

eTEN Work Programme 2004

DG INFORMATION SOCIETY

Trans-European Telecommunication Networks

Work Programme for Calls published in 2004

"Deploying Trans-European e-Services for All"

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I. Introduction

The eTEN programme grant-aids the deployment of e-services in the European Union. It publishes an annual Work Programme that outlines the work for the year, how the work will be performed and how the budget will be awarded to beneficiaries.

eTEN is part of the Trans-European Networks policy of the EU, which is designed to assist the realisation of the EU single market. It is founded in articles 154, 155 and 156 of the Treaty establishing the European Community. Its objective is to enable citizens of the European Union, economic operators and regional and local communities to derive full benefit from the setting-up of an area without internal frontiers. It seeks to promote overall harmonious development by contributing to the strengthening of economic and social cohesion. In particular, it aims at reducing disparities between the levels of development of the various regions and pays special attention to the least favoured regions.

As a key instrument of the eEurope Action Plan 2005, eTEN supports the establishment of operational services of common interest based on electronic data transmission networks. *It should be noted that it does not fund the infrastructure over which these services are provided.*

The main focus of eTEN in 2003 was the practical realisation of eEurope general interest services objectives – addressing a broad set of applications and generic services in the area of eGovernment, eHealth, eInclusion, eLearning, eBusiness, advanced mobile services and trust and confidence services. The performance of the programme in 2003 and the results of the eTEN Call for Proposals 2003/1 have been very encouraging.

The eTEN Work Programme 2004 builds on this success and addresses the priority issues identified during 2003. It takes into account the comments received from those consulted and the results of the eTEN Call for Proposals 2003/1 and updates the relevant sections from the Work Programme 2003 accordingly.

Additional consideration has been given to the recommendations from the expert panels and the evaluation observers from Call for Proposals 2003/1. These include some refinements to the evaluation criteria, minor changes to the guide for proposers, minor adjustments to the evaluation logistics and clarifications of definitions and terminology.

Services of common interest¹ were stressed in the eTEN Work Programme 2003. While public sector involvement was not mandatory, public administrations and organisations (national, regional and local) were encouraged to propose and participate in projects as, among other considerations, these were considered to be a potentially fruitful source of deployment projects.

The number of proposals submitted for deployment projects was promising, but less than anticipated. This was partly due to the fact that these are difficult proposals to configure and set-up and the low funding level. There were also indications that a part of the eTEN constituency deferred submitting this type of proposal in view of the pending decision to increase the deployment funding ceiling from 10% to 30%.

¹ See Glossary for definition

As a result of the low response to the call for deployment projects, services of public interest¹ will receive renewed attention in 2004, in recognition of their importance to the common interest. eTEN will emphasise e-services involving public sector actors that can bring benefits to a large number of citizens. Projects involving national, regional and local actors will therefore be encouraged. Cross-border service delivery will receive special attention. However, the difficulties faced by public administrations in this regard are recognised as services developed by them are rarely done so to include a Trans-European dimension. This issue will receive special attention.

Please note that this document contains a number of terms and phrases that have a particular meaning in the context of the eTEN programme. They are explained in the glossary.

The eTEN Work Programme 2004 has been drawn up on the basis of the priorities defined in the eTEN guidelines. It has been drafted on the basis of external and inter-service consultation and discussion with the eTEN management committee, which has provided its opinion on it. Subsequently it has been adopted by Commission Decision.

The Work Programme contains:

- Details regarding the programme and its priorities.
- Rules for participation.
- Information regarding the instruments to be used.
- Timetable for implementation.
- Content and budget of the call for proposals.
- Evaluation criteria to be applied.

II. Overall Context and Focus

eTEN focuses on advancing the objectives of the eEurope action plan 2005 through financial support to the deployment of e-services in the enlarged European Union.

This Work Programme defines the objectives, priorities and actions for 2004 and is valid for eTEN calls published in the Official Journal of the European Union in 2004. The focus of activity is the deployment of services of common interest, with special emphasis on public services, within the context of the eEurope 2005 action plan.

A number of EU and national programmes, including eTEN, are contributing to the objectives of eEurope. It is important that the implementation of the policy is delivered in a coherent, consistent and targeted manner. As in 2003, where applicable, eTEN will consult with these implementing programmes on priorities and synergies; co-operate in ensuring there is no duplication of effort; and collaborate in areas where a joint approach will best meet the overall objectives of eEurope.

In this respect the eTEN programme will continue to play an important role in both linking national, regional, and local services and extending their deployment across

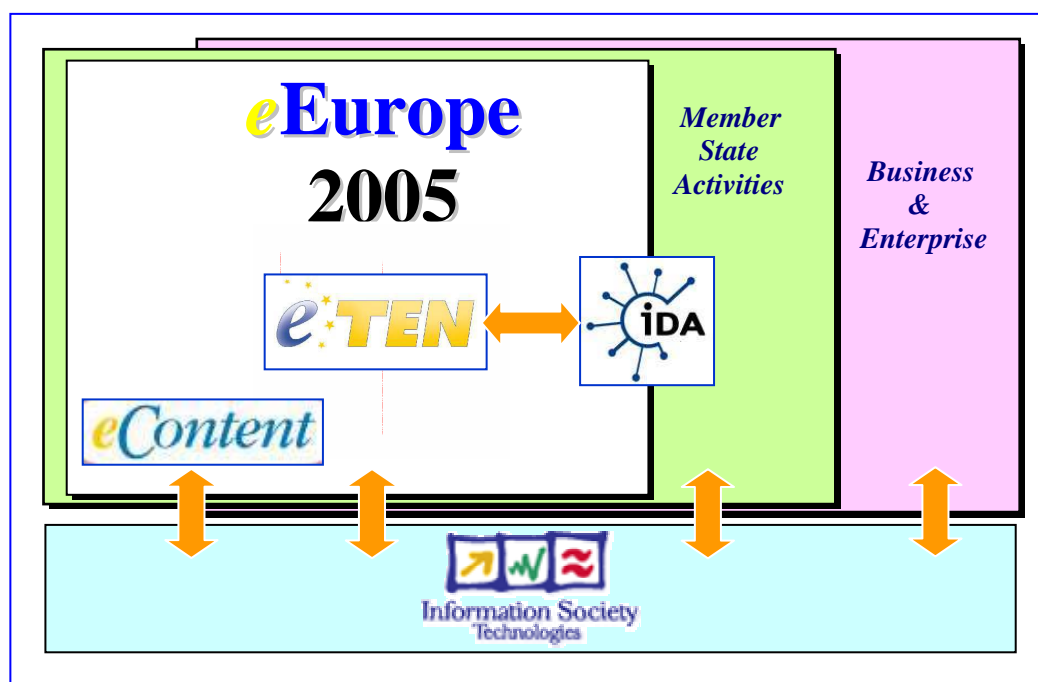
¹ See Glossary for definition

boundaries. Developing links with the IST¹, IDA², the EU Safer Internet Action Plan³ and eContent⁴ and consulting them on the call for proposals continue to be important for 2004 and other initiatives with these and other Programmes, such as eLearning, will be pursued, if relevant. The involvement of SMEs in eTEN is encouraged, both in the capacity of participants in consortia submitting proposals and in the capacity of potential beneficiaries of services of public interest to be deployed and/or validated through the eTEN Programme 2004.

eEurope 2005

The objective of the eEurope 2005 Action Plan is to give everyone the opportunity to participate in the global information society and, thereby, to provide a favourable environment for private investment and for the creation of new jobs, to boost productivity and to modernise public services. The information society is opening up significant economic and social opportunities. It has much untapped potential to improve the quality of life, create new markets and increase growth and employment throughout the economy. eEurope 2005 aims to stimulate secure services, applications and content based on a widely available broadband infrastructure.

The action plan envisages, among other activities, the deployment of good practice and demonstration projects and the rollout of leading edge applications. Special reference is made to broadband and interoperable services. eTEN is an important vehicle for the Community to support the eEurope objectives.



The context of eTEN "in the Heart of eEurope"

¹ The Information Society Technologies thematic priority of the Sixth Framework Programme for Research and Development (FP6). See Glossary

² Initiative for Interchange of Data between Administrations. See Glossary

³ See Glossary

⁴ See Glossary

Deployment of services of common interest

Services of common interest (see Glossary) contribute to the development of the information society in terms of growth, employment, social cohesion and participation for all in the knowledge-based economy. To ensure the full deployment of services of common interest eTEN encourages all involved stakeholders, and particularly public administrations (national, regional and local) or organisations (e.g. hospitals, education establishments, public museums, public agencies in tourism or commerce, NGOs and other civic society associations, etc.), to propose and participate in projects. Public sector involvement is emphasised and, though not mandatory, will help to ensure the sustainability of the services after eTEN funding has finished. Public sector participation will receive special attention through actions to promote the replication and localisation of good practice in government.

Enlargement of the European Union

The expansion of the eTEN community to 25 countries poses a challenge to all of those involved in the programme - how to integrate the new and existing member states into a cohesive community. The New Member States share their under-representation in the eTEN programme with several remote regions in the current Member States. A number of activities will be launched to facilitate the integration of all stakeholders in this part of the Community. The actions will involve the organisation of infodays and workshops in conjunction with the eTEN committee delegates, support to National Contact Points' activities and joint actions with multiplier organisations.

III. Specific Objectives for 2004

This work programme has been drafted in the context of the Council decision on the Guidelines for Trans-European telecommunications Networks. It derives strategic objectives from these. A set of operational objectives has been defined to address them and a number of actions and themes have been decided.

Strategic Objectives

In contributing to the establishment and development of Trans-European telecommunications Networks and to the acceleration of the implementation of eEurope 2005, the strategic objectives of eTEN are:

- To enable citizens to derive full benefit from the single market and the information society.
- To strengthen economic and social cohesion.
- To reduce disparities between the levels of development of the regions.
- To promote the interconnection and interoperability of services and access to such services.
- To deploy applications and services that provide the means to improve the competitiveness of the European Union economy.

Operational Objectives

The following operational objectives have been defined for eTEN in 2004 with reference to the strategic objectives and in the context of the objectives of the Trans-European Networks:

- To stimulate and support the deployment of services in support of eEurope;
- To support market validation and deployment with priority on projects addressing deployment;
- To increase participation in the programme by its full range of stakeholders;
- To reinforce and extend national, regional and local initiatives;
- To integrate the 10 new Member States into the programme;
- To continue to improve the procedures, methods and mechanism in relation to the call and project lifecycle.

Objectives common to all actions

One of the objectives of the information society is to provide seamless access to secure services to all citizens, throughout the European Union. With this in mind a set of objectives, common to all Actions, have been defined. These must be addressed by all proposals. The extent to which proposals meet these will be taken into account in the evaluation. Proposed services should:

- Be Trans-European in scope.
- Be in the common interest.
- Address relevant security and trust and confidence issues where appropriate and in the context of the services proposed.

In addition, proposals should endeavour to:

- Conform to open standards and existing or emerging norms, where appropriate.
- Address relevant interconnection and interoperability issues, taking account of national interoperability frameworks and the coming European Interoperability Framework, where appropriate.
- Address delivery over mobile and broadband networks and on multiple platforms where appropriate or advantageous.

Themes addressed by actions

Six thematic areas are defined that are to be addressed by proposals. Their emphasis is services for citizens. Proposals can address, where appropriate, one, several or all themes. They are:

Theme 1: eGovernment is defined to include on-line services provided by or for public administrations at all levels (local, regional and national); services aimed at broadening participation in the democratic process; and support to government process transformation.

The primary objective is to realise seamless eGovernment (eAdministration) enabling administrations, citizens, NGOs, businesses, suppliers, and other public sector bodies in the European Union to interact electronically.

The priorities are: multi-functional access to public services; cross-administration government services; effectiveness and efficiency of public administrations; and improved quality of public service provision.

Theme 2: eHealth is defined to include: services that promote health and improve the prevention of illness; access, quality and cost-efficiency of healthcare; and adapting to medical advances and demographic change.

The primary objectives focus on the use of electronic health and insurance cards; reliable information networks for health, public health and prevention on a Trans-European level, reimbursement and management systems; paramedical support; online health systems; and homecare, in particular for the disabled and the elderly.

The priorities are: to provide regional health authorities and healthcare providers with improved access to cross-border healthcare through the use of "smart" identification cards; electronic health records; cost-efficient healthcare (both medical and administrative); access to quality emergency medical data; and support of health authorities in assessing health needs and planning capacity.

Theme 3: eInclusion is defined to include services that strengthen the European social model, to address the specific needs of people with disabilities, the elderly and the socially disadvantaged, to contribute to overcoming socio-economic, educational, geographic, cultural and gender barriers and to favour the prevention of new risks of "digital exclusion".

The primary objectives focus on the provision of e-services to the particular needs of disadvantaged groups, the promotion of independence and the assistance of participation in society for the widest possible range of users.

The priorities include access to government services, education, employment and health; website accessibility; access to telecommunications and broadcasting services; and assistive technology for service delivery.

Theme 4: eLearning is defined to include the use of multimedia technologies and the Internet to improve knowledge acquisition and the quality of and access to learning accompanied by the adoption and reorganisation of business models, organisational structures and learning services.

The primary objectives are to increase the availability of e-learning services for all in the European Union.

The priorities are to facilitate lifelong learning; to provide virtual services for students and researchers; to assist the reskilling of the workforce and to promote digital literacy for all citizens.

Theme 5: Trust and Security is defined to include all security aspects of e-services and e-applications and related trust and confidence issues, e.g. trust marks; the improved security of EU networks by strengthening the presence and co-operation of CERT/CSIRT organisations (Computer Emergency Response Teams / Computer Security Incident Response Teams); and the promotion of the deployment of privacy enhancing services for e-authentication and electronic ID services to effectively fulfil the requirements of the EU directive 2002/58 on privacy and electronic communications.

The primary objective is to raise the level of security and trust among citizens and consumers in e-applications in order to accelerate their involvement in the Information Society.

The priorities will be the deployment of good practice and the verification, with the involvement of public administrations and businesses and citizens - including, as appropriate, through the establishment of public-private partnerships- of the adequacy and suitability of interoperable solutions. Special emphasis will be placed on proposals relating to Open Source Solutions¹.

Theme 6: SMEs This theme is defined to include services that facilitate the participation of SMEs in the e-economy.

The primary objective is to increase the competitiveness of SMEs by their use of e-services. In this context these are defined to include access to government services; access to eBusiness solutions; and to new forms of business and commerce from which they may otherwise be excluded because of their size.

The priorities are to support SMEs in the adoption and use of e-applications; to enhance their e-skills; to foster public-private partnerships, including those established with a view to address security issues; and to facilitate the provision of cross-border e-services targeted for SMEs.

Types of actions

Four action types are defined; Initial Deployment; Market Validation; Support and Co-ordination; and calls for tender. In order to broaden the scope of proposals relative to previous calls for proposals each action can address, where appropriate, one, several or all themes.

Action 1: Initial Deployment

Increasing the number of initial deployment projects in the eTEN project portfolio remains a priority in 2004. The current level of funding of these projects is at 10% of investment costs. A proposal to increase this to 30% is before the European Council. Initial deployment projects will be funded at the level authorised at the time of contract signature.

Replication of existing localised services is considered a potentially effective and cost-efficient manner to stimulate Trans-European deployment. As effective replication requires more than “copying” of services from one location to another, it must take into account factors such as the differences in regulatory, administrative and cultural environments. Initial deployment projects also need to take into account back-office functions and the organisation and processes underlying e-services. The eTEN Work Programme 2004 aims to stimulate this type of initial deployment project in order for prospective proposers to identify and take full advantage of the potential for replication. In particular, resource pooling, software exchange/sharing and co-operative deployment between public administrations will be stimulated and it is proposed to encourage replication between bordering regions of different Member States, since they often have

¹ See Glossary

common needs, cultures, infrastructures and constituencies; already work together on certain public issues; and can exploit existing cross-border administrative co-operation. This approach is seen as making good economic sense; increasing the leverage of public funds and promoting collaboration between European Union administrations.

Initial Deployment proposals are eligible for funding in 2004 for all programme themes (see section III) as follows.

- eGovernment
- eHealth
- eInclusion
- eLearning
- Trust and Security
- SMEs

Action 2: Market Validation

Market validation covers activities in connection with the launching of a new service. These may include market tests and adaptation of the product for different markets. Market validation projects test the feasibility of the deployment of a service via practical pilots and demonstrates and validates the precise conditions to be fulfilled for subsequent deployment. They also identify the specific barriers to overcome and the actions needed for deployment. These actions are eligible for funding in 2004 and are open for all programme themes. Their primary focus is the rollout of eTEN-services for citizens.

Market validation proposals are eligible for funding in 2004 for all programme themes (see section III) as follows.

- eGovernment (eAdministration)
- eHealth (eHealthcare)
- eInclusion
- eLearning
- Trust and Security
- SMEs

Action 3: Support and Co-ordination

Support Actions are sought to build further co-operation between stakeholders in the value chain; to provide the appropriate environment for the realisation of the projects; to promote the programme; and to co-ordinate the activities undertaken under the programme with related Community and national Programmes. Actions are expected to address:

- Programme and project awareness through workshops, support to the eTEN NCP's and other means.
- Optimisation of current projects.
- Analysis of needs and future development of the eTEN domain.
- Stimulation and promotion of deployment including good practice test-beds and brokerage.
- Analysis of the impact of EU policy on potential deployment of e-solutions and identification of measures to achieve this deployment.

Action 4: Calls for Tender

Direct support to the programme and to projects may be considered where necessary. In this respect studies and supplementary actions will be the subject of calls for tender, as appropriate.

IV. Project Characteristics

The primary objective of eTEN is to facilitate the development of the information society. At the operational level eTEN funds market studies for potential e-services and funds the initial or 'test' deployment of e-services that are considered worthwhile. eTEN does not fund research and development nor does it fund 'full-scale' deployment.

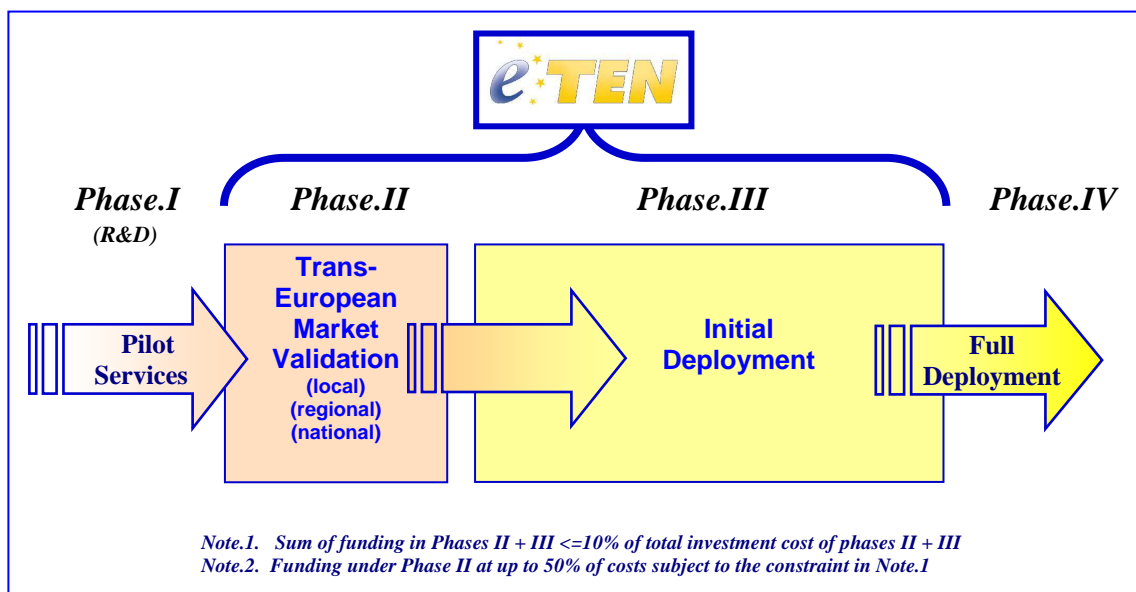
All proposed systems and services should be based on existing or mature technology, i.e., it should be possible to demonstrate at least the fully developed and tested prototype service at the proposal phase. All R&D work, as described below, should be completed on both the technical and content aspects of the system and service. Therefore the proposals should not include major development efforts, apart from minor adaptation prior to market testing, of the original system or service on the basis of user feedback or technical advance, and apart from customisation of the service for Trans-European use as outlined in the sections below. Project proposals submitted to these actions should be part of the natural process of service rollout and should also be an integral part of the activities of the organisations submitting the proposals. They should not be written for the sole purpose of obtaining an eTEN grant. They should serve existing or recently identified needs in the user population and their emphasis should be on service provision rather than the exploitation of novel technology.

In 2004, eTEN will continue to support the types of projects defined in the Guidelines, namely: studies on commercial feasibility (market validation projects); initial deployment projects; actions that stimulate trans-boundary initiatives and the identification and removal of the barriers to effective interconnection and interoperability. The priority for 2004 continues to be an increase in the number of initial deployment projects. With this in mind proposers should ensure that all stakeholders are present in the consortium. Representatives of the total value chain (users or beneficiaries, communities to whom the service is directed, service providers, technology providers, service contributors, etc.) should either be in the consortium, have indicated their willingness to sponsor the project or be engaged in a peer review capacity. Proposers should also indicate how they propose to proceed beyond the validation phase.

Successfully concluded research projects could consider the opportunity for initial deployment under the eTEN programme. Successful services established in one Member State could also consider replication in at least one other member state. Where relevant, close links will be established between projects supported by EU, national and the eTEN programmes with a view to contributing to program awareness, consensus development and technical concertation, and to raise awareness about technology options, success factors for take-up and initial deployment, and market perspectives.

A project resulting in a service can be considered as passing through several phases from initial conception and research resulting in a pilot service up to sustained operation

servicing users. eTEN addresses two phases of this process, the validation phase where a technically mature service is tested in the market and a deployment report is completed, prior to a decision to deploy; and the initial deployment phase where a service is launched under operational conditions.



Types of Project

The four phases leading to the provision of an e-service are described in the following sections to assist potential proposers differentiate between tasks that are, and are not, eligible for eTEN funding.

R&D phase

The eTEN programme does not fund research and development (R&D). This is defined as creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications. It is differentiated from other activities by an appreciable element of novelty and the resolution of scientific and/or technological uncertainty. It covers three broad activities: basic research, applied research, and experimental development.

When calculating the costs of potential eTEN projects one source of difficulty is locating the cut-off point between experimental development and the related activities required for marketing and deployment on a Trans-European basis. This section provides guidance on how intending proposers should do this.

Experimental development is systematic work, drawing on existing knowledge gained from research and/or practical experience, that is directed to producing and installing new systems and services, or to improving substantially those that already exist. This type of activity is not eligible for funding.

However, if the system or service is substantially developed and the primary objective is to develop markets, to do pre-launch planning, or to get the system or service working smoothly then this latter work is considered eligible for funding.

Construction and testing of prototypes falls within the scope of R&D and is not eligible for funding. A prototype is an original model constructed to include all the technical characteristics and performances of the new system or service up to the point where the design and any necessary modifications to the prototype have been completed and testing in the original context has been satisfactorily performed.

However, the work after successful testing of the original prototype necessary to test and adapt it in its new, Trans-European environment is eligible for funding. This work constitutes customisation or localisation and is understood in the context of eTEN to be the tailoring of the service in response to all aspects, both technology, content and society related, of the new environment of the service that differ from the original specification. This may include some different requirements of the users of the service; the technical integration of the service into the new process environment; and the adaptation of the service to different organisational structures. It may also include internal configuration of the service to tailor it to match the new requirements.

The enhancements or modifications due to this customisation should preserve, where possible, the system integrity, in other words the use, manner of use, users and purpose of the service should remain unchanged, except in the case of a transfer of a service to a different user type. In addition the functionality of the system should not undergo any further development or transformation beyond that required for customisation.

Other activities that are eligible for funding include:

- Start-up activities that may include service modifications and trial production even if this implies some further design and engineering.
- Design for the preparation of service production. This may cover activities aimed at defining procedures; technical specifications; and operational features necessary to the Trans-European development and marketing of new systems and services.
- Software-related activities such as work on enhancements and solutions to technical problems related to Trans-European deployment.
- Studies relating to social systems using established methodologies.

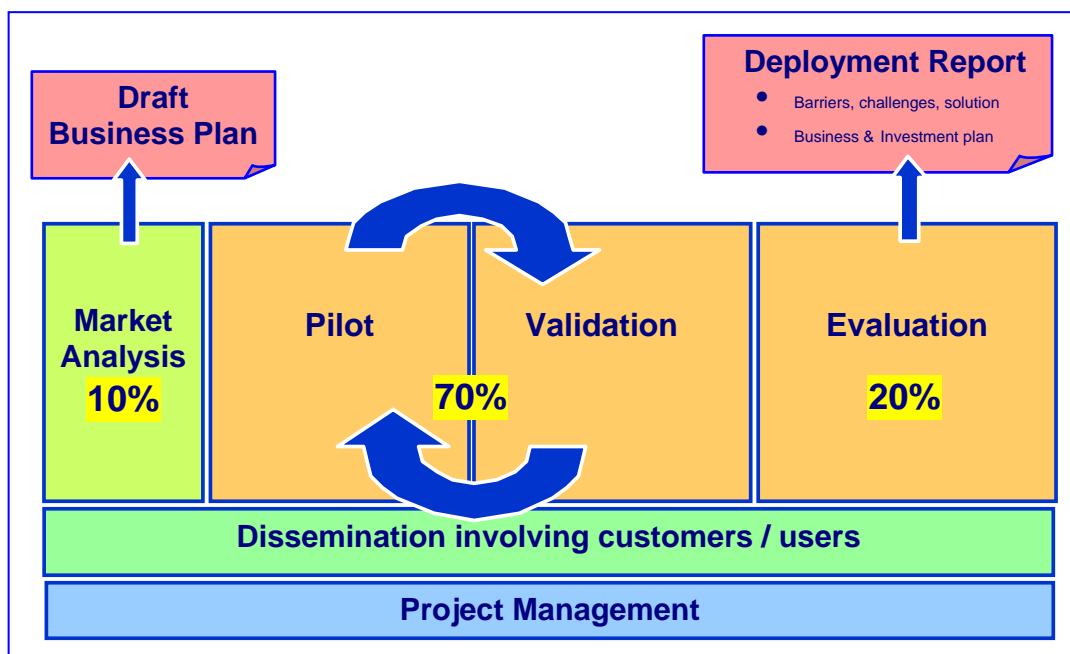
Market Validation projects

Market validation is the testing of the viability (economic, social, administrative, etc.) of a service. It is not the technical or functional validation of a service. Project proposals in this phase must start from an existing operational or fully developed and tested prototype system or service. This phase is typically of up to 18 months duration and should be focused on description and demonstration of the service, identification of the users or target population, user feedback, success criteria and peer reviews. Therefore, a feasibility / market validation project based on the eTEN Work Programme 2004 will consist of the following elements:

- Demonstration of a pilot or operational service (involving a significant number of users in real life conditions), including at least two Member States.
- Peer review of the service, including dissemination activities. Peer reviews can be arranged in the form of a series of workshops / seminars / discussion groups.

- Feedback documented by the project from the user population, including the description of specific barriers to overcome prior to initial deployment.
- Drafting of a deployment report and incorporating the results of the peer review and user feedback and outlining the actions needed for deployment.
- Final report documenting the findings of the project, enumerating the barriers and challenges for the administrations for deployment and including a business/investment plan as a composite part of the reporting.

The end result of a market validation project should be the demonstration of feasibility via practical pilots, demonstrating and validating the precise conditions to be fulfilled for subsequent deployment. For example, the project effort and resources could be distributed as: Analysis (10%), Pilot/Validation (70%), and Evaluation (20%) as indicated in the diagram below. The validation would normally include several iterations.



Market Validation Project Structure

This validation phase aims at preparing a deployment plan that clarifies project management thinking about future Trans-European market deployment and sets out a plausible case to secure project internal or external financing.

The deployment report must be formulated from the viewpoint of partners, investors or public decision-makers. It should describe the proposed service and should demonstrate its soundness and sustainability. It should include the following basic categories of information:

- user population (size, state of development, type of customers and competitors, Trans-European dimension),
- service definition and the reasons why a customer would want to buy it or a service provider deliver it free,
- cost and benefits of the service for all the actors in the value chain,

- management and management control systems necessary to roll-out the service, as part of a consolidated consortium,
- financing requirements to launch the service and the impact that Community aid might have on it,
- Timing for initial and full deployment.

Initial Deployment

This phase covers the initial rollout of the service and is typically of up to 36 months in duration. Project proposals in this phase must start from an existing operational or fully developed and tested prototype system or service. They must present a convincing deployment plan with full details for the initial operational deployment and also showing the development strategy for the full service. This is typically the case of existing services that are being extended at Trans-European level.

The size or scope of an initial deployment project depends upon a number of factors. The chief among these is the investment that the consortium is willing to make. However, other considerations, such as the minimum potential user or customer population and the minimum number of 'test sites' that are necessary to provide the information needed to proceed to full deployment will influence the structure of a proposal and will need to be decided. Other considerations, such as revenue flows (where applicable), will also influence the size and scope of the initial deployment. The deployment and business plans should present a realistic view of the role, use and potential uptake of the proposed e-service.

The kinds of projects that can be considered as deployment are:

- Service replication. eTEN supports the roll out of services on a Trans-European basis. This Trans-European concept is a crucial element of eTEN and needs to be fully understood in terms of the practical barriers that prevent the roll out of services across national and regional borders. These barriers can be physical but, in the context of informatics applications and services, these barriers are more often ones of language, standardisation, interoperability (application and service level), localisation of services, and replication of services. These are the practical barriers to deployment that need to be addressed by the projects that wish to replicate an existing service on a Trans-European basis. Conversion of existing good practice services to open source solutions may be considered under this heading if it would enhance Trans-European roll out and offer clearly defined socio-economic benefits.
- New service. This refers to a first deployment of a new solution or service. This may be based on new technology or the exploitation of research results, or on the adaptation of existing and operational services and applications to a new domain.

The outcome of this phase is the achievement of the initial deployment of a new service or application, which will lead to full commercial or public operation. An outline roadmap for the final deployment should be included in all proposals.

Full Deployment

Defining the cut-off point between 'initial' deployment and full deployment can sometimes present difficulties when preparing proposals. Unlike in the case of R&D and market validation, the difference depends more on the response of the users or customers to the service than to the purpose of the work undertaken and the novelty or otherwise of the components of the service.

It depends primarily on the perceptions of the intending proposers. They must first decide the scale of their investment in initial deployment - how much they are willing to risk. This will be influenced by the timescale of revenues from the service or the full public availability of the service. They should define the size of the target user population and the number of deployment sites that will be needed to test and refine the service sufficiently prior to full-scale launch. Their judgement as to the scope of the project will be examined during the evaluation and will be accepted or refined during negotiations with the Commission if the proposal is accepted for funding.

V. Implementation

eTEN will publish a call for proposals in the Official Journal of the European Community in early 2004. This will contain the instructions for submission of proposals. Consortia of a minimum of two legal entities from two different member states from the enlarged European Union can seek funding. The level of grant-aid depends on the type of project. Guidelines for the preparation of proposals and other information for proposers will be available from the eTEN website (<http://europa.eu.int/eten>).

Making a Proposal

One main call for proposals is foreseen in 2004. Proposals should be submitted in accordance with the procedure defined in the call text. They should comply with the existing EU legislation and policy, in particular, concerning data protection and privacy. In order to establish that the proposals are in the common interest, a statement to this effect is required from the National Authority¹ of the Member State of origin of the proposal co-ordinator. The list of National Authorities is published on the eTEN website. This section explains the structure of proposals, the funding available, how proposals are evaluated and selected, and the process that leads to project funding.

Structure of Consortium

Consortia must be trans-national in the sense that they are comprised of a minimum of two independent, registered, legal entities from two Member States from the enlarged European Union. As a general rule, projects should be implemented in a minimum of two member states but implementation in a single Member State is allowed if it contributes to a broader Trans-European interest. The consortium must have sufficient expertise and resources (personnel, equipment, financial,...) necessary for success and these should be convincingly integrated to form a coherent action. The participants must be committed to the tasks assigned to them and there must be sufficient complementarity between participants to ensure that all tasks can be adequately addressed.

¹ See Glossary

Third country participation

The Community may allow participation of entities from 3rd countries to projects, where such participation is of mutual interest and ensures the interoperability of services and applications. The participation will be decided on a case-by-case basis. Participants from 3rd countries will not receive Community funding.

Forms of Community Aid

Proposals should justify the need for European funding and state why private or public resources are not available to completely fund the project. At the time of publication of Work Programme 2004 the total amount of Community funding shall not exceed 10% of the total investment cost of the overall project, regardless of the form of aid chosen and the number of project phases funded. The total investment cost is briefly described in the glossary and more fully defined in the eTEN Guide for Proposers 2004.

A proposal to increase this to 30% of the total investment cost of the overall project for initial deployment projects is before the European Council. Initial deployment projects will be funded at the level authorised at the time of contract signature. Aid for projects will take the following forms:

Market Validation Projects - Co-financing of up to 50% of the allowable costs incurred for projects of common interest in the sectors covered by eTEN, up to a maximum of 10% of the estimated total investment cost.

Initial Deployment Projects - Co-financing of up to 10% of the allowable costs incurred during the market validation and initial deployment phases, for projects of common interest in the sectors covered by eTEN, up to a maximum of 10% of the estimated total investment cost. It has been proposed to increase this to 30%. The decision of The European Council and Parliament on this is expected in the first half of 2004.

Initial deployment projects will be funded at the level authorised at the time of contract signature¹.

Structure of Project Proposals

The eTEN Guide for Proposers 2004 contains full details on how to make a proposal. In brief, the project proposal should be structured in two sections:

Part A is a set of forms which collect basic information about the proposal and the proposers, e.g., proposal name, proposers' names and addresses, brief description of the work, total funding requested, etc.

Part B: The first part contains a description of the long-term project in which the proposers intend or have decided to invest, together with the estimated implementation and financial projection plans. This section must include an estimate of the total investment required to complete the project as a whole. Since the maximum funding available is determined by the overall investment, this estimate must be fully justified.

¹ Up-to-date information on the status of the 30%- decision can be found on the eTEN website at URL:

http://europa.eu.int/information_society/programmes/eten/news/30percent/index_en.htm

The proposer must explain the calculation in sufficient detail to enable it to be verified during the evaluation process.

The second part identifies the project phase for which a Community contribution is requested. This can be either the market validation phase or the project initial deployment phase. This section of the proposal shall include all the information required for the assessment of applications for financial aid.

Evaluation and Selection

The evaluation process in all procurement actions by the Commission (these include calls for proposals) is set out in the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities. The evaluation is carried out by the Commission assisted by independent experts.

Proposals received that pass the evaluation will be ranked in terms of quality. Separate lists will be prepared for Initial Deployment proposals, Market Validation proposals and Support Action proposals. When allocating budget, priority will be given to Initial Deployment proposals.

The evaluation of proposals will be based on the principles of transparency and equality of treatment. Each submission will be assessed on the basis of the evaluation criteria, which are divided in three categories: eligibility criteria, award criteria and selection criteria. Only proposals meeting the requirements of the eligibility criteria shall be evaluated further. The description of these criteria is presented below.

After the evaluation of the individual proposals, they will be divided into 3 lists, one each for initial deployment, market validation and support and co-ordination actions, and ranked within the lists according to their order of priority for funding. The initial deployment proposals deemed appropriate for funding will have priority for funding. Should there be a residual budget from the minimum of 40.5M€ foreseen for these actions after the initial deployment proposals have been funded, this will be allocated to the market validation proposals deemed appropriate for funding in the order of priority of that list.

The list of support and co-ordination actions will be funded in their order of priority. Should there be insufficient proposals in the list to consume the maximum of 1.5M€ allocated to this action, calls for tenders may be made for actions in the areas that have not been addressed under the support and co-ordination action.

Calls for tenders will be made for two studies for an estimated amount of 770K€. Further calls for tenders will be made depending on the results from the call for proposals and the need for support and co-ordination actions identified by the midterm programme evaluation and the project review process.

Eligibility criteria

Eligibility criteria are applied by the Commission services prior to the application of the other criteria.

On receipt, all proposals and applications will be subject to an eligibility check, to ensure that they conform to the requirements of the call, and to the submission procedure.

The following must be complied with:

- E1) Timely arrival at the location specified in the eTEN Call for Proposals.
- E2) Submission of a complete proposal.
- E3) Compliance of the consortium composition to the rules set out in the eTEN Work Programme 2004.
- E4) Provision of a declaration by applicants that they are not subject to a prejudicial legal or financial situation and have not been found guilty of grave professional misconduct.
- E5) Declaration of the National Authority that the proposal is in the common interest.

The deadline for submission is the time of arrival at the location specified in the call for proposals. It is absolutely firm and will be strictly enforced. Project proposals not meeting the deadline specified in the call will not be accepted for evaluation and will be returned unopened to the proposers.

A formal separate declaration covering point (E4) will only be required for proposals that go into the negotiation stage. As a first measure it will be made clear in the submission documents that by submitting a proposal all of the partners make this declaration.

The fulfilment of criterion (E5) is based on the submission, as part of the proposal documentation, of a form indicating the agreement of a proper public authority in the Member State of the co-ordinator.

Award criteria

Award criteria are grouped in four categories described below.
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A1) Nature of the proposed service

- a) The alignment of the proposal with the objectives of the eTEN Work Programme 2004.
- b) The RTD phase of the service is complete and a prototype service exists.
- c) The maturity of the underlying technology pilot and the interest of the proposed service compared to existing technology offers in the same market in a particular sector.
- d) The expected impact of the proposed action and its viability beyond the phases of work sponsored by the Community.

Although not mandatory, proposals will be considered to be of extra value in so far as they:

- e) make use of broadband and mobile telecommunications and interoperable platforms,
- f) make use of open-source components and open standards.

A2) Planning

- a) Adequacy of the chosen methodology to achieve the stated objectives.

- b) Clear work plan with well-defined work packages, partner roles, deliverables and validation.
- c) Appropriateness of the management approach.
- d) Appropriateness of the outline deployment plan and business case for market validation proposals;

or

Appropriateness of the detailed deployment plan and business case for initial deployment proposals.

A3) Use of resources

- a) Adequacy of the partnership and involvement of users and other stakeholders in the value chain, in particular the commitment from relevant public organisations to carry through the project, where appropriate.
- b) Appropriateness of the financial package including the allocation of resources in view of the achievement of the objectives of the proposal.
- c) The credibility of the overall investment plan, including the estimation of the total investment costs, and the rationale for Community contribution to the project.

A4) Contribution to EC policies

- a) The contribution of the proposal to socio-economic policies; to the implementation or the evolution of other EU policies related to the internal market; and to standardisation and regulation in the area addressed by the proposal.
- b) The extent of the Trans-European dimension of the proposal and the potential for future wider Trans-European deployment.
- c) Potential scope for future replication/localisation of the service at EU level.

Selection criteria

Selection criteria are initially applied on the basis of the information supplied in the proposal. If this identifies cases of weak financial capacity or professional competence it may necessitate counterbalancing actions such as financial guarantees or other measures. Successful proposals called to negotiations will be the subject of a formal legal and financial validation as a requirement to the issuing of a contract.

S1) Financial and operational capacity to carry out the project

Proposers must have stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain their activity throughout the period during which the action is being carried out. They must have the:

- Capacity to co-finance the proposed project as demonstrated by the company accounts. A test methodology to rate financial capacity will be made available to intending proposers.
- Capacity to allocate adequate human resources to carry out the project in question. In particular, proposals in which any partners request unjustified significant third party assistance will risk rejection on this criterion.

S2) Professional competencies and qualifications

Proposers must demonstrate professional competencies and qualifications required to complete the proposed project. They must provide:

- Documented relevant experience in the field of the proposed action (e.g. technical, commercial and financial expertise or references to previous or ongoing projects).

Scoring and thresholds of award criteria

A score and a threshold will be applied to each of the four award criteria. Proposals which fail to achieve one of the threshold scores will not be considered for implementation.

For each award criteria a score from 0 to 5 is given:

- 0 - the proposal fails to address the criterion under examination or can not be judged against the criterion due to missing or incomplete information.
- 1 - poor
- 2 - fair
- 3 - good
- 4 - very good
- 5 - excellent

The respective thresholds of the four award criteria are:

	Threshold
1) Nature of the proposed service	3
2) Planning	3
3) Use of resources	3
4) Contribution to EU policies	3

Evaluation of support measures

The evaluation of proposals submitted to 'Support and Co-ordination actions' will be based on a reduced set of the above criteria. The following criteria and sub-criteria will apply:

- Eligibility criteria E1, E2, E3, and E4.
- Award sub-criteria A1(a); A2 (a), (b) and (c); A3 (a) and (b); A4 (a).
- Selection criteria S1 and S2.

There are no changes to the scoring procedure or to the applied thresholds.

Timetable

The Commission will launch one call for proposals with an indicative budget of 42M€ on the basis of the eTEN Work Programme 2004 as follows.

- The CFP will be launched in the first quarter of 2004 covering all actions. It will be open for at least three months from the date of its publication in the Official Journal.
- The Commission, assisted by independent experts, will evaluate the proposals.
- Proposals that pass all evaluation thresholds will be ranked in terms of quality. Separate lists will be prepared for initial deployment, market validation and support actions. Priority will be given to initial deployment projects over market validation projects. The ranked lists will be the basis for establishing a list of proposals to be called for negotiations.
- All proposal co-ordinators will be sent their evaluation results.
- This list will be presented to the Member States eTEN Financial committee for opinion following which the Commission will decide upon the list.
- After adoption of the decision, the contract negotiations will start. The Commission aims to finalise contract negotiations within 8 months after the closure of the call.
- The implementation of the projects will start after finalisation of the negotiations.

The Commission will launch two specific calls for tender. One will be finalised in early 2004; the other will be launched in the second quarter of 2004.

Indicative Budget

The eTEN programme budget for 2004 is estimated at 43M€.

An amount of approximately 1M€ is foreseen for ongoing project reviews and two specific calls for tenders.(budgets of € 350.000 and € 420.000). Consequently, the indicative budget allocated to calls for proposals resulting from this Work Programme is 42M€ of which a maximum of 1.5M€ is anticipated for support and co-ordination actions. This latter amount will be allocated either through the call for proposals or calls for tenders.

Further information

For further information related to this programme and a current list of the eTEN national contact points and members of the eTEN Member States committees go to <http://europa.eu.int/eten>

Annexes

Legal Framework

The Trans-European Network (TEN) initiative is based on articles 154, 155 and 156 of the Treaty establishing the European Community, which set the objective of establishing Trans-European networks in the areas of transport, telecommunications and energy. These networks will enable the citizens of the Union, economic operators and regional and local communities to derive full benefit from the setting-up of an area without internal frontiers.

The Treaty requires that a set of guidelines be produced to define the terms of reference to meet the objectives set out in the articles:

- Decision No 1376/2002/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 July 2002 amending Decision No 1336/97/EC on a series of Guidelines for Trans-European telecommunications Networks.

The Programme is governed by the TEN financial regulations

- Regulation (EC) No 1655/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 July 1999, amending Regulation (EC) No 2236/95 laying down general rules for the granting of Community financial aid in the field of Trans-European Networks (OJ 1995/ L282/16 of 24.11.1995).

Links and Documents

Europa <http://europa.eu.int/>
eEurope <http://europa.eu.int/eeurope/2005>
IDA <http://europa.eu.int/ISPO/ida/jsps/index.jsp?fuseAction=home>
eTEN (including reference and legal documents) <http://europa.eu.int/eten>
eLearning <http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/elearning>
Treaty of European Union http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/search/search_treaties.html

Glossary

Application	A system or service offering access to information through telecommunications and information technologies and/or a means of performing transactions.
Business plan	A complete analysis of the market viability of a venture, from its conception, to its management and control, up to the financial requirements to launch it and the expected revenues and benefits from its operation.
Call for Proposals	As published in the Official Journal. Opens parts of a work programme for proposals, indicating what types of actions are required. A provisional timetable for such Calls is included in each work programme
CERT	Computer Emergency Response Teams These are centres of Internet security expertise. They provide information and training on all aspects of ICT security. They also deal with computer security incidents and vulnerabilities and publish security alerts.
CSIRT	Computer Security Incident Response Teams These are organisations that define and document the nature and scope of a computer security incident response (CSIR)
Demonstration site	A demonstration site is the real or virtual location where one attempts to prove the viability of services based on new technologies offering potential advantage . It facilitates the validation, involvement of users, possibilities to create market opportunities and eventual exploitation.
Deployment	The construction and operation of the application to offer the services in a real life environment.
EC	European Commission
eContent	eContent is a market oriented programme which aims to support the production, use and distribution of European digital content and to promote linguistic and cultural diversity on the global networks
eEurope 2005	This action plan provides a favourable environment to give everyone the opportunity to participate in the global information society. eEurope 2005 aims to stimulate secure services, applications and content based on a widely available broadband infrastructure. (for further details refer to http://europa.eu.int/eeurope/2005)
eGovernment	There are many definitions of eGovernment. Some are very focussed, limiting the scope to eCommerce in government. Some definitions restrict e-government to internet applications only or to interactions between government and outside

	groups. Others are all embracing, as the provision of government information and services in the electronic environment. Our definition describes eGovernment as the use of information and communication technologies to improve the activities of public sector organisations. Within this definition is included the provision of information and services, the engagement in eCommerce, management using ICT, the integration of ICT into work practices and eDemocracy.
eHealth	In the context of eEurope, the concept of "eHealth" is used to describe the application of information and communications technologies across the whole range of functions which, one way or another, affect the health of citizens and patients. It includes systems ranging from the purely administrative to those for care delivery. It also concerns commercial information providers such as publishers and electronic trading of health care goods such as pharmaceuticals, medical devices and the various ICT applications.
eInclusion	eInclusion is targeted to strengthen the European social model, to address the specific needs of the disadvantaged, so that all citizens can benefit from the new opportunities presented by the Information Society. It recognises that the fast development of the information society has brought about deep changes in our way of working and living that are accompanied by organisational, commercial, social and legal innovations. It promotes independence and accessibility for all.
eLearning	eLearning refers to the eLearning programme of the European Commission that seeks to mobilise the educational and cultural communities, as well as the economic and social players in Europe, in order to speed up changes in the education and training systems for Europe's move to a knowledge-based society. eLearning (e-learning) is also a generic term referring to "the use of new multimedia technologies and the Internet to improve the quality of learning by facilitating access to resources and services as well as remote exchanges and collaboration" – eLearning Action Plan COM(2001)172 final.
EU	European Union
Evaluation	The process by which proposals are, or are not, retained with a view to selection as projects. Evaluation is conducted through the application of eligibility, award and selection criteria identified in a work programme. The evaluation is conducted by the Commission assisted by independent experts.
FP6	Sixth Framework Programme for Research and Technological

	<p>Development</p> <p>Info: http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/fp6/index_en.html</p>
Generic Service	A service, either conversational, messaging, retrieval or groupware, of direct usage for a large number of users, which provide common tools for development and implementation of applications, whilst aiding their interoperability.
Grants	Grants are direct financial contributions covered by a written agreement, by way of donation, from the Community budget in order to finance either an action intended to help achieve an objective forming part of a European Union policy; or the functioning of a body which pursues an aim of general European interest or has an objective forming part of a European Union policy.
IDA	IDA (Interchange of Data between Administrations) is a European Commission driven strategic initiative using advances in information and communications technologies to support rapid exchange of information between administrations.
Interoperability	The ability of two or more systems (devices, databases, services or technology) to interact with one another in accordance with a prescribed method.
IST	<p>Information Society Technologies.</p> <p>A thematic priority for Research and Development under the Specific Programme “Integrating and strengthening the European Research Area” in the Community Sixth Framework Programme. (→FP6)</p> <p>Further information can be found at http://www.cordis.lu/ist/about/about.htm</p>
Market validation	All activities related to an application/service project aiming at evaluating its technical, economic and financial characteristics.
National Authorities	<p>In the context of the eTEN programme these are the offices of the national representatives to the eTEN Member States’ committees or their delegates. The list of National Authorities is published on the eTEN website</p> <p>http://europa.eu.int/information_society/programmes/eten/contacts/management_committee/index_en.htm</p>
NCP	eTEN national contact point. See list on eTEN web site.
OJ	Official Journal of the European Union
Open Source software	<p>An open source software is a software distributed freely with its code, allowing anyone to access, to study, to redistribute and to change it. It must be distributed under a license recognised by the Open Source Initiative (www.opensource.org) or the Free Software Foundation (FSF) (www.fsf.org).</p>

Open Source solutions	Open Source solutions are services based on the use of open standard which have an → <u>open source software</u> reference implementation.
Pilot site	A pilot site is the real or virtual location where one attempts to deploy, test and modify services based on new technologies.
Potential economic viability	Refers to the general and long-term socio-economic net benefits of the project, rather than its mere financial profitability and economic profitability.
Safer Internet Action Plan	The Safer Internet Action Plan promoting safety on the Internet is the European Union's response to tackling the controversial issue of illegal, harmful and racist content on the Internet. It provides funding for activities to deal with illegal and harmful content, as part of a coherent approach by the European Union. The Safer Internet Action Plan, which ended on 31 December 2002, was extended to continue for a further two years. (http://europa.eu.int/ISPO/iap/)
Service of common interest	A service which is of widespread benefit in a social or economic sense.
Service of public interest	Services of public interest are services performed for the benefit of the public or its institutions. They are usually subject to government regulation and encompass a wide range of activities that are undertaken in the public interest or in the interest of a particular community. They are usually provided by, to, or on behalf of, public administrations.
SME	An enterprise that satisfies the criteria laid down in the Commission Recommendation of April 3, 1996 concerning the definition of small and medium size enterprises (OJ L 107, 30.4.1996, p. 4); has no more than 250 employees; has annual turnover of no more than 40 million Euro; is independent.
Socio-economic net benefits	Capacity of a project to generate net benefits for society at large, whether captured or not by the market, and quantifiable in monetary terms or not. It allows for the inclusion of qualitative factors in the final judgement of a project.
Total investment cost	The total investment cost is the sum of all eligible costs for the market validation phase and for the initial deployment phase. Eligible costs do not include recurring operational costs, and any operating profit generated by the service during the project duration must be deducted. This is further described in the 'Guide for Proposers'.
Trans-European	A project conceived to satisfy needs existing in several Member States. As a general rule, projects shall be implemented in several Member States but implementation in a single Member State is allowed if it contributes to a broader Trans-European interest.
Value chain	This includes all participants involved in the deployment of a

	service, from the developers, through service and content providers to users. It can comprise all types of entities such as commercial and public organisations, non-profit associations and citizens.
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