

ReSPA e-participation and open government general roadmap

Step 2: 22-4-17, JM

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1. Introduction

1.1. Guide to the roadmap development process

This document is part of step 2.

1.1.1. Step 1

Step 1 consisted of compiling baseline information for a roadmap for e-participation, including OG and OGD objectives, for each of the ReSPA beneficiaries. This was used as a basis for discussion, questions and answers during the ReSPA eGovernment days, 14-15 December 2016, in Belgrade, Serbia.

1.1.2. Step 2

This document represents the first draft general roadmap, which will be used to prepare six draft specific roadmaps, one for each ReSPA Beneficiary. **As a general roadmap it does not directly fit any of the specific roadmaps, and many of the items mentioned will not be relevant to all.** Moreover, during the process of preparing the specific roadmaps, this draft general roadmap is itself likely to be revised in light of the details which emerge. Once both the draft general and the draft specific roadmaps have been developed, they will be sent to the ReSPA beneficiaries for remote commenting and feedback, before final versions are prepared and submitted in Step 3.

A separate roadmap template document has been prepared to develop each of the six ReSPA Beneficiary roadmaps.

1.1.3. Step 3

The final set of roadmaps will consist of the general roadmap plus six specific roadmaps, one each for the six ReSPA beneficiaries.

1.2. Purpose and audience of the roadmap

The purpose of the roadmap for e-participation and open government (including open government data) is to avoid becoming just another paper document to be accounted for as received in government and archived. It needs to aim to achieve the higher level function of guiding government action rather than a detailed formula. In order to achieve this it is imperative that the roadmap is ambitious as well as realistic, so needs to be translated into policies, strategies, principles and action plans in this light.

In this context, it is necessary to understand for whom the roadmap is meant and to whom it is targeted. There could be more than one audience, but it is important it reaches the right people and does not get passed around with no responsibility taken. The e-participation and open

government roadmap represents a prioritisation of a ReSPA Beneficiary's overall e-government and ICT strategy focusing on necessary building block implementations over a number of years. Thus it also needs to be specifically targeted at those responsible for Public Administration Reform (PAR), as well as the whole government of the beneficiary more generally as there are implications for all, including in particular ministries and other entities with a key role in e-government development.

2. E-participation context

E-participation is about fostering civic engagement and open, participatory governance through ICT. It is a tool for engagement and strengthened collaboration between governments and citizens, both for the empowerment of individual citizens and for the benefit of society as a whole. In addition to promoting participation in policy-making, the overall objective of e-participation is to improve access to information and public services, as well as the understanding of, and engagement in, administrative and other governance processes.

Participation, including e-participation, is very important given that, although governments in democratic countries are not omnipotent, their actions affect millions of citizens' lives. As citizens we have a right to know how our institutions are making decisions, who participates in preparing them, who receives funding, and what information is produced or underlies the preparation or adoption of legal acts. Without this, there is increased danger that high levels of corruption (even perceived corruption) and lack of trust in governments will undermine their ability to act effectively. If e-government is developed without e-participation and open government, it may result in the actors in society (citizens, businesses, public bodies, etc.) not trusting each other and lead to an increase in transaction costs across society as a whole. Such costs place a burden on all of society, making it less effective and less coherent.

The overall context of the digitisation of society shows that people are connecting with each other by social and other ICT media on a massive scale which cannot be ignored by governments. This presents governments with both opportunities and threats, given that some e-participation tools are government controlled and owned, though most are not and should not be. This means that in an open manner government will also have to follow the users (citizens, civil society organisations and businesses) and be where they are when this is relevant to its roles and functions. Government needs to join in, monitor and contribute to any relevant on-line community in order to reap the full benefits.

E-participation is thus about 24/7 communication, not about the technology, although a good understanding of the latter is of course required. ICT technology has both high and wide reach (huge mass audiences) but can also be targeted, one-to-one and be very personal and customised. It tends to be interactive and is not as top-down, uni-directional or authoritative compared to traditionally broadcast media. Security in the ICT context is increasingly important, in relation to technical, personal and reputational (trust) issues. There are numerous and ever expanding technical tools available, such as networks (e.g. Facebook), platforms (e.g. wikis), publication tools (e.g. YouTube) and feedback facilities (e.g. rating, surveys, etc.).

Overall, therefore, e-participation and open government are able to:

- Connect ordinary people with the political and policy-making process
- Ensure that citizens understand decision-making processes
- Allow citizens to speak with politicians and decision-makers and vice versa
- Ensure that people are, and feel they are, heard and included when decisions are made
- Ensure that citizens can directly engage with and influence:
 - Government policies and decisions
 - Public services, including e-government services
 - The arrangements, administration and procedures of government and the public sector
 - Express their comments and complaints about any aspect of government and the public sector, and have these addressed in a timely, professional and effective manner that satisfies the citizen and/or explains why their needs cannot be met or input used.
- Enable governments to tap into the collective knowledge of society quickly and directly.

In addition, with the latest ICT tools, e-participation using big data for evidence-based intelligent government is able to use, for example, data analytics and AI (artificial intelligence) for decision simulation and policy modelling based on:

- The huge unexploited data reservoirs ('big data')
- Distributed data, seamless 'cloud computing'
- Data mining, pattern recognition, visualisation, gaming
- Co-design, co-creation, co-evaluation
- Greater precision on policy choices and trade-offs.

In the current EU context, Pillar 3 of the EU eGovernment Action Plan for 2016-2020 (published in 2016) is concerned with facilitating digital interaction between administrations and citizens / businesses for high-quality public services, for example consisting of re-usable modules for user-friendly and personalised as well as better policies. Such initiatives should be based on: inclusiveness and accessibility; openness and transparency; and trustworthiness and security.

Also relevant, are the OECD principles of digital government (published in 2014) which point out that, although government was once seen purely as a provider, it is now also seen as a convener and enabler, and no longer as a silo separated from the rest of society. The three main OECD pillars of digital government are concerned not with the technology per se but with how the technology can be used: engaging citizens and opening up government to maintain public trust; adopting joined-up approaches to deliver public value; and strengthening capacities to ensure a fair return on ICT investment.

There are also many current challenges and threats which need to be addressed, partially arising from the digitisation of government, such as the development of the so-called 'post-truth' society when data and information are mis-used, manipulated or distorted without any factual or objective basis. In this context, vigilance as well as new forms of security are needed to address questions such as how do we know the data is correct, and are 'black-box' algorithms dangerous when it is not clear how they function? There are also potentially bigger challenges with big data, such as cyber crime and warfare as well as the creation of the so-called 'dark web' and other subversive developments.

3. Overview of the general e-participation and open government roadmap

3.1. Roadmap derivation

The evidence from the investigations carried out when preparing this general roadmap shows that three main strategies, each represented by three development stages, are necessary to design and implement a successful e-participation and open government policy for ReSPA Beneficiaries:

1. Transparency
2. Engagement
3. Collaboration.

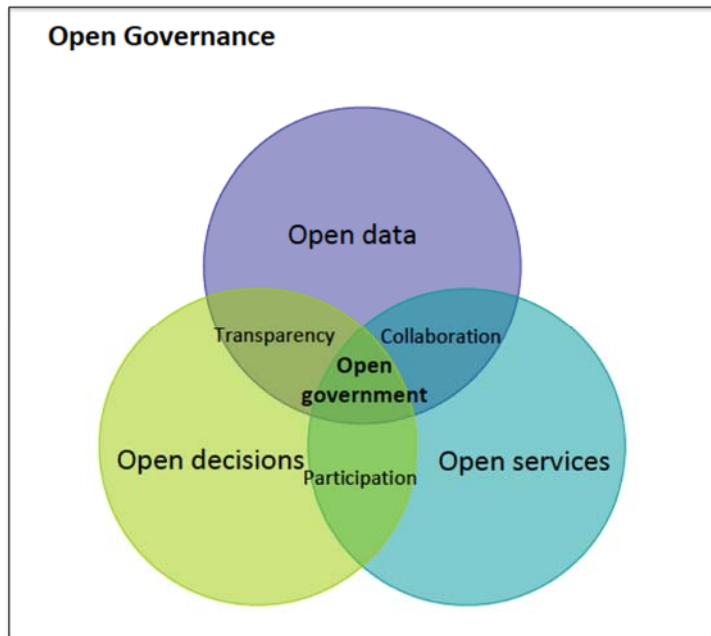
These are also derived from the Obama Presidency's Open Government Directive from 2009 based on three principles forming the cornerstone of an open government:

- Transparency promotes accountability by providing the public with information about what the government is doing.
- Participation allows members of the public to contribute ideas and expertise so that their government can make policies with the benefit of information that is widely dispersed in society.
- Collaboration improves the effectiveness of government by encouraging partnerships and cooperation within the Federal Government, across levels of government, and between the government and private institutions.

Open government as a set of principles as the basis for action, underpinned by an overt philosophy and mindset of openness, has since been taken up globally, as evidenced by the development of the Open Government Partnership since 2011. It has now also formed the background for preparations for the European E-Government Action Plan, 2016-2020¹. This in turn derives from work undertaken in 2013 on a European vision for public services driven by opening up and sharing assets -- making data, services and decisions open -- to enable collaboration and increase bottom-up, participative forms of service design, production and delivery. The kind of public sector organisation at the heart of this transformation is open government, based on the three pillars of: open data, open decisions and open services. As Figure 1 shows, the intersections comprise: transparency, participation and collaboration, with open government at the centre.

¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/european-egovernment-action-plan-2016-2020>

Figure 1: The three pillars of Open Governance in the EU²



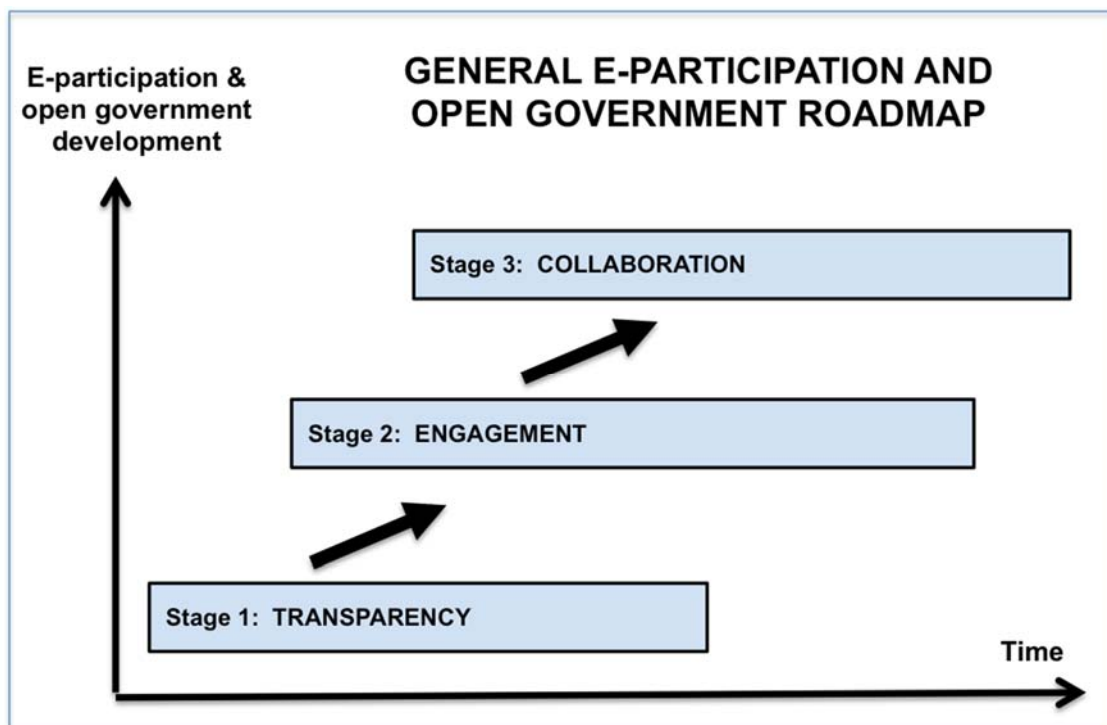
3.2. Roadmap stages

Each of the three stages of transparency, engagement³ and collaboration represent distinct types of relatively independent strategies which can and often are carried out by countries independently from each other. Each stage consists of a number of building blocks which will need different work at various stages of the roadmap (see below). However, there is also considerable overlap and mutual dependence between the stages. In real life, they co-exist and overlap, forming numerous interactions between governments and people related to the prevailing socio-cultural and regulatory contexts of each country. The stages are also highly synergistic, especially if carried out in the order presented, i.e. from transparency, to engagement, and then to collaboration, with the benefits to both government and users increasing at each step. Even though it is possible to achieve some e-participation and open government benefits implementing each strategy independently in any order, the evidence shows that the size of the benefits increases when all three are implemented and in the order suggested. See Figure 2.

² European Commission (2013) —A vision for public services||, prepared by DG CONNECT after an expert workshop and open public consultation: <http://ec.europa.eu/digitalagenda/en/news/vision-public-services>.

³ Note the descriptor "engagement" is used here instead of "participation" because the latter is also used by the United Nations to describe all three stages in their eParticipation Index: e-information, e-consultation and e-decision-making (see below).

Figure 2: General e-participation and open government roadmap



Each stage can be summarised as follows:

Stage 1: Transparency

At stage 1, the e-participation and open government strategy is to be transparent. This is basically a one-way flow of information from government to citizen, so the government remains relatively passive and not open to significant interaction with non-government actors. At stage 1, transparency by default is recommended, so that in principle all government activities should be fully transparent except in specific legally defined areas. Transparency enables the public to understand the workings of their government and makes it possible for them to hold the government to account for its policy and service delivery performance. An important part of this is putting data online.

Sources used to assess the 2016 baseline for Stage 1 of e-participation and open government in the ReSPA Beneficiaries:

- E-participation questionnaire for ReSPA Beneficiaries, November 2016 (see Annex 2)
- ReSPA report “E-Government Analysis: from E-Government to Open Government”, December 2015.
- UN E-Participation Index 2016: e-information: Enabling participation by providing citizens with public information and access to information without or upon demand.
- Open Government Data⁴: star rating 1: available on the web (whatever format) but with an open license, to be open data.

⁴ Tim Berners-Lee’s “linked Open Data 5 Star Scheme” for assessing the stages of open data deployment and use: <https://www.w3.org/DesignIssues/LinkedData.html>

Stage 2: Engagement

At stage 2, the e-participation and open government strategy is to be engaged. This is mainly a two-way exchange of information, knowledge and opinion from government to citizen (and other non-government actors) and vice versa, so that government becomes relatively active. At stage 2, engagement by default is recommended, so that in principle all government activities should be fully open to public engagement except in specific legally defined areas. Engagement allows members of the public to contribute ideas and expertise so their government can make policies with the benefit of information that is widely dispersed in society. However, government tends to determine the agenda, which issues are open for consultation, and does not directly include other actors in its decision-making, so that it always retains the leading role. Whereas transparency on its own is passive, transparency is necessary for engagement to actively function so that the public can see and understand what is happening inside government in order to influence its workings by engaging with public policy processes and public service providers. An important part of this is putting data online and making it machine readable and structured.

Sources used to assess the 2016 baseline for Stage 2 of e-participation and open government in the ReSPA Beneficiaries:

- E-participation questionnaire for ReSPA Beneficiaries, November 2016 (see Annex 2)
- ReSPA report "E-Government Analysis: from E-Government to Open Government", December 2015.
- UN E-Participation Index: e-consultation: engaging citizens in contributions to and deliberation on public policies and services.
- Open Government Data: star ratings 2 and 3: available as machine-readable structured data (e.g. excel instead of image scan of a table); plus non-proprietary format (e.g. CSV instead of excel).

Stage 3: Collaboration

At stage 3, the e-participation and open government strategy is to be collaborative. This is mainly multi-way from governments to citizens (and other non-government actors), vice versa and involving in principle many other actors, so that each actor -- not only government -- can become proactive in initiating and implementing collaboration. At stage 3, collaboration by default is recommended, so that in principle all government activities should be open for collaboration with all legitimate actors, both where government proactively takes the lead but also enables others to do so, even without government, as long as this contributes to public value over which the government has the final say. Whereas engagement on its own provides only limited opportunities determined by government for non-government actors to participate in the workings of government, collaboration takes this the final step by enabling these actors to themselves have significant say in which issues they consider important to participate in. As mentioned, however, the extent of this needs to be determined by legal provision, and in a society in which governments are duly elected, the government will need to determine whether such participation is in the public interest or not. Well designed and implemented collaborative government can considerably improve the overall effectiveness of government and public sector activities by encouraging partnerships and cooperation within the government, across levels of government, and between the government and other legitimate actors in society, also in situations where government may decide it is not necessary for itself to take the leading role. This is because it is clear that government on its own does not have a

monopoly of knowledge, resources or power to tackle societal challenges and fully achieve societal goals⁵. An important part of this is putting data online, making it machine readable and structured, plus using open standards and enabling non-government actors to link to and mesh with their own or other actors' data.

Sources used to assess the 2016 baseline for Stage 2 of e-participation and open government in the ReSPA Beneficiaries:

- E-participation questionnaire for ReSPA Beneficiaries, November 2016 (see Annex 2)
- ReSPA report "E-Government Analysis: from E-Government to Open Government", December 2015.
- UN E-Participation Index: e-decision-making: empowering citizens through co-design of policy options and coproduction of service components and delivery modalities
- Open Government Data: star ratings 4 and 5: all the above, plus use open standards from W3C (RDF and SPARQL) to identify things, so that people can point at your stuff; plus link your data to other people's data to provide context.

As indicated in Figure 2, the overall roadmap process shows that subsequent stages rely on success in previous stages to fully maximise synergies and benefits. The importance of interlinking between the three strategic stages is underlined by the fact that most countries do not see them in isolation but as an integrated package of an e-participation and open government policy, which is in turn an integral part of their overall e-strategy and e-government policy. Experience from some of the lead European countries (including Denmark, Estonia, the Netherlands and the UK) shows that the whole roadmap if starting from scratch can take up to ten years, although it should be remembered that these countries had no good practice to refer to. In addition, the technology has changed, and continues to change, often more rapidly than institutions and policies can keep up, pushing countries to move more quickly. Progress in future should, therefore, be faster, also because the process continues to be supported and coordinated at EU level, for example through the EU eGovernment Action Plan 2016-2020⁶.

As indicated above, the three strategic stages can be implemented independently, but in this case the benefits are likely to be lower and the costs higher. Thus, a comprehensive roadmap should consider the stages as a continuous process composed of three sequential as well as strongly overlapping elements, even though each is more or less discrete. Clearly each ReSPA Beneficiary will be at a different stage in this progression, so the general roadmap is a guide assuming that each starts from scratch⁷. The main building blocks of the roadmap are mapped against the above three stages in **Table 1** showing the sources of evidence available.

3.3. Structure of the document

⁵ Millard, J (2015) Open governance systems: Doing more with more, *Government Information Quarterly*, 12 September 2015: <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.giq.2015.08.003>

⁶ EU eGovernment Action Plan 2016-2020: <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/european-egovernment-action-plan-2016-2020>

⁷ Specific country inputs or comments on the roadmap, derived from the interviews and the consultation process, are indicated by showing the country abbreviation in brackets.

In sections 4, 5 and 6 below, a generalised roadmap description is provided for the three stages respectively, and within each stage for the eight strategic and implementation issues. In each case the roadmap description consists of two parts:

1. Building block elements as summarised in **Table 1** for which evidence is available from the following sources.
 - E-participation questionnaire for ReSPA Beneficiaries, November 2016 (see Annex 1)
 - ReSPA report “E-Government Analysis: from E-Government to Open Government”, December 2015.
 - UN E-Participation Index data, e-participation questions and relevant e-government data from UN E-Government Survey data 2016⁸ (see Annex 1)
 - Open Government Data: star ratings 1 to 5⁹.
2. Lessons and guidance for e-participation and open government from selected global good practices, summarised and tailored to the situation in the Western Balkans.

⁸ United Nations (2016) “E-Government survey 2016– E-Government in support of sustainable development”, United Nations Department of Social and Economic Affairs New York:

<https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/reports/un-e-government-survey-2016>

⁹ Tim Berners-Lee’s “linked Open Data 5 Star Scheme” for assessing the stages of open data deployment and use: <https://www.w3.org/DesignIssues/LinkedData.html>

Table 1: Roadmap stages showing building blocks and elements: strategic and implementation issues

STRATEGIC ISSUES	Building blocks	BUILDING BLOCK ELEMENTS FOR 2016 BASELINE ASSESSMENT		
		Stage 1: TRANSPARENCY	Stage 2: ENGAGEMENT	Stage 3: COLLABORATION
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UN E-Participation Index: e-information score: enabling participation by providing citizens with public information and access to information without or upon demand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UN E-Participation Index: e-consultation score: Engaging citizens in contributions to and deliberation on public policies and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UN E-Participation Index: e-decision-making score: empowering citizens through co-design of policy options, coproduction of service components, delivery modalities
Policy & strategy	E-strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main e-strategies Open government data policies PAR policies and initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPP/PCP policies and initiatives 	
	E-participation policies and strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General e-participation strategies Rating e-participation policies and strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> E-engagement strategies Engagement strategies 	
	E-participation initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed e-participation initiatives On-going e-participation initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planned e-participation initiatives Rating e-participation implementation 	
	Opportunities for e-participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thematic areas of potential benefit Government needs for e-participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drivers and opportunities 	
	Challenges to e-participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Past challenges Future challenges 		
Institutional frameworks	Institutional framework for transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State/national authority for information (transparency) State/national authority for e-information activities (e-transparency) Rating national authority for public information (transparency) 		
	Institutional framework for engagement		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institute for public consultations (engagement) Institute for public e-consultations: activities (e-engagement) Rating national authority for public consultations (engagement) 	
	Institutional framework for data privacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State/national authority for data privacy State/national authority for data privacy: activities 		
Legal & regulatory frameworks	Legislation on transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislation and policies on freedom of information (transparency) Constitutional rights for citizens accessing public information (transparency) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislation and policies on freedom of e-information (e-transparency) Rating access to information legislation (transparency) 	
	Legislation on engagement		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislation on consulting with citizens (engagement) Constitutional rights for citizens to be consulted by government (engagement) Legislation on e-consulting with citizens (e-engagement) Rating e-consultation (e-engagement) 	
	Legislation on collaboration			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constitutional rights for citizens to participate in public policy and decision-making Rating on e-decision-making (e-collaboration)
	Open government data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislation and policies on open government data Open government data star rating 1 (available on the web (whatever format) but with an open license) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open government data star ratings 2 (available as machine-readable structured data, & 3 (plus non-proprietary format (e.g. CSV instead of excel) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open government data star ratings 4 (as above plus use open standards from W3C: RDF and SPARQL) & 5 (plus link your data to other people's data to provide context)
	Data protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies and legislation on personal data protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rating legislation on protection of personal data 	

IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES	Building blocks	BUILDING BLOCK ELEMENTS FOR 2016 BASELINE ASSESSMENT		
		Stage 1: TRANSPARENCY	Stage 2: ENGAGEMENT	Stage 3: COLLABORATION
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UN E-Participation Index: e-information score: enabling participation by providing citizens with public information and access to information without or upon demand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UN E-Participation Index: e-consultation score: Engaging citizens in contributions to and deliberation on public policies and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UN E-Participation Index: e-decision-making score: empowering citizens through co-design of policy options, coproduction of service components, delivery modalities
Government capacity	Financial capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial capacity Rating e-participation financial capacity 		
	Technical capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical hardware and software capacity Rating e-participation technical capacity Government bodies use of ICT channels 		
	Human capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personnel use of ICT Rating e-participation human capacity 		
	Social media capacity		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Processes for monitoring social media How do governments monitor social media Rating PA social media utilisation 	
	Open data capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open government data responsible official 		
E-participation features & channels	E-participation portal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> E-participation national portal and information features E-participation national portal and interactive features 		
	Transparency features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rating Information sharing with citizens (transparency) Transparency and participation 		
	Engagement features		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Web 2.0 & social media E-engagement features Rating consultation with citizens (engagement) 	
	Collaboration features			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> E-polling and e-voting features (e-collaboration) Collaboration Rating e-collaboration
	Open government data features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open government data sets Open government data Open government data star rating 1 (available on the web (whatever format) but with an open license) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open government data star ratings 2 (available as machine-readable structured data, & 3 (plus non-proprietary format (e.g. CSV instead of excel) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open government data star ratings 4 (as above plus use open standards from W3C: RDF and SPARQL) & 5 (plus link your data to other people's data to provide context)
	Targeting specific groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rating targeting specific groups 		
Public capacity	Technical capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICT Access Subsidies for vulnerable groups 		
	Human capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> User training Political activity and features 		
	Take-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internet usage survey National portal usage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social media usage 	
	Citizen trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rating citizen trust in ICT channels 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rating citizen trust in e-collaboration
	Citizen demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rating citizen demand for transparency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rating citizen demand for engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rating citizen demand for collaboration
	Capacity of specific groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSOs supporting e-participation Rating ability of specific groups for e-participation 		

4. Stage 1: transparency roadmap

4.1. Overall goals

As mentioned in section 3.2, the overall goal of a transparency strategy basically needs to ensure a one-way flow of information from government to citizen. However, given that means that the government remains relatively passive and not open to significant interaction with non-government actors, it should be seen as just the first stage of an overall e-participation and open government strategy. At stage 1, transparency by default is recommended, so that in principle all government activities should be fully transparent except in specific legally defined areas. Transparency enables the public to understand the workings of their government and makes it possible for them to hold the government to account for its policy and service delivery performance. An important part of this is putting data online.

IMPORTANT NOTE: As reflected in **Table 1**, it is clear that Stage 1, as the first stage, typically has the role of establishing policies, strategies, systems and initiatives which provide the basis for all three stages, and/or which can be built on for Stages 2 and 3. Thus, this section on the transparency roadmap is more detailed than the sections on engagement and collaboration.

4.2. Policy and strategy

4.2.1. Building block elements

E-strategy (also basis for stages 2 and 3)

- Main e-strategies
- Open government policies
- Open government data policies
- PAR policies and initiatives
- PPP/PCP policies and initiatives

E-participation policies and strategies

- General e-participation strategies
- Rating e-participation policies and strategies

E-participation initiatives (also basis for stages 2 and 3)

- Completed e-participation initiatives
- On-going e-participation initiatives
- Planned e-participation initiatives
- Rating e-participation implementation

Opportunities for e-participation (also basis for stages 2 and 3)

- Thematic areas of potential benefit
- Government needs for e-participation

- Drivers and opportunities

Challenges for e-participation (also basis for stages 2 and 3)

- Past challenges
- Future challenges

4.2.2. Lessons and guidance

1. Policy

- A long-term and politically stable policy framework is needed which provides sufficient resources, as well as political will and support.
- Focus on e-participation and open government from the beginning, as well see these as part of the wider e-government, e-strategy and Public Administration Reform PAR agenda. It is also important to closely align e-participation and open government policies with the broader societal policies a country has, both to maximise synergies and minimise conflict with such policies that could lead to lower or even negative impacts as well as the waste of resources.
- E-participation should be embedded within the wider participation, communication and awareness strategies, including using traditional media (radio, TV, posters, leaflets, campaigns, etc..) as well as physical face-to-face engagement such as 'town-hall' meetings. The specific benefits of e-participation need to be understood vis à vis the traditional means and, all means together should be deployed for maximum effect and impact.
- E-participation and open government are often most effective at local and regional level, especially in large countries, as this is where the government touches the everyday lives of citizens, where the local context can best be addressed, and where they can quickly and directly see whether or not activities have an impact.
- E-participation and open government are not goals in themselves, but tools to make wider societal goals possible, so consideration needs to be given to making them mandatory otherwise these other benefits might not appear. E-participation and open government are the cornerstones of making efficient and effective government possible, together with other elements of e-government, need to be seen on the political as well as the strategic level.

2. *Devise policies and strategies taking account of their likely as well as actual impact, benefits and costs*

The main costs of e-participation and open government are related to limited resources and funding, so that for example any efforts and finances devoted to them will result in fewer inputs for other policies, programmes and initiatives. However, there are also substantial benefits if e-participation and open government are well designed, implemented and monitored. Table 2 summarises the main types of benefits and impacts that can be considered.

Table 2: Main types of benefit of e-participation and open government¹⁰

Context	Impacts and benefits
Benefits of participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service efficiency and effectiveness • Quality and legitimacy of decisions • Good governance and active citizenship
Benefits of eParticipation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced transaction and coordination costs in social and political relationships • Greater deliberativeness due to asynchronic and anonymous qualities of ICT • The enhanced information-processing capacity which information technology facilitates
Benefits by stakeholder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For participants – increased convenience, satisfaction, feelings of involvement, greater engagement and commitment in community and society, also noting that eParticipation is not only a rational but also an emotional experience • For organisations – improved efficiency, effectiveness and legitimacy of organisations, for example successful participation can increase the economic viability of private and civil sector organisations, and probably also public institutions as well, by reducing costs. Also the increased efficiency and quality of their own policy-making • For governments – support for social cohesion and other society-wide policies • For all – eParticipation can increase overall participation rates and the intensity and quality of participation if undertaken in the right way
Benefits related to policy and governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ends or means: the instrumental benefits (i.e. means to an end) compared to the intrinsic benefits of a participation process (i.e. end in itself, e.g. learning, individual reflective learning or social learning) The type of governance mode is more important for instrumental benefits than for intrinsic benefits. • Who benefits: public compared to private goods and values which are produced (instrumental benefits are often public goods and intrinsic often private, although this is not always the case) • Short-term / long-term: the more immediate (micro) benefits of a distinct project or initiative compared to the longer-term (macro) benefits of living in a participative political culture. This can also be related to the operational outputs of an eParticipation project, on the one hand, compared to its outcomes and impacts.
Benefits at local and regional government level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most headway with eParticipation has been made at the local level. • The most commonly used eParticipation tools currently are discussion forums and e-consultation tools. • However, there are considerable variations between cultural contexts, e.g. in Europe ‘deliberation’ tools tend to predominate, notably forums, given that the political culture is typically more participative and on-going. (This applies to the national level as well.) This is compared with the USA where ‘transparency’ tools seem to predominate, such as webcasting, podcasting and Web 2.0 tools like RSS feeds and video sharing. Here, the political culture tends to be to hold representatives more to account and this typically peaks at campaign time.
Benefits at national government level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Given that the national level representative system has become formalised and entrenched over often hundreds of years, it is more difficult to find a role for eParticipation, so it is less in use here than at local level. • However, some eParticipation tools have increasingly been developed in recent years to help citizens lobby their representatives more effectively and in a coordinated way, or to enliven the internal democratic life of political parties. The use of basic personal communication tools for similar purposes, especially email, has also expanded.
Benefits at European level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eParticipation is used even less at the European level than the national level, not least due to the fragmentation of the European public sphere in which the vast majority of media are focused at national and/or local level, and because of the problems of linguistic diversity. • However, some eParticipation tools are starting to be used such as forums, blogs, email, and some virtual communities.

¹⁰ European Commission (2009). European eParticipation Summary Report:
<https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/community/epractice/document/eu-european-e-participation-summary-report>

3. *Quick wins*

- Quick wins always need to be undertaken with care so as not to impede longer term goals.
- Analyse where and how costs are incurred, the number of transactions and their costs, to distinguish those which can be rapidly changed to produce quick results from those which require longer term work.
- Examine all relevant legal and regulatory issues to identify which can be rapidly changed to produce quick results as compared to those requiring longer term work.
- In the absence of obligation, start only with “the willing” entities, build on those and show the benefits to others.
- Set up principles for how to incorporate e-participation and open government in new regulation, e.g. what areas are regulated, what data is there access to, what are users being asked to do, is it technically feasible, etc.? Also, do other authorities possess the information being requested.
- A ‘risk-based’ approach to e-participation and open government is needed, e.g. for the latter compare the efforts involved in preparing and making available open data versus the risks of not doing so.

Many of the policies prepared and implemented in Stage 1 will need to be designed for all three stages, depending on the overall ambition and goals. Such policies include the following.

4. *Develop and align and enforce relevant policy, institutional, legal and regulatory provisions*

Although many policy, institutional, legal and regulatory provisions are in place, they are often insufficiently aligned. In addition, enforcement mechanisms and adherence within and between entities are typically weak so their impact and effectiveness is reduced. This is necessary in order to address the next recommendation.

5. *Form collaborative alliances across government*

It is important to form collaborative alliances across government to coordinate the roadmap effectively so that these joint efforts can leverage the maximum potential, ensure redundant investments are avoided, exploit synergies wherever possible, and introduce a culture of sharing and reusing building blocks and solutions as part of routine practice. To achieve these principles, effective collaboration within a collaborative governance structure involving all relevant key players is of utmost importance. In order to achieve the priorities outlined in the roadmap, the full commitment of specified actors is required as a precondition. This is necessary to tackle the silo phenomena and especially where different ministries, agencies and levels compete against each other.

Specifically, there is often a lack of coordination between relevant stakeholders, such as IT-bodies, involved ministries and other entities. Mostly, these actors have their own agendas and do not take into consideration the requirements and developments of other entities. This non-coordination will severely hamper the effectiveness and efficiency of implementing the roadmap, as well as build barriers to interoperability.

If policy-making, implementation and oversight are imbedded into a single line organisation, it will be seen as a competitor by other entities, rather than as a facilitator for the whole of the government. Thus, cooperation can typically only occur when such an organisation has cross-

government responsibility and power, supported by clear political pressure from the top. Similarly, if responsibilities for IT in line ministries are spread between subordinated agencies, this causes them to compete with one another at the expense of the public good and the overall principles of good governance. Without built-in collaboration, expensive infrastructure will be underutilised and e-services, e-participation and open government data will not be developed and shared. Although many deficiencies are caused by the understandable lack of financial resources, existing systems often contain plenty of redundancies to reduce the IT and other expenditure of the government in the short and medium term while opening up new opportunities for longer-term growth.

6. *Tackle the resistance of government entities to recognise e-participation and open government as apart of the core business of government*

E-participation, open government and open government data are typically seen as chores and burdens on government rather than as tasks and responsibilities, and there is insufficient awareness and understanding of their value in economic, social and democratic terms.

Overcoming this resistance is ultimately dependent on applying high level political will, legal obligations and budgetary entitlement/enforcement to drive a change of culture. This must enable a set of core competencies needed to focus on the prioritisation of overall public value rather than, as is often the case at present, the individual interests of different agencies competing with each other. Change should focus on a shift away from this inherent competition based on exclusive ownership of data by individual agencies, and even the selling of data between agencies (which should be disallowed and the costs allocated centrally by budgetary entitlement). In other words, data should be seen not as a commodity but as a resource. If the use of publicly created resources is charged for between entities, disincentives for the re-use of data will be created, and unnecessary complications in accounting will grow exponentially with the increase in interoperability. This inhibits e-participation and open government, as well as all e-government development.

Thus, it is important to determine what is 'core' business in e-participation and open government, as part of the overall e-government policy, and to ensure that this can be handled inside government. This is necessary to retain control and retain/build competence, whilst the many non-core tasks can be outsourced to help build national and WB ICT businesses through PPPs and PCPs.

Sometimes agencies are reluctant to release data because there are concerns with its accuracy, but this can often be overcome by always specifying the provenance and timelines of the data and being completely transparent about its shortcomings as part of the guide as to how it can be used. In turn, international experience shows that users accept this and even in some cases work with government to improve its accuracy and hence value for all stakeholders. The focus should move towards combining and sharing across government to enable more efficient use of available resources including data, e.g. by establishing inter-agency networks and training.

7. *Align the e-participation roadmap with the e-government agenda and the wider political agenda*

The roadmap needs to be aligned with the overall e-government agenda as well as the wider political agenda. This also includes the wider spectrum of government policies. The greater this alignment is, the greater will be the effective impact of the roadmap and the lower the effort and cost.

4.3. Institutional frameworks

4.3.1. Building block elements

Institutional framework for transparency

- State/national authority for information (transparency)
- State/national authority for e-information activities (e-transparency)
- Rating national authority for public information (e-transparency)

Institutional framework for data privacy (also basis for stages 2 and 3)

- State/national authority for data privacy
- State/national authority for data privacy: activities

4.3.2. Lessons and guidance

1. Governance

- There is a need for clear role and authority demarcations between entities, including the balance between centralisation and de-centralisation, especially concerning responsibility and accountability. Where there are decentralised entities involved in the strategy, these should be coordinated and supported.
- In terms of the overall responsibilities for implementing the roadmap for e-participation and open government, the following general approach is strongly recommended (in approximate sequence although the process will be to be iterative):
 1. Centrally: develop and determine the overall long-term strategies, priorities, frameworks and infrastructures at the centre linked to the beneficiary's general policy goals.
 2. De-centrally: determine the goals and needs of each entity/ministry/local government operating at decentralised level.
 3. Centrally: prioritise, coordinate and (if necessary) enforce the goals and needs centrally.
 4. De-centrally: implement decentrally (responsibility of relevant entities)
 5. Centrally: coordinate, monitor and (if necessary) enforce on-going implementation at the centre.

Once the details of the action plan are determined, the implementation guidelines, including timing, can be prepared. Some initial guidelines can, however, be specified in this general roadmap, as described in the following:

- Coordinate and/or enforce the strategy at top level politically (prime minister's or president's office), or through a powerful cross agency task force, for example located in the Finance.
- Rigorous change and risk management programmes together with strong leadership at all levels is required.
- Governance can also ensure robust change management which is necessary due to wide differences in how civil servants work, for example the initial needs assessments and designing e-participation and open government tools. Training in the use of new tools and in undertaking complex inter-administration communication work is also very important.

2. *Monitoring*

- Monitoring the roll-out of the strategy is necessary to assess and quantify both monetisable and non-monetisable costs and benefits for e-participation and open government on an on-going basis
- However, benchmarking and comparing between agencies is not always easy as processes vary and are often not transparent.
- Use a standardised approach to monitor and analyse impacts and deploy this to develop and update the business case for implementing e-participation and open government.
- Undertake specific studies on costs, benefits and other impacts, both nationally but also internationally, to learn from good practices elsewhere.

4.4. Legal and regulatory frameworks

4.4.1. Building block elements

Legislation on transparency

- Legislation and policies on freedom of information (transparency)
- Constitutional rights for citizens accessing public information (transparency)
- Legislation and policies on freedom of e-information (e-transparency)
- Rating access to information legislation (transparency)

Open government data

- Legislation and policies on open government data (should be basis for stages 2 and 3)
- Open government data star rating 1 (available on the web (whatever format) but with an open license)

Data protection (should be basis for stages 2 and 3)

- Policies and legislation on personal data protection
- Rating legislation on protection of personal data

4.4.2. Lessons and guidance

1. *Legal*

- Establishing a sound forward looking legal basis is extremely important, which also ensures as much transparency as possible as well as clear lines of accountability.

- Consider whether e-participation and open government should be mandatory and whether to achieve them in steps. Some entities are reluctant as they think they may lose power.
- There can be legal distinctions between legal enablement and legal obligation.
- No entity should be able to request data from users if already given to another entity.
- Get the legal relationships right with vendors and other non-public actors.
- The legal basis maybe not of paramount importance compared with governance or monitoring. In principle, administrations might well enforce an e-participation and open government policy on a voluntary basis. The right mix of policy and quick wins is highly dependent on specific the political and social context.
- Often digitisation comes after legislation, but should instead be considered before making new legislation. This will lead to closer coordination between regulation and the successful implementation of policies.

2. *Data quality*

- The ownership of data, including who has responsibility for data quality, data update, data loss, etc., is a critical issue.
- Clear instructions to agencies are needed as to how to use and re-use data, based on common standards and approaches.
- Taxonomy (semantic) issues are important, including defining terms in law so they are equivalent, such as addresses, etc.
- A critical issue is semantics when not everyone use sthe same definition for similar items.
- ReSPA Beneficiaries should align their business reporting systems with the global standards and framework using equivalent fields, taxonomies and definitions.
- Enable users to see their data and apply to correct errors and improve quality.
- Enable users to track which entities have used their data to increase trust.
- Data can be of good quality in one context but not at all sufficient in another.
- Open data and open standards are very important.

3. *Data protection*

- Clear, trustworthy and legally defined data protection/privacy rules and systems are necessary for e-participation and open government to be successful, together with robust information management systems.
- A clear legal base is needed, e.g. which entities and officials can use which data.
- A big issue is how much control the user has over his/her own data. Where there are no base registries or unique user identifiers, one option is to consider how to allow people to control the use of their own data. For example in the UK through the Identity Assurance Programme which enables citizens or business to remain in control of their data in a personal safe box and decide which entities can see and use it. This is a policy of data re-use and processing by user consent, but can be overridden by law if necessary. One widely accepted solution to providing identity online in the UK is the development of 'identity assurance' using a federated trust 'framework', or trust 'ecosystem'. Basically, this requires an industry- agreed set of protocols, standards and certification under which organisations can collaborate to allow citizens to use assets they own to validate and verify their identity to 'relying parties'.
- Conciliate the e-participation and open government strategy with national regulations on privacy and data protection.

- Data protection should be mandated at all levels of the administration.
- National ID and authentication are important in allowing people to control the use of their own data. Data protection is conditional for trust in e-participation and open government, and in that sense it is very important, although too narrow an interpretation of data protection may conflict with other policies such as 'once only'.

4. *Security*

There are three security issues that require attention for safe eParticipation

- **Technical Security:** Prevention of damage to your own systems by viruses, hackers or people with malicious intent. Also spam and spam prevention though for example entering email details, registration, logging on via Facebook profile, etc.
- **Citizen Security:** The security of personal citizen data such as passwords, personal ID-numbers, bank account and health details.
- **Reputation Security:** Prevention of publishing or displaying content, such as pornography, that would cause offence to users. This requires co-operation between authors, discussion moderators, marketing and legal departments. Also prevention of, or positive response to, inaccurate, or potentially illegal material. The requires a proactive approach by marketing and covers not only your own 'in house' domain but also any online social media systems where the government might be discussed.

4.5. **Government capacity**

4.5.1. **Building block elements**

Financial capacity (should also be basis for stages 2 and 3)

- Financial capacity
- Rating e-participation financial capacity

Technical capacity (should also be basis for stages 2 and 3)

- Technical hardware and software capacity
- Government bodies use of ICT channels
- Rating e-participation technical capacity

Human capacity (should also be basis for stages 2 and 3)

- Personnel use of ICT
- Rating e-participation human capacity

Open data capacity (should also be basis for stages 2 and 3)

- Open government data responsible official

4.5.2. **Lessons and guidance**

Many of the policies prepared and implemented in Stage 1 will need to be designed for all three stages, depending on the overall ambition and goals. Such policies include the following.

1. Increase government's knowledge and application of key success factors

The key success factors of e-participation and open government are to focus on high impact areas and issues sets to prioritize initiatives. For example, in the area of open government data, the overall level of development of open data initiatives amongst the ReSPA beneficiaries seems rather limited. Some specific challenges include:

- There is a very limited number of data sets
- Data is not published in machine-readable format (e.g. instead as PDF files)
- OGP partnerships often have only limited (or no) partners from the civil and private sectors
- The legal base for open data is still in progress in some countries
- There is limited awareness and/or capability concerning open data
- Some countries do not have a fully functional open data portal.

In order to realise the benefits of open data in a short period of time, it is important to focus on high value data sets, either as defined by the European Commission and the G8¹¹ and as prioritised by the ReSPA beneficiaries in consultation with potential end users. Apart from a sectoral/domain focus, the approach can also be at a specific government level, e.g. choosing a specific domain within a city. Many open data initiatives have shown that great value and engagement is achieved at this level, and indeed cities are at the forefront¹² of releasing and exploiting open data in the leading countries globally.

2. Develop the capacity of government personnel

Many of the policies and initiatives needed for e-participation and open government will only be successful if government personnel also have a whole-of-government perspective and have the security, confidence and assurance that they can receive good career progression across the public sector through good management practices as well as appropriate employment contracts and training.

Although, the overall level of awareness held by ReSPA beneficiaries of open government in general and open government data specifically is reasonable, more emphasis is needed on knowledge transfer and capacity building. The extensive online resources provided by the European Commission's Data Portal, including Massive Open Online Courses, Case Studies, Specific Reports and Gold Books provide an excellent starting point for this¹³. ReSPA and its beneficiaries could benefit from actively promoting the use of these online resources amongst data managers, CIOs and government staff generally.

3. Raise awareness and exploit the benefits of cross-border cooperation

The cross-border value of e-participation and open government initiatives can be found both at the European Level as well as regionally within the Western Balkans, but is insufficiently developed by ReSPA beneficiaries. At EU level, the European Commission's European Data Portal¹⁴ harvests metadata from all national EU28+ portals, provides learning resources and

¹¹ See also: http://ec.europa.eu/isa/documents/publications/report-on-high-value-datasets-from-eu-institutions_en.pdf

¹² See also: https://www.europeandataportal.eu/sites/default/files/edp_analytical_report_n4_-_open_data_in_cities_v1.0_final.pdf

¹³ See <https://www.europeandataportal.eu/en/training-library/elearning> and <https://www.europeandataportal.eu/en/training-library/training-companion>.

¹⁴ www.europeandataportal.eu

support tools. A user can obtain open data from many different countries and across numerous languages through the portal. Pan-European data in multiple domains can be of great value to journalists, governments, businesses, NGOs and citizens for a wide variety of purposes. At regional level, very specific data domains can similarly be of great value, for example in the area of environmental and/or agricultural data where regional cross-border economic activity is taking place.

4.6. E-participation features and channels

4.6.1. Building block elements

E-participation portal (should also be basis for stages 2 and 3)

- E-participation national portal and information features
- E-participation national portal and interactive features

Transparency features

- Rating Information sharing with citizens (transparency)
- Transparency and participation

Open government data features

- Open government data sets (should also be basis for stages 2 and 3)
- Open government data (should also be basis for stages 2 and 3)
- Open government data star rating 1 (available on the web (whatever format) but with an open license)

Targeting specific groups (should also be basis for stages 2 and 3)

- Rating targeting specific groups

UN E-Participation Index 2016

- E-information score: enabling participation by providing citizens with public information and access to information without or upon demand

UN e-participation questions 2016: availability of information/evidence on transparency and e-information

- E-participation portal
 - Official website (UN Stage I #1)
 - Portal info on 1. Justice/Security, 2. Finance, 3. Education, 4. Health, 5. Employment/growth, 6. Social Services/Welfare, 7. Environment, 8. Housing, 9. Water and Sanitation, 10. Transport (UN Stage I #1-8)
 - Availability of sources of archived information (policies, budget, legal documents, budgets, etc.); plus 1. Justice/Security, 2. Finance, 3. Education, 4. Health, 5. Employment/growth, 6. Social Services/Welfare, 7. Environment, 8. Housing, 9. Water and Sanitation, 10. Transport (UN Stage I #1-8) (UN Stage I #8-16)
- Transparency features
 - Availability of online information on citizens' rights to access government information (such as Freedom of Information Act or Access to Information Act)
 - Anti-corruption policy

- Availability of e-participation policies/mission statements
- Availability of public procurement notifications and tender results online
- Public services: About and How to use them
- Forms download/print, (policies, etc., ministries, etc.)
- Link to eParticipation Portal
- Audit institution / anti-corruption section
- Civil servants' code of conduct
- Open government data features
 - Section or link to open data initiative?
 - PDF documents accessible
 - Legislation on Data Privacy
 - Personal Data Protection Acts or equivalent
 - Legislation on Open Data
 - Policy on Open Government Data
 - Guidance using Open Government Data
- Data protection features
 - Availability of “personal data protection” legislation online
 - Privacy Statement
- Targeting specific groups
 - Archived information on/for vulnerable groups (UN Stage I #21)

4.6.2. Lessons and guidance

Many of the policies prepared and implemented in Stage 1 will need to be designed for all three stages, depending on the overall ambition and goals. Such policies include the following.

1. Align and design e-participation features and channels to suit the joint needs of the government and users

Given the precise conditions in each ReSPA beneficiary context, the technical e-participation features and channels need to be tailored as precisely as possible to suit the joint needs of both government and users. An ongoing process of experimentation and adaption in which lessons learnt can be easily applied is needed, which also draws on European and global best practice as well as on high levels of cooperation between ReSPA beneficiaries and other European countries.

2. Raise awareness and take up of e-government generally and e-participation specifically amongst citizens and businesses

Although a number of basic infrastructures and e-services are already in place, and some awareness raising activities have been carried out, the take-up of e-service and e-participation offers and solutions is generally low amongst ReSPA Beneficiaries. While in general citizens and businesses are already using the Internet, they are often not aware of the e-services offered by public agencies, nor do they know how to use the provided services.

3. Provide incentives for citizens and businesses to participate

Basic questions need to be asked as to why citizens and businesses wish to participate, and specifically e-participate, what is in it for them and how they can do it. Thus, although

government capacity may be in place, the capacity and willingness of the public to participate is often lacking. It is thus important to address issues of why and how should people participate and to make this easy and rewarding, and what types of incentives are needed to get them to do so successfully and continue to do so in future.

4.7. Public capacity

4.7.1. Building block elements

Technical capacity (should also be basis for stages 2 and 3)

- ICT Access
- Subsidies for vulnerable groups

Human capacity (should also be basis for stages 2 and 3)

- User training
- Political activity and features

Take-up (should also be basis for stages 2 and 3)

- Internet usage survey
- National portal usage
- Social media usage

Citizen trust (should also be basis for stages 2 and 3)

- Rating citizen trust in ICT channels

Citizen demand

- Rating citizen demand for transparency

Capacity of specific groups (should also be basis for stages 2 and 3)

- CSOs supporting e-participation
- Rating ability of specific groups for e-participation

4.7.2. Lessons and guidance

1. Provide basic digital training

Basic digital training is needed, offered to the whole population, especially to those who are traditionally digitally excluded, such as the elderly, the poor and/or disabled. For example, this should cover the acquisition of appropriate ICT, how to access and how to use. This could be started at school and college level, as well as by providing support through citizen groups and CSOs, as well as ad hoc support in public offices.

2. Engage directly with the public to curate the demand side ecosystem for e-participation and open government

Effort is needed to ensure that both e-participation features and open data are used. For example, the involvement of open data re-users is crucial to both help prioritise which data sets could be of value as well as to receive direct feedback on what improvements are needed in

data provision to improve its usability. It is important that governments and other data providers proactively curate demand side ecosystems by providing appropriate tools, open data catalogues, customised support for specific needs and problems, advice, events, prizes, hackathons, cases and good practices, etc. To facilitate this, a survey of business and civil society awareness of, and needs for, open data should be undertaken, which will also help to identify quick wins and potential pioneers. In promoting the value of open data to users, focus should not be on the open data as a technological fix, but on how its use can provide specific (public) value benefits, such as for competitiveness, jobs, safety, health, education, inclusion, quality of life, transparency, etc.

5. Stage 2: engagement roadmap

5.1. Overall goals

As mentioned in section 3.2, the overall goal of an engagement transparency strategy is mainly a two-way exchange of information, knowledge and opinion from government to citizen (and other non-government actors) and vice versa, so that government becomes relatively active. At stage 2, engagement by default is recommended, so that in principle all government activities should be fully open to public engagement except in specific legally defined areas. Engagement allows members of the public to contribute ideas and expertise so their government can make policies with the benefit of information that is widely dispersed in society. However, government tends to determine the agenda, which issues are open for consultation, and does not directly include other actors in its decision-making, so that it always retains the leading role. Whereas transparency on its own is passive, transparency is necessary for engagement to actively function so that the public can see and understand what is happening inside government to order to influence its workings by engaging with public policy processes and public service providers. An important part of this is putting data online and making it machine readable and structured.

IMPORTANT NOTE: As reflected in **Table 1**, it is clear that Stage 2, as the second stage, typically builds upon the policies, strategies, systems and initiatives developed in Stage 1.

5.2. Policy and strategy

5.2.1. Building block elements

E-strategy (should be covered by stage 1)

- Main e-strategies
- Open government policies
- Open government data policies
- PAR policies and initiatives
- PPP/PCP policies and initiatives

E-participation policies and strategies (also basis for stage 3)

- E-engagement strategies
- Engagement strategies

E-participation initiatives (should be covered by stage 1)

- Completed e-participation initiatives
- On-going e-participation initiatives
- Planned e-participation initiatives
- Rating e-participation implementation

Opportunities for e-participation (should be covered by stage 1)

- Thematic areas of potential benefit
- Government needs for e-participation
- Drivers and opportunities

Challenges for e-participation (should be covered by stage 1)

- Past challenges
- Future challenges

5.2.2. Lessons and guidance

1. *Four pillars of e-engagement policy*

- i) The overall philosophy – why are you doing e-participation and e-engagement, i.e. the specific purpose it serves
- ii) List of facilities functions – how you are doing it, i.e. the specific role and rationale of each function
- iii) Commitments to how you will handle participation, use of moderation, rules, etc. – service delivery obligation
- iv) Expectations about user behaviour, for example a code of conduct.

2. *Success criteria for e-engagement*

- Be clear about the purpose and what you expect eParticipation to do (and not do), and focus on real (e)participation needs at the outset of the process.
- Overall processes and outcomes must be highly transparent, open and in most cases negotiable, as this helps build confidence.
- High level (political) backing can be critical.
- Use words and language people understand, and not just 'coded' information.
For example, there may be cases where, in order to involve stakeholders in policy-making, providing policy drafts may not be enough but instead such drafts should be explained or commented in terms simpler than those used in European law.
- Listen as well as ask and tell, including let people express their anger and frustration.
- Timing – get participants involved early in the policy lifecycle.
- Provide feedback on inputs, show how it is used so the citizen doesn't feel that their input is simply disappearing into a black hole ... if does not affect the outcome, explain why.
- If inputs are ignored, cynicism breeds.

- Before start, decide how to collect input, how to analyse it, how to use it, and make this clear to participants.
- Directly address the needs/interest of participants, and involve them in this.
- Use careful, independent, trustworthy moderation, with transparent guidelines.
- Clear, transparent, rules-based discourse and accountability may be more important than ICT to increase participation.
- Must take citizen inputs very seriously (whether they are asked to give them or they give them anyway), show how they are used, etc. A rationale needs to be provided for the final outcome or decision which specifically addresses participant inputs.
- Provide independent monitoring where appropriate to ensure balance as well as to minimise mis-use and inappropriate online behaviour.
- Always be wary of the digital divide, so do not assume that every view or need is captured.
- Evaluate – including asking the participants!

3. *Process simplification and reduction*

- Simplification of processes, forms, legal requirements, etc., is an ongoing process, including trying to get rid of forms and reducing the time needed to engage.
- The goal is to simplify forms and processes to improve their usability by obtaining as much data as possible from the relevant base registries where the legal base allows this.
- Make processes smarter, more intuitive and user friendly using data from the base registries, supplemented where relevant by new data from the user.
- Undertake initiatives to simplify procedures, e.g. by analysing processes and propose simplifications, benchmarking, etc.
- Integrated e-participation and open government services are simple services which require little effort from citizens, so that complexity is kept in the back office and never in the front office.

4. *User-centred design*

- Move to fully user-centred design processes, such as through ‘design thinking’ employing ethnographic and anthropological approaches, as well as the analysis of e-participation and open government personas and service pathways, which will also assist in developing very simple, highly personalised services which are of high quality and easy to use.
- For example, the Danish Business Authority is undertaking anthropological studies – observation studies – on companies engaging with the legal processes, e.g. how companies understand the information and procedures they are presented with. The UK’s service design principles were fully rolled out in 2014 and include the proviso that no service will be launched unless the responsible minister can successfully complete it unaided and in a timely manner. Working groups have been set up with stakeholders to develop style guides and similar can be useful to achieve this.
- Once basic policies and systems are in place, focus should be on providing services that enhance user experience and usability, and to ensure that procedures are supported by fluid and fully integrated services.
- Finland has reduced the work of the user through good service design and actual use benefits, rather than just better access and ease of use, so has developed ‘service design models’ which involve government doing all or most of the work, thereby enabling users to use as much of their time as possible to engage/collaborate.

5. *Personalisation*

- Focus on usability through segmented as well as personalised e-participation and open government services, e.g. using MyPage interfaces as in Denmark and the Netherlands This also includes better exploitation of multiple channels, including web, social media, mobile, kiosks, call centres, service centres, etc., as services are honed to individual needs using the most suitable means.
- Ultimately simplification means personalisation, as everything which is not relevant to a given user and their specific needs at a particular time and place, is removed.
- Government should move to becoming like a personal assistant (and intelligent agent), as are the best commercial companies through a process of 'mass customisation'. This might involve switching between, on the one hand, the government 'pushing' pro-active services it 'knows' individual users want or need (using big data, data analytics together with base registries, etc.), and, on the other hand, empowering users to reactively 'pull' what they 'want', e.g. through providing their own data, co-creation, from the cloud, etc.

5.3. Institutional frameworks

5.3.1. Building block elements

Institutional framework for engagement (also basis for stage 3)

- Institute for public consultations (engagement)
- Institute for public e-consultations: activities (e-engagement)
- Rating national authority for public consultations (engagement)

Institutional framework for data privacy (should be covered by stage 1)

- State/national authority for data privacy
- State/national authority for data privacy: activities

5.3.2. Lessons and guidance

1. Governance

The governance recommendations here are similar to those in Stage 1 (section 4.3) but upgraded to take account of the e-engagement and e-consultation context. It is thus recommended that Stage 2 governance be already included in the Stage 1 institutional framework design.

2. Monitoring

The monitoring guidance here is similar to those in Stage 1 (section 4.3) but upgraded to take account of the e-engagement and e-consultation context. It is thus recommended that Stage 2 monitoring be already included in the Stage 1 institutional framework design.

5.4. Legal and regulatory frameworks

5.4.1. Building block elements

Legislation on engagement (should also cover stage 3)

- Legislation on consulting with citizens (engagement)
- Constitutional rights for citizens to be consulted by government (engagement)
- Legislation on e-consulting with citizens (e-engagement)
- Rating e-consultation (e-engagement)

Open government data

- Legislation and policies on open government data (should be covered by stage 1)
- Open government data star ratings 2 (available as machine-readable structured data, & 3 (plus non-proprietary format (e.g. CSV instead of excel)

Data protection (should be covered by stage 1)

- Policies and legislation on personal data protection
- Rating legislation on protection of personal data

5.4.2. Lessons and guidance

1. Legal

The legal guidance here is similar to those in Stage 1 (section 4.3) but upgraded to take account of the e-engagement and e-consultation context. It is thus recommended that Stage 2 legal be already included in the Stage 1 legal and regulation framework design.

2. Data quality

The data quality guidance here is similar to those in Stage 1 (section 4.3) but upgraded to take account of the e-engagement and e-consultation context. It is thus recommended that Stage 2 data quality be already included in the Stage 1 legal and regulation framework design.

3. Data protection

The data protection guidance here is similar to those in Stage 1 (section 4.3) but upgraded to take account of the e-engagement and e-consultation context. It is thus recommended that Stage 2 data protection be already included in the Stage 1 legal and regulation framework design.

4. Security

The security guidance here is similar to those in Stage 1 (section 4.3) but upgraded to take account of the e-engagement and e-consultation context. It is thus recommended that Stage 2 security be already included in the Stage 1 legal and regulation framework design.

5.5. Government capacity

5.5.1. Building block elements

Financial capacity (should be covered by stage 1)

- Financial capacity
- Rating e-participation financial capacity

Technical capacity (should be covered by stage 1)

- Technical hardware and software capacity
- Government bodies use of ICT channels
- Rating e-participation technical capacity

Human capacity (should be covered by stage 1)

- Personnel use of ICT
- Rating e-participation human capacity

Open data capacity (should be covered by stage 1)

- Open government data responsible official

Social media capacity (should also be basis for stage3)

- Processes for monitoring social media
- How do governments monitor social media
- Rating PA social media utilisation

5.5.2. Lessons and guidance

1. Guidance for civil servants

Civil servants who engage with the public on websites and in social media should abide by the following principles:

- Be credible. Be accurate, fair, thorough and transparent.
- Be responsive. When you gain insight, share it where appropriate.
- Be integrated. Whenever possible, align online participation with other offline communications.
- Be a civil servant. Remember that you are the ambassador for your organisation. Whenever possible, disclose your position as a representative of your department or agency.
- Be clear and open about what you can and cannot do. Make sure you openly distinguish situations where you can give concrete advice as a representative of government from situations where you can only inform citizens how to get such advice.

Social media however are about individuals talking to each other and interacting. That is the whole social aspect. As a civil servant engaging on behalf of the organisation in social media, you will act as a person (but representing your organisation).

2. *Civil servant: understand how to select issues*

- **Which issues:** concrete and local. Much experience shows that there are, for example, two areas in which e-engagement works well and both are at city/local level, i.e. participatory budgeting and public planning¹⁵. The reason seems to be that they are concrete enough to get people involved, although then, interestingly, participants frequently begin to abstract and start talking about other topics and perhaps even more general political perspectives and visions. An example is a discussion on a single issue over a public space in Hamburg that broadened out and fed into broader multi-issue consultations over a 20-year strategic plan for the city. One conclusion from this is that highly close, local, specific and concrete topic hooks should be used to start the participation process, and then to encourage a natural process of widening out to encompass related and more general issues which participants themselves embark upon. However, it seems important, even when participants themselves extend the scope of their interest, to ensure that online debates remain concrete (like a strategic plan which contains many specific proposals) if they are to be successful.
- **Single issues.** A clear current trend is also the increasing importance of single issue politics, seemingly at the expense of party politics. Citizens and voters seem to want both to reduce tax on petrol but also protection for the environment, cheaper house prices for their sons and daughters to join the housing ladder but also don't want houses built near them, lower taxes but better public services. In other words, however laudable single issues are, taken together they are often undeliverable. The Internet is however, a highly effective tool both for organising and propagandising single issues, and this is one reason why they are on the rise.

3. *Civil servants: frame the debate and link issues*

One of the biggest challenges of e-engagement is for politicians is to cope with an avalanche of single issue campaigns (including housing for the homeless, Amnesty International and Greenpeace) through constructive engagement, and where ICT can both exacerbate the problem as well as potentially provide some answers. It is thus important to focus on the Internet's potential to provide space for deliberation and debate, in addition to or rather than the shouting and trivialisation which can also occur (see also section 1). An important way to do this is for politicians or civil servants to accurately and fairly frame the debate, so that it balances simplicity and leverage, on the one hand, with nuance and the need to recognise trade-off with other issues on the other. As government is increasingly becoming just one player among many, it is finding that it needs to be an arbiter between competing interests in society. In this role, the intelligent and balanced framing of issues is critical. Many single issue campaigns have an external face, based on propaganda, stridency and opposition to a policy or another group. However, many also have an internal stance which is reasonable, measured and capable of compromise. Politicians and others must therefore seek to avoid 'false polarisation', focusing much more on genuine disagreement which recognises complexity and trade-off.

4. *Civil servants: which processes and which stakeholders*

- **Which processes.** What works often depends on careful timing, for example, by ensuring that participant input is early enough to make a difference to the outcome, and that it is

¹⁵ Millard, J (2009) "eParticipation recommendations" Deliverable of the European eParticipation study, European Commission.

sufficiently regular in terms of time and scope to suit the specific situation¹⁶. This relates to where in the policy or political life cycle participation is designed to take place. It is also important to measure and provide feedback and show that you are listening, so the citizen doesn't feel that their input is simply disappearing into a black hole. Lack of feedback makes people cynical. How to listen and to do this constructively needs careful consideration. Thus, it is essential that e-engagement efforts are acknowledged, that feedback is given where appropriate, and that evidence is provided on the impact of people's engagement, even if this did not fundamentally change anything, although the reasons for this must be clear and transparent. Recognition is required and must be open and communicated, so that a participative culture is created and maintained. Success with providing accessible and useful information depends on using language that people understand and not just 'coded' information. However, this clearly also depends on the particular stakeholder so, for example, professional or special interest groups should be addressed in the language they use and understand, linked of course to the mandate of the organisation concerned and its objectives.

- **Which stakeholders.** A major success requirement of e-engagement is the necessity to directly address the needs of the stakeholders involved, understand their situation and motives, and get them involved in identifying and designing the process. Stakeholders should try to define their own interests and strategies, i.e. determine why and how they will use eParticipation. Most success seems to come when the expectations of stakeholders are outlined from the beginning, including the purpose, the means, the processing of input, and the outcomes. Thus, objectives need to be clear from the outset, and, in particular, the participants themselves need to understand in a transparent way the procedure, otherwise their interest in participating will rapidly diminish.

5. *Security and privacy for civil servants*

The organisation's IT and other security policies also apply to social media websites, but a few additional precautions must be taken:

- Employees should not use their official email address or password to log into their private accounts on social media websites. It is essential that an employee's professional and social profiles online are kept separate.
- Websites such as Facebook offer access to additional applications which may pose security risks such as spam, phishing and security attacks. Further, such third party applications may misuse or keep data indefinitely.
- The incentive to share data is so strong, that the user becomes more lax when it comes to their own personal privacy, especially on third party applications like social media sites. Employees should be educated about these security risks. They must be aware that:
 - Information shared can potentially remain on the internet indefinitely
 - They must never share sensitive government information such as confidential data or private information about themselves or others
- It should be clearly stated what type of information civil servants can disclose when using social media.

¹⁶ Millard, J (2009) "eParticipation recommendations" Deliverable of the European eParticipation study, European Commission

5.6. E-participation features and channels

5.6.1. Building block elements

E-participation portal (should be covered by stage 1)

- E-participation national portal and information features
- E-participation national portal and interactive features

Engagement features

- Web 2.0 & social media
- E-engagement features
- Rating consultation with citizens (engagement)

Open government data features

- Open government data sets (should be covered by stage 1)
- Open government data (should be covered by stage 1)
- Open government data star ratings 2 (available as machine-readable structured data, & 3 (plus non-proprietary format (e.g. CSV instead of excel)

Targeting specific groups (should be covered by stage 1)

- Rating targeting specific groups

UN E-Participation Index 2016

- E-consultation score: engaging citizens in contributions to and deliberation on public policies and services

UN e-participation questions 2016: availability of information/evidence on engagement and e-consultation

- E-participation portal
 - Audio/Video contents
 - Multilingual
 - Forms online/upload, (policies, etc., ministries, etc.)
 - Upcoming e-participation activities
 - Open parliament action plan
 - E-law making system
- Engagement features
 - Evidence about engaging citizens in consultation/communication to improve online/mobile services and raise citizens' satisfaction with them
 - Evidence about engaging citizens in consultation/communication on education, health, finance, social welfare, labour, environment
 - Availability of online tools (on the national portal) to seek public opinion and other input in raw (non-deliberative) form policy formation
 - Evidence about decisions made that included the results of consultation with citizens online in the area of education, health, finance, social welfare, labour, environment
 - Evidence about governments' publishing the outcomes of policy consultations online
 - Updates via mail or RSS, (policies, etc., ministries, etc.)

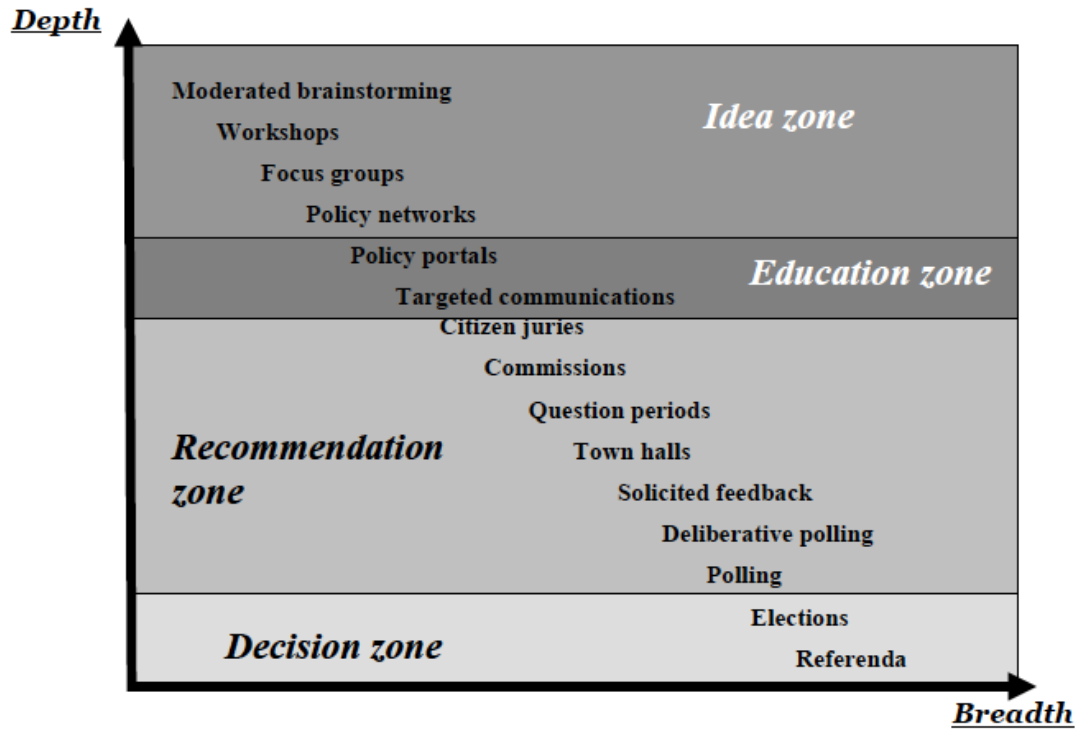
- Targeted/personalized alerts via email or SMS subscription (policies, etc., ministries, etc.)
- Social media tools
- e-consultations
- Consultation/communication to improve online/mobile services
- Decisions as results of consultation with citizens
- Acknowledge receipt of e-opinions, e-deliberations, and e-interactions
- Social networking tool specifically on policy issues (eParticipation)
- Social networking tool specifically on policy issues (eParticipation)
- Polls/Surveys (eParticipation)
- Blogs (eParticipation)
- Chat/IM (eParticipation)
- Online voting
- Online petitions
- Polls/Surveys (eParticipation)
- Blogs (eParticipation)
- Chat/IM (eParticipation)
- Outcomes of policy consultations online
- Commitment to using feedback
- Measure eParticipation
- Eliminate opportunities for corruption by consulting citizens for ideas
- Results of procurement/bidding processes
- Monitoring/evaluation of existing procurement contracts
- Open government data features
 - OGD: Availability of open datasets (in machine-readable non-proprietary formats), related policies/ guidance
 - OGD: Availability of open datasets (in machine-readable non-proprietary formats), related ministries etc.
 - OGD Availability of open datasets (in machine-readable non-proprietary formats), related to corruption
 - OGD Availability of open datasets (in machine-readable non-proprietary formats), updated regularly
 - Citizen see own data
 - Data literacy programmes
 - Open data events like workshops on utilizing government data
 - Data Dictionaries
 - Support data journalism
 - Are public channels available to propose new datasets?
 - User can comment on datasets
 - Provide information on the APIs used to provide access to the data
- Data protection features
 - eID/authentication
 - Information (Privacy) Commissioner to whom citizens can relate their concerns
 - Guidance on cyber security

5.6.2. Lessons and guidance

1. Aligning the purposes and types of e-engagement

A European overview of digital age engagement methodologies compares the depth and the breadth of participation with the types of benefits they could be associated with, as shown in Figure 3. This considers engagement and participation types in terms of four 'zones': the idea zone, the education zone, the recommendation zone, and the decision zone, each of which is made up of a number of specific types of activity. Thus, ideas are more likely to be generated in the depth of smaller groups (although there could be many of these) using a mix of online and offline techniques, whilst decisions at a societal level typically need to be more broadly based across mass populations and this could increasingly move towards mainly online methods. Thus, although there is likely to be a tendency for ICT to play a stronger role moving down and to the right hand side of Figure 3, the specific application of e-engagement in practice will vary according to circumstances and objectives, as well as in relation to new applications as they become available.

Figure 3: Digital age engagement methodologies¹⁷



2. Which channels and the digital divide

Taking a multi-channel and multi-media approach is essential for e-engagement, i.e. not to focus only on the 'e' channel, but also on the interplay and switching points between different channels in terms of their respective strengths and weakness, the specific needs of the stakeholder at that point in time, and the precise circumstances. ICT is thus seen as only one channel, albeit potentially very powerful and perhaps transformative, but which also complements other channels. It is also the case that still perhaps up to one quarter of the EU population are digitally excluded and thus not online so an exclusive move to the 'e' channel could deepen the digital divide. Many people, including the ICT-literate, still like to meet face-to-face, and many want real communicative and tacit substance which is difficult to deliver purely electronically¹⁸.

3. Social media

Web 2.0 is online technology or tools which allow users to author and contribute their own content, or manipulate the content of others. Social media are one major type of Web 2.0 tools which enable users to socially interact with each other. The use of all Web 2.0 tools blurs the distinction between producers and consumers of content. We are all consumers and producers of content, and the more we contribute the greater value we can reap from its use. Even just 'listening in' to a conversation makes us creators of content, as our views or entry is

¹⁷ European Commission (2009). European eParticipation Summary Report:

<https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/community/epractice/document/eu-european-e-participation-summary-report>

¹⁸ See for example Millard, J (2015) "The digital divide and the post-2015 development debate" in *Digital Divides: The New Challenges and Opportunities of e-Inclusion*, Taylor and Francis Publishing Group, Abingdon, UK.

often logged and added to a statistic showing the popularity of the content. The more views, the more popular or interesting the content is perceived to be, and even this piece of information is of value to other users. We know the social media by names such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, but there are many other tools and technologies available, and change is very rapid. Table 3 describes a useful categorisation of Web 2.0 tools, their advantages and disadvantages.

Table 3: Web 2.0 / social media participatory tools

Tool	Description	Advantages and disadvantages
Networks	<p>An online service or platform built upon and reflecting the networks and relationships between people (e.g., interests or activities). A network generally consists of a representation of each user (often a profile), social ties and a broad range of services (e.g. e-mail, chat, messages, blog posts and content). It offers the users the opportunity to exchange ideas, activities, events and interests with members of a personal network.</p> <p>Examples: Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn and Twitter.</p>	<p>Advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User and target audience is present • Informal tone, two-way dialogue and open to all • Input directly from users and stakeholders • Can be combined with various publications and feedback components as well as portal • Dialogue creates ideas and innovation • Good communication and PR channel • Independent, neutral platform <p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use and feedback is not guaranteed and the dialogue on social networks is often superficial and difficult to encourage a constructive debate • Alternative channel for debate and voting, opens another channel for communication • Added value and tipping point unknown • Not necessarily full control
Platforms	<p>An online collaborative platform, facilitating the cooperative and work processes that help more people to interact and share information to achieve a common goal and thus promote innovation. The internet makes it easier to disseminate and exchange information and knowledge as well as facilitates contributions from individuals. A crucial element of collaboration is that ideas occur everywhere and that individuals are able to share these ideas. Social cooperation corresponds to crowd sourcing, where individuals work together towards a common goal.</p> <p>Examples: Wikis like MediaWiki, DokuWiki, TikiWiki, Google page wiki, blogs like Wordpress or Blogger and collaborative office solutions as</p>	<p>Advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two-way dialogue and discussion forum • Input directly from users and stakeholders • Can be combined with various publishing and feedback components as well as a portal • Dialogue creates ideas and innovation • Common platform, forum and resource <p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use and feedback is not guaranteed and can be difficult to encourage a constructive dialogue • Alternate channel • Added value unknown

Tool	Description	Advantages and disadvantages
	digitaliser.dk, Debategraph, Teamwork or Work Spot.	
Publication	<p>An online service or platform that facilitates sharing, publication, changes, folksonomies, user creation and mash-up of content. Content may be in the form of video, images, text, etc.</p> <p>Examples: YouTube, Flickr, SlideShare, RSS feeds and Twitter</p>	<p>Advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active update of user and stakeholder • Helps to maintain interest • Gives the user a "share" in the content and how it is used • Alternative tools for mediation and alternative to text - web accessibility • Compliment a platform with audio, pictures and text • Give users a choice of medium • Can be used on different networks and collaborative platforms and a portal <p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential information overload • The value of user-generated content can have large fluctuations • Copyrights not always respected • Can be heavy/time-consuming material upload/access
Feedback	<p>An online service or platform facilitating input from an audience through one or two-way communication. Two forms of feedback exist: Quantitative forms like voting and rating and qualitative forms as commenting, discussion, surveys, wikis and blogs. Feedback types are often combined and are often found on website or as functional elements in different networks and collaborative platforms.</p> <p>Examples: Vote and debate on borger.dk or Debategraph, rating and commenting on Facebook or digitaliser.dk, surveys as survey monkey, pirate survey, free online surveys, blogs, wikis, Wikipedia's article feedback tool, various public solutions etc.</p>	<p>Advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be used on different networks and collaborative platforms and oman.om • Two-way dialogue and discussion forum • Input directly from the users and stakeholders, facilitate inclusion and involvement <p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use and feedback is not guaranteed • Alternative method of user and stakeholder feedback • Added value and resource unknown

4. Direct communication channels: citizens provide feedback

Citizens may want to engage government in certain areas that they feel needs attention. They may want to point out a problem, express their views on service delivery, or make unsolicited suggestions. There are many reasons why citizens want to engage and notify government about something. Government may also want to receive inputs from citizens in specific areas

to inform the administrative or political process. E-engagement features and channels take many forms, the most common of which are given below.

- **Chat/comment/poll facility on each webpage:** Government websites should consider setting up a comment facility at bottom of each page for users to chat with each other about the page and/or with civil servants. This will provide direct feedback to the IT departments on their service delivery and the authors on the quality of information on the webpages (from a user perspective). As civil servants it is quite natural for IT departments to assume that users have the same knowledge about government organisations and processes as they themselves do. Very often citizens do not possess this knowledge, so this is a very easy way to get structured feedback from users on how well information and content on webpages is understood and how well it works. Problematic electronic services and misunderstood or erroneous webpages can be identified and improved very quickly, if feedback from users is available. When a comment facility is supplied each comment should be vetted before released for publication and if necessary moderated.
- **Opinion polls and surveys** must ask *relevant* questions and not give the user the feeling that they are provided just to fill up space or because a poll was required by an external evaluator.
 - Users should be able to view poll/survey results, also old polls/surveys displayed as results in an archive.
 - Users should be able to see how long the poll/survey will run (and has run)
 - Answering categories must not be biased, i.e. only displaying favourable answers. There *must* be a balance between positive, neutral and negative answering categories, not as shown in the “bad practice” example below.
 - Users should be informed if any action was taken, as a direct result of the poll or survey.
- **Discussion forums and suggestion/feedback/input forms and social media.** As government organisations it is perfectly acceptable to establish guidelines for government provided or sanctioned discussion forums. But there should not only be obligations put on the users. Government should also tell the user how they intend to handle the dialogue in its discussion forums. Will they moderate discussions? Will they act on feedback and suggestions from the users? Such principle for e-participation and dialogue should be put into the e-participation policy for the government organisation, and parts of that should be included as e-participation statements on pages containing e-participation functionality. Sometimes governments must go where the users are, and they may be on social networks and discussion forums hosted by third parties. If government wants to engage with citizens and further the dialogue and increase transparency, they must in some cases cease control. But it should be done in a manner appropriate for government, and the civil servants engaging on behalf of government must know that they act on behalf of and as spokes persons for government. This means that a social media policy is created for the civil servants, so that *they* know how to conduct themselves. (See also above)
- **Automatic receipt of feedback.** Ensure that every time a user makes an input or request or asks a question (except in an open on-going discussion), that an automatic receipt (acknowledgment) is generated on the page (and/or sent by email if appropriate). For

every relevant facility ensure a statement is made so the user knows to expect such a receipt

- **The government blog** A blog (web-log) is like a written diary or journal. It is a frequent, chronological publication of personal thoughts and Web links. The blog is usually written by one person, or in the name of one person. Each 'post' or entry is usually listed with the newest one first and the oldest at the bottom. Blogs are most often about a particular topic, just like a daily or weekly column in a newspaper. It can be used as a tool to present the blog writers personal thoughts, and often blogs invite readers to make comments to the blog posts at the bottom of the page. This concept of sharing personal thoughts on a particular subject on a blog is a good way for top-management as well as for other government key personnel or experts to have a permanent communications channel to a targeted audience. A minister might share his or her thoughts on certain political issues or upcoming initiatives. It gives the author a place for providing in-depth analysis on the particular subject, and, through commenting, engaging with his/her audience.
- **Using the social media link buttons** A good way of propagating the information on your website is to use the save on, sharing on, like, tweeting, etc., buttons offered by social media. If your users encounter anything on your website they find interesting and want others to see, they can 'spread-the-word' by clicking on one of the social media buttons. Social media sharing buttons are easy to integrate on webpages, as it is just embedding a script. Once installed they require no intervention from the webmaster, they are just added functionality. Some of the buttons also offers statistics, showing how many times your content has been spread by your users.

5.7. Public capacity

5.7.1. Building block elements

Technical capacity (should be covered by stage 1)

- ICT Access
- Subsidies for vulnerable groups

Human capacity (should be covered by stage 1)

- User training
- Political activity and features

Take-up (should be covered by stage 1)

- Internet usage survey
- National portal usage
- Social media usage

Citizen trust (should be covered by stage 1)

- Rating citizen trust in ICT channels

Citizen demand

- Rating citizen demand for engagement

Capacity of specific groups (should be covered by stage 1)

- CSOs supporting e-participation
- Rating ability of specific groups for e-participation

Take-up

- Social media usage

5.7.2. Lessons and guidance

1. *Build citizen engagement from the bottom*

Much experience shows that most citizens are interested primarily in single specific issues which have a direct impact/influence on their own lives where they live, whilst some are also interested in such issues which have wider geographic relevance like climate change, migration, crime, economic conditions, etc.¹⁹ These interests should be used to build citizen participation in a national or local public space from the bottom.

- Show how local debates have wider relevance and provide tools and mechanisms for hooking them together in a two-way process that both provides context for a local debate as well as concrete substance for the wider debate. Localities can, also, in this way learn from each other.
- Specific topic hooks should be used to extend the participation process and encourage a natural process of widening out to broader multi-issues many of which will have national, regional or even European resonance.
- Harness informal social networks, both online and off, in this process.

2. *Actively support participatory, digital and political literacy*

Ultimately, it is probably not possible to get around the problem of 'elites' which can dominate discourse and the political sphere given that this has always been the case historically. The introduction of ICT will not change this, although experience shows that if the technology is applied with care, it may in some cases mitigate the problem. It is also important to strongly support the participatory, digital and political literacy of those currently excluded.

- Encourage, design and support skills acquisition and education/training in participatory, digital and political literacy.
- Ensure ICT channels complement non-ICT channels and invest in new interfaces which are more intuitive and better embedded in everyday activities.
- Support the emergence of self-organising mechanisms in particular where they support key European values and goals
- Build upon what is already happening, such as the CIPAST training package for participation.

¹⁹ For example, European Commission (2009). European eParticipation Summary Report: <https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/community/epractice/document/eu-european-e-participation-summary-report>

6. Stage 3: collaboration roadmap

6.1. Overall goals

As mentioned in section 3.2, the overall goal of a collaboration transparency strategy is mainly multi-way from governments to citizens (and other non-government actors), vice versa and involving in principle many other actors. At stage 3, collaboration by default is recommended, so that in principle all government activities should be open for collaboration with all legitimate actors, both where government proactively takes the lead but also enables others to do so, even without government, as long as this contributes to public value over which the government has the final say. Whereas engagement on its own provides only limited opportunities determined by government for non-government actors to participate in the workings of government, collaboration takes this the final step by enabling these actors to themselves have significant say in which issues they consider important to participate in. As mentioned, however, the extent of this needs to be determined by legal provision, and in a society in which governments are duly elected, the government will need to determine whether such participation is in the public interest or not. Well designed and implemented collaborative government can considerably improve the overall effectiveness of government and public sector activities by encouraging partnerships and cooperation within the government, across levels of government, and between the government and other legitimate actors in society, also in situations where government may decide it is not necessary for itself to take the leading role. This is because it is clear that government on its own does not have a monopoly of knowledge, resources or power to tackle societal challenges and fully achieve societal goals²⁰. An important part of this is putting data online, making it machine readable and structured, plus using open standards and enabling non-government actors to link to and mesh with their own or other actors' data.

IMPORTANT NOTE: As reflected in **Table 1**, it is clear that Stage 3, as the third stage, typically builds upon the policies, strategies, systems and initiatives developed in Stages 1 and 2.

6.2. Policy and strategy

6.2.1. Building block elements

E-strategy (should be covered by stage 1)

- Main e-strategies
- Open government policies
- Open government data policies
- PAR policies and initiatives
- PPP/PCP policies and initiatives

E-participation policies and strategies (should be covered by stage 2)

²⁰ Millard, J (2015) Open governance systems: Doing more with more, *Government Information Quarterly*, 12 September 2015: <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.giq.2015.08.003>

- General e-participation strategies
- Rating e-participation policies and strategies

E-participation initiatives (should be covered by stage 1)

- Completed e-participation initiatives
- On-going e-participation initiatives
- Planned e-participation initiatives
- Rating e-participation implementation

Opportunities for e-participation (should be covered by stage 1)

- Thematic areas of potential benefit
- Government needs for e-participation
- Drivers and opportunities

Challenges for e-participation (should be covered by stage 1)

- Past challenges
- Future challenges

6.2.2. Lessons and guidance

1. *Proactive involvement in decision-making*

There are different degrees of e-participation that move from more ‘passive’ to ‘active’ engagement and collaboration.. Active participation can be defined as “a relationship based on partnership with government in which citizens actively engage in defining the process and content of policy-making”²¹. People can be involved in public decisions and service delivery in many different ways and degrees. People can be informed of government decisions and availability of services, they can be consulted about certain decisions, they can be asked to take part in decisions, or they can themselves become proactive and take the initiative themselves in framing and taking decisions. Such proactive involvement in decision-making does not necessarily mean that people’s opinions and inputs will automatically be translated into actual policies.

The level of participation in e-decision-making does not always presume literally the direct enactment of policies and decisions. It greatly depends on the type of tool being used as well as on the intention of those using that particular e participation tool. In the case of e-voting, where people choose political parties and candidates during elections or vote on referenda by utilizing online platforms, the inputs of citizens are translated into immediate tangible outcomes. Overall, there is no one-size-fits all in the implementation of this concept, since each country has its own peculiar characteristics in terms of participation culture and preferred means of interaction between people and public authorities²².

²¹ OECD, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2001). Citizens as Partners: Information, Consultation and Public Participation in Policy-making.

²² *Op cit* United Nations, 2016.

2. *The challenges of e-decision-making*

E-decision-making at Stage 3, remains a serious challenge. E-decision-making refers to a process in which people provide their own inputs into decision-making processes. Two examples are: (i) direct e-voting via secure systems and (ii) identifying preferred (popular) options and proposals by rating them through social media's "Like/Dislike" or "plus/minus" functions. While policy-making is the logical next step after Stage 2's e-engagement, e-information and e-consultation are equally valuable participation forms in their own right. Recently, policy discourse has gained special attention as new software tools are creating complex and sophisticated systems of deliberation online. The UN E-Government Survey 2016 provides evidence that progress in participatory decision-making is closely linked with progress in public consultation²³. Discussing policies and decisions with the public is becoming an increasingly common practice, for example, the portal Gov.uk interlinks all three e-participation domains into one process. Publishing policy drafts – also supplying other relevant documents and information – for public consultation (e-information) allows for constructive and informed feedback. The Government then publishes its position on the feedback received from the public and explains any changes in the proposed policy options taken as a result of consultation by highlighting what has been taken into account and what has not and why. Such a holistic approach to e-participation expands the scope and meaning of participatory decision-making.

The UN E-Government Survey 2016²⁴ also concludes that, despite the growing practice of online consultations, most consultations are not yet sufficiently institutionalised in policymaking processes. In many instances, it is not clear how well online public debate was planned and executed, which objective it pursued and what the outcome was. Further, the feedback of the public was often scarce and infrequent. Much ongoing online consultation and deliberation is still ad-hoc and in its infancy, with plenty of untapped potential. To unlock this potential:

- Public authorities should have a clear e-participation strategy which strikes a balance among the e-information, e-engagement, and e-decision-making stages. This obviously includes ensuring that the necessary e-tools are available.
- There should be clarity with regard to the targeted population groups and regional audiences, complemented by explanations about the consultation and decision-making procedures to be used.
- Public authorities should have clear rules and procedures in place to process the received contributions. They should have sufficient analytical capacity to review them and a process to report back to the public about the outcome of the consultation and its impact on policymaking.

3. *The opportunities of e-decision-making*

The UN E-Government Survey 2016²⁵ also showed that, despite e-decision-making being the most challenging aspect of public participation, it has shown a breakthrough over just two years. This comes after many years of focusing primarily on e-transparency and more recently

²³ *Op cit* United Nations, 2016.

²⁴ United Nations (2016) "E-Government survey 2016– E-Government in support of sustainable development", United Nations Department of Social and Economic Affairs New York:
<https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/reports/un-e-government-survey-2016>

²⁵ *Op cit* United Nations, 2016.

also on e-engagement, which technically, are easier to implement. At the same time, it also shows that the practice of e-decision-making has expanded so much that it is becoming an important part of the policy-making cycle rather than an ad-hoc experiment. The very notion of policy making has expanded well beyond the boundaries of decisions taken solely by governments. Now it also seeks to support the process through which people form an opinion as they deliberate on common positions using, for example, technologies of collective moderation and preferential voting within the liquid feedback/democracy concept²⁶ to ensure maximum transparency of the decision-making process. The traditional meaning of decision-making, as a government-only-run-business within the constraints of public administration processes, is being transformed into an open and complex process of collaboration and decision-shaping realised both between authorities and people, and increasingly among the latter as well.

6.3. Institutional frameworks

6.3.1. Building block elements

Institutional framework for engagement (should be covered by stage 2)

- Institute for public consultations (engagement)
- Institute for public e-consultations: activities (e-engagement)
- Rating national authority for public consultations (engagement)

Institutional framework for data privacy (should be covered by stage 1)

- State/national authority for data privacy
- State/national authority for data privacy: activities

6.3.2. Lessons and guidance

1. Governance

The governance guidance here is similar to those in Stage 1 (section 4.3) but upgraded to take account of the e-collaboration and e-decision-making context. It is thus recommended that Stage 3 governance be already included in the Stage 1 institutional framework design.

2. Monitoring

The monitoring guidance here is similar to those in Stage 1 (section 4.3) but upgraded to take account of the e-collaboration and e-decision-making context. It is thus recommended that Stage 3 monitoring be already included in the Stage 1 institutional framework design.

²⁶ LiquidFeedback.org ‘embeds a deliberative process where proposals are voted on, supported, debated and written in a collaborative way; alternative options are voted on with the Schultze algorithm. Liquid Feedback was born to support democratic deliberation within political movements (e.g., German Pirate Party) and experimented with as a way to gather ideas from the public; it is extensively practiced, for example, in Italy, De Cindio, F. and Stortone S. (2013). Experimenting liquid feedback for online deliberation in civic contexts. *Electronic Participation*, Springer, 147–158.

3. Trust, transparency and openness of institutions are necessary for e-collaboration

Trust, transparency and openness are arguably the three biggest challenges which need to be ensured and promoted in any system of participation and democracy, and all are inextricably interlinked. Without trust in political and participatory institutions and in political representation no functioning democracy is possible, and it is well known that trust in European as well as national politics and institutions has been falling in the recent past. It is a truism that trust is difficult to grow and easy to degrade, so it is imperative to find ways to reverse this trend. Trust and mistrust go hand-in-hand and need to be balanced, and both can be important in a healthy democracy. Trust reduces transaction costs, but a healthy mistrust encourages constructive criticism and debate. The trick is to know the difference. Governments can assist in this by maximising e-participation and open government so citizens can see how decisions are made, who takes them and why. Suitable opportunities to challenge and directly participate in the decision-making process are also needed within clear rules. Although ICT can be very important for increasing participation, it is crucial to have clear, transparent, rules-based accountability for all forms of participation in order to reconnect disaffected voters with politicians.

4. Accountability, rights, responsibilities and the shifting role of the public sector

Accountability flows from responsibilities as well as from openness and transparency. It is also related to ethical considerations, which are, both in theory and practice, highly important in the public realm. There are different types of accountability. First, political accountability should be exercised by politicians and democratically elected representatives. Second, institutional and administrative accountability rests on civil servants individually as well as on the public sector as an institution. This also includes the likelihood of changing accountability when private sector, and community, partners are involved in undertaking public sector tasks, such as policy making or delivering services. Third, more informal institutions like citizen and interest groups have to be accountable in not mis-using or abusing public sector services or facilities, as well as in participating in legitimate and responsible ways. All these relate to responsibilities. Fourth, the general ethical and moral accountability of all actors, including citizens, businesses, communities, and the public sector. Further, when government is just one player amongst many in the public sphere, which now also legitimately consists of private and civil sector actors, new forms of accountability need to be found reflecting the new institutional landscape, whether formal or informal. Thus, there is also a need to re-balance institutional rights and responsibilities.

5. Can there be too much participation in the institutional context?

Another important challenge, for example in the context of ICT-enhanced participation, is that existing institutional capacities may set practical (if not legal or ethical) limits on participation. Too much participation may not be in the interests of democracy if the system is overwhelmed by a massive increase in involvement, resulting in instability and system breakdown. Further, too much participation may not be in the interest of the individual citizen, certainly without on-going commitment, knowledge and perhaps some training, if this leads to shallow, knee-jerk or populist participation. New technologies and methods could reduce the cost of collective decision making, but thereby could de-stabilise the political system with, for example, too many decisions and not enough responsibility. The right of participation in decision making must be balanced against the need for responsibility for those decisions. A sole reliance on 'direct democracy' produces problems – if all are responsible then no-one is.

Note, however, that the same arguments have been used throughout history to restrict the democratic franchise, and limits to participation may only be an attempt to preserve elitism or the meritocracy.

6. Establish or support an independent, neutral trusted third party service for eParticipation

There are a number of functions which government institutions cannot, or should not, perform for themselves in order to promote e-participation and open government. An independent, neutral trusted third party service, not controlled by government institutions, should be identified or set up in cooperation with other stakeholders, for example to:

- Act as a 'champion' and 'watchdog' for ordinary citizens in relation to e-participation and open government in policy issues.
- Act as a sort of 'ombudsman' for citizens vis à vis government institutions.
- Agree and publicise a citizen charter of rights and responsibilities for citizens in e-participation and open government, building on what is there already (such as relevant provisions in the Lisbon Treaty), and open these to debate and amendment by citizens.
- Identify and implement frameworks for real motivation, incentives and rewards for citizen participation.
- Continuously monitor the potential risks of e-participation and open government, and inform citizens about these, as well as offer possible solutions and assistance.
- Provide both pro-active and passive moderation, as well as help frame debates in a neutral and balanced way, as needed.
- Monitor and uphold citizens' privacy and data protection rights vis à vis government institutions and other interests, including private companies like FaceBook and Twitter.

7. Identify and support existing cross-border communities and interest groups

Government institutions should help to nurture, sustain, learn from and partner (where appropriate) existing cross-border communities and interest groups, for example by providing them with resources, tools, guidelines, and other forms of support. Cross-border can be at any level, i.e. local, national, regional, European.

- Growth and development need to come naturally, so the role of government institutions is to provide opportunities, incentives and support, rather than pre-designed schemes or attempting to take them over.
- Identify and assist other potential initiatives which could promote debate and consultation spilling across borders, including at local level, for example by providing frameworks of incentives and support.

6.4. Legal and regulatory frameworks

6.4.1. Building block elements

Legislation on collaboration

- Legislation on consulting with citizens (engagement) (should be covered by stage 2)
- Constitutional rights for citizens to participate in public policy and decision-making
- Legislation on e-consulting with citizens (e-engagement) (should be covered by stage 2)
- Rating on e-decision-making (e-collaboration)

Open government data

- Legislation and policies on open government data (should be covered by stage 1)
- Open government data star ratings 4 (as above plus use open standards from W3C: RDF and SPARQL) & 5 (plus link your data to other people's data to provide context)

Data protection (should be covered by stage 1)

- Policies and legislation on personal data protection
- Rating legislation on protection of personal data

6.4.2. Lessons and guidance

1. Legal

The legal guidance here is similar to those in Stage 1 (section 4.3) but upgraded to take account of the e-collaboration and e-decision-making context. It is thus recommended that Stage 3 legal be already included in the Stage 1 legal and regulation framework design.

5. Data quality

The data quality guidance here is similar to those in Stage 1 (section 4.3) but upgraded to take account of the e-collaboration and e-decision-making context. It is thus recommended that Stage 3 data quality be already included in the Stage 1 legal and regulation framework design.

6. Data protection

The data protection guidance here is similar to those in Stage 1 (section 4.3) but upgraded to take account of the e-collaboration and e-decision-making context. It is thus recommended that Stage 3 data protection be already included in the Stage 1 legal and regulation framework design.

7. Security

The security guidance here is similar to those in Stage 1 (section 4.3) but upgraded to take account of the e-collaboration and e-decision-making context. It is thus recommended that Stage 3 security be already included in the Stage 1 legal and regulation framework design.

6.5. Government capacity

6.5.1. Building block elements

Financial capacity (should be covered by stage 1)

- Financial capacity
- Rating e-participation financial capacity

Technical capacity (should be covered by stage 1)

- Technical hardware and software capacity
- Government bodies use of ICT channels
- Rating e-participation technical capacity

Human capacity (should be covered by stage 1)

- Personnel use of ICT
- Rating e-participation human capacity

Open data capacity (should be covered by stage 1)

- Open government data responsible official

Social media capacity (should be covered by stage 2)

- Processes for monitoring social media
- How do governments monitor social media
- Rating PA social media utilisation

6.5.2. Lessons and guidance

1. *Strengthen professional communities at every level*

Networks of organised professional groups should be encouraged to use online debate and knowledge exchange tools at any and all levels much more than they do at present.

- eRule or eRegulation-making should be more widely exploited, adapted to local conditions.
- For example by employing user-controlled wiki systems that allow everyone in the group to join the discussion and contribute.
- Provide frameworks of incentives and support where appropriate, as well as appropriate tools and guidelines.
- Again, build on what is already happening, much of which takes place through the “Your Voice in Europe” umbrella, including the Interactive Policy Making tool, the European Business Test Panels, SINAPSE and CONECCS.

2. *Countering the challenges*

There are an increasing number of challenges and indeed dangers of e-engagement and e-decision-making, not least current concerns around ‘fake news’ and ‘post-truth’ politics. The major challenges which the government needs to develop capacity to deal with are as follows:

- E- The threat of unaccountability and ‘street politics’
- Self-selecting elites, the ‘digital mob’ and digital exclusion.
- Trivialisation, short-termism and nimbyism.
- Coarsening of the debate.
- Apathy and lack of understanding of the participatory and political process.
- ‘Post-truth’ society
- participation features and channels

6.5.3. Building block elements

E-participation portal (should be covered by stage 1)

- E-participation national portal and information features
- E-participation national portal and interactive features

Collaboration features

- E-polling and e-voting features (e-collaboration)

- Collaboration
- Rating e-collaboration

Open government data features

- Open government data sets (should be covered by stage 1)
- Open government data (should be covered by stage 1)
- Open government data star ratings 4 (as above plus use open standards from W3C: RDF and SPARQL) & 3 (plus link your data to other people's data to provide context)

Targeting specific groups (should also be covered by stage 1)

- Rating targeting specific groups

UN E-Participation Index

- E-decision-making score: empowering citizens through co-design of policy options and coproduction of service components and delivery modalities

UN e-participation questions 2016: availability of information/evidence on collaboration and e-decision-making

- Collaboration features
 - Evidence about government partnership/collaboration with third parties (civil society, private sector) to provide services
 - Evidence about collaborative co-production, crowdfunding
 - Personalisation (UN Stage III #146)
 - E-decision-making: Popular proposals by rating "Like/Dislike" through social media
 - E-decision making features in the past 12 months, Education
 - E-decision making features in the past 12 months, Health
 - E-decision making features in the past 12 months, Finance
 - E-decision making features in the past 12 months, Social welfare
 - E-decision making features in the past 12 months, Employment and Growth
 - E-decision making features in the past 12 months, Environment
 - E-decision-making: e-voting via secure systems
 - Collaborative co-production, crowdfunding
 - Services with PPPs, civil society, or the private sector
- Open government data features
 - Machine readable structured format (e.g CSV, RSS, XML, RDF)
 - Machine readable open format (e.g ODF, PDF-A)
 - Open Standards for OGD (RDF, SPARQL)
 - Link to companies using open government data
 - Open data standards in parliament
- Data protection features
 - Citizens can correct own data

6.5.4. Lessons and guidance

1. *E-voting / e-polling*

Electronic voting (also known as e-voting) is voting using electronic means to either aid or take care of the chores of casting and counting votes. The degree of automation may vary from

simple chores to a complete solution that includes voter registration and authentication, vote input, local or precinct tallying, vote data encryption and transmission to servers, vote consolidation and tabulation, and election administration. The most successful examples, such as in Estonia and Switzerland, comply with a set of standards established by regulatory bodies, and are also capable of dealing with strong requirements associated with security, accuracy, integrity, swiftness, privacy, auditability, accessibility, cost-effectiveness, scalability and ecological sustainability. Electronic voting technology can include punched cards, optical scan voting systems and specialized voting kiosks (including self-contained direct-recording electronic voting systems, or DRE). It can also involve transmission of ballots and votes via telephones, private computer networks, or the Internet. In general, two main types of e-Voting can be identified:

- e-voting which is physically supervised by representatives of governmental or independent electoral authorities (e.g. electronic voting machines located at polling stations), such as in Brazil and India
- remote e-voting via the internet (also called i-voting) where the voter votes at home or without going to a polling station, such as in Estonia.

E-voting / e-polling remains very controversial due to the possibilities of hacking, cyber attacks and severe disruption of results, although it is also claimed that the dangers are no greater -- though of a different nature -- than with traditional physical voting systems.

2. E-Petitions

E-petitions is a stand-alone e-participation tool that is institutionalised and widely used by many people around the world. However, e-petitions are not typically preceded or accompanied by public consultations, at least on the same government-run website²⁷. As a good practice, legislators will formally debate and consider those petitions that have been signed by a certain number of people. Yet, such formal consideration of people's preferences does not necessarily translate into policy decisions. Therefore, there is a broader and serious challenge when engaging and/or collaborating with citizens or other non-government actors. According to the findings of a report on e-petitions by the United Kingdom's Hansard Society, this tool is used more as a way to attract the attention of the public and the media, rather than to understand public opinion more deeply²⁸. Nonetheless, e-petitions and the associated public debates can also be seen as an important entry point for a two-way dialogue with the public.

3. Participatory budgeting

Participatory budgeting is a process of democratic deliberation and decision-making, and a type of participatory democracy, in which ordinary people decide how to allocate part of a municipal or public budget. Participatory budgeting allows citizens to identify, discuss, and prioritise public spending projects, and gives them the power to make real decisions about how money is spent. Participatory budgeting processes are typically designed to involve those left out of traditional methods of public engagement, such as low-income residents, non-citizens, and youth. A comprehensive case study of eight municipalities in Brazil analysing the

²⁷ United Nations (2016) "E-Government survey 2016– E-Government in support of sustainable development", United Nations Department of Social and Economic Affairs New York:
<https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/reports/un-e-government-survey-2016>

²⁸ See in "E-petitions: a collaborative system". Third Report of Session 2014–15: Published on 4 December 2014 by authority of the House of Commons, Procedure Committee. London: The Stationery Office.

successes and failures of participatory budgeting has suggested that it often results in more equitable public spending, greater government transparency and accountability, increased levels of public participation (especially by marginalised or poorer residents), and democratic and citizenship learning²⁹. All participatory budgeting schemes allow citizens to deliberate with the goal of creating either a concrete financial plan (a budget), or a recommendation to elected representatives. The earliest example is in Porto Alegre, Brazil, in which the structure of the scheme gives neighbourhoods authority over the larger political jurisdiction (the city) of which they are part. Neighbourhood budget committees, for example, have authority to determine the citywide budget, not just the allocation of resources for their particular neighbourhood. There is, therefore, a need for mediating institutions to facilitate the aggregation of budget preferences expressed by such small areas. Participatory budgeting generally involves several basic steps:

- Community members identify spending priorities and select budget delegates
- Budget delegates develop specific spending proposals, with help from experts
- Community members vote on which proposals to fund
- The city or institution implements the top proposals

4. Collaborative co-production, multi-stakeholder partnerships, crowd-sourcing and crowd-funding

Innovative Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) have emerged as models for the provision of public services and social entitlements in areas such as education, health and environmental sustainability. Recent advances in technology, connectivity, collaboration tools, as well as improvements in management practices in both the public and private sectors, may significantly contribute to the development of PPPs. There is also increasing awareness among the business sector that profit is possible while undertaking socially beneficial programmes. Some companies have started to rethink their business models by turning social and global development issues into business opportunities.

Similarly, the collaborative production of services via social networking and interactive web-based tools enable people to play a more active role in the design and production of public services within the context of Public-Civil-Partnerships (PCPs) as well as Public-Private-People Partnerships (PPPPs). The use of ICT in government not only offers the opportunity to improve service delivery and citizen engagement, it can also help mobilise additional resources from both the public and private sectors, which enhances collaboration of stakeholders and innovation. Multi-stakeholder partnerships can harness the resources, knowledge and ingenuity of the private sector, civil society, the scientific community, academia, philanthropy and foundations, parliaments, local authorities, volunteers, and other stakeholders. This collective power is important to generate ideas, mobilise, and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources; complementing the efforts of governments; and supporting the achievement of the SDGs, in particular in developing countries³⁰.

Such multi-stakeholder partnerships can also be considered a form of crowd-sourcing, i.e. a sourcing approach in which individuals or organisations use contributions from users (normally obtained electronically) to obtain needed services or ideas. When finance is source in the same

²⁹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Participatory_budgeting

³⁰ UN General Assembly (1995). Report of the World Summit for Social Development. A/ CONF.166/9.

way, this is termed crowd-funding, the potential of which is estimated by the World Bank to represent at least a \$90 billion market within twenty years just in developing countries³¹.

6.6. Public capacity

6.6.1. Building block elements

Technical capacity (should be covered by stage 1)

- ICT Access
- Subsidies for vulnerable groups

Human capacity (should be covered by stage 1)

- User training
- Political activity and features

Take-up

- Internet usage survey (should be covered by stage 1)
- National portal usage (should be covered by stage 1)
- Social media usage (should be covered by stage 2)

Citizen trust

- Rating citizen demand for collaboration

Citizen demand

- Rating citizen demand for collaboration

Capacity of specific groups (should be covered by stage 1)

- CSOs supporting e-participation
- Rating ability of specific groups for e-participation

6.6.2. Lessons and guidance

1. Build citizen collaboration from the bottom

Guidance for building citizen collaboration from the bottom is similar to those in Stage 2 (section 5.7) but upgraded to take account of the e-collaboration and e-decision-making context. It is thus recommended that Stage 3 citizen collaboration be already included in the Stage 2 public capacity initiatives.

2. Actively support participatory, digital and political literacy

Guidance for participatory, digital and political literacy is similar to those in Stage 2 (section 5.7) but upgraded to take account of the e-collaboration and e-decision-making context. It is thus recommended that Stage 3 participatory, digital and political literacy be already included in the Stage 2 public capacity initiatives.

³¹ World Bank, Information for Development Program (2013). 'Crowdfunding's Potential for the Developing World', [online], available: http://infodev.org/infodev-files/wb_crowdfundingreport-v12.pdf

7. Annex 1: Western Balkans e-participation and open government impact measurements

7.1. Rating results from questionnaire

Please note some ReSPA Beneficiaries corrected some of these scores after step 1 and that the new data has not yet been input into the following table. There were however no corrections from Montenegro.

Q		Albania	Bosnia & Herzegovina	Kosovo*	Macedonia	Montenegro	Serbia
112	Political commitment	5	3	3	3	3	3
113	National eParticipation	4	1	1	4	5	2
114	Access to information: legislation	5	4	3	4		4
115	Protection of personal data: legislation	4	4	4	5	4	4
116	eConsultation: legislation	5	2	3	4	4	2
117	eDecision-making: legislation	5	0	3	4		2
118	National authority for public information	4	1	2	5	2	4
119	National authority for public consultations	4	1	0	3	4	4
120	eParticipation policy formation	4	1	2	5	2	2
121	eParticipation implementation	3	0	3	4	3	2
122	PA web presence	5	3	4	3	3	3
123	PA email communication	5	3	4	4	4	3
124	PA social media utilization	5	2	4	2	3	3
125	PA mobile utilization	5	1	4	4	2	2
126	PA online polls, forums, petitions	3	1	1	3	3	2
127	National eVoting eReferendums	1	0	0	0	0	1
128	Citizen trust in PA web presence	2	2	3	4	3	2
129	Citizen trust PA email communication	3	3	3	4	4	3
130	Citizen trust in PA social media utilization	3	2	2	0	4	3
131	Citizen trust in PA mobile utilization	3	1	3	0	2	3
132	Citizen trust in PA online polls, forums, petitions	3	0	3	0	0	
133	Citizen trust in national eVoting eReferendums	3	0	0	0	0	2
134	Information sharing with citizens: finance/budget	4	3	3	0	3	2
135	Information sharing with citizens: social development/welfare	4	3	3	0	3	2
136	Information sharing with citizens: urban development/planning	4	2	4	0	4	3
137	Information sharing with citizens: environmental protection	4	2	3	0	3	3
138	Information sharing with citizens: public services	4	4	3	3	4	3
139	information sharing with citizens: transport	4	2	3	4	3	3

Q		Albania	Bosnia & Herzegovina	Kosovo*	Macedonia	Montenegro	Serbia
140	Consultation with citizens in the area of finance/budget	4	3	4	0	3	3
141	Consultation with citizens in the area of social development/welfare	4	3	3	0	3	3
142	Consultation with citizens in the area of urban development/planning	4	2	4	2	3	3
143	Consultation with citizens in the area of environmental protection	4	3	3	0	3	3
144	Consultation with citizens in the area of public services	4	3	3	3	4	3
145	Consultation with citizens in the area of transport	4	2	3	0	3	3
146	Capacity for e-Participation in terms of human resources (staff, knowledge, skills)	3	2	1	3	2	2
147	Capacity for e-Participation in terms of financial resources	3	2	1	2	0	2
148	Capacity for e-Participation in terms of technical resources	3	4	5	4	4	2
149	Citizens' demand for access to public information	2	3	4	2	3	3
150	Citizens' demand for consultation on development matters and policies	2	3	3	2	3	3
151	Citizens' demand for the opportunity to participate in policy making and implementation	2	3	3	2	2	3
152	Reaching out electronically to the civil society organizations (CSOs including NGOs)	4	3	4	4	3	3
153	Reaching out electronically to the youth	4	3	3	2	3	3
154	Reaching out electronically to women	4	3	3	1	3	3
155	Reaching out electronically to the vulnerable/socio-economically disadvantaged groups (low-income groups, indigenous groups, illiterate persons, persons with disabilities, the elderly, etc.)	4	1	1	2	3	3
156	Ability of the civil society organizations (CSOs including NGOs) social groups to be involved in e-Participation activities	4	4	1	3	1	4
157	Ability of the youth social groups to be involved in e-Participation activities	4	4	1	5	1	4
158	Ability of the women social groups to be involved in e-Participation activities	4	4	1	4	1	4
159	Ability of the vulnerable/socio-economically disadvantaged groups (low-income groups, indigenous groups, illiterate persons, persons with disabilities, the elderly, etc.) social	3	1	1	0	2	4

Q		Albania	Bosnia & Herzegovina	Kosovo*	Macedonia	Montenegro	Serbia
	groups to be involved in e-Participation activities						

7.2. UN data e-participation and e-government data on the Western Balkans

7.2.1. UN eParticipation Index and three stages

(2015), p.26 Table 3: E-participation by stages: selected countries 2014 (Source United Nations (2014) "E-Government Survey 2014)

E-Participation utilisation by stages 2014					
Country	Stage 1: E-information (%)	Stage 2: E-consultation (%)	Stage 3: E-decision making (%)	Total (%)	
Montenegro	74	41	22	53	
Albania	85	23	0	48	
Serbia	63	23	0	38	
BiH	37	14	0	22	
Macedonia	33	14	0	21.	
Global mean	56	25	7	36	
Global top ten	94	83	69	86	

E-participation by stages: selected countries 2016 (Source United Nations (2016) "E-Government Survey 2016)

E-Participation utilisation by stages 2016				
Country	Stage 1: E-information (%)	Stage 2: E-consultation (%)	Stage 3: E-decision making (%)	Total (%)
Serbia	91	79	57	83
Montenegro	85	84	71	83
Albania	74	68	14	65
Macedonia	74	63	0	62
Bosnia and Herzegovina	71	37	0	52
Global mean	56	43	13	47
Global top ten	98	96	80	95

7.2.2. UN eGovernment Development Index

(2015), p.24, Table 1: E-Government Development Index: selected countries, 2008. 2010, 2012 and 2014 (Source United Nations (2014) "E-Government Survey 2014")

E-Government Development Index				
Country	2008	2010	2012	2014
Montenegro	0.4282	0.5101	0.6218	0.63455
Serbia	0.4828	0.4585	0.6312	0.54715
Albania	0.467	0.4519	0.5161	0.50455
Macedonia	0.4866	0.5261	0.5587	0.47198
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0.4509	0.4698	0.5328	0.47069
Global mean	0.42679	0.41886	0.49078	0.47362
Global top ten	0.79202	0.77818	0.86459	0.88887

E-Government Development Index: selected countries, 2008. 2010, 2012, 2014, and 2016 (Source United Nations (2016) "E-Government Survey 2016")

E-Government Development Index					
Country	2008	2010	2012	2014	2016
Serbia	0.4828	0.4585	0.6312	0.54715	0.71308
Montenegro	0.4282	0.5101	0.6218	0.63455	0.67326
Macedonia	0.4866	0.5261	0.5587	0.47198	0.58855
Albania	0.467	0.4519	0.5161	0.50455	0.53305
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0.4509	0.4698	0.5328	0.47069	0.51183
Global mean	0.42679	0.41886	0.49078	0.47362	0.49220
Global top ten	0.79202	0.77818	0.86459	0.88887	0.87877

(2015), p.25. Table 2: E-Government Online Service Index divided by stages: selected countries 2014 (Source United Nations (2014) "E-Government Survey 2014")

Online Services Index by stages 2014					
Country	Stage 1: Emerging inf. services (%)	Stage 2: Enhanced inf. services (%)	Stage 3: Transactional services (%)	Stage 4: Connected services (%)	Total (%)
Montenegro	84	68	12	35	48
Albania	88	27	21	44	42
Serbia	72	52	12	18	37
BiH	56	41	7	12	28
Macedonia	50	34	5	15	25
Global mean	65	40	25	27	37
Global top ten	99	78	80	79	84

7.3. ReSPA 2015 study from e-government to open government

The tables on the following two pages summarise the progress of ReSPA Beneficiaries progress from e-government to open government by mid 2015.

Table 4: Country progress from e-government to open government (cell scores from 0 to 4)

	Transparency (OGP) & open data (EC)		Engagement (participation) (OGP) & open decisions (EC)		Collaboration (OGP)& open services	
	Open data	Transparency & trust	Web 2.0 / social media	Feedback & participation	Service personalisation	PPPs/PCPs
Albania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget expenditure of treasury, by Ministry of Finance Statistical data 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anti-corruption Joined OGP+ 2nd Action Plan Law on the right of information 3	All ministry websites have social media 4	New law on public consultation with provisions for feedback from stakeholders 3	No 0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action plans for OGP was adopted based on a PCP partnership model Digital Police Station Application ProTIK – ICT Resource Center 2
Bosnia & Herze-govina	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget expenditure of treasury, by Ministry of Finance 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joined OGP Anti-corruption E-transparency 3	Some use examples 1	Some examples, but not systematically 1	No 0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vibrant NGO sector working with gov promoting e-services 6 NGOs + govt. institutions formed partnership on OGD Alliance for promoting transparent budgeting of govt. institutions Development of Sarajevo Canton ICT Strategy 4
Kosovo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When data is published, it is only PDF 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Law on access to public documents 1	0	Some examples, but rare due to lack of trust 0	No 0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drafting of the OGP Action Plan which was done with the NGO “FOL” and the MEI CSO platform “Civikos” is planning to help government with OGD and will use the PCP strategy 2
Mace-donia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 27 institutions, offering 154 open data sets (109 active and other in planning process) and their mash-up on OGD portal 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joined OGP+Action plan Various laws Anti-corruption 3	Many institutions uses social media 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Citizen diary E-democracy user satisfaction (‘traffic lights’) 4	No 0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mol – citizens schedule timing for submitting application and taking photo for ID cards, passports and driving licence E-service (personality testing) when applying to administrative service 1
Monte-negro	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public procurement documents by the Public Procurement Administration of Montenegro All documents and materials debated and adopted at the Governments' session 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joined OGP 2nd Action Plan drafting Be Responsible campaign Follow procurement Open budget 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion fora Others Much use of social media RSS & FAQs 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> E-participation (underused) E-petition (underused, threshold very high) 4	Some examples 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPPs are increasingly being used as a mechanism for covering the budget deficit OGP Team drawn from business, NGOs & municipalities Free wireless internet access project for citizens (joint venture PPP) and PCP ad hoc examples 11 community projects financed with fines 4
Serbia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25+ datasets on OpenData.rs ‘Register of medicines and medical devices’ by Medical Devices Agency of Serbia Data by Statistical Office Open Data Readiness Assessment conducted 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joined OGP Freedom of access to info by default Anti-corruption Public procurement law 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many uses Facebook, Twitter Some have YouTube channels 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> E-participation E-forum Contact form on govt. websites mandatory e-government portal has public hearings and discussion 4	No 0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No examples 0

Table 5 summarises the ReSPA Beneficiary progress scores from e-government to open government derived from Table 4.

Table 5: Summary country progress scores from e-government to open government

	(1) e-government online services scores (UN, 2016) ³²	Open government scores (2015) ³³			
		(2) Total % score of max 24	(3) Transparency	(4) Engagement (participation)	(5) Collaboration
Albania	53%	67%	7	7	2
BiH	51%	50%	6	2	4
Kosovo*	--	17%	2	0	2
Macedonia	59%	58%	7	6	1
Montenegro	67%	79%	5	8	6
Serbia	71%	54%	6	7	0
Mean score	60%	53%	5	5	2

³² Derived from United Nations (2016) "E-Government survey 2016– E-Government in support of sustainable development", United Nations Department of Social and Economic Affairs New York:

<https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/reports/un-e-government-survey-2016>.

³³ Derived from Table 4Error! Reference source not found.

8. Annex 2: E-participation survey for ReSPA beneficiaries

Results received November 2016.

To be added