

Table of Contents

Information (Informace)

Introduction.....	7
Programme Schema	8
Congress Centre Aldis	10
Administration of ISSS 2002.....	13

Programme (Program)

ISSS 2002 Conference Programme	15
Annotations.....	20

Documents (Dokumenty)

National Studies	24
New Challenges for Local Governments.....	25
<i>Boris Tonhauser, Slovakia</i>	
Union of Towns and Communities of the Czech Republic, Committee for Municipal Information Systems	27
<i>Jaroslav Svoboda</i>	
Hungarian National Association of Local Authorities	37
<i>Zoltán Farkas</i>	
Association of Polish Cities.....	43
<i>Marek Bigosiński</i>	
Association of Towns and Communities of Slovakia.....	49
<i>Boris Tonhauser</i>	
Declaration of EAP Project	58
<i>Heikki Lunnas</i>	
EU Networks	60
Representative Organisation of European local and regional authorities (CEMR)	60
<i>Walter Wenzel, Project Coordinator, ELANET/CEMR</i>	
ELANET	66
Telecities.....	69
European Regions & the Information Society.....	71
A presentation of Urban Data Management Society	74
<i>Massimo Rumor, Urban Data Management Society</i>	
Miscellaneous	77
ISSS in the Month of Internet.....	77
<i>Irina Zálišová, BMI Association</i>	
Establishment of Municipal Web Sites	79
<i>Jan Savický, Golden Crest Association</i>	

Lecture Notes (Přednášky)

eGovernment in Austrian Cities	82
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<i>Eberhard Binder, Vienna City Administration</i>	
Public Administration and e-Commerce in Europe (PACE)	85
<i>Anna Lisa Boni, Manager of TeleCities</i>	
EmunIS Project–Electronic Municipal Information Services	87
<i>Bojil Dobrev, Mechthild Stoewer, Lambros Makris, Eleonora Getsova</i>	
Project PANISCO	90
<i>Krzysztof Glomb, Cities on Internet Association, Poland</i>	
TeleCities—a Stepping Stone towards eEurope.....	91
<i>Ingrid Götzl, TeleCities President, City of Vienna</i>	
eEurope+ Initiative and its implementation under the conditions of the Czech Republic	95
<i>Jiří Krump, representativ of the Czech Republic of JHLC, Chairman of the Office for Public Information Systems</i>	
PRELUDE Project	97
<i>Javier Ossandon, Project Coordinator, ELANET/CEMR</i>	
Infoville. A large-scale implementation of a Smart Community model.....	99
<i>Manuel Muro Perez, Marketing Director, Oracle Iberria</i>	
vCRM the Vienna Citizens Request Management, the platform for citizens participationship	103
<i>Rainer Riedel, Member of staff, VCA</i>	
e-MINDER (Electronic Commerce Leveraging Network for Developing European Regions)	108
<i>Sara Riso, Project Manager, ELANET/CEMR</i>	
EUSlanD (European System for Local Authorities' Networking Domains).....	110
<i>Sara Riso, Project Manager, ELANET/CEMR</i>	
eGovernment in the 6 th Framework RTD Programme	113
<i>Gérald Santucci, Head of Unit, European Commission</i>	
The implementation of e-Government City of Tallinn.....	118
<i>Toomas Sepp, Tallinn City Secretary, Tallinn City Office</i>	
Networking of Public Administrations—the IDA Mission	121
<i>Bernhard Snittger, European Commission</i>	
Prague – IT and e-government in municipal administration	123
<i>Jaroslav Šolc, Head of Department for Concepts and Strategies, Magistrate Office of the Capital of Prague</i>	
KEeLAN Project.....	128
<i>Walter Wenzel, Project Coordinator, ELANET/CEMR</i>	

Catalogue (Katalog)

General Sponsor of the Conference.....	131
Main Sponsors of the Conference	132
Sponsors of the Conference	133
Triada Ltd.	134

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Friends,

The 5th year of the Internet in the Public Administration (ISSS) conference is approaching. It has become a place for an annual evaluation of the progress in using the most up-to-date information and communication technologies (ICT) in public administration. The character of the conference makes the organising town of Hradec Králové (one of the most significant and most beautiful towns of the Czech Republic) the “ICT metropolis” for two days of a year.

At the same time ISSS has also an important international dimension. During the last years of the conference this dimension has been highlighted by the narrow co-operation with similarly oriented initiatives of the European Union countries as well as by the participation of important representatives of the European Commission. The conference reputation as well as the place where it is held, made the conference itself the most important event of this kind within the Central European framework. In 2001 almost 1,500 representatives of public administration, specialists from the ICT field, representatives of universities and other branches not only from the Czech Republic but from 12 other European countries have met in the town of Hradec Králové.

The motto of the previous year of the conference was “From presentation to communication”. The motto of the approaching year is “In a more reasonable, cheaper and faster way”. In this way we want to express the new dimension of discussions on using ICT in public administration. It is apparent that specialists in the field of ICT and the representatives of public administration communicate among each other in still better ways. The result of this communication is a widely shared opinion that the way forward supposes a narrow systemic co-operation, not just a simple transfer of office mechanisms into their electronic forms. It is valid not only in the Czech Republic but it is a whole-world trend.

European Union actively pushes forward the idea of the so called e-government. In the wider sense of word, it means application, or better to say, integration of the ICT into the process of public administration. The e-Europe initiative, which was agreed upon in Lisbon in 2000 by government heads and EU states, determines ambitious aims in this field: each citizen should have access to internet and the whole European Union should become computer-literate. This process should lead to a bigger social coherence and, as a final result, to the creation of the most dynamic economics of the world.

Europe wants to profit from the information society and therefore it invests not only into technologies, but mainly to people and their education. The motto “better on line than in line” characterises the human dimension of the social modernisation. It is not only time that will be saved by using ICT. Technological progress has also a social dimension: necessary knowledge and skills make people more confident citizens of the society which, in return, does not let them wait in humiliating lines for its services.

At the approaching conference we also want to discuss the whole series of other practical advantages that are brought by e-government. Among others, these are, e.g., bigger transparency of public administration, lower administration burden on entrepreneur sphere or a bigger possibility of interaction among citizens and their elected deputies at all levels of public administration but most of all at the level of local administration.

The natural starting point of discussions will be e-Europe initiative of the European Union but also the e-Europe+ initiative—a EU-candidate support of the “European 15” intentions. Comparison of experience of the representatives of the Czech Republic public administration with the opinions of their colleagues from the European Union countries and other countries-candidates, we consider to be one of the pillars the conference relies upon.

The previous years of the conference have established the tradition of the top meeting on the republic level, and of a most important event within European context. The approaching year is therefore organised with the awareness that its participants expect at least the same quality event they had opportunities to take part at in previous years.

Being aware of the responsibility of the success of the conference and expecting your participation, I am

Sincerely Yours,



RNDr. Tomáš Renčín
Executive Director of the Conference

Administration of ISSS 2002

Programme Director

František Dohnal
dohnal@issss.cz
Head of the Vysocina region

Programme Committee

Tomáš Renčín
rencin@issss.cz
Triada, spol. s r. o.

Jitka Pavlonová

jitkap@spis.cz
Executive director of SPIS

Tat'jana Jelínková

jelinkovat@uvis.cz
ÚVIS

Pavel Dvořák

dvorak.pavel@vlada.cz
The Government of the Czech Republic

Irina Zálišová

bmi@brezen.cz
Executive director of BMI committee

Eva Pauknerová

eva.pauknerova@terezango.cz
CAGI

Tomáš Holenda

tholenda@mvcz.cz
MV ČR

Executive Director of the Conference

Tomáš Renčín
rencin@issss.cz
Triada, spol. s r. o.

Michaela Šimová

simova@triada.cz
Triada, spol. s r. o. – assistant

Conference Officers

Radka Kroftová

kroftova@issss.cz
Triada, spol. s r. o.

Antonín Eliáš

elias@triada.cz
"Obec a finance" magazine

Jan Pokorný

jpokorny@cro.cz
Český rozhlas

Jan Brychta

brychta@triada.cz
Triada, spol. s r. o.

Blanka Brychtová

brychtova@triada.cz
Triada, spol. s r. o.

Petr Palisa

palisa@triada.cz
Triada, spol. s r. o.

Internal Conference Committee–Local and Regional Information Society

Marie Bednářová

educpr.bednarova@seznam.cz
VCVS

Jana Voldánová

voldanova@issss.cz
VCVS

Petra Sýkorová

sykorova@issss.cz
VCVS

Jaroslav Šolc

jaroslav.solc@mag.mepnet.cz
MHMP

Martin Dvořák

UNMIK

Secretariat of the Conference

Head: Blanka Brychtová

Address: U svobodárny 12, 190 00 Praha 9

Phone: +420 2 84 81 40 41, 84 81 70 17

Fax: +420 2 84 81 80 27

e-mail:issss@issss.cz, brychtova@triada.cz

Programme

ISSS 2002 Conference Programme

Monday 25th March

Grey marked areas: Translation Czech↔English is provided for. Others presentations are in Czech language.

Main Hall 10.40–12.00

Official opening of the conference – Plenary session

Oldrich Vlasak, Lord Mayor of Hradec Kralove

Contribution of new IT for improving in public services and making them more accessible

Vladimir Spidla, Deputy Prime Minister of the Czech Republic

Evaluation report including comparison with EU, *Karel Brezina, Minister of the Czech government*

e-Government strategy and the role of ÚVIS, *Jiri Krump, President of the Authority for Public Information Systems*

Municipalities and regions mission and activities in ICT, *Ing. Frantisek Dohnal, Asociace krajů*

Representatives of EU networks

Ingrid Götzl, president of Telecities

Bill Macbeth, president of ERISA

Javier Ossandon, president of ELANET

Gerald Santucci, Europe Committee

14.00–14.50

Without e-mmunity

This program area block aims to help Conference's participants to be oriented in political parties' attitude concerning future development of e-governments in the Czech Republic and answer the questions, if and how the implementation of State Information Policy and Informatisation of regions will continue after elections.

Miroslav Benes, MP (ODS)

Karel Brezina, Minister of the Czech Government

Vaclav Exner, MP (KSCM)

Vladimir Mlynar, MP (US-DEU)

Cyril Svoboda, Chairman of the KDU-ČSL

Lecture Hall 9.00–10.30

International Seminar: Local and Regional Information Society

National Studies of Candidate Countries

Co-operation of state administration and self-government when creating conditions for building and implementation of electronic public services in order to attain electronic local public administration within eEurope:

Opening, *Petr Svec, Jiri Krump*

EAP Czech Republic (*Jaroslav Svoboda*), EAP Slovakia (*Boris Tonhauser*), EAP Poland (*Marek Bigosinski*), EAP Hungary (*Zoltán Farkas*), Estonia (*Toomas Sepp*) and other Candidate Countries

Brief presentation of current situation in other Candidate Countries

14.40–15.50

General presentation of the main objectives and initiatives of the EU networks

ERIS@ (European Regional Information Society Association), *Bill Macbeth*

ELANET (European Local Authorities Network), *Javier Ossandon*

TELECITIES, *Ingrid Götzl*

16.00–16.30

Infoville project – Effective maintenance of heterogeneous informations

M. M. Perez, Oracle Iberria, 30'

16.40–18.05

Governance in ICT age

CEMR (Council of European Municipalities and Regions), Process of involvement municipalities and regions in EU policies, *Walter Wenzel, 20'*

UDMS (Urban Data Management Society), *Massimo Rumor, 15'*

EUSlanD project (European System for Local Authorities's Networking Domains), the new ELANET/CEMR knowledge management system for local experts networking Europe-wide, presentation of the prototype being developed by the EUSlanD project, co-financed by the EU, *Sara Riso, 15'*

e-MINDER project (Electronic Commerce Leveraging Network for Developing European Regions), presentation on an EU co-financed project to create leveraging centres on e-commerce, *Sara Riso, 10'*

E-MUNIS project (Electronic municipal Information Services) *Bojil Dobrev, 15'*

Lounge 1 16.00–17.00

Workshop: Cooperation of Candidate Countries with ERIS@

17.30–18.00

Common meeting of ELANET, ERIS@, TELECITIES with representatives of candidate countries' local government associations

Lounge 3 14.15–14.30

Workshop: Electronic identities for Citizens, *Camel Boussadia*

Czech Part of the Programme

- Small Hall** 9.00–10.30 **Selected application systems and pilot projects**
 Smartcard and contact point of public administration, *Karel Lux, Ivo Rosol, Jindrich Stepanek, OKsystem*
 Wireless solutions for internet connection and their support + competition
Ivo Nemecek Cisco Systems, 30'
- 13.00–13.30 **Ceska sporitelna: on-line banking**
Richard Schwarz, ČS, a. s.
- 13.30–14.00 **eGovernment for public administration**
Ales Kucera, Novell-Praha
- 15.00–15.45 **Microsoft Company strategie for electronic public administration**
Jan Toman, Microsoft, 45'
- 15.45–16.30 **Future architecture of IS in public administration**
Jaroslav Zeman, Oracle Czech, 45'
- 16.40–18.00 **Sun ONE and Identity solutions on Internet**
Jaroslav Malina, Sun Microsystems, 30'
- Security of Information systems**
 ISVS's Security policy, *Ebbo Petrikovits, 15'*
 Security base of OS Windows 2000
Robert Hernady, Microsoft, 15'
 Computer virus, *Pavel Baudis ALWIL, 15'*
 User authentication and electronic signiture, *Vasek Matyas, 15'*
 Data security – back-up, *Jaroslav Techl, 15'*
- Lecture Hall** 9.00–10.30 **Informatisation in process of public administration's transformation**
 Experiences of Regions basic informatisation, *Babarik 10'*
 Main development tendency of complex regions informatisation, *Jaroslav Skrabal, 10'*
 Regions Informatisation, *Jiri Nemecek ICZ, 30'*
 Register of Municipalities – project presentation *Vaclav Koudele, Petr Pavlinec, 10'*
Local and regional IS (RAMIS) *Jaroslav Maly, 30'*
- 12.15–13.00 **ISSS Press Conference**
- 13.30–14.00 **Infrastructure services IS in Public Administration**, *Jan Brodsky ANECT*
- Lecture Hall** 15.00–16.30 **Support of the public administration's informatisation process**
 Reengineering as a methode of rationalization and improvement of work and as a effective and economic tool of IS development, *Pavel Bures, Vaclav Kucirek, Zdenka Hauerlandova, Jan Pokorny 30'*
 Transfer of Distric's date basis, *Vaclav Kucirek, 10'*
 IT services to the authorised municipalities,
 Administration and transport administratiion registration, *Jiri Malatek, 15'*
Management of operating and investment costs by budget
Igor Sverka, Petr Kopecky, Oracle Czech, 45'
- 16.40–18.00 **Benefits of SAP solutions for public administration management**
Karel Nekuza SAP 30'
 AMD Company presentation, *Alexey Netchuyatov, AMD, 30'*
 Electronic friendly administration (EVA)
Vlastimil Tlusty, Deputy of Chamber of Deputies 20'
- Elisabeth Hall** 9.00–10.30 **Public administration and e-procurement**
Moderator: Zdenek Pilz, member of SPIS
 e-procurement benefits for public administration, *Compaq, Sun Micosystems, Oracle Czech, SAP*
e-procurement and public administration
Michal Polehna, Petr Jirasek, PVT, Pavel Stosek, CRCG servis, 30'
- 15.00–16.30 **Renumbering of public telephone nets and creation of new telephone loops**
David Stadnik, 15'
 Communication infrastructure of public administration, *Jan Müller, 30'*
Communication of citizens with public administration, *Ladislav Kostak, Oracle Czech*
- 16.40–18.00 **How to get Microsoft services in the cheapest way?** *Jan Toman, Microsoft, 40'*
- Financing of public administration's informatisation**
 Project School Internatisation and its financing, *Vladimir Lev, 10'*
 Model of Informatisation project financing and legislative support
Jiri Krump, 10'
 Panel Discussion: Financing of Czech Society's Informatisation
Participants: Karel Brezina, Frantisek Dohnal, Ondrej Felix, Jiri Krump, Ivan Pilip, Jiri Zlatuska, 30'

Main Hall	15.30–17.10	Effective anti-virus protection, <i>Radek Smolik, Symantec, 30'</i>
Lecture section		Public administration services in comparison with benchmarking criterias of EU for eGovernment , <i>Petr Paukner, Oracle Czech</i> Introduction of electronic registry services in Podebrady municipality <i>Miloslav Odvarko, Tomas Lechner, Triada, 40'</i>
Congress Centre Aldis	20.00–02.00	Evening festive programme Social programme, refreshment, informal meeting, auction Public Announcement of The czech @ (<i>prize for a project that has contributed significantly to the development of informations society of the Czech Republic</i>) Public Announcement of the Geo-aplication of the Year Public Announcement of the Biblio-web (<i>prize for the best web presentation of libraries</i>) Public Announcement of the Golden Crest Public Announcement of the Eurocrest (<i>prize for the best web presentation of European towns and communities</i>)

Tuesday 26th March

<p>Meeting Hall 9.00–10.30</p>	<p>International Seminar: Local and Regional Information Society eEurope+ Initiative and its implementation under the conditions of the Czech Republic <i>Jiří Krump, chairman of ÚVIS (Office for Public Information Systems)</i> Using IT in the Czech Tax Administration, <i>Michal Faltynek, 10'</i> Presentation of IDA Program, IDA stands for Interchange of Data between Administrations and is a Community program set up in 1995 to promote the electronic exchange of information between administrations, <i>Bernhard Schnittger, 20'</i> Presentation of eContent Program, the eContent program aims at supporting the production use and distribution of European digital content (e-content) on the global network. The eContent program will contribute to a better use of public sector information throughout Europe by supporting projects and other activities that will address in particular the improvement of the exploitation possibilities of this information <i>Massimo Garriba, Eva Hillerová, Technology Centr AS ČR</i> Presentation of PRELUDE project, project CEO : presentation of the EU financed project aiming at disseminating and promoting Information Society actions in Europe among Local and Regional governments <i>Javier Ossandon 20'</i></p>
<p>10.45–12.20</p>	<p>Presentation of KeeLAN project, by identifying 50 best practices among 700 local government websites from 15 countries of the EU, KEeLAN will carry out a benchmarking exercise to produce appropriate models and roadmaps for future electronic government at local and regional level <i>Walter Wenzel 15'</i> e-Government in the 6th Framework Programme, <i>Working rowards a 10-year vision Gerald Santucci 15'</i> Methodology of the creation of the www homepages of municipalities <i>Jan Savický, 10'</i> Panel Discussion: Experiences with on-line public services provided by means of www sites of local authorities <i>František Dohnal, Gerald Santucci, Ingrid Götzl, Jaroslav Solc</i></p>
<p>13.00–14.50</p>	<p>e-Government Presentation of PANISCO project <i>Krzysztof Glomb, 15'</i> Implementation of the e-Agenda, Portal and government Gateway <i>Barrington, e-Envoy, London, 20'</i> Prague – IT and e-government in municipal administration, description of the Capital of Prague, its roles within public administration of the CR and municipal administrative bodies, the municipal international policy concept, progress in the implementation of ICT etc. <i>Jaroslav Šolc, 20'</i> EGovernment in Austrian Cities: Lessons learned in Vienna, a Review based on Experiences <i>Riedel Rainer</i> Good practice cases of strategic regional Information Society initiatives, <i>Eris@, Mathias Müller, 20'</i> Presentation of PACE project, public administration and e-Commerce in Europe <i>Anna Lisa Boni, TeleCities,</i></p>
<p>Lounge 1</p>	<p>Common meeting of ERIS@, ELANET, TELECITIES</p>
<h3>Czech Part of the Programme</h3>	
<p>Main Hall 8.45–10.45 Lecture section</p>	<p>Geoinformation, Internet and public administration National geoinformation infrastructure development programme in Czech Republic <i>Josef Hojdar, 10'</i> Meta-information system of MIDAS Geodata Ressources <i>Bronislava Horakova, 10'</i> Training programme in public administration <i>Jiri Hiess, 10'</i> Geoapplication of the year 2001 <i>50'</i> Development of Geoinformation component of ISVS (<i>Public administration information system</i>) <i>Eva Pauknerova</i> IS of cadastral register on Internet after 2001 implementation <i>Josef Jirman, 20'</i></p>
<p>11.20–12.10</p>	<p>e-Government gateway Coordination of the project, <i>Radim Jäger,</i> Integrated system for business and export–Businessinfo.CZ <i>Michal Sontodino, Miloslav Marcan</i> Educational gateway <i>Petr Kordule</i></p>
<p>Small Hall 9.00–10.40</p>	<p>Legal framework of public administration elektronisation Survey of going processes <i>Vladimír Smejkal, Martin Maisner, 20'</i> Public Administration and electronic signature I. Electronic signature in use <i>Jakub Kopecký KPNQwest Czechia, 30'</i> Options of practical implementation of electronic signature act <i>Stanislav Biza, IBM, 30'</i> E-registry <i>Jaroslav Novotny PVT, 20'</i></p>

- Small Hall** 10.50–12.25 **Public Administration and electronic signature II.**
Moderator : Jitka Pavlonova, presidents of SPIS
 Legislative framework of electronic signature in the Czech Republic
Ivan Langer, Vladimír Mlynar, Chamber of Deputies, 10'
 Electronic forms in State social assistance system, *Roman Kucera, 5'*
 Use of electronic signature in the communication with Ministry of Finance, *Michal Faltynek, 5'*
 Electronic documents obligation, *Petr Landkammer, 5'*
 ISVS's standard for e-registry profession, *Ebbo Petrikovits, 5'*
Panel Discussion: Implementation of electronic signature in public administration, 60'
Participants: Ivan Langer, Vladimír Mlynar, Michal Faltynek, Roman Kucera, Petr Zatloukal, Jiri Krump, Jindřich Kodl, Dagmar Bosakova, Petr Budis
- Lecture Hall** 8.45–10.30 **Offer of electronic services for citizens**
 Public Information Services *Moderator: Tomáš Holenda*
 Practical examples of public administration web-sites
 Archive Fund of Czech Republic
 Access to basis register of inhabitant and connection of authorised Municipalities of type III
- Lecture Hall** 10.45–12.20 **Project supporting IS development**
 Public access to the Internet, *Jaroslav Winter, 10'*
 Action Plan realisation of SIP to the end 2003 *Pavel Dvorak, The Government of the Czech Republic, 10'*
 Digitizing of documents enrolled in Register of Economic Subjects and their access on Internet *Petr Landkammer, Jaroslav Martaus, 10'*
 Project Health care on-line, *Radek Papp, 15'*
- Lecture Hall** **Exchange of health information**, *Pavel Hrdlicka IBM, 15'*
 On-line culture and public access to the Internet in Municipale Libraries
Antonín Kudláč, Vít Richter, 20'
 Green book about e-Commerce in Czech republic, *Ivana Gorgolova, 15'*
- 12.30–14.00 **Workshop: internetisation of Towns and Communities**
 EU IST programme, experiences in Czech republic, *Eva Hillerova, 15'*
 Implementation of Act on personal data protection and Act on free access to information *Oldřich Kuzilek, Frantisek Neuwirth, 20'*
 Domains of the third order in public administration, *Ebbo Petrikovits, 20'*
 Register of communities – communication support of communities and regions
Václav Koudele, Petr Pavlinec, 5'
 Best practices of the GoldenCrest award, *discussion, 30'*
- 14.00–15.00 **Meeting of software suppliers with CEO of Regional Informatics Department and representatives of Committee for Municipal information systems of Union of Towns and Municipalities**
- Elisabeth Hall** 9.00–10.30 **Services of communication infrastructure ISVS I.**
 ISVS services procurement and Framework Contract with Czech Telecom, *Karel Brezina, 20'*
 Activities report of Framework Contract Steering Committee, *Vladimír Siska, 20'*
 Czech Telecom approach to the communication of public administration
Premysl Klima, CTc, 5'
Integration of ISVS Communication infrastructure networks
 Communication infrastructure of Ministry of social affairs and employment resort
Miloslav Vanek, 15'
 Ministry of Finance, communication platform *Jiri Roudny, 10'*
 Mutual communication in ISVS
Miroslav Novacek, Libor Neumann, ANECT, 30'
- 10.45–12.20 **Services of communicative infrastructure ISVS II.**
Communication infrastructure ISVS and business framework of Czech Telecom services for public administration
Ondrej Felix, Jiri Smahel CTc., 45' + discussion, M. Gurlichova, V. Siska
UK Government Gateway – Best practice of e-government
Robert Hernady, Microsoft, 45'
- 12.30–13.35 **Use of IT in case of emergency**
 Possibility of the use of the Czech Army emergency information system in danger
Jan Kase, Czech Army, 15'
 European emergency call No 112, *Ludek Prudil, 10'*
 IT and internet use in emergency management, *Jaroslav Pejcoch, 10'*
 Disrepair plans in Ostrava Municipality, *Petr Berglowiec, 10'*
 Navigation system for all issues of integrated rescues systems and emergency management, *Jaroslav Lepeska, 10'*
 IS for planning of civil resources ARGIS 2.0
Pavel Brazda, 15'

Annotations

eGovernment in Austrian Cities

Eberhard Binder, Vienna City Administration

The implementation of eGovernment is well under way in many Austrian cities. Past experiences have, however, shown that there are some critical questions still to be answered before eGovernment can be used extensively and successfully. These questions involve three aspects: costs, awareness, and confidence.

Public Administration and e-Commerce in Europe (PACE)

Anna Lisa Boni, Degree In Political Science, Manager of TeleCities

The PACE project (IST-1999-13041) is dedicated to promoting the effective use of electronic commerce technologies by European Public Administrations (PAs). E-commerce promises to change profoundly the way PAs work with their citizens, business communities, and other public sector organisations – as well as new forms of service provision, it enables increased productivity, new job creation, and control of public spending.

EmuniS Project—Electronic Municipal Information Services

Bojil Dobrev, Mechthild Stoewer, Lambros Makris, Eleonora Getsova

The E-MuniS ultimate goal is to provide opportunities for user-friendly implementation of the information technologies achievements in municipal administration working processes and services to citizens. The E-MuniS project main objective is to bridge the gap between EUMs and SEEMs regarding use of Information Technology in administration working procedures and services to citizens, thus facilitating the work of the municipal employees and making the life of the citizens easier.

TeleCities – a Stepping Stone towards eEurope

Ingrid Götzl, TeleCities President, City of Vienna

TeleCities is a network of about 120 European cities, including metropolises, small and medium-sized cities. The network co-operates Europe-wide on issues relating to the Information Society and is chaired by the City of Vienna; key business partners are joined as associate members. The TeleCities profile is based on a combination of networking activities, on research and high-level strategic work which targets on the definition of Information Society initiatives, and resulting policies of European cities.

eEurope+ Initiative and its implementation under the conditions of the Czech Republic

Jiří Krump, representative of the Czech Republic of JHLC, Chairman of the Office for Public Information Systems

Implementation of Action Plan eEurope+ 2003 in the Czech Republic. Benchmarking indicators using for monitoring progress—role of Czech Statistical Office. Preparation of the First Progress Report. The report will be discussed on Ministerial Conference on Information Society (Ljubljana, 2–4 June 2002).

PRELUDE Project

Javier Ossandon, Project Coordinator, ELANET/CEMR

The 24-month PRELUDE project will carry out a major dissemination programme of Information Society-related actions involving Regions and local governments. The Consortium will participate in not less than 50 important promotional events in Europe and launch not less than 200 initiatives of different levels. The activities will be undertaken within nine Digital Areas, ranging from public health systems and equal opportunities to urban transport, from e-Government and Regional Geographic Information Systems to education, training and e-learning, and from regional marketing to Technology Development Research Programmes in the EU and CEEC. Within all these Areas, PRELUDE will disseminate regional profiles and benchmarking; best practice galleries and modelling; clustering and concertation; local, regional and European networks' actions and events; and provide editorial and web supporting services.

Infoville. A large-scale implementation of a Smart Community model

Manuel Muro Perez, Marketing Director, Oracle Iberria

In 1996 the Regional Government of Valencia (Spain) launched a project to improve the region's overall competitiveness by implementing an Information Society strategy for all of its four million citizens and

public and private entities. So far the project is expanding successfully, and eighteen cities are already using this model.

vCRM, the Vienna Citizens Request Management, the platform for citizens participationship

Rainer Riedel, Member of staff, VCA

The paper describes the main aspects and functionalities of the system dealing with citizens complaints as the former called Citizens Complaint Management (CCM). As CCM the system has been selected for the exhibition during the eGovernment congress in Brussels in November 2001, is selected for an award by the pan european "Global Award for Excellence in Workflow" in San Franzisko and is invited for various presentations (i.e. Lissabon). To give space to expand the idea and the development for a citizens participationship system the name has changed to Vienna City Request Management (vCRM) and you will find in the paper prospectives ideas implementing tools and functionalities into the vCRM which will be developed already in EU-projects.

e-MINDER (Electronic Commerce Leveraging Network for Developing European Regions)

Sara Riso, Project Manager, ELANET/CEMR

The e-MINDER project aims at bridging the existing gap between the most and least developed regions as far as the use and development of e-commerce is concerned. To achive this goal, a European Network of three Leveraging Centres will be created among the three partner regions (Galicia, Pomerania and Cyprus).

EUSlanD (European System for Local Authorities' Networking Domains)

Sara Riso, Project Manager, ELANET/CEMR

EUSlanD is a flexible and open system for the use of Local and Regional governments, based on a shared knowledge management and networking model. The research system will allow retrieval and integration of existing information at local and regional government level, using intelligent technological support systems. This system greatly facilitates the provision, semantic classification and exchange of information in five European key areas of interest to European Local Authorities: Financial opportunities through EU programmes; Implementation of European legislation at regional level; Benchmarking of urban transport solutions among larger cities; Employment policies by Local and Regional Authorities; Local and regional innovation based on ICT and technology watching.

A presentation of Urban Data Management Society

Massimo Rumor, Urban Data Management Society

A presentation of UDMS is intended to present Urban Data Management Society, its scope, its history, which started more than thirty years ago, its organisation and to illustrate future activities, in particular the next UDMS event to be held in Prague October 1st- 4th 2002.

eGovernment in the 6th Framework RTD Programme

Gérald Santucci, Head of Unit, European Commission

The next EU Framework Programme of RTD activities (FP6) is the most important instrument by which the European Research Area will be realised. The proposal for the next FP brings within the scope of the Framework Programme itself a number of co-ordinating activities that are already being organised by the European Commission. Under the title "Strengthening the Foundations of the European Research Area", these include the mutual opening-up of national programmes, and the mapping of scientific and technological excellence in Europe.

The implementation of e-Government City of Tallinn

Toomas Sepp, Tallinn City Secretary, Tallinn City Office

e-citizen - The e-citizen is a nation wide project that focuses on developing cooperation between Estonian citizens and the public sector through the Internet.

X-road - X-road is the modernization program of national databases with the aim to change national databases into a common public, service-rendering resource.

ID-card - One may identify himself with electronic card.

E-state - Enviroment in the Internet where all public organisations can put their information and services;

Estonian Government of Ministers' Session - A support system for the organization of ministers' sessions to automate the preparation processes and proceeding of the Estonian Government Cabinet meetings.

The final objective is to prepare all materials digitally and thus to reduce copying costs and delivery time; **Population Register** – Electronical database where are personal information of all Estonian citizens and about other countries citizens who permanently resident in Estonia. This database is not for public use.

Networking of Public Administrations - the IDA Mission

Bernhard Snittger, European Commission

The IDA (interchange of data between administrations) mission is to support the implementation of Community policies and activities by co-ordinating the establishment of Trans-European telematic networks between administrations. As data needs to be exchanged throughout Europe, IDA also acts as an important vehicle for the re-engineering of the working processes of the administrations. The work within IDA is performed through several action lines.

Prague – IT and e-government in municipal administration

*Jaroslav Šolc, Head of Department for Concepts and Strategies,
Magistrate Office of the Capital of Prague – IT Department*

The paper briefly describes the Capital of Prague, its roles within public administration of the CR and municipal administrative bodies, and also mentions the municipal international policy concept. It also shortly recapitulates progress in the implementation of ICT, an overview of its current state including the infrastructure, organisation and funding. A more detailed attention is paid to the tasks of e-government, i.e. the electronic form of providing information and services by the City to its citizens. It also mentions several more significant activities and projects already implemented as well as new development plans (e.g. information strategy, security policy, MePNet, municipal web, environmental projects etc.).

KEeLAN Project

Walter Wenzel, Project Coordinator, ELANET/CEMR

By identifying 50 best practices among 700 local government websites from 15 countries of the EU, KEeLAN will carry out a benchmarking exercise to produce appropriate models and roadmaps for future electronic government at local and regional level. It will also focus on local ICT priorities useful for projects co-funded by the European Commission, in particular European research and technology development projects under the IST programme.

Documents

National Studies

Co-operation of state administration and self-government when creating conditions for building and implementation of electronic public services in order to attain electronic local public administration within eEurope

Projects supported by

EAP

Enhancing Active Participation of Sub-National Governments
in EU Enlargement Process

New Challenges for Local Governments

Boris Tonhauser, Slovakia

A local government system can be considered successful when it is able to react fast and effectively to any challenges and changes that are posed by citizens and the circumstances that define the operational environment for municipalities.

Currently, local governments face three challenges that require them to address problems that are similar to each other in many respects:

- A demand by constituents that basic municipal services are carried out in a true service-like manner;
- The preparation for the accession to the European Union;
- Using the advantages offered by the information society.

The mission of a service-provider type of municipality will be to provide services that satisfy local citizens, who expect from the municipality to

- be continuously open to citizens' demands, make proper decisions in time, and implement those decisions accurately and attentively;
- do its business by adjusting to customers' demands, not to burden them with superfluous administrative tasks, and not to waste their time;
- provide information effectively, give more publicity to information and data of common interest, make those data and information readily available to citizens, and expand on its services on a continuous basis;
- Make the process of decision-making transparent and easy to monitor, be accountable to citizens for distributing funds, and use public funds effectively;

The digital revolution caused by IT developments and the evolution of the information society opens a new chapter in the advancement of local governments as service-providers. It opens up new windows of opportunity with respect to maintaining relationship between local government and its citizen.

In the highly developed societies of today a strong tendency is observed to shift from the industry based economy to the information based economic system.

The application of new technologies will enable significant improvement in the main function of public administration which is to provide services to citizens and the business sphere.

Legislative Prerequisites

The developing Information Societies require proper legislative in order to set up the basic building blocks of the emergin electronic system. Current standards include at least the legislation regulating the following areas:

- **Information society development**—the governmental commitment and support to the Information Society principles should be implemented in state informatisation policy,
- **Free access to information**—which defines the right of the citizen to information,
- **Personal data protection**—which protects personal data especially in electronic systems and databases,
- **Electronic signature**—which defines the conditions for authorised provision of, and access to electronic communication and services.

e-Local Government in e-Europe

As the Visegrad countries strive for membership in the European Union, local governments, too, should aim to adopt initiatives in the framework of the European initiatives *eEurope* and *eEurope+*, with the following objectives:

- Objective 0: Development of the telecommunications infrastructure.
- Objective 1: Widespread, cheaper, faster, and safe internet
 - Widespread, cheaper, and faster access to Internet resources
 - Fast Internet for scientists
 - Network security
 - Free software
- Objective 2: Investing in people and skills
 - Education in the digital age
 - Work in economy based on knowledge
 - Widespread participation in economy based on knowledge
 - Cultural resources in global networks
- Objective 3: Stimulation of a better use of internet capabilities
 - Electronic economy (e-economy)
 - Public administration on-line
 - The Judiciary and public prosecutor's office in the network
 - Telecom and Information Technology in the Police
 - Health care on-line
 - Social welfare on-line
 - Intelligent systems of transportation support
- Objective 4: Telecom and information technology in rural areas
- Objective 5: Development of digital radio and television

Local Government Strategies for the Future

- **Efficient self-government** of towns and communities and rendering of services supported by information technologies.
- **Open communication** with citizen and entrepreneurs based on the maximum use of public information services.
- Towns and communities will be equal members of international communities of information societies
- **State support** for the implementation of administrative activities.
- Authorised **access to databases** operated and maintained by the state.
- **Development of standards** relating to the functional operations of the information systems of towns and communities.

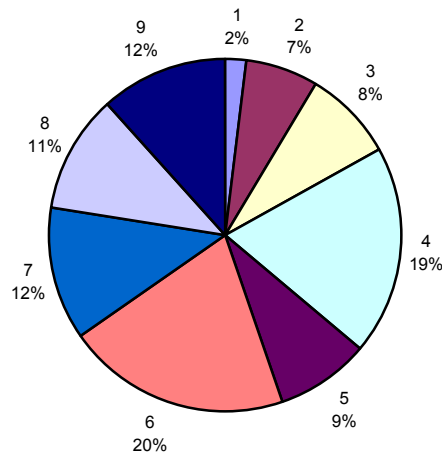
Union of Towns and Communities of the Czech Republic Committee for Municipal Information Systems

Jaroslav Svoboda

Definition of local government

The CR has a territory of 78,860 km², with 10,292,933 inhabitants who live in 6,258 towns and municipalities. One third of all inhabitants live in one of the 24 towns with over 50,000 inhabitants.

Ratio of inhabitants according to individual categories of municipalities



	Category of municipality according to number of inhabitants	Number of municipalities	Total number of inhabitants	
1	up to 200	1 698	205 131	2%
2	200 to 500	2 063	680 335	7%
3	500 to 1.000	1 217	873 097	8%
4	1.000 to 5.000	991	1 950 294	19%
5	5.000 to 10.000	135	901 959	9%
6	10.000 to 50.000	108	2 120 378	20%
7	50.000 to 100.000	17	1 267 897	12%
8	100.000 to 500.000	6	1 093 690	11%
9	over 500.000	1	1 215 326	12%

Organisational structure

Central administration: 14 Ministries (sectors) and the Office of Government
approx. 37 administrative authorities

Regions: 14 (as of 12. 11. 2000) 8 regions (NUTS II).

No. of inhabitants in individual regions as of 1. 3. 2001 *

Region	Number of municipalities	Total number of inhabitants	Total number of men	Preliminary results	
				Total	%
TOTAL IN THE CR	6 258	10 292 933	5 019 381	5 273 552	51,2
Prague - the capital city	1	1 178 576	560 030	618 546	52,5
Central Bohemian region	1 148	1 129 627	554 127	575 500	50,9
South Bohemian region	623	630 168	309 768	320 400	50,8
Pilsen region	506	553 741	271 584	282 157	51,0
Karlovy Vary region	132	306 799	150 704	156 095	50,9
Ústí region	354	826 380	405 648	420 732	50,9
Liberec region	216	430 769	210 043	220 726	51,2
Hradec Králové region	448	554 348	270 131	284 217	51,3
Pardubice region	453	510 079	250 072	260 007	51,0
Vysočina	730	521 212	257 631	263 581	50,6
South Moravian region	647	1 133 916	550 342	583 574	51,5
Olomouc region	394	642 465	312 913	329 552	51,3
Moravian-Silesian region	302	1 277 095	624 680	652 415	51,1
Zlín region	304	597 758	291 708	306 050	51,2

* Data is taken from the Czech Statistical Office - preliminary results of census

Districts	77	(till 31.12. 2002)
Authorised municipalities of type III	190	(from 1. 1. 2003)
Authorised municipalities of type II	384	
Total number of all municipalities	6 258	(as of 1. 3. 2001)

State administration in the CR

State administration in the CR is divided into **sectoral (departmental) Ministries** the operation of which is defined by an act on competencies. The act stipulates, in detail, the rights and duties of individual Ministries although in some cases, on the basis of this act there is an overlap of competencies or insufficient competencies in some areas. That is why a project was processed within the PHARE programme which dealt with, among other things, the new allocation of central bodies' competencies in order to improve the performance of public administration. This problem is also dealt with by one of the projects of public administration reform. At present, the following areas of public administration reform are being tackled - territorial public administration reform, central public administration reform and the reform of content of public administration's operation.

On the basis of public administration reform, **regions** were constituted as of 1. 1. 2000. The bodies of regions were constituted on the basis of elections (held on 11. and 12. 11. 2000) as self-governing bodies and **regional authorities** are being constituted now which also execute delegated state administration.

At the same time, new territorial division is being done into approximately 190 units with **municipal authorities of type III** which should take over the executive part of competencies of the present lowest level of state administration - **district authorities** - after their activities have been terminated. Starting from 1. 1. 2003, the competencies of district authorities will be divided between authorised municipalities of type III (defined by law) and regional authorities.

The division of competencies is a real problem, which has had an impact on the entire local administration. A gradual transfer of competencies to towns and municipalities without proper preparation brings chaos to public administration activities in some areas (for example

issuing driving licences). Towns and municipalities are not sufficiently informed about this approach which results in many misunderstandings and uncertainties within the present reform of public administration. The process of this reform has also had an impact on the information systems of public administration.

The implementation of information and communication technologies (ICT) in public administration has been taking place since 1990 in a very dynamic way. Investments to public administration including communication networks which are estimated at a minimum of 50 billion Czech Crowns, helped to equip Czech authorities at all levels - central, district, town and municipal. The introduction of PCs into common office work has changed the approach to ICT in a majority of towns and municipalities. Better use of ICT is hindered by insufficient co-ordination and an absence of standardised procedures in public administration. In the last 3 to 4 years, there has been a dynamic development of the Internet, but we can also see an insufficient conception in this area: insufficient co-ordination and an absence of standardised procedures. As well as some excellent www applications there are also some which are totally inefficient. At present, all levels of public administration strive for standards and relevant legislation. In the Czech Republic, many applications for public administration were created in the area of record keeping (database applications) as well as in the area of accounting and GIS.

Legislative support

Currently, mainly the following standards and regulating activities in information technology area, are valid:

- Act 106/1999 Coll., on free access to information which defines the right of citizens to information,
- Act 101/2000 Coll., on personal data protection which protects personal data. This is ensured by an independent body - **Office for personal data protection**,
- Act 227/2000 Coll., on electronic signature, which defines the conditions for authorised electronic services,
- Act 365/2000 Coll., on information systems of public administration (ISVS), which defines such systems and appoints an independent body to co-ordinate the building of IS for public administration and ensures the fulfilment of statutory conditions of operations - **Office for public information systems**.

Apart from these legislative regulations, the Government of the CR adopted a programme called the State information policy (SIP) in May 1999. The programme is further explained in the Action plan of SIP. The Action plan had already been discussed and adopted by the Government in May 2000.

The following is a quotation from SIP: "The purpose of the Action plan is to present the preparedness of the central bodies of state administration to transform, via direct and indirect activities, the vision of an information society into real benefits experienced by citizens and the capability of central bodies to put into practice the principals of co-operation with other entities especially self-government and the business sphere when striving for the objectives of the state information policy."

The Action plan defines successive steps which fulfil the objectives of the state information policy. Direct activities are represented by the duties of the central bodies of state administration and their responsibilities towards citizens. Indirect activity is for example represented by the support of public library projects focused on public information services.

Another monitored area is represented by the activities of other entities with the aim of achieving the defined objectives of the state information policy whether in co-operation with state bodies or as independent or business activities.

The following are the main areas, defined by state information policy, which were adopted prior to the approval of the European programme, eEurope: information literacy, democracy through information technologies, development of information systems in public administration, communication infrastructure, reliability and security of information systems and personal data protection, electronic commerce, transparent economic environment, information society: stable and secure

Apart from the above-mentioned documents, the Government of the CR adopted, in October 1999, the "Conception for building ISVS" which defines the following main objectives of optimisation and the building of the public administration's information systems: to improve the effectiveness and respect of public administration, to improve faith of the citizens in public administration, to enhance the transparency and development of the economic environment

The following are some basic conditions for functionality and further managed development of ISVS amendments or creation of relevant legislation, improvement of ISVS contents, specification of ISVS services, creation of a conducive market environment, understanding status and development abroad

This concept was also adopted by the Government of the CR prior to the announcement of the eEurope initiative on December 8, 1999.

The eEurope initiative was extended to include associated countries to become the **eEurope+ 2003** initiative which was adopted on June 16, 2001 in Göteborg. The requirements of this initiative are currently reflected in an updated version of the Action plan of the State information policy (AP SIP). Completion of this work is estimated for October of this year. In the Action plan, the individual initiatives are allocated specific tasks of individual ministerial sectors which can then be controlled and co-ordinated more easily.

Co-ordination of state information policy

A co-ordination of the state information policy begins at a Government level - **Government Council of information policy** established in 1998 where: all ministerial sectors (represented by the deputies of the ministers), some central institutions, SMO (chairman of the ISMO committee) and Union of industry and transport and the Economic Chamber are represented. The executive body of the Council is a work group of experts which prepares and elaborates the specific execution of individual objectives and tries to co-ordinate and inter-link them. A member of the ISMO committee represents SMO in this body. If needed, expert committees are established within work group of experts which tackle specialised tasks (for example communication infrastructure, basic registers, public information services, etc.).

Non-state organisations and groups, which have the statute of platforms, advisory groups or interest groups, are also involved in solving the problems concerning information society.

The Office for public information systems (UVIS) was established in accordance with the Act on information systems of public administration (ISVS). Its activities are focused on an on-going survey of new information in order to improve the grounding of knowledge used in the creation and development of information systems, strategic planning of ISVS, pragmatic co-ordination of plans and projects regarding the building or overhauling of ISVS caused by a common need of ISVS administrators. The Office is also in charge of creating

standards i.e. it ensures the creation and publication of standards, determines and manages reference interfaces and rules for data and service sharing. It also creates and administers a publicly accessible information system which includes some basic information on the accessibility and content of available ISVS, especially the so-called portal of public administration currently available on the following address: www.centralniaadresa.cz/portal. It publishes a bulletin with standards and their validity, it announces a list of certification centres and granted certificates as well as other documents of public administration. The Office is in charge of public administration bodies as far as their compliance with regulations of the Act on ISVS is concerned; it evaluates projects of inter-sectoral activities and compliance with standards and certificates concerning ISVS. It issues and revokes authorisation of legal and physical entities entitling them to carry out certification concerning ISVS. It imposes sanctions for breach of obligations stipulated by law and imposes measures in order to remedy insufficiencies.

The Czech forum on information society (CFIS) was established by the Government of the CR in 1999 as an advisory body responsible for dialogue between the Government and the public concerning specialised and social aspects of state information policy implementation and development of information society. Thanks to this platform, the Government is informed about various aspects of the above stated development and CFIS participation in informing public on changes which are taking place in society.

Nemoforum – an association of state, business and professional groups was established under the **Czech office of geodesy and land register (CUZK)** as a result of international cooperation (with Dutch partners). The purpose of Nemoforum was to create an information system on territory based on the land register. It will be further developed on the basis of recommendations coming from groups of experts. Many activities will be further researched. Other procedures follow objectives specified by interest groups in the area of geodesy. On the basis of discussions held by Nemoforum's groups of experts it is clear that business entities are interested in activities regarding this area.

Czech association of geographic information (CAGI) is an association of experts coming from physical and legal entities involved in the field of geographic systems. Its activities are focused on the co-ordination, advice and standardisation of work concerning geographic information. Apart from its participation in many standards concerning ISVS, CAGI also participates in an annual competition for the best Internet geographic application for public administration.

The association for information society (SPIS) is an entity which was established by major business entities from the area of IT on the Czech market and will mainly serve to promote, guide and develop IT in the CR. The association currently incorporates 50 of the most important companies on the Czech market. Its total annual turnover is over 80 billion Czech crowns. One of the objectives of this association is an effective and rational public administration. A co-ordinated approach together with major economic potential represents the basis for major involvement of the association in IT development and in public administration. The association declares its support for public administration.

The Union of Towns and Communities

The Union of Towns and Communities (SMO) is a voluntary association of the towns and communities of the CR. There are currently 2192 municipalities in the Union with 70% CR inhabitants. The aim of the Union of towns and communities is to protect the common interests and rights of associated communities. The Union is a respected institution on a national as

well as international level. It became a major partner of the Parliament as well as the Government of the CR and cannot be omitted during the preparation of new laws and policies of the Government. The Council of the Union governs the union of towns and communities and has 91 representatives of self-government from towns and communities. The Council is elected by the national congress. The Council of SMO elects an 11- member presidium which regularly deals with the operative tasks of the Union.

SMO is the only nation-wide association of towns and communities in the CR, but there are various regional associations and unions of communities being established in the regions. The association of historical sites – SHS also has a nation-wide operation and mainly deals with the protection of monuments and cultural heritage. Many SHS members are also members of SMO. These two organisations do not compete with each other.

The Office of the Union ensures professional support of the entire Union's activities which are carried out by activists from towns and communities. With **16 employees**, the Office ensures the agenda of the entire Union, provides service to the presidium of the SMO, to the Council of the SMO and to all below stated committees.

The following are 18 committees which are working under the SMO: Security committee, Housing committee, Transport committee, Energy committee, Financial committee, Tourism committee, **Committee for information systems of towns and communities - ISMO**, Committee for international co-operation, Committee for handicapped citizens, Environmental committee, Chamber of municipalities of the Union of towns and communities of the CR, Control committee of the Council of the Union of towns and communities of the CR., Legislative committee, Property committee, Regional committee, Social committee, Educational committee, Committee of town districts and town quarters of statutory towns and the capital city Prague

The above stated committees co-ordinate the activities of municipalities within their areas of interest, they promote achieved results in the given areas and express their opinions on bills in line with their field of expertise and submit proposals for the solution of problems to state bodies. Better provision of information based on the use of ICT and higher importance attached to self-governing authorities in public administration reform are the main areas of the SMO's activities defined in the programme declaration of the VIIth Congress of SMO held from 31. 5. till 1. 6. 2001.

Committee for information systems of towns and communities (ISMO committee)

A co-ordination of ICT at the level of the Union of towns and communities (SMO) is ensured by the **Committee for information systems of towns and communities (ISMO committee)** where the representatives of towns and communities and active information technology specialists work alongside associated members from other fields. The Committee mainly comments on acts and other regulations and documents concerning ICT from the point of view of towns and communities. Since SMO is a respected authority in public administration, its proposals, comments and suggestions are taken into consideration during the preparation of discussed, commented on and critically evaluated documents of a statutory or non-statutory character. Regarding ICT, this Committee is also represented in other bodies, for example, in the Government Council for information policy, work group of experts of this Council, in Nemo-forum and others.

The following are the main objectives of work of the Committee for information systems of towns and communities: efficient self-government of towns and communities and

state administration in delegated operation on the basis of information technologies and services support, open communication with citizens and entrepreneurs based on the maximum use of public information services, towns and communities will be equal members of international communities of information society.

The Chairman of the Committee represents the SMO in the Government Council for state information policy. The committee has an active representative in the work group of experts of this Council. Other members work in Nemoforum (under CUZK) together with SMO's representatives and participate in the work of this group with regard to legislative problems of the land register (a solution of the whole area of territory registers is expected). They also co-operate with a group responsible for remote access which currently deals, for example, with problems concerning 'go-live' of information system on the Internet with authorised charged access. Another group deals with GIS problems from the point of view of the process of graphic territorial information. There are also other interest groups represented in Nemoforum. Another area which the committee deals with is the Internet information system (www.munet.cz), which is currently focused on information concerning the work of the committee and is a place of several Internet conferences on ISMO. There are conferences which deal with daily problems and which also allow for retrospective access via an archive on MuNet. Members of the Committee also participate in other activities such as Portal of public administration, which is dealt with by a group of experts. Recently a contract was signed on the co-operation with UVIS which stipulates a larger contribution of the Committee during preparation of documents concerning ICT. This report is also prepared by the ISMO committee members.

Towns, communities and ICT

Towns and communities have been getting equipped with IT since 1990. At present, we can say that most towns and many communities are equipped with information technology and operate information systems with databases. Approximately 1800 towns and communities have their own www page and 1300 municipalities actively use e-mail. The content of information on www pages is unbalanced and is based on the information source which each community considers important. Upon adoption of the act on free access to information a methodology was prepared at the level of central authorities for publishing selected information about public administration in the way allowing for remote access. The above-mentioned methodology was adopted as a standard of ISVS. Thus the state administration created a base for balanced publication of information of public administration's entities on the Internet. One of the objectives of AP SIP is the implementation of this methodology into practice in line with standards.

Each year, a conference is held in the CR called "Internet in state administration and self-government" which reflects the activities and steps taken in this area. The conference deals with general questions concerning information society and the presentation of results of work from all the public service entities involved. It is important to point out that business entities from the area of ICT in public administration, also participate in this conference. This regular two-day event is a show of most activities from this area not only in the CR but also activities of partners from many countries. It is a platform for the exchange of information. The ISMO committee participates in the organisation, programme and presentation of a section for web-masters coming from towns and communities. Several competitions take place during the conference (for the best geographic application on the Internet, for the best presentation of a library, etc.). The ISMO committee co-organises a competition called "Golden coat of arms" which evaluates the level and content of www pages of local public administration.

These pages represent the best presentation of entities (subjects) from the categories of community, town and region. The winners of the individual categories represent specimen applications for the providing of information in public administration.

All town and municipal authorities of the so-called **type I** (i.e. 6 258) operate residence registration offices on the territory of their community on the basis of delegated state administration. These offices are used for managing voting lists for elections (every two years), for drawing up lists of personal identity cards (youth at the age of 15) and lists for the conscription of recruits (men at the age of 18). Various forms of the record-keepings of inhabitants occurred in towns and communities. Communities operate them together with statutory paper-form record keepings. Towns and communities of **type II**, which are stipulated by law, ensure the performance of state administration on a designated territory for more communities (in line with the specification of pertaining district authority). This concerns the registers of the births, marriages and deaths, hearings of administrative delicts, offices issuing building permits, Trade Licence Offices, social care offices, environmental offices and transport offices (in combinations stipulated by laws and other regulations). They operate various information systems, according to the scope of authorised state administration. The scope of such systems is based on the financial capabilities of the given community or town and also on the open-minded approach of the local government. The scope ranges from almost perfect information systems which fulfil all the requirements down to isolated agendas which are used only for limited functions in line with the relevant state employees' requirements. In the worst cases, information technology is used as a substitute for a typewriter. It is important to say that this type of information technology use does not happen often. Unfortunately, there is no connection of information systems of towns and communities to ISVS. At present, there are questions as to whether such IS are just internal systems of towns and communities or whether they will be classified as part of ISVS. The problem is that each community or town, apart from delegated state administration, also carries out self-governance on the territory of their municipality. Self-governance is focused mainly on the administration of its own budget and the property of the community which is mainly based on its size and significantly varies also due to the scope of regressive privatisation of nationalised property which fell upon communities in 1990 on the basis of the legal regulations (we can see significant differences here since 1990 for example in case of property which was nationalised after World War II). Most communities manage property for which they do not have enough maintenance resources. They look for a model of financing the property administration by suitable sale of redundant property. The state does not provide any free data for this self-governing activity. Towns create their own record keeping of property which is quite a large burden for employees of information departments. Apart from the above, information on towns and communities is processed for the Internet (remote access). These activities together with unclear state participation in providing information for towns and municipalities are the main problems of the present phase of social changes in the CR.

Last year, the state transferred the record keeping of inhabitants from the police of the CR to district authorities and thus the problem of dual data still remains (record-keeping of inhabitants and register of inhabitants in municipalities). There is a similar problem concerning the registers of the births, marriages and deaths and transportation record keeping which have been, from 1. 7. 2001 transferred from the CR police also to district authorities. Towns and communities also ensure other activities in the area of local taxes and fees (for example municipal waste disposal) for which record keeping of inhabitants is important.

On the basis of the above-mentioned facts, the Czech side requires the state to guarantee information concerning administrative activities and wants towns and municipalities to

have authorised access to the required data. The state authorities' help is mostly expected in the above-mentioned area. Pressure has been applied to central bodies to participate in a change of approach regarding the provision of required data and to provide local administration operation in towns and municipalities on the basis of defined access to data required for the execution of delegated state administration and their own self-governing functions.

Another requirement is the enhancement of **ISVS standards relating to the functional operations of the information systems of towns and communities**. Additional work has to be done in this area in order to comply with valid standards regarding information systems of towns and municipalities.

Another backlog of central administration is in the **definition of activities and procedures concerning the execution of state administration**. Present solutions are isolated and therefore lots of issues are solved by many individual information systems rather than by one unified system with clearly defined procedures and data access.

Also very important is the absence of educational systems in towns and municipalities as well as the absence of ICT for information technology specialists in towns and municipalities. There is neither a definition of professional capabilities nor a direct dissemination of information about these specific ICT applications. Often, professional solutions prevail over ones with a more comprehensive approach to public service and support of activities and services in the given area.

Improvement of information systems in towns and municipalities in line with uniform rules specified by required standards and in line with implementation of functional IS will allow for more work to be dedicated to the establishment of virtual authorities which will serve the public around the clock. This will also fulfil information society requirements regarding public services right down to the lowest level of public administration i.e. to towns and communities which carry out delegated state administration in each municipality.

The state currently participates in subsidising of local administration via central administration bodies. One of the subsidised areas is the Union of towns and communities. The subsidies to the Union come from the Ministry of Regional Development in order to support rural development in the area of IT – over 230 projects (1998–2000). Other subsidies include the programme of IT implementation in public libraries of the Ministry of Culture. The Ministry of the Interior prepares projects for Internet implementation in towns and communities with the possibility of co-financing them. A subsidy is expected to be 55%. The Internet is expected to become the standard communication medium of public administration.

Conclusion

Overall, this report reflects the present situation concerning IT implementation in public administration. It describes the state at the central administration level as well as the situation of towns and municipalities based on the information and knowledge gained from the Committee for information systems in towns and communities. The objective of this document is to raise discussion in towns and municipalities and to define further steps towards an information society. To do that, ICT has to be used and public information services have to be provided, i.e. by the development of electronic government (eGovernment). The above efforts should result in possible solutions for towns and municipalities whilst fulfilling eEurope+2003 objectives and should create co-ordinated pressure on central administration to fulfil the needs of towns and communities via the Union. The Union, thanks to its activities, has the best starting position and possibilities for development of further activities aiming towards an information society. We can say that there are several activities in the CR which will need to be taken into

consideration (for example public libraries). It is necessary to co-ordinate these activities with those which have already achieved positive results. It is necessary to initiate and support better promotion of achieved results in the area of ICT regarding various activities. Central administration should strive for publication of successful results which are often achieved thanks to its active support and thus contribute towards a better understanding of the public administration's steps towards an information society. So that these steps are better understood not only by citizens but also by experts from all areas of society. From the point of view of the ISMO committee this understanding should be mainly reached by towns and communities on which the public administration reform has the biggest impact.

Recommended and used literature

1. **State information policy**, Road to information society, approved by resolution of the Government of the CR, on May 31, 1999, No. 525
2. **Conception of building ISVS**, approved by resolution of the Government of the CR, on October 11, 1999, No. 1059
3. Programme EU **eEurope** from December 8, 1999
4. **eEurope+2003**, Joint programme for information society implementation in Europe, Action plan prepared by candidate countries with the European Commission contribution, June 2001, Göteborg
5. **Municipalities and Internet**, Ministry of Regional Development of the CR, Prague 2000

Hungarian National Association of Local Authorities

Zoltán Farkas

The Government of the Republic of Hungary

Hungary has no national strategy on the information society. While for many years a number of initiatives have been taken to develop such a strategy, the attempts (including an attempt in early 1998 to get the Government Program on IT Strategy adopted) have all failed. The most recent effort by the Government of Hungary was started in spring 2000 in order to eliminate the backlog in the area of developing information society. Even after the setting up of an independent IT Government Commissioner's Office, there remained multiple overlaps in relation to the political treatment of information society. There is no one single, named player, who could keep the Program on Information Society Strategy intact from the fights between political parties, and that of Ministries, and at the same time could make all the players of the political system and those of the economy and society accept the fact that the Program for the Development of Information Society is a central priority for societal development in the 21st century. Thus, there is no guarantee that the efforts of developing previous documents will not be wasted and there is no guarantee the those documents will be used by the Government for programs on information society run by individual Ministries and public offices.

Even accelerated efforts seemed to be made in the topic of information in the year 2000, the political demand for systematic information developments is dated from an earlier time.

The National Information Strategy (NIS) initiative was launched and remained uncompleted under the previous government. A Preparatory Committee to NIS was formed in spring 1995 (with the involvement of professional organizations, Ministries and consultants), in order to prepare the nation's information strategy for a period of 5–15 years. A draft version of the document has been prepared, however the government has never adopted it. That fact, however, did not represent any obstacle to launching and continuing large strategic programs on creating infrastructure and making it available to people: e.g. the outstanding 'SULINET' Program run by the Ministry of Culture (to equip schools with computers and access to Internet), and the National Information Infrastructure Development Program. The problem lies in the fact that those existing programs and new development programs have not been coordinated, they lack a systematic and consciously formed strategic force to support them.

After the change of government in 1998, an effort has been started by the Prime Minister's Office to create an overall information strategy. As part of that effort, several papers have been discussed in 1998 and the years after, and a number of important strategic documents were published in spring 2000.

Theses on Information Society – That document has been coordinated by a unit of the Prime Minister's Office, and, considering its literary genre, is not applicable to describe a strategy, and can rather be deemed a background material to a strategy.

Hungarian Answer to the Challenges of the Information Society – That lengthy document has been made by another unit of the Prime Minister's Office, and describes accurately and in high quality the contents and size of the information challenge, its major parts, and states the necessity and players of cooperation. Based on its literary genre, the document is a discussion document in preparation for strategy formulation.

Széchenyi Plan – That document is the official National Development Plan of the Government of Hungary, and explicitly says that all development efforts should be taken with a view to the importance of affluence in knowledge and reliance on information in economy.

The document's objective is to achieve accession to the European Union, and its economic philosophy is network economy. "The process of globalization and the evolvement of the information society have made knowledge as capital even more valuable, and that fact will provide the economy of Hungary, which is lacking capital funds, with a competitive advantage." – the document says in one of its central theses. However, apart from the Innovation Sub-program, the specific tasks defined in the strategy of the Széchenyi Plan fail to include the initial premises, and therefore cannot make up for the lack of an overall information society strategy.

Electronic Government Program – The document was published in June, 2001, and describes ideas about a planned schedule for introducing the practice of electronic transaction of affairs. It is important to note that the Program addresses the IT problems and solutions of the central public administration together with the local public administration. The Program sets it as a goal to achieve citizen-friendly transaction of affairs and more effective internal operations. The plans as defined in the Program can easily be fitted to the endeavors municipalities have pursued so far. However, in order to implement and further develop the Program, it would be necessary – especially with respect to the chapters on local governments – to involve municipal experts in an institutionalized way.

As far as the current status of the country is concerned, it can be stated that though the existence of the IT Government Commissioner's Office gives us reason to be optimistic, nevertheless what is lacking is a strategic document (sometimes referred to as Neumann Plan) and defined tasks and objectives in it, which could be used to coordinate the efforts of the Office and could politically be undertaken. But it can reasonably be expected that, in addition to its current Programs, the IT Commissioner's Office, as a responsible agency, will launch and help others starting a number of information society development programs, the objective and nature of which agree with the endeavors of local governments in this area. Thus, due to mutual benefits, the Government of Hungary can be considered as a very important partner in relation to municipal information technology developments and harmonizing information systems. Local governments, both as initiators and active participants, should help implement national programs so that synergy can be achieved. Local governments need to get prepared so that they can join appropriate central programs, and can absorb central funds.

The strategic programs of the Government are powerful, which can be illustrated by the fact that Hungary managed to "take the rhythm of the developed world" especially in the areas of information and data management. In recent years, successful steps have been taken in the area of creating meta-databases under the METASPACE Project run by the IT Inter-ministerial Committee and the Hungarian Energy Office. The Achievements of the Project acclaimed much recognition in Europe. The ongoing KIKERES Project are expected to produce outstanding achievements, and will be in complete harmony with the guidelines contained in the Green Book of the EU. In spring 2000, the working group of the KIKERES Project prepared the foundations for a meta-data-set, and started to take steps in gathering and comparing data sources and data needs in the various sectors of Government. From the onset of that effort, many other agencies have been actively involved (Hungarian Energy Office, Central Statistical Office, the Ministry of Transport and Water Management, the Ministry of Health). In association with the KIKERES Project, a Government Decree (No. 1113/2000 XII. 27) has been issued on the data assets in public administration - a step that has been welcome by many. In future, the meta-database will further be developed, co-ordinations between institutions will take place, and an institutional system of its own will be created for the KIKERES Project.

NGO's and the Society

The role of NGO's (Non-Governmental Organizations) is becoming tremendously important in the age of information. It is because NGO's are able to amplify the problems that affect individuals, and represent them before market players and politicians. They have preserved that function of them all through history, therefore NGO's can be characterized even today as the mediators between individuals and the participants of politics and the market.

The principle of subsidiarity is used widely as a fundamental principle in definitions of civil society in Western-Europe and in the political practices of the EU. That notion maintains that everything should be solved on the level where the most information is available for tackling the problem, where the necessary expertise is present, where the most interest is attached to the implementation of the effort, and where the legitimate players in the effort are present. The opportunities provided by new information and communication devices have given a strong impetus to NGO's, and no wonder, since they play a special role in enforcing the principle of subsidiarity.

- NGO's may be backed by large market players as founders of foundations, public foundations or non-profit organizations, which fact in itself may represent a substantial organizing force in the market. The non-profit sector has importance not only in society and politics, but that sector has become an important economic force in the past decade. The non-profit sector produces HUF 155 billion annually, which is 2,8 percent of Hungary's GDP. 60 thousand registered NGO's employ 45 thousand full-time staff.
- In spite of that fact, NGO's are operating in an increasingly unstable financial environment nowadays, and the non-profit sector in Hungary is facing the most difficult period after the change of regime. Foreign supporters had made substantial contributions earlier to the development of the domestic NGO sector, however, assistance from the West today is targeted to countries further East to us. That situation will inevitably enforce a closer cooperation in the near future between market organizations, political organizations and NGO's. In addition to the economic pressure, some focused efforts should be made in order to strengthen communication and expand on coordination possibilities between the political and the NGO sector especially. An announcement to that effect is included in the document published by the European Community, which was drafted in late 1999 in order to encourage a closer cooperation between political and central government organizations on one hand and NGO's on the other.

The Local Government System

In Hungary there are almost 3200 local governments in communities, and an additional 19 county governments. Law 1990/LXV on Local Governments (hereinafter the Municipal Act) sets forth the institutional framework for local governments, which enjoy independence in financial management.

Local governments have a wide range of responsibilities and competence. Governments of the capital city, the counties, and the cities with county rank have some extra responsibilities under law, otherwise the governments of communities provide the same mandatory services and can provide the same type of voluntary services. Mayor's Offices transact affairs as authorities as well, the responsibility for which rests with the Notaries (a Notary is the top person in the administration of a local government, and his/her main responsibility is to ensure that the local government does everything lawfully –*the translator*). The local government and its institutions provide all the mandatory and voluntary services under full responsibility.

Services are funded from own incomes (taxes, income from financial management, other), and from central transfers (called normative subsidies). This latter funds represent the larger part of incomes. The state gives normative subsidies to finance those services that are the responsibility of the state but are carried out by municipalities. Therefore, those funds are earmarked, and in most of the cases fail to fully cover actual costs, thus the flexibility of local governments is rather limited from a financial perspective. The budgets of the majority of local governments fail to secure enough funds for high quality public services. For the purpose of capital investments in the community or to improve the operational conditions for themselves, local governments can participate in grant programs (targeted and addressed subsidies from the central government, international programs), however, even those funds are not enough to keep capital investment levels adequate. That statement holds especially true for municipal capital investments in administration and in information technology.

In spite of the fact that the local government system in Hungary is rather fragmented, local governments are not ready to cooperate with each other, may be due to lack of traditions.

Local governments in 264 communities in the country operate so called “document offices”, which issue various documents (driver’s licenses, car traffic licenses, passports). The information system necessary for doing the job is provided and maintained by the state. It would be a practical step to do in future to connect the information system in document offices with the information systems operated by local governments, which could result in a number of benefits (e.g.: information on transfer in ownership of cars could be linked to information on car weight tax levied by local governments).

It varies from local government to local government to what extent they are equipped with information systems. Scarce resources have not made it possible for municipalities to replace the fleet of computers continually by most recent designs, or to buy and maintain large information systems. In Mayor’s Offices, you can see decade-old and brand new computers used side-by-side in the same office. Many different types of computers, usually with no brand and with systems incompatible to each other are used to try and do the job. Scarce resources also prevent local governments from employing computer enough staff with appropriate competence.

Despite limited resources, local governments have launched many programs with the objective of utilizing information technology in order to facilitate their work and simplify and accelerate communications with their partners. Attempts to coordinate those programs have not been successful so far, which may lead to fragmentation of resources that are scarce anyway. Local governments can boast with success primarily in relation to creating digital maps.

In order to implement the idea of electronic governance, a fundamental improvement need to take place in the utilization of information systems by local governments. On-line transaction of affairs poses completely different requirements as to the nature of computer systems in comparison with the systems that have been used so far for supporting administrative work mainly. Systems need to be made much more reliable and data security must be improved.

Municipal decision-makers need to change their attitude fundamentally in order to meet the challenges of the information society. That statement can best be corroborated by the fact that in 2000, the 22 cities with county rank spent hardly over 0.5 percent of their budgets for IT investments and maintenance, which is only a fraction of the desired level. As a result, citizens can day to day experience the differences between the services of organizations in the community that are well equipped with information systems, like banks, insurance companies, telephone companies or even the document offices and those of the mayor’s offices.

Most of the local governments are unlikely to have enough funds and competent staff (with special expertise, like networks, data security) even in future to be able to create and

maintain systems necessary for electronic operations. Therefore, applications offered by external suppliers will need to be used increasingly in future. The role of ASP's (Application Service Provider) will substantially increase in the digitalization of public services by municipalities. And that process will soon need to be supported by various means.

Electronic Local Government

The developments that have taken place in information and communication technology allow the phenomenon called "information society" to happen in the near future and promise to make it possible to finance in the long-run. The acceleration of the accession process in Europe with an equal speed has opened up an additional front in the competition between the communities of individual regions in economy and interest representation. Communities can remain competitive only when local governments are able to share information available to them to the entire society, can create effective communication channels with the numerous participants of economic and cultural life in the community and the region.

The expansion of communication possibilities enforced the leaders of local governments even with much larger funds than those in Hungary to participate in the elimination of data monopolies, which are harmful to communities. The financing problems of the public service sector clearly indicate also in Hungary that the ability of individuals and their economic communities to participate is increasing, and their participation in financing goods that have been created from public funds previously is unnecessarily and harmfully hindered by the lack of disclosure of information of public interest.

Local governments have to undertake any responsibilities that rest with them in relation to making developing technologies available to society, and, in the course of providing public services, they need to make good use of new opportunities and get prepared to meet new demands:

- Citizens want to get information about the affairs of themselves and their communities not only in person by using transportation means, but also at any given time and service location they chose. They want to use some of the services regardless the limits of space and time.
- Nobody should be pushed out of the services of the information network just because he/she has no access to conditions necessary to link to the system. Everybody should be allowed to use the opportunities offered by computers and access to networks.
- Local governments must undertake a role in disbursing information culture and educate people on it.
- Based on the information received, citizens want to react much faster and more directly than before to the decisions of municipal offices and leadership.
- The players in public administration themselves want to get prepared for decision-making based on information that is more ample and controlled by the public, therefore credible, (E-procurement with the help of sector-based IT developments.)
- Gathering credible data on the financial management of the community - for the purpose of making it public among others – and the organization of that information from several perspectives will help learn about the real costs and quality indicators on the services provided by municipal institutions. Those data will become more comparable with each other, and with the performance figures of the market players. Thus, those services could be selected that must be provided from public funds but do not necessarily require the involvement of public employees. At last, one can make a distinction between the objectives and means of public services.

Citizen demands for high quality and effective services and the challenges of the information society both require almost similar answers from municipalities. The possibilities for supporting traditional operations with modern IT applications will soon be exhausted, they will be impossible to further develop. Therefore the only option left for municipalities is to start the difficult task of introducing electronic governance. And how much change and restructuring is required to do that effort will, of course, vary from local government to local government depending on their size and responsibilities. However, only that effort can result uniformly in the evolvement of municipal operations of high quality to meet demands in all areas.

Citizen Opinions About Electronic Transaction of Affairs

Survey results show that over half of the citizens using public services are dissatisfied with the way their affairs are transacted, and an additional quarter of them is partly satisfied only. Nearly 30 percent of those dissatisfied complained about the way municipalities treated their affairs. The next service-providers on the list is banks, the dissatisfaction rate against which is half of the one against municipalities. (It must be noted that after document offices have been made part of the organization of local governments, municipalities have become the service providers to serve the largest and most diverse clientele).

Over half of those questioned said that IT applications were used for transacting their official affairs (customer orientation system 56%, automatic telephone information system 51%, info-terminal 32%, getting information through the Internet 19%).

Most of those having used the services mentioned above were satisfied with the new options (customer orientation system 70%, automatic telephone information system 59%, info-terminal 75%, getting information through the Internet 80%). The same survey also shows that over 80 percent of those questioned are on the opinion that automated solutions will play an increasingly important role in the transaction of official affair in future. Nearly 80 percent is the proportion of those according to whom the increased use of computers and the Internet substantially facilitates the transaction of official affairs.

Citizens seem to be quite open to electronic transaction of affairs. 83 percent of Internet-users said that they would tend to use electronic means for transacting their affairs, but 51 percent of those not using Internet were also on the same opinion. However, special attention should be given to the information which shows that nearly 80 percent of those questioned have an aversion against or tend to mistrust electronic transaction of affairs.

Even the survey results show that citizens accept and ready to use the services offered by information technology when using public services, and they are aware of the fact that electronic transaction of affairs will become an everyday business – a process that cannot be halted. Over half of those questioned were on the opinion that this process will take place within a decade (65 percent of the Internet-users and 55 percent of non Internet -users). Citizens trust that IT will make the transaction of affairs more comfortable.

Unfortunately no survey has been made on the subject, but it is most likely that such municipal information systems that can secure transparency to the operations and decision-making processes of local governments, and help people get oriented in their private and business lives, and are accessible without limitation would largely increase the trust in the organization, and would diminish the democratic deficit. An electronic governance system that would allow active participation of citizens in decision-making processes would substantially facilitate the job of decision-makers, and increase citizen satisfaction with their work.

Association of Polish Cities

Marek Bigosiński

Introduction

The key task for Poland is to join the process of building the information age by using modern telecom and information technologies, ensuring direct access to information, shaping the social awareness, and developing the intellectual and economic potential of the society. In consideration of the process of integration with the European Union structures, a need arises to adapt Polish solutions and standards to the modern image of the Information Society in the process of moulding. The majority of the countries candidates for joining the European Union is preparing or has already prepared the documents defining the strategies for the development of information societies. In Poland this document is entitled *“ePoland. Scheme for the development of the Information Society in Poland for the years 2001-2006”* and has been passed to different opinion-making environments, including self-government bodies, for their comments and agreement. This document was accepted by the Government on 11 September 2001.

It is worth mentioning that Polish Information Technology organisations and self-government bodies have for several years now insisted on the need of taking up definite steps at the government level to enable the building and development of the Information Technology. During the Congress of the Polish Information Technology held in Poznań from November 30 until December 2, 1998 a proposal was presented to make the *“Treaty for the development of the Information Society in Poland”*. Below we present selected passages from the document approved in Poznań on December 2, 1998:

Similarly, self-government environments represented by the largest, Poland-wide organisations initialled the *“SELF-GOVERNMENT TREATY FOR THE INFORMATION SOCIETY”* on June 16, 2000 agreed to take common action to develop the Information Society on the regional and local level.

Poland-wide self-government organisations:

- The Polish County Association,
- The Federation of the Associations of Municipalities and Counties of the Republic of Poland
- The Union of Polish Small Towns,
- The Union of Rural Communes of the Republic of Poland,
- The Association of Polish Cities,
- The National League
- And the Association of the “Cities in the Internet”

National Legislative Frameworks

Rules of law related to the building of the information society in Poland

Law on the protection of personal data.

LAW of 29 August 1997 r. on the protection of personal data.

The law determines the principles of procedure in processing data of persons and legal entities, which data are or can be processed in databases. This law is applied for personal data processing in IT systems and directories, file listings, statistics and other registries.

Law on the protection of secret information.

LAW of 22 January 1999 on the protection of secret information

The law determines the principles of the protection of information, which demand shelter from illegal disclosure for containing state or service secrets, independently of the form of expression.

Telecommunications law.

LAW of 21 July 2000: *Telecommunications law*.

The law determines the principles of the:

- provision and of activities related to providing telecom services and the usage of telecom networks
- usage and control of radio appliances,
- functioning of telecom regulatory organs,
- number management,
- radio wave and orbital frequency management.

2. The acts also determine the:

- requirements towards telecom equipment,
- requirements towards electromagnetic compatibility of appliances,
- principles of trade sales of appliances under this law.

Electronic signature.

LAW of 18 September 2001 *on e-signature*.

The law determines the principles of applying e-signature, the legal effect caused, the principles of authentic services and controlling measures.

Access to public information.

LAW of 6 September 2001 on access to public information.

The law on the access to public information determines the term ‘public information’ and determines the right to access this type of information and the duties of those required to guarantee an access.

(Waiting for the signature of the President of the Republic of Poland).

Database security.

LAW of 27 July 2001 on database security.

The law defines the phrase ‘database’ and also determines the principles of protection against unwanted access incl. works under the law of 4 February 1994 on *copyright and related laws*.

(Waiting for the signature of the President of the Republic of Poland)

National Strategies***ePOLAND* the discussion of the document**

It is worth presenting here the contents and the advancement of work on the document which may decide the shape and the directions of the development of the Information Society in Poland in the years to come – “*ePoland Scheme for the development of the Information Society in Poland in the years 2001-2006*”.

ePoland inspired by the European initiative ‘*eEurope 2002 – An Information Society for All*’ with the purpose to accelerate the steps taken in order to transform the European community in the global *Information Society*. From the very beginning this initiative has been one of the key elements of the European Committee strategy, aimed at strengthening the competitiveness of the European economy. The strategy is expected to stimulate employment increase, work efficiency and competitiveness of the EU products in world markets, and to have a positive influence on the whole sphere of the European social and economic life. The assumptions of such initiative are fully reflected in general objectives accepted by the member states:

- introduction of the European citizens to the digital civilisation age in all spheres of social and professional activity,
- creating the Europe competitive with respect to the rest of the world, ready to finance and implement new ideas,
- ensuring that the in the processes underway social, economic and cultural conditions of the EU states are taken into consideration, and that the processes inspire trust and strengthen the unity of societies.

The Polish strategy for the development of the Information Society assumes that the following main objectives are attained:

- preparation of the Polish society for fast technological, social and economic changes related with the creation of the Information Society ,
- adaptation of the legal regulations to the requirements of the fast technological progress and the Information Society age,
- preparation of the Polish society for the challenges of the new employment market and new work methods,
- adaptation of the national economy to the requirements of the global electronic economy through the introduction of appropriate legal regulations,
- creating of clear and citizen-friendly public administration structure tailored to the open Information Society, by means of telecom and information tools,
- creating conditions for constant and balanced regional development, in consideration of modern telecom and information technologies,
- development of modern industry branches and the increase of their *innovation capacity* in order to improve the competitiveness of the Polish economy,
- ensuring the support for electronic economy by means of scientific background, in order to better use the opportunities offered by the Information Society model,
- extensive promotion of the Polish culture and the Polish economic achievements.

The defined objectives should be attained by means of:

- appropriate adaptation of legal regulations and their fast implementation,
- co-ordination of operations of entities at each public sector level,
- stimulation of activities of the private sector and extra-government organisations, in compliance with the principle of subsidiary,
- definition of indexes used to calculate and verify the activities taken up,
- initiating the operations which require public means to be used.

During the implementation of this strategy, the co-ordinating body appointed by the Government of the Republic of Poland, shall systematically prepare reports on the advancement of works and make it available to public administration units and other entities concerned.

The discussed document is composed of the following parts:

OBJECTIVE '0': DEVELOPMENT OF THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE.

- Widespread, cheaper, and faster access to Internet resources
- Fast Internet for scientists
- Network security
- Free software

OBJECTIVE 2: INVESTING IN PEOPLE AND SKILLS

- Education in the digital age
- Work in economy based on knowledge
- Widespread participation in economy based on knowledge
- Polish cultural resources in global networks

OBJECTIVE 3: STIMULATION OF A BETTER USE OF INTERNET CAPABILITIES

- Electronic economy (e-economy)
- Public administration on-line
- The Judiciary and public prosecutor's office in the network
- Telecom and Information Technology in the Police
- Health care on-line
- Social welfare on-line
- Intelligent systems of transportation support

OBJECTIVE 4: TELECOM AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IN RURAL AREAS

OBJECTIVE 5: DEVELOPMENT OF DIGITAL RADIO AND TELEVISION

For the fulfilment of the aforementioned objectives, the detailed tasks were defined in *ePOLAND* document with the division into the execution/ coordination units along with the evaluation of estimated costs. Full version of the document is available on: www.kbn.gov.pl

The negotiation attitude of Poland in the EU accession process in the field of: „19. Telecommunications and information technology” [7].

It is an important element in the development of the Polish information society that local law matches the EU legislation. Therefore it is worth taking a look at the present negotiation attitude of Poland in the field of “*Telecommunication and Information Technology*”.

The four priorities of the Polish part are (approved by the Council of Ministers 12.06.2001):

Liberalisation of the telecom market – in line with the EU directives, especially in the following fields: liberalisation, closed networks, inter-network connections, licensing, general services, mobile and satellite communication, equipment quality standards, regulation authority functions. Planned budget for 2000-2002 is PLN 25.5 m.

Development of general telecom services in rural regions meeting the *acquis communautaire* requirements – the required budget is app. PLN 764 m.

Adjusting Polish Postal Law to regarding mail postal services to **the acquis communautaire and restructuring P.P.U.P Poczta Poland** in order to ensure EU quality control standards and to set up the Postal regulation Office – estimated costs: PLN 2301 m.

The development of the information society in Poland – as outlined in *ePOLAND*. Required budget is currently under estimation.

European Programmes Frameworks

Common efforts to implement the information society in Europe.

The level of development of EU-candidate countries in building the information society is similar and is unfortunately behind the EU 15. Therefore the **eEuropa+** [12] initiative must be valued very high. It is only the modernisation of national economies, implementing changes in business processes, up-to-date management techniques and administration as well as changes in the relations between the citizens, companies and governments may help to avoid the broadening of the “digital crevasse” in Europe.

It is important so that the self-governments of our countries identified cooperation opportunities in order to act in favour of at least some of the purposes of the document. It is also very important to promote the idea among the candidates.

The LOGIN initiative (Local Government Information Network) [13] is a good example of this type of cooperation. It aims to set up an Internet-based information service to support self-governments in professional development and to supply the officers with the adequate knowledge.

I believe that many fields of cooperation can be identified as issues on the agenda of forthcoming international initiatives.

Conclusions

- The development of Information Society in Poland should be accepted as an unavoidable process, a development opportunity for us and all countries, including those aspiring to the European Union. As early as in the Report of Bangemann [6] (1994) the following provision may be found: *... “all revolutions create the uncertainty, breach the continuity – but also create new possibilities. The current revolution is not an exception. The way in which we respond, the way in which we convert our current chances into real benefits will depend on the fact how fast we would be able to find our place in the European Information Society.” ...*
- An important element in this process is to work out the national strategies in conformity with the strategies of the European Union countries, to win the supporters and properly select the executors,
- The strategies must in a special way take into account the developing disproportions occurring in particular regions of the State and provide support for the non-developed regions so that the lack of access to modern technologies do not cause the increase of the distance to the best ones. It is necessary to eliminate the “digital illiteracy”,
- The government strategies must clearly determine the role of local self-government authorities who provide direct services to the citizens,
- It is necessary to adopt the assumption about the division of tasks into the government and local self-government authority administrations ascribing the first the responsibility for the infrastructural investments along with the businesses, legislative activity, regulations in the field of education shape and maintenance of national Information Technology resources, as well as the determination of the principles and sources of financing,

- Local self-government authorities will execute the supporting principle, depending on their level. Thus, the task of the local self-government authority of voivodship should be to work out the strategies of the development of Information Society in a particular region, so that the region may start winning the voivodship contracts for the execution of undertakings within Information Society as well as the supplementing funds from the European Union. The local self-government authority of counties should become the initiators of common actions with municipalities located in its area (e.g. development of multimedia centres of information in libraries, cooperation in developing county telecom and Information Technology infrastructure, promotion, unemployment fighting, etc.). The tasks of municipalities should be to improve the citizen service with the use of the remote access – remote dealing with different matters, information provision of local law acts and municipality self-government functioning, activation of information desks, etc.,
- The process of development of Information Society will not succeed without a properly developed system of education at all levels starting from children and the young ending up with the employees and local self-government authority activists,
- A conscious Information Society performs an important role in the democratisation process. Having an access to the public information, such Society may control the public institutions and manage public funds,
- The local self-government authorities should facilitate the inclusion of non-governmental organisations into the process of development of Information Society treating them as their allies in the executed undertakings,
- The cooperation of local self-government authority organisation from the Central European countries aspiring to the European Union is very important because it will enable the use of the synergy effect in the execution of joint undertakings eliminating technological delays.

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Association of Towns and Communities of Slovakia

Boris Tonhauser

Organisation of public administration in Slovakia and the state of local self-government

Public administration in the Slovak Republic has been governed, since the cancellation of an integrated public administration in 1990, by a strictly separated model, where state administration authorities exist parallel to self-governing bodies.

State administration authorities execute their operation at the level of central state administration bodies (Office of the Government, Ministries, specialised bodies), bodies of regional state administration (regional authorities) and bodies of district state administration (district authorities). In Slovakia, there are 8 regional authorities and 79 district authorities which represent decentralised authorities of state administration.

In Slovakia, self-government currently exists only on a local level, but the creation of regional self-governing units (self-governing regions) is expected to occur in 2002, according to the present situation concerning the process of public administration reform. Self-government authorities thus carry out self-governing competencies only on local level, in municipalities and towns or town quarters. Another major complication is the sub-division of local self-government, because the Slovak Republic is divided into over 2 900 independent and self-governing municipalities and towns. Which leads to municipalities facing problems caused by low income coming from local and proportional taxes (received as a percentage from the state budget) as well as by ineffectiveness of services provided to the population. These issues are currently being dealt with by the government project of public administration reform. The main objectives of this project are as follows:

- The creation of self-governing units at regional level (self-governing regions)
- The decentralisation of operation (competencies) from the state administration level to bodies of regional and local self-government
- The reform of the tax system and fiscal decentralisation.

The main and the most important representative of local self-governments in Slovakia is ZMOS – Združenie miest a obcí Slovenska (Association of Towns and Communities of Slovakia), which includes 96% of all towns and communities. Within the organisational structure of this association, there is a Section of information technologies, statistics and education which deals with the problems relating to information technologies. Difficulties relating to implementation of information technologies within self-government represent one of the main priorities of this Section's agenda.

Current status of local self-governments in the area of information technologies

When assessing the development and further strategic planning of information technologies, it is very important to know how many municipal and town authorities are equipped with a computer system capable of communicating with external systems (Internet, Extranet) located externally and also with which type of information technology the authorities of self-government are equipped. Former Slovak national survey (1998) provided the following results: out of all 2908 Slovak municipalities, 1612 municipalities answered the survey (a 55% return rate). Among all respondents, there were only 386 municipalities, which were not equipped with information technology at all (24%). It is worth mentioning that towns are all

equipped with information technology, usually to quite a high standard both in hardware and software.

The Act on Free Access to Information which requires towns to disclose a full list of enumerated areas of information via Internet, also dealt with situation in the towns. Towns were obliged to implement a systematic procedure for the collection, processing and disclosure of such information as well as to create their own web pages, provided they had not already done so.

There are still a lot of municipalities which are not yet equipped with information technology. This is explained by a lack of financial resources in their municipal budgets. The truth is also that not all mayors have understood the benefits of modern methods of data processing and there is not a relevant expert or at least an enthusiast available in all municipalities.

Implementation and use of information technology in public administration, or in local self-government obviously requires some initial investments but then again such investments are required by all services provided to the population. In the same way that it is possible to gradually invest in the building of a sewerage system or in the implementation of gas pipes in municipalities, it is also possible to build a municipal information system.

Ideas and trends concerning further development

In 1992, the “National Programme for the implementation of information technologies” had already been drawn up. This document reflected the current state of knowledge from Slovak and world perspective. However, the execution of this Program, apart from having positive aspects (progress in some areas for example legislation or establishment of the Slovak academic network – SANET) also had some negative ones (for example the support of science and education remained only in written form and the updating of a strategy programme was forgotten). During the Program implementation, it was mainly state stimulation and support as well as resources needed for the program implementation, which were missing.

Fast IT and their applications development in many areas of practical life of society lead to re-evaluation of strategic targets of society development. The National Programme for the implementation of IT in the Slovak Republic (further only SR) is, from a current standpoint, already obsolete. The current status does not offer much hope for optimism, not only because a clearly defined policy of IT implementation, strategic vision and action plan for the creation of an information society in the SR are missing, but above all, due to a lack of explicit support of executive and legislative power.

Legislative framework

Legislative support for the development of an information society is currently based on a few (more or less) isolated acts. Insufficient co-ordination of the IT implementation process has also had a negative impact in the area of legislation. During the preparation of a legislative framework for the IT implementation process, a systematic approach is missing, i.e. a comprehensive conception of the required legal rules, their mutual links and a time schedule for their preparation.

Act on the State Information System

The framework for a systematic approach in the area of the IT implementation in state administration is created by the Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic (further only the NR SR) No. 261/1995 Coll., on the State Information System (further only SIS). This act regulates the conditions for the building and operation of SIS as well as the rights and obligations of the bodies operating in the area of SIS. The act aspires mainly to ensure the improve-

ment of SIS integrity by the standardisation of information-communication technologies (further only ICT) and data as well as by the co-ordination of procedures in design and the implementation of its individual parts. At the same time, it should unify procedures of the state bodies when obtaining data from other entities, during a mutual takeover and submission of data among the state bodies and also when providing data to other entities and to public.

Adoption of the Act on SIS had many positive consequences, for example, in the area of legislation (personal data protection), integration tools creation (creation of basic standards for SIS, methodology-organisational procedures for planning, development and IS project management), in communication infrastructure development (GOVNET). The Act however, also has problems in the areas of the specification of the “state information system” concept and the method of constituting the Council for Information technologies of the Slovak Government. The main problem however, is the fact, that the Act itself does not constitute a duty to prepare a long-term strategic vision of the target state of SIS or a long-term strategic plan which would roughly indicate how to attain such a state. A practical consequence of this is the fact that a short-term two-year conception (which is required by the Act) is not only shortened to support the IT implementation in state administration but, on top of that, is neither put into a longer-term context.

In 1997–1998, according to SIS conception, the following projects (among others) were to be tackled: register of inhabitants, program for the electronisation of libraries, information system on cultural heritage, IS on land, primary record-keeping’s and statistics in non-state forests, GIS on forest management, environmental information system, information system on territory, register of flats, health-care information system, European Communities (further only EC) legal regulations and international agreements concerning transportation, post and telecommunications, information on visa requirements when travelling to individual countries, information about children and youth in the SR, national information system on the scientific-research potential of the SR, unified system of legal information, automated information system of geodesy and cartography

Other significant legal regulations concerning the process of IT implementation in society are:

- Act of the NR SR No. 195/2000 Coll., on telecommunications which creates general regulatory framework for telecommunication networks and telecommunication services and stipulates rights and obligations of all telecommunication market entities
- Act of the NR SR No. 211/2000 Coll., on free access to information which regulates conditions, procedure and scope of free access to information
- Act of the NR SR No. 52/1998 Coll., on personal data protection in information systems
- Act of the NR SR No. 100/1996 Coll. on state secret and official secret protection and cryptographic information protection
- Act of the NR SR No. 322/1992 on state statistics, etc.

Act on Free Access to Information

This act came into force on 1. 1. 2001. The adoption of Act No. 211/2000 Coll., on free access to information and on change and amendment of some acts, filled this particular gap in the legal system of the Slovak Republic and, more notably, provided citizens and people working in public administration with a legal framework of access to information.

Act on Electronic Signature

The urgent need for an act on electronic signature in the Slovak Republic is also illustrated by the fact that it was discussed concurrently by the Ministry of Economy as well as the Ministry

of the Interior of the SR. Apart from this bill of government, there were also bills on electronic signature prepared by deputies and submitted to the National Council of the SR.

The reasons for the suspension of the legislative process of this act were unclear issues concerning competencies, factual disagreements with the Ministry of the Interior of the SR and the Office of the Government of the SR as well as a lack of executive regulations

Policy of IT implementation in society

Although the building of an information society is also included in the Programme Declaration of the Government of the SR (November 1998), the process of the IT implementation in society runs into many problems. The roots of these problems probably lie in a lack of attention to the strategic importance of information technologies and in a misunderstanding of the substance of the IT implementation in society.

By resolution No. 558/1999 of 30. 6. 1999, the Government of the SR asked the Minister of Post, Transportation and Telecommunications, in co-operation with other central bodies of state administration, to work out a complete strategy for the development of an information society in the new millennium. This task is one of the results of the discussion of the Government's representatives with the Slovak Conference of Rectors and of conclusions reached by ministerial forums of Central and Eastern European countries focused on the development of the information society. By the amendment of the act of competencies as of 1.1.2000, competencies in the area of information technologies were delimited to the Ministry of Education of the SR. By the change of competencies, the performance of the resolutions of the Government of the SR was also delimited.

Development of an information society (IT implementation in society) is a political programme of practically all developed countries in the world. In spring of 2000, the European Union passed the joint initiative which was then worked on further to create the action plan *eEurope*. The majority of Central and Eastern European countries are also getting very actively involved in the process of IT implementation.

Tackling the following problems must also be part of a long-term conception of developing an information society in the SR:

- absence of a policy and strategy for developing an information society under the SR conditions
- unclear competencies and practically no co-ordination of the sectors responsible for various aspects of the IT implementation process
- owing to a lack of a systematic approach in legislative initiatives, laws are being prepared in an isolated way
- fragmentation of financial resources prevents more comprehensive projects (which would allow for use of ICT potential) from getting started
- insufficient co-ordination of activities and co-operation at an international level within globalisation, very little involvement in the international division of labour
- unclear purpose and conception of the State Information System (SIS), which is still more focused on administration than on individual citizens.

IT implementation and the EU accession process

The SR has expressed its support to the international co-operation in the process of building an information society mainly by supporting conclusions of EU/CEE ministerial forums, con-

clusions of the European ministerial conference “Global networks – use of potential” (Bonn, 1997) and conclusions of ministerial conference on information society (Warsaw, 2000).

In line with conclusions of the above-mentioned forums and conferences, the Government of the SR adopted several important resolutions concerning the information society development (for example: 807/1996, 438/1997, 770/1997, 786/1997, 558/1999, 440/2000). All the resolutions still have only a partial character without a clear, conceptually sound strategic goal. The key problem is that resolutions with the aim of producing policy and strategy (conception) of IT implementation, have not been fulfilled yet.

In line with our ambitions concerning accession to the EU, the priorities stipulated in the National Programme for adoption of *acquis communautaire* (Chapter 19 –Telecommunications and information technologies) can be considered the key ones in the area of the information society development.

- Elaboration of the strategy of the information society development in the SR
- Implementation of the Action plan projects which execute the national strategy
- Stimulation of business sector
- Creation of prerequisites and building of trust in electronic commerce
- Development of activities of a national agency for IT implementation, as a co-ordination centre
- Enhancement of the role of science, research and information education (including a life-long education)
- Rationalisation of public administration execution (state administration and self-government) by effective use of ICT.

On the basis of the stated tasks we can see some progress in creating prerequisites for electronic commerce (a law on electronic signature is being prepared) and in (indirect) support of science and research (by getting involved in the 5th framework programme of the EU)

Representatives of the SR also participate in preparation of the action plan eEurope+. Enforcement of interests of the SR in this document is made more difficult by the fact that the SR does not have any official policy or strategic plan for developing an information society.

Link to the State Information System

Considerations relating to the possibility of connecting towns and municipalities to SIS do not require technical equipment of municipalities to be compliant with SIS requirements. It is the task for the communities and will have to be fulfilled by towns and municipalities themselves if they are interested in obtaining information from SIS in the future. Towns and municipalities require state administration to create a defined interface to which, if needed, they would be able to connect themselves on the basis of their own information system.

Ideally, all bodies of public administrations i.e. state as well as self-governing ones should have such software available which is capable of processing the agreed data structures. Development of such a product would not incur any additional costs. In most cases, municipalities will not be able to interfere with data or change their contents or structure. They will just be passive readers of information. Objective costs will be incurred only when there is a need to train an employee or employees of the municipal office to be able to work with application software.

To provide towns and municipalities with information from SIS on the basis of fees, is a separate issue. Section § 5, paragraph 3 of the Act No. 369/1990 as amended, stipulates the following: “state bodies provide municipalities with information from individual record-

keepings managed by the state bodies and participate in professional preparation of the employees of municipalities”. This statutory requirement is fulfilled by the strategy which requires the “interface” for municipal information systems be taken into consideration when preparing the individual projects.

Strategy of the national associations of local self-governments to assist local self-governments and serve as a bridge between the central and local level.

The current information systems of municipalities first began with the creation of utility systems usually concerning financial management. Gradually, other blocks were added until urban geographical information systems (GIS) were created.

In reality, the information needs of self-governments are wider. Currently, there is a need to process information flows in the area of national legislation as well as important documents of the bodies of the Council of Europe or the European Union. What is needed is an information contact with important institutions at a national as well as international level, overview on changing economic conditions, for example, banking services, support funds for self-government, etc.

We know, on the basis of a specific survey, that a citizen is not interested in who, from public administration, provides him/her with services, whether it is a body of state administration or a body of self-government. That is why it would not be right to allow information barriers to be created between these elements of public administration. Association of towns and communities of Slovakia (ZMOS) believes that it is essential to make an information state highway, which is represented by the State Information System (SIS) which is currently being built and the governmental network *Govnet* accessible, in required scope, to local self-governments, in compliance with Act No. 261/1995 Coll.

ZMOS understands the above as a fulfilment of the Act on Municipal Administration which, under § 5, paragraph 3, stipulates that “ state bodies provide municipalities with help in professional matters and with required information from individual record-keepings managed by the state bodies and participate in the professional training of the employees of municipalities.”

In order to professionally assess this issue, ZMOS organised several specialised events in 1998 with the goal of analysing the current problems and in order to look for optimal solutions in co-operation with involved partners from the area of state administration as well as the private sector.

In May 1998, at a conference in Modra, more than 200 participants tried to identify the main problems connected with information access and processing with regard to self-governments of towns and municipalities. Apart from lord mayors and mayors, representatives of the National Council of the SR, Office of the Government and the Ministries (of the interior, justice, environment, economy, construction and public work), the Office of geodesy, cartography and land register as well as software companies offering municipal information systems participated in this meeting with active contributions.

SIS and self-government were the key topics of the whole conference and they were discussed from the point of view of possibilities and conditions concerning link of towns and municipalities to SIS. ZMOS requires the creation of an interface to which towns and municipalities could get connected with their own information systems. For these purposes, it is necessary to have software available which will be able to process the agreed data structures. Since it is assumed that all district authorities will be provided with such software, its provision via ZMOS would not incur any additional costs. An issue concerning free provision of information from SIS is still unsolved. ZMOS, in this case, refers to the above-mentioned § 5,

paragraph 3 of the Act on Municipal Administration. In line with this stipulation it is necessary to take such an interface into consideration when preparing the individual projects of SIS.

Govnet represents a network which serves for mutual communication and data exchange between the central state bodies, their information resources and Internet. According to SIS conception, connection of regional and district authorities and their information systems to this network is ensured within the IT implementation process in the SR. Since ZMOS is a place where comments are raised against proposals of legal regulations, a requirement was raised repeatedly to obtain these proposals in electronic form. It would remove current technical barriers for processing of standpoints which would have more weight and better quality.

Another meeting at which over 350 participants dealt with specific problems of public administration took place in Bratislava, on October 15, 1998 and its key topic was the creation of the Register of population on the basis of the Act No. 253/1998 Coll., on reporting of residence of the citizens of the SR and Register of the inhabitants of the SR. Apart from organisational and technical problems connected with the system of the Register being built, the participants also discussed potential options of using technical equipment and software of the register in order to use two-way information flows between the local bodies of state administration and self-government. Since the aim of creating a new Register is represented by improved quality of collection, processing and provision of data on inhabitants at residence registration offices of municipalities and at district authorities, the system will not be functional without the involvement of town and municipal authorities. Subsequently, at the meetings of ZMOS and the Ministry of the Interior of the SR, options of equipping towns and municipalities with the required software were considered.

A danger of information barriers between state administration and self-governments is far from gone. Town and municipal authorities often express their displeasure when providing state administration with information in the form of various statistics and reports which do not always seem to be meaningful. That is why they believe that they should also get this information back processed in electronic form. So the situation sometimes seems to be a form of jealousy in regard to municipalities, as if state and especially central bodies wanted to keep the information for themselves, as if they did not want to provide it further. That is why towns and municipalities expect concrete steps to be made which will introduce the local self-government to the information highway of SIS.

The position of the information systems specialists within the structure of professionally specialised employees of town and municipal authorities is the second problem which many involved parties consider to be critical. Similar to other lines of business, in self-government many people consider the spreading of information technologies to be more of a source of frustration than a real benefit. The solution lies in patient educational work, in improved horizontal exchange of opinions and experience (including district information technology specialists) in the creation of a ZMOS information system and in the creation of an Association of communal information technology specialists which could, in line with other occupational associations under ZMOS, better monitor and solve specific problems of information technology specialists at town and municipal authorities.

The most recent meeting of the representatives of IT line of business and self-government in the Slovak Republic took place under the title Applications of information technologies in self-governments.

An international seminar under the auspices of the town mayor of Piešťany held on 20.–21. March 2001 pointed out some practical aspects of implementation of municipal and town information systems (MIS). On the basis of the presented lectures and presentations of

companies as well as discussion contributions, the participants of the seminar adopted and recommended the following conclusions:

- Current problems and legal obligations of self-governments as well as the reform of public administration point out a wide applicability and practical use of information technologies with an emphasis on town information systems.
- In the SR, as well as in individual regions, it is necessary to comprehensively tackle education in the area of information and communication technologies, to equip public administration at all levels with an information system which will provide information concerning the citizens and to make it available to citizens via Internet.
- The strategic importance of *e*-business support is based on the fact that only those regions which will master the technologies of *e*-business in practice, will be able to apply for a more important position in the global economy, for example when applying for support from pre-accession funds of the EU and later from the structural funds of the EU. The task of the state is therefore to create conditions for education, legislative regulations and economic impetus supporting the expansion of *e*-business.
- It is necessary to support the development of regional as well as cross-border tourism via MIS and Internet, as much as possible.
- Presentations given by the seminar's participants providing information systems for town and municipal self-governments (for example A.V.I.S., CORA, GEOINFOS) pointed out performance and comprehensiveness of such systems which could, in addition, be adjusted to the specific requirements of a customer. On the other hand, however, there are problems with their compatibility.
- The necessity of MIS (municipal information systems) unification seems to be inevitable, for example, for use of such systems for regional and national statistics for example.
- Local televisions (TV) which can be understood as a sub-system of the regional information system, are also a specific information medium. Considering the large-scale use of television, it will be, for some time, the only dominant functional information channel. One disadvantage of local TV as opposed to other elements of the system is, that TV is only a one-way channel. Interactivity between the source of information and the user, which is so typical over the Internet, is not available. The functions of local TV are still looked for and are indicated in relevant documents. In order to deploy and implement this medium successfully, we can, only in a relatively exact way, define "what the local TV should not be" or at least what it should try to avoid:
 - It should not be just a "village radio in images"
 - It should not be just an audiovisual "flyer or by-law" of the town authority
 - It should not be just a tool in the hands of communal manipulators and demagogues or being over-compliant towards current local political power
 - Local television will fulfil its informative function only if the viewer –citizen freely decides to accept such "local cable television".

ZMOS information strategy

Although the questions of information technologies have not yet been among the priority problems which ZMOS have been dealing with, the situation has been gradually changing. Effectiveness of co-operation between many foreign partner associations is based, to a large extent, on a good quality information system, effectively connected to the information systems of member towns and municipalities. The mission of ZMOS is to gain updated information for effective performance of self-governing functions for member towns and municipalities.

Apart from the State Information System, the bodies of state administration have created and extend their own information systems, which have large databases available. It is not easy to get oriented with this information and it is not generally accessible either. In principle the same applies also to data of international institutions of self-government (the Council of Europe, Committee of Regions of the EU, and also sister foreign associations of self-government where, in addition to the above, the orientation within the possible co-operation and obtaining of financial support is often complicated by language barriers.

On the other hand, it is necessary to obtain information from ZMOS members themselves in order to gather their standpoints and arguments when dealing with the Government or the National Council of the SR.

Another important element is to provide mutual information exchange among self-governments for example when making decisions in the financial area and when issuing generally binding ordinances, etc.

The main task of ZMOS is therefore to create its own information system as a service for member towns and municipalities (the objective is a general reference service) as well as to enforce direct access of towns and municipalities to required data outside the local self-government sphere of influence.

LOGIN

The first step in this effort is the web page of our association (www.zmos.sk), which was extended in 2001 by an interactive database of electronic documents thanks to the association's involvement in the international project consortium LOGIN – Local Government Information Network (www.logincee.org).

The goal of the project is to build an international library of electronic documents accessible via Internet which will allow local self-governments in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union to provide and share information, knowledge and experience. Documents concerning the areas connected with the problems of territorial and regional self-government are available on the above-mentioned web pages.

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Declaration of EAP Project

Heikki Lunnas

In accordance with the conclusions of the Budapest conference on the “Enhancement of the Active Participation of CEE Associations of Local and Regional Authorities in the Process of European Union Enlargement (European Project)”, held on March 17th and 18th 2001,

THE ASSOCIATION OF POLISH CITIES,
THE ASSOCIATION OF TOWNS AND COMMUNITIES OF SLOVAKIA,
THE UNION OF TOWNS AND COMMUNITIES OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC (UTC),
THE PARTNERSHIP OF HUNGARIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENTS (PLGA),

AND

THE ASSOCIATION OF FINNISH LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES,
THE SWEDISH ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES, AND
THE ASSOCIATION OF NETHERLANDS MUNICIPALITIES (VNG):

Reiterates that:

The accession of the Central and Eastern European countries to the European Union has a major impact on the economic, social development and efficient public sector, therefore it is a major strategic goal of the local and regional governments and their associations in the Central and Eastern European candidate countries.

The involvement of local and regional governments and their associations in the decision-making process after the post-Nice period of accession negotiations is in the interest of the sub-national, national and European levels, and it is a pre-condition to a successful and transparent accession.

Local and regional governments and their representative organisations play a critical role in development of administrative capacity of accession countries.

It is of great importance that the interest representation of the local and regional level is strengthened at the national and European levels.

The local and regional governments in the accession countries have the responsibility and a leading role to take in turning the accession into the accession of all the citizens of the candidate countries through making information about the impact of the accession – both positive and negative – widely known.

Whereas:

The advocacy channel to the European Union for local and regional governments has not been solidly established and institutionalised;

Local and regional governments' involvement in the formulation of the accession process has not been sufficient;

Pre-accession policies of local and regional governments have not been firmly established in all the Central and Eastern European candidate countries;

Incorporating the local and regional governments in the internal preparatory process towards EU accession in the candidate countries has not reached the optimal level;

The mutual cooperation of Central and Eastern European associations of local governments at the national and international levels as well as with their central governments has not been efficient.

Therefore:

It is extremely important that the local and regional level establishes a continuous dialogue at the national and international level.

At the European level the Central and Eastern European associations of local and regional governments will strive to network among each other as well as to strengthen the professional relationship with similar associations in the European Union.

Under the “Enhancement of Active Participation of CEE Associations of Local and Regional Authorities in the Process of EU Enlargement” Project, supported by the Local Governance and Public Service Reform (LGI), of the Open Society Institute (OSI), and by the Local Government Co-operation Programme managed by VNG and financed by the MATRA Programme of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of The Netherlands the above Central and Eastern European associations have identified the following areas as those of crucial importance to them:

- Employment
- The impact of EU harmonisation on local regulations and decision making
- Regionalisation
- Information society

In these areas the above associations will undertake research activities, and will prepare national and regional position papers in 2001.

The associations from the European Union member countries will assist the above associations as mentors by offering their experience resulting from their accession to the European Union.

The Central and Eastern European associations will take all opportunities to make their voice heard at the national level using their country specific channels to the national government, as well as at the European level identifying opportunities through the Committee of Regions, the Council of European Municipalities and Regions, and other institutions whenever possible.

EU Networks

Representative Organisation of European local and regional authorities (CEMR)

Walter Wenzel, Project Coordinator, ELANET/CEMR

Background

The Council of European Municipalities and Regions originated out of two essential prerequisites :

- Local democracy is the basis of all States' democratic public life : deeply attached to the principle of democracy, CEMR may only accept as members local and regional authorities resulting from free universal suffrage.
- Because, as one of the founders of CEMR, Edouard Herriot, Mayor of Lyons, asserted, "everything divides States and everything unites municipalities", **local authorities have an essential role to play in the realisation of the European Union**. Indeed, they provide popular support incited by local leaders, as the elected representatives closest to the citizens.

In a world which has become extraordinarily interdependent, towns and regions are therefore called upon to co-operate with their counterparts from other countries. The exchange of experience and transfer of expertise in the most varied fields are of the greatest interest to them. However, in order that this cooperation be successful, they must have their own tools available at the national level and set up joint structures with the local authorities of other countries.

It was in response to this need that the Council of European Municipalities (CEM) was founded in 1951 in Geneva, becoming the Council of European Municipalities and Regions in 1984.

The idea which formed the basis for the foundation of CEMR was sufficiently strong enough that **today, CEMR brings together more than 100 000 local and regional authorities in Europe**, from Lisbon to Tallinn, Reykjavik to Sofia, Oslo to Palermo, federated through 42 large national associations of local and regional authorities in 29 European countries. Hence, CEMR, since its merger with IULA (International Union of Local Authorities), is by far the most representative association of local and regional authorities in Europe. It is today presided by Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, President of the Auvergne Region.

CEMR is an organisation largely inspired by the federalist philosophy. Since its inception, it has held strongly to the principle of subsidiarity, according to which whether it be an individual citizen or all Europe, no level delegates to a superior level (municipality, region, State, European Union) that which it can do itself.

For CEMR, the principle of subsidiarity should not only regulate relations between States and the European Union, but based on the Citizen, all relationships between and among public authorities.

Actively working in favour of the implementation of new forms of governance, CEMR has drawn up a White Paper on the consultation process of local and regional authorities in Europe.

CEMR was at the origin of the European Charter for Local Self-Government, which has become a Convention of the Council of Europe, now signed and ratified by 34 Member

States. CEMR contributes its support to the draft European Charter on Regional Self-Government, adopted in 1997 by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe.

An organisation of local and regional authorities, CEMR argues in favour of European citizenship, particularly in seeking to promote the participation of Europeans in the various elections which affect them.

While remaining faithful to its founders' European commitment, CEMR is henceforth an organisation providing services for its members, the local and regional authorities.

Its main objectives are to:

- develop a European spirit among local and regional authorities in order to promote a federation of European states, based on the autonomy of these authorities and their participation in European construction,
- contribute to the reflection of local and regional authorities on the Union's main political dossiers which affect them directly : reform of the institutions, subsidiarity and governance, employment, Charter of Fundamental Rights, equal opportunities,
- encourage dialogue, exchange of experience and co-operation between its members, using all means (interregional and intermunicipal co-operation, partnership, twinning...),
- disseminate to its members the information from the Community institutions,
- help make the voice of its members heard by the representative institutions and bodies.

The popular base of CEMR's action nevertheless remains the remarkable network of twinings which it initiated: over 15 000 European twinings are the fruit of the vitality of a movement unique in the world. CEMR succeeded in obtaining the setting up of a financial structure by the European Parliament, adapted to support and encourage twinning : the Community Aid for Twinning Programme established in 1990 promotes the thousands of twinning events in Europe.

CEMR Structures

CEMR is a federation of National Sections which gather together:

- either one or several national representative associations of the various local authority categories;
- or the local authorities of a country directly a member of the National Section;
- or both one or several associations and their direct members.

These National Sections delegate a certain number of their representatives, depending on the size of their country's population and in accordance with the CEMR statutes, in a general assembly (called the Assembly of Delegates).

This Assembly then elects a set number of representatives of each country to the Policy Committee. The latter then elects the president, vice presidents and Secretary General, and appoints an Executive Bureau.

All of these statutory bodies set CEMR's policy positions, its position with respect to the process of European unification and particularly the representation of local authorities with the official European institutions in order to defend their interests there in the best possible conditions. It decides on the activities to be undertaken in this context.

The status of CEMR members

The Policy Committee examines and gives an opinion on the candidatures of Associations which then make up National Sections. It judges their representativeness : the National

Sections must represent at least a third of the population of one or several local authority categories existing in the country, or at least a quarter of its population.

Membership of CEMR takes effect after the Section whose candidature is accepted has paid its affiliation fee.

CEMR only recognises the National Sections of European countries which hold local free elections as full members (with the right to vote) and they must also fulfil the democratic conditions of the Council of Europe.

The National Sections of States that are not members of the Council of Europe and the European groupings of local and regional authorities may become associated members of CEMR.

CEMR Activities

At National Level

Each National Section sets its policies as it sees fit and organises its dialogue with its central government as it considers appropriate. It may also take inspiration from examples of other European countries, and sees to it that its government adopt and respect the entirety of the Council of Europe's European Charter for Local Self-Government, drawn up due to the impetus of CEMR members.

At European Level

CEMR supports all the National Sections and all their members upon request in the establishment of twinnings between two or more European local authorities.

- It negotiates the material support which the European institutions, in particular the European Union, may provide for twinning activities.
- It requests that twinned municipalities solemnly sign the CEMR Twinning Oath, by which the municipalities commit themselves to the European Union.
- It provides local authorities with all useful information in order that they develop their twinnings in the areas wished for by their partners : cultural, social, economic, technical (transfer of know-how).
- It organises training seminars for the twinning officers and organisers, gathering them together every three or four years in the framework of the large "Congress of European Twinned Towns", the 7th edition of which took place in November 1998 in Ferrara (Italy).
- It ensures the dissemination of its Practical Twinning Guide and the Directory of European Twinnings.

CEMR encourages interregional and intermunicipal cooperation in supporting local and regional authorities in their search for Community funding linked to programmes set up by the European Union.

CEMR constantly encourages cooperation and exchanges between local and regional authorities. This work, which was always undertaken by CEMR and which local and regional authorities had financed alone for a long time, has benefited for a number of years now from significant support from the Commission through Article 10 of the ERDF.

- CEMR thereby manages exchange of experience programmes and cooperation networks which have until now lead to the redistribution of more than 40 MECU to over 3 000 European local and regional authorities.

- It supports local and regional authorities when dealing with the European Union, which has decided to help most of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe in this area.
- It proposes to organise specialised symposia for local and regional authorities, for the promotion of exchange of experience and transfer of know-how in all sectors of local management - financial, administrative and technical.

CEMR works for the federation of the defence of local and regional authority interests within the European institutions.

CEMR has always taken an active stand so that local and regional authority interests be taken into account by European authorities, particularly through a true institutional representation. Various structures have been progressively set up, through the decisive impetus of CEMR : Standing Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (Council of Europe) and Consultative Council of Regional and Local Authorities (European Community).

- The Maastricht Treaty was a very important step in the process of the recognition of local and regional authorities, with the establishment of the Committee of the Regions of the European Union, set up in March 1994.
- CEMR - which includes many leaders of the Committee of the Regions as members - is particularly attentive to ensure that this consultative authority's work make an essential contribution to the process of institutional democratisation by giving a voice to European territories. The experience of CEMR members helps enrich the work of the members of the Committee of the Regions and to reflect the opinion of the 85 000 local and regional authorities of the European Union.
- The same applies to the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe, established in May 1994, which underlines the essential role of the Council of Europe as the representative institution of the Wider Europe, particularly by associating the territorial elected representatives of Central and Eastern Europe.

Alongside the work done within these two bodies, CEMR has relaunched its action in support of subsidiarity, particularly requesting that guarantees for local and regional authorities be introduced within the framework of a genuine implementation of this principle, and by campaigning for the European Charters on Local and Regional Self-Government. CEMR had organised a large-scale campaign in view of the 1997 Intergovernmental Conference, channelled through a Policy Follow-Up Committee on the reform, made up of high profile figures from the European local and regional arena. An appeal adopted in Valencia in December 1995, was put forward to be signed by European local and regional elected representatives and received hundreds of responses. CEMR presented a Resolution to the Italian Presidency of the Union in Turin in March 1996, and in June 1996, the first 2 500 signatures of the Valencia Appeal were handed over to Romano Prodi, President of the Council of the Union.

The CEMR campaign followed on with the first signatures being published in European newspapers in December 1996 and further initiatives were taken under the Dutch presidency in view of the Amsterdam IGC.

CEMR, disappointed with the Summit's results, opened new discussions on subsidiarity, proposing on the eve of the informal Council meeting in Pörtlach held on 24-25 October 1998 that a « definition of the practical distribution of powers between the European Union, the Member States and regional and local authorities » be established. CEMR is thus currently preparing a White Paper on the consultation mechanisms of local and regional authorities in the EU countries.

CEMR supports the European study by territorial authorities of all Community dossiers concerning the management of local and regional authorities.

It thereby regularly informs local and regional authorities of both community proposals and national initiatives which could be used as the basis for European regulations.

It organises local and regional authority delegations to the responsible authorities of the European institutions (for example, European Parliament hearings, and meetings with the Commissioners).

CEMR supports local authority exchanges of experience by organising specialised symposia and by disseminating guides and other publications.

Lastly, through committees or conferences organised at the European level, CEMR encourages local and regional authority study in fields such as the environment, social dialogue, transport, information society, equal opportunities, employment and more generally all areas linked to local and regional authority action. CEMR organises meetings on a regular basis in Brussels or in other European towns, of its working groups and committees.

In Thessaloniki in 1996, CEMR launched a European network of women elected representatives of local and regional authorities.

In 1997-1998, one of the main priorities of CEMR involved the revision of the structural funds and urban policy. A major conference of cities and regions on Agenda 2000 was thus held on 5 February 1998 in London, under the British Presidency of the European Union. Employment is one of the major areas of concern for our Organisation in 1999; a series of recommendations derived from innovative experiences has been drafted and an initiative "Act locally for employment" was launched in Bonn in April.

As part of the preparation for enlargement, CEMR works for intermunicipal cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe.

Following the upheavals in Central and Eastern Europe, these countries' local authorities have joined CEMR as soon as free and democratic municipal elections were held in each country.

CEMR helped the local and regional authorities to freely organise their local authority associations, making them sufficiently strong and able to deal with their central State, along the lines of Western European associations. Joining several other Associations (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia), the National Association of Municipalities in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Union of Local and Regional Governments of Latvia are CEMR's newest members in 1998.

CEMR strives to organise the transfer of know-how and the necessary technology for good municipal administration, in response to the towns' request. Central and Eastern European elected representatives do indeed wish to manage their local and regional authorities democratically, provide efficient services, stimulate their local or regional economies, and finally study and take decisions in accordance with sustainable development.

Our aim is to prepare these authorities to enter the European institutions as soon as possible, by associating them in our fight for the political union of Europe. CEMR thus supports enlargement of the European Union which is one of the priorities of our 1999 work programme. In October 1998, a first Summit meeting between the CEMR Executive Bureau and the Presidents of the national associations of local government of the candidate countries provided the opportunity to address the state of preparations for membership in each country and the involvement of local and regional authorities.

During this meeting it was proposed that a working group on enlargement be set up and this was approved by CEMR's Policy Committee in Lisbon. Thanks to funding from the Austrian Chancellery and the European Union, the Austrian Association of Towns led INTERREG project (LOGON) helps fund the participation of some of the Eastern European representatives.

Based on the London Declaration, this activity seeks to support the Central and Eastern European associations' effort to become actively involved in the accession process. An evaluation report of the accession strategies of the most recent EU member associations (Sweden, Finland and Austria) constitutes the first major output and a basis for exchanging experiences. A major political conference involving representatives from central governments and local and regional associations from the different countries launched the activity politically on 25-26 February.

CEMR takes action for the cooperation of Mediterranean local and regional authorities.

CEMR strives to contribute to Euro-Arab dialogue, in particular through holding Euro-Arab towns conferences, the second of which took place in September 1994 in Valencia.

A round table on Euro-Mediterranean dialogue and co-operation was organised in Barcelona during the CEMR Executive Bureau on 22 March with the participation of the Presidents of Israeli, Palestinian, and EU local authority associations.

CEMR participates in world dialogue between local and regional authorities.

In response to increasing demands from its members, CEMR has been more active on the international level since the HABITAT II Summit held in Istanbul in June 1996, in particular in the areas of sustainable development and the World Charter of Local Self-Government. Likewise, CEMR and IULA, its world Organisation, played an active role in strengthening cooperation between the leading world organisations of local and regional authorities in.

CEMR facilitates dialogue between local and regional authorities

To promote its approach in favour of the construction of the European Union, CEMR frequently acts at the national level with governments and organises important meetings and gatherings, particularly on the occasion of "summit meetings" and intergovernmental conferences.

Every three years CEMR organises a large congress in a major European city, convening several thousand local elected representatives - The General Assembly of European Municipalities and Regions - which to this day, still remains the largest "mass" event dedicated to developments in the process of European construction. The debates at the XXth General Assembly, held in Thessaloniki, Greece on 22-25 May 1996, focused in particular on the role of local and regional authorities in the Intergovernmental Conference, an information society and Local Agenda 21.

The XXIst General Assembly of European Municipalities and Regions, which gathered more than 900 local and regional elected representatives from 29 European countries, closed on 17 June 2000 with the adoption of the "Oulu Declaration". The next CEMR General Assembly will be held in Poznan, Poland in 2003.

<http://www.ccre.org/top>

ELANET



The European Local Authorities' Telematic Network (ELANET) is an initiative of the Associations of Local and Regional Governments and their daughter companies operating in the field of the Information Society, launched in 1996. It became part of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) in 1997, by acting as its Information Society Committee. At present, the network consists of representatives from 19 European countries, including all the EU Member States.

The mission

ELANET was created to support its members and the European local and regional authorities in their efforts to re-engineer their organisations through an important use of the modern information and communication technologies, most notably:

- to inform and support European local governments on ICT innovation, in particular the emerging local and regional digital networks;
- to assist local and regional authorities, their associations and CEMR in addressing their strategies in the field of the Information Society to EU institutions and related European organisations;
- to stimulate and increase the number of local authorities willing to participate in European projects by launching mainstream initiatives and European partnerships between ELANET members and prime movers of innovation at local and regional level.

The structure

ELANET is coordinated by a Steering Committee elected by its members in the annual General Meetings. President and Vice-President are the top executive officers of ELANET. The network desk at the CEMR office in Brussels is responsible for the network website (<http://www.elanet.org>) and supports the different working groups:

- the Policy Group, that meets regularly to discuss the different papers and documents on the Information Society introduced by different European institutions, namely the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Committee of the Regions. The group produces also position papers on key policy aspects, such as the electronic use of public sector information, policies on European research and deployment of e-Europe;
- the Project Groups, that are continuously formed by different European consortia created by ELANET members to participate in calls for proposals under the different programmes of the European Commission;
- the EISCO team, that is responsible for preparatory activities and realisation of the European Information Society Conference organised by ELANET and CEMR every 18 months. The EISCO Conferences gather local and regional decision-makers, civil servants and ICT experts from more than 25 countries of the European Union, CEEC (Central and Eastern European countries) and the Mediterranean.

The mainstream projects

Since 1998, ELANET has launched some important projects, co-financed by the European Commission:

- **ISLA** (Information Society in Local Areas) created a first inventory of best practices at municipal level in Austria, Finland, Italy and Spain;
- **NET for nets** (Finland, Germany, Italy and Spain) launched the “European Municipal Counter” for citizens with interactive administrative services;
- **ELADIS** (France, Greece, Ireland, Italy and United Kingdom) was a feasibility study for future European digital sites on land management and urban property data;
- **EUSlanD** (Italy, Denmark, France and Belgium) is building a knowledge management system for local and regional experts participating in thematic networks at European level (EU financial opportunities; EU legislation; ICT innovation and technology watching; Employment policies; and Benchmarking of urban transport solutions).

In this context of European cooperation, ELANET collaborates also with European projects in which Local and Regional Governments have a significant role, by helping to determine user needs and requirements, to assess the project progress and, in the case of research projects, to evaluate prototypes from the point of view of their potential users. ELANET also provides support to the dissemination of project results and exploitation plans.

The accompanying measures

During 2002, two most significant accompanying measures for Local and Regional governments will be carried out under the IST programme, in close cooperation with the European Commission and other European networks:

- **PRELUDE** (Promoting European Local and Regional Sustainability in the Digital Economy) is a “prelude” to the Sixth Framework Programme of Research and Technology Development of the European Commission (2003–2007). The project will be implemented by ELANET, in close cooperation with eris@ and 8 digital European regions. The main aim is to prepare the grounds for thematic networks able to plan large integrated projects that bring forward the regional dimension of European research, according to the new ERA (European research area) approach;
- **KEeLAN** (Key Elements for electronic Local Authorities’ Networks) is a comprehensive study involving all European Union countries to analyse the level of service and architecture of the municipal front offices on the web. The project will “scan” 700 websites and benchmark the best ones, to create models and relevant roadmaps that will help Local and Regional governments to plan their digital investments and initiatives.

The enlargement policy

Many of the network activities are addressed in the near future to the Newly Associated States and CEEC countries. ELANET, as part of CEMR, intends to make an important contribution to European cohesion and to the enlargement of the European Union through common action and policy discussion aiming at an inclusive Information Society.

The cooperation between European networks

Through PRELUDE and other multilateral initiatives, ELANET is engaged in common activities with other European networks, in particular eris@ and TeleCities. These activities aim

at a common policy framework and to the launching of mainstream projects in the Sixth Framework Programme for RTD.

EISCO conferences

The EISCO 2002 European conference on "*Internet Portals and the Reengineering of Local and Regional Governments in Europe*" will take place on 27-29 May 2002 in Cagliari, Italy. It is expected to gather near 30 countries from the EU, the NAS countries and those from the Mediterranean area. EISCO 2002 will be prepared by ELANET and CEMR with the collaboration of the European Commission, the Region Sardinia, ANCI, AICCRE and ANCINET, and the European networks.

ELANET is also preparing EISCO 2003 (November) in Aalborg, Denmark, together with the Danish Association of Local Authorities, the North Denmark Digital region project, the County of Jutland and the City of Aalborg.

Telecities



Background

TeleCities is an open network of local authorities and businesses. TeleCities was setup in 1993 as a sister network of Eurocities by a number of member cities wishing to focus the activities on issues related to the Information Society. To encourage the activities of the network at a local level and cater for smaller cities, TeleCities supports a framework for national branches.

Cities as Active Players in the Information Society

Information and Communication Technology forms a key instrument for local development and local democracy. By promoting universal access to ICT-based services and applications, cities and towns can improve the quality of life for their citizens, using technology as a backbone to addressing the challenges of socio-economic cohesion, citizenship, social inclusion, democratization and sustainable development. By creating a learning platform for cities across Europe, TeleCities aims to involve cities in the development of the Information Society and therefore act as a catalyst in the deployment of new technologies.

Transnational Co-operation & Knowledge Transfer

Through transnational co-operation and knowledge transfer, TeleCities promotes the involvement of local actors in the Information Society. Using the city as a pilot project, groups of local actors can establish research and development projects within the framework of the TeleCities network.

TeleCities aims to promote a Public-Private-Partnership approach to its activities in order to enable the involvement of European industry. TeleCities offers itself as a platform to exchange information, expertise and lessons with other members benefiting from new opportunities and reduced risks.

TeleCities originates from the belief that local authorities have a fundamental role to play in the development of the Information Society and new forms of governance. TeleCities promotes a wider awareness of the potential of new ICT applications and services and to ensure that these reflect a balance between economic competitiveness and social needs, in terms of contributing to employment growth, urban regeneration and a better quality of services to the citizens.

Policy Development

Based on active involvement of the political representatives of the cities and on the expert knowledge of the cities themselves as the direct representatives of millions of citizens, a distinct political weight can be attributed to TeleCities at European level.

Projects

TeleCities acts as a facilitator to develop and implement transnational projects between members of the network. Some of those are under the IST Programme as PACE (Public Administration and e-Commerce in Europe) and MUTEIS (Macro-Economic and Urban Trends in Europe's Information Society), other are within the eContent programme - eCT (Electronic Call for Tender) and ODA (Open Digital Administration); and Exchange of Skills under Leonardo.

Services to Members

In order to respond to the needs of its members, TeleCities coordinates a number of clearly defined services. These include a network website with online database, the coordination of several specialized working groups, regular publications and coordination of events.

In ensuring the necessary external relations, the network maintains a number of lobbying activities aimed at other influential political and industrial actors.

Events

TeleCities holds four conferences each year, hosted by a member city focusing on a topical issue from the annual workprogramme. The theme of TeleCities events offer opportunities for cities to express their needs and expectations of the market in direct contact with business partners who in turn may target their services and products by getting relevant customer information from the best source.

Ingrid Götzl
President, City of Vienna

Teresa Serra,
Vice-President, City of Barcelona

European Regions & the Information Society



The regions of Europe are feeling the growing impacts of globalisation, increased competition and rapid technological development. This is especially true with respect to the development and diffusion of Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) and related information society developments. Each, in their own way, is seeking to respond to these pervasive forces and to maintain or enhance their competitiveness. At the same time, regions have been seen – and see themselves – as an important focus for economic and social development. Regions, it has been argued, provide an appropriate framework for strategic co-ordination and planning, allowing for economic and cultural diversity, at a scale lower than overloaded central government but higher than the limited scope of local authorities.

Recognising this, **the European Regional Information Society Association (eris@)** was created in 1998 as an initiative by regional authorities within the European Union based on the results and activities of the Inter-Regional Information Society Initiative (IRISI) and Regional Information Society Initiative (RISI) launched by the European Commission in 1995 and 1997 respectively. Whilst the 28 founding regions recognised that regions compete with each other, they understood that regions also have much to gain through co-operation and collaboration. Accordingly, **eris@** was established as a not-for-profit organisation (an a.i.s.b.l. under Belgian Law) as a vehicle for the exchange of experience, the development and sharing of best practice, and for collaboration in the development of inter-regional applications and services.

The member regions of **eris@** have been working to develop strategies and action plans to exploit the potential of ICTs for regional economic and social benefit, and to accelerate their shift to the information society. They work at stimulating innovative actions, establishing new partnerships and building a regional consensus on priorities for action.

eris@ members share a number of common aims and objectives:

- to utilise new technologies for regional economic and social development.
- to identify the most effective ICT tools and applications.
- to work with policy makers to influence financial support for new technology actions, including Structural Funds' intervention.
- to identify opportunities where working together can bring increased benefit in terms of economics, performance and reduced costs.

Objectives

eris@'s principal objective is to shape ways to promote sustainable economic, social and cultural development of member regions in the emerging Information Society and to create a common platform for the exchange of experience, know-how and projects among the regions. It will mobilize any system, service or activity which may directly or indirectly assist its members in achieving their objectives with optimum professionalism and efficiency. Accordingly, **eris@** seeks to support regions in their efforts to develop the regional information society, and to exploit emerging information and communications technologies, for regional economic and social benefit. In doing so, **eris@** aims to enhance the competitiveness of its member regions and to promote and accelerate the development of the information society in Europe as a whole.

eris@ is the only European Association whose specific aim is to support regions in exploiting the opportunities of the information society for the purposes of regional growth and development.

More specifically, eris@ seeks to

- Raise the profile of the Information Society as a vehicle for regional economic development and social cohesion.
- Promote European regions as the most suitable focus for strategic information society development.
- Support member regions in the development and implementation of their information society strategies and action plans.
- Develop strong working relationships between regions, the private sector, and European Institutions.
- Identify the emerging needs of regional communities through collaborative and targeted research.
- Provide a Regional Information Society Policy Forum to facilitate information exchange, develop collaborative proposals for policy actions, and to be the voice of the regions in EU policy fora.
- Raise awareness of the information society and promote universal access in the regions to ICT applications and services in order to stimulate regional development and growth, safeguard and create employment, and promote social inclusion.
- Address the challenges of structural adjustment, social inclusion and economic cohesion so as to enhance the development capacity and competences of member regions.

Activities, Services & Benefits

eris@ offers members a range of activities and services including:

- An inter-regional electronic communication platform including web site.
- Inter-regional workshops, seminars and other opportunities for the exchange of expertise and experiences, including an annual conference.
- Regional benchmarking.
- Support in mainstreaming of structural development plans.
- Partner search and the brokerage of partnerships, and assistance in the development of inter-regional project proposals.
- Advice on sources of project funding and targeted information on EU Calls for Tender.
- Access to expert advice in areas such as regional development, innovation strategies, technology transfer etc.
- Methodology and process workshops
- Market research.
- Process advice on programme development, strategy formulation, and the implementation and management of action plans.
- Advice, assistance and support in developing frameworks for monitoring and evaluation.
- Membership of thematic and policy-related work groups and work group meetings. These are subject to periodic review but include topics such as
 - Education and training
 - Rural and peripheral areas.
 - Tele-medicine and health care

- Small and medium size enterprise and e-commerce.
- Social Affairs
- Public administration and citizens' services
- Telecommunications policy and infrastructure.
- A regular newsletter, events calendar, news on relevant policy developments, and access to reports and position papers,
- Liaison with representatives of the European Commission and other European Institutions.
- Liaison and development of partnerships with the private sector.
- Liaison and co-operation with other European networks and associations working in the information society and related fields.

A presentation of Urban Data Management Society

Massimo Rumor, Urban Data Management Society

UDMS scope

UDMS, Urban Data Management Society, is a Society which organizes international symposia at various locations in order to promote the development of Urban Information Systems in Europe. The aim of UDMS is to provide a forum for people to discuss new approaches, to consider new technologies and to share practical experience in the field of urban data management. Among urban information systems, special attention is paid to all aspects of geographic information systems.

The objectives are therefore to improve local government through improved urban data management, to increase knowledge and professionalism in the field of urban data management and to spread information and develop cooperation in this field within the European Community and Europe as a whole.

UDMS history

Symposia have been held since 1971 on the following themes:

- Bonn (1971), The role of data banks in urban and regional planning: experiences in a number of cities.
- London(1972) Experiences with urban information systems; special studies concerning information needs, data exchange and software.
- Paris (1973) Systems for city planning and transport planning: overview of existing information Special study groups dealing with data structures and geocoding.
- Madrid (1974) Progress reports for important projects on data banks and information systems used in local government.
- Stockholm (1975) The comparative study of major urban data management projects with emphases on the design and the extent to which the systems have met users requirements.
- Liège (1977) Practical applications of urban information systems, in particular of urban data banks.
- The Hague (1979) Exploring new horizons in urban data management, including its theoretical, functional, administrative, political and ethical dimensions.
- Oslo (1981) Ten years on: the tenth anniversary of the first symposium: development review, indication of likely future trends.
- Valencia (1982) The impact of the economic and cultural crisis, the evaluation of its implication. The study of new methodological requirements. The definition of information policies and organisation of the implicated administrations.
- Padua (1984) Urban data management and the end users. Special attention to decision support systems, new tools for end-users, information systems for urban and regional planning and land information systems.
- The Hague (1985) Information needs for local authorities, in combination with the 12th meeting of the Spatially Oriented Referencing Systems Association (SORSA). The role of information systems in planning and decision making in local authorities. The state of the art of present information systems. Aspects affecting the development of information systems.

- Blois (1987) New information technologies for citizens and local authorities. Technologies like automatic cartography, optical devices, artificial intelligence and intelligent card based systems.
- Lisbon (1989) The development of urban information systems. Standardisation, data requirements and future developments.
- Odense (1991) Technological innovation and new ways of doing things in municipal operation and management. The coordinated approach to local information systems
- Lyon (1992) Managing the city of the future. Using data and knowledge bases in urban planning and municipal management in order to improve the quality of life of city-dwellers
- Vienna (1993) GIS Quo Vadis ? was the main theme of the conference underlying the discussions on real estate cadaster, environment, transport and traffic and data issues as data quality and data sharing.
- Espoo (1994) Information Resource Mangement and new Information sources for the provision of urban information services. EDI for urban management.

In 1994 UDMS joined forces with AM/FM GIS International European Division and EGIS, which resulted in three joint european conferences and exhibition on geographical information:

- The Hague (1995);
- Barcelona (1996);
- Vienna (1997).

Following a cooperation started in 1991 with the organizers of MIS 91 in Prague, in 1996 a joint event, MIS/UDMS '96 was held in Prague dealing with information technology and services for public administration and the public.

After the three joint conferences with AM/FM GIS International European Division and EGIS, UDMS resumed its tradition and organised UDMS '99 , the 21st UDMS Congress, in Venice.

The general theme of the 21st UDMS Congress “ *Information Technology in the service of local government planning and management*” was totally related to one of the main objectives of UDMS: to improve local government through urban data management.

The special themes adressed at the Conference reflected the hot issues of the day: a great number of papers dealt with the environment in the urban context and with the possibilities offered by the new technologies, with a special interest on the use of internet

During the 21st Symposium it became clear that UDMS should broaden its scope. In an increasing degree urban developments have their effect on regional and rural zones and vice versa. Especially in the densely populated parts of Europe cities, industry and infrastructure need more and more space. The impact of this expansion on rural areas should be made visible. New technologies, like the interaction between 3D GIS and Virtual Reality, make it possible to visualise these consequences.

Therefore UDMS decided to focus also on regional and rural aspects at the beginning of a new century.

Following this wider approach the 22nd URBAN and REGIONAL DATA MANAGEMENT SYMPOSIUM was held in Delft the Netherlands September 11–15, 2000 at the Congress Centre of the Delft University of Technology in combination with the seminar Land Markets and Land Consolidation in Central Europe.

The general theme was: *Urban And Rural Data Management- Common Problems - Common Solutions?* with papers dealing with scientific, technical but also practical aspects of

Management of urban and rural information, Cadastre and land administration, Gis technology, Environmental information.

Future Activities

I would like to announce that the 23rd UDMS Symposium will take place in Prague on October 1st-4th 2002.

It's not the first time that UDMS is in Prague, as we were present at the 1st Conference on Municipal Information Systems, in 1991 and at the 2nd Conference on Municipal Information Systems and Urban Data Management Systems MIS/UDMS, in 1996.

But this is the first full UDMS Symposium that is organised out of the borders of the former West-Europe or the current European Union. It increases the activities of UDM Society in supporting the development of Urban and Regional Data Management in the new democratic states in Europe.

The 23rd UDMS is a special event also because it will also be the occasion for celebrating the 30 years activity of UDMS replacing the special meeting planned for December 2001 in Cortina d'Ampezzo that had to be cancelled after the terror act in New York in September.

Let me summarise the topics we would like to discuss at the 23rd Symposium:

- Application of information, geo-information, communication technologies and Internet in information systems of public administrations
- Digital maps, Ortho photo maps, 3D maps and applications using them
- Information on regions, cities and towns, their current situation and supposed or planned development, oriented both to the public and the administration
- E-government at the local and regional level
- Public information services and systems
- European and global initiatives in e-government, information and geo-information infrastructures, international projects, etc.

I conclude reminding that we are waiting for your contribution (April 15th, 2002 is the deadline for proposals) and look forward to welcoming you at Hotel Pyramida, Praha on October 1st, 2002

for the 23rd Urban Data Management Symposium/3rd Conference on Municipal Information Systems/Exhibition Town in computer with the general themes **"30 years of UDMS - looking back, looking forward"** and **"Digital town and local e-government"**

Author

Massimo Rumor, Urban Data Management Society, via Bibione, 6, 35142 Padova, Italy, Phone: +39-49-8670037, email: rumor@dei.unipd.it

Mr. Massimo Rumor (1946) is President of the Urban Data Management Society. Graduated in Electronic Engineering he is active as professor in Information Systems with University of Padova and in Geographical Information Systems with University of Architecture of Venice, Italy. He is consultant in Geographical Information Systems, I.T strategies and applications for Local Authorities (design and implementation of Information Systems, particularly GIS for local authorities, utilities and other organisations, participation in National and International I.T. projects). 1980-1994 Director, City Information System, Municipality of Padova, 1975-1980 Manager, Organisation and MIS, SAIMP S.p.A. Padova.

Miscellaneous

ISSS in the Month of Internet

Irina Zálišová, BMI Association

Month of Internet is a unique Czech awareness rising project, which is covering each year in March about 15 projects under one logo. The project is organized by BMI Association and is celebrating its 5th anniversary this year. The ISSS Conference was launched in 1998 in cooperation of TRIADA and BMI Association and has become the highlight of the Month of Internet. It has become a significant event not only for public administration in the Czech republic, but also the place of meeting for representatives of different international projects and networks (Telecities, ERISA, ELANET, CEMR).

BMI Association is supporting and promoting ISSS not only on the media wave of Month of Internet campaign, but also in context of their international activities. In the 2000 BMI was awarded by ESIS (European Survey of Information Society) as a key player with promotional activities in support of information society in the Czech republic. BMI is active in 5FP, IST and participate preparations of 6FP as an expert and national catalyst. In case of ISSS we are seeking for similar events for synergic cooperation information exchange, where the ISSS is the biggest in Europe for public administration professionals.

The central based BMI co-operates with national and regional authorities, medias and groups of population, organizing local seminars as well as central conferences.

The main activities of BMI concern:

- Projects based on awareness and dissemination activities for support of the Internet and Information Society all over the Czech Republic (seminars, conferences, media and PR),
- Educational and promotional actions for e-Business to SMEs, in cooperation with regional Chambers of Commerce and Regional Development agencies,
- Projects based on sociological and market researches (e-Business, Public Internet),
- Special target groups projects: e.g. support for Internet use for disabled persons organizations.

Projects and references

1. During the last three years of activities, BMI has launched several projects towards different target groups of population. The most popular of them is the nationwide project **Month of Internet** (www.brezen.cz), which was first organised in 1998. .

2. **e-Business Roadshow** is a range of promotional and researching actions in 8 Czech regions, in co-operation with regional Chambers of Commerce. The results of researches about e-business in SMEs has become an official supplement of a National Green Book on Electronic Commerce.

3. **Public Internet** is the pilot project for mapping, listing and indicating those places, where the Internet is available for the general public as a service (e.g. internet cafés, libraries, posts, municipalities). This is a co-operative project with UVIS (State Office for Public Information Systems) for the year 2001 – www.uvis.cz

4. **Junior Internet** - Child's Internet Conference. This event has been organized since 1999 with children and for children in the conference hall in Prague. It is accompanied by the Internet related contest for children. Participants of the contest are invited to the Junior Internet Conference (www.juniorinternet.cz)

5. **Internet into schools.** The project maps the different experiences and problems with the implementation of IT into schools. BMI organizes an annual Conference for professionals from schools and public administration about different aspects of using the Internet in the educational process.
6. **Internet and disabled people.** A long-term project maps the possibilities and presents the best uses of the Internet for disabled people. The first **INSPO** conference at Prague Congress Center is taking place in March 2002. The project is running in cooperation with Czech units and associations for disabled persons (www.aiso.cz)
7. **Democracy On-Line,** www.mail-poslanci.cz (pilot application for direct e-mail communication with Czech Parliament representatives)
8. **ISSS Conference** (Internet in Public Administration), www.issc.cz, cooperative project, which presents now the biggest European conference for public administration authorities for cca 1500 participants, each March in Hradec Kralove..

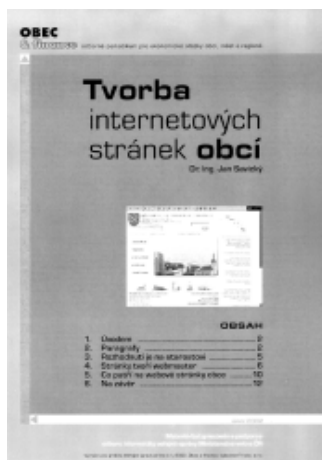
Awards

The Month of Internet, the project of BMI, was a finalist in the Stockholm Challenge Award 2000, (www.challenge.stockholm.se), from a competition of 612 projects from the whole world.

BMI is one of a key players on the field of promotion of Information Society in the Czech republic according to the European Society Survey, 2000, (Best in ESIS), www.park.cz/esis/best.htm

Establishment of Municipal Web Sites

Jan Savický, Golden Crest Association



At the end of 2001, a methodology document on the establishment of municipal web sites was produced with the assistance of the Public Administration Informatics Department of the Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic. It was published in the Online Public Administration No 1/2001, Municipality and Finance.

The methodology summarises practical advice for all levels involved in the implementation of Internet sites of Czech municipal authorities. The material covers current requirements for municipal web sites, i.e. in particular electronic publishing with simple interactive features. The material is intended to address the staff of municipal authorities but it could also be a contribution for contractors.

The author wishes to thank for their consultations, in terms of the document preparation, namely to Ing. Tomáš Holenda and Ing. Jaroslav Svoboda from the Public Administration Informatics Department of the Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic, and to RNDr. Hana Bubeníčková and Radek Pavlíček from the Czech Blind United, and to his colleague Radomír Klíma. Much experience and many ideas have arisen from the work of the Golden Crest Association organising a competition of the same name on the best web site among municipalities and regions. The article and an online supplement to the Article can be found at http://www.obce.cz/tvorba_stranek_obci.

The introductory text summarises obligations imposed by Act No 106/1999 Coll., on Free Access to Information and requirements of the ISVS Standard, however, it does not represent their legal interpretation. It also briefly covers other related laws.

A citizen visiting actively growing commercial servers naturally expects his/her municipal authority to provide accurate, dynamic and reliable online information and services in various electronic channels. The material determines the most important decisions of the municipal leadership on the commencement and activities of contributors, web site contents in relation to mandatory information, aim of web sites and their target groups. A decision on the interactivity level of online services with respect to the potential of the authority concerned must be made. It may be suitable to establish an editorial board, editorial rules and rules of web site update control. The technical implementation of the page must be ensured and/or an editing system must be chosen. What web site address to choose?

The methodology is also aimed at work of a webmaster whose task is to ensure technical, programming and advisory services and to take care of their performance. The webmaster is responsible for information availability as to its correct arrangement and format in line with the standards and technologies applied. The webmaster, in some cases, also ensures correct operation of technical equipment of the server.

The chapter "Recommendations for Individual Pages" is dedicated to technical issues such as screen resolution, diacritic coding, file format, text structuring, font and colour selection, references, etc. Good availability of pages depends on correct work with tables and images. Emphasis is placed on barrier-free access. The chapter "Recommendations for Web Level" is focused on the requirement of a uniform design and arrangement of sites, use of frames, and e.g. on choosing file names. Creation of an appropriate navigation method is important. The methodology briefly categorises applied types of navigation features such as contents, orientation based on the need of a user, target group, news, selected topics, searching

tools, web map, etc. Special attention is paid to the contents and design of title page. The trend in web page design is to use editing systems.

A high quality page is based, in particular, on its contents. The Chapter “What Belongs to a Municipal Web Site” offers the contents classification into several groups: mandatory, expected, recommended and welcome services and information. It also envisages what should not be included on the pages.

Provision of online services and information is a new field of work of authorities that requires concentrated attention, a change of thinking and setting of new priorities and procedures. Existing municipal pages represent the best study material. They often are an excellent example of creativity of their webmasters and a responsible approach of municipal representatives and their authorities. Some foreign pages and projects may serve as an inspirative source. A need to learn, follow the recent development and get inspired by sample solutions has arisen. Motivation to be better than the fellow workers and succeed in a professional evaluation may occur. It is supported by competitions such as the Golden Crest in the Czech Republic. A prize for the best web page among towns, municipalities and regions will be granted for the fourth time.

Lecture Notes

eGovernment in Austrian Cities

Eberhard Binder, Vienna City Administration

The implementation of eGovernment is well under way in many Austrian cities. Past experiences have, however, shown that there are some critical questions still to be answered before eGovernment can be used extensively and successfully. These questions involve three aspects: costs, awareness, and confidence.

The costs of eGovernment

For public administrations, electronic government (eGovernment) is a new product, a new channel by which services can be offered to citizens and businesses.

Every new product requires investments. Potential economies and return on investment (ROI) depend on the amount to be invested, but equally on the efficiency gain and the actual take-up of the new channel. Nevertheless initial investments are inevitable, and significant economies of scale can only be expected after some time.

Though investment costs can be reduced by using standards, standardised interfaces, a modern modular architecture, and access to central registers, introducing electronic government will still require additional resources. The ensuing economies of scale cannot be expected to cover the entire costs of implementing eGovernment.

Consequently, additional resources are indispensable for a speedy introduction of eGovernment.

The take-up of eGovernment

Maximising the take-up of the new service is essential in order to attain economies of scale. The degree of take-up depends on how well-known, comfortable, and useful the service is, as well as on the users' confidence in the new technology.

Awareness

A public survey conducted by an Austrian consulting firm in November 2001 indicates that almost two thirds of Austrians do not know what the term "eGovernment" means. Consequently, we must convince the population and the business community of the advantages of eGovernment, and try to develop their Internet skills by offering specific training programmes. This can only be done with the help of political decision-makers and the media.

Confidence

When it comes to enhancing the users' confidence in eGovernment, it is most important to take extensive safety measures and employ state-of-the-art technology in the fields of network safety, data safety, process safety, encoding and electronic information, and to ensure strict compliance with data protection provisions.

However, simply taking these measures is not enough. We also have to focus our efforts on educating the users about the steps we have taken. Publishing a policy on data protection and security is one of the measures needed in this context. We should also think about introducing a quality seal for eGovernment applications, awarded by an agency that enjoys high public confidence and confirms the application's compliance with current security and data protection requirements.

Security

An EU Council decision of 6 December 2001 calls for specific measures in the field of network and information security, including the following:

- guaranteeing the availability of services and data
- preventing the disruption and unauthorised interception of communication
- confirming the completeness and correctness of data transmitted, received or stored
- safeguarding the confidentiality of data
- protecting information systems against unauthorised access
- protecting information systems from attacks by using malicious programmes, and
- ensuring reliable authentication.

It is essential that this decision should be implemented swiftly and extensively in order to ensure the success of eGovernment.

Electronic identification

A “citizen card” is to serve as a reliable means of electronic authentication. Apart from the signature, the card will include further characteristics relevant for electronic identification, but also certain encoding functionalities.

The main problems with regard to the citizen card are low take-up due to relatively high costs, and the users’ general reluctance to accept the card which is mainly due to negative reports by data protection organisations.

Economies of scale due to eGovernment

The cost of using and operating electronic government is generally very low. The efficiency gain, i.e. how much money can actually be saved per service transaction, does not only depend on the take-up of the new information and communication technology, but equally on whether the processes have been adequately adapted and redesigned in order to make full use of the possibilities offered by new technologies. It is of principal importance to integrate the individual activities in order to ensure the exclusive use of electronic media, and to use electronic access to central registers. The need for motivation, training, and support measures equally applies to this field.

In the end, the success of eGovernment will depend on how extensively the public uses these applications. Economies of scale can only be achieved with a certain use frequency (critical mass) which is individual and depends on investment costs as well as on efficiency gains per application.

Summary

eGovernment requires additional financial resources. We should strive for economies of scale which can, however, only be achieved with the critical mass of use.

Marketing and confidence-building measures are necessary to achieve an extensive use of eGovernment applications.

But eGovernment should not only be about economies of scale. We have the chance to offer citizens simple, comfortable, customer-oriented, modern and effective services. We can give the feeling that citizens are provided with excellent administration as well as information and that they are included in community processes.

We can render public administration and policies more transparent, and can increasingly involve citizens in decision processes and task implementation.

We can present ourselves as a professional business partner who provides support in speedily and efficiently implementing necessary activities. It is an advantage to set up businesses in our administrative area.

To achieve this success, we need to implement

- intense inward and outward marketing measures to promote use and security of eGovernment applications,
- financial support for public administration and for users,
- efficient and extensive infrastructure (citizen card, data exchange formats ...) as well as
- motivation, training, and support to reorganise processes.

Author:

Eberhard Binder, Vienna City Administration, Chief Executive Office– EDP and Information Management; binder@mdi.magwien.gv.at; <http://www.wien.at/>

Public Administration and e-Commerce in Europe (PACE)

Anna Lisa Boni, Manager of TeleCities

Introduction

The PACE project (IST-1999-13041) is dedicated to promoting the effective use of electronic commerce technologies by European Public Administrations (PAs).

E-commerce promises to change profoundly the way PAs work with their citizens, business communities, and other public sector organisations – as well as new forms of service provision, it enables increased productivity, new job creation, and control of public spending.

However, many PAs are unsure how to best exploit the potential of e-commerce technologies, and have been lagging behind the private sector, even though they have a major role to play in stimulating the wider uptake of e-commerce in Europe. The public sector is responsible for over 40% of European GDP; by implementing e-commerce, creating a critical mass of users, raising awareness, and spreading effective demand, PAs are central to the successful use of e-commerce.

The role of PACE is to help to realise this potential by supporting PAs' *e-commerce learning processes* through the formation of an **integrated learning environment** (see figure) for the benefit of relevant players: public administrations, companies, e-commerce R&D projects and policymakers.

Creating an Integrated Learning Environment

PACE's **integrated learning environment** offers relevant players a combination of e-commerce knowledge with a range of physical and virtual activities to access this knowledge, interact with PACE members and other players, and generally become active contributors to the collective learning process.

E-commerce knowledge in the PACE's learning environment include trend-mapping reports and newsletters on technological, market, and legal themes, surveys of European PA e-commerce, and best-practice case study reports. Visit the PACE website and download all available reports!

PACE's integrated physical and virtual activities include:

Three **Working Groups** aligned with the *TeleCities* programme and providing an opportunity for PAs, companies and projects to meet and get to know each other's interests and needs relating to e-commerce.

- Public Administration to Business e-commerce (PA2B)
- Public Administration to Public Administration e-commerce (PA2PA)
- Public Administration to Consumer/Citizen e-commerce (PA2C)

Virtual Forum offering an online facility for continuation of discussions on issues emerged from the Working Group's meetings. *Visit the PACE website and contribute to the present forum!*

Virtual Resource Facility intended as an online reservoir of information, knowledge, available product/services and good and bad experiences in the context of real solutions to real problems in PA e-commerce. This virtual reservoir is to be filled and used by the PACE consortium, public administrations, companies, R&D projects and policy-makers.

Virtual Campus is an online virtual training facility offering virtual modular educational units based on the e-commerce knowledge produced in the PACE project. It provides an interactive environment for effective learning.

Help Desk is the PACE facility aimed to support public administrations with their initial concerns and questions regarding technical, legal and business issues involved in the definition and implementation of e-commerce solutions. *Visit the Help Desk in the website and let us now of your e-commerce queries!*

In principle, the greater the participation of players, the greater the richness and effectiveness of the learning environment.

The PACE Partners

The PACE consortium combines technical, market, business practices, legal, ethical and socio-economic expertise in e-commerce in public administrations. The partners are:

Technology Management and Policy Programme (TechMaPP) at the University of Edinburgh (UK) is PACE Coordinator. TechMaPP offers research and other services in the strategic management of innovation and technology and e-commerce in public administrations.

The Electronic Commerce Competence Center (ECCO) (Germany), part of the German National Research Center for Information Technology (GMD) deploys innovative and open technologies to develop virtual market solutions for business, government, and consumers.

The Centre for Research on Computers and Law (CRID) (Belgium) carries out academic and applied research in the field of information and communication technologies from legal, technical and socio-economic perspectives.

Censis (Italy) has worked for years on the development of civic networks and the issues connected with the introduction of new technology into public administration.

HELIOS (UK) is an SME consultancy providing solutions and services in the area of information society applications and innovative ICT services, with particular reference to public administrations.

TeleCities (Belgium) is the open network of European Local Authorities dedicated to the development of urban areas through the use of information and telecommunications technologies.

Author:

Anna Lisa Boni, Manager of TeleCities

Anna Lisa Boni is the Manager of the TeleCities network, grouping 120 cities all over Europe and focusing its networking, partnership and lobbying activities in the field of Information Society. Her education and training background covers the following: University degree in Political Science (Bologna), several courses and post-graduate studies (Maastricht, Nancy, Luxembourg), ERASMUS scholarship (Leiden/NL), European Baccalaureate (Luxembourg). With regard to her professional life, she has been coordinator of the International Projects Office in the Municipality of Bologna and EU Project Manager. Her network knowledge extends not only to TeleCities, but also to the Eurocities Executive Committee, the Eurocities Culture and Social Welfare Committees and to the Committee of the Regions. She holds experience in working for NGO's as well. Italian, she speaks English, French, Spanish, and beginner Dutch.

EmuniS Project - Electronic Municipal Information Services

Bojil Dobrev, Mechthild Stoewer, Lambros Makris, Eleonora Getsova

A Project funded by the IST Programme of the EU is presented with its main goals and scope.

The activities performed within the first stage and the expected results are described, and the dissemination strategy of the Project outcomes is outlined.

Project main goals and expected benefits

Municipal services to citizens and municipal administration working processes have mostly been associated with enormous paper work, procedural formalities, long queues in front of always busy administration offices, complete waste of time and a lot of nerves – again both for the citizens and administrative staff.

Although Europe as a whole has shown a rapid advancement in the field of implementation of the ITs for improving and facilitating the humans' life, some recent statistics show that currently only 8% of the EU municipalities are providing e-services to citizens and 56% are offering information through Internet. In the South-East European (SEE) region there are limited IT applications (mostly off-line), lack of e-services to citizens and only 1% of municipalities offer a web presence.

The project is realised with the financial support of the IST Programme of the European Union. It started in November 2001 and will end in October 2003.

The E-MuniS ultimate goal is to provide opportunities for user-friendly implementation of the information technologies achievements in municipal administration working processes and services to citizens. The E-MuniS project main objective is to bridge the gap between EUMs and SEEMs regarding use of Information Technology in administration working procedures and services to citizens, thus facilitating the work of the municipal employees and making the life of the citizens easier.

Project scope

The Project includes three stages. The first stage is focused on study and analysis of EU municipalities' best practices in the administration working processes and provision of services to citizens based on IT applications and study and analysis of the working practices and services to citizens in four South East European municipalities suitable for IT applications. Based on the results of these studies a comparative analysis will be made in order to determine the opportunities for best practice transfer, to identify the transferable applications and the applications to be further adapted.

The second project stage is the adaptation and pilot development stage, where improvement of existing transferable applications and/or pilot development of new ones will take place.

The third project stage is the dissemination stage.

By its end the Project will achieve:

- **E-Municipality office**, consisting of three adapted and improved pilot prototypes of IT applications: **Electronic Document Management System** providing tools for automated document workflow within the municipality; **Interface tool to external information resources** (Citizen's Register, Legal, statistical and other governmental data bases); **City Mayor's office information network**, will be based on the executive information system development approach utilizing the previous two systems and designed according to

a particular City mayor's office requirements for decision-making. The three prototypes will be implemented and demonstrated at one pilot site.

- **On-line services to citizens:** to be achieved through the transfer and adaptation of four IT applications.
 - The first two are web applications consisting of development of a standardized **municipality web site** with information about the structure, activities and decisions of the municipality and a **city web-site** with information about the city infrastructure and various types of services. Both applications will ensure transparent information services to citizens.
 - The third application will be a **Citizens software tool kit** allowing the citizens to request and receive services via Internet.
 - The 4th application will consist of an **Interface tool set** providing access to municipality information resources needed for accelerated provision of requested e-services by citizens.

The last two applications will be implemented and demonstrated once at a second pilot site and twice – together with the municipal and city web sites within the pilot implementation of an **information kiosk** (single window) at a third pilot site.

First Stage

The first stage of the E-MuniS workplan (Nov. 2001-April 2002) focused on the study and analysis of EU municipalities' best practices and ICT infrastructure and the demand for improvement and ability for e-performance of working practices and services to citizens in 4 SEE municipalities. Therefore a set of questionnaires has been realized to: identify the current situation regarding implementation of Information Technology in EU municipalities; the best practice applications and elaborate on their improvement; those applications that are better suited for transfer to the SEE municipalities based on certain criteria; to describe the most important services currently provided by SEE municipalities as well as Information sources, IT applications and IT infrastructure.

For selecting best practice applications which are better suitable for transfer to SEE-municipalities a set of criteria has been used: is it relevant? is it feasible? what are the risks involved?

The relevance of a given application depends on two considerations:

- is it relevant to the core activities and services of the municipality?
- would the solution make a measurable difference?

Is it feasible? These aspects can be grouped into mainly three categories: organisational aspects, technological aspects, and human aspects.

What are the risks involved? In most cases the introduction or expansion of new technology like IT systems has a potentially dramatic effect on the organisation, especially when it is meant to lead to significant improvements in efficiency. There is a need for change in three different areas: changes in the organisational structure and culture, and in the information technology.

Despite the potential for dramatic improvements through the re-engineering of organisations and the better use of existing and introduction of appropriate new technologies there is often a great risk involved. Taking into account these three main considerations of relevance, feasibility and risks it is essential that the survey on the municipal administration working processes and services to citizens should aim to provide information on these issues.

Dissemination strategy

It will cover three levels of dissemination focusing the project municipalities as direct end-users at the project level, other municipalities of the E-MuniS countries as potential end-users at national level, other municipalities from other countries as potential end-users upon demand and expressed interest in the project at international level. At each level appropriate dissemination tools and mediators will be used, and indirect end-users are envisaged – citizens and companies.

At the Project level of dissemination workshops will be organized in each project municipality to demonstrate the applications, discuss the opportunities for their implementation in the particular municipality and conduct training for a designated group of staff to be working with them. The Project web site will contain a data base with information about all results achieved during the project stages and tools for analysis, modification and visualization. It will be installed on a server and will be accessible via Internet.

At the national levels of dissemination the municipalities participating in the E-MuniS (the Catalysts) will disseminate the project outcomes to other municipalities in their own countries that have shown interest in the project.

The dissemination will be through professional societies and associations, NGOs, government bodies, supported by IT companies, based on public- private partnership.

At the International level of dissemination municipalities from other countries that have expressed interest in the E-MuniS outcomes will be potential end-users. The dissemination will take place through European associations and networks, such as Global Cities Dialogue, Tele-cities Network, Regional Innovation and Technology Strategies Networks, Association of the Balkan Municipalities, GISIG Network. The tools to be used are again the project promotional materials and project web-site.

For the national and international levels of dissemination all the municipalities that have expressed interest in the E-MuniS outcomes will get for free both the technological outcomes and accompanying documentation.

Summary

The ER-MunIS Project will contribute to the Information Society development providing facilities for improving services to citizens and municipal work based on implementation of ICT.

The E-MuniS tends to act as a driver for cooperation between public administrations of a number of cities in different countries, to contribute to public-private partnership development between the local administration and the IT industry, to establish links and joint activities between IT companies from SEE and EU, and to provide opportunities for integration of the SEE Municipalities in the EU Community Municipal Network.

The project Consortium involves as participants couples of local municipality-IT company partnerships (end-users and technology providers) from EU countries (Germany, Spain, Italy, Greece) and from South East European countries (Bulgaria, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Croatia).

Project PANISCO

Krzysztof Glomb, Cities on Internet Association, Poland

The project strategic objective is creation and development of eGovernment

thematic network consisting of local government organisations from EU and NAS, experts from industry and scientific community. Objective is to provide Community with throughout analyses and study of state of IST development in NAS and stage of realisation of eEurope and eEurope+ initiatives in candidate countries with particular attention paid to fields like public information accessibility and transparency, eDemocracy development and smart government, and GIS. To continue the work started in the project an eGovernment Institute will be created in Poland.

Work in PANISCO project is clearly structured and divided in the following way:

- Development of a knowledge base, which is aimed at the assessment regarding the development of IST for eGovernment and eDemocracy on a local and regional authority level. Activities will include analysing the current situation in NAS, comparison with the situation in Member States and drafting a set of requirements for local administrations in NAS
- Creating eGovernment thematic network - focussing participation in 6th Framework Program activities. Work will include assessment of strategic position of local, regional authorities in the context of IST development toward eGovernment and eDemocracy; development of recommendations for national IS programmes in NAS, identification of partners and cooperation opportunities and finally setting up a thematic network composed of partners from NAS and Member States aiming at realization of project in the 6th FP.
- Creating awareness and enhance research activities, which is aimed at creating a platform for collaboration and dissemination. It will include setting up organizational platform for cooperation between all involved parties, creating multilingual portal, organizing a network of conferences and creation of eGovernment Institute in Tarnow, Poland, spreading of relevant standards and dissemination of project results.
- Project Management, ensuring everyday coordination of project work, proper allocation of resources, monitoring progress, quality assurance and project evaluation.

TeleCities – a Stepping Stone towards eEurope

Ingrid Götzl, TeleCities President, City of Vienna

TeleCities is a network of about 120 European cities, including metropolises, small and medium-sized cities. The network co-operates Europe-wide on issues relating to the Information Society and is chaired by the City of Vienna; key business partners are joined as associate members. The TeleCities profile is based on a combination of networking activities, on research and high-level strategic work which targets on the definition of Information Society initiatives, and resulting policies of European cities.

TeleCities Strategy

Strategic issues of TeleCities during the Vienna presidency are

- Enforcing eGovernment in order to work on a people-oriented level and promote the Digital Inclusive Society by specifically addressing all groups of the population.
- Strengthening TeleCities as the ICT representative of the Cities and their aims and needs towards the EU institutions.
- Intensifying the co-operation of the EU Cities by linking ICT-advanced members with cities yet striving for intense ICT development.

These issues reflect the need for confirming the European cities' position as the major stakeholders for the citizens' prosperity and welfare and the material role ICT has been playing in recent years in city policy.

TeleCities encourages participation of key players in the information society based on cross-border cooperation and knowledge transfer. Within the TeleCities network itself *cities* as such are considered pilot projects for research and project development. TeleCities serves as a forum for knowledge exchange between members seeking information on other cities' expertise and experience in order to implement their own innovative plans without running into the risks otherwise entailed. TeleCities is actively involved in establishing public-private partnerships to promote participation of the European business sector.

Cooperation with the European Commission

At the European level our goal is to influence aspects of EU policy development. This is pursued through maintaining a regular dialogue with the European Institutions and producing policy contributions. The European Commission/DG INFSO has invited TeleCities as their partner in a continuing consultation and co-operation process. In order to play an active role within such a process, TeleCities takes a stronger strategic direction of its activities in order:

- to strengthen the position of TeleCities as the main interlocutor network with the European Commission on ICT related urban policy issues
- to set the needs and interests of European cities more firmly on the agenda of European policy, as is befitting to that kind of public authority that is closest to the citizens,
- to enforce eGovernment as a main ICT activity of the TeleCities member cities and a priority of the Commission,
- to include the member cities of the applicant countries and to work actively on promoting Digital Inclusion.

Role of the Cities

A first priority of TeleCities is to highlight the role of cities in the developments brought about by the Information Society in Europe. Here our goal is to place the city related aspects of these developments higher on the EU agenda as well as on the agenda of the national and the local political level. We aim to draw the attention of the policy makers to the impact that the Information Society has on cities and the people living and working there and to urge them to support local public administrations to ensure a good quality of life in the new social, economic and cultural environment, and to foster e-Citizenship for all.

As for the national governments' policy, TeleCities is developing regular contacts with the relevant ministries of the European countries represented by its membership. Through the promotion of the network and its initiatives at national level, TeleCities aims to influence national governments' ICT policy development in order to allow a more city-oriented approach.

However, the key policy development activity of the network is carried out at the local level, where TeleCities aims to facilitate the promotion of an Information Society for all. The goal here is to help local decision-makers to develop integrated policies that use ICT to foster new modes of governance and improve the delivery of local public services reflecting the needs of citizens and communities. The identification and transfer of good practice between cities is promoted to this end.

The TeleCities Challenges

In this respect, a Major European Challenge has been identified by TeleCities to be tackled throughout the 6th FP and being relevant for the network – a challenge where cities are the key players, simultaneously representing the citizens as major stakeholders. The Major Challenge would be:

By 2010, “eCitizenship and associated new forms of urban governance” will be ensured for all, in all (then) EU countries, at all levels.

Such challenge is based on the assumption that full citizenship means also to grant individuals the rights to access public services in the most effective way, to actively participate in local public decision-making processes which affect their quality of life, to equally profit from the benefits of Information Society.

This Major Challenge could develop into four depending challenges, all with the 2010 perspective:

- *All cities will have implemented their services online integrated into re-engineered processes and using the multichannel model, in order to improve the quality of the services delivered to citizens, professionals and businesses.*
- *All Cities will have implemented eDemocracy with all the new forms of citizens' participation and community empowerment.*
- *All European citizens will have the right to eSecurity.*
- *All European citizens will be digitally literate and able to benefit from the gains of the Information society.*

TeleCities Priorities and Activities

TeleCities issues are based on four pillars:

Knowledge Transfer

Within the information society, exchange of experiences, project results and “lessons learned” among the cities concerned is to facilitate local and global processes of learning. Knowledge, experience and Best Practices are spread through network dissemination activities like international TeleCities conferences, regular working groups, exhibitions, publications, TeleCities’ own website, training courses as well as a virtual discussion forum. TeleCities Working Groups were established as open discussion forums. Participants physically meet four times a year during TeleCities conferences to discuss topical issues of vital significance to city administrations. Each working group is coordinated by a city chosen for its experience with and practical knowledge of a particular subject matter. There are four working groups currently in progress on: eEducation, Organisational Changes in the City of Tomorrow, Smart Government und TeleDemocracy. Three additional working groups are active within the PACE project (see below).

Information Provision

A second priority of TeleCities is to provide regular information to its members of EU policy development relevant to Information Society, Research and Technological development, Trans-European Networks, EU programmes from other DG’s and other funding opportunities. This will be mainly achieved through:

- Regular e-Newsbrief to members

This tool is a collection of all information and relevant news of each week. It provides information on EU policies, programmes, calls, events in the field of Information Society and other relevant areas for TeleCities. Initiatives and events from the members can be included as well in the brief, if communicated by the members.

- The TeleCities Web site

The TeleCities database-driven web site is composed of four sections, namely “What’s New”, “Activities”, “Events”, and “Membership”. The first section provides information on EU policies, call and events, as well as an overview of the last five documents uploaded on our website, and finally a document search facility. Differently from the first section, the “Activities” and “Events” section offer information on internal issues, such as TeleCities Working Groups, EC-funded projects (Activities) as well as TeleCities conferences (Events). Given the nature of our web site, both sections may disseminate information on local activities and events promoted by our members. Finally, the last section of the TeleCities web site is devoted to our membership and provides information on members’ activities, projects and best practices.

- The TeleCities Events

TeleCities events are used as an opportunity for cities to receive information about EU policies, funding and events, as representatives from the European Commission and other European institutions will be regularly invited to speak, participate in and contribute to the debates.

The same tools is to be used to ensure a broad and structured dissemination of TeleCities and members’ projects.

Policy and Dialogue

TeleCities acts as a platform of dialogue for cities and EU institutions, particularly with regard to information and communication technologies. This is to place increased emphasis on the position of cities vis-à-vis EU institutions in the above context. Policy Papers are one of TeleCities’ more recent activities which has helped to establish its official position on ICT issues of political interest. It relies on participation of representatives from city administra-

tions as well as on the expertise drawn from within cities themselves. It has given considerable political weight to TeleCities as a city network and speaker of millions of people in Europe. TeleCities is cooperating with Eurocities to create widespread understanding within pertinent EU institutions for ICT issues of relevance to city administrations, and to engage in constructive dialogue on such issues. Policy papers on eLearning and eDemocracy have recently been prepared.

EU Funding and Projects' Support and Assistance

TeleCities is also highly appreciated among its members for its efforts in preparing new projects, searching for partners for EU proposals, providing information on programmes, initiatives and EU funding. TeleCities has become a chosen partner for such EU projects as enable it to pursue its primary objectives, which are: "to raise awareness, exchange of best practices among all relevant actors and of state-of-the-art urban IS technologies by means of events and information dissemination." TeleCities is a partner of "DEBUT - Data Exploitation and Best Utilisation Trail", the aim of which is to encourage public private partnerships between private partners and public administrations; it also participates in "EDEN – Electronic Democracy European Network", a project developed in support of Natural Language Processing (NLP) Tools and subsequent citizen participation in urban policy plans. TeleCities is also actively involved in the LEONARDO project "Exchange of Skills", the eContent projects "eCT – Electronic Call for Tenders" and "ODA – Open Digital Administration", as well as the IST eCommerce project „PACE - Public Administration and Electronic Commerce in Europe“, one of TeleCities' main projects. PACE has triggered a sustainable process of studies, knowledge distribution, training, awareness raising activities and working groups, etc., within public administrations which is to open the doors to the European eCommerce market.

For the future, TeleCities expects some excellent projects to come to life, as the network has become partner in other EU proposals, so e.g. a three networks' project „Three Roses“ together with ELANET and Eris@, PANISCO with a.o. city networks of CEE cities, BRAINCHILD on reengineering public administrations in the framework of eEurope+ actions etc.; MUTEIS, an IST research project on digital economy on a macro and regional/urban level and the connected urban trends in Europe's Information Society with several major European cities and research institutions is approved and started its realization.

Summary

The importance of cities in being the most immediate partner and prime contact for citizens for delivering governance services for the citizens' daily life and well-being has been proven; its relevance acknowledged also by the European Commission.

Given that the tasks of public administrations have been changing fundamentally over the past years, ICT has been recognized more and more as a strategic tool for urban development by influencing the organisation of a public administration; principles of New Public Management and Business Process Re-engineering, catchwords like customer orientation and back office/front office have already started to change the "traditional" Digital City.

Combining these two issues, the TeleCities network is presented as a means of support for cities on their way towards Information Society and the support cities give each other by working together and linking their efforts.

eEurope+ Initiative and its implementation under the conditions of the Czech Republic

*Jiří Krump, representative of the Czech Republic of JHLC,
Chairman of the Office for Public Information Systems*

eEurope 2002 Action Plan

“Prodi’s eEurope Initiative” – December 1999

- European Council Meeting, Lisbon, 2000 – Goal: the EU shall become the most dynamic economy based on knowledge by 2010;
- European Council Meeting, Feira, 2000 –eEurope 2002 Action Plan (Implementation: EU Member States)
- General objective of eEurope : Online Europe as soon as possible.

Action Line

- Cheaper, faster and safe Internet;
- Investments in people and skills;
- Support of Internet utilisation.

Tools

- programmatic financial assistance;
- benchmarking.

Action Plan eEurope+2003

- Process initiation – European Ministerial Conference, Warsaw, May 2000;
- Programme of EU Candidate Countries, similar to eEurope;
- Official launching at the meeting of European Council at Göteborg, Sweden, June 2001;
- Reflects a specific situation in Candidate Countries, including :

Action Line – Acceleration of the implementation of major structural features of the Information Society

- speed up provision of access to available communication services for all;
- adopt and implement an *acquis* related to the Information Society.
- Reflecting priorities of eEurope+ 2003: update the Action Plan on State Information Policy Implementation by 2003 (Note: adopted by the Government by its Resolution No. XXX/2002 – it shall be on the Government agenda in February 2002);
- It includes a list of projects of public administration authorities in the IS area;
- Monitoring progress by using benchmarking indicators – determined for each action line;
- Czech Statistical Office – it shall establish organisational and methodological preconditions for monitoring of benchmarking indicators for 2002 and the following years on the basis of Government Resolution No 405/2001;
- Establish a Statistics Working Group to monitor benchmark indicators.

JHCL – members, representation in the Czech Republic

- JHLC = Joint High Level Committee;
- Joint Body of the European Commission (Information Society DG) and representatives of EU Candidate Countries for the development of Information Society;

- It meets several times a year as necessary (Note: the next meeting will take place on 14 March 2002 in Brussels, probably followed by a meeting at the end of April – beginning of May in Prague);
- The Czech Republic is represented by the Chairman of the Office for Public Information Systems and a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
 - Co-ordination of preparation and implementation of the *eEurope+2003* Action Plan;
 - Preparation of the **First Progress Report** (FPR);
 - FPR publishing – on the occasion of the Ministerial Conference on Information Society in Ljubljana (2 – 4 June 2002).

Ministerial Conference on Information Society (Ljubljana, 2 –4 June 2002)

- Host Country – Republic of Slovenia;
- Prepared in co-operation with the European Commission (Information Society DG) and EU Candidate Countries;
- Participation - official delegation having 5 members (EU Candidate Countries, EU Member States, European Commission, representatives of Balkan countries), a fifteen members suite for each Candidate Country;
- Accompanying exhibition – a limited number of exhibitors;
- First Conference Output:
- First Progress Report on implementation of *eEurope+*;
- Recommendations and conclusions.

Other important foreign activities of the Office for Public Information Systems

- Negotiations with the European Commission on the joining of the Czech Republic to the IDA Community Programme (Networks between Administrations), aimed at eCommunication between state administrations - <http://europa.eu.int/ISPO/ida/> - expected date of the Czech Republic joining: 2002;
- Negotiations with the European Commission on the joining of the Czech Republic to the eContent Community Programme <http://www.cordis.lu/econtent> or <http://www.econtent.cz> – expected date of the Czech Republic joining: 1 June 2002;
- Activities towards OECD (administering co-operation – Committee for Information, Communication and Computer Policy – and working groups).

Author:

Jiří Krump, representative of the Czech Republic of JHLC, Chairman of the Office for Public Information Systems

From 1996 he was employed by the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic. Until May 2000 he served as a department director, later as a director of the administrative section responsible for the development of the information systems of the Office. From the end of 1998 to March 2000 he served as deputy to the Head of the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic. Mr. Krump was also responsible for security and telecommunication systems of the Office, printing, operation of the library, registry and records office. In March 2001, he became Chairman of the Office for Public Information Systems.

PRELUDE Project

Javier Ossandon, Project Coordinator, ELANET/CEMR

Promoting European Local and Regional Sustainability in the Digital Economy

Abstract

The 24-month PRELUDE project will carry out a major dissemination programme of Information Society-related actions involving Regions and local governments. The Consortium will participate in not less than 50 important promotional events in Europe and launch not less than 200 initiatives of different levels. The activities will be undertaken within nine Digital Areas, ranging from public health systems and equal opportunities to urban transport, from e-Government and Regional Geographic Information Systems to education, training and e-learning, and from regional marketing to Technology Development Research Programmes in the EU and CEEC. Within all these Areas, PRELUDE will disseminate regional profiles and benchmarking; best practice galleries and modelling; clustering and concertation; local, regional and European networks' actions and events; and provide editorial and web supporting services.

Objectives

The PRELUDE project will:

- promote IST achievements as an instrument for regional sustainable development;
- reinforce digital strategies at regional and sub-regional/local level;
- prepare the grounds for future research initiatives in Europe, according to the idea of the European Research Area, by incorporating the European Regions therein;
- support eEurope and excellence regarding regional digital economies and strategies;
- favour clustering and cross-fertilisation within the nine Digital Regions of the project;
- consolidate collaboration with European institutions and with other European regional networks and similar organisations;
- generate a sustainable model for the continuous existence of PRELUDE.

Description of the Work

The PRELUDE project will perform a major dissemination programme concerning the promotion of research technology and innovation. These activities will be done through the Consortium itself as well as through supporting actions conducted by other relevant actors. Each participating Region will lead Europe-wide its own Digital Area, within which actions will be performed in the PRELUDE Regions as well as in non-PRELUDE Regions (both will obtain half of the total budget). Particular attention will be paid to Objective 1 Regions and CEE countries. All the plans for the dissemination activities will be approved at the Steering Committee meetings, on the basis of the proposals by the PRELUDE Regions.

Other management will be done through a Team in Brussels and by the participating organisations. Special advisory organs - Advisory Committee and European Commission Supporting Team - will offer assistance for the project. The project is divided into six work-packages, four of which are directly dedicated to dissemination purposes.

Two European regional networks, ELANET/CEMR and eris@, are in central role in the project. They support PRELUDE through their different backgrounds and competencies, providing assistance for the PRELUDE Regions and organising activities in non-PRELUDE Regions.

The PRELUDE web portal and its links to existing tools in other sites will provide information and supporting services for the project. At the end of the project, a European conference will be organised, where the results of PRELUDE and further activities will be outlined with a view to achieving continuity for the project well into the future. By then, the participating Regions have become prime movers within their respective Digital Areas and able to continue their work Europe-wide after the project.

Milestones

In T6, the PRELUDE website will be online. The Project Management Plan and the programmes for promotion activities have been adopted. Initial analysis has been performed on the situation with regard to the digital economy in Europe.

The promotion and dissemination actions will take mainly place from T7 to T24. Mid-term evaluation will be done in T12, and the programmes for subsequent activities are adjusted accordingly. At the end of the project, a model and a roadmap will be elaborated for future actions as well as a representative European conference will be organised in T24.

Infoville. A large-scale implementation of a Smart Community model

Manuel Muro Perez, Marketing Director, Oracle Iberria

Abstract

In 1996 the Regional Government of Valencia (Spain) launched a project to improve the region's overall competitiveness by implementing an Information Society strategy for all of its four million citizens and public and private entities. So far the project is expanding successfully, and eighteen cities are already using this model. The basic principles that made it successful are explained in the paper below.

Introduction

There is a strong push from governments around the world to promote access to the Information Society. This is as a result of an increasing awareness of, and concern about, the digital divide between those citizens who are connected and those that are not.

The benefits of adopting this new model are enormous. Not only will it enable citizens to have better access to public services in a more cost effective way but also, by integrating access to public and private services, such as Healthcare, Police, Schools, Employment, Shops, Associations, etc. the Information Society becomes a reality, increasing the quality of life and productivity of its participants.

There is a clear political reward in promoting this new model.

The Importance of the Local Portal concept

The importance of a portal (a door into the virtual space of the Internet) is that it is the only place where a user is under some degree of "control" or guidance. By creating an attractive portal, with a high degree of retentiveness, users will be willing to use it as an entry point to conduct their transactions. Portals are valued by the number of subscribers or users they attract, and are becoming highly valued assets.

Local portals are becoming increasingly important as they have the potential to attract a large sector of the population that until now has had little interest in participating in the Internet revolution. This sector invariably requires more local than national information. For example, such users might not be interested in accessing the web site of the National Education Ministry to learn matters of general interest, they might often access a local school's site to learn how their children are progressing and discuss their school's methods or activities with teachers and other parents.

The Region of Valencia in Spain felt that the creation of a local city portal would be extremely beneficial to its organizations and citizens.

Implementing Infoville

Infoville was initially launched with the aim of modernizing the Public Administration in the Region of Valencia. Almost immediately, it became a more ambitious program with the chief objective of increasing the Region's overall competitiveness through the adoption of Information Society tools and methods. To make things happen, the regional government (Generalitat de Valencia) enlisted the help of two entities: OVSI (Oficina Valenciana para la Sociedad de

la Información), responsible for the sociological aspects of the project and TISSAT, a private company, partially owned by Generalitat, to create the solution from the technological point of view. A number of public and private organizations with a regional or national presence were invited to participate including for example, Telefónica, which became a major sponsor and contributor to the project. Infoville also won the support of the European Commission within its 4th Framework Program, and other European cities became participants.

The city of Villena was chosen as the pilot site to launch the program as its sociological mix and degree of awareness of information and communications technology was considered to be representative of the whole region. This first implementation took six months and enabled the creation of a model that would be replicated by other cities in the region. OVSI learned the best way to deal with citizens and deliver training, as well as promoting the success of what was being achieved. TISSAT partnered with leading IT and communications providers to join components and make the developments of what was going to be a real city portal. Some of the most important technological decisions were made at this time, such as the use of Java throughout as the programming language. Also, the Network Computing model proposed by Oracle, that would allow portal access to be independent of device, and the use of Oracle's database to solve potential scalability problems.

Villena's citizens as well as public and private entities enthusiastically supported the initiative, and a good number of services were quickly added to the portal, most of them with a high degree of personalization. By the end of 1997 Villena was the most advanced city in Spain, in terms of its citizens' involvement in the Information Society. People living in Villena could make a restaurant reservation, ask for a certificate from the Town Hall, send a mail to a relative, update personal data with the bank, participate in a discussion about a local school's performance, receive local news, create personal web pages, or even select a time slot on a doctor's agenda. It was also a huge change for local organizations. Without no major cost they became content providers: banks, hospitals, clinics, the local police, shops, private associations, the football team and most of the existing businesses were connected and started experiencing the Information Society for themselves. All this made the Villena experiment very popular in the region and paved the way for the other cities that applied to follow the initiative.

Since its launch in 1996 Infoville has been implemented in eighteen sites in the region: Villena, Catarroja, Torrevieja, Altea, Oliva, Gandía, Burriana, Vall d'Uixó and others. Also, the same model proved to be successful in the University Miguel Hernández, to create a virtual community between students and teachers. The Infoville project keep expanding at a rapid pace and there should be around 50 cities implemented in the short term, with others to follow, in the coming years.

Using technology to offer inherent flexibility and scalability, Infoville is rolled out via each local authority incorporating specific local information and data, simply, quickly, and cost-effectively. This technological platform also enables local businesses and local administrations to add their own services to Infoville with minimal investment.

User access was originally via PC, but it is now possible through interactive TV, and soon through WAP and UMTS technology as well, driving down the cost of participation for the citizen.

Uptake has been impressive. Some 16,000 terminals already provide access for more than 50,000 users, and Infoville is also available in over 100 schools where children learn how to use the system and understand the power of the Internet. The average time connected per user is 49 minutes each day, with 80% of this time spent inside Infoville and 20% outside on the World Wide Web. Average training time is just four hours.

Typical activities, in the cities where Infoville has been implemented, include requests for certificates from the municipality, access to personal data (such as paying bills through a local bank account), viewing balances and changing address details. Local businesses - even small shops - have created Web pages and promote their businesses through the portal. Citizens participate in chats and discussions, both in public and private. Local authority queries can be dealt with online and citizens can even contact their children's teachers for school reports and other information. A local news service keeps the population informed of up-to-the-minute news in their city, and there are specialist areas for farmers and agricultural businesses which provide access to bulletins from the regional government covering everything from the weather to pest control and the latest market prices. The local electricity company allows people to enter their meter readings online and local hospitals provide information and an appointments system.

Both public and private sector organizations find that they can add their services to the portal at minimal cost and this has encouraged new growth paths. In the private sector, e-commerce participation is higher in the region than would normally be expected. In the public sector, self-service and access for twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, has relieved pressure on local administrations. Many citizens will now make enquiries via the Internet instead of visiting or telephoning the town hall, enabling administrations to focus resources on those citizens who feel they need a more personal service.

Lessons Learned from the Infoville Project

Advanced as it is from the technological point of view, probably the best lessons came from the human and sociological aspects of this implementation. Everything was conceived to minimize the fear many people would have of using a computer. As far as possible, the system avoided the use of concepts such as navigation (substituted by a two-dimensional menu always present in the screen) or the use of hyper-links, cut-and-paste, or other technical tricks, maximizing at the same time simplicity and personalization features. The aim was to make the portal personalized and as attractive as possible so that each individual felt it was his or her own portal.

At the same time, great effort was dedicated to include some segments of the population typically left out of the most innovative new solutions. New sub-projects to develop specific sets of services for them were launched, such as Infosenior for older people, Infodona for women, or Infocole for teachers and children at school.

Another important lesson was that there are no "killer applications" in this type of system. Each person will use it in his or her own way, and only having a critical mass of services guarantees the portal's attractiveness and frequent access. Infoville also solved the problem of how to create a local content-based portal with an industrial scope or vision. This means that it can conjugate both the artisan-type of solution for local services while maintaining a highly effective approach to replicate this model in many places at a very fast pace. This is shown by the following statistics:

- While the first implementation (city of Villena) took six months, the most recent ones are becoming operational in just two to three months.
- An initial offering of about one hundred services are easily available each time a new city portal is launched.
- Telecom usage (paid by users) has increased threefold in the cities where the project has been implemented.

- Other European cities and regions are considering the same model. It has proven to be a highly successful one amongst the many initiatives launched in this area.

Thanks to the relatively low implementation costs associated with the model, there are many different approaches where government, telcos, utilities, services or any other type of organization can play a role, either leading or partnering in these projects. The common interest is for the City Portal to become the place citizens will connect to.

Proposal to build a Smart Community

For Smartcity/Smart Community projects the Internet model has to be re-thought and carefully deployed to guarantee a critical mass of users, services and content providers, and highest level of use by the citizens. These two factors determine the success or failure of such project

- To achieve a critical mass of services and content-providers, the early involvement of every potential content provider is key, but it is essential to avoid relying exclusively on their commitment or ability to make their services available through the new portal but, provide the tools to integrate their legacy systems with minimal effort and cost instead.
- To obtain a high rate of usage, everything must be conceived from the average citizen's point of view. Therefore, concepts such as user training, citizen's interface, personalization, data protection, cost, affordability and others, have to be built-in to the solution.
- To invite partner who are experienced in such projects and can contribute not only with technologies but know-how as well.

vCRM

the Vienna Citizens Request Management, the platform for citizens participation

Rainer Riedel, Member of staff, VCA

Brief description

The paper describes the main aspects and functionalities of the system dealing with citizens complaints as the former called Citizens Complaint Management (CCM). As CCM the system has been selected for the exhibition during the eGovernment congress in Brussels in November 2001, is selected for an award by the pan european "Global Award for Excellence in Workflow" in San Francisco and is invited for various presentations (i.e. Lisbon). To give space to expand the idea and the development for a citizens participation system the name has changed to Vienna City Request Management (vCRM) and you will find in the paper prospective ideas implementing tools and functionalities into the vCRM which will be developed already in EU-projects.

Thesis of the paper divided into chapters

Chapter 1: System Overview

Vienna is Austria's federal capital. Within Austria, the City of Vienna has a special position as regards administration as stipulated by the Austrian federal constitution, which means that Vienna is both a federal province of the Republic of Austria and a municipality ("statutory town"). Home to approximately 1.7 million inhabitants, Vienna is also the seat of numerous big international companies.

Due to the large size of the city, the Vienna City Administration, as the competent municipal authority, has to handle a broad range of tasks in a consistent, efficient manner and within the legal framework.

In addition to mandatory administrative tasks, Vienna's City Administration has to deal with Citizen Services which is a very sensitive area.

In the development of the vCRM (Vienna Citizen Request Management) application former CCM (Citizen Complaint Management) application, priority was given to a highly customer-oriented approach in complaint management in order to simplify and harmonize contacts between the municipal authority and its citizens. This called for the implementation of a consistent data gathering and handling routine throughout the Vienna City Administration.

The core project was launched in August 2000, starting with the introduction of an analysis stage in various branches of Citizen Services. This stage was followed by a design stage during which requirements concerning design and functionality were implemented, and led to the development of a prototype. After a series of further adjustments and modifications, another prototype was developed and produced. Prior to prototype production, all citizen concerns not dealt with to that point were integrated in the new system to avoid the loss of pending matters.

The application is based on the Vienna City Administration's general electronic file system and contains only few inherent features. This was provided for deliberately so as to ensure its functionality within the domain system used by the Vienna City Administration.

After initially taking up operation in five service departments, contacts with further departments were soon established where SP1 has since been integrated and is in operation now. In stage three the application will be integrated in the Web, enabling citizens in the future to enter their concerns directly and to find out what the status of their concern is and how it is being handled.

Chapter 2: The key motivations behind installing this workflow system

In a major city like Vienna, citizens usually have a great number of different requests or concerns they would like to address to the City Administration.

The system used previously by the Vienna City Administration was able to register such concerns only as long as they were notices of a claim. Any other type of requests or concerns was not registered, because it was impossible to attribute them to a specific subject matter.

A classification system had to be established, allowing to report concerns of any kind to the Vienna City Administration and its branches. The vCRM (Vienna Citizen Request Management) had to support the capture and unequivocal classification of requests so that they could be attributed to a single, clearly defined subject.

All requests arriving since then were captured in the system while their further processing was still represented on paper copies. The latter also formed the basis for decision-making and were passed on to the hierarchy for approval. Up until that point neither a consistent capturing method nor any clear classification of requests had existed. Frequently requests brought in earlier at different municipal administrative office departments were dealt with several different times and in different ways.

Harmonization of data input:

To ensure a unique and consistent handling of related requests, their input was standardized. In a first step, users have to enter all required details which identify a matter clearly. Apart from the business type, this involves primarily the assignment of a reference code unique for the specific municipal administrative office branch. This reference code has a hierarchical (trinomial) structure which is headed by a wider, generic term which allows for an easier attribution to a specific subject area such as noise, contamination, etc. Derivative terms help to further refine a request's attribution. Knowing the facts of a case, users can make an abstract attribution to a specific reference code.

Alignment within the system

This unique classification of citizens' concerns allows to query whether any similar requests or matters have already been stored in the system, for instance because they were brought in with different services. The system automatically obliges users to fill in the queries before a number referring to a particular request is assigned. This ensures uniqueness not only with regard to capturing a case but also to handling (related) cases.

Speed in handling matters

By means of systematic alignment, identical cases are aggregated under a single reference number. Relevant criteria in this context are the reference code, address and temporal cohe-

sion. Optionally, the person entering a request can be defined as a criterion unless he or she has made an anonymous request.

Consistent handling

Users have to adhere to specific operational processes which support them in taking into account all decisive factors when dealing with a particular matter. These processes require users to proceed in a particular way, ensuring that the case is dealt with accurately both in terms of the citizen as well as the Vienna City Administration. However, officials in charge cannot be saved from taking decisions regarding the nature of a matter.

These operational processes therefore have a checks-and-balances aspect to ensure that a matter has been dealt with thoroughly. Once the required processes have been completed and a decision has been reached, the user signs the number, making transparent to others which processes he or she has completed in the course of handling his or her matter.

Interdepartmental workflow

The vCRM workflow is handled via an interdepartmental domain to which users working in vCRM have full access through their respective department domains.

Chapter 3: The overall business innovation showing impact on management resulting from the new system

Thanks to the use of a single system for capturing and handling citizens' concerns throughout the Vienna City Administration, requests can be handled as quickly and as efficiently as possible, always with an eye to satisfying customers and citizens. This contributes considerably to improving the Vienna City Administration's image with regard to customer care and professionalism.

Consistent procedure:

Related complaints or complaints referring to the same case are handled in an interdepartmental file. Consequently, a single item number is generated for all departments dealing with a particular case. (So far, each department has handled their own file and generated their own item number.) Each item of the file (inbound, outbound or internal item) is assigned a sub-classification number, so that each document and each process has its own number. This leads not only to files being processed in a more consistent and more logical manner, but it is also a pre-requisite as regards the efficient use of a predominantly electronic file handling system.

Reference

Complaints are captured as inbound items. Detailed information on the complainant and the subject (including reference address) has to be added, as it is vital in assessing whether a complaint has already been lodged earlier (e.g. several complaints made over an industrial establishment causing noise; a citizen complaining over a single matter at several departments without indicating it). The screen form fills the entire screen and its clear structure helps users not to overlook essential pieces of information.

Access authorization:

Basically all vCRM participants are authorized to inspect all complaints lodged. However, higher-ranking departments ("head departments") can exempt ("block") specific complaints from being inspected, granting access exclusively to authorized persons. The system also sup-

ports the possibility of giving a particular user the authorization to search, but not to read particular files

Workflow:

Files and items are assigned another clerk or the competent specialized department electronically either via standing directives, or in an ad-hoc manner, enabling users to handle matters very flexibly. This leads to a considerable reduction of the time needed for postal delivery and makes it possible to react more quickly to citizens' requests.

Chapter 4: The overall technological innovation, showing process and workflow changes, improvements

The vCRM has been conceived and developed for application throughout Vienna's City Administration. The requirements identified for this application field are met by Fabasoft Components software. The need for a consistent integration of all offices of the Vienna City Administration in a single vCRM area required modifications and adjustments with regard to Fabasoft Components, compared with their implementation when used exclusively by a specific department.

Organizational structure:

The departments' organizational structure is generally very flat. It consists of the department, the subordinate office and a staff unit. To ensure the functioning of the vCRM throughout the City Administration, the Fabasoft Components electronic workflow is used. To work in a targeted and efficient way, highly detailed organizational structures are frequently required.

Chapter 5: The system users and what their job now entails compared to pre-installation

The new application assigns system users new roles which determine the distribution of tasks and competences as well as a series of procedures and signature authorizations.

For instance, the only person authorized to approve vCRM files is the vCRM executive. At this point, a historic copy of the file is made which cannot be modified. This ensures transparency on what was approved at certain point in time and permits attribution to a particular person.

This signature regulation can be extended to new requirements any time.

Chapter 6: Cost savings, increased revenues, and productivity improvements

Major progress has been achieved since the establishment of the vCRM, particularly as regards productivity gains. Automatically combining various local observations which were captured in task- and location-related departments, has made it possible to devise analyses and evaluations for large areas. For instance, by entering various notices regarding public nuisance caused by odors in a particular district, it can soon be identified that the person or company causing the odor is identical. Consequently they can be investigated promptly. Being able to easily identify problematic areas, clerks can assign causes more quickly and competently. Decisions can thus be reached promptly. It is only through the introduction of the vCRM that the Vienna City Administration has been enabled to act in a considerably more targeted and networked way, following a host of steps: **Capture, Identify, Decide, Act.**

Summary

The vCRM (Vienna Citizen Request Management) as the basic interface for nonformal requests from citizens to the public administration is designed to fasten the performance of individual complaints and wishes but it is also designed to recognize similar cases to make procedures more efficient and to enable visualisation of problem areas in a complex system as such as a city.

The application is prepared for future Web integration. In the future, communication and interaction between Vienna City Administration staff and citizens will be possible independent of time and place. The Web browser represents a homogenous user interface making the vCRM (Vienna Citizen Request Management) application independent of the operating system. Citizens can lodge their complaints anonymously and query the status of their matters via the Web any time. This enables citizens to enter their requests or complaints via home PCs, but also through so-called ACCESS points (kiosk systems) accessible to all members of the public at several sites throughout the city of Vienna.

There are also consideration to apply intelligent tools as for instants automatic routing systems, visualisation support for local problem areas, personalisation tools for individual access demands. Many ideas are contained in running EU-projects as the EDEN project.

The realisation of the vCRM – Vienna Citizen Request Management is a step forward to the extended idea of a CRM as Citizen Relationship Management, a system in which the citizen participation comes true.

Author:

Rainer Riedel, Member of staff, VCA (Vienna City Administration) / Municipal Department 14 Automated Electronic Data Processing

e-MINDER

(Electronic Commerce Leveraging Network for Developing European Regions)

Sara Riso, Project Manager, ELANET/CEMR

Brief introduction of the content:

The e-MINDER project aims at bridging the existing gap between the most and least developed regions as far as the use and development of e-commerce is concerned.

To achieve this goal, a European Network of three Leveraging Centres will be created among the three partner regions (Galicia, Pomerania and Cyprus).

The Leveraging Centres

The Leveraging Centre is an independent body that will provide services to the SMEs. All members of the Consortium will run the Leveraging Centre, and each member will contribute in its area of expertise.

The Leveraging Centres created by e-MINDER are crucial to give a picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the e-commerce indicators in Europe and the means available and needed to a better performance in this field. In particular, three categories of activity will be carried out:

- improve regional policies for encouraging innovative enterprises, in particular by building on “best practices” that have proved successful in other European regions;
- encourage innovators and would-be innovators;
- raise awareness about e-commerce.

The three Leveraging Centres will act as pilots, with the intention of further centres being set in less developed regions throughout Europe. Each one will be structured in four activity modules:

- Module A: Observatory
- Module B: Education and Training
- Module C: Demonstration and Support
- Module D: Information and Communication

Objectives

The specific objectives of e-MINDER are: raise awareness of ICT application in eCommerce among the SMEs and the education and training structures;

- provide services and support to citizens and companies in implementing their eCommerce related activities.

Participants

Co-ordinator: SlumbergerSema (Spain)

Principal contractors

- Centro de Supercomputacion de Galicia (Spain)
- Virtual IT (Cyprus)

- Pomeranian Region and President Office (Poland)

Assistant contractors

- Universidad de Santiago de Compostela (Spain)
- Universidad de A Coruña
- Cyprus Telecommunication Authority
- University of Cyprus
- Computer Centre Regional Data Bank of Pomeranian Region

The results of the e-MINDER project will be disseminated Europe-wide by the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) and its Information Society network ELANET, who will exploit the system in the future.

Summary

On a first stage of the project, the requirements for e-commerce and regional environmental variables will be settled down and a handbook for establishing the appropriate Leveraging Centre will be issued. Second stage: all three centres are created in Galicia, Cyprus and Pomerania. During a first of nine months the four major activities will be carried out. At the end of this stage, a synchronising seminar will be held and the third stage will start immediately afterwards. The end of the project will include a final international conference with a large pan-European coverage and at least seven more regions involved.

Author:

Sara Riso, Project Manager, ELANET/CEMR

Member of the ELANET/CEMR desk in Brussels, responsible for EU projects and head of the European thematic network on EU financial opportunities in the EUSlanD project, co-funded by the European Commission. Masters degree in ICT (Brussels)

EUSlanD (European System for Local Authorities' Networking Domains)

Sara Riso, Project Manager, ELANET/CEMR

Brief introduction of the content:

EUSlanD is a flexible and open system for the use of Local and Regional governments, based on a shared knowledge management and networking model. The research system will allow retrieval and integration of existing information at local and regional government level, using intelligent technological support systems. This system greatly facilitates the provision, semantic classification and exchange of information in five European key areas of interest to European Local Authorities: Financial opportunities through EU programmes; Implementation of European legislation at regional level; Benchmarking of urban transport solutions among larger cities; Employment policies by Local and Regional Authorities; Local and regional innovation based on ICT and technology watching.

Main features of the EUSlanD system

The idea of collaboration and co-operation is very strong and always present in EUSlanD. It is surely the main and basic concept of the entire project. Collaboration can be seen not only while EUSlanD users access information coming from other members, but above all while they provide their own information to the system, and so to other users, making, in this way, their private information public and available to the whole EUSlanD community. It's clear now how the EUSlanD Knowledge repository will be the result of the collaboration and contribution of all EUSlanD users who want to share their knowledge.

The EUSlanD system provides an innovative methodology to organise existing information and to classify it, as well as to build applications packages related with the exchange of this information. The system consists of two basic ***abstraction mechanisms***:

- the "Tagged-Abstract"
- the EUSlanD Concepts Domain

The fundamental transaction by which private information becomes public and known to the system is called, in EUSlanD, *publishing*, and its output, saved in the EUSlanD repository, is the so called ***Tagged Abstract***. The Tagged Abstract is an abstract (a descriptor) of a published information, but with something more (specifically added for EUSlanD purposes) than a normal and simple abstract, in fact it also provides a classification of the information, and a link to the complete document.

Other features

A new component labelled "Crawler" is being integrated into the EUSlanD system. The Crawler is an interactive information harvesting and knowledge management tool facilitating the retrieval of information available on Internet and in other specific public and private repositories.

The user should be able to define its domain of interest in terms of semantics formalized by EUSlanD's Conceptual Maps. Then, using the Crawler it should be able to search interactively in pre-defined repositories for documents related to these concepts, to examine documents proposed by the utility as relevant, and to extract from these documents their es-

sential concepts. Finally, the user should be able to create for document selected with the help of Crawler the draft of appropriate Tagged Abstract that will be conform to predefined Document Type Definition.

EUSlanD Crawler will orchestrate the synergetic work of different public search engines available free on Internet, and – if necessary - some other specific search engines possibly dedicated to particular public and private information repositories. The nucleus of the EUSlanD Crawler will be a state-of-the-art engine capable to continuously monitor a user-defined set of URLs.

Objectives

The basic goal of this project is to strengthen and to homogenise the decentralisation process that is taking place in Europe by creating an efficient data retrieval and knowledge networking system on Internet for civil servants and experts of administrations and community organisations acting at the local level.

In the context of increasing importance of the European dimension and the establishment of the European monetary union of the Euro, the system will respond to the urgent need for collaboration that local administrations have, by working together, by learning from each other, by using positive and negative experiences of other local governments in other places of the Union in order to avoid reinventing wheels.

The main EUSlanD project objectives are, consequently two:

- to contribute to increase the efficiency of local and regional governments in a decentralised society by creating and testing (research and demonstration) a knowledge management and networking system at European level, based on the Internet and extensive use of other telematic and multimedia products.
- to strengthen existing thematic networks at a transnational European level, as well as creating new ones, by allowing people working for or with municipalities, provinces and regions, to interact through the system, while benefiting from additional support services.

Participants

Co-ordinator: ANCITEL SpA (Italy)

Principal contractors:

- Engineering Ingegneria Informatica SpA (Technical partner - Italy)
- National Association of Local Authorities in Denmark
- URBA 2000 (France)
- NEUROSOFT Poland
- «Cities on internet» Association

Assistant contractors:

- Westminster (Italy)
- ARCO Systems (Belgium)
- AICCRE (Italy)
- ANCI (Italy)

The EUSlanD project is sponsored by the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) and its Information Society network ELANET, who will exploit the system in the future.

Summary

The main potential added-value of the system is to become an important instrument to support European cohesion and to favour EU enlargement. The community added-value of the projects lies precisely in this objective of the European Union, not only from the economic and government policy point of view but in particular as much as it gets people working together to solve problems that despite of their local realities are quite similar.

EUSlanD will facilitate access to classified information in key domains for Local governments to improve their own administrations and services; it will promote standardisation and provide services to help networking between civil servants and experts from any kind of organisation working at the local level. In a reality like Europe where the large majority of economical competitions involves SME's and where Local governments are strong employers, such a knowledge management system will help to create new business opportunities and more employment of qualified personnel.

Author:

Sara Riso, Project Manager, ELANET/CEMR

Member of the ELANET/CEMR desk in Brussels, responsible for EU projects and head of the European thematic network on EU financial opportunities in the EUSlanD project, co-funded by the European Commission. Masters degree in ICT (Brussels).

eGovernment in the 6th Framework RTD Programme

Gérald Santucci, Head of Unit, European Commission

Introduction

Over the last ten years great progress was made toward better interaction between governments and citizens, governments and businesses, and governments among themselves. Since the European Nervous System (ENS) programme launched in 1992, the Commission has funded under three consecutive Framework Programmes around 140 RTD projects for a public investment of 235 millions of Euros.

Under ENS (3rd Framework Programme 1991–1994), “data telematics” based research was used to support, through the interconnection of the existing national networks, the implementation of the single market. The IDA programme, i.e. the EU programme for the Interchange of Data between Administrations, was born from the thrust generated by the ENS programme. It provided counsel and access to the results of existing telematics projects to help administrations build information links with their counterparts across Europe.

Under the Telematics Applications programme (4th Framework Programme 1994–1998), research work shifted from “data telematics” to “multimedia telematics” and was expanded and strengthened to address the needs of sub-central territories (regions and municipalities). The Integrated Applications for Digital Sites activity (IADS), launched by this programme in 1997, fostered the development of sustainable and effective public-private partnerships at the local and regional level. Altogether this RTD work contributed to the large scale deployment of the Information Society at all levels of government.

Under the IST programme (5th Framework Programme 1998–2002), which is finishing this year, research work started to shift from telematics to the new paradigm of “ambient intelligence” for smart government and electronic democracy. Ambient intelligence provides a vision of the Knowledge based Society where the emphasis is on greater user-friendliness, more efficient services support, user-empowerment, and support for human interactions. Relevant work under the IST programme has developed in the new context created by the eEurope initiative, the definition of an European Research Area (Communication from the Commission of 18th January 2000), and the White Paper on European Governance (published on 25th July 2001).

The eGovernment conference “From policy to practice”, which took place in Brussels on 29th–30th November 2001, has shown that research efforts carried out in the Member States and under the Framework Programmes have resulted in great and tangible progress in the full scale implementation of interactive e-government applications.

Further collaborative R&D in the field of e-government will take place in a new context which is characterised by:

- The implementation of the European Research Area
- A new vision for research and its management
- The use of new instruments

The European Research Area (ERA)

The Commission Communication “Towards a European Research Area” analysed the current state of EU R&D, and argued that a more co-ordinated approach was needed in order to get the best from Europe's R&D resources.

The Commission Communication was endorsed at the special Lisbon Council of 23/24 March 2000, which called on the Council and the Commission, together with the Member States where appropriate, to take the necessary steps towards the establishment of ERA. The Council resolution adopted at the European Research Council of 15 June 2000 then identified a number of themes for action to this end. These include:

- Benchmarking national R&D policies
- Networking national and joint research programmes
- Mapping excellence
- Improving the environment for private research investment
- Creating a high-speed trans-European electronic network
- Removing obstacles to the mobility of researchers
- Introducing a Community patent

The next EU Framework Programme of RTD activities (FP6) is the most important instrument by which the European Research Area will be realised. The proposal for the next FP brings within the scope of the Framework Programme itself a number of co-ordinating activities that are already being organised by the European Commission. Under the title "Strengthening the Foundations of the European Research Area", these include the mutual opening-up of national programmes, and the mapping of scientific and technological excellence in Europe.

The vision

ERA provides the necessary framework to bring together the IST research effort in the Member States and build coherent approaches for future research. Any vision for research into eGovernment systems, services and applications should build upon the following key trends: concentration of effort on key developments that help reinforce European competitiveness, longer term horizons for time to market, a shift from traditional Internet technologies (e.g. PC based access, HTML, word indexing) towards the next generation of technologies (e.g. embedded intelligence, new sensing techniques and multisensorial interfaces, wireless and mobile, broadband and enabling semantic-based knowledge handling).

Against this background, the main challenge for governments today is that they have to face increasing demands and expectations from citizens, businesses and society as a whole. Governments must analyse, co-ordinate and react more quickly than ever in a context of rapid technological, market and societal changes.

As a consequence, the focus of the work in FP6 will be on the restructuring of the government workflow/business models to provide transparency and citizen participation in the political decision making process, especially on the local level. *The vision should focus on governmental process innovation rather than the transformation of existing processes for on line delivery.*

Government applications are generally big and their change, through the use of emerging technologies, can face serious organisational, financial and regulatory obstacles. Therefore, research is required into organisational knowledge management to optimise the use of corporate intangible assets and enable a better integration of processes across the value chains.

The target constituency

The main components of the constituency are the technology suppliers and the users, which in this domain are public organisations, citizens and companies. There are two main issues, which differentiate this domain, from the business world: public organisation structure and users of public services.

A starting point in the definition of the constituency could be the project cluster mechanism, which is already implemented in the Administrations area of the IST programme. The project clusters do not include only IST projects but are open to national and company projects. This is our way to prepare for the future ERA. With the horizontal work done in the project clusters, the research results are consolidated in relation to the interested actors.

Attracting constituents from the established areas of *eBusiness* and *eWork* should enrich the above work. The objective should be to consider the governance domain as an integral part of the business globalisation processes, notwithstanding its special characteristics.

However, the participation of all the above actors in the future RTD projects is not sufficient to achieve fast take-up of the research results. This is because a dramatic change of governments' current workflow processes and attitudes will be required. What is in addition required is to engage both the European political and company decision-makers into the RTD work. With the introduction of the new instruments it is necessary to expand and strengthen the current E-Forum Association concept in order bring together these decision-makers in the definition of RTD targets, the monitoring of their implementation, and the adoption of results by the users.

The new instruments

Integrated Projects (IPs) are designed to give increased impetus to the EU's competitiveness or to address major societal needs by mobilising a critical mass of research and technological development resources and competence. Each IP should be assigned clearly defined ambitious scientific and technological objectives and should be directed at obtaining specific results applicable in terms of products, processes or services. The detailed architecture of an IP will depend on the complexity and scope of the project, the topic it addresses, the objectives and the managerial approach taken. The integration may take several forms: vertical integration (from technology development to technology transfer), horizontal integration (multidisciplinarity), activities integration (R&D, demonstration and take-up, protection and dissemination of knowledge, training, etc.), inter-sectoral integration (private-public sector research partnership), financial integration (mobilisation of public and private sector funding schemes).

Internet Voting 2010

Electronic and Internet Voting are likely evolutions of the current voting processes, but it is so far unclear how such a development can be implemented in technological terms and how it could gain the acceptance of all actors (decision-makers and citizens). Work is required in three major areas: supporting technologies, user acceptance (decision-makers/citizens), and impact on democratic institutions and processes.

The RTD work should bring together the main actors in the domain in order to consolidate and build upon the RTD results achieved in FP5, and to provide secure, user-friendly total solutions for the future.

eGovernance Innovation 2010

The RTD work should identify a realistic roadmap towards innovative governance models for the future and should implement selective components of them. This work should include definition of the overall architecture, individual components and their priorities for development and deployment. Since the successful deployment of the RTD results will not only depend on technological advancement but also on legislative and political will of the European Governments, part of the work should be devoted to creating the political structures/forums which will be able to influence/engage the political decision making process.

Anywhere/anytime access to an ever increasing number of Internet services requires research and development of new environments capable of dynamically presenting users with content that is relevant to their context (e.g. activity, surrounding environment, location, preferences) and to do so in as natural a manner as possible. This includes the development of languages to describe the properties of Internet services, technology to capture contextual attributes, agent functionality capable of carrying out tasks and access multiple internet services on the behalf of their users as well as the development of new interface paradigms and new modes of interactions with the users (e.g. conversational dialogues). At the centre of all this also lies a number of interoperability challenges, which can strongly benefit from co-ordination at the European level.

Networks of Excellence (NoEs) are designed to strengthen scientific and technological excellence on a particular research topic by networking together at European level the critical mass of resources and expertise needed to be a world force in that topic. This expertise will be networked around a joint programme of activities aimed at creating a progressive and durable integration of the research activities of the network partners while at the same time advancing knowledge on the topic.

Government Interoperability framework

Work in FP6 will aim at the establishment of a Reference Model in the form of a Government Interoperability Framework (GIF), which will allow the independent and scalable development of compatible applications and interoperability between new and legacy government systems. Although all Member States have concrete plans for the modernisation of their administrative processes and passage to eGovernment, the provision of application interoperability on a European level is very low in their priority list. In addition interoperability issues, by their very nature, should be addressed on a European rather than national level.

Progress towards European integration will make interoperability an utmost necessity for the future. This is the main reason why EU-funded research work is particularly suited to address this important issue. Existing Commission actions, in particular IDA, address already these issues but only for the applications needed today and on a sector by sector basis. Close co-ordination between the IST and IDA programmes will therefore accelerate the deployment of the best practices in the Member States.

Specific Targeted Research Projects will aim at improving European competitiveness and at addressing social needs. They should be sharply focused and will take either the form of a research and technological development project or the form of a demonstration project, or a combination of the two. They are distinguished from integrated projects by the more limited scale of their ambition and research effort.

Such projects will be used (together with co-ordination actions) as a “stairway of excellence” to facilitate the access of smaller research actors of scientific excellence, including

SMEs, as well as research actors from candidate countries, to the activities of the FP6. The “stairway of excellence” is a transitional measure to help smooth the change from the FP5 to the FP6.

A small number of projects under this category will provide the bridge between FP5 and FP6. The work should focus on well defined narrow objectives which should align with the broader objective for the provision of eDemocracy for 2010.

In particular, the above instruments could be used for high risk visionary research, which could feed in the development of the big IPs. The calls for “expression of interest”, before the development of an IP, includes the risk of exclusion of innovative SMEs, because of their fear that their ideas will eventually be implemented by the established big companies.

Author:

Gérald Santucci has worked with DG XIII of the Commission of the European Communities since 1986. In the last six years, Dr Santucci has been involved in the strategic planning of European research in the field of telematics. He also co-ordinated the evaluation and monitoring of the 4th Framework Programme Telematics Applications R&D Programme. As Head of Unit, he currently manages the “Applications relating to administrations” unit of the newly-formed DG INFSO-B “Information Society Technologies: Systems and Services for the Citizen”.

The implementation of e-Government City of Tallinn

Toomas Sepp, Tallinn City Secretary, Tallinn City Office

Facts and figures about Estonia and Tallinn

	Estonia	Tallinn
Inhabitants (01.01.2002)	1 361 000	370 792
Territory km ²	45 227	158

Estonian IT Legislation

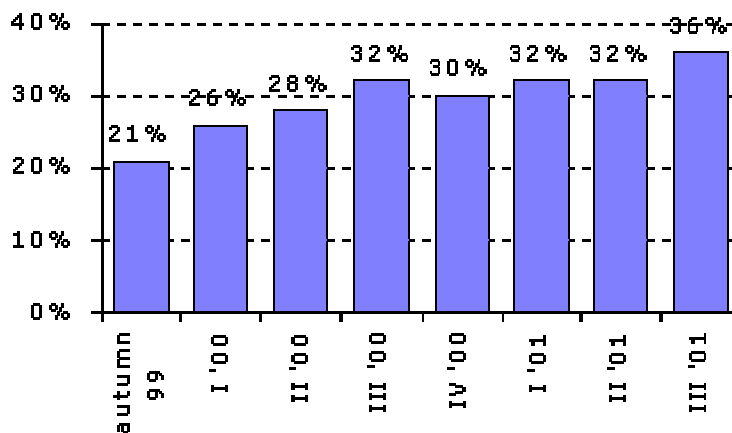
- Personal Data Protection Act
- Database Act
- Act on Intellectual Property
- Principles of Estonian Information Policy
- Action Plan of Estonian Information Policy (eEstonia)
- Digital Signature Act
- Public Information Act

Estonian people and Internet

There were 36% of internet users among Estonian 15–74 years old population in the 3rd quarter of 2001 who had used e-mail or other possibilities provided by the internet during last 6 months. During the previous year the share of internet users remained on the stable 32% level and growth resulted rather from more intensive internet usage. In the 3rd quarter the number of internet users increased.

In addition to the growing number of PCs the foundation of new public internet access points and the support to internet usage from private and public institutions has also influenced the growth of internet usage. There is more than 50 IAP in City of Tallinn.

Internet usage among Estonian 15–74 years old people (have used the internet during last 6 months)



Main Projects on the State Level

e-citizen

The e-citizen is a nation wide project that focuses on developing cooperation between Estonian citizens and the public sector through the Internet.

X-road

X-road is the modernization program of national databases with the aim to change national databases into a common public, service-rendering resource.

ID-card

One may identify himself with electronic card.

E-state

Environment in the Internet where all public organisations can put their information and services.

Estonian Government of Ministers' Session

A support system for the organization of ministers' sessions to automate the preparation processes and proceeding of the Estonian Government Cabinet meetings. The final objectives is to prepare all materials digitally and thus to reduce copying costs and delivery time.

Population Register

Electronical database where are personal information of all Estonian citizens and about other countries citizens who permanently resident in Estonia. This database is not for public use.

Main Projects on the Local Level

- web page: www.tallinn.ee
 - Virtual information hall for citizen.
- City Council Legal Acts Managing System
- City Government Session Information System
 - Information is public and open for all the internet users. The City Government session System enable users to read session agenda and public documents
- Legal Acts Register
 - Consists all legal acts which are accepted by City Government or City Council.
- Land and Real Estate Register
- Financial Management Information System
- City Government Document Managing System

City E-services – some principles for implementation

- e-government and e-services are not the objectives but the means for achieving the main objective – improving of life for the citizens.
- for a client the use of e-services should be cheaper and more convenient than other ways – useful information must be in the distance of 2 or 3, maximum 4 clics.
- e-services should be so user-friendly to use that even raw recruiters of computer and internet can manage.

- it is most important to make the processes easier, more uncomplicated.
- one priority for Tallinn is to create more e-services and best way to do it is through PPP (public-private-partnership).
- October 2001 we had III international conference: Contemporary Solutions in Capital Cities' Governance, organized by City of Tallinn in co-operation with Estonian Ministry of Internal Affairs and Association of Estonian Cities Supported by Danish Ministry of the Interior.

Results of the conference

Closer co-operation with Helsinki in the field of designing units to measure efficiency of IT investments, solutions–improvement in quality of services. Information about already existing networks brought to the public. Tallinn is weighing to possibly join the TeleCities Network.

Summary

There is very good IT background in City of Tallinn to make more e-services, main problem is undiscrbed service delivery process and low number of users.

Co-operation with state and local level is necessary and knowledges and help from private sector are very useful.

Author:

Toomas Sepp, Tallinn City Secretary, Tallinn City Office

1978–1983 Tartu University - Law Faculty, Civil Law; 1989–1991 Post Graduate exams at Tartu University (Theme of candidate work - Privatization of Housing Stock)

Several courses in Sweden, Finland and Denmark (local government, privatization, city planning). In-service training course at the University of Greenwich, England (1 month - in 1993).

November 1983–January 1991 - Ministry of Housing and Municipal Services;; Lawyer. Main task - Housing Law; January 1991–May 1991 - State Chancellery, Law Department; May 1991–April 1992 - Tallinn City Government, Housing Councillor

From April 1992 - Tallinn City Secretary, Chief of the City Chancellery - 113 employees

Networking of Public Administrations—the IDA Mission

Bernhard Snittger, European Commission

One of the major factors leading to the successful implementation of Community policies and the Community decision making process is the co-operation between Community and Member State administrations, and between these and the private sector. Collaborating administrations must be capable of rapidly exchanging large quantities of information between themselves and with industry, keeping pace with the transformations that the advent of the information society has brought about. This goal can only be achieved by means of co-ordinated use of modern technologies.

The IDA (interchange of data between administrations) mission is to support the implementation of Community policies and activities by co-ordinating the establishment of Trans-European telematic networks between administrations. As data needs to be exchanged throughout Europe, IDA also acts as an important vehicle for the re-engineering of the working processes of the administrations. The work within IDA is performed through several action lines:

- Promoting the implementation of sectoral networks in priority areas of work
- Developing interoperability measures, for use by sectoral networks
- Extending the benefits of the networks to Community industry and citizens
- Co-operating with national authorities and
- Co-operating with other EC services.

Promoting the implementation of sectoral networks in priority areas of work

In its first phase, IDA took significant steps to help administrations interchange information electronically, and to facilitate inter-institutional communications and the operations of European agencies. In the second phase of the programme, actions are being undertaken to establish or enhance sectoral networks in priority areas such as:

The removal of the obstacles to the free movement of goods, persons, services and capital

- The implementation and satisfactory operation of economic and monetary union and
- The industrial competitiveness in the Community, in particular the competitiveness of SMEs

Developing interoperability measures for use by sectoral networks

A number of horizontal measures cutting across the various sectoral networks are needed to facilitate interoperability within and across networks. Here IDA provides a co-ordinated approach in order to examine and solve common problems, make available solutions that meet sectoral user requirements and promote best practices. This concerns not only the technical, but also the organisational, legal and cultural aspects. The following actions will be undertaken:

- Development of a catalogue of generic services and support to the migration to the use of such services, for example the TESTA II network services
- Development of common tools for sectoral applications
- Removal of legal barriers and establishment of security measures, in particular a public key infrastructure

- Improvement of information content interoperability, and establishment of pilot applications within selected sectoral networks
- Collection/dissemination of information on national/regional initiatives
- Design and implementation of a quality assurance programme and
- Promotion of best practices and cross-fertilisation between sectoral projects, and organisation of a series of awareness events in the Member States.

Extending the benefits of the networks to Community industry and citizens

IDA has managed to become a driving force to change and modernise both Commission and Member States. One of the major challenges is to ensure that the benefits of the Trans-European networks reach the customers of the public administrations, namely citizens and enterprises. Actions ongoing or to be undertaken concern in particular:

- Development of relations with ministries in charge of industrial affairs, chambers of commerce, business networks, etc.
- Analysis of concrete possibilities for the establishment of relevant telematic networks (e.g. to facilitate access to databases of interest to industry) and
- Contribution to EC initiatives aimed at facilitating the access of citizens to public information.

Co-operating with National Authorities

All the Member States must be able to see the benefits of being active stakeholders in the process of building Trans-European Networks. In this context, an obvious concern is the respect of subsidiarity as individual Members States scope for action and freedom of choice have to be fully preserved. Not only all Member States need to be represented in the networks, but increased benefits will result from the extension of the networks to the associated countries. The main tasks of the unit in this area concern:

- The management of the TAC (Telematics between Administrations Committee) that assists the Commission in the execution of IDA
- The management of the TAC Working Group on horizontal measures, responsible for establishing a medium-to-long term strategy
- The evaluation of the IDA programme in co-ordination with the Member States and
- The preparation for any extension of the IDA programme to EEA and associated countries and cooperation with non-member countries and with international organisations and bodies, as appropriate.

Co-operating with other Commission services

Several sectoral services of the Commission participate directly in the IDA programme, other services which do not participate need nevertheless to be kept informed of IDA developments, in order to exploit possible synergies. Particular tasks concern:

- Co-ordination of the contribution of the sectoral services to the yearly IDA work programme, co-ordination of the budget distribution, and guidance on the preparation of the sectoral global implementation plans and
- Co-operation with the Commission departments in charge of relevant R&D programmes, the TEN Telecom programme, and relevant standardisation initiatives.

Prague – IT and e-government in municipal administration

*Jaroslav Šolc, Head of Department for Concepts and Strategies,
Magistrate Office of the Capital of Prague – IT Department*

Brief description

This paper briefly describes the Capital of Prague, its roles within public administration of the CR and municipal administrative bodies, and also mentions the municipal international policy concept. It also shortly recapitulates progress in the implementation of ICT, an overview of its current state including the infrastructure, organisation and funding. A more detailed attention is paid to the tasks of e-government, i.e. the electronic form of providing information and services by the City to its citizens. It also mentions several more significant activities and projects already implemented as well as new development plans (e.g. information strategy, security policy, MePNet, municipal web, environmental projects etc.).



General description of the Capital of Prague

Area:	496 km ²
Population (2001):	1.18 mil.
Population density (2001):	2,357 inhabitants/km ²
Number of businesses (2001):	366,453
Municipal share in the GDP (2001):	22.4%
Unemployment rate (2001):	3.5%
Average income/month (2001):	CZK 16.6 thous. (ca EUR 520)

Prague, the capital of the Czech Republic, is situated in the heart of Europe. It is a place attractive for tourists with rich history, culture and architecture (European City of Culture 2000). The city centre lies in the Vltava valley and in its outskirts you will find not only panel housing estates, but also valuable natural sites. Prague is a city of dynamic developments in the sphere of industry and services.

International cooperation

Compliant with its foreign policy concept, the top priorities of Prague have been the preparation of the CR for the EU membership and the development of cooperation with other cities in Europe and in the world. Prague has contractual partner relations with a number of foreign cities. Of importance is the axis Berlin – Prague – Vienna, extended to Bratislava, Budapest and Hamburg. Prague is e.g. a member of these organisations: METROPOLIS, CLARE, OWHC, and of the following European networks: EUROCITIES, UCEU, METREX, POLIS. Its membership in TeleCities (since 2001) and Global Cities Dialogue (since 2000) is rather significant for the sphere of IT. Prague also plays the role of an active partner in international projects, especially in the sphere of transport and environmental information systems. Its foreign policy falls within the competencies of the Lord-Mayor. Since 2000, there is a foreign relations department at the Magistrate Office and the city has established its representation in Brussels.

Organisation of municipal administration

Apart from its statute of the Capital, Prague fulfils double role in public administration: it is one of the 14 administrative regions in the CR (kraj, based on reform of 2000) and also a municipality with its self-government and delegated state administration tasks. Municipal administration is organised at two levels – at the central level and in 57 municipal districts (22 of which fulfil special tasks of delegated state administration). Council of the Capital of Prague is an elected municipal body (55 members) that further elects from among its members the Board (11 members) headed by the Lord-Mayor (Jan Kasl). The Magistrate Office of the Capital of Prague is a municipal executive body and is headed by the CEO (Zdeněk Zajiček). The structure of this office has undergone intensive development since 2000 (currently over 30 departments in 8 sectors, ca 1900 employees). Municipal districts also have their elected and executive bodies (councils and municipal district offices); relations between the Capital of Prague and its districts are governed by the statutes of the Capital. The Capital of Prague is also the founder of a number of specialised organisations that participate in the administration and operation of the city (transport, education, culture, health-care etc.). All these structures employ ca 40,000 people.

Organisation of the IT

The administrative structure of IT Prague is similarly complicated. A designated member of the municipal Board is responsible for the IT issues (Deputy Lord-Mayor Petr Švec); the Board uses an IT Committee in the capacity of an advisory body. In the Magistrate Office, strategic and technological aspects of ICT are managed at the central level by the IT Department (currently 63 employees in 7 units, director: Mrs Jana Kratinova). Several organisations founded by the municipality play also an important role in the sphere of IT (IMIP, TSK, ÚDI, ÚRM or SÚRM MHMP etc.). Municipal district offices also have their IT departments or units of different size that are relatively independent of the city. Several years ago a “College of District Information Officers” (KOI) was set up as a platform for exchanging experience. Municipal information officers have several meetings a year at the Magistrate Office. Legislative framework for a coordinated approach in the sphere of municipal IT is provided by a number of Czech laws, ISVS (ÚVIS) standards and the Statutes of the Capital of Prague.

Recapitulation of the development of IT

In the first stage of implementing the IT instruments for municipal administration (ca 1990-1994) IT units were established at the Magistrate Office and in municipal district offices and first PCs were bought. The Institute of municipal IT (IMIP) was established to ensure specific activities (digital maps, address register, Environmental IS). In the second half of the 90s the setting up of local networks and of the city-wide closed computer networks ZRIS and MePNet was started, together with the development of client-server applications over robust databases (Informix, Oracle), the use of GIS, introduction of e-mail and creation of a municipal web server. 2000 has launched a following stage where - apart from the previous activities and administrative changes (public administration reform in the CR, IMIP-MHMP) - increased attention has been paid to conceptual documents (IT strategy, security, database), provision of information services to the public, city-wide projects for administrative districts, preparation for the introduction of the electronic signature etc. International cooperation in the sphere of IT has also been launched.

Current state of IT

Administrative aspects of IT in the city have been described above. If considering its infrastructure, the existence of MePNet, a closed city-wide data network, is important. Local networks are available in all significant offices and organisations in the municipality. Almost all municipal civil servants have been equipped with PCs (MS Office, e-mail and access to the Internet). Almost all administrative branches have their IT support, they are mostly supported by applications in a 2-3 layer client-server architecture and tasks with shared data. Internet technologies are used for the internal and public information services, web applications are linked to the maintained databases; on the web graphical data (GIS) are also presented. Municipal offices and organisations mostly present information on the Internet. The City archives its crucial documents in the electronic format, it maintains its address register, system of digital maps. Basic flows of data between municipal offices and between these and state administrative bodies of the CR are operative (municipal finance and ownership, inhabitants, real estate cadastre), although a high level of autonomy of municipal offices has resulted in different variants of their IT solutions. Pressure towards standardisation has also been exerted by new legislation at the national level (laws, ÚVIS standards).

Information strategies and priorities of e-government

Last year the IT Department prepared a document called "Information Strategy of the Capital of Prague". It was based on the Strategic Plan of the Capital of Prague of 2000 (chapter Management and Administration) and on requirements issuing from legislative and strategic documents at the national and municipal levels. The document has offered a basic vision of the development of IT (not for the HW or SW but with a view to the information services) for a several-year-long period. Main strategic objectives have been targeted at three spheres classified by users' categories.

The first overall objective, required for meeting the further targets, is the development of conditions for efficient municipal administration (digital municipal administration). Its specific objectives include issues targeted at the development of technical and communication infrastructure, database, software and security.

The second objective is the development of public information services using the Internet ("electronic communication with the public"), i.e. it is targeted at the issues of e-government. It includes tasks linked to the development of web presentations of the city and its entities, support of the users' approach to information, involvement of citizens in municipal administration, development of services within the e-government, communication with businesses and visitors of the city.

The third objective is to enhance prestige and cooperation of Prague at the national and international levels through its participation in programmes and projects aimed at developing the information society ("Prague in the vanguard of information community"). The involvement of Prague in activities of TeleCities and the development of tasks of the e-government in cooperation with other European cities is fully compliant with this objective.

The Information Strategy of course includes - apart from the background analysis of the current state, trends in the respective branch and identification of risks (also in the form of a SWOT analysis) - draft measures aimed at meeting the objectives as specified.

Examples of projects and plans

To conclude with, let me give you some examples of projects included in the draft Information Strategy implementation programme and linked to the issues of e-government. These include projects already operative and under preparation.

Municipal computer network MePNet – It is a closed ATM data network using the TCP/IP protocol, built since 1996. Its core is formed by optical cables (co-operation with Pragonet). Step by step, 35 municipal entities have been connected to the network, others are linked through different technologies (modem, ZRIS project). Through this network municipal entities are also provided the Internet services.

City-wide information projects for administrative districts – In 2001, along with the establishment of 22 administrative districts, a system of city-wide projects has been launched. Projects introducing the Documentary Service and Document Management System as well as the registration of municipal property are gradually launched.

Information server of the Capital of Prague on the Internet – Since 2001, the municipal web has had a new image, which has integrated the previously independent applications and sources of information (www.praha-mesto.cz). Development and loading of the server is ensured mainly by the IT and the Public Relations departments of the Magistrate Office. Some information is acquired from databases loaded and administered by the authorised offices/establishments of the Magistrate Office. A multi-level menu offers the following information:

- Elected bodies - Council, Board, Lord-Mayor - including the membership, committees, contacts, agendas and resolutions of Council meetings
- Magistrate Office – structure of the office and its administrative regulations, office buildings, information for the public, contacts, offer of job openings etc.
- Contacts – how to contact the elected bodies and the Magistrate Office, municipal authorities/ organisations, reference to national institutions, to the telephone directory.
- Documents – administrative regulations, resolutions of the City Council and Board, decrees, strategic plan, zoning plan, price map, budget, list of contracts, references to Czech legislation.
- Official board – documents from the official board in the electronic format in an aggregate list and in thematic classification (plots, flats, public procurement, grants, public announcements).
- I need to settle – documents with information in thematic classification (flats, taxes, transport, preservation of monuments, social care, plots, energy, waste etc.).
- I need to know – wide range of information on the city, factual and official information, in thematic classification (health-care and social care, culture, education, spatial development, transport, security, environment, tourist information, information for entrepreneurs, for Prague citizens etc.).
- Latest news – Internet news, press digest, newspaper “Listy hl. m. Prahy” (in PDF format).
- Discussion club – discussion panels on general and specific topics, letters written to the elected representatives of the city
- Municipal districts – maps, information and reference to servers of municipal district offices.

The server has been continuously developed, offer of information in foreign languages is being prepared.

Intranet of the Prague Magistrate Office and the municipal Extranet – Similar to the public information service other servers based on the Internet technologies have also been

developed since 2001: Intranet for internal use within the Magistrate Office and Extranet serving all entities in the city.

Geographic applications on the web – Since 1999, special Internet geographic applications have been developed and administered (MURIS and Environmental Atlas of Prague) that have received national awards. Applications are also offered using digital maps and land-use registers of Prague for the presentation of the price map, zoning plan, searching for addresses, presentation of environmental maps etc. These applications have been updated and their further development and integration with other non-graphical applications is planned.

Environmental Information System – Has a long-standing tradition in Prague and has published on the Internet – apart from the above Atlas - also further outputs in the form of publications and applications (yearbooks, statistics, air pollution sources, results of modelling – air quality and noise, measurement results for air pollution – PREMIS, vegetation maps etc.). Yearbooks (from 1992) and the Atlas include information and maps subdivided into thematic chapters (air, water, landscape, waste, noise etc.).

Electronic registry – In compliance with requirements laid on public administration in the CR the Magistrate Office has launched the operation of an electronic registry on its web sites (so far for spheres not requiring the electronic signature).

Forms – Similar to other offices, the Magistrate Office has started publishing on the municipal web pages forms required for the settlement of different applications. The first forms published relate to administrative work in the sphere of transport.

Security of information systems is a burning issue that requires strategic solutions. The Magistrate Office has prepared a basic document on this topic that includes the principles and has been preparing its security policy and further documents required for security measures than have already been implemented or are being prepared.

Electronic signature – Following Czech legislation the Magistrate Office has been working on the introduction of the electronic signature, first only for internal use within its office and later for communication with the public.

Author:

Ing. Jaroslav Šolc, Head of Department for Concepts and Strategies, Magistrate Office of the Capital of Prague – IT Department

The author is a graduate of Chemical and Technological University in Prague. Since mid-80s he has headed a team ensuring the operation and development the Information System on the Environment in Prague (Informační systém o životním prostředí v Praze IOŽIP, hereafter Environmental Information System). The system was administered by various organisations: PUDIS, ČEÚ, IMIP, MHMP and its current outputs are evaluated even at the international level (e.g. yearbooks, an environmental atlas published on the Internet and presented at the ISSS in 2001). The author used to cooperate at tasks in IT in the above sphere with the Ministry of the Environment of the CR, Charles University etc. Since 1999, he has been Prague coordinator of works under international projects CEROI and INTERACT. Since 2000 he has been employed in the IT Department of the Prague Magistrate office and is responsible for international activities including involvement in TeleCities.

KEeLAN Project

Walter Wenzel, Project Coordinator, ELANET/CEMR

Elements for electronic Local Authorities' Networks

Abstract

By identifying 50 best practices among 700 local government websites from 15 countries of the EU, KEeLAN will carry out a benchmarking exercise to produce appropriate models and roadmaps for future electronic government at local and regional level.

It will also focus on local ICT priorities useful for projects co-funded by the European Commission, in particular European research and technology development projects under the IST programme.

The overall aim is to provide local administrations in Europe and the European Union with a most relevant tool package for eEurope through extended and advanced e-government.

Outcomes will be mainly disseminated through the European multimedia information and publishing frame of ELANET/CEMR as well as the management network of PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Objectives

By identifying 50 best practices among 700 local and regional government websites from 15 EU countries, KEeLAN will carry out a benchmarking exercise to produce appropriate models and roadmaps for future electronic government at local level. It will also focus on ICT local priorities that are useful for projects co-funded by the European Commission, in particular RTD under IST and the Innovative Actions programme of DG Regio. The overall aim is to provide local administrations in Europe and the EC with a relevant tool package for eEurope through extended e-government. The study will develop objective data and benchmarking tools against which eEurope implementation may be measured over the next few years.

Objective (1): to develop a vision and a strategic approach towards internet based e-government for local authorities, a tailor-made marching route that makes best use of IT infrastructure and of the new possibilities offered by the European research and IT market. This will allow to measure present EU developments against worldwide technological trends.

Objective (2): to stimulate local authorities, through intensive and extensive dissemination of results, in their transition process towards modernisation, integrated access platforms and advanced new generation web services to citizens.

Description of the Work

The tailor-made marching route will be reached by:

- identifying and benchmarking web front-office best practices looking for e-government key elements;
- studying how these practices incorporate new ICT solutions;
- providing different approach models from national strategies for e-government deployment;
- creating roadmaps to implement these key elements for success;
- elaborating advise for strategies that accelerate definition and ongoing of e-government projects;

- working out a decision matrix for local decision-makers enabling them to choose the roadmap fitting to situation, objectives and possibilities (political, financial, organisational, technical, personnel);
- offering support tools for successfully planning and carrying out e-government projects.

Intensive and extensive dissemination of results will mainly consist of:

- confronting results with national/regional strategies in four major conferences (EISCO 2002 and three regional workshops);
- activating a pro e-government web-site as part of the multimedia information and dissemination webs frame organised by ELANET/CEMR, covering all European countries through the associations of local and regional governments, the PricewaterhouseCoopers management network and the websites of the EU projects that will collaborate with KEeLAN.
- the project will generate its own dynamic, creating possibilities for further dissemination, training and consultancy.

Milestones

M2: The KEeLAN website online; dissemination and use plan prepared

M4: Results of the web-scanning phase presented at the EISCO 2002 Conference

M9: Benchmarking report ready

M11: Models and roadmaps outlined; project results disseminated in three regional workshops

M12: Final report

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<http://www.pvt.cz>



Triada Ltd.

Contact

Triada spol. s r.o.
U svobodárny 12/1110
190 00 Praha 9
Czech Republic

RNDr. Tomáš Renčín
Telephone: 00420-2-84814041
Facsimile: 00420-2-84818027
e-mail: rencin@triada.cz

The Company

Triada Ltd. holds conferences for local and state government and administration, develops and promotes software for state and local government and company issues municipal magazine called “Obec & finance” (Municipality & Finance). Triada Ltd. engage 25 employees and 38 external collaborators.

Major Activities

Conferences for state and local government

International conference called “**The Internet in Public Administration**”

Annual conference since 1998, this year it was visited by over 1700 participants from the most European countries.

Main topics: Legislative Process and the Internet, EU Programmes-support of information technologies, Launched projects of digital cities and e-areas in Europe, Discussion: E-government--state administration in the Internet era, e-Europe initiative of the European Union but also the e-Europe+ initiative – a EU-candidate support of the “European 15” intentions, The Internet and Education, Round table with the most important personalities
Activities of the European Forum for information society, Activity of Telecities, Elanet and ERIS@ association, The development of information society and employment, E-commerce.

For more information: www.issc.cz, comparison of experience of the representatives of the countries-candidates, with the opinions of their colleagues from the European Union countries.

Conference called “**The Day of Small Villages**” is visited by mayors of small villages and they discuss *their* own specific problems.

Magazines

Municipality & Finance (Obec & finance)

Since 1996, 5× a year, for every municipality in the Czech Republik, *number of copies: 8000*, average number of pages 125

Magazine for economical issues of towns and villages, regional politics, local development, appropriation programmes for local government. Independent part of magazine is “Public Administration On-Line”, 16–24 pages devoted to use of recent technologies *including the Internet* in public administration.

For more information: www.triada.cz/oaf

Daily News for Public Administration

It is the Internet magazine for public *administration*, it provides daily news, links to other public *administration* servers, in part called “Towns and Villages” there is statistics of all towns and villages in the Czech Republic (over 6000 municipalities), it provides outline of the main events (for example conferences, fairs, meetings, deadlines etc.) For more information: www.obce.cz

Software for Public Administration

Since 1991, the company Triada provides and develops software and all relevant services. This software solves municipality finance, property evidence, local tax, wages, office system, evidence of inhabitants and lands, elections and over 20 other agends. This information system is used by over 1500 municipalities in the Czech Republic.

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