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IT GOVERNMENT STRATEGY 2021-2027 – comparison analysis

## IntroductionSignpost

Building on the European Commission Country Report Slovakia 2019 and first Slovakia investment prioritization proposal for new programming period 2021-2027 sent at the end of 2019, Deputy prime minister office for investment and informatization prepared this document to open new framework for dialog about IT government strategy.

Following text is focused on digital government sector as part of the big picture of national Strategy for digital transformation, its Action plan which includes application of new technologies in all sectors. To keep dialog narrow, also broadband topic will require separate communication.

Priorities of digital government strategy for new programming period are linked to the Policy Objective 1: A Smarter Europe – Innovative and smart industrial transformation, based on European Commission recommendation „investment needs are identified to reaping the benefits of digitisation for citizens, companies and governments, and in particular to:

* increase the quality and effectiveness of e-service provision taking into account regional differences and prioritising regions lagging behind;
* cooperate with neighbouring countries in developing mutually recognisable e-services.”

First chapter of the document briefly summarize IT during programming period 2014-2020 and second chapter focuses on programming period 2021-2027 based on comparison analysis. Second chapter has four sections, each dedicated to different viewpoint on the comparison between programming period 2014-2020 and 2021-2027. Due to the complexity, each section has **simplified** **figures** representing **situation of OPII after projects will be delivered** (year 2023) and situation of new programming period and its delivery held in 2030. Document is at the end explaining **new tools** to tackle IT projects slack of **delivery risk**. The data used to create the comparison figures are indicative figures. Document was created by the department of programming office involved in all submitted IT projects to OPII and other IT projects financed by the state budget. The numbers will be tuned in following documentation for the new programming period.

# CHAPTER ONE: PROGRAMMING PERIOD 2014-2020

* During programming period 2014-2020, eGovernment strategy was supported by Operational programme Integrated infrastructure, by priority axis 7: Information society, implemented through nine specific objectives: 1. Broadband, 2. SME innovation capacity support in digital economy, 3. Government to Business digital services, 4. Government to Citizen digital services, 5. Open data, 6. Digital inclusion, 7. Modernization of government institution, 8. Government cloud, 9. Cybersecurity.
* The biggest proportion of approved projects allocation is in specific objectives: 7.7 Modernization of government institution, followed by 7.4 Government to Citizen digital services, 7.8. Government cloud, 7.3 Government to Business digital services and 7.9 Cybersecurity with 11% and 7.5 Open data with 10%.
* The most approved projects were supported by specific objective 7.7 Modernization of government institution with electronic workflow as a most required activity. Specific objective 7.5 focused on open data is horizontal and can be delivered by most supported projects, which explains the second highest number. Third place belong to specific objective 7.4 and 7.3 oriented to digital services for citizens and business. Projects in these specific objectives aimed mostly on new electronic services.
* As was mention, eGovernment strategy for programming period 2014-2020 was built upon nine specific objectives. For purpose of the document, most relevant specific objectives and their activities was classified in tree perspectives based on the implementation tactic. First perspective is **experiment**, dedicated to new ideas that need to be tested, absorbed by operational level of institutions. Moreover, thank to the experiments, capacity knowledge will be acquired on the institutional level. Second perspective is **rollout**, which is a follow up for successfully implemented experiments. It is more funded with broad understanding what and how needs to be done. The third perspective is **continue,** ensuring necessity tuning and changes as a reaction to activities in rollout perspective. More details about activities which fall out for the next programming period due to lack of progress, needs or replacement by a new, better solution are in chapter two, section two.

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* The first figure represents 80% money of OPII distributed by specific objectives 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 7.7 and 7.8. Activities that will be supported in programming period 2021-2027 in different perspective of strategy are marked with blue square. Activities that will not be eligible for EU funding in next programming period are marked with grey square.
* The support goes to continue perspective mostly to building more new electronic services, government cloud and electronic workflow and paperless institutions. Last but not least money was focused to improve the backbone for core data and backbone for central services which are part of the eGOV Act and central architecture model.
* We have also rollpout very successfully data integration, the „once only” principle is taken place in all national and specific demand-oriented calls to build solid majority systems integrated to each other. Programming period 2014-2020 introduced entry money to support business intelligence, my data, and data quality to ease acceptance and create innovators and early adaptors among public institution. The same tactic was taken in services aside of strategy to improve UX and CX, launched OPEN API component and product management office aimed to lean, continue front end and GUI improvements.
* Specific position in delivering IT strategy has the Data office and Behavioural office, project of OPEPA ensuring central expert capacities for data and services. Third component in the figure, financed by OPEPA, but still having a crucial role in IT strategy is Business analytical actions. Outputs of this actions are optimized backend processes of public institutions that will be implemented to the IT systems. Its coordination is held by Ministry of interior affairs

# CHAPTER TWO: PROGRAMMING PERIOD 2021-2027

## 1. SECTION: PROJECTS

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  Description automatically generatedThe demand-oriented project calls were tested in government IT. This new element has taken place at the second half of the programming phase 2014-2020. This kind of projects was small scale, it supported competitiveness between applicants but most important it strongly held the strategy to be open and reachable to all who want to apply. Calls requirements cannot be misplaced in projects. Therefore, projects are lean and focused on delivery fitting to the national strategy.
* However, this kind of calls are not suitable when you are building or improving the backbone for central services or data. Due to this fact we will keep small proportion of funding in national project calls for proposals.
* We are also introducing inhouse development which is explained in section NEW TOOLS.

## 2. SECTION: STATEGY

* Most elaborated strategies hardly look back and there are even less which declare a follow up on the effort and money spent in past. The framework of strategy for the new programming period is not making this mistake and launches a new approach. The strategy is based on perspectives connecting programming periods.

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* The programming period 2021-2027 strategy is supporting government digital transformation based on two mayor priorities: reducing bureaucracy burden and government as a platform.
* The long hanging fruits in reducing bureaucracy is **data integration** which needs to be supported to acquire late majority public intuitions. Moreover, we keep supporting **Backbone for core data** and **Data office** which will need to reflect new components in rollout perspective. **Open data** will continue to react not only on the transparency point of view but also to create opportunities for third entities that create apps and business.
* Rollout must be done in **data quality** threatening the whole „once only” principle and trust between public institutions in exchanging data. **My data** as experiment will become mainstream in mobile and pc platform usable to give, share and also block access to personal data. Projects of **business intelligence** and **analytical units** will become a standard part of major public institutions to support data driven decisions, reduce number of changes in legislative, efficiency of public spending and ensure more value for money projects. Last but not least a new model of optimized backend process needs to be taken. This new **business analyst units** will be on core public institutions responsible to “cut the red tape”, reduce gold platting and eliminate processes and ensuring lean backend workflow in order to reduce time and money of citizens and business spent on interaction with the government.
* Digital transformation of government will experiment with smaller amount of money focused on **machine learning, big data** and SME **business based on open data**.
* **Government as a platform** as a second priority for the new programming periodfocused on an increase of digital take-up to acquire full potential of government digital transformation. Digital take-up is the percentage of people using government services online in relation to other channels, for example paper or telephone.
* In continue perspective we will keep support of the **Backbone for central digital services** and **Behavioural office** which will need to reflect new components in start perspective. Based on good practise from government client centres supported from OPEPA we will continue in this field with integrated lean digital one stop shop office situated in cities to ensure digital inclusion for all citizens.
* Rollout must be focused on majority government organization To achieve benefits of digital communication, services must be built from **customer and user perspective**. Projects will be focused on GUI, digital interaction and attributes that should be implemented based on eGOV benchmark evaluation of digital services. Government as a platform is focused on open and transparent access through **OPEN API** to government digital services by third entities. To ensure environment readiness, experiment on central level and legislative changes have been made during this programming period. Start of this kind of projects focused on changing digital services engines in order to ensure interoperability and capacity to handle requests from third entities will be implemented on majority government institutions. Last but not least, **robotic process automation** (list of automated actions) can be a new default to digital services mainly in state obligated welfare programmes such as state social insurance agenda. **Product management** units need to be added as a complementarity to IT projects. Frontend experts focused on collecting and analysing feedback from customers, analysing customer journeys and continuity of development will ensure on strategic ministries digital take-up. During the current programming period experiment supported by OPEPA financed at Deputy prime minister office for investment and informatization create a path for the new role in digital government.
* In the experiment perspective new ideas will be launched in priority Government as a platform. Such as **artificial intelligence** and supporting **SME business to create new apps based on government OPEN API** will be financed in small scale. Last but not least experiment with **personalized digital services** will show, how moving from form based digital services to more interactive and proactive online communication can improve government services.

## 3. SECTION: KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR

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  Description automatically generatedAll OPII projects are based on a business case (cost benefit analysis) and KPIs.
* The biggest proportion of IT projects till 2023 was focused on **time savings of government employees**. Digitalization of government employee workflow and data integration generate approximately 30% of all benefits generated by IT projects.
* The second most common type of KPI in projects are dedicated to **cloud usage savings** and the third is shared between **time saving of citizens, time saving of business and qualitative benefits**.
* KPI for the new programming period will be changed based on the new two priorities. Success of reducing bureaucracy burden will be measured on OP level and on each project level by the **amount of money saved by citizen and business**. Success of government as a platform priority will be measured by digital take-up. It represents **the percentage of people using government services online in relation to other channels, for example paper or telephone**. Digital take-up will be also a project KPI and OP KPI. We will face a **qualitative benefit** used in business case, therefore this kind of KPI will be kept, but only on project level and in compliance to the two priorities.
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  Description automatically generatedDigital take-up potential is shown on figure where only 100 thousand citizens use the government digital mailbox. Potential for the new programming period is to reach up to 2,5 million users (economically active population).
* Project aimed on **government cost savings** such as time savings of government employees but also cloud based projects (Iaas, PaaS, SaaS) will be in the new programming period financed by state budget. This channel with coordination of Ministry of finance will enforce reduction of spending on employees or on new hardware and software licences. All can be done thanks to private government cloud but also a very successful initiative of public cloud certification in Slovakia – hybrid cloud.

## 4. SECTION: PRORITIZATION

* Lesson learnt from the current programming period can be structured in to two areas. The first area is related to complicated and difficult OP strategy consisting of nine specific objectives. It brings lack of concentration on delivery and creates an environment for complex projects many times aimed on more than three specific objectives.
* The second area is an issue due to complicated coordination mechanism between OPII and OPEPA. This coordination mechanism was designed to ensure digitalization of new processes not the existing one created in “paper world”. Moreover, organization should manage not only big process and IT changes, but also change in legislation and services provided to citizens.

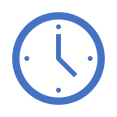
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* The new programming period sees IT projects as smaller and delivery oriented. Therefore, new simple project assessment needs to be implemented.
* Figure shows simplicity that we want to achieve based on two priorities with additional **horizontal prioritization on monitored eGOV benchmark services** (8 categories: start a business, study, lost and finding a job, family life, regular business operations, claims and administrative proceedings, ownership and use of a car, removals) a**nd single digital gateway services** (23 services).
* Project assessment requires presenting a **positive business case** to evaluate the return of investment and value for money based on KPI: time savings of citizen and time savings of business or digital take-up. The new programming period should not copy coordination mechanism between OPEPA and OPII and bring new form of building capacity to ensure success of IT projects. Business analyst units and product management units can be financed by ERDF and both roles are part of the new Strategy of human resources in IT elaborated in 2019. More details about the abovementioned units are in section two.

## NEW TOOLS

**Inhouse development** is part of a broader concept of insourcing services documented in Strategy of human resources in IT. Inhouse development is based on dedicated projects for key government organizations to create agile internal units. One unit should have 8 to 20 people covering roles such as architects, coders, testers and IT experts capable to code and develop changes in GUI (websites, forms), small components such as integrations and microservices, new small modules, new OPEN API and open data services and also cloud-based and opensource backoffice apps where less coding is required.

**EU refinancing** of completed projects supported by state budgetis a new approach that has two positive effects. Firstly, refinancing successfully delivered projects with visible result is easy to assess based on outputs and results due to services launched on deployment environment. Therefore, the risk of not reaching value for EU money is very low. Secondly, the time between project proposal and financial closing of the completed project can be around 6 months. This stream is not eligible during the current programming period, due to one requirement. Projects can be refinanced only if it is not complted due to date of project proposal. The solution is to allow government institutions propose small scale completed projects. This tool can deliver early financial performance from OP perspective, without delay and low risk from delivery standpoint.