



EU-IXP

Interconnectivity and exchange platform for EU

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Rules of the meeting

- DIGIT will present the EU-IXP strategy (~40 min), no question raised in chat will be directly considered or replied, unless for specific technical reason.
- After the presentation given by DIGIT, market representatives will be allowed to virtually raise their hand to provide their feedback. This live feedback during the session is not mandatory (but appreciated). One speaker at the time. Other attendees are kindly requested to stay muted. Priority among speakers will be given based on Teams 'raise hand' button.
- During feedback, no direct specific questions on future procurement procedures will be considered or replied, may it cover explicit timing, content or volume. Eventual questions to clarify specific aspects of EU-IXP strategy may be replied, if possible.
- Note that written feedback remains possible after the session, through DIGIT's functional mailbox: DIGIT-CONTRACTS-INFO-CENTRE@ec.europa.eu
- No recording or transcript or meeting will be made, and no minutes will be distributed. Presentation will be published on DIGIT's webpage after the meeting.



EU-IXP

Presentation of the strategy

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- Why a new approach regarding trans-European network service offering ?
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What is the current situation ?

- Trans-European Services for Telematics between Administrations (TESTA)
- Introduced in 1997 to offer a private communication infrastructure, not connected to Internet, for data exchanges between Member States (MS) and European Union Institutions, Bodies and Agencies (EUIBAs)
- Since its creation, TESTA services are fully outsourced, based on a single framework contract
- TESTA services and security requirements, as well as related SLA, are drafted, awarded and monitored by DIGIT (and few other stakeholders for their respective networks) which remains accountable for them towards TESTA customers,
- However, the provisioning and delivery of the services themselves are 100% under the responsibility of a single external service provider, relying on multiple subcontractors.

Why a new approach ?

Based on the current limitations of TESTA, the evolution of the IT market and other changes, DIGIT concluded that:

- The current model of service, offered since 1997, is reaching its limit,
- It is based on an outdated approach compared to current market trends, and built on obsolete business requirements and technical standards,
- It lacks flexibility and possibility to adapt quickly, and at reduced costs, to new rapidly evolving business needs,
- It needs to be fully reshaped and built on future-proof standards coming from the enlarged and fast-developing IT market, while considering an adaptative posture towards fast-evolving security threats landscape.
- It needs to be better aligned with DIGIT's positioning regarding its IT service catalogue, its customers and the IT market, as well as with EC strategical goals.

What are DIGIT's objectives?

Based on those conclusions, DIGIT wants now to:

- Deploy as soon as possible new trans-European network services to replace the existing TESTA ones,
- Align services with the recommendation of recent EC white paper on the future of Europe's digital infrastructure¹,
- Bring diversity to the trans-European network service catalogue, and space for flexibility,
- Bring competition among contractors, while avoiding vendor lock-in,
- Align to future-proof market trends and standards, while keeping an evolving safe security posture,
- Sustain its strategical objective of supporting digital public administration within EU.

1. White Paper - "How to master Europe's digital infrastructure needs?"
<https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/white-paper-how-master-europes-digital-infrastructure-needs>

What is the strategy ?

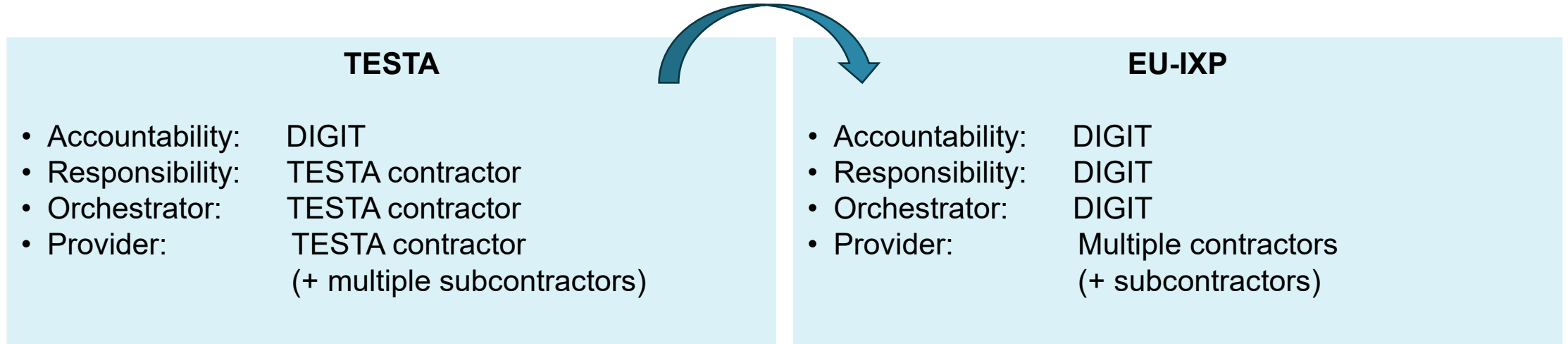
- An organisational change at DIGIT level has then been decided, with the transfer of the responsibility of trans-European network services to DIGIT.C (Digital Workplace & Infrastructure), unit C.4 (Networks & Telecommunications).
- Objective is to create synergies for the future trans-European network services with the already existing service catalogue provided in the field of network and telecommunications.
- Indeed, DIGIT.C.4 is today providing more than 20 IT services in the networks and telecommunications field, benefits from renown skills, knowledge and know-how, and has proven to deliver performant, reliable and state-of-the-art IT services to its multiple customers since decades.

What is the strategy ?

- DIGIT will start the design and development of a new trans-European network (**'interconnectivity and exchange platform for EU'**, a.k.a. **EU-IXP**) which will replace in a near future the current TESTA network.
- The objective of EU-IXP is to be a set of IT services that primarily aim to interconnect customers networks, while allowing them to implement secure, fast, flexible and reliable dedicated 'circuits' to cover their business needs.
- A 'circuit' is a dedicated virtual network (a logical subset implemented on top of the whole EU-IXP network), allowing only the designated customers' sites that are part of it to communicate among them.
- EU-IXP set of services will be owned, procured and delivered to its customers by DIGIT based on dedicated SLAs. DIGIT will coordinate, orchestrate and ensure seamless integration and operation of the multiple service elements and providers involved, in a similar way as it today delivers all internal network and telco services within European Commission.
- EU-IXP will then have to be considered as an 'internet exchange point dedicated to EU and related administrations', operated fully under the sole responsibility of DIGIT, on top of which multiple overlaying IT services may be deployed on demand, and operated independently.

What is the shift of paradigm ?

- From a service customer's point of view:



What is the (new) role of DIGIT ?

- DIGIT aims to become more than a contract provider, or a programme manager. It will be the unique responsible and the sole service provider of EU-IXP services towards its customers.
- DIGIT will have to manage multiple contractors and providers covering the different service elements included in the scope of EU-IXP and will play the role of integrator and orchestrator among them, exactly as it does today with the provision of internal network and telco services for the European Commission and a few other EUIBAs.
- DIGIT will then need to coordinate procurement procedures for the different service elements involved in the future EU-IXP, to ensure their delivery according to the expected requirements, orchestrate their integration and ensure their compliant operation.

What is the service strategy ?

- From a service catalogue's point of view, EU-IXP will be based on three different service layers:

UNDERLAY

- Field services (on-site interventions)
- Local connectivity (local loop)
- Regional connectivity (to EU-IXP points of presence)
- EU-IXP backbone

OVERLAY

- Virtual circuits (SDN network management)
- Network security services (segregation & access control)
- Encryption of data in transit
- 'Bring-Your-Own-Service' capabilities

CYBERSECURITY

- Security assurance, threat analysis and vulnerability management
- Cybersecurity monitoring, incident handling and response (SOC)

What are the use cases and customers ?

- Similar as for current TESTA services, main customers of EU-IXP will be EU Institutions, Bodies and Agencies, EU Member States and EU accessing countries administrations, EFTA Members administrations, and their 3rd parties (business service providers).
- Main places of delivery of the EU-IXP services will be, at least, the 27 EU Member States, the 4 EFTA Member States, the EU accessing countries, UK, as well as eventual third parties that would need to be interconnected with EU administrations.
- Main business use cases are interconnection of administrations networks to allow usage of large trans-European information systems, as well as deployment of IT services across and outside EU, in all offices and buildings where EU-IXP users will be present.

What is the timeframe related to implementation ?

2024

- Q1 to Q2 – Market consultation & discussion with TESTA stakeholders
- Q2 to Q4 – Design of EU-IXP, draft of service specs, procurement procedures for connectivity

DESIGN

2025

- Q1 to Q3 – POC and test around EU-IXP services
- Q1 to Q4 – Launch of procurement procedures (backbone and overlay services)

BUILD

2026

- Q1 to Q2 – EU-IXP backbone ready to be used
- Q1 to Q4 – Progressive deployment of EU-IXP services
- Q3 to Q4 – Progressive integration of customers sites

RUN

2027

- Q1 to Q4 – Progressive integration of customers sites

What is the procurement strategy ?

- From a procurement point of view, DIGIT will mainly use the following mechanisms to acquire the service elements that will enable the first iteration of EU-IXP, by order of priority:
 1. Existing and available framework contracts, in the limit of existing scopes and available ceilings,
 2. New competition launched in DPS (Dynamic Purchasing Systems),
- It is important to note that, in the future and following related contract's expiration and renewal needs, DIGIT intends to rely on 5 specific dynamic purchasing systems that are already -or will be- set in the coming months.

What is DIGIT strategy towards DPS ?

- As part of its procurement strategy, DIGIT has established several dynamic purchasing systems (DPS) ⁽¹⁾:

CLOUD (data at rest)	TELCO (data in transit)	HARDWARE (purchase or lease)	SOFTWARE (incl. SaaS)	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES
Current: CLOUD III DPS (until 2028)	Current: TELCO DPS (until 2027)	Current: DPS ITS (until 2027)	Current: SIDE III DPS (until 2027)	Current: CLOUD II DPS2 (until May 2024) Future: PROSERV DPS (Q2 2024 – until 2028)

- DIGIT intends to use those DPS to acquire, subscribe and/or implement many of the service elements and subsequent technologies that are needed to deploy and operate the future EU-IXP.

1. List of all Dynamic Purchasing Systems from DIGIT available through:
https://commission.europa.eu/funding-tenders/find-calls-tender/tender-opportunities-department/tender-opportunities-informatics_en#dynamic-purchasing-systems-dps

What is DIGIT expecting from the market ?

- In particular, TELCO DPS and the future PROSERV DPS will be largely targeted to launch procurement procedures aiming at acquiring specific elements of EU-IXP, such as –but not limited to-:
 - Local connectivity for customers sites,
 - Backbone connectivity towards point of presence of EU-IXP across Europe,
 - SDN management and operation services,
 - Field services on customers sites,
 - Integration services for ‘Bring-Your-Own-Service’ approach,
 - Managed services around integration/orchestration/evolution of IT services
 - etc.
- The exact timing and scope of those specific procurement procedures will be announced through the related DPS channels. However, keep in mind that, even if public information may be released on the platform supporting the DPS, **ONLY** registered companies to those DPS will receive the formal competition notice and will have the right to bid for those specific procurement procedures.

What is the procurement strategy ? (1/3)

- From a procurement's point of view, DIGIT intends to use the following mechanisms:

UNDERLAY

- Field services (on-site interventions)
- Local connectivity (local loop)
- Regional connectivity (to EU-IXP points of presence)
- EU-IXP backbone

Competition to be launched through future PROSERV DPS. Expected publication in 2025.

EXICON II - Competition n°04 to be launched through TELCO DPS. Expected publication by end of May 2024.

Competition to be launched through TELCO DPS. Expected publication by end of 2024.

What is the procurement strategy ? (2/3)

- From a procurement's point of view, DIGIT intends to use the following mechanisms:

Competition to be launched through future PROSERV DPS. Expected publication in Q2 2025. Software solution may be acquired through SIDE III DPS.

Competition to be launched through future PROSERV DPS. Expected publication in Q2 2025. Software solution may be acquired through SIDE III DPS, hardware solution through NATACHA IV.

OVERLAY

Virtual circuits (SDN network management)

- Network security services (segregation & access control)

Encryption of data in transit

- 'Bring-Your-Own-Service' capabilities

Competition to be launched through future PROSERV DPS. Expected publication in Q4 2025. Software solution may be acquired through SIDE III DPS. Hardware solution through NATACHA IV.

What is the procurement strategy ? (3/3)

- From a procurement's point of view, DIGIT intends to use the following mechanisms:

Competitions to be launched through CLOUD II DPS 2. Expected publication in coming months. The contracts will cover not only future EU-IXP cybersecurity services, but all cybersecurity services of DIGIT (i.e. DIGIT.S portfolio). Announcement and market consultation were launched in February 2024.⁽¹⁾

Additional competitions for complementary services may be launched afterwards through the future PROSERV DPS.

CYBERSECURITY

- Security assurance, threat analysis and vulnerability management
- Cybersecurity monitoring, incident handling and response (SOC)

1. [The European Commission is setting up a procurement competition on Cybersecurity Professional Services - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/digital-affairs/en/news/procurement-competition-cybersecurity-professional-services)

What to pay attention to, while registering to a DPS?

- The two main reasons of rejection of a registration file to a DPS are:
 - Absence or insufficiency of proofs regarding exclusion criteria
 - Absence of Q-SIGN, qualified electronic signature → guidance available at [DocsRoom - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](https://docsroom.ec.europa.eu/)
- However, remind that, even if the registration file is rejected, you may at any moment correct it, amend it and re-submit it again, any number of time until it will be finally accepted.
- If you are not 100% sure of which document or administrative proof you may provide, you can at any time address to DIGIT-CONTRACTS-INFO-CENTRE@ec.europa.eu, or to the respective DPS functional mailbox.

What will be the follow-up provided by DIGIT ?

- Further information on EU-IXP related procurement opportunities will be published on the regular channels: the Funding & Tender's portal ([EU Funding & Tenders Portal \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eu-funding-tenders-portal/)) and the respective DPS supporting tools in which competitions may be organized.
- Eventual update on development and evolution of EU-IXP may also be published, to inform IT market actors of its evolution and expected/adapted timeframe for deployment and transition.
- In any case, feedback on the new strategy can be addressed to DIGIT functional mailbox: DIGIT-CONTRACTS-INFO-CENTRE@ec.europa.eu. DIGIT plans to collect and analyse the received feedback from this preliminary market consultation, but does not intend to respond to the individual submissions of the economic operators. DIGIT, however, reserves the right to follow-up for potential clarifications of the received feedback
- Specific question regarding the registration to an existing Dynamic Purchasing System can be addressed in the Q&A section of the respective procedure.



... Thank you for your interest.

Stay tuned for further information.



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Feedback from market representatives