



e-SENS white paper

Preliminary proposal of a governance body

Deliverable 3.4

Abstract of the Deliverable 3.4:

The deliverable D3.4 presents the preliminary proposal of a governance body to ensure the sustainability of the e-SENS building blocks. It currently consists of two documents which will be updated in different stages of the project depending on the developments within and outside of e-SENS.

The first document (made available in November 2013) presents ideas, suggestions and recommendations regarding a future governance body respectively structure to ensure the maintenance and sustainability of the solutions provided by e-SENS. The document provides the point of views of the previous LSPs and the e-SENS domains of WP5 on governance sustainability respectively organisational governance aspects. The identification of the commonalities revealed a complex landscape, where different requirements need to be taken into account.

The second document [soon on the e-SENS website¹] presents ideas and suggestions for the implementation of a future governance structure to ensure the sustainability of the e-SENS building blocks. The timeframes (short-term – e-SENS project, medium-term – CEF funding and long-term – after 2020) are presented in chronological order. The implementation plan suggests the concrete definition of tasks and stakeholders, as soon as ideas about the governance structure, its policy, operations, funding, communications and implementation support are developed.

The deliverable 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 BB and their support in creating interoperable public services across all European Member States and Associated Countries.

¹ www.esens.eu



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, e-CODEX, STORK, epSOS and SPOCS. The technical building blocks (BBs) developed and piloted by the LSPs will be consolidated, improved and extended to new domains in e-SENS. As the project timeline is limited to 36 months, it 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 e-SENS governance structure must contribute to the continuity of the BB ecosystem (i.e. their use and development) and facilitate the further integration of new Member States, domains, BBs and their related stakeholders.

The primary structure of a future governance structure proposed in the first version of [D3.4](#) highlights the following elements that should be considered:

- Central role of the public administrations and clear definition of responsibilities at any level (EU, national, regional administrations, competence centres, agencies etc.): Public services of general interest must be regulated, governed and supervised by public authorities. This does not mean that the governance structure should be centralised, but that the implementation and sustainability of cross - border public services cannot abstract from the coordinated action of the competent authorities and their leading political commitment.
- Stakeholders/Users involvement: A user- stakeholder driven approach in designing the future governance structure should be preserved in order to ensure the acceptability of the cross - border services and an effective decision making process.
- Market take - up oriented model: Technical solutions developed by the LSP and brought to the attention of the decision making level need for their maintenance and take-up, a governance structure qualified by the engagement of the private sector (self-regulated and pro-active), which is committed to the sustainability of the cross-border services.
- Addressing standardisation issues: A major strand for the sustainability of the cross-border services is the standardisation component which should be involved in the governance structure for ensuring the reliability of the services.
- Considering domain/sector-specific vs. more generic (non-sector-specific) requirements: There is a natural hierarchy between the generic components, like the high-level building blocks which are amongst others part of the maturity assessment of e-SENS Work Package 3.2 vis- à-vis the more sector specific components, simply because any adjustment of a high-level building block will affect all domains. Therefore, on the short term, domains should be given the opportunity to influence any change to generic components that have repercussions to their domain, which needs to be reflected in the eventual governance structure. On the long term, however, it is expected that any change of a generic component will be handled in domains as any ordinary update which should have little effect on domain related components. From the beginning, the distinction between domain specific and generic should be crystal clear for all stakeholders.

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The second version of the deliverable D3.4 presents ideas and suggestions for the implementation of a future governance structure which will ensure the sustainability of the e-SENS BBs. It covers three timeframes, serving as input for future decision makers:

- the short-term (the e-SENS project lifetime until spring 2016)
- the medium-term (2016-2020 CEF funding)
- the long-term vision (beyond 2020)

For each timeframe, a number of objectives were formulated, reflecting the vision on the functioning of the governance structure. In order to make clear what tasks need to be executed to achieve the set objectives in all timeframes, the BOMOS model² was used. Originally, this model has been set up to develop and manage open standards. However, it was adapted to the e-SENS requirements in order to be used for D3.4. The model consists of six process blocks: Strategy (vision, governance, and finance), implementations support, operational, policy tactics, and finally, communication. The main findings and conclusions are listed below for the three timeframes.

Short-term

A number of activities should be already carried out during the project lifetime to ensure the sustainability of the solutions when e-SENS ends. The short-term organisational structure is the e-SENS project governance. This current structure is responsible for the continuity of the BBs and the integration of new Member States, domains and BBs. This is funded through co-funding from the European Commission and Member States.

ACTIONS HIGHLIGHT:

- An alignment between CEF policy makers at DG CONNECT and e-SENS should be ensured, at both decision-making and financial levels.
- New piloting domains should be engaged to test the BBs and promote their usage.
- Discussions should be started with candidate governance structures, such as the agencies, whilst at the same time, a communication plan should be drafted, containing strong stakeholder analysis and business cases. This should help the aforementioned efforts and widen the circle of e-SENS partners.

Medium-term

The medium-term presents ideas for the implementation of the governance structure in the framework of the CEF. From 2016-2020, the envisioned governance structure is led by the European Commission with active involvement of Member States' representatives and relevant public or private stakeholders, including standardisation bodies. Any strategic choices should be synchronized across Digital Service Infrastructures (DSIs) in order to be effective, self-reinforcing and compatible.

² https://www.forumstandaardisatie.nl/fileadmin/os/publicaties/HR_BOMOS_English_translation_Jan2013.pdf
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Funding in the medium-term will mainly rely on the CEF, although the long term reciprocity should already be anticipated and strengthened by 2020.

ACTIONS HIGHLIGHT:

- It is recommended that CEF implements the general preferred licensing scheme in all CEF programs and other EU interoperability initiatives, and determine clear rules for payment for commercial usage, if applicable.
- In terms of infrastructure, the BBs and their rights should form a coherent whole, which can be promoted for take-up by means of a marketing plan. The take-up itself will still be managed on a case by case basis using CEF funding.
- The stakeholders will have an important role in promoting the BBs. They will communicate needs, gather and maintain the solutions and results of e-SENS.
- The added value and commercial benefits (such as cost-effectiveness, reusability and scalability of the solutions) should be promoted.
- The activities related to implementation support (e.g. training materials, services and the establishment of (commercial) help desk services) should address the homogenisation of mechanisms across CEF initiatives, as well as the successful development and provision of related services.

Long-term

The vision of long-term implementation of a governance structure is a coordinating and executive governance structure. It should have a stakeholder driven approach at its core, taking into account both public and private interests. In order to fund this governance structure, a hybrid funding scheme should be in place: the operating and integration costs will be covered by contributions in nature and the provision of services on a Service Level Agreements (SLA) basis. Any new BB or domain should be accompanied with new funding. The governance structure is steered by the community, a coherent group responsible for the quality and coherence of its assets, and able to decide to integrate new domains in the structure. The governance structure is very horizontal to help build bridges across domains, and self-organized strategic committees are believed to be a good means for efficient decision making. It will be steered by the Member States and European Commission, with a consultative role for the other stakeholders.

ACTIONS HIGHLIGHT:

- Decision upon the rights policies of the BBs should be taken by the community. The preferred scheme is a copy left-non-commercial licensing scheme for all assets. This makes it possible to reproduce, adapt and distribute BBs in various domains and countries.
- Business cases should be defined to attract the private sector to invest in the DSIs and maintenance of the BBs. This also involves defining a pricing level, drafting Service Level Agreements (SLAs), creating a regulatory mechanism and preparing a catalogue of services.
- A communication plan should lead to effective internal and external communication, focusing on community building and promotion of the assets.
- Roadshows should spread the results obtained and the opportunities the BBs offer.
- Further support mechanisms for uptake should be put in place to accelerate market readiness.

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- The BB specifications should be retained online in a common and well known platform, such as Join Up.
- An effective complaints procedure should be in place, which creates opportunities for improvement.

Summary

The deliverable D3.4 enumerates a list of tasks to be executed in the short, medium and long-term in order to ensure the sustainability of solutions. WP3 (sustainability) is primarily responsible for ensuring project sustainability; therefore tasks suggested in the document also address the timeframes beyond the project lifetime.

However, there is a number of actions that should be readily undertaken in the course of e-SENS, in order to move to the medium and long-term. The e-SENS project members and work packages will have to cooperate intensively and put forward an integrated strategy in order to get the message of this document across, primarily to the future policy- and decision makers. Moreover, intervention and an active stance by the e-SENS participants are required to ensure that the three timeframes will indeed take the shape of the preferences described in this document.

Next steps

- D3.5 will describe a number of national/ international IT governance structures and proposes a future organisational structure and organisational form
- Increased involvement of the stakeholders in the development of a future governance structure, for example by collecting their input for deliverable D3.6, is needed.
- A roadmap will be created based on the actions and tasks proposed in the next version of deliverable D3.4.

