

# Austria's E-Government Strategy 2023

Vienna, March 2023

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# Cooperation between federal government, provinces, municipalities and local communities

- The federal government, provinces, municipalities and local communities have been working closely together for many years with the aim of establishing standardised, interlinked and coordinated procedures for digital government services or e-government. Now, with the help of over 80 representatives of the federal government, provinces, municipalities and local communities, this joint E-Government Strategy has been produced, to provide guidance and point the way forward for government services in Austria. This document summarises the results of the strategy-making process and, as such, constitutes the joint E-Government Strategy 2023.

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# Introduction

→ Digitalisation has proved to be an essential driver for **growth** and **future-proofing**. The digital transformation is not only changing the way we live and work but also having a positive effect overall on growth in the economy and new jobs. It is an opportunity to completely rethink our government services. Targeted digitalisation can increase the **efficiency** and **effectiveness of government services** and significantly improve interaction between the state, society and the economy. Citizens and businesses can already access government services online today via the **service portals** of local authorities and the provinces, or via oesterreich.gv.at, the Digital Office app and the **Business Service Portal**. With faster processes and greater transparency, a modern digital administration system can help business people to achieve their goals sooner, increase their productivity and operate even more successfully in the international arena.

An efficient digital administration system in which different administrative bodies work closely together has been made possible by the **Portal Group**. While the individual portals form a good basis, there is also a need for **interoperability between portals horizontally, vertically and sectorally** to establish the foundations of an inter-agency one-stop shop. Experience gained during the coronavirus crisis shows that people are willing to accept and use online government services provided that they are easily accessible for all and can be used intuitively. For example, the coronavirus crisis resulted in the number of active mobile e-IDs (verified digital identities [Handy-Signaturen]) doubling within a year.

For many years, **Austria** has been among the **highest-ranking countries** when measured against a range of international benchmarks. Furthermore, digital services such as the central e-government portal [oesterreich.gv.at](https://oesterreich.gv.at), the individual portals of the provinces, municipalities and local communities, the Digital Office app for mobile e-government, FinanzOnline, GISA (the inter-agency Austrian Business Licence Information System) and the Business Service Portal for business owners are regarded as examples of **best practice** in international comparisons. In order to maintain this standard in the future, it is important to look at digital services from the perspective not only of citizens and business owners but also of the staff working at the administrative agencies, and to continue to expand and integrate them, taking account of the latest technological requirements.

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# Vision and basic principles





## → 2.1 VISION

People use trusted services in digitally sovereign Austria.

People are at the heart of our digital services. We take account of all social strata and groups equally. Personal contact with government agencies remains important to us and will continue to be possible in a digital world. With our plans for education and training, we support and improve the digital skills of people of all generations.

In an increasingly mobile environment, we offer all target groups – citizens, businesses and administrative agency staff – easy and interlinked access to all our digital services; users verify their identity using ID Austria. We comply with recognised standards in our services and ensure that they can be used across borders – especially within the European Union.

The federal government, provinces, municipalities and local communities work together to take advantage of the potential of the latest technologies. At the same time, we set high standards for reliability and security, always remembering the importance of maintaining digital sovereignty. The Austrian legal framework formulates the basic principles of digital government services centrally and supports and facilitates continuous further development of the digitalisation process.

We are constantly innovating to ensure that we meet the expectations which citizens, businesses and administrative staff have of digitalisation and to enhance its value and the efficiency of government services.

## → 2.2 BASIC PRINCIPLES

Everything revolves around people.

Fundamental to the development of digital government services are the needs of citizens, businesses and administrative staff, and the legislative system. Digital services are available to all, no-one is disadvantaged. The services are provided in such a way that they can be found and used by everyone as easily as possible. They are designed so that they can be used simply, intuitively and on the move. Despite the stronger focus on digital services, citizens can still always choose between digital and in-person processes. Having a consistent interface and similar functions and options makes accessing digital government services simpler. This is why, in focussing on people's interests and needs, all administrative organisations are working together, cooperating on implementation and taking account of agreed or internationally established standards.

We are designing innovative services for a digital future.

Government administrative agencies are open to modern working methods and technologies and are willing to put them to good use to increase efficiency. Initiatives such as interlinking portals, introducing one-stop/no-stop services to speed up processes, expanding automation and implementing the once-only principle make life easier not only for citizens and business owners but also for the staff working in administrative agencies. The necessary framework conditions are being created to ensure that regional authorities and all administrative organisations can continue to work together on new innovations.

We are creating the conditions for establishing digital sovereignty.

Establishing digital sovereignty is essential if the administrative agencies are to carry out their core tasks. This will be done by building up the necessary expertise in the administrative agencies and by selecting properly skilled system operators.

How digital services will be implemented to enact new legislation must be anticipated even as it is being designed. The legal framework must support digitalisation and take account of the need to simplify processes for citizens and business owners and also for the administrative agencies themselves.

Building up trust is a matter for us all.

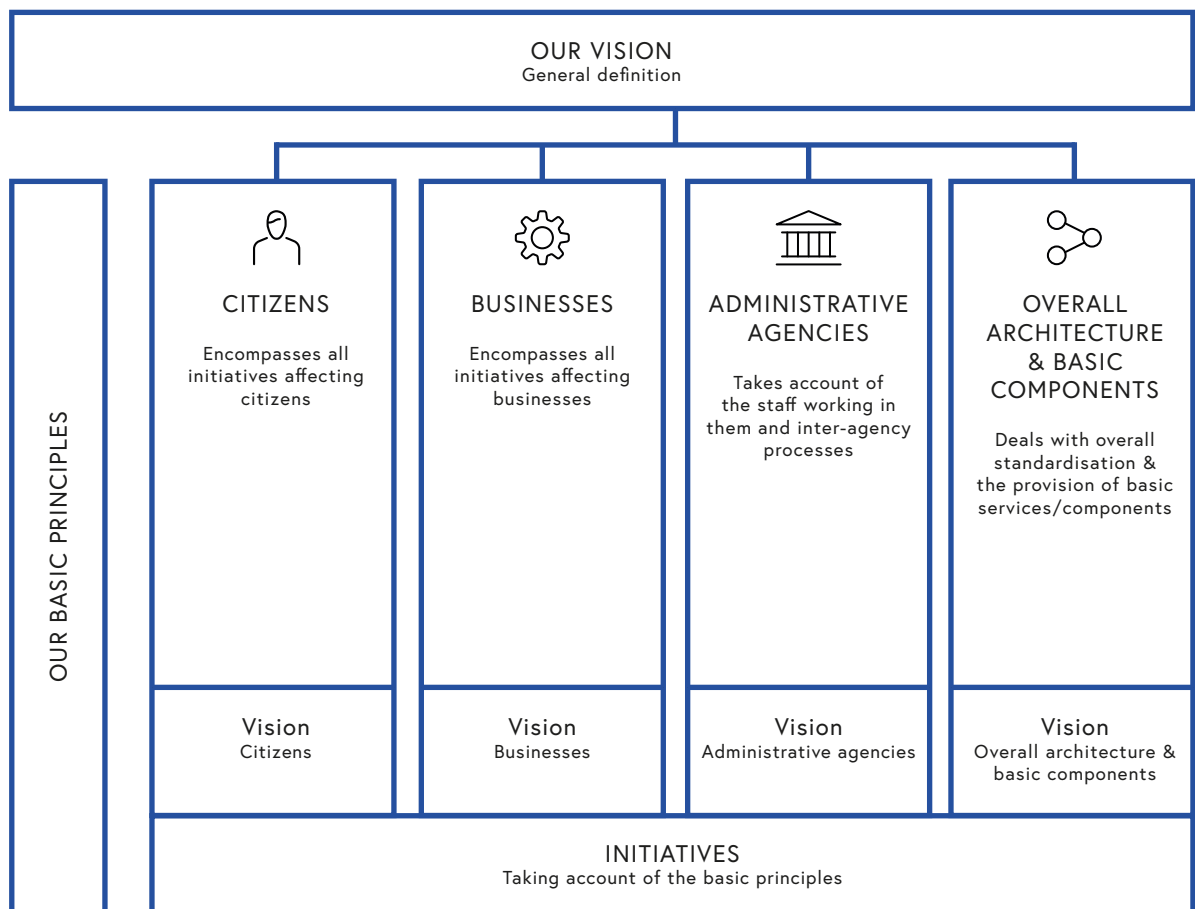
Taking active measures such as those described below will ensure that citizens and business owners can justifiably carry out their administrative activities with confidence. Transparency, complying with high standards for security and data protection and good communication to keep people informed form the basis for trust. Citizens, business owners and administrative staff can all contribute their ideas, expertise and feedback. Interactive participation processes enable them to influence the way administrative procedures are designed.

# Impact areas



→ The E-Government Strategy identifies four specific focal points – the impact areas. This should enable the vision that has been defined to be implemented in a targeted way, with appropriate initiatives:

- Citizens
- Businesses
- Administrative agencies
- Overall architecture and basic components



The main focus for administrative procedures is on those areas impacting citizens and businesses. Building on the overall vision, more detailed visions and initiatives have been identified for the four impact areas.

## Vision for citizens

The digital services available to citizens are simple, accessible, easy to find, mobile-compatible, intuitive and multilingual. They save users time and effort. Non-digital use of government services is still possible.

The digital identities of citizens are protected to the highest degree possible and also enable them to manage (view, use and update) their data themselves transparently. Open communication with citizens is increased. Information about government services is made available to citizens proactively. Ideas and suggestions from citizens are welcomed and considered.

Digital services are available to citizens across the board, covering all administrative agencies and all Austrian provinces. This makes it much easier to access administrative channels because the same stored data can be reused (the once-only principle). The process of enabling an individual to act as an agent, so that they can conduct administrative affairs for someone else, is simple and consistent.

All online public administration services are available to citizens round the clock, regardless of their location or the device they are using. An up-to-date legal framework provides the lawful basis for protecting and safeguarding data. Citizens will be equipped with the digital skills that each target group needs in order to use the services.

## Vision for businesses

Digital services are geared towards users, can be used on any device (smart devices & mobile phones) and are accessible to all, seamlessly across different media and in multiple languages. The Help functions are regularly updated with the use of intelligent support systems to ensure ongoing support for all users. A secure identification process with single sign-on authentication gives businesses access to all relevant data, information, services, portals, platforms and systems, providing them with an overview of processes across all administrative agencies. They can be confident that, at any time and in a transparent and easy to understand way, they can check that their data is being used securely.

An efficient and secure data management system enables stored data to be reused as effectively as possible with only missing data being requested (the once-only principle). On the basis of their core procedural data that has been saved, business owners are involved at an early stage in the service flow, so that they are proactively sent suggestions about appropriate services, across all agencies and provinces, in order to get the best possible search results. The processes of managing company data and assigning and cancelling online powers of attorney are intuitive and straightforward.

The prevailing conditions increase Austria's appeal as a place to do business for innovative and high-tech companies, thereby supporting Austria's digital sovereignty in the European context. There is close interaction between businesses and the administrative agencies so that businesses are kept informed about the government services that are available. The data that is required to use administrative channels and also for private business matters is available round the clock, nationwide and internationally. Businesses are offered ways of building up and extending their digital skills, along with training and certification opportunities.

## Vision for administrative agencies

The work of staff in administrative agencies is supported by easy-to-use, accessible, intuitive and integrated services, regardless of where they are located; there is a standardised process for accessing those services. Administrative agencies work on the basis of national and international (e-government) standards and take account of all their users.

The services provided offer maximum security and data protection. The administrative agencies use new technologies to enable employees to be flexible about where and when they work. It is a basic premise that the processes of administrative agencies are as transparent as is legally possible.

The administrative agencies put new technologies (e.g. automation) to good use, enabling existing data to be used on the move and across agencies as far as is legally possible (the once-only principle). Processes are set up in such a way that media discontinuity is avoided and the same processes can be used across all agencies.

A legal framework that embraces digitalisation supports Austria's digital sovereignty in a European context. Digital (technology-neutral) education and knowledge management for all staff in administrative agencies are an essential prerequisite.



## Overall architecture and basic components

Sustainable and open architectures that meet the requirement for European interoperability provide networked and interoperable services that support an up-to-date user experience. Innovative ideas are tested out in real-life laboratory projects.

The overall architecture of digital services is coordinated across regional bodies in the European context and is continuously developed. Agreements on governance ensure that the services, standards, technologies and applications which are put in place meet the expectations of citizens, business owners and administrative agency staff as far as possible and that the confidentiality, availability and integrity of their data is maintained.

Service portals are networked to ensure the interoperability of e-government services. An efficient and secure data management system ensures that data stored by the authorities can be reused as effectively as possible, in compliance with data protection regulations (the once-only principle). Digitalisation projects affecting more than one organisation are worked on jointly and, where appropriate, implemented across all organisations.

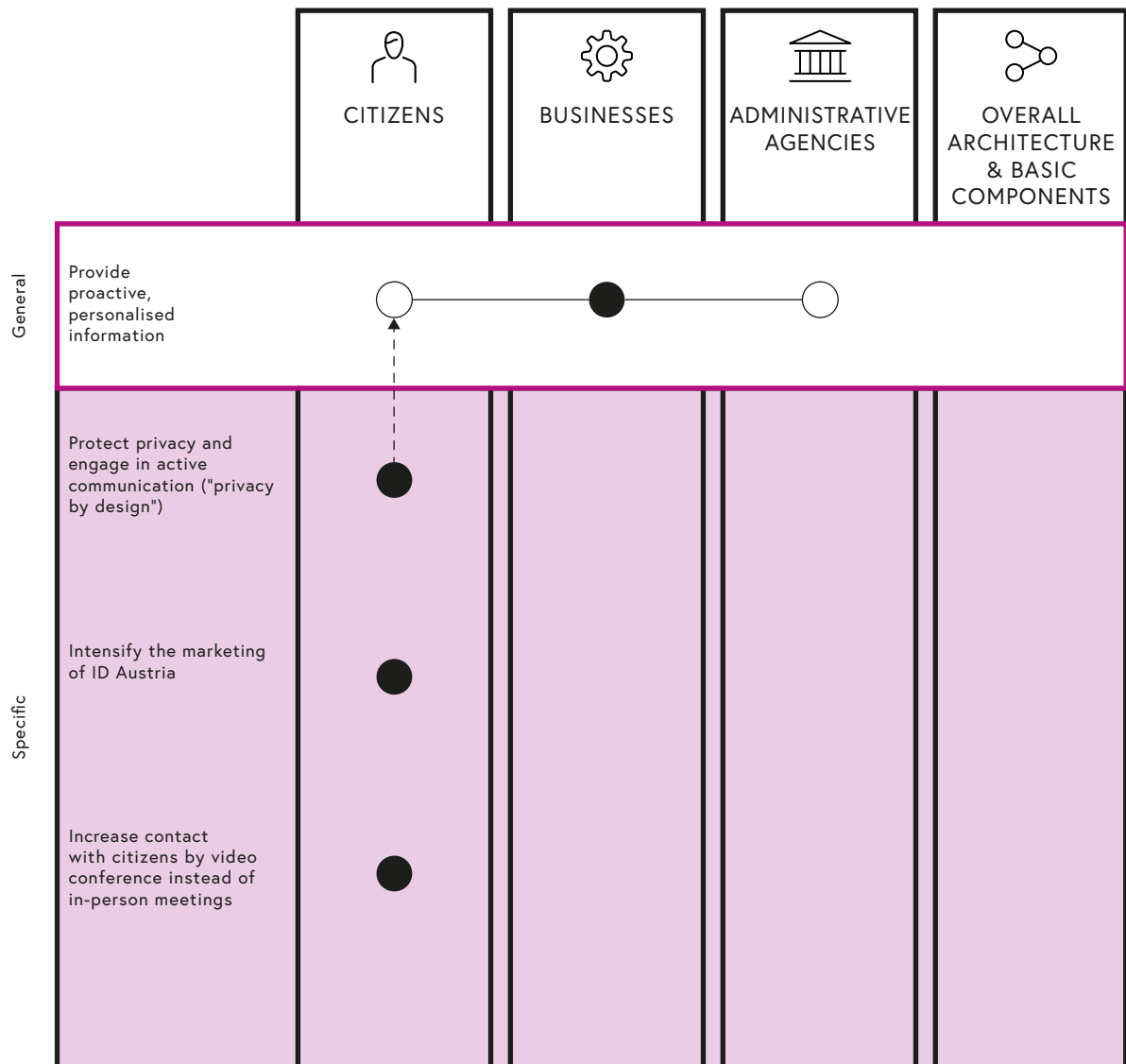
As administrative agencies evolve, they take account of digital services in their entirety, to ensure that they can be used in many different areas of work. Digital services are implemented in such a way that they are reusable and the administrative agency retains control of the data that is being processed. The administrative agencies have the skills to deal with critical services and critical infrastructure in-house, so as to ensure continuity in their interactions with the market.

# Initiatives



→ Possible initiatives have been identified across all four impact areas which will contribute to achieving the vision and boosting confidence. Similar initiatives have been grouped together in line with the overall vision.

**Everything revolves around people.**



**KEY**

- Initiatives – defined in the strategy process
- Initiatives – resulting from the overall view
- Initiatives – linked thematically
- - - - Initiatives – required before another initiative

### **Provide proactive, personalised information**

Engage in more, and more focused, active communication and information about digital services, especially any new features.

### **Protect privacy and engage in active communication (“privacy by design”)**

Conduct a nationwide communication campaign about the current legal framework and data security.

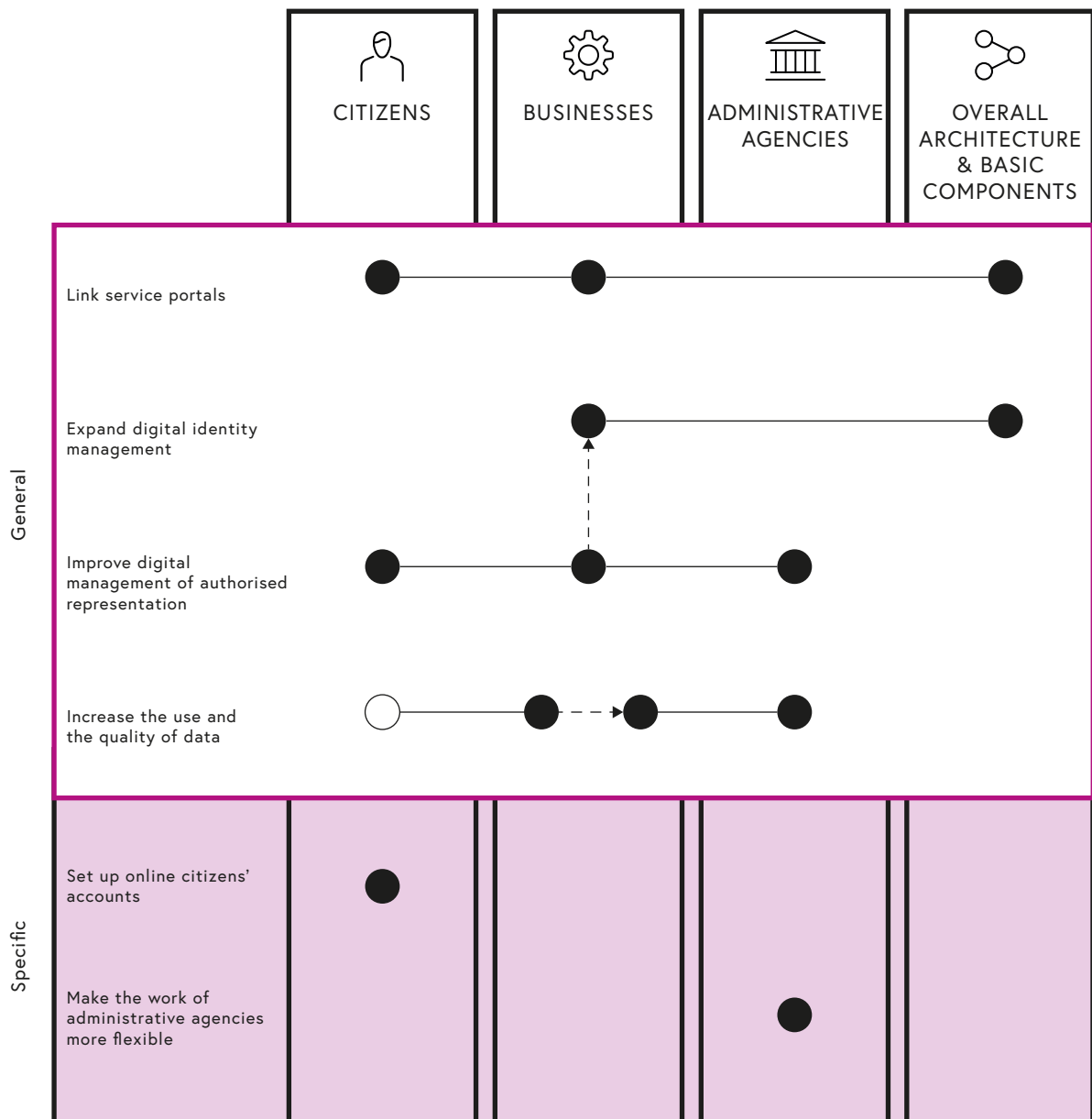
### **Intensify the marketing of ID Austria**

The way that ID Austria is the key to using digital services needs to be conveyed to citizens and business owners in an easily understood way – and also to administrative agency staff in their capacity as multipliers.

### **Increase contact with citizens by video conference instead of in-person meetings**

Offer online video conferences instead of in-person meetings, where this is legally and organisationally possible.

**We are designing innovative services for a digital future.**



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### **Link service portals**

The linking of service portals offers easy and secure access to the online information and services of administrative agencies and organisations working in the public interest.

### **Expand digital identity management**

Expand the use of centralised digital identification, authentication and authorisation processes for businesses using digital administrative applications, and add additional functionality to ID Austria.

### **Improve digital management of authorised representation**

Set up a system for digital management of authorised representation for use by citizens and business owners, including management of roles and rights and powers of representation and authority.

### **Increase the use and the quality of data**

Make greater use of existing data for faster and simpler processes, taking account of the right to data transparency. This also increases the quality of the data.

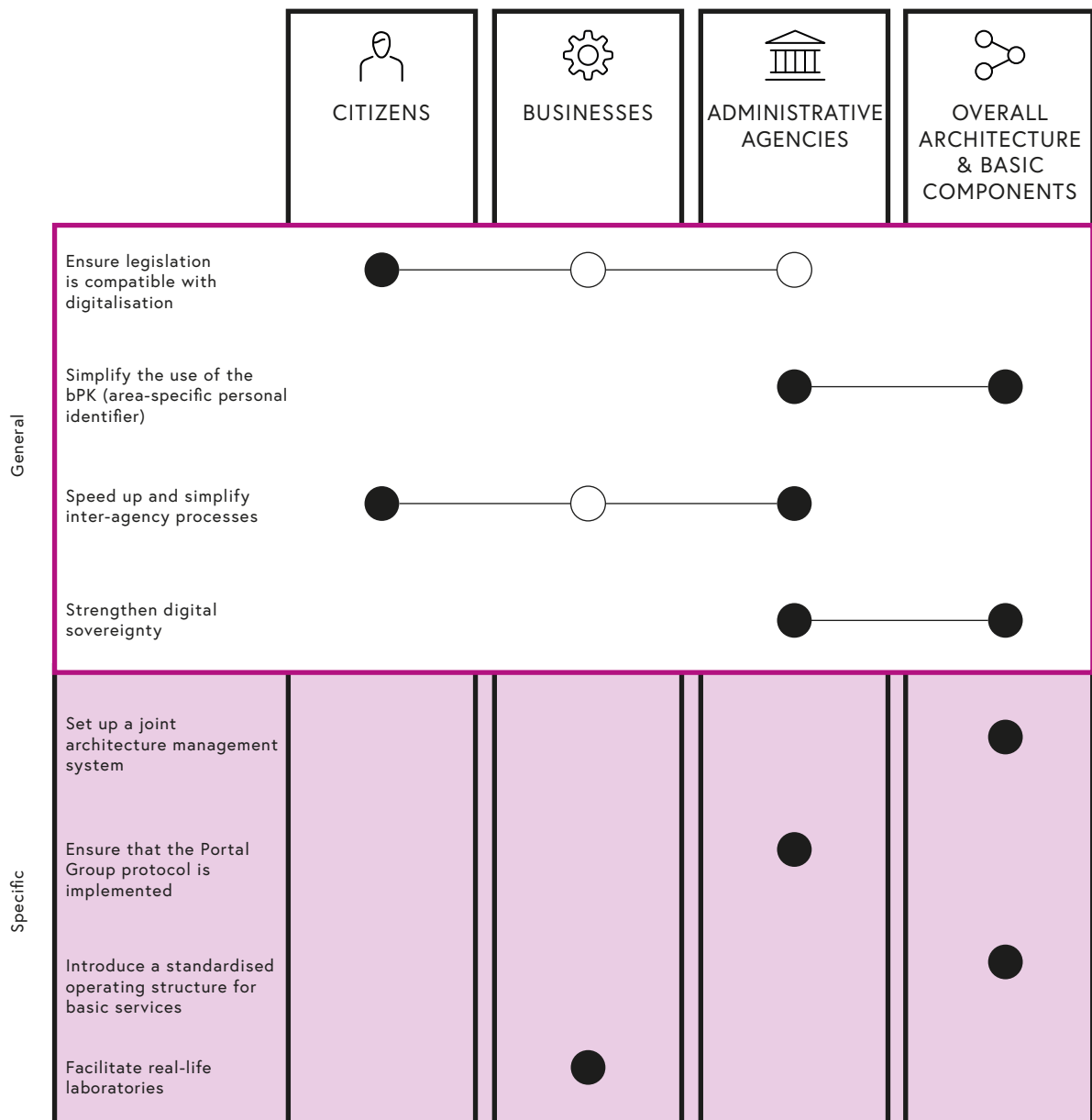
### **Set up online citizens' accounts**

Meet the requirements for online citizens' accounts which offer proactive information, customisable areas of interest and an overview of how their own data is being used.





### **Make the work of administrative agencies more flexible**

Identify possible options and come up with recommendations for making working methods in the administrative agencies more modern and flexible.

### We are creating the conditions for digital sovereignty.



KEY

-  Initiatives – defined in the strategy process
-  Initiatives – resulting from the overall view
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### **Ensure legislation is compatible with digitalisation**

Continue to develop a digitalisation-friendly legal framework that takes account of the need to optimise administrative processes from the users' point of view.

### **Simplify the use of the bPK (area-specific personal identifier)**

Simplify the intended areas of use for the area-specific personal identifier (bPK) in the interests of efficient administrative processes.

### **Speed up and simplify inter-agency processes**

Link all the digital services associated with any life situation across different agencies. Define standardised inter-agency formats, guidelines, procedures, interfaces, technical systems etc.

### **Strengthen digital sovereignty**

Strengthen digital sovereignty by gathering and evaluating data from the input fields of open-source products and identifying opportunities for cooperation. Take account when designing, developing and operating IT systems of the need for digital sovereignty over the data being used. Include planning for appropriate data migration scenarios as part of risk management.

### **Set up a joint architecture management system**

Create a shared understanding of Enterprise Architecture Management (EAM) in the partnership between federal government, provinces, municipalities and local communities; enshrine this in governance procedures and embed cooperation on EAM as an ongoing part of the partnership.



### **Ensure that the Portal Group protocol is implemented**

Make all applications, especially registry searches, available via the Portal Group. Set up an inter-agency structure to support implementation of the agreed standards.

### **Introduce a standardised operating structure for basic services**

Define minimum requirements for operating the system, in the interests of more efficient operation, especially regarding monitoring of availability, SLAs, ticketing, documentation and points of contact.

### **Facilitate real-life laboratories**

Create spaces for experimentation (“regulatory sandboxes”) so that novel technological developments/innovations can be tested dynamically in a controlled environment.



Governance

- Central to governance within Austria's e-government is the partnership between the federal government, provinces, municipalities and local communities (for short: BLSG). This encompasses organisational, legal and technical standards which are developed jointly and form the foundation for implementing generic basic services and specific e-government solutions. The BLSG cooperation ensures that organisations work together as partners on e-government. They act on the basis of defined structures and processes. Jointly convened committees meet regularly, jointly applicable standards are confirmed in writing and published on the reference server. Input drawn from committees outside the partnership but judged to be relevant is also taken into account.

## Basic principles

**1. Early involvement:** The relevant stakeholders are involved in any matter under discussion as early on as possible and are kept informed.

**2. Implemented standards:** All participating organisations ensure compliance with the standards that have been agreed and approved within the BLSG. Possible exceptions are actively reported and/or a new standard is established in the medium term.

**3. Available resources:** Participating organisations make appropriate resources available for committees, teams, working groups and (key) projects.

**4. Efficiency in practice:** The main focus is on those topics, working groups and (key) projects which are reasonably practicable and/or likely to succeed. Care is taken during concept development to ensure that the work is based on actual use cases from the various administrative areas wherever this is sensible and possible.

**5. Active participation:** The representatives of participating organisations who attend meetings/workshops are those who are in charge of or responsible for that subject. It is also important to have the broadest possible involvement of specialist IT representatives.

**6. Proactive communication:** Information about, and the outcomes of, matters in which the partnership is involved are proactively distributed and made available to a wider public where appropriate. Good communication is regarded as an obligation.

The purpose of joint governance is to work together as equal partners across the boundaries between regional bodies, to establish standardised procedures, share information about cross-sectoral and current issues and communicate about matters affecting all partners.

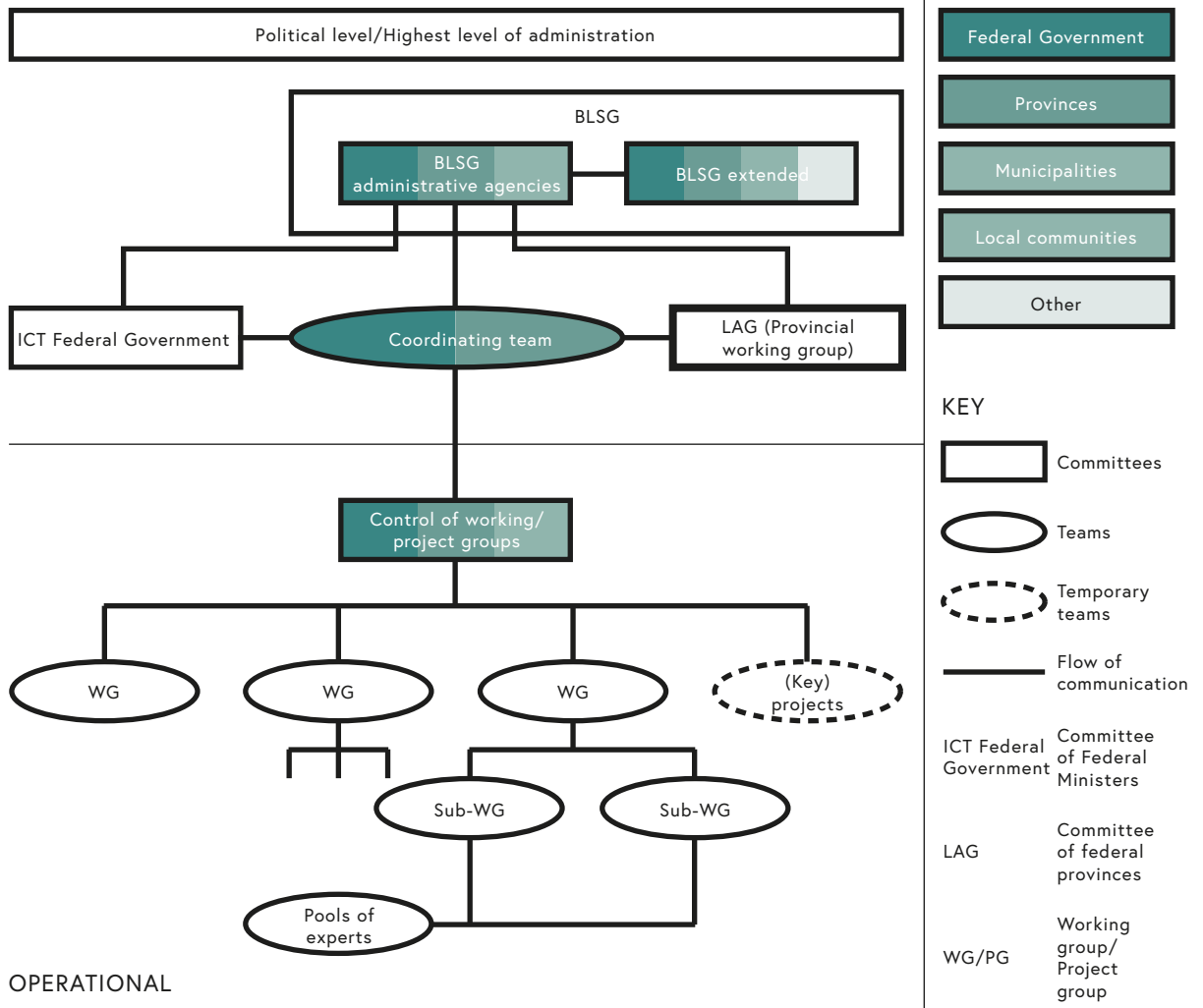
## Content

- General standards, interfaces, principles and framework conditions
- The components and concepts of e-government
- Cooperation projects and initiatives
- A common roadmap
- Active information about projects and legal regulations at national and EU level
- Other current and high-priority matters

# Organisation

## ORGANIGRAM

### STRATEGY & ARCHITECTURE



**BLSG administrative agencies:** Internal agreements and resolutions, including commitments to be made by the administrative agencies

**BLSG extended:** Mainly responsible for communication and sharing of information

**Coordinating team:** Mainly responsible for coordination

**Control of working/project groups:** Responsible for controlling the topics discussed by working and project groups