

EUROPEAN PUBLIC SECTOR AWARD 2025-26

Driving Competitiveness through Reforms and Investments

General Report



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FOREWORD



Cecilia Wikström, Chair EIPA Board of Governors

It is a great pleasure and honour to present to you the report of the European Public Sector Award 2025–26. This edition marks a special milestone - EPSA's 10th anniversary. It gives us a great opportunity to look back at what we have achieved together, while also looking ahead to the challenges and new ideas that will shape future public services. Managed by the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA) since 2009, EPSA is a core part of our work to support learning and development for public administrations across Europe.

EPSA is the only award scheme in Europe open to all levels of public administration (local, regional, and national) as well as international bodies and European Union institutions and agencies. At the same time, EPSA is much more than an award. With more than 1,700 projects submitted since it began, it has become a true platform to spot emerging trends and highlight the hard work, creativity, and progress of public servants across Europe. In this 10th edition, we are proud not only to celebrate new projects, but also to recognize the lasting achievements of past winners and certificate holders.

Every new edition is shaped by changing conditions, showing EIPA's ability to adapt, innovate, and keep improving. Launched in October 2025 under the theme *"Driving Competitiveness through Reforms and Investments"*, this edition brought forward cases that show the real value of bringing reforms and investments together to build stronger, more sustainable, and more competitive societies. EPSA clearly shows how EU policy priorities and funding tools are being put into practice on the ground to help Member States carry out meaningful national reforms.

The multiple crises of recent years have shown just how important it is to have strong public governance and the practical skills to plan and carry out long-term reforms, smart investments, and sound policies. Public officials today face new and complex demands. For this reason, EPSA does not just reward excellence; it focuses heavily on sharing practical knowledge so administrations can learn from one another. Our EPSA Database continues to grow as an accessible library of project descriptions and real-world inspiration. I hope the lessons from these cases will provide useful, hands-on input for future reform efforts, including work linked to the next EU budget, the updated European Semester, and new platforms were civil servants exchange ideas.

EPSA would not be possible without the support of our official partners. I want to express my sincere thanks to the European Commission, Austria, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands, as well as our local partners, the City of Maastricht and the Province of Limburg. Thanks to the grant through the Technical Support Instrument (TSI), managed by SG REFORM, and the ongoing support from our national and regional partners, EPSA continues to make a practical difference to public sector reform in Europe.

I also want to thank the EPSA team, our evaluators, the Jury members and all our colleagues at EIPA for their hard work and commitment in organising this edition. Most of all, congratulations to all the teams who submitted their projects. I warmly invite you to read through the inspiring initiatives in this report and use them in your own daily work.

1. EPSA 2025-26: CONTEXT AND AWARD CATEGORIES

The 10th edition of the European Public Sector Award (EPSA) 2025-26 takes place in a time of growing economic, social and geopolitical challenges. It highlights the importance of high-performing public administration and governance in restoring and sustaining smart and inclusive economic growth.¹ In the multi-level institutional framework of the EU, effective public administration is essential not only for the transposition and implementation of EU law, but also for the successful design and delivery of reforms, investments and public services. Strengthening administrative capacity across Member States therefore contributes to economic convergence and growth, cohesion and resilience throughout the Union.² In response to these challenges, the EU has introduced several policy and financial instruments to support public sector reform and investment. In particular, the Technical Support Instrument (TSI) assists Member States in designing and implementing structural reforms, while the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) supports reforms and investments through national recovery and resilience plans.³ The importance of strong administrative capacity was further emphasised in the European Commission's 2023 Communication on Enhancing the European Administrative Space (ComPact),⁴ as well as in the Letta⁵ and Draghi⁶ reports, which highlight the role of public administration and governance in strengthening the EU's competitiveness and economic growth.

The European Public Sector Award is open to public sector entities at all levels of government across Europe. Against this background, EPSA 2025-26 was launched under the overarching theme *“Driving Competitiveness through Reforms and Investments”*. The edition focuses on identifying, recognising and rewarding innovative projects that demonstrate how reforms and investments can contribute to resilient growth, competitiveness and improved public service delivery, thus seeking projects supported by the TSI and RRF specifically, while also welcoming initiatives financed through other EU funding instruments and national resources.

The EPSA 2025-26 edition welcomed the submission of projects in three award categories:

- Category I “Innovating Government, Governance and Policies”
- Category II “Investing in Infrastructure, Mobility and Energy”
- Category III “Delivering User-Centric Services at Subnational Level”

Across all three categories, data-driven public administration constitutes a common thematic focus, reflecting the growing importance of data as a strategic asset for evidence-based policymaking, efficient service delivery and proactive governance.⁷ At the same time, the emphasis on reforms and investments reflects their complementary role in strengthening administrative capacity, competitiveness and resilience. By showcasing successful initiatives and facilitating the exchange of good practices, EPSA continues to promote mutual learning, knowledge dissemination and capacity-building among public administrations across Europe.

¹ European Commission, “Supporting public administrations in EU Member States to deliver reforms and prepare for the future”, SWD (2021)101 final, Brussels, 29.4.2021; p. 5.

² European Commission, “Mid-term evaluation of the Structural Reform Support Programme”, SWD (2020)220 final, Brussels, 1.10.2020; p. 3, 5.

³ Regulation (EU) 2021/240 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 February 2021 establishing a Technical Support Instrument; Regulation (EU) 2021/241 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 February 2021 establishing the Recovery and Resilience Facility.

⁴ European Commission, “Enhancing the European Administrative Space (ComPact)”, COM (2023)667 final, Brussels, 25.10.2023.

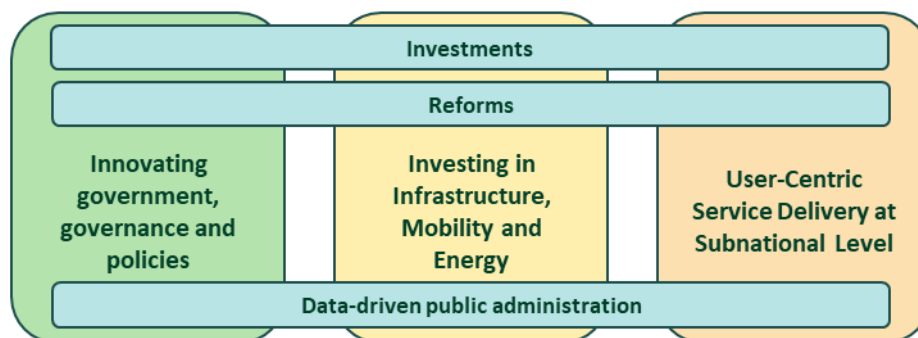
⁵ “Much more than a market”, Enrico Letta, 2024, p. 47.

⁶ “The future of European Competitiveness”, Mario Draghi, 2025, p.67.

⁷ European Commission, Joint Research Centre (2022), *Emerging approaches for data-driven innovation in Europe: Sandbox experiments on the governance of data and technology*; OECD (2019), *A data-driven public sector: Enabling the strategic use of data for productive, inclusive and trustworthy governance*, OECD Working Papers on Public Governance, No. 33.

Thematic overview EPSA 2025-26

Driving Competitiveness Through Reforms and Investments



The remainder of this introduction describes the three Award Categories in more detail.

a. INNOVATING GOVERNMENT, GOVERNANCE AND POLICIES

Innovation in government, governance and policymaking plays an important role in improving the efficiency, transparency and accountability of public sector institutions. Data-driven approaches, digital technologies and evidence-informed policymaking provide opportunities to modernise administrative processes, improve the quality of policies and strengthen the capacity of public administrations to respond to emerging challenges. This includes the development of digital and algorithmic solutions for policymaking and legislation, as well as interoperability and automation solutions supporting the application of regulations and the delivery of user-centric public services by public administrations and the judiciary.

Hence, this category called for projects aimed at reforming the structures and functioning of public sector institutions through innovative governance approaches and the strategic use of data and new technologies. Attention was given to initiatives enhancing evidence-informed policymaking, impact assessment and ex post evaluation through new analytical and monitoring tools, partnerships to produce evidence and policy experimentation. The category also included projects aimed at improving administrative productivity through the re-engineering of work processes, digital platforms and whole-of-government approaches to increase efficiency and create greater public value.

Furthermore, this category encompassed initiatives promoting data-driven human resource management and public sector integrity through the systematic use of data. These included reforms of civil service policies and human resource management processes, as well as innovative approaches to recruitment, workforce planning, upskilling, reskilling and the effective allocation of staff and resources to address emerging priorities. Emphasis was placed on projects supported by the Technical Support Instrument (TSI), the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) and the Digital Europe Programme, while also welcoming initiatives financed through other EU funding instruments or without EU financial support.

b. INVESTING IN INFRASTRUCTURE, MOBILITY AND ENERGY

Investments in infrastructure, mobility and energy play an important role in strengthening competitiveness, supporting sustainable economic growth and advancing the green and digital transitions. The development of critical digital infrastructure, telecommunications networks and sustainable energy solutions contributes to modernising public services and enhancing resilience. In this context, digitalisation, research and technological innovation provide opportunities to improve connectivity, strengthen cybersecurity and promote energy efficiency and sustainability.

Hence, this category called for projects aimed at developing and modernising infrastructure through investments in digital technologies, sustainable mobility and renewable energy. These included initiatives supporting Digital Innovation Hubs, critical digital infrastructure and networks, the digitalisation of public transport and the strengthening of cybersecurity and telecommunications infrastructure. The category also encompassed projects promoting the deployment of hydrogen and renewable energy, investments in bioeconomy products and technologies, and improvements in the energy efficiency of buildings.

Furthermore, this category covered initiatives supporting research, development and innovation (R&D&I), strengthening research capacities and facilitating the uptake of advanced technologies, particularly in the field of renewable energy. Attention was also given to investments in green and digital skills, including skills development for smart specialisation, industrial transition and the circular economy. The category placed particular emphasis on projects supported by the Technical Support Instrument (TSI), the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the Cohesion Fund (CF) and the Digital Europe Programme, while also welcoming projects financed through other EU funding instruments or without EU financial support.

c. DELIVERING USER-CENTRIC SERVICES AT SUBNATIONAL LEVEL

User-centric service delivery at subnational level plays an important role in improving the accessibility, efficiency and quality of public services and creating greater public value. The use of data-driven approaches, digital technologies and evidence-informed policymaking provides opportunities for regional and local administrations to respond more effectively to citizens' needs and emerging policy challenges. In this context, digital and algorithmic solutions, interoperability and automation can support the development of policies, the application of regulations and the provision of user-centric public services.

Hence, this category called for projects aimed at improving public service delivery through innovative administrative practices, digitalisation and the strategic use of data. These included initiatives promoting evidence-informed policymaking through partnerships to produce evidence, the deployment of new analytical and monitoring tools, and policy experimentation. The category also encompassed projects improving administrative productivity through the re-engineering of work processes and the use of digital platforms and new technologies to enhance the quality of policies and public services.

Furthermore, this category covered initiatives promoting data-driven human resource management, including effective approaches to recruitment, workforce planning, upskilling, reskilling and the allocation of staff and resources to address emerging priorities. Particular attention was also given to effective models of cooperation, resource sharing and joint service provision. The category placed particular emphasis on projects supported by the Technical Support Instrument (TSI), the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the Cohesion Fund (CF) and the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+), while also welcoming projects financed through other EU funding instruments or without EU financial support.

2. APPLICATIONS: STATISTICS, POLICY AREAS AND GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

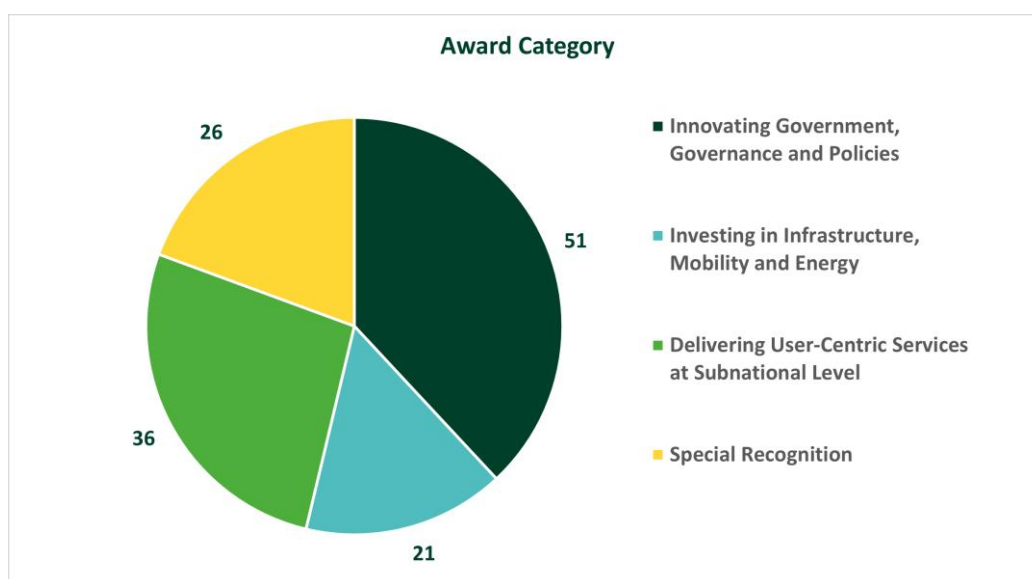
In total, 134 applications were submitted to EPSA 2025-26. Following the eligibility check, all projects were admitted. The eligible projects were submitted from 30 different countries/international organisations at all levels of government. The biggest share of applications was made by national level entities (57%) followed by local (24%) and regional level of government (19%).

On the occasion of the 10th edition, EPSA 2025-26 included a Special Recognition scheme geared towards projects submitted to previous EPSA editions. This scheme offered projects the chance to showcase continuous commitment to the improvement of public services by updating their original project submission with additional and targeted information. Hence, the Special Recognition scheme facilitates the acquisition of information about long-term impact and institutionalisation of innovation.

While the total number of submitted projects decreased in comparison to EPSA 2023-24 (151 eligible projects), there is an increase in the number of submitting countries (from 23 to 30). Out of 134 projects, 108 new projects were submitted and 26 projects under special recognition were updated. Out of 134 projects, 56 are supported by EU Funds.

Applications per Award Category

The highest number of applications was received in the category of Innovating Government, Governance and Policies (51 eligible projects); second highest number of applications was received in the category of Delivering User-Centric Services at Subnational Level (36), and third was the category of Investing in Infrastructure, Mobility and Energy (21).



Applications per policy area

For the EPSA 2025-26 projects, five main policy areas can be identified across the Award Categories, reflecting the diversity of public sector innovation:

Revenue Administration and Public Financial Management (5%) included initiatives related to public expenditure, budget preparation and implementation, public accounting, tax policy, revenue administration and its digitalisation.

Governance and Public Administration (62%) accounted for the largest share of applications, covering state governance and better policymaking, the efficiency of state organisation and service delivery, digital government, human resource management, and public sector ethics and integrity.

Sustainable Growth and Business Environment (17%) encompassed initiatives related to sustainable development, climate action, environmental protection, energy, transport and mobility, as well as support for small and medium-sized enterprises, research and innovation.

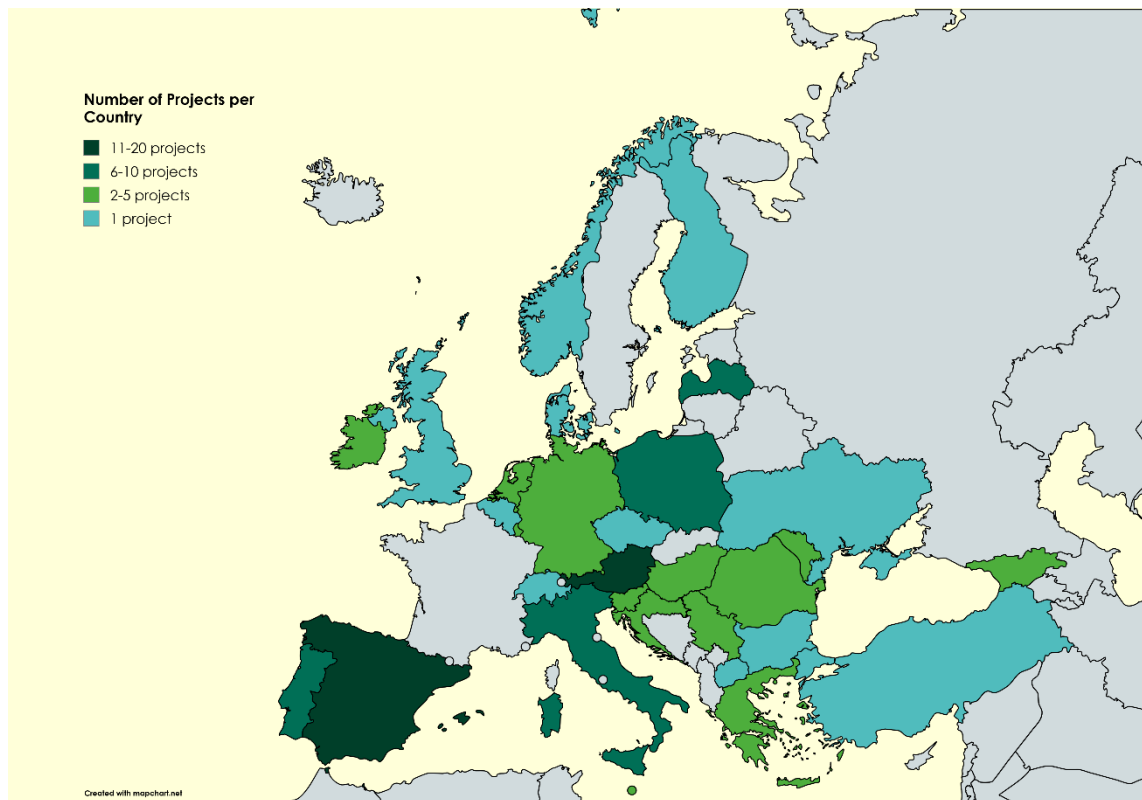
Labour Market, Education, Health and Social Services (15%) covered projects addressing employment policies, social protection, the provision of social and healthcare services, education, and the development of digital skills.

Financial Sector and Access to Finance (1%) represented the smallest share of applications, covering areas such as access to finance, financial services, financial literacy and financial innovation.

Policy Areas	Percentages
1. Revenue Administration and Public Financial Management	5%
2. Governance and Public Administration	62%
3. Sustainable Growth and Business Environment	17%
4. Labour Market, Education, Health and Social Services	15%
5. Financial Sector & Access to Finance	1%
Total	100%

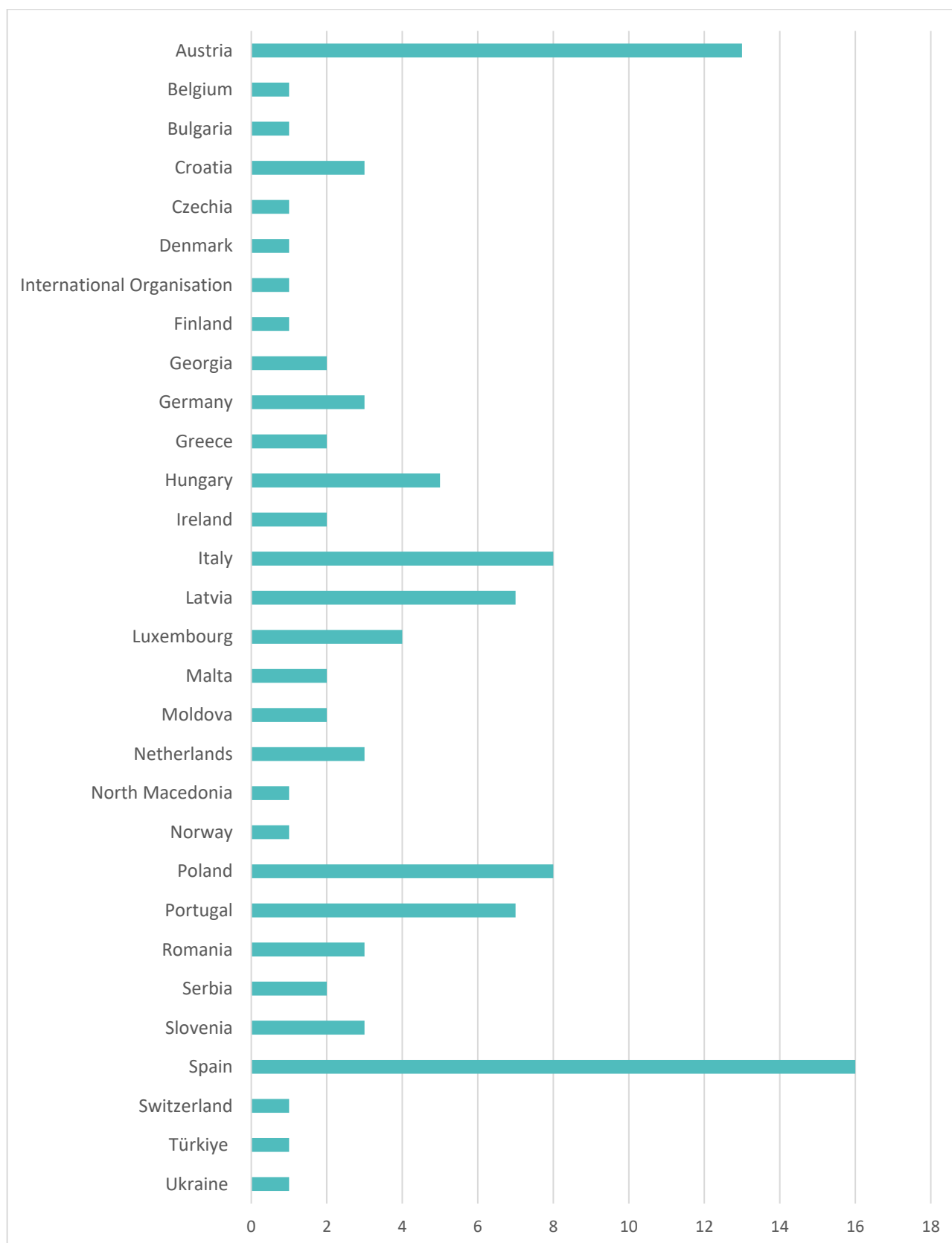
Geographical distribution of applications

As regards geographical distribution, the highest number of projects originated from Central and Eastern Europe (40 projects, 14 countries), followed by Southern Europe (35 projects, 5 countries) and Western Europe (28 projects, 8 countries). The remaining projects originated from Northern Europe (3 projects, 3 countries) and an international organisation (1 project). The geographical distribution reflects the involvement of public administrations from across Europe, with contributions from Western, Southern, Central and Eastern, and Northern European countries. Notably, countries from Central and Eastern Europe, including Poland and Latvia, accounted for a considerable share of submissions, reflecting the region's participation in public sector reform and innovation. Applications were also received from countries outside the EU, including Georgia, Moldova, Norway, North Macedonia, Serbia, Switzerland, Türkiye, Ukraine and the United Kingdom, as well as from an international organisation. This broad geographical representation demonstrates the continuing relevance of EPSA as a pan-European award scheme.



The countries with the highest numbers of applications were Spain and Austria. Their leading positions are consistent with previous EPSA editions, in which both countries were among those submitting the highest numbers of projects. They were followed by Italy and Poland. While the number of Italian applications remained relatively stable, Poland recorded a significant increase compared to the previous edition. Latvia also demonstrated a notable increase in participation, having submitted no applications in the previous edition. By contrast, several countries recorded fewer applications than in the previous edition, including the Netherlands, Germany and Ireland. Similarly, the number of applications submitted by EU institutions dropped to zero.

Applications per country



3. EVALUATION: PROCESS AND CRITERIA

The evaluation of all project applications submitted to EPSA 2025-26 was based on an enhanced methodology and entailed five stages.

Online Evaluation

The online evaluation took place between the 13 February and 19 March 2026.

Following the initial eligibility check by the EPSA team, all eligible projects were distributed amongst external experts for the first evaluation. Each project was assessed by two evaluators independently, based on the information provided for in the application form and against the six evaluation criteria (see Box below). The evaluators scored the projects on each evaluation criterion to develop the provisional ranking of projects in each Award Category. Based on the scoring, the EPSA team compiled lists of the 24 highest scoring projects to be invited to an online meeting with the evaluators.

The distribution of projects per category was as follows:

Award Categories	Total Number	Number Projects Invited to online meetings
Innovating Government, Governance and Policies	51	10
Investing in Infrastructure, Mobility and Energy	21	6
Delivering User-Centric Services at Subnational Level	36	8

Online Meetings

For this edition, EPSA introduced online meetings with shortlisted candidates to substantiate project details and strengthen the overall evaluation process. Representatives from the shortlisted projects were invited to individual, 30-minute online meetings with the evaluators.

These meetings gave project teams the opportunity to present their initiatives in depth and provide key updates, while enabling evaluators to probe deeper into project results, assess transferability to other public administrations, verify original scoring, and cross-check information.

The insights gathered during these discussions directly informed the Consensus Meeting, where evaluators convened to review both the written applications and presentation findings to select the Good Practice Certificate (GPC) recipients and determine the three top-ranking nominees per category.

Consensus Meeting

The Consensus Meeting marked the third step in the EPSA evaluation methodology. Following the online evaluation and the online meetings with shortlisted projects, evaluators convened to discuss available evidence and collectively decide on the winning projects in each Award Category. Moreover, Good Practice Certificates were awarded.

The table below shows the distribution of the 108 new projects among the three award categories as well as the number of shortlisted projects and projects nominated for GPCs.

Award Categories		
Innovating Government, Governance and Policies	Investing in Infrastructure, Mobility and Energy	Delivering User-Centric Services at Subnational Level
Number of projects submitted		
51	21	36
Number of projects invited to online meetings		
10	6	8
Number of projects nominated to receive GPC		
11	5	6

The evaluators who assessed projects in their respective categories discussed the shortlisted projects, i.e. the projects invited to online meetings, in panels to identify the three winning projects per category. There was no target number for GPCs, and the final number depended on the outcome of evaluator discussions.

The overarching goal was for evaluators to reach consensus on both winning projects and GPCs.

The discussions during the Consensus Meeting, held on 12 May 2026, focused on the assessment of shortlisted projects against the evaluation criteria and the available evidence from the applications and online meetings. The evaluators followed a structured approach, first identifying projects on which there was immediate agreement and subsequently engaging in more detailed deliberations where differences in their assessments remained. The discussions led to a consensus on the three winning projects in each Award Category and the recipients of Good Practice Certificates (GPCs). All decisions were reached by consensus, without the need for voting.

Across the three Award Categories, several common considerations emerged from the evaluators' discussions. Particular attention was given to the transferability of projects beyond their original national, regional or institutional contexts. While some initiatives demonstrated significant results within their specific environments, evaluators also considered whether their approaches could be replicated or adapted by other public administrations. Similarly, innovation was assessed not merely in terms of introducing new technologies or digital solutions, but also in terms of their contribution to broader institutional transformation, the improvement of administrative processes and the development of internal capacities.

Another important consideration was the distinction between project outputs and measurable outcomes. Evaluators emphasised the importance of reliable data demonstrating tangible improvements in administrative efficiency and citizens' experiences. Cost-effectiveness and sustainability were also central to the discussions, particularly regarding the efficient use of resources, financial transparency and the availability of long-term funding beyond the initial implementation phase.

Finally, evaluators highlighted the importance of user-centricity, stakeholder engagement and social inclusion. Projects demonstrating effective cooperation between public administrations, citizens, research institutions and the private sector were recognised for their contribution to public value. Particular attention was given to initiatives addressing citizens' needs, promoting social integration and ensuring that administrative innovation delivers tangible benefits to the wider public.

EPSA Evaluation Criteria

Criterion:	Description:
RELEVANCE	This criterion assesses the objectives of the project including the relative importance or urgency of the problem to be addressed and the respective added value. ▪ Applicability of the project in relation to the description of the respective award category ▪ Significance in relation to societal, economic and political objectives, e.g. in relation to current EU and/or national policy priorities ▪ Scope of the project and potential benefits for target groups and/or beneficiaries
QUALITY	This criterion assesses how well the project was designed and managed focusing on the internal coherence of the project to ensure that the necessary steps were taken to address identified problems. ▪ Congruence between project design and stated objectives, i.e. level of fit between intervention and expected outcomes ▪ Clarity of the organisational structure and the logic of the planning. ▪ Appropriateness of resource allocation, i.e. staff, budget and time. ▪ Appropriateness of steps taking in the implementation including potential divergencies demonstrating adaptability.
COST-EFFECTIVENESS	This criterion assesses the relationship between resources and results to determine whether the project achieved its objectives at a reasonable cost. ▪ Proportionality of the costs/resources given the scale of the problem. ▪ Optimisation of the use of resources in project design and implementation. ▪ Efficiency gains in the short and/or long term by demonstrating structural savings in terms of time, money, labour etc.
IMPACT	Achievement of results, i.e. scope and magnitude of outcome in relation to stated objectives
SUSTAINABILITY	Potential for sustaining (positive) outcomes over an extended period of time, e.g. institutional reform, political support, financial and/or organisational commitments allowing for the sustained implementation/delivery of project-related outputs
TRANSFERABILITY	Potential for drawing lessons, i.e. to what extent is the project relevant to other entities because it provides the potential for successful replication in, or adaptation to, other contexts (e.g. different Member States and/or levels of government)

Validation visits

The validation visits took place on multiple dates in June and July 2026.

Following the Consensus Meeting, on-site validation visits were conducted with the nominated projects across Europe. These visits were designed to verify the findings of the earlier evaluation steps, confirming that the written submissions accurately reflect the work taking place on the ground. Importantly, these site visits were not an extra evaluation or rescoring phase, but an opportunity to see the initiatives in action, clarify outstanding questions raised by evaluators, and gather detailed evidence and background material for both the Jury and the EPSA Database.

The team used tailored interview formats to meet not only with the direct project leaders, but also with practical beneficiaries, external stakeholders, and high-level political sponsors to gain a complete picture of the project's real-world impact.

Jury meeting

Following the full evaluation across the submitted applications, nine nominated projects advanced to the final stage to determine the first, second, and third-place winners in each category.

Organised on 23 September on the margins of the Award Ceremony, the Jury meeting gave each nominated team 20 minutes to pitch their project's main strengths and answer their questions. Because members were already familiar with the project dossiers, the focus remained squarely on key results and practical value.

The questions centred on core criteria such as impact, sustainability, and transferability. Following the presentations, the Jury met behind closed doors to deliberate and reach a consensus on the final rankings.

Special Recognition

To celebrate EPSA's 10th anniversary, a dedicated Special Recognition category was introduced to showcase long-term impact and continuous improvement.

This track invited initiatives submitted to previous EPSA editions to provide updated information on how their projects evolved over time. Using a streamlined application form, participating teams presented their latest developments, ongoing resources, and long-term results, demonstrating how their original innovations became permanent parts of their organisations. In total, 26 projects were submitted under this category.

Each submission was assessed by an evaluator focusing on three main criteria: lasting impact, sustainability over time, and transferability to other public administrations. Evaluators weighed these outcomes against the project's original objectives and starting point, paying close attention to concrete evidence of real-world results rather than simple day-to-day outputs. Following this rigorous review, 15 projects were selected to receive a Special Recognition certificate.

4. RESULTS: WINNERS, GOOD PRACTICE CERTIFICATES AND SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

In total, the evaluation of all 134 eligible project applications resulted in the selection of nine winning projects (1st, 2nd and 3rd place in three Award Categories respectively), and the awarding of 24 Good Practice Certificates and 15 Special Recognitions. In line with the variation in terms of applications per Award Category, the number of Good Practice Certificates varies according to category: Innovating Government, Governance and Policies (10 certificates), Investing in Infrastructure, Mobility and Energy (6 certificates) and Delivering User-Centric Services at Subnational Level (8 certificates).

The nine winning projects are distributed among the following countries: Croatia, Germany, Latvia (2 projects), Netherlands, Spain (2 projects), Switzerland and one International Organisation. The projects are located at all levels of government: national (4 projects), regional (2) and local (2) and international (1). As regards geographical distribution, these projects originated in three regions: Western Europe (3 projects), Southern Europe (3) and Central and Eastern Europe (2).

The 24 Good Practice Certificates are distributed among the following countries and entities respectively: Austria (4), Croatia, Denmark, Finland, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy (2), Latvia (2), Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal, Serbia, Spain (3), Ukraine. The projects are located at all levels of government: national (14 projects), regional (3) and local (7). As regards geographical distribution, these projects originated in four regions: Western Europe (6 projects), Southern Europe (9 projects), Central and Eastern Europe (7 projects) and Northern Europe (2 projects).

The geographical distribution of winning projects and Good Practice Certificate recipients broadly reflects the distribution of applications, with countries submitting higher numbers of projects also receiving several awards and certificates. Nevertheless, recognition was not limited to countries with high application numbers, as projects from countries with fewer submissions were also recognised. This distribution highlights the diversity of public sector initiatives across Europe and demonstrates that innovative approaches to public administration can emerge from different national and institutional contexts

The distribution of winning projects/certificate recipients in terms of policy areas corresponds with the distribution within the whole population, i.e. the most prominent meta-categories being Governance and Public Administration (4 Winners, 16 GPCs) and Sustainable Growth and Business Environment (2 Winners, 4 GPCs); the meta-categories Revenue Administration and Public Financial Management (1 Winner) and Labour Market, Education, Health and Social Services (2 Winners, 4 GPCs) with a smaller number of projects.

It is noteworthy that, across all three Award Categories, the recognised projects demonstrate different approaches to public sector innovation, combining technological solutions, institutional reforms and improvements in public service delivery. Furthermore, the recognised initiatives demonstrate the importance of measurable outcomes, long-term sustainability and the potential for replication or adaptation in other administrative contexts. Effective stakeholder engagement, cooperation between public administrations, citizens, research institutions and the private sector, as well as a strong focus on user-centricity and social inclusion, were also important considerations in the evaluation process.

5. CONCLUSION

The European Public Sector Award continues to provide a tangible contribution to public sector reform in the EU by supporting administrations across Europe in the design and implementation of reform policies. Through the first stage of EPSA 2025-26, the award scheme, valuable information about data-driven administration as driver for reforms and investments is acquired and processed. Following the award scheme, the second stage aims to share best practices and disseminate knowledge to support public administrations across Europe with the design and implementation of reform.

Information

The dissemination of information pertaining to new projects submitted to EPSA is facilitated by updating the EPSA Database; following this update, the database will include projects from the EPSA editions 2017, 2019, 2021, 2023 and 2025 including updates through the Special Recognition scheme. These updates ensure that the EPSA Database remains a key reference point for public sector innovation with a view to provide inspiration for future reform initiatives.

Briefings

To promote successful reform examples and support the wider dissemination of proven public sector reforms, comprehensive briefings covering the design, operational frameworks, and implementation pathways of the nine winning projects will be published. The briefings build on the application and evaluation data, collecting evidence about the institutional conditions and mechanisms underpinning projects' achievements. Ultimately, the briefings aim to enhance the impact and scalability of these achievements by synthesizing key operational lessons and offering actionable recommendation for administrations seeking to adapt and implement similar reforms across Europe.

Events

Knowledge dissemination will include webinars on the most relevant award-winning topics with a focus on transferability and scaling up impact. The main objective of the webinars is to reflect on concrete opportunities and challenges in implementing effective reforms, and to provide conclusions on the factors for their successful design and implementation. Furthermore, knowledge dissemination will include workshops on the most relevant award-winning topics. The main objective of the workshops is to discuss the factors for success of inspiring reforms and innovation and to provide guidance and hands-on skills on transferring successful reform projects. In providing participants with a better understanding of such challenges, the workshops seek to make a tangible contribution to building capacities of public officials in implementing reforms.

The 10th anniversary edition of the European Public Sector Award has demonstrated that European public administrations are actively transforming systemic challenges into opportunities for enduring modernization. Under the overarching theme "*Driving Competitiveness through Reforms and Investments*," EPSA 2025-26 brought together an exceptional breadth of initiatives spanning 30 countries/international organisations and all levels of government. From large-scale national frameworks funded by instruments such as the Recovery and Resilience Facility and the Technical Support Instrument, to agile, community-rooted solutions delivered at the subnational level, the submitted initiatives highlight that Europe's administrative space is driven by a shared commitment to resilience, evidence-informed policymaking, and user-centric governance. While celebrating these achievements is an integral milestone of the EPSA cycle, the true impact of the award lies in its capacity to facilitate mutual learning, capacity-building, and cross-border replication. Furthermore, the introduction of the Special Recognition scheme underscored that innovation in the public sector is not merely an isolated achievement, but an evolving, institutionalized practice capable of delivering sustained public value over time.

PROJECT CATALOGUE

Category I: Innovating Government, Governance and Policies

Number of projects submitted: 51

Number of winning projects: 3

Number of projects receiving Good Practice Certificates: 10

Winning Projects

	Name of project	Country
1st Place	CH@World 2.0	Switzerland
2nd Place	Participatory Budget Platform - Development and Implementation of a Shared Platform for Participatory Budget Management	Latvia
3rd Place	Voucher Based Adult Education Scheme in Croatia	Croatia

GOOD PRACTICE CERTIFICATES

- *IRIS: Integrated Regulatory Impact System – Advancing Digital Solutions for Evidence-Based Policy Making*, Federal Chancellery – DG III – Civil Service and Administrative Innovation, Austria
- *Equal Start: A New Funding Model to Support Access and Meaningful Participation in ECEC and School Age Childcare for Children and their Families who Experience Disadvantage*, Department of Children, Disability and Equality, Ireland
- *A User-Centric Digital Transformation for INPS*, Social Security and Welfare Administration, Italy
- *Government's Digital Academy*, Latvian School of Public Administration, Latvia
- *Prozorro.Sale*, Ministry of Economy, Environment and Agriculture, Ukraine
- *Nordic DigiGov Lab*, Digital and Population Data Services Agency, Finland
- *Data Distribution and Governance Platform (DAGR)*, State Digital Development Agency, Latvia
- *Luxchat4gov*, Ministry for Digitalisation, Luxembourg
- *Embedding Mental Wellbeing in Public Administration: Support Groups for Civil Servants*, Government Human Resource Management Service, Serbia
- *Public Services in Your Pocket – Hungary's DÁP App*, Digital Hungary Agency, Hungary

1st Place

CH@World 2.0, Switzerland

Project No:	EPSA2025111
Name of the lead organisation:	Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA
Contact person:	David Venzin, Digital Organisation Manager
Level of Government:	National
EU funding:	No

Project overview

CH@World is the central digital working platform for conducting Switzerland's foreign policy, developed by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA). It enables structured consultations and collaborative information exchange across the diplomatic network worldwide and various federal departments. Used by roughly 4000 users conducting thousands of consultations each year, the legacy system faced end-of-life by 2025, prompting a comprehensive modernisation. The project was initiated to address fragmented information flows, siloed data sources, and manual processes that limited evidence-informed decision-making across government units. The new application integrates structured data, analytical tools, and collaborative workflows on a single platform accessible to both headquarters and embassies. It automates reporting and knowledge-sharing tasks, and provides user-centric services tailored to different roles. By consolidating country information, policy inputs, and indicators, CH@World strengthens data-driven policy formulation, monitoring, and evaluation.

The primary objective of CH@World 2.0 is to strengthen coordinated, evidence-informed policymaking by transforming fragmented information management into an integrated digital ecosystem. In response to identified needs, the project pursues five concrete goals. First, it provides a single, user-friendly platform that allows for cross-government consultations and consolidates country knowledge, policy inputs and analytical data, enabling decision makers to access reliable up-to-date information in one place. Second, it improves data interoperability by connecting internal and external sources through common standards and automated interfaces, breaking down institutional silos. Third, it increases productivity by re-engineering reporting and coordination processes – reducing duplication and manual workload via automation and structured workflows. Fourth, it enhances evidence-based governance by embedding tools for analysis, monitoring, and evaluation directly into daily work (facilitating, for example, timely political reporting and scenario planning). Finally, it supports organisational transformation by establishing shared digital practices, roles, and responsibilities for collaboration and knowledge management across the FDFA. Together, these objectives translate pressing institutional needs into practical solutions. They ensure that foreign policy formulation and implementation are more agile, transparent, and data-driven, generating greater public value, and aligning with the strategic priorities of digital government.

CH@World 2.0 was implemented under a clear governance structure and agile methodology, ensuring strategic alignment and timely delivery. Commissioned by the Deputy State Secretary and supported by a steering committee, the project was led by an interdisciplinary team of subject-matter experts and internal IT developers, supported by external consultants. Project management followed the HERMES framework for formal oversight, while agile product development (Scrum) enabled flexibility and iterative design and delivery. The initiative began in May 2023 with a baseline study, user surveys, and a co-creation workshop to define priorities. A phased roll-out strategy was adopted to mitigate risks: the first version went live in July 2024 for pilot groups (e.g. experts leading consultations in the field of the UN Human Rights Council and Council of Europe), followed by further deployments through January 2025, when the legacy system was fully replaced. The final release in June 2025 introduced 'Country pages' to support bilateral diplomacy. Feedback was continuously gathered through tests and integrated into development. Communication, training, and support accompanied each roll-out. The project remained on schedule and within budget throughout its lifecycle. Institutional reforms (e.g. directive updates) were synchronised to reinforce adoption and anchor the platform in regular administrative practice.

2nd Place

Participatory Budget Platform - Development and Implementation of a Shared Platform for Participatory Budget Management, Latvia

Project No:	EPSA2025075
Name of the lead organisation:	Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development
Contact person:	Dāvis Melnalksnis, Project Manager
Level of Government:	National
EU funding:	Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF)

Project overview

Following the adoption of the Local Government Law, which requires all municipalities in Latvia to implement participatory budgeting from 2025, the Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development (MoSARD) developed a nationwide Participatory Budgeting Platform with support from the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF). The platform was created as a shared digital support tool to ensure that all 42 municipalities – regardless of their size or administrative capacity – have equal opportunities to organise participatory budgeting project competitions in compliance with national legislation. The platform enables municipalities to manage project competitions in a unified digital environment, while citizens can submit proposals, vote on initiatives, and explore territorial development projects implemented in other municipalities.

The project addresses the problem of insufficient citizen involvement and trust in the municipal decision-making process. Its objective was to establish a secure, user-friendly and scalable digital infrastructure that supports municipalities in implementing participatory budgeting in line with the Local Government Law; reduces administrative and financial burden through a shared service model; strengthens transparency by publishing structured open data; and provides citizens with a meaningful opportunity to influence the allocation of part of the municipal budget.

The project implementation was based on Articles 59–62 of the Local Government Law, which establish unified principles for participatory budgeting and mandate its introduction in all Latvian municipalities from 2025.

In the first phase, the implementation model and practical conditions were developed in close cooperation with municipalities and NGOs. In the second phase, with support from the RRF, the Participatory Budgeting Platform was developed using a user-centred design approach. The process was iterative and included: conceptual development and user story definition; interactive design prototypes and usability testing; demonstrations, seminars, and working groups with municipalities; continuous improvement after the platform launch.

The Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development (MOSARD) managed the project and defined business requirements. The State Digital Development Agency ensured ICT infrastructure, procurement, and system administration. The Ventspils Digital Centre integrated the solution with the national and municipal one-stop customer service centre system, ensuring access also for citizens without digital access or skills.

3rd Place

Voucher-based Adult Education Scheme in Croatia

Project No:	EPSA2025045
Name of the lead organisation:	Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy
Contact person:	Ivan Vidiš, State Secretary (Project leader)
Level of Government:	National
EU funding:	European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) / Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF)

Project overview

A voucher-based adult education system was designed and introduced as a response to structural challenges related to the mismatch between workforce skills and labour market needs, as well as the limited adaptability of the education system to the rapid changes brought by the green and digital transitions. Existing models for financing adult education, burdened by lingering procurement procedures and limited educational offer, were inflexible and insufficiently focused on monitoring outcomes and real effects of education. In this context, the need for a structural reform was identified that would link education policy, employment policy, and digital transformation through a unified, transparent, and user-centred model of financing adult education based on relevant data and focused on clear outcomes, which would significantly increase participation in lifelong learning and operationalise the acquisition of micro qualifications at all levels of education.

The project aims to establish a transparent, flexible, digitalised, user-friendly, and accessible system of financing adult education, which for the first time in Croatia includes both unemployed and employed persons. It also provides support to users through standardised self-assessment tools and career counselling services. The voucher system is a unique and efficient model for upskilling and reskilling that aims to improve the skills and employability of vulnerable groups, fill the skill gaps in the workforce, encourage lifelong learning, and boost economic development and competitiveness.

A special emphasis is placed on the quality of offered training programmes, inclusion of the employers in development and curriculum design including for non-formal programmes, and the establishment of mechanisms for monitoring, evaluating, and adapting public investments in workforce skills development. In the long term, the project aims to institutionalise the voucher system as a permanent reform instrument of skills acquisition and adult education policy through the development of individual learning accounts.

The project is led by the Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy (). All relevant stakeholders, including ministries and agencies responsible for education, educational institutions, and social partners, were involved in design and implementation of the project. The Croatian Employment Service () is the implementing body responsible for awarding vouchers.

The project was implemented through the establishment of a legislative framework and the development of a digital platform for voucher management that integrates data on beneficiaries, education providers, available programmes, and labour market needs. The system enables acquisition of micro, partial, and full qualifications at the secondary and tertiary education levels, as well as to develop skills for the twin transition and labour market adaptation. Programmes are aligned with the Croatian Qualifications Framework, ensuring transparency and recognition of acquired competences. Based on the Labour Market Act, a system for evaluating acquired competencies and programme effectiveness was also established.

The implementation of the project has shown positive effects on participation in adult education. Between April 2022 and December 2025, more than 54 000 unemployed and employed persons enrolled in education through the voucher system. Over 84% of unemployed participants successfully gained employment within one year of completing education. Nearly 300 education providers offer more than 2500 programmes for acquiring skills relevant to the labour market needs via the digital voucher platform. The voucher scheme alone has generated significant public investment in skills development, which is the largest boost to adult education in Croatia to date.

GOOD PRACTICE CERTIFICATES

IRIS: Integrated Regulatory Impact System – Advancing Digital Solutions for Evidence-Based Policymaking, Austria

Project No:	EPSA2025027
Name of the lead organisation:	Federal Chancellery – DG III – Civil Service and Administrative Innovation
Contact person:	Öner Cinar, Policy officer at the Federal Performance Management Office (FPMO), Project leader at the Federal Chancellery – DG III
Level of Government:	National
EU funding:	Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF)

Austria's commitment to evidence-based policymaking led to the 2013 introduction of a Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) system, which external evaluations later revealed faced gaps in digital infrastructure and collaboration. To address this, Austria launched an innovative project to transform its fragmented, manual processes into a cohesive digital ecosystem. The project's main objectives include enhancing RIA quality through a user-friendly web application, standardizing evaluations to foster a learning administration, and increasing public transparency via a redesigned monitoring website. It also aims to boost cross-departmental collaboration, optimize resources through automation, and align with EU and OECD benchmarks. Implemented using an agile methodology under a cross-ministerial steering committee, the project was funded by departmental budgets and the Recovery and Resilience Facility. Collaborating with the Federal Computing Centre and specialized IT firms, the initiative utilized a phased roll-out, extensive training, and a proactive change management framework to ensure successful adoption across all government departments.

Equal Start: A New Funding Model to Support Access and Meaningful Participation in ECCE and School-age Childcare for Children and Their Families who Experience Disadvantage, Ireland

Project No:	EPSA2025113
Name of the lead organisation:	Department of Children, Disability and Equality
Contact person:	Anne-Marie Brooks, Assistant Secretary of Department of Children, Disability and Equality
Level of Government:	National
EU funding:	No

Equal Start is an Irish policy response to childhood disadvantage, providing a funding model with universal and targeted measures to support access to Early Childhood Care and Education and school-age childcare for children experiencing disadvantage. Rooted in the 2018 First 5 whole-of-government strategy, it treats early years access as a prevention, early intervention, and anti-child-poverty measure. Roll-out began in September 2024, with full implementation expected by the end of 2028. Around 807 settings (nearly 20% of all Irish settings, serving 37,000 children) have received a priority designation and extra funding for additional staff hours, reduced adult-child ratios, family engagement, and training. Achievements so far include Bia Blasta, Ireland's first preschool nutrition programme; the Early Talk Boost language intervention; the Traveller Parenting Support Programme; Traveller and Roma Advisory Specialists; and a dedicated Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.

A User-centric Digital Transformation for INPS, Italy

Project No:	EPSA2025080
Name of the lead organisation:	Social Security and Welfare Administration
Contact person:	Giacomo Grassi, Director of Digital Processes & User Experience
Level of Government:	National
EU funding:	No

INPS, Italy's national social security and welfare administration serving over 45 million citizens and businesses, has long been perceived as complex and hard to navigate due to fragmented digital services and technical, legalistic language. In the context of national and European policy initiatives on digital transformation and inclusion, INPS launched a project to harmonise more than 450 digital services into a coherent, citizen-centred ecosystem. Its objectives are to reduce fragmentation, establish a uniform and scalable design system embedding accessibility from the outset (design-for-all), and simplify institutional language, with progress tracked through readability metrics, customer satisfaction, and customer effort scores. Implementation combines an internal management team with external consultants, overseen by an Experience Authority function ensuring consistency. Strong stakeholder engagement, continuous validation, the inps.design platform, and internal training support progressive organisation-wide adoption and long-term sustainability.

Government's Digital Academy, Latvia

Project No:	EPSA2025043
Name of the lead organisation:	Latvian School of Public Administration
Contact person:	Baiba Medveckā, Lead of Government's Digital Academy
Level of Government:	National
EU funding:	Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF)

Latvia identified a public sector digital skills gap as a structural risk to the effectiveness of reforms and Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) investments. In response, the Digital Academy of Public Administration was created as a governance reform instrument, embedding workforce upskilling into the national reform architecture rather than treating training as isolated capacity-building. It introduces a unified digital competence framework, role-based learning pathways (e-learning, blended courses, and applied projects), systematic skills assessment, and training impact evaluation, aiming to upskill at least 62,900 public sector employees by 2026 and strengthen capacities in service design, data analytics, AI, cybersecurity, and ICT project management. Implementation follows a multi-level governance model led by the Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development, delivered by the School of Public Administration and coordinated by the State Chancellery, with partners including Riga TechGirls, the Universities of Tartu and Jyväskylä, and Demos Helsinki.

Prozorro.Sale, Ukraine

Project No:	EPSA2025078
Name of the lead organisation:	Ministry of Economy, Environment and Agriculture
Contact person:	Sergiy Boote, Chief Executive Officer Prozorro Sale
Level of Government:	National
EU funding:	No

Prozorro.Sale is Ukraine's governance-innovation e-auction system for selling and leasing public assets and rights, replacing fragmented local approaches that suffered from limited competition, unequal information, discretionary decisions, and low public trust, issues made more pressing by Ukraine's EU integration agenda. Built as national digital public infrastructure, it uses a two-tier ecosystem: a state-administered core enforcing unified rules and compliance, connected to over 40 independent private e-marketplaces competing on service and outreach under the same standards. Its objectives are to increase competition and information access, maximise value through market-based price discovery, strengthen integrity via complete transparency (default publication of procedures, results, and agreements, plus open data, public BI analytics, and APIs), and ensure resilience through standardised processes and cloud hosting outside Ukraine. Performance is tracked through indicators on auction volumes, bids, success rates, and value generated, supporting oversight and evidence-based management.

Nordic DigiGov Lab, Finland

Project No:	EPSA2025088
Name of the lead organisation:	Digital and Population Data Services Agency
Contact person:	Mikko Mattinen, Director
Level of Government:	National
EU funding:	No

DigiGovLab addresses persistent cross-border friction in digital life-event services in the Nordic-Baltic region, where despite high digital maturity, the "once only principle" cannot yet be fully executed, citizens must still re-declare information and navigate multi-jurisdictional procedures, particularly after a death abroad. The project puts humans at the centre, building seamless, trustworthy digital services that work across borders. Its objectives include enhancing Nordic living, moving, and doing business across Member States; building momentum for Nordic digitalisation agencies to pool expertise; strengthening the EU and the Digital Decade; and delivering three Proofs of Concept plus a work package demonstrating human-centred design at scale. Solutions include AI-based guidance offering personalised, plain-language next steps, automated Nordic data exchange, and a Nordic AI Trust Model for safe, transparent AI in public services. Multidisciplinary teams from DVV (Finland), Digg (Sweden), and DigDir (Norway) co-design with users and prototype open, reusable, EU-interoperable components, with the lab transitioning into a permanent Nordic collaboration platform beyond 2026.

Data Distribution and Governance Platform (DAGR), Latvia

Project No:	EPSA2025036
Name of the lead organisation:	State Digital Development Agency
Contact person:	Vladimiris Vicehovskis, Director of Shared Component Department
Level of Government:	National
EU Funding:	Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF)

The Data Distribution and Governance Platform (DAGR) is a national, high-performance security system in Latvia managed by the State Digital Development Agency that optimizes data exchange between public and private entities. Its primary objective is to decouple data consumption from primary providers, preventing system overload by allowing consumers to retrieve real-time data directly from DAGR. This guarantees seamless business continuity, high data freshness, and a uniform technical standard across public administration, which slashes bureaucratic burdens and allows administrative formalities to be completed in a single day. Implemented under the strategic oversight of the Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development, the project aligns with European Union digital goals. It was funded by both EU and national budgets, utilizing a blend of internal public staff and external IT providers to establish a centralized, secure, and cost-efficient data governance ecosystem.

Luxchat4gov, Luxembourg

Project No:	EPSA2025016
Name of the lead organisation:	Ministry for Digitalisation
Contact person:	Patrick Weber, Attaché in Ministry for Digitalisation
Level of Government:	National
EU funding:	No

Luxchat4gov emerged from a gap exposed during the 2020 pandemic: Luxembourg's civil servants lacked a secure, sovereign platform for official but informal mobile communications, leading to "Shadow IT", sensitive government communications and metadata flowing through commercial apps like WhatsApp or Signal on foreign servers. The project establishes digital sovereignty through a national, interoperable messaging solution hosted entirely within Luxembourg, built on the open-source Matrix protocol with end-to-end encryption and verified identities via the national SSO/IAM system, without requiring personal phone numbers. It also serves as a resilient "out-of-band" fallback channel during network crises or cyberattacks. After a 2020 "Fail Fast" pilot, the service launched in May 2023 and now supports over 13,000 agents across ministries, the army, and police. The Ministry for Digitalisation leads governance, with the Government IT Centre (CTIE) managing authentication and LuCIX, a neutral internet exchange point, providing redundant national hosting under a five-year contract, while Luxembourg, as part of the EU's Digital Decade programme, pursues Digital Commons EDIC membership with France and Germany.

Embedding Mental Well-being in Public Administration: Support Groups for Civil Servants, Serbia

Project No:	EPSA2025012
Name of the lead organisation:	Government Human Resource Management Service
Contact person:	Jovana Stojadinović, Head of Recruitment and Employer
Level of Government	National
EU Funding:	No

This project, launched in 2023 by the Human Resources Management Service of Serbia, establishes Support Groups for the mental well-being of civil servants within the existing public administration framework. It was developed after identifying that performance and communication challenges often stemmed from chronic stress, emotional strain, and workplace conflicts rather than a lack of skills—issues further highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic and aligned with EU/SIGMA SIGMA reform principles. The project's objective is to provide a safe, confidential, and stigma-free environment to manage work-related stress and prevent burnout before it escalates. Facilitated by four internal psychologists and psychotherapists, the initiative structures civil servants into groups of up to eight participants based on screening interviews. By relying entirely on in-house staff and premises, the project requires no extra budget, ensuring high cost-effectiveness, long-term institutional sustainability, and a demand-driven approach that improves resilience and public sector performance.

Public Services in Your Pocket – Hungary's DÁP App, Hungary

Project No:	EPSA2025104
Name of the lead organisation:	Digital Hungary Agency
Contact person:	Peter Vidos, International Advisor of the Agency
Level of Government:	National
EU funding:	European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)

Hungary entered the 2020s with structurally fragmented public administration: siloed IT systems forced citizens to navigate multiple portals, paper documents, and in-person visits. In 2022 the government launched the Digital Citizenship Programme (DÁP) for 2022 - 2026, led by the Digital Hungary Agency, shifting from institution-centric digitalisation to a shared, platform-based architecture built on high-assurance digital identity, interoperability, and user-centric design. The DÁP mobile application is the primary citizen interface, providing wallet-grade digital identity, qualified electronic signatures, and certified, consent-based data sharing for secure, legally binding interactions, designed for eIDAS high-assurance compliance and EU cross-border interoperability. It was shaped by life-event research with 5,000 - 6,000 citizens and institutions, and adoption has exceeded the baseline target of 300,000 active users annually. Delivery involved over 200 contributors operating as a single agile organisation with synchronised sprints, structuring services around life events and life situations rather than institutional structures.

Category II: Investing in Infrastructure, Mobility and Energy

Number of projects submitted: 21

Number of winning projects: 3

Number of projects receiving Good Practice Certificates: 6

Winning Projects

	Name of project	Country
1st Place	Supporting Municipalities in Realising Temporary Housing for Recognised Refugees	The Netherlands
2nd Place	Baltic Energy Independence project – Baltic power systems Synchronisation with Continental Europe and Desynchronisation from Power System of Russia and Belarus	Latvia
3rd Place	Copernicus Data Stores (CDS & ADS): Modernising Europe's Open Climate and Atmosphere Data Platforms	International Organisation

GOOD PRACTICE CERTIFICATES

- *Compensation Area 2.0 – From Gravel Pit to Bird's Paradise*, ASFINAG Bau Management GmbH, Austria
- *From Fragmented Administration to Data-Driven Governance – Post-Earthquake Reconstruction in Croatia*, Ministry of Physical Planning, Construction and State Assets, Croatia
- *INVEAT Plan: High Technology Equipment Investment Plan in the National Health System*, Ministry of Health, Spain
- *DREAM RRMV Vienna – Construction of the BOKU River Lab*, City of Vienna, Municipal Department for European Affairs, Austria
- *Development of the EuroVelo 11 Cycling Route*, Regional Roads Authority in Kraków, Poland
- *Establishing Indicators of Sustainability Culture for the Improvement of Citizens' Climate Action and Empowerment*, Climate Change and Sustainability Office, Barcelona City Council, Spain

1st Place

Supporting Municipalities in Realising Temporary Housing for Recognised Refugees, Netherlands

Project No:	EPSA2025065
Name of the lead organisation:	De Thuisgevers
Contact person:	Laura Prat Bertrams, Founder of De Thuisgevers
Level of Government:	Local
EU funding:	No

Project overview

Across the Netherlands, municipalities have faced a structural shortage of affordable housing for several years, including for recognised refugees. Limited housing availability and complex procedures have made timely housing solutions difficult, resulting in prolonged stays in reception facilities and pressure on municipal capacity. In early 2022, following the Russian invasion of Ukraine, demand for emergency housing increased further. Municipalities, including Kampen, were required to accommodate additional refugees within a short time frame. This highlighted the limited flexibility of existing housing systems, while various forms of social and public real estate remained temporarily unused. De Thuisgevers was established through a collaboration between the Municipality of Kampen, the Protestant Church in the Netherlands and the national government. The initiative focused on the temporary use of unused buildings to house status holders, supported by local volunteers. National funding schemes, including the Hotel and Accommodation Regulation and later the Through-Flow Location Scheme (, enabled implementation and covered transformation costs. What started as a local initiative has since developed into a platform supporting municipalities across the Netherlands.

The project aims to support municipalities in realising timely and workable housing solutions for recognised refugees within the context of a persistent housing shortage. Many municipalities face limited capacity, complex procedures, and difficulty translating national funding schemes into concrete housing projects. A primary objective is to accelerate access to temporary housing by making practical use of unused social and public real estate. De Thuisgevers supports municipalities in identifying suitable buildings, assessing feasibility, and applying national funding instruments. This enables municipalities to move more quickly from exploration to implementation. In addition, the project aims to ensure that housing solutions are socially embedded. By involving local volunteers and community partners, residents receive practical support and housing projects are better integrated into their surroundings. Building on experience with temporary housing, the objectives have expanded to include identifying additional and less visible housing opportunities through a specific program using smart data analysis to identify hidden sites for housing development. Across all activities, the project seeks to balance speed, feasibility, and social acceptance, while remaining applicable across different municipal contexts.

The project is implemented as a collaborative public–societal initiative involving municipalities, locals, and public organisations. De Thuisgevers functions as a coordinating platform responsible for programme coordination and operational support, and financial and administrative processes are hosted by the Municipality of Kampen. Activities are carried out by a flexible pool of independent professionals with expertise in housing, spatial planning, finance, and social support; staff deployment is adjusted to the scale and phase of municipal projects.

The national funding schemes are used to finance housing costs and necessary transformations. Implementation typically starts with proactive outreach by De Thuisgevers to municipalities facing delays in meeting housing targets, as well as with requests from municipalities seeking support. This is followed by an assessment of available buildings or locations and applicable funding options. De Thuisgevers supports coordination between municipal departments, property owners, and community partners. Stakeholder consultation takes place throughout the process, including communication with local residents where appropriate. Processing of publicly available spatial data complements this approach by identifying additional housing opportunities. Progress is monitored through outputs such as supported municipalities, realised housing locations, and housed recognised refugees. Feedback from partners is used to adjust implementation to local conditions.

2nd Place

Baltic Energy Independence Project – Baltic power systems Synchronisation with Continental Europe and Desynchronisation from Power System of Russia and Belarus, Latvia

Project No:	EPSA2025047
Name of the lead organisation:	Ministry of Climate and Energy
Contact person:	Līga Rozentāle, Deputy State Secretary for Energy Policy at the Ministry of Climate and Energy of Latvia
Level of Government:	National
EU funding:	Connecting Europe Facility (CEF Energy) / Recovery and Resilience Facility (RFF) / Modernisation Fund

Project overview:

After joining the European Union, NATO, and the Eurozone, Latvia's integration into Europe's energy system became the next decisive step. This process, known as Baltic synchronisation, was launched in 2007 by decision of the Baltic Prime Ministers and has since become the most comprehensive energy independence project in the region, involving new cross-border interconnections, synchronous condensers providing inertia services, battery energy storage systems for balancing, and other measures to strengthen the grid. Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, risks to Baltic energy infrastructure increased significantly, as the system historically operated within the Russia-controlled BRELL transmission system. To eliminate this dependency and ensure a stable and reliable electricity supply, the Baltics desynchronised from Russia's energy system in February 2025, one year earlier than planned. The project is a strategic initiative with strong political and financial support from the EU, implemented through close cooperation between the Baltic states, continental European transmission system operators, and the European Commission.

Baltic synchronisation is a joint regional initiative designed to fully integrate the electricity transmission systems of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia into the Continental Europe Synchronous Area (CESA). Its primary objective is to strengthen the energy independence of the Baltic states, which historically operated synchronously with the Russian power system and depended on centralised frequency management controlled by Russia. By shifting to CESA, the project eliminates this vulnerability and ensures full national sovereignty over grid operations. The initiative also prioritises European market integration, allowing the Baltic grids to operate under common, transparent, and highly regulated European rules to the direct benefit of end consumers. Alongside this, the installation of modern power lines, high-capacity substations, and dedicated grid equipment significantly increases transmission capacity to support a much higher share of renewable energy across the Baltic states and Poland. Finally, the project has acted as a catalyst for technical innovation, driving the deployment of large-scale synchronous condensers and high-capacity battery energy storage systems at a scale previously unseen in Europe.

Implementation took over 15 years, four countries (Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, and Poland), and more than 40 projects, uniting thousands of stakeholders from transmission system operators and government agencies to the European Commission, contractors, and municipalities. It required careful, systematic preparation at several levels: readiness of physical infrastructure, development of the operators' IT systems, regional cooperation, and coordinated national action. Intensive development and construction took place especially between 2022 and 2024, both nationally and regionally, to reduce the risks of disinformation and cybersecurity threats, particularly in light of third-party efforts and physical damage to energy infrastructure in the Baltic Sea. Despite the pandemic and the new geopolitical situation, synchronisation with the continental grid was completed nearly a year ahead of schedule and carried out flawlessly, demonstrating unprecedented cooperation, adaptability, and strategic execution. Total investments in the energy system of the Baltic states and Poland have reached unprecedented levels, with vital support from the European Commission through several funding programmes.

3rd Place

Copernicus Data Stores (CDS & ADS): Modernising Europe's Open Climate and Atmosphere Data Platforms, European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecast

Project No:	EPSA2025005
Name of the lead organisation:	European Centre for Medium-range Weather Forecasts
Contact person:	Florian Pappenberger, Director General
Level of Government:	International
EU funding:	Copernicus Programme (EU Space Programme) – C3S/CAMS Joint Services / Data Stores modernisation contract(s) under Copernicus.

Project overview

This project modernised the Copernicus Data Stores – the Climate Data Store (CDS) and Atmosphere Data Store (ADS) – to strengthen data-driven public administration across Europe. Copernicus provides open, quality-assured climate and atmospheric information used by EU institutions, national and regional authorities, researchers, and businesses. However, legacy access pathways and rapidly growing demand required a step-change in governance, reliability, and usability. Starting in 2022, the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF) led a full-stack modernisation of the service – front-end, back-end engine, and cloud infrastructure – culminating in the operational transition to the new CDS/ADS platforms in September 2024. The modernised service delivers large-scale, trusted access with KPI-based monitoring and improved user management to meet updated Copernicus reporting requirements, while maintaining continuity for existing users. Impact is demonstrated by scale and adoption; by the end of 2024 the CDS had 389 266 registered users, and the new platforms rapidly attracted large numbers of re-registered users with very high daily data delivery peaks. The renewed data stores enable user-centric public services and policy applications (e.g. the European Climate Data Explorer) by making data easier to find, access, and reuse – supporting more transparent, evidence-based governance and faster, more consistent decisions on climate adaptation and air quality.

The main objectives was to modernise the Copernicus Data Stores (CDS/ADS) to ensure that climate and atmosphere data can be accessed and used as a reliable, scalable public service, thus reducing barriers for public authorities and other users through improved usability (web plus application processing interface), clearer onboarding/licensing and KPI-compliant user management; increase operational resilience, performance and trust via continuous monitoring, incident management and strong data governance/stewardship; accelerate policy and service uptake by enabling user-centric applications and workflows on top of the data stores.

The project delivered a full-stack upgrade (front-end, back-end engine, and cloud infrastructure) and executed the operational transition to the new CDS/ADS platforms in September 2024, maintaining continuity for existing users while supporting rapid growth. It then expanded capabilities that make data actionable: the European Climate Data Explorer for policy-relevant indicators, platform-embedded analytics such as public JupyterHub, and sectoral services (e.g. energy/water/risk) were delivered through the catalogue and application processing interfaces.

ECMWF, as Copernicus Entrusted Entity, governed the data stores modernisation through the Joint Services/Data Store Service workstream, aligning delivery with European Commission requirements and evolving user needs. The programme combined in-house platform stewardship with competitively procured delivery and formal progress reviews, risk tracking, and KPI reporting. Technical implementation followed an agile approach: requirements and issues were managed in a shared backlog, prioritised in regular ECMWF–contractor sessions, and deployed through controlled system sessions (regular releases, hot-fixes, upgrades) to protect operational continuity. The work modernised all layers – web interface, back-end engine, and cloud infrastructure, while maintaining service availability during the transition to the new CDS/ADS and scaling operations with monitoring of request success and incident management. Stakeholder consultation and communication were embedded via service-level agreement-driven user support, user-engagement activities, and institutional interfaces (e.g. EEA's European Climate Data Explorer), supported by coordinated Copernicus communications. Governance planning also covered handover and continuity beyond Phase 1, with follow-on platform enhancement beginning in 2026.

GOOD PRACTICE CERTIFICATES

Compensation Area 2.0 – From Gravel Pit to Bird's Paradise, Austria

Project No:	EPSA2025093
Name of the lead organisation:	ASFINAG Bau Management GmbH
Contact person:	Heike Michaela Stadtschreiber, Expert
Level of Government:	National
EU funding:	No

For the eastern section of Austria's S7 Fürstenfeld Expressway, the Environmental Impact Assessment mandated 15 hectares of compensatory habitat for open-land bird species, implemented on a single restored gravel extraction site in Großwilfersdorf (Styria). Consolidating measures in one contiguous area maximises ecological effectiveness, land-use efficiency, and governance, and tests the scientific hypothesis that large, contiguous compensation areas outperform multiple smaller sites. The site quickly became a biodiversity hotspot with over 190 recorded bird species, including rare and protected taxa. Since 2022, a multi-year monitoring programme tracking target species (Northern lapwing, grey partridge, corncrake), vegetation, and insects has guided adaptive management, and from 2025 extensive year-round grazing complements mowing to enhance structural diversity and resilience. Public engagement through observation and educational platforms fosters regional acceptance without promoting tourism, delivering a transferable best-practice model for biodiversity compensation in sustainable infrastructure development.

From Fragmented Administration to Data-Driven Governance – Post-Earthquake Reconstruction in Croatia

Project No:	EPSA2025084
Name of the lead organisation:	Ministry of Physical Planning, Construction and State Assets
Contact person:	Alma Agović, Head of Department
Level of Government:	National
EU funding:	No

After the devastating 2020 Zagreb and Banovina earthquakes damaged 69,000 buildings (initial damage estimated at EUR 17 billion), Croatia's reconstruction efforts were hampered by responsibilities split across three public bodies relying on fragmented records, manual data entry, and disconnected databases, all amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Following legislation consolidating these bodies into a single Ministry, the Reconstruction Monitoring Platform was developed as a centralised digital solution for reconstruction management, data-driven governance, and transparency. It provides a comprehensive overview of over 26,000 locations under reconstruction, 45,000 applications, 16,000 financial authorisations, 7,500 temporary housing residents, and 18,000 stakeholders' activities. Released in March 2023, the platform was built in-house, without additional financial resources, following a phased, crisis-driven approach: core data consolidation, gradual functionality expansion, and continuous user-feedback refinement. Now fully embedded in the Ministry's daily operations, it constitutes a structural administrative reform evolving into a sustainable digital governance solution.

INVEAT Plan: High Technology Equipment Investment Plan in the National Health System, Spain

Project No:	EPSA2025025
Name of the lead organisation:	Ministry of Health
Contact person:	Eloy Cuéllar Martín, Deputy Director-General for Planning and Coordination of European Funds
Level of Government:	National
EU funding:	Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF)

Spain's INVEAT plan, the Ministry of Health's largest-budget project under the national Recovery, and Resilience Plan, allocates significant investment to renew and expand high-tech medical equipment, resulting in 863 items installed and commissioned, including linear accelerators, MRI, PET and PET-CT scanners, gamma cameras, brachytherapy, angiography, neuroradiology equipment, and haemodynamic rooms. The project addresses obsolescence levels above the European average, equipment density below it, and severe geographical imbalances. Its main objective is to increase survival and quality of life through early diagnosis, especially for chronic, oncological, rare, and neurological diseases, while consolidating equitable access. Specific targets include renewing 100% of equipment aged 12+ years (10–11 for linear accelerators and CT) and raising equipment density per 100,000 inhabitants by at least 15%. Governance relies on National Health System co-governance bodies with the Autonomous Communities, plus two expert scientific-technical groups defining technological bands and reviewing ageing MRI equipment.

DREAM RRMV Vienna – Construction of the BOKU River Lab, Austria

Project No:	EPSA2025062
Name of the lead organisation:	City of Vienna, Municipal Department for European Affairs
Contact person:	Martin Pospischill, Head of Department
Level of Government:	Regional
EU funding:	European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) / Interreg

The EU-funded DREAM RRMV Vienna project initiated construction of the River Lab, a globally unique research infrastructure in Vienna enabling 1:1 scale experiments on water-flow dynamics and sediment transport, overcoming the limitations of conventional small-scale models that cannot adequately represent interactions of flow, sediment, vegetation, and biota. Its island location between the Danube and Danube Canal allows gravity-driven water abstraction, with discharges up to 10 m³/s under free-surface flow, supporting realistic research on turbulent hydrodynamics, fish behaviour, and human flood safety. Results inform EU policymaking on climate change, navigation, hydropower, flood protection, agriculture, and ecological restoration. Designed as a cooperation involving six regions across four Member States, the project was awarded UNESCO Centre status for Integrated River Research and Management in November 2025 by unanimous decision. Implementation followed a structured multi-phase approach — feasibility study, four EU-funded projects, six national co-financiers, BIM-supported planning, EU-compliant procurement, and construction under challenging geotechnical conditions with BIG overseeing delivery.

Development of the EuroVelo 11 Cycling Route, Poland

Project No:	EPSA2025054
Name of the lead organisation:	Regional Roads Authority in Kraków
Contact person:	Katarzyna Węgrzyn – Madeja, Director of the Regional Roads Authority in Kraków
Level of Government:	Regional
EU funding:	European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) / European Social Fund (ESF)

Poland's Małopolska Region faced fragmented transport infrastructure, congestion, and a lack of safe corridors for non-motorised mobility, limiting both active tourism competitiveness and residents' sustainable commuting options. Aligned with the regional VeloMałopolska strategy, this project established a coherent, zero-emission transport corridor along the EuroVelo 11 route through the Dunajec and Poprad river valleys, connecting municipalities to the wider European cycling network. Specific objectives include stimulating local SMEs (gastronomy, accommodation, services) through cycling tourism; enhancing safety by separating cycling from motor traffic with grade-separated bridge crossings; integrating cycling with the regional rail network to address the "last mile" challenge; and opening up environmentally valuable river valleys while meeting strict environmental standards. Implementation maximised existing land resources, adapting disused railway embankments and flood protection levees, and required advanced engineering in mountainous, flood-prone terrain, including riverbank stabilisation and dedicated cycling bridges, making EuroVelo 11 a viable alternative for both commuting and tourism.

Establishing Indicators of Sustainability Culture for the Improvement of Citizens' Climate Action and Empowerment, Spain

Project No:	EPSA2025074
Name of the lead organisation:	Climate Change and Sustainability Office, Barcelona City Council
Contact person:	Helena Barracó Nogues, Head of Programmes and Facilities, Climate Change and Sustainability Office - Barcelona City Council
Level of Government:	Local
EU funding:	No

Barcelona, a long-standing leader in urban sustainability with ten-year Sustainability Action Programmes since 2002 and its Climate City Contract approved in 2024 under the EU Mission for 100 Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities by 2030, recognised that climate neutrality requires profound social and cultural change, not just infrastructure. As sustainability initiatives multiplied under the Let's Change for Climate Plan, the city lacked a unified framework to monitor and demonstrate their impact. This project fills that gap through four objectives: defining a shared Theory of Change linking municipal services to long-term climate outcomes; establishing a harmonised indicator and monitoring system delivering real-time evidence; embedding a data culture within municipal teams through training and shared tools; and supporting evidence-based decision-making and resource allocation. Teams report monthly via a standardised Excel template, with data consolidated and visualised in Power BI on the Council's intranet. By 2025, the system covered 706 activity types and registered 560,927 impacts (a 20% year-on-year increase) giving Barcelona its first comprehensive, comparable overview of sustainability culture services.

Category III: Delivering User-Centric Services at Subnational Level

Number of projects submitted: 36

Number of winning projects: 3

Number of projects receiving Good Practice Certificates: 8

Winning Projects

	Name of project	Country
1st Place	The Galician Strategy for Public Procurement of Innovative Solutions in Health of the Galician Health Service (SERGAS)	Spain
2nd Place	BärGPT	Germany
3rd Place	Suma CivicData Engine: A Subnational CivicData Engine for Fair Tariffs and User-Centred Public Services	Spain

GOOD PRACTICE CERTIFICATES

- *Jems – Joint Electronic Monitoring System for Interreg programmes*, City of Vienna, Municipal Department for European Affairs, Austria
- *WIPP360 – An Evidence and Data-Driven Model to Detect and Motivate Elderly People at High Risk to Participate in Preventive Interventions*, Municipality of Slagelse, Denmark
- *OpenCouncil.chania.gr – Bringing City Councils to Citizens: Democracy, Transparency and Participation Enhanced with AI Tools*, Municipality of Chania, Greece
- *Next Diba Service: Support for EU Fundraising and Fund Management*, Diputació de Barcelona (Provincial Council), Spain
- *Madrid, Digital Capital: Delivering Public Services for People through Data-Driven, Automation, AI and Interoperable Digital Government*, Madrid City Council, Spain
- *Mobile Public Service Hall*, Public Service Hall, Ministry of Justice, Georgia
- *Voghera Digital*, Municipality of Voghera, Italy
- *More Inclusive School*, Municipality of Paredes, Portugal

1st Place

The Galician Strategy for Public Procurement of Innovative Solutions in Health of the Galician Health Service (SERGAS), Spain

Project No:	EPSA2025079
Name of the lead organisation:	Galician Health Service
Contact person:	José María Romero Fidalgo, Director Health Development and Innovation area, ACIS
Level of Government:	Regional
EU funding:	European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) / Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF)

The Spanish healthcare system is decentralised and managed by the Regional Governments within the framework of the National Health System . This model places responsibility at regional level for healthcare organisation and delivery that requires developing effective mechanisms to address complex and evolving challenges.

In this regard, Galicia, a region in the north of Spain, has responded by developing a long-term strategy based on Public Procurement of Innovative solutions (PPI). Since 2012, the use of PPI has been instrumental in the development of innovation programmes and advanced digital health solutions, creating significant institutional learning and enhancing delivery capacities.

As a result, PPI has become an instrument widely used within the Galician public healthcare system, promoting the consolidation of this governance approach. From Hospital 2050 and Innova-Saúde to Código100 and the ongoing PRECISAÚDE programme, the Galician Health Service (SERGAS) has made an intensive and extensive use of PPI in all their forms. This sustained experience and investment has positioned Galicia as one of the leading regions in Europe in the use of innovation procurement, a trajectory recognised at European Level through participation in reference networks.

First, the objective of the project is to identify, develop, and deploy innovative healthcare solutions that are not yet available on the market and that effectively respond to the current and evolving needs of the population. To achieve this objective, the strategy uses Public Procurement of Innovative solutions (PPI) as a governance instrument that complements ordinary procurement and allows the healthcare system to broaden its options and capacities to address societal and healthcare challenges, particularly in situations where existing market solutions are insufficient. Through this approach, the project seeks to ensure that concrete needs identified by healthcare professionals and services can be transformed into solutions that are developed, tested, and progressively incorporated into everyday healthcare practice.

The strategy is implemented through a framework that integrates PPI as a tool used within the planning, decision-making, and investment processes. Between 2012 and 2026, more than EUR 120 million was allocated to a range of programmes using PPI to promote research, development, and innovation. This approach has led to a portfolio of innovation procurement initiatives across different areas, such as electronic medical records (IANUS), e-prescription, advanced process management for prevalent diseases, telecare by ICT, tools for the management, and optimisation of clinical trials. PPI is used as a mechanism to identify unmet needs, have dialogue with the market, and align innovation towards the healthcare system needs. Through this process, companies, technology centres, and other stakeholders are involved from the early stages in the development of innovative solutions aligned with regional health priorities and with potential for replication in other contexts. Open market consultation is a key element of this approach, allowing public needs to be clarified and solutions to be shaped before launching procurement procedures. Once contracts are awarded, implementation is monitored through reports, technical follow-up, evaluation of results, and impact analysis. This experience has positioned Galicia as a reference in the use of innovation procurement.

2nd Place

BärGPT, Germany

Project No:	EPSA2025095
Name of the lead organisation:	Governing Mayor of Berlin – Senate Chancellery
Contact person:	Benyamin Abdülhay, Policy Officer for Digital Transformation
Level of Government:	Regional
EU funding:	No

BärGPT is an open-source AI assistant developed for public servants in Berlin and hosted entirely on European infrastructure. It supports everyday administrative work such as document analysis, drafting texts, knowledge management, and policy preparation, with the aim of increasing efficiency and quality in public service delivery. The product emerged from a prototyping and service design process that placed public servants at the centre of development. Their needs directly shaped core features such as persistent document uploads and clear source citations, and is by default shipped with a set of standard documents relevant to the day-to-day work of public servants. This data-driven set-up improves the quality of generated outputs while reducing the risk of generating responses that contains false or misleading information (so called Hallucinations).

By combining a user experience comparable to commercial tools with full compliance of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), BärGPT provides a safe, practical, and accessible digital service at subnational level. It enables public servants to work more effectively and, in turn, deliver better policies and services for citizens.

The main objective of the project is to provide a secure, GDPR-compliant AI assistant for public servants that relies exclusively on European technology. The rapid spread of generative AI has created immediate demand within public administration, while demographic change and labour shortages are increasing pressure on existing staff. At the same time, most available AI tools raise concerns regarding data protection and sovereignty. BärGPT addresses this gap by offering an easy-to-use, compliant alternative tailored to public-sector needs. A key goal was to support evidence-based policymaking by ensuring transparency and reliability. This led to the implementation of persistent document management and direct source citations, allowing users to trace generated content back to original documents. Usability was another central objective. Extensive user testing with public servants ensured that the system remains intuitive and practical for daily work, enabling faster adoption and meaningful impact across Berlin's public administration.

BärGPT is a joint initiative of the Berlin Senate Chancellery and CityLAB Berlin. The project emerged from an exploration phase initiated by an AI task force coordinated by the Senate Chancellery. In this phase, CityLAB Berlin organised workshops with public servants to identify practical use cases for generative AI in administrative work. Based on these insights, an initial proof of concept was developed and tested.

Following successful validation, the cooperation was formally established. The project combines policy and administrative oversight from the Senate Chancellery with product design and technical development at CityLAB Berlin. As the initiative evolved from prototype to product, additional staff were allocated to support development and implementation. Funding came from the existing public innovation grant to CityLAB Berlin, with resources primarily dedicated to development and operational capacities. The project followed an agile, service-oriented approach with continuous stakeholder involvement through workshops and user testing. After iterative refinement and feature completion, a restricted beta phase was launched, supported by internal communication and training measures. Prior to full roll-out in November 2025, the system was migrated to a GDPR-compliant infrastructure. Ongoing improvements continue, based on user feedback.

3rd Place

Suma CivicData Engine: A Subnational CivicData Engine for Fair Tariffs and User-Centred Public Services, Spain

Project No:	EPSA2025007
Name of the lead organisation:	Suma Tax Administration, Alicante Provincial Council
Contact person:	Óscar Tormo Moratalla, Coordinador de la Unidad Mantenimiento de Información Gráfica
Level of Government:	Local
EU funding:	No

For two years, Directive (EU) 2018/851 and Law 7/2022 have required municipalities to calculate the waste tax on the basis of the actual or estimated generation of each dwelling and activity, in accordance with the 'polluter pays' principle. However, many municipalities – especially those with fewer than 20 000 inhabitants – do not have reliable, up-to-date, or interconnected data. This shortcoming compromises the fairness of the system, local financial sustainability, and regulatory compliance.

The project addresses this challenge through an interoperable data ecosystem that transforms dispersed and heterogeneous registers into personalised public services tailored to the territory and end user. Designed for the subnational level, it provides advanced capabilities such as georeferencing, Geographic Information System (GIS) analysis, data curation, and indirect estimation, without requiring technology or specialised staff from municipalities. By putting the user at the centre, the model adjusts the fee to the occupancy and actual use of each property, improves transparency, and reduces inequalities, turning data and artificial intelligence into a useful, fair, and understandable public tool.

Most municipalities lack the reliable, homogenous, and geo-referenced data needed to apply the new waste tax model required by Law 7/2022, threatening the fairness of the system, legal certainty, and municipal financial sustainability. In response, the project defines five strategic objectives focused on improving the experience of citizens and municipalities alike: ensuring regulatory compliance through a methodology based on objective data, aligned with the European 'polluter pays' principle; creating a smart ecosystem of municipal data, integrating and georeferencing multiple databases into a single reliable source for decision-making; strengthening tax fairness by identifying omissions and inconsistencies and estimating the potential waste generation of each building; equipping municipalities with advanced capabilities, offering GIS tools, analyses, and tariff scenarios without the need for local investment; and providing user-centric services through a replicable, sustainable model geared towards continuous improvement.

The project responds directly to the requirements of Law 7/2022, operating not as an isolated technological solution but as a collaborative governance model that ensures compliance and long-term sustainability while relieving municipalities of complex technical and administrative burdens. At its core are strong institutional alliances, with Suma acting as a centralised centre of competence that works with local authorities through the co-creation and territorial validation of data, involving municipalities directly in defining tax and modelling tariff scenarios. Suma fully absorbs the investments required for advanced technology and specialised talent - including GIS and advanced analysis experts - freeing municipalities from operational costs. The entire budget is borne by Suma as part of its annual capital investments, funding a dedicated five-person team that transforms scattered, outdated administrative records into high-value public geodata. Finally, the initiative maintains a transparent, two-way communication strategy, presenting complex technical results through clear visualisations and mapping data so that both citizens and municipal authorities can understand, verify, and rely on a fair, objective, and evidence-based tariff system.

GOOD PRACTICE CERTIFICATES

Jems – Joint Electronic Monitoring System for Interreg Programmes, Austria

Project No:	EPSA2025056
Name of the lead organisation:	City of Vienna, Municipal Department for European Affairs
Contact person:	Alexandra Kulmer, Project manager, Interact Office Vienna
Level of Government:	Regional
EU funding:	Yes / Interreg

Interreg is a key instruments in EU Cohesion Policy, with 86 programmes managing significant amounts of funds, implemented by regional and national authorities across Member States under diverse administrative traditions but a common EU regulatory framework. Programmes must digitalise all exchanges with beneficiaries yet historically relied on fragmented national or programme-specific IT solutions, causing duplication, inconsistent practices, and high administrative burden — with smaller programmes unable to afford robust systems. The City of Vienna's Interact Office developed the Joint Electronic Monitoring System (Jems) as a governance reform: a common solution, free of charge for all programmes, that supports the complete programme and project lifecycle, calls, applications, assessment, contracting, monitoring, reporting, expenditure verification, payments, and accounting, with standardised workflows and automated checks improving data quality, traceability, and legal certainty. Developed from 2020 to 2024 through an agile, stakeholder-centred approach, Jems is now used by 45 programmes in 19 Member States, contributing to significant savings of development costs.

WIPP360 – An Evidence and Data-Driven Model to Detect and Motivate Elderly People at High Risk to Participate in Preventive Interventions, Denmark

Project No:	EPSA2025102
Name of the lead organisation:	Municipality of Slagelse
Contact person:	Gorm Riisager Rabølle, Senior Consultant
Level of Government:	Local
EU funding:	Interreg

Across Europe, populations are ageing while the health and social care workforce shrinks, leaving municipalities under pressure to deliver preventive services with limited resources. Traditional approaches rely on age-based eligibility and professional intuition, often missing vulnerable citizens until functional decline has progressed. WIPP360, developed in Denmark, replaces age-based selection with an evidence-based, scalable model: validated health indicators feed a digital screening and automated triage algorithm that stratifies older citizens into three risk categories, red (immediate preventive home visit), yellow (guidance towards preventive support), and green (self-management support). This enables municipalities to identify those at highest risk of functional loss and dependence, allocate scarce workforce resources accordingly, improve consultation quality, and strengthen equity by detecting otherwise "invisible" vulnerable adults, including non-digital citizens. Founded through the Interreg 5A-funded WIPP project by Slagelse and Middelfart Municipalities with the University of Southern Denmark, it operated as a formal network until 2023 and continues since 2024 as an open implementation network with annual experience-sharing, relying on in-kind staff contributions rather than a dedicated budget.

OpenCouncil.chania.gr – Bringing City Councils to Citizens: Democracy, Transparency and Participation Enhanced with AI tools, Greece

Project No:	EPSA2025060
Name of the lead organisation:	Municipality of Chania
Contact person:	Sevasti Polychronaki, Head of the Management, Quality and IT Department - Municipality of Chania
Level of Government:	Local
EU funding:	No

OpenCouncil.chania.gr, launched on 1 January 2025, uses AI, natural-language processing, and geospatial data to convert raw council meeting recordings into structured, searchable, location-specific information. In Chania, Greece, as across Europe, council meetings were technically public but practically inaccessible: hours of unstructured YouTube footage with no searchable records and no way for residents to know when their neighbourhood was being discussed. The platform pursues four objectives: establishing transparency as permanent civic infrastructure through AI transcription, speaker identification, and searchable archives; fostering civic comprehension via plain-language summaries, interactive maps, and WhatsApp/email notifications; enabling place-based accountability by mapping discussions to specific streets; and driving scalable innovation through open-source code and public APIs. Run as a public–private partnership between the Municipality and OpenCouncil, it also automates official minutes and participation analytics, reducing administrative burden. In its first year, Chania processed over 70 meetings (110+ hours), and nine other Greek municipalities, from Samothrace to Athens, have adopted the platform, with over twenty more pending.

Next Diba Service: Support for EU Fundraising and Fund Management, Spain

Project No:	EPSA2025030
Name of the lead organisation:	Diputació de Barcelona (Provincial Council)
Contact person:	Marina Espinosa de Castro, Coordinator of Local Cooperation and Assistance
Level of Government:	Local
EU funding:	No

Next Diba, launched by Barcelona Provincial Council, is a user-centric service ensuring that all municipalities, regardless of size, can access and manage European funds efficiently. It was born in response to the COVID-19 crisis, when the EU activated NextGenerationEU and the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), an unprecedented opportunity for the green, digital, and social transition, but one whose regulatory, technical, and administrative complexity risked excluding many local governments, especially smaller ones. Its three objectives are: strengthening the local world's influence on the design of European funding and defending its interests in multi-level governance; providing high-quality legal, technical, and strategic support for attracting, executing, and justifying funds; and generating a transferable management model that builds institutional capacity. Overseen by the Office of the Chair for political leadership, the team has grown from two to eight multidisciplinary staff, mobilising funds for 179 local projects plus 18 Council projects. The service has since expanded beyond NextGenerationEU to other European funds through a new one-stop shop.

Madrid, Digital Capital: Delivering Public Services for People through Data-Driven, Automation, AI and Interoperable Digital Government, Spain

Project No:	EPSA2025105
Name of the lead organisation:	Madrid City Council
Contact person:	Fernando de Pablo Martín, General Director of the Digital Office
Level of Government:	Local
EU funding:	Digital Europe Programme / European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) / Horizon Europe / Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) / Connecting Europe Facility (CEF – Digital)

Madrid, Digital Capital (MDC) is Madrid City Council's cross-cutting Digital Transformation Strategy, launched in late 2022 to ensure technology is human-centred, inclusive, and trustworthy. It has consolidated a structural shift from paper-based administration to a fully digital, data-driven operating model: by 2025, 83.41% of procedures were conducted electronically (up from 14.34% in 2019), paper usage fell to near zero, electronic notifications exceeded 14 million, and the Madrid Movil app approached one million downloads. MDC pursues three objectives: more and better digital services designed around user needs, accessible especially for older and vulnerable people; a smarter, more efficient City Council leveraging data, automation, and AI; and a dynamic digital ecosystem strengthening public-private collaboration. Backed by significant funds across 74 projects, implementation is coordinated by the Digital Office as a whole-of-government programme, featuring responsible AI governance through MAIA, IoT and 5G infrastructure, and digital inclusion measures such as volunteer programmes and in-person support agents for older residents.

Mobile Public Service Hall, Georgia

Project No:	EPSA2025076
Name of the lead organisation:	Public Service Hall, Ministry of Justice
Contact person:	Mariam Tsaguria, Head of Analytical Service of Administration Department
Level of Government:	National
EU funding:	No

The Mobile Public Service Hall was developed in Georgia to address unequal access to public services in rural and high-mountainous regions, where geographic isolation, weak infrastructure, and socio-economic barriers prevented citizens from reaching service centres, and where permanent infrastructure beyond the existing 127 branches was neither feasible nor cost-effective. Specially equipped mobile units deliver nearly 500 interoperable services from multiple public institutions and selected private partners under a one-stop shop model, with routes and schedules determined through population data, distance analysis, demand assessment, and citizen feedback. Objectives include expanding geographic coverage without costly infrastructure, reducing financial and time burdens, maintaining full service quality, and increasing access for vulnerable groups, elderly persons, persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities, and residents near occupation lines. Launched in 2021 as a five-vehicle pilot, the project has expanded to 18 mobile units serving around 90 villages weekly across all regions, delivering more than 218,000 services, with continuous monitoring enabling route optimisation and adaptive management.

Voghera Digital, Italy

Project No:	EPSA2025008
Name of the lead organisation:	Municipality of Voghera
Contact person:	Gloria Chindamo, Vice President of the City Council of Voghera
Level of Government:	Local
EU funding:	Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF)

Voghera Digital was initiated by the Municipality of Voghera to structure its digital transformation in response to growing municipal responsibilities under national and European digital reforms. The project has evolved from an experimental initiative into a stable framework embedded in the municipality's governance, aligning infrastructure upgrades, service innovation, capacity-building, and data-driven approaches within a coherent strategy. Grounded in the understanding that digital transformation requires institutional and cultural adaptation alongside technology, it aims to reduce the digital divide by improving digital public services and ensuring citizens of all ages can access them, combining technological upgrades with continuous training, assisted access, and participatory initiatives. Its centrepiece is the annual Voghera Digital Festival, bringing together citizens, businesses, associations, schools, universities, and institutions to explain reforms, present services, and gather feedback. Implementation follows a coordinated governance model with cross-departmental involvement, funded through municipal budget, public grants, and sponsorships, with digital initiatives integrated into ordinary administrative activities to ensure gradual institutionalisation and long-term continuity.

More Inclusive School (Escola Mais Inclusiva – EMI), Portugal

Project No:	EPSA2025053
Name of the lead organisation:	Municipality of Paredes
Contact person:	Alexandra Teixeira, Coordinator
Level of Government:	Local
EU funding:	Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF)

Escola + Inclusiva is a coordinated local service delivery model that integrates education, social services, and community support to prevent school dropout, academic failure, and reduced well-being among students from vulnerable and disadvantaged backgrounds. Its objectives are to strengthen non-curricular support through cross-disciplinary teams combining educational, social, and technological expertise, notably robotics and digital activities; promote active family involvement as key partners in educational success; develop seminars improving digital parenting skills; enhance coordination among schools, social services, and community organisations; and provide complementary therapies addressing emotional, behavioural, and developmental needs. Implementation combined an integrated programme for at-risk students (robotics, occupational and speech therapy, psychosocial development) with a Capacity Building and Certification of Trauma-Sensitive Schools component: Year 1 trained the whole educational community, while Year 2 focused on certification, advanced training, and supervision. Participatory governance involved school leaders, teachers, mediators, therapists, and families, with resources allocated to robotics kits, specialised trainers, therapy services, and complementary activities.

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

- *Guichet.lu, Ministry for Digitalisation, Luxembourg*
- *Justice 3.0, Federal Ministry of Justice, Austria*
- *Destination Barcelona: Multilevel Governance for the Competitiveness and the Decentralisation of Tourism Offer in the Province of Barcelona, Diputació de Barcelona (Provincial Council), Spain*
- *Digital Justice & Justice Folder, Ministry of the Presidency, Justice and Relations with the Courts, Spain*
- *One Stop Shop in Catalonia, Government of Catalonia, Ministry of Business and Labor, Business Management Office, Spain*
- *SEDIPUALB@ Public Digital Administrative Management Platform, Diputación de Albacete (Provincial Council), Spain*
- *Decidim. Free Open-Source Participatory Democracy for Cities and Organisations, Barcelona City Council, Spain*
- *Units of Support for High Performance in Schools, Directorate-General of Education, Portugal*
- *Digital for Reconstruction Grants, USRC - Special Office for the Reconstruction of the Municipalities of the “Seismic Crater”, Italy*
- *The Public Policy Planning and Evaluation Area, Andalusian Institute of Public Administration, Regional Government of Andalusia, Spain*
- *“My City, My Future” to “Co-Create, Co-Manage”, Nilüfer Municipality, Türkiye*
- *Public Research Infrastructure Database: Research and Innovation through Open for Collaboration in Austria, Federal Ministry of Women, Science and Research (BMFWF), Austria*
- *IdroGEO – The Italian Web Platform on Landslides and Floods, Italian Institute for Environmental Protection and Research – ISPRA, Italy*
- *Digital Sustainability: Contribution of Technology to the Green and Digital Transition in the City of Madrid, Madrid City Council, Spain*
- *Together for Better, a New Funding Model for the Early Learning and Childcare Sector, Department of Children Disability and Equality, Ireland*

Guichet.lu, Luxembourg

EPSA Previous Project No:	EPSA2009179
Name of the lead organisation:	Ministry for Digitalisation
Contact person:	Vera Soares, Government Advisor
Level of Government:	National
EU funding:	Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF)

Guichet.lu, Luxembourg's single point of contact for citizens and businesses dealing with public authorities, has expanded continuously since 2009. By 2026, the brand comprises the information portal Guichet.lu, the interactive portal MyGuichet.lu (web and mobile app), a helpdesk with video call option, and a physical citizen service point. MyGuichet.lu offers a secure eSpace with intelligent assistants, electronic appointment scheduling, access to authentic sources for pre-filling forms, and eDelivery of official documents, with authentication via the Luxembourg eID, eIDAS, and LuxTrust enabling cross-border use. Recent developments include easy-language sections, company API interfaces, and planned 2026 innovations: digital mandates, decentralised physical service points, and an AI chatbot. Its long-term impact is substantial: by 2025, over 850 procedures were available online, 2,282,910 procedures were transmitted (up from 393,620 in 2018), and 87% of residents used online administrative services (versus 27% in 2009). The platform also proved crucial during COVID-19 and underpins Luxembourg's top eGovernment benchmark rankings. Since 2018, the Ministry for Digitalisation has strengthened resources, positioning Guichet.lu as the flagship of national eGovernment.

Justice 3.0, Austria

EPSA Previous Project No:	EPSA2015058
Name of the lead organisation:	Federal Ministry of Justice
Contact person:	Christian Gesek, Head of department legal informatics and ICT
Level of Government:	National
EU funding:	No

Justice 3.0, Austria's e-Justice transformation initiative, has evolved from a strategic road map into the standard operating model of the Austrian justice system. Its core, the Digital Justice Workplace (DJAP), is now used across 160 justice authorities by more than 7,500 daily users, supporting 5.4 million cases, with roughly 90% of new cases managed digitally. The originally envisaged building blocks, central file system, OCR-enabled document handling, integration with specialised applications, have been implemented and refined through continuous practitioner feedback, enabling parallel file access, automation, and full-text search across civil, criminal, and administrative proceedings. Over 750 courtrooms have been equipped with modern media technology, supporting well over 1 million hearings within digital proceedings, while JustizOnline provides citizens and legal professionals with electronic file inspection and digital submissions. Long-term impacts include reduced administrative overhead, faster decision-making, and pandemic-proven resilience through location-independent work. Notably, Switzerland selected the DJAP as its e-Justice file application after comparative testing, and both countries now co-develop the system jointly, confirming its transferability and European relevance.

Destination Barcelona: Multilevel Governance for the Competitiveness and the Decentralisation of Tourism Offer in the Province of Barcelona, Spain

EPSA Previous Project No:	EPSA2017034
Name of the lead organisation:	Diputació de Barcelona (Provincial Council)
Contact person:	Elisabet Gonzalez, Head of the Technical Tourism Office
Level of Government:	Local
EU funding:	No

Barcelona Destination, the inter-institutional collaboration between Barcelona Provincial Council and the City of Barcelona awarded by EPSA in 2017, has evolved into a mature, destination-wide sustainability governance model. Its central result is the Destination Barcelona Commitment to Sustainable Tourism (DBCST), a shared methodology aligned with the UN SDGs that defines clear criteria, 21 sector-specific Good Practice Manuals, annual commitments, and common sustainability indicators, supported by a digital monitoring platform and accredited consultants providing annual verification. Participation has grown from 245 distinguished companies in 2017 to 1,199 members by 2025, spanning the full tourism value chain — accommodation, restaurants, cultural facilities, wineries, marinas, natural parks, events, and transport — with strong SME presence. Governance has been strengthened through a permanent Sustainability Board, reinforced technical teams, and coordination with the Chamber of Commerce, eliminating fragmentation between city and province. Since 2025, members must report water consumption, energy consumption, and carbon footprint, backed by targeted training, consolidating sustainability as a structural requirement embedded across tourism management.

Justice Folder, Spain

EPSA Previous Project No:	EPSA2023147
Name of the lead organisation:	Ministry of the Presidency, Justice and Relations with the Courts
Contact person:	Aitor Cubo Contreras, Director General for Digital Transformation of the Administration of Justice
Level of Government:	National
EU funding:	Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF)

Justice Folder, Spain's single digital access point to the Administration of Justice, has evolved from a case file consultation service into a cornerstone of the national justice digitalisation strategy. Managed by the Directorate-General for Digital Transformation with a dedicated product office and co-governed with the autonomous communities through the State Technical Committee, the platform has incorporated AI solutions including a Plain Language Document Summary Service, which makes legal information accessible to non-specialists, and a Document Anonymiser that removes personal data for safe sharing. Functionalities now span case consultation, hearing schedules, electronic notifications, judicial payments, Civil Registry certificates, and notarial documents. The progressive integration of autonomous communities with devolved justice competences ensures a unified nationwide experience. In three years, the platform has reached over 618,000 unique users and 100,000+ monthly visits, with professional adoption exceeding 80% in some groups; its mobile app, launched in September 2024, has surpassed 75,000 downloads. Over 100 additional services are under assessment, alongside synergies with hyperautomation and European interoperability initiatives.

One-Stop Shop in Catalonia, Spain

EPSA Previous Project No:	EPSA2017089
Name of the lead organisation:	Government of Catalonia, Ministry of Business and Labor, Business Management Office
Contact person:	Cristina Pruñonosa, Business Management Office Manager
Level of Government:	Regional
EU funding:	European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) / Interreg

The One-Stop Shop (OSS) of the Government of Catalonia integrates information, processing, and management through a single entry point for procedures to start, modify, and develop economic activity. Since its 2017 EPSA presentation, the model has been consolidated through a strengthened governance framework led by the Business Management Office (BMO), Law 18/2020 on the facilitation of economic activity, and the OSS Plan 2024–2028, formalising a relationship model based on trust, digital-by-default, and intensive data use - including the Once-Only Principle, proactive services, and Building Information Modelling for complex procedures. Impact has been structural: full adoption by all 947 Catalan municipalities; catalogue procedures up from 524 to 772; registered users up from 39,782 to over 1 million; electronic procedures nearly tripled to 1.97 million; and 640,000 cases managed annually with 99% digitalisation. With 2,800 cases processed daily and significant savings estimated, supported by increasing budgets, the OSS demonstrates sustained, scalable long-term impact.

SEDIPUALB@ Public Digital Administrative Management Platform, Spain

EPSA Previous Project No:	EPSA2019002
Name of the lead organisation:	Diputación de Albacete (Provincial Council)
Contact person:	José Joaquín de Haro Navarro, Head of the Administrative Modernization and ICT Service
Level of Government:	Local
EU funding:	Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF)

This project has established itself as the largest public management platform in Spain, used by more than a thousand public administrations across all Spanish territories. Its governance model anticipated growth from the outset, based on platform usage (number of users) and each entity's storage needs, and economies of scale have been remarkable: staff increased by only three people despite utilisation growing over 300%, aided by technological advances delivering cheaper, higher-performance processing and storage. The long-term impact is substantial, more than 35,000 public employees use its services daily, and over 15 million citizens are affected by their management, with new administrations requesting to join every month, supported by recurring infrastructure investment. Artificial intelligence has made development and management more efficient and agile, expanding growth capacity. Strategically, the project symbolises the innovation capacity of a small public administration with extraordinary market impact, offering an alternative that protects against technological lock-in from private-sector dependence and reinforcing public technological and information sovereignty, increasingly critical in the AI era.

Decidim. Free Open-Source Participatory Democracy for Cities and Organisations, Spain

EPSA Previous Project No:	EPSA2019135
Name of the lead organisation:	Barcelona City Council
Contact person:	Arnau Monterde, Director of Participation and Innovation for Democracy
Level of Government:	Local
EU funding:	No

Decidim, the open-source participatory democracy platform originating in Barcelona, has evolved through comprehensive institutionalisation: the Decidim Association was created in 2019 with formal governance statutes, supported by the Metadecidim community as a participatory space for road map decisions and a Committee for Public Institutions integrating institutional stakeholders. Funding shifted from municipal budgets to a mixed model of membership fees, grants, and donations. Technically, the software moved from a monolithic architecture to a modular Ruby on Rails framework, improving scalability and cost-effectiveness, with enhanced GDPR compliance, multilingual support, accessibility standards, and a hybrid online-offline participation model complemented by civic tech literacy programmes. The platform now serves more than 450 organisations across 30 countries (municipalities, NGOs, and universities) with full traceability of administrative actions and public dashboards ensuring accountability. Its scope has expanded from participatory budgeting to complex assemblies, consultations, and accountability mechanisms, generating spillovers into open government, climate action, urban sustainability, and EU-funded research, backed politically by Barcelona City Council and the Generalitat de Catalunya.

Units of Support for High Performance in Schools, Portugal

EPSA Previous Project No:	EPSA2019139
Name of the lead organisation:	Directorate-General of Education
Contact person:	Victor Pardal, National Coordinator
Level of Government:	National
EU funding:	No

UAARE (Unidades de Apoio ao Alto Rendimento na Escola), Portugal's dual-career support programme for student-athletes, has evolved since its 2019 EPSA Best Practice Certificate from a pilot into a nationally institutionalised programme, expanding from 16 to 27 schools supporting over 1,600 student-athletes (38% girls). Key developments include Power BI dashboards for real-time academic and sports performance tracking, the 2024 launch of UAARE Superior in six universities covering 150 elite athletes, a 225-hour VET training programme for sports tutors whose first cohort graduated in early 2026, and the design of an interministerial UAARE National Structure ensuring coordination and multi-annual funding. Results are strong: dropout rates near 0%, a 96.10% school performance rate, and in 2024/25 alone, 58 world podiums, 337 European podiums, and 2,116 national team call-ups across 47 sports. With funds allocated for the Olympic cycle to 2028, two public sports science schools under development, and expanding Erasmus+ collaboration, UAARE demonstrates resilience, scalability, and sustained cross-government support.

Digital for Reconstruction Grants, Italy

EPSA Previous Project No:	EPSA2021052
Name of the lead organisation:	USRC - Special Office for the Reconstruction of the municipalities of the "Seismic Crater"
Contact person:	Raffaello Fico, Director
Level of Government:	Regional
EU funding:	No

The USRC digital platform, originally created to manage private building reconstruction applications after Italy's 2009 earthquake, has significantly expanded its functionality and user base. Municipal staff now use it as a direct sharing portal alongside applicants, designers, and USRC staff, supported by automatic notifications indicating who handles the next procedural step. The platform now also manages public reconstruction requests, integrates sismabonus tax incentives with reconstruction grants, and since December 2021 offers secure access via CIE or SPID digital identity. Usage has grown markedly: from roughly 21,000 accesses (October 2020–May 2021) to nearly 140,000 by December 2025 (84.63% external users), with applications rising from 2,354 to 6,347 across 125 municipalities and 245,684 documents. Work progress reports submitted digitally reached 84.59% of the total, and 72.31% of users rate the portal as excellent. Building on this success, USRC launched a platform in 2024 collecting 211 territorial regeneration proposals from 56 municipalities, with another portal for Complementary National Plan interventions expected in early 2026.

The Public Policy Planning and Evaluation Area, Spain

EPSA Previous Project No:	EPSA2021089
Name of the lead organisation:	Andalusian Institute of Public Administration, Regional Government of Andalusia
Contact person:	Carmen Seisdedos Alonso, Deputy Director of Evaluation and Innovation
Level of Government:	Regional
EU funding:	No

Andalusia's public policy evaluation project has transitioned since 2021 from an emerging initiative into a deeply institutionalised service, marked by the formal creation of the Public Policy Evaluation Service (EPP) within the IAAP in 2024, an expanded team of eight members, and the Collaborative People Group (GPE) growing to 37 members whose participation is officially recognised as professional merit. The service catalogue has scaled substantially: ex-ante evaluations rose from 13 before 2020 to 58 in 2021-2025, pre-evaluability analyses from 12 to 44 sessions, and methodological consulting supported 28 plans, underpinned by 14 published guides. The cornerstone is SEPA, the Monitoring and Evaluation System for Plans and Programmes of Andalusia, an EU-funded digital platform, mandatory by regulation since April 2025, fully operational since August 2025, incorporating AI capabilities and integrated into the regional Transparency Portal in January 2026. Training reached nine MOOC editions (8.5/10 satisfaction), and Andalusia's leadership culminated in founding REDEVAL, the Spanish Network for Public Policy Evaluation, in April 2025.

“My City, My Future” to “Co-Create, Co-Manage”, Türkiye

EPISA Previous Project No:	EPISA2021096
Name of the lead organisation:	Nilüfer Municipality
Contact person:	Buse Sözer, Project Development Specialist
Level of Government:	Local
EU funding:	No

My City, My Future, the participatory governance project of Nilüfer Municipality (Türkiye), has evolved since its 2021 EPISA submission into a fully institutionalised model embedded in the 2025–2029 Strategic Plan under the Co-Create, Co-Manage approach, moving citizen participation from consultation to direct influence on policy, service design, and resource allocation. Participatory practices included neighbourhood meetings across 16 regions covering all 64 neighbourhoods, future workshops with women, youth, and children, and tools like the Future Circle Board and Participation Box, with thousands of citizen inputs analysed using AI-supported technologies and aligned with the UN SDGs to produce 6 Strategic Aims and 36 Strategic Objectives. Nilüfer became the only Turkish municipality to define its vision and priorities through direct citizen deliberation and achieved a national first with Türkiye's inaugural local digital election via mobile app under the Compass is Digital Participation initiative. The Participation Council, neighbourhood committees, and hybrid digital-physical mechanisms ensure continuous dialogue, monitored through KPIs, with performance-based budgeting securing sustainability.

Public Research Infrastructure Database: Research and Innovation Through Open for Collaboration in Austria, Austria

EPISA Previous Project No:	EPISA2023099
Name of the lead organisation:	Federal Ministry of Women, Science and Research
Contact person:	Thorsten D. Barth, Senior Scientific Officer (SSO)
Level of Government:	National
EU funding:	No

Austria's Public Research Infrastructure Database has evolved from an initial project into an institutionalised process serving as the central instrument of the Austrian Research Infrastructure Action Plan 2030, part of the RTI Strategy 2030. Born from the need for coordinated planning, financing, and shared use of increasingly costly research infrastructures, the publicly accessible database now inventories over 2,600 collaborative RIs from more than 140 voluntarily participating R&D institutions, serving researchers, funders, policymakers, and administration. Its four KPI-measured objectives — access and use, strategy, monitoring, and mapping — show strong results: infrastructures grew from 799 (2016) to 2,671 (2025), annual users from 16,167 to 168,654, with 556,500 total users from 178 countries; monitoring documented significant funds in tenders and infrastructure investments; and mapping covers six research clusters and 24 ESFRI participations. The 2024 shift to process management cut additional costs and human resources, with technology infrastructure views planned by 2027.

IdroGEO – The Italian Web Platform on Landslides and Floods, Italy

EPSA Previous Project No:	EPSA2023100
Name of the lead organisation:	Italian Institute for Environmental Protection and Research - ISPRA
Contact person:	Alessandro Trigila, Head of unit, Project leader
Level of Government:	National
EU funding:	European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) / Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF)

IdroGEO, Italy's national web platform for landslide and flood risk information managed by ISPRA, has been substantially enhanced between 2023 and 2025 with an updated interface, 3D viewer, itineraries and stories, landslide webcams, and a new Landslide Monitoring section. An unplanned addition, the Check the Hazard tool, lets citizens and businesses geolocate an address and obtain hazard information within a 500 m buffer — developed in response to the 2024 Italian Budget Law's mandatory natural disaster insurance for businesses. An AI-powered virtual assistant now engages users in natural-language dialogue about risks, narrowing the gap between perceived and real risk. All objectives were achieved on schedule: users grew 114% from 142,607 (October 2023) to over 305,000 (January 2026), with page views rising from 7.2 to 17 million. The platform publishes data on over 684,000 landslides and 1,024 monitoring systems following FAIR principles, contributing to the UN Sendai Framework. New developments for 2026–2029, funded through the ERDF-co-financed CapCoe programme, include a new platform release and an AI model for cataloguing landslide news.

Digital Sustainability: Contribution of Technology to the Green and Digital Transition in the City of Madrid, Spain

EPSA Previous Project No:	EPSA2023137
Name of the lead organisation:	Madrid City Council
Contact person:	Fernando de Pablo Martín, General Director of the Digital Office
Level of Government:	Local
EU funding:	Digital Europe Programme / European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) / Horizon Europe / Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) / Connecting Europe Facility (CEF – Digital)

Madrid Capital Digital, the evolution of Madrid City Council's digital strategy since its EPSA 2023-2024 submission, has transformed from a digital sustainability initiative into a full institutional reform and city-wide operating model for digital, green, and social transformation. The consolidated Digital Office governs prioritisation, data management, and responsible AI, with portfolio-based governance aligning investment with KPIs and public dashboards replacing activity reporting. Digital adoption reached structural levels: electronic channels grew from 14.34% (2019) to 83.41% (2025), paper use is near zero, and satisfaction reached 98% in-person. The MAIA framework regulates responsible AI, with production use cases including the Asbestos Map AI (95% accuracy), Smart Tax Laboratory, and the IGUALA system integrating 60+ datasets into a territorial vulnerability index. Flagship infrastructure includes AI-managed traffic in Europe's longest urban tunnel and Mercamadrid's 5G smart grid with digital twin. Social impact spans over 150,000 teleassistance beneficiaries, digital inclusion support for 1,800 older people, and structured digital consultations, while San Blas Digital delivers 500+ annual activities reaching 9,000 participants, evidencing territorial scalability.

Together for Better, a New Funding Model for the Early Learning and Childcare Sector, Ireland

EPSA Previous Project No:	EPSA2023144
Name of the lead organisation:	Department of Children Disability and Equality
Contact person:	Anne-Marie Brookes, Assistant Secretary
Level of Government:	National
EU funding:	No

Core Funding, Ireland's funding scheme for the Early Learning and Care sector, has evolved significantly since its initial EPSA application, with a team now of 27 people. Key refinements include adjusted base rate allocations, targeted support for smaller and sessional services, application cloning (used by 97% of services to reduce administrative burden), and the Staff Funding Additional Contribution (SFAC) supporting pay increases under new Employment Regulation Orders. Fee management has advanced through the 2024/2025 Fee Increase Assessment process, with 1,145 services undergoing structured assessment, plus fee caps and freezes to reduce extreme fee variations. Long-term impacts are substantial: childcare-related consumer price expenditure fell 35.7% between December 2022 and December 2025, 93% of eligible services participate, and sector pay rates grew 29% on average from 2021-2025. The scheme has also created a comprehensive data environment enabling evidence-based oversight. The government commitment to a EUR 200 maximum monthly childcare cost per child is now accelerating further fee management development, positioning Core Funding as a model for managing public investment in privately delivered sectors.

