

Minutes

Second Meeting of the Interoperable Europe Board

20 May 2025 (9h00-15h30), Warsaw

1. Welcome and introduction

Mr. Dariusz Standerski, Polish Secretary of State at the Ministry of Digital Affairs, inaugurated the Second Meeting of the Interoperable Europe Board, under the Polish presidency of the EU Council. Mr. Standerski highlighted the Board's crucial role in managing interoperability across the EU, praising its potential to reduce redundancy for Member States in the digital sphere. By following EU standards and specifications, Member States can avoid developing separate local solutions, leading to streamlined digital integration. Mr. Standerski reiterated Poland's focus on cybersecurity, increased AI adoption in the public sector, and consistent digital regulation implementation. He emphasised that these goals are achievable only through strategic cross-border interoperability, especially important in the current geopolitical context. Following the opening speech, the Chair of the Board, Ms. Veronica Gaffey, Director-General of Digital Services from the European Commission, welcomed the high-level representatives of the Interoperable Europe Board for its Second Meeting in Warsaw and introduced the setup of the meeting.

The meeting agenda was approved. The Greek delegation asked for the floor under any other business (AoB).

2. Interoperable Europe Agenda development and Interoperable Europe solutions

The Chair introduced the work carried out by the Permanent Working Group to advance on preparing the Interoperable Europe Agenda consultation and establishing the set of criteria for labelling Interoperable Europe Solutions. During the discussion, the following key points were raised:

- Clarification regarding the target audience of the Agenda consultation and how to engage stakeholders effectively.
- The need to avoid an overly extensive list of labelled solutions was identified as a priority, cautioning against hosting thousands of solutions without focus.
- Concerns over the high granularity of the criteria, particularly their fitness to measure synergies with the Single Digital Gateway (SDG) and the EU Digital Identity Wallet.
- Suggestions to embed mobile-first and security concepts within the “*Needs and User Centricity*” criterion and its alignment with the AI Act; as well as to include a cost-benefit criterion to prioritise solutions contributing to cost efficiency. Additionally, this criterion should also consider solutions that, indirectly, enable the creation of new services through the interoperability of databases from different entities.
- Preference for a broad interpretation of “*Openness*” criterion going beyond just "open source," advocating for non-proprietary solutions.
- Importance of effective dissemination and communication via the Portal to ensure labelled solutions are findable, accessible and user-friendly.
- Concerns about fragmentation in catalogues like EIRA and the new Open Source Software Catalogue were discussed, prompting a call for strategic alignment. An action point was set to address this at the next Board meeting.

The orientation paper and questionnaire for the Agenda consultation and the draft statement on criteria for Interoperable Europe solutions were approved by the Board.

3. Interoperable Europe: Actions towards a GovTech Single Market

The German delegation took the floor to deliver a presentation and facilitate a discussion on the topic *'Interoperable Europe: Actions towards a GovTech Single Market'*. The following key points were raised by members during the discussions:

- Establishing a European GovTech Single Market is crucial for innovation, public services, and digital governance in the EU, building on initiatives like the GovTech Incubator and Innovation Procurement programme.
- The Interoperable Europe Act provides a framework for scaling GovTech across Member States, with a need to improve procurement processes and shift to reusable solutions.
- Concerns over retaining start-ups in Europe and preventing acquisitions by non-European entities were highlighted.
- Suggestions included organising challenges and hackathons for local governments to cultivate innovation.
- Numerous existing initiatives, such as Public Sector Tech Watch and GovTech Connect, offer a strong knowledge base, calling for joint and agile procurement to further these aims.

Next Steps:

- Call for members to join the Second and Third Specific Grant Agreements (SGAs) under the GovTech4all Incubator¹. The Second SGA will fund EUR 4 million for 8 pilots using emerging technologies (29 partners from 20 countries already joined).
- Action point for the Steering Board and the Permanent Working Group to draw up a roadmap and action plan based on the orientations given in the meeting.

4. Interoperability regulatory sandboxes: The Board's role and priorities

The following points were addressed:

- Recommendations to explore use cases related to the cross-border services identified by the Single Digital Gateway Regulation.
- The following use cases were highlighted: electronic signature, taxation, social security, academic qualifications, exchange of health data in the context of the European Health Data Space
- Regarding the operational aspects, it was agreed that the related tasks should be delegated to the Permanent Working Group keeping the Board regularly updated on progress. The reports should present aggregated information on the interoperability regulatory sandboxes and approval of reports should be carried out via written procedure.

The Commission, in its response, emphasised that:

- There is no dedicated funding for regulatory sandboxes under the current MFF. The INVEST CSA project is currently exploring the opportunity to establish an interoperability regulatory sandbox.
- The Digital Europe Work Programme provides an envelope for the establishment of a multi country project dedicated to public administrations; this initiative could potentially finance interoperability regulatory sandboxes if there is a clear demand.

Next Steps:

- The Commission will follow up with the Permanent Working Group to define the processes and reporting templates for interoperability regulatory sandboxes.

¹ <https://interoperable-europe.ec.europa.eu/collection/govtechconnect/govtech4all>

- The implementing act for interoperability regulatory sandboxes is currently being translated and prepared for its official adoption.

5. Information points:

- **Annual report on Interoperability in the Union:** The data collection of the new monitoring mechanism took place from January to May 2025. Due to limited data availability, for its first year, the report would focus more on good practices and stories from early adopters. In June, the Permanent Working Group will be consulted to provide feedback on the interim report. The Board will analyse the results of the report at the third meeting in December 2025.
- **Informal expert group on the next generation EIF:** Experts have been selected and are set to work on key activities: create a methodology for developing the next generation EIF, draft a blueprint to address challenges related to interoperability in digital public services, and prepare a report to map synergies with relevant Union and national programmes, including identifying financial opportunities. The expert group's first meeting took place on 12 May in Brussels. The next meeting is scheduled for June.
- **Interoperability assessment template:** As of January 2025, a space dedicated interoperability assessments was created on the Interoperable Europe Portal and includes: the guidelines adopted in December (available in 24 languages), a forum for Member States and union entities to share updates, an online form for reporting interoperability assessments, and a repository of assessment reports. The Commission developed a draft data model for interoperability assessments and held a first workshop with interested stakeholders. On this basis, an API will be implemented.

6. The Board's Work Programme 2025-2026

The Chair gave the floor to Mr. Jarkko Levasma, Government CIO, Director-General, Ministry of Finance of Finland. The following were discussed among the members:

- A collective strategic vision is needed to achieve cross-border interoperability by defining the EU-level information architecture of IT services. Multi-country projects are crucial in shaping this strategic vision and contributing secure cross border data exchange.
- Participants suggested expanding France's use of open-source solutions for message exchange to a secure EU-wide communication system.
- Future Board discussions should focus on digital sovereignty, AI applications in the public sector, large language models, innovative procurement, common catalogues, processes, and organisational interoperability for digital services.

The Commission, in its response, emphasised that:

- The Interoperable Europe Agenda should reflect these strategic topics.

7. AOB

The Greek delegation provided an update on the activities and deliverables from the Coordination and Support Action (CSA) INVEST.

8. Conclusions and next meetings

- Members were invited to send their inputs and comments in writing to EC-INTEROPERABLE-EUROPE-BOARD@ec.europa.eu.
- The Interoperable Europe Agenda consultation will be launched in June 2025 and the Agenda will be drafted in autumn 2025.
- The 2nd Permanent Working Group meeting will take place online on 27 June; the 3rd Permanent Working Group meeting will be held in October.
- The 2nd Steering Board meeting will take place on 3 October.

- The 3rd Interoperable Europe Board meeting will take place on 4 December in Brussels.

9. List of participants

Members	Organisation
<i>Austria</i>	Federal Chancellery
<i>Belgium</i>	Ministry of Policy and Support
<i>Bulgaria</i>	Ministry of Electronic Governance
<i>Croatia</i>	Ministry of Justice, Administration and Digital Transformation
<i>Cyprus</i>	Deputy Ministry of Research, Innovation and Digital Policy
<i>Czechia</i>	Digital and Information Agency
<i>Denmark</i>	Agency for Digital Government
<i>Estonia</i>	Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications
<i>Finland</i>	Ministry of Finance
<i>France</i>	Direction interministérielle du numérique
<i>Germany</i>	Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community
<i>Greece</i>	Greek Ministry of Digital Governance
<i>Hungary</i>	Digital Hungary Agency
<i>Italy</i>	Department of Digital Transformation – Presidency of Council of Ministers
<i>Latvia</i>	Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development
<i>Lithuania</i>	Ministry of the Economy and Innovation
<i>Luxembourg</i>	Ministry for Digitalisation
<i>Malta</i>	Malta Information Technology Agency
<i>Netherlands</i>	Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations
<i>Poland</i>	Ministry of Digital Affairs
<i>Portugal</i>	Administrative Modernization Agency
<i>Romania</i>	Authority for the Digitalization of Romania
<i>Slovakia</i>	Ministry of Investments, Regional Development and Informatisation
<i>Slovenia</i>	Ministry of Digital Transformation
<i>Spain</i>	Ministry for Digital Transformation and Public Function

<i>Sweden</i>	Agency for Digital Government
Observers	Excused