

PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE NEXT E-GOVERNMENT PLAN (2016-2020)

POSITION PAPER

Conseil national du numérique - CNNum
(French Digital Council)

Beirait “Junge Digitale Wirtschaft” - BJDW
(“Young Digital Economy” Advisory Board)

The French Digital Council and the “Young Digital Economy” Advisory board welcome the efforts realized by the European Commission and the member states for the implementation of the current e-Government Action Plan. Both councils still support the priority given to user empowerment, efficiency and effectiveness of governments and administrative bodies, as well as the development of the single market. They also agree with the recommendations from the recent mid-term evaluation and the eGovernment Benchmarking, which emphasized on the need to focus more on open data policies, citizen’s involvement in developing digital public services, interoperability and re-use of public sector information, as well as the application of the “once only” principle.

In order to feed into the discussions on the next Action Plan, the French Digital Council and the “Young Digital Economy” Advisory board would like to briefly summarize the recommendations they issued during their previous works on the public’s sector digital transformation. These recommendations were based on a dialogue with national digital ecosystems - citizens, civil society, administrations and innovative businesses.

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The European Union and its member states should set ambitious common targets in the next e-Government Plan. If some actions have to be implemented on a national or local level, the Commission should also use legal instruments to achieve the plan’s goals (directives on public procurement, re-use of public information, etc.).



Beirat Junge Digitale Wirtschaft
beim Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Energie



We recommend action in the following priority areas :

- **Open policy-making processes and increase transparency at the all levels, in line with the “open government” approach:** we believe that we can find new methods to engage citizens, firms and public institutions in policy-making.
 - First, we need to rethink our survey tools in order to make public consultations more collaborative and inclusive. This means that they should allow participants to interact, comment existing propositions and suggest new ones. A special attention should be given to the provision of context information and other pedagogical materials, in order to allow an informed citizen participation.
 - Public debates on open and interactive websites should however be complemented by physical meetings across the EU. Some could be organized by the Commission itself and others be outsourced, by making available a “do it yourself kit” framing the discussions and their outputs. The French Digital Council itself experienced this approach while heading up a five month public consultation process (from octobre 2014 to February 2015). The Council helped stakeholders to use its DIY kit and provided support on the subjects they wanted to address, and then organised the collection of ideas on the www.contribuez.cnnumerique.fr website.
 - We strongly believe in the necessity to establish a methodological framework for public consultations. One key aspect here is the ability for participants to track the impact of their contributions, which guarantees the sincerity of public authorities’ consultation processes. The recent public consultation on the law “*Pour une République Numérique*” in France can be considered exemplary in this matter : the Government responded publicly to more than 250 contributions (those who received the largest number of positive votes)¹. Such provisions are necessary in order to guarantee transparency and trust in the decision-making procedures.
 - Furthermore, we should bolster genuine transparency and decision-making traceability by instituting a legislative footprint - a comprehensive public record of lobbyists’ influence on a piece of legislation. The European institutions should be exemplary in this regard and go beyond the lobby register that has been implemented recently.
- **Develop support for digital public services :** we strongly support the development of digital public services, however we are concerned about the side effects of a “*digital by default*” principle, especially for vulnerable populations. In order to ensure an equal access to public services for all members of society, we have to promote mediation as a top priority, increase

¹ <https://www.republique-numerique.fr/project/projet-de-loi-numerique/step/reponses>

the number of mediation spaces supporting public services and establish ambitious objectives with regards to public services accessibility.

- **Improve the design of public services on the basis of end-user experiences** : we welcome the implementation of the *Action plan for design-driven innovation*, but call for a better visibility of this initiative and closer cooperation between member states. Data analytics need to be used to improve the conception of digital public services on a regular basis. For instance, common design principles could be elaborated to guide the construction of efficient and user-friendly digital public services. These principles could notably being used for the development of cross-border public services, through the creation of innovation labs, which allowto invent, experiment and implement new digital services.
- **Improve personal data protection standards for the development of innovative public services based on data analytics** : the informational self-determination principle should be applied to personal data held by public administrations and agree on security rules warranting high level of protection. We believe that the re-use of personal data by government departments need to be verifiable and monitored, in order to guarantee an environment of trust between citizens and their administration.
- **Strengthen open data policies in order to further facilitate reuse of public sector information** : all European administrations must work towards the objective of eventually making public data automatically available and, generally, free-of-charge.
 - The European Commission should support the development and coordination of open data strategies, by providing technical and qualitative guarantees to foster reuse by third parties. It should provide methodological support to local authorities through an harmonized framework, in order to ensure interoperability between national data sets (data formats) and their reuses (licensing).
 - The eGovernment action plan should include the support of a European open data community, based on a network of chief data officers. It could be built along with the PSI working group.
 - Member states should develop common European open data projects based on national as well as European data, opened to private actors from civil society or the business sector (Open Data Insitute, Open knowledge Foundation).
- **Instil an innovation culture in government departments** : heighten the digital literacy of civil servants, introduce collaborative practices and knowledge sharing and improve control over public procurement.

- Reorient public procurement towards innovative tools and services : clearly insert an innovation principle into public procurement law (revision of public procurement directives) and establish innovative investment and public procurement methods. Reinforce the ambition and accelerate the implementation of the The Small Business Act for Europe.
- Assess collaborative projects and cooperative professional networks within public administrations and launch a platform dedicated to open projects within government departments, while encouraging collaboration between local authorities on free software projects. Open source technologies indeed simultaneously allow administrators to work on a same core - which guarantees interoperability - and to develop innovative services around this core, in a flexible and locally adapted manner.
- Set up open labs on an experimental basis, which facilitate cooperation with innovative private sector enterprises.

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The French Digital Council and the “Young Digital Economy” Advisory board are two commissions which advise the French and German Governments on issues related to the economic and social impact of the digital transition. They are composed of honorary members, chosen for their expertise in the field of digital transformations.

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