

Single Digital Gateway

During the September 2018 plenary, the European Parliament is expected to vote on a legislative proposal creating the Single Digital Gateway. The aim is to establish a single digital entry point for EU citizens and businesses, giving access to a host of information, offering total and non-discriminatory use of online procedures, and facilitating the work of services providing assistance upon request.

Background

Citizens intending to live, work or study in another EU Member State, as well as businesses intending to trade across borders, are often discriminated against as they are not able to access or carry out administrative procedures online, e.g. registering a company or applying for a residence permit. A number of portals already exist, such as the [points of single contact](#), but they are fragmented and little known. Through the Single Digital Gateway (SDG), relevant information will be accessible and Member States will be obliged to make sure that their most important and most commonly used procedures are fully accessible online, not only in the language(s) of the country, but in at least one additional language. To this end, the existing [Internal Market Information System \(IMI\)](#), a software application which until now was only accessible to Member States, will be opened up to the general public and businesses.

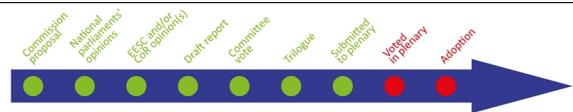
European Commission proposal

The Commission adopted its [proposal](#) for a regulation on 2 May 2017. It is part of the '[compliance package](#)' aimed at increasing the efficiency of the [single market](#).

European Parliament position

On 22 February 2018, Parliament's Committee on Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO) adopted its first reading report on the Commission's proposal. While welcoming the initiative, which Parliament has called for in the past, the committee nevertheless requested a number of modifications. These concern in particular enhanced clarity and simplicity, better data protection, and improved access for the disabled. It also asked for the creation of a logo and higher quality requirements and advocated the integration of the single point of entry into the existing '[Your Europe](#)' portal. All of these proposed changes were taken over during the trilogue negotiations. Parliament also influenced the outcome on many other points, for example the extension of the number of areas in which information would be made available through the SDG, such as property transactions. In addition, the number of procedures to be offered fully online was increased, so that it will be possible, for instance, to submit an income tax declaration via the single digital gateway. However, in exceptional cases, when public security, public health or the fight against fraud may justify such precaution, the user may be required by a Member State to appear in person before the competent authority. Much attention was devoted to quality requirements, in order to make the websites operable, understandable and robust. As information has to be made available in foreign languages, the EU budget could be used, if necessary, to finance the translation of basic information provided by the Member States. Safeguards were added around the 'once only' principle, under which evidence has only to be submitted once to authorities, a principle that would also apply cross-border. The text agreed between Parliament and Council negotiators was endorsed by the IMCO committee on 12 July 2018. It is now due to be voted on by Parliament as a whole during its September plenary session.

First-reading report: [2017/0086\(COD\)](#); Committee responsible: IMCO; Rapporteur: Marlene Mizzi (S&D, Malta). For further information see our 'EU Legislation in progress' [briefing](#).



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PE 625.159 – September 2018

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