Annex 3 - Summary of European Interoperability Framework Recommendations

The EIF Recommendations from the Final Version 1.0 document should be examined in context, where explanatory text, footnotes, and references provide a complete picture; they are summarized here in list format for convenience.

Recommendation 1: Member State administrations and EU Institutions and Agencies should use the guidance provided by this European Framework to introduce a pan-European dimension into their own interoperability frameworks and administrative infrastructures to enable interoperable pan-European eGovernment services. Adherence to the EIF should also be mentioned in the national interoperability frameworks. For IDABC projects, the guidance provided by the EIF and related documents should be considered mandatory.

Recommendation 2: The following principles, of a general nature, should be considered for any eGovernment services to be set up at a pan-European level: Accessibility; Multilingualism; Security; Privacy; Subsidiarity; Use of Open Standards; Assess the Benefits of Open Source Software; Use of Multilateral Solutions.

Recommendation 3: Setting-up eGovernment services at a pan-European level requires the consideration of interoperability issues with regard to organizational, semantic and technical viewpoints.

Recommendation 4 (organizational): The requirements for pan-European eGovernment services should be jointly determined by the participating administrations via a demand-driven approach. This should lead to the identification and prioritisation of such services to be provided at pan-European level.

Recommendation 5 (organizational): Public administrations that consider setting up eGovernment services with a pan-European dimension should analyse the related business processes and actors to be involved. They should agree on the necessary Business Interoperability Interfaces (BII) through which their business processes will be able to interoperate at pan-European level and the definition of common BII standards should be studied.

Recommendation 6 (organizational): Where the provision of a pan-European eGovernment service requires contribution from several public administrations across Europe, the respective expectations should be formalised, for example by means of service level agreements. Such agreements should at least be considered between the different business interoperability interfaces (BII) concerned (at pan-European level). In addition, a common security policy should be agreed upon.

Recommendation 7 (semantic): For each eGovernment service considered at a pan-European level, the data elements to be exchanged should be made interoperable by requiring :

- The responsible administrations to publish information on the corresponding data elements involved at national level.
- The responsible administrations to draft proposals for and agree on the data and the related data dictionaries required at pan-European level. This work should be

performed on the basis of core eGovernment data elements common to all pan-European eGovernment services. The sector-specific eGovernment data elements should then be defined and agreed upon.

- The responsible administrations to draft proposals for and agree on multilateral mapping tables between the various national and pan-European data elements.

Recommendation 8 (semantic): When considering semantic interoperability, due account should be taken of linguistic traces of the specific legal vocabularies used in delivering services. In the European Union's legal and social framework, there is a presumption of linguistic equivalence in directives and regulations that are approved as part of the legislative process. This implies that vocabulary used in European law subsequently finds itself used in the delivery of eGovernment services on the national level. This may require pan-European harmonization.

Recommendation 9 (semantic): Initiatives at pan-European level to develop common semantics on the basis of XML should be performed in a coordinated way and should consider cooperation with the existing standardisation bodies. In particular, the XML vocabularies should be developed whilst taking into account the agreed core/specific eGovernment data elements. Specific European schemas and definitions should be made available to all pan-European stakeholders through common infrastructures.

Recommendation 11 (technical): At back-office level, technical interoperability aspects should be considered for the following fields: Data integration and middleware; XML-based standards; EDI-based standards; Web Services; Distributed Application Architecture; Interconnection services; File and message transfer protocols; Message transport and security; Message store services; Mailbox access; Directory and domain name services; Network services.

Recommendation 12 (technical): Security aspects to be considered concern all layers: Security services; General security services [PKI]; Web service security; Firewalls; Protection against viruses, worms, Trojan horses and email bombs.

Recommendation 13 (technical): Member State administrations and EU Institutions and Agencies should develop and use common guidelines for the technical interoperability of pan-European networks, applications and services in the context of eGovernment. The IDA(BC) guidelines should constitute the basis for such guidelines, and be updated accordingly, also taking into account relevant results and guidelines coming from the Community research and technological development programmes and other Community programmes such as IST, eTen, and eContent.

Recommendation 14 (technical): The common guidelines should be based on recognised open standards.

Recommendation 15 (technical - multilingualism): As concerns the submission of requests via e-mail or front offices, there should be facilities for citizens and enterprises to submit requests in their own language when possible. An alternative is to submit requests only in a limited set of languages at EU level (*e.g.*, 3 languages such as English, French and German).

Recommendation 16 (technical - multilingualism): For the Pan-European services provided via portals, the top level EU portal interface should be fully multilingual, the secondlevel pages (introductory texts and the descriptions of links) should be offered in the official languages and the external links and related pages on the national websites should be available in at least one other language (for example English) in addition to the national language(s).

Recommendation 17 (technical - multilingualism): For other cases machine translation software may be offered to yield a rough translation of the contents of a website into the desired language.