



e-SENS white paper

D3.5 Preliminary Proposal for long-term sustainability within the CEF Deliverable 3.5

Abstract of the Deliverable 3.5:

The deliverable aims at presenting concrete ideas and suggestions for the organisation of a future IT governance structure in Europe¹, which will ensure the sustainability of the e-SENS Building Blocks (BB). In the first part of the document, national IT governance structures are analysed. The analysis focuses on organisational aspects, best practices and lessons learnt. In the second part, organisational functions for a future IT governance structure in Europe is proposed. Finally, three possible organisational forms² (DG Programme, Agency, NPO) of a future governance structure in which the organisational functions may be embedded are described. The proposals illustrated in the document focus on the long-term perspective, meaning the time after the expiration of the CEF/ beyond 2020.

The deliverable D3.5 was developed by the e-SENS Work Package 3 (WP3) ‘Sustainability and Long-Term Governance’, which deals with the long-term consolidation and maintenance of the technical solutions developed within e-SENS. The goal of Work Package 3 is to pave the way for sustainability and long-term governance of the e-SENS BBs and their support in creating interoperable public services across all European Member States and Associated Countries.

White paper:

e-SENS is a Large Scale Pilot (LSP) aimed at promoting interoperability between public services in Europe based on the results of the previous LSPs: PEPPOL, SPOCS, STORK/ STORK 2.0, epsOS and e-CODEX. The technical building blocks (BBs) developed and piloted by the LSPs are consolidated, improved and extended to new domains in e-SENS. As the project timeline is limited to 36 months, it

¹ The IT governance structure should support a coherent architecture for interoperability of trusted services like e_ID, e-Signatures, e-Delivery and e-Documents in the Internal Market and maintained them.

² An organisational form is the legal framework in which an organisational chart may be embedded. It regulates the basic structure regarding membership, liability and funding.



is necessary to develop a stable and consolidated sustainability plan as well as a proper governance structure.

This ensures that the developments are maintained and made available for interested parties after the project is completed.

The following BBs have emerged from the previous LSPs and will be consolidated within e-SENS: e-ID, e-Signatures, e-Documents and e-Delivery. The future IT governance structure proposed by e-SENS must contribute to the continuity of the BB ecosystem and facilitate the further integration of new Member States, domains, BBs and their related stakeholders.

In D3.5, e-SENS presents concrete ideas and suggestions for the organisation of a future IT governance structure in Europe³, which will ensure the sustainability of the e-SENS BBs. During the process of preparing the paper, the following steps were undertaken:

1. Analysis of national IT governance structures
2. Proposal of organisational functions for a future IT governance structure in Europe
3. Description of three possible organisational forms⁴ (DG Programme, Agency, NPO) of a future governance structure in which the organisational functions may be embedded

All proposals illustrated in the deliverable D3.5 focus on the long-term, meaning the time after the expiration of the CEF/ beyond 2020.

❖ **Analysis of national IT governance structures**

Several existing national IT governance structures have been analysed in terms of organisational aspects, best practices and lessons learnt. In the majority of analysed countries the governance structures consist of multiple organisations/entities, which are based upon regulation frameworks and strategic plans/programmes adopted at central or regional and sub-regional level, and assign a guiding role to the public administrations. Despite of these common elements, several differences were identified which provide food for thought such as:

- depending on the form of government, the governance structure can be centralised or decentralised, whereas the decentralised systems often show overlaps of work and economic disadvantages
- even if the allocation of the steering power can be up to one or more bodies, a good cooperation and coordination (horizontal – between Ministries or vertical – between the

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different levels of administration) is necessary, but should be flexible enough and guided by a clear cross-government strategy plan

- the legal basis upon which a governance structure can be founded can be extended to private sector involvement or limited to the public sector, but only a small number of countries foresee the involvement of the private sector in the decision-making process. The majority of countries include only the public sector, while some others underline the importance of the participation of stakeholders – such as business – in the decision-making process as a success factor of their national IT governance structure.

The conducted analysis of national IT governance structures offer a general overview of the existing visions, strategies, funding and organisational approaches, which supported the modelling of the long-term governance structure for the provision of the digital services.

❖ **Proposal of a organisational functions for a future IT governance structure in Europe**

The paper illustrates ideas for organisational functions of a future governance structure. The proposed governance structure will act as an unique IT **Cooperation Forum** where matters with a strong cross-domain potential will be considered. This organisation will aim at the diffusion of proper information and the coordination of decisions on cross-border and cross-domain services. For its proper functioning, the IT Cooperation Forum will be dependent on the participation of Member States and the EU in discussions and the decision-making process.

The main purpose of the IT Cooperation Forum is the coordination of decisions related to cross-domain services and their IT-enabling components, in a transparent, effective and cost-savings way. The daily operations and provisioning of digital services (incl. hosting, development, training, support and more) should be assigned to a less political body and one that has a direct interest, stake and competence in the quality and successful delivery of this service.

The communities – consisting of policy makers, public bodies, public and private service providers, solutions developers, standardisation bodies, end user etc. – are the most adequate entities to coordinate the matters relating to the provisioning of cross-domain services. The communities represent all service providers of a domain. Their representatives would directly raise and decide on issues such as helping new countries implement existing services, operating required infrastructures, revising quality of service terms or suggesting to the MS or the EU modifications in the legal framework to enable these services. Coordinating issues relating to cross-domain service provisioning is the role of the **Service Provisioning Strategic Board**, within the common governance structure/ coordination forum.





To decide effectively on Architecture Interoperability issues an establishment of an **Architecture Interoperability Board** is necessary. Member States – for example - need to bring a clear strategic and technical positioning of their country with clear interests or stakes, means and intents in matters relating to cross-domain services. They need to be open and flexible in the design of joint solutions, and be able to ensure the implementation of the decided solutions nationally.

To increase the use of the existing cross-domain services participants in the IT Coordination Forum like MS and EU are asked to share their knowledge of the needs and requirements of their constituents in terms of cross-domain services. Joint discussions and decisions on these matters are hosted in the **Take Up Strategic Board**. This board is in charge of coordinating the efforts for expanding the usage of the existing cross-domain services in integrated domains.

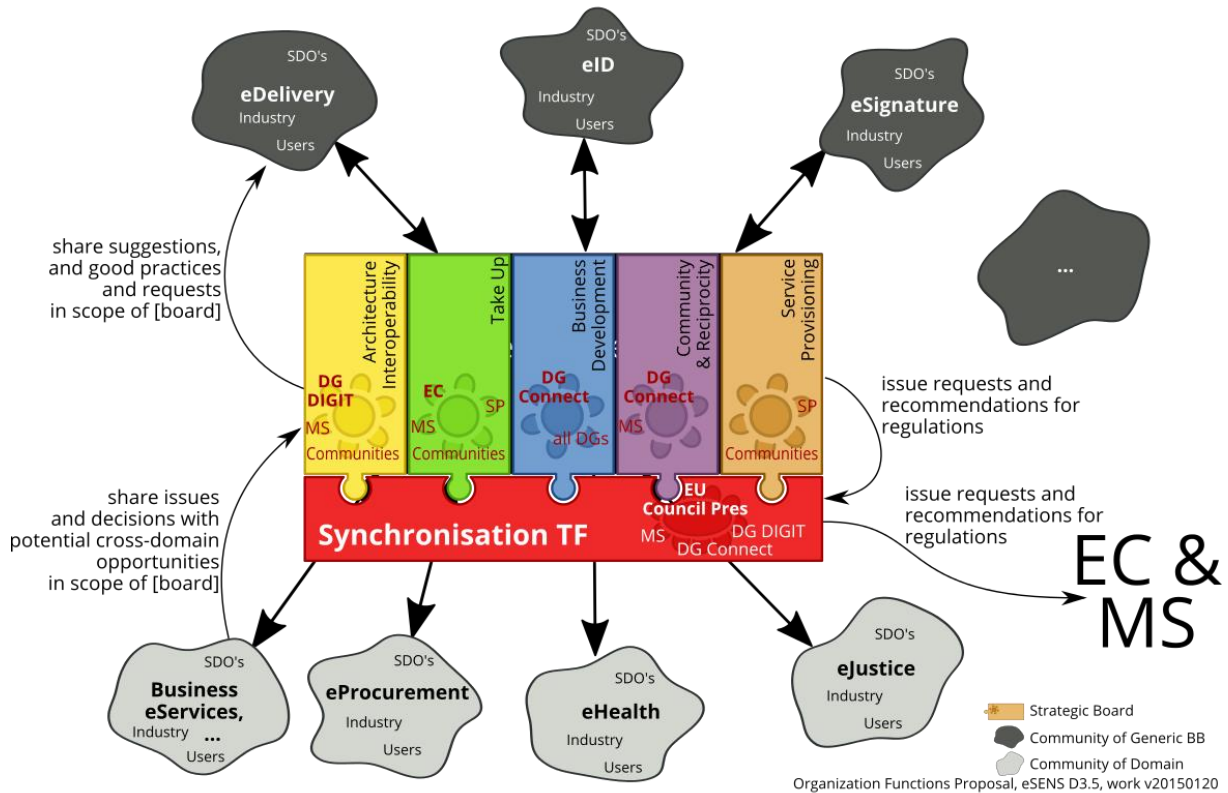
To foster the integration of new domains in the IT Coordination Forum and assess the potential for cross-domain services with these new domains, the Take Up Strategic Board need to look for potential opportunities in their administrations and coordinate these matters pro-actively with other members in the **Business Development Strategic Board**.

Long-term sustainability is directly reinforced by the principle for reciprocity as a self-balancing mechanism, in the highly social and political system that is the inter-relations between MS and communities in a clearly bounded environment. The establishment of a fifth **Community and Reciprocity Strategic Board** is therefore suggested in to design acceptable terms for this “reasonable balance” mechanisms.

Furthermore a **Synchronisation Task Force** is proposed that will, at least in the beginning, make sure that cross-boards issues are handled in a coherent way. This task force is not taking decisions relating to the cross-domain services, but its task is to nurture the synchronising of the work of the Boards.

The cooperation forum will be guided through the principles of subsidiarity, reciprocity, transparency and flexibility. It should ensure an improvement of the quality of the services and alignment of the requests for changes in the legal framework.





❖ Three possible organisational forms

On the basis of the performed analysis, e-SENS provides the description of three possible organisational forms for the long-term governance of the project's results: DG Programme, Agency and Non-profit Organisation (NPO). The description of the organisational forms are based on different criteria and principles addressing legal, organisational, financial, architectural and domain-related issues. D3.5 contains a description on how and in which way the different organisational forms meet these criteria and principles.

The notion of a **DG Programme** refers to projects and programmes supported by the EC through its Directorates-Generals (DGs). For the purpose of the deliverable D3.5, DG Programme has been referred as an organisational form potentially appropriate for the governance of the e-SENS Building Blocks. Having this in mind, the evaluation of the DG Programme has been positively evaluated in terms of EC involvement, maintenance of costs, capacity to avoid market fragmentation, ability to enhance architecture coherence and accomplish domain requirements. This organisational form naturally foresees an average involvement of Member States. On the other hand, could reasonably ensure the cost to be incurred (set-up costs) to get an organisation or IT governance structure ready to safeguard an effective deployment of the e-SENS building blocks at the Digital Single Market in the long-term perspective, and be capable to attract any kind of source of funding both public and

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private. Contrarily, the DG Programme has been considered not completely suitable to guarantee an adequate stakeholder involvement.

A **European Agency** is a body of the European Union, distinct from institutions, governed by European law and set up by an act of secondary legislation (regulation/joint action/decision). Agencies are established to accomplish specific tasks. Each agency has its own legal personality and it sometimes takes legally binding individual decisions for third parties. The evaluation has revealed that seven criteria upon nine have met a positive assessment. The European Agency ensures a high-level of Member State, EC and stakeholder involvement. Furthermore it is able to avoid market fragmentation and enhance architecture coherence. However, the set-up costs of an agency is rather high compared to the ones of the other organisational forms and therefore is averagely appraised.

The Non-Profit Organisation (NPO) assessment has pointed out that this organisational form could assure significantly relevant involvement of stakeholders together with effective maintenance of costs, ability to avoid market fragmentation, capacity to ensure set-up costs, ability to enhance architecture coherence and fulfil domain requirements. On the other hand, this form of organisation could be moderately successful in terms of the involvement of EC and Member States.

For an overview of the evaluation results, please consider the table below showing the comparison of the proposed organizational forms:

	Organisational forms		
Criteria	DG Programme	Agency	NPO
Member State involvement	average level	very high level	average level
EC involvement	very high level	very high level	average level
Stakeholder involvement	low level	high level	very high level
Set-up cost	average level	average level	high level
Maintenance costs	high level	high level	high level
Ability to avoid market fragmentation	high level	very high level	high level
Ability to enhance architecture coherence	high level	very high level	high level
Funding from different	average level	high level	high level



sources			
Domain requirements	high level	very high level	high level

Table: Comparison of the organisational forms

very high level	
high level	
average level	
low level	

A future governance structure which will ensure the sustainability of the results of e-SENS, should be public-sector driven with support of stakeholders, users and standardisation bodies and with a stronger priority on cross-domain/ generic solutions. The concrete ideas and suggestions presented in the deliverable D3.5 might help decision-makers in their discussions and investigation on a future governance structure on the long-term. The final results of the deliverable will be presented in D3.9 'Proposal for a governance body', which is expected in March 2016. Aside from this, e-SENS will continue making recommendations for a future IT governance structure thus continue to work in several and complementary directions by proposing a legal framework that will prepare the ground for future common EU digital service infrastructures foreseen in the CEF and proposals for a governance body and for long-term sustainability within the CEF.