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PUBLIC CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Single Digital Gateway

Fields marked with * are mandatory.

Overview

What is this survey about?

This survey is about creating a 'single digital gateway' for European citizens and businesses – an online access point where you can find key information on living, working or doing business in other EU countries.

What is the 'single digital gateway'?

The idea behind the **single digital gateway** is to provide all the information people need to:

- do business cross-border
- travel to another EU country
- live / study / work in another EU country

The single digital gateway would be based on existing portals, contact points and networks. But it would improve them and better connect them and help people to complete the most frequently used national procedures fully online.

Why do we need it?

If you want to travel to, live, work or do business in another EU country, you need to find out about the national rules, requirements and procedures that will apply to you.

The internet offers new opportunities to access such information.

But online information can be unreliable – it can be incomplete, inaccurate or hard to understand. Sometimes it's only available in the local language, or not accessible from your country.

We want to make it **easier** for people and businesses to find essential information to help them **make the most of the single market**.

Your answers to this survey will help us design the single digital gateway so that it meets your needs.

In particular, we want to find out how **easy or difficult** it is to find information on the following subjects – and how you rate the **quality** of what you find:

- **information on applicable EU and national rules**, on issues such as how to register as a resident in another EU country, have your qualifications recognised, obtain a permit to open a shop, register your business activity, sell or manufacture your products abroad, what your rights are when shopping abroad, how to register your employees in social security schemes of another EU country or register for VAT;
- **procedures to comply with national rules** (often via national e-government portals), e.g. national procedures for registering as a resident, registering with employment services, registering for VAT and tax payments, registering with social security services, and on the EU level the European professional card procedure;
- **services for personalised assistance and advice** when online information is not enough, e.g. an authority or (semi-) private online help centre or association that citizens and businesses can contact when facing problems with rules and procedures.

This public consultation contains **3 separate questionnaires** for specific target audiences:

- citizens
- businesses
- public authorities.

The citizen and business questionnaires are primarily aimed at individuals (i.e. we want to hear the personal experiences of the respondents). However, **other groups** (e.g. organisations *representing* businesses and citizens), can also answer these questions based on the common experiences of the people / businesses they represent.

Other research

Several reports that are relevant to this initiative are already available. The Commission will take these into consideration along with the findings of this consultation.

For summaries of the key findings and references please see the inception impact assessment (http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/roadmaps/docs/2017_grow_012_single_digital_gateway_en.pdf).

We will also use any relevant findings from other ongoing or recently closed public consultations covering related Commission initiatives (e.g. on the services passport, the start-up initiative, the possible revision of the Mutual Recognition Regulation, the e-government action plan 2016-2020 and the EU citizenship consultation of 2015).

Deadline

26/07/2016– 21/11/2016.

If your response arrives after this deadline, we will not take it into consideration.

Privacy

We will publish your response unless you state otherwise.

We are committed to protecting your personal data.

*Publication consent

Can we publish your response on the Commission's website? *Please note that whichever option you choose, your response may be subject to a request for access to documents under Regulation 1049/2001 (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1454925130412&uri=CELEX:32001R1049>) on public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents. If this happens, the request for access will be assessed against the conditions set out in the regulation and in accordance with data protection rules (<http://ec.europa.eu/justice/data-protection/>).*

- YES – under the name I have provided** I agree to the publication of all the information in my response and I declare that none of it is subject to copyright restrictions that would prevent publication.
- YES – anonymously** I agree to the publication of all the information in my response and I declare that none of it is subject to copyright restrictions that would prevent publication.
- NO – please keep my contribution confidential** My response will not be published, but will be used internally within the Commission.

*May we contact you with follow-up questions based on your answers?

- Yes
 No

Information about you

*Which describes you / your organisation best?

- Public authority (including government)
 Business representative organisation
 Organisation representing citizens / consumers
 Company
 Self-employed
 Academic / research institution
 Private individual

*At what level do you operate:

- International
 EU
 National
 Regional
 Local

*Name / Name of organisation:

*Email address

This field is required

*Where is your organisation based or established?

SPECIFIC QUESTIONS TO PUBLIC ADMINISTRATIONS

In this questionnaire, we'd like to find out about **national e-government practices** and how online portals and administrative procedures are managed.

To start with, we'll ask you a few general questions.

Then we'll ask you some more specific questions about e-procedures.

GENERAL

Finding information online about applicable rules can be difficult for businesses and citizens. This is partly because information is spread over different national and EU-level websites – and these are often not connected to one another.

There are already several contact points and web portals that provide information about single market rules. For example, for the services sector there are the 'Points of Single Contact'. For goods, there are the 'Product Contact Points' and the 'Points of Contact for Construction Products'.

Some business stakeholders have recently called for the creation of online national business portals that cover both goods AND services.

Similarly, information for citizens is currently provided by different national contact points and on various websites in each EU country. Again, not all of these are centralised or cater for cross-border users interested in working, studying, or living in that EU country.

*How desirable would it be for your country's administration(s) to integrate the services and goods contact points in one national portal?

- Very desirable
 Desirable
 Neutral
 Undesirable
 Very undesirable

*How feasible would it be for your country's administration(s) to integrate the services and goods contact points in one national portal?

- Easy
 Somewhat difficult – it requires important back-office coordination, but in general it is feasible
 Difficult – would be extremely complex and expensive
 Already done or about to be done

Any other comments?

500 character(s) maximum

The Dutch ministry of economic affairs has started an initiative to further integrate the national contact points for goods and services. Central within this initiative is the Point of Single Contact, which can be seen as a coordinating body for the various contact points. An important aspect within this initiative is the implementation of an effective back-office in which the employees of the various contact points cooperate with each other, share best-practice and coordinate their work.

We'd like to make sure there are no gaps in the information you find online.

What needs to be done to improve online information, especially for cross-border users?

	Should be mandatory	Should be voluntary / guidance would be sufficient	Not necessary	No opinion
*Authorities in each EU country should provide a minimum amount of information for citizens to help them carry out cross-border activities.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Authorities in each EU country should provide all the information necessary for citizens to engage in cross-border business or private activities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Information should be provided in at least one other language.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
*EU countries / national public authorities should provide personal assistance to answer the specific questions from citizens that are not covered by the information online.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*For certain important areas, information on national rules should be collected and made available in a centralised EU database instead of on national websites.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How feasible would these actions be for Member States / national authorities?

	Unfeasible / too costly	Challenging but feasible	Easy to do / already being done	Unnecessary	Don't know
*Authorities in each EU country should provide a minimum amount of information for citizens to help them carry out cross-border activities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Authorities in each EU country should provide all the information necessary for citizens to engage in cross-border business or private activities.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Information should be provided in at least one other language.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*EU countries / national public authorities should provide personal assistance to answer the specific questions from citizens that are not covered by the information online.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*For certain important areas, information on national rules should be collected and made available in a centralised EU database instead of on national websites.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*Generally speaking, how would you rate your administration's switch to e-government (delivering government services using digital technology)?

- very good – no major problems
- neutral
- poor – with major problems
- not applicable – has not happened yet

We are considering taking action to encourage the switch from paper-based to online procedures. There are various options – we'd like to know what you think of them.

What should be done to improve provision of online procedures, especially for cross-border users?

	Should be Mandatory	Should be voluntary / guidance	Unnecessary	No opinion
*A limited number of the most important procedures for cross-border users should be provided fully online	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* All procedures relevant for cross-border users should be fully online.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Any procedures relevant for cross-border users required under future EU laws should be fully online. Offline procedures may exist in parallel.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Procedures should be available in at least one other foreign language .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

How feasible would these actions be for Member States / national authorities?

	Unfeasible / too costly	Challenging, but feasible	Easy to do / already being done	Unnecessary	Don't know
*A limited number of the most important procedures for cross-border users should be provided fully online.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* All procedures relevant for cross-border users should be fully online.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Any procedures relevant for cross-border users required under future EU laws should be fully online. Offline procedures may exist in parallel.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Procedures should be available in at least one other foreign language .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
*A limited number of the most important procedures for cross-border users should be provided fully online.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Can you think of any examples of good practice in managing and ensuring the quality of online content on portals (e.g. quality charters, guidelines, feedback mechanisms) and how this is being implemented?

700 character(s) maximum

In order to ensure the quality of online content it is crucial to engage the various government and non-government bodies that are involved in (online) procedures for services and goods. Processes, procedures, national laws, and EU-regulations change over time, therefore, it is a challenge to ensure the quality and the utility of the online content. Due to this fact, the ministry of economic affairs has set up an editorial team for the PSC (www.ondernemersplein.nl) in which the experts of various bodies and contact points work together to ensure the quality of the online content of the PSC.

How do you promote your online services?

700 character(s) maximum

The Netherlands promotes its online services via google AdWords, social media and search engine optimization. Furthermore, the content of the PSC can be plugged into other government websites.

E-PROCEDURES

The following questions intend to map the online state of play of the most important administrative procedures for citizens and businesses in the EU / EEA countries, their plans for further roll-out of e-procedures, the criteria used for doing so and whether the needs of users from other EU countries are taken into consideration.

We'd also appreciate it if you are able to indicate the cost of setting up procedures online.

*At your level of administration, do you accept documents in any electronic format (e.g. PDF, scanned images) as part of an online procedure?

- Yes, for all administrative procedures.
 Yes, for some administrative procedures.
 No, I require original paper documents or certified documents.
 I do not know.

*What, if any, are your criteria for deciding which administrative procedures to put fully online? (Please select all that apply.)

- frequency of use of that procedure
 ease of implementation maximum benefit for users (e.g. if an offline procedure is particularly burdensome for them)
 maximising benefit for the authority, in terms of expected savings and increased efficiency
 available budget
 legal requirement
 other
 my administration does not apply any criteria
 don't know.

*When putting procedures online or planning to do so, do you take into consideration the specific needs of users from other EU countries (e.g. in terms of language cover, technical aspects such as e-identification and payment, or legal aspects such as whether foreign documents need to be certified)?

- Yes
 No

* How? (Please select all that apply)

- Explanation of the procedure is available in at least one frequently used foreign language in addition to the national language(s)
 Online forms are provided in at least one frequently used foreign language on top of the national language(s)
 Help desk service can deal with questions and provide replies in at least one frequently used foreign language on top of the national language(s)
 Means of payment, where applicable, are also accessible to foreign users as well
 Users from other EU countries are not asked to provide documents which do not exist in their countries
 Foreign supporting documents do not need to be certified
 Foreign supporting documents do not require certified translation
 Foreign users' e-IDs and e-signatures are accepted
 Other

Please specify:

Cross border EID's s can only be used in the Netherlands for the following websites: www.ceib.nl and www.rvo.nl. As from 18 September 2018 access to public services will become possible for the notified EID's in all EU member-states. This is only relates to the topic authentication, on other topics (such as language and legal aspects), the responsibility to set demands lies with the member-states.

The Netherlands sees an uptake of the availability of e-procedures for foreign users.

Please indicate which of the following important procedures for businesses and citizens are:

- **'fully online'** – online forms can be filled in directly on the screen and sent off within the portal environment, together with any (scanned or e-) documents or other data, i.e. no printing, face-to-face contact and e-mail is needed);
- **'partially online'** meaning forms are online, but then need to be printed, filled in, and sent by post or email, together with any required documents;
- **'not at all online'**: information about the procedure may be online, but not the forms needed to start the procedure.

FOR BUSINESSES

VAT:

	Fully online	Partially online	Not at all online	Do not know or not applicable
*VAT registration	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*VAT returns	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Notification of cessation of activity subject to VAT	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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	Fully online	Partially online	Not at all online	Do not know or not applicable
*Registration for income tax	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Corporate / business tax declaration	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SOCIAL SECURITY:

	Fully online	Partially online	Not at all online	Do not know or not applicable
*Registration with national insurance scheme as employer	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Registration of employees with pension schemes	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Payment of social contributions for employees and payroll withholding tax	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

OTHER BUSINESS RELATED PROCEDURES:

	Fully online	Partially online	Not at all online	Do not know or not applicable
*Registration of business activity	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Reporting end of contract of employee	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Recognition of qualifications	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Apply for building planning permits	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Apply for environmental permits	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Notifications related to data protection	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Applying for public procurement	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Please specify:

For a full measurement of the digital maturity of transactions in the Netherlands, see the reports on: <https://www.digitaleoverheid.nl/digitaal-2017/monitoring/aanbod-digitale-dienstverlening>

FOR CITIZENS:

	Fully online	Partially online	Not at all online	Do not know or not applicable
*Declaring income	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Requesting / renewing ID card or passport	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Registering a change of address	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Registering a marriage	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Register for child allowances	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Request a birth certificate	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Register for social security benefits	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Registering as unemployed	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Register a car	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Request recognition of diploma from a foreign EU national	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Request recognition of professional qualifications from a foreign EU national	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Apply for a criminal record certificate	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Enrol in university	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Apply for a study grant	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Starting an inheritance procedure	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Register for a pension	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Any other comments?

500 character(s) maximum

For a full measurement of the digital maturity of transactions in the Netherlands, see the reports on:
<https://www.digitaleoverheid.nl/digitaal-2017/monitoring/aanbod-digitale-dienstverlening>

Some of the procedures (see the above investigation for a full specification) are set on partially online, because they are executed by different municipalities and some have the procedure fully online, some

Does your administration have plans to make more procedures available online (for citizens and / or businesses)?

- Yes
 No

Please provide details about the procedure(s):

Title of the procedure(s):

We want to create 'my government for entrepreneurs' in which entrepreneurs can do transactions with the government and (re) use the data of the government.

Envisaged target date(s) for being online:

Around the summer of 2017

Level of online sophistication – would the procedure be fully online or partially online (e.g. documents would still need to be sent by email or post)?

- Fully
 Partially

Reasons for putting this particular procedure online:

The aim of 'my government for entrepreneurs' is to make business with the government more easy for entrepreneurs and to accelerate the digital transformation of the government.

Furthermore it is the aim of the Dutch government to have all procedures online. To assist civilians and companies faster and better, and for efficiency purposes of the government. In 2017 the law will be adjusted so all procedures have to be available online, if a government has them on paper.

Any other information:

-

Could you share with us your experience with the implementation of an e-procedure in your country?

- Yes
 No

If you have any studies / feasibility analysis / evaluations etc. of e-procedures in your country that you can share with us, please upload them here (these studies will not be published but may be used / referred to in the process of impact assessment).

Any other comments?

The central position of the Single Digital Gateway (SDG) can be a valuable asset when it is set up as a coordination tool for the Points of Single Contact (PSC's). In this case, the national PSC's will still be the central contact point for citizens and business and the SDG will be a tool to share important information, share best-practice and collect information that is valuable for the PSC's. Furthermore, the SDG can provide information to the national PSC's about EU rules and monitor the functioning of the PSC's.

It is important to understand that every PSC has its own type of governance and the same applies to the organisations that are involved with the (e-)procedures for goods and services. Therefore, it is important to uphold a level of independence and flexibility for the PSC's and the involved organisations. Flexibility would enable these organisations to effectively adapt to new economic and regulatory changes (on a national and an EU-level). New EU-initiatives and a new regulatory framework should be complementary to systems that already proved to be successful. New rules and frameworks should not put national initiatives into a straightjacket, but enable them to effectively assist citizens and business.

It is clear that the main improvements for the issues described in the impact assessment are made on a member state level. For instance, the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs initiated a plan that deals with the fragmentation of portals in the Netherlands. In order to improve the quality and findability of the information the ministry set up a central platform for business information called ondernemersplein.nl (the Dutch PSC). Within this system the existing portals work together by providing information, sharing best practice and improving their key performance indicators together. The system continuously has to adapt to changing economic and regulatory changes in the Netherlands. In order to do this, it is key that the involved organisation closely cooperate with each other and that there is flexibility within the system. For the Ministry of Economic Affairs it is essential that the SDG builds upon the successes of this PSC and that the SDG enables all PSC's to further improve their system.

It is not only important to counter fragmentation and improve the quality of the portals at a national level, it is also essential that the European Commission closer integrates the initiatives and portals at an EU-level. The SDG can be a helpful tool in this respect. When the SDG operates as a system that groups all the necessary information and portals together, national PSC's and ministries of the member-states can build upon this success.

Due to the various issues that have to be tackled it is important that the European Commission focusses on the key challenges that businesses and citizens face in the field of cross-border entrepreneurship. It is practical impossible to implement a system that tackles all issues at ones. The Commission should therefore focus its attention on the priority demands and needs of citizens and businesses. For instance, there is a high demand for information about product requirements or information about business registration. In order to set up a successful instrument it is essential that the Commission identifies these priorities and focuses its attention on these issues. Furthermore, it would be wise to make a sharp distinction between businesses and citizens, as both group have different needs and demands.

*Sometimes it was not clear what was meant by a specific question, in these cases the bullets 'do not know' or 'no opinion' were selected. For instance, it was unclear what specific information the European Commission refers to in the following question: "Information should be provided in at least one other language." In general the Netherlands supports an obligation to provide a minimal amount of information in another language; however, we do not support the obligation to provide all possible information in a foreign language.

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