

# ***MITA's approach to Open Standards***

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# MITA

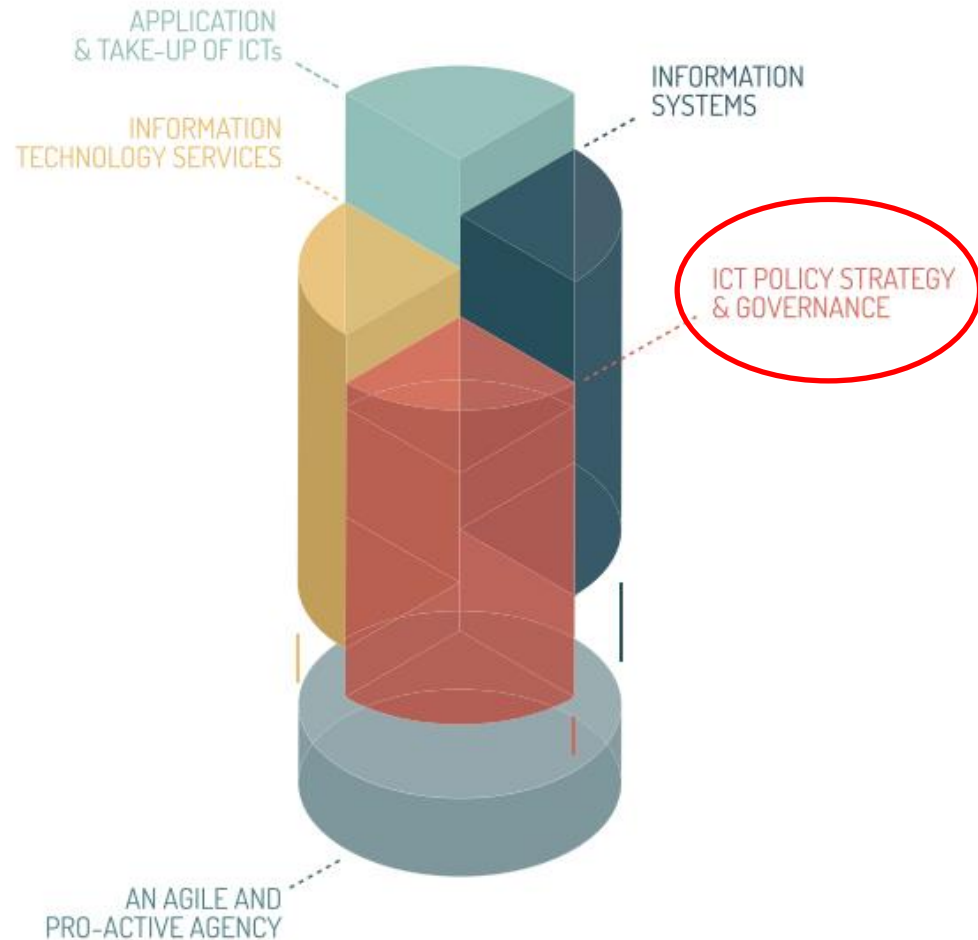
- Malta's population over **400K** inhabitants occupying an area of **316 km<sup>2</sup>**
- Malta Information Technology Agency (<http://mita.gov.mt>)
  - **central driver** of Government's ICT policy, programmes and initiatives in Malta
  - Deliver and implement **Digital Malta** National ICT Strategy 2014 – 2020 (<http://www.digitalmalta.gov.mt/>)

# ***My background***

- National expert on Interoperability and Open Standards, authored
  - Malta NIF
  - Open Standards policies and procedures
- Enterprise architect for the Education sector
  - One Tablet per Child initiative
  - Wireless technologies across state schools
  - Identity federation across educational services and solutions

# *Standards setting in Malta*

- Public sector
  - MITA, GMICT Policy
- National
  - Standards and Metrology Institute, Malta Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority



# ***Definition of Open Standards***

- Adopted stance taken by the **European Interoperability Framework**
- Open specifications
  - informally referred to as Open Standards
  - **formal specifications** with terms of use, accessibility and decision-making features that enable the implementation of **flexible**, **re-usable** and **interoperable** ICT resources for public services

# Strategic foundation

DIGITAL MALTA  
National Digital Strategy 2014 – 2020

## Digital Government

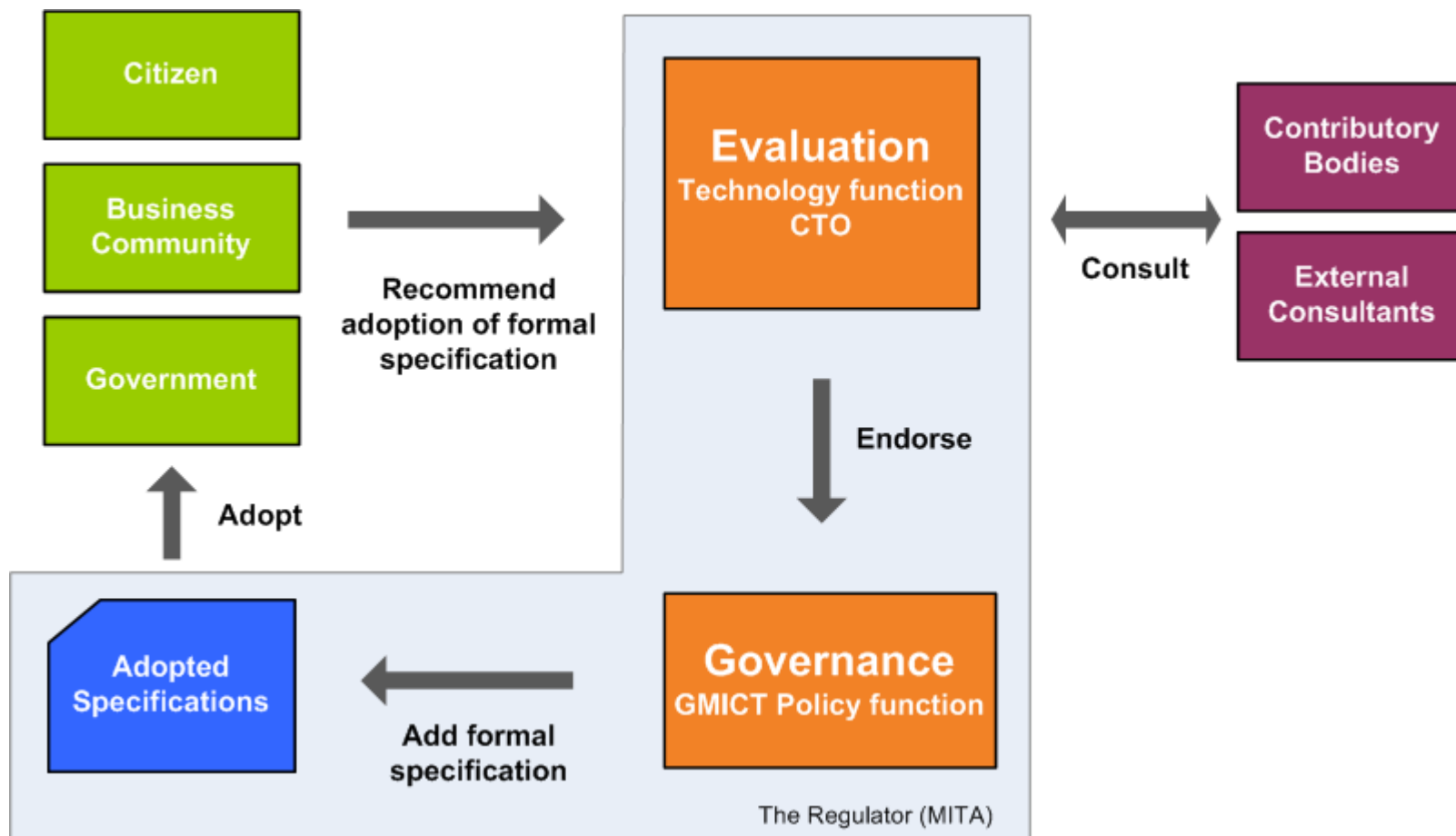
“Government will **adopt open standards**, encouraging the exchange of information and innovation, while seeking healthy competition and lower costs. Equal consideration will be given to open source and closed source software.”

## Infrastructure

“The design and implementation of government network infrastructure and applications will to be **based on open standards** to ensure interoperability and collaboration at national and international level.”

# *How are Open Standards adopted within MITA?*

Setup a process to **govern** open standards



# Set Policy direction

“When establishing Public services, the Public Sector shall **prefer open specifications**, taking due account of the coverage of functional needs, maturity and market support.”

Interoperability and Open Specifications  
Policy Version 1.0



Government of Malta

Reference: GMICT P 0115:2012

Version: 1.0

Effective: 9 October 2012



## Interoperability and Open Specifications Policy

This document is part of the GMICT Policy Framework

<http://ictpolicies.gov.mt>

Underlined terms are defined in the Vocabulary

### Purpose

Within the spirit of Public services delivery, it is Government's intention to ensure that maximum benefit is derived from all technology investments, by introducing ICT resources that are flexible, reusable and interoperable.

Thus, this Policy aims to reach the objectives that:

1. Shared and reusable ICT assets owned by the Public Sector are discoverable and can be used by Public services with minimal effort;
2. Public services are deployed on a flexible architecture centred on business needs and provided through standardised approaches and capabilities so as to reduce dependencies on specific vendors, technologies and practices. In turn this is seen to promote:
  - a. a level playing field so that multiple vendors can fairly compete on the feature set and performance levels of their products;
  - b. a wider selection during the acquisition process which may allow for improved business continuity and exit strategy scenarios whilst keeping in view the required performance levels and functional capabilities;
  - c. the ability to take advantage of pre-established international best practices that have already been applied by other EU Member States;
3. Public services mediate administrative business processes by offering user-centric and one-stop shop services;
4. Inter-connectivity and information sharing between solution constituents, Public services and EU-wide implementations is transparent, secure and trustworthy;
5. Citizens can request and make use of public domain data, their own personal data (subject to appropriate identity verification) and any other information as regulated by specific legislation.

### Scope and Applicability

This Policy covers ICT Assets that enable the delivery of Public services. It is applicable to citizen facing and back office ICT services originating from the Public Sector.

Unclassified

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# Adopted specifications can be directly used when **designing** and **procuring** ICT solutions

GMICT X 0071:2015

Adopted Specifications  
version 9.0



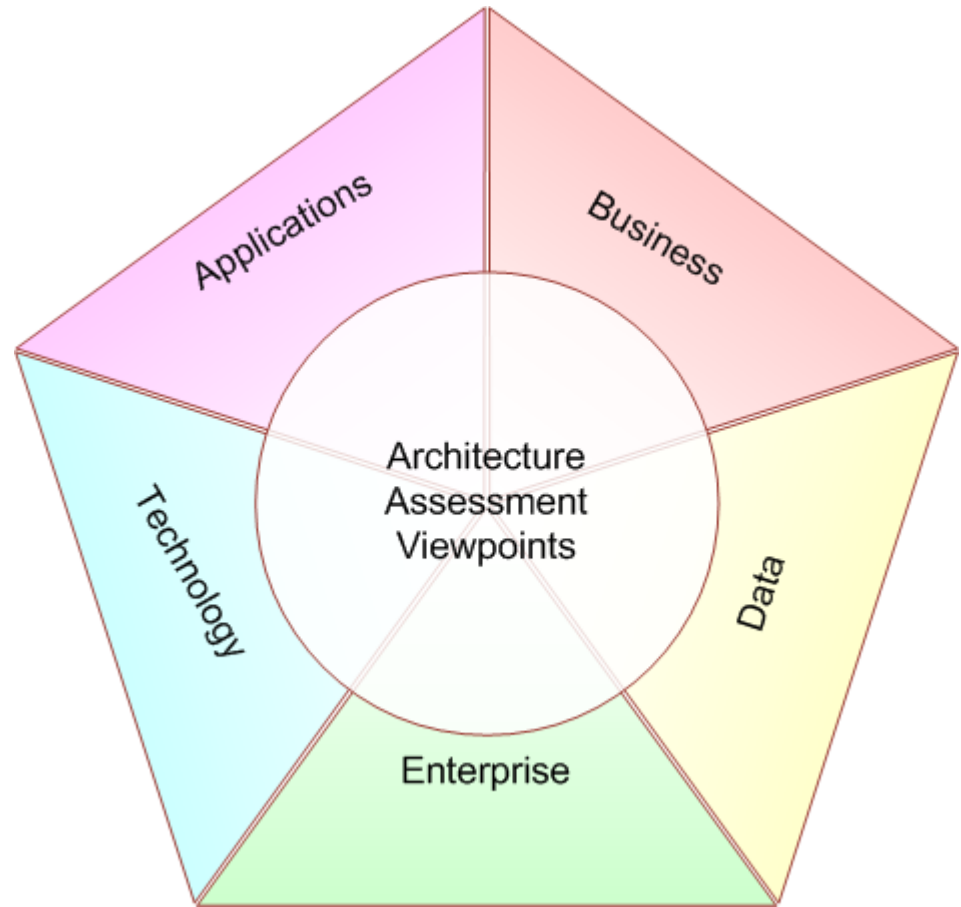
Function	Description	Specification Name and Version	Scope and Applicability <sup>1</sup>	Standards Body / Reference
	Security mark-up	SAML v2.0 (Security Assertion Markup Language)		OASIS
	Signature	XMLDSIG		W3C <a href="http://www.w3.org/standards/techs/xmlsig#w3c_all">http://www.w3.org/standards/techs/xmlsig#w3c_all</a>
	Minimum interoperable character set	Transformation Format - 8 bit UTF-8 (RFC3629), individual items in the XML schema may be further restricted in character set on a case by case basis.		IETF
	Model exchange	XMI (XML Metadata Interchange) version 2.1		OMG
Internet Calendar	Internet Calendar	iCalendar Transport – Independent Interoperability Protocol iRFC 5546	Website Content and Presentation Standard (GMICT S 0051-1)	IETF <a href="http://www.ietf.org/rfc/rfc5546.txt">http://www.ietf.org/rfc/rfc5546.txt</a>
Sitemap		Sitemap Protocol	Website Content and Presentation Standard (GMICT S 0051-1)	<a href="http://www.sitemaps.org/protocol.php">http://www.sitemaps.org/protocol.php</a>
Public-Key Cryptography	Cryptographic Token Interface	PKCS#11		RSA
	Cryptographic Token Information Format	PKCS#15		RSA

# ***Assist requesters in making recommendations***

- A resource pack is available on the GMICT Policy web page <http://mita.gov.mt>
  - adoption procedure
  - adoption guidelines
  - request form template
- Low use possibly due to lack of marketing and perceived value!

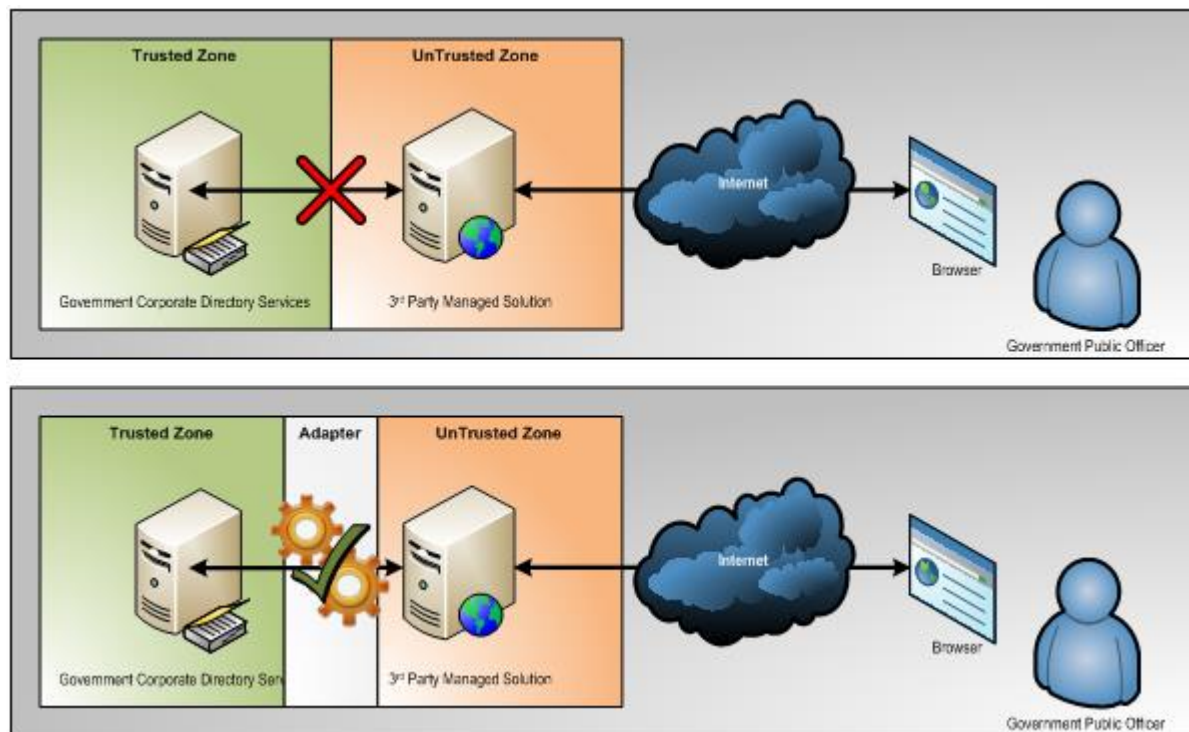
# *Promote standards on the ground*

- Assist in building  
**Roadmaps**
- Perform  
**architecture assessments** at
  - Project initiation
  - Design
  - Implementation



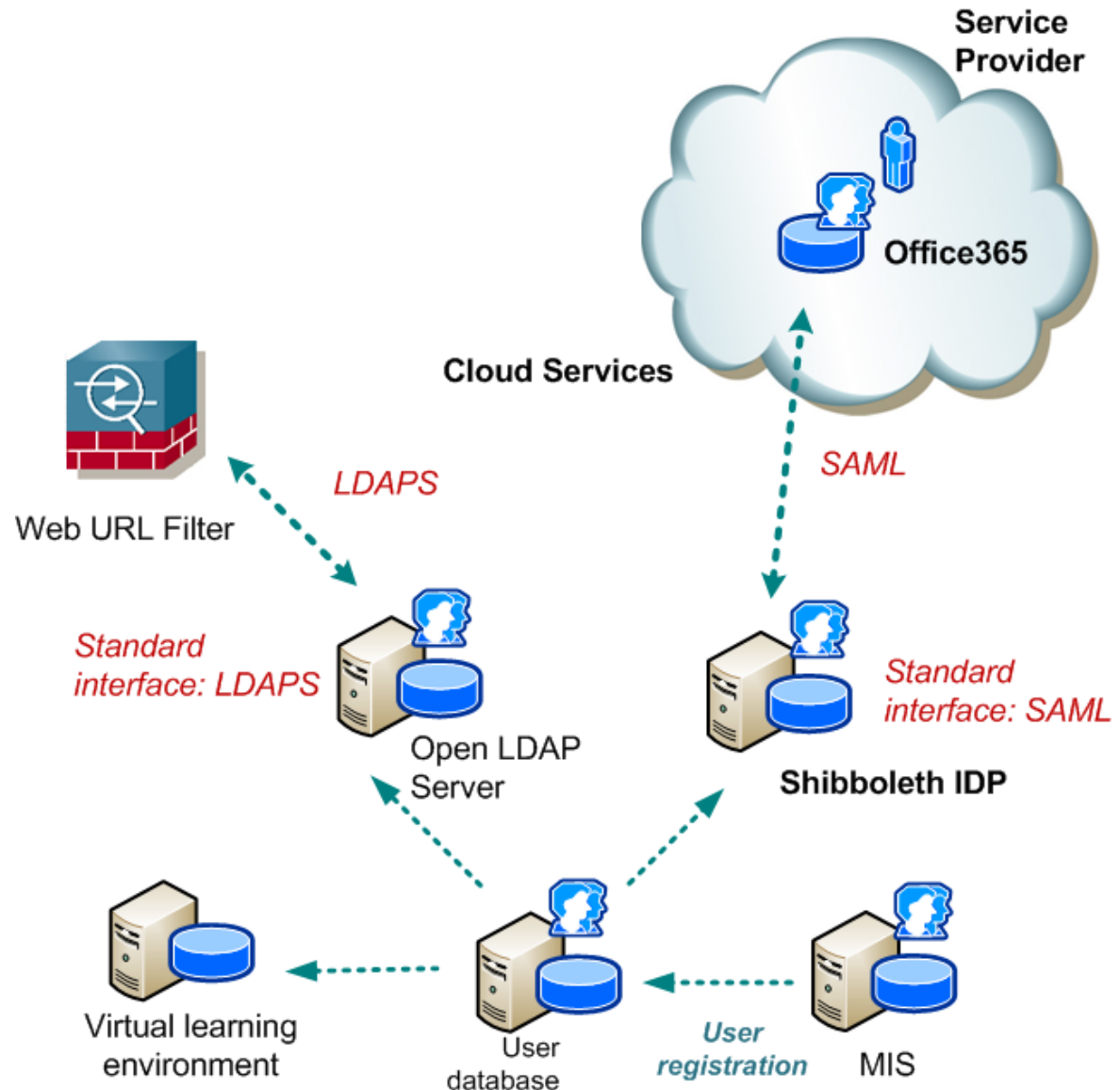
# Success stories using standards

- Extended Government Directory service using SAML and WS-Federation to facilitate authentication and attribute provisioning



# Standards based Identity federation in State schools

- 35,000 students and 7,000 teaching grades
- Procurement required use of standards
- Increased usefulness of iLearn account



# ***Lessons learnt***

- Place adoption of open standards as high as you can, give room for implementation flexibility
- Raise awareness for early adoption of standards in procurement and architectural design
- Cloud services require re-assessment of where to apply standardisation
- It's easier to sell a solution rather than a specification, consider prototyping standard based solutions as exemplars

# Thank you

