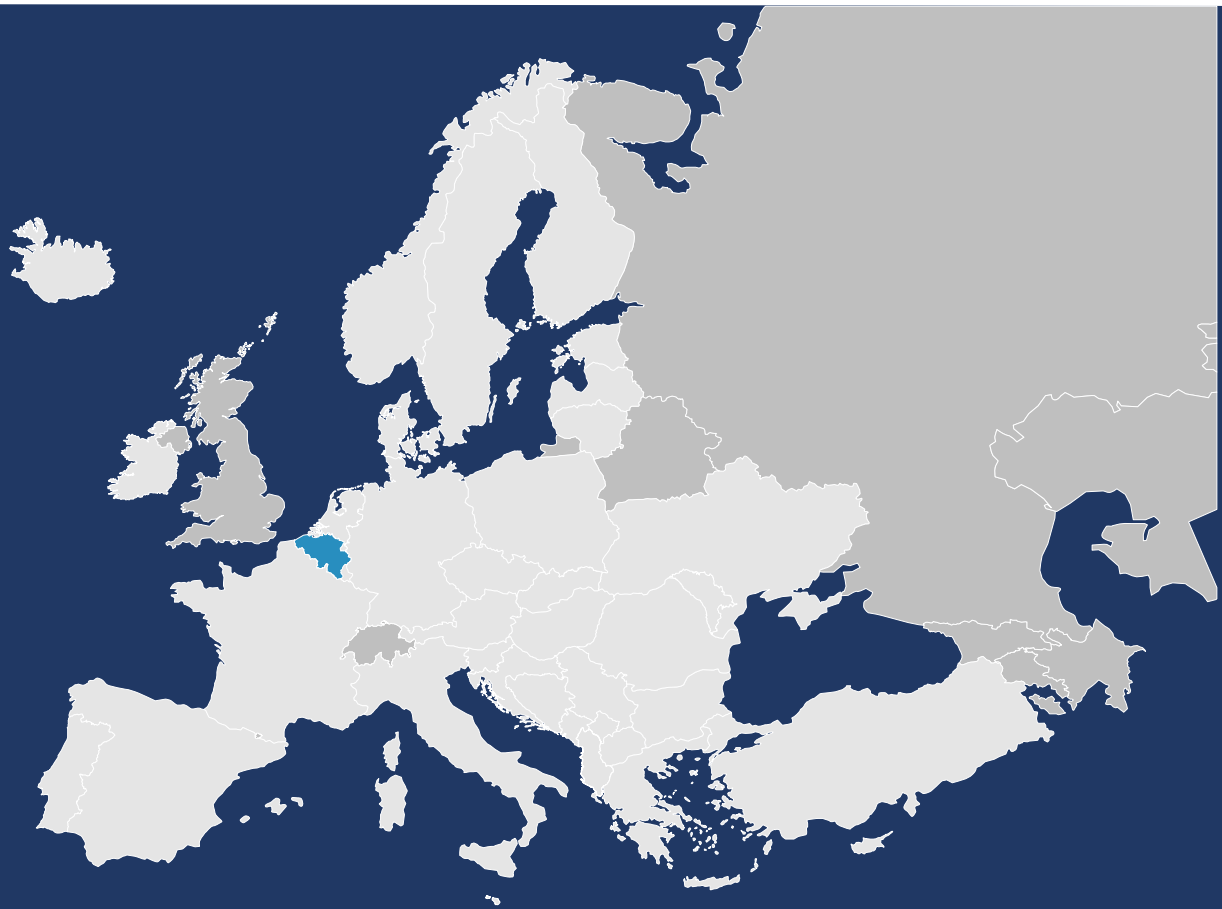


# BELGIUM

## 2024 Digital Public Administration Factsheet

Supporting document






Main developments in digital  
public administrations and  
interoperability

JULY 2024

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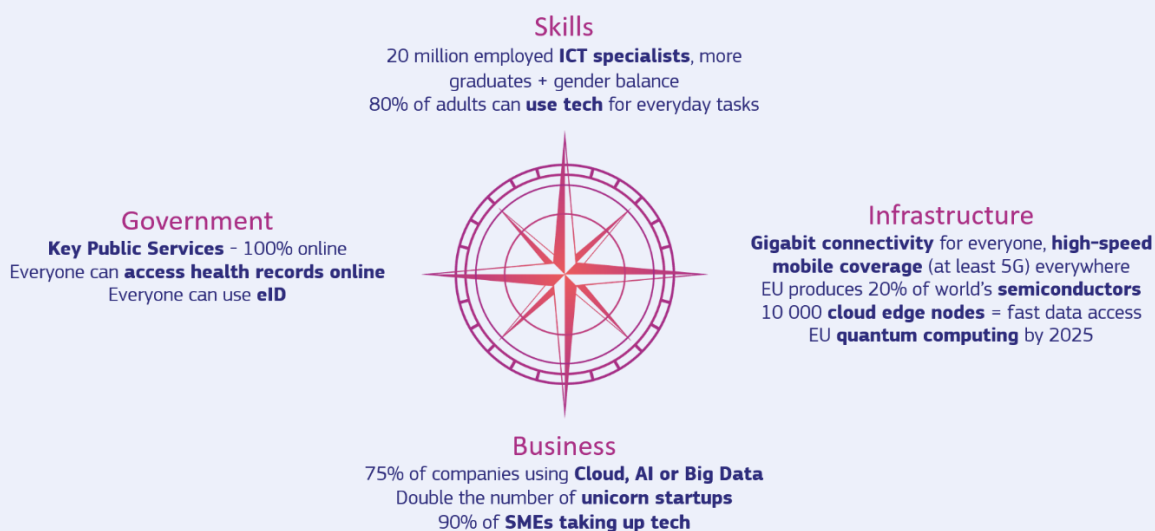
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## 2030 DIGITAL DECADE

The **Digital Decade policy programme 2030** sets out digital ambitions for the next decade in the form of clear, concrete targets. The main goals can be summarised in 4 points:

- 1) a digitally skilled population and highly skilled digital professionals;
- 2) secure and sustainable digital infrastructures;
- 3) digital transformation of businesses;
- 4) digitalisation of public services.



The production of the **Digital Public Administration factsheets and their supportive documents** support the objectives and targets of the Digital Decade programme. By referencing national initiatives on the digital transformation of public administrations and public services, as well as interoperability, they complement existing data and indicators included in the Digital Decade reports and related resources. They also highlight and promote key initiatives put in place or planned by EU countries to reach the Digital Decade's targets.



# 1. Interoperability State-of-Play

In 2017, the European Commission published the **European Interoperability Framework (EIF)** to give specific guidance on how to set up interoperable digital public services through a set of 47 recommendations divided in three pillars. The EIF Monitoring Mechanism (MM) was built on these pillars to evaluate the level of implementation of the framework within the Member States. Whereas during the previous, the MM relied upon three scoreboards, starting from the 2022 edition it includes an additional scoreboard on cross-border interoperability, assessing the level of implementation of 35 Recommendations. The mechanism is based on a set of 91 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) clustered within the four scoreboards (Principles, Layers, Conceptual model and Cross-border interoperability), outlined below.

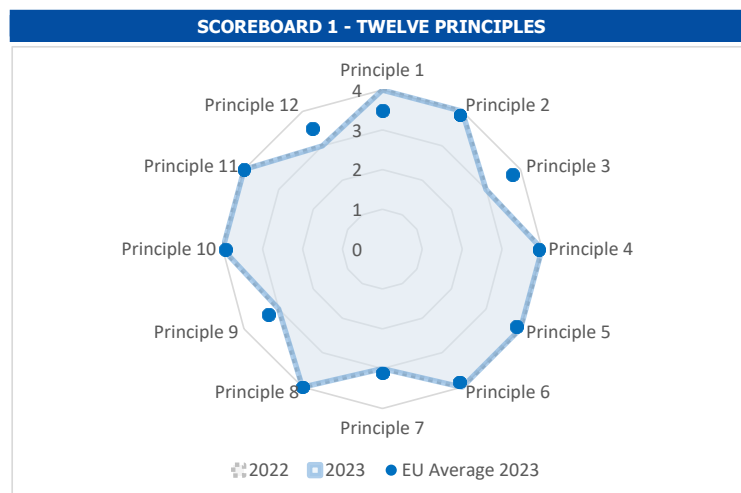
Starting from the 2022 edition, an additional scoreboard, **Scoreboard 4**, focusing on cross-border interoperability, has been incorporated. This scoreboard assesses the adherence to 35 Recommendations outlined in the EIF framework. Specifically, it encompasses Interoperability Principles 2, and 4 through 11 from Scoreboard 1, all recommendations pertaining to Interoperability Layers from Scoreboard 2, as well as Conceptual Model recommendations 36 to 43 and 46 to 47 from Scoreboard 3.

Scoreboard 1 Interoperability Principles		Scoreboard 2 Interoperability Layers		Scoreboard 3 Conceptual Model	
	Recommendation(s) n°		Recommendation(s) n°		Recommendation(s) n°
Principle 1 - Subsidiarity and Proportionality	1	Interoperability Governance	20-24	Conceptual Model	34-35
Principle 2 - Openness	2-4	Integrated Public Service Governance	25-26	Internal information sources and services	36
Principle 3 - Transparency	5	Legal Interoperability	27	Basic Registries	37-40
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Principle 6 - User-centricity	10-13	Technical Interoperability	33	External information sources and services	45
Principle 7 - Inclusion and accessibility	14			Security and Privacy	46-47
Principle 8 - Security and privacy	15				
Principle 9 - Multilingualism	16				
Principle 10 - Administrative simplification	17				
Principle 11 - Preservation of information	18				
Principle 12 - Assessment of Effectiveness and Efficiency	19				

Scoreboard 4 Cross-border Interoperability

Source: European Interoperability Framework Monitoring Mechanism 2023

Each scoreboard breaks down the results into thematic areas (i.e. principles). The thematic areas are evaluated on a scale from one to four, where one means a lower level of implementation and four means a higher level of implementation. The graphs below show the result of the EIF MM data collection exercise for Belgium in 2023, comparing it with the EU average as well as the performance of the country in 2022.



Source: European Interoperability Framework Monitoring Mechanism 2023

The Belgian results in Scoreboard 1 stand for an overall good implementation of the EIF Principles. Belgium even performed above the European average for Principle 1 (Subsidiarity and

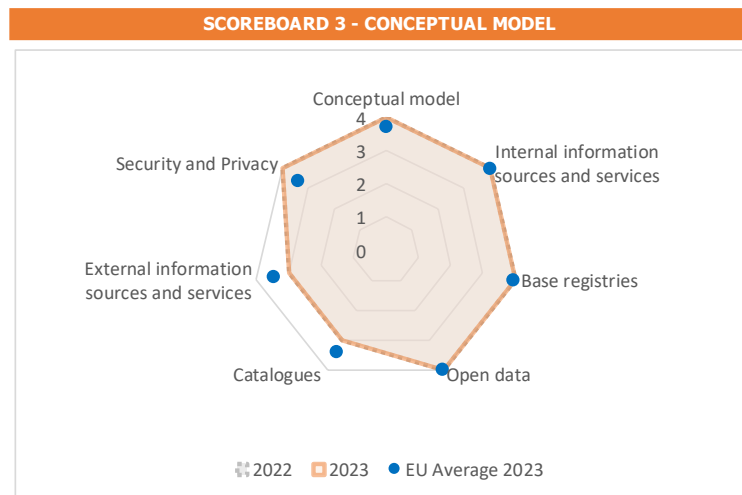


Proportionality). Potential areas for improvement relate to the implementation of Principles 3 (Transparency) and 12 (Assessment of Effectiveness and Efficiency). Particularly, the provision of internal visibility and external interfaces for European public service to make administrative procedures available and accessible online (Principle 3 – Recommendation 05) is partial and could be improved to reach the maximum score of 4. In addition, Belgium could increase its score on Principle 9 (Multilingualism) to reach the maximum score of 4 by enhancing its use of information systems and technical architectures that cater for multilingualism when establishing a European public service (Recommendation 16) and more specifically, the total number of language resources proposed to users.



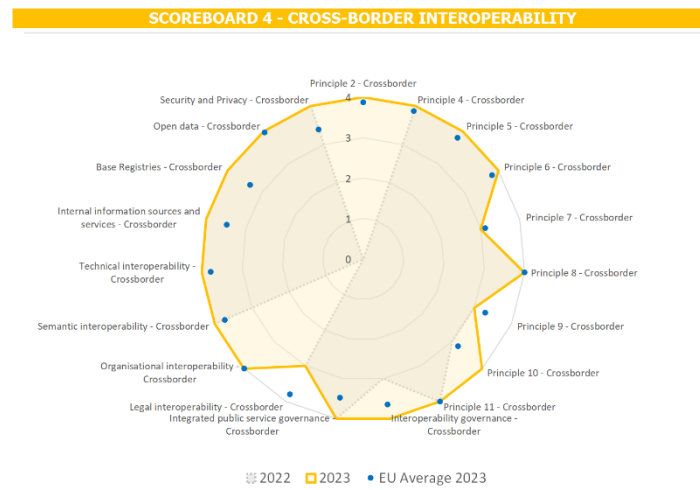
Source: European Interoperability Framework Monitoring Mechanism 2023

Belgium's scores in Scoreboard 2 illustrate an overall good performance of the country with scores of 3 and 4 in all the interoperability layers. Areas for improvement to strengthen the country's implementation of the recommendations under Scoreboard 2 concern mostly Legal interoperability. To match the European average on this area, Belgium could further ensure that legislation is screened by means of 'interoperability checks' in order to identify any barriers to interoperability (Recommendation 27).



Source: European Interoperability Framework Monitoring Mechanism 2023

The Belgian results in relation to the Conceptual Model in Scoreboard 3 show a very good performance of the country. Belgium reached a high performance in Security and Privacy, performing better than the European average in this area. To improve its score on External information sources and services, Belgian public administrations could use more external information sources and services while developing European public services, when useful and feasible to do so (Recommendation 45). Similarly, to increase its score related to Catalogues, Belgium could increase its efforts to put in place catalogues of public services, public data, and interoperability solutions and use common models for describing them (Recommendation 44).



Source: European Interoperability Framework Monitoring Mechanism 2023

The results of Belgium on Cross-Border Interoperability in Scoreboard 4 show a very positive performance of the country. Particularly, Belgium reached the maximum score of 4 in almost all thematic areas, including seven Principles. However, Belgium still has margin for improvement in relation to several indicators where the country obtained a lower performance, such as Principle 7 (Inclusion and accessibility – Cross-border). For instance, further efforts may focus on fully complying with European accessibility standards of the Directive of accessibility to websites and mobile applications of public-sector bodies (Recommendation 14).

Additional information on Belgium's results on the EIF Monitoring Mechanism is available online through [interactive dashboards](#).

#### **Curious about the state-of-play on digital public administrations in this country?**

Please find here some relevant indicators and resources on this topic:

- [Eurostat Information Society Indicators](#)
- [Digital Economy and Society Index \(DESI\)](#)
- [eGovernment Benchmark](#)
- [Repository of good practices on the EIF implementation](#)



## 2. Digital Transformation of Public Administrations

### Main Digital Strategies, Action Plans and Legislations

#### Smart Nation Digital Strategy (2022–present)

On 20 November 2020, the Belgian government announced to the Chamber of Representatives that the drafting of the action plan Digital Belgium 2.0 was ongoing. The [new 'Smart Nation' Digital Strategy](#) of the Belgian federal government was published in 2022, as the preparatory work was concluded at the beginning of the same year, in cooperation with the Digital Minds for Belgium, i.e. the group of experts from the public and private sectors advising the Secretary of State for Digitalisation to commonly draft a convergent, ambitious and inclusive digital strategy.

The strategy includes ten ambitions:

1. Internet access becomes a fundamental right for everyone;
2. All citizens will acquire digital skills;
3. Civil servants will acquire advanced digital skills;
4. All citizens receive digital citizenship with access to all online public services;
5. Belgium will promote the emergence of the data economy;
6. Online democracy will be protected and safeguarded;
7. Belgian governments will create the conditions for economic actors to digitalise;
8. Belgium will be leading in eHealth and its applications in artificial intelligence (AI);
9. Belgian governments will support Belgian digital champions; and
10. Digital transformation will benefit the environment.

#### Federal eGovernment Strategy for the Social Sector (2009–present)

The Federal eGovernment Strategy for the Social Sector aims to create a single virtual public administration while respecting the privacy of users, as well as the specificities and competences of all government bodies and administrative layers. Its main objective is to improve the delivery of public services for citizens and businesses by rendering it faster, more convenient, less constraining and more open.

The current strategy is outlined as follows:

- Formulation of specific objectives, such as optimal service delivery to citizens, limitation of administrative burden, and optimisation of the efficiency and effectiveness of public services;
- Explicit choice to opt for stakeholders' collaboration to create added value for users of eGovernment services;
- Adoption of a common vision for the use of information in terms of information modelling, mandatory reporting of supposed errors, electronic exchange of information and single collection of information;
- Use of a common vision for information security and protection of privacy;
- Maximum use of common elements for networks, electronic identification (eID), interconnected middleware and related basic services;
- Role of the Crossroads Bank for Social Security (CBSS) as driver for eGovernment development in the social sector; and
- Establishment of a strong partnership among all social security institutions.

#### Belgian Federal Action Plan for Administrative Simplification (2022–2024)

The Belgian Federal Action Plan for Administrative Simplification consists of 39 specific actions, ranging from the Single Digital Gateway and Data Governance policies to a review of the Belgian national Once-Only legislation.

#### Digital Wallonia Strategy (2015–2024)

On 6 December 2018, the Walloon government adopted the second version of its [Digital Wallonia Strategy](#) for the period 2019–2024. The strategy marked the Walloon government's stated ambition to transform Wallonia into a connected and smart territory, where technological



companies are recognised as leaders and as the driving force behind the region's successful industrial transformation. It sets the direction to allow the region of Wallonia to seize the socio-economic opportunities of the digital transformation. Just like the first version of 2015, which was based on the contributions of more than 100 actors and organisations, Digital Wallonia 2019–2024 is the result of the work of the Digital Wallonia Champions. In 2019, the new regional government confirmed Digital Wallonia as the digital roadmap for the region. Consequently, the Digital Wallonia Strategy is now fully integrated into the political declaration of the Walloon government. Digital Wallonia also contributes to the digital objectives of the [Declaration of Regional Politics 2019–2024](#) and [Wallonia's Recovery Plan 2021–2024](#).

The Digital Wallonia Strategy is structured around five major goals:

1. Digital sector: the goal is to create a strong technological sector by means of a growth programme, which aims to give Wallonia's digital sector an international dimension;
2. Digital economy: the goal is to increase the digital capabilities of companies, which is essential for the development of connected commerce;
3. Connected and intelligent territory: the goal is to achieve full high-speed connectivity in Wallonia;
4. Open utilities: the goal is to foster open and transparent digital public services; and
5. Skills and employment: the goal is to develop Wallonia's citizens' digital skills.

More than 20 projects have been implemented as part of the Digital Wallonia Strategy. For example, [Digital Wallonia 4 AI](#) is now the roadmap for the development of AI, [Digital Wallonia Industry of the Future](#) is the framework for the adoption of the Industry 4.0 by factories of the manufacturing sectors and Digital Wallonia Giga Region defines the priorities to offer high-speed fixed and mobile networks to all citizens and companies in Wallonia.

### [Master Plan and Digital Vision of the Ministry of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation \(2016–2024\)](#)

In May 2016, the government of the *Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles* (FWB) signed the first Master Plan of the Ministry of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation (MFWB), running until 2024. This [Master Plan](#) for public services represents a first-time effort to set up a global, integrated and consistent roadmap with precise goals, proper governance and adequate funding. The digital part of the Master Plan is divided into eight areas, which constitute the pillars of the government's digital vision. The first pillar aims to work on the user experience, which includes both external users of the public service (e.g. citizens, non-marketers) and internal users. The second pillar concerns data, which are a relevant component of the entire digital approach. The third pillar is mainly internal and focuses on the digital workplace. The fourth pillar is dedicated to innovation and the fifth concerns digital governance. The sixth pillar targets the digital culture of the organisation, including the acquisition of digital skills and management changes. The seventh pillar is devoted to the necessary resources, including the information technology (IT) infrastructure. Finally, the eighth and most important pillar is the digital platform, consisting of all IT capabilities of the MFWB.

The government of the French community also included a chapter on digitalisation in its global strategy named 2020–2025 Strategy of the Government of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation. It focuses on six main pillars: governance, data, digital workplace, innovation, digital culture and users.

### [Flanders eGovernment Strategy](#)

As to the Flemish Region, the eGovernment Strategy is under the responsibility of the Minister-President of the Flemish government. It is now managed by the Flanders Digital Agency, which was created in 2021 by the merger of the [Flanders Information Agency](#), and the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Department of the Flemish government.

This agency was responsible for the eGovernment programme [Radically Digital Flanders \(Vlaanderen Radicaal Digitaal\)](#), an investment programme that ran from 2015 till 2017. The programme substantially increased the digital maturity of the Flemish government digital service provision. It also ensured that the Once-Only data collection principle (known in Flanders as the MAGDA principle) was adopted by the whole Flemish administration. In 2021, a follow-up investment programme, [Radically Digital Flanders II \(Vlaanderen Radicaal Digitaal II\)](#), was launched, again investing EUR 30 million in the creation of a state-of-the-art digital government.

As part of Flemish Resilience (*Vlaamse Veerkracht*), the Flemish recovery plan after the COVID-19 crisis, further substantial investments are also being made in the digitalisation of the Flemish administration and the local authorities. A key policy element in this eGovernment policy is the



continued development of authentic sources of information (base registries). These are databases that can be used to obtain complete, correct and up-to-date data on businesses, natural persons, addresses, plots, buildings, maps, etc. A comprehensive system of Flemish authentic data sources and related services is in the process of being built. All these initiatives aim to turn the Flemish government into a state-of-the-art digital government, by becoming more data-driven & AI-enabled, and further adopting the Once-Only principle to proactively deliver digital services to citizens and enterprises.

In 2022, the Flemish government adopted the [Flemish Data Strategy](#) to increase the general data maturity of the Flemish administration and, in a broader perspective, further develop the data economy and data society in Flanders. An interesting element in this strategy is the establishment of personal data vaults. To that end, Flanders is the first government to work with the data vaults of the [Solid project](#) of Sir Tim Berners-Lee, the inventor of the World Wide Web (www). In the same year, the [Flemish Digital Government Service Delivery Strategy](#) was also adopted, aiming to improve quality, user-centricity and especially inclusiveness of digital service delivery by regional and local governments in Flanders. In 2023, a digital service delivery assessment tool was developed, to assess whether a digital service of the Flemish public administrations satisfies the principles of this Service Delivery Strategy.

### [eGovernment Strategy of the Brussels-Capital Region](#)

In July 2019, the Brussels government brought forward the [policy](#) that, among other digital measures, seeks to address inequalities and poverty by automatically granting derivative rights resulting from the social status of the citizens. Furthermore, the new policy includes an entire section on the ambition of the Brussels Region to become a smart city. The transition towards becoming a smart city has multiple purposes:

- To democratise the access to digital wealth;
- To improve the quality, the performance and the synergies across public services;
- To reduce the costs and the consumption of available resources; and
- To streamline and improve the interactions between citizens and public administration.

Aware of the exponential increase in IT costs generated by the societal evolution towards a more digital world, as accentuated by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Brussels government approved in 2020 the implementation of a new IT governance. Its aim is to better meet the needs of users while adopting a harmonised and coordinated approach to regional IT with a view, among other things, to achieving economies of scale and limiting its environmental impact.

Furthermore, in 2020 the government approved the Data Governance Strategy to coordinate, strengthen and professionalise data exchange within the Region and to ensure coherence across regional public administrations. The strategy includes:

- The establishment of a data governance structure called 'Regional Data Office';
- The development of a Brussels Data Exchange Platform, aiming to carry out innovative data management and development projects, particularly of the 'big data' type, for the benefit of public authorities; and
- The creation of a 'Brussels Code of Governance'.

### [Strategic Plan of the Steering Body for the Flemish Information and ICT Policy \(2020–2024\)](#)

In June 2020, a [Strategic Plan of the Steering Body for the Flemish Information and ICT Policy](#) was adopted by the Flemish government (VR 2020 2606 DOC.0643/1). The plan outlines the priorities with regards to information and ICT policy for the Flemish administration and local authorities for the period 2020–2024. The plan also implements the Radically Digital Flanders II investment programme, which has been ongoing since 2021 to support the realisation of the objectives of this strategic plan. The management and follow-up of the strategic plan is under the responsibility of the Steering Body for the Flemish Information and ICT Policy.

### [Berlin Declaration on Digital Society and Value-Based Digital Government](#)

In December 2020, the Belgian government signed the [Berlin Declaration on Digital Society and Value-Based Digital Government](#), thus re-affirming its commitment – together with other EU Member States – to foster digital transformation in order to allow citizens and businesses to harness the benefits and opportunities offered by modern digital technologies. The Declaration aims to contribute to a value-based digital transformation by addressing and strengthening digital participation and digital inclusion in European societies.





## Governance Framework for the Digital and Information Technology Policy

On 25 October 2018, the Parliament of the French Community adopted key legislation on the Governance Framework for the Digital and Information Technology Policy. The governance framework is an important piece of legislation, as:

- It defines general principles for the digital government transformation;
- It establishes a Strategic Council for Digital Transformation;
- It gives a legal basis to the governance structures; and
- It establishes a five-year strategic plan for digital and IT development in the French Community.



## Action Plan for Administrative Simplification

The up-to-date Action Plan for Administrative Simplification contains the list of projects to be pursued to achieve administrative simplification and digitalisation goals. The list is organised by administrations, strategic areas, target groups and axes, and provides a comprehensive understanding of all ongoing and upcoming projects for the years 2023 and 2024.

## Digitalisation of Internal Processes



### Interactive Federal Budget Platform

To promote transparency in the public sector, a **intuitive and dynamic platform** was created in 2022, including federal level expenditure, and specifying the amounts allocated and liquidated. This new interactive Federal Budget Platform also details the allocations of public bodies directly dependent on the government (Afsca, Fedasil, Debt Agency, etc.) and those of autonomous bodies such as federal cultural and scientific institutions.



### FedMAN

The Federal Metropolitan Area Network (FedMAN) was launched by the Federal Government Department for Information and Communication Technology (Fedict), currently known as the Federal Public Service Policy and Support (BOSA)'s Directorate-General Simplification and Digitalisation (DTO), in September 2002. It is the Federal Metropolitan Area Network which connects the administrations of 15 federal Ministries and government service buildings in Brussels. FedMAN offers to 80 000 federal civil servants a shared high-speed network and a number of related services supporting the delivery of eGovernment, including access to the **Trans European Services for Telematics between Administrations (TESTA)** network of the European Union (EU). The first level of FedMAN is a central platform, while the second level enables the creation of virtual networks for each federal administration. Federal departments have the right to use the central platform to create their own security environments. An upgraded version of FedMAN, FedMAN II, whose capacities are ten times superior to the original version, has been operational since March 2006. It is intended to allow for the launch of new services, such as Voice over IP, and for infrastructure sharing between different federal departments.



### Federal Service Bus

The **Federal Service Bus (FSB)**, which started in 2006, is service-oriented and allows for a simplified connection among the various applications and the federal administration's IT data files. At the same time, the FSB is set to ensure the follow-up of specific processes. Access should also be open to private companies, by means of an authorisation.



### IRISnet

**IRISnet** is the name of the Brussels-Capital Region broadband network, designed to simplify telecommunications among regional public bodies. It is built upon fibre optic cables and uses the latest technologies to support data, voice and video streaming flows. A procurement procedure was launched in 2022 to find a new private partner for the next 15 years.

## Digitalisation supporting the EU Green Deal

### Tomorrow's Tech Today

The Tomorrow's Tech Today conference organised on 7 and 8 February 2024 under the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the EU focused on sustainable telecommunications, data centres and digital solutions for a sustainable future. The input collected at the conference will contribute to the Council conclusions in preparation for the Telecom Council on 21 May 2024.

### Study on Data Centres and Networks in Belgium

In 2022 the Belgian Institute for Postal Services and Telecommunications (BIPT) adopted the [Communication of 17 November 2022 concerning the study regarding data centres and digital content providers in Belgium](#). Specifically in the related chapter, the communication discusses various aspects of sustainability in data centres, primarily focusing on energy consumption, cooling systems, waste management and emissions. It begins by establishing a framework for understanding sustainability in data centres, highlighting key components such as energy usage, cooling requirements, waste generation and emissions. Then, it emphasizes the importance of efficient energy use as well as of the adoption of sustainable energy sources, like green energy, to minimise the ecological footprint. The text also delves into governmental policies surrounding data centre sustainability, noting the increasing interest from regulatory authorities in addressing environmental concerns. However, it acknowledges the lack of standardised methodologies for assessing and classifying data centre sustainability at a national level.





## 3. Interoperability and Data

### Interoperability Framework



#### BelgIF – Belgium’s National Interoperability Framework

BelgIF is Belgium’s official National Interoperability Framework, to be followed by all levels of public administration in Belgium. In line with the revised European Interoperability Framework (EIF), the Belgian federal government and the Regions have agreed to use the twelve principles of the EIF as the basis for defining their interoperability. A number of recommendations are derived from these principles. The 47 recommendations are also endorsed within the context of BelgIF, as a valuable foundation to define the architecture, applications and solutions for data exchange and interoperability within and between the federal government, the Communities and the Regions. The main integrators supporting the implementation of BelgIF are the [Flanders Information Agency](#), the [Banque Carrefour d’Échange de Données \(BCED\)](#), the [Crossroads Bank for Social Security \(CBSS\)](#), [BOSA](#), the [eHealth portal](#) and [FIDUS](#). The BelgIF website also lists the main building blocks enabling and supporting interoperability in the country: the [G-Cloud](#), the [Federal Service Bus](#), [FedMAN](#), [eBirth](#) and [CSAM](#).



#### Simplification and Digitalisation Office Strategy

Within BOSA, the DTO implements the Belgian Digital Agenda. To support this strategy, the DTO, together with the Belgian regional governments, adopted the EIF as reference for BelgIF. The DTO mapped its architecture based on the European Interoperability Reference Architecture (EIRA). This has allowed the DTO to:

- Communicate the DTO enterprise architecture in a standardised way;
- Detect gaps in the existing DTO architecture;
- Make use of the available Solution Architecture Templates to complete the DTO architecture; and
- Compare the DTO architecture with the architecture of other Belgian and EU partners (provided their architecture is also built according to EIRA), and in this way detect gaps and overlaps between different architectures.

### Data Access, Management and Reuse

#### Open Data



#### Charter on Open Data Use by Local Authorities

The Smart Flanders Initiative included the [Open Data Charter](#), which establishes 20 principles, such as open-by-default and machine-readable data, enabling local authorities to foster an open data ecosystem. The Open Data Charter was approved in the summer of 2018 and ratified by 13 Flemish cities. To translate the Charter into practice, a dedicated document was developed with sample clauses to be used in tenders, concessions and contracts to make arrangements with suppliers about (linked) open data. The use of these formulations is recommended, so as to strive for a more joint approach to open data.

To effectively stimulate the movement towards open data, a broad support offer for local governments has also been developed in the Smart Flanders Programme. For example, a handbook entitled ‘[Open Data for Local Governments](#)’, published in 2021, provides policymakers with insight into the benefits of open data, and offers them a hands-on step-by-step plan for getting started with open data within their local government. In addition, a ‘[Quick Scan on Open Data](#)’ questionnaire provides them with insight into growth opportunities towards a sustainable local open data policy.



#### Open Data Decree of Wallonia and the Wallonia-Brussels Federation

On 12 July 2017, the Walloon Parliament adopted the [Open Data Decree of the Walloon Government and the Wallonia-Brussels Federation](#). Following this decree, public administrations

will open their data in digital format so that they can be reused easily, whether by citizens, companies or the administrations themselves, such as local authorities.

### Ouvrir ma Ville

To advise and support Walloon municipalities and administrations in their implementation of open data, the non for profit organisation FuturoCité provides the 'Ouvrir ma Ville' programme. Supported by the Digital Wallonia Strategy and the Walloon Region, it offers practical workshop sessions held several times a year.

### Data.gov.be

The [data.gov.be](https://data.gov.be) Portal has been created to enable the use and sharing of public data by collecting and harmonising metadata from federal, regional and local administrations, universities and private entities. The portal maintenance is under the responsibility of BOSA. As of March 2024, the Portal summed up around 12 500 datasets and had welcomed 8 000 visitors per month on average.

### Law on the Right of Access to Administrative Documents

The right of access to documents held by the public sector is guaranteed by [Article 32 of the Belgian Constitution](#) and by the [Law of 11 April 1994](#). It was amended in 1994 precisely to provide everyone with the right to consult any administrative document and get a copy, except in the cases and conditions stipulated by the laws, decrees or rulings referred to in [Articles 39 and 134](#). Government agencies must respond immediately, or within thirty days in case the request is delayed or rejected.

The Law of 1997, related to the publication of information by provinces and municipalities, provides for the same type of transparency obligations for provinces and municipalities. Furthermore, the Flanders Region/Community (lastly amended in 2007), the French Community (lastly amended in 2007) and the Brussels-Capital Region (lastly amended in 2010) also adopted their own legal acts on the right of access to administrative documents.

### Law on Open Data and the Reuse of Public Sector Information

The [Law of 4 May 2016](#), modified on 25 December 2023, transposed into Belgian law the general principles governing the reuse of public sector information, in line with the provisions of Directive (EU) 2019/1024 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 on open data and the re-use of public sector information. Regional and community governments too were required to transpose the directive on the reuse of public sector information. As a result, Flanders, the Brussels-Capital Region and the French- and German-speaking Communities also have their own decrees which were inspired from the relevant federal legislation. In particular, the existing Flemish decree on the reuse of public sector information was adapted in 2016 to be in line with the new European directive.

### Royal Decree Establishing the Procedures and Time Limits for the Handling of Requests for Public Sector Information Reuse

The [Royal Decree of 2 June 2019](#) regulates formal aspects related to the procedures and timelines for handling requests for public sector information reuse.

### Brussels Ordinance Once-Only

Since the entry into force of the Ordinance of 17 July 2020, Brussels administrations and services must apply the Once-Only principle: they must use the unique identification key of natural or legal persons in all the administrations' forms, and no longer ask citizens and companies for information accessible in authentic sources. The ordinance also specifies that electronic forms and their annexes are deemed to have the same value as paper forms.

### Data Governance Act

The European Data Governance Act was adopted in May 2022 and has become applicable since September 2023. Its Chapter II on the reuse, within the Union, of certain categories of data held by public sector bodies concerns data held by public sector bodies which are protected on grounds of:

- Commercial confidentiality, including business, professional and company secrets;
- Statistical confidentiality;



- Protection of intellectual property rights of third parties; or
- Protection of personal data, insofar as such data fall outside the scope of Directive (EU) 2019/1024.

The implementation of the Data Governance Act is in its final stages to allow its timely entry into force at the Belgian level.



### Flemish Public Governance Decree

Adopted on 7 December 2018, the [Flemish Public Governance Decree](#) significantly streamlines and simplifies the digital government framework. The decree incorporates the previously separate decrees on the Steering Body for the Flemish Information and ICT Policy, on electronic intergovernmental data exchange and on the reuse of public sector information. It has then been adapted to take into account the new obligations introduced by [Directive \(EU\) 2019/1024 on open data and the re-use of public sector information](#).

The decree, amongst other topics, dedicates extensive attention to the use of base registries and the adoption of the Once-Only principle by Flemish and local administrations. On the one hand, it defines the criteria for the recognition of Flemish base registries and specifies how to manage them. On the other, it introduces the Once-Only obligation to use base registries in Flemish administrative processes (citizens may refuse to give their data more than once), with the obligation to notify back any errors found in these base registries.

### Base Registries

The following table lists the Belgian base registries:

National	
Business and Tax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Company Registry, National Registry and Cadastral Parcels</li> </ul> <p>BOSA maintains a list of federal authentic sources. This list includes the Company Registry, the National (Citizen) Registry and the Cadastral Parcels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crossroads Bank for Enterprises</li> </ul> <p>Managed by the Economy Department, the <a href="#">Crossroads Bank for Enterprises</a> is an integrated business registry that contains all authentic sources of all Belgian enterprises, such as company name, company number, postal and email address, legal form, activities performed within the company, professional skills of the company staff, etc.</p>
Transportation / vehicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Belgian Ship Registry</li> </ul> <p>The Belgian Ship Registry is managed by the Federal Public Service (FPS) Mobility and Transport.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Car Pass</li> </ul> <p>The Car Pass contains information about mileage, CO2, recall actions, etc.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crossroads Bank of the Vehicles Registry</li> </ul> <p>The Crossroads Bank of the Vehicles Registry is managed by the Vehicle Registration Service (DIV).</p>
Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CartoWeb</li> </ul> <p>CartoWeb is managed by the National Geographic Institute (NGI) and contains topographic maps.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land Registry / Cadastre</li> </ul>





	The Land Registry / Cadastre is managed by the FPS Finances.
Population	Managed by the Interior Department, the National Registry gathers basic data relating to all persons holding the Belgian nationality.
Other	BOSA provides interested users with a list of the federal authentic sources of the Belgian Regions and the social security system.
Sub-national	
Flemish Base Registries	<p>The <a href="#">Flanders Information Agency</a> continues to work on a complete set of Flemish base registries (on buildings and addresses, roads, government organisations and government services). They are made available through an open-source generic framework (e.g. by offering APIs) based on the <a href="#">OSLO</a> data management standards. Examples of such base registries are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The <a href="#">Central Reference Addresses Database</a> (<i>Centraal referentieadressenbestand</i>); and</li> <li>▪ The <a href="#">Proofs of Education and Experience Database</a> (<i>Leer- en ervaringsbewijzendatabank</i>).</li> </ul>



### MAGDA Platform

The [MAGDA Platform](#), introduced in February 2006, is a service-oriented architecture (SOA)-based interconnecting infrastructure for base registries at regional level, enabling the integration of government data exchange services, and facilitating both the access to authentic data sources and the data exchange among public bodies. It connects base registries on persons, companies, associations and government entities, that can be accessed through web services using standardised APIs and a canonical MAGDA-specific data format. These base registries are part of a Flemish ecosystem of authentic data sources, managed by the Flemish government. The MAGDA Platform ensures that data from authentic sources can be extracted from the underlying databases in a secure manner. Thanks to the platform, citizens and businesses do not have to submit their data to the government more than once. MAGDA is also connected with base registries at federal level through the relevant federal service integrators. When receiving the data in various formats, it transforms it into a single MAGDA-specific data format, thus ensuring that all users need to deal with a single data format only. It also handles data privacy issues, making this process transparent for users. MAGDA contains non-geographic data, while the GDI platform allows for access to geospatial data. The MAGDA Platform and the GDI Platform are now part of the new central Flemish data exchange platform, the Flanders Crossroads Bank. In the last 17 years, the MAGDA Platform has continued to grow: in 2023, the number of transactions via the MAGDA web services rose to more than 500 million to 1,5 billion, largely due to the creation of new data sharing capabilities for the COVID-19 certificates system and following the creation of several new data exchange services.

### Data Platforms and Portals

The following table is a non-exhaustive list of the Belgian data platforms and portals infrastructures:

<a href="#">Mydata.be</a>	<a href="#">mydata.belgium.be</a> is a new platform established in 2023 on the transparency of federal data, enabling all Belgians to find out which federal public service accessed their personal data and with what purpose.
<a href="#">My Brussels App</a>	Launched in 2020, My Brussels is a free application that allows Brussels residents to access a vast array of information and services. In 2021, the app was improved with new features: beside weather, traffic information and public transport timetables, My Brussels now offers data on animal shelters, public job placement agencies, public computer spaces, public toilets and waste sorting.



Brussels Data Platform	<p><a href="#">datastore.brussels</a> is the regional platform for opening up and sharing data and services in the Brussels-Capital Region. This platform aims to meet the needs of both users and data producers, allowing them to open up and freely reuse the data and services available for the Brussels-Capital Region. It also aims to be a tool that enables organisations to introduce datasets and services that exist but are not freely accessible.</p> <p>Users of <a href="#">datastore.brussels</a> are completely free to browse the portal, and search and consult data and web services, with no obligation to register. They can also create a profile allowing them to make suggestions, as well as subscribe to the news of one or more organisations or datasets, so that they can keep up to date with what is new on the portal.</p>
Open.budgets	<p>In May 2019, the Brussels-Capital Region sought to ensure greater transparency of its administrations by adopting the Joint Decree and Ordinance of 16 May 2019 on the Publicity of the Administration in the Brussels Institutions. Inventories of public contracts and subsidies granted are thus published each year by the administrations on the <a href="https://datastore.brussels">https://datastore.brussels</a> platform giving access to the Region's open data. These expenditure inventories are then collected and centralised in the cadastre of public expenditure. The data can be consulted and downloaded on the site <a href="https://openbudgets.be.brussels">https://openbudgets.be.brussels</a>.</p>
Wallonie en Poche	<p>Wallonie en Poche is an application that brings together a range of relevant, up-to-date information and services for everyone in Wallonia. It can be customised to provide a single interface for everything one needs to make everyday life easier for local users, from waste collection and public transport timetables to highly detailed mapping information.</p>
Business Support Portal for the Walloon Region	<p>The Business Support Portal, managed by the <a href="#">Enterprise and Innovation Agency</a> (the former Economic Stimulation Agency or ASE), offers to businesses and entrepreneurs all kinds of information about management, financing, development and support by public authorities.</p>
Open Data Wallonia-Brussels Portal	<p>The <a href="#">portal</a> of the French Community was launched in September 2014 and provides information both to businesses and citizens related to the competences within the scope of the FWB.</p> <p>The <a href="#">Open Data Wallonia-Bruxelles (ODWB) Portal</a> is shared by the Walloon Region and the FWB. It is part of a proactive approach to data governance, aimed at facilitating access to information managed or generated by public service agencies, as a basis for transparent public action. It represents both a tool for increased citizen participation and an incentive to create innovative services.</p> <p>The data gathered within this portal are aggregated at the level of the <a href="#">federal portal</a> (as is the case for the Flemish and Brussels portals), which is in turn taken up at <a href="#">European level</a>.</p>
Geo.be	<p>Geo.be is a federal portal listing INSPIRE datasets and services, operated by the NGI.</p>
German-Speaking Community of Belgians Portal	<p>The <a href="#">eGovernment Portal</a> of the German-speaking Community provides a range of information both to businesses and citizens concerning the Community's administrative procedures and services, as well as administrative forms to download.</p>
Flemish Portal for Enterprises and Entrepreneurs	<p>The new <a href="#">Flemish Portal for Enterprises and Entrepreneurs</a> uses the <a href="#">federal Crossroads Bank for Enterprises</a> as a base registry. It contains various services that Flemish enterprises can benefit from.</p>
Federal Service Bus	<p>The <a href="#">FSB</a> aims to be the gateway to the main (authentic) data sources of the federal government. More specifically, the service puts a platform at the disposal of the federal administrations, bodies and institutions performing a task of general interest, to allow for the consultation or standardised exchange of data, from application to application, via the</p>



	internet. The platform makes web services available in a harmonised and secure manner that offer seamless access to (authentic) data sources.
<a href="#">DataVindplaats Vlaanderen</a>	The DataVindplaats Vlaanderen portal provides an overview of (and access to) various datasets and services of the Flemish Region.
<a href="#">Biodiversity.be</a>	Biodiversity.be is a Belgian platform on biodiversity, funded by the Belgian Science Policy Office.
<a href="#">TransportData.be</a>	Transportdata.be is Belgium’s National Access Point (NAP) for information on Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) and is referred to by its acronym NAP ITS. The NAP ITS was launched in February 2020 in the light of the European ITS directive, which aims at making mobility in the EU safer, more efficient and more sustainable.
<a href="#">Kruispuntbank Vlaanderen</a>	<p>The Flanders Crossroads Bank (<i>Kruispuntbank Vlaanderen</i>) is the central Flemish data exchange platform. It fulfils four basic functions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) It makes data easily accessible in the form that best suits everyone’s needs (by using standardised APIs);</li> <li>(ii) It ensures the quality of the data (by using data standards elaborated within OSLO or INSPIRE);</li> <li>(iii) It ensures the integrity of the data, meaning that no third party has the possibility to change the data during transport; and</li> <li>(iv) It supports its partners in the confidential and secure processing of personal data throughout the entire process.</li> </ul> <p>The platform is the result of the merger of the existing MAGDA and Geographic Digital Infrastructure (GDI) platforms.</p>
<a href="#">Databases/Authentic Sources System</a>	<p>Belgian eGovernment strategies rest on an authentic-source system by which federal public departments gather and manage their own databases with information provided by citizens, businesses and civil servants. These databases, known as authentic sources, can be consulted by other federal services in need of this type of information. This way, citizens and businesses will be asked to convey data only once. Operational authentic sources include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The <a href="#">National Registry</a>; and</li> <li>▪ The <a href="#">Crossroads Bank for Enterprises</a>.</li> </ul> <p>Similar infrastructure elements are implemented at regional level, with the <a href="#">VKBO-GO</a>, the online application of the Flemish Crossroads Bank for Enterprises, and the <a href="#">BCED</a>. The latter is an exchange platform facilitating the sharing of data among administrations of Wallonia and the FWB. The bank acts as an independent entity and offers services that increase the reliability of electronic data exchange and data recording. The BCED follows the applicable rules regarding the protection of privacy and computer security in general. The staff are composed of members of the eAdministration and Simplification Unit (eWBS), Etnic and the Defense Technical Information Center (DTIC). The BCED’s mission is to create authentic sources in Wallonia and in the FWB.</p>

### Cross-border Infrastructures

The following table lists the European cross-border infrastructures of which Belgium is part of:

<a href="#">European Business Registry</a>	Belgium is a member of the <a href="#">European Business Registry</a> , which is a network of national business registries.
<a href="#">EUCARIS</a>	Belgium is a member of the <a href="#">European Car and Driving Licence Information System (EUCARIS)</a> , allowing the exchange of vehicle and driving license information among its member nations.



TESTA	The Trans European Services for Telematics between Administrations (TESTA) network is used for a number of cross-border use cases.
Once-Only Technical System (OOTS)	In April 2023, Belgium participated in the first Once-Only Technical System (OOTS) Projectathon, which brought together 25 EU Member States in Brussels in a marathon of peer-to-peer interoperability testing.
EU Digital Wallet	Prior to its roll-out in Member States, the EU Digital Identity Wallet is piloted in four large scale projects, that were launched on 1 April 2023. The objective of these projects is to test digital identity wallets in real-life scenarios spanning different sectors. Belgium took part in the projects.



### Exchange of Diploma Information

A Proof of Concept (PoC) project for the exchange of diploma information using blockchain between Flemish and Dutch higher education institutions has been set up and will now be extended towards a Europe-wide solution.



### Gaia-X for Belgium

In November 2020, the Belgian government launched Gaia-X for Belgium during the first pan-European Gaia-X summit. Gaia-X is a European initiative aimed to make the EU a global leader in the data economy while fostering the development of data-driven economic operators across the continent. Gaia-X is an important step towards a stronger EU digital market. At the Belgian level, the initiative, developed by the private sector, aims to create an open community of cloud stakeholders, also part of the European Gaia-X community. It focuses on bundling interests in Belgium to bring Belgian requirements and use cases towards Gaia-X, and facilitate the scaling up of Gaia-X use cases. Gaia-X for Belgium will support the Gaia-X Association in its endeavour to set up and establish a well-functioning federated data infrastructure following Gaia-X policy rules and standards, as well as the required federation services.





## 4. Digital Transformation of Public Services

### Digital Public Services for Citizens

#### Communication Campaign on eBox

In February 2019, a law introduced eBox. eBox is an electronic mailbox that can be used by public actors to send electronic communications to Belgian citizens, and registered companies and organisations, including registered mail.

During the second half of 2019, the Belgian government developed a communication campaign on social media to promote private partners in the eBox ecosystem. These private partners offer to their clients the possibility to consult government documents with their applications. During this campaign, the following partners were promoted: Doccle, bpost bank and Trusto. In the meantime, also *Mijn Burgerprofiel* (by the Flemish Region) and KBC (a bank) have become eBox-private partners/Human Interface Providers, offering the possibility to consult government documents on their applications. Subsequently, in December 2019, the government released a communication campaign on the national television and radio aimed to raise awareness around eBox. In 2020, the Flemish government and local governments also started to use eBox as their electronic mailbox for sending official government documents.

#### Laws on eBox

The Law of 15 August 2015 on the Incorporation and Organisation of a Federal Service Integrator organises the communication and integration of data from different data sources, and promotes single data collection, central registration and access.

The eBox Law of 28 February 2019 stipulates the provisions concerning eBox (see above), while the Royal Decree of 2 June 2019 sets the conditions for private service providers to be accredited to make the eBox available to citizens. Finally, in the Walloon Region the Decree of 27 March 2014 regarding electronic communications was amended in 2020, allowing the public administrations of the Region to use the eBox system.

#### Federal Portal Belgium.be

The Federal Portal was first launched in November 2002. Originally, it served both as institutional site of the federal government and as eGovernment portal providing a single and multilingual entry point to information and services provided by the federal government to citizens, businesses and civil servants.

A new version of the portal was released in May 2008, following a review of the entire system. The objective was to simplify the way citizens and businesses communicate and interact with the administration. The information, available in Dutch, English, French and German, is displayed in a more user-friendly manner, according to the main life events of both citizens and businesses. Apart from this new user-centric presentation, a powerful search engine allows to perform searches not only within the portal, but also outside of it. Also, a major section of the new portal contains links to all the public services available online (eServices). Users looking for a specific eService can refine their search by theme, target group and/or level of government involved. Several of these eServices are secured and thus require authentication (site token or eID card). The upgrade process was technically managed by Fedict, which has been incorporated into the DTO of BOSA. At the same time, the external communication service of the Chancellery of the Prime Minister provided the content, in close collaboration with other federal government departments.

#### Walloon Regional Portal

The Walloon Regional Portal is the main source of information about Wallonia for citizens and businesses. It contains a series of information, ranging from a general overview of Wallonia to more specific step-by-step guidance for citizens and businesses for completing administrative procedures. To that end, the portal provides access to a dedicated website for carrying out administrative procedures, *Mon Espace* (see below), that requires a secured authentication.



Finally, it also includes a [detailed guide](#) to the main institutions of the Walloon Region, a RSS feed of the main news in the Region and a [dedicated page for entrepreneurship in Wallonia](#).

### [Mon Espace Walloon Portal](#)

*Mon Espace* is Wallonia's dedicated website for citizens and businesses to interact with public administrations. Once logged in, users have access to online administrative procedures, and can carry them out and follow their processing by the administration. Also, they can create their reusable profile, and access their own data and those of their company. *Mon Espace* reuses data from the National Registry to pre-fill online forms, and is connected to eBox, the secure federal mailbox, and to other Belgian portals such as MyMinFin, *MySanté* and the portal of the FWB.

A new roadmap for 2021–2025 was validated in the context of the [Recovery Plan for Wallonia](#). The objectives are to make *Mon Espace* the Walloon one-stop-shop for administrative procedures and to provide new efficient services, including personalised and proactive services, offering citizens and businesses an enhanced user experience.

### [Mon Espace in the Wallonia-Brussels Federation](#)

The portal, developed by the Ministry of the FWB, is devoted to teachers and citizens. After authentication, they can manage their administrative procedures, monitor them and interact with the administration. The portal was extended to schools in 2022 and to associations in 2023.

### [Brussels-Capital Region Portal](#)

The eGovernment portal *Chez Vous* of the Brussels-Capital Region provides a range of information in Dutch, English, French, German and Spanish, as well as regional online services arranged by theme. Since 2021, the be.brussels portal also offers citizens and companies a centralised catalogue of regional and municipal administrative procedures in Brussels. Many online forms and procedures can be processed electronically via the *Irisbox* one-stop-shop. On 17 November 2011, the Brussels government decided that all forms should be available through that platform.

### [Flemish Regional Portal](#)

The eGovernment portal of the [Flemish regional government](#) was launched in February 2003. Built around its users' life events to best meet their needs, this portal provides citizens and businesses easy access to information and regional public services in Dutch. The portal is constantly being updated and can be seen as a reference point for all Flemish government organisations that want to make their digital services simpler, more recognisable and optimally accessible for their customers and for citizens.

An important new addition to this portal is *Mijn Burgerprofiel*, a user-friendly and scalable plug-and-play website feature that allows for data consultation in a safe and reliable manner, allowing citizens to see what the government knows about them, and what the government has done and is doing for them. *Mijn Burgerprofiel* is accessible both through the portal and through local governments' websites, thus achieving the no-wrong-door goal of integrated government service delivery. In 2022, the *Mijn Burgerprofiel mobile app platform* was launched, allowing local governments to create a custom branded app that combines both local and Flemish government products and services in a single app.

### [Flemish Portal for Enterprises and Entrepreneurs](#)

The [Flemish Portal for Enterprises and Entrepreneurs](#) uses the federal [Crossroads Bank for Enterprises](#) as a base registry. It contains specialised information and various services that Flemish enterprises can benefit from.

## eInvoicing

### [eInvoicing Measures](#)

The DTO, part of [BOSA](#), acts as a centre for technical expertise when it comes to eInvoicing and is a central player regarding the intergovernmental programme to promote eInvoicing in Belgium. It is the official Belgian Peppol authority and was knowledge partner of the [Belgian eInvoicing Event 2022](#).



Several measures to promote eInvoicing have been taken by the various levels of Belgian government. From 1 November 2020, only electronic invoices are accepted for all public contracts awarded by the administrations and public organisations of the Brussels-Capital Region. In Flanders, all eInvoices sent to the Flemish government pass through [Mercurius](#) and the Flemish authorities have appointed a project team to coordinate the regional and local deployment of eInvoicing. Wallonia and the FWB have entrusted the eWBS with the implementation of promotional and awareness-raising activities for eInvoicing. This service invites Walloon and local administrations to register on the Mercurius platform in order to receive their invoices electronically. Finally, from 1 January 2022 the [WBFIN software](#) implemented in the Walloon public service provides for the fully dematerialised handling of invoices.

### eInvoicing Legislation and Platform

In Belgium, the responsible entity for eInvoicing is BOSA. However, other public services at federal and regional levels may share part of the responsibility. BOSA has also become a [Peppol Authority](#).

There is no overall legislation in place for the country as a whole. At federal level, the Law of 7 April 2019, published in the Belgian Monitor of 16 April 2019 and transposing Directive 2014/55/EU into national law, requires contracting authorities to receive and process electronic invoices, following the European standard. Despite not being mandatory, economic operators are encouraged to submit eInvoices, and central, regional and local contracting authorities and entities are encouraged to receive them. Differently, in Flanders B2G eInvoicing is mandatory for regional contracting authorities.

In 2019, the [eInvoice website](#) was created by the Federal Agency for Administrative Simplification, which is now part of the DTO of BOSA, to guide enterprises, private persons and governments through the concept of eInvoicing, its future applications and its implications for Belgium. The website uses the Peppol model of eInvoicing to support both B2G and B2B eInvoicing.

In 2013, the Council of Ministers launched a pilot project for inbound eInvoicing to public authorities. This pilot project has given rise to several positive developments, including the launch of the [Mercurius](#) inter-federal platform. Mercurius is the central gateway between the private and public sectors (B2G) and acts as an electronic mailroom for invoices sent to all Belgian public entities. This platform is accompanied by a web portal, which allows public service suppliers who have not yet adopted eInvoicing to send their electronic invoices in the required structured format. The Flemish Region has decided to collaborate with the federal level and to also use the Mercurius platform for the receipt of incoming invoices.

Again at federal level, the [Hermes Platform](#) has also been made available to companies in Belgium. This free tool will allow them to convert electronic XML invoices to PDF format. This should be seen as an incentive to initiate structured exchanges, while waiting for the IT sector to develop the appropriate reception and processing tools, and market them in attractive terms.

## eHealth and Social Security

### eHealth Action Plan 2022–2024

In 2022, the Inter-ministerial Conference for Public Health (*Conférence interministérielle Santé publique*, CIP SP) approved the [eHealth Action Plan 2022–2024](#). By approving this plan, the eight Ministers that participated in the CIP SP have reinforced their commitment to the digital transformation of the Belgian healthcare system.

The eHealth Action Plan is based on six clusters:

1. Quality, continuity and safety of healthcare;
2. Empowerment of citizens to access their health data and services;
3. Empowerment of healthcare professionals to access health data and services;
4. Facilitation of the exchange of care and health data;
5. Innovation, and stimulation of research and development; and
6. Digitalisation and optimisation of administrative processes.

### Decree on Primary Care

The new [Decree on Primary Care](#), which was adopted by the plenary on 3 April 2019, lays down the provisions for the organisation of primary care in Flanders, and introduces a digital care and support plan for patients.



### MyHealth Portal

**MyHealth** is a secure online health portal, also called Personal Health Viewer. Through this central gateway citizens can obtain information about their health, including their health condition, administrative information, information about patient associations, etc.



### MyPension

**MyPension.be** is the online pension portal that contains all the personalised information about Belgians' statutory supplementary pensions. It is the result of a close collaboration between the Federal Pensions Service, the National Institute for Social Insurance for the Self-employed (NISSE) and Sigidis.



### MyBEnefits

The **MyBEnefits** application allows citizens to justify their status when, for example, they apply for a cost reduction, as well as to consult the list of available benefits or report a benefit of which they are aware of.



### Social Security Portal

The **Social Security Portal** offers citizens an extensive, completely updated website structured around three main themes: private life, professional life and health. Every page offers easy navigation to theme-related subjects, external organisations and institutions. The website is the result of a collaboration between all public social security institutions and the FPS Social Security.



### beConnected

**beConnected** is an electronic platform that allows all staff members of federal organisations and social security actors to collaborate and manage documents remotely. beConnected enables its users to:

- Share and edit documents;
- Manage versions;
- Send messages and links; and
- Give access to whomever they want, with the rights they want.

beConnected is ideal for supporting networks and projects with external parties: it allows users to collaborate remotely and exchange information with other federal organisations and social security institutions, but also with people who do not work for the federal government.

Since 2010, beConnected has replaced eCommunities, a groupware application that had been made accessible to civil servants since April 2003 through the **eGovernment Portal**. beConnected aims to enable communication, cooperation, and knowledge management and sharing within cross-departmental networks of expertise. The functionalities of the system includes document management, simple and advanced search capabilities, content management and joint working tools.

## Other Key Initiatives



### Intelligent Web Forms

**Intelligent Web Forms (IWF)** is a tool developed to help citizens and businesses filling online forms. This tool preloads information directly for clients, making the process faster and easier. Once the user is logged in, the system shows the information in compliance with the content of the National Registry. To avoid typing the same information several times (or typing any information at all), the IWF also automatically displays auto-filling suggestions.

In addition, upon users' authorisation, the tool is able to retrieve new information and categorise it by type of data. The application follows the snowball effect - each time citizens or business owners allow storage of new information, the potential for reuse is ramped up and the amount of time to fill the next form is exponentially reduced. As a secondary effect, the quality and consistency of the information supplied is only expected to improve.

This tool can have a significant impact in terms of time saved, considering the potential number of users and the number of online forms that can use this application.



### Intelligent Application Framework

BOSA offers the **Intelligent Application Framework (IAF)**, which facilitates the creation of digital forms and applications tailored to the needs of federal government services. Transactions between citizens and government are digitalised thanks to the integration with authentic data sources and the internal systems of government services.



## Digital Public Services for Businesses



### Single Point of Contact Portal

The Belgian government launched the first version of the **Single Point of Contact Portal** for businesses in 2016. It contains practical information that helps users to set up business activities in Belgium and is continuously updated with more services being added. This is now part of the [bosa.belgium.be](http://bosa.belgium.be) website (*'Werken bij de overheid'* section).



### eCatalogue Platform

The **eCatalogue Platform** offers a collaborative environment for businesses to upload their catalogues and manage dossiers, while enabling the reception of electronic orders and modification of the status of the orders.

## Public Procurement



### Law on Public Procurement and Several Public Works Contracts, Public Supply Contracts and Public Service Contracts

The **Law of 17 June 2016 on Public Procurement**, published in the Belgian Monitor of 14 July 2016, was last amended by the **Law of 7 April 2019**. The changes concerned the introduction of the definition of eInvoice, including its essential elements. Also, the new law introduced several amendments to the third chapter of the Law of 17 June 2016 concerning concession contracts.



### Law on the Acceptance of Bids, Information to Candidates and Tenderers, and Time Limits on Public Procurement and Several Public Works Contracts, Public Supply Contracts and Public Service Contracts

The legislation related to public procurement was amended several times over the last few years. It transposes into Belgian law the EU Directives on public procurement, i.e. (i) Directive 2014/25/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on procurement by entities operating in the water, energy, transport and postal services sectors and repealing Directive 2004/17/EC; (ii) Directive 2014/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on public procurement and repealing Directive 2004/18/EC; and (iii) Directive 2014/23/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on the award of concession contracts.

The legislation defines the use of electronic tools in public procurement and concession contracts, such as electronic publications of tender opportunities, electronic accessibility of procurement documents, electronic submissions of tenders, acceptance of eInvoices and electronic means of procurement as having the same legal value as that of traditional means. In addition, it defines new concepts based on public procurement directives, namely electronic auctions and the Dynamic Purchasing System.



### Public Procurement Portal

Launched at the beginning of 2008, the Belgian **Public Procurement Portal** provides links to the portals and platforms which currently cover three of the main aspects of the procurement process, namely eNotification, eTendering and eCatalogue. The eProcurement platform can be used by federal, regional as well as local public entities for public procurement purposes. Companies can access the platform to search for new public contracts, to submit their offers and to follow the status of the process.

In 2020, 18 751 contracts were published on the eProcurement platform, 96.1% of which using only electronic documents.



### eNotification Platform

Launched in 2002 as the instrument used by the federal government for the electronic publication of calls for tender, the **eNotification Platform** presents all federal and non-federal entities' calls for tender. The platform assists public bodies in drafting their calls for tender and submitting them electronically to the official publication organisations, enabling them to notify invitations to tender, contract awards, as well as other documents, such as minutes of clarification meetings or technical notes. At the same time, it allows businesses to browse and search tender opportunities and the related documentation. This platform communicates with the eTendering platform to communicate all notices published to everyone.



### eTendering Platform

The **eTendering Platform** is an open, secure, interoperable and reconfigurable eProcurement platform based on open European standards and the EU directives. Via the platform, contracting authorities and economic operators can perform some of their daily eProcurement activities.



### eOrdering Portal in OpenPEPPOL in the Flemish Region

**OpenPEPPOL** is a non-profit international association under Belgian law consisting of public and private sector members. The purpose of OpenPEPPOL is to enable European businesses to easily deal with any European public sector buyers electronically in their procurement process. It has made it possible for economic operators to receive orders electronically from any public sector awarding entity in Europe. The region of Flanders makes use of the Peppol model for **eOrdering** and **eCatalogue**.



### Regional eTendering Portal of the Walloon Region and the French Community

Some regional, community and local authorities have developed their own eTendering portals. For instance, the Walloon Region and the French Community share the same portal.

## Digital Inclusion and Digital Skills



### wifi.brussels and the Fiber to the School Project

Complementary to IRISnet and designed to close the digital divide, a WiFi network called **wifi.brussels** has been deployed on 221 sites, among which 15 town halls, 3 sport halls, 17 squares, many meeting rooms of a series of public administrations and 70 metro stations. An access point is also available for refugees who are lining up in front of the administrations in charge of welcoming them.

Moreover, the Brussels-Capital Region pursues the programme **Fiber to the School**, which aims to connect all secondary schools of the Brussels-Capital Region to the regional optical fibre network IRISnet and still maintain the existing connections of more than 300 primary schools to the IRISnet network through vDSL connections. The reinforcement of the internal connectivity of schools (WiFi access points) in secondary schools started in 2021 within the framework of the national Recovery and Resilience Facility.



### Digital Belgium Skills Funds

Since 2016, the Digital Belgium Skills Fund (DBSF) has been investing in projects designed to boost digital skills, particularly among socially vulnerable young people and (young) adults. In 2023, no fewer than 61 organisations from all over Belgium applied in the context of the call for projects. 22 projects were selected by an independent jury, with a total of around EUR 5 million available to fund these projects.



## 5. Trust and Cybersecurity

### eID and Trust Services



#### ITSME Agreement and Mobile Application

In February 2021, BOSA renewed the agreement with Belgian Mobile ID, the developer of the mobile identity app **ITSME**, for a period of three years. This agreement responds to the federal government's intention to continue engaging in public-private partnerships. The **ITSME Mobile Application** allows citizens to securely authenticate themselves before accessing various digital public services. The use of the mobile identity app represents a win-win result for all stakeholders with the final objective of developing a future-oriented ecosystem.



#### Law on Electronic Identification

The Belgian **Law on Electronic Identification**, dated 18 July 2017, completes Regulation (EU) No. 910/2014 on electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions in the internal market (eIDAS Regulation). Under the new law:

- Each Belgian public sector body determined the required assurance level to grant access to its services and transmitted this information to the DTO;
- The DTO determined the assurance level of the Belgian eID means to be notified to the European Commission and notified two Belgian eID schemes; and
- The DTO, designated as the Belgian hub for IT cross-border exchange, transfers a minimum set of personal identification data to the node of another Member State when a user wants to access an online service in that second Member State.

To enable mobile identification, BOSA drew up the **Royal Decree of 22 October 2017**, which sets out the rules governing the recognition of private eID services, and in particular mobile services. Working with private partners allowed the government to keep costs under control and foster innovation. These external identification services, developed and operated by private sector companies, were added to the **CSAM Platform** devised by BOSA and complemented the already existing set of digital keys.



#### Legal Framework on Trusted Services

The eIDAS Regulation has been completed by several clauses in Book XII of the Economy Code. On a regional level, a law on electronic forms and electronic identity card signature of December 2006, as well as two related decrees of July 2008 were adopted by the Walloon Parliament and the Walloon government, respectively. These decrees gave to electronic forms the same legal value as paper forms. Finally, the legal framework for the use of eID cards was set in a series of royal and ministerial decrees, among others: (i) the Law and the **Royal Decree of 25 March 2003 on the Legal Framework for eID Cards**; (ii) the **Ministerial Decree of 26 March 2003 on the Format of eID Cards**; (iii) the **Royal Decree of 1 September 2004 on the Generalisation of eID Cards**; and (iv) the **Royal Decree of 18 October 2006 on the eID Document for Belgian Children under 12**.



#### Law on the Use of Electronic Signature in Judicial and Extra-Judicial Proceedings

A law dating 20 October 2000 has introduced the use of the eSignature within judicial and extra-judicial proceedings. It was the first law to address the eSignature issue in Belgium. The law was lastly amended in September 2006.



#### Belgian eID card

The **Belgian eID card** contains all the information included on the traditional identity card, and serves as an identification and travel document. It is a smart card containing two certificates: one for the authentication and another one for generating qualified eSignatures (eIDAS Regulation). The Belgian eID thus gives access to restricted online services making internet use safer by providing an online means of identification, and enables the electronic submission of official documents as well as other related services. The National Registry number, that is the





unique identification number for Belgian citizens, appears on the eID card and its microchip, and is used as unique identifier in the certificate of the eID card.

Almost all of the (qualified) eSignature applications in the Belgian eGovernment sector make use of the Belgian eID card. On the federal [eGovernment Portal](#), multiple levels of security exist, depending on the type of eService delivered.



### Federal Signing Box

The [Federal Signing Box](#) application allows users to sign files electronically (with qualified eSignature) and verify signed files by means of their eID. In addition, the [Federal Trust Services \(FTS\)](#), offered by BOSA, allow users to easily and reliably integrate electronic signatures, seals and time stamps using webservices or software.



### eSignBox

The [eSignBox](#) tool, created by the Walloon public authorities, allows for easy digital signing of electronic documents and files (with qualified eSignature). In practice, users can sign a file, but also check an existing signed file and its certificate.



### Digital Signature Platform of Flanders

The [Digital Signature Platform of Flanders](#) was launched on 20 September 2010 by the Flemish eGovernment and ICT-Management Unit (*Entiteit eGovernment en ICT-Beheer, e-IB*). Since then, all public authorities of the regional government of Flanders have been able to digitally sign documents in a legal way via the platform (with qualified eSignature). More specifically, the platform converts the files it receives into ready-to-sign PDF documents which can be distributed to and signed by the various parties using their Belgian eID cards. Citizens, businesses and the external partners of the Flemish government benefit from many advantages, such as legal validity, user friendliness, the possibility of signing by multiple parties, support for different document formats, open standards and a greener ICT.



### Digital Certificates

The commercial certification authorities' [certificates](#) can be used in a number of eGovernment applications, as an alternative to eID card signatures. Since 2007, the federal government has recognised three private certification authorities complying with the required standards regarding qualified certificates, as defined in the Belgian eSignatures Act. Their certificates are used for certain eGovernment applications, in particular tax and social security eServices. Like the eID, these digital certificates contain certain identity data, the public key connected with the certificate holder, the public key usage, and the validity and category of the certificate. They are issued to natural persons and legal entities.



### Biometric Passports

In November 2004, Belgium scored a world first by becoming the first country to start issuing electronic passports complying with the recommendations of the [International Civil Aviation Organisation \(ICAO\)](#). These passports featured a contactless microchip storing personal identification data and biometric information (facial image of the holder). Fingerprints were added at a later stage. In 2022, Belgium launched the [new version](#) of its passport, containing 48 security elements.



### Digital Keys

The [digital keys](#) provided by CSAM allow citizens and businesses to securely log in to various platforms and websites offering public services. All digital keys offered by CSAM are secure for logging on to government online services. CSAM is also responsible for providing the following services: (i) FAS, for handling users' identification and authentication; (ii) BTB, for managing managers' access within a company or organisation; and (iii) SSM, for managing mandates that a user gives to another entity in order to act on their behalf.



### Digital Wallet

The federal Secretary of State for Digitalisation announced the creation of a Digital Wallet, in one digital platform, which has been in the test phase since 2023. Belgium intends to be a frontrunner when it comes to the EU Digital Wallet. The idea is to connect the methods, tools and data of all the public sector bodies in Belgium in one Digital Wallet, a one-stop-shop where every

Belgian can access his or her eID, driver's license or visa, among others. It will also allow mobile signatures and include the option to request official documents.

## Cybersecurity



### Strategic Plan 2019–2025

On 12 December 2019, the Belgian Data Protection Authority (DPA) released its [Strategic Plan](#) for the period 2019–2025. In the plan, the Belgian DPA describes its vision for the years to come, defining its priorities and strategic objectives, and listing the necessary means to achieve said objectives.

The Belgian DPA focuses its actions on five sectors:

- Telecom and media;
- Public institutions;
- Direct marketing (including data brokers);
- Education; and
- Small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

The Belgian DPA indicated that its actions are focused on the following aspects of [Regulation \(EU\) 2016/679](#):

- The role of the data protection officer (DPO);
- The lawfulness of data processing activities; and
- Data subjects' rights, specifically the scope of some of these rights.

The societal priorities addressed by the strategic plan are the following:

- Pictures and cameras;
- Online data protection; and
- Sensitive data (such as biometric data, health data, etc.).



### Flemish Data Protection Decree

Adopted on 8 June 2018, the [Flemish Data Protection Decree](#) adapted existing Flemish decrees to the new legal rights and obligations introduced by the [General Data Protection Regulation \(Regulation \(EU\) 2016/679\)](#).



### Law on the Protection of Private Life with regard to the Processing of Personal Data

The General Data Protection Regulation has been completed by the new Act of 3 December 2017 establishing the Data Protection Authority and the new Act of 30 July 2018 on the Protection of Natural Persons with regard to the Processing of Personal Data.



### Law on the Establishment of a Security Framework for the Information Systems Having General Interest

Adopted on 7 April 2019, the new [Law on the Establishment of a Security Framework for the Information Systems Having General Interest](#) transposes at federal level the EU Directive 2016/1148 (NIS Directive). It aims at enhancing the cybersecurity measures put in place by the public and private organisations that provide essential and digital services to the community. The transposing law sets obligations for providers of specific essential and digital services related to technical and organisational security measures to avoid incidents or limit their impact. Furthermore, it specifies the requirements for the development of security policies in accordance with ISO/IEC 27001. The law also foresees reporting obligations in case of incidents, annual audit obligations and the requirement to designate a contact point for reaching competent authorities.





## 6. Innovative Technologies

### Artificial Intelligence



#### National Convergence Plan for the Development of Artificial Intelligence

In November 2022, the Belgian federal government adopted a [National Convergence Plan for the Development of Artificial Intelligence](#) as part of the #SmartNation-strategy developed by the Digital Minds and led by the Secretary of State for Digitalisation. The plan focuses on nine goals with regards to creating the conditions for the development of AI for the common good.



#### Digital Wallonia 4 AI

Following its launch in 2019, the main goal of [Digital Wallonia 4 AI](#) is to speed up the adoption of AI in Wallonia and develop the Walloon ecosystem around this new technology. The strategy is supported, among others, by the [AI Network](#), [Agoria](#), [Infopôle Cluster TIC](#) and the [Wallonia Digital Agency](#).

The programme includes practical actions to support companies that want to incorporate AI into their business model by developing prototypes. In this regard, an important component of the programme is the support to businesses through awareness-raising and training initiatives.

For the first two years, the strategy was based on two main streams:

- **Start AI:** an analysis of the company's activities and identification of AI opportunities to improve the business process and create new products or services; and
- **Springboard AI:** implementation of PoCs on AI.

In 2021, [additional measures](#) were put forward to reinforce the impact of Digital Wallonia 4 AI. The programme now revolves around four structuring axes:

- Society and AI;
- Companies and AI;
- Training and AI; and
- Partnership, innovation, research and AI.

Each axe foresees numerous initiatives, such as awareness-raising activities, training from beginner to advanced level, marketing support, calls for projects and ecosystem cartography. Within this context, the [TRAIL consortium](#) aims to provide businesses with the expertise and tools developed by the five Walloon universities and four approved research centres active in the AI field.



#### Flanders' Action Plan on Artificial Intelligence

The Flemish Minister for Innovation, Philippe Muyters, has made EUR 32 million available in the coming years to put Flanders at the forefront of AI. The funds are injected into the Flemish economy through a dedicated Flemish [Action Plan on AI](#), signed in March 2019.

The Flemish plan is made up of three major components, namely research, industry applications and a supporting policy on education, awareness-raising and ethics:

- **Research:** money will be invested in strengthening the internationally renowned Flemish AI research programmes. Special attention will be given to leading AI technology platforms with clear market potential;
- **Industry applications:** the action plan considers that Flanders can be at the forefront of the application of AI in the business world. It aims to achieve this goal by acting as a laboratory for Flemish and international AI applications; and
- **Education, awareness-raising and ethics:** in Flanders, broad awareness is needed about the disruptive potential of AI technology. The action plan foresees several training programmes as well as the setting up of a dedicated AI think-tank to address the ethical implications of AI.



#### AI4Belgium

Whilst not a strategy, [AI4Belgium](#) is an important project that aims to promote a community-driven AI development across the country. Its goal is to enable Belgian citizens and organisations to seize the opportunities of AI, while responsibly facilitating the ongoing transition. That way, AI4Belgium has the ambition to position Belgium in the European AI landscape. The project has seven general objectives:



- Providing policy support on ethics, regulation, skills and competences;
- Providing a Belgian AI cartography;
- Co-animating the Belgian AI community;
- Collecting EU funding and connecting EU ecosystems;
- Proposing concrete action for training in AI;
- Contributing to the uptake of AI technologies by the industry;
- Promoting new products and services based on AI technologies; and
- Organising the [European Artificial Intelligence Week](#).



### AI Assessment Tool (ALTAI) AI4 Belgium

As part of the AI4Belgium project, Belgium launched in December 2023 its open-source [AI Assessment Tool \(ALTAI\)](#) to help organisations performing a comprehensive assessment of their AI implementation, highlighting areas of strength and areas for improvement. On top of that, users will receive detailed suggestions and guidance for improving the trustworthiness of their AI systems, enabling them to maintain trust with all stakeholders, and offering the opportunity to mitigate the risks associated with AI implementation. Finally, as the tool is open source it can be hosted and fully controlled by organisations, providing ownership and control over data and assessments.



### SmartNation AI Hackathon

As part of the SmartNation Strategy, BOSA organised in March 2024 a [hackathon on AI](#). The event will be focused on three main topics: (i) intelligent applications for medical data; (ii) AI for more accessible and efficient justice; and (iii) parliamentary questions.



### Artificial Intelligence.Brussels

[ArtificialIntelligence.Brussels](#) is the online portal available to entrepreneurs, researchers, students and citizens in general to get to know all the initiatives on AI developed in Brussels. The portal presents information and relevant statistics around a variety of themes in the field of AI, such as financing opportunities, research centres, start-up and business support, and training. The portal is designed to accommodate the needs of the different users, presenting the initiatives depending on the stakeholders' interests.

## Distributed Ledger Technologies



### European Infrastructure for Blockchain Services

A series of events were organised in 2021 with the aim of informing and meeting the Belgian blockchain community. The first event took place on 24 February 2021. These events were the result of a collaboration between Belnet, Smals, BOSA and KU Leuven, which have formed a Belgian consortium whose objective is to deepen the use of blockchain technologies in the fields of research, education and public services.



### Blockchain4Belgium

In February 2023, the Secretary of State for Digitalisation decided to launch the [Blockchain4Belgium](#) initiative. It will allow the various Belgian stakeholders to draw up a series of recommendations to the government. Through the FPS BOSA, Blockchain4Belgium will become a platform for actors from industry, academia, civil society and the various administrations concerned (economy, finance, justice, etc.).

## Big Data

No particular initiatives in this field have been reported to date.

## Cloud & Edge Computing



### G-Cloud Programme

The [G-Cloud Programme](#) is the result of a joint initiative of several public institutions, i.e. federal public services, social security institutions and the care sector. The G-Cloud is a hybrid



cloud service which uses services provided by private companies operating in public cloud environments and services hosted in government datacentres. The G-Cloud is managed by the government, while its expansion and operational functioning largely rely on private sector services. The Cloud Governance Board controls its implementation.

The development of this government-based community cloud is laid out in a joint roadmap. The first-generation G-Cloud services became operative in March 2015 and many improvements are still being implemented.

The G-Cloud services operate in four different domains. The services offer is gradually being extended and improved, based on the actual needs of the participating institutions. Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS), Platform as a Service (PaaS) and Software as a Service (SaaS) are all included. The G-Cloud programme also encompasses synergy initiatives undertaken by the government in the field of classic ICT. New services will be added upon availability.

'Hard' infrastructure services ensure that government applications are able to run in a reliable physical environment including datacentre housing, servers and storage. The complete virtual capacity can be flexibly modified in a fully managed IaaS environment. These services are supplemented by a 'soft' infrastructure, which allows for high-quality back-ups, security and identity, as well as authorisation management. PaaS services mainly focus on developing the new software generation, namely cloud-enabled and cloud-native applications using the latest architecture. Generic online applications via SaaS for translation, document management, website management and IT service management, among others, are a priority.

## Internet-of-Things



### Internet of Water Network

A fine-grained measurement and high-frequency sensor network called **Internet of Water Network** is being deployed at selected locations across Flanders and will continuously measure indicators of water quality from 2023 onwards. This will facilitate a more dynamic and efficient water management and pave the way to a more robust water system. The permanent data flows open the way for smart applications.

## Quantum Computing



### BeQCI Project

Through the **BeQCI project**, Belnet is throwing its weight behind the roll-out of a quantum communications network in Belgium. Such an infrastructure should make the exchange of sensitive data significantly safer for research institutions and governments, among others.

## Gigabit and Wireless High-speed Networks



### National Broadband Plan

On the proposal of the Minister of Telecommunications, a national plan for fixed and mobile broadband, in short the **National Broadband Plan**, was approved in principle on 30 April 2021. The plan was then granted final approval by the Belgian Council of Ministers on 20 October 2021. The plan's main objective is to eliminate the so-called 'white areas' in Belgium and thus contribute to the European connectivity targets by 2025.

The plan contains five axes:

- Mapping network coverage and identifying white areas;
- Facilitating the roll-out;
- Stimulating investments in the white areas;
- Creating a support base for fibre and 5G; and
- Setting up a permanent broadband unit within the FPS Economy.

The FPS Economy, the Belgian National Regulatory Authority (NRA) and the BIPT are in charge of implementing this plan for the period 2022–2024. On 15 July 2021, the government of the Brussels-Capital Region approved the mutualisation of the regional public fibre optic networks and their future commercialisation.



### Amendments to the Telecommunications Act

In December 2021, a draft law modernising Belgium's telecommunications legislation and transposing a significant part of the European rules was approved. The new series of provisions aim to better inform the consumer, to better fight cybercrime, and to promote the development of 5G and access for all to high-speed internet with a view to creating a 'gigabit society'. The text also ensures the achievement of the European objective to complete the 5G coverage of the territory and to ensure the availability to all households of an internet connection of at least 100 Mbps through very high-capacity networks.



### Belnet Network

The Belnet network operates a full optical fibre network with connections of more than ten gigabit/s, offering virtually unlimited bandwidth for internet access. The network is mainly open to researchers, academics and students at nearly 200 research and education institutions, government/public services and research centres. Belnet connectivity includes access to the pan-European research network [Géant](#) and the American [Internet2](#). Belnet also operates a central infrastructure for exchanging internet traffic for internet service and content providers, and large private companies, called the Belgian National Internet Exchange or BNIX. Other activities include [FedMAN](#), the supercomputing network GRID and the Belgian National Computer Emergency Response Team.

## GovTech

No particular initiatives in this field have been reported to date.



# 7. Digital Public Administration Governance



For more details on Belgium's responsible bodies for digital policy and interoperability, its main actors, as well as relevant digital initiatives, please visit the [NIFO collection](#) on Joinup.

## National

### Directorate-General for Simplification and Digitalisation

The Directorate-General Simplification and Digitalisation, which is part of BOSA, supports the government and federal organisations in their digitisation drive. It is the driving force behind the evolution and the digital reforms of the federal government. This directorate-general provides advice and develops projects in connection with the new technologies, paying particular attention to citizens and businesses. It is also the main body responsible for coordinating interoperability initiatives.

The Directorate-General Simplification and Digitalisation also includes a committee whose responsibility is to coordinate base registries interconnection. It is an entity that, by law, is charged with the organisation of eGovernment in Belgium, data electronic exchange, as well as the integrated unlocking of data. It has become the most significant actor regarding public sector services, especially after the passing of a law in 2014 that makes it mandatory for public entities to store their authoritative source data. In this context, BOSA facilitates the dialogue between base registries' owners, the operational units involved in processing base registries data and the consumers of base registries data. It performs four main tasks:

1. Uniting all national service integrators (three federal and one for every Region);
2. Coordinating the working methods of service integrators;
3. Monitoring all authoritative data disclosed by service integrators (not bilateral data exchanged between governments/departments); and
4. Establishing the circle of trust between service integrators.

### Crossroads Bank for Social Security

The Crossroads Bank for Social Security (CBSS) supports the implementation of eGovernment services in the social sector. In particular, it promotes integrated services across all public institutions dealing with social security. The CBSS also manages the BIS Registry, which contains a database of persons who do not have the Belgian nationality, yet who live in Belgium and are registered with the Belgian social security.

### Federal Departments, Ministries and Agencies

The federal Departments, Ministries and Agencies are responsible for the implementation of individual or joint eGovernment projects falling within their respective areas of competence.

### Belnet

The government agency Belnet, part of the Federal Science Policy Office, provides secure internet access with very high bandwidth to end users in education institutions, research centres and public administrations. In addition, Belnet is in charge of operating the federal network FedMAN.

### Smals

Smals is a not-for-profit organisation realising IT projects in the domains of eGovernment and eHealth. Smals is the main IT provider of the Belgian federal government and acts as a contracting authority.

### Federal Public Service of the Interior

The Federal Public Service of the Interior is tasked with coordinating the National Registry of Natural Persons, which handles the master personal data of natural and legal persons. The National Registry contains data from several registries: the Population Registry, the Foreigner Registry and a Waiting Registry. The municipalities (and the Immigration Office for the last



category of the population) are the ones responsible for recording the information. Everyone whose data is maintained in the National Registry has a unique identification code, i.e. the National Registry number. The Once-Only principle is applied to the registry. The consultation of data in the National Registry is subject to authorisation from the relevant sectoral committee established within the Commission for the Protection of Privacy (now the DPA), which is competent to grant access to the National Registry information or communication thereof. The National Registry is managed by the Directorate for Institutions and Population, which manages the central database in which all the information related to the population is recorded.

### Federal Public Service Mobility and Transport

The Federal Public Service Mobility and Transport is responsible for the coordination of the Vehicle Registry, which handles master data for vehicles. In cooperation with DIV, the department is also responsible for the management of the Crossroads Bank of the Vehicles Registry. The Vehicle Registry functions under the authority of the (federal) central government, DIV and the FPS Mobility and Transport. The service has been fully integrated through the [WebDIV](#) application, an IT application developed by the FPS Mobility and Transport enabling insurance companies, agents, brokers and leasing companies to register their clients' cars online.

### Federal Public Service Economy

The Federal Public Service Economy is responsible for the coordination of the registry of the Crossroads Bank for Enterprises, which handles master data for businesses. The Crossroads Bank for Enterprises is an authentic source of information that stores all basic data regarding enterprises and their individual business locations. It incorporates data from the former National Registry of Legal Entities, the former Trade Registry, the VAT Registry and the social security administration. All the existing data from the above-mentioned sources have been combined by the FPS Economy in the Crossroads Bank for Enterprises, which provides a truly centralised 'crossroad' of data on companies. The registry is kept up to date by the authorised organisations that input the data.

The FPS Economy is also designated as supervisory body for (qualified) trust services as mentioned in Article 17 of the eIDAS Regulation.

### (Federal) Social Security

The (Federal) Social Security is responsible for the coordination of the CBSS. The CBSS registry is complementary and subsidiary to the National Registry. Over the past 17 years, a major business process re-engineering and computerisation effort has been undertaken by about 3 000 Belgian public and private actors in the social sector from different levels (national, regional and local), under the coordination of the CBSS.

### National Property Documentation Centre of the Federal Public Service Finance

The National Property Documentation Centre of the Federal Public Service Finance is responsible for the coordination of the Land Registry, which handles master data for land and parcels.

### Parliamentary Committees

At federal level, the ICT- and eGovernment-related projects are examined by the Committee for General and Home Affairs, and the Civil Service of the [House of Representatives](#), as well as by the Committee for Home and Administrative Affairs of the [Senate](#).

### Data Protection Authority

Since 25 May 2018, the [Data Protection Authority \(DPA\)](#) has replaced the Commission for the Protection of Privacy (Privacy Commission). With the Act of 3 December 2017, the DPA became the new Belgian independent supervisory authority in charge of ensuring compliance with the fundamental principles of personal data protection.

## Subnational (Federal, Regional and Local)

### Regional and Community Authorities

Political responsibility for eGovernment in the Belgian regions is held directly by the 'Minister-Presidents' (Prime Ministers) of the three regions: the [Flemish Region](#), the [Walloon Region](#) and the [Brussels-Capital Region](#). Within their own areas of competence, the [Wallonia-Brussels French-](#)





speaking Community (WBF), in charge of education and culture policies for the French-speaking Community in Belgium, and the [German-speaking Community](#) are also working on enabling some of their services. The institutions of the Flemish-speaking Community were merged with those of the Flemish Region in 1980.

### Steering Body for the Flemish Information and ICT Policy

In 2018, the [Steering Body for the Flemish Information and ICT Policy](#) became fully active as the main governance body for the Flemish information and ICT policy. In 2020, a new Strategic Plan of the Steering Body was adopted outlining the priorities with regard to information and ICT policy for the Flemish administration and local authorities for the period 2020–2024. In the framework of this strategic plan, a digital government security strategy and a digital government data strategy were defined, together with a digital government service delivery strategy. In 2023, an integrated Flemish digital strategy for the whole of the Flemish government, economy and society was formulated.

### Regional Units/Bodies

Regional eGovernment efforts are coordinated by dedicated units or bodies set up by the regional executives: the Flanders Digital Agency in Flanders, the eWBS in Wallonia and the FWB, and the Brussels Regional Informatics Centre (BRIC) in the Brussels-Capital Region.

In 2020, the Walloon government decided to set up a Chief Information Officer function for the Walloon Public Service, in charge of addressing the challenges related to digital administration. This is a major strategic decision in the context of the digital transformation of the Walloon administration.

### Governance Committees for the Brussels-Capital Region

To implement the new IT governance, the Brussels-Capital Region has set up three committees:

- The IT Steering Committee, made up of the ten regional institutions with the largest IT budgets, which is responsible for ensuring transversality by integrating the realities of the various regional administrations, and aiming to harmonise and reuse all types of shareable components available for the implementation of IT projects within the Region;
- The Regional Committee for Advice and Validation of Architecture and Data Exchange, which is responsible for guaranteeing IT architectural coherence based on the different regional realities and market trends; and
- The Digital and IT Steering Committee, which is responsible for identifying the main challenges facing the Brussels-Capital Region in terms of the digital transition.

From now on, BRIC, currently IT services producer and provider, will embody this new open and collaborative governance, and become the orchestrator of IT services for the entire Brussels ecosystem. As such, it sits on all three committees. In this context, BRIC is setting up a single Citizen Relationship Management (CRM Salesforce) Platform for the Brussels-Capital Region. This platform will make available to citizens and companies innovative and efficient services based on data from authentic sources, in compliance with the Once-Only principle and the General Data Protection Regulation. It will ensure coherence and mutualisation, in terms of both project implementation and management of the operations necessary for the proper functioning of the platform. The deployment of 16 projects within this platform by 2024 is financed by the Recovery and Resilience Facility.

### Wallonia Digital Agency

At the end of 2014, the Walloon Agency of Telecommunications became the [Wallonia Digital Agency](#) (*Agence du numérique*), a subsidiary of the Enterprise and Innovation Agency, which is in charge of promoting the development of ICT in the region, while also providing operational and expert support to Walloon administrations and municipalities.

### Brussels Regional IT Procurement Office

The Brussels government has asked BRIC to set up a Regional IT Procurement Office for all IT purchases in the Region. The expected benefits are:

- To increase the negotiating power with the main IT suppliers and thus make substantial savings;
- To limit the environmental impact of IT equipment, in particular through the development of a circular management of the latter; and
- To streamline the tools, software, infrastructure and IT architecture.



## Flanders Digital Agency

The main responsibility of the Flanders Digital Agency is to determine the strategic aims and priorities for the transformation of the Flemish government into a data-driven government, while taking part in eGovernment projects in an advisory and supportive role. The Agency is also in charge of developing eGovernment-related knowledge and skills, supporting digital transformation, coordinating and providing incentives, and creating a generic eGovernment infrastructure to facilitate cooperation among the different entities within the Flemish administration and the local authorities. This generic eGovernment infrastructure consists of a number of eGovernment building blocks (eID and trust services, electronic documents, eProcurement, authentic sources, etc.) that can be used as shared systems to improve existing (electronic) service delivery and streamline government operations. The Agency also provides additional funding for cross-departmental eGovernment projects (Flanders Radically Digital II projects) and coordinates the government digitalisation projects that are part of Flemish Resilience, the Flemish recovery plan after the COVID-19 crisis.

In addition, the [Flemish Data Utility Company](#), created at the end of 2022, wants to stimulate citizens' trust in sharing data by focusing on responsible and secure data sharing, as well as to support the Flemish economy by making data more findable and exchangeable, and by building bridges between citizens, companies and associations for better cooperation. The company acts as a neutral third partner and catalyst for innovative data initiatives to stimulate economic and social prosperity in Flanders.

## Artificial Intelligence for the Common Good Institute

In the spring of 2021, the Brussels Region, the Université libre de Bruxelles (ULB) and the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB) launched the [Artificial Intelligence for the Common Good Institute \(FARI\)](#). FARI and BRIC are working together on a roadmap for the development of AI in the Brussels Region. The objective is to have a development framework, to guarantee the coherence of projects and also to rely on knowledge sharing. The collaboration concerns:

- Support services (e.g. training and development of PoCs of software solutions) to profit and non-profit organisations, and public organisations in areas such as AI education, healthcare and employment in the Brussels Region;
- Creation of a multidisciplinary team of experts on AI data and robotics to support the public services provided by the Brussels-Capital Region and the digital transition; and
- Provision of AI services to local authorities, and in particular support to the digital twins, as well as training and consulting activities related to citizen services.

## 8. Cross border Digital Public Administration Services for Citizens and Businesses



Further to the information on national digital public services provided in the previous chapters, this final chapter presents an overview of the basic cross-border public services provided to citizens and businesses in other European countries. [Your Europe](#) is taken as reference, as it is the EU one-stop shop which aims to simplify the life of both citizens and businesses by avoiding unnecessary inconvenience and red tape in regard to 'life and travel', as well as 'doing business' abroad. In order to do so, Your Europe offers information on basic rights under EU law, but also on how these rights are implemented in each individual country (where information has been provided by the national authorities). Free email or telephone contact with EU assistance services, to get more personalised or detailed help and advice is also available.

Please note that, in most cases, the EU rights described in Your Europe apply to all EU member countries plus Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, and sometimes to Switzerland. Information on Your Europe is provided by the relevant departments of the European Commission and complemented by content provided by the authorities of every country it covers. As the website consists of two sections - one for citizens and one for businesses, both managed by DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW) - below the main groups of services for each section are listed.

### Life and Travel

For citizens, the following groups of services can be found on the website:

- [Travel](#) (e.g. Documents needed for travelling in Europe);
- [Work and retirement](#) (e.g. Unemployment and Benefits);
- [Vehicles](#) (e.g. Registration);
- [Residence formalities](#) (e.g. Elections abroad);
- [Education and youth](#) (e.g. Researchers);
- [Health](#) (e.g. Medical Treatment abroad);
- [Family](#) (e.g. Couples);
- [Consumers](#) (e.g. Shopping).

### Doing Business

Regarding businesses, the groups of services on the website concern:

- [Running a business](#) (e.g. Developing a business);
- [Taxation](#) (e.g. Business tax);
- [Selling in the EU](#) (e.g. Public contracts);
- [Human Resources](#) (e.g. Employment contracts);
- [Product requirements](#) (e.g. Standards);
- [Financing and Funding](#) (e.g. Accounting);
- [Dealing with Customers](#) (e.g. Data protection).

## The Digital Public Administration Factsheets

The factsheets present an overview of the state and progress of Digital Public Administration and Interoperability within European countries.

The factsheets are published on the Joinup platform, which is a joint initiative by the Directorate General for Digital Services (DG DIGIT) and the Directorate General for Communications Networks, Content & Technology (DG CONNECT). This factsheet received valuable contribution from BOSA (*SPF Stratégie et Appui*) and from the Digital Flanders Agency.



*The Digital Public Administration Factsheets are prepared for the European Commission by Wavestone.*

## An action supported by Interoperable Europe

The ISA<sup>2</sup> Programme has evolved into **Interoperable Europe** - the initiative of the European Commission for a reinforced interoperability policy.

The work of the European Commission and its partners in public administrations across Europe to enhance interoperability continues at full speed despite the end of the ISA<sup>2</sup> programme. Indeed, enhanced interoperability will be necessary to unlock the potential of data use and reuse for improved public services, to enable cross-border collaboration, and to support the sector-specific policy goals set by the Commission for the future.

Interoperable Europe will lead the process of achieving these goals and creating a reinforced interoperability policy that will work for everyone. The initiative is supported by the *Digital Europe Programme*.

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