Digital public services and environments

The Commission is using digital technologies to improve public services and develop smart cities.

Smart public services, also known as digital public services or eGovernment, refer to the use of technology to provide services to citizens at local, regional and national levels. They bring many opportunities to both citizens and businesses: students can apply to study abroad, citizens can open bank accounts online, and workers can file taxes with the click of a button.

The EU is working to help public administrations across Europe to make the change to digital so all citizens can enjoy the benefits of smart public services during the Digital Decade. It is focusing on reducing barriers to public services and ensuring they are accessible across borders.

Actions already taken by the Commission include:

- ensuring European platforms can work together and interact with one another;
- funding large-scale e-participation projects;
- encouraging public services, businesses and citizens to share solutions through the JoinUp platform (https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/);
- standardising electronic health records.
- Creating the Once-Only Technical System (https://ec.europa.eu/digital-building-blocks/wikis/display/OOTS/), which connects EU public authorities, so they can exchange official documents and data at the citizen’s request, eliminating the need for citizens to provide information to authorities if another authority already holds that information in electronic format (it puts into practice the Once-Only Principle).
One key aspect of digital public services is ensuring we have a secure digital identity (https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/electronic-identification). Having a digital identity allows us to prove who we are – or what business we own – to online services.

The EU is also supporting the development of smart cities across Europe.

Just like smart public services, smart cities use technology to become more efficient. They do this by using sensors to collect data, and using this data to improve how the city works. For example, smart energy meters help us to see if a building is being heated efficiently. Meanwhile, data collected on transport can help us improve road capacity and reduce the impact on the environment.

Smart cities also create direct benefits for citizens, such as safer public spaces and support for an ageing population.

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Latest News

PRESS RELEASE | 24 November 2023
EU and Canada launch Digital Partnership to strengthen strategic cooperation

Today, the EU and Canada strengthened their relationship as strategic and like-minded partners in the digital field.

PRESS RELEASE | 09 November 2023
Commission welcomes final agreement on EU Digital Identity Wallet

The Commission welcomes the final agreement reached earlier this week by the European Parliament and the Council of the EU at the final trilogue on the Regulation introducing European Digital Identity Wallets.

PRESS RELEASE | 27 September 2023
First report on the State of the Digital Decade calls for collective action to shape the digital transition

The first report on the State of the Digital Decade, published earlier this week, provides a comprehensive look at progress towards achieving the digital transformation to empower a more digitally sovereign, resilient, and competitive EU.

PRESS RELEASE | 30 June 2023
2030 Digital Decade: Commission adopts indicators to monitor Europe’s digital transformation and issues guidance to Member States

Today, the Commission adopted the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to allow for measuring progress made in achieving the 2030 Digital Decade targets, and issued guidance on how Member States should structure their national roadmaps, to reach the digital targets.
The European Commission supports innovation procurement as a tool to deliver solutions to economic and societal challenges.

Smart Cities and Communities
The European Commission is working with smart cities and communities in order to address local challenges, deliver better services to citizens and reach the European Green Deal objectives.

Trust Services

The EU has introduced rules to strengthen trust services and ensure our online activity is secure across the EU.

Electronic signatures

The eSignature Directive established the legal framework at European level for electronic signatures and certification services.

Electronic Identification

Electronic identification (eID) is one of the tools to ensure secure access to online services and to carry out electronic transactions in a safer way.

eGovernment and digital public services

The European Commission is taking concrete actions to develop cross-border digital public services.

eHealth

The European Commission is working to provide citizens with access to safe and top quality digital services in health and care.

European Open Science Cloud (EOSC)

The European Open Science Cloud (EOSC) champions research data management and application to guarantee scientists’ access to data-driven science.