

New TAP portal to facilitate public participation in legislative process

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A Single Portal for Development and Harmonisation of Draft Legal Acts ([TAP portal](#)) became operational on 9 September this year. The TAP portal is an electronic state information system of documents to be considered by the Government and data circulation. This means that, in future, the legal acts, which have been drafted by institutions and will be examined by the Government, will “travel” within an electronically uniform system. The TAP portal will also provide the public with more opportunities to follow all stages of legislative drafting. The introduction of the TAP portal is a step towards e-Government in Latvia.

The development and circulation of legal acts and development planning documents in a single place, avoiding an intense flow of documents in several channels, corrections and comments in many individual documents – the creation of the TAP portal marks a new approach by conceptually abandoning the document as a tool for organizing the processes and information in the public administration, and using the information instead. This will contribute to the development of more efficient, transparent and higher-quality legal acts of the public administration, their harmonisation, approval and control in a single system. The TAP portal will significantly improve the environment for public participation and strengthen the principles of open governance. The State Chancellery's first e-service “Public Participation in the Development of Draft Legal Acts” has also been established, says Signe Rudzīte, project manager of the TAP portal.

One of the [principal functions of the State Chancellery](#) is to provide the work of the Cabinet of Ministers by organising Cabinet sittings, to ensure the drafting of documents in line with procedures laid down in regulatory acts, as well as to manage the record keeping of the Cabinet of Ministers. The implementation of the TAP portal project will help to carry out these functions more effectively; this is also one of the tasks set forth in the Action Plan of the Government Headed by Prime Minister Krišjānis Kariņš.

The TAP portal will serve as an extensive information database on the government's future and adopted decisions where all draft legal acts, their content, stakeholders' and public opinion on the specific draft legal act and information on the progress of the draft legal act will be available to everyone in a single place.

Currently, the citizens who wish to participate in the development of draft legal acts have to visit the website of a line ministry and find a discussion document or statement on the opportunity for public participation. This means that a citizen has to be familiar with the competence of the ministries and check regularly whether such statements have been published on their websites. A list of current public participation statements in an aggregated form is available on the website of the State Chancellery; however, it includes only the titles of the draft legal acts. Detailed information regarding the content still has to be searched on the websites of line ministries. The TAP portal will contribute to the improvement of this area since draft legal acts of all sectors, passed on to public participation, will be stored in a single place, together with all the explanatory information and the possibility of involving in the development of the draft legal acts on the TAP portal.

The TAP portal enables anyone who is interested to find information related to the development of a draft legal act – annotation, annexes, opinions, statements, etc. with the exception of restricted access information; whereas, by logging in the TAP portal using Latvija.lv, it is also possible to participate in the development of a draft legal act and to express one's opinion.

“By modernising the process of legislative drafting, the State Chancellery is taking a significant step towards a fully electronic development and substantial improvement of transparency and openness of the process of development of draft legal acts. The TAP portal will address a number of current challenges – dispersed and heterogeneous process of development, harmonisation and approval of draft legal acts, large number of non-automated activities, fragmented control of tasks and impeded public participation,” explains Director of the State Chancellery Jānis Citskovskis.

The TAP portal will also enable the originating authorities of draft legal acts to work more easily, effectively and conveniently. This will help to carry out the daily tasks more quickly by significantly reducing the working hours spent on routine tasks (copying, outlining, forwarding of information, etc.), and devoting more time to the creation and improvement of the content. The portal's working environment includes templates and assistance tools which synchronise the input of information in different information environments – in the draft legal act, annotation, statement and opinion.

“The information will be created, stored, processed and distributed electronically and all data will be stored in a structured manner in the new TAP portal and subsequently centrally transferred from the TAP portal for storage in the State Archives. All information regarding the life-cycle of a draft legal act, from developing an idea, an assignment, to public involvement, inter-institutional harmonization and decision-making at the Cabinet of Ministers and the *Saeima* or publishing in the “Latvijas Vēstnesis” and control over its implementation will be available in a single place rather than in fragmented and different systems or sites,” says Viktors Sidorenkovs, Deputy Head of the Legal Department of the State Chancellery.

The TAP portal that has been developed by upgrading the 'e-portfolio' system used by the public administration for more than 19 years will improve the process of organising the sittings of the Cabinet of Ministers and decision-making. The portal will allow members of the Cabinet of Ministers and other participants of the sittings to familiarise themselves with the history of preparing the matters to be discussed at the sitting, to record the individual vote, if any, as well as to add individual opinions on the matter under consideration.

Detailed information on the TAP portal project is available on the [website of the State Chancellery](#).

The Single Portal for Development and Harmonization of Draft Legal Acts (TAP portal) that is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) has been developed by the State Chancellery in close cooperation with representatives of all ministries.

[Director of State Chancellery](#) >
[Communication Department](#)

Santa
Jirgensone

Consultant

 [+371 67082922](tel:+37167082922)



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