



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
ENTERPRISE DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

Services, tourism, new technologies and design industries  
**Networks between public administrations (IDA)**



On-line EU and national public services

## **The strategy for the implementation of the Portal of the EU Administration (Your Europe)**

**v. 4.1 – May 2004**

**The aim of the Portal of the EU Administration (which will be known to the public as “Your Europe”) is the provision to European citizens and enterprises of public online information and interactive services with a cross-border dimension. The portal will offer services to both EU citizens and enterprises in real-life situations, e.g. citizens wishing to work or study in another MS, or EU enterprises wanting to move or open a new branch in another MS. It is an initiative of the IDA Programme (Interchange of Data between Administrations Programme, <http://europa.eu.int/ispo/ida> ).**



## Table of content

1.	INTRODUCTION.....	4
2.	RATIONALE: THE PAN-EUROPEAN CONTEXT .....	5
3.	CHARACTERISTIC OF THE SERVICE.....	6
3.1.	Your Europe: a Service offered by European public administrations to European Citizens and Enterprises.....	6
3.2.	A cross-border case: from information to support services.....	6
3.3.	Implementation approach .....	9
4.	KEY ACTORS.....	9
4.1.	The EU level.....	10
4.2.	The Member States .....	11
4.3.	The regional and local administrations .....	11
5.	KEY FEATURES.....	12
5.1.	The identification of content and priorities for provision of services.....	12
5.1.1.	Identification of content .....	12
5.1.2.	Harmonisation of terminology.....	13
5.1.3.	Topics to be covered.....	14
5.1.4.	Existing assets .....	17
5.2.	A service-centred Architecture and a Portal Framework .....	17
5.3.	Languages.....	18
5.4.	The multichannel aspect .....	20
5.5.	Sustainability.....	20
6.	THE ORGANISATIONAL MODEL.....	21
6.1.	Responsible sector and sectoral committee .....	21
6.2.	Portal Project Team .....	21
6.3.	Editorial Board.....	22
6.4.	Steering Committee.....	22
7.	THE PLANNING.....	23
7.1.	An incremental approach.....	23
7.1.1.	Short term (2003- 2004): pilot phase leading to the launch of the consolidated portal “Your Europe” .....	24



7.1.2. Medium to Long term (mid-2004-2005): leading to the operational phase of the portal including interactive services .....	25
7.2. The promotion strategy .....	25
7.3. Roadmap for the implementation .....	26
8. COSTS .....	27
8.1. Human Resources foreseen.....	27
8.2. Budgetary impact (IDA funds allocated in WP) .....	27



## 1. INTRODUCTION

In 2001 a preliminary study<sup>1</sup> to assess the situation at EU level was conducted, and the type of services to be provided through the portal were identified. It was agreed that work would be centred around life events related to cross-border movements.

Following a phased approach, a pilot phase (the pilot portal public-services.eu - <http://europa.eu.int/public-services>) is currently being carried out, aiming initially at a base service level for the portal. The pilot portal in 2003 and 2004 was meant to be used for learning and demonstrations, including studies of practical relationship between central portal/web sites and MSs' portals/web sites.

At the beginning of 2003 an ex-ante evaluation<sup>2</sup> was carried out, identifying cost and resource implications, as well as available options, for the short-term development of the pilot portal (2003-2004).

In June 2003 a revised strategy paper was produced and discussed with the Member States (V. 3.02, document TAC 2003-06-18 DOC 4.1)<sup>3</sup>.

In parallel, a strategic partnership between DG Enterprise and DG Internal Market was set up. In this context, the merging of the two Dialogue websites – Dialogue with Business<sup>4</sup> and Dialogue with Citizen<sup>5</sup> – with the pilot portal to create the portal “Your Europe”<sup>6</sup> was decided, paving the way to the creation of a single entry point at EU level.

In September 2003 an Editorial Board was set up. During the successive meetings, a number of policy and editorial documents have been finalised.

In parallel the Commission has worked on two main initiatives: a proposal for a follow-up programme for the IDA programme (called IDABC)<sup>7</sup> and a draft of the European Interoperability Framework (EIF)<sup>8</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://europa.eu.int/ISPO/ida/jsps/doc.jsp?321>

<sup>2</sup> <http://europa.eu.int/ISPO/ida/export/files/en/1724.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <http://europa.eu.int/ISPO/ida/jsps/doc.jsp?1593>

<sup>4</sup> <http://europa.eu.int/business/en/index.html>

<sup>5</sup> [http://europa.eu.int/citizens/index\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/citizens/index_en.html)

<sup>6</sup> <http://europa.eu.int/youreurope>

<sup>7</sup> Interoperable Delivery of pan-European eGovernment Services to Public Administrations, Business and Citizens, COM(2003) 406, available at <http://europa.eu.int/ISPO/ida/jsps/doc.jsp? 1474>

<sup>8</sup> <http://europa.eu.int/ISPO/ida/jsps/doc.jsp? 2033>



Furthermore, the Council has further discussed the eGovernment agenda and two important ministerial declarations have been issued (respectively during the conference organised in Como under the Italian presidency in July 2003<sup>9</sup> and during the meeting of the Telecom Council in November 2003<sup>10</sup>).

The present document updates the earlier version in accordance with the above developments<sup>11</sup>.

## 2. RATIONALE: THE PAN-EUROPEAN CONTEXT

In today's Europe citizens are free to work and re-locate within the Union. Enterprises wish to trade and carry out business across the Union. When citizens and enterprises do this, they frequently have to interact with public administrations. Member States are currently putting in place e-government strategies that will allow such transactions to take place electronically. In parallel, they are frequently improving their business processes and the way in which business with citizens and enterprises is carried out.

However, there is a risk that the development of e-government services may inadvertently result in the erection of barriers to the continued development of the single market and the associated freedoms of movement. This would happen if citizens and enterprises that need to transact business electronically with a public administration in a different country were unable to do so. For enterprises it could mean a relative loss of competitiveness, and for citizens increased costs.

In this context, a major policy objective should be to ensure that the needed Pan-European e-government services are provided and that are open to citizens and enterprises in other Member States.

By itself, the creation of an EU legislative framework does not ensure that people benefit fully from their rights and opportunities in the Internal Market. Responding to citizens' concerns with specific information about their rights, free advice and problem solving are necessary to improve the functioning of the Internal Market.

The action for the implementation of the Portal of the EU Administration (also called "Your Europe") fits therefore into this context.

---

<sup>9</sup> [http://europa.eu.int/information\\_society/eeurope/egovconf/doc/ministerial\\_declaration.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/information_society/eeurope/egovconf/doc/ministerial_declaration.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> <http://register.consilium.eu.int/pdf/en/03/st14/st14487.en03.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> It has to be noted that this document aims to address the main components of a strategy for the development of the portal across (2004) and beyond (after 2005) the pilot phase. It does not include more technical aspects that will be dealt in other documents (covering elements like metadata and open standards requirements, as well as the architectural requirements for the portal platform).



### 3. CHARACTERISTIC OF THE SERVICE

#### 3.1. Your Europe: a Service offered by European public administrations to European Citizens and Enterprises

The final objective of Your Europe is to implement a Pan-European portal for the provision by the EU public administrations of pan-European online information and interactive services addressed to EU [citizens](#) and [enterprises](#). The final product will be interactive, multilingual, offer user-centred services and be both reliable and complete. In a sentence: it aims at becoming the reference public portal for citizens and enterprises interested in cross-border activities within the enlarged EU.

In this context **user-centric** means that:

- the information and interactive services offered by the Portal will be targeted to clearly identified user groups. In the first instance, the two main categories of EU Citizens and EU Enterprises are introduced; in second instance, distinction is made between different profiles like (for citizens), workers, students, pensioners and travellers, and (for citizens) self-employed persons, SMEs, corporations;
- the information and interactive services are made available, whenever possible, also through the introduction of the corresponding life events/business episodes<sup>12</sup>.

On the other hand, the co-existence of **multiple access points** is envisaged and even desirable: the information and the interactive services should in fact be accessible both from the EU Portal and from the relevant national/thematic portals, as well as from the local sites that serve the single constituencies. What is envisaged is in fact a **two-way relationship**, whereby national/local portals will also be able to draw on the resources made available through the EU Portal (notably the information at EU level, the information and interactive services from the other administrations and even the information on their own national administration translated into the most commonly used EU languages).

#### 3.2. A cross-border case: from information to support services

As stated above, Your Europe will help citizens and businesses to gain access to a wide variety of information and advice from all level of administrations (European, national, regional or local). This will result in more user-friendliness and thus improved satisfaction of its target clients, citizens and businesses in the EU.

---

<sup>12</sup> It has to be noted that the report “Crossing borders” by the Viktoria Institute (available at <http://europa.eu.int/ISPO/ida/export/files/en/1725.pdf>), which is annexed to the ex-ante evaluation, has listed some limitations of the model based on pure “life events” and suggested an evolution to an ‘intentional model’, which would suit better the users’ needs. Still, the use of life events as a model for the introduction of key administrative procedures is felt to be particularly appropriate for certain categories of users, in particular when addressing the citizens at large and particularly in a cross-border context, since the concept of life event tend to be, for its own nature, cross-cultural.



The “service chain” model illustrates the way this can be achieved (see figure here below for the EU level):

- (1) a main European Portal (Your Europe) covers various sources of information (both at EU or country level) and presents relevant pan-European e-services (existing examples currently managed by the Commission are EURES<sup>13</sup>, PLOTEUS<sup>14</sup>, MISSOC<sup>15</sup>, COWEBS<sup>16</sup>, VIES<sup>17</sup>);
- (2) customised support services are available to answer specific questions from the end users (as this is the case today for the Business Support Networks<sup>18</sup>, like the Euro Info Centres<sup>19</sup>, and the Citizens Signpost Service<sup>20</sup>);
- (3) if action is needed from the administration, notably to address administrative problems, a service like SOLVIT<sup>21</sup> can be also be called upon.

---

<sup>13</sup> The Job Mobility Portal, <http://europa.eu.int/eures/>

<sup>14</sup> The Portal on Learning Opportunities, <http://europa.eu.int/ploteus/>

<sup>15</sup> Mutual Information System on Social Protection,  
[http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/missoc2001/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/missoc2001/index_en.htm)

<sup>16</sup> An IDA project for an EU Portal on Social Security, <http://europa.eu.int/ISPO/ida/jsps/doc.jsp? 2051>

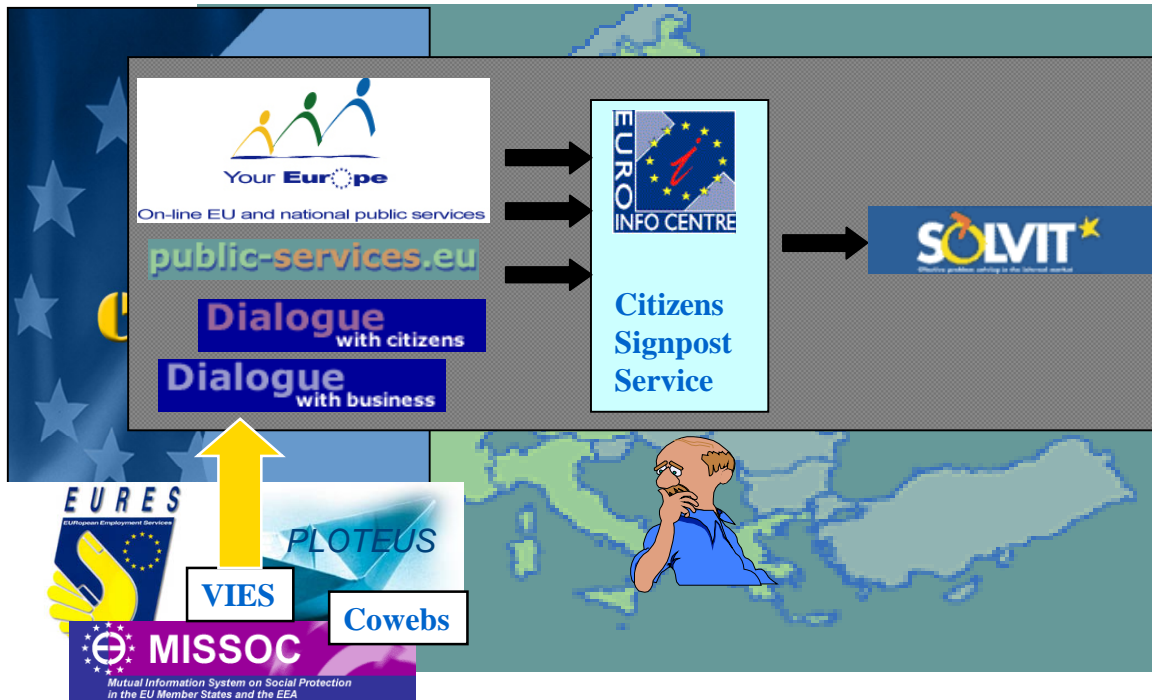
<sup>17</sup> VAT Number Validation, [http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/taxation\\_customs/vies/en/vieshome.htm](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/taxation_customs/vies/en/vieshome.htm)

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.ebn.be/>

<sup>19</sup> <http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/networks/eic/eic.html>

<sup>20</sup> [http://europa.eu.int/citizensrights/signpost/front\\_end/signpost\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/citizensrights/signpost/front_end/signpost_en.htm)

<sup>21</sup> SOLVIT is a service, funded by IDA, which in co-operation with Member States aims at resolving problems with national administrations at a bilateral level between MS  
[http://europa.eu.int/comm/internal\\_market/solvit/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/internal_market/solvit/index_en.htm)



The following table gives an example of a real-life situation where the Portal could **offer assistance to a citizen looking for a job**. In this example, the Portal would offer a framework for integration of existing and new services.

	Examples for situation	Type of information	Specific measure to be provide through a common portal
Blue	<i>I would like to go and work abroad. What do I need to know?</i>	General information on rights and opportunities	Guides and business information
Green	<i>I need information on the recognition of my diploma in another country.</i>	Specific information on my rights	National factsheets and links
Olive	<i>I have read the detailed information but now have even more questions than before. I need personalised help.</i>	Personalised advice	Citizens Signpost Service  Business support networks (mainly Euro Info Centres)
Dark Red	<i>I now feel comfortable and can contact directly the national administration of a specific Member State.</i>	Direct access to Member State's administration	On-line links to national administrations
Red	<i>Things went wrong. I was sure that I should get my diploma recognised but the administration in the Member State "X" has refused it. What can I do now?</i>	Solving of problems	SOLVIT





Examples of real-life case studies were detailed in the Preliminary Study<sup>22</sup> made in 2001: a UK family wanting to live and work in Germany, a Spanish student wishing to study in The Netherlands and a Danish software SME wanting to establish a subsidiary in France.

### 3.3. Implementation approach

A basic concept widely accepted for pan-European e-services foresees a 3-leg approach: the strategy is defined at EU level, the e-services are mostly developed at national level (and in some cases at EU level) and then they can be processed and/or delivered at the local level (including the regional one). The Portal can leverage this process and guarantee accessibility to the end-users, independently of the access path chosen. In an ideal situation, the delivery of the e-services is independent of geographical or administrative limitations: this corresponds to the concept of a **virtual European Administration** working as a 24x7 agency.

The implementation approach follows then the main principles listed below:

- the implementation of the final portal relies mainly on a decentralised model (meaning that the responsibility for the supply of content is identified at the most appropriate level, namely the EC for the EU, the MS's administrations for the country level and regional/local authorities for the services they provide directly);
- on the other hand, a central co-ordination is necessary to address horizontal issues, notably by producing quality guidelines and giving guidance in the preparation of common reference models (covering both terminology and processes) for the use of the content providers. This latter work will need to be done, wherever possible, in collaboration with the relevant sectoral groups to be identified;
- the implementation approach is an incremental one: on the technological side by starting with an information service and then upgrading in a second step to increased interactivity services; on a content-related side by considering a limited number of priority services, to be then expanded in accordance with the end-user demand.

The different elements of the implementation approach are covered in more details in the following sections.

## 4. KEY ACTORS

The creation of a state-of-the-art portal for information, advice and problems solving is a big challenge for the Commission and for Member States. This implies shared responsibility between the Commission and Member States.

---

<sup>22</sup> <http://europa.eu.int/ISPO/ida/export/files/en/730.pdf>



#### 4.1. The EU level

The Community, and more in particular the European Commission, has a three-fold involvement in this type of action:

- On one hand, it provides useful information on the rights of the EU Citizens and Enterprises in the context of the four freedoms in the Internal Market;
- On the other hand, it has started working on selected pan-European e-services that address the need of a direct interaction between the European administration and its own constituency. Examples of such e-services are EURES, SOLVIT, the Citizens Sign-Post services and IPM<sup>23</sup>.
- Furthermore, the role of the Commission is essential as a facilitator and coordinator with respect to the relevant initiatives taken in the MSs, the objective being to guarantee the principle of equal treatment across the EU. In the end the Community at large is responsible for defining and implementing a strategy and the related policies.

The most relevant initiatives within the Commission are the following ones:

- DG MARKT currently manages "Dialogue with Citizens and Business" which focuses on information and advice on Internal Market rights and opportunities. These sites consists of guides with general information, factsheets prepared in co-operation with Member States, a series of links to national and European on-line services and the Citizens Signpost Service which gives personalised advice to citizens. Moreover, DG MARKT is running "SOLVIT".
- DG ENTR is currently piloting the portal "[Public-services.eu](http://public-services.eu)" which provides information and services in support of Europe's citizens and enterprises' cross-border activities. The citizen section contains general European Union information and specific national information regarding cross-border activities (including real life situations such as working and studying in another country). The business section is aimed at European-based enterprises and entrepreneurs that need to interact with administrations in another country. Both sections include direct links to the relevant national administrations. Furthermore DG ENTR runs different types of Business Support networks, mainly targeted to SMEs, notably the Euro Info Centres.
- DG PRESS manages the main European Union official site, the server Europa (<http://europa.eu.int>).

DG MARKT, DG ENTR and DG PRESS share the view that through intensified co-operation the challenging goals of the Portal can be achieved while at the same time reducing the workload on individual DGs and avoid possible duplications by other DG's (EAC, EMPL, RESEARCH...) currently involved in projects aimed at specific

---

<sup>23</sup> Interactive Policy Making, an IDA-sponsored action: [http://europa.eu.int/yourvoice/ipm/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/yourvoice/ipm/index_en.htm)



audiences (students, professors, researchers, job-seekers...). As a first step the main existing European 'horizontal' sites managed by DG MARKT and DG ENTR are being merged with the pilot site public-services.eu into a single Portal, to be called "Your Europe". To this purpose DG ENTR and DG MARKT have now established joint management of this action.

#### **4.2. The Member States**

As mentioned above, the national administrations are in most cases the suppliers of the e-services. Furthermore, they are in charge of defining the general administrative framework that then can be implemented at national or local level. They only can provide an accurate and complete introduction to the administrative reality of a MS.

The participation of the MSs, therefore, is a key element in ensuring both the quality and appropriateness of the information and services provided.

In this context, the Commission has proposed to the TAC<sup>24</sup> the creation of an Editorial Board (see below section 6.3), with full participation of national administrations and Commission services. This organism, now fully operational, is at present a forum for co-ordination between public administrations involved in this initiative (including EU Institutions, national and local administrations) acting both horizontally (country level) and vertically (sectoral level).

The recent **enlargement** of the EU puts an extra challenge on the development of the Portal; the Member States (both the old and new ones) are faced today with the need of informing their citizens and investing the necessary resources. The portal is now in the process of being progressively extended to the new Member States. Advice networks such as the Citizens Signpost Service and the Euro Info Centres are also being enhanced to cover the new MS in order to provide the same level of help to citizens and business in those countries. Guides with general information and fact-sheets outlining national procedures and requirements need to be extended to the new MSs as well.

#### **4.3. The regional and local administrations**

Regional and local administrations are key providers of administrative services to both citizens and businesses in their own constituencies. It is therefore reasonable to assume that they will be in the front-line when delivering online information and interactive services. Furthermore, it is easy to imagine that more and more these administrations will be confronted with the needs of both EU non-national users wishing to move in and local users planning to move out. The Portal will be one of the tools at their disposal addressing the particular needs of those cross-border users.

### **5. IN THIS CONTEXT, ON THE BASIS OF CONCRETE PROPOSALS PRESENTED BY THE NATIONAL DELEGATES IN THE EDITORIAL BOARD, FORMS OF PARTNERSHIP**

---

<sup>24</sup> Telematic between Administrations Committee, the management committee of the IDA Programme



## **COULD BE ESTABLISHED IN THE FUTURE BETWEEN THE PORTAL ACTION AND THE REGIONAL AND LOCAL ADMINISTRATIONS INTERESTED. KEY FEATURES**

The following key features are considered in the development of the Portal:

- 1) The content to be provided through the Portal
- 2) The Portal Architecture
- 3) The multilingual aspects
- 4) The Multi-channel aspects
- 5) Ownership and sustainability

These elements are further developed in this section (the fourth one also in the following section 6 dealing with the organisational model).

### **5.1. The identification of content and priorities for provision of services**

#### *5.1.1. Identification of content*

As previously defined, the portal aims at providing online information and access to the interactive services that are provided by public administrations to assist Europe's citizens and enterprises to carry out cross-border activities.

The Editorial Board has defined an information/interactive service of relevant cross-border dimension when the following (minimal) conditions are met:

1. The source/provider is either an EU or international public organisation or a private organisation whose site is compliant with the criteria defined under point 5.
2. The content to which the users of the portal are referred is stable (i.e. is based on a established legal framework and/or an operational service) and its availability is guaranteed over a medium/long term period;
3. The target audience is pan-European (citizens and enterprises);
4. The information/interactive services are in support of cross-border activities (either of a citizen or an enterprise). This support might be either direct (e.g. registration of a company in another MS) or indirect (e.g. description of living and working conditions in a MS). Furthermore, information/services aimed at removing possible obstacles to cross-border activities are also considered of relevance;



5. URL's provided by **private organisations** can be integrated into the portal only after verification of the following criteria for their site:

- The site is relevant for the portal site subject where it has to be integrated. This is notably the case when the private organisation is entrusted to perform a service of general public interest on the basis of a decision of the competent authorities.
- The organisation, presentation and text are present in a qualified level to help users understand the subject.
- The sites contains enough relevant free of charge information. Information to be paid for presents a real added value for the web user. It is available in at least one of the Portal's working languages (EN, FR and DE – see also section 5.3). Preference will be given to multi-linguistic sites.
- It does not contain any interpretation or modification of a European legal text.

The portal will propose links to resources that meet the conditions stated above. However, the contents referred to via external links will stay under the responsibility of the different content providers.

#### *5.1.2. Harmonisation of terminology*

Furthermore, the user will need guidance on how to make use of the selected resources: it is important that these links are properly introduced and that the user receives all information needed to understand the basics administrative processes of the MS of interest.

Therefore an effort of content harmonisation is envisaged: following the recommendation of the ex-ante evaluation, it should tackle in first place the definition of a common multilingual terminology. The study and proposal of harmonised models and templates (for instance in the form of checklist, draft process models) could also be pursued in the medium term. Existing dictionaries/models developed by either general information sites (notably the Dialogue's) and by sectoral initiatives (like in the fields of employment and education), as well as the ones already developed in the context of the pilot, will be used to achieve this goal.



### 5.1.3. Topics to be covered

At the beginning of the pilot phase, a number of themes<sup>25</sup> were chosen as priority on the basis of the services currently offered at national level. This selection was made in a pragmatic way for the pilot in the early phase in 2002 (i.e. based on the offer's availability), but it had to be analysed more in-depth for the following steps. In particular the demand side was to be considered, as well as criteria of cost-effectiveness and the assessment of the possible impact (the value for money).

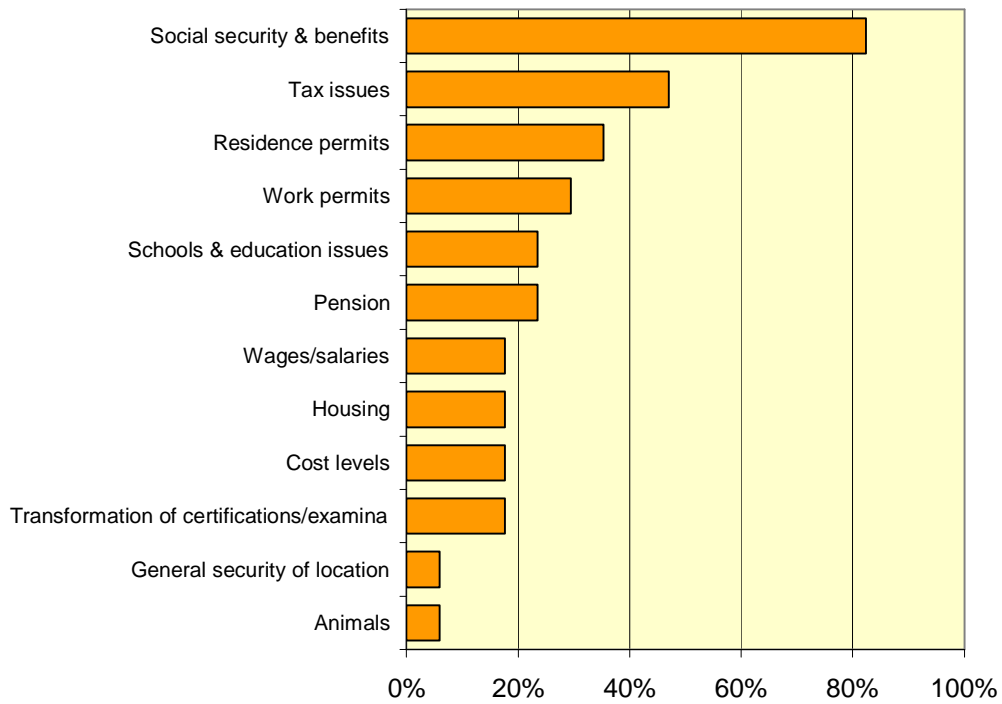
The ex-ante evaluation investigated different sources of information (see Annex 1 of the evaluation report for details), resulting in a refined priority list<sup>26</sup>. In addition, existing pan-European support networks, notably the EICs, Citizen's Signpost and SOLVIT services, as well as sectoral networks like EURES provided very useful statistics on the information needs from citizens/enterprises.

The following diagram, taken from the ex-ante evaluation report, is the result of a survey of citizens' needs that was based on a spot test of intermediaries, organisations, institutions and Human Resources Managers representing citizens in a cross-border situation.

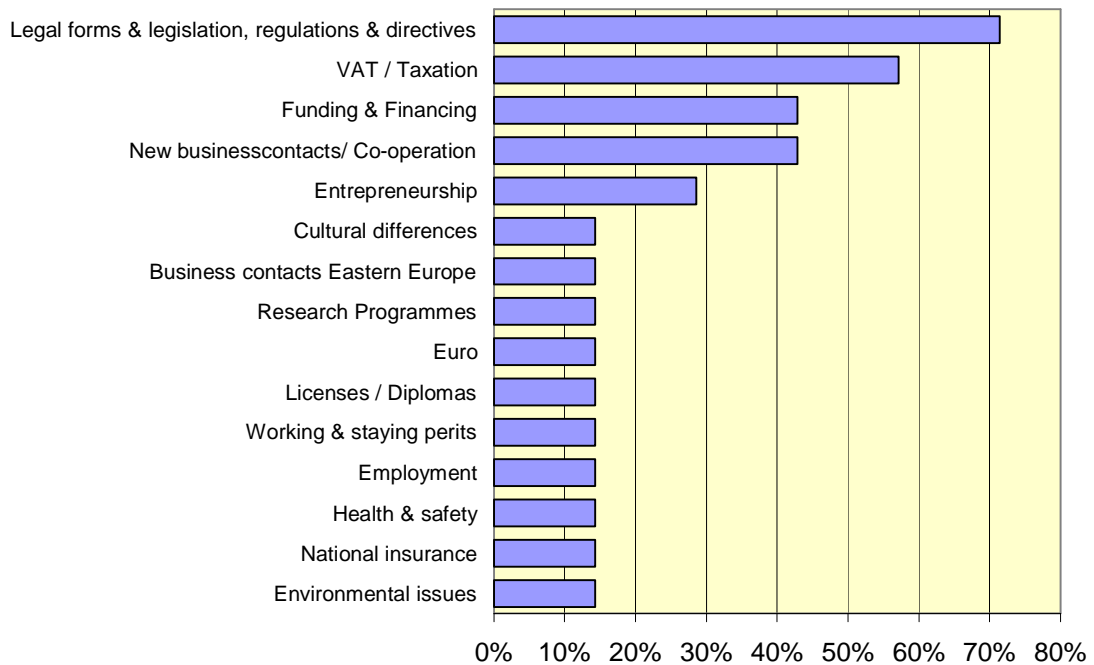
---

<sup>25</sup> Information for Citizens  
Moving to a Country- Care (social issues/social security)  
Moving to a Country- Finding Employment  
Employment- Being self-employed  
Employment- Employment in the Public sector  
Education - Higher Education  
Education - Educational Structure  
Information for Enterprises  
Setting Up- Legal Structure  
Public Procurement Opportunities  
Taxation- VAT  
Taxation- Corporate Tax

<sup>26</sup> For citizens: Health care insurance, Pensions, Social benefits, Unemployment insurance, Income taxes, Taxation on imports (immigration), Working permit, Residence permit.  
For enterprises: Regional/Local partnership, Establishment conditions, National legislation and regulations, Funding for business establishment, Funding regarding work-force (special development area), EU Legislation in context with business establishment, Regional/Local business conditions, Public Procurement & Tenders, Customs on imports, Enterprise taxation, Employee taxation.



The following diagram, also from the ex-ante evaluation, deals with the Enterprises needs, on the basis of information collected through interviews with Euro Info Centers and representatives from National Chambers of Commerce.



Following the analysis of the above sources, a proposal for the content structure is made along the following main topics:



## CITIZENS

- Living in another EU Country.
- Working in another EU country (incl. **Job search** and Equal opportunities).
- **Studying in another EU country.**
- Travelling in another EU country.
- Buying goods and services.
- Enforcing your Rights.
- **Social Security.**
- Taxes.

## Enterprises

- Business Life (incl. **starting a business**).
  - Funding Opportunities.
  - **Public Procurement.**
  - Regulation and Financing.
  - Business Development.
  - Taxation (incl. **TVA**).
  - Social and Human Information.
  - Market Information.
- Getting advice / Business Support Networks





The items in bold underlined are indications for future pan-European eGovernment services that could be developed, inter alia, in the context of the IDABC programme. They are derived from the recommendations issued by the Council in November 2003. It is planned that these recommendations are further elaborated by an in-depth ‘Stakeholder Survey’, aiming at identifying end-user needs for this type of services, which will be carried out during 2004 in the context of the IDA Work Programme 2004. The Portal could be one of the leading framework under which this type of services are offered in the medium to long term.

#### 5.1.4. Existing assets

For the Citizens part, the Portal can rely on the rich content available from the Dialogue with Citizens site: 80 different fact-sheets covering the 15 MSs, 10 guides at EU level and 10 special fact-sheets covering the transition period for the new MSs. This material has been recently updated in the beginning of 2004 in the three working languages plus the country ones. In addition, there are the information and links selected in the public-services.eu pilot site. The coverage can therefore be considered as satisfactory for the EU level and 15 MSs, the effort to be concentrated in future mainly on the new MSs.

For the Enterprises part, very good coverage is available at EU level with the information and links provided by public-services and Dialogue with Business. This information will just need some refreshing. On the contrary, a bigger effort will be necessary for the national part, for which the contribution of the EB members is fundamental.

## 5.2. A service-centred Architecture and a Portal Framework

The model proposed relies on two different types of services to be offered through the Portal:

- On one hand, ad-hoc information covering cross-border subjects of interest for EU Citizens and, to a more limited extent, for EU Enterprises;
- On the other hand, a single European point of access to e-services supplied by the European administrations (centrally, nationally or locally).

The former part, which is the logic evolution of a site like ‘Dialogue with Citizens’, will typically comprise EU guides and national fact-sheets on various type of ‘life events’ of interest for a wide public.

The latter part, which correspond more to an approach ‘Yahoo’ like, will present guided links to the most useful resources available, including interactive services provided by administrations. For some selected e-services a stronger integration might be envisaged in the portal: to this purpose the development of integrated e-services at pan-European level will need to be supported by the portal platform. This will be the challenge for the next phase of development.

To achieve the above goals, the creation of a common provision framework for the delivery pan-European e-services to citizens and enterprises can be envisaged. The



approach will entail proposing to all Member States, whenever establishing portals, to use this common framework for guidance. Such a **Portal Framework** would be part of the European Interoperability Framework<sup>27</sup> currently been discussed, and could cover aspects such as terminology and metadata, content format, definition of users' profiles, content provisioning and quality guidelines. This is in line with the outcome of the ex-ante evaluation. This framework will be developed in a stepwise approach. The first step should be to find a harmonised presentation of the relevant information services on the central portal and on possibly also on MSs' portals and web-sites. In the medium to long term the use of standardised XML schemas (or equivalent mechanisms) is envisaged to further support this objective. In the longer run the framework should develop to include also the other elements stated above, as well as technical solutions and recommendations.

### 5.3. Languages

Following the outcome of the ex-ante evaluation (see in particular section 5.3.2 of the evaluation report) and considering the financial implications (section 6.3 of the evaluation report), the implementation of a linguistic policy is envisaged along the following lines:

- the portal interface will be fully multilingual. The second-level pages at both EU and Country level (in particular for the introductory texts and the descriptions of links) will be offered in up to 4/5 official languages (including English, German and French, plus the national language(s) for the Country level);
- on the other hand, since it is not evident to which extent the services provided at national/local level can fulfil this requirement, the external links and the related pages on the national web-sites for the identified services should be available in at least one official language in addition to the Country one(s). The choice of this additional language would be left to each national administration<sup>28</sup>.

The table below details the level of multilingualism envisaged for the Portal, as agreed by the Editorial Board.

---

<sup>27</sup> <http://europa.eu.int/ISPO/ida/jsps/doc.jsp?2033>

<sup>28</sup> Taking into account all recent surveys on the knowledge of languages in the EU and Accession Countries, English should be considered in first place for practical considerations.



Site	Level	Linguistic policy	Applicable to
<b>Portal</b>	1	One multilingual page	Start-up page Multilingual index page
	2	All official EU languages	Main page Navigation page FAQ's (contains stable information and can be considered as another way to access site information) Interactive page (search, contact facilities)
	3	EN, FR, DE plus official language(s) of the country to which the information refers	All content provided within the portal itself
<b>External sites to which the portal links</b>	4	Official language(s) of the country plus one other official EU language (recommended)	National-level sites and services

Furthermore, a (relatively) simple solution can be found for the search engine: this would require translating (in all languages) not the whole content but only the metadata (tags) encoded in the pages accessed from the portal. This will allow a true multilingual search engine to retrieve appropriate information on the other sites/portals.

The use of machine translation will also be studied as an additional support in this context. Relevant results are expected to come from the IDA-MT action<sup>29</sup> currently ongoing.

---

<sup>29</sup> <http://europa.eu.int/ISPO/ida/jsps/doc.jsp?2070>



#### 5.4. The multichannel aspect

The developing of a multichannel platform should respond to the different type of accessibility requirements the end-users might have, notably in terms of e-inclusion and mobility. It could then cover Kiosks, Web-TV, Call-centre service and mobile connectivity. In any case, the choice of the different channels to be phased-in has to be done on the basis of an integrated approach, looking notably to the possible benefits to be achieved for the end users by the introduction of each specific channel. A general model for this type of choice is being developed in the context of the IDA Programme.

The ex-ante evaluation recommended that this aspect is covered in the technical impact analysis in view of the future evolution of the platform. Nevertheless the aspects related to the integration of existing support networks (which offer online and/or telephone channels) like the EIC, the Citizen's signpost, SOLVIT and the Europe Direct call centre will be analysed in the short term (as part also of the approach explained in section 3.2).

#### 5.5. Sustainability

Once the Portal is fully operational, the content will need to be maintained, e.g. the information and links regularly verified and updated and in some cases possibly upgraded to a higher service-level (notably to answer the need for more customised information or of a greater interactivity/integration of a given e-service). To this purpose, it is envisaged that users are regularly consulted e.g. through, for instance, discussion forums, bulletin boards, case studies, signpost services and email feedback mechanisms. In a future phase, panels of users might be identified and intermediaries, such as Chambers of Commerce, Industrial Confederations and consumers associations, could be involved to enrich the analysis of content process by a more demand-driven approach. The IDA eGovernment Observatory<sup>30</sup> should also be engaged in the work to facilitate the creation of a baseline of information on existing/planned initiatives in the EU.

Furthermore, once the selection of the priority services for the Portal has been finalised, it will be necessary to formalise the commitments for implementation on EC level and on MS level.

To this purpose, the strategic evolution of the Portal should be integrated in the wider reflection to be made in the context of IDABC. The current IDA action for a stake-holder survey of the end-user needs for pan-European eGovernment services should provide the necessary base for further reflection<sup>31</sup>.

---

<sup>30</sup> <http://europa.eu.int/ISPO/ida/egovo>

<sup>31</sup> It has been recognised that the long-term perspective required for the provision of key services such as the Portal does not correlate well with the limited lifespan of Community programmes such as IDA. By consequence, "outside" financing options will have to be considered. If outside financing is mobilised this may require a transfer of ownership away from IDA. A number of options are conceivable, including transfer to an EU office, an agency or a public-private partnership.



## 6. THE ORGANISATIONAL MODEL

A 3-layered model is foreseen: a steering level, an editorial board and a project team. This organisation adds to the existing sectoral groups at EU level.

### 6.1. Responsible sector and sectoral committee

Each sector participating in the portal should engage its sectoral committee/group for the definition of vocabulary, content and information to be provided either centrally or nationally/locally.

### 6.2. Portal Project Team

The Commission will provide the necessary horizontal support to support the development and the maintenance of the content of the portal (in collaboration with the content-responsible sectors of the European Commission and MSs) through the provision of consultancy and technical services (including the technical development of the platform). The allocation of the necessary IDA funding for the current phase has already been discussed in the context of the IDA HAM WP 2003 and 2004.

The MSs and the responsible sectors have been requested to identify one or more contact persons for the Portal Project Team at the appropriate level of their administration.

A list of possible tasks for the project team is enclosed below:

- technical support/advice (also guidelines)
- publisher role (quality control)
- author/editor role (creation of introductory texts and model templates, encoding) in support of content providers
- translator role (terminology, texts, templates)
- central promotion office (communication policy, share of best practices)
- liaison with the sectors, sectoral committees and editorial board (see below)
- management of the technical development/integration of the portal platform

Furthermore, input for the selection of the content will be provided to the PCT by the eGovernment Observatory desk research on the subject. All input should be validated by the appropriate sectoral and/or national representatives.



### 6.3. Editorial Board

An Editorial Board (EB) has been set up in September 2003 to facilitate co-ordination between the Portal Project Team and the national portal and web-site organisations involved.

It is composed by national co-ordinators from all MSs and Accession/Candidate Countries (designated by the TAC) and by Commission's officials. Representatives from other European organisations (notably Consumer's associations, Chambres de Commerce, Enterprises associations) can be invited by the Commission as advisors.

The EB has to co-ordinate as well with the specific sectoral groups that will provide the sectoral know-how on the most relevant topics. It is envisaged that the first groups to be contacted will be already established sectoral organisations, like the IDA projects Cowebs, Ploteus, eProcurement<sup>32</sup>, as well as the sectoral projects EURES and Mobility of Researchers<sup>33</sup>, the Internal Market Advisory Committee and the existing Business Support networks.

Until September 2005, the update of the Citizen content is ensured by the IMAC (as a follow-up of the initiative Dialogue with Citizens) and the update of the Business content is ensured by the Editorial Board. Afterwards the EB should take over co-ordination of both.

### 6.4. Steering Committee

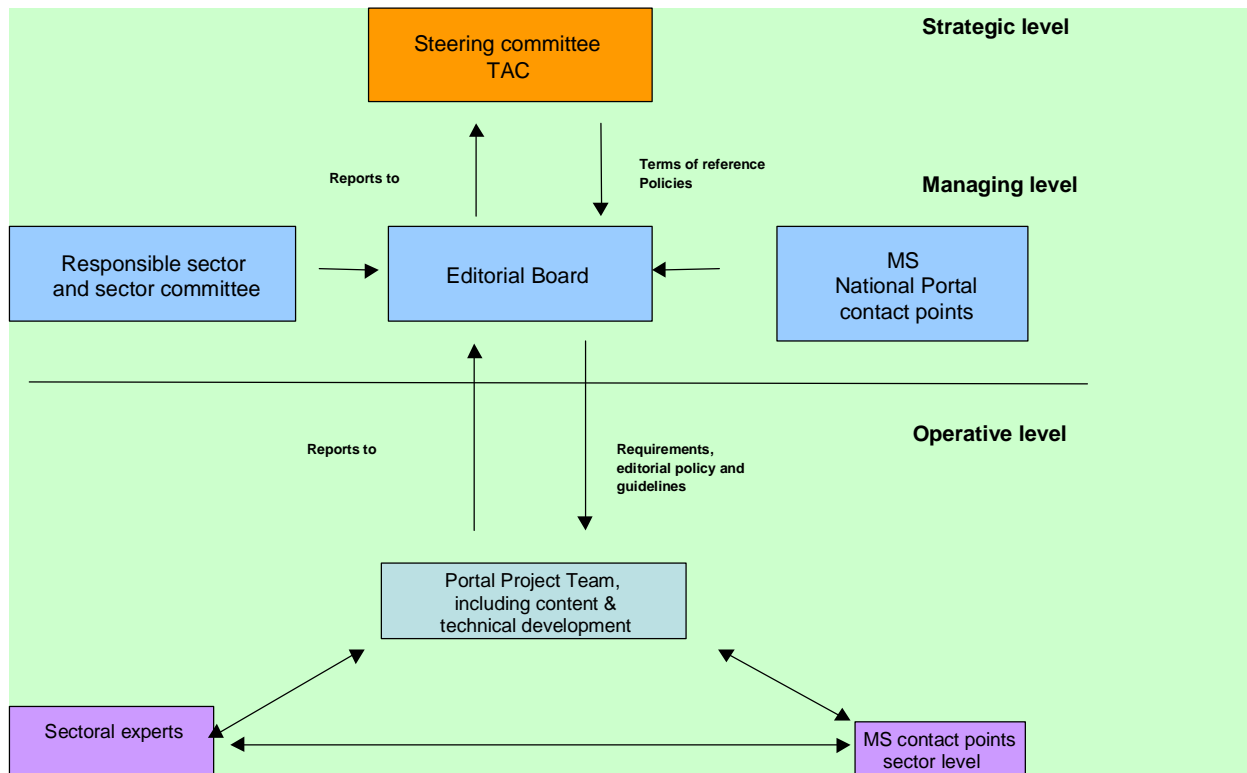
As it is clear that a permanent steering group is necessary and in order to streamline the organisational model, it has been decided that the TAC fulfil this role. The TAC is therefore the “**System Owner on MS level**” of the Portal and is responsible for the definition of the objectives and the strategy, as well as for the approval of the terms of reference of the editorial board and the supervision of its work. This is done by having a fixed agenda item on this subject at regular meetings.

An organisational chart is enclosed here below (inspired from the evaluation report section 5.4).

---

<sup>32</sup> <http://europa.eu.int/ISPO/ida/jsps/doc.jsp?2084>

<sup>33</sup> <http://europa.eu.int/eracareers>



## 7. THE PLANNING

### 7.1. An incremental approach

To achieve even a simple portal will be a significant undertaking with respect to co-ordination and co-operation.

The implementation approach chosen is therefore an incremental one. The ex-ante evaluation recommended following in the short to medium term two main phases of development of the portal, the pilot being extended basically till end 2004. The related actions are listed below (with an indicative time frame):

#### Short term measures (2003-2004)

- organizational measures
- work on policy and guidelines
- revision/consolidation of content - basic requirements
- enhancement of the portal platform - basic requirements

#### Medium to long term measures (2004-2005)



- impact analysis for a second-generation service
- development of a new platform
- Launch of full operational service

Some aspects are further detailed in the following sections.

*7.1.1. Short term (2003- 2004): pilot phase leading to the launch of the consolidated portal “Your Europe”*

In the short to medium term prospective the goal is to offer a single European point of access to citizens and enterprises, without addressing yet the full back-office interoperability issues at pan-European level.

The work is therefore targeted to the definition and implementation of a portal framework for the integration of the content, aiming at a certain degree of harmonisation.

The key actions, a part from the organisational measures and the work on policy and guidelines (as explained in the previous sections), are the revision/consolidation of content and the enhancement of the portal platform.

- *Revision/consolidation of content*

*A set of basic requirements has been identified in the evaluation report and following discussions. The activities ongoing are:*

- *to perform additional surveys on user requirements (using existing networks like EIC, citizen’s signpost service);*
- *to work on the consolidation/simplification of existing content: notably Dialogue with Citizens and Business site will be merged with public-services.eu into one single European portal;*
- *to revise the existing content structure based on a prioritization to be decided (starting from the evaluation's recommendations as stated in section 5.1 and as resulting from the above tasks);*
- *to complete the language offer with additional translations (where needed)*

- *Enhancement of portal platform*

*A detailed set of basic requirements has also been identified in the evaluation report. The activities foreseen are:*

- *to implement the new workflow for the suggested organisation, preferably using a market Web Content Management (WCM) tool;*
- *to perform QC on current content (e.g. national links leading to non-topic related national information);*
- *to enhance the GUI by providing better guidance to the use of external links (notably by adding the source or information when entering the national level and indicating beforehand when rerouting the user to an external site).*





### *7.1.2. Medium to Long term (mid-2004-2005): leading to the operational phase of the portal including interactive services*

The ex-ante evaluation recommended that, prior to any further extension of the pilot portal platform, a technical impact analysis is carried out, leading to the IT Architecture of a new platform. The topics foreseen for this analysis are:

- Metadata and content harmonization
- Advance personalization features
- Implementation of an intentional model (including a sophisticated search engine)
- Multi-channel features
- Back-office interoperability features (portal to portal/WCM to WCM)

Following the results of the technical impact analysis, a new development phase will be started.

## **7.2. The promotion strategy**

A clear **promotion strategy** will be agreed in co-ordination with all stakeholders since the early phases. This strategy would be twofold: on one hand at European level could include the offer of targeted services (like ad-hoc training for content providers, documentation, provision of promotion material like press-releases, presentations, etc.), on the other hand at a national/local level could consist in the presentation of the service by publication on eGovernment and other portals/web-sites, announcement at local events, training for officials.

The responsibility for the adoption of the promotion plan will be of the Editorial Board. The main objectives would be the marketing of this new service to both the general public in Europe and to the administrations interested.

In particular, specific promotion activities should be planned for the second half of 2004 (coinciding with the next release of the Portal).



### 7.3. Roadmap for the implementation

A roadmap is proposed below:

- Creation of an Editorial Board: September 2003
- Setting up of a Portal Content Team: December 2003
- Establishment of sectoral groups in relation with the EB: Q1 to Q2 2004
- Finalisation of a minimum set of policies and guidelines (terminology, languages, editorial and quality standards, workflow models): Q3 2003 to Q2 2004
- Revision/consolidation of content (basic requirements, see section 7.1.1 above): Q1 to Q3 2004
- Enhancement of portal platform (basic requirements, see section 7.1.1 above): Q1 to Q3 2004
- Impact analysis for a second generation service (see section 7.1.2 above): Q2 2004
- Launch of a promotional campaign: second half 2004
- Development of the new technical platform (second generation): Q4 2004 to Q2 2005
- Launch of full operational service: Q4 2004
- Promotion and inclusion of the relevant results of other IDA actions (notably EIF, multichannel study, MT, MIREG): on-going
- Back-office interoperability for selected, high priority services: as from mid-2005



## 8. COSTS

Indications of costs in this section are derived from the estimation made in the evaluation report (see in particular section 6 of the report for details). Section 8.1 gives an indication of the yearly human resources to be allocated at least in the first phases of the project. Section 8.2 gives the current allocation of IDA budget.

### 8.1. Human Resources foreseen

Commission:	2 persons/year
MSs:	3-7 persons/year part-time (including TAC, Editorial Board representatives and sectoral experts), depending on the number of specific sectoral groups involved
Translators:	up to 5 persons/year
Contractors (content work):	3-5 persons/year
Contractors (development work):	2-3 persons/year (considering only the basic requirements as in the evaluation report)

### 8.2. Budgetary impact (IDA funds allocated in WP)

For 2003: 470K EUR

For 2004: 750K EUR

The above allocation is based on the following assumptions:

- translations in up to 3 additional languages for content centrally stored on the portal;
- no translations of national (remotely stored) pages;
- considering only basic requirements from evaluation;
- covering contractors, translators and hosting/SW licenses costs.

As agreed with the Editorial Board, the costs related to the translations of the content to be hosted in the portal will be supported by the Commission, notably by requesting the appropriate funding from the IDA Programme. The Member States will take on the costs related to any additional translations of the content hosted in their sites.

**It is expected that the yearly costs for the future years will be of the same order of magnitude than for the first two years (that is around 0.5 M EUR).**