

e-Invoicing: Directive 2014/55/EU

Q2 2018

Problem Addressed

The proliferation of e-Invoicing standards and syntaxes coexisting in the Member States led to increased complexity in term of cross-border interoperability. Additionally, the take-up of electronic invoices in public administrations is still rather low despite the many benefits offered (savings, simplification, etc.). However, e-Invoicing represents a clear example of how digital innovation can provide efficiencies and cost-cutting measures of tangible benefit to public administrations, citizens and businesses throughout Europe. Since 2001, European legislation has given electronic invoices legal equivalence with their paper counterparts.

Objective

Directive 2014/55/EU seeks to promote the uptake of electronic invoicing in public procurement, thereby allowing Member States, contracting authorities, contracting entities, and economic operators to generate significant benefits in terms of savings, environmental impact, and reduction of administrative burdens.

Solution

The Directive calls for the definition of a common European standard at semantic level and additional standardisation deliverables which will enhance interoperability at the syntax level.

Additionally, it will become mandatory for all contracting authorities and contracting entities to receive and process e-Invoices complying with the European standard, starting in November 2018.

The definition of the e-Invoicing European standard will be carried out by CEN , a European Standardisation Organisation.

Timing

2017 Q1 European standard is published by CEN

2017 Q2 European standard is published in the Official Journal of the European Union

2018 Q2 (allowing 12 months) for implementation in Public Authorities at national level

2019 Q3 (allowing 18 months) for implantation at local level

Use case example

There are two broad use cases relating to Directive 2014/55/EU concerning public administrations (who are legally bound by the directive) and solution providers (affected by the directive).

- Public administrations have a legal obligation to accept electronic invoices in the new European standard by November 2018, as defined in the European e-Invoicing Directive.
- Solution providers will benefit from adapting their capabilities in line with the need of public administrations to comply with the European e-Invoicing Directive.