Administrative burden reduction at the local and regional level

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Executive summary

This note aims to assist the Committee of the Regions (CoR) in the provision of input to the High-level Group of Independent Stakeholders on Administrative Burdens, in the preparation of the report on good practices in Member States (MS) to implement EU legislation. Specifically the report: (i) analyses the results of the consultation on good practices of CoR members' administrations and other partner LRAs, as well as other sources, to identify and present successful examples of structures/programmes/initiatives, as well as model solutions for the implementation of legislation of EU origin; (ii) develops methodological suggestions on how good practices can potentially be transposed to other regions, cities or to the national context; and (iii) offers conclusions in the form of broad policy guidelines for sub-national level action to address the administrative burden.

More specifically, section 1 outlines the origins of administrative burdens at the local and regional levels, indicating that further to the EU and MS levels, an additional administrative burden is sometimes imposed by regional and local administrations, with the most burdensome elements being: poor interoperability among local agencies and authorities, as well as with the next level of governance; overlapping and fragmented legislation and administrative competencies; procedures designed and structured to address manual administrative practices, as opposed to e-processes.

Section 2 presents an analysis of a suggested list of 20 good practices, highlighting their impact on public authorities as well as on economic operators (notably SMEs). The study showed greater involvement of LRAs in ICT solutions and in horizontal initiatives addressing the provision of services to citizens and businesses or the restructuring of administrative processes. With regard to concrete examples, where the implementation of legislation of EU origin is addressed, the environment, public procurement, statistics and tax law are among the priority policy areas addressed by LRAs in this context.

Methodological suggestions on the transfer of good practices in administrative burden reduction to other administrations at the local, regional or national level are provided in section 3. These include the following elements: (i) Setting short, medium and long-term targets for concrete and measurable results; (ii) Establishing good communication and effective collaboration processes with the LRA that has developed the practice; (iii) Consulting the target groups of the practice, i.e. citizens and business operators; (iv) Designing and applying an implementation strategy in partnership with trade unions; (v) Securing sufficient political will to proceed with changes; (vi) Securing sufficient funds to proceed

with changes; (vii) Establishing effective collaboration processes with other administrations to support interoperability; (viii) Measuring performance; (ix) Developing and implementing a communication plan.

Conclusions in section 4 underline the need for the EC to broaden the scope of existing funding opportunities, to address more complex practices as well as 'soft' initiatives; and the CoR to highlight the difficulties faced by LRAs as regards access to, and mobilisation of, adequate resources to extend the scope of administrative burden reduction initiatives to address all priority policy areas. They also indicate a good potential for the CoR to coordinate LRAs' action towards multiplication of relevant initiatives, in particular through supporting the transposition of good practices to other sub-national administrations.

Likewise, there is increased potential for collaborative efforts in the reduction of the administrative burden, involving the national and sub-national administration and requiring central government authorities to promote a framework of joint actions and shared services, as well as to create a culture of good practice in administrative burden reduction.

Lastly, five broad policy guidelines targeting LRAs are developed: (i) increasing interoperability among local agencies and authorities, as well as with the next level of governance; (ii) simplifying, rationalising and consolidating legislation; (iii) reallocating competences among local and regional agencies and authorities with a view to simplifying and rationalising administrative procedures; (iv) restructuring business processes in public administration; and (v) highlighting potential difficulties in, and lessons learnt from, the implementation of smart regulation policies and practices.

1. Better regulation and administrative burden reduction from the local and regional perspective

1.1 Introduction

The European Union (EU) 'better regulation' (later rebranded as 'smart regulation') policy aims at both simplifying existing, and improving the design of new, legislation[1]. It was conceived as a response to growing recognition of the negative impact of the legislative burden on both the public and private sectors (as expressed at the Gothenburg and the Laeken European Councils in 2001) and the need to maximise opportunities for EU competitiveness on the world stage. The entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in December 2007 placed a renewed emphasis on the quest to achieve better regulation.

The overall objective of the initiative is to reduce administrative burdens by 25% by 2012; this covers EU legislation as well as national regulatory measures. Success of the initiative could lead to an increase in the level of EU GDP[2] of approximately 1.4%, or 150 billion EUR, in the medium-term. Achieving this objective involves efforts towards harmonisation, simplification and reduction of legislation, as well as reduction of costs and of 'irritation' to: (i) public administrations at all levels (EU, National, Regional and Local); and (ii) other stakeholders contributing to the development and socio-economic progress of the EU, with an emphasis on SMEs.

Since the establishment of the initial framework of the EU better regulation initiative there has been a steady evolution of the approach towards achieving the afore-mentioned policy objectives, with considerable progress, culminating in the implementation of improved legislative provisions. Throughout this process (covering policy and the legislative cycle of instruments, action and implementation, monitoring and evaluation), the following three elements have been stressed as essential for achieving the 2012 objective: (i) co-operation between the EU institutions and the MS in all aspects of the initiative; (ii) involvement of regional, local and city governments as a prerequisite for practical action at grassroots level; and (iii) targeting of SMEs and (ultimately) the public as the major beneficiary groups outside the public sector.

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[1] White Paper on European Governance, COM (2001) 428 final.
[2] COM(2007) 23 final.

In the White Paper on European Governance[3], the role of the CoR was described in the following way:

- Play a more proactive role in examining policy, for example through the preparation of exploratory reports in advance of Commission proposals.

- Organise the exchange of good practice on how local and regional authorities (LRAs) are involved in the preparatory phase of European decision-making at national level.

- Review the local and regional impact of certain directives, and report to the Commission by the end of 2012 on the possibilities for more flexible means of application. The Commission will then consider a more systematic approach to allow such flexibility for some parts of Community law.

The CoR has shown a consistent and high-level interest in improving the regulatory environment and strengthening the role of LRAs in the design and implementation of measures to cut red tape. One single fact underlines the importance of this role: LRAs are responsible for the implementation of almost two thirds of all legislation of EU origin and thus their interest in and commitment to a successful outcome is essential.

In this context, the High-level Group of Independent Stakeholders on Administrative Burdens (HLG) has called upon the CoR for input into the preparation of the report on good practices in the MS towards implementing EU legislation[4]. Specifically, the HLG requested that the CoR provide concrete examples of model solutions applied by regional and local governments to implement EU legislation, and to identify innovative and important institutional structures, initiatives or cross-cutting solutions implemented at the regional and local levels. These examples of models, practices and institutional arrangements are intended to be used to stimulate dissemination and replication by other MS and their regional and local governments.

This note aims to assist the CoR in that process, notably through: (i) analysing the results of the consultation on good practices of CoR members administrations and other partner LRAs, with the objective of seeking data on the implementation of selected EU instruments with specific relevance for LRAs; (ii) supplementing these findings with independent research from other sources (iii) developing methodological conclusions on how good practices can potentially be transposed to other regions, cities or to the national context; and

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[3] COM (2001) 428 final.
[4] The preparation of this report is a new additional task of the HLG under its extended mandate. The HLG report will be presented to the European Commission by November 2011.

(iv) offering conclusions in the form of broad policy guidelines for sub-national level action to address the administrative burden.

1.1.1 Outline of the origins of the administrative burden at the local and regional level

The origins of the administrative burden faced at the local and regional levels lie in the legislative framework, non legislative factors and actions taken at three levels: (i) the EU; (ii) the Member States; and (iii) locally and regionally.

The EU is the primary driver of subsequent legislative provisions in the MS, as well as at the regional and local levels. Since mid-2007[5] and with a five year horizon, the overall EU policy framework on better regulation and administrative burden reduction has been shaped by: (i) a clearly defined Action Programme[6] setting out the actions to be taken at all levels and acknowledging the key role of regional and local governments and the major impact that the adjusted legislation would have on the SME sector in particular; and (ii) a thorough consultative process with all stakeholder groups.

The key parts of the Action Programme consist of: (i) large-scale measurement of administrative burdens (in 2007-08 and then extended to mid-2009), followed by major simplification proposals; (ii) Fast Track Actions, with a view to producing concrete results in the short term; and (iii) a rolling programme of simplification. The measurement of administrative burdens covered 72 EU legal acts in 13 domains, which were assumed to impose 80% of the administrative burdens stemming from EU law. The 13 domains include: agriculture and agricultural subsidies; annual accounts/company law; cohesion policy; the environment; financial services; fisheries; food safety; pharmaceutical legislation; public procurement; statistics; taxation/customs; transport; and the working environment/employment relations. In terms of cost, *taxation* and *company law* are the two most important priority areas, accounting for more than 80 % of the total burden measured.

The EC Action Programme has placed great emphasis on national governments, given that: (a) they have a dual role of transposing EU legislation into national law and ensuring that EU legislation is properly implemented; (b) in certain key fields such as company law, taxation and social security, most legislation is national in origin; and (c) they establish the framework within which actors at the regional and local levels operate. Moreover, under the Lisbon Treaty, national parliaments monitor the application of the subsidiarity principle in

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[5] Following the first strategic review of Better Regulation in the EU, released in November 2006 [COM(2006) 689 final].
[6] COM(2007) 23 final.

Commission proposals and can, in this regard, contribute to ensuring a higher quality of EU legislation.

MS are often responsible for the establishing additional administrative costs through 'gold-plating', i.e. the creation of more requirements than normally asked when transposing EU legislation at national level, as well as through inefficient implementation/transposition of EU Information Obligations (IOs).

EU MS have made significant progress in administrative burden reduction - though not all at the same pace - being encouraged by the EC to adjust their smart regulation actions to their own human and institutional capacities. To improve their performance and accelerate progress, several MS have shown interest in mobilising all available resources, and hence considered ways to enhance the involvement of local and regional level stakeholders in EU policy-making and, more importantly, in policy implementation; the use of contractual arrangements has also been promoted for such purposes.

Importantly, right from the start of the process and embodied in the 2001 White Paper, there was a focus on '*a stronger interaction with regional and local governments and civil society*'[7]. Both the EC and MS agreed that the appropriate level at which action is taken (in all stages of the policy cycle, from visualisation to implementation) should depend on the specific policy objectives to be promoted. However, despite LRAs' increased responsibility as EU policy implementing bodies, '*their role as an elected and representative channel interacting with the public on EU policy is not exploited*'[8]. Moreover, the Action Points in the White Paper stressed that '*Local conditions can make it difficult to establish one set of rules that covers the whole of the Union, without tying up the legislation in excessive complexity. There should be more flexibility in the means provided for implementing legislation and programmes with a strong territorial impact, provided the level playing field at the heart of the internal market can be maintained*'.

1.1.2 Some major burdensome elements at the local and regional level

Lastly, whilst it is clear that the primary origins of the administrative burdens are at EU and MS levels, an additional layer of rules and regulations exists at the level of regional and local administrations themselves (see box 1 for an illustrative example). Indeed, the administrative burden at sub-national levels is considerable, with the most burdensome elements being:

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[7] COM(2001) 428 final.
[8] Idem.

- ***Poor interoperability among local agencies and authorities, as well as with the next level of governance***. On the one hand, there are no central information repositories locally, thus communication with other governance levels is hampered and national/EU agencies are unable to access information that is relevant to the monitoring of policy implementation. On the other hand, existing data processing systems within LRAs use different data formats, data models and data definitions, impeding comparisons and sharing of information through automated electronic procedures.

- ***Overlapping and fragmented legislation***, making administrative procedures subject to different interpretations, thus causing both delays and errors in the processing of applications.

- ***Overlapping and fragmented administrative competencies***, requiring numerous licences and approvals thus rendering authorisation processes a challenging experience for the public and entrepreneurs.

- ***Procedures designed and structured to address manual administrative practices, as opposed to e-processes***, making investments in expensive, high-technology online systems underperform, thus negatively affecting the quality and effectiveness of public services.

Box 1. Origins of the administrative burden at the sub-national level in selected EU MS

A. **UK:** The following features demonstrate the scope and scale of the regulatory burden at local and regional levels: i) the structure of regulators, particularly at local level, is complex, prevents joining up, and discourages business-responsive behaviour (for example, in 2005, there were 61 000 people working for 674 regulatory bodies with a combined budget of around EUR 5 bn; at the local level alone, regulatory inspection and enforcement is divided between 468 authorities); ii) there is over-inspection at local level; iii) the wide variety of forms makes small reductions in data requirements, or improvements in design, important; iv) currently, there are no standard design guidelines for forms, or any unified way of filing them electronically; iv) at local authority level, there is wide variation in standards of service to businesses and the public; v) regional and local offices are overburdened and often lack resources (all regulatory functions not carried out at national level are carried out by local authorities with a budget of just over EUR 1 bn. There are just under 20 000 people working in local authority regulatory services of whom 5 500 work primarily on inspection and enforcement. Local authorities carry out approximately 2.5 million inspections a year, i.e. four times as many inspections as national regulators; vi) the legislative framework is also very complex – inspections are carried out under more than 80 different Acts of Parliament and hundreds of associated regulations.

B. **Austria:** the OECD (2010) highlights (amongst other things) the following origins of the administrative burden at the regional and local level: i) when the Länder (*The county or local level)* implements federal legislation, it often enacts secondary legislation, thus creating an '*institutional distance'* between the preparation of legislation and its execution. In this context, there appears to be a lack of information with regard to the need to assess whether federal legislation is directly implementable and achieves its goals or not (and hence the need to adapt federal legislation prior to implementation); ii) the participation of the Länder in the legislative process at the federal level is not comprehensively regulated.

Sources:
- *Hampton, P. (2005), 'Reducing administrative burdens: effective inspection and enforcement', H.M. Treasury.*
- *OECD (2010), 'Better regulation in Europe: Austria'.*

1.2 Overview of the methodology

The approach used in the study is based on the combined analysis of information collected through: (i) research on background documents, including literature and press reviews; and (ii) feedback from the consultation carried out by the CoR.[9] In particular, the following main steps were performed (1.2.1 to 1.2.4).

1.2.1 Background review of the origins of administrative burdens relevant to LRAs

Further to the work undertaken by the HLG, relevant background documents and literature available either in related (scientific or other) databases, or from EU institutions, MS and LRAs were widely consulted. A bibliographic search was undertaken in English, French, Italian, Greek, Spanish, German and Portuguese, mainly with the use of internet services. The focus of the review was on the local and regional level. Moreover, the review considered the perspective of both public administrations and economic operators, especially SMEs.

1.2.2 Research on examples of good practice

Additionally, research on good practices was undertaken, relying on the following sources: press releases, public administration reports, private sector reports, review or assessment reports published on the institutional websites of relevant authorities, compilations of case studies or good practices by research centres/agencies/institutions, screening of prizes/awards given to administrations for good performance and internet search by means of key words.

The search for good practices in terms of institutional structure/programmes/ initiatives, on the one hand, and model solutions for the implementation of legislation of EU origin, on the other, covered all EU27 MS (though, regrettably, in a few countries no eligible records were found) and focused on the sub-national level; hence a non-exhaustive list of examples of good practice was compiled by applying the following two criteria:

    (i)   <u>Public administration level of implementation</u>

Regional and local initiatives were given priority. However, some national projects were also appealing due to their focus on and support for the development of IT infrastructure (ensuring, for example, nationwide

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[9] The questionnaire was submitted by the CoR to its Members on 10 December 2010, with a final deadline of 28 February 2011.

interoperability) and since, in most cases, these projects were expected to be implemented at lower administrative levels or initially piloted at regional level, a few examples were included in the list.

(ii) *Direct involvement of local and regional authorities*

With a few exceptions, the direct involvement of LRAs in the initiatives was a prerequisite for their selection and inclusion in the list. Several records were discounted because evidence of this involvement could not be documented. However, besides regions and municipalities, the term 'authority' was interpreted to encompass any public unit, structure, institution or organisation at the local or regional level that plays an official and public role in the delivery of administrative services, such as sub-national agencies of central administration, regional/local development agencies, etc.

The outcome of the search was a list of good practices comprising examples of institutional structure/programmes/initiatives and of model solutions for the implementation of legislation of EU origin. In particular, the 'model solutions' were intended as comprehensive, horizontally-applied efforts to reduce administrative burdens as opposed to specific measures such as dedicated structures, targeted initiatives or programmes. For each good practice, the country, the institution/organisation involved, a brief description (of the initiative/institutional structure/programme or of the model solution), the sources (including links), and the reasons why further analysis would have been valuable, are given.

1.2.3   Analysis of replies to the questionnaire

The CoR consultation on administrative burden reduction aimed to identify examples of good practice from the local and regional levels, in which 'EU *legislation has been implemented in the least burdensome way, without placing unnecessary administrative burdens on business – especially SME's – or imposing excessive costs on public administrations*'[10] and was intended as a means of gathering input for contribution to the report of the High-level Group. In total, 51 questionnaires were submitted by LRAs from 11 EU MS (including one contribution from a cross-border network of local authorities). The replies to the questionnaire are intended to show that LRAs '*are in the front line of the efforts to achieve the goals of Smart Regulation and cut red tape for citizens and business alike*'[11].

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[10] CoR (2010), 'Cover letter to the Questionnaire for the CoR Contribution to the HLG', Mercedes Bresso.
[11] Idem.

On receipt, replies to the CoR questionnaire were progressively analysed, briefly summarised and, finally, categorised. Categorisation was based on: (i) the main policy sector addressed (a list of main policy sectors was compiled on the basis of both the priority areas of the EU Action Programme on administrative burdens and the content of the replies); and (ii) the reference to a specific institutional structure/programme/initiative or to a 'model solution'.

As a next step, a gap analysis was performed for the replies received, looking at: geographical coverage, policy area/legal instrument coverage and topic coverage. The purpose of this analysis was to complement the information gathered through the questionnaire with the information gathered through the experts' search.

1.2.4   Selection of examples of good practice

The good practices identified as a result of the consultation were considered together with those identified through the research of the literature and other sources, with the ultimate target of selecting, on the basis of well defined criteria, the most interesting cases. These are presented in this file note in the form of a "short-list", which is subject to the approval of the CoR.

1.2.4.1 Criteria

Three main criteria – quality, geographical balance and thematic representativeness – were used to select examples of good practice from those gathered through the consultation or the research.

As a next step, the quality of the practices was characterised according to the following yes/no criteria: (a) clear description of practice (mature and well explained); (b) relevance to the aims of the survey; (c) explicit impact on/significant importance for smart regulation policies and/or administrative burden reduction; (d) evidently reliable and easy to implement methodology/approach; (e) innovative character; and (f) replication potential.

'Unsatisfactory quality' characterised practices that were not sufficiently explained or/and were not fully relevant to the aims of the study/survey, i.e. '... *to identify horizontal initiatives to prevent bureaucracy in Europe's cities and regions*'.

'Adequate quality' characterised practices that were sufficiently explained and were relevant to the aims of the study/survey, but did not include any of the following: an explicit impact on/significant importance for smart regulation policies and/or administrative burden reduction (quality criteria (c) above); an

evidently reliable and easy to implement methodology/approach (quality criteria (d) above).

'Good quality' characterised practices that were sufficiently explained and were relevant to the aims of the study/survey <u>and</u> at the same time included at least one of the following: an explicit impact on/significant importance for smart regulation policies and/or administrative burden reduction (quality criteria (c) above); an evidently reliable and easy to implement methodology/approach (quality criteria (d) above).

In addition, 'good quality' practices received a preference when: they included an innovative element (quality criterion (e) above) and/or included tools that facilitated replication/presented no obstacles - such as high cost, or dependency on rare local resources (quality criteria (f) above) – that would preclude their potential replication to other areas.

A matrix was created (Annex V) containing the identification number of the practice, the geographical reference, a brief summary of the practice, the priority areas (thematic sector(s) addressed), the replies to questions relevant to the effect of the practice on business (in particular SMEs), on public administrations and on other sectors (aspects used to assess the quality of the practice), and a characterisation of the quality (Unsatisfactory (U) – Adequate (A) – Good (G)), as derived from the application of the above-mentioned criteria (template shown in table 1). Two more columns at the end of the table allowed for comments regarding quality and, finally, for the result of the selection process.

Table 1 - Template of the selection matrix

Identification Number	Geographical reference	Summary of practice	Thematic sector									Aspects of good practice	Quality Comments	Selection
			1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	...			

In the case of replies received through the questionnaire, it should be noted that the criterion of 'Quality' did not refer to the *actual* quality of the practice but to the *relative* quality of the action as it was described, e.g. with respect to the information provided in the reply. However, the information provided by

respondents in the questionnaire was complemented with relevant publicly available information (such as reports, papers, websites, etc.) whenever practices looked particularly interesting but, regrettably, were not sufficiently described and explained and were therefore likely to be initially marked as 'unsatisfactory quality' according to the above proposed selection criteria. When such additional research was performed, a relevant remark was made in the 'comment' column.

1.2.4.2 Selection process

In total, 50 examples were selected as 'good quality' practices. The priority areas and geographic breakdown of these 50 'good quality' practices are reported in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2 – Number of 'good quality' practices per priority area

Thematic Sector	Number of practices
Agriculture (incl. subsidies)	1
Annual accounts/company law	1
Environment	14
Food safety	1
Public procurement	5
Statistics	7
Tax law	3
Working environment/employment relations	1
Public services to business/citizens (Horizontal)	25
Business process re-engineering	7
Legislation (Horizontal)	2

Table 3 – Breakdown of 'good quality' initiatives by country

AT	4	FI	1	MT	-
BE	4	FR	-	NL	1
BG	-	GR	1	PL	1
CY	-	HU	1	PT	11
CZ	1	IE	2	RO	1
DE	5	IT	4	SE	-
DK	1	LT	-	SK	1
EE	-	LU	-	SL	-
ES	8	LV	-	UK	3
Total: 50					

Of the 50 good quality practices, 20 cases were subsequently short-listed to satisfy both the geographical balance and the thematic representativeness criteria. The proposed short-list of selected examples of good practice is presented in Table 4.

Table 4 - List of selected 'good quality' practices according to established selection criteria

Identification number[12]	Title
Structures/programmes/initiatives implemented at the local and regional level	
Data Source:	**CoR consultation**
6	Pilot-project to simplify, redesign and streamline 23 administrative procedures at the Murcia Regional Government
41	Implementation of a strategy to identify, measure and reduce administrative burdens aimed at streamlining procedures in the Region of Extremadura
30	Simplification and rationalisation of the regional corpus of legislation in consolidated laws (Lombardy region)
47	Thematic campaigns in the field of waste management (Madeira)
1	'Implementation and certification of integrated quality and environmental management within the county council' - Braila SIMJUD
34	Centralising and monitoring of the procedures involved in

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[12] As per Annex I.

Identification number[12]	Title
	commercial plant operation (Voralberg State Government)
Data Source: **Experts' research**	
82	Benefits online (City of Edinburgh Council)
70	Referential environment: integrated management of enterprises (REGINE, Walloon region)
58	VAHTI compliance monitoring system (Finland)
59	One stop shops/citizen service centres (Greece)
75	HORECA1 – One-stop-shop for hotel and cafe licences (Amsterdam)
81	Transforming access to services in local government (Newport City Council)
57	eTramits - eServices platform of the Barcelona City Council Tramits Online
62	'Ravenna Semplifica' (Ravenna simplifies)

Model solutions for the implementation of selected legislation of EU origin

Data Source: **CoR consultation**	
21	Replacement of the business licence with a prior notification system for service activities that do not entail a risk to the environment, security, public policy or individuals (City of Murcia)
33	Hamburg Point of Single Contact
27	Saxony-Anhalt electronic contracting and procurement
49	Galicia's online platform for public procurement
39	Advice and consultation prior to the submission of an application for integrated environmental authorisation (Czech Republic)
Data Source: **Experts' research**	
53	Environmental inspections in Styria

A detailed presentation of the short-listed good practices was drawn up using a standard template, which also includes (as comprehensively as possible, subject to availability of relevant information) quantified data related to the administrative costs reduced through the applied models or practices (section 2).

Following the application of geographical and thematic representativeness criteria, a few examples of good practice were not shortlisted, for reasons of: a) relatively limited innovation (similar approaches already being implemented in several other areas); b) insufficient information about the specific role of the LRAs involved; c) relatively average impact on administrative burden reduction compared with other initiatives addressing the same issue; and d) relatively

limited information on the specific impact of the initiative, and no quantification of results. These included:

- ***The provision of services to the public and companies through one-stop-shops and/or e-applications available at a single web-portal***, such as the Integral and Multi-Channel Citizen Service System (SIMAC) in Spain, the e-communication system in the Silesia region in Poland, and the Application Service Provider pilot-centres in Hungary.

- ***The simplification of permit schemes***, such as the single permit and single authority initiative by the Wallonia government (Belgium); the simplification of administrative procedures related to the setting up, development, modification and termination of business activities (DIAP) in Lombardy region (Italy); the efforts to streamline waste permits in Ireland, as well as the Austrian approach for consolidation of environmental requirements under different permit regimes, focusing on EMAS certified companies.

- ***Collaborative efforts for administrative burden reduction***, addressing: a. ***different communities***, such as the case of the Wallonia government and the French Community ('*Ensemble simplifions*' plan); b. ***national and sub-national levels of government***, such as the introduction of a framework of shared services and joint actions in Ireland, and the Danish e-government strategy, jointly adopted by the central, regional and local governments; c. ***regional government and sub-national level stakeholders including individuals***, such as the integrated administrative simplification strategy promoted by the Lombardy region ('Simplifying Lombardy' Agenda); and d. ***the public sector (at all levels) and the general public***, such as the 'Help us cut red tape' initiative in the UK.

- ***Simple approaches***, not necessarily with a high impact on administrative burden reduction but ***with good potential for replication***, such as the online tax simulator introduced by Elvas Municipality in Portugal, and the example from Karlovy Vary, Czech Republic, on information about the origin and consequences of major accidents[13].

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[13] This case was not included in the final selection of good practice examples, because it lacked practical detail in terms of procedures followed by the key stakeholders, including the regional administrative authorities.

In addition, increased potential for cutting red tape was identified in the set of thirteen contributions submitted by the Balearic Isles – not included in the final selection of examples of good practice – which, if combined together, could form a comprehensive model approach for simplification and administrative burden reduction.

2. Short list of good practices

2.1 Good practices in terms of structures/programmes/ initiatives implemented at the local and regional level

Business process re-engineering

1. Title of initiative:	Pilot-project to simplify, redesign and streamline 23 administrative procedures at the Murcia Regional Government
Identification number	*6*
Organisations involved (Location)	*Murcia Regional Government (Spain)*
Data sources	Questionnaire (CoR consultation)
Implementation of EU legislation	N/A
Policy area	Business process re-engineering; agriculture (including subsidies); environment; food safety; statistics; working environment/employment relations; public services to business/citizens (horizontal)
Status of implementation	Just started

Description

Murcia regional government has recently (2009) initiated a joint effort by its administrative departments in all sectors, to redesign operating methods and simplify procedures, paving the way for introducing e-government. The first stage of the action included a pilot project on the simplification of 23 administrative procedures, as a preliminary step before tackling all regional procedures in force (around 1 100). More specifically, pilot action focused on the following procedures: ◆Online business registration form; ◆Increasing the added value of agricultural products; ◆Tailored assistance for people with disabilities; ◆Issuing of contract permits, deeds of sale or housing care or rental of protected accommodation; ◆Permits for works on historical sites and around places of cultural importance; ◆Assistance for boosting the academic performance of students at public universities; ◆Subsidies for R&D programmes; ◆Waiting lists for public-sector jobs; ◆Subsidies for the self-employed; ◆Special employment centres registration; ◆Inclusion on the registry of heating plants of buildings; ◆Permit for transporting schoolchildren and

workers; ◆Health permit for food establishments selling directly to end-consumers; ◆Operating permit for social organisations, centres and services; ◆Subsidies for managers and organisations carrying out quality-improvement measures; ◆Registration of lifts; ◆Trading permit for the self-employed; ◆Admission and enrolment process for students at public language schools; ◆Aid for nuts; ◆Beef slaughter premium; ◆Application for a single European aid payment for agriculture and livestock farming; ◆Aid for indigenous livestock breeds.

The key aspects of the simplification process include: (i) standardisation of processes and working methods towards lower processing and response times; (ii) maximum use of electronic administration and elimination of paper; (iii) coordination between public administrations to avoid duplication and overlapping in information requirements.

The second stage of the initiative addresses 166 procedures; these are currently under review.

Results (incl. actual reduction in administration costs)

The pilot project showed significant results in terms of potential for improvement, mainly as regards time and cost reduction. The following table sets out the estimated reduction in costs to stakeholders (public administration, individuals and businesses) after the simplification of the aforementioned 23 procedures. The methodology used is based on the Standard Costs Model.

Table 5. Quantification of estimated results of the pilot simplification project

	Number of procedures	*Number of applications*	*Cost before simplification (in €)*	*Future cost (in €)*	*Reduction in pages*	*Reduction as %*
TOTAL	23	50,808	14,439,068	8,975,978	5,463,090	37.84%

Impact on public administration

The workload of the managers involved in the selected procedures has been reduced as a direct outcome of the reduction in the number of manual tasks, with these becoming semi-automated or automated, after the introduction of the regional authority's e-government application and the use of computer programmes for processing cases. Moreover, several procedures have been eliminated, resulting in a total reduction of 40% in case resolution times.

Impact on economic operators (notably SMEs)

The simplification offered businesses a flexible and dynamic regulatory framework, by reducing the administrative burden and improving regulation in procedures that free up resources for investment and growth, especially for SMEs. More specifically, the initiative:

- reduced the time required to process a case;
- developed a relationship of trust and responsibility;
- reduced the costs to businesses for preparing documents (costs of staffing and auxiliary materials, such as paper, messaging, photocopying, etc.), including external costs such as auditing fees, consultations, etc.;
- provided better information on the case's progress; and
- reduced the number of visits to the authority's offices.

Other impacts

The pilot project showed a high potential for the improvement of overall efficiency and quality in the services provided to economic operators and the public. It also raised both public administration and citizen awareness on simplicity of processes and working methods. At the same time, it facilitated transparency, through the use of automated and electronic processes. Lastly, the initiative improved access to public services from outlying areas or areas with poorer communications.

Scaling up/replication potential

The initiative is a pilot and will gradually extend to address all regional procedures currently in force. Some lessons learnt can be shared with other regions, though the customised approach limits scope for replication.

For further information	Murcia Regional government [administrative procedures webpage](#)

2. Title of initiative:	**Implementation of a strategy to identify, measure and reduce administrative burdens aimed at streamlining procedures in the Region of Extremadura**
Identification number	*41*
Organisations involved (Location)	*Assembly of Extremadura (Spain)*
Data sources	Questionnaire (CoR consultation)/ Experts' research
Implementation of EU legislation	N/A
Policy area	Business process re-engineering; Public services to business/citizens (Horizontal)
Status of implementation	Mid-term

Description

The project covers approximately 12% of all inventoried procedures in the Region of Extremadura, selected according to the following criteria: (i) impact in terms of increasing companies' competitiveness; (ii) social impact; (iii) high-level of bureaucracy involved; (iv) high number of related applications processed; (v) representation by all Regional Ministries of the Region of Extremadura.

Key aspects of the approach include: standardisation of forms, homogenising their content and format; regulatory consolidation, preventing excessively diffuse regulation regarding procedures directly affecting citizens and companies; authorisations to obtain data and certifications, using the standardised models, in order to prevent the user from having to present documentation which has been issued by the same public administration; internal interoperability, meaning that people are not asked for data which is already held in registers within the autonomous administration; removal of the obligation to present a photocopy of the national identity card and the certificate of inclusion on the electoral roll during the different administrative procedures; external interoperability (following authorisation from the person in question, automatically obtaining data and certifications held by other administrations regarding compliance with tax and social security obligations); use of official statements of compliance with requirements.

Moreover, the Region of Extremadura applies a structured process of analysis, documentation, streamlining and standardisation of administrative procedures, with a view to creating an online platform containing automated administrative

processes. A relevant pilot action was implemented between 2007 and 2010, under the e-@dministración project, with the objective of establishing an electronic administration platform.

Results (incl. actual reduction in administration costs)

Since the beginning of the initiative, 741 procedures have been documented and simplified, and 158 of them automated within the administration's processes. In 16.5% of the procedures analysed, it was possible to reduce the timescale for completion and notification laid down in the regulations.

The total estimated cost of the procedures analysed, according to the Standard Cost Model (SCM), was over EUR 31 million. Following application of the reduction and simplification measures, the estimated cost of these procedures would be approximately EUR 25 million.

The net estimated saving could therefore amount to EUR 6.5 million. Implementation of the proposals in 91 of the procedures analysed could produce an annual saving of EUR 6 541 032.

In addition, a report has been drawn up on each of the procedures analysed, providing public administration managers with a guide on how to reduce burdens. This report contains an analysis of the procedures, recommendations for the reduction of burdens, and an indication of the potential savings rate should the suggested recommendations be implemented.

Impact on public administration

The implementation of the strategy enables regional administration staff to increase the efficiency of the internal management of the different procedures, through the removal of unnecessary information obligations.

Moreover, the implementation of the simplification strategy through the online platform (e-government project) has assisted public administration in:

- Streamlining procedures, tasks and resources
- Standardising applications and documents
- Improving the maintenance of procedures

Impact on economic operators (notably SMEs)

The average savings rates for the main sectors, according to the Standard Cost Model, are as follows:
agriculture: 79.46%; culture: 38.02%; tourism: 8.59%; companies: 14.72%; commerce: 17.23%; employment: 87%; environment: 44%.
In addition, the implementation of the simplification strategy through the online platform (e-government project) has offered companies:

- faster completion of consultations or procedures
- increased transparency in the handling of applications and procedures
- improved quality of public services.

Other impacts

The implementation of the simplification strategy through the online platform has facilitated access for citizens and third parties to regional administration services, by incorporating new channels of communication with the relevant departments. Moreover, it has brought the regional administration closer to the citizen, increased citizen participation through the use of new technologies and kept people informed about the progress of their case.

Scaling up/replication potential

The initiative will gradually extend to address all regional procedures currently in force. Some lessons learnt can be shared with other regions, though the customised approach limits scope for replication.

For further information | http://sede.juntaex.es/web/portal/tramites

3. Title of initiative: **Simplification and rationalisation of the regional corpus of legislation in consolidated laws**

Identification number	*30*
Organisations involved (Location)	*Lombardy region (Italy)*
Data sources	Questionnaire (CoR consultation)
Implementation of EU legislation	N/A
Policy area	Legislation (horizontal)
Status of implementation	Mid-term

Description

The initiative aims at unifying all regional legislative provisions relevant to a specific issue (e.g. transport, health, commerce, etc.) in one consolidated, clear and organised set of rules.

The consolidation approach includes the following key aspects: (i) each consolidated law, upon its entry into force, explicitly repeals all provisions covered by the consolidated text, and lists them specifically, along with any other provisions not covered by the text, but which must nevertheless be repealed; (ii) the consolidated law explicitly mentions any provisions concerning the same area or sector not covered by it, and which remains in force; provisions in force, which have not been repealed by the consolidated law, continue to apply in their own right; (iii) future repeals or amendments must be incorporated directly in the consolidated law; and (iv) subsequent measures concerning the area or sector covered by the consolidated text can only be introduced via amendments or additions to the consolidated law itself.
The drafting of consolidated laws is entrusted to an ad hoc body referred to as a "technical working group". It is made up - in equal numbers - of technical experts from the regional government and the regional council. As a result, consolidated laws are the product of the joint work and discussions of the regional bodies.

Results (incl. actual reduction in administration costs)

Ten consolidated laws, covering a total of 270 repealed laws, were adopted in the period from the introduction of regional law no. 7/2006 until February 2010. Rationalising the corpus of legislation has cut down on time and legal complexity for all those whose job is based on the use (and therefore interpretation) of regional laws, whether they work for the public authorities or

for businesses; however quantified data on time (or cost) savings are not available.

Impact on public administration

Consolidation of laws makes regional legislation leaner, by explicitly repealing overlapping laws and provisions. This allows regional administrative staff, along with law professionals collaborating with regional administration, to find their way around regional legislation more quickly and with greater certainty.

Impact on economic operators (notably SMEs)

The intended effect of these consolidated laws on businesses is to simplify relations with the public authorities by reducing the risk of delays and unfair decisions stemming from inadequate knowledge or false interpretation of legislative provisions, a situation which occurred frequently in the past due to the fragmented legislation and the number of rules dispersed in different instruments across the legal system.

Other impacts

Simplification and consolidation of legislation increases transparency in public administration and helps to build the people's trust in the effectiveness of administrative procedures. The initiative was a pilot for the regional Government Agenda 2011-2015 for the simplification and modernisation of the Lombardy system - "Simplifying Lombardy: Minimising bureacracy, improving institutions" (Agenda Lombardia Semplice); the latter is an integrated approach towards administrative simplification, aiming at redefining procedures and organisational models. Its implementation has only recently started with the introduction of two innovations: the use of a checklist for each administrative procedure and the assessment of staff performance.

Scaling up/replication potential

The initiative will gradually extend to address all regional legislation. The approach is straightforward and can be easily replicated to other regions in EU MS; scope for replication is however limited to highly decentralised regions featuring a regional legislative corpus of adequate size.

For further information | Lombardy region's website on simplification

4.   Title of initiative: Benefits Online

Identification number	*82*
Organisations involved (Location)	*City of Edinburgh Council (UK)*
Data sources	Experts' research
Implementation of EU legislation	N/A
Policy Area	Tax law; public services to business/citizens (horizontal)
Status of implementation	Advanced

Description

The project is part of a broader strategic initiative launched in April 2001: the City of Edinburgh's 'Smart City' vision; a fifteen-year plan, aiming at a comprehensive re-organisation of the Council's activities, particularly as regards interaction with citizens. 'Benefits online' promotes seamless delivery of public services to the people and businesses of Edinburgh. Its operation is based on an integrated suite of applications, with a fully integrated electronic document management system and a customised solution for the progress of housing and council tax benefits applications.

The initiative helps people to create and submit housing or council tax benefit claims and notify changes of circumstances, online It concerns an e-application (developed in partnership with British Telecom - BT), which makes complex paper-based application forms obsolete. The online application (also provided via phone) minimises errors in the format and type of data submitted by citizens; it validates answers across the whole application on submission; it also supports tracking and monitoring of the progress of applications.

Key aspects of the application are: (i) the capacity to determine the specific sections of the claim form that are relevant to the claimant, thus simplifying the task of filling in the form by guiding the claimant directly to those sections; (ii) the use of information gathered during preliminary (eligibility) questions to pre-fill the claim form; (iii) the repeated (at every stage of the process) validation of input, ensuring that only correct and complete information is entered in the form; (iv) the capacity to save partially completed forms; (v) the compilation of a customised list of all the supporting documents which the claimant is required to attach to the claim; and (vi) its parallel role as a single source of information on housing and council tax benefits, including the option to check the status of claims online.

Results (incl. actual reduction in administration costs)

Benefits Online has resulted in the minimisation of the use of the paper application process, as well as in the direct provision of accurate information to citizens regarding the benefits for which the latter are eligible and the amount to which they are entitled (benefit claims can be calculated accuracy to the nearest £5). The use of online services significantly reduces the time required to process benefit claims and at the same time simplifies the process to the benefit of both the citizen and the local public administration.

The Edinburgh Council in partnership with BT have created a replicable application with a commercial value; however, quantified data on cost and time savings are not available.

Impact on public administration

The online system has assisted the Edinburgh local administration in its efforts to address a huge task involving the handling of more than 50 000 applications for housing and/or council tax benefits (a complex 28-page document) on an annual basis. The system streamlined processes, significantly improving efficiency within the organisation. Moreover, it has resulted in a dramatic decrease in the volume of customer enquiries as well as in the number of wrongly completed applications, thus leading to a further reduction in service delivery costs. In terms of quality of services, Benefits Online facilitated the provision of timely and personalised service to citizens.

Impact on economic operators (notably SMEs)

The online system focuses on citizens rather than economic operators; however its success has resulted in the improvement of local awareness on e-government applications, a fact which consequently encouraged the Council to consider the replication of the system in other sectors (e.g. other benefit schemes), including services to business.

Other impacts

The project improved public opinion on the efficiency of local administration and introduced a new application process, featuring a fully interactive experience between local people and Edinburgh Council.

Scaling up/replication potential

The application was designed to be easily replicated, transferred and utilised by other LRAs in the UK; the design process involved a wide-ranging stakeholder analysis, addressing citizens, revenue and benefits officers, the Citizens Advice Bureau and registered social landlords.

For further information	http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/ http://www.ezgoveurope.com/?q=city-of-edinburgh-council Edinburgh Benefits Online case study

5. Title of initiative: Referential Environment: Integrated Management of Enterprises (REGINE)

Identification number	*70*
Organisations involved (Location)	*Walloon region - General Directorate of Natural Resources and Environment (Belgium)*
Data sources	Experts' research
Implementation of EU legislation	N/A
Policy area	Environment; Statistics
Status of implementation	Advanced

Description

REGINE offers a rational and simplified approach to environmental monitoring and reporting, allowing companies to exchange environmental information with the public administration, in line with the requirements of several EC Directives, as well as national and regional laws. Central to the approach is the utilisation of a user-friendly online application (environmental survey), integrating information in a single inventory used by the competent authorities to monitor the environmental performance of the companies involved and to produce sectoral reports and indicators (which are then published on the internet). The environmental survey has been developed by the Walloon regional administration (General Directorate of Natural Resources and Environment - DGRNE), in consultation with stakeholders such as the Walloon federation of enterprises and industrial federations. It integrates all requirements linked with environmental issues, which are applicable to the target group of companies (initially about 300 operators of activities/installations covered by local, national, EC or other regulations).

The electronic data exchange system fully replaces the submission of questionnaires in paper form; the online application facilitates the sending of digital data by companies.

Results (incl. actual reduction in administration costs)

REGINE has consolidated overlapping regulations, thus significantly simplifying the environmental information requirements applying to companies. Furthermore, the initiative has raised companies' awareness on environmental obligations, as indicated also by the fact that the majority of companies currently submit their environmental questionnaires on time.

A full and quantified assessment of costs and benefits is not available but among the benefits highlighted by DGRNE are:

- both companies and public authorities have managed to comply with reporting deadlines, while at the same time reducing their administrative costs and saving working time;
- dialogue between public authorities and companies has improved, leading to a better understanding of environmental requirements by companies and improved knowledge of the companies' environmental issues by authorities;
- both quality and coherence of data have improved;
- less time is spent on data coding work;
- a single source of information is available for use by all public actors;
- the coherence of economic, social and environmental data has been improved (a direct outcome of the links with the Enterprises Crossroads Bank established by REGINE).

According to DGRNE, the initiative has a response rate of over 80%. DGRNE's annual budget allocated to the operation of the system amounted to EUR 581 738 in 2005.

Impact on public administration

The regional public administration (mainly DGRNE) has benefited from the initiative in terms of working time and cost savings, due to:

- significantly less data handling requirements;
- minimisation of errors in data submitted by companies; and
- facilitation of report writing.

Similarly, the administration has achieved better results in terms of meeting the deadlines set for the submission of environmental data reports on the target companies.

Impact on economic operators (notably SMEs)

Participating economic operators are in general satisfied with REGINE, enjoying time and cost savings, mainly resulting from the consolidation of environmental data requirements.

During the first phase of system implementation, participation of the target companies was voluntary, with online submission of data replacing inputs to a

number of sectoral surveys addressing selected groups of companies (carried out through conventional means, mainly involving paper forms), as opposed to broadly applied, mandatory environmental reporting systems; thus, not all operators experienced explicit benefits. Moreover, some companies were already using an electronic data management application, often not fully compatible with the REGINE online reporting forms; in such cases, overall benefits were inevitably reduced.

Other impacts

The REGINE database also provides selected data to sectoral industry federations; the latter use them for internal reporting purposes.

Scaling up/replication potential

REGINE offers an adaptable e-application, which allows for the updating and anticipation of new regulations, as well as for continuously expanding the size of the targeted group of companies. Scope for replication to other regions and MS is high, though any such effort would inevitably entail extensive customisation.

For further information | http://bilan.environnement.wallonie.be/welcome_en.jsp

6. Title of initiative: Thematic Campaigns in the Field of Waste Management

Identification number	*47*
Organisations involved (Location)	*Madeira regional government (Portugal)*
Data sources	Questionnaire (CoR consultation)
Implementation of EU legislation	N/A
Policy area	Environment
Status of implementation	Mid-term

Description

The initiative aims at increasing compliance of economic operators with environmental legislation in cases requiring widespread implementation, as well as where compliance rates are very low; for that purpose it supports the implementation of market solutions, using focused campaigns as a key tool.

The campaigns feature three main elements:

1. creation of an inventory of existing waste management operators on the market and information to the public on emerging waste markets;

2. development of documentary content and support (legislation, regulations, practical information, contacts, website, forms, notices and postal notifications);

3. Public dissemination (media and postal notification) and awareness (inspections and on-the-spot warnings).

More specifically, the approach aims at making all businesses in the waste management sector aware of: (i) the legal requirements they have to meet; and (ii) the market solutions available that may assist them in meeting these requirements. It is based on the notion that, as a result of the campaign, each business should be aware of legal requirements and ready to adopt the best available solution for its specific needs; in this way, relevant applications for waste management authorisation will be complete and their processing will require minimal input from the administration's side.

Several campaigns have been launched since 2009. An average of four

campaigns on specific issues are carried out each year.

Results (incl. actual reduction in administration costs)

The launch of the waste management campaigns initiative has resulted in the acceleration of authorisation procedures involving complex waste management issues. By optimising notification methods, the Madeira regional administration, despite the limited resources available, has managed to reach out to all operators in the sector, effectively improving their capacity to respond to environmental requirements.

The average overall processing time of waste management authorisation applications has been substantially reduced; with regard to correspondence alone (notifications and reports), replacing the traditional system (registered post) with the system created under the campaigns, has meant a saving of 95%.

Impact on public administration

There are clear savings for the administration in terms of human and material resources. Campaigns on specific waste management issues enable the administration to respond *en masse*, through a standardised, coordinated and fast authorisation process, having already informed operators about how to overcome difficulties and avoid potential errors.

Impact on economic operators (notably SMEs)

The campaigns have assisted companies in their efforts to seek solutions best suited to their particular circumstances and needs in order to address environmental legislation requirements. Being better prepared and in a more timely fashion, economic operators benefit from improved collaboration with the regional public administration.

Other impacts

The approach supports the development of the environmental technologies market, with available products and services being widely promoted in a transparent way, thus reducing competition distortion and attracting investments.

Scaling up/replication potential

The approach is simple and straightforward, and could thus easily be replicated by other LRAs in all EU MS.

For further information | http://dramb.gov-madeira.pt/berilio/berwpag0.listctn?pCtn=98

7. Title of initiative: VAHTI compliance monitoring system

Identification number	*58*
Organisations involved (Location)	*Ministry of the Environment and regional environment centres (Finland)*
Data sources	Experts' research
Implementation of EU legislation	N/A
Policy area	Environment
Status of implementation	Advanced

Description

The VAHTI compliance data system is a tool used by the 13 regional environment centres in Finland to process and monitor permits. The system also includes information on compliance of installations with environmental regulations. It uses information technology to simplify monitoring and reporting, as a means to improve efficiency and reduce burdens on operators.

Since 2003, when the first version of the system became operational, users of the system have greatly expanded to reach 800 active members. VAHTI is perceived as an effective tool in the daily routine of the environmental administration for Finnish businesses.

The data system has the flexibility to produce reports addressing the diverse needs of the administration, as well as for other interested parties requiring relevant information. More specifically, the VAHTI database is fed with information taken from periodical environmental reports (on production, fuel types and quantities used, air and water emission concentrations, and volume and type of waste generated, etc.). The system facilitates analysis on pollution by specific SMEs or in a specific geographical area. As a tool, it can be used not only by regional environmental administration but also by the SMEs involved; the latter may use the information provided in the system in order to monitor their own situation. Competent regional authorities in Finland encourage operators who have been granted environmental permits, to submit the required emissions monitoring and other data and reports though an electronic application (TYVI - flow of information from customers to authorities) which feeds into VAHTI.

Results (incl. actual reduction in administration costs)

So far the system has been working well and no other self-monitoring systems have been required. The following advantages are evident:

- electronic simplification – all relevant data in one system;
- easier access to all relevant case data for the authority issuing the permit;
- bringing different permits together;
- unified format of permits across the country;
- one competent contact partner in the authority for the company.

Amongst the results are:

- cooperation between relevant partners; and
- fast implementation.

Impact on public administration

Moreover, the data system provides substantial reports for the diverse needs of the administration and for other interested parties needing information.

Impact on economic operators (notably SMEs)
This improvement in the existing reporting systems is intended to improve efficiency and reduced business burdens.

Other impacts
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Scaling up/replication potential

The system is flexible and can be expanded to address the needs of any interested SME. Scope for replication to other MS is good; any such effort would inevitably entail some customisation.

| *For further information* | http://www.epractice.eu/en/factsheets/
 The VAHTI website |

8. Title of initiative:	'Implementation and Certification of Integrated Quality and Environmental Management within the County Council' - Braila SIMJUD
Identification number	*1*
Organisations involved (Location)	*Territorial administrative unit of Braila County (Braila County Council)(Romania)*
Data sources	Questionnaire (CoR consultation)
Implementation of EU legislation	N/A
Policy area	Environment; public services to business/citizens (horizontal); business process re-engineering
Status of implementation	Just started

Description

The project aims to make the decision-making process more flexible at County Council level, by implementing an integrated system for quality (ISO 9001:2001) and environmental management (ISO 14001:2005), thereby promoting more rational use by the Council of human and other resources. An innovative element of the approach is the parallel development of an IT application, which is compatible with the integrated system, and can be used to manage investment projects relevant to the County.

The integrated quality and environmental management system: (i) identifies issues for improvement; (ii) sets quantifiable targets and specific timeframes for the attainment of those targets; (iii) sets a budget for the implementation of relevant actions to address those issues; (iv) monitors expected results; (v) measures progress; and (vi) evaluates the solutions that have been adopted. This process, apart from a continuous improvement in the fields of quality and the environment, ensures that a client- (citizen-) oriented approach is adopted and that the public's concerns are addressed at high-level.

Results (incl. actual reduction in administration costs)

The project is still at an early stage of implementation; concrete results with regard to administrative burden reduction are thus not yet available. Expected results include:

- higher levels of public satisfaction with the services delivered by Braila County Council, thus encouraging efforts towards decentralisation of public services provision;

- continuous improvement in the quality of services delivered to the public (more effective and more efficient service provision);

- greater transparency in administrative processes.

Impact on public administration

The integrated quality and environmental management system provides support to decision-making at the level of the board of Braila County Council (president, vice-presidents, County secretary), through the timely provision of concise information on the institution's operational aspects. In this way, the system promotes efficiency and transparency in both planning and implementation of action.

Moreover, civil servants and contract staff in departments under the authority of Braila County Council, benefit from both accurate information on the institution's activities and streamlined procedures, i.e. aspects, which together increase the rate of information requests processed and ensure improved access to public services.

Impact on economic operators (notably SMEs)

- streamlining of procedures and consistency in the provision of public services, facilitating long-term planning by economic operators;

- continuous improvement in the quality and efficiency of public services

- greater transparency in information management and wider access to public services.

Other impacts

The initiative facilitates more efficient management of investment projects and enhances the capacity of the county administration to access structural funds.

In addition, it improves environmental protection measures and reduces the environmental impact of the county administration activities, as a direct consequence of the Council's commitment to continuous environmental improvement (as per the requirements of the environmental management

system standards).

Scaling up/replication potential

The approach is based on the ISO 9001 and 14001 standards and can thus be implemented by virtually any interested organisation. Scope for replication is average; relatively attractive and beneficial to large- and middle-sized organisations but with fairly limited added value for small local authorities.

For further information | http://www.portal-braila.ro

9. Title of initiative: Centralising and monitoring of the procedures involved in commercial plant operation	
Identification number	*34*
Organisations involved (Location)	*Vorarlberg State Government (Austria)*
Data sources	Questionnaire (CoR consultation)
Implementation of EU legislation	N/A
Policy Area	(Horizontal) provision of public services to business; business process re-engineering
Status of implementation	Advanced

Description

The Vorarlberg State Government is a pioneer in procedure centralisation; all procedures for authorising and approving a project are carried out within a single concentrated administrative process (e.g. under the Trade Act, the Water Act, the Nature Protection Act, etc.). From 1994 to 1996 the processes involved in commercial plant operation were further optimised and centralised in one department in each of the relevant district authorities. A computer programme has been developed and put in operation for the analysis and ongoing monitoring of the processes involved in commercial plant operation, as well as for other related processes to be carried out in parallel.

Results (incl. actual reduction in administration costs)

The time taken to get a commercial plant into operation has been cut from an average of 160 days in 1993 to 84 days in 2001, and to less than 80 days today. On average, around 77% of the processes are now completed in less than three months (in 2001, the figure was around 66% and in 1993, around 43%) and another 16% in less than six months (compared with around 22% in 2001 and around 26% in 1993). The introduction of new management practices, including task focusing and a monitoring system, ensure goal orientation and efficiency in the performance of official duties.

In 2007 the Economic Chamber of Austria awarded the Office of the Vorarlberg State Government its "Officer Manager of the Decade" Jubilee Prize for introducing a centralised approval process for commercial plant operation and a procedure monitoring system.

Impact on public administration

The centralisation and monitoring of procedures involved in the ap*proval process for a commercial* facility *have increased the efficiency of the public administration and reduced* the time required for the completion of cases.

Impact on economic operators (notably SMEs)

The centralisation and monitoring of commercial plant operation procedures affect all businesses that wish to build new commercial *facilities* and expand *or close down* existing ones. *Management of these procedures through a single authority* has made them less *time-consuming, to the benefit of economic operators.*

Other impacts

-

Scaling up/replication potential

Some lessons learnt can be shared with other regions, though the customised approach limits scope for replication.

For further information | europa@vorarlberg.at

10. Title of initiative: One stop shops/Citizen Service Centres

Identification number	*59*
Organisations involved (Location)	*The Greek Ministry of the Interior, Public Administration and Decentralization, all Municipal Authorities (Greece)*
Data sources	Experts' research
Implementation of EU legislation	N/A
Policy area	Public services to business/citizens (horizontal)
Status of implementation	Advanced

Description

One-stop-shops/Citizen Service Centres (CSCs) have been established in all LRAs in Greece and have quickly managed to get into the everyday life of citizens. The centres operate with staff of the competent municipality or regional authority and their purpose is to provide better and easier access to a series of government information and services, from a single point of contact/location. In practice, the CSCs provide to citizens (and often to companies, too) a way out of the long bureaucratic procedures that dealing with the public sector usually implies; upon submission of an application from a citizen, their personnel undertakes to proceed with all necessary administrative procedures and follow up the case until the citizen's request has been addressed. More specifically, CSCs implement the following main tasks:

- Undertake a preliminary document control of citizens' applications to public authorities. Should additional documents not submitted along with the application be required, CSC staff (upon request and relevant authorisation by the citizen concerned) collect these documents from competent authorities;
- Forward the complete applications to the competent authorities;
- Receive from the competent authority the written reply to the citizens' application (one or several documents);
- Notify the citizen (by phone call, e-mail or other means) about the completion of their application process; the citizen can then collect the reply from the CSC or receive it by registered mail;

- Certify the authenticity of administrative documents on behalf of public authorities;
- Certify the authenticity of citizens' signatures;
- Provide citizens (upon request) with tax clearance certificates (using the relevant e-government application – TAXISnet).

The CSCs operate as independent local units (with their own staff - locally based and managed human resources) with increased interoperability, which renders each centre capable of providing services to all citizens independently of location, nationality, social orientation, or digital capabilities. The backbone of the centres is a broad and expanding system of e-government applications (e.g. Ermis – National e-government portal, TAXISnet, etc.); though a large number of services are still carried out by fax.

The provision of services is mainly focused on citizens needs; however CSCs also deliver public services to public agencies and private companies. Further to the local units, both a call centre and a [website](#) are in operation, offering the same main services on a non-stop basis. CSCs competencies over administrative processes are subject to joint decisions of the Minister of Interior and the relevant Minister that set out the specific procedures to be handled.

Results (incl. actual reduction in administration costs)

The network of CSCs has succeeded in providing administrative services to several thousands of citizens and companies on a daily basis, addressing more than one thousand different administrative procedures. More than 75% of all administrative transactions involve the local level (municipalities/former prefectures). The centres are highly rated by the public (used by 52% of the adult population), with an overall satisfaction rate of up to 94%.

The operation of CSCs has reduced time spent on administrative procedures by citizens, companies and public authorities, mainly through:

- granting access to simplified and accelerated public administration procedures (upon joint ministerial decisions);
- eliminating the requirement for citizens and companies to visit public authorities in person;
- the use of trained personnel, familiar with a wide range of administrative procedures and capable of addressing issues involving a large number of different public authorities, within a reasonable timeframe.

Quantified data on time and/or cost savings are not available.

Impact on public administration

CSCs have radically improved both the image (45% of citizens consider that public administration has improved over the recent years) and the operational capacity of public administration in Greece. Moreover, the initiative pushed forward the decentralisation process in the delivery of public services, effectively reducing the interaction of citizens with central administration. As a direct consequence, public administration was given the opportunity to improve its productivity and re-allocate administrative staff to other tasks.

Impact on economic operators (notably SMEs)

Companies have largely benefited from the operation of CSCs in terms of both working time (through, amongst other things, the simplification of procedures, the online services and the delivery of documents at their own premises) and cost (minimisation of transaction fees) savings.

Other impacts

CSCs have created more than 3,000 new jobs, including in remote regions all over Greece. Moreover, they have significantly assisted people living in remote areas (particularly on islands and in mountainous regions) who no longer have to travel long distances to deal with the authorities.

Scaling up/replication potential

The initiative is gradually expanding to cover additional services to citizens and companies. Scope for replication is high and similar practices are being implemented in several other EU MS. The approach is customised, though several lessons learnt can be used by other LRAs, especially with regard to the collaboration among the various administrations involved (at all government levels).

For further information	http://www.epractice.eu/en/cases/csckep
	http://www.kep.gov.gr/portal/page/portal/kep/
	National research for the use of administrative services

11. Title of initiative:	**HORECA1 - One stop shop for hotel and cafe licences (Amsterdam)**
Identification number	75
Organisations involved (Location)	*City of Amsterdam (The Netherlands)*
Data sources	Experts' research
Implementation of EU legislation	N/A
Policy area	Public services to business/citizens (horizontal); business process re-engineering
Status of implementation	Advanced

Description

The initiative is twofold and involves: (i) the simplification of the procedure followed by entrepreneurs wishing to obtain or renew (obligatory every three years) licences and dispensations to open a bar, hotel or a restaurant in Amsterdam; and (ii) the establishment of a one-stop-shop (HoReCa1), in which the applicant is assisted in selecting and completing the appropriate documents (from more than 18 different authorities).

The project is part of a city-wide programme aiming at the optimisation of municipal rules and regulations and of the processes that follow them. It operates both as an online do-it-yourself tool and a front office of the 14 local boroughs.

At the front offices entrepreneurs (applicants) are assisted by trained civil servants in completing the entire form for the licensing of their company; a process involving licenses and dispensation from over 18 different authorities. Each applicant is guided through a preliminary questionnaire to identify the exact licensing procedure that has to be followed. Subsequently they complete a single document, which consolidates the administrative information required for issuing all related Amsterdam city licences.

The centre offers services covering not only local but also regional legislation with regard to permits and licenses. It can also be accessed by phone, through the Customer Contact Centre 'Antwoord' (Answer), or online at the dedicated Horeca1 website.

Results (incl. actual reduction in administration costs)

The simplification and consolidation of licensing procedures on the one hand, and on the other the provision of direct support to entrepreneurs involved in this process, have achieved a significant reduction in the administrative burden. More specifically, the expansion of the initiative at national level is expected to achieve cost savings of up to EUR 30.2mn per year (average implementation cost of EUR 300-499 000 for each local centre and annual operating cost below EUR 50 000).

Moreover, the initiative has increased the quality of the applications and business plans submitted and reduced the number of failures; though official statistics are not available.

The project also acts as a pilot, contributing to the national level effort to cut red tape, notably the *Law on co-ordinated, composite and coherent decisions on licences and procedures*, requesting local governments to streamline administrative procedures.

Impact on public administration

Horeca1 has reduced the involvement of local government staff in the licensing process of hotels, bar and restaurants, leading to significant cost and working time savings. Moreover it has increased the transparency of transactions between entrepreneurs and local/regional administration.

Impact on economic operators (notably SMEs)

The initiative has substantially decreased the required time and effort for entrepreneurs to obtain permits related with the start up or operation of businesses.

Other impacts

The Horeca1 project, by simplifying procedures and lowering administrative barriers to entrepreneurs, contributes to the creation and protection of jobs.

Scaling up/replication potential

Scope for replication is high and similar practices are being implemented in several other EU MS. The approach is customised, though several lessons learnt can be used by other LRAs, notably with regard to the increase of interoperability among local agencies and authorities.

12. Title of initiative: Transforming Access to Services in Local Government	
Identification number	*81*
Organisations involved (Location)	*Newport City Council (UK)*
Data sources	Experts' research
Implementation of EU legislation	N/A
Policy area	Public services to business/citizens (horizontal)
Status of implementation	Advanced

Description

The initiative comprises three tools for the provision of services to citizens: (i) a multi-channel contact centre using a single telephone number to enable direct access to all council services; (ii) a centralised Face to Face Contact Centre; and (iii) an online interactive application. The contact centre is integrated with back office functions and processes over 500,000 contacts annually.

The project was designed in line with Newport City Council's agenda on access to public services, which is based on a customer-focused approach. In this context, three key challenges were addressed at the planning stage: access to services; performance of the process; and skills of the employees involved.

As a first step, the Council developed a process named Transforming Access to Services (TATS), reviewing all citizen access channels; a multi-level approach making best use of technology was considered appropriate to address the need for provision of quality services in a rapidly changing environment.

Performance management was achieved through the use of Customer Relationship Management software, facilitating the monitoring and tracking not only of customer enquiries, but also of the contact centre and the back-offices (through the generation of performance management data).

Also pivotal to the organisation of the contact centre, was the recruitment and subsequent training of employees. The Council closely collaborated with the

Results (incl. actual reduction in administration costs)

The Newport Council Contact Centre has significantly improved the level of services provided to citizens, addressing queries in a fast, efficient and effective manner, as proved by a series of performance indicators, such as:

- the minimisation of complaints, which have dropped down to a level close to zero;
- the high number of customer queries (at least 70%) being answered by the contact centre operators; and
- the quick and efficient responses, with more than 90% of the calls being answered in less than 20 seconds.

The successful operation of the service has resulted in major awards for the centre, including 'Contact Centre of the Year' at both the National Customer Service Awards and at the Welsh Contact Centre Awards.

Impact on public administration

The initiative has streamlined business processes and achieved time and cost savings through the standardisation of procedures for all online documents. Indicatively, more than 24 000 documents are automatically handled annually through the use of a content management system - an otherwise labour-intensive task.

The TATS and specifically the contact centre have particularly benefited Newport City Council, as regards improvement of services efficiency:

- information on performance has helped the council to focus restructuring efforts on low efficiency areas in the back office;
- the same information has provided the impetus for a culture change towards performance management monitoring and assessment, with members, senior officers and back-office managers carrying out these tasks.

Impact on economic operators (notably SMEs)

The main focus of the project is on citizens; though economic operators also benefit from reductions in the time required for the local administration to process a query.

Other impacts

The good performance of the contact centre has had a positive impact on the 'image' of the city administration with the citizens of Newport.

Scaling up/replication potential

Scope for replication is high. The approach is straightforward and partly based on an ICT application which can be easily adjusted to address the needs of other LRAs.

For further information	http://www.wlga.gov.uk/english/access-to-services-case-studues/newport-city-council-1/

13. Title of initiative: eTramits - eServices Platform of the Barcelona City Council Tramits Online

Identification number	*57*
Organisations involved (Location)	*Barcelona City Council (Spain)*
Data sources	Experts' research
Implementation of EU legislation	N/A
Policy area	Public services to business/citizens (horizontal)
Status of implementation	Advanced

Description

eTramits is an eService platform introduced by the Barcelona city council with a view to becoming the main communication channel addressing citizens and businesses. The service facilitates access to over 1,000 municipal and other government office procedures, while allowing Barcelona-based citizens and companies to complete online, through a digital certificate, about 90 administrative procedures, i.e. 80% of the volume of procedures handled by the Barcelona City Council.

The target groups of the web portal include a wide range of stakeholders (businesses, self-employed professionals, residents and non-residents); a key element of the system is that it offers customised services to each group, based on their specific needs. For that purpose, different folders have been created within the portal to facilitate transactions with citizens and with companies or entities.

The system combines user friendliness with strong accessibility elements, including among other things: an online call centre support service; several secure payment options; use of electronic signatures; a database of electronic documents; and a registration service.

The project also includes a large re-structuring effort addressing internal processes; this involved linking the web portal with the back-office and simplifying and streamlining procedures to facilitate electronic processing, as well as training municipal staff and implementing a communication plan.

The initiative is part of a multi-channel public access strategy (also including Citizen Attention Offices facilitating face-to-face transactions and a telephone centre) and has been considered among the finalists competing for the 4th

Results (incl. actual reduction in administration costs)

e-Tramits has quickly achieved wide recognition among the target groups, with the portal receiving over 100,000 requests concerning administrative procedures on a monthly basis, by both citizens and businesses.

Statistics (2007) point to significant use of the web portal: about 15 million annual visitors with 39 million web accesses serving 1.2 million online procedures through 362 million page visits. These figures show that a substantial part of the administrative workload has been shifted towards electronic transactions – indicatively, same year data show that more procedures and searches were processed through the internet (69,000) than in person (47,000) or by phone (13,000) together.

Moreover, the system has reduced the time required to process applications; the average time for granting building licenses, for example, has dropped by 52%, to 38 days (from 79 days), while other planning permissions, which previously required months to be issued, now need only few minutes.

Impact on public administration

Barcelona city council has benefited from e-Tramits in terms of:

- Improved service provision to citizens and businesses, with faster processing times;

- Reduced workload for municipal employees, due to the introduction of simplified and automated processes.

Impact on economic operators (notably SMEs)

Businesses doing transactions with Barcelona city administration through the web-portal benefit from working time and cost savings, due to faster processing of requests as well as submitting applications right from their workplace (no need for repeated trips to local administration departments and face-to-face meetings).

Other impacts

Satisfaction with the electronic provision of public services on the part of citizens and business, improves the overall 'image' of local administration.

Scaling up/replication potential

Scope for replication is high, though the approach implies a large internal re-structuring effort, which might impede its use by other LRAs.

For further information	www.bcn.cat/tramits
	http://www.epractice.eu/en/cases/etramits

14. Title of initiative: 'Ravenna Semplifica' (Ravenna simplifies)	
Identification number	*62*
Organisations involved (Location)	*Ravenna Municipality (Italy)*
Data sources	Experts' research
Implementation of EU legislation	N/A
Policy area	Public services to business/citizens (horizontal)
Status of implementation	Just started

Description

'Ravenna Semplifica' is an overall e-government framework at the municipal level aimed at the simplification of procedures, at the efficient management of the related information and at keeping administrative requests in line with existing legislative and regulatory requirements. The initiative takes advantage of a regional platform (platform C&A People) made available to local entities for the online delivery of Front Office services to businesses, complemented by Back Office software for the automatic insertion of data. A 'unit for simplification' (nucleo per la semplificazione – NUS) was established with the task of defining the knowledge-base of all the administrative procedures in order to subsequently propose measures for improvements. Within the framework initiative, two projects were initiated to test the implementation of measures, one of which, 'Simplifying procedures for entrepreneurs', was awarded a mention within the national competition 'Let's give a prize to results' (Premiamo i risultati') in 2010.

The 'Simplifying procedures for entrepreneurs' project aimed to reduce the costs incurred by businesses and related associations to meet administrative requirements by reducing as much as possible the amount of information they were required to submit and shortening of the time needed for such information to be processed by the relevant authorities. Within the project, 265 processes were reviewed and made compatible with online completion requirements; 50 hours were dedicated to the training of public functionaries; and, most importantly, a 'cultural' change among public personnel was initiated.

The second project, 'Online institutions for commerce', aimed to rationalise the obligations on SMEs related to the opening and/or management of their businesses. The obligation of double presentation of applications to both the

Chamber of Commerce and the Municipality was abrogated and an agreement between the two institutions reached to define functional roles, responsibilities and modalities for implementation. The project achieved a 50% reduction in the use of paper; a 20% time saving for staff in charge of handling the work flow; and a 50% time saving in terms of archive searching.

Results (incl. actual reduction in administration costs)

Review of procedures, development of online services, rationalisation of roles and mindset change, allowed the following results to be achieved: (i) Internal restructuring of municipal units for a more effective provision of services to both businesses and citizens; (ii) Opening of two interactive portals (in March 2011), one dedicated to SMEs (SUAP - Sportello Unico per le Attività Produttive and) and one to citizens (Sportello Polifunzionale per il Cittadino); (iii) launching of an information campaign 'Rapida' ('Fast') aimed at promoting the new tools and technologies and at guiding users in their uptake. The online facilities will become compulsory from 29 March 2011 onwards.

Impact on public administration

- Reduction of processing time (during the pilot phase, a 20% time reduction for processing and a 50% time reduction for document searching)
- Reduction of paper use; some 8,000 internal documents became irrelevant.
- More homogeneous application of rules for public procurement.
- Higher efficiency and transparency

Impact on economic operators (notably SMEs)

- Only one institution to which documentation is to be submitted
- Time saving as most of the requests can be completed online and most of the certificates can be obtained online.

Other impacts

- Administrative burden reduction has been targeted for both SMEs and citizens and online facilities for both categories have been made available simultaneously. Through a separate log-in interface, citizens can access certificate issuing services and school subscriptions, or interact with various municipal offices.

Scaling up/replication potential

The initiative will gradually be extended to address a larger number of municipal procedures. Scope for replication is good; though use of the online application implies a large internal re-structuring effort, which might impede expansion to other LRAs.

For further information	*The establishment of interactive portals for the simplification and rationalisation of processes related to production activities and services is required and regulated by the national D.P.R. (Decree of the President of the Italian Republic) 160/2010.*
	Sources: Progetto PEOPLE per la Regione Emilia Romagna; Project fact-sheet, national competition 'Premiamo i risultati'; 'Ravenna semplifica la vita alle imprese', 2010 presentation. Rapida website. Comune di Ravenna press release of 12/03/2011.

2.2 Good practices in terms of model solutions for the implementation of selected legislation of EU origin

<div style="text-align:right;">Public services to business/citizens (Horizontal)</div>

15. Title of initiative:	Replacement of the business licence with a prior notification system for service activities, which do not entail a risk to the environment, security, public policy or individuals
Identification number	*21*
Organisations involved (Location)	*City of Murcia (Spain)*
Data sources	Experts' research/Questionnaire (CoR consultation)
Implementation of EU legislation	EU Services Directive (Directive 2006/123/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2006 on services in the internal market)
Policy area	Environment; Public services to business/citizens (horizontal)/*Services Directive*
Status of implementation	Mid-term

Description

The project concerns a model approach on the implementation of the services directive (Directive 2006/123/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2006 on services in the internal market) with regard to the environmental aspects of business licensing. The approach intends to reduce the time required for starting up the activity, as well as to simplify and standardise the documentation required for licensing.

More specifically, the city of Murcia has introduced a process allowing the replacement of the business licence requirement with prior notification, without compromising environmental protection. The process includes two main tasks: (i) local administration makes a selection of those activities or actions, which are not technically complex and whose impact on the environment and urban planning is minimal; (ii) an immediate, non-preventive check is carried out, based on which the right to operate is granted to the business involved. In addition, the series of documents accompanying the licensing process have been modified to facilitate electronic processing.

Results (incl. actual reduction in administration costs)

Replacement of a business license with prior notification has reduced processing times from over three months to only 15 days from notification of the city council with a limited possibility of this timeframe being further reduced without compromising the protection of the environment. In parallel, the implementation of the approach has decreased the total number of documents handled during the licensing process and has also replaced physical files with electronic documentation; both changes had positive implications in terms of working time and cost savings (though relevant quantified data are not available).

Impact on public administration

The city of Murcia administration has benefited from the new approach as follows:

- Improvements in the documentation submitted by businesses to the administration (introduction of standard forms, reduced number of reports that municipal experts have to produce) minimised requirements in terms of personnel and material resources, so that existing resources can be reorganised to achieve faster processing of other business licences (the remaining reports are issued faster).

- Face-to-face interaction and electronic processing remove the need for internal communications, physical handling of files and drafting and signing of documents, with a positive impact on time (and cost) savings.

- The new approach has enhanced customer service to the public, the rapidity of administrative responses and efficiency.

Moreover, the approach has created the need to improve inspection of businesses and take greater account of formal local complaints.

Impact on economic operators (notably SMEs)

The model approach simplifies the process of opening small businesses and cuts processing times for entrepreneurs, so they do not have to pay rent and other start-up costs before opening their businesses (reserves, guarantee deposits, etc.).

In addition, it reduces the number of businesses opened illegally by making it easier to open businesses legally.

Other impacts

The approach facilitates the establishment of small businesses and thus supports job creation and entrepreneurship; an issue of particular importance during the recession.

Scaling up/replication potential

The approach is simple and straightforward, while scope for replication is high.

For further information │ Murcia City Council land-use planning department webpage

16. Title of initiative:	**Hamburg Point of Single Contact**
Identification number	*33*
Organisations involved (Location)	*Hamburg (Germany)*
Data sources	Questionnaire (CoR consultation)
Implementation of EU legislation	EU Services Directive (Directive 2006/123/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2006 on services in the internal market)
Policy area	Public services to business/citizens (horizontal)/*Services Directive*
Status of implementation	Mid-term

Description

The Hamburg regional Point of Single Contact, in line with EU Services Directive, offers companies and entrepreneurs from Germany, Europe and around the world: advice on licensing requirements and procedures, including on the competent administrative bodies in Hamburg, access to public registers and additional sources of advice. As a "procedural intermediary" (one-stop-shop) it also offers the following services related to starting and running a business in Hamburg: handling and complete processing of applications, legal proceedings, declarations of intent and other documents; identification of the appropriate authorities, forwarding to the competent authorities; mediation between companies and the authorities on further questions; monitoring of procedures; provision of information on the state of procedures; advising on further assistance in the event of problems with procedures. The point of single contact simplifies administrative procedures and makes complex dealings of service providers with the authorities more transparent and less time-consuming. It can also provide information on access to registers (e.g. the list of members of the professional association of lawyers), available legal remedies and other institutions that can provide support (including other Chambers, such as the Chamber of Handicrafts, and associations).

In addition, Hamburg has created the following *e*-government *applications for entrepreneurs, within the* Central Online-Portal of the Point of Single Contact: (i) Online procedure finder*: This application allows entrepreneurs to use an interactive questionnaire to find out which permits* they need to obtain or *submit.* On completion of the questionnaire, permit forms can be downloaded and documents transmitted electronically to the relevant authorities. *(ii)* Online Authorities Finder: This application enables people to carry out their own

search for the relevant authorities in particular subject areas.

Results (incl. actual reduction in administration costs)

Administrative cost savings cannot *yet be estimated* with accuracy, *because they depend largely on the* scale of future use of the Website and Single Point of Contact by companies.

For 2010, the involved Chambers estimated that around EUR 246 000 would be needed for both the establishment of the S*ingle Point of Contact* and the *performance of its tasks. When the Single Point of Contact was initially set up, it was estimated that the fees paid to the Chambers would cover a quarter of the costs. Accordingly, a sum of EUR 184 000 was set aside for 2010 in the budget of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg.* One year after its launch, around 750 clients from various sectors have used the new Service (at the Chamber of Commerce). A breakdown by sector of the users of the service, is presented below: Hotels/restaurants (14%); Retail trade (11%); Commerce (11%); Media (7%); Industry (6%); Wholesale and foreign trade (5%); Professional (5%); Real estate (4%); Freight (3%); Recipients of services (3%); Passenger services (1%); Insurance (3%); Other (corporate and personal) services (27%).

Impact on public administration

The fact that the Online-Information Portal or the Point of Single Contact can be used for preliminary enquiries and information is reducing the burden that would otherwise have been placed on the administration as a result of the new procedures that need to be completed, such as issuing acknowledgements of receipt and monitoring the observance of deadlines by the competent authorities in the procedures concerned.

Impact on economic operators (notably SMEs)

*The initiative has reduced consultation fee costs for SMEs, while enabling the calculation of total cost risk, by introducing a fee schedule, which regulates t*he *fees* charged by the Chamber for the services of the Point of Single Contact. This schedule foresees *a maximum* fee of *EUR 360 and also* no charge for consultations lasting up *to half* an *hour*. Moreover, the *Point of Single Contact has provided assistance to SMEs in handling legal disputes, for example in relation to waste disposal; hazardous waste management; planning and construction; loans; licensing, etc.*

Other impacts

The Point of Single Contact, including the Online-Information Portal, can be accessed by the public. Both are thus likely to be used by information seekers other than the beneficiary group targeted in the Services Directive.

Scaling up/replication potential

Scope for replication is high; similar approaches have been developed in several other LRAs. The approach is straightforward and partly based on an ICT application, which can be easily adjusted to address the needs of other LRAs.

For further information	http://www.hamburg.de/hamburg-psc/ http://www.hamburg.de/ea-hamburg/

17. Title of initiative:	**Saxony-Anhalt electronic contracting and procurement**
Identification number	*27*
Organisations involved (Location)	*Saxony-Anhalt Ministry for State Development and Transport; County Councils and Municipalities of the State of Saxony-Anhalt (Germany)*
Data sources	Experts' research/Questionnaire (CoR consultation)
Implementation of EU legislation	EC Procurement Directives (2004/17/EC and 2004/18/EC)
Policy area	Public procurement/*Procurement Directives*
Status of implementation	Mid-term

Description

The Saxony-Anhalt electronic contracting and procurement project is implemented in line with EC Procurement Directives (2004/17/EC and 2004/18/EC) and is based on an online platform serving both the provision of notices and the award of state and federal government procurement contracts. As part of the initiative, an automated e-application has been developed to facilitate fast communication between bidders and the awarding body. *The system foresees the electronic generation of tender documents, as well as electronic* assessment *of bids (currently for road and building contracts only).* Moreover, it provides free tender documents in electronic format for the bidder (mainly SMEs).

Since January 2008, a relevant e-service for *tenders of the Saxony*-Anhalt *state building authority* has been put in operation.

Beneficiaries include all SMEs participating in public calls for tenders issued by state and local governments.

Results (incl. actual reduction in administration costs)

The initiative has resulted in savings in copying equipment and paper (the *cumbersome process of copying and posting* is *no longer necessary*), as well as in transaction processing time, e.g. l*ess time is needed to create entire tender*

documents, *as these are electronically generated in advance* usi*ng other custom IT applications*. Total savings are estimated at 20-30% compared with the use of traditional procurement procedures.

A future standardisation of the electronic processing of the various procurement methods is expected to enable further savings to be made.

Impact on public administration

The electronic procurement system has benefited public administration in terms of savings in time spent on:

- *the creation of entire tender documents;*
- *addressing bidders' enquiries; and*
- *on communication and the processing of transactions, by eliminating the need to copy tender documents.*

Other benefits include savings in investments in office equipment and consumables (mainly *copy machines,* printers, ink/toner *and paper)*.

Impact on economic operators (notably SMEs)

Electronic contracting and procurement has facilitated fast communication between bidders and the *awarding body*. Moreover, economic operators enjoy cost savings not only through f*ree* access to *tender documents in electronic format,* but also by minimising the man-days spent on tender document administration*, an issue particularly significant for small companies with limited resources available.*

Other impacts

The e-application has further promoted transparency in all tender processes, notably in communication between public administration and potential bidders.

The number of bidders that can be reached in each call for tenders has significantly increased, as calls *are published* o*n advertising and competition* web*sites that can be accessed throughout Germany and the EU.*

Scaling up/replication potential

The application will soon (05/2011) be expanded to address *state and municipal authorities in Saxony*-Anhalt. Scope for replication is high. The approach is straightforward and partly based on an ICT application, which can

easily be adjusted to address the needs of other LRAs.

For further information | www.evergabe.sachen-anhalt.de
www.evergabe-online.de

18. Title of initiative: Galicia's online platform for public procurement

Identification number	*49*
Organisations involved (Location)	*Autonomous community of Galicia (Spain)*
Data sources	Questionnaire (CoR consultation)
Implementation of EU legislation	EC Procurement Directives (2004/17/EC and 2004/18/EC)
Policy area	Public procurement/*Procurement Directives*
Status of implementation	Advanced

Description

Galicia's online platform supports self-employed professionals and businesses in searching and bidding for public sector contracts (from regional and local authorities, state universities, etc.), by providing comprehensive information on the contracting authorities and their calls for tender. The system, in line with the EC Procurement Directives (2004/17/EC and 2004/18/EC), provides a comprehensive range of e-procurement services including free access to, and (if relevant) download of: contract notices published in the official journals gazettes (OJEU, Spain's Official State Gazette, Spain's Provincial Official Gazette, and the Official Gazette of Galicia); specifications and additional information on the bid (evaluation criteria, projects, etc.); information on the contracting authorities and members of the contracting board, expert committees and specialist organisations that will be involved in the bid evaluation process; information on the date, time and place of particular events related to calls for tender; contact information (phone and email) of officers responsible for clarifications on the tender procedure; all the contractor/buyer profiles that have been approved in the system; minutes and reports on the procedure; the results of the evaluation of the submitted tenders; the date of the award of the contract; updates on changes to the procedure or documentation published. In addition, the online platform facilitates web tracking of the progress of the tender procedure, as well as sending out of e-mail notifications with updates on contract notices that fit the personal profile of users (based on a set of selections made during the user-registration process, such as targeted types of contracts, etc.).

An innovative element of the system, which greatly enhances transparency, is the use of a certified recording system, to guarantee time-stamping (records the

time when information is published).

Results (incl. actual reduction in administration costs)

Galicia's online platform has resulted in the minimisation of input (in terms of working days and overheads) required from both local administration and entrepreneurs during the procurement process. In this context, the overall financial cost of procurement procedure implementation has been reduced; though quantified data on cost reductions are not available.

Impact on public administration

The initiative introduces a new way of working with the public from a distance; it reduces the time spent providing information to contractors, as well as the cost of paper, photocopying, phone calls and postage.

Impact on economic operators (notably SMEs)

Galicia's electronic procurement system improves business opportunities – particularly for SMEs, by offering timely and comprehensive procurement information at zero cost, as well as by ensuring, in a transparent way, that all economic operators receive the same level of information concurrently.

Moreover, all economic operators benefit from the use of e-procedures, offering savings in working time and cost.

Other impacts

The publication of contract notices and bid results promote transparency in public procurement.

Scaling up/replication potential

Scope for replication is high; the approach is straightforward and partly based on an ICT application which can be easily adjusted to address the needs of other LRAs.

For further information | www.contratosdegalicia.es

19. Title of initiative:	**Advice and consultation prior to the submission of an application for integrated environmental authorisation.**
Identification number	*39*
Organisations involved (Location)	*Karlovarske regional authority (Czech republic)*
Data sources	Questionnaire (CoR consultation)
Implementation of EU legislation	*IPPC Directive*
Policy area	Environment
Status of implementation	Advanced

Description

The initiative aims that in the case of complex procedures within the framework of integrated prevention (IPPC Directive), consultations take place and initial adjustments are made prior to submitting applications, to ensure that the authorisation process is simplified and shortened as much as possible. Applicants are only required to submit the supporting documents needed to assess the application (fewer documents than under the legal requirements). Equally, all supporting documents, which the applicant has already submitted to the regional authority under other procedures or applications, are not required.

The main elements of the approach used prior to the implementation of the IPPC authorisation process are: (i) a series of consultations involving the applicant and the competent regional officers; and (ii) active co-operation with the official responsible in the elaboration and submission of the IPPC application.

Results (incl. actual reduction in administration costs)

The initiative has resulted in more effective collaboration between the regional authorities and the companies applying for IPPC authorisation. The overall time and financial resources required for the successful completion of the authorisation process have been reduced, as a result of less errors made in the applications and the reduction in requests for later submission of additional information; however quantified data on cost savings are not available.

Impact on public administration

The regional authority, in its capacity as an integrated prevention agency, receives a complete application, which has been the subject of prior consultation; this implies a reduction in working time spent on administrative tasks and, accordingly, in the financial cost of processing the application.

Impact on economic operators (notably SMEs)

The introduction of consultation sessions in integrated environmental authorisation has minimised errors made by companies in the submitted applications; this has consequently benefited target companies in terms of working time spent by both technical and administrative staff on processing requests for additional information and amendments to the application forms (since comments are sent to the institutions concerned prior to the launch of the procedure itself). Moreover, the approach has reduced the overall time needed to issue an integrated permit.

Other impacts
-

Scaling up/replication potential

Scope for replication to other regional authorities is high, especially in areas hosting large numbers of industries. The approach is simple and straightforward and can thus be easily transferred to interested regional authorities.

| *For further information* | http://www.kr-karlovarsky.cz/ZIVOTNI/IPPC_IRZ/, http://www.mzp.cz/www/ippc.nsf (in Czech) |

20. Title of initiative: Environmental Inspections in Styria

Identification number	*53*
Organisations involved (Location)	*Provincial Government of Styria, in co-operation with relevant trade and business associations (Austria)*
Data sources	Experts' research
Implementation of EU legislation	EU recommendation 2001/331/EC
Policy area	Environment/*Environmental inspections Recommendation*
Status of implementation	Advanced

Description

The initiative increases efficiency for the administration and companies by bringing together different environmental inspection functions. Given the decentralised nature of the environmental inspection system in Austria, the approach focuses on the consolidation of the work of various authorities with environmental competencies, in particular: (i) the local authorities (Gewerbebehörde), responsible for air pollution and noise aspects, based on the industrial act, which forms the legal basis for the majority of inspections; (ii) the waste authorities (Abfallbehörden) covering waste issues; and (iii) the water authorities (Wasserrechtsbehörden) addressing water pollution aspects. More specifically, it aims at the simplification of inspection and provides some compliance assistance and support mechanisms to industry/companies. The EU recommendation 2001/331/EC (providing for minimum criteria for environmental inspections in the Member States) requires regular inspections of industrial sites, which are often difficult to fulfil, creating a need for the establishment of an efficient structure minimising administration. Since 2004, such a system has been established in Styria, facilitating:

  (i)   the implementation of a unified procedure in the whole Province;
  (ii)   coordination when a case takes place in several (administrative) regions within the province;
  (iii) optimisation of the efforts of the verifiers;
  (iv)   data management;
  (v)   maximising synergies between different administrative bodies; and
  (vi)   the implementation of self inspection at company sites.

Results (incl. actual reduction in administration costs)

The simplification approach has allowed for inspections to be carried out regularly and in a timely fashion, without the involvement of additional personnel from the side of provincial administration. Further to savings in resources, the initiative has improved the efficiency of inspections, through the use of an electronic control system. Quantified information on the administrative cost savings induced by the simplification approach is not available.

Impact on public administration

The simplification of the inspection process has multiple benefits for public administration in terms of human and material resources. More specifically, the provisional administration:

- has improved collaboration with companies and among different administrative departments, through the use of electronic control for all inspections;
- has minimised staff needs and use of other resources required in inspections; and
- has improved the efficiency of implementation of EU regulation on the minimum requirements of environmental inspections.

Impact on economic operators (notably SMEs)

Businesses have benefited from the initiative in terms of working time savings, as a direct result of the:

- minimisation of the need for authority contacts;
- option to undergo self-inspection; and
- provision of a bonus for the use of an Environmental Management System.

Other impacts

Standardisation and simplification of environmental inspection processes has improved transparency, with positive implications on public perceptions regarding the effectiveness of environmental protection on the part of the provincial administration in Styria.

Scaling up/replication potential

Scope for replication to other regional authorities is high, especially in areas hosting large numbers of industries. A potential transfer of the approach would require customisation of procedures to the local context.

For further information	BEST Expert Group (2006), 'Streamlining and simplification of environment related regulatory requirements for companies', Final report, May 2006.

3. Methodological suggestions for the transposition of good practices to other LRAs or to the national context

The transfer of good practices of administrative burden reduction to other administrations, at the local, regional or national level is a complex exercise requiring:

(i) from the side of the LRAs already implementing the good practice:

- good knowledge of the design and implementation elements of the practice, including success factors and potential barriers;

- an open policy facilitating exchange of information with other administrations;

- the capacity and resources to devote time and personnel to training and coaching employees of the other administrations involved; and,

(ii) from the side of the administrations planning to transpose the good practice:

- strong political commitment and competence to make and implement legislative changes;

- adequate resources to apply organisational changes and changes in administrative processes; and,

- sufficient sources of funding to support the introduction of technological developments, where relevant.

In this context, the following elements of a methodological approach for the transposition of the short-listed good practices to other cities, regions or national administrations, are considered essential:

- *Setting of short-, medium- and long-term targets for concrete and measurable results.* The analysis of good practices revealed that initiatives for administrative burden reduction are multi-step projects (e.g. Newport City Council multi-channel service public provision in UK; integrated quality and environmental management system in Braila, Romania, etc.), requiring both long-term commitment and regular

feedback. Transposition efforts should therefore consider a step-by-step approach (iterative process) involving pilot applications, to facilitate the testing of preliminary or interim results. Pilots have been used in almost all selected case studies prior to consideration of full-scale application; moreover, implementation at the local level was often considered as a pilot project for national level administration (e.g. Horeca1 project in the Netherlands; REGINE initiative in Belgium).

- *Establishing good communication and effective collaboration processes with the LRA that has developed the practice.* In a few good practices, the LRAs involved have already considered the transferability of their approach to other administrations at the design stage (e.g. Benefits Online and TATs in UK; Hamburg point of single contact in Germany, etc.); in those cases a transfer mechanism is already in place – normally also involving an external contractor handling IT issues. In several cases, detailed documentation describing the approach is available; however there remains a need for significant efforts to be made towards establishing a knowledge, skills and experience transfer mechanism.

- *Consulting the target groups of the practice, i.e. citizens and business operators.* The majority of good practices used targeted consultations to get feedback from the eventual users of public services either at an early (e.g. REGINE in Belgium) or at an interim stage of implementation (e.g. CSCs in Greece). Adaptation of good practices to the local and/or national context inevitably requires a new consultation with stakeholders to ensure that future services deliver the desired targeted improvements.

- *Designing and applying an implementation strategy in partnership with trade unions.* Human resources have been pivotal to the implementation of all selected good practices; most LRAs refer to significant investments in the employees involved in their administrative burden reduction projects, in terms of training and re-organisation of working terms (mostly to facilitate strong interoperability between Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) applications and the back-office working team).

- *Securing sufficient political will to proceed with changes.* Experience with the selected good practices indicated the crucial role that high-level political commitment plays in the success of administrative burden reduction initiatives. Moreover, a large number of these practices have been developed as part of a broader agenda and/or long-term strategy securing multi-level commitment (e.g. centralisation and monitoring of procedures in Voralberg state government, Austria; Galicia's online

public procurement platform in Spain; 'Ravenna simplifies' in Italy, etc.). Therefore, transferring and adapting these good practices can by no means be based solely on the potential enthusiasm of a group of civil servants within the targeted administration nor on the use of external contractors (however efficient they might be), but requires an equal effort at top level.

- *Securing sufficient funds to proceed with changes.* The cost of the development and implementation of the short-listed good practices varies significantly. However in all cases where quantified data is available, it is evident that the main barrier considered was the initial investment cost, since cost savings from administrative burden reduction are greater than the operational costs of the new practices. In this context, both LRAs and national level administrations should consider the use of structural funds for that purpose (as has been the case in CSCs in Greece and in the Integrated quality and environmental management system in Romania, for example).

- *Establishing effective collaboration processes with other administrations to support interoperability.* The need to secure interoperability among agencies at various levels is an issue highlighted in several good practices (e.g. simplification of legislation in Lombardy region, Italy; Horeca1 in Amsterdam city, the Netherlands; CSCs in Greece); being a direct consequence of the fragmentation of administrative competences, interoperability is crucial for the effective operation of e-government tools as well as one-stop-shops, aiming at serving the customer (citizen or business) through a single application.

- *Measuring performance.* Managing performance data is a task made possible with the use of ICT applications; the latter being an indispensable element of each one of the selected good practices. The analysis of good practices showed that measuring performance facilitated benefit leveraging and provided feedback to business process restructuring. In this context, the issue of performance assessment should be seriously considered at the beginning of any effort to implement administrative burden reduction practices, given that for most public administrations, this is considered an issue that is bound to induce reactions and resistance from employees.

- *Developing and implementing a communication plan.* Most of the successful administrative burden reduction practices analysed, have managed to quickly gain wide acceptance by users (e.g. e-Tramits in Spain; CSCs in Greece; Benefits online in the UK; etc.); the existence of a communication plan informing all stakeholders about the new practice

was central to those projects. This indicates the level of importance that should be given to targeted actions, which raise awareness on, and promote the use of, the services that are intended to be delivered.

4. Conclusions

Both the EU and its MS, have long acknowledged the importance of eliminating unnecessary regulation and administrative procedures. Through the smart regulation policy initiative and related national policy measures, a considerable effort is being made to reduce the burden imposed on economic operators, citizens and the public administration.

Furthermore, as research on good practices in administrative burden reduction at the sub-national levels confirmed, a significant amount of red tape also exists in local and regional administration, mainly in the form of:

- overlapping competences causing confusion and delays;
- fragmented legislation impeding fast implementation of laws and regulations;
- complex administrative terms and procedures puzzling both civil servants and their customers (citizens and economic operators);
- outdated structure of administrative processes, encouraging traditional transaction methods (face to face visits, paper documents, etc.) over the use of New Technologies, capable of delivering fast and free communication.

The analysis of good practices indicated that LRAs' response to administrative burden is heavily weighted towards ICT solutions and horizontal initiatives involving the provision of services to citizens and businesses, or the restructuring of administrative processes. Other priority policy areas addressed comprise the environment (including model approaches reducing the inspection and enforcement of legislation), statistics, taxation (at the local level), and public procurement; agriculture (including subsidies), food safety, and working environment/employment relations are less often addressed, as part of comprehensive strategies to tackle red tape.

The prominent use of ICT is encouraging and entirely in line with the EC Action programme to reduce administrative burden, the opinion of the HLG[14], and the apparent public perception (as indicated by the large numbers of users of such services). There is real momentum in this regard at local and regional government levels, with public administration (in partnership with businesses in the ICT sector) taking advantage of more concise forms, less paperwork, speed, convenience and more cost effective solutions to reduce administrative burdens.

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[14] High-level Group of Independent Stakeholders on Administrative Burdens, 2010

The large number of similar approaches used by LRAs in most EU MS to reduce administrative burden, potentially indicates the influence of EC initiatives, as regards both strategic guidance on the implementation of better/smart regulation [15] and the provision of funding possibilities for e-governance applications, as well as for practices aiming at simplifying the application of EU legislation at both the national and sub-national levels. So far, the Structural Funds appear to be the main EC mechanism used by both central governments and LRAs to address the initial investment cost required for the implementation of smart regulation policies and practices. Inevitably, the administrative procedures required to access Structural Funds favour well-defined and straightforward practices with a tangible outcome, such as ICT applications and initiatives involving the development of service structures, notably those anticipating the creation of physical infrastructure (e.g. One-stop-shops providing services to business and/or citizens). The EC could therefore consider:

⇒ ***broadening the scope of existing funding opportunities,*** to address: a) more complex practices, such as integrated administrative burden reduction strategies; and b) 'soft' initiatives, such as those targeting the simplification of legislation.

In this respect, the CoR, could:

⇒ ***make use of its consultative role to highlight the difficulties faced by LRAs in accessing and mobilising the resources necessary to extend the scope of administrative burden reduction initiatives to address all priority policy areas.***

Likewise, the relatively wide geographical coverage of the identified successful practices and the wealth of approaches examined, indicate a good potential for the CoR to coordinate LRA action towards the multiplication of relevant initiatives, particularly through supporting the transposition of good practices to other sub-national administrations. The CoR could therefore consider:

⇒ ***organising a series of workshops and outreach events aiming at creating a culture of good practice in administrative burden reduction***, with a varying thematic focus, covering the 13 priority policy domains of the EC Action Programme;

⇒ ***publishing a guide with selected good practices***, including clear methodological suggestions enhancing transferability initiatives;

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[15] COM (2001) 428 final; COM (2007) 23 final; COM(2010) 543 final.

⇒ *advocating financial support for relevant joint initiatives*, through territorial co-operation programmes focusing on the exchange of experiences at policy level (Interreg IVc).

Moreover, the identified momentum for the implementation of administrative burden reduction initiatives, at all governance levels, has increased the potential for relevant collaborative efforts involving the national and sub-national administration. Central government authorities should thus consider:

⇒ *promoting a framework of joint actions and shared services together with regional and local administration.* Such initiatives could focus on (among other things): a two-way collaboration on the implementation of legislation of EU origin, including provisions for top-down guidance as well as for bottom-up feedback on day-to-day implementation issues; a jointly developed and adopted e-government strategy; jointly operated one-stop-shops for the provision of services to business and citizens, etc.

⇒ *creating a culture of good practice in administrative burden reduction.* Relevant initiatives could include communication events targeting sub-national government representatives and business intermediary organisations, as well as awareness-raising activities targeting civil servants, companies and citizens.

In addition, LRAs should be encouraged to take action towards:

⇒ *increasing interoperability among local agencies and authorities, as well as with the next level of governance.* Enhancing communication and supporting collaboration among different administrations, including with other governance levels, should be a priority if customer-focused approaches are to be used for the delivery of good quality services to the public and businesses.

⇒ *Simplifying, rationalising and consolidating legislation.* Reducing the number of laws and regulations and unifying legislative documents addressing the same policy area minimises delays and the risk of errors in the processing of applications.

⇒ *Reallocating competences among local and regional agencies and authorities, with a view to simplifying and rationalising administrative procedures.* Addressing overlaps in the allocation of administrative competencies facilitates streamlining and standardisation of administrative procedures, thus making possible the use of automated processes and ICT applications.

⇒ ***Restructuring business process in public administration***. Administrative process re-engineering should not only take full account of e-governance applications, but also formalise the knowledge of civil servants, in order to eliminate grey areas between laws and regulations and the actual delivery of services based on them.

⇒ ***Highlighting potential difficulties in and lessons learnt from the implementation of smart regulation policies and practices***. LRAs can play a key role in providing feedback to the EU level (both the CoR and the EC) through consultations and contributions to impact assessments, as regards practical action to reduce administrative burden.

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Annex I: Respondents to CoR (2011) consultation on administrative burden reduction

No	Authority	Examples of good practice
1	**Judetul Braila**	'Implementation and Certification of Integrated Quality and Environmental Management within the County Council' - Braila SIMJUD.
2	**Trnavský samosprávny kraj (Trnava region)**	Joint centralised procurement of heating and hot water.
-		Integrated public procurement system for goods, services and construction works.
-		Use of a comprehensive product (Fabasoft eGov-Suite) as the basis for electronic processing of files/records.
-		Optimisation of human resources management at the Office of the Trnava Region and its various departments.
6	**Comunidad Autónoma Región de Murcia, Spain**	Pilot-project to implify, redesign and streamline 23 administrative procedures at the Murcia Regional Government.
7	**Miltelberg Province**	Integrated energy and environmental protection project for the Bayern-Untermain region.
8	**Balearic Islands**	Expanding single-directory agreements.
-		Agreement between local government levels on electoral roll data.
-		Creation of a Group to promote simplification and reduction of administrative burdens.
-		Drafting and approval of a Master Plan for Simplification and Administrative Burdens Reduction.
-		Creation of an automated inventory of administrative procedures.
-		Creation of coordination structures and systems: establishment of a process management supervisory Committee.
-		Plan to streamline administrative procedures (in housing, planning permission and building companies), within the 13 economic recovery

		measures of the government of the Balearic Islands.
-		Good administration and good governance law.
-		Co-operation agreement between the Ministry of Territorial Policy and Public Administration and the Government of the Balearic Islands in terms of administrative simplification and burden reduction.
-		Implementation of a management system for CAIB processes - Phase I: Standardising horizontal processes in the secretariats-general.
-		Description and agreement on priority cross-cutting processes.
-		Training: Inventory of procedures, process management, process improvement, peer review and study groups, etc.
-		Implementation of the web portal Opina.caib.es Islands, to increase public involvement in administrative simplification issues.
21	**City of Murcia (Murcia City Council/Land-use planning department)**	Replacement of the business licence with a prior notification system for service activities which do not entail a risk to the environment, security, public policy or individuals.
22	**Municipality Vila Nova de Poiares**	Municipality website.
-		Project to create municipal archives.
-		Implementation of an online system for public procurement.
-		Implementation of a one-stop-shop for the municipality.
26	**Kontrijk region West Flanders**	Lean in government.
27	**Landesverwaltungen und Kommunen des Bundeslandes Sachsen-Anhalt**	eGovernment project 'Electronic contracting and procurement'.
28	**Land Wien**	Decree governing publication media.
29	**Zweckverband eGo-Saar**	Information portal for registration data (MRA).
30	**Regione Lombardia**	Simplification and rationalization of the

		regional corpus of legislation in consolidated laws.
-		Declaration of intent to pursue business activities (DIAP).
-		Government Agenda 2011-2015 for the simplification and modernisation of the Lombardy system - "Simplifying Lombardy: Minimising bureaucracy, improving institutions".
33	**Bürgerschaft der Freien und Hansestadt Hamburg**	Hamburg Single Point of Contact.
34	**Vorarlberg, Austria**	Centralising and monitoring of the procedures involved in commercial plant operation.
35	**Krajský úřad Karlovarského kraje (Karlovy Vari, Czech Rep.)**	Water Act amendment.
-		Information about the origin and consequences of major accidents.
-		Clean Air Act amendment.
-		Reduction of administrative burdens in waste management.
-		Advice and consultation prior to the submission of an application for integrated environmental authorisation.
40	**Municipal de Bragança (Braga Municipality, Portugal)**	Administrative modernisation project: 'online services' and 'single counter'.
41	**Assemby of Extremadura, Spain**	Implementation of a strategy to identify measure and reduce administrative burdens aimed at streamlining procedures in the Region of Extremadura.
42	**Madeira**	Electronic platform for public contracts.
-		Use of the Regional Government Electronic Portal to submit online applications and requests for payment (with regard to community incentives).
-		Funchal business procedures centre (one-stop shop).
-		Online services in the field of trade and industry.
-		Payments management system.

		Thematic Campaigns in the Field of Waste Management.
-		Regional Environmental Information System.
49	**Galicia**	Galicia's online platform for public procurement.
50	**Bothnian Arc, Finland**	The Bothnian Arc.
51	**Lisboa**	The 'Counter' Lisbon Initiative.

Annex II: List of examples of good practice on administrative burden reduction identified through experts' research

No	Country	Examples of good practice
52	AT	**IT for One Stop Shop permitting in Lower Austria**.
53	AT	**Environmental Inspections in Styria**.
54	DE	**Simplification and Streamlining of environmental requirements for companies**.
55	DE	**Simplification of waste monitoring regulations**.
56	DK	**Danish egovernment strategy 2007 – 2010 ' Towards Better Digital services, Efficieny and Stronger Collaboration**.
57	ES	**eTramits - eServices Platform of the Barcelona City Council Tramits Online**.
58	FI	**VAHTI compliance monitoring system**.
59	EL	**One stop shops/Citizen Service Centres**.
60	HU	**Application Service Provider (ASP) Centres**.
61	IE	**Streamlining the Waste Permitting System**.
62	IT	**'Ravenna Semplifica' (Ravenna simplifies)**.
63	NL	**eGovernment - ITeams - GovUnited and Dimpact**.
64	PL	**Implementation of a new eCommunication system in the Silesia region**.
65	PT	**Online tax simulator (Simplex Autárquico Programme)**.
66	AT	**Consolidation of Permits**.
67	BE	**Ensemble Simplifions Plan**.
68	IE	**Framework for the Interface between Sub-national and national Levels of Government**.
69	UK	**The 'Help us cut red tape' initiative**.
70	BE	**Referential Environment: Integrated Management of Enterprises (REGINE)**.
71	BE	**Simplification of permit schemes**.
72	BE	**Water tax reform through introduction of 'unified water bill'**.
73	IT	**Environmental reporting and information management support tool for companies**.
74	ES	**YKONOS' Project at Castilla La Mancha region**.
75	NL	**HORECA1 - One stop shop for Hotel and Cafe licences (Amsterdam)**.
76	BE	**Flemish Contact Infoline**.
77	IE	**Donegal Online Planning Services (DOPS)**.

78	LV	**JCCICRABES Jekabpils City Council Information Centre's Residential and Business eServices.**
79	LT	**ONE CONTACT' ('ONESTOPSHOP') PRINCIPLE APPLIATION IN VILNIUS CITY MUNICIPALITY.**
80	ES	**SIMAC (Integral and Multi-Channel Citizen Service System).**
81	UK	**Transforming Access to Services in Local Government (Newport City Council).**

Annex III: List of short-listed examples of good practice on administrative burden reduction

Id No	Title
Structures/programmes/initiatives implemented at the local and regional level	
Data Source:	**CoR consultation**
6	Pilot-project to simplify, redesign and streamline 23 administrative procedures at the Murcia Regional Government
41	Implementation of a strategy to identify, measure and reduce administrative burdens aimed at streamlining procedures in the Region of Extremadura
30	Simplification and rationalisation of the regional corpus of legislation in consolidated laws (Lombardia region)
47	Thematic Campaigns in the Field of Waste Management (Madeira)
1	'Implementation and Certification of Integrated Quality and Environmental Management within the County Council' - Braila SIMJUD
34	Centralising and monitoring of the procedures involved in commercial plant operation (Voralberg State Government)
Data Source:	**Experts' research**
82	Benefits Online (City of Edinburgh Council)
70	Referential Environment: Integrated Management of Enterprises (REGINE, Walloon region)
58	VAHTI compliance monitoring system (Finland)
59	One stop shops/Citizen Service Centres (Greece)
75	HORECA1 - One stop shop for Hotel and Cafe licences (Amsterdam)
81	Transforming Access to Services in Local Government (Newport City Council)
57	eTramits - eServices Platform of the Barcelona City Council Tramits Online
62	'Ravenna Semplifica' (Ravenna simplifies)
Model solutions for the implementation of selected legislation of EU origin	
Data Source:	**CoR consultation**
21	Replacement of the business licence with a prior notification system for service activities which do not entail a risk to the environment, security, public policy or individuals (City of Murcia)
33	Hamburg Point of Single Contact
27	Saxony-Anhalt electronic contracting and procurement
49	Galicia's online platform for public procurement

Id No	Title
39	Advice and consultation prior to the submission of an application for integrated environmental authorisation (Czech Republic)
Data Source:	**Experts' research**
53	Environmental Inspections in Styria

Annex IV: List of non short-listed selected examples of good practice on administrative burden reduction

No	Country	Examples of good practice
4	SK	**Use of a comprehensive product (Fabasoft eGov-Suite) as the basis for electronic processing of files/records**. The software product used by Trnava Autonomous Region is a tool that enables the full electronic processing of all types of requests, applications etc. without any need to change the platform used; it acts as an effective support for everyday tasks and has a simple interface that is highly user friendly, enabling a rapid increase in productivity. It is a tool, which encourages greater innovation.
9	ES	**Agreement between local government levels on electoral roll data**. The initiative promotes interoperability between authorities. An agreement was signed between the regional and local authorities enabling access to the local electoral roll and making it possible to obtain excerpts from the electoral roll with the aim of incorporating voter information into relevant regional procedures.
20	ES	**Implementation of the web portal Opina.caib.es Islands, to increase public involvement in administrative simplification issues**. The Baleares Opina [Baleares Thinks] programme was set up as a channel for two-way communication between the government, the public and the islands' social and economic stakeholders and as a space in which to share experiences and to improve public services together. During the first stage, running from December 2010 until February 2011, the Baleares Opina portal will host a process of participation in simplifying and reducing administrative burdens with priority sectors or groups, such as NGOs, ICT, renewable technologies, small businesses and the self-employed, etc. The proposals and ideas arising from these discussions will be collated and studied by the Directorate-General for Service Quality. These proposals will be forwarded to the bodies responsible in the DGSQ, which will follow them up and inform their proponents of any response they might receive.
23	PT	**Project to create municipal archives**. Gradual digitalisation of documents and dematerialisation of processes, through user-friendly measures and simplification and streamlining of

		internal processes across the different departments. The initiative is expected to make it easier for people to go online to find out about procedures for various different types of information/applications/licensing services provided by the local municipality. Some initial investment was required to set up the process; however this is expected to be paid off through time savings (direct result of the improved flow of information) and savings in consumables.
24	PT	**Implementation of an online system for public procurement**. The initiative concerns the setting up of a registry of procurement notices and calls, through an online information system. It provides adequate information to investors so that they can assess whether they are in a position to bid for a particular contract. In addition, it ensures transparency (e.g. comprehensive information on the evaluation criteria is made available at the same time for all bidders), makes the whole process more competitive and increases the quality of services provided to participating companies. The online system also includes information on new procedures, such as competitive dialogue, e-auctions, and central purchasing bodies. It has achieved a (roughly) 30% reduction in terms of working time and consumables.
25	PT	**Implementation of a one-stop-shop for the municipality**. The creation of a one-stop-shop for the municipality, provides a personalised service which brings the municipality closer to the local population, businesses, tourists, and the general public as a whole. The project ensures transparency, accuracy, and the reduction of bureaucracy, without compromising service provision. It improves quality and ensures that customer service procedures are simplified and rationalised; apart from general enquiries, the one-stop-shop handles applications, deals with licensing requests and requests for information, and addreses other administrative issues (including tax, accounts, water, general services, repairs and spatial planning issues). The project has not yet been fully implemented; financial support from the regional operational programme is pending.
26	BE	**Lean in government**. The initiative concerns the introduction of the lean management techniques first applied in the automotive industry sector. It focuses on services provided to entrepreneurs only (as opposed to other similar initiatives in EU LRAs, addressing mainly citizens). It aims at continuous small improvements in terms of cost reduction, simplicity of processes, faster services, more transparency and

		standardisation. The project is supported by the Flemish government, but is still in the initial stages (the 'identification of services having the greatest improvement potential'/'prioritisation of services' stage has been completed).
28	AT	**Decree governing publication media**. A website facilitating easier access for businesses to information regarding contracts. Applicants i.e. bidders, can easily access notices concerning public contracts; this also applies to contract award procedures below the thresholds stipulated in Directives 2004/18/EC and 2004/17/EC. Information on contract award procedures is available on one single internet page, also offering search functions. Tenders above the relevant EC threshold are automatically passed on to the European Commission; in those tenders there is no double input and the identity of the information is guaranteed. The web site has achieved time savings due to a reduction in errors and in the need to make corrections. Moreover, the new process is transparent and friendlier to business, especially SMEs.
29	DE	**Information portal for registration data (MRA)**. As part of the updating of the Saarland Law on Registration, it was made possible for anyone to obtain information online from the registration database. The system that has been created enables businesses (insurance companies, publishers, mail order companies, lawyers, notaries, engineers, debt recovery agencies) to search address information (basic register information) held in a central database immediately and at any time. Unnecessary journeys to the competent authorities are avoided. Paper forms can to a large extent be dispensed with.
31	IT	**Declaration of intent to pursue business activities (DIAP)**. The initiative concerns the simplification of administrative procedures related to the setting up, development, modification and termination of business activities. It makes the launch phase of business activities shorter through the principle of entrepreneurial responsibility; entrepreneurs are bound to take responsibility for their own statement that they meet the stipulated requirements and are in compliance with the legislation applicable to the business activity concerned. The DIAP thus facilitates immediate start up of new companies, an improvement offering entrepreneurs time savings of up to thirty days. A web platform for the use of DIAP has been developed; the incorporation of digital signatures is planned for the near future, a fact that will facilitate the use of the platform for online submission of start-up statements.

32	IT	**Government Agenda 2011-2015 for the simplification and modernisation of the Lombardy system - "Simplifying Lombardy: Minimising bureaucracy, improving institutions"**. The model approach targets 5 groups of stakeholders in administrative simplification actions, namely citizens, businesses, non profit organisations, intermediary business organisations and regional public administration. The agenda aims to redefine procedures and organisational models in order to reduce burdens for citizens and businesses, to achieve greater certainty, with respect to deadlines and outcomes, and administrative efficiency, with a view to recovering economic competitiveness. Its implementation has only recently started; so far two innovations have been introduced: the use of a checklist for each administrative procedure and the assessment of staff performance.
42	PT	**Electronic platform for public contracts**. The initiative concerns the development of a web platform facilitating public procurement. Specifically the platform simplifies procedures prior to contracting (notification, proposal sending and verification, etc.). The e-procedures promote transparency and offer improved services to all those involved (mainly to companies providing services and local public administration staff), including among other things, faster notification for tenders and contracts, faster verification of proposals, etc.
43	PT	**Use of the Regional Government Electronic Portal to submit online applications and requests for payment (with regard to community incentives)**. The initiative involves the provision to firms and consultants of online access to information on the various types of financial support programmes. It facilitates fast submission, validation and assessment of proposals for funding.
44	PT	**Funchal business procedures centre (one-stop shop)**. The aim of the centre is to facilitate the process of establishment, modification or closure of firms and related-acts. It implies the physical installation in one single unit of a delegation of the services of the public administration that are involved in these procedures. The concentration of the various services in one place promotes the creation of synergies, supports the tasks of firms and provides customers with all necessary information on various business-related matters.
45	PT	**Online services in the field of trade and industry**. Electronic project of the government of Madeira to facilitate online access to regional government services concerning trade and industry.

		The initiative offers online services for the trade and industry sectors, regarding registration, modification and closure of industrial, commercial or service units.
46	PT	**Payments management system**. An e-application of the regional government of Madeira facilitating payments of charges. The initiative simplifies procedures relevant with payments, thus reducing the time required for processing receipts and eventually for making payments.
51	PT	**The 'Counter' Lisbon Initiative**. It aims at providing a single point of contact between the City of Lisbon and entrepreneurs. It provides advice and specialist support, through a single front office (one-stop-shop) for the submission and processing of applications (e.g. Construction Licensing, advertising licensing, etc.). The internal procedures regarding license issuing were reviewed and a maximum processing duration was set (30 days). Moreover, a simplified form enabling the execution of various permit applications was introduced. The process now allows the investor to know, at any moment, the status of their case, from submission, up to final approval. The Lisbon Initiative is integrated into the Agency for Administrative Modernisation (AMA), locally providing entrepreneurs with central government services (through a dedicated desk office).
54	DE	**Simplification and streamlining of environmental requirements for companies**. The initiative is intended to provide assistance to applicants for environmental permits. It features the introduction of a project manager and a permit pilot in the permitting procedure (Projektlotse). It will improve communication between a project developer and the permitting authority before and during the permitting procedure in order to guarantee the applicant an easy, quick and comfortable licensing procedure and to avoid unnecessary administrative burdens and checking steps. Administrative measures to accelerate the procedure will also ensure that the procedure runs smoothly and that coordination between authorities is improved. The chemical industry of Northern Germany has positively referred to the initiative in a press conference.
55	DE	**Simplification of waste monitoring regulations**. This good practice case describes a reform of monitoring obligations, particularly achieving simplification through electronic reporting. The initiative aims at simplifying monitoring and reporting and makes use of IT tools. The project aims at modernising and simplifying waste monitoring regulations. In particular, the verifications required in waste legislation will be

		submitted electronically in the future. This will lead to a significant reduction of the administrative burden for companies but also for the enforcement authorities. The chemical industry of Northern Germany has positively referred to the initiative in a press conference.
56	DK	**Danish egovernment strategy 2007 – 2010 'Towards Better Digital Services, Efficiency and Stronger Collaboration**. Jointly adopted by the Danish Government, Local Government Denmark (LGDK) and the five Danish regions, the new e-Government strategy raises the level of ambition by establishing new standards for the development of citizen services and cohesion across the public sector, as well as principles for a more binding co-operation among all levels of Government. The new strategy attempts an improved and closer co-operation among all levels of Government. The strategy foresees that specific digitisation measures will continue to be implemented by the respective public authorities; however it requires that Public bodies develop cohesive digital solutions enabling the improvement of citizen-centred services through the transfer of resources from the administration. In this light, the strategy focuses on three inter-related, overarching priority areas: Better digital service; Digitisation to facilitate increased efficiency; and Stronger collaboration to create digital cohesion.
60	HU	**Application Service Provider (ASP) Centres**. The central government of Hungary has recently started implementing the development of local municipality e-administration through pilots. However, the scope of the pilots was limited to larger cities and smaller local municipalities were found to still lag behind in terms of both capacities and resources. As part of the e-public administration 2010 Strategy, is the creation of Application Service Provider (ASP) centres according to a defined framework setting standards, regulations and recommendations to achieve interoperability and integrated implementation. These centres are expected to provide an integrated solution and replace isolated developments for the provision by local authorities of eGovernment services, providing, in particular, 'transparent and client-friendly service based on modern information technology tools'.
61	IE	**Streamlining the Waste Permitting System**. The aim of this initiative is to reduce and simplify the number of permits required by commercial waste collectors for collecting and managing waste. Currently a separate licence is required to

		manage and collect commercial waste in each of the ten waste regions in Ireland, with each region having its own licence and fee. Waste management permits are issued for specified activities in each area e.g. composting; recovery; small waste disposal units. However, there is no consistency between activities or between areas concerning licence conditions, leading to large administrative costs and fees for waste management companies that operate nationally due to such overlapping. Consideration is being given to the introduction of a single licence and fee for collecting waste nationwide. It is also intended to standardise permits and conditions for each activity across regions.
64	PL	**Implementation of a new eCommunication system in the Silesia region**. The initiative concerns the establishment of a common platform for the provision of eGovernment services in the region of Silesia (Poland). This new eCommunication system, named 'SEKAP', was put in operation in April 2008 with a dual role: to facilitate internal communication among different regional administrative offices on the one hand and, on the other, to deliver improved eServices to citizens and businesses. The system's web-portal encompasses the eServices of all regional administrative offices and facilitates centralised processing of all relevant requests.
65	PT	**Online tax simulator (Simplex Autárquico Programme)**. The online tax simulator initiative is part of the 'Simplex Autárquico Programme', an administrative burden reduction programme running in parallel in all municipalities in Portugal. ELVAS Municipality has developed and tested an e-application (due to be put in full operation on May 2011) which allows citizens and businesses to simulate the calculation of municipal tax fees and rates of municipal services.
66	AT	**Consolidation of Permits**. This good practice case increases efficiency for public administration by allowing a consolidation of requirements under different permit regimes and has its focus on companies with an EMAS-certificate. Though the initiative has been developed by the Austrian Ministry of the Environment, it is directly linked with the regional level, through the provisions of the Environmental Management Law allowing companies to apply to the Regional Authority (which is responsible for planning permits) to start a consolidation procedure. Companies that have been in operation for many years and have implemented several adaptations or extensions to their facilities and plants, often have to comply with the

		requirements of a large number of different permits (resulting from federal laws about the protection of water, protection of workers, air quality norms, waste management, trade law, etc.) some of which may conflict with others or may be outdated. In order to facilitate compliance for the companies and also compliance monitoring for the authorities, this initiative has enabled companies in co-operation with the authorities to merge the existing permits into one, and to eliminate contradictions.
67	BE	**Ensemble Simplifions Plan**. 'Ensemble Simplifions' is a plan for the reduction of administrative burdens and eGovernment adopted jointly by the Wallonia Government and the French Community in February 2010 and covering the period 2010 - 2014. The plan foresees collaboration by the two administrations in terms of implementation, adoption of a common methodology, sharing of means, prioritisation of activities and regular monitoring of results; further it aims at reducing by 25% the administrative burden imposed on users on public officials. Both Wallonia and the French Community have developed their own list of 'projects' to achieve six common objectives through a range of tools, among which are, for example, the Kafka test and the Standard Cost Model. The six common objectives are: (i) simplification and improvement of regulation; (ii) simplification and harmonisation of procedures; (iii) automatisation of processes; (iv) electronic management of administrative papers; (v) simplification and automatisation of data collection and sharing; (vi) improvement of information and communication with end-users.
68	IE	**Framework for the Interface between Sub-national and national Levels of Government**. The Local Government Efficiency Review Group proposes a model framework of reforms including: joint administrative areas for selected sets of counties; review of staffing levels with fewer senior management positions; the use of shared services to be promoted, through, for example, joint inspectorates and regional design offices; and stronger monitoring mechanisms, including the use of service indicators, towards improving performance. It is foreseen that a small Local Government Efficiency Review Implementation Group be established, with the mandate to oversee implementation of relevant recommendations within the set timescales.
69	UK	**The 'Help us cut red tape' initiative**. The UK Department for Communities and Local Government sets policy supporting

		local government. One of the initiatives undertaken by the Department was a survey to collect 'ideas about which pieces of CLG statutory guidance, secondary legislation or regulation should be removed to help cut red tape and reduce burden' (where CLG stands for Communities and Local Government). The survey received 700 responses; 38% of the responses were taken forward for action, while 45% were considered within broader frameworks or under the competence of other departments. Among proposed and implemented changes are: (i) removal of the National Indicators set, replaced by a list of data requirements for local government; (ii) removal of Local Area Agreements, leaving the decision responsibility to the local level and thus deleting some 4,700 top-down targets; (iii) reforming quangos, i.e. organisations to which the government is devolving powers; (iv) reviewing building regulations; and (v) reviewing grant funding.
71	BE	**Simplification of permit schemes.** A Walloon region Decree was introduced in 1999 to simplify the granting of environmental permits. Among the key aspects of the new regional regulation were: the establishment of a single permit integrating all environmental issues (covering all media and activities), as well as urban planning permissions; the application of faster deadlines; the establishment of a single authority and the of an one-stop-shop for companies.
80	ES	**SIMAC (Integral and Multi-Channel Citizen Service System).** The initiative combines improved information on public services with faster administrative procedures. It introduces a unified service catalogue comprising information regarding services, electronic requests and institutional information. The e-application facilitates quick processing of citizens' requests, and provides 'self-service' options for citizens. All in all, it offers about 300 electronic services of which 150 use digital signature.