



## Press Release

Luxembourg, 12 October 2017

### E-government brings risks as well as benefits, warn auditors

EU auditors meeting in Luxembourg have warned that the trend towards e-government (electronic government), which is based on information technology and information management platforms to provide public services, may undermine governance accountability unless action is taken.

*“Greater moves towards e-government should bring lawmakers and citizens closer together, but they also carry accountability risks which differ from those with which auditors are familiar. Public agencies as we know them may disappear, or could be gradually augmented with machine based, automated decision making, so that the question of who is responsible becomes very difficult to answer,” said Alar Karis, the Auditor General of Estonia. “In this environment, we will need IT auditors or hybrid auditors to perform relevant and high-impact audits”.*

Mr Karis was speaking in Luxembourg at a high-level international conference of auditors marking the 40th anniversary of the European Court of Auditors.

“Citizens’ trust in public finances can only be strengthened if they see that every euro spent at EU level brings clear added value. We, as supreme audit institutions, can only do our part to ensure this if we are prepared to deal with new developments, notably in IT,” added Klaus-Heiner Lehne, the President of the European Court of Auditors.

#### Notes to Editors

The European Court of Auditors was established by the Treaty of Brussels of 22 July 1975 and started work on 18 October 1977. Its Members held their first meeting on 25 October of the same year.

The Contact Committee of the Heads of Supreme Audit Institutions (SAIs) of the European Union and the European Court of Auditors meets annually to discuss matters of common interest focused around EU policy and financial management issues, and to agree, as needed, on joint activities when these can achieve greater impact.

This year’s Contact Committee meeting is being hosted by the European Court of Auditors in Luxembourg on 12-13 October 2017. The main focus of discussion is whether SAIs can contribute to restoring the trust of EU citizens. The meeting includes a review of the current state of the EU and the reasons for which citizens seem to be losing trust, followed by sessions on the role of SAIs in the EU, innovative audit products and forms of communication with stakeholders.

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