

DIGITALIZATION AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

a collection of best practices
from the EUDIGIT partner cities



**E-book dedicated to the
3rd EUDIGIT webinar,
hosted by the Municipality of Genoa,
on 16-17 December 2021**

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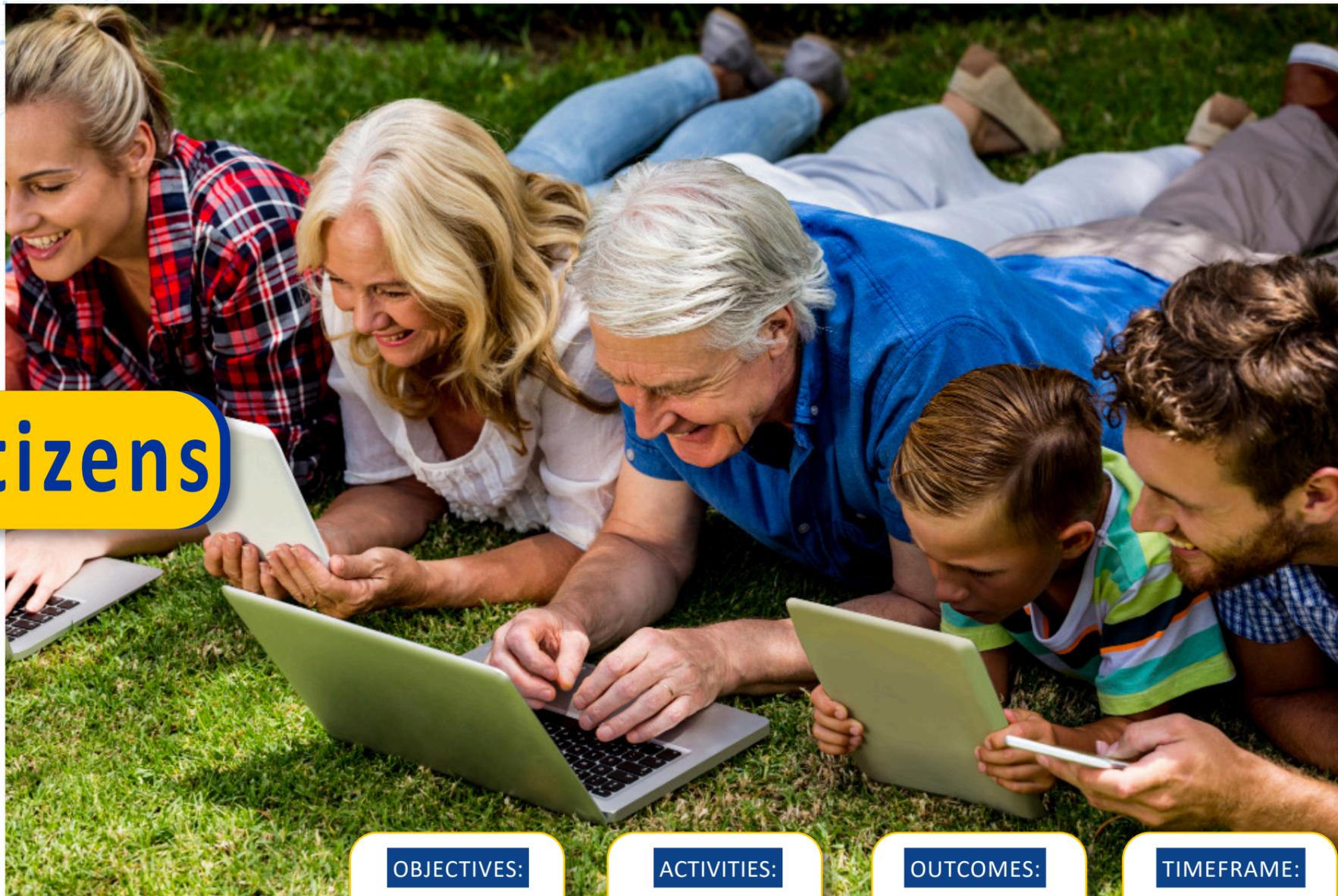
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EUDIGIT

European Digital Citizens



The facts are alarming: 169 million Europeans do not have even basic computer skills. This presents itself as a real brake, not only in the professional sphere but also in the fight against social exclusion. This gap also creates differences in development among citizens, and between cities and villages, it endangers the principle of regional cohesion and may damage the feeling of belonging to the EU and having a broader European identity.

This fact has been noted by all EUDIGIT partner cities, which have expressed their concerns about the link between digital exclusion and European Union citizenship, especially among disadvantaged groups of people.

The digital divide, as a contemporary phenomenon, actually acts as an accelerator of social exclusion for those who are not connected enough, not skilled enough and not informed enough – in other words, those who missed boarding “the boat of progress”. Even when they are digitally connected, many citizens show poor interest in European matters. These are pertinent issues since communication stemming from the EU institutions and Member States flows mainly through online channels.

The stakes are therefore high since it involves a battle for the hearts and minds of all EU citizens. On the ground level, EUDIGIT explores how cities, as the government level closest and most accessible to people, can become actively involved in reducing the digital divide through the adoption of policies and an evolution of public services tailored “with and for all citizens” approach, coupled with better communication strategies.

OBJECTIVES:

- Strengthening EU citizenship and citizens' awareness
- Contributing to reduce the digital gap in cities
- Co-building digital policies with citizens

ACTIVITIES:

- 7 events
- 30 workshops with civic society
- Co-build policies with citizens and stakeholders in all partner cities

OUTCOMES:

- 5 e-books
- A declaration for cooperation between partner cities
- Digital participation surveys
- Involvement of 520 people directly and 30 000 indirectly

TIMEFRAME:

May 2020 to March 2023

BUDGET:

126,000 EUR



PARTNERS

- CITY OF MARSEILLE
- EVRO ADVANS ASSOCIATION /
THEMAYOR.EU
- CLUJ METROPOLITAN AREA
- MUNICIPALITY OF GENOA
- MUNICIPALITY OF ROTTERDAM
- FREE AND HANSEATIC CITY OF HAMBURG
- MUNICIPALITY OF VARNA





DIGITALIZATION AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

The third EUDIGIT webinar took place on 16 and 17 December 2021, under the topic of “Digitalization and Public Administration.” Organised by the Municipality of Genoa, in collaboration with the City of Marseille, the Project Coordinator and TheMayor.EU, the media partner, the event gathered hundreds of participants interested in the latest advancements in the field of urban digitalization.

Unlike the previous two editions, the event was not oriented towards a specific target group but was rather open to anyone interested in urban development and good local governance. For two days, the participants got the chance to explore dozens of successful examples in digital services oriented to the benefit of citizens and businesses, ranging from culture events, and communication, to the facilitating of urban-focused programmes and networking.

As per tradition, the first day opened with greetings from the host - Genoa, which then gave the floor to EUDIGIT partner cities to present their own advancements in the digitalization of citizen services. They were later joined by other cities, this time surpassing the borders of the EU reaching as far as Mar del Plata (Argentina).

Participants got familiar with the concepts and implementation of the renowned “Rolli Days Digital Week” (Genoa, Italy), “The Scopitone Festival” of Nantes (France), among others. They also explored the EURO CITIES Knowledge Society Forum and the way Debrecen (Hungary) promotes digital citizenship.

The second day brought a higher-level European perspective to the webinar, with Mrs Marlene Madsen, Deputy Head of Cabinet of Cohesion and Reforms Commissioner Elisa Ferreira introducing the targets of the European Union until 2030 in terms of digitalization, the Technical Support Instrument and the assistance the EU offers to administrations on their path to digital transformation.

TO DIVE FURTHER INTO THESE AND OTHER TOPICS, HEAD OVER TO [EUDIGIT.MARSEILLE.FR](https://eudigit.marseille.fr), WHERE YOU CAN DOWNLOAD ALL THE SLIDES AND WATCH THE RECORDINGS OF ALL SESSIONS.

HOW THE EU supports reforms

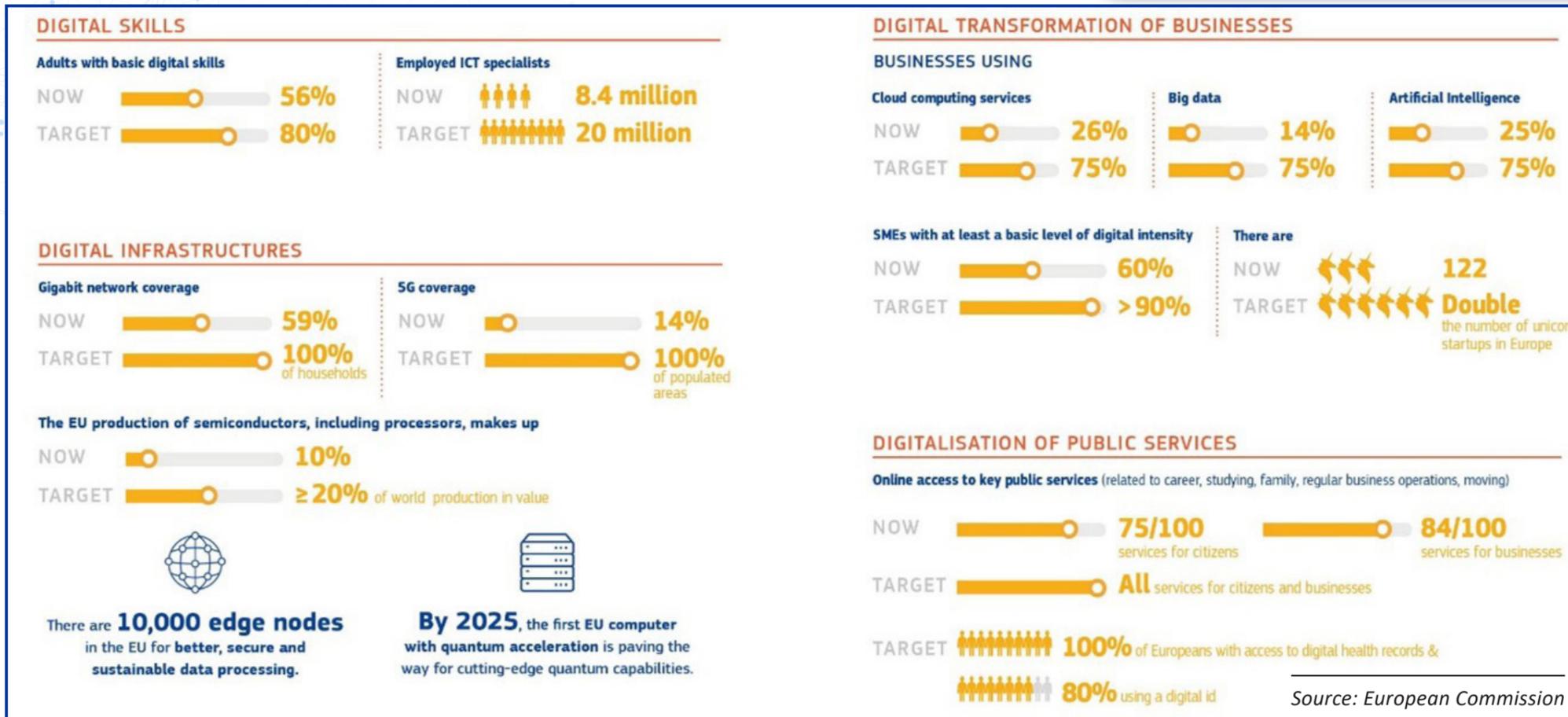
Here are the EU's 2030 Digital Targets vs the current situation:

GETTING TO KNOW the Technical Support Instrument

Did you know that the EU is on "The Path to the Digital Decade"? It aims to achieve:

- A **digitally sovereign Europe** where technologies and services respect and enhance Union principles and values and support the competitiveness of the Bloc's industry.
- A **green Europe** where digital infrastructures and technologies become more energy- and resource efficient and contribute to a sustainable circular and climate-neutral economy and society in line with the European Green Deal.

Moreover, the EU's Digital Decade vision foresees the empowerment of all European citizens and businesses to seize the benefits of a human-centred, sustainable and prosperous digital future in a global context.



On 9 March 2021, the Commission presented a vision and avenues for Europe's digital transformation by 2030. This Digital Compass for the EU's digital decade revolves around four cardinal points:

- Skills,
- Infrastructures,
- Business,
- Government.

What is the Technical Support Instrument?

- The Technical Support Instrument (TSI) is the EU programme that provides tailor-made technical expertise to EU Member States to design and implement reforms.
- The support is demand driven and does not require any co-financing from Member States.
- It is an important pillar of the EU recovery plan, which helps Member States mitigate the economic and social consequences of the outbreak of the COVID-19 crisis.

TSI covers the following reform areas:

- Green transition,
- Digital transition,
- Health and long-term care,
- Skills, education and training,
- Governance and public administration,
- Competitiveness,
- Financial sector and access to finance,
- Revenue administration and public financial management,

- Labour market and social protection.

What are the Flagship technical support projects?

- Proposed by DG REFORM - The Directorate-General for structural reform;
- Viewed as needed in many Member States;
- Meet a top EU priority;
- Designed so they can be fitted to various national contexts;
- Voluntary;
- May be taken up **individually** by different Member States **or jointly** as a multi-country project;
- Can cover issues of **horizontal priority** for the Commission (e.g. equality);
- May comprise technical support modules that can have an opt-in and be **tailored-made to national context**.

Some Flagship technical support projects for TSI 2022:

- EU Supervisory Digital Finance Academy: Strengthening Supervisory Capacity in Innovative Digital Finance;
- Digital Skills for Digital Transformation of Health and Care System;
- Development of Resilient, Innovative and Human-centric Digital Government Services.

Support is available to all EU Member States, upon request. It may be provided by DG REFORM itself, by staff from other Commission services, by national experts, international organisations, public bodies and/or experts from the private sector.

THE TSI HAS A € 864-MILLION BUDGET FOR THE PERIOD 2021-2027. IT CAN BE USED AT ANY REFORM PHASE, FROM DESIGN TO IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION.



“ALLÔ MAIRIE”

the comprehensive proximity service in Marseille



Allô Mairie is a multi-purpose call centre operating in the City of Marseille for more than 20 years now. Launched in 1998, it was one of the first municipal call centres in France.

During that time, it has become an essential digital service for the locals thanks to the numerous benefits it offers, such as:

- Signalling a problem in the public space or services – for example, a stray or injured animal, cleanliness issue, illegal parking, etc.;



- Receiving assistance in various situations, such as scheduling a vaccination appointment, registering one’s kid for municipal sports activities or accompaniment to seniors;
- Finding an answer to administrative queries easily – be it about issuing a document or the cultural agenda of the city.

The service operates as a free hotline (3013), every day of the week except Saturdays and also as a mobile application available on Google Play and Apple App Store.

Moreover, the service was recently adapted to the specific needs of the visually and hearing-impaired people, in a collaboration with the local society ACCEO. When reaching out to the “Allô Mairie” call centre, a qualified ACCEO operator responds to the citizen either by means of a sign language

video-interpretation, by instantaneous transcription of speech or by video-coding in French. People with visual or hearing impairments can also request personalised assistance for administrative tasks using the service.

By the end of 2022, the City wants to enable the creation of a single account for each citizen and consolidate the existing portfolio of digital services in a single hub – “The Publik platform”.



THIS WILL MEAN MORE TIME SAVED, LESS FORMALITIES, AND A BETTERED PROCESS OF FEEDBACK COLLECTION.





CLUJ-NAPOCA

a strategic approach to the digital transformation

To ensure a methodological digital transformation, Cluj-Napoca adopted a Digital Transformation Strategy which brings together under the umbrella of a common vision, **shared by all relevant actors** in the local ecosystem, the following:

- Intervention priorities aimed at improving public services;
- Developing digital infrastructure, data-driven decisions, participation and transparency;
- Protecting citizens' data;
- Ensuring cybersecurity;
- Sustainability and resilience as cross-cutting strategic concerns.

The digital transformation strategy has as **prime objectives: the growth of the quality of life** for citizens and the **prosperity of Cluj** community. It is an integral part of the broader vision of the City (based on quality of life, innovation, universities, and participation). The document is based on the following **priorities:**

- Being citizen-centric – the needs of the citizens, not the needs of the institutions, are taken as the starting point;
- The creation of a favourable economic environment for private companies and support for start-up development;

- Stimulating the medium and long-term development of a regulation framework that can create the legal context necessary for digital development (Cluj Digital Law Package);
- Involving the relevant IT&C actors;
- Recognising the essential role of education in general, particularly digital education, for public servants, but also for citizens;
- Prioritising innovation in all fields and forms (technological, social, process-related, etc.), especially innovation that leads to or facilitates the creation of digital services;

- Interoperability, service integration and open data sets;
- Emphasising cybersecurity;
- Improving and optimising communication, information exchange, and inter-departmental, inter-institutional, citizen-institution co-participation;
- Connecting makes a difference – from the onset, projects and applications need to be prepared for interconnectivity; technological investments need to offer increased measurement and analysis capabilities and offer improved support for

decision-making; minimising supplier lock-in; technology or infrastructure should be made a priority; access to data generated and stored by applications needs to be unrestricted; an explicit technological transfer process from supplier to beneficiary needs to be included; open code source should be used as much as possible;

- Flexibility and adaptability. Technology is a means subordinated to the needs of the users and to local policies.

THE DOCUMENT WAS PREPARED UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE COLLEGE OF POLITICAL, ADMINISTRATIVE AND COMMUNICATION SCIENCES (BABES-BOLYAI UNIVERSITY), CLUJ-NAPOCA.





USERS

from

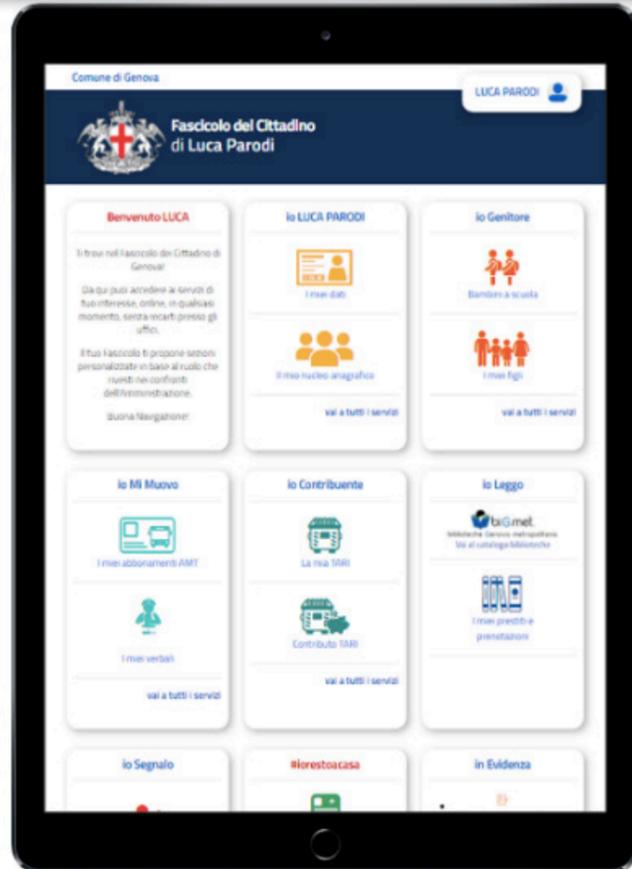
Citizens residing in Genoa

to

All Citizens with SPID or CIE

CITIZENS HAVE A PERSONALIZED

digital folder at the Municipality of Genoa



Fascicolo del Cittadino or the Citizen's Digital Folder is free and easy-to-use comprehensive information service offered by the Municipality of Genoa. It is literally a personalised folder with extensive documentation on the life of an individual, his/her work experience and dependent family members that can easily be consulted and downloaded for various needs.

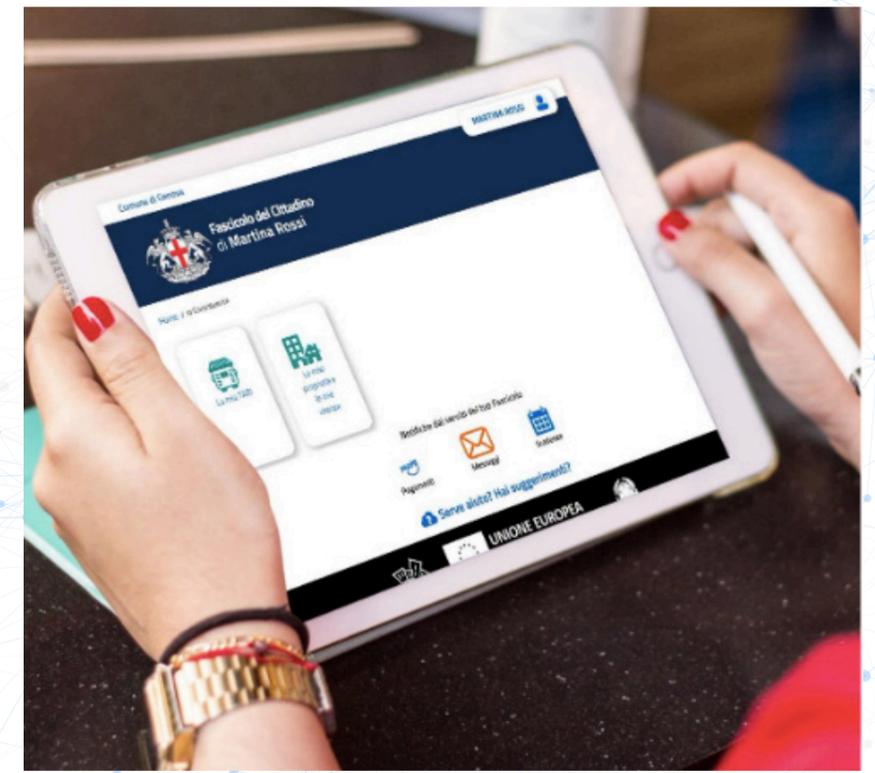
It also allows one to perform different administrative tasks, such as registering a child for a school canteen, checking deadlines, paying taxes or fines, even monitoring traffic conditions. All of this, without having to physically visit the municipality.

TO ACCESS THEIR FILE, A USER NEEDS TO PROVIDE A UNIQUE IDENTIFIER AND A PASSWORD ON FASCICOLODELLECITTADINO.IT



Moreover, thanks to the collaboration between the Municipality of Genoa and other institutions, state agencies, the folder also contains documents that go beyond the municipal level, which saves a lot of time and energy to the citizens.

The tool is generally defined as easy to use and smartphone friendly. However, there is also online chat support and various tutorial videos in case further information is needed. Finally, the city also offers a free training programme – an internet school – allowing citizens to learn how to use the online services offered by Genoa.



DIGITALIZATION IN ROTTERDAM MUNICIPALITY:

ten years in the making



Digitalization has already taken deep roots in Rotterdam, after the city launched its first such major projects 10 years ago. As a result, nearly all the forms from the municipality are already available online. And not as a PDF that one needs to download, but as an interactive application in real time.

Since the pandemic, the city also launched a **Digital desk** (*digitale balie*). It gives the possibility to citizens to schedule video calls with the local government, without the need to download extra apps – they just request a consultation, get a link on their email address and start the conversation.

The city is constantly adding new services that can be done online. It is also improving the existing and

is improving the existing ones in consultation with citizens, paying special attention to those living with a disability. One of the ways the Municipality of Rotterdam improves its services is by using a **UX lab** – a lab that researches user’s experiences with digital products and services. It is used with citizens, but also with municipal employees to test new digital tools. The UX lab gives valuable qualitative insights on what works and how it is perceived.

civil servants can participate and share opinions. There, citizens can participate in interactive sessions and take collective decisions about their neighbourhood and its environment.

**IN 10 YEARS, ROTTERDAM HAS
MANAGED TO DIGITALISE NEARLY
ALL ADMINISTRATIVE FORMS,
SAVING ITS RESIDENTS THE TIME AND
INCONVENIENCE OF GOING TO THE
GOVERNMENT OFFICES**

Finally, the newest jewel in Rotterdam’s digital services arsenal is the digital participation platform *Mijn Rotterdam* (My Rotterdam). This is a digital meeting place where citizens and



📷 Digital desk: a family portrait for the online birth registration.



DIGITALIZATION

of public services in Hamburg

In January 2020, the Senate of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg decided on a comprehensive digital strategy that takes into account all areas of life in the community. Digital transformation involves establishing new forms of cooperation and strengthening interdisciplinary and interdepartmental cooperation.

Digital applications should be used where they are beneficial and bring about improvements. They aim to identify and exploit the opportunities offered by digitalization – climate-friendly mobility, citizen-friendly administration, and comprehensive participation of all social groups. The goal is to shape the digital society together.



Public administration plays an important role in all these tasks. It sets the general framework for almost every aspect of society, enables participation in social life as well as the political and economic activities. The Digital Strategy for Hamburg therefore focuses on all aspects of life through Digital Spaces. It opens up perspectives for all sectors of urban society. The strategy is based on the following programmatic guidelines:

- Digitalization is a task for the whole City;
- Digitalization is not an end in itself;
- Administration is not an end in itself;
- Digital first, but not digital only;
- Enabling innovation;
- Share, use and protect data;
- Digitalization means change;

- Dialogue-oriented citizen participation strengthens urban society;
- Strategies create orientation;
- Design requires responsibility and commitment;
- Digitalization can only succeed with a modern legal framework.

Based on these principles, the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg is supporting the development of public services such as:

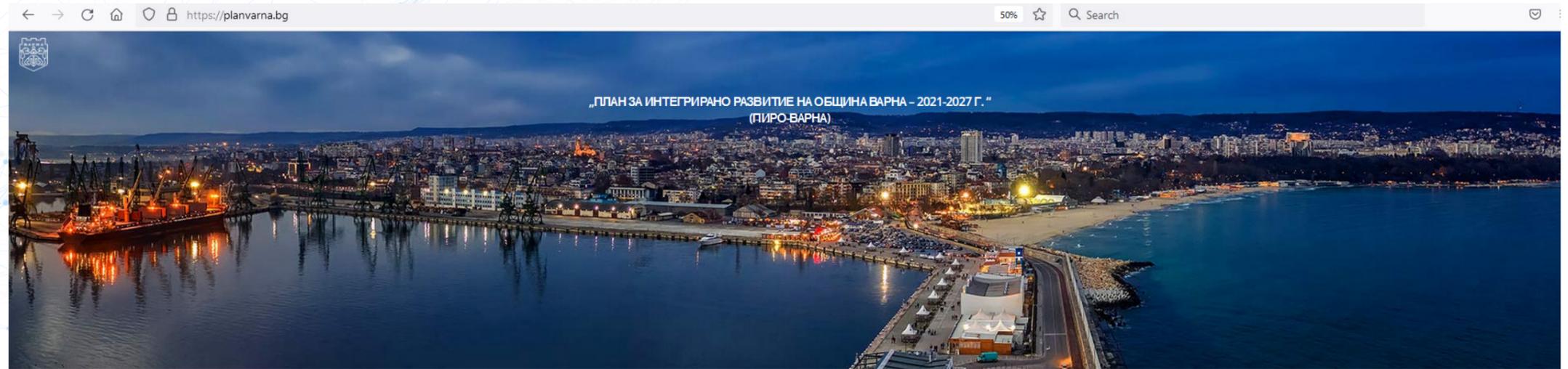
- **HVVAny App:** allows the user to pay the cheapest daily fee for using the public transport services;
- **Digital police station:** here you can file a report in a digital format;
- **Public services:** for example, applying digitally for ID cards and permits;
- **Public library:** various digital offers around media, especially for older adults.

Source: Digital Strategy of Hamburg/Document Nr. 21/19800, Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg - Senate Chancellery-Department of IT and Digitalization.



IN THE CITY OF HAMBURG, STRATEGIC THINKING ON DIGITALIZATION APPLIES TO ALL ASPECTS OF THE COMMUNITY.





Какво е ПИРО?

ПИРО определя средносрочните цели и приоритети за устойчиво развитие на Община Варна за периода 2021-2027 г. Документът обхваща предимствата и потенциала за развитие на местно ниво с ясно дефинирана визия, цели и приоритети, свързани общо от стремежа към по-висок жизнен стандарт на хората в общината и устойчиво развитие на територията.

Неговите структура и съдържание са нормативно определени, като с тях можете да се запознаете в раздел „Структура на ПИРО“.

Четири точки



Защо ПИРО е важен за Община Варна?

Планът обхваща цялата територия на общината, като се определят зони за прилагане на интегриран подход за удовлетворяване на идентифицирани нужди, за подкрепа на потенциалите за развитие и на възможностите за коопериране със съседни общини. Чрез ПИРО се осигурява пространствена, времева и фактиска координация и интеграция на различни политически планови ресурси за постигане на дефинираните цели за трайно подобряване на икономическото, социалното и екологичното състояние на територията на Община Варна.

ONLINE CONSULTATIONS ON THE integrated development of Varna

“The Integrated Development Plan of Varna Municipality” is a document of strategic importance that identifies the policies and perspectives of the coastal city for the period 2021-2027. Unfortunately, as the work on the document coincided with the coronavirus pandemic, the possibilities to organise in-person events to consult the citizens on the important topic were severely hindered.



Still, the local authorities in Varna decided that the pandemic should not put a break in citizen participation. That is why they took consultations to the online space and integrated an online dimension into the subsequent work on the document. For this reason, the city conducted in the spring of 2021 an online citizen survey to collect opinions on the priority areas for development as well as some concrete ideas for future projects as part of the plan.

The citizens could give feedback on what approach to be taken in the development and to rearrange priorities. The directions that they finally chose were those of sustainable environment and economy, and services with care for the people.

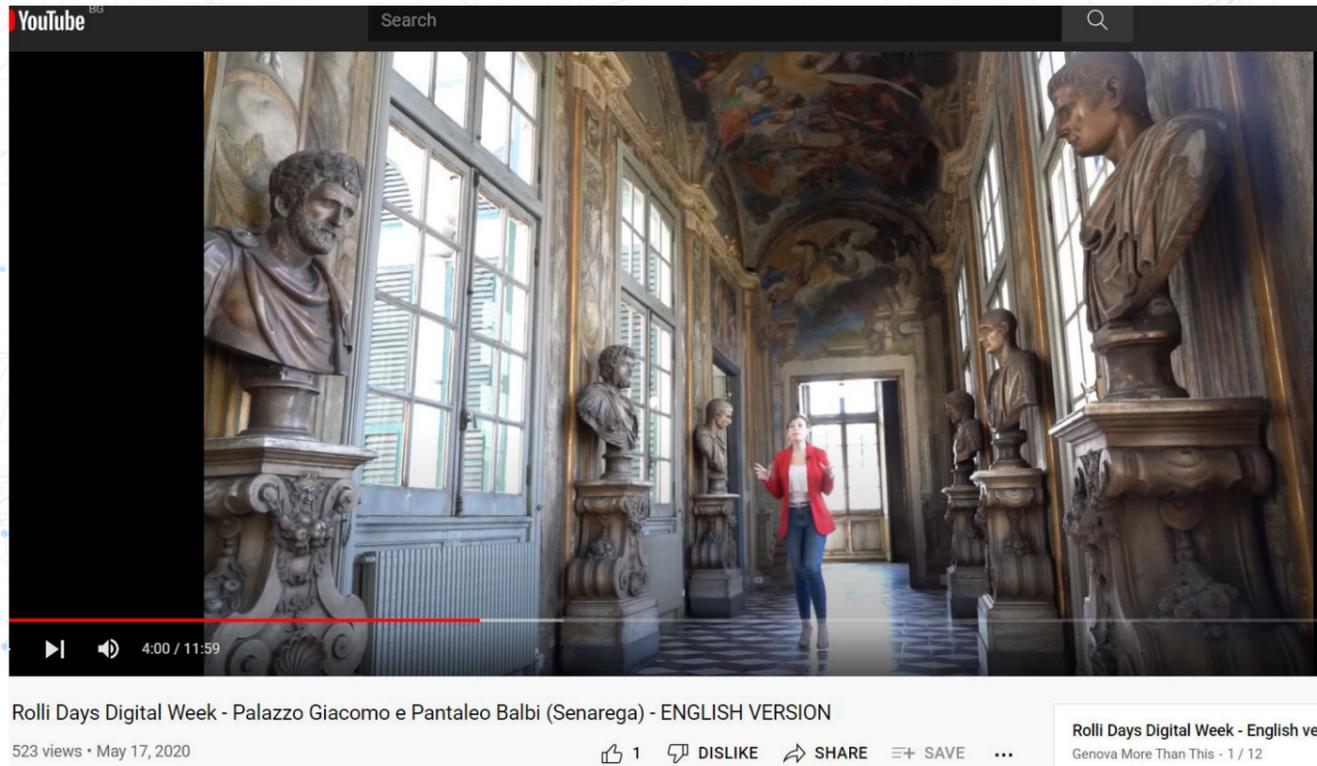
The results were then presented to small-scale in-situ events (nine focus groups with stakeholders from the private, public and NGO sectors) for consideration before working further on the document.

Moreover, in April 2021, an online public event titled “Conference of the Future” was organised to present some of the materials prepared so far. It gave citizens the chance to debate with the experts who have worked on the document, the politicians set to execute it and to exchange opinions with other representatives of the local

business, administration, higher-education institutions, etc.

Public consultations in hybrid mode (Zoom + on-site) took place on several occasions along the process and continue to this day, with the most important information materials from the meetings being made available online.

BEFORE THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, ONLINE PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS WERE NOT THAT COMMON IN VARNA, BUT THE MUNICIPALITY IS HOPEFUL THAT AFTER THIS POSITIVE EXPERIENCE THEY WILL BECOME A COMMON PRACTICE.



DIGITALIZATION OF CULTURAL EVENTS: the case for “Rolli Days” in Genoa

There are more than 100 Palazzi dei Rolli in Genoa, built between late Renaissance and Baroque times by the Genoese aristocratic families. In 1576, the Genoese Republic Senate established a peculiar public accommodation system: it defined an official list (Rollo) of prestigious palaces whose owners were obliged to host state visits in rotation.

In 2003 the Municipality of Genoa decided to organize a pilot event, called “Rolli Days”, to allow the public to get to know this part of the city’s UNESCO-listed heritage. At the beginning the sites and the Rolli Days event were promoted via traditional offline tools (press, TV, radio and leaflets).

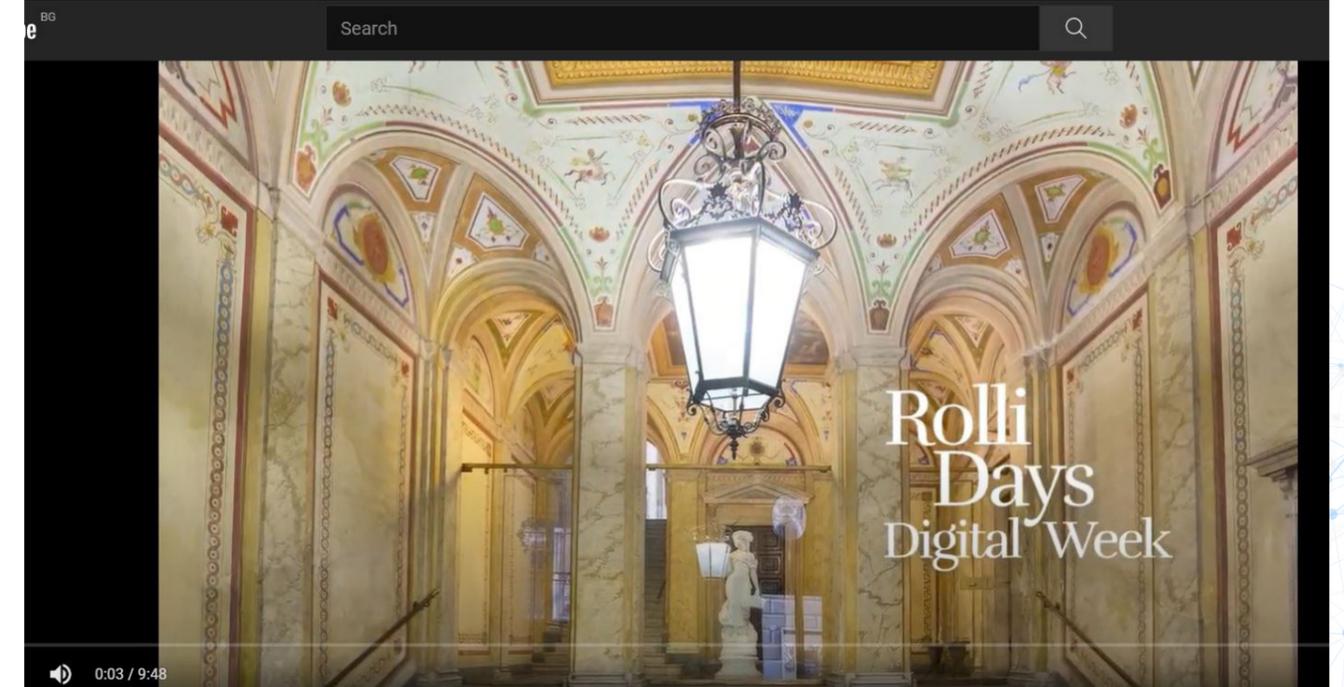
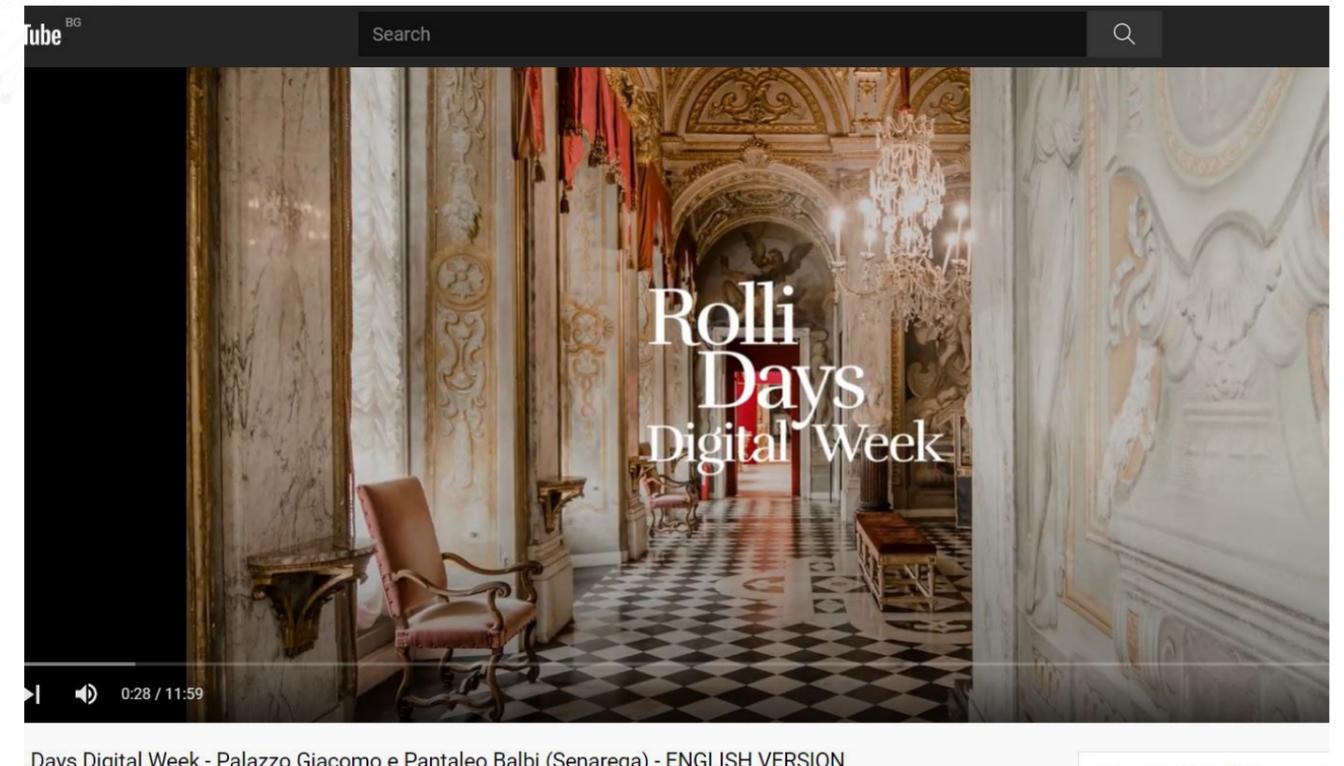
Starting from 2015, however, more and more digital means were introduced to support the promotion: social network posts, digital marketing campaigns, and a dedicated mobile app. Due

to the Covid-19 pandemic, all the events were cancelled, and everything had to change focus. The Rolli Days thus became Rolli Days Digital Week. The guided tours of the Palazzi dei Rolli turned into wonderful videos, in which young communicators tell the public stories about the historic buildings.

The digital event was promoted for one month (from April to May 2020) through a web and social media campaign. The objective was to communicate the new format and, at the same time, to maintain the public’s traditional engagement with Rolli Days.

The results?

- 900.000 views of the YouTube videos,
- 1.400.000 social media users reached,
- Over 70.000 social interactions,
- 76 national and international press releases, TV and radio emissions.



The communication of the event was further enhanced by some special actions, such as the involvement of local influencers (Social Ambassadors) and of influencers of national renown.

In 2021, with the gradual return to normality and the partial reopening of in-person events in Italy,

the event came back to life, but with new digital content being developed to enrich the video collection on YouTube.

THE NEXT ROLLI DAYS IS SCHEDULED FOR MAY 2022 IN GENOA, SO STAY TUNED FOR UPDATES!

TOWARDS A CLEAR PUBLIC COMMUNICATION: learning from Rotterdam's residents

Before the webinar in December, each partner city held a citizen and expert committee, aimed to collect insights into what works and what could be improved in the digitalization of public services. Rotterdam decided to set the committee meeting's focus on written public communication and the ways to make it clearer.

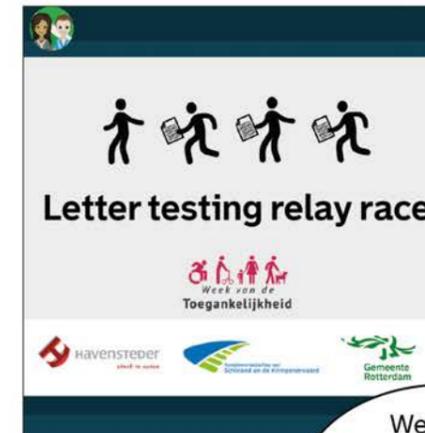
To do this, the participants crossed the city by bike taxis, visiting several institutions (such as water boards, housing committees, the city administration). Each institution presented them a written letter that it typically sends to citizens. The participants in the committee had a look at each letter and gave feedback on their legibility and comprehensibility.

Here is an overview on the ideas and tips, that citizens gave as feedback. And we can safely

say, most of them can be useful to any public administration:

- Avoid long sentences and words;
- Sending out a letter? Start it with a friendly opening sentence – the feeling a letter gives the reader is important and no one enjoys it when it starts off with what they have done wrong;
- Consider adding images as they help convey the message. But pay attention: these need to be relevant to the text and support it;
- Avoid long letters – people with low literacy levels usually do not read two-sided letters. They might do an attempt at the first page and put the letter aside for later. Eventually, the second page will likely be left off;
- Be as clear as possible – especially about the small things such as deadlines – do not use phrases like “before the 17th of September”, rather, change it to “before the 17th of September, included”.

Municipality of Rotterdam



Long sentences are hard for me to understand. Long letter words as well.

We went by bicycle taxi from Hoogheemraadschap van Schieland en de Krimpenerwaard to Havensteder.

When I receive a two sided letter, I don't read it. Maybe I will read the front page.

Images and short sentences help me understand the message. This letter, I understand very well

A picture in a letter can be helpful. But the picture should support the content of the letter.

I felt like queen Máxima, everyone waved at us in the bicycle taxi!

A letter can start with a friendly opening sentence. Don't start the letter by saying what I have done wrong.

Your story helps me understand how I can improve this letter. That way, it will be more clear.

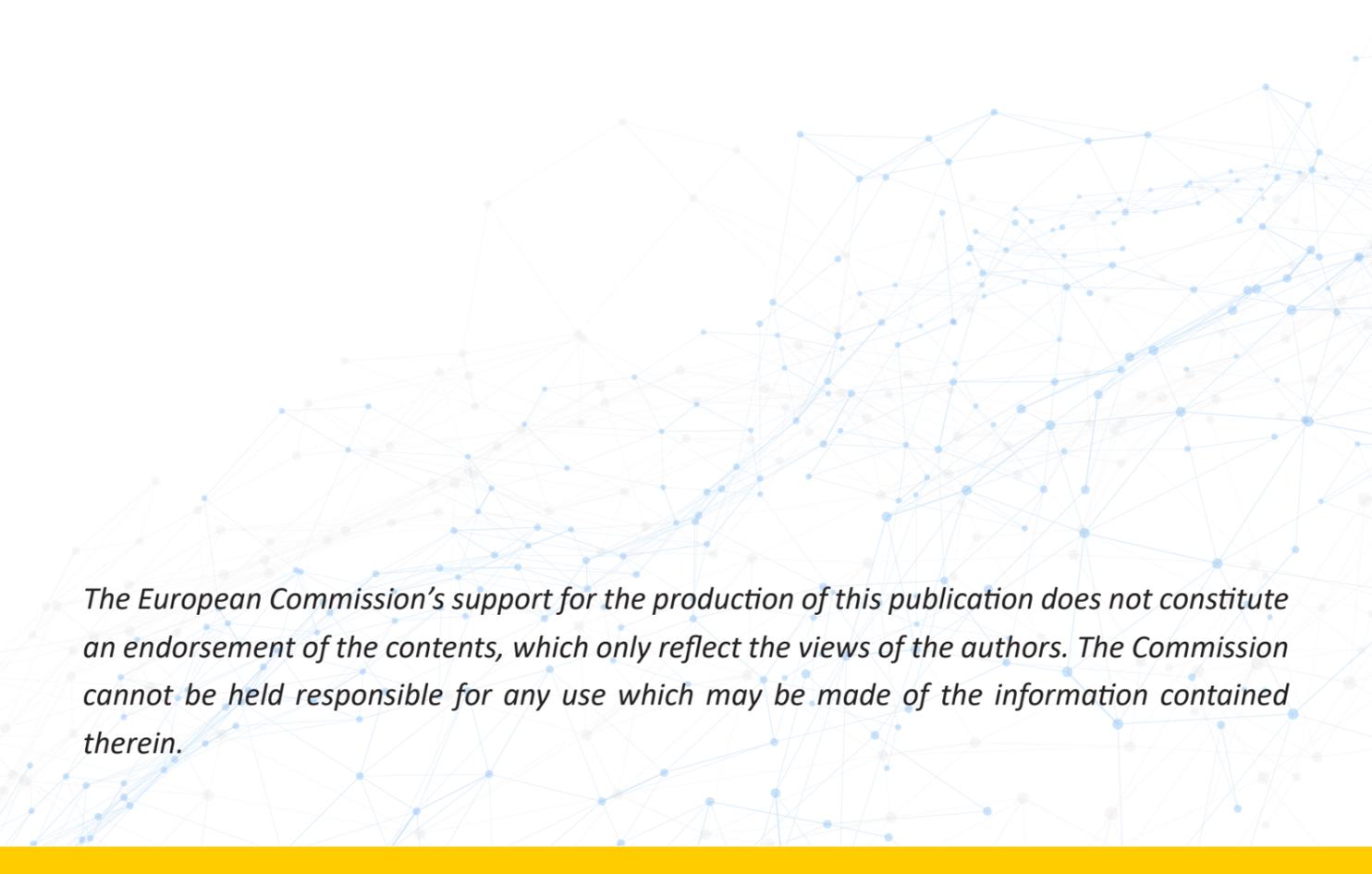
Let's go for clear and understandable letters and information!

A complex network of blue and grey nodes connected by thin lines, forming a dense web that tapers off towards the right side of the page.

Save the date!

EUDIGIT webinars are set for a comeback very soon! The next event will take place online on 10 and 11 March 2022. The Municipality of Rotterdam will play host, and the theme will be on persons with disabilities, the digital divide and citizenship.

**STAY TUNED FOR UPDATES
ON HOW TO JOIN ON
EUDIGIT.MARSEILLE.FR !**

A complex network of blue and grey nodes connected by thin lines, forming a dense web that tapers off towards the right side of the page.

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