

SUPPORTING  
DIGITAL ECONOMY  
AND SOCIETY IN THE  
EASTERN PARTNERSHIP  
#eu4digital

Armenia 

Azerbaijan 

Belarus 

Georgia 

Republic of Moldova 

Ukraine 

EU4Digital Facility

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## List of Acronyms & Abbreviations

Abbreviations	Definition
<b>AM</b>	Armenia
<b>AZ</b>	Azerbaijan
<b>BY</b>	Belarus
<b>EaP</b>	Eastern Partnership
<b>Facility, EU4Digital Facility</b>	EU4Digital: supporting digital economy and society in the Eastern Partnership
<b>GE</b>	Georgia
<b>MD</b>	Republic of Moldova
<b>UA</b>	Ukraine



## 1 Introduction

This report reflects the activities of the fourth reporting period of the EU4Digital Facility (hereinafter - EU4Digital): 1 July 2020 - 31 December 2020. The report summarises the outputs achieved under the six thematic streams during the reporting period. Also, it outlines the objectives for the upcoming six-month reporting period, including events planned which are known at the time of preparing this report. In this report, we provide the main political highlights and operational challenges encountered and the mitigation measures applied or suggested for the upcoming period. Finally, the report Annexes provide a summary of outputs, updated workplan, the summary of administrative matters concerning the reporting period and monitoring of the logframe indicators.

## 2 Political Summary

The EU4Digital Facility is the core programme of the EU4Digital Initiative. The other EU actions and programmes under the EU4Digital Initiative are the six EU4Digital networks, EU4Digital: Broadband strategies in the EaP region, EU4Digital: Cybersecurity EAST and EU4Digital: EaPConnect. Launched in 2019, the EU4Digital Facility focuses on enabling a stronger economy and stronger governance in the Eastern partner countries through digital transformation. Its purpose is twofold: to promote key areas of the digital economy and society in the Eastern Partnership region, in line with EU norms and best practices, and to establish EU4Digital as a recognised and well-communicated brand. Under the guidance of DG NEAR, this involves working in close cooperation with the HDM Panel, thematic experts, country coordinators and EU Delegations.

### Context

The year 2020 marks a transition from the previous Eastern Partnership (EaP) priorities to new objectives beyond 2020. The **20 Deliverables for 2020** agenda agreed at the EaP summit of November 2017 is coming to an end. This provides the opportunity to assess the progress made and set future objectives.

Digital remains high on the agenda for both EU and Eastern partner countries, especially in the context of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The importance and urgency of digital empowerment, and access to services via remote means, has been highlighted amidst the physical restrictions triggered by the spread of the virus.

In March 2020, the European Commission and the High Representative for the Union on Foreign Affairs and Security Policy issued a [Joint Communication on the Eastern Partnership policy beyond 2020](#). This laid out the areas of priority that will underpin the future programming of EU assistance and cooperation in the 2021-2027 period. ‘Together for a **resilient digital transformation**’ was affirmed as one of the five priorities to drive sustainable growth for both the EU and the Eastern partner countries in the coming period.

In addition to these priorities, the concrete **deliverables for 2025** still need to be defined. The European Commission held consultations<sup>1</sup> with partner countries, Member States, EU institutions, civil society and other key stakeholders to collect feedback and reflections in order to define these objectives. These can then be validated at the EaP summit planned for the first half of 2021.

DG NEAR and DG Connect, supported by the EU4Digital Facility and the thematic networks, identified **nine suggested deliverables for 2025**. These are divided into four main pillars: digital infrastructure, eGovernance, digital economy and innovation, and cybersecurity, as illustrated in the table below.

*Suggested deliverables for 2025*

Digital infrastructure	1. 80% reduction of retail prices for international roaming among EaP countries
	2. 80% of EaP households having access to affordable high-speed internet
eGovernance	3. 80% of public services in the EaP available online through interoperability platforms
	4. Mutual recognition of digital signatures among at least 4 EaP countries and with the EU, with 30% of the documents transferred cross-border being digitally signed
	5. Digital transport corridors operational in at least 4 EaP countries, and with the EU, with 30% of logistics information submitted digitally

<sup>1</sup> In the context of these consultations, several meetings provided a forum for discussion between the European Commission and country representatives. These include the EU4Digital Steering Committee Meeting in September 2020 and the fifth HDM Panel and the EaP Platform 2 meetings in November 2020.



Digital economy and innovation	6. 50% increase in cross-border eCommerce among EaP countries and with the EU
	7. EUR 100 million invested in digital start-ups in the EaP (seed and pre-acceleration)
	8. One million EaP citizens digitally empowered
Cybersecurity	9. Institutional, policy and legislative cybersecurity frameworks in place in all EaP countries, compatible with EU legislation and guidelines

Among the priorities, the upcoming period includes further attention to the areas of roaming, digital signatures, digital transport corridors and eCommerce. These, combined with the suggested deliverables of investing in digital start-ups and digitally empowering citizens, will further **build on the successes and the achievements** of the current stage of the EU4Digital Facility.

## Political Highlights

Since the previous report from July 2020, the Facility has been continuing its work to improve the legislative and regulatory framework conditions for the digital economy and society, and to build the EU4Digital brand. In line with the broader EU policy goals, the Facility works to analyse, assess, recommend and pilot digital solutions in six thematic areas. The actions of the Facility further aim to promote dialogue, cooperation and harmonisation between the EU and the Eastern partner countries.

To facilitate a **common international roaming space** among Eastern partner countries, EU4Digital has been supporting countries in reaching the final text for the Regional Roaming Agreement. Signing is expected in early 2021. After full application, this agreement will provide tangible benefits for citizens, who will see an 87% reduction of retail roaming tariffs among Eastern partner countries<sup>2</sup>. Building on the momentum of the regional agreement, a feasibility study for a common EaP-EU roaming space has also been launched by the Facility.

Also in the area of telecom rules, EU4Digital is working with the countries to finalise the Regional Spectrum Agreement. This agreement will **facilitate coordinated spectrum management strategies** in the Eastern partner countries so that future 5G technologies can be enabled in the region. Supporting the countries' National Regulatory Authorities **to close identified independence gaps** is a further focus of the Facility. These activities are helping to advance the EaP telecommunications environment in order to create similar benefits for EaP businesses and citizens as those that are currently enjoyed in the EU.

Cross-border technical pilots are a crucial part of **facilitating future interoperability and cross-border digital exchanges**. EU4Digital has focused on a number of pilots between Eastern partner countries and between EU and Eastern partner countries. In the area of eTrade, the eDelivery pilot facilitated the exchange of electronic invoices between companies in Ukraine and Poland, as a demonstration of paperless information exchange which will reduce costs for companies and speed up processes. The pilot is to be extended to Armenia. Additionally, an eCustoms pilot to exchange pre-arrival information between Belarus and Lithuania has been launched, with the aim of reducing time and effort needed for border crossings.

In order to support the ambitious growth of eCommerce between the EU and Eastern partner countries, the Facility is helping to **assess the changes required in legal environment and ecosystem** structure. A virtual warehouse solution to be piloted by the Facility between Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and an EU Member State (to be selected) will help to eliminate obstacles and further develop the field of eCommerce in the EaP. Further to this, identifying the background necessary for digital transport corridors to **facilitate the movement of goods** has also been one of the successes of the Facility.

In the area of digital trust, eSignature pilots are helping to **identify the technical requirements needed** for countries to enable cross-border mutual recognition. The legislative and technical links being tested through the preparation of the Ukraine-Moldova and Ukraine-Estonia pilots are important for future use of this technology in the region. A newly launched activity on cross-border eServices from a regulatory perspective is a further example of the important groundwork being conducted by the Facility in the area of Trust and Security. Additionally, the Facility has begun work in the area of eGovernance, looking into the modernisation of public administrations. Through this new area, the Facility will seek to help **improve public sector reforms** with digital opportunities and best practices as a central element.

The Facility is helping to identify the **conditions and environment needed for Start-ups and Scale-ups** within the EaP region to foster innovation. The Digital Innovation and Scale-up Initiative (DISC) activities include a market assessment, the development of a practical ICT entrepreneurial ecosystem guidebook, and the design

<sup>2</sup> As detailed in the EU4Digital Roaming Report, 2019. Available at: <https://eufordigital.eu/library/eu4digital-roaming-report/>



of the EaP DISC Capital funding instrument that will support digital start-ups in the EaP through a regional EUR 150 million venture investment fund.

To foster the development of the ICT ecosystem, the EU4Digital Facility has also been encouraging the networking of ICT stakeholders in the partner countries. Further to this, the Facility is helping to **promote women in technology** in the EaP by partnering with local organisations to develop recommendations for women’s mentorship programmes in ICT. The work of the Facility in this area will pave the way for practical actions to support the EU’s strategic priorities on gender equality<sup>3</sup>.

Any resilient digital transformation must be supported by **digital literacy**. In digital skills, the Facility is supporting the establishment of national job coalitions in the Eastern partner countries. A common digital skills competence framework and the creation of digital job role profiles for SMEs are activities conducted by the Facility to boost digital skills in the region.

As the current pandemic continues, **tools to support the collaboration of stakeholders**, such as the eHealth online collaboration portal, can be used to exchange best practices and information on COVID-19. With different digital health systems across the region, the interoperability guidelines prepared by the Facility aim to identify where these systems could be further harmonised to have a **seamless exchange of health data** between cities, regions and countries. The Facility has also been working on joint initiatives to support healthy ageing in the EaP region.

The impact of EU support in the six thematic areas is communicated through the EU4Digital brand. The Facility has built EU4Digital to be a trusted partner in the region, viewed as an important source of relevant information and expertise for all questions on digital. The Communication activities include providing a **central hub for information on the EU4Digital Initiative** on the dedicated website, as well as **outreach campaigns** to further promote the actions undertaken by the Initiative and positively affect citizens in the EaP region. For example, the social media campaigns successfully launched on ICT Innovation and eHealth **explain in an accessible way the tangible impact of EU4Digital** for citizens of the Eastern partner countries.

The EU4Digital brand is also seen through the various communication products (newsletters, factsheets), through bilateral communication cooperation with projects and Ministries, as well as through partnerships with the local media. For accurate **tracking of progress towards the deliverables and political objectives** of the EU, the Facility has also implemented and managed a detailed monitoring framework.

### *EU4Digital - objective, purpose and expected results*

I. OVERALL PROJECT OBJECTIVE	
<p>The overall objective of the project is to eliminate existing obstacles and barriers for pan-European online services for citizens, both women and men, public administrations and businesses, including through the harmonisation of the digital environments among the EaP partner countries and with the EU.</p> <p>The geographical scope includes the Eastern Partnership countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.</p>	
II. PROJECT PURPOSE	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote key areas of the digital economy and society in the EaP region, in line with EU norms and best practices.</li> <li>Establish EU4Digital as a recognised and well communicated brand, encompassing EU support to the digital economy and society in the EaP region and providing links to other complementary activities by the Eastern partner countries, EU Member States, IFIs and other donors.</li> </ol>	
III. RESULTS	
Result 1	Legislative and regulatory framework conditions for the digital economy and society improved, and key enablers for electronic services in place, including implemented policy recommendations and piloted cross-border eServices for businesses and citizens in the following areas: Telecom Rules, Trust and Security, eTrade, ICT innovation, eHealth, eSkills
Result 2	EU4Digital brand established, visible and recognised as the reference for EU cooperation on the digital economy and society in the EaP

<sup>3</sup> European Commission Gender Action Plan, November 2020, [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP\\_20\\_2184](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_20_2184)



IV. PROJECT RESULTS IN THE THEMATIC AREAS	
Telecom Rules	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. International agreement on a common roaming space among the Eastern partner countries.</li> <li>2. Strengthened independence of National Regulatory Authorities (NRAs) for electronic communications in all 6 Eastern partner countries.</li> <li>3. Well-coordinated frequency distribution strategies among the Eastern partner countries and with the EU.</li> </ol>
Trust and Security	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Piloted interoperable cross-border eSignature and established regional framework for cross-border eServices for businesses, in the EaP region.</li> <li>2. Preparatory work completed for the design and implementation of cyber-security strategies in the EaP region, based on EU experiences.</li> </ol>
eTrade	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Better harmonised national legal frameworks for eTrade, including eCommerce and eCustoms, among the Eastern partner countries and with the EU.</li> <li>2. Piloted cross-border eTrade services among Eastern partner countries and with the EU.</li> </ol>
ICT innovation	Legislative and regulatory reforms, relevant ICT infrastructures and best practices, favouring the development of ICT research, start-ups & innovation ecosystems in the EaP region, in line with EU norms, established.
eHealth	Better harmonised national legal frameworks for eHealth, among Eastern partner countries and with the EU.
Digital Skills	Common methodology for designing digital skills strategies; and common competence framework for SMEs and microbusinesses in the EaP region established.

### 3 Programme state of play & planning of activities

This chapter covers the main EU4Digital Facility results achieved and a short description of the related activities under the six sub-streams and the Communication stream during the reporting period (July 2020 – December 2020). Likewise, under each thematic sub-stream (where applicable), key highlights in the six Eastern partner countries are provided. Additionally, the report provides planning for the upcoming six-month period under each sub-stream.

#### 3.1 Telecom Rules

##### State of play

##### Roaming

In the area of establishing a common roaming space between the six Eastern partner countries, the EU4Digital finalised the national-level consultations regarding the draft Regional Roaming Agreement (RRA) with all six Eastern partner countries at the HDM Panel on 13 November 2020 and **submitted the final draft RRA** for formal national approval procedures. It is expected that outstanding questions will be addressed and all Eastern partner countries will obtain the required mandate to sign the RRA and finalise the national approval procedures in January. The official RRA signing ceremony is expected to take place in March 2021.

Additionally, in October 2020 EU4Digital launched another activity related to roaming – **a feasibility study on establishing a common international roaming space between the Eastern partner countries and the EU Member States** (EaP-EU roaming study) to build on the expected signing of the RRA among Eastern partner countries. At the current stage, EU4Digital continues to work on the legal framework analysis aimed at identifying and evaluating legally feasible options for EaP-EU roaming arrangement.

##### Key outputs:

- Draft RRA submitted for formal national approval procedures.
- Launched feasibility study on EU-EaP roaming.



## Country perspective

The table below presents the current status regarding the formal national approval procedures on the RRA per each Eastern partner country.

Country	Highlights
AM	The draft RRA has been shared with the stakeholders and the comments have been received. Some Armenian stakeholders have expressed their reservations on certain matters, incl. possible fraud prevention.
AZ	The draft RRA has been already discussed with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Economy, no major comments on the RRA are expected.
BY	The draft RRA is undergoing national consultation initiated by the Ministry of Communications and Informatization with the Ministry of Antimonopoly Regulation and Trade, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Economy as well as market participants.
GE	The formal alignment has been started with the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, but no feedback has been received yet.
MD	The formal alignment has been started with the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Ministry of Economy is currently drafting the Government decision on final negotiation and signing of the RRA.
UA	The agreement has undergone several rounds of informal consultations and been submitted to the Ministry of Digital Transformation by the NRA – National Commission for the State Regulation of Communications and Informatization – to launch formal consultation procedure. No major comments are expected.

## Regulators' independence

EU4Digital has progressed towards strengthening the organisational and financial independence of national regulatory authorities (NRAs) for electronic communications in the Eastern partner countries. EU4Digital jointly with the Eastern Partnership Electronic Communications Regulators Network (EaPeReg) has conducted a **detailed analysis in each Eastern partner country in terms of legislative gaps identified in the field of electronic communications**. As a result, a **report on gap assessment regarding governance of NRAs and their powers and obligations** was prepared, including recommendations towards bridging the gaps where applicable. In the report, the European Union (EU) 2002/2009 electronic communications regulatory framework<sup>4</sup> is used as a benchmark for assessing the gaps. Based on the outcomes of the report, together with each Eastern partner country EU4Digital has selected the priority topics in light of recommendations.

### Key outputs:

- NRA independence gap assessment reports for all Eastern partner countries (available in three levels of detail).

## Country perspective

The table below presents the key highlights on the NRA independence gap assessment report findings in the regulatory independence area, as well as the priority topics identified by national experts of Eastern partner countries based on recommendations provided in the gap assessment reports.

Country	Highlights
AM	NRA is well established; however, independence of the NRA may be further strengthened by ensuring availability of sufficient resources and competitiveness of the NRA in the labour market. <b>Priority topics to be addressed first:</b> recruitment of personnel and experts, ability to set remuneration for Board members and employees, as well as powers to regulate market entry, to define and analyse relevant markets, to implement ex-ante obligations and to regulate interconnection and access.

<sup>4</sup> [EU 2002/2009 electronic communications regulatory framework](#) is part of the 'Telecoms Package', adopted in 2002 and amended in 2009 to take account of the rapid development of the sector. This package includes four Directives which regulate specific aspects of electronic communications, as well as two Regulations.



Country	Highlights
AZ	<p>An authority meeting the requirements of an NRA for electronic communications cannot be confirmed. However, the adopted strategic roadmap on the development of ICT in Azerbaijan highlights the priority to establish an independent regulatory body by the end of 2020.</p> <p><b>Priority topics to be addressed first:</b> appeal procedures as well as dispute resolution, enforcement of regulation, control quality of service requirements, powers to organise public hearings, ex ante obligations - access to ducts and/or other network infrastructure and cost accounting and allocation methodologies, to set requirements for contracts, to solve customer complaints, setting of universal service obligations and to define universal service's baskets.</p>
BY	<p>Even though previously the existence of an NRA was reported by Belarus representatives, upon review the EU4Digital Facility cannot confirm the statement.</p> <p><b>Priority topics to be addressed first:</b> as of preparation of this report, priority topics have not been identified by the representatives of Belarus.</p>
GE	<p>The regulatory system is well aligned with the EU regulatory framework. Legal guarantees of Independence of NRAs are established in the Constitution of GE.</p> <p><b>Priority topics to be addressed first:</b> legislative initiative powers of NRA as well as powers to implement ex-ante obligations, to regulate interconnection and access, to manage numbering plans, to set universal service obligations and to define universal service's baskets.</p>
MD	<p>The regulatory system is well aligned with the EU regulatory framework.</p> <p><b>Priority topics to be addressed first:</b> powers of enforcement of regulation topic in light of recommendations.</p>
UA	<p>NRA has been set up; however, it does not meet the requirements of an independently functioning NRA. Substantial review of regulatory system is required to bring it in line with EU legislation.</p> <p><b>Priority topics to be addressed first:</b> status of NRA – legally distinct and functionally independent, decision making powers, prohibition to seek or take instructions, 2014 EU Broadband Cost Reduction Directive<sup>5</sup>, imposition of ex ante obligations including access regulation, setting of universal service obligations and to define universal service's baskets.</p>

## Freeing 700 MHz

EU4Digital continued to support a coordinated approach for **reassigning the 700 MHz frequency band** in the six Eastern partner countries by supporting regional negotiations towards the alignment on a final version of the **Regional Spectrum Agreement (RSA)**. The draft RSA was presented to all six Eastern partner countries at the HDM Panel on 13 November 2020 with two open clauses remaining. Further, the document was aligned between the countries and is ready to be submitted for formal national approval procedures, whereas the official signing ceremony is expected to take place in March 2021.

Additionally, EU4Digital continued to **support the Spectrum expert working group with their agenda, specifically focusing on 5G launch in the partner countries.**

### Key outputs:

- Technical assistance provided (including on-demand consultations for Spectrum expert working group (SEWG), workshops on 5G launch in EaP region, etc.).

### Country perspective

The table below presents the status of release of 700 MHz and implementation of mobile fixed communication networks (MFCN) in each Eastern partner country.

Country	Highlights
AM	<p>The process of release of 700 MHz has been finalised in Armenia.</p> <p>A programme for implementation of MFCN has not been prepared. It is required to define the conditions for shared 700MHz band usage between Aeronautical Radionavigation System (ARNS) and MFCN as well as to conduct spectrum authorisation procedure.</p>

<sup>5</sup> Directive [2014/61/EU](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014 on measures to reduce the cost of deploying high-speed electronic communications networks



Country	Highlights
AZ	The technical preparatory work has been completed and Azerbaijan is consulting with broadcasting operators regarding financing mechanism, which is required to replace television transmitters currently operating in 700MHz band. A programme for implementation of MFCN is under development.
BY	Technical preparatory work has been completed. Main obstacle to finalise the process is lack of financing required for broadcasting operator to replace television transmitters operating in 700MHz band. The schedule of implementation of MFCN have not been decided yet.
GE	The process of release of 700 MHz has been finalised in Georgia. Planning to conduct spectrum auction in early 2021.
MD	Replacement of television transmitters operating in 700MHz has been completed in the most territory of the country. Main obstacle to finalise the process is lack of financing required for broadcasting operators to finalise the digital terrestrial television (DTT) implementation and achieve DTT national population coverage. A programme for implementation of MFCN is under development.
UA	Technical preparatory work has been completed. Main obstacle to finalise the process is lack of financing required for broadcasting operator to replace television transmitters operating in 700MHz band. The draft programme of implementation of MFCN has been prepared. Due to usage of Aeronautical Radionavigation System (ARNS) in Ukraine, the MFCN will be implemented with restrictions (resulting from protection of ARNS against harmful interferences).

## Planning for the upcoming six months

### Roaming – key objectives:

- Finalise the RRA text (signing ceremony is planned in March 2021).
- Support the RRA implementation procedure during the transition period (the RRA is expected to enter into force on 1 January 2022).
- Finalise the legal feasibility assessment of EU-EaP roaming arrangement (full study to be finalised by the end of Q3 2021).

### Regulators' independence – key objectives:

- Develop country specific action plans to strengthen regulatory independence.
- Provide technical assistance aimed at bridging the gaps identified and implementation of recommendations (preparation of legislation, stakeholder events, etc.).
- Design a platform for international cooperation of National Regulatory Authorities (design and development of new EaPeReg website as well as technical support and maintenance).

### Freeing 700 MHz – key objectives:

- Provide periodic technical assistance, including support in the preparation and implementation of RSA (signing ceremony is planned in March 2021).

## 3.2 Trust and Security

### State of play

#### eID and eSignature

**About.** The eSignature pilot aims to test the cross-border eSignature technical operation in selected Eastern partner countries. During the pilot, the testing of a qualified electronic signature solution compatible with eIDAS Regulation requirements took place.

**Pilot countries.** The eSignature pilot was performed between Ukraine and Estonia (EaP – EU), and Ukraine and Moldova (inter- EaP).



**Scope.** The eSignature pilot includes the timestamping, validation mechanisms and the certificate status checking components which are deployed to enable the cross-border mutual recognition of qualified electronic signatures (digital signatures).

The technical specifications of eSignature pilots defining the eSignature cross-border mutual requirements were finalised, covering the specific needs of both Ukraine-Moldova and Ukraine-Estonia pilots. A cross-border mutual validation proof of concept was presented during the EU4Digital Steering Committee Meeting in October 2020. Further, EU4Digital will work on finalising common EaP recommendations and roadmap for cross-border mutual recognition based on eSignature piloting activities. It is important to note that on several different events (e.g. 2<sup>nd</sup> Trust and Security Network meeting, Virtual individual workshops with representatives from Eastern Partner countries and Steering Committee Meeting) Eastern partner country representatives expressed the need to extend the eSignature pilot to all Eastern partner countries.

**Key outputs:**

- Requirements for the trust services offered during the eSignature pilot.

**Country perspective**

The table below presents the status that was developed during the previous reporting period as a result of the Legal and Technical Maturity Assessment of Trust and eID services. The maturity level of the services is measured on a scaled score from 1 to 5 (please see the definition of the scale below the table).

Country	Highlights
AM	<p><i>Technical Maturity Rating: <b>3.05</b>   Legal Maturity Rating: <b>2.47</b>   Overall Maturity Rating: <b>2.76 (Managed)</b></i></p> <p>There is only one certification authority (CA) and one registration authority (RA) in one entity. The primary or secondary level regulations need amendments to ensure better compatibility with eIDAS Regulation when more types of trust services will be provided in the country.</p>
AZ	<p><i>Technical Maturity Rating: <b>3.72</b>   Legal Maturity Rating: <b>1.99</b>   Overall Maturity Rating: <b>2.85 (Managed)</b></i></p> <p>There is a need for secondary and tertiary legislation to enforce best practices and to ensure an adequate level of confidence in the operation of trust services at the trust service providers (TSP) level (e.g. rules and specific policies for the audit of TSPs in order to accept their signatures for specific e-services or a specific set of rules, policies and procedures that third parties and entities who are part of the eID issuance process should comply with in order to ensure the security of these services).</p>
BY	<p><i>Technical Maturity Rating: <b>3.69</b>   Legal Maturity Rating: <b>3.70</b>   Overall Maturity Rating: <b>3.69 (Defined)</b></i></p> <p>There is only one CA in Belarus with several RAs. The national regulations are being implemented and followed by all registration authorities in Belarus rigorously. There is an adequate offering of trust services with eight public entities and three private entities. However, the encryption schemes and cryptographic algorithms used by Belarus currently are not compatible with the requirements of the European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI) and Webtrust standards and thus technological adaptations are required to be compatible with the eIDAS Regulation.</p>
GE	<p><i>Technical Maturity Rating: <b>2.02</b>   Legal Maturity Rating: <b>2.40</b>   Overall Maturity Rating: <b>2.21 (Managed)</b></i></p> <p>There is only one major TSP in Georgia who acts as a CA and RA in one organisation. Amendments of primary or secondary regulations are needed to ensure better compatibility of certificate lifecycle management processes with eIDAS Regulation.</p>
MD	<p><i>Technical Maturity Rating: <b>3.01</b>   Legal Maturity Rating: <b>2.97</b>   Overall Maturity Rating: <b>2.99 (Managed)</b></i></p> <p>To ensure better compatibility with eIDAS Regulation on certificate lifecycle management processes and enforcement of technical controls, Trust services best practices should be addressed at the primary or secondary regulations. There is a strong offering of trust services with 3 public entities and 3 private entities in operation.</p> <p>Developed functional and non-functional requirements for the Moldova-Ukraine eSignature pilot, together with best practices that enable cross-border mutual validation of digital signatures.</p>
UA	<p><i>Technical Maturity Rating: <b>4.49</b>   Legal Maturity Rating: <b>4.69</b>   Overall Maturity Rating: <b>4.59 (Defined and Measured)</b></i></p>



Country	Highlights
	<p>The laws and regulations on trust services are generally mature and compatible with the EU eIDAS Regulation. Ukraine has very strong offering related of trust services with 14 public entities and 7 private entities which offer various trust services.</p> <p>Developed functional and non-functional requirements for the Ukraine-Moldova and Ukraine-Estonia eSignature pilots, together with best practices that enable cross-border mutual validation of digital signatures. Country representatives expressed the need to extend the Ukraine-Estonia eSignature pilot, focusing on legal and technical aspects.</p>

*Maturity Rating Scale: N/A (Score: 0 to 0.99); Ad-Hoc (Score: 1 to 1.99); Managed (Score: 2 to 2.99); Defined (Score: 3 to 3.99); Defined and Measured (Score: 4 to 4.99); Optimised (Score: 5)*

In order to close identified gaps and to achieve cross-border mutual recognition between the Eastern Partnership countries and EU member states, EU4Digital prepared a number of recommendations (roadmap). The table below presents the key recommendations for all Eastern partner countries to achieve cross-border mutual recognition of trust services.

Key recommendations
<p>1. Update regulatory framework to designate and define the roles for the Supervisory Body (SB) equivalent to eIDAS counterpart.</p> <p><b>Final Goal:</b> Have an institution in place that has an overview and oversight over the trust services in scope for cross-border mutual recognition and over the trust service providers who are delivering them. The institution will act as the point of contact and as a dialog partner with equivalent institutions in the EU.</p>
<p>2. Update regulatory framework to designate and define the roles for the Conformity Assessment Body (CAB) equivalent to eIDAS counterpart.</p> <p><b>Final Goal:</b> Have an institution in place that has an overview and oversight over the compliance status of the trust services in scope for cross-border mutual recognition and over the compliance of the trust service providers (TSPs) who are delivering those services.</p>
<p>3. Update the local regulatory frameworks to ensure a clear separation of use cases between electronic signatures (digital signatures) and electronic seals (digital seals) for trust service providers who are in scope for cross-border mutual recognition.</p> <p><b>Final Goal:</b> Have clear use cases for different trust services in order to help users and organisations properly differentiate between each trust service intended purpose. The use case clarity enables better selection and adoption of specific trust services in order to achieve a specific goal. For example, the use of electronic seals for economic activities between organisations will limit the processing of personal identifiable information of citizens (commonly associated with the electronic signature use), which in the end will improve the security of users' personal information through the minimisation of data processing.</p>
<p>4. Update the local regulatory frameworks to define the trust services in scope for cross-border mutual recognition, and ensure that there is primary and/or secondary legislation in place to define an adequate level of equivalence to the eIDAS counterpart (for each of the trust services in scope for cross-border mutual recognition).</p> <p><b>Final Goal:</b> Have primary and secondary legislation in place that defines the trust services which are in scope of cross-border mutual recognition, defined using a compatible terminology, designated for a similar use like the equivalent services available in the EU. Define at the level of secondary legislation the EU compatible technical specifications (based on ETSI standards) for the trust services in scope for cross-border mutual recognition.</p>
<p>5. Update the local regulatory framework to allow/enable the use of advanced electronic signatures (AdES), specifically to enable the use/support of XadES X-L (with -LT and -LTA) which provide timestamp and certificate validity data (OCSP) at the time of signing, for the trust services in scope for cross-border mutual recognition.</p> <p><b>Final Goal:</b> Have the regulatory framework in place to enable the development and implementation of trust services based on the EU compatible technologies that reduce the overhead and technical complexity related to cross-border mutual validation of the aforementioned trust services using technical mechanisms.</p>
<p>6. Adopt the technical measures to enable the creation of timestamps using an eIDAS equivalent timestamping service.</p> <p><b>Final Goal:</b> Have the technical mechanisms to implement timestamping with trust services in-scope for cross-border mutual recognition. Define the technical mechanisms using eIDAS compatible technical specifications (ex. based on ETSI).</p>
<p>7. Adopt the technical measures to enable cross-border mutual validation of trust services, through the ability to validate the status of electronic certificates using an eIDAS equivalent validation service (technical mechanism).</p>



Key recommendations
<p><b>Final Goal:</b> Have the technical mechanisms to implement validation with trust services in-scope for cross-border mutual recognition. Define the technical mechanisms using eIDAS compatible technical specifications (ex. based on ETSI).</p>
<p>8. Update the local regulatory frameworks to define and adopt an eIDAS equivalent service for long term certificate preservation service.</p> <p><b>Final Goal:</b> Have the technical mechanisms to implement long term preservation with trust services in-scope for cross-border mutual recognition. Define the technical mechanisms using eIDAS compatible technical specifications (ex. based on ETSI).</p>
<p>9. Update the local regulatory frameworks related to data protection and privacy to ensure a GDPR equivalent level of protection for EU citizens' personal identifiable information processed during certificate (digital signatures and eIDs) validation activities.</p> <p><b>Final Goal:</b> Have a regulatory framework in place to enable the secure processing of personal identifiable information related to the use of trust services, in the cross-border mutual recognition ecosystem, in a GDPR compliant way.</p>
<p>10. Update the local regulatory frameworks to allow/enable the auditing of trust services providers using the eIDAS audit scheme.</p> <p><b>Final Goal:</b> Have a regulatory framework in place that enables the delivery of eIDAS assessments for the trust services in-scope for cross border mutual recognition.</p>
<p>11. Initiate the cross-border mutual recognition mechanism with the EU and the inclusion of in-scope trust service providers into the European Trust Lists or enable trust services validation using third party lists.</p> <p><b>Final Goal:</b> Achieve cross-border mutual recognition of trust services with the EU.</p>

## Cross-border eServices

EU4Digital launched cross-border eServices activity in September. The aim of the activity is to provide a regional framework for the enablement of cross-border eServices. An analysis was initiated on the current state of EU legal basis, best practices and priority cross-border eServices, aiming to identify the EU baseline for interoperability of cross-border eServices. At the present stage, EU4Digital continues to analyse the state of play in current eService offering and has initiated an assessment on gaps in the regulatory framework for implementing cross-border eServices in the Eastern partner countries.

## eGovernance

In December 2020, EU4Digital launched the activity aiming to develop country-specific recommendations on eGovernance to improve public administration efficiency and to enhance public service delivery in the EaP countries. The activity will focus on analysing underlying conditions for eGovernance in the Eastern partner countries: eServices access for both citizens and businesses; presence of digitised data; system of interoperability of the data; development of digital identity. In addition to these basic elements, there are two horizontal enablers that will be a focus of the activity as well: management model and status of basic regulatory framework; adoption of relevant classifiers compatible with those of the EU.

Currently, EU4Digital is preparing a methodology to define the eGovernance development approach / dimensions and the EU baseline.

## Planning for the upcoming six months

### eID and eSignature – key objectives:

- Finalise the roadmaps and action plans for cross-border mutual recognition of trust services and eIDs for the Eastern partner countries.
- Finalise and share the eSignature best practices, recommendations and lessons learned, plan for post-pilot activities.

### Cross-border eServices:

- Finalise cross-border eServices environment assessment criteria.
- Perform gap analysis on regulatory framework for implementing cross-border eServices.
- Assess current eService offering and cross-border interoperability aspects of priority digital public service(s).



## eGovernance – key objectives:

- Define eGovernance development analysis approach / dimensions and EU baseline.
- Assess eGovernance maturity in Eastern partner countries based on identified eGovernance development dimensions and EU baseline.

## 3.3 eTrade

### State of play

#### Pilot cross-border eTrade solutions

**About.** The cross-border eTrade pilot is testing the ground for paperless information exchange in selected Eastern partner countries using established EU-wide solution and standards. Specifically, cross-border trade partners (companies) have been exchanging standardised invoice data.

**Pilot countries.** eDelivery pilot was performed between Ukraine and Poland (EaP - EU) and will be further tested between Armenia and Ukraine (inter - EaP).

**Scope.** EU4Digital tests the exchange of standardised invoice data using a secure, reliable, interoperable and trusted channel [eDelivery - CEF Building Block](#). Piloting parties join the [Peppol eDelivery testing network](#), which in the long term will allow them to exchange data with the EU and beyond (30 countries in Europe plus Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Singapore, South Africa and USA).

To facilitate full-scale solution implementation (in production environment) and its scale-up in the Eastern partner countries, EU4Digital is preparing recommendations on the required legal, organisational and technical adjustments.

EU4Digital reached a **key milestone**: the cross-border eTrade (eDelivery) pilot between Ukraine and Poland **was successfully launched in October and concluded** at the end of November 2020. Major importing and exporting companies from Ukraine, i.e. Kernel and Premier Food, were exchanging standardised invoice data via the eDelivery channel, in parallel with issuing the invoice in the regular manner with their counterparties in Poland. Moreover, to further promote the pilot and usage of eDelivery in the country, representatives from Ukraine have initiated various communication activities, such as a [webinar on eDelivery](#), an [article in the national media](#), etc.

To ensure the sustainability and continuation of the pilot results, as well as to extend the fruitful cooperation with the Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine, the decision was made **to involve Ukraine in the inter-EaP eDelivery scenario with Armenia**. Currently, the preparatory actions for inter-EaP eInvoice exchange are in progress and the pilot launch is foreseen in January 2021.

During the reporting period, one of the **principal achievements was the establishment of the first eDelivery Access Points in Armenia and Ukraine**, which will ensure the sustainability of the pilot results subject to the further promotion of eDelivery in the participating countries, and their willingness to implement the required adjustments from the legal perspective.

After the pilot is concluded with all the countries, EU4Digital will prepare recommendations that will guide beneficiaries towards the required legal, organisational and technical adjustments to be made for full-scale solution implementation and scale-up in the Eastern partner countries.

#### Key outputs:

- Preparatory actions for eDelivery pilot completed, including infrastructure and software set up for three pilot countries.
- Piloted eDelivery solution between four preselected business companies from Poland and Ukraine.
- Legal assessment of Ukrainian law to identify the recommendations for required legal changes to legitimise exchange of invoices in digital format.

#### Country perspective

The table below presents the status in Eastern partner countries regarding electronic document exchange.

Country	Highlights
AM	<b>eInvoicing</b> is already being used inside the country. <b>Peppol BIS 3.0</b> is being tested and one <b>eDelivery access point</b> is already established (realised in the scope of EU4Digital eDelivery pilot).



Country	Highlights
AZ	<b>eInvoicing</b> is already being used on a national level. <b>Peppol BIS 3.0</b> is not adopted and there are no <b>eDelivery access points</b> established.
BY	<b>eInvoicing</b> is already being used on a national level. <b>Peppol BIS 3.0</b> is not adopted and there are no <b>eDelivery access points</b> established.
GE	<b>eInvoicing</b> is not being used. <b>Peppol BIS 3.0</b> is not adopted and there are no <b>eDelivery access points</b> established.
MD	<b>eInvoicing</b> is not being used but is considered. <b>Peppol BIS 3.0</b> is not adopted and there are no <b>eDelivery access points</b> established.
UA	<b>eInvoicing</b> is already being used inside the country. <b>Peppol BIS 3.0</b> is being tested and one <b>eDelivery access point</b> is already established (realised in the scope of EU4Digital eDelivery pilot).

## Stakeholders networking

As part of its networking activities, in October, EU4Digital organised an online eDelivery study visit, which created an opportunity for the event participants to virtually visit and learn best practices of eDelivery solution applicability in countries and organisations from across the European Union. The experience and knowledge were shared by representatives of the European Commission from DG DIGIT, which is currently maintaining the solution, e-CODEX project, that has applied eDelivery in the justice domain, as well as OpenPeppol and the Norwegian Peppol Authority, which has one of the strongest practices of eDelivery usage on a national level.

Following the successful conclusion of the eDelivery pilot between Ukraine and Poland, at the beginning of December, a showcase was organised to demonstrate how eDelivery had been applied in the pilot activity. During the showcase, technical aspects of pilot implementation were highlighted and a walkthrough of the step-by-step process of standardised invoice exchange via eDelivery, which was followed during the pilot, was demonstrated.

Further, it is foreseen that even more networking activities will be organised to ensure the continuous involvement and interest of eTrade stakeholders in the activities that are being carried out within EU4Digital. The upcoming events on the agenda are technical showcases of eCommerce and eCustoms pilots, as well as virtual events / study visits to explore the best practices of eCommerce and eLogistics.

### Key outputs:

- Virtual eDelivery study visit.
- Virtual showcase of eDelivery pilot.

## Pilot mechanisms of customs information exchange

**About.** The customs information exchange pilot facilitates customs-to-customs data exchange and demonstrates the improvement in release time of goods, as well as introducing more advanced customs risk management processes.

**Pilot countries.** Customs information exchange piloting is performed between Belarus and Lithuania, and will be performed between Armenia and Georgia (on hold, subject to further negotiations).

**Scope.** EU4Digital tests customs information exchange by using the SEED (Systematic Electronic Exchange of Data) solution, implemented in the Western Balkan counties (financed and developed with EU support).

During the pilot, three data exchange related scenarios are tested:

1. Empty Trucks;
2. Exchange of exit data from transit / export declarations (limited data set);
3. Full declaration data set from the transit and export declarations for volunteers.

The eCustoms pilot is the starting point to test initial (limited) functionalities and data sets. Further, recommendations on the required legal, organisational and technical adjustments to be made for full-scale solution implementation on a national level. This should facilitate further bilateral dialogue and extension of the pilot for continuous use by the pilot and other Eastern partner countries.



EU4Digital reached an important milestone in the eCustoms pilot when **Belarus and Lithuania signed a Memorandum of Understanding** between Customs Administrations for cooperation during the pilot. Following this official establishment of cooperation, the technical design and development of the eCustoms pilot was concluded, and in December, the **first pilot scenario on data exchange on empty means of transport was successfully launched**. The exchange of such information is aimed at enabling quicker evidence of the border crossing of empty freight means of transport, and consequently their quicker passage through the border. From the law enforcement perspective, empty vehicles are considered as high risk. The data exchange will facilitate the verification that a truck which is declared as empty at exit is also declared as empty at the customs office of the neighbouring country. Remaining scenarios to exchange limited and full data set from transit / export declarations is planned to be completed by March 2021.

It is important to note that throughout the preparation phase, modifications of the SEED solution were introduced in order to comply with the requirements and specifics of the participating Customs Administrations and remove the existing barriers for customs data exchange, e.g. compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), since data such as truck number plate is considered as personal data. This highlights the **adaptability and flexibility** of the SEED solution in terms of required adjustments as per any country, which is interested to use the solution for customs data exchange needs.

Regarding the Armenia - Georgia inter-EaP pilot, the **countries have not yet confirmed their participation**. However, the discussions are already ongoing. It is expected that the final response on their willingness to take part in the eCustoms pilot will be obtained in January 2021.

#### Key outputs:

- Preparatory actions for eCustoms pilot solution (SEED) completed, including technical conditions document for the pilot.
- Piloted eCustoms solution (SEED) between Belarus and Lithuania on data exchange of empty means of transport (first out of three scenarios).

#### Country perspective

The table below presents the status in the Eastern partner countries regarding customs information exchange.

Country	Highlights
AM	<b>Partnership agreement</b> with EU as well as <b>bilateral protocols</b> with Iran and Georgia are in place.
AZ	<b>Bilateral protocols</b> with Georgia, Ukraine, Turkey, Iran, Russia, Belarus and Uzbekistan are in place to ensure the facilitation of exchanges of electronic customs data. In the future, the <b>bilateral agreement</b> with Kazakhstan is planned to be signed. From September 2020, the Twinning Project on 'Support to the State Customs Committee of Azerbaijan in the accession to the Convention on a Common Transit Procedure, Convention on Simplification of Formalities in Trade in Goods and implementation of the <b>New Computerised Transit System</b> (NCTS)' was initiated together with Italian partners (Italian Customs and Monopolies Agency).
BY	<b>Bilateral protocol</b> with Ukraine and <b>bilateral cooperation</b> with Lithuania are in place which facilitates the exchange of electronic data exchange between the countries.
GE	<b>Association Agreement</b> with the EU is signed and requires approximation of customs legislation. Also, <b>agreements</b> with Turkey, Azerbaijan, Ukraine, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Moldova and the China (with regards to electronic exchange of Rules of Origin related data) are in place.
MD	<b>Association Agreement</b> with the EU is signed and requires approximation of customs legislation. Moreover, <b>agreement</b> with Ukraine on mutual assistance and cooperation as well as <b>CEFTA agreement</b> are in place. <b>Customs code</b> was updated in 2020 to specify provisions around simplified customs declaration.
UA	<b>Association Agreement</b> with the EU is signed and requires approximation of customs legislation. Also, <b>agreements</b> with Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Azerbaijan are in place.



## eCommerce

**About.** The eCommerce pilot aims to use digital tools to eliminate barriers and increase eCommerce flows between the EU and among the EaP countries. During the pilot, EU4Digital will establish a digital solution to support selected retailers, marketplaces, delivery operators and customs to place products for sale abroad and complete cross-border delivery.

**Pilot countries.** Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia participate in the pilot to create conditions to connect to the EU marketplaces to sell and deliver goods to the EU (initially, Germany) as well as among the Eastern partner countries.

**Scope.** The eCommerce pilot is to establish a virtual warehouse as a re-usable database to list products with necessary data for cross-border sales and exchange data about cross-border transactions. The warehouse will be established in each pilot country.

This is the starting point to test the functionalities and data sets of the virtual warehouses, which in the long term will facilitate data exchange in eCommerce with all the Eastern partner countries, the EU member states and up to 192 countries within the Universal Postal Union. Further, EU4Digital will prepare recommendations for the full-scale solution implementation on a national level to facilitate bilateral dialogue and extension of the pilot for further use by the pilot and other Eastern partner countries.

EU4Digital has supported the six Eastern partner countries to define relevant and actionable recommendations in the eCommerce areas of legislation, standards and ecosystems (including topics such as consumer protection, electronic contracts, platforms and payments, cross-border taxes, delivery). The recommendations aim to eliminate obstacles and encourage speeding up of eCommerce development in general and in line with the EU 2021 eCommerce package/changes<sup>6</sup>. **The work resulted in six national action plans** that set a basis for further implementation through:

- Authorities of the Eastern partner countries making the necessary changes in legal and standards areas as per the provided specific points.
- Governmental and non-governmental stakeholders adopting the recommendations in national economy development plans for practical actions.

During this activity, a broad stakeholder community was mobilised, and **inputs were received during regional stakeholder consultation from over 80 key eCommerce stakeholders across the Eastern partner countries**, including EU Delegations, ministries responsible for digital and eCommerce matters, customs, taxes and standardisation authorities, national post and others.

One of the recommendations - to establish a virtual warehouse as a re-usable database to list goods for sale in the EU and other EaP countries - was selected to pilot in the EaP countries and with the EU. EU4Digital defined the eCommerce pilot concept and presented it to the EC and the key stakeholders of the Eastern partner countries. Armenia and Azerbaijan have already assigned the working group representatives as the most intensive work on the pilot implementation is planned for Q1 2021. The ambitious goal is to launch the pilot in March-April 2021.

### Key outputs:

- eCommerce state of play in the legal, standards and eCommerce ecosystem areas in the Eastern partner countries.
- Recommendations for eCommerce environment harmonisation in the Eastern partner countries and with the EU (including gap analysis).
- eCommerce pilot concept to establish a virtual warehouse as a re-usable database to list goods for sale in the EU and other EaP countries.

<sup>6</sup> The EU 2021 eCommerce package/changes: introduction of [mandatory electronic advance data](#) in customs declarations, [item-level tracking](#) for parcels, changes in [taxes payment in cross-border operations](#).



## Country perspective

The table below presents the overview of eCommerce legal framework and standards in the Eastern partner countries.

Country	Highlights
AM	<p><b>Legal framework:</b> Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA) is signed with the EU and supports harmonisation of legal framework, including consumer protection, customs area, security of trade, competition, electronic communications and electronic data exchange. Specific eCommerce legislation and eCommerce strategy are not developed. eCommerce law is in progress of update by 2023.</p> <p><b>Standards:</b> international (ISO, UPU) and national standards in the field of eCommerce are implemented by The National Institute of Standards.</p>
AZ	<p><b>Legal framework:</b> Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with the EU is signed but doesn't particularly require harmonisation with the EU legislation or standards having the focus on international legislation and standards (including the EU). eCommerce law exists from 2006. eCommerce strategy is not developed. eCommerce legislation framework is in progress of update.</p> <p><b>Standards:</b> international (UPU) standards are used and standardisation programme is launched by the Azerbaijan Standardization Institute to develop national standards in the field of eCommerce.</p>
BY	<p><b>Legal framework:</b> there is no agreement signed with the EU to influence harmonisation of eCommerce legislation and standards with the EU. Specific eCommerce legislation is not implemented. There is no dedicated eCommerce strategy, but the National Strategy of Informatization Development includes certain areas of eCommerce.</p> <p><b>Standards:</b> international (UPU) standards are used and national standards are developing with the priority to harmonise with international and regional standards. The State Committee for Standardization of the Republic of Belarus is focused to develop technical regulation system in the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) and cooperates with the leading international and European organisations (ISO, IEC, OIML, UNECE, CEN, CENELEC, ILAC, EA, GS1).</p>
GE	<p><b>Legal framework:</b> Association Agreement with the EU is signed and requires harmonisation of eCommerce framework with the EU. eCommerce law drafted in 2018 in line with the EU acquis and is planned to be adopted in 2020. There is no dedicated eCommerce strategy, but the Digital Economy and Information Society strategy includes certain areas of eCommerce.</p> <p><b>Standards:</b> international UPU standards are registered and implemented.</p>
MD	<p><b>Legal framework:</b> Association Agreement with the EU is signed and requires harmonisation with the EU legislation and standards. As a part of this agreement, eCommerce law has been aligned with the EU in 2018. eCommerce strategy is not developed.</p> <p><b>Standards:</b> international (UPU) standards are used and national standards are developed by adopting the EU standards – the Institute of Standardization of Moldova plans to adopt all European standards relevant to eCommerce by 2020.</p>
UA	<p><b>Legal framework:</b> Association Agreement with the EU is signed and requires harmonisation with the EU legislation and standards. As a part of this agreement, eCommerce law has been developed in line with the EU in 2014. It is planned to be updated by 2023. There is no dedicated eCommerce strategy, but the Digital Agenda includes certain areas of eCommerce.</p> <p><b>Standards:</b> eCommerce-related standards are being implemented by the Ministry of Infrastructure of Ukraine, and the postal standards in particular are ensured by the National commission for the state regulation of communications and informatization. International (UPU) and national standards are being implemented. Ukraine is a partner of the European Committee for Standardization.</p>

## Planning for the upcoming six months

### Pilot cross-border eTrade solutions – key objectives:

- Pilot standardised invoice exchange via eDelivery between Armenia and Ukraine.
- Prepare analysis and recommendations regarding the required legal, organisational and technical adjustments to be made for full scale eDelivery implementation in the Eastern partner countries.



- Hand over the tested solution for further development, customisation and adaptation according to the needs of pilot countries.

#### **Networking – key objectives:**

- Organise virtual eCustoms showcase to demonstrate how solution works in practice between Lithuania and Belarus.
- Organise virtual eCommerce showcase to demonstrate how a virtual warehouse supports cross-border product listing and logistics in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and the EU member state.
- Organise two virtual eCommerce and eLogistics site-visits to demonstrate how the existing solutions support cross-border transactions.

#### **Pilot mechanisms of exchange of information – key objectives:**

- Pilot two remaining eCustoms pilot scenarios between Belarus and Lithuania.
- Pilot eCustoms solution (SEED) between confirmed inter-EaP countries.
- Prepare analysis and recommendations regarding the required legal, organisational and technical adjustments to be made for full scale solution (SEED) implementation in the Eastern partner countries.
- Hand over the tested solution for further development, customisation and adaptation according to the needs of pilot countries.

#### **eCommerce – key objectives:**

- Conduct preparatory actions for eCommerce pilot: define standards for goods listing and delivery in the EU, establish a virtual warehouse to list goods for sale in the EU.
- Prepare a pilot scheme/model including the final solution concept and data flows between the parties participating in the pilot.
- Set up the test pilot solution and pilot it in the selected countries.
- Prepare analysis and recommendations for full scale solution (virtual warehouse) implementation in the Eastern partner countries.
- Hand over the use of the tested solution for further development, customisation and adaptation according to the needs of pilot countries.

## **3.4 ICT innovation**

### **State of play**

#### **Legislative framework**

The activity was finished in June. In addition to the defined [six recommendation packages for policy changes and action plans](#), during the reporting period EU4Digital supported six Eastern partner countries stakeholders to define **the priority policy actions** from the action plans and needed technical, networking and financial support to implement the proposed recommendations. **The work resulted in six national informational notes** on the prioritised policy actions that EU4Digital presented to DG NEAR and EU Delegations to Eastern partner countries. Further initiative for the implementation is led by the respective country beneficiaries.

#### **Networking of innovation payers**

The format of networking events was changed to online due to COVID-19 and the networking plan was updated. During this reporting period, **EU4Digital organised two virtual networking events on policy areas** selected by the Eastern partner countries - [digital innovation SMEs' access to finance](#) (event topic 'Integration of business angels and venture capital into EU and global networks and their capacity building to increase digital SMEs' access to finance in the Eastern Partnership region') and [new organisational forms for support of ICT Innovation](#) (event topic 'Networking of ICT innovation clusters in the EU and the Eastern partner countries to support cluster organisations development and regional cooperation').

The events attracted the following key European organisations: [European Crowdfunding Network](#), [European Business & Innovation Centre Network](#), [European Business Angels Network](#), [Business Angels Europe](#), [European Clusters Collaboration Platform](#). Together, events gathered around 130 participants from almost 70 different organisations in the alternative finance, IT, ICT Innovation and related sectors.

The events also led to a significant interest in future collaboration for joint projects and initiatives in the regional and the EU level. In addition, EU4Digital organised several practical follow-up meetings, where the possibilities of establishing capacity building programmes, and possible membership in EU organisations, were discussed between participating EU organisations and participants from partner countries.



**Key outputs:** Two events on the selected policy areas in line with the updated networking plan.

## **Promoting women in tech**

EU4Digital, in collaboration with EU practitioners of the '[Women Go Tech](#)' programme, successfully finalised the activity focused on knowledge transfer for women mentorship programmes in ICT. For that, EU4Digital organised four regional online workshops with local beneficiary organisations: [Girls in Tech](#) (Armenia); [Women in ICT Club – Femmes Digitales](#) (Azerbaijan); [EPAM](#) (Women EPAM Training Programme) (Belarus); [Georgia's Innovation and Technology Agency](#) (Georgia); [Moldovan Association of Information and Communications Technology Companies](#) (Moldova); [Girls in STEM Initiative](#) (Ukraine). The workshops were dedicated to the introduction of the mentorship concept as a tool to bridge the gender gap in ICT, assessment of local organisations' readiness to implement similar programmes, as well as development of a joint mentorship programme roadmap. Along the process, practical answers and knowledge-sharing were provided to local organisations. As a result, the know-how package and roadmap for women mentorship programme in ICT were developed and handed over to local beneficiary organisations.

As a next step, in line with the [EU Gender Action Plan \(GAP\) III](#), EU4Digital is recommending to pilot mentorship programmes in selected Eastern partner countries before further implementation across the region.

## **Key outputs:**

- Know-how package for the establishment of women mentorship programme in ICT.
- Roadmap for the implementation of women mentorship programme in ICT.
- Selected organisations for women mentorship programme knowledge transfer in each Eastern partner country and knowledge transfer training sessions.

## **DISC facility design**

Based on the results of the earlier concluded EU4Digital activity '[Market Assessment for Digital Innovation and Scale-up Initiative \(DISC\) in Eastern partner countries](#)' (DISC phase 1), EU4Digital drafted a guidebook with recommendations for capacity building of the ICT entrepreneurial ecosystems in the six Eastern partner countries. The guidebook measures and suggests the actions to improve the performance of the key ecosystem actors who are providing ICT start-ups with the access to knowledge, capital, markets, facilities and regulations. This guidebook will be finalised in Q1 2021 by conducting online sessions with potential implementors of recommendations, namely representatives of local EU Delegations and policy makers.

In parallel, EU4Digital drafted a design and action plan for the set-up of a regional venture fund that will provide access to finance for ICT start-ups from idea to early growth stages. The fund, named EaP DISC Capital, was designed by holding a round of consultations with international finance institutions, accelerators, investors, international organisations and local policy makers.

These are the key characteristics of EaP DISC Capital:

- Regional EUR 150 million venture investment fund financed by EU, international finance institutions and international players with a duration of 10 years.
- Fund investments made through three financial programmes based on start-up life cycle stages: Incubation (Subsidised Debt), Acceleration (Seed Equity) and Internationalisation (Series A Equity).
- Four associated programmes incorporated to educate start-ups: Incubation (for business idea validation), Pre-Acceleration (for business strategy development and prototyping), Acceleration (for product/service and business model validation) and Networking (for sales and profits generation).
- Based on the current estimations, EaP DISC Capital should support around 1,500 start-ups during the overall fund duration.

The design and action plan of EaP DISC Capital to be finalised in Q1 2021.

## **Key outputs:**

- Draft guidebook for capacity building of ICT entrepreneurial ecosystems for the six Eastern partner countries.
- Draft EaP DISC Capital design and action plan for the six Eastern partner countries.

## **Other ICT Innovation activities**

During the reporting period, EU4Digital also progressed in other ICT innovation areas (though the focus was set on the above described activities):

1. **Training packages.** EU4Digital held discussions with EC regarding potential EdTech hub concept in Eastern Partner countries and aligned on a common framework for modular training package development.



2. **Extension of networks and platforms.** EU4Digital held discussions with the [European Startups](#) initiative and the EC regarding collaboration in terms of activity scope and expansion to Eastern partner countries.

## Planning for the upcoming six months

### Training packages – key objectives:

- Draft the letter of intent with identified national competence centres in the Eastern partner countries.
- Define common framework for modular training package for the EaP countries in the context of Joint Communication on Eastern Partnership policy beyond 2020.
- Identify online learning contents / platform(s) for the modular training package.
- Prepare six national hand-over plans for training competence centre experts on further maintenance of the common framework for modular training package.

### Networking of innovation players – key objectives:

- Organise three networking events based on the policy areas selected by countries.
- Prepare a report summarising lessons learned and key discussion points from the networking events.
- Prepare concept of the 'Governance and policy coordination forum' for the Eastern partner countries.

### Extension of networks and platforms – key objectives:

- Register the ICT innovation and start-up ecosystem stakeholders from the Eastern partner countries in the selected and relevant EU networks and platforms.
- Identify technical possibilities of the [European Startups](#) platform extension to include information of ICT innovation and start-up ecosystem stakeholders from the partner countries.

### DISC facility design – key objectives:

- Finalise Guidebook for capacity building of ICT entrepreneurial ecosystems for the six Eastern partner countries.
- Finalise EaP DISC Capital design and action plan for the six Eastern partner countries.

## 3.5 eHealth

### State of play

#### Harmonisation, interoperability guidelines and standards

EU4Digital developed the final **common harmonisation and interoperability guidelines** and standards for the Eastern partner countries. The guidelines are based on countries' **eHealth self-assessment results** and **analysis sessions** with the EaP countries' representatives to provide actionable recommendations for countries seeking to achieve an interoperable and harmonised healthcare ecosystem. The most important guideline areas are:

- Key strategic directions to enable effective governance of the eHealth infrastructure;
- Digital service harmonisation and increase of interoperability levels;
- Digital trust service integration into eHealth eservices;
- Crisis management approaches.

EU4Digital presented and handed over the results to the countries for implementation.

#### Key outputs:

- Regional presentation on eHealth Harmonisation and Interoperability guidelines.
- Individual country guideline sessions, where individual recommendations were presented to each Eastern partner country.
- Final Common eHealth harmonisation and interoperability guidelines and standards.

#### Country perspective

The table below provides the key individual recommendations for eHealth harmonisation and interoperability in the Eastern partner countries.



Country	Highlights
AM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mature the data exchange infrastructure on the national level, i.e. National Interoperability platform.</li> <li>• Integrate the common eHealth Digital Service Infrastructure (eHDSI) with Public Health domain Systems to exchange the data about communicable diseases.</li> <li>• Implement or further mature key health care sector systems such as the Specialist Registry, Health insurance information system and Pharmacy information systems.</li> <li>• Define legal conditions under which personal data may be shared cross-border.</li> <li>• Establish data accessibility for Health Care providers (HCPs) and pharmacists through unified portal.</li> </ul>
AZ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further implement and mature National Interoperability Platform.</li> <li>• Define legal conditions under which personal data may be shared cross-border.</li> <li>• Define processes with clearly assigned roles and responsibilities to provide the clinical information to eHealth platform.</li> <li>• Develop the eHealth digital infrastructure including the eHealth interoperability platform and priority services such as ePrescription and Patient Summary.</li> <li>• Define the governance model of eHealth on a national level.</li> <li>• Establish usage of internationally accepted clinical information standards.</li> </ul>
BY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply the whole-of-government approach to interoperability (reusability of infrastructure and services, National interoperability platform development)</li> <li>• Establish access to eHealth portal / eHealth services via the common eGovernment services gateway catalogue.</li> <li>• Implement or further mature key health care registers such as e.g. the Specialist Registry, Health insurance IS and Pharmacy IS.</li> <li>• Select and implement internationally accepted clinical information standards.</li> <li>• Implement the regulation of patient consent for collection and processing of patient data for medical services, treatment, diagnosis and similar purposes.</li> </ul>
GE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop eHealth National Contact Point for cross-border interoperability enablement.</li> <li>• Implement the digital health strategy.</li> <li>• Integrate the common eHealth platform with Public Health domain Systems to exchange data about communicable diseases.</li> <li>• Implement / further mature key health care sector systems such as the Specialist Registry, Health insurance information system and Pharmacy information systems.</li> <li>• Harmonise mandatory ePrescription service implementation with open EU ePrescription specification.</li> </ul>
MD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop the eHealth interoperability infrastructure adopting the principles from the EU interoperability framework.</li> <li>• Develop Digital Health strategy.</li> <li>• Further develop the Public Health Information Systems.</li> <li>• Implement eHealth data access services.</li> <li>• Harmonise ePrescription service implementation with open EU ePrescription specifications.</li> <li>• Implement Patient Summary service.</li> </ul>
UA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement legal certainty for foreigner's identification (eID and eSignature regulation) as well as harmonisation of personal ID codes throughout public sectors services and systems.</li> <li>• Develop eHealth strategy.</li> <li>• Implement public health information systems.</li> <li>• Establish Social/ Health insurance information system.</li> <li>• Harmonise ePrescription service implementation with open EU ePrescription specifications.</li> <li>• Implement Patient Summary service.</li> </ul>



## eHealth collaboration platform

In the previous reporting period, a dedicated [eHealth platform](#) was launched, consisting of a communication portal as a complimentary part of the EU4Digital website and a separate access controlled eHealth collaboration platform exclusively for EaP eHealth Network representatives. During this reporting period, the eHealth collaboration platform was used to share identified relevant content such as toolsets and frameworks related to eHealth and eHealth interoperability, as well as eHealth strategy development, examples of eHealth strategies in leading EU countries, eHealth glossary and other relevant material that the countries could further use. Also, EU4Digital results were uploaded and provided for alignment with the countries through the collaboration platform.

**Key outputs:** Initial content uploaded and maintained on the eHealth platform and country representatives trained on how to use the eHealth collaboration space.

## EaP involvement in EU initiatives

EU4Digital facilitated Eastern partner countries' participation in the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing (EIP on AHA). During the reporting period, EU4Digital finalised identification of good eHealth innovation practices with Armenia and Ukraine. The analysis in other countries was covered in the previous reporting period. Potential Reference Sites in the partner countries and potential Twinning partners within the partner countries and in the EU for participation in EIP on AHA were identified. Also, a practical recommendations package was finished, which includes **recommendations on potential Twinning partners** between EaP countries, and **recommendations for building a collaboration network based on EIP on AHA principles**. The recommendations were handed over to the partner countries during the last eHealth Network event in November 2020.

### Key outputs:

- List of identified good innovation practices in the EaP region.
- List of potential 'reference sites' identified in the EaP region.
- Twinning recommendations from AHA repository for implementation in the EaP region.
- Roadmap and recommendations for Eastern partner countries' participation in EU projects, programmes and initiatives.

## Country perspective

The table below introduces the country-specific recommendations and findings for involvement in EIP on AHA.

Country	Highlights
AM	<p><b>Good eHealth innovation practice identified:</b> e-Health system integrated with Ambulance under EHR standards.</p> <p><b>Recommended Twinning with the EU:</b> IANUS – electronic medical record system from Galicia, Spain.</p> <p><b>Recommended Twinning between EaP partner countries:</b> (1) Electronic Health Records (EHR) – 2016-2020, Georgia; (2) Electronic Medical Records, Ukraine.</p> <p><b>Potential Reference Site:</b> 'National eHealth operator' Closed Joint-Stock Company (CJSC), Yerevan, Armenia.</p>
AZ	<p><b>Good eHealth innovation practices identified:</b> Hospital Management System and E-Tabib (electronic health data record and hospital management system).</p> <p><b>Recommended Twinning with the EU:</b> Attend Anywhere - health consultations online from Scotland, UK.</p> <p><b>Recommended Twinning between EaP partner countries:</b> The Republican system of telemedicine counselling (RTMS), Belarus.</p> <p><b>Potential Reference Site:</b> State Agency on Mandatory Health Insurance, Azerbaijan.</p>
BY	<p><b>Good eHealth innovation practices identified:</b> (1) Electronic prescription; (2) Telemedicine counselling; (3) Information-analytical system for accounting of medical and pharmaceutical staff; (4) Diabetes patient register; (5) Cancer Registry.</p> <p><b>Recommended Twinning with the EU:</b> IANUS – electronic medical record system from Galicia, Spain.</p> <p><b>Recommended Twinning between EaP partner countries:</b> (1) Electronic Health Records (EHR) – 2016-2020, Georgia; (2) Hospital Management System and E-Tabib, Azerbaijan; (3) Electronic Medical Records, Ukraine</p> <p><b>Potential Reference Sites:</b> (1) The Republican Scientific and Practical Center of Medical Technologies, Informatization, Management and Economics of Public Health (RSPC MT), Belarus; (2) State Institution</p>



Country	Highlights
	'Republican Scientific and Practical Center of Oncology and Medical Radiology named after NN Alexandrov', Belarus.
GE	<p><b>Good eHealth innovation practices identified:</b> (1) E-Prescription; (2) Electronic Health Records (EHR).</p> <p><b>Recommended Twinning with the EU:</b> (1) Attend Anywhere - health consultations online from Scotland, UK; (2) Telemedicine for real life integrated care in chronic patients from Lombardy, Italy, and (3) IANUS – electronic medical record system from Galicia, Spain.</p> <p><b>Recommended Twinnings between EaP partner countries:</b> (1) The Republican system of telemedicine counselling (RTMS), Belarus; (2) Hospital Management System and E-Tabib, Azerbaijan; (3) Electronic Medical Records, Ukraine.</p> <p><b>Potential Reference Site:</b> Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia.</p>
MD	<p><b>Good eHealth innovation practices:</b> Not identified by the country.</p> <p><b>Recommended Twinning with the EU:</b> Interoperability between social and health information systems from Basque region, Spain.</p> <p><b>Recommended Twinnings between EaP partner countries:</b> (1) The Republican system of telemedicine counselling (RTMS), Belarus; (2) Electronic Health Records (EHR) – 2016-2020, Georgia.</p> <p><b>Potential Reference Site:</b> Not identified by the country.</p>
UA	<p><b>Good eHealth innovation practices identified:</b> (1) 'Diy Vdoma' ('Act at Home') - self-isolation app; (2) State Affordable Medicines Programme (ePrescription); (3) Electronic Medical Records.</p> <p><b>Recommended Twinning with the EU:</b> Interoperability between social and health information systems from Basque region, Spain.</p> <p><b>Recommended Twinnings between EaP partner countries:</b> (1) The Republican system of telemedicine counselling (RTMS), BY; (2) Electronic Health Records (EHR) – 2016-2020, Georgia.</p> <p><b>Potential Reference Sites:</b> (1) Ministry of digital transformation of Ukraine, Ukraine; (2) The National Health Service of Ukraine (NHSU).</p>

## Planning for the upcoming six months

### eHealth collaboration platform – key objectives:

- Periodically update eHealth collaboration platform and ensure its smooth operation.
- Maintenance of the Collaboration and Communication platform including organisation of collaboration events to further support Eastern partner countries in eHealth harmonisation and interoperability activities.

## 3.6 Digital skills

### State of play

#### Digital skills measurement

Activity was finished in June. In addition, EU4Digital drafted and will finalise in February 2021 a **Note regarding the measurement of digital skills gaps according to EU methodologies** in Eastern partner countries based on the **Methodology for Measuring and Forecasting Digital Skills Gaps**. The Note will suggest assessing country readiness and implementing the Digital Economy and Society Index. Digital skills measurement in line with EU practices would allow to assess the **impact of strategic and investment initiatives in digital skills**, benchmark country progress with the EU and other Eastern partner countries, and to plan targeted remedial activities for skills shortages, gaps and mismatches.

#### Competence Framework

The Competence Framework aims to establish **common language for digital competences** for SMEs and microbusinesses based on the **European e-Competence Framework (e-CF)** and **Digital Competence Framework for Citizens (DigComp)**.

EU4Digital developed **Competence Framework Guidelines** on how to develop Job Role Profiles, recruitment advertisements, internal HR documents, define education requirements and competence-based learning paths,



assess competences and develop competence-based learning programmes based on European frameworks. Moreover, four **Job Role Profiles** (Digital Transformation Role, Data Specialist Role, Information Security Specialist Role, Digital Educator Role) were developed as examples for the integrated use of European Frameworks.

**Key outputs:**

- Competence Framework Development Methodology.
- Competence Framework Guidelines and Four Job Role Profiles.

**National Coalitions**

EU4Digital supports countries in establishing and running National Coalitions (NC) by providing tailored support: sharing EU **best practices and examples, providing consultations and trainings**. Trainings on EU best practices in establishing and managing NCs that engaged a wide range of stakeholders (ministries, ICT associations, training providers, ICT companies, etc.) have been organised regionally as well as nationally in Azerbaijan, Moldova and Ukraine.

By 2020, 20 Deliverables for 2020 set a goal to establish NCs in all Eastern partner countries, that has not yet been achieved. NC establishment was delayed in several countries due to COVID-19 related restrictions, lack of commitment from local stakeholders on taking the leading role of an NC, changes in governmental structure and political situation in several Eastern partner countries. All countries where establishment was postponed (Belarus, Georgia and Moldova, for more detailed information see table below), plan to conclude it during the first half of 2021.

**Key outputs:**

- Supported Azerbaijan in establishing Digital Skills Partnership platform.
- Identified potential NC members in Moldova.

**Country perspective**

The table below demonstrates the current status in establishing NCs in the Eastern partner countries.

Country	Highlights
AM	NC was established in 2017, but is currently inactive. The action plan and members list need to be reviewed prior to commencing new activities.
AZ	Azerbaijan established Digital Skills Partnership platform on 15 December 2020, involving key digital skills stakeholders: Ministry of Transport, Communications and High Technologies, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Population, and private partners Microsoft Azerbaijan and Azercell. A memorandum has not yet been signed due to COVID-19 related restrictions.
BY	Lack of commitment from any member organisation to fulfil the role of Coalition Secretariat. Stakeholders have agreed to pursue informal cooperation and coordination without signing a memorandum. Due to current political situation in Belarus, creating a NC has been postponed to 2021.
GE	Draft memorandum and stakeholder list have been developed. Signing of the NC memorandum has been delayed to 2021 due to COVID-19 and limited capacity of key stakeholders, who have not yet expressed the willingness to sign a binding memorandum.
MD	Establishment of an NC has been postponed to 2021, due to changes in ministry leadership and other cooperation-oriented memorandums signed during the second half of 2020 diverting attention of key digital skills stakeholders. Moldova has expressed its commitment to establish the Coalition led by Moldovan Association of ICT Companies during the first half of 2021.
UA	The National Coalition has been established in 2019. EU4Digital is providing support in the form of consultations and trainings.

**Planning for the upcoming six months**

**National coalitions – key objectives:**

- Develop and approve National Coalition action plans for Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia and Moldova.
- Signed National Coalition memorandums in Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia and Moldova.



## Conferences, training and study visits and promotion campaign – key objectives:

- Organise national training on the establishment and management of National Coalitions in Georgia. Similar trainings will be held in Armenia and Belarus if country representatives express the need.
- Organise regional training on digital skills measurement, EU practices and methodology, followed by national level consultations if requested by Eastern partner countries.
- Organise regional trainings on the European competence frameworks, Competence Framework use cases and Job Role Profile application, as well as best EU practices for upskilling and reskilling workforce.
- Organise virtual study visit (Ireland or Spain).
- Organise conference on digital skills for Industry 4.0.
- Establish promotion campaign on Youth in STEM and ICT.

## 3.7 Communication

### State of play

Communication plays a major role in making the work of the EU4Digital Facility teams more visible and recognisable, both on the regional and national levels. The EU4Digital Facility communication team is therefore working towards the creation of clear messages and relatable stories that help reinforce the EU4Digital brand and put the EU's support for the digital transformation of partner countries in the spotlight. It is therefore crucial that the communication approach is comprehensive, inclusive and innovative.

### Website for EU4Digital

Since its launch in October 2019, the EU4Digital website – [eufordigital.eu](http://eufordigital.eu) – has become a **key hub for all digital communication and content** on the EU4Digital initiative and related bilateral digital projects. Since its launch, it has seen a total of almost 80,000 visitors, with almost 100,000 sessions, and 306,000 page views. It is updated daily and maintained in eight different languages (six local languages, plus English and Russian). In the reporting period, the editorial team has been carefully crafting digital updates that were later featured on partner channels, raising awareness of EU4Digital and helping to reinforce and strengthen the Initiative's brand. In the reporting period, **133 content pieces** were drafted, edited and uploaded in English, with a total of **811 content entries in all eight languages**:

Type	English	Armenian	Azerbaijani	Belarusian	Georgian	Romanian	Russian	Ukrainian	Total
News	68	49	47	47	54	52	52	53	<b>422</b>
Events	23	20	22	20	20	22	22	21	<b>170</b>
Feature stories	18	6	8	6	10	9	13	9	<b>79</b>
Library	24	16	16	15	16	18	19	16	<b>140</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>811</b>

To track the efficiency of the website performance, **two 3-month website analytics reports** (covering July-September and October-December) were prepared. The key highlights in the period July-December:

- **45,631 total website visitors** with 41,260 being new visitors, compared to 32,387 website visitors in January-June 2020;
- **181,295 total website page views**, compared with the 110,694 page views in January-June 2020.

Further development of the EU4Digital website was supported:

- a **new section – Factsheets** – was developed and added on the thematic pages.
- several **static sections** of the website, drafted prior to the website launch in October 2019, were **updated** to reflect latest developments, and the new [Privacy](#) and [Cookie](#) policies were integrated on the website.
- EaPConnect's page received a further boost following the inclusion of this project under the EU4Digital umbrella.

A proposal for a redesign of the EaPeReg website was prepared and presented to EaPeReg in September, and then November 2020. When the EaPeReg provides the final confirmation, Telecom Rules team will support with **new EaPeReg website** development as part of Regulators' independence activity.



Finally, as part of this activity, key project outputs were shared via the [capacity4dev web platform](#) (with a total of 33 updates). The number of views and downloads show that there is a clear interest in EU4Digital materials on this knowledge sharing platform.

## Key outputs:

- 130 content items in English and 657 in national languages on the website.
- Further content and technical website updates.
- Two quarterly website analytics reports.
- Proposal for the redesign of EaPeReg website within the EU4Digital portal.
- Key project outputs on capacity4dev web platform.

## EU4Digital social media presence

The purpose of this activity is to reach our target audiences via social media by engaging with them, raising awareness about EU4Digital and by creating an additional follower base. It is important to take into consideration that EU4Digital does not have any of its own social media channels, which means that we can only secure a social media presence through partner channels. We have a very positive collaboration with the EU Delegations across the six Eastern partner countries as well as EU Neighbours East project, and rely on their uptake of our produced campaign materials.

In the reporting period, the communication team worked on two campaigns – the first thematic [ICT innovation campaign](#) was launched on 21 August and was run together with five EU Delegations (all except BY), EU Neighbours East and EaPConnect until 21 September. It **reached almost 2.5 million people** via social media, with over **3.3 million** ad impressions. The campaign saw a **23.5% rise** in newsletter subscribers, growing by 268 people. The campaign was not launched in Belarus due to the political situation – however, the prepared content remains relevant and can be used once the situation stabilises. A detailed overview of the campaign's products can be found in the PDF inserted below (with clickable links to various products).

The **second thematic campaign**, focusing on eHealth, was launched on 16 December and will be promoted on EU Neighbours, five EU Delegations (all except BY) and EaPConnect's channels until mid-January 2021. A **full communication package** was prepared on the respective [Trello board](#). The performance of the eHealth campaign will be analysed and presented in the next reporting period, when the advertising period is over.

In November, the team also started preparations for the **Telecom Rules campaign**. The campaign is planned to be launched in February-March 2021 and will be linked to the signing of the RRA.

## Key outputs:

- ICT innovation campaign successfully implemented; eHealth campaign launched.
- ICT innovation campaign performance analysis.
- Preparations for Telecom rules campaign.

## Communication activities and visibility of EU4Digital

**Five success stories** were developed in cooperation with local media partners and had coverage in 27 local media in Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Azerbaijan within the framework of the ICT innovation campaign. **Six more stories** were prepared and covered by 16 national media in Georgia, Ukraine and Moldova in the frames of the eHealth campaign. These features reached millions of people locally.

**Four newsletter editions** were prepared and distributed: the [July edition](#) was delivered to 1,201 subscribers, the [September edition](#) to 1,350 subscribers, a special October [Steering Committee Meeting week edition](#) to 1,474 subscribers and the [December edition](#) was sent to 1,559 subscribers. While we aimed at three editions over these past six months, we accommodated four, as we had enough content and communication triggers to spread the word about the progress that the EU4Digital Facility and the other EU4Digital projects were making. The subscribers list is growing organically and sees major spikes during the social media campaign periods (as a reminder, the very first July 2019 edition was sent to only 532 subscribers).

Full **communication support** was provided for the **Steering Committee Meeting week** in October. A dedicated [event webpage](#) was created, and thematic videos were produced and played at the sessions. Detailed event scripts were prepared, event rules elaborated, and moderation ensured in all the sessions. During the week, two email updates to attendees were sent and social media material created for DG NEAR. After the event, ten news articles were published as a follow-up on Steering Committee sessions and side events.

**Six thematic factsheets** were developed, designed and translated into seven languages and are being used at events and as part of campaign packages.

Finally, an **EU4Digital Glossary** was prepared in cooperation with the teams. Its main concepts were translated into national languages for the future use for translators and interested partners.



## Key outputs:

- 11 success stories in local media, with outreach to millions of citizens in the Eastern partner countries.
- Four EU4Digital newsletters shared with core policy makers and stakeholders.
- Conceptualisation of the Steering Committee Meeting week as a continuous series of related events, provision of comprehensive communication support services in preparation, during and after the events.
- Thematic factsheets in 8 languages.
- EU4Digital Glossary.

## Impact and result monitoring

Continuous monitoring was ensured during this six-month period. It covered the work of the EU4Digital Facility, Broadband project and Cybersecurity project. For the latter, our team has delivered a set of draft KPIs to be monitored and is awaiting further input from the Cybersecurity project's team. The EU4Digital Facility has made a tangible contribution towards the progress tracking on the 2020 deliverables and elaboration of a new set of 2025 deliverables.

## Key outputs:

- Continuous performance monitoring.
- Reporting on results.

## Ensuring coherence and coordination of activities

In the reporting period, in addition to maintaining previously established collaborations, the EU4Digital team explored new ways of building synergies and creating new partnerships to further increase the initiative's visibility. Among these are the newly established relationships between the communication teams of EU4Digital and:

- Ministry of Digital Transformation in Ukraine – which helped organise relevant promotional activities in support of eDelivery pilot;
- EU4DigitalUA - to align communication priorities and discuss collaboration opportunities;
- Bilateral project 'Visibility of EU and EU Assistance in Moldova in 2020' - which is sharing all related updates from EU4Digital in its regular newsletters ([third](#), [fourth](#) and fifth editions).

Also, as part of this activity, the communication team has been providing communication guidance, advice and training to EU4Digital Facility teams and other branded projects, namely EaPConnect, Cybersecurity EAST and Broadband strategies.

## Key outputs:

- New partnerships established.
- Regular information and experience exchange meetings and calls organised.

## Planning for the upcoming six months

### Website for EU4Digital – key objectives:

- Perform regular content and technical maintenance of the EU4Digital website.
- Gather and process quarterly website analytics and monitor the website's performance.
- Share key project outputs via capacity4dev web platform.

### EU4Digital social media presence – key objectives:

- Finalise the promotion and analyse the performance of eHealth campaign.
- Run the fourth (Telecom rules) and the fifth (Digital skills) social media campaigns and gather analytics.

### Communication activities and visibility of EU4Digital – key objectives:

- Plan, initiate and conduct thematic communication campaigns.
- Develop and promote campaign package materials (e-cards, factsheets, feature stories in local media).
- Develop and distribute February, April and June editions of EU4Digital newsletter.
- Support major events (online and offline) organised by EU4Digital teams.

### Impact and result monitoring – key objectives:

- Continuous monitoring support, answering ad-hoc requests.
- Reporting on results with progress reports, including preparation of political summaries.



**Ensuring coherence and coordination of activities – key objectives:**

- Maintain synergies between EU4Digital and other relevant EU initiatives.
- Maintain and support internal communication processes.



## 4 Key events

### Summary of past events

The following section presents multiple digital-related events that took place in the Eastern partner countries during the past six-month period (July 2020 - December 2020) in the six thematic areas. While face-to-face events and meetings could not take place due to COVID-19, online work continued, including meetings and workshops.

Past events
<p><b>General</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EU4Digital Steering Committee: focus on key priorities in digital and future of the Eastern Partnership (October) <a href="#">(Read more)</a>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Telecom rules</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Telecom Rules: achievements and goals presented at EU4Digital event (October) <a href="#">(Read more)</a>.</li> <li>Electromagnetic field protection and 5G implementation discussed at EU4Digital event (October) <a href="#">(Read more)</a>.</li> <li>EU4Digital presents initial results of regulatory independence assessment (October) <a href="#">(Read more)</a>.</li> <li>EU4Digital launches feasibility study on international roaming area between Eastern partner countries and the EU (October) <a href="#">(Read more)</a>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>eTrade</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EU4Digital highlights eTrade pilot projects at Eastern Partnership Trade Panel (September) <a href="#">(Read more)</a>.</li> <li>eDelivery in practice: EU4Digital virtual study visit highlights solutions and opportunities (October) <a href="#">(Read more)</a>.</li> <li>eTrade in focus as EU4Digital event highlights achievements and prospects (October) <a href="#">(Read more)</a>.</li> <li>EU4Digital eTrade Network: workshop highlights progress on pilot projects and future targets (December) <a href="#">(Read more)</a>.</li> <li>eDelivery pilot showcase – event highlights process of eInvoice exchange between Ukraine and Poland (December) <a href="#">(Read more)</a>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>ICT innovation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Networking event on integration of business angels and venture capital funds from EaP countries into EU and global networks, and SMEs’ access to finance (October) <a href="#">(Read more)</a>.</li> <li>Networking event on development and internationalisation of ICT clusters in Eastern partner countries (December) <a href="#">(Read more)</a>.</li> <li>EU4Digital workshop to develop action plan for implementation of women mentorship in tech programme (December) <a href="#">(Read more)</a>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>eHealth</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EU4Digital hosts a Virtual 3<sup>rd</sup> eHealth Network meeting (November) <a href="#">(Read more)</a>.</li> <li>Individual workshops with representatives from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus and Georgia to present the individual Guidelines for eHealth development and eHealth collaboration platform (July and August) <a href="#">(Read more)</a>.</li> <li>EU4Digital consultative workshop on the eHealth Harmonisation and Interoperability Guidelines (December) <a href="#">(Read more)</a>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Digital skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EU4Digital holds regional training on setting up National Coalitions for Digital Skills and Jobs (July) <a href="#">(Read more)</a>.</li> <li>EU4Digital Facility training on women’s mentorship programmes in ICT and innovation (August) <a href="#">(Read more)</a>.</li> </ul>



## Past events

- EU4Digital holds workshop on development of Digital Competence Framework for SMEs and microbusinesses (September) ([Read more](#)).
- Connecting skills with demand: EU4Digital hosts training on Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition in Moldova (October) ([Read more](#)).
- EU4Digital holds training on Digital Skills and Jobs Coalitions for Ukraine (October) ([Read more](#)).
- Digital Skills Network approves guidelines for Competence Framework for SMEs and microbusinesses (December) ([Read more](#)).
- Digital Skills Partnership platform established in Azerbaijan (December) ([Read more](#)).

## Events planned for the upcoming six months

The following section presents multiple events planned in the upcoming reporting period (January 2021 - June 2021) in the six thematic areas. The calendar is indicative (both dates and countries); a confirmed plan of events will be provided every month together with monthly progress reports.

## Upcoming events

### Telecom rules

- EaP stakeholders' meeting to present preliminary findings and recommendations regarding governance of the national regulatory authorities (March).
- EaP stakeholders' meeting on Regional Roaming Agreement (February-March).
- Official signing ceremony of the RRA and RSA (March).
- Meeting of the EaPeReg Independent Regulators and Broadband Expert Working Group (IRB EWG) (April-May).
- Meeting of the EaPeReg Spectrum Expert Working Group (SEWG) Date to be decided.
- Meeting of the EaPeReg Roaming Expert Working Group (REWG) (April-May).

### Trust and security

- Virtual eSignature pilot closing event to share eSignature best practices, recommendations and lessons learned, and to plan for post-pilot activities. Date to be decided.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Trust and Security Network workshop. Date to be decided.
- Introductory seminar to present the purpose of the study and eGovernance concept. Date to be decided.
- Country consultations to introduce EaP countries with eGovernance and present preliminary results of the country assessments, recommendations and strategic orientation. Date to be decided.
- Regional consultation to present the results of the country assessment and the different eGovernance strategies. Date to be decided.

### eTrade

- Virtual eCustoms showcase to demonstrate how solution works in practice between Lithuania and Belarus (February-March).
- Virtual eCommerce showcase to demonstrate how a virtual warehouse supports cross-border product listing and logistics in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and the EU member state (March-April).
- Two virtual eCommerce and eLogistics site-visits to demonstrate how the existing solutions support cross-border transactions. Date to be decided.
- 10<sup>th</sup> eTrade Network workshop. Date to be decided.

### ICT innovation

- Networking event on ICT innovation ecosystems for start-ups and scale-ups (February).
- Networking event on digitising industry - digital transformation of SMEs in traditional sectors (Industry 4.0) (March-April).



## Upcoming events

- Networking event on intellectual property rights management for digital innovation (May-June).
- Consultations with stakeholders of the six Eastern partner countries on implementation of recommendations for capacity building of ICT entrepreneurial ecosystems (January).

## eHealth

- Workshop on eHealth Harmonisation Guidelines prioritisation and selection for commitment. Date to be decided.
- Session on the EIP on AHA progress update. Date to be decided.
- Webinar on COVID-19 experience in eHealth and best crisis management practices. Date to be decided.
- Workshop on eHealth strategy development. Date to be decided.
- Webinar on the latest trends in eHealth across the EU (Catalonia, Netherlands, Denmark, Estonia, Lithuania). Date to be decided.
- Workshop on the eHealth Harmonisation guideline progress tracking. Date to be decided.

## Digital skills

- Georgia country specific training on establishment and management of NC. Date to be decided.
- Armenia and Belarus country specific training on establishment and management of NC. Date to be decided.
- Regional training on digital skills measurement: EU practices and methodology. Date to be decided.
- Regional training on a general overview and benefits of European competence frameworks. Date to be decided.
- Regional training on the Competence Framework. Date to be decided.
- Virtual study visit for best practice sharing on NC and digital skills measurement to Ireland or Spain. Date to be decided.
- Conference on digital skills for Industry 4.0. Date to be decided.