



Government of Malta

Reference: GMICT D 0099:2010

Version: 1.0

Effective: 1 June 2010



Open Standards Directive

This document is part of the GMICT Policy Framework

<http://ictpolicies.gov.mt>

Underlined terms are defined in the **Vocabulary Standard**.

1. Purpose

Within the spirit of Public services delivery, it is Government's intention to strive in ensuring that maximum benefit is derived from all technology investments. In this regard, Open Standards have been recognised as key enablers to implement flexible, re-usable and interoperable ICT resources.

2. Scope and Applicability

This Directive covers ICT Assets that enable the delivery of Public services. It is applicable to ICT services originating from the Public Sector.

3. Directive

ICT Standards to be adopted within Government shall:

1. adopt the general principles and comply with the **minimum characteristic requirements** included in the Open Standards definition
2. be preferred where they comply with the **targeted characteristic requirements** included in the Open Standards definition
3. where they are intended to replace or serve the same or similar purpose of an already adopted standard, be assessed to identify the benefits, costs and other implications of the implementation of the new standard. Adoption of a new standard should only be considered if:
 - A substantiated business case can highlight the implications, costs and benefits associated with introducing the additional Standard and give concrete justifications for the choice.
 - Compatibility is enabled by means of translation schemes that are available (long-term) to convert from the currently adopted Standard to the proposed Standard/s and vice versa, without incurring disrupting penalties to flexibility, interoperability and re-use.
4. have recognised implementations that are available from and supported by different sources. The following considerations shall also apply:
 - If multiple implementations do not yet exist due to the innovative nature of the particular context, then the Standard can still be adopted, however it should be listed as an "Emerging Standard" and scrutinised accordingly.

Unclassified



-
- Multiple implementations should be according to the Standard's specifications. Any additional features provided by chosen implementation/s shall do so without incurring disrupting penalties to flexibility, interoperability and re-use.
5. be, without prejudice to any legal norm, applicable in the area for which a standard is sought
 6. support localisation where applicable.

Any request for an exemption from the terms of this Directive shall:

1. Explain in enough detail the technical and/or business justification, and
2. Prepare any necessary exit strategies (or other mitigation processes) as required by the specific context.



4. Deviations from GMICT Policy

Instances where it may not be technically possible or cost-effective to comply with a particular GMICT Policy requirement shall be reported to Government's ICT Compliance function. This is done in order to evaluate the security, architectural, operational and other risks anticipated to result from the deviation, to identify additional compensating controls required to mitigate these risks and to formally acknowledge any residual risk and assign appropriate responsibility. In such instances, a request for exemption shall be forwarded to the ICT Compliance function for assessment in line with the Exemptions and Waivers Policy and Directive (GMICT P 0048). This also applies to deviations from best practices adopted by the Agent on behalf of Government.

Breaches of GMICT Policy shall be brought to the attention of ICT Compliance function in order to determine appropriate corrective action and potential internal control improvements.

5. References

Name	Reference	Location
Open Standards Policy	GMICT P 0099	http://ictpolicies.gov.mt
Compliance Policy and Directive	GMICT P 0018	http://ictpolicies.gov.mt
Exemptions and Waivers Policy and Directive	GMICT P 0048	http://ictpolicies.gov.mt
Exemptions and Waivers Procedure	GMICT R 0048	http://ictpolicies.gov.mt

6. Modification History

Version	Effective Date
1.0	1 June 2010

7. Issuing Authority

This document has been issued with the authority of the **Malta Information Technology Agency**.

8. Contact Information

Government ICT Policies, Directives, Standards and associated publications can be found at <http://ictpolicies.gov.mt>.

Any suggestions, queries or requests for clarification regarding Government ICT Policies, Directives and Standards may be forwarded to ictpolicies@gov.mt.