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COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION
REPORT**

Accompanying the document

**Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the
European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions**

**EU eGovernment Action Plan 2016 - 2020
Accelerating the digital transformation of government**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The purpose of this implementation and evaluation Staff Working Document is to describe the implementation progress of individual actions of the European eGovernment Action Plan 2011 -2015 ("EU eGovernment Action Plan 2011-2015") and to evaluate whether it was fit-for-purpose, delivered on its objectives at a reasonable cost, was relevant, coherent and had EU added value.

The EU eGovernment Action Plan 2011 – 2015, based on the Malmö Ministerial Declaration, set out to contribute to two general targets: increase the usage of eGovernment services and make a number of key on-line public services available across borders. The Action Plan had four policy priorities: User empowerment, Internal market, Efficiency and effectiveness of governments and administrations, and Pre-conditions for developing eGovernment.

Methodology

This evaluation is based on data from a number of sources. The Mid-term Evaluation of the eGovernment Action Plan carried out between 2013 and 2014, together with the annual eGovernment benchmarking surveys provide the bulk of the findings. In addition, the evaluation process benefited from an online public consultation that gathered views from stakeholders on the functioning of the Action Plan, its added value and that sought orientations for future priorities. Other sources of information included studies conducted between 2011 and 2015.

Findings

Effectiveness: the EU eGovernment Action Plan met most of its objectives. It acted as a "mobiliser instrument" and contributed to two targets of the Digital Agenda for Europe. The target of 50% of citizens using eGovernment by 2015 was missed by 4 percentage points, but the Action Plan target of 80% of enterprises was exceeded already in 2011 (84%). One significant impact of the Action Plan was that in most Member States the national eGovernment strategies include priorities from the European Action Plan, giving the Action Plan objectives further strength and visibility. Progress in the different priorities of the Action Plan was sometimes uneven, with some Member States performing better than others.

With respect to its second general target (to contribute to the availability of key cross-border services online by 2015), the Action Plan played a key role in pushing for the availability of key cross-border services. This was carried out in particular through a series of Large Scale Pilots in partnership with Member States. These pilots were successful and the results obtained are now being deployed in Member States with the support of the Connecting Europe Facility Digital Service Infrastructures following a "building blocks" approach. The building blocks available for deployment in the end of 2015 were eID, eSignature, eDelivery, eInvoicing and automated translation.

Efficiency: the EU eGovernment Action Plan had no dedicated budget. Its objectives were supported by a number of EU funding programmes such as the ICT Policy Support Programme under the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP-ICT PSP), the Interoperability Solutions for European Public Administrations (ISA) Programme,

the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7) European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) and Horizon 2020. The value for money of the Action Plan could therefore only be assessed indirectly. However, under efficiency, the evaluation also assessed the capacity of the Action Plan to mobilise resources for eGovernment given the potential savings in the public sector. An example is the work started under the Action Plan on the once-only principle that has been estimated to significantly reduce the administrative burden and thus brings important savings to citizens, businesses and public administrations.

Relevance: the EU eGovernment Action Plan's objectives and its importance in modernising the European Public administrations remain relevant today. This has been recognised as one of the key priorities of successive Annual Growth Surveys. Citizens' rights, re-use of public sector information, transparency, participation and data protection are important principles when modernising a public administration. Also the relevance of eGovernment services for the internal market continues in many policy areas. The public online consultation supported the continued relevance of the work, along the lines of the Roadmap for the new Action Plan.

Coherence: the EU eGovernment Action Plan objectives were aligned with the wider objectives of the Digital Agenda for Europe and with the policy objectives of Member States. The exchange of experience and continuous dialogue with Member States as well as the funding from different programmes ensured coherence in terms of policy development and funding instruments.

However, as the EU eGovernment Action Plan was based on voluntary activities of the Member States, full coherence could not be assured, as the Member States had different implementation approaches and priorities. The evaluation of coherence has not found any possible conflicts with other policy fields.

EU-added value: The intervention of the EU eGovernment Action Plan brought added value to realising cross-border eGovernment services, avoiding fragmentation of eGovernment activities and to increase interoperability. It was instrumental in setting up the coordination and collaboration efforts needed to ensure full interoperability (not just technical) between national systems towards seamless access to digital public services across borders. However, continued work is required to encourage opening up between public administrations at all levels, re-using existing solutions to avoid duplication and reduce the multiplication of costs and optimise investments.

Conclusion

The European eGovernment Action Plan met most of its objectives and demonstrated the importance of having common European goals in eGovernment. The Action Plan was a "mobiliser" instrument for eGovernment policies in the Member States and a guiding framework for funding in the European Commission. The potential benefits and important savings from eGovernment outweigh its costs. Modernising the European public administrations through eGovernment remains relevant and brings important EU-added value.