Republic of Latvia

Cabinet

Regulation No. 611

Adopted 25 September 2018

**Procedures for Publishing Information on the Internet by Institutions**

*Issued pursuant to*

*Section 10, Paragraph six of the Freedom of Information Law*

**I. General Provisions**

1. The Regulation prescribes the procedures by which institutions shall publish information on the Internet.

2. The requirements referred to in Chapter IV of this Regulation, insofar as they do not impose a disproportionate burden, shall apply to institutions of direct administration and local governments, and authorities, associations, and foundations subordinate to the institutions of direct administration and local governments which are implementing the functions and tasks of State administration, as well as to such legal persons governed by private law who conform to all of the following criteria:

2.1. they have been established or are operating to meet the needs of the public which are not of commercial or industrial nature;

2.2. they are subordinate to or under the decisive influence of a public person or authority thereof, or under the decisive influence of a legal person governed by private law meeting these criteria (this influence manifests as the majority of voting rights upon electing the members of the supervisory or executive authority or upon appointment of the management), or more than 50 per cent of financing for activities of such legal person governed by private law comes from the public person, authority thereof, or another legal person governed by private law meeting these criteria.

**II. General Requirements for Publishing Information on the Official Website and Mobile Application of the Institution**

3. The institution shall ensure that the information within the competence thereof is available on the official website of the institution or on the official website and mobile application, if any has been developed, of the supervisory institution, except for the information that is to be classified as restricted access information or official secret, or is not to be published in accordance with the special laws and regulations.

4. The head of the institution shall be responsible for publishing information within the competence of the institution on the official website and mobile application of the institution, for its content and updating.

5. The institution shall ensure the accessibility of the official website both on stationary devices and mobile devices, ensuring the adaptation of the website to the device used as much as possible.

6. The institution shall create information on the official website and mobile application so that it is easy to understand and perceive for the user in terms of the content, structure, and visual appearance.

7. If the law or regulation prescribes a general obligation for the institutions to publish a respective information on the official websites, the law or regulation shall also prescribe a common structure and form for the information to be published. The requirements referred to in the laws and regulations in force shall be ensured if substantial amendments are made to the law or regulation.

8. If the institution publishes forms on the official website or mobile application, they shall be created at least in the form of files ensuring the possibility to download the form from the website, fill it in, and save without restrictions. The institution shall ensure instructions on how to fill in the form.

9. The institution shall ensure that the user has the possibility to ask a question, submit a proposal, complaint or give feedback on the official website or mobile application.

10. When developing the official website, the institution shall use the State shared solutions to the extent possible.

11. When developing the design of the official website, the requirements of the laws and regulations governing the common visual identity of the State administration institutions and the State symbols and their use shall be observed.

12. If the institution uses the machine translation solution to translate the content of the official website or mobile application in foreign languages, a visible indication shall be provided in the translated part of the text that a machine translation solution has been used.

13. The institution shall create the official website and mobile application by conforming to a user-oriented approach and the principle of iterative development in accordance with the Latvian national standard LVS EN ISO 9241-210:2016, Ergonomics of human-system interaction – Part 210: Human-centred design for interactive systems.

14. The official website and mobile application of the institution shall be available:

14.1. during working days from 8:30 to 17:00 – 95 % a month;

14.2. during working days from 17:00 to 8:30, on weekends and public holidays – 90 % a month.

15. The institution shall publish a notification on the official website or mobile application of the interruptions in the operation of the website and mobile application:

15.1. regarding a planned interruption in operation – at least two working days prior to the planned interruption;

15.2. regarding an unplanned interruption in operation – immediately, according to technical possibilities.

16. For easy browsing of the official website, the institution shall create a sitemap, creating it in a machine readable form to the extent possible.

17. Information technology safety requirements shall be ensured for a website according to the procedures laid down in laws and regulations.

**III. Structure and Content of the Official Website of the Institution**

18. The institution shall develop the official website according to the needs of user groups.

19. The official website shall have at least the following sections:

19.1. the section “About us” shall include:

19.1.1. a description of the institution and information on the laws and regulations governing the operation of the institution;

19.1.2. a schematic description of the structure of the institution. The institution shall indicate the institutions subordinate thereto and the direct links to their websites, if such have been developed;

19.1.3. annual public reports of the institution;

19.2. the section “Contacts” shall include:

19.2.1. contact information of the institution and the official details of the institution (including electronic mail address, contact telephone) necessary for clients of the institution and other stakeholders;

19.2.2. at least the list of those officials and employees of the institution who perform the basic functions of the institution. The given name, surname, official electronic mail address or other electronic mail address, direct telephone number or other telephone number of the official shall be indicated, ensuring communication options. The abovementioned requirements shall not be applied to State security institutions, as well as officials of institutions who perform operational activities measures and special investigative actions;

19.2.3. information on the location of the institution, ways to get there, ensured access to the institution for persons with special needs, including an image of the entrance of the building, as well as the representation of the location of the institution in a map, according to the technical possibilities of a website;

19.3. the section “News” shall include information on the news of institution which are presented in a user-friendly form;

19.4. the section “Field of Operation” shall include information:

19.4.1. on lines of action of the sector, the functions, operation, and the most significant tasks of the institution, as well as on related policy planning documents and management documents of authorities, or references to these documents;

19.4.2. on the implementation of sectoral strategic documents and action plans within the competence of the institution;

19.4.3. on the international cooperation of the institution;

19.4.4. on public consultations regarding the European Union law and public participation, as well as on the preparation of draft European Union laws and public participation;

19.4.5. on the participation of Latvia in international organisations and the laws and regulations governing such cooperation;

19.5. the section “Services” shall include information on the Public administration services and other services provided by the institution, indicating links to the descriptions of the State administration services or by creating the descriptions of the State administration services at least to the extent laid down in the legal framework on the procedures for accounting, quality control, and provision of State administration services;

19.6. the section “Publications” shall include publications (for example, research, statistical information, information material) prepared by the institution or references to such publications;

19.7. the section “Public Participation” shall include information:

19.7.1. on draft policy planning documents and draft legal acts undergoing the development and coordination process;

19.7.2. on the cooperation of the institution with non-governmental organisations (information on cooperation partners, short description of cooperation principles, contact persons);

19.7.3. on the advisory institutions established within the fields of responsibility of the institution (for example, working groups, advisory councils, councils supervising projects, advisory groups for projects);

19.8. the section “Budget” shall include information:

19.8.1. in accordance with the procedures and within the time periods laid down in the law On Budget and Financial Management;

19.8.2. on the remuneration disbursed to the officials end employees of the institution in accordance with the procedures laid down in the Law on Remuneration of Officials and Employees of State and Local Government Authorities;

19.9. the section “Property” shall include information:

19.9.1. on the immovable property rented by the institution, as well as on immovable property that is intended to be rented in accordance with the procedures laid down in laws and regulations;

19.9.2. on the immovable property leased by the institution, as well as on immovable property that is intended to be leased in accordance with the procedures laid down in laws and regulations;

19.9.3. on the movable property of the State which is not necessary to ensure the operation of the institution in accordance with the procedures for alienating the property of a public person stipulated by the Cabinet;

19.10. the section “Easy to Read” shall include a brief description of the institution and other information necessary for the clients of the institutions in an easy-to-read language.

20. On the official website the institution:

20.1. may include sections and information that is not referred to in Paragraph 19 of this Regulation, according to the field of operation and other laws and regulations regarding the publishing of information;

20.2. may exclude those sections and that information referred to in Paragraph 19 of this Regulation which do not apply to the institution.

**IV. Accessibility Requirements of a Website and Mobile Application on All Websites Belonging to the Institution**

21. The institution shall ensure accessibility of a website in accordance with the requirements of Chapters 9, 10, and 11 of the Latvian national standard EN 301549:2017, Accessibility requirements suitable for public procurement of ICT products and services in Europe.

22. In accordance with the methodology stipulated by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, the institution shall assess the conformity of websites with the standard referred to in Paragraph 21 of this Regulation.

23. Accessibility requirements need not be applied:

23.1. to the content of the following websites and mobile applications:

23.1.1. to audio or audiovisual works of national electronic mass media during a live transmission;

23.1.2. to online map and cartography services, provided that information is provided in accessible digital format in maps intended for navigation;

23.1.3. reproductions of objects of national heritage collections of restricted access, provided that the accessibility requirements are not compatible with the preservation of the relevant object or authenticity of reproduction, or automated and cost effective solutions for easily obtaining text from manuscripts or other objects of heritage collections and transforming in a content that conforms to the accessibility requirements are not available;

23.2. by the following institutions:

23.2.1. national electronic mass media and their subsidiaries that provide public broadcasting services of the State;

23.2.2. non-governmental organisations that irregularly provide specific Public administration services for specific groups in society, excluding the target group of persons with disability.

24. The institution shall assess the burden caused thereto by the conformity with the requirements referred to in Paragraph 21 of this Regulation on all the websites under its authority and it may ensure partial conformity with the abovementioned requirements, justifying the disproportionality thereof. The following shall be taken into account during the assessment:

24.1. the significance of the tasks performed by or the Public administration services and other services, if any, provided by the institution for large groups of society;

24.2. the financial and human resources of the institution;

24.3. the proportionality of the benefit of target groups and the amount of costs of the institution in order to ensure the conformity of the websites and mobile applications held by the institution with the requirements referred to in Paragraph 21 of this Regulation.

25. If the institution implements the requirements referred to in Paragraph 21 of this Regulation partially, it shall ensure alternative accessibility options to the content of its websites and mobile applications.

26. Institutions of direct administration and local governments shall ensure that the authorities, associations, and foundations subordinate thereto which are implementing the functions and tasks of State administration, as well as legal persons governed by private law which are implementing the functions and tasks of State administration perform the assessment referred to in Paragraph 24 of this Regulation.

27. Upon ensuring the supervision of the implementation of information accessibility requirements, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development shall:

27.1. according to the methodology stipulated by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, carry out an in-depth random assessment of the conformity of websites with the standard referred to in Paragraph 21 of this Regulation;

27.2. establish an advisory council that examines the submissions of users of websites on failure to ensure the accessibility requirements.

**V. Publishing Open Data on the Internet**

28. The institution shall publish the open data at the disposal thereof in a machine readable form together with metadata or only the metadata of the data set on the Open Data Portal of Latvia (https://data.gov.lv) (hereinafter – the Open Data Portal).

29. The Open Data Portal is a State information system whose manager is the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development (hereinafter – the manager) and the keeper is the State Regional Development Agency.

30. The Open Data Portal shall ensure the receipt of data and access to the data available on the Open Data Portal:

30.1. using a web browser;

30.2. performing manual downloading of data sets;

30.3. using a software interface.

31. The manager shall develop guidelines for publishing data on the portal. The guidelines shall determine:

31.1. the criteria for describing data sets;

31.2. the recommendations for preparing the format of open data.

32. The metadata of open data and the data may be published on the Open Data Portal in the following ways:

32.1. by uploading the data to the Open Data Portal;

32.2. by receiving data automatically, using a software interface;

32.3. by indicating the direct link to the data or data publishing service located on external websites;

32.4. by automated collection of metadata from other catalogues where metadata corresponding to the standard of the Open Data Portal are published.

33. The institution shall publish the open geospatial data on the State Unified Geospatial Information Portal (https://geolatvija.lv).

34. Upon publishing the data on the Open Data Portal, the institution shall conform to the conditions of use of the abovementioned portal.

35. The provisions for the use of the Open Data Portal shall be available in the section of the portal “About us”. The provisions shall determine::

35.1. the conditions of access to the Open Data Portal;

35.2. the operating principles of the catalogue of the Open Data Portal;

35.3. the obligations of the publishers of the Open Data Portal.

36. Upon updating the provisions for the use of the Open Data Portal in conformity with the changes in the functionality of the operation of the Open Data Portal, the manager shall, not later than three months prior to such changes, inform all the data publishers of the planned changes in the provisions for the use of the Open Data Portal.

37. The data sets published on the Open Data Portal shall be structured at least in the following data categories:

37.1. foreign affairs;

37.2. economy and entrepreneurship;

37.3. energy;

37.4. general population and society;

37.5. education and sport;

37.6. culture;

37.7. regions and local governments;

37.8. justice, home affairs, and safety;

37.9. transport;

37.10. State administration;

37.11. health;

37.12. environment;

37.13. agriculture, food, and forestry;

37.14. science and technology.

38. The Open Data Portal shall collect non-personalised statistics on the activities of users in the portal.

39. The manager may use the technical solutions of third parties for the collection of the statistics of the Open Data Portal and for obtaining and analysis of the feedback of end users.

40. If a non-conformity with the definition of the open data or other requirements of laws and regulations has been established in the data published on the Open Data Portal, the manager may use the possibility (without deleting data) to make the relevant data unavailable on the public environment of the portal, concurrently sending information on the detected problem to the e-mail for communication indicated in the metadata.

41. The institution has an obligation, according to the classification of the frequency of data updates indicated by the institution, to update the data published on the Open Data Portal and to ensure their conformity with the metadata.

**VI. Domain Names and Electronic Mail Addresses**

42. The institution of direct administration shall use unified procedures for creating domain names and names of electronic mail addresses for the websites and mobile applications held thereby, using the second-level domain name of the websites – “gov.lv”. The use of the existing domain names is permissible if the rerouting to the domains specified in the unified procedures is ensured.

43. The institution shall use the following domain name and the electronic mail address for the official website, except for the website referred to in Paragraphs 44 and 45 of this Regulation:

43.1. www.institution.gov.lv (www.unit.institution.gov.lv, if any has been created);

43.2. name.surname@institution.gov.lv

(name.surname@unit.institution.gov.lv, if any has been created);

43.3. mail@institution.gov.lv – to be used as the central electronic mail address of the institution;

43.4. designation@institution.gov.lv – to be used for ensuring separate functions or operations of the institution.

44. Structural units of the National Armed Forces shall use the following domain names and electronic mail address:

44.1. www.mil.lv;

44.2. www.mrcc.lv;

44.3. www.unit.mil.lv;

44.4. name.surname@mil.lv;

44.5. info@mrcc.lv.

45. The following domain name and electronic mail address shall be used for the official website of a local government:

45.1. www.localgovernment.lv;

45.2. name.surname@localgovernment.lv;

45.3. mail@localgovernment.lv – to be used as the central electronic mail address of the local government;

45.4. designation@localgovernment.lv – to be used for carrying out separate functions or operations of the local government.

46. Letters with diacritical marks shall not be used in a domain name and electronic mail addresses.

47. The use of the second-level domain name of the websites “gov.lv” shall be registered and the use thereof shall be supervised by *valsts akciju sabiedrība “Latvijas Valsts radio un televīzijas centrs”* [State joint stock company Latvia State Radio and Television Centre].

**VII. Closing Provisions**

48. Cabinet Regulation No. 171 of 6 March 2007, Procedures by which Institutions Place Information on the Internet (*Latvijas Vēstnesis*, 2007, No. 41; 2008, No. 122; 2010, No. 69, 99; 2011, No. 122; 2013, No. 95, No. 214; 2017, No. 571), is repealed.

49. The requirements referred to in Paragraph 21 of this Regulation:

49.1. shall be applied to extranets and intranets to be newly created and used by a closed group of people rather than the society at large as of 23 September 2019. Accessibility requirements shall be ensured in existing extranets and intranets during substantial process of rebuilding thereof;

49.2. shall be applied to the content of websites and mobile applications that qualify as an archive, namely it contains only such content that is not required for active administrative proceedings and that is not being updated or edited, as of 23 September 2019;

49.3. shall be applied to the websites to be developed anew as of 23 September 2019;

49.4. shall be applied to the existing websites as of 23 September 2020;

49.5. shall be applied to the audio or audiovisual works of electronic mass media that are previously recorded and connected to a specified transmission time as of 23 September 2020;

49.6. shall be applied to mobile applications as of 23 June 2021.

50. Paragraph 24 of this Regulation shall come into force on 30 June 2019.

51. Paragraph 22 of this Regulation shall come into force on 1 January 2020.

52. Paragraphs 5, 11, 18, 19, and 20 of this Regulation shall be applied to the websites of the institutions which are not intended to be added to the unified platform of the websites of State and local governments by the institution as of 31 December 2020.

53. Paragraphs 5, 11, 18, 19, and 20 of this Regulation shall be applied to the websites of the institutions which are intended to be added to the unified platform of the websites of State and local governments by the institution as of 31 December 2022.

**Informative Reference to a Directive of the European Union**

The Regulation contains legal norms arising from Directive (EU) 2016/2102 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 October 2016 on the accessibility of the websites and mobile applications of public sector bodies.

Prime Minister Māris Kučinskis

Minister for Environmental Protection and Regional Development Kaspars Gerhards