

Publications Office of
the European Union

Strategic Objectives

2017-2025

Revision

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SUMMARY

The present revision of the Strategic Objectives 2017-2025 is based on the assessment conducted after 3 years of implementation (July 2017-June 2020). It takes into account the milestones achieved and those yet to be achieved, which are carried over in the present framework. It draws conclusions from the lessons learned, such as the need to exploit internal synergies and increase the granularity of objectives in order to minimise programme and project management overheads. It also combines the mission of the Publications Office as the interinstitutional provider of publishing and data management services with a more clearly defined role in support of EU policies.

Seven revised Strategic Objectives are therefore proposed:

- Digital European legal space,
- Public procurement data space,
- European open data space,
- Interinstitutional legal publications support,
- Optimised publishing services,
- Standardisation services for interoperability,
- Connecting and preserving content and knowledge.

The first three objectives, based on the concept of 'information/data space', strengthen the link between the activities of the Office and general EU policies.

They tend to expand its outreach beyond institutional stakeholders, by more clearly engaging with Member State authorities at a technical level and with societal actors such as reusers of open data. This is consistent with the evolution of the Office from a purely technical body to a policy support entity.

The objectives 'Interinstitutional legal publications support' and 'Optimised publishing services' share the focus on providing all institutions, agencies and other bodies with state-of-the-art publishing services, for legal and general (non-legal) publications respectively.

The last two objectives ('Standardisation services for interoperability' and 'Connecting and preserving content and knowledge') are based on the role of the Office as a recognised competence centre for information and knowledge management, providing all institutions with a complete set of enabling technologies and solutions which can underpin the full life cycle of their content and ensure long-term access for all.

For each Strategic Objective a detailed description is provided in the following pages, as well as a road map with milestones for the 2020-2025 period and the expected date of achievement.



Strategic Objective

DIGITAL EUROPEAN LEGAL SPACE

A digital European legal space provides easy and comprehensive access to all law applicable within the EU.

Interdependencies between legal systems operating in the EU: a complex legal space

The concept of **European legal space** describes the interdependencies between different legal orders that operate in the EU – mainly EU law and national law, but also other systems such as the one created by the European Convention on Human Rights. Two significant dynamics characterise this space: on the one hand, national law becomes more and more dependent on EU law and, on the other hand, national law acquires more relevance in cross-border relations, as citizens exercise the four fundamental freedoms provided for in the Treaties.

Despite the harmonising effect of EU law, the inherent complexity of the European legal space makes it difficult for citizens and businesses to **understand the full extent of their rights and obligations** and to fully **benefit from the internal market**. It is therefore important to **eliminate barriers** to smooth navigation through the whole body of law applicable within the EU, whether those barriers are of a legal, technical or linguistic nature, by **creating the digital European legal space**.

Digital European legal space: bringing law closer to citizens

The cornerstones of this objective are the following:

- connecting EU law and national law, including case-law and soft law, with their relations made explicit;
- facilitating understanding of EU law and national law;
- fostering the role of EUR-Lex as the reference point for EU legal information.

In order to achieve the objective, the following actions will be carried out.

- Propose recommendations to Member States to bring national law and case-law closer to EU citizens, namely through digitalisation and consolidation.
- Contribute to and promote common standards and interoperable frameworks in the domain of legal information and documentary management within EU institutions as well as at national level (ELI and ECLI identifiers ⁽¹⁾, ontologies).
- Publish consolidated texts at the moment of publication of the amending act and provide better visualisation of the life cycle of the act.
- Integrate information from different systems providing access to EU law, EU law-making procedures (including information on evidence supporting legislative proposals) and justice information (EUR-Lex, the future Joint Legislative Portal, Interinstitutional Register of Delegated Acts, Better Regulation Portal, N-Lex, European e-Justice Portal and others).

⁽¹⁾ ELI: European Legislation Identifier; ECLI: European Case Law Identifier.

- Provide simple access for a non-specialised audience to the currently applicable EU law and tailor EUR-Lex functionalities to the needs of different target audiences: in this context, the possibilities offered by natural language-processing technologies will be explored.
- Implement new key functionalities, such as introducing hyperlinks to enable direct navigation from references in documents, improve editorial content, curate document information and improve the search function on EUR-Lex.
- Strengthen the visibility and reuse of summaries of EU legislation and explore the visual presentation of the contents of the legal acts.
- Improve access to national legislation and case-law in collaboration with Member States, including via machine translation and common search platforms.
- Increase the visibility of EUR-Lex – the most visited europa.eu website – through various channels: search engine optimisation to ensure that EUR-Lex pages figure among the top results of the most important search engines, communication via social media, better linking with other relevant information outlets and promotion at different professional forums and events.

Easy access to law: enhancing transparency and trust

The benefits of the digital European legal space will be multifaceted. It will allow **citizens** to easily retrieve official information about their rights and obligations across the EU when they exercise the four fundamental freedoms. It will enable **businesses** to innovate, grow and access new markets thanks to a better understanding of different national legal rules. It will help mutual understanding across **national administrations and courts** for a better implementation and application of EU law and other Member State laws. It will make it easier for the **EU institutions** to communicate the core values of the European Union.

Overall, the digital European legal space will enhance **transparency** and **trust** in the EU, and contribute to the **cohesion** of its Member States.

Road map

Better connection of EU law and national law

2020

A recommendation to the Member States on access to national law is drafted.

2021

Machine translation is available for national law (documents available in machine-readable format).

The common search platform using ELI and ECLI is operational.

Understanding of EU law facilitated

2020

The 'EU law in force' interface is available.

The results of a usability study are implemented.

2021

The EU Law Analytics dashboard is developed and launched.

A visual presentation (timeline) describing the evolution of legal texts over time is available.

The visibility of summaries of EU legislation is boosted.

2024

Consolidated text (EU legislation) is produced at the time of adoption of the amendments (dependent of the availability of the AKN4EU format).

Specific functionalities for specific user profiles are available on EUR-Lex, including the 'laymen' interface.

Role of EUR-Lex as the reference site for EU legal information fostered

2020

A specific section on EUR-Lex is dedicated to legal acts of the European Central Bank.

Hyperlinks are available for the first documents on EUR-Lex.

Information describing international agreements on EUR-Lex (applicability, parties to the agreement etc.) is improved.

2022

EUR-Lex and the e-Justice Portal are interlinked.



Strategic Objective

PUBLIC PROCUREMENT DATA SPACE

A European public procurement space provides an authoritative point of access to information on EU institutions' and Member States' public procurement activities and enhances the exploitation of public procurement data for its beneficiaries (economic operators, public decision makers and EU citizens).

Public procurement in the EU: need for reliable and complete data

Reliable, accurate and complete public procurement data are essential to enhance the **transparency and accountability** of public spending, fight corruption and improve spending quality for the public authorities at all levels. The data should provide the answers to four questions: who buys?, from whom?, what? and for how much?

Who buys, and from whom? At European level there is no accurate way of identifying the entities procuring or selling, as the use of unique identifiers in procurement is not yet mandatory. The same entity can therefore participate in different procedures, under slightly different names. This makes it virtually impossible to get appropriate information about all the procurement awarded by a certain entity, or about all contracts given to a certain economic operator. Yet identifiers exist and are used at national level.

What are public entities buying, and how much are they paying for it? Clear and consolidated data are often not available. There is no EU-wide consensus on which data need to be collected and for what purpose.

Standard eForms and improved quality of public procurement data

There is a large volume of procurement data available, both in the Member States and on the TED website. The strategy for the European public procurement space will focus on the measures needed to get the right data, and get the data right. This means **data that are structured and standardised**.

Thus, the backbone of this objective will be the **implementation of the eForms regulation** coupled with an **enhanced access** to and the **improvement of public procurement data**.

Under the **eForms regulation** ⁽²⁾, eForms are standard forms used by public buyers to publish notices on the TED website. The use of standard forms will facilitate interoperability and reuse of data. This is very significant when dealing with information that needs to be published at both national and European levels. Standard eForms must be available for use by November 2022 ⁽³⁾.

Additionally, the **public procurement ontology**, which the Office is developing within the ISA² ⁽⁴⁾ programme and with the support of a working group composed of national experts in public procurement, aims to adopt a common understanding of concepts used in procurement – it includes a glossary of terms (with definitions) and a data model depicting the relations between concepts used in procurement. The ontology is the basis for the new generation of standard procurement forms. The eNotification part of the ontology is expected to be completed in the course of 2020.

⁽²⁾ Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/1780 of 23 September 2019 establishing standard forms for the publication of notices in the field of public procurement and repealing Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1986 (eForms) (OJ L 272, 25.10.2019, p. 7).

⁽³⁾ Article 4 of Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/1780.

⁽⁴⁾ ISA²: Interoperability solutions for public administrations, businesses and citizens (https://ec.europa.eu/isa2/home_en).

Actions the Office will therefore focus on

- **Implement eForms by November 2022.** A new data exchange model for public procurement notices, based on a recognised standard (Universal Business Language), will be introduced. The Office will also develop a new web interface for submission of procurement notices (eNotices2) and implement a unique system for verification of respect of validation rules at reception, and subsequent rejection of non-compliant notices. It will adapt the existing publication applications – eSentool, TED Monitor, eTendering, etc. – to work with eForms, and will adapt the TED website in order to display eForms. Finally, the Office will create an eForms-based and eProcurement ontology-compliant repository.
- Provide for easy and user-friendly access **to public procurement data and to bulk data, and enable** the extraction of statistical data. **The TED and SIMAP websites will be merged in order to limit** access points. The search and display of results will be enhanced for the TED website, and the publication of and access to tender documents will be improved, including by enhancing the eTendering features, such as search.
- **Increase data quality.** The eProcurement ontology will be finalised, and the corresponding reference lists (code lists) will be adopted. Non-XML forms will be phased out.
- **Improve services and workflows and limit manual interventions.** A unique system will be implemented for monitoring and reporting throughout the publication chain, and analytical tools will be provided to retrieve and analyse data. The Office will maintain a catalogue of services and provide for a single point of access for machine-to-machine communication.

Enhanced automation of data processing and interoperability

The public procurement ontology will **enhance exchanges** between actors; it will also significantly **facilitate the treatment of information and interoperability** between the different modules and applications.

Following the implementation of eForms, common data formats and exchange protocols will facilitate the **automation of data processing and transfer between national and European platforms**. Furthermore, applying standards makes **linking of data** easier – linked data are a precondition for developing artificially intelligent systems which will facilitate the **increased exploitation of the potential** of procurement data.

Road map

Implementation of eForms

2020

The TED exchange UBL schema (version to be used in TED applications and by TED eSenders, etc.) is in place.

2022

A new web interface for submission of procurement notices (eNotices2) is available.

A unique system for verification of respect of validation rules at reception (Central Validation Service) is available.

Easy and user-friendly access to public procurement data

2022

TED and SIMAP are merged.

TED search and display of results are enhanced.

Improvement of data quality

2020

Non-standard/non-structured (i.e. non-XML) procurement forms are phased out.

2022

Quality control at reception and during processing of notices is enhanced (including rationalisation of services and quality of data).

2024

The eProcurement ontology is finalised.

Better services and workflows

2022

A system for monitoring and reporting throughout the publication chain is implemented.

2024

Analytical tools to retrieve and analyse data are provided.



Strategic Objective

EUROPEAN OPEN DATA SPACE

A European open data space provides access to an authoritative collection of open data of EU institutions, Member States and European countries.

A European open data space in the single market for data

The **European open data space** will be an essential element of the single market for data – an EU-wide interoperable data space that will enable the development of new products and services based on public data, as well as industrial and scientific applications. It will focus on the **implementation of EU open data and reuse policies** under the legal acts adopted by the EU institutions, in particular Directive 2003/98/EC ⁽⁵⁾, and will be an integral part of the common European data spaces for public administration as defined by the European strategy for data ⁽⁶⁾.

A gap still exists between the available wealth of open data, spread across multiple outlets, and the effort required to discover, access and reuse it. This results in missed opportunities, redundancies and higher burdens for actors who could use these resources. The European open data space, as an **ecosystem of tools** – datasets, data models, ontologies and data-sharing contracts – **and specialised management services** to preserve, generate and share new knowledge, will help fill that gap.

A single entry point to open data and citizen-centric reuse services

The building blocks of this objective are:

- providing a comprehensive catalogue of open data and citizen-centric reuse services;
- improving the interlinking and interoperability of open data with other sources of public-sector information, such as legislation, publications and digital content;
- fostering the reuse of data from EU content through the organisation of EU Datathon competitions and data visualisation events;
- contributing to the implementation of data governance and policies across the EU institutions.

A comprehensive collection of open data and related services will be provided via a single platform based on **data.europa.eu**, to strengthen the implementation of the EU open data policy ⁽⁷⁾. This access point to the European open data space will be established through the **consolidation of the EU Open Data Portal and European Data Portal**. Based on the already provided tools and specialised management services, the new consolidated platform will develop additional service-oriented functionalities such as metadata and data quality checks, previews, powerful APIs ⁽⁸⁾ and automated data visualisations. It will make **more data machine readable**, available in bulk, with an open licence, up to date and interlinked and thus increase the reusability and quality of public-sector information.

The Office will identify and support the exploitation of the potential of **linked open data for European public administrations**, which enables data analysis and facilitates

⁽⁵⁾ Directive 2003/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 November 2003 on the reuse of public sector information (OJ L 345, 31.12.2003, p. 90).

⁽⁶⁾ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – A European strategy for data (COM(2020) 66 final).

⁽⁷⁾ Directive 2003/98/EC and Commission Decision 2011/833/EU of 12 December 2011 on the reuse of Commission documents (OJ L 330, 14.12.2011, p. 39).

⁽⁸⁾ API: Application Programming Interface.

the creation of new data, information and knowledge (for example publishing the EU budget and other important datasets as linked open data). The Office will also facilitate the **reuse of enablers of linked data**, such as common vocabularies, standards and usage of identifiers and standard data citation styles.

The European open data space will allow for systematic data visualisation for datasets by letting users create their own visualisations and export and embed them in their websites. The Office will also work to strengthen data visualisation capacities in the EU institutions through training sessions and workshops, and will pursue its efforts to foster the development of a **data visualisation community** through sharing of knowledge and reusable tools and the organisation of data visualisation events ⁽⁹⁾.

Furthermore, the European open data space will incorporate user-centric services benefiting from the ideas arising from the **yearly EU Datathon** competitions ⁽¹⁰⁾. A comprehensive assessment will be conducted to consolidate the lessons learnt and to take stock of the innovative business and societal services resulting from the editions of the EU Datathon.

While the EU institutions remain responsible for their open data management and publishing, the Office will **actively support** those having established their reuse policies – the Council and the Commission – and encourage the other EU institutions to do so. The Office will work towards interoperability between the European Commission Data Catalogue, under development, and the data.europa.eu outlet. Under the European Commission Data Advisory, the Office will promote a culture shift (through workshops and training sessions) from ‘need to know’ to ‘**need to share**’ across the EU institutions, as a role model for the change needed across the EU to **make data available in the best possible formats** and thus achieve the ambition of becoming a Europe fit for the digital age.

Facilitating the reuse of open data to benefit society

The European open data space will increase the EU’s capacity to address societal challenges through the use of data by fostering an **evidence-based decision-making** process, in particular through data profiling – this will allow for better targeted policy interventions. The Office will explore possibilities for collaboration between the data.europa.eu outlet and the MIDAS platform ⁽¹¹⁾, which includes models used by the Commission in policymaking and impact assessments.

It will lower the burden of data collection on market players, as companies would only have to deal with a **single entry point**, which gives sustainable access to reliable and reusable data. Finally, under a ‘data as a public service’ approach, the European open data space will enable **the creation of services** on the basis of EU information sources.

⁽⁹⁾ Such as EU DataViz: op.europa.eu/eudataviz

⁽¹⁰⁾ op.europa.eu/eudatathon

⁽¹¹⁾ MIDAS: Meaningful Integration of Data Analytics and Services (https://ec.europa.eu/knowledge4policy/modelling/topic/corporate-modelling-inventory-knowledge-management_en).

Road map

2020

The community of practice for data visualisation is launched.

2021

Data citation guidelines are available.

The EU Open Data Portal and the European Data Portal are consolidated and data.europa.eu is launched.

A training and promotion package for citation guidelines is delivered.

Open data advisory is provided as part of the European Commission Data Advisory.

Stocktaking of innovative business and societal services from the EU Datathon takes place.

2022

Metadata and data quality checks and feedback loops are provided to data providers.

Data storage for datasets is available.

The EU Open Data catalogue contains data collections from the Court of Justice of the European Union.

2023

A preview of datasets is available.

Automated translation is available for textual metadata.

A data visualisation service is embedded into data.europa.eu for datasets structured according to a predefined format.

2024

Knowledge graphs are available for datasets.

A dedicated space is available for high-value datasets.

Data versioning is implemented.



Strategic Objective

INTERINSTITUTIONAL LEGAL PUBLICATIONS SUPPORT

The EU institutions are provided with secure, fast and flexible digital solutions for publishing legal information.

The Official Journal act by act

The Official Journal: from paper to digital age

In July 2013, the **electronic edition** of the Official Journal acquired **legal value** instead of the printed edition. However, this shift was not accompanied by a change in the structure of the electronic edition, which remained a legacy of the paper age: a collection of unrelated acts published in a single issue. Furthermore, technology has radically changed the way legislative acts are drafted and processed by the EU institutions – new tools have increased the expectations of a **faster publication time**, in particular for **urgent and sensitive acts**.

Additionally, the existing Official Journal edition puts severe constraints on the production process, such as the collation of the acts in a single edition and the preparation of a static table of contents.

Publishing the Official Journal act by act

With the **act-by-act publication of the Official Journal**, acts will no longer be combined to produce an issue to be published as a gazette. Instead, **each act will be published** as soon as it is ready for publication, **independently of other acts**.

The objective will be implemented in close cooperation with the EU institutions, which will be called on to **jointly decide** how to tackle the changes triggered by the move to the act-by-act production of the Official Journal, such as **referencing of published acts**, metadata and required additional features, e.g. bundled access to sets of acts which are strictly related. Every document consulted will

be authentic – to this end the existing manual electronic signature will be replaced by an **automatic electronic seal**, leveraging benefits from the eIDAS regulation ⁽¹²⁾ as an early institutional adopter.

More flexible and faster publishing of the Official Journal

The objective will bring a more **flexible, faster and simplified way** of publishing the Official Journal. The task of collation and a static table of contents will no longer be needed, thus **decreasing the overall time** from the adoption of an act to its publication in the Official Journal. There will be fewer restrictions on responding to **last-minute publication requests** and publishing acts on dates when no regular publication is planned. Similarly, there will be less impact in the case of an author's last-minute decision not to publish a document or to postpone its publication date.

For **EUR-Lex users**, **each act** consulted will be **authentic**. Currently, an act can be considered authentic only when it is consulted within an issue of the Official Journal. Referencing will be simpler since the Official Journal number will disappear. Users will have the possibility to **display published acts in different views**, customisable according to their interests, selected criteria etc.; they will be able to **group acts** according to their needs, for example all the authentic acts of the same legislative package could be presented together even when they are not published in the same Official Journal edition.

⁽¹²⁾ Regulation (EU) No 910/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 2014 on electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions in the internal market (OJ L 257, 28.8.2014, p. 73).

Interinstitutional Budget Information System

The EU budget as an interinstitutional collaborative process

The annual EU budgetary procedure is a **complex and politically very sensitive exercise**. Today, the production of the EU budget is ensured by the Common Integrated Budget Application (CIBA), which is the unique interinstitutional collaborative information system used by the Commission to prepare its annual statement of estimates and the EU's draft budget, and by the European Parliament and the Council to prepare, negotiate and publish the final budget in the Official Journal and on EUR-Lex.

The Office has a critical role in this respect by ensuring that the EU institutions can rely on a **performant tool** throughout the multiple steps of the procedure (Commission hearings, Council position, Parliament readings, conciliation, etc.) with a **secure environment** that guarantees the appropriate level of confidentiality by strict access control. The three EU institutions regularly bring the critical value of CIBA to the fore. However, CIBA is a legacy information system built over the last 20 years, with outdated technologies and data formats and increasing maintenance costs.

A performant digital solution for the production of the EU budget

The objective is to provide the EU institutions with the **Interinstitutional Budget Information System (IBIS)**: a secure, state-of-the-art digital solution to support the production of the EU budget, **enabling the sharing of data and collaborative working practices**.

This solution will be designed to **optimise the user experience** in terms of functionality and user interface and to provide flexibility for the EU institutions' staff as to how, when and where they work, allied with more **standardisation** in the way IT tools and information are used.

Together with the EU institutions, the Office will carry out a **thorough analysis of the business needs and requirements**, exploring further collaboration and synergies among the institutions with a view to **streamlining business processes** related to the production and publication of the EU budget.

The Office will ensure a modern and secure integration with the institutions' information ecosystem. On the one hand, the tool will reuse existing **corporate solutions for document editing** (LEOS/Edit), **workflow and access management**. This will ensure that editing can be restricted for different actors during different parts of the process and that changes are traceable, with the possibility to extract and compare different versions and see who made the changes and when. On the other hand, the tool will incorporate adopted **standard formats** (IMMC⁽¹³⁾ and AKN4EU) and the design will support the production

of **ready-to-publish documents**. It will ensure **dissemination** of the public part of the information directly on EUR-Lex **automatically**, making use of the publication channels already used for publishing EU law documents.

Transparency and better performance

By enabling **real-time publishing**, the new tool will contribute to improving the **transparency** of the EU budget. Being based on modern principles, IBIS will offer **better performance**, availability, reliability and flexibility, while lowering maintenance overheads. For the EU institutions, the faster and more performant tool will translate into efficiency gains.

Road map

Official Journal act by act

2020

The adaptation of the information systems involved starts.

2021

The specifications for contractors producing the Official Journal are finalised.

All the information systems involved are ready for act-by-act production.

The Official Journal contractors are ready to produce on an act-by-act basis.

2022

Act-by-act production starts.

Interinstitutional Budget Information System

2020

All institutions are consulted.

The business needs and requirements are finalised.

The conception phase of IBIS starts.

2021

The conception phase of IBIS is finalised.

The development of the first 'production-ready' release of IBIS starts.

2022

The first 'production-ready' release of IBIS is developed and tested.

2023

The first 'production-ready' release of IBIS is deployed for acceptance.

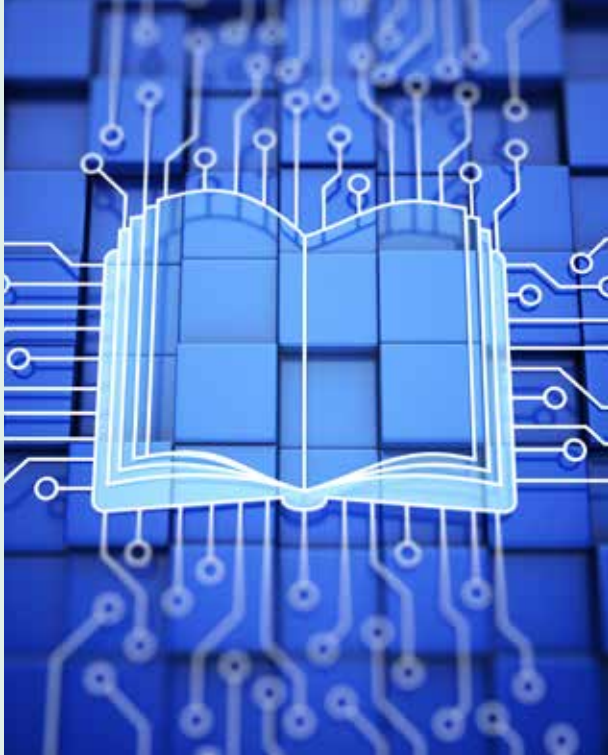
Using the agile approach, successive releases of IBIS are deployed and validated with the different EU institutions involved in the EU budgetary procedure.

2024

All functions of CIBA are covered by IBIS and fully validated with the different EU institutions involved in the EU budgetary procedure.

IBIS can be rolled out in production and CIBA is definitively phased out.

⁽¹³⁾ IMMC: Interinstitutional Metadata Maintenance Committee.



Strategic Objective

OPTIMISED PUBLISHING SERVICES

Governance and optimised publishing services are provided to all EU institutions to enable them to meet their communication objectives.

Effective communication in a digital and data-driven world

Effective communication requires fewer products and messages, but more investment in their **quality and impact**. Communication products must be well targeted and editorially and graphically well designed; their linguistic coverage, digital formats and dissemination channels must correspond to their purpose and to the public's expectations. All these requirements apply to **publications as important tools** supporting collective EU communication efforts.

At the same time, in a digital and data-driven world, the content must be **shareable and reusable**. **Machine-readability** is crucial as a key aspect of **discoverability**. Digital technologies also provide new opportunities for **inclusive publishing** catering for the needs of persons with disabilities ⁽¹⁴⁾.

Finally, European public administration should operate as efficiently as possible, and EU institutions are called on to **achieve better results with fewer resources**. The Commission framed this process in the concept of domain leadership, proposing further specialisation of support services linked with the implementation of **synergies and efficiencies**.

The Office's vision for domain leadership responds to the **need for savings** in the Commission and other EU institutions, but it also frames the Office's efforts to **support the communication efforts of all EU institutions** and helps strengthen its capacity as a modern digital publisher.

Creating better publications to enable better outreach to citizens

The building blocks of this objective are:

- collaborative planning and better governance for publications;
- translation request management;
- centralised production of publications;
- editorial advice and performance measurement.

Publications governance and **collaborative planning** are the key elements of this objective. The Office will gather information from author services and manage the collaborative planning data of publications on behalf of all directorates-general, providing a sound basis for **collaborative decisions at corporate level**. Under the publications governance linked to its domain leader mandate ⁽¹⁵⁾, the Office will provide support to corporate bodies in the field of publications and to the Commission directorates-general for the implementation of governance decisions. For a bigger impact, the Office will propose to its Management Committee the extension of the governance schema to other institutions at a later stage.

⁽¹⁴⁾ Directive (EU) 2016/2102 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 October 2016 on the accessibility of the websites and mobile applications of public sector bodies (OJ L 327, 2.12.2016, p. 1); Directive (EU) 2019/882 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2019 on the accessibility requirements for products and services (OJ L 151, 7.6.2019, p. 70).

⁽¹⁵⁾ The Office's vision for domain leadership based on four building blocks has already been discussed and agreed upon with the Commission central services; a final agreement to start a pilot phase with four Commission directorates-general has been approved by the Corporate Management Board.

Savings and high-quality publishing support services for all EU institutions

The Office envisages that centralising production coupled with strong governance would bring savings – firstly to the Commission and, in the long term, to other EU institutions. In accordance with the Office's vision for domain leadership and its underlying methodology, the resource savings for the Commission would be significant if the goal of a progressive reduction in the number of publications of up to 30 % could be met.

The Office's vision for domain leadership responds to the **need for savings** in the Commission and other EU institutions, but it also frames the Office's efforts to **support the communication efforts of all EU institutions** and helps strengthen its capacity as a modern digital publisher.

In order to achieve the savings described in the Office's vision for domain leadership by transferring decentralised work from the Commission directorates-general to the Office, investments are needed over the next 3 years. Different scenarios have been designed as to the scope of investments and savings, affecting the level of results and impact of the actions proposed by the Office. Based on internal reallocations, the Office is carrying out pilot projects with four directorates-general in order to document the net impact of the workload shift to the Office. Additional needs for other institutions to join relevant parts of the process such as governance will be evaluated after the first stock-taking exercise.

In response to authors' need for professional advice on targeting, structuring and language coverage of their publications, the Office will provide a comprehensive set of services, including technical **editorial advice before or during drafting** and **performance measurement** after the release of a publication. These reports on the performance of high-priority publications will consolidate, interpret and visualise data on physical dissemination, electronic consumption, social media and citations, for governance purposes. As regards the **accessibility of digital publications** for persons with disabilities, and complementing the Commission's actions in the field of web accessibility, the Office will assist the EU institutions in **introducing accessibility into all other digital formats**, from simple Microsoft Word documents to mobile apps. The Office will also develop a modular system of **publishing-related training**, suitable for both basic and advanced users and supplemented by seminars, conferences, dialogue platforms, newsletters, etc. In addition, in a bid to support authors' efforts to **address citizens in their own languages** and to ensure a sound use of content management assets, the Office suggests that it make translation requests to DG Translation following the copy-editing of the original manuscript by the Office's language editors and its enrichment at a technical level. This streamlined approach to translation request management is expected to produce savings in administration overheads while ensuring better quality.

The Office envisages that its **modern production services** and the added value of its project management model will attract a growing number of clients. The objective of **centralising production** should be met without making the use of the Office's services mandatory. It must be **based on client satisfaction**.

The road towards implementation

To implement the Office's vision, **IT developments** will be necessary to support collaborative planning, automated data harvesting for performance management and accessibility templates. A modern workflow management system will be also developed covering the production of legal and general publications. Additionally, scaling up of services will require a stable contractual basis: **digital publishing contracts** equipped with accessibility provisions have been concluded and, under the Office's new language-editing policy, the new generation of contracts allowing outsourcing of language-editing services is operational, enabling a shift of the Office's language staff to new higher added-value services. As regards **accessibility**, work processes, contracts, templates, guidelines and tutorials will be **further developed and promoted** in a structured way in cooperation with stakeholders.



Road map

2020

The Office's vision is approved by the Commission's Corporate Management Board (CMB) and the Office's Management Committee.

The first pilot with four selected directorates-general starts.

The Office fine-tunes its vision for new services to support the communication goals of the institutions.

The Office's vision for new services, design of concepts and evaluation of needs is available.

The governance schema for publications is defined.

Editorial advice services are in the scaling-up phase.

A collaborative planning infrastructure and methodology are established.

A training path is developed and the first sessions based on the holistic programme for the publications community are proposed.

Outsourcing for language editing is operational.

A partial staff redirection to new added-value services starts.

2021

Analysis and reporting on the pilot phase is available for a decision of the CMB and Management Committee on scaling-up.

Implementation of the scaling-up of centralised production and other services included in the pilot project starts for the whole Commission.

A translation work process is defined with DG Translation and request management is available for the Commission.

Publications governance is established for the Commission (dependant on the CMB).

Feedback on performance of publications is available for all institutions.

A community identification and training path is put in place for the Commission.

2022

Services included in the pilot project are scaled up for the Commission and possibly for other institutions (implementation continues).

Synergy with the Office for Infrastructure and Logistics in Brussels is completed.

Publications governance is extended to other institutions.

A full training programme and community animation are available to all institutions.

2023

Staff redirection to full deployment of editorial support and advisory services is completed.

Publications governance implies stocktaking of savings for the Commission and scaling up to all institutions.

New services are scaled up to all institutions (end of 3-year process for the Commission).

Analyses are carried out on stocktaking of the reduction of the volume of publications and the percentage of non-identified publications.

The Unified Production Platform (for publications) is fully deployed.

Accessible publishing

2020

The Office's accessibility tutorials and related assistance are available for the institutions.

2021

Technical support for accessible drafting is available for all institutions.

2023

Accessible products are fully integrated in the mainstream production.



Strategic Objective

STANDARDISATION SERVICES FOR INTEROPERABILITY

Standardisation services in the area of formats, metadata and multilingual reference data are provided at corporate level in order to rationalise resources, increase interoperability and strengthen information and knowledge management.

Interoperability in the EU institutions

As an **interinstitutional service provider**, the Office exchanges data with multiple partners such as the EU institutions and professional reusers. It needs to be able to deal with data from different sources and in different formats. In its transition from paper to electronic publishing house, the Office has recognised early on the importance of using **standards for both content and metadata** to achieve interoperability.

Interoperability is the ability to exchange and make use of information. If information is encoded differently, systems do not understand each other and therefore are not interoperable. To remedy this, mappings, conversions or manual interventions are needed. These costly and error-prone activities can be avoided by agreeing on the use of **common standards**.

In the EU institutions there is no corporate approach to reference data management, and the knowledge and maturity level varies between services. Some standards exist, but they are often domain specific and not conducive to cross-sector, cross-service or cross-border interoperability. Reference data are often created ad hoc. This leads to interoperability issues and a waste of resources due to duplication of effort and overlapping standards. A striking example is the multitude of lists with country codes maintained inside EU institutions and the lack of awareness of the existence of a reliable reference source.

Common standards to achieve interoperability

The solution is to define corporate standards and to agree on using common interoperable tools and methods within the framework of a corporate governance and data policy.

The aim of this objective is twofold:

- to drive forward **the exchange of all legal data** with EU institutions **in a secure and automated** way based on common standards (metadata and content in a structured format);
- to come to a truly **common approach** for the management of reference data and knowledge organisation systems in EU institutions. Thus, there will be a **single point of access** and contact for interoperability resources and standards within the EU institutions.

By providing corporate services for reference data management, the Office aims to have a leading role in the standardisation domain.

In the field of the exchange of legal data, several major versions of AKN4EU – the adaptation and implementation of the Akoma Ntoso standard for the EU legislative context – will be released. They will include common structural and semantic concepts for all types of documents in the ordinary legislative procedure and will enable inter alia the automation of the consolidation of legal acts. Finally, all acts published in the Official Journal will be converted into AKN4EU format, creating one of the biggest corpora of legal documents with XML markup based on the Akoma Ntoso standard.

To reuse reference data instead of maintaining own instances in silos, the EU institutions' services need to be able to trust the data and the data provider. As an interinstitutional service provider, the Office is a neutral intermediary, providing the required **quality and trust** combined with the necessary expertise and a **catalogue of corporate services and solutions** in the standardisation domain.

As regards reference data management, a list of key reference data assets under corporate governance will be established with the identification of the data owner/curator and a 'comply or explain' policy that will apply for new information systems. The Office proposes to **coordinate the governance** of the list of corporate reference data assets and to **provide access and support** for the use of the corporate service for reference data management to services of the EU institutions and selected public administrations in Member States. With a view to cost savings and rationalisation of resources, the institutions' services may decide to outsource the maintenance of their reference data assets to the Office.

Secure and efficient exchange of data

The use of common formats will facilitate the processes of exchanging, accessing and reusing information. Exploiting new harmonised structures can bring **savings** in costs and time, and will help **improve the quality of documents**. Implementation of a seamless automated workflow for legal documents produced by the EU institutions during the interinstitutional legislative process will bring benefits in terms of greater **simplification, effectiveness, efficiency and security in the exchange of legal data**.

Under a corporate approach for reference data management, using common standards-based reference data assets instead of maintaining separate reference data assets per system will enable systems to exchange data without the need for costly and error-prone conversions and manual interventions. Making use of new technologies, the information provided in these corporate reference data assets can be **exploited by machines** and will serve as reliable building blocks for innovative data-based services. Thanks to their **multilingual** nature, corporate reference data assets will **bridge language barriers** and facilitate the provision of cross-border and cross-sector services.

Road map

Standardisation of legal data

- 2020** The AKN4EU test environment is available.
The Office's internal format (Formex) is ready to process the Official Journal act by act.

2021

AKN4EU specifications allow for the first exchange of AKN4EU documents between EU institutions.

A web service provides the text of legal provisions published in the OJ L series in AKN4EU format (after conversion from Formex, excluding most annexes).

A validation framework is developed to fully support the latest version of AKN4EU.

A new major AKN4EU version 4.0 is available.

The parallel run of AKN4EU and Legiswrite/Formex (transition period) starts.

The IMMC is implemented for all exchanges of legal data between the institutions and the Office.

IMMCbuilder Distributed Architecture supports a distributed architecture in order to allow a maximum of scalability in a cloud environment.

Specifications for AKN4EU consolidation extension cover all aspects of markup and metadata necessary to automate the consolidation.

2022

A new major AKN4EU version is available.

CIBA/IBIS document types are included in AKN4EU.

2024

The texts of legal provisions still in force and published in OJ series L are converted into AKN4EU, creating one of the biggest corpora of legal documents with XML markup based on the Akoma Ntoso standard. Annexes are only converted when structurally covered by the AKN4EU specifications.

Corporate management of knowledge organisation systems

2020

A corporate reference data management policy is proposed.

The first list of corporate vocabularies is available.

A new major version of VocBench is available.

The IMSB proposal for corporate governance at the Commission is available.

The *Interinstitutional Style Guide* is revised and streamlined, providing easy reference to digital and paper publishing conventions.

The *Interinstitutional Style Guide* production and dissemination system is modernised.

2021

EU Vocabularies is extended with the PMKI platform.

The list of corporate vocabularies is updated.

The new major version of VocBench is available.

VocBench is located in the cloud.



Strategic Objective

CONNECTING AND PRESERVING CONTENT AND KNOWLEDGE

Persistent and integrated access to the content and knowledge of the EU institutions is provided for current and future generations to ensure that citizens are well informed.

Access to information: a fast-evolving landscape

Expectations today are that we find adequate answers to our questions without being confronted with the **complexity of the information production processes**. Moreover, the expected **form of this information** has changed. Rather than in lengthy documents, information is consumed in bite-size pieces. People are turning to **small items of content** in the form of videos, audio clips and comments, as valid purveyors of information. This move has been reflected in the **output of the EU institutions**. More and more information is being disseminated as videos, web pages, podcasts, etc. Similarly, instead of coming to our websites, users turn more frequently to bite-sized pieces of content that they find typically through search engines and often share further in the form of links or as references – via blogs and social media, on websites, in articles, etc.

The challenge facing us is to **provide access to these pieces of content** in a **narrative tailored to the individual user** where possible.

Improving access, discoverability and linking across EU content

To this end, several supporting behind-the-scenes services are required: **consistent ways to identify and describe** the content, intuitive and **performant search engines** and **robust long-term access services**. There also needs to be harmonised approaches, in terms of descriptive metadata and identification, to ensure the **interconnection of material across EU institutions**, regardless of format. The old silos of information have to align and where possible merge, moving to an

interlinked, persistent output provided in a **user-centric way** with minimum administrative overheads for the producers of this material.

Core services already existing at the Office support the aim set out above, namely to identify, to acquire, to describe, to disseminate and to archive. The Office will build on this solid expertise and **develop new services** adapted to this changing landscape.

In response to the evolving processes of information production, the Office will develop **new ways of cooperation with the content creators** so information and knowledge can be easily passed on to citizens.

The Office will also **fully draw upon its interinstitutional role** and offer to citizens a reliable and trustworthy **point of access to diversified content and knowledge** present in EU repositories and archives.

The Office will leverage its expertise to help EU institutions model their information, describe it and make it available. A **light identification service** will be implemented, in a simple, easy-to-use way, whereby the user receives a persistent identifier at the moment of depositing the content with the Office – such deposited content will still benefit from the full range of services (description, dissemination, preservation). At the same time, **persistent identification of publications' parts** will facilitate their dissemination in bite-size pieces and encourage users to share EU content across platforms.

The **OP Portal** will be developed as an **aggregator and access point** for such content, with several 'views' on the information held in the Office's repository (Cellar) and elsewhere. The Office will also develop tools that will graphically represent relationships between various types of content and will provide **high-quality citation services**

and linked access. Existing partnerships will be further exploited, with the integration of the latest EU publications into **library catalogues around the world**, so that users find the information regardless of their starting point.

The Office will make the most of its expertise in interoperability. **Improved subject access** will be ensured through the consistent use of EuroVoc descriptors and the further alignment of EuroVoc with other vocabularies. Finally, artificial intelligence will be exploited to improve access, discoverability and linking across the range of material hosted or referenced by the Office.

Under **long-term preservation** activities, the **EU legal deposit** will be implemented and will provide a framework for persistent identification of and access to all EU publications. The **web archiving service** will be further developed as an agile capturer of content 'in the wild', with regular harvesting of unidentified content on websites (document harvesting). **ISO (International Organization for Standardization)** will be acquired for the **EUDOR** long-term archive, providing further recognition of its role as a secure archive.

The proposal to transfer the Commission's **Central Library** to the Office will provide further legitimacy to the Office's **data and information provider** role as well as for **data and content acquisition** for the Commission and other EU institutions.

Integrating the Library into the Office will facilitate the move from a print-based service to a more **digital-oriented service provision**. **Integrating EU publications with online access** to third-party material, it will be the go-to service for anyone interested in the EU project.

The current physical spaces of the Library, in Brussels and Luxembourg, will be transformed into **outreach centres**, showcasing information on the EU to both internal and external audiences, and serving as training areas to develop search and information retrieval skills.

By building on the **expertise in acquiring** of knowledge and data within both the Office and the Library, it will be possible to take on the role of centralising the purchase of data, providing a single, horizontal service. This could lead to savings and would **democratise** the use of this data as all staff would have access to everything, instead of data only being available to the purchasing directorate-general. Possible synergies with other libraries within the EU institutions will be explored.

Ensuring information availability for all

Knowledge management is at the centre of any organisation's activities, enabling swift decision-making based on reliable information. Thus, improving discoverability and access to EU content and knowledge supports the Commission's guidelines on **better regulation** as 'a way of working to ensure that policy is prepared, implemented and reviewed in an open, transparent manner, informed by the best available evidence and backed up by the comprehensive involvement of stakeholders'⁽¹⁶⁾.

These aims also fit with the **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs) of the United Nations, in particular SDG 10 'Reduced inequalities' and SDG 16 'Peace, justice and strong institutions', which includes access to information. Target 16.10 talks specifically about **ensuring public access to information** and protecting fundamental freedoms. The EU institutions' own push for democracy can be well served by **connecting with people and ensuring information availability for all**.

⁽¹⁶⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/law-making-process/planning-and-proposing-law/better-regulation-why-and-how_en

Road map

2020

Prototype of plug-in citation tool is available.

The IMMC workflow for general publications is fully implemented.

2021

A simple identification service is developed.

The Legal Deposit scheme starts (publications, websites) (Phase 1).

2022

The Legal Deposit scheme extended to cover additional collections (audiovisual, press releases) is implemented (Phase 2).

2023

The Legal Deposit scheme is extended to cover new collections (data sets, social media, etc.) (Phase 3).



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