

## **Conference "From ISA to ISA<sup>2</sup>"**

**Welcome by Ms. Gertrud Ingestad**

**- check against delivery -**

Dear Vice President Ansip, honourable members of the European Parliament, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, it is with great pleasure that I welcome you here today to the "ISA to ISA<sup>2</sup>" conference.

We are pleased to see that the need for interoperability and public sector modernisation is bringing such a variety of stakeholders to the table.

This conference inaugurates officially the new Union Programme on interoperability solutions and common frameworks for European public administrations businesses and citizens as the means for modernising the public sector, ISA<sup>2</sup>. The new Programme, a Decision of the European Parliament and the Council of December 2015, was put into force on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2016.

ISA<sup>2</sup> succeeds the ISA programme, and builds strongly on its achievements and tangible outputs. It is the success of ISA that inspired the co-legislators to raise the level of expectations even higher.

The scope has been extended to include the missing link to businesses and citizens, and reach the local and regional administrations. Its updated objectives calling for a holistic approach towards interoperability in the Union arise naturally from the new and emerging challenges facing Europe.

Through ISA<sup>2</sup> we address a true European need that is necessary for the successful implementation of Union policies and maximize their impact. More particularly, interoperability is now recognised as a condition for the modernisation of public administrations and receives an unprecedented political support as demonstrated by a dedicated chapter in the Digital Single Market strategy.

This conference is not only a chance to celebrate the beginning of the new programme. It is the best occasion to show to a larger audience the achievements of the predecessor programme, ISA, and also to demonstrate the numerous interoperability solutions that have been implemented and are now operational in many Member States. This is a strong ground where we will build our endeavours for ISA<sup>2</sup>.

During the day you will hear about the political importance of interoperability and of the new programme by Members of the EP. You will see the Commission leaders explaining the links that the programme has with several EU policies, how it will contribute to their objectives and how important it is for boosting growth and competitiveness in the Union.

You will also get familiar with national and European cases on successful implementation of interoperable digital public services.

A high level panel will answer questions on concrete challenges faced by the ISA<sup>2</sup> programme: how to engage citizens and businesses, the role of local and regional administrations, the role of the EU institutions, etc.

Later in the day you will get insights on how businesses and citizens are affected by interoperability as users but also as engaged stakeholders in the design of digital public services.

In addition to this, you will get in touch with a fundamental element of interoperability in Europe, the base registers, as well as with major supporting tools to implement interoperability, the European Interoperability Framework and reference architectures.

At this point I would like to explain a few things on the structure and the programme of the conference.

- First point, as you will notice, is a change in the afternoon programme. We moved the high level panel earlier in the programme since we needed to accommodate some of the panellists travel arrangements. This change is already distributed to you in your conference material;
- Second point is about the structure of the conference. There are several speakers that will present during the day and the idea is to have short presentations of 10' each, focused on the key points of each presentation. In this way, we can provide for more interoperability cases and you can seek for additional information using the references indicated in each presentation. Questions and answers periods will also allow for further clarifications;
- The final point I want to raise is that the conference will be web-streamed and we appreciate in advance your consensus on this.

I would like to welcome all those that follow us by web streaming today.

Throughout the day the conference will be moderated by Mr. Paul Hofheinz, the founder and president of Lisbon Council think tank. Mr. Hofheinz has a long and distinguished career as journalist and researcher in fields ranging from innovation and knowledge economy to economic development and European policies.

It is with great pleasure that I now introduce you Mr Carlos Zorrinho, Member of the European Parliament and rapporteur of the ISA<sup>2</sup> legislative act. Mr. Zorrinho was the national coordinator of the Lisbon Strategy and Technological Plan in Portugal. He developed the Portuguese Digital Agenda which improved the country's competitiveness through technology, innovation and knowledge. So, without any further delay, I invite him to the floor to open the conference.