



# REINVENTING PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY

A VISION FROM TOMORROW'S LEADERS

*College of Europe Student Case Studies  
Final Report 2016*

  
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*The opinions expressed in the case studies are those of the individual student teams, and do not necessarily reflect the views of Accenture, the College of Europe, the Lisbon Council, the Government Executive Innovation Circle or any of their associates.*

# THE EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR GOVERNMENT TRANSFORMATION

*The 21st century is a time of unprecedented challenge – and great opportunity*

The European Centre for Government Transformation strives to shape a high performing and innovative public sector, enabling the delivery of sustainable, modern and quality public services. It provides a unique and multi-stakeholder platform for constructive dialogue, exchange of best practices and formulation of innovative solutions. This network of frontline practitioners, change agents and thought leaders is complemented by ground-breaking research and analyses in an effort to shape and inform policy developments and the government of the future – a transformation in the way governments do business.

Founded in 2009 as a European research centre and practitioner-driven community, the European Centre for Government Transformation is dedicated to providing pragmatic and actionable solutions designed to help government agencies and other public service organisations improve the social, economic and health outcomes of the people they serve through delivery of increased and improved public services. It is a new kind of ideas and solutions hub that recognises the interdisciplinary nature of state transformation and public sector modernisation. Its three founding partners – Accenture, the College of Europe and the Lisbon Council – bring a broad range of experiences and knowledge to this fast-growing community, contributing expertise and guidance to the debates and ensuring broad dissemination for the ideas developed in these fora.



*Herman Van Rompuy, president emeritus of the European Council and former prime minister of Belgium, hands out The 2015 Public Service Innovation Award to College of Europe students.*

## Our Activities

### Thematic High-Level Roundtables on

- Digital Government
- Employment and Skills
- Sustainable Public Finances
- Public Procurement
- Smart Borders

### Collaboration with the European Commission's Research and Innovation Directorate-General

- Roundtable on Public Sector Innovation
- Launch of the Final Report by the Expert Group on Public Sector Innovation
- Fringe Session on Public Sector Innovation at the Innovation Convention

### Annual European Summits for Government Transformation and Award Ceremonies

**Landmark Publication *Delivering Public Service for the Future: How Europe Can Lead Public-Sector Transformation***, a unique collection of thoughtful essays on the future of public-sector reform and state modernisation by 12 of Europe's leading thinkers and policymakers



**Executive Briefings** on key themes, such as employment and skills, digital government, public procurement and public service innovation

**Research Study *Driving Public Entrepreneurship: Government as a Catalyst for Innovation and Growth in Europe***, published in collaboration with Oxford Economics



*The 2015 Employment and Skills Roundtable on Building the Missing Skills in Europe to Rekindle Growth and Competitiveness*

# COLLEGE OF EUROPE STUDENT CASE STUDIES: INTRODUCTION

## *Tomorrow's Leaders Evaluate Today's Challenges*

In 2015-2016, 12 students from the College of Europe were competitively selected to take part in a project on state transformation. They were divided into three teams of four students. Working together with Accenture, the staff and faculty of the College of Europe and the Lisbon Council, each team was asked to evaluate the challenges of a public agency, chosen among the finalists of the **European Prize for Innovation in Public Administration**, awarded by Máire Geoghegan-Quinn, then European commissioner for research, innovation and science. The selected agencies are: Ministry of Industry, Energy and Tourism and the Ministry of Finances and Public Administration in Spain; the Northern Netherlands Provinces Alliance (SNN) in the Netherlands; and the Federal Ministry of Finance in Austria. Each team visited the administration they were evaluating to learn about the particular challenges they faced, and ultimately help them better understand their public-sector challenges and improve their innovation strategies.

In completing this project, the students were coached by a team of top transformation managers at Accenture, the global management consultant firm, as well as by the **Government Executive Innovation Circle**, a European Centre for Government Transformation community committed to developing and implementing solutions to high-level state transformation challenges. Members of the Government Executive Innovation Circle met with the students in February 2016, and later agreed to evaluate the case studies, awarding a prize to the best of them. In June 2016, the case studies were presented at a policy event organised in collaboration with the Dutch Rotating Presidency of the Council of the European Union, in the presence of Maarten Camps, secretary-general of the Dutch Ministry of the Economy.



## GOVERNMENT EXECUTIVE INNOVATION CIRCLE

### **Robert Madelin**

Chair, Government Executive Innovation Circle  
*Hors Classe* Senior Adviser for Innovation,  
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European Commission  
President, State Transformation Case  
Study Jury

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## FOREWORD

### Robert Madelin

Chair, Government Executive  
Innovation Circle  
*Hors Classe* Senior Adviser for Innovation,  
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European Commission  
President, State Transformation Case  
Study Jury

Europe enjoys an unbroken record in making general purpose technology breakthroughs, from which all the world now benefits.

The question for Europe today is how far, in this new century, we shall continue to be one among the global purveyors of innovation, and how far reduce our role to that of a needy user. Europeans still love the new and improved, still have needs and remain as inventive as any part of humanity. But in our adoption of the new as well as in our political, administrative and social structures, there is less urgency than in times past: time to market no longer carries the same weight. Meanwhile, the innovative capacity of other continents continues to evolve at a pace no longer known to Europe.

So on what foundations can Europe get fit to play a fuller role? I believe salvation lies in the innovation trinity of systems thinking, public reform and youth leadership.

Systems. Effective living in a century of complex systems requires not only "systems thinking," but systems approaches to any public intervention.

This is not merely nice to have. In a period of rapid change (see the "Deep Shift" forecast annexed to Professor Schwab's "Fourth Industrial Revolution"), this is urgent. Mechanistic logic applied to complex systems systematically fails. It will overlook certain actors, fail to account for feedback loops and overestimate linear returns to effort. Lagging institutions will inevitably impose on European society and enterprise not only rapidly increasing opportunity costs, but also spiralling downside risk. Even when disaster does not result, such under-performance erodes the legitimacy of governance.

A systems approach will map more subtly what is going on, will be more modest in action, will favour the experimental, but also be more attentive to early response and more swift in fine-tuning. Modesty is the key. Where power and knowledge are evolving and widely distributed, governments who want to succeed must operate in a more co-operative and open manner.

Reform. This too is urgent. There is plenty going on: the Open Government Partnership at global level, the digital-driven reform coalition of Europe's public chief information officers (CIOs), to name but two going concerns. And in recent European Commission-generated studies (notably *Public Sector Innovation – Towards a New Architecture*, 2014) there is plenty of analysis of what must be done. What is still missing in too much of the planet is any awareness of the overwhelming evidence that this counts a lot; that public sector reform is a transformative bet worthy of top level political support and guidance.

Youth. This is why younger leadership is part of the solution. The younger generations are by definition the new arrivals, the Martians new to Planet Old, the immigrants to the Brave-ish New World. And that makes youth the best possible source of innovation. Because historically the new arrivals are overwhelmingly the source of the great new ideas. So we desperately need in Europe to encourage, empower and use the talents of our youth, just as we must attract and retain incoming global innovators.

Which brings me to the current report of case studies in improving government. This report captures in a few pages the energy and imagination of young talent. The talent came together first and foremost because individuals made the choice to study at the College of Europe, and then because they were crazy enough to take on a huge chunk of extra labour... and then because they were the best. I have had the pleasure to join the jury, which has sat with the three top teams, and assessed their final papers: inspiring, but not an easy task to 'pick a winner.' The real winners are not the competitors, although I hope the race has brought them knowledge and maybe wisdom. The real winners are the administrations who have the benefit of new perspectives on their real-world challenges. So I salute those who have conceived and offer this prize, as well as those who have braved the 2016 edition.



# FOREWORD

**By Professor Olivier Costa**

Director of Political and Administrative Studies, College of Europe



In current times, it is rather difficult to write a foreword for a pioneering project such as the European Centre for Government Transformation, without mentioning the profound challenges presently faced by the European project. The European Union has been described as a political system 'in crisis' for decades, but the current situation is unprecedented in its scale, with the combination of several threats: the ever rising level of Euroscepticism among citizens and elected representatives across the Union; a decline in the European policymaking capacity; a loss of faith in the virtues of European integration; open criticism of several pivotal-policies; and the risk of departure of one state from the Union. For the first time, the crisis does not simply call into question the legitimacy of EU institutions or the impact of EU policies: it is challenging the very essence of the European integration project.

Until now, treaty reforms have failed to raise support of citizens for the European project and institutions, and the current context is not favourable to major reforms capable of modifying citizens' perceptions of the EU. It seems a new approach is needed, and that the focus should now be put on EU policies and action, and no longer solely on its institutions and polity. Not only are ordinary citizens ignorant of the vital work of the supranational union in today's interconnected world, but misperceptions are commonplace in this regard. Hence, many have a skewed picture of the impact of European integration on public services: the idea that they are incompatible with the objectives of European economic integration, and that the Commission is fighting against them, is deeply rooted in public discourse.

The European Centre for Government Transformation programme however shows that European integration plays a vital role in the development and modernisation of public services. It fosters the exchange of ideas and best practices between national leaders, civil servants and students alike and highlights the active role of the Commission in this respect. We should bear in mind always that the Treaty of Lisbon has recognised the specific mission of

services of general economic interest and their role in the promotion of social and territorial cohesion, and has underlined the responsibility of member states in the provision of these services. EU actors are all the more attached to public services, and they have proved crucial as social and economic stabilizers since the beginning of the financial crisis.

The students of the College of Europe are fully aware of, and receptive to, the many challenges that surround the efficient and effective provision of public services. This is undoubtedly the reason why they are so committed, year after year, to the European Centre for Government Transformation project. They are motivated not only by the crucial opportunity to gain professional experience, but also by the possibility to contribute to the reform of public services and to development of new projects by public authorities.

Each year the European Centre for Government Transformation initiative attracts more positive attention from the students. In 2015-2016, with the ongoing support of Accenture and the Lisbon Council, 12 students had the great privilege to work on public service reform projects that are being undertaken in three European countries. They have enjoyed advice and training of high-level professionals who were most generous in giving of their time and sharing their insights.

The College of Europe, which has been preparing young Europeans for leadership functions since 1949, in both private and public sectors, is most grateful to Accenture and the Lisbon Council for such fruitful and exciting partnerships. Furthermore we are immensely proud of our students who have been fully committed to their respective case studies on top of a highly demanding study programme at the College. They have shown, once again, that it is possible to support the European conception of public services by creative thinking and productive teamwork. We have full confidence that their analysis and proposals will make valuable contributions to this end.



## FOREWORD

By **Bernard Le Masson**

Global Managing Director, Public Service,  
Accenture Strategy

When Accenture began the collaboration with the College of Europe and the Lisbon Council seven years ago, we believed passionately in the importance of providing insights into some of the vital aspects of public service provision. Transformation was, and still is, leading the public service agenda. And while the European Union and the public sector are facing ever-growing expectations to deliver financially-sustainable, better-quality public services, today, digital innovation is playing a decisive role in achieving governmental transformation. The ambitious digital single market strategy from the European Commission, coupled with the launch of the 2016 to 2020 European Union e-government action plan, highlight progress and illustrate how far we have come in opening up the dialogue around successful public service initiatives.

Citizens and businesses want access to tailored public service solutions, anytime and anywhere across Europe — and some forward-thinking public service players have begun seizing the opportunities to serve those demands. Among them are proven pioneering public administrations such as the winners and finalists of the European Prize for Innovation in Public Administration, awarded by the European Commission. This year, three of those highly talented entrepreneurial public service organisations have been collaborating with the European Centre for Government Transformation to scale-up some of their inspiring ideas. Coached by Accenture, the actionable recommendations and tangible roadmaps put forward by the 12 students of the College of Europe include designing a business-to-business e-invoicing system orchestrated by the Austrian

government, scaling-up a governmental open data strategy to stimulate growth in Spain and defining how to best use European structural funds to foster innovation in Northern Netherlands. Here, we find the future generation of leaders is being confronted with real public-sector issues, while learning from — and teaming with — entrepreneurial public service organisations.

Exploiting digital technologies to develop innovative public-sector practices lies at the heart of what Accenture sees as the crucial role of government-as-a-platform — one that brings together the citizens, businesses, public administration and civil society to co-create effective public services. Government-as-a-platform is a crucial step on the path towards successful transformation that can not only respond to new constituencies' demands, but also stimulate economic growth in Europe.

As we facilitate, stimulate and sustain this groundbreaking partnership among the public sector and students, Accenture proudly reflects on the fact that we have helped to boost the academic curricula of around one hundred students. Giving these students this exceptional experience means they can not only gain a distinctive and competitive advantage in the labour market but also be equipped with the necessary skills to drive next-generation public services. In doing so, the European Centre for Government Transformation is paving the way for public services to adapt to continuously changing demands and fuel the disruptive ideas that better prepare the leaders of tomorrow in the digital age.

# FOREWORD

**By Paul Hofheinz**

President and Co-Founder,  
The Lisbon Council



Today, smartphones and tablets are so intuitive and powerful that children master them before they even learn how to speak. It's no exaggeration to claim that information and communication technologies have brought about a true revolution in the way we learn, communicate and live.

These technologies are not limiting themselves to the private sector-led spheres where products and services 2.0 are developed. In fact, they are increasingly used by public sector agents to interact in a new way with their constituents, be it thanks to apps that allow the citizens to pay their taxes, or via platforms that help jobseekers to find a new job, or with open data – this huge amount of public information being put in the public domain. In this world where the public sector uses and masters ICTs, transparency wins – thanks, for instance, to technologies like blockchain, which, with its distributive ledgers, keeps a record of each and every interaction or transaction that has ever happened and makes it traceable by anyone. In this world, participation increases too, with citizens feeling better informed and thus more and more empowered to take decisions and claim their rights. Finally, customisation becomes the norm: with a more accurate view of the citizens' needs and more modern tools, the administration can serve, in a more personalised and tailor-made way, virtually each and every constituent.

But for this world to become a reality on a large scale, we need innovative and visionary civil servants, who are ready to challenge the way things have been done, the procedures followed and the mentalities shaped. Young people are by nature ready to experiment, to improvise, to try new things out. That's why we asked

12 students from the political and administrative department of the College of Europe to participate in this state transformation case study programme. We wanted to know how a smart, young person imagines their dreamed government, how they would like to see their public administration function, and, if the reality check doesn't pass, what should be done to make the dream come true. I'm grateful to these bright minds for sharing their thoughts and hopes as well as for coming up with astute and interesting ideas in very technical but crucial domains, i.e. extending a business-to-government e-invoicing system to broader business-to-business transactions; identifying new services a region could provide to support SMEs and economic growth in their area; and designing strategies for the use and reuse of public data by the public and private sector.

I also want to thank the friends and colleagues at Accenture, the amazing team at the College of Europe as well as the outstanding thought leaders who served on the jury. Their commitment to future excellence in the public sector has been a source of great inspiration – for us and for the students as well.

The outcome of the exercise, the students' proposals, are refreshing. They show us that a bright future can be in the making. If we nurture creativity, emotional skills, entrepreneurial and "can-do" attitudes in the next generation, we develop a fertile breeding-ground where the word impossible can be erased and where a world of possible can see the light of day. I hope you will enjoy reading these case studies and recommendations and that they will leave you filled with enthusiasm, just as they did for me.





# CASE STUDIES

Helping Business Service Portal in Austria  
Extend E-Invoicing Services to Business-to-  
Business Transactions

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Enabling Northern Netherlands Provinces  
Alliance to Continue Its Work Towards  
Promoting Economic Growth and SMEs'  
Activities in the Region

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Stimulating Growth in the Infomediary  
Sector and Fostering the Level of Re-Use and  
Sharing of Public Information with Public  
Administrations in Spain



## CASE STUDY

# BUSINESS SERVICE PORTAL IN AUSTRIA

### Client:

Federal Ministry of Finance, Austria

### Objective

Helping Business Service Portal in Austria  
Extend E-Invoicing Services to Business-to-  
Business Transactions

### Team

Nadim Abillama (FR/LB), Aleksandar  
Latinov (BG), Christiane Seidel (DE) and  
Linda Strazdina (LT)



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The provision of user-centric e-government services is one of the most effective ways of improving public administration. The subject of our report, the promotion of a Business-to-Business (B2B) e-invoicing service, generates important cost-saving and efficiency gains potential for both economic operators as well as for the public administration itself. Therefore, the introduction of such an e-invoicing service represents an important contribution for enhancing the competitiveness of Austrian enterprises by offering them the possibility to digitize their invoicing processes.

The Austrian Federal Ministry of Finance is a frontrunner in provision of information and access to e-services for businesses. In 2010, the Ministry contributed to the establishment of a Business Service Portal (BSP) as a "one-stop-shop" for the interaction of enterprises with public authorities. An integral part of the BSP is the Business-to-Government (B2G) e-invoicing service, which has proven to be a major success since its launch in 2014. Based on this success, the Ministry now wants to take a step further and provide Austrian businesses with the opportunity of using the portal for submission of their B2B invoices. Our report presents a scenario to carry out the Ministry of Finance's objective. The scenario was constructed with a view to addressing the following challenges:

1. How to foster the usage of B2B e-invoicing by enterprises through the functionalities of the BSP?
2. How to assure the economic sustainability of the system?

To solve these challenges we carried out a benchmarking analysis on a selection of countries in order to learn from their B2B e-invoicing experience and identify transferable elements. On the basis of these findings, and taking into account the particularities of the Austrian context, we developed an optimal scenario.

Our report presents a detailed set of recommendations for the establishment of a B2B e-invoicing system in accordance with the optimal scenario outline. They encompass financial, technical, political as well as legislative elements from the design to the operation phase as well as the accompanying incentive scheme. The recommendations do not only

aim at making full use of the existing infrastructure of the Business Service Portal but also to involve business operators and, therefore, to specifically address the needs of said business community. The scenario is accompanied by a detailed implementation timeline as well as a comprehensive communication strategy. The strategy covers all aspects of the design, implementation and launch of the proposed B2B e-invoicing service. It allows for channelling feedback to and from the business community and to communicate benefits to them, which arise from the use of e-invoices. Therefore, the communication strategy is key in ensuring a widespread adoption of the service portal and guaranteeing its sustainability.

In sum, the introduction of B2P e-invoicing by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Finance would represent a major step forward in provision of high-standard public service as a driver of economic growth.





## CASE STUDY

# DRIVING GROWTH IN NORTHERN NETHERLANDS

### Client:

The Northern Netherlands Provinces Alliance: SNN (*Samenwerkingsverband Noord-Nederland*)

### Objective

Identify New Services and Opportunities to Help SNN Fulfil its Role in Promoting Economic Growth and Supporting the Activity of SMEs in Northern Netherlands.

### Team

Pietro Bertaggia (IT), Althea Cenciarelli (IT), Louis Navé (FR) and Lison Rabuel (FR)



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SNN is a grant management authority for European funds in the three provinces of Northern Netherlands. SNN wants to continue fulfilling its role supporting economic growth and SMEs in the region.

To do so, SNN provides information on EU Structural Funds to various stakeholders in the region, via its most successful tool: the online platform 123subsidie.nl. It also acts as an innovation agency and promotes the region at the national and European level through its offices in The Hague and Brussels.

Studying the challenges faced by SNN and the strategic objectives of the regions, we identified three main issues to be addressed. Firstly, to promote the evolution of SNN's role as grant management authority to cover new financial possibilities offered by EU thematic funds. Secondly, to enhance SNN's information exchange and communication tools with SMEs. And finally, the use of the Brussels' office as to develop more efficient services for SMEs.

Three methodological tools have been used to address these issues and to produce workable recommendations for SNN. An in-depth benchmarking analysis has been combined with a thorough EU fund analysis. In parallel, a series of interviews were held to contribute to the understanding of the case.



## Recommendations aiming at diversifying SNN grant management activities

In order to promote the evolution of SNN's role as grant management authority benefiting from EU financial possibilities offered by thematic funds, SNN should enhance its role as facilitator in providing EU funding opportunities for SMEs, while directly applying for Horizon 2020 funds to develop new services.

## Recommendations to improve SNN exchange capabilities and communication to SMEs

As to enhance SNN's information exchange and communication tools with SMEs, a strategy should be implemented in order to gather more and better information, and to efficiently redirect it to the relevant stakeholders. Concrete instruments such as a questionnaire and a survey should be used by SNN to become an information broker in the region.

## Recommendations to strengthen the role of the Brussels' office

SNN could coordinate the actions between the Brussels' office and the Northern Netherlands. It should aim at introducing local SMEs in the EU environment in order for them to benefit from information, network and opportunities available. This would also improve the whole organisational structure of SNN and help to design more targeted services for SMEs.

## Conclusion

The study aimed at elaborating recommendations to support SNN in pursuing its key role in Northern Netherlands. Looking forward, this is only the first step in an evolutionary process that could bring SNN to affirm as a focal point of contact in a multilevel European governance system.





## CASE STUDY

# OPEN DATA IN SPAIN

### Clients:

The Ministry of Industry, Energy and Tourism and the Ministry of Finances and Public Administration, Spain

### Objective

To Stimulate Growth in the Infomediary Sector and to Foster the Level of Re-Use and Sharing of Public Information within Public Administrations in Spain

### Team

Liam Farrow (UK), Sarah Mazari (FR), Nathalie Sadowski (FR/PL) and Cecilia Serrano-Piedecabras (ES)



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The ever-evolving digital economy creates new challenges and opportunities for states to instigate societal and economic change. The use of new technology now calls into question traditional organisation models in public administration. The concept of open data provides a future vision of how to take advantage of and improve digital services to transform Spain's society and economy.

The Spanish government have witnessed the economic opportunity that public data represents. Since the recovery of the Spanish economy from the sovereign debt crisis and is now on a path to moderate expansion, open data has rightfully been understood as an opportunity to improve economic growth and competitiveness on the digital scene.

In order to stimulate this growth, we provide recommendations to (a) increase the sharing of public data; (b) promote the reuse of public data by businesses; and (c) fund these reforms. These recommendations can be distinguished into two clear areas:

Firstly, adaptive changes in this report deal with ways to modify and amend current practices in the Spanish Government's open data strategy.

Secondly, structural changes explore innovative solutions to efficiently manage a redesigned open data strategy and would require significant investment. New business models will also be developed to ensure financial sustainability.

In this report, coherent actionable steps are offered as a first step to take Spain from its respectable position on the global open data scale, to that of a world-leader and trend-setter.







## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Photography by Bernard Foubert and Yves Fonck

## ABOUT ACCENTURE

Accenture is a leading global professional services company, providing a broad range of services and solutions in strategy, consulting, digital, technology and operations with 373,000 people serving clients in 120 countries. Combining unparalleled experience, comprehensive capabilities across all industries and business functions, and extensive research on the world's most successful companies, Accenture collaborates with clients to help them become high-performance businesses and governments. The company generated net revenues of US\$31.0 billion for the fiscal year ended 31 August 2015. Its home page is [www.accenture.com](http://www.accenture.com).



## ABOUT THE COLLEGE OF EUROPE

The College of Europe, founded in 1949 and based in Bruges (Belgium) and Natolin (Warsaw, Poland) was the first and is one of the most reputed institutes of European postgraduate studies, which prepares annually up to 400 students from over 55 countries to work and live in an international environment. The European Political and Administrative Studies programme offers a wide range of courses on the functioning and policies of the European Union. In 2015, it launched a new option devoted to "European Public Policy Analysis." Its home page is [www.coleurope.eu](http://www.coleurope.eu).



## ABOUT THE LISBON COUNCIL

The Lisbon Council is a Brussels-based think tank and policy network committed to making a positive contribution by engaging political leaders and the public-at-large in a constructive exchange about the economic and social challenges of the 21st century. Incorporated in Belgium as an independent, non-profit and non-partisan association, the Lisbon Council is among Europe's most authoritative and thoughtful voices on economic modernisation and social renewal. Its home page is [www.lisboncouncil.net](http://www.lisboncouncil.net).



[www.government-transformation.eu](http://www.government-transformation.eu)