“The State as a Platform” and France Connect

or,

a new approach to the design of digital public services

https://references.modernisation.gouv.fr/appel-public-%C3%A0-commentaires-epfc

Service Architecture & Urbanisation de la DISIC
Synthèse courte du 23 avril 2015 (V4.22 projet)
State as a Platform and France Connect

1. A platform strategy
2. Some key architectural principles
3. An ecosystem of federated APIs
4. Summary
State as a Platform and France Connect

1. A platform strategy
A platform strategy

Key objectives

1. Design public services with a central focus on the needs and circumstances of end users.

2. Open up data, but give end users control over how personal information is exchanged.

3. Foster the growth of a self-regulated ecosystem of digital public services open to actors from the public, non-profit and private sectors.

4. Provide a framework of guidelines to choose among highly diverse technical and architectural options.

5. Lead the charge for a paradigm shift in project management practice.

6. Align with a number of similar initiatives in other countries and internationally.
A platform strategy

Key objectives (1)

- Design public services with a central focus on the needs and circumstances of end users, with their active participation and across many channels (i.e. web, mobile, counter services, voice calls...), providing a consistent “public face” for government agencies and masking their internal complexity.

This allows for the rapid deployment of legislative measures for simplification, such as « Dîtes-le-nous-une-fois » (« Tell Us Once ») or « Déclaration Sociale Nominative » (single salary expense declaration).
A platform strategy

Key objectives (2)

Open up data for exchange between agencies, but give end users control over how information of a confidential nature is exchanged, such as personal data.

- … which implies a reliable mechanism for user identification,
- … backed where necessary by appropriate authentication,
- … and allowing the circulation of data beyond the public sphere, under the control of end users so as to forestall abuses.

Create public trust through robust and secure systems
A platform strategy

Key objectives (3)

- Foster the growth of a self-regulated ecosystem of digital public services open to actors from the public, non-profit and private sectors:
  - by opening up for collaboration throughout the public sphere, for enhancing the public services offered by:
    - central administrations,
    - agencies, particularly social services,
    - local and regional authorities,
  - and open to:
    - private industry,
    - business innovators,
    - non-profit operators,
  - giving a central role to end users on a par with public servants.

For a more collaborative state ...
A platform strategy

Key objectives (4)

- Provide a framework of guidelines to choose among highly diverse technical and architectural options, converging quickly on shared invariants enjoying a high degree of legitimacy:
  - a repository of interoperability guidelines,
  - a common architectural framework,
  - proven Web standards,
  - a shared co-creation platform open to all actors,

... while acknowledging for a period of transition the choices embodied in legacy systems, and defining a migration path.
A platform strategy

Key objectives (5)

- Lead the charge for a paradigm shift in project management practice, and a transformation in the State’s information systems:

  - Start with the “pain points” most direly felt by end users,

  - Invest gradually in accordance with the priorities set for modernizing and enhancing public policy (simplification, streamlining, quality of service, reducing redundancy and waste in public expense, etc.)

  - Champion development initiatives aligned with agile approaches,

  - Promote “share and reuse” policies,

  - Turn failure into an option rather than a stigma when trialling services,

  - Accept that investment priorities require more frequent and regular review.

For a more Agile government …
A platform strategy

Key objectives (6)

- Align with a number of similar initiatives in other countries and internationally:
  - eIDAS* (EU regulation) : Electronic Identification and Signature
  - PSI* : Public Sector Information,
  - ISA* : Interoperability Solutions for European Public Administrations,
  - Others relating with opening up and sharing public data, trust and confidence in public electronic transactions.

... collaborating closely with other agencies with overlapping responsibilities, such as ANSSI (National Agency for Information Systems Security)

Respecting security contraints for information systems and the needs for protection of individuals, but with a mandate to redraw the lines

* cf. annexes pour détail
State as a Platform and France Connect

2. Some key architectural principles
   - 2.1. Major data flows
Some key architectural principles

Major data flows:
Opening up data...

- Having all relevant data at hand (or being able to query for them) brings about radical change in the design of our systems, provided a clear distinction between:

  - data that constitutes a public good, managed by a public body obligated or willing to share it with all actors: statistical data bases, directories and repositories, etc., and
  - data of a “confidential” or “sensitive” nature pertaining to a physical or legal person, which may be freely exchanged between agencies with a legitimate interest in such data, so long as the end user may control these exchanges, or is at the least informed that they take place.

« Data is the new code », « code is the law »*

and ...

... « architecture is politics »

* Lawrence Lessig – janvier 2000 – Harvard Magazine
Some key architectural principles

Major data flows:
Automated, paperless workflows

End users: persons acting on their own behalf as private individuals, or on behalf of other private individuals, or on behalf of legal entities
State as a Platform and France Connect

2. Some key architectural principles

- 2.2. Identification and Authentication – France Connect
Some key architectural principles
France Connect
Identification and authentication of end users (1/2)

We aim to make life simpler for end users, in particular allowing all to identify and authenticate, when necessary*, through a federated identity system to which all actors in the State as Platform are parties: France Connect. In this way, anyone can pick whichever digital identity is most convenient for them, to gain access to all digital public services.

In order to guarantee the security of digital public services, to ensure services process and exchange “the right data about the right person”, and to ensure confidentiality while keeping the end user in control to a significant degree… … end users must be able to provide unambiguous forms of identification, and authenticate their identity to the degree warranted by the service being provided or data being accessed. These will be aligned with EU regulations and specifically eIDAS’ Levels of Assurance (low, substantial, high).

* many formalities are also available anonymously, without requiring identification.
Some key architectural principles
France Connect
Target populations

- Three distinct variations on France Connect are envisioned, for each of:
  - Private individuals,
  - Representatives of legal entities (firms, non-profits, sole proprietorships, Les représentants de personnes morales (entreprises, associations, indépendants, members of regulated professions, …),
  - Agents of the three branches of civil service, elected officials (TBC).

France Connect provides a mechanism for identification and authentication, but is not concerned with and does not manage roles and permissions; these are under the purview of Service Providers.
Some key architectural principles
France Connect
Federated identity management

France Connect allows end users to provide authenticated identification through whichever I&A provider they prefer.
Some key architectural principles
France Connect
Federated identity management (SSO)

Authentication

Identity and authentication Provider

End user

Login page of service provider

eidas level of insurance requested by service provider

FranceConnect

France Connect

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Some key architectural principles

France Connect

Trusted Third Party - Privacy by Design

End user

Inform

Grand consent

France Connect

Workflow at service provider

Data provider

eldas level of insurance requested by Data provider

http://guichet-parisien.demo.dev-franceconnect.fr/
http://guichet-lyonnais.demo.dev-franceconnect.fr/
http://doc.integ01.dev-franceconnect.fr/
http://franceconnect.jamespot.pro/

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State as a Platform and France Connect

3. An ecosystem of federated APIs
An ecosystem of federated APIs

The State as Platform is intended as an « API First Strategy »!
State as a Platform and France Connect

6. Summary
With some key initiatives now underway…

The “State as a Platform” strategy will succeed insofar as its general principles are translated into each of the major domains of public responsibility: education, health, social protection, employment, finances and accounting, local authorities, etc.

It is therefore the responsibility of each of us to translate the concepts and principles into concrete action to bring about « Public services as a platform »
The State as a Platform and France Connect provide a consistent architectural framework supporting the design of new practices aligned with strategies for modernising and simplifying public policies.