Annex

Shortened Guidelines
for the Preparation of the Recommendation concerning the Promotion and Use of
Multilingualism and Universal Access to Cyberspace

<u>**General information**</u>
Fourth report of the Republic of Latvia regarding the UNESCO Guidelines for the Preparation of the Recommendation concerning the Promotion and Use of Multilingualism and Universal Access to Cyberspace has been prepared in replay to the UNESCO letter with Ref.CL/4248 dated on 6th August 2018 signed by Audrey Azoulay, Director –General of UNESCO.
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Responsible for the preparation the report is the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development of Latvia what is also in charge of development of Information Society in Latvia.
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<u>**Elements for reporting on the specific provisions of the Recommendation**</u>

1.   Development of multilingual content and systems
*1.1.   Please **furnish detailed information** explaining what measures have been taken **to alleviate language barriers.***
Various solutions have been developed in Latvia in order to facilitate overcoming the language barrier and ensure higher availability of the content to the whole society.
  ✓ Culture information systems centre has developed state machine translation platform **www.Hugo.lv** which gives opportunity government institutions integrate their e-services and other information systems for automated translations. Also that allow non-Latvian speaking users to access information in Latvian language. Hugo.lv allows to translate from Latvian to English and Russian and vice versa. Currently Hugo.lv is among leading solutions in the EU of government level with language and speech technologies available.
  ✓ The Latvian company **Tilde** is the principal software provider in the Baltics. Together with the leading European researchers (from the Universities of Edinburg, Uppsala, Copenhagen) it elaborates a vision on how translation technologies may ensure free information flow over national borders, assisting civil societies, governments and enterprises.
  ✓ Culture Information Systems Centre (KISC) in corporation with Tilde and State Language Centre has developed **Public Terminology Database www.termini.gov.lv** (to be launched on December 2018)..
The portal covers terms of various fields in Latvian and foreign languages approved by Terminology Commission of the Latvian Academy of Sciences and term collections developed by the State Language Centre. It provides information on linguistic issues discussed by Terminology Commission of the Latvian Academy of Sciences and Latvian Language Expert Commission of the State Language Centre. Termini.gov.lv is the platform for finding terms and their equivalents in foreign languages, as well as

participating in discussions regarding rendering of terms. Www.termini.gov.lv also allows users to download term collections.

*1.2.   Please **provide information** on support given to capacity- building for the **production of local and indigenous content** on the Internet.*

Major progress has been achieved in developing technologies for Latvian language. Translation tools for Latvian range from advanced electronic dictionaries to fully automated translation systems surprising in quality such generic solutions as Google Translate. Style corrector allows even non-native Latvian speakers to fluently express themselves in Latvian. Latvian terminology is openly accessible in online terminology databases. Voice technologies for Latvian are in development and are already used in freely accessible solutions.

 ✓ In Latvia, a gateway to local content produced by public libraries is **the library portal www.biblioteka.lv**. Highly demanded source of the audio-visual content is the Latvian movies portal filmas.lv which allow for Latvian internet users freely watch popular and well known movies at home or other places where internet is available. Portal is managed in cooperation by National Film centre and Culture information systems centre. Also there is **digitised radio and TV portal www.Diva.lv** which gives access to historical records for long hours.

 ✓ Numerous innovative cross-disciplinary free online e-learning solutions have been developed in Latvia. Example of that is the **multilingual *Talking Book* project *(http://pasakas.letonika.lv/)*** which advances foreign language skills, cross-cultural communication and social skills of young kids. It is created by kids for kids with the support of IT experts and education professionals.

 ✓ In Latvia the **National Library of Latvia** (NLL) has established a **National Digital Library** to digitize newspapers and journals, in view of the poor physical state of these items, their historical and cultural value and demand for them. NLL has digitized more than 3 million pages of newspapers and journals, more than 7000 monographs published in Latvia and deemed to be of significant historic or artistic value, many hundreds of historic maps and many thousands of historic posters, postcards, prints and other image materials, such as the "In Search of Lost Latvia" collection which consists of more than 25000 historic photos depicting the history of places and people in Latvia.

*1.3.   Please **describe** the measures taken for formulating appropriate **national policies on the issues of language survival, revitalization, development and promotion in cyberspace**. Please include information about main legislation and/or policy measures, if any, and date of their introduction/adoption.*

On 7th December, 2012 the Cabinet of Ministers approved the **Next Generation Network (NGN) Development 2013-2020 concept** (in Latvian), which provides for significantly enhanced broadband availability through a change in speed and quality of service. The concept will help to achieve the aim of Europe's "Europe 2020" growth strategy for enhancing Europeans" access to fast and ultrafast Internet. Furthermore, in view of the remarkable data-transmission speed it offers, NGN is a major factor for further economic development and improvement of quality of life, and, as it uses a single infrastructure, its implementation will foster the use of different services and make an increasing number of public and non-public services more readily available in a digital environment.

The **Information Society Development Guidelines for 2014 -2020** were elaborated and adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers on 14ᵗʰ October, 2013 to ensure continuity of existing policies and to determine the priorities in the area of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for the European Union Structural Funds Programming period for 2014 – 2020.

Guidelines were developed in close cooperation with ICT industry, national ICT associations, Latvian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Latvian Confederation of Employers, Latvian national committee of UNESCO, representatives of all ministries and representatives of local (municipal) governments. The

focus of the Guidelines is economic growth and job creation. Guidelines contains aspects of the digital single market developments as well as the European Digital Agenda objectives, Guidelines are set out in the seven action lines, including ICT education and e-skills, widely available access to the Internet and e-services and digital content for the public. Action "ICT education and e-skills" focuses on the areas that will contribute to both, small and medium sized enterprises as well as citizens. Also focuses on informing the public, development of citizens' and entrepreneurs' e-skills, increasing the ICT competences of the public administration, preparation ICT practitioners and professionals for the requirements of the labour market as well as increasing share of algorithmic thinking and information literacy in education programs. According to the internet access it is planned by mapping of transport networks, the last mile, upstream and existing electronic communications network infrastructure. Detailed description of the required action in those fields included in the Next Generation Network (NGN) Development 2013-2020 concept. Regarding to Digital content, it has an increasing and more decisive role in the national economic and social development. Digital content plays a key role in a research and education as well as in cultural and the public administration sector services. E-governance solutions enables opportunities for institutions to offer the citizens more accessible and convenient state, including education and health services, cultural and educational content as well as create conditions for supportive business environment, social processes etc..

Science, Technology Development and Innovation Guidelines for 2014-2020 was adopted on 17th December, 2013. The Guideline's aim is to build Latvian science, technology and innovation sector to be globally competitive and the Latvian national economy and social development needs providing sector. As one of the priorities in the Guidelines determine that ICT sectors have to be promoted through the digital content resources ensuring the availability of new products and services building the need to develop digital content base and promote ICT and other sectors cooperation is strongly encouraged (language technology development, cultural and educational content digitization, etc.)

In 29th July, 2014 a **Cultural Policy Guidelines "Creative Latvia 2014-2020"** was adopted by Cabinet of Ministers. Guidelines define four priorities (strategic objectives) for the policy objective - 1) preservation of the cultural capital and development of public participation in cultural processes 2) creativity in lifelong learning and the labor market-oriented cultural education, 3) competitive cultural and creative industries, as well as 4) accessibility of the creative territories and culture services.

The Latvian Cybersecurity Strategy 2014-2018 was adopted on 21st January, 2014. The strategy sets five priority objectives and related actions to achieve them. The five objectives are following a) Governance and Resources of Cyber Security b) rule of law in cyber space and reduction of cyber-crime, c) crisis management, d) awareness raising, education and research, and e) international cooperation.

On 15 March 2017 confirmed the action plan for the improvement of the Business Environment, which envisages the introduction of the enterprise registration online only (the electronic environment), the archives of the Register of Enterprises of the Republic of Latvia, the existing document electronization Register of Enterprises of the Republic of Latvia, the provision of services available in English and other advanced services. Register of Enterprises of the Republic of Latvia has developed new information services to help ensure the issuance of any person to receive information on entities and legal facts, as well as prescribed by regulatory enactments for the copy of a document electronically. It also has begun work on a new electronic registration services, in order to ensure the submission of applications for registration of the Register of Enterprises of the Republic of Latvia only in electronic format.

1.4. *Please **provide information**, including references, on major events, projects, publications and **examples of best practices** identified during the reporting period **that contributed to the promotion of use of multilingualism and universal access to cyberspace.***

National Interoperability Framework Observatory (NIFO) publish case study about Latvian automated translation service as good example in EU level https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/document/latvian-automated-translation-service .

2.   Facilitating access to networks and services

*2.1.   Please **report on national efforts** to **recognize and support <u>universal access</u>** to the Internet as well as to promote access to the Internet as a service of public interest.*

*2.2.   Please also **describe what mechanisms** have been established at the local and national levels **to facilitate universal access** to the **Internet** through affordable and **accessible telecommunications** and **Internet costs.***

Latvia has designated the incumbent operator to handle obligations of the universal service in the electronic communications sector. The scope of the universal service is the following: special measures for disable users. Currently, the universal service is financed from the State budget. The fully distributed cost methodology is applied for calculating the universal service net costs.

Next Generation Network (NGN) Development 2013 – 2020 concept foresees that Digital Agenda for Europe targets for broadband are met. To achieve this, further development and establishment of fibre backhaul infrastructure *(the "middle mile")* for wholesale broadband services in rural *areas (which are not covered and where there are no plans for development of a next generation network in the near future)*, a state aid program, co-financed by the EU, is currently being implemented. According to this program, the completion of its first phase, done in 2015, ensure establishment of 177 new points for a wholesale broadband access. The second phase will follow with the establishment of at least 200 new points for a wholesale broadband access.

In Latvia ***public library network*** offers the most accessible facility for no-cost information and communication services. There has been considerable transition to no-cost Internet services in the public libraries of Latvia in recent years.

*2.3.   Please **indicate the measures** taken **for encouraging the development of information strategies and models** that facilitate community **access and support cooperation on** information and communication technologies (**ICT) among public service institutions, including community tele centres, libraries, Internet access units** and others.*

On *13 September 2011*, the Cabinet of Ministers adopts the concept paper on **"One-stop shop principle establishment for access of state and local authorities' services"**. The concept paper stipulates the improvement of public service delivery, ensuring citizens with accessible, convenient and comprehensible services in person or electronically throughout the country.

For better access to digital services a pilot project was launched, that includes initialization of plenipotentiary's e-service or "e-assistant" service is providing by Unified Customer Service Centres since October 2018. Plenipotentiary's e-service gives the ability to citizen sign up for e-service by electronic even if citizen has no possibility to use electronic identification.

The "National Development plan for 2014-2020" was approved by the Cabinet of Ministers on 20th December, 2012 which constitutes the main instrument for medium-term development planning and is a component of the Latvia 2030 sustainable development strategy. The Plan pinpoints activities in the public ICT sector relating to digital content, e-services, infrastructure and e-skills.

To continue development of existing policies and to determine the priorities in the area of ICT as well as for encouraging the development of information strategies**,** the **"Information Society Development Guidelines for 2014 -2020"** (Guidelines) was elaborated and adopted in October, 3013.

There are lot of measures for facilitating community access and support cooperation on ICT among public service institutions, including community tele centres, libraries, Internet access units and others has been developed.

In compliance with the requirements of the **official e-address law**, the first stage of the secure electronic delivery platform is being developed and implemented:

- e-mail accounts and integration with regulatory authorities (with DIV);

- e-mail accounts for residents, improving www.Latvia.lv accounts;

- Further development plans for **e-Address** with additional benefits for entrepreneurs:

    ✓ From June 1, 2018, the e-address is mandatory for state and local government institutions, planning regions, state institutions of higher education and scientific institutes, public establishments, public prosecutor's office and private persons to whom the task of public administration has been delegated.

    ✓ From 2020 e-address will be used by courts, sworn bailiffs and insolvency administrators.

Since the commencement of Wi-Fi network expansion works Lattelecom Ltd[1] has gradually launched **more than 4000 free of charge Wi-Fi hotspots** throughout Latvia, including 35 hotels, 644 educational establishments, 97 state institutions, 139 medical institutions, 214 restaurants and cafes, 1177 places of trade and services, 207 places of recreation, art and sports and other outdoor areas and parks of Latvia's major cities and towns. There are Lattelecom Ltd. free public Internet hotspots, as well as the hotspots which are installed in association with such companies as Statoil, SEB, DNB, Nordea, Atletika, etc. From 2015 onwards Lattelecom Ltd have been continuing to launch new public Internet hotspots, and will keep upgrading the existing technology solution so as to enable users to enjoy easier connection to free Internet.

Official site for Legislation of the Republic of Latvia (https://likumi.lv/) is official web page where all official legislation is published. It is freely accessible to anyone. Likumi.lv was created in 2001, so that everyone could exercise his or her rights stipulated in Section 90 of the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia: "Everyone has the right to know about his or her rights." The most recent information about changes in the legislation is available on the website maintained and developed by the official publisher *Latvijas Vēstnesis*.

The sittings of the Cabinet of Ministers have been open since 2000, and NGOs have the opportunity to participate and express their opinions. **Since 2013, the** Government sittings have been broadcasted live on the Internet. **All draft regulatory documents** submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers, including accompanying documents (e.g. impact assessments etc.), as well as viewpoints (opinions) received on these documents are also available on the Internet http://tap.mk.gov.lv/mk/tap/.

In July 2013 the State Chancellery established a **Twitter account "Participation"** to strengthen communication by the Memorandum Implementation Council, to inform the public about emerging possibilities of contributing to the government decision-making process and events related to public participation, as well as enabling a more active response to NGO discussion with respect to public participation.

The web-tool "Less Burden" (http://mazaksslogs.gov.lv/slogs/sakums/) and mobile application "Futbols" (only Latvian) (https://mazaksslogs.gov.lv/futbols/sakums/). The aim of project is to reduce administrative burdens and make government institutions work better and be more client oriented. Incoming proposals are evaluated by the State Chancellery and solved together with the responsible institutions. In 2018 the administrative simplification pilot project "Once only principle in public administration services" is being realised - both entrepreneurs and individual persons, as well as employees in public administration were asked to submit their proposals using web-tool "Less Burden".

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[1] https://www.lattelecom.lv/majai/internets/bezvadu-internets/wifi-cenas

The Public Administration Reform Plan 2020, developed by the State Chancellery and adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers in 2017, encompasses increasing the value of public e-services in the field of public administration.

In Latvia's experience involving the society in the decision-making processes, has been organized through ICT also by creating unique community initiative platform in https://manabalss.lv/ (My Voice, translated into English) in 2013. This is a 100% legitimate community initiative platform where any citizen of Latvia starting from 16 years can propose and electronically sign an initiative. Any initiative signed by at least 10,000 citizens is placed on the agenda of the Parliament and discussed.

2.4. ***What efforts*** *have been made in order* ***to encourage Internet service providers*** *to consider provision* ***of concessionary rates for Internet access in public service institutions***?

No such efforts were made, taking into account that free access to Internet is ensured in many places of socioeconomic driving force in Latvia, including almost all libraries with equipment and librarians ready to give an advice, as well as more than 4000 free Wi-Fi hotspots throughout cities and public places in Latvia.

3.   Development of public domain content

3.1.   Please explain the legal and administrative measures adopted to give effect to the provisions of this part of the Recommendation:

a)   recognizing and enacting the ***right*** *of* ***universal online access to public and government-held records****,*

b)   identifying and ***promoting repositories*** *of* ***information and knowledge*** *in the public domain and* ***making them accessible by all****, in particular persons with disabilities, linguistic minorities, women and girls and,*

Please note, that Section 3.contains also the information of section 2.3.

Starting from the time when the first Internet access in the libraries of Latvia was established within the comprehensive State Unified Library Information Network (SULIN), the government of Latvia has consistently endeavoured to ensure as equal as possible conditions for access to information for the inhabitants of the entire country.

   ✓   **Project** "**Third Father's Son**" is the Foundation's Library Public Access Computing Program in Latvia, an initiative of the Global Libraries with the goal to expand no-cost access to computers and the Internet in Latvia's public libraries and **provide the necessary training and technical** support to users and librarians.

In Latvia, where almost all of **874 public libraries** (except 17 small rural libraries):

- already connected to the Internet during the SULIN project, the Third Father's Son provided

- resources to connect all Latvian public libraries to the Internet with ***broadband connections****;*

- build a ***Wi-Fi*** *network for library users for 24/7 wireless access;*

- offer basic computer training to library users;

- provide training to all nearly 2,000 public library librarians in Latvia;

- Inform the public about new resources available in libraries.

Project "Third Father's Son" has purchased around 4,000 new computers that were installed in all library buildings throughout Latvia in spring 2008. On average, there are three new computers per library now, distributed based on the population of the area. 17 libraries have been connected to the Internet for the first time, in 853 libraries the Internet connection has been upgraded but in 874 wireless accesses to the

Internet has been installed, which allows visitors with personal laptop computers use the Internet at the library *free of charge.*

✓ In Latvia the ICT infrastructure in education is based on a set of **workstations, computer classes** and network infrastructure (including data transfer bandwidth). Unlike the educational content, the infrastructure is shared competence between the Ministry of Education and Science and local governments as the major founders of the network.

✓ **Public Administration Services Portal** www.latvia.lv (https://www.latvija.lv/en/Epakalpojumi) aim is to ensure quick and convenient access to the services provided by Latvian State institutions and municipalities. Every person may find guidance on requirements (forms, documents, payments, terms etc.) and administrative procedures in order to receive public and municipal services, as well as start service electronically, if it's is offered online. By September 30, 2018 State portal www.latvia.lv (https://www.latvija.lv/en) has offered more than 600 e-services, and 119 public service descriptions. The number of unique users since launching www.latvia.lv in 2006, is 912,000. And that, with the population of roughly 2 million.

✓ In order to give basic knowledge on state social insurance system, the importance of tax payments and their impact on the possibility of obtaining social guarantees in different social risk situations and future pensions, as well as giving more skills for private financial planning, in 2018 digital online training programme "Financial literacy. My money today and tomorrow." was introduced by the **Latvian State Employment Agency** (SEA). The online training programme was developed within ESF co-funded project "Support to Training of Unemployed Persons" and is provided to all unemployed as well to as every SEA website visitor (www.nva.gov.lv). In addition, e-course is also very suitable for persons from different social risk groups (borrowers who are facing loan repayment difficulties, residents with lower income level etc.) where specific information on financial literacy (private budget planning, taxes, the specifics of loans and liabilities etc.) would be very useful. The duration of the e-course is 5 academic hours. Financial literacy programme consists of theoretical explanation, audio-visuals (images, video, dialogue simulations etc.) as well as a self-assessment test of acquired knowledge at the end of the course. In total 12 665 registered unemployed and job seekers at the SEA were involved in the financial literacy training within the first 8 months of 2018. The digital online training programme will be promoted further giving the understanding of how important is to think preventively at the individual level on the work we do, related social guaranties of each person and consequences of not socially and financially responsible choices. The aim of this initiative is to reach 20 000 participants in the online training programme per year.

*c)	promoting and facilitating* **ICT literacy***, as well as* **information and media literacy***, including popularizing and building trust in ICT implementation and use.*

ICT in Latvia has developed rapidly, and its role in public education has changed from the acquisition of ICT basic skills to e-skills, from traditional offer of e-resources to the development of interactive e-resources, from the traditional forms of learning to e-learning, etc. The development of Latvian e-learning and lifelong learning concepts is linked with EU guidelines. To build information and knowledge society, they are seen as the integration of ICT applications (learning, teaching and education) on different levels of education: formal, non-formal and informal.

✓ There are no separate action plan in place to increase digital skills of citizens in Latvia. Instead, the Action Direction "ICT Education and E-Skills" is one of the seven main pillars in the Information Society Development Guidelines 2014-2020 (Guidelines).

- It includes 5 **sub-directions as follows**:

*1)	public awareness and readiness to use e-Opportunities;*

2) development of inhabitant and entrepreneur e-skills;
3) increase of public administration ICT competences;
4) preparation of ICT practitioners and professionals according to requirements of labour market;
5) Increasing the proportion of algorithmic thinking and information literacy in educational programs.

✓ To encourage society to use government e-services and to ensure that maximum wide population is informed about online services offered by the government and the benefits of eID, in April 2018 (will be implemented during the period 2018 to 2020), a comprehensive communication and training program **"Mana Latvija.lv. Dari digitāli**! (My Latvija.lv! Do digitally!)" was launched.

Program involves the development of "Digital friendly" visual identity, extensive information and training activities as national and regional informational events, as well as training of at least 6000 national and local government officials in order to provide them better knowledge of digital solutions so they can further assist clients who are accustomed to receiving on-site services to try their services digitally. In order to promote a better understanding of digital solutions life situation descriptions are developed, which includes video tutorials for the implementation of e-services (https://mana.latvija.lv/situacijas/). The program includes complete and integrated advertising, marketing and public relations activities — online channels (social media, online newsletters, infographics and banners) and offline channels such as print-out materials (posters, flags and stickers, info triangle, info pages), events, press articles, TV and radio commercials. The program involves communication on more than 500 e-services and orchestrate cooperation of more than 30 government institutions.

✓ Since 2010 there has been organized an annual Informative campaign *"European E-skills Week"* with an aim to popularize and to rise a public interest in knowing more about the possibilities to learn e-skills. The most important aim of the "E-skills Week" is to inform the society about the e-skills empowerment and its obtaining possibilities, ICT solutions. It also gives an opportunity to spread an information about state e-services and encouraging to use them. The main target groups of "European E-skills week" are small, micro and medium enterprises, government and public sector workers, teachers, parents, children and youngsters, seniors, unemployed people, work searchers as well as a part of the society who has never used ICT before. The Informative campaign covered all regions of Latvia reaching around 108 000 people since 2010. There also has a great and close cooperation between more than 200 governmental, non-governmental institutions every year that contributed such a great response among the population.

✓ The forth objective of the Latvian Cybersecurity Strategy 2014-2018 - awareness raising, education and research - includes the following actions to achieve it: increase competences of teaching and training staff to raise awareness about cyber security, including among children and youth; develop academic studies and research on cyber security; establish an IT security lab and organise scientific conferences on cyber security; leverage international informative initiatives and use the EU Cyber Security Month and e-Skills Week to increase awareness; and to promote innovation in cyber security.

An informed society is a crucial part of a secure and reliable cyberspace. Awareness is ensured by purposeful and regular explanatory work, including the policy and communication implemented by the leading officials of a country, raising the issues in educational institutions and organising regular discussions of experts in the media. To improve the knowledge of ICT users, it is necessary to implement a set of complex measures, starting from primary and secondary education. It is necessary to organise regular information campaigns in cooperation with non-governmental and private institutions, as well as constantly reflect the information in mass media.

*3.2.   Please also provide information on **whether open access solutions** and **web accessibility of public domain information** were advanced and **how,** including supporting data, reference to best practices, examples and solutions.*

✓ The Register of Enterprises data, which are classified as public, are periodically for free made in machine-readable format and it is a measured the ability to provide broader access to information free of charge in a machine-readable format; Basic information about subject is available for free in the Register of Enterprises website www.ur.gov.lv search. There is also a service to check the company to represent the entitled persons; under reuse license agreement is entitled to receive information held by the Register of Enterprises generated in the registration process of legal entities and legal facts. E-services for state/local authorities – possibility for state and local authorities for performing their functions, receive data stored in registers of the Register of Enterprises electronically. The Register of enterprises has developed new electronic services, which will ensure accessibility of information to any person (not just state and local authorities).

✓ The *state portal* www.latvija.lv is a constituting a central portal for Latvian state. Institutions offering a variety of e-Government services for citizens and businesses. There are about 600 governmental services has been digitized in Latvia. In the state portal www.latvija.lv the most popular e-services, are 1) e-Application to the State Social Insurance Agency, 2) Document Verification in the Invalid Document Register and 3) residence Declaration (based on data published on 30st September, 2018). Please, for more info see page 7.

✓ **Network of State and Municipal Unified Customer Service Centres** (https://www.latvija.lv/lv/pakalpojumucentri) (Available only in Latvian) operates across Latvia since 2014, where, through cooperation between National and Local Governments, are unified and digitalised services of such bodies as State Social Insurance Agency, State Employment Agency, State Revenue Service, Register of Enterprises, State Rural Support Service, State Land Service, Office of Citizenship and Migration, State Labour Inspectorate. Provision of bodies is offered for 78 municipality in Municipality level centres, Regional and National level centres – good territorial coverage even in sparsely populated areas.

In accordance with Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No. 401 State and Municipal Unified Customer Service Centre is organised entity providing the public administration services of several public administrations in one place.

The amount of services provided at the single customer service centre shall be composed of:

- *services included in the minimum service basket;*
- *local government services intended to be provided at the single customer service centre;*
- *other services.*

✓ The further development of the ***State Information Systems Integrator*** (VISS) supplementing it with the new, unified data services for traditional and mobile applications.

✓ ***Data Publishing Platform*** (Open Data Portal).

Requirements for project implementers to publish open data sets and develop data services in accordance with the needs of local government and other public administration institutions.

In Open Data Portal at his moment, in November 2018 has been published 156 datasets from publishers. Cabinet of ministers' regulations "The order how public institutions place information on the Internet" has been approved and it determines that Public institutions shall publish open data in machine-readable form, together with metadata or only data set metadata, on the Latvian Open Data Portal (https://data.gov.lv).

4.   Reaffirming the equitable balance between the interests of rights- holders and the public interest

4.1.   Please indicate **what action your Government** *has taken in order* **to update the national copyright legislation** *and* **its adaption to cyberspace***. Please indicate also* **what consideration was given** *to the possibility of* **encouraging rights-holders** *and the* **lawful beneficiaries of limitations** *and* **exceptions to copyright** *and related* **rights protection** *to* **ensure that such limitations** *and exceptions* **are applied***. Please provide information on* **open access policies adapted***, conditions to access open scientific data and any favourable conditions applied for marginalized groups, such as persons with disabilities.*

4.2.   Please also indicate **what are the actions planned** *to give consideration to the development of* **technological innovations***, including* **Free and Open Source Software** *(FOSS) and to their potential impact on access to information.*

In the **"Information Society Development Guidelines for 2014 -2020"** special attention is devoted to implementation of open data principle in the public administration. This principle unleashes the growth potential of the digital economy, by making data and information resources created by public administration easily available to society, thereby establishing a precondition for the spur of new innovative, **data-driven business ideas**, services, and products.

✓ Government and Latvian ICT Association signed a **cooperation Memorandum with the aspiration for Latvia to become Data Driven Nation.** Partners agreed upon the concept of Data Driven Goals, its three pillars, and the common goals in the process of digital transformation of Latvia and development of Data Driven Nation.

The major goals of the memorandum of co-operation are to strengthen the development of the Latvian ICT industry and its export, to use the opportunities provided by this industry for the growth of Latvia's national economy, as well as to achieve full potential of digital government according to the requirements of modern society and economics, and to increase the competitiveness of Latvia and its economy.

The three pillars of Latvia as a Data Driven Nation are:

1) Data democracy and accessibility. It is the basis for a more transparent public governance process; for a more active public participation in decision-making process; for the development of new, innovative business models; and for the higher quality of public sector and business decision making. State institutions will promote data availability, transparency and reuse, including the development of proper legal regulation.

2) Data enabled citizen engagement. Access to transparent and perceptible information about public sector decisions, activities and results is the foundation for civic participation and citizen engagement.

Public institutions will become an example for the citizens and businesses, as regards state-of-the-art communication and information exchange. The developed solutions and tools will be applicable both for public, non-governmental and private sector communication.

3) Data driven innovations / Innovative data commercialization. Data driven innovations and innovative data commercialization, based in global technology development tendencies and opportunities, is an instrument to strengthen country's competitiveness and the export capacity of high value added products.

✓   As a result of the Memorandum there was fruitful cooperation between Latvian government, Microsoft Company and University of Latvia and **Microsoft Innovation Centre** (LUMIC) was founded. LUMIC implements several programs: start-up support program, development of new digital skills programs, development of applications and solutions, and the program for the development of the digital transformation ecosystem.

✓   Informative report about cloud-computing strategy was approved in 2018 and strategy of Artificial intelligence open data are in line.

✓   In the context of Latvia's strategic focus of Data Driven Nation and Public Private cooperation on emerging technology pilots in Public sector to increase efficiency and effectiveness of its work, Register of Enterprises on 13 June 2018 **introduces Virtual assistant - UNA**, who is assisting clients in receiving information services in RoE website, Facebook page, and is serving as a pilot to evaluate possibilities of Artificial intelligence assisted service provision. The virtual assistant provides written replies to the frequently asked questions regarding registration of a new subject, progress and liquidation of the submitted registration documents. It is a customer oriented tool, available at any time of the day and night and using clear and understandable language for communication and at the same time business-like communication style. UNA has been developed within the framework of the pilot project during seven months. During development of the virtual assistant the Register of Enterprises cooperated with the Latvian company Tilde, which is using artificial intelligence technologies in its work and being able to ensure operation of the virtual assistant in Latvian. Virtual assistant platform, neuron networks and natural language technologies were used for creation of the virtual assistant of the Register of Enterprises, ensuring that you may freely communicate with the virtual assistant, like with the employee of the Register of Enterprises.

5.   Final comments

*5.1.   What efforts has your Government made **to establish a system of continuing monitoring of the implementation** of the decisions taken at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and other internationally agreed development goals and commitments and **what time** – related goals and benchmarks has your **Government set in this respect**?*

WSIS as a platform has had an important role for fostering changes and promoting common goals for building inclusive and fundamental knowledge society in the context of national level.

Latvia regards ICTs as a driver for growth, employment and development through providing enabling environment. We support a single, open, free, secure and trustworthy Internet, subject to an inclusive, transparent and accountable multistakeholder model of governance. The same laws and norms that apply in other areas of our day-to-day lives should apply also online.

By the free movement of people, goods and services flow Latvia must be a part of the Digital Single Market. To provide cross-border cooperation in the Digital Single Market, free movement of goods and services as well as the free flow of citizen, must be provided a national e-governance solutions for interoperability with the EU solutions and must be developed content for a cross-border services and solutions for exchange of information across different sectors. It is planned to establish solutions for the cross-border e-services and data exchange solutions as well as to develop basic solutions for providing the cross-border services.

For more than 10 years Cabinet sittings in Latvia have been open to the public. Since 2013 live video broadcasts of Cabinet sittings have been aired live on the web page to make the decision-making process of the Cabinet more open and transparent. Publication of public participation plan on ministries' and the Cabinet's websites (http://tap.mk.gov.lv/mk/tap   (meetings and draft laws)). Communication with society through the social media is very active, today they are the most convenient channel for information transfer, in terms of both speed and diversity. The Twitter account managed by the State Chancellery (@Brivibas36) has more than 11 000 followers and Facebook account – more than 2 500 followers. Both visual materials, videos and photos are used, there is opportunity to insert links. The posts are mainly in Latvian, but we are working to develop communication in English.

Formally the representatives of the society to be involved are enumerated in the State Administration Structure Law, as well as in the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation Nr. 970 «Procedures for the Public

Participation in the Development Planning Process». Meanwhile, the target group of a regulation can vary and the involved stakeholders in practice are and should be defined in every situation individually in order to respect the principle that any person that could be affected by the decision should be informed about it and generally to enable the public administration to work in the public interest. Among mandatory sections of public institutions' websites - Public participation. General information on cooperation with society, incl. permanent and ad-hoc working groups / councils.

In 2018, 170 consultative councils (for example, Environment consultative council, Public Council of the Corruption Prevention and Combating Bureau, Customs Consultative Council), involving representatives of NGOs, were active that is indicative of considerable transparency of the process of drafting the regulatory documents and development/implementation of national policies. All minutes and protocol decisions of the consultative councils will have to be published on the website of the relevant institution. NGO and cabinet of ministers memorandum of co-operation Introduced in 2005, based on NGO initiative and 436 NGOs have signed the Memorandum in 2018. Meetings transmitted live; agendas, videos and minutes publicly available.

5.2. ***What are***, *according to your Government, the* ***main issues, new challenges and actions*** *that need to be further addressed* ***for promoting multilingualism*** *and* ***universal access*** *to* ***cyberspace, including the evolution of the Internet and its governance***? *Please provide a brief description in your final comments.*
Currently Latvia has reached a good level of public service digitalization and according to EU eGovernment benchmark most of essential government digital service are available digitally. Our next steps will be focused on closing the government services digitalization gap and proceed to further and more broader implementation of digital by default/ digital only approach. For example, starting from January 2019 Official e-address will be implemented for digital by default communication between citizens and business. Further work will be related to focus on public service delivery process integration across sectors and administration levels (Use of State and Government Unified Customer Service Centres); Proactive service delivery and enabling them work across-borders.

5.3. *Please* ***provide references*** *to the main* ***sources of information*** *and* ***data used*** *in compiling this report and that could be of interest to share with other Member States, such as recent public policy strategies, reviews or evaluations; latest research or studies and statistical data.*

References:
1. eGovernment Factsheet of Latvia.
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3. Free Wi-Fi access to Internet more than in 4000 hotspots (http://www.wifi.lv/index-en.html
4. Wi-Fi outdoors (http://www.wifi.lv/content-en.html#tab-1-tab).
5. Public library development project "Third father's son" (http://www.kis.gov.lv/projekti/bibliotekam/publisko-biblioteku-attistibas-projekts/) (available only in Latvian).