

ReSPA instrument of support: e-Government pilot

- Methodology -

This Methodology provides key elements of the eGovernment (**e-GOV**) *pilot instrument of support* as follows:

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General

1. The purpose

The purpose of the e-GOV pilot instrument of support is to provide support to public administrations to improve the practices related to digitizing of public services through targeted technical support for piloting the specific service or/and its delivery. **Pilots will be used for phased introduction or upgrade of government/institutional services or/and their delivery allowing them to be tested, evaluated, and adjusted where necessary before being rolled out.**

Upon the completion of the e-GOV pilots, the experiences and lessons learned related to the design of the new/upgrade service will be documented and evaluated by the applicant and summarised. This will inform the development of a standardized model which will be offered to public administrations as **Guidelines for design principles**, the optional tool for *improving the design and delivery of digitized public services* (e.g. principles for designing digitized public services¹).

¹ <https://www.oecd.org/publications/oecd-good-practice-principles-for-public-service-design-and-delivery-in-the-digital-age-2ade500b-en.htm>

2. Objectives

The objective of providing support through **E GOV pilots** is to enhance the quality of digitized public services by prioritizing the digital quality and embedding it earlier into the development of the service. The quality will be assured by functional testing of applied human centred approach, envisaged seamless delivery, usability, and accessibility of new or upgraded digitized service.

3. Expected results

Expected results By utilising **E Gov pilots** public administrations in ReSPA members will improve their policies and practices in developing the digitised services by taking a user-centric approach in design and delivery for ensuring to create accessible, ethical and fair digitised public services for the benefits of users.

It is also expected that public administrations will increase their capacities in terms of design thinking, digital skills, digital communication, networking and partnering.

Application procedure

4. Which services – categories and examples

E GOV pilots can be used for the development of **new digitised services** or for revision/**upgrade of existing services** where there is a recognised need for improvement based on evidence of low level of usage.

E-GOV pilots can relate to **specific public services deriving from the mandate of public administration institutions** for categories of **G2C, G2B, G2G** services.

E Gov pilots can be used for services that are **legally defined or defined as the services to be produced based on the strategy/programme adopted by the government.**

(Examples include: Developing new digitised service using e identification, upgrading existing electronic service for any life situation, designing e-application service, designing of chat-bot, using AI for whole or component of the service, revision of technical features of the open data portal, revision of delivery model, etc).

5. Ensuring Human centric approach

In order to ensure **human centric approach** the recommended approach will include the application of Design Thinking Methodology. The technical assistance of ReSPA can include a one-day Design Thinking Methodology training for the applicant at the inception stage of the project.

6. Piloting approach

- **Phased introduction**

The development of the service will go through the phased introduction that will ensure functional testing after each stage and adjustment where necessary before rolling out. Phased introduction will consist of minimum three stages: 1) Define and Ideate, 2) Prototype and 3) Test. For testing ReSPA has developed the *Framework for testing* which will be shared with the applicant.

- **Duration of piloting**

Pilots will last up to six months from inception to launching, with additional time for evaluation and summarising of the lessons learned, preferably up to six months after the launch. The needed period for evaluation can vary for each application.

- **Developing design principles**

Beneficiaries will be advised to utilize design principles² or digital service standards³ elsewhere developed during the development of the service. The individual experiences in designing the service will be documented and provided at the end of the project. They will be gathered and systematized by ReSPA into the *Guidelines for design principles* with the aim to be used as a guidance tool for designing the digitized services throughout the region.

7. Eligibility criteria and evaluation of the Application

E GOV pilots will use the eligibility criteria as here defined and presented in the Application.

The Applicant can be a public administration institution that is the budget user at national level belonging to public administration of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia i.e. ministries, subordinated organisations, executive organisations and independent institutions⁴ in these countries irrespective of sectors.

The Applicants will need to have the following:

² <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/government-design-principles#history>

³ The Digital Service Standard is a set of best-practice principles for designing and delivering government services. It helps digital teams to build services that are simple, clear, and fast. See at <https://www.dta.gov.au/help-and-advice/about-digital-service-standard>

⁴ Institutions within the public administrations which are budget users, established by special laws, such as Agencies, Commissions etc.

- ✓ Institutional managerial consent and sustained support to engage from the inception phase until the service is fully developed and evaluated
- ✓ Maturity level to host piloting project refers to the available digital infrastructure and baseline data as well as link to adopted strategic document or study where the services were recommended or planned,
- ✓ Confirmation of availability of a multidisciplinary and multifunctional team (IT, policy maker, other supporting staff) and stated commitment to ensure conditions in terms of staff and their time, appointed leader and staff in the pilot project with roles and responsibilities and decision-making structure,
- ✓ Determined lines of communication internally and with key stakeholder(s) if needed externally,
- ✓ In case of more institutions are involved in the development of the service the Applicant needs to confirm that the coordination is assured.
- ✓ Readiness to ensure the documentation of the data from the pilot including steps undertaken in developing the design of the project that will be used for *Guidelines for design principle*

Each application (including documentation submitted in support thereof) will be reviewed and assessed by ReSPA team with the possibility to add an external Assessor within one month from the date of the application submission.

8. ReSPA support

Each ReSPA Member has an opportunity to swiftly address a specific need and make a direct impact by requesting a provision of expertise for a specific digital service.

ReSPA will, based on the applicant proposal, provide to the Applicant technical assistance comprising of:

- Up to two experts per pilot project, out of which one will provide **IT technical assistance** and **other, if requested**, assistance related to legal/normative, communication and promotion or economic aspects.
- Training at the inception stage, if requested - one day training, on HCD-Design Thinking Methodology or Agile project management.

ReSPA support may additionally include remote presentations at national or regional events at the end of the project, if requested.

Experts: As a minimum IT expert (s) shall have an IT profile, hold as a minimum a Bachelor Degree in information technology, digitalization, or similar. The expert(s) can be from an EU member state or regional expert with excellent knowledge of English. Knowledge of the language of the country where the pilot project will be implemented, shall be considered an important asset.

The duration of the IT expert (s) engagement is advised at the level of 20 working days, which can be increased to up to 30 days if the other expert is not needed.

Other expert (legal, economic, communication etc.) can be engaged for up to 10 working days per project.

Total number of days of technical expertise cannot exceed 30 working days.

Few general parameters:

- The E Gov Pilot support mechanism is financed by the EC Grant; therefore, all the activities should be implemented and completed within the EC Grant implementation period and related cost eligibility criteria (December 2025).
- The identified needs have to fall within the domains of the ReSPA Programme of Work uploaded on the ReSPA website.
- The financial resources - per each ReSPA Member – (that can be allocated annually) are available for around 30 expert days per one E GOV pilot (indicative) per ReSPA Member. ReSPA will monitor the usage of the available allocated days per ReSPA Member and at the end of each year, ReSPA Secretariat will review the remaining unused days and relocate them for the next year.
- Applications with more than 30 expert days shall not be accepted without proper justification.
- The instrument is open throughout the year for receiving applications.

9. Mitigation of risks

The Applicant needs to explain in the application how the possible risks will be mitigated.

The Applicant needs to explain in the Application how it will control the factors outside of the project that may hamper the project completion.