Local and Regional Information Society Conference

City of Hradec Kralove, 24th—25th March 2003

Guidebook

based on the analysis of best practices observed and topics discussed

RNDr. Alexander Kratochvil
Conference Programme Manager

RNDr. Tomas Rencin
Conference Executive Director

Table of content

Introduction

The International Local and Regional Information Society Conference – LORIS 2003 organized by Vysocina Region in co-operation with Triada Ltd., the City of Prague and Union of Towns and Communities of the Czech Republic took place in Hradec Kralove from March 24th to 25th, 2003.

The number of Czech participants of LORIS Conference: 349 and 110 participants from other 25 countries represented either cities or other institutions (e.g. Brussels – European Commission, Bratislava –Ministries and Parliament of Slovakia, Budapest- Ministries of Hungary).

LORIS was held parallel with the National Conference "Internet in Public Administration" - ISSS 2003. Conference has been the most significant eGovernment event in the Czech Republic and Central and Eastern European Countries. The number of participants in this 6th year of the Conference - 1853 with relevant representations at Ministerial level, regional and local government level and from national Parliament, 72 companies taking part in the accompanying exhibition and increasing interest of media partners - is the best evidence. The Conference was opened by video recording of Prime Minister inaugural address.

According to representatives of European Commission such a major European event has been very significant for the possibility not only to share experiences and good practices between representatives of local and regional government of Central and Eastern Europe Countries, but also to define common vision and a sound approach for shaping the knowledge – based economy and society together.

The main goal of the LORIS 2003 was to promote the information society technologies and services in public administration; evaluate the progress in eGovernment; preparation of the framework for virtual twinning between EU cities and cities from CEEC; to implement best practises to stimulate and increase the number of local authorities willing to participate in European projects promoting partnerships in the process of European integration.

On Sunday 23rd March 2003 afternoon at the common meeting of representatives of capital cities of candidate countries with Lord Mayor of Prague a Prague Declaration on the Information Society Development was adopted in which delegates recognised the EU´s strategic objectives related to Information Society development (eEurope 2005) and committed themselves to strengthen mutual co-operation with international networks and associations and to exchange best practises.

During Meeting of representatives of CEE Associations of Municipalities, which took place in Hradec Kralove, which took place on the eve of the opening of Conference on Sunday late afternoon, all associations provided participants with short presentation of Association focused on current status of the Association and level of electronic access to services.

On the occasion of Sunday evening Cultural Programme Mayors from Central and Eastern European Cities Zakopane – Poland, Moldava nad Bodvou – Slovakia, Kuressaare – Estonia, Panagyurishte - Bulgaria, Jagodina -Serbia and Montenegro, Bratislava – Slovakia, Sopot – Poland, Hluboka - Czech Republic and Pardubice - Czech Republic signed the Declaration of

the Global Cities Dialogue, thus giving impetus to closer information society dialogue Central and Eastern European countries with countries of the European Union. The signatories will then act as champions in shaping the rules and the long-term agenda of the Global Cities Dialogue initiative.

On Monday 24th March CEEC Associations Specific Workshop and Global Cities Dialogue Event for Eastern Europe was held with objective to optimise the presence of local authorities to the Conference in offering them a specific "seminar" aiming at raising their awareness on EU programmes/opportunities and related decision and lobbying process regarding the binomial "Regional Development and Information Society". The workshop intended to address in the most integrated way the following topics:

- European affairs management / lobbying - main factors influencing the elaboration of one's strategy of relations and lobbying with the EU institutions were presented
- Structural funds and the local/regional governments - the keys were given to the audience for to optimize their positioning towards the European institutions involved in structural actions and thus maximize the use of the funds their regions will receive in the framework of structural actions
- Regional development and Information society - how information society issues are tackled at the European level.

Workshop was followed by the parallel session focused on financing IT in European public administration: European Investment Bank programmes supporting the development of electronic public administration and e-services and EU programmes for eGovernment and information society – IDA, eContent.

CEEC Associations had the possibility to share experiences with representatives of European Commission, European Investment Bank and TeleCities.

During Monday evening festive programme the EuroCrest prizes for the best web presentation of European towns and communities were awarded to the towns Praha – Czech Republic, Vranov nad Toplou - Slovakia, Tartu – Estonia, Jurbarkas – Lithuania, Ventspils – Latvia, Sopot - Poland and Rousse – Bulgaria. The Conference was accompanied by the exhibition of the best practises of the web sites.

Presentation of CEEC Associations

The main goal of the LORIS Conference was to promote the information society technologies and services in public administration; evaluate the progress in eGovernment; preparation of the framework for virtual twinning between EU cities and cities from CEEC; to implement best practises to stimulate and increase the number of local authorities willing to participate in European projects promoting partnerships in the process of European integration.

Local and regional governments were represented also by 16 CEEC national associations:

- Association of Municipalities and Cities of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Association of Municipalities and Towns of Republic of Srpska
- National Association of Municipalities in the Republic of Bulgaria
- Association of Towns and Municipalities of Republic of Croatia
- Union of Towns and Communities of the Czech Republic
- Association of Estonian Cities
- Hungarian Organisation of Intelligent Settlements
- Union of Local and Regional Governments of Latvia
- Association of Local Authorities in Lithuania
- Association of Polish Cities
- Cities on Internet Association - Poland
- Public Administration Information Systems Professionals Association – Romania
- Romanian Federation of Local Authorities
- Association of Towns and Communities of Slovakia
- Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities of Yugoslavia
- Union of Municipalities of Montenegro

During Meeting of representatives of CEEC Associations that took place in Hradec Kralove on Sunday late afternoon, all associations provided participants with short presentation of Association focused on current status of the Association and level of electronic access to services. "The fact that you all are here means that you want extent your cooperation with Europe to make progress faster and better," said Mr. Gérald Santucci, representative of DG Information Society of European Commission to the delegates. "The meeting is a milestone in the development for defining roadmap of work programme for the next years."

The Association of Municipalities and Cities of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bosnia and Herzegovina has approximately 4 million inhabitants. Since December 1995, there has been an internal structuring of the state, created within the Dayton Peace Agreement in Bosnia and Herzegovina, recognized as two entities and one district, which together comprise the country of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Considering such an administration division, there are two Associations of Municipalities and Cities: the Association of Municipalities and Cities of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Association of Municipalities and Cities of the Republic of Srpska. In

the entire Bosnia and Herzegovina, in total there are 150 local self-government units which present 145 municipalities, 4 cities and one district. 86 of them make up the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Association of Municipalities and Cities of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina currently gathers 66% of a possible membership and that percentage is in constant growth.

Currently, the main task of the Association is improving the status of municipalities in a system where they are completely degraded today, and as such, they are not able to offer all the necessary services to its citizens.

Cooperation of the Association with authorities of local self-government and local administration in Europe and other countries today is most active in the Network of Associations of Local Authorities in South-East Europe (NALAS). Also, communication has been established with CEMR due to the process of possible twinning with municipalities from other countries. What is really necessary for us today in these projects are twinning projects that in great part include youth and citizens in processes of participation and decision making at the local level.

Association has a direct cooperation with the Association of Dutch Municipalities, VNG, and their International department. VNG International is implementing a serious project which ends in May this year, regarding strengthening local public administration. Part of that project is improvement in using IT technologies, equipping and designing of our web page. This part of VNG project results today that Association is equipped with 60% of needs and that an initial web page has been created and officially set up. In the nearest future, Association plans to develop this page and to make it interactive and open for wider discussions as a serious service and tool for our members.

The number of cities and municipalities which are using their email and having their web page is not satisfying, but the process is really increasing rapidly and it is sure that today's figures which are 53% of municipalities using e-mail and 21% of them having a web page, will be changed in the next year dramatically. There is no state support in financing of this activity and Association needs international support regarding this. Until now, only VNG International was ready to support Association financially and through expert consultations.

Association of Municipalities and Towns of Republic of Srpska

Current status of the Association

- Total number of inhabitants of our country (Republic of Srpska) is 1 200 000.
- Total number of municipalities and towns is 61 municipalities and 2 towns-Banja Luka and City of Serbish Sarajevo
- Membership in the Association includes 59 municipalities of 63 in the whole country that means 93, 65% of total.
- Co-operation of the Association with local authorities in Europe is including following organizations.
  1. NALAS-Network of the Associations of Local Authorities of South-Eastern Europe-
  2. Committee of experts on the framework and structure of local and regional authorities of the Europe (LR-FS),

3. CDLR - Association has got membership in the Steering Committee of the Congress of local and regional authorities of the Europe
4. CLRAE - Association also has a membership in the Congress of local and regional authorities of Europe.
5. Through the implementation of VNG project, strengthening of local public administration in BiH, with target groups of two Associations in BiH, Association has excellent cooperation with VNG International-Association of Netherlands municipalities, having in mind period of project implementation from 1.may 2001 to 1.may 2003 as well done job. One of the important things is choosing pilot-municipalities, providing them with complete IT equipment, financed by VNG.

- Number of the municipalities with their own web-pages is very small – only 5 and there are 5 others using their e-mails.
- State support for the introduction of internet (grants) does not exist.

Levels of electronic access to services:

- Association of municipalities and towns of Republic of Srpska has own web-site by that is working on providing constantly information on current events/activities of the Association. All interesting organizations can access to this web-site and informing themselves about all Association's activities.

Generally, having IT technologies is very complicated issue in the country, and most of important bodies of country do not want to recognize that as problem. (Some municipalities still have old manual-typing-machine. This is a huge problem for further development.)

It will be very useful work if some international organizations can apply for some project concerning introduction of internet in municipalities.

National Association of Municipalities in the Republic of Bulgaria (NAMRB)

Association was founded in 1996 by 94 municipalities. Supported strongly from its very start by a number of European associations and by the US Agency for International Development, the organization rapidly gained prestige and new members. Since 1999 all 263 municipalities have been members of NAMRB, thus making it the sole nationwide representative organization of local governments. Each municipality contains about 25 settlements – towns and villages. Total population of Bulgaria is 7 973 700 people, allocated as follows – 5 498 900 in the cities and towns and 2 474 800 in the villages.

The leading principles in the activities of NAMRB are voluntary participation and equality of its members.

In implementation of its mission to be the Voice of Municipalities the Association works for powerful, responsible and sustainable local self-government, it provides services for expansion of its competence and capacity and develops efficient cooperation with the central government, and with Bulgarian and international organizations. Relevant management structures are set up and function within the Association, a web-site is published in the Internet with a lot of information; the Association provides information, legal, economic and other services to its members, it organizes training seminars, round tables and discussions, published and disseminates a newsletter, as well as various informational, consulting and other publications. These activities are performed by the Association within a partnership network with the regional associations of municipalities, the Foundation for Local Government Reform, and with the established professional organizations of municipalities.

Since 1998 NAMRB has been a member of the World Union of Local Governments and its European branch – the Council of European Communities and Regions and has already made a tangible contribution to their activities. NAMRB takes part in the work of the Committee of Regions with the European Union. The Association is the Secretariat of the Bulgarian delegation to the Congress of Local and Regional Governments of Europe in the Council of Europe. NAMRB is also a member of the Network of Associations of Local Authorities in the South Eastern Europe (NALAS), as it was the Secretariat of the Network in the period 2002-2003; Local Governments Network of Central and Eastern European Countries (LOGON); Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR); International Union of Local Authorities (IULA), etc. These international contacts are extremely useful for the preparation of Bulgarian local authorities for EU accession.

Association views the role of Bulgarian municipalities in the context of growing importance of local and regional governments in EU. By means of Association's contacts in the Council of European Communities and Regions, the International Union of Local Authorities and EU Committee of Regions Association takes part in this process and we note the increasingly relevant place European institutions attribute to local and regional level of self-government. The current debates on elaboration of a European Constitution and taking into account the principles of the European Charter on Local Self-government is yet another proof to this effect. Local and regional governments are loyal partners to central governments and should carry out their activities in compliance with the principles of consultation, subsidiarity and correspondence between assigned responsibilities and ensured funding.

Until now about 82 % from the municipalities have Internet sites, as about 90 % have and use e-mail. No state financial support is provided for development of e-technologies and Internet for the municipalities till the moment. Grants are provided by international donor organization through implementation of different projects.

Over 1/3 of the municipalities have reorganized systems at modern level – ONE SHOP systems for services. This system continues its development in the rest of municipalities that is an important circumstance for elaborating e-services for all the Bulgarian citizens. A National Strategy for the front offices is adopted.

Association of Towns and Municipalities of Republic of Croatia.

Association is emerging in recent form in the Year 1993, after the big territorial, financial and functional reform of Croatian local self government.

On the local level, there are two sort of local units: towns with more then 5.ooo inhabitants, and municipalities with less then 5ooo inhabitants.

In Croatia there are 124 towns, and 442 municipalities, and approximately 70 per cent are member of Association, which is, in accordance with act, unique national representing Association.

Association is financial supported by membership fee, and so it is independent from government side.

The main task of Association is to strengthen the process of democratisation and decentralisation of local governments.

For fulfil this task, it is very important to cooperate with all organisations which are occupied with these issues, as Council of Europe, Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), etc., and collect good practices and experiences for other countries and regions.

Rebuilding the peace and the role of twinning is extremely important for all countries in South-Eastern Europe - SEE. It is one of main precondition for democracy and stability in this area.

Union of Towns and Communities of the Czech Republic

The Czech Republic has 79 800 km2 and it has got 10.3 mil. inhabitants. They live in more than 6 500 municipalities (6 500 local authorities). 500 municipalities have got the statute of the town so there are more than 6 000 villages.

The Union of Towns and Communities of the Czech Republic is voluntary non-political and nongovernmental association. One of the main goals of the Union is to protect the interests and rights of communities as the local administrative bodies. The Union has got more than 2 350 members recently so it unites about 38 % of all the communes. About 7 millions inhabitants lives in communes united in the association. It is more than 72 % of all the country's inhabitants. The union is a constructive partner for both government and non-government political sphere. It takes the part when the legislative changes are submitted and it comments legislative norms concerning the local authority directions.

18 committees are formed within the UTC. One of them is Committee for Towns and Communities Information Systems (ISMO) which carries out activities in the area of information systems for local government offices and coordinates ICT. The members of the committee are representatives of the towns and communities - skilled information scientist working in the town offices and the affiliated officials. The committee cooperates and brings comments when new legislative and other ICT norms and materials concerning the towns and villages are submitted.

The main goals of the ISMO Committee are:

 - Effective execution of the self-government and of the state government in the towns and communities using the information technologies and services,

 - Open communication with citizens and businessmen with maximum of use of the information services,

 - The towns and communities should be the equal partner in the international information field.

The Union prepares the ground for integration of the Czech municipalities in various forms of cooperation in the area of self-government and local government in Europe and other countries of the world. The Union is a member of the worldwide organization IULA (International Union of Local Authorities) and CEMR (Council of European Municipalities and Regions). Thanks the membership in CEMR the representatives of the Union take a part in the EU consultative organ - the Committee of the Regions.

The ISMO Committee cooperates with TeleCities. Prague representative was elected to the Executive Committee as the only representative of the candidate countries. He has got the statute of an observer.

The most of the towns and many of the villages are provided with the computer technology and they run the database information systems. About 1800 towns and villages have their own www pages and 1300 communities are using the e-mail connection. The www page presentations have various quality levels. An obligatory methodology how to publish selected information and make them widely accessible was prepared by central offices. A basis was prepared this way so that the quality of published information could have a comparable level.

In the beginning of 2003 the newly formed Ministry of Informatics of the Czech Republic initialized the project Intranet of the Public Services (also municipalities). The goal of the project is to form and carry on the safe communication channels for the public services. In the framework of the project Intranet of The Public Services is to connect all contact places of the public services to the unified network. It is necessary for making the public services accessible to the citizens. When the project is finished it would provide the safe communication between organs of the public services and would make the public services more effective.

Another government project is Internet to the Libraries. According to the Library Law the libraries providing the public library and information services should be connected to the Internet till 31 December 2006. Up to this day three quarters of the citizens can access the Internet in the libraries. It is planned that at the end of the 2003 that about 1700 libraries should be connected to the Internet (1300 libraries were connected to the Internet at the end of 2002). Other 3000 libraries should be connected to the Internet till the end of 2006.

The Ministry for Regional Development and the Ministry of Interior provide more other grants to achieve the development of informational network in the municipalities.

The level of the electronic services in the Czech Republic does not reach a good level when reviewing in global. The best services are offered by regions and communities and their official web pages which bring information about events in the offices, information about the board meetings, advices to the citizens (for various life events), information for tourists, businessmen – everything in some languages.

Association of Estonian Cities

- Total number of inhabitants of the country 1, 370, 500
- Total number of towns 39 and municipalities 202
- 45 municipalities – members of the Association represents 67% of inhabitants
- Association is a member of CLRAE, IULA, CEMR, BSSSC, COR, UBC (Union of Baltic Cities), Tallinn-Helsinki Euregio, Eurocities, B7 (Baltic Sea Seven Islands), WHO Healthy Cities.
- 238 towns and communities have their web-page and they use e-mail as well

Estonian ICT proceeds from the Principles of Estonian Information Policy approved by the Estonian Parliament in may 1998, which serves as a basis for making public policy decisions to support the rise of information society. The policy document serves as a basis for an action plan for establishing information society. The Information Policy Action Plan in its turn is the basis for all government agencies to make specific proposals to the Government - proposals with schedules, sources of finances, and responsibilities for the implementation of information policy programs every year. The Action Plan has been approved by the Government in April 1998, May 1999, and February 2001.

According to the Government decision of 14 May 2002 the information policy priorities for 2002/2003 are as follows:

- development of services for citizens, business sector and public administration, especially the elaboration of ID-card applications, proceeding also from the list of e-government services defined in the eEurope+ Action Plan;
- improvement of skills and access of social groups in unequal position for using electronically provided services;

- elaboration and introduction of systems for digital document management and archival processing;
- development of the system and infrastructure of state registers, including the development of systems that ensure the maintenance of databases and the introduction of the data exchange layer (project "X-road") of information systems;
- better provision of schools with computers to achieve the ultimate goal – one computer per 20 students;
- launching of Tiger University program to support the development of information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure and academic ICT staff, and the infrastructure for post-graduate training.

The priorities of information policy in 2001:

- Implementation of the tasks proceeding from the Public Information Act;
- Enforcement of the infrastructure for digital signature (including ID-card);
- Document management in public administration;
- Sate registers reform: service layer of state registers (project "X-Road");
- eCitizen - a nation-wide project for developing the cooperation between Estonian citizens and the public sector through Internet;
- IT in general and higher education.

In 1998 in the course of the project "Vahetu Riik" ("Direct Government") a common access point for Estonian government agencies and constitutional institutions was created through an Internet domain riik.ee (gov.ee) and virtual Estonian Web Centre was established for administrating it. Together with the powerful development of Internet services the domain riik.ee has in four years become an inseparable part of Estonian e-government and the symbol of Estonia in the Internet. The portal "e-government" (http://www.riik.ee/en/) has been time and again changed and supplemented; new headings, databases, links etc have been added. In addition to the role of being the state portal it has acquired also the role of an integrator and coordinator of national information systems. In 2000 the project went through several organizational changes and new directions for development were prepared as well a large part of which have already been realized by now.

Addresses like tom.riik.ee (portal "Today I Make Decisions", in Estonian), ats.riik.ee (public document system, in Estonian) etc have been added to the domain. Although there have been only a few changes to the portal's content during the last year, the portal's administrative organization has stabilized and the quality of the content has improved.

Other Projects:

KülaTee (Village Road)

> The county data communication target program "KülaTee" is an information technology program initiated in cooperation of county governments, the Estonian Informatics Centre, and the Department of State Information Systems (RISO). KülaTee is one of Estonian Information Policy framework programs. The aim of the project is to establish data communication services in the counties and join the information systems of local governments with those of public administration. KülaTee is in the administration of the Estonian Informatics Centre.
> http://www.kylatee.ee/sisue.htm

Project eCounty

> The project aims to develop an Internet-based working environment and a web portal for Estonian counties. Such an information portal would:
> enable to fill in electronic documents; support the creation of employment; enable rural areas to participate in Internet-based learning; help equalize living conditions in rural and urban areas; support local initiative of rural areas.

A very important area for Estonia is accession to the European Union. The activities targeted in the Action Plan at this process are overview of prerequisites which. Estonia must fulfil in the field of IT for accession, overview of legislation pertaining to IT, contacts and cooperation with the EU programs, and EU information server for the general public

National Association of Intelligent Settlements (Hungary)

- Total number of inhabitants of the country 10 million
- Total number of towns and municipalities. 3185
- Number of municipalities – members of the Association: 15 representing about 10% of inhabitants
- Association is a member of TeleCities
- 62 % of municipalities with more than 5000 inhabitants have their own web page and 81 % of it actively uses E-mail.
- A complex system of state support for the introduction of internet and informatisation of municipalities – grants exists and the opportunity of applications for municipalities is continuous.

Public administration services for citizens, business and/or tourists provided by web sites on either one of the following levels: Information – on-going, widely used, Interaction – high number of solutions but individual realizations, Bi-directional interaction – some examples, Transactions - exceptionally

In Hungary the level of usage of technology is relatively high but the content of the web sites are very poor. Content providers and standards for Internet services are essential.

Main functions of the Association:

- co-ordinates domestic intelligent settlement initiatives,

- establishes links between domestic and international projects,

- provides comprehensive information about domestic and international experiences and products,

- organizes information forums and professional visits,

- establishes professional workshops for co-operation in various fields,

- helps in the formulation and distribution of standards,

- establishes contacts between settlement developments and relevant state, government and local authority developments.
- establishes and expands contacts between domestic and international partner-organizations, which aid the work of the association, including the widening of opportunities for members.

Ventures

- Better understanding of market situations and demands through collected and published information. From the information archives of the Association better and more thorough knowledge of the market can be gained. The entrepreneur can gain a better understanding of the professional and financial details of domestic developments, can weigh up the risks involved in the venture.

- Through organizing markets increased presence and business transaction. Within the framework of the Association the chances for ventures for entering the market and establishing a profile, increase.

- Increase the effectiveness of the market activities of the venture. The costs are drastically reduced by the wide-scale distribution the project. The cost of development is distributed, the risk of development and marketing costs are reduced, and the chances of formulating standards from the customer side of the organized project increase.

- Enhanced market position, name, and reference.

- Possibility for competing in internal tenders.

- Staging of own professional forums in the organization of the Association, the entry of advertisements and information material in the Association's Home Page.

- Enhanced chance for nation-wide professional collaboration, expansion of partner-connections for the mutual distribution and support of each other's solutions etc.

- Possible participation in the formulation of a standard.

- Possibility for personal participation in the Association's professional working teams, participation in the work of development teams.

- Opportunities for establishing international connections and collaboration.

- Increased chances for establishing joint contracts with several customers.

- The integration of services and applications with other customers.

Union of Local and Regional Governments of Latvia (ULRGL)

The Union is a public organisation associating local and regional governments of the Republic of Latvia on voluntary basis. It was founded on 15 December 1991.

Today, in accordance with the article 96 of the "Law on Local Governments", the Union has authority to represent local and regional governments in the negotiations with the Cabinet of Ministers as the Union associates:

- all the 7 major cities,
- all the 59 towns,
- all the 26 districts,
- 396 rural municipalities from total 461,
- 13 amalgamated municipalities from total 15.

The Union is the only municipal association of such level in Latvia.

Main objectives

- development of municipal policy in Latvia;

- municipal problem solving;
- protection of local government interests.

Tasks

- to represent interests of the Union and its members in state authorities and administrative institutions;
- to develop opinion of the Union in the policy of Latvian local governments according to proposals of local/ regional governments, their associations and unions;
- to secure local governments with information and required services;
- to organise training for local government deputies and employees;
- to facilitate social protection of local government employees;
- to facilitate co-operation among Latvian local/ regional governments, their associations and unions;
- to facilitate co-operation with local governments and their organisations abroad;
- to facilitate establishment of enterprises for solving issues of common local government interest;
- to organise establishment of local government information processing system based on unified principles.

The members of the Union can be districts, rural and amalgamated municipalities, town and city local governments.

In the framework of the Union at present there operates Association of Latvian Rural Municipalities and Association of Executive Directors of Latvian Local Governments.

Association of Latvian Rural Municipalities:

Rural municipalities occupy 97% of the territory of Latvia, they comprise 720 000 inhabitants of the state. There are 473 rural municipalities in Latvia, 395 (84%) of them are the members of the Union.

In 1993 rural municipalities established Association of Rural Municipalities at the Union It was established in order to unite on voluntary principles these rural municipalities which have joined the Union.

The aim of the Association of Rural Municipalities is to unite all the rural municipalities for solving common problems and protection of their interests in the framework of the Union and on the state level.

There are 5 committees working in the Union:
- The Committee of Finance and Economy
- The Committee of Education and Culture
- The Committee of Social and Health Issues
- The Committee of Regional Development and Co-operation
- The Committee of Technical Issues

Union Enterprises

1. Local Government Training Centre of Latvia was founded on March 18, 1993.
Its basic objectives are organisation of training for local and regional government politicians and employees, preparation of training programs for employees of local and regional government working in different specialties, supporting local and regional government organizations and their enterprises in distribution of experience.
2. Centre of Family Care "Bulduri" was founded on March 8, 1994.
The Centre supports children in need: orphans, disabled and sick children, children from risk families and also under-age pregnant women. The Centre renders medical services, carries out educational work and deals with social problems.
3. Magazine of the ULRGL "LOGS" was founded on May 23, 1995.
The magazine is published monthly and supplies the deputies and employees of local/ regional governments, the central government, the deputies of Parliament and the foreign embassies with newest information, actualities and problems in local/ regional governments.
4. Local Government Consultation Centre was founded in December 1997.
The Consultation Centre renders services in the sphere of finance and economics: elaboration of investment projects and business plans for local and regional governments; local government development strategies; cooperation schemes with local and regional governments abroad; analysis of different kind of projects; rehabilitation plans. The Centre provides also legal aid and book-keeping consultations.

The Association of Local Authorities in Lithuania (ALAL)

There are 60 Municipalities and 10 regions in Lithuania. At the present time all 60 local authorities are members of the Association.
The smallest Municipality is Neringa – 2,400 inhabitants.
The largest Municipality – Vilnius city – 554,200 inhabitants.
Average number of people in the municipality – 58,180.
The total amount of inhabitants in Lithuania is approximately 3, 5 million.
The most important tasks of the municipalities:
- General education
- Pre-schooling upbringing
- Primary health protection
- Provision of social services
- Care or elderly and disabled people
- Communal economy (water supply, heating, repair of streets and local roads, waste arrangement, etc.)

Main goals and objectives
- To represent general interests of local governments in all state and government institutions
- To take part in drafting and improving the laws and other legal acts related to the activities of local governments
- To implement the provisions of the European Charter of Local Self-government in Lithuania
- To represent Lithuanian local authorities in foreign countries, and in international organizations

Incomes of Association
- membership fees (0,03 % of municipal revenue budget)
- incomes from participation in different national and international projects.
- targeted allocations from the state and municipal budgets

Association cooperation with international organizations
- Council of Europe (CLARE)
- European Commission
- IULA, CEMR
- Committee of the Regions (JOINT Committee)
- LOGON GROUP

All 60 Municipalities actively use E-mail.
Almost all the Municipalities have got their own websites (56 of them).The 4 municipalities are on the way of establishment of them. The websites are rather different by the amount and quality of the provided services.
The main information of the websites is related to these subjects:
- Information about a Municipality
- Urgent information for inhabitants
- Cultural, tourism and other information

Almost all homepages of the municipalities provide public information for citizens (90 %)
The only one Municipality that is Jurbarkas Local Authority has implemented the project "Building of e-Community". It has implemented the services of Interaction and Bi-directional interaction.

Although building of information society, implementation of information technology is now one of the priorities of the Lithuanian Government, the Government doesn't directly allocate means to Municipalities for development of information technology. Municipalities started to understand the value of the Internet cities and to finance their creation and maintenance.

The Government recognizes the importance of development of information technology, has started partly financing development of information technology in Municipalities. As an example we can present the project "Building of e-Community" that was carried out in Jurbarkas Regional Municipality. Referring to the results of the mentioned project there were prepared recommendations and proposals for development of e-Communities in other municipalities too.

Association of Polish Cities

The Association had its heyday in between First and Second World Wars. The years 1917-1939 brought a large number of achievements in the fields of legislation as well as the economic and cultural promotion of cities. The organisation was involved in editorial and training activity as well as in the extensive information exchange within a range of municipal civil services. The Association was also engaged in successful international co-operation.

After Second World War the activity of the Association of Polish Cities was blocked. The initiative of its restitution emerged following the free local government election on May the 27th 1990. In a couple of months the councils of over 60 cities have taken the resolution to enter the Association and in January 1991 the Restitution Congress took place in Poznań - the

statutory headquarters of the Association. By the end of the year 2001, 268 cities, including all major cities (provincial capitals), have become members of the Association. 80% of the total numbers of city-dwellers in Poland live in the member-cities of the Association of Polish Cities.

The standpoints of the Association developed as a result of the work of committees, sessions, conferences and other meetings of the cities' representatives are introduced at the sittings of parliamentary committees, The Mutual Committee of Central and Local Government and its task teams. As for the matters of great importance, in cases when the voice of local government is not respected and the bill passed is largely unfavourable, the Association with its cities and towns resolves to turn to the Constitutional Tribunal of Poland.

The Association arranges sessions, conferences and workshops for the representatives of cities. There are 15 task committees at work with nearly 300 representatives of cities participating in their activities. Researches and surveys are conducted whose outcomes are used in legislative procedures and made available to the member-cities of the Association.

At the beginning of its activity, the Association established a successful co-operation with the National League of Cities (USA). The experience of this organisation turned out to be helpful for the Association of Polish Cities during its organisational stage. Later on, the Association entered into similar partnerships within Europe. In 1995 the agreement was signed with the German Section of CEMR in the framework of which both organisations have co-operated since then. The Association established lasting bonds also with the Association of Swiss Cities, the Association of Finnish Local Authorities as well as with the Local Government International Bureau in London. These partnerships are mostly aimed at reinforcement of the co-operation.

The Investment Fair of Polish Cities, INVESTCITY, the annual event for the last 8 years, creates an opportunity for the participants to present their offer in investment and co-operation. 'The Investment Offer of Polish Cities Catalogue', which accompanies the Fair, is published in a booklet, on CD- ROM and on websites. There are also other events aimed at promotion of cities, such as: The National Festival of Cities' Bugle-calls, The Exhibition of Municipal Insignia, The Review of Cities' Promotion Materials and The Exhibition of Towns Poster.

The publications of the Association are largely informational. Initially it issued its own Information Bulletin while at the moment 'City Council' is published - a monthly supplement to 'The Community' which is a weekly magazine of the local government. Moreover, there are also publications of informational booklets and books in which, among others, innovative solutions of problems connected with urban management are depicted.

Cities on Internet Association (Poland)

"Cities on Internet" Association (CoI) is a non-profit organization, created in 1997 by group of people who are professionally involved in local administration and in particular modernization of the municipalities and cities, through implementation of ICT. The core aim of the organization is to support local & regional government and other municipal institutions in this process of modernization.

Association's functions:

- advisement, consulting and help for local & regional governments and other municipal institution, at implementing modern management technology
- creation of thematic data base and electronic instruments for better communication and information as an element of support for cooperation between local government and social partners, NGOs and SMEs,
- assistance at building of local eDemocracy
- carrying out international projects
- organizing conferences, seminaries and workshops
- Co-operation with local government organizations from CEEC and NIS.

The Association is actively participating in many initiatives of European Commission. On May 12th, 2000 it co-organized a *„Global Cities Dialogue signatory event*" in Warsaw, Poland, where 13 mayors from CEEC cities joined GCD initiative.

The Association also co-operates with National Contact Point of 5th Framework Programme in Poland and with the scientific community.

The Association is one of the signatories of "Pact for Information Society Development in Poland" which brings together organizations such as: Association of Polish Districts, Federation of Municipalities and Districts of Republic of Poland, Union of Polish Cities, Association of Rural Municipalities, Association of Polish Cities. Association co-ordinates all the work in the pact, it runs its secretariat and organizes work groups.

The Association has signed "Zakopane Declaration", defining frame for co-operation of organizations from Romania – Association of Municipalities; Bulgaria – Foundation for Local Government Reform; Estonia – Association of Estonian Cities; Lithuania – Association of Local Authorities; Slovenia – Association of Municipalities and Towns; Czech Republic – Union of Towns and Communities and Slovakia – Association of Towns and Municipalities.

1. INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS

Association is also very active in the field of development of information and communication technologies. Association is involved in many ICT research and development projects cooperating with major European and International ICT players (e.g. France Telecom, BT Stepchange, Bull France, and Siemens Informatica). Activities of Association in these projects are focused on:

- development of the portal and other ICT solutions (MAP, Visual Admin, EUSlanD)
- creation of eGovernment and eDemocracy initiatives
- stimulation of initiatives aimed at building more ICT-enabled and knowledge-based societies and encouragement of e cooperation of local governments, SMEs and citizens.

The most important projects of the Association are:

- EUSlanD (http://www.eusland.org)
- Visual Admin (http://www.visual-admin.net)
- MAP (http://www.map-project.net)
- eForum (http://www.eu-forum.org)

COI experts are also involved in the following projects:

- E-POLL– the idea behind the project was to build and test a network based electronic voting system.
- LOGIN - The mission of LOGIN is to promote the professional development of local government officials and their staff and to strengthen the capabilities of organizations

that support the reform of public administration at the local level. Association supports the programme with data and document delivery.

National Association of IT Specialists from Public Administration – ANIAP (Romania)

- Total number of inhabitants of the country
  - 23 millions
- Total number of towns and municipalities.
  - 41 - counties
  - 101 – municipalities
  - 188 – towns
  - 2500 – communes
- In Association are enrolled 140 IT experts from 78 local government authorities
- International co-operation
  - Association is the official partner for all the local governments associations for implement the e-government concepts
  - Association is the official partner (nominated by the Romanian Government) to develop standards for soft-ware applications for public administration
  - Association is the official partner (nominated by the Romanian Government) to coordinate the IT training for civil-servants
  - Association is partner on GIS matters with Chesapeake of Urban and Regional Information Administrator Systems Association from USA
- Number of towns and communities with own www page and number of municipalities actively using e-mail.
  - Counties – 41 web-pages from 41
  - Municipalities – 55 web-pages from 101
  - Counties – e-mail use: 41 from 41
  - Municipalities – e-mail use: 101 from 101
  - Association – 140 members use e-mail
- No grants from state for support of the introduction of internet and informatisation of municipalities
- Public administration services for citizens, business and/or tourists provided by web sites
  - Information – forms needed for permits, working schedule of local governments, budget, structure of councils, legislative issues (local & central), tourism information, culture and entertainments, local events, etc
  - Transactions – electronic local taxes payments
- Ideas and trends concerning further development
  - County portals and national portals
  - Electronic ID
  - National network of public administration
  - Increase number of electronic services

Romanian Federation of Local Authorities (R.F.L.A.)

The Federation is an apolitical, non governmental, with no lucrative purpose, Romanian legal entity of private right, constituted within the purpose of a unique representation of the

associative structures in their relations with the Parliament, Government, other public authorities as well and in the relations with international institutions and bodies.

Federation was constituted from the following associative structures:
- The Romanian National Union of County Councils
- The Romanian Association of Municipalities
- The Romanian Association of Towns
- The Romanian Association of Communes.

The mission of the Federation is to become the unified voice of Local Governments from Romania in representing their interests in front of the Central Government and Parliament.

Federation has two main roles:
1. to represent the interests of local authorities in the context of national and political system. This represents a responsibility that will influence the whole system of public administration and that is very important for each member.

2. to provide services and professional assistance to local authorities, including the member associations. The services will have in view to improve the professional relations and to accelerate the exchange information between local authorities. Federation, as a result of its central position, represents the ideal vehicle for dissemination of information and of the most important practices and experiences used for promotion of the methods and the processes available for Federation.

The objectives of Federation are:
a) an efficient and active participation to the modernization and decentralization process of the Romanian public administration;
b) the improvement of the legislative framework according to the European Chart of local autonomy and other international norms that regard the interests of local, county (regional) communities;
c) a consolidation of the partnership with the central public administration ;
d) a unitary representation of the local governments common interests in their relations with the central public administration, non governmental organizations and third parties, in country and abroad
e) to harmonize the interests of the component associations for an equilibrated social economic development of local communities;
f) To promote collaboration and mutual support at the level of local communities in the economic, financial, social, cultural and institutional field.
g) to create and maintain an integrated information system as well as specialized bodies capable to analyze and offer solutions to solve the problems that the local governments are facing;
h) to participate together with other civil society structures to the accomplishment of common goals, specific for local communities;
i) The cooperation, respecting the law provisions, with the local public administration structures from other states.

The Romanian National Union of County Councils is a non-governmental organization that brings together all the 41 counties of Romania. The Union was established with the following goal:

To put in practice the principals of local autonomy and decentralization of public services within the organizational and functional framework of local governments, to promote regional co-operation with other existing associations of local governments in Romania.

The Romanian Association of Municipalities aims to contribute to the achievement of real local self determination in view of solving the public needs in the citizens´ benefit and also for ensuring their participation to the decision process regarding the local communities. Association founded in 1990 at present comprises 101 member municipalities, and the 6 sectors of Bucharest Municipality, thus ensuring a high degree of representation.

The main objectives of the Romanian Association of Municipalities are:

- The active participation to the improvement of the existing legislation, according to the Constitution of Romania and to the European Charta of Local Autonomy;
- Strengthening the position of AMR as a dialogue partner of the Romanian Government and Parliament, aiming to support the local authorities in its activities;
- Organizing its own activities in training and improving the expertise of local elected officials, public officials and other categories of personnel belonging to local government;
- Promoting forms of collaboration and mutual support among the members of the Association;
- Organizing specialists' bodies to analyze and offer solutions in solving the specific problems of the public administration and local communities;
- Encouraging participation of the civil society structures in solving the problems of the local public administration
- Unique representation of the local communities' common interests within the relations with the central public administration, non-governmental organizations and third parties;
- Organizing information and databases concerning the local public administration.

During its activity the Romanian Association of Municipalities implemented and developed important partnership programmes, like

- EU/PHARE RO 9707.01 – Romanian Local Public Administration Development Project supporting the different local authorities to increase skills and expertise. Project included the design and administration of a Local Government Modernization Fund of 1500 000 €.
- Local Government Association Grant Programme financed and supervised by USAID
- Institutional Development of Municipalities Programme financed by Know How Fund
- Co-operation programme with Dutch Association of Municipalities – VNG financed by the MATRA Programme of Dutch government.
- LOGON Programme elaborated by Council of European Municipalities and Regions – CEMR.
- Co-operation programme with Swedish Association of Local Authorities - S.A.L.A.

The Romanian Association of Towns was set up in 1994 in view of promoting and protecting the common interest of local public administrations authorities, aiming to solve and manage the public needs in the name and for benefit of the local communities.

The general objectives of the Association are:

- Active participation to the improvement of the existing legislation, according to the Constitution of Romania and to the European Chart of Local Autonomy which involve the local communities interest by undertaking a partnership with the local administration
- Strengthening the position of the Association as a dialog partner of the Romanian Government and Parliament, aiming to support the local authorities in its activities.

The Romanian Association of Towns includes, now, 114 members, out of 138 towns all over the country.

The Romanian Association of Communes founded in 1997 includes, now, 500 members, out of the 3000 communes in Romania.

Among the general objectives of the Association:

- Organizing its own activities in training and improving the expertise of local elected officials, public officials and other categories of personnel belonging to local government
- Promoting form of collaboration and mutual support among the members of the Associations
- Initiating mediation structures with governmental organizations aiming to solve the general problems of the local community
- Organizing information and data bases concerning the local community
- Organizing specialist´ corps to analyze and offer solutions in solving the specific problems of the public administration and local communities
- Encouraging participation of the civil society structures in solving the problems of the local public administration.

Association of Towns and Communities of Slovakia (ZMOS)

Association established on March 21st, 1990 by representatives of 176 municipalities is
- a representative of 95 % of local governments in Slovakia
- the largest non-governmental organization in Slovakia, associating towns and communities
- a democratic, representative and independent organization
- engaged in solving of real problems of towns and communities
- currently associating over 2,700 member towns and communities
- the seat is in Bratislava
- supported by regular and exceptional membership fees

Principal Goals
- to defend the rights and interests of towns and communities of Slovakia based on the European Charter of Local Government, in accordance with the Constitution and the legislation of the Slovak Republic
- to influence actively the development of local activities and to create conditions for solving the members' common problems

- to co-operate proactively with the state authorities in order to solve problems of the local government
- to co-ordinate the activities of towns and communities while carrying out their tasks

Dialogue Partners
- President of the Slovak Republic
- National Council of the Slovak Republic
- Government of the Slovak Republic and central state administration authorities
- parliamentary political parties
- Federation of Employers' Associations of the Slovak Republic
- Confederation of Trade Unions of the Slovak Republic
- professional associations relating to local government
- international organizations and foreign partners

Activities of Association
- Co-ordination—creating a platform for the exchange of ideas and experience as well as for the formulation of common strategies and solutions
- Initiative—proactive involvement of local government representatives and their expertise in finding solutions for issues of joint interest
- Methodology and information—consulting, organization of conferences, workshops and other events, publishing of periodic and ad-hoc publications for the local government, organization of thematic study tours abroad.

SCTMY – Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities of Yugoslavia National Association of Local Authorities

Total number of inhabitants of the country
- Serbia   approx. 7.500.000 (without Kosovo)
- Montenegro   approx.   650.000
Total number of towns and municipalities
- Serbia   163
- Montenegro   21
Number of municipalities – members of the Standing Conference
- 163 in Serbia (100% of all municipalities)
 Number of municipalities that have web address
- 44 (27 %)
Number of local self-governments that actively use email
- 135 (83 %)

Membership in networks of towns:
- Member of IULA
- Soon to become member of CEMR (on May 14, 2003)
- Member of NALAS (Network of National Associations of Local Authorities of SEE)
- Member of LACDE (Local Governments Confronting Disaster and Emergences)
- Cooperation with UTO and ICLE

Co-operation of the Standing Conference with authorities of self-government and local administration in Europe and other countries of the world:
- Agreements on cooperation with national associations of local authorities of Bulgaria, Czech Republic and Italy

Public administration services for citizens, business and/or tourists provided by web sites, at the moment, are mainly on the level of providing information.

Ideas and trends concerning further development are pointed in the direction of the interaction with the service users, i.e. citizens.

Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities of Yugoslavia (SCTMY), the national association of local authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was founded in 1953, following the traditions of international associations of local authorities throughout the world. The SCTMY is an organization dedicated to the promotion and development of local self-government, standing for their interests and of the cooperation among local authorities.

The substantial changes that have happened on the year 2000 at the overall political scene of Serbia have brought democratically–oriented people to all relevant posts in the republic and federal level of government, as well as to the local level.

Consequently, important changes have occurred concerning the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities of Yugoslavia: the Association for the Development of Local Self-governance, which previously functioned as the Association of Free Cities of Serbia, has become the part of the SCTMY.

The duty of the SCTMY, now as the national association of local authorities in Serbia, in the new, favourable political climate is to support local governments in their efforts to rebuild their legal and financial capacity, as well as to cope with the severe problems they are still facing.

SCTMY is dedicated to fostering cooperation and dialogue among local authorities, supporting their initiatives towards the Central Government and is a key spot of information flow on important issues for towns and municipalities.

SCTMY has a well-developed international cooperation with many other national associations of local authorities as well as with relevant international associations.

Based upon the principle of the free will of membership, the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities of Yugoslavia is open to all Serbian local communities, the interests of its members defining the main guidelines of its work.

The ways of fulfilling the role of the SCTMY in the Serbia society comprise:
- Supporting the development of local government as an essential part of democratic processes in Serbia;
- Promoting close cooperation among Serbian towns and municipalities and helping them to establish links with local authorities from other countries;
- Representing the interests of its members at the national and the international level;
- Encouraging the use of theoretical and practical know-how in managing municipal functions and promoting specialized education for local employees. In this the Conference is relaying on its cooperation with a large number of its foreign and local partners, government and non-government organizations and institutions, associations of local authorities from other countries and other international organizations;

- Various technical services to its members, as well as providing help and support of international donor institutions for the realization of projects.

Fields of Interest
- Local government (organization and functioning of municipal bodies and citizen participation in decision-making processes)
- Local finances
- Functioning and management of local public services and municipal enterprises
- Town planning, housing, land management
- Environmental protection, sustainable development of urban and rural areas,
- Energy efficiency, etc.
- Social issues
- Various other urban and municipal issues

In the course of its activity, the SCTMY cooperates with different state organs, scientific institutions and expert groups in order to be able to present to its members and to the general public the relevant up-to-date knowledge on points of interest and concern of the local governments. Moreover, leading urban and municipal issues are tackled in seminars, "round tables", symposiums etc., allowing for a thorough exchange of theoretical and practical knowledge and ideas.

In order to become a complete and reliable representative of local authorities' interests, SCTMY has set strategic goals and aims of its future activities:
- Complete and reliable participation in legislation building process
- Providing services to its members according to their needs and interests
- Development of wide field of training programs for local officials
- Representing interests and needs of local authorities before Central Government
- Offering and organizing expert help to the municipalities
- Insuring its long-lasting through building modern organization systems and structure

The full involvement and participation of Serbian towns and municipalities in all important international events concerning local authorities represent one of the main aims of the SCTMY. This is mostly carried out through bi-lateral and multi-lateral contacts between national associations of local authorities.
In that respect, the SCTMY:
- Cooperates with national associations of local authorities of numerous countries, especially within Europe and in the Region of South-Eastern Europe, aiming to fully develop various segments of such cooperation
- Takes part in the activities of international associations of local authorities
- Encourages and supports direct communication between local authorities, with special emphasis on economic cooperation, youth and cultural exchange, etc.

The SCTMY has

- The committees - deal with issues in different fields of activities: local self-government, local finances, housing, urban and municipal infrastructure and systems, environmental protection, international cooperation etc.

- The sections - are specifically aimed at discussing certain issues of common interest for various groups of municipalities (such as big cities, spas, coastal towns, towns on the banks of the Danube River etc.)

- The boards - are the working bodies concerned with specific urban and municipal services, such as district heating, public transport etc., in which representatives of public enterprises dealing with these issues are brought together.

- The Secretariat - offers expert, administrative and managerial support to all these activities. In front of the Secretariat is the Secretary General, who is a member of the Presidency.

Union of Municipalities of Montenegro

Montenegro covers the space of 13812 square km of land, and about 8500 square km of the sea with more than 650 000 inhabitants. The space covered by Montenegro is full of contrast. It refers equally to both national – geographic and cultural – historical characteristic. At the distance less than 200 kilometres of air line three regions can be emphasized: costal region (Montenegrin coast), the region of the central Montenegro and the mountainous – valley region.

Union was established in august 1972. With its headquarters in Podgorica, as an independent, non-governmental and non-profit association of municipalities and other units of self-government organized with the purpose of accomplishment the citizen's common interests and needs. The initiative was made by the municipality of Podgorica, and members of the association are all 21 municipalities in Montenegro.

The goals of the Union:

- to develop local democracy and realize common interests of local government units;
- to improve organization, work and functioning of local government;
- to create conditions for developing various forms of cooperation in all areas of local communities work in Montenegro;
- to cooperate with international organizations and local government associations.

The Union of Municipalities of Montenegro is a member of the NALAs Network.

Six months ago, only 7 municipalities had web-sites. Thanks to the support of the European Agency for Reconstruction, the Union started to develop web-sites for remain municipalities in September 2002. Now, every municipality in Montenegro has its own web-site. Unfortunately, they don't use e-mail very actively and they don't up-date their sites very often. This is due to lack of IT knowledge in some municipalities. In order to improve this situation the Union will conduct a series of trainings on improvement of computer skills in municipalities.

On these web-sites you can find information regarding organizational structure of municipality, activities, culture, sports, history, business, tourism, events, contacts, etc.

There are no transactions via Internet in Montenegro.

Information about the LORIS 2003 Conference Exhibition

On the occasion of the LORIS 2003 Conference in Hradec Kralove, the organizers set up an exhibition displaying the best practices of the local and regional government web sites from the European countries.

The exhibition was open throughout the conference period (24[th]March 2003 from 9 a.m. until 20 p.m. and 25th March 2003 from 9 a.m. until 13 p.m.) and provided the participants with the opportunity to promote their application to a large and knowledgeable audience and the visitors with the chance to look into fine examples of Information Society concept implementation.

The objectives of the exhibition were to display concrete public administration services for citizens, business and/or tourists provided by web sites, to feature good European practice in the domain, to put forth success stories and to provide an "orientation tour" of the European local and regional government web sites implementation.

Exhibition displaying the best practices of the local and regional government web sites involved winners of the EuroCrest Contest 2003 for the best homepage of towns and communities of Europe, which encourages municipalities to use information technologies for e-democracy development. This is based on experience gained from the Czech contest Golden Crest during last years (with participation of hundreds of Czech municipalities).

The towns Praha, Czech Republic www.praha-mesto.cz, Vranov nad Toplou, Slovakia www.vranov.sk and Sopot, Poland www.sopot.pl are winners of national contests, towns Tartu, Estonia www.tartu.ee, Jurbarkas, Lithuania, www.jurbarkas.lt, Ventspils, Latvia www.ventspils.lv and Rousse, Bulgaria www.bulgaria.domino.bg/rousse were nominated by national associations of towns and municipalities, because in those countries such a contest does not exist yet.

The organizers of the conference have prepared some practical notes how to organize the national competition as the real motivating power for the municipality representatives as well as their webmasters to compare the own online services with the best practices and to improve them. Hungarian and Romanian representatives of associations confirmed their readiness to begin with organization of national contest this year. Establishing the competition in their countries will be a visible step toward the eGovernment principles.

The European E-City Award presented in Vienna last September for the first time, is being given to the city with the best internet portal in the whole of Europe and was selected from 130 European cities out of 29 countries within the framework of an extensive European benchmark study. The Award was represented by web sites of Berlin, Germany www.berlin.de, which in the category firms prevailed because of its clearly structured and detailed information offers for prospective firms and investors. In the category tourists it reached the 3rd place and the 2nd place of the overall prize was given by the jury to Berlin.

The participants of the conference had the possibility to draw from the experience of the towns Bratislava, Slovakia www.bratislava.sk, Rijeka, Croatia www.grad-rijeka.hr, Gdansk, Poland www.gdansk.gda.pl, Podgorica, Serbia and Montenegro www.podgorica.cg.yu,

Tallinn, Estonia www.tallinn.ee, Turku, Finland www.turku.fi and Ljubljana, Slovenia www.ljubljana.si.

Official declaration of results of the Czech Golden Crest Contest 2003 was a part of the Conference. Winners in the categories Cities, Communities, Regions, Blind friendly web and Special publicity prize presented their web sites as well as Vysocina Region presented the first regional Golden Crest Contest.

The conference will be followed by a guidebook based on the analysis of best practices observed and topics discussed. The guidebook will involve also the best practises of the local and regional government web sites from the European countries displayed during the Conference at the exhibition.

Best practices of the local and regional government web sites from the European countries displayed during the Conference at the exhibition.

Berlin
Web address: www.berlin.de

Public services focus:
Population of Berlin and the surrounding region; companies interesting in locating in Berlin; information for the business community; tourist information

Level of implementation:
Fully implemented; additional projects planned

Brief description:
Berlin.de is the official Web site of the federal state and city of Berlin.
Around 120 state and borough administrative units and agencies subordinate to these are integrated into the Internet platform Berlin.de. The Web site is operated within the framework of a public-private partnership. Information from the public as well as the private sector is offered under Berlin.de, which has a total of around 70,000 pages and registers 15 million page views a month. The entering and updating of information is decentralized and is done by the individual administrative units.

Public services objectives:
All of the residents of Berlin and the surrounding area are to be provided with current information from the administration for to encourage citizen participation and involvement. Another objective is to make it easier for companies to locate here. Tourist information can be offered worldwide.

Public services benefits:
Current information and, in particular, interactive applications are very useful. Examples include providing rent tables that show users how high their rent is permitted to be, allowing users to reserve personalized vehicle license plates, or enabling users to register or de-register their residence in Berlin. These services save time for both the administration and residents. The time saved by the administration can be used to improve the quality of services in general and services offered on the Internet.

Interactivity level:
There are around 10 interactive services currently available. This number is to be expanded in the near future.

Availability and accessibility:
It is planned to make the services offered more user-friendly for those who are blind or partially sighted.
Information is to be offered in several different languages as soon as possible. Berlin's administration also has an Intranet. All of the information available on the Internet under Berlin.de can also be accessed via the administration's Intranet.

Impact on reorganization of government processes:
Changes to be made in the administration are based on a master plan. These changes primarily involve communicative processes. Residents can send their questions to the administration via e-mail. Within the administration, information can be accessed quicker. This means that residents' and companies' expectations of the administration have risen. Legislation is being prepared that will enable us to accept applications that have been submitted by e-mail.

Transferability:
The way information has been structured is transferable. Information on experience with pilot applications such as: offering forms on-line, on-line payment, electronic signatures, e-appointments, e-procurement, a guide to the administration, a one-stop-agency for the business community, can be exchanged

Experience with decentralized databases and decentralized updating of data has been good.

Operational implementation:
Berlin.de is operated by a public-private partnership and has had varying experience with this operational model.

Experience and future prospects:
Berlin.de is used by a great many residents and companies as an up-to-date source of administrative information. (15 million page views a month). What need to be expanded are the interactive services and the e-government projects. The exchange of experience with other cities and countries is welcomed.

Gdansk
Web address: www.gdansk.pl

Public services focus:
The website of Gdansk is oriented on citizens, investors (business) and tourists.

Level of implementation:
The website has a modern database, web structure and design. Since November 2002 a new website www.e-gdansk.gov.pl was developed in accordance with the act of access to public information Bulletin of Public Information with public administration information, which is available exclusively on-line.

Brief description:
Citizens and business can easily find latest local news, everything about the City Authorities, organisational structure of the City Hall, city annual budget, legislative acts, resolutions of the City Council, detailed guide of how to move about in the City Hall, offers for investors, public tenders, publications of the City Hall, on –line chats with the officials, interactive map of Gdansk.

Public services objectives:
The public services objectives are to reduce bureaucracy and offer service on-line also to tourists, elderly people and to the disabled people. They can find a lot of useful information and services on the thematic websites of Gdansk: heritage.gdansk.gda.pl, roots.gdansk.gda.pl, gis.gdansk.gda.pl, virtual.gdansk.gda.pl, sail.gdansk.gda.pl, hanza.gdansk.gda.pl.

Public services benefits:
For to make all the information and services available to citizens the integrated management system in the City Hall of Gdansk was created. Computer systems of the City Hall of Gdansk linking GIS – digital map and map applications, parcels, buildings, citizens files, cars files, legal subjects, finances of the City, taxes and other payments service and other files with documents and issues circulation system.

Experience and future prospects:
Website development has provided additional skills and experience on bases for advancing towards the creation of e-services environment. Management of websites is using also questionnaire survey: 86% respondents have confirmed that they had found the information they had been looking for in the municipal internet service. 48% respondents are using services guide, 40% news, 39% transport timetables, 33% city hall open hours, 28% cultural events, 19% European integration, 18% SMEs help.
The future objectives are to establish complex services such as on-line education, action for supporting the disabled and the elderly, intelligent transport, virtual City Hall (e-Government) for allowing City of Gdansk to be strong centre of economy, centre of maritime economy, centre of tourism and recreation of international reputation, centre of culture, science and research, to be city in which the quality of life is improving and to play a dominant role in the region of Southern Baltic.

Availability and accessibility:
The thematic website gdaskon.gdansk.gda.pl represents up-to-date, accurate and reliable source of various information for the disabled people with text interface for the blind. For this websites are specially created GIS layers in the system of finding the optimal route for people with specified disability.

Interactivity level:
There are over 300 service descriptions with forms for downloading.

Jurbarkas
Web address: www.jurbarkas.lt

JURBARKO RAJONO SAVIVALDYBĖ
Dariaus ir Girėno g. 96, LT-4430 Jurbarkas
Tel.: 8-447 70153, Faksas: 8-447 70166
El.paštas: jurbarkas@lsa.lt
Kaip mus rasti?

Elektroninis žemėlapis
Elektroninės paslaugos
"Skaitmeninės bendruomenės sukūrimo" projektas

SAVIVALDYBĖ INFORMUOJA

English

- Apie rajoną
- Savivalda
- Kultūra
- Švietimas
- Sportas
- Ekonomika
- Renginiai
- Turizmas
- Ryšiai su užsienio šalimis
- Nuorodos
- Savivaldybė informuoja

023365

Svetainė atnaujinta 2003 05 27

maps.lt

JvB

KVIEČIAME BIRŽELIO 7 D. Į ŽVEJŲ ŠVENTĘ SMALININKUOSE.
Šventės programa: 6 val. žvejų varžytuvės - komandinės, individualios, žuvienės virimas, žuvies kepimas; **16 val.** žvejybinio burlaivio "Kurėnas" sutikimas prie Nemuno ant pylimo; **16.40 val.** eitynės į šventės vietą; **17 val. šventės atidarymas.**
Sportinės pramogos: varžytuvės - žuvies ruošimas ir vaišinimas, laimės šulinys, sportinės estafetės, piešinių ant asfalto konkursas.
Šventėje koncertuos: Raseinių Girkalnio kaimo etnografinis ansamblis, Raudonės kultūros centro kaimo kapela, Jurbarko pučiamųjų orkestras "Bišpilis", Viešvilės bendruomenės namų šokių kolektyvas, Smalininkų kultūros centro moterų ansamblis, kaimo kapela, moterų etnografinis ansamblis, etnografinis šokių kolektyvas, Smalininkų AŽŪM kaimo kapela, Spec internatinės mokyklos moterų ansamblis.
Vyks gegužinė - diskoteka (dalyvaus disko klubas "Mes" iš Tauragės).

Atvažiuokite, nepasididžiuokite. Dovanosime gerą nuotaiką, turiningą poilsį. Maloniai priimsime, žuvimi pavaišinsime.

SEREDŽIUS švenčia 710-ąsias metines nuo pirmojo vietovės paminėjimo rašytiniuose šaltiniuose.
2003 m. birželio 21-22 d.d. vyks Jubiliejinės Šventės pagrindiniai renginiai. **Maloniai kviečiame visus, norinčius ir galinčius, dalyvauti šioje garbingoje Seredžiaus miestelio ir mūsų visų kraštiečių šventėje.**
Mielas kraštieti, perskaitęs Seredžiaus jubiliejaus paminėjimo programą ir nusprendęs į ją būtinai atvykti, perduok šią žinutę visomis ryšio priemonėmis savo giminaičiui, kaimynui, draugui ar bendradarbiui. Tegul visi sužino iš kokio gražaus ir kilmingo Lietuvos krašto mes esame kilę! Susitikime ir pabendraukime visi kartu gimtajame Seredžiuje! Jubiliejinės šventės organizacinis komitetas.
Atsakinga už renginį mokytoja M.Baršauskienė, tel. 42344.

Birželio mėnesį Lietuvoje vyks žemės ūkio visuotinis surašymas. Jis rengiamas siekiant nustatyti žemės ūkių skaičių, dydį, gamybos tikslus, kaip panaudojama žemė, kokie auginami augalai ir gyvuliai, kiek ūkiai turi technikos ir kt. Tai bus antrasis žemės ūkio surašymas Lietuvos valstybės istorijoje (pirmasis vyko 1930 m.) Jis atliekamas pagal Jungtinių tautų rekomendacijas ir taps pasaulinio ūkio surašymo dalimi.

Birželio 11 d. 9 val. "Nemunėlio" pradinės mokyklos salėje vyks **seminaras "Europos Sąjungos struktūriniai fondai ir vietinių iniciatyvų finansavimo galimybės".** Seminarą ves Finansų ministerijos finansinės paramos departamento direktoriaus pavaduotoja Ana Stankaitienė.
Seminare kviečiami dalyvauti savivaldybės Tarybos nariai, rajono verslininkai, savivaldybės administracijos darbuotojai. Vietų skaičius ribotas. Prašome registruotis iš anksto telefonu

Atmintinės

» Savivaldybės kalbos tvarkytoja pataria
» Pageidaujantiems pertvarkyti želdinius
» Informacija apie licencijas
» Įmonės įregistravimas
» Norintiems rengti detalųjį arba specialųjį planą
» Pageidaujantiems laikinai įsiregistruoti nebaigtuose statyti namuose ar ūkiniuose pastatuose
» Norintiems įsigyti nukentėjusio asmens pažymėjimą
» Pageidaujantiems aptverti tvora savo sklypus
» Civilinės metrikacijos skyriaus informacija
» Socialinės paramos skyriaus informacija
» Vaikų teisių apsaugos tarnybos informacija

Tarybos sprendimai
» 2003-02-20
» 2003-02-27
» 2003-03-27
» 2003-04-10
» 2003-04-24
» 2003-05-15

Savivaldybės fondai
» Daugiabučių namų savininkų bendrijų rėmimo fondas
» Sveikatos fondas
» Verslo rėmimo fondas

Public services focus:
In the homepage the visitors of it can get the information about history, inhabitants, culture, education and sports of the region. Visitors can find all the needed information about tourism services in Jurbarkas area, economic development of the region

Level of implementation:
The internet homepage of Jurbarkas Regional Municipality has been functioning since 2001. This year regarding to the demands of citizens that are related to better, more convenient reception of information, electronic services have been started provided. The main aim of electronic services is to build E-Community.

Brief description:
The project of the homepage is being changed only so much as it's needed optimally to integrate newly projected electronic services:

The list of electronic services by themes: environment, disaster, auto transport, construction and gaining lodging, work intercourse and employment, insurance, registration (removal from registration) of enterprises, organizations, import, export

The list of electronic services according to the purposeful groups of customers: unemployed, employers, schoolchildren and students, disabled persons, owners of real estate, pensioners, hired workers, socially supported inhabitants, owners of transport means, farmers, state and municipality clerks, business people.

Public services objectives:

The public services objectives are not only possibilities to receive information but also involve citizens into the discussions of the projects. The municipality seeking for the publicity of its activity and more active participation of the community, accepting important decisions, publishes the projects of the documents that are going to be discussed in the municipality council or board in the internet homepage.

In order to simplify and encourage members of the community to express their opinion, an opinion expression form was established.

After a user chooses and reads the project of the document that he is interested in he has the right to express his commentaries, to write a commentary in a free form and commentary automatically is sent to the responsible municipality specialist.

Public services benefits:

For to reach benefits from the point of view of users and administration it was necessary to prepare strategy for motivation of citizens to exploit possibilities of public administration electronic services. The main means of motivation of inhabitants for usage of electronic services are:

- Informative. Information about electronic services that are provided is announced through media
- Memorandums about electronic services that are provided. Small booklets have been prepared and published about electronic services that are provided in the Municipality. Short instructions and rules of usage are indicated in them.
- Giving information for inhabitants during service. The interior order of reception of electronic documents is indicated, responsible persons are appointed.
- Municipality workers, in the course of reception of inhabitants inform them about the possibilities to use electronic services.
- Establishment of access points to the public internet.

Experience and future prospects:

Electronic services should be possible for everybody's access using popular and universally used technical means.

The present and the future usage of ES is directly related to the level of computerization of a society and usage of the internet.

The rural community, which uses services of institutions of public administration, is interested in development of electronic services and possibility of using the internet.

Availability and accessibility:

In order to improve access to information and to simplify service procedures for inhabitants and economic subjects in the municipality, it is decided that electronic service for filling in and submitting various request forms to the municipality via internet is the most important electronic service:

- Free form requests

- Request for allotting an extraordinary grant
- Request for getting social allowance
- Request for those who want to re-arrange plants to be preserved
- Request for getting license for trading
- Request asking for license for arranging commercial events
- Request asking for license for establishing outside advertisement
- Request for announcement of the event that is going to be organized

Mentioned requests are for inhabitants and economic subjects. After filling in a request form an Applicant will be able:
- at once to send it to the municipality
- get printed the filled in request
- to save the request form in the computer

After the Mmunicipality gets the request :
- it is registered in the indicated order
- is given to a certain officer to fulfill it and give a reply
- a reply is sent to an applicant by e-mail or otherwise, according to his/her wish.

Ljubljana
Web address: www.e-ljubljana.com

Public services focus:
Domestic and foreign tourists, citizens

Level of implementation:
Local and regional

Brief description:
1. Source of information about the events in the Capital, history, sightseeing, additional information for tourists (i.e. restaurants, accommodation...), information for media
2. Virtual walk through the virtual city centre

Public services objectives:
As a local tourist board our objective is to make Ljubljana a recognizable modern European Capital. All necessary information can be found before the arrival, in the future will be possible to make accommodation bookings and purchase tickets for the events online. Objective is to provide all information to several target groups.

Availability and accessibility:
Availability online only, full access for everyone

Impact on reorganization of government processes:
Impact on developing the virtual presentation of city centre. Plans are ambitious and depend on the available budget

Operational implementation aspects:
The maintenance is outsourced, but the Editor of the page is employed by the Ljubljana Tourist Board. Data are refreshed/added/changed daily. Portal was launched on 27th September 2002.
Fully outsourced, including eventual daily changes. Plan in the future is to combine both sides with the Ljubljana official side in a common portal. E-Ljubljana was launched end of October 2002.

Experience and future prospects:
Both pages were well accepted and are frequently visited by domestic and foreign public. Future prospects are to develop a modern portal which would combine the already existing information about for tourists and official city government cites for citizens.
Current official city side is already old and needs to be modernized. Data are correct, but the technical and visual part of the side is poor.
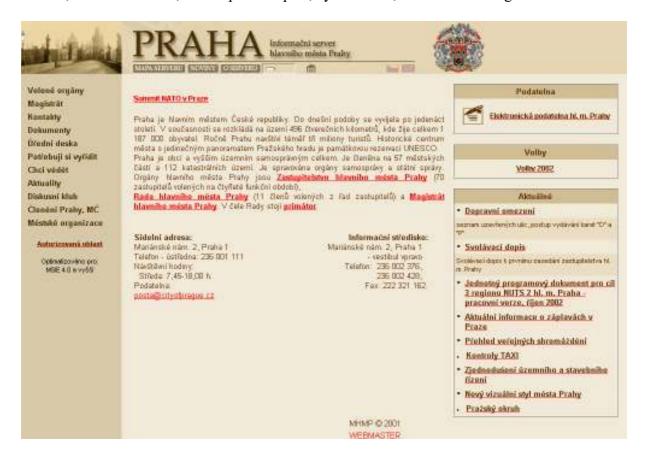
Prague
Web address: www.praha-mesto.cz

Public services focus:
Services on the City of Prague websites are mainly focused on citizens. Citizens can find everything about the City Authorities, organisational structure of the City Hall, legislative acts, resolutions of the City Council, city annual budget, latest news, forms, contacts, etc.

Information for business involve list of contracts, pattern contracts, offers for investors, public tenders, City of Prague strategic plan and links to the websites of public administration, development agencies, etc.

Information for tourists are provided by the specialized tourist agency of the City – heritage, culture, accommodation, municipal transport, cycle tracks, addresses in Prague.

Public services benefits:
Benefits from the point of view of time savings are evident. Information is used also by City Hall clerks in communication with citizens.

Operational implementation aspects:
Services, maintenance and development of the websites are performed by the City Hall. The development and maintenance of software is solved by outsourcing.
Security and personal data protection are main precondition of the whole system.

Experience and future prospects:
The future objectives are using on-line Content Management System, electronic Document Management System, better coordination of all departments, the development of the linking between Internet services for citizens, Extranet services for City of Prague organizations and Intranet services for City Hall departments. The focus on two way on-line interaction and full transactions services will be linked with introduction electronic signature into the public administration in the Czech Republic. Project Web GIS Prague for providing interactive geographic services is under preparation. Server ENVIS focused on exploitation of on-line Content Management System, databases and maps for environment agenda was initiated as a pilot project. Based on Prague's new Corporate Design websites will be improved.

Availability and accessibility:
All information is on-line, there are no group restrictions. Websites enable better contact with public administration especially for disabled people.

Interactivity level:
On the websites it is possible to find all forms, all contacts and there is the possibility of on – line chats with the officials on specific themes. All submissions of applications can be done via electronic registry.

Rijeka
Web address: www.grad-rijeka.hr

Public services focus:
Citizens, business and tourists

Level of implementation:
Local

Brief description:
Portal functions are presently divided according to following structure:
- Politics: Decision making; City council; Political service
- Municipal administration: Municipal Information System; Form Server; Entry point for e-services
- Cultural life: Theatres; Locations of musical events; Libraries; Museums; Art galleries; Cultural organizations; Calendar of cultural events
- Tourism
- Business and traffic: Business development; Trade areas, estates; Business organizations
- Public transport
Beside this part of the portal, offering service and information related to the city as political and administrative body, further information and service is offered:
- Health; Entertainment; Jobs, livelihood; Telecommunications; Shopping; Educational institutions (not belonging to the city); News; Insurance; Energy supply

Public services benefits:
Portal is build using "iSite application" for content management. This product enables refreshing and changing of Web sites without the mediation of the IT team and webmasters, and it supports complex team work and "workflow" approach. The users can independently create the structure of pages and the whole site, standardized formats of typical pages, roles of persons included in the publishing process, their authorizations and the manner of their mutual interaction. After the initial installation and configuration, the management of the whole system is quite easy, and can be done by a single qualified person - administrator. By the use of parameterisation, a quick and easy change of the look of the whole site or any part of the site is possible, without the need to change the content. This way, a whole Web site can be refreshed in a very short time.
One of the main advantages of the portal dynamic management is flexibility. The structure of the site, form and appearance of each individual part, structure of the articles and other content, like graphics, banners, tables, forms, etc., is determined by the user. The classification of articles, as the primary elements of Web pages, into categories makes possible easy presentation of content on the Web, and thus makes the browsing, reading and movement through the site much easier. iSite is based on technology solutions which provide automatic searching of the whole Web site, and thus provide the users with better orientation on the dynamic Web site.
In order to satisfy different user requirements, portal is developed as a flexible and parameterized, fully customizable system. Portal approaches the organization of a Web site as a news desk, with people who create content, and the editorial staff, who determine the structure, appearance and the final form of the published site as a whole. In case a certain user does not require such organization of work, it can be turned off to enable the content creator to publish it directly.
Portal is globally divided into two parts: Admin zone, where the preparation and production take place, and Production zone where the finished content is published. The production zone may comprise one or more Targets, i.e. targets like e.g. public Web site, company intranet, WAP site, etc. The technology of multiple targets makes possible administration and

maintenance of 2 or 3 Web sites from a single administration post. In the basic configuration of the system those are: public Web site, intranet and Web for mobile devices (WAP / Pocket PC / Palm PC).

Portal makes it possible to publish the same content to be published on several targets (in whole or partially), where each target may have a different visual appearance and design.

Impact on reorganization of government processes:

Portal is designed to enable production and publishing of portal sites without intervention of the IT staff. Any person with basic knowledge of computers in Windows environment and standard Office applications will quickly learn how to use portal for preparing and publishing of content on the Web site.

Operational implementation aspects:

A Web site contains articles classified into sections, i.e. subjects. An article may belong to several sections. Sections are building blocks of the Web site skeleton. Such principle provides easy and simple navigation for the end-user. This way the sections are organized in a tree structure. Articles and other elements are later added to sections, which make up the skeleton of the site. Each article has a structure, i.e. its own component elements. The basic element is the header, which contains information used to identify the article. An article may contain additional elements: paragraphs, tables, illustrations and documents

The basic portal functionality is as follows:

"Owners" of the information manage the content; unlimited number of categories and levels; search by all published texts; support for organized business processes - "workflow"; adjustment to graphic design standards of the client; dynamic change of content, appearance of pages and organization of categories

Availability and accessibility:

RIMIS (Rijeka Municipal information Services) Application is accessible from portal home page under the name: INFOSERVIS.

Objective of the RIMIS system is to provide the Internet presence of a city with an extensive set of administration information governed by the municipality. The structure of the system is the following:
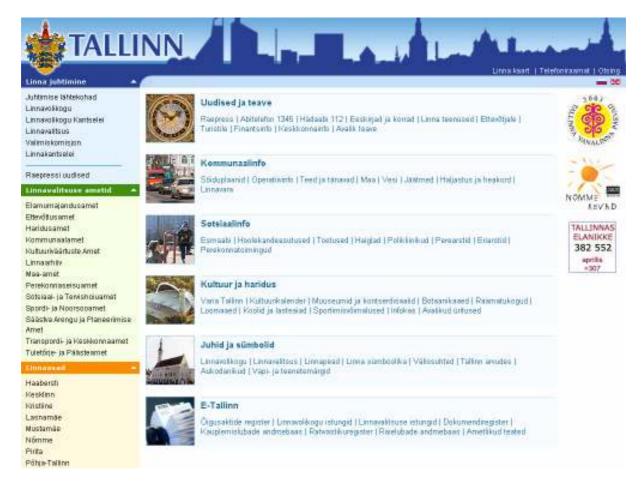
· Catalog of services the municipality offers to citizens.

· Catalog of life events: requests are grouped according to situations in citizens' life.

· Information about the organization of the municipality: about departments and their tasks, services and persons in charge, about addresses, telephone numbers, opening hours, stops of public transport, and information about other institutions situated in Rijeka.

· Forms Service: citizen can fill out the form you need directly on the screen and then print it or, if there is an appropriate online service, send it electronically to the municipality.

· An interactive City Map of Rijeka.

RIMIS user can get links to all organizational units of the municipality; he can get information about addresses and stops of public transport, telephone numbers, opening hours, figures etc. And, perhaps even more important, he is treated as a customer and can ask for his personal request or life event. Following only a few links he will get to know all the relevant information, the proper department, the persons in charge, the procedure, and the fees. On the other hand RIMIS provides the municipality with a system to present all the departments, their addresses, their relationships, their tasks, etc to each interested citizen. In addition RIMIS includes the ability to call a Geographical Information System (GIS), so that the user will not only get the address of the requested department, but also a map centered on his needs.

Last but not least RIMIS comes with a maintenance tool where all the single elements and all the relationships can be noted, so that the system works and is up-to-date. RIMIS uses Internet technology. All the user needs is an Internet browser. The maintenance tool uses the same technology: All the maintenance people need is a browser to use the Intranet. Maintenance can be done in a central way or locally at different places and with different responsibilities.

Tallinn
Web address: www.tallinn.ee

Public services focus:
The website of Tallinn is meant to be for citizen oriented usage. Apart from citizens website exist web portals for tourists and entrepreneurs.

Level of implementation:
Tallinn's first website was implemented in 1998. Practically from the first day online it has been a dynamic website, as the information has been entered and changed in base of web database. A development of new website project started in the last quarter of year 2000. The goal was to design more modern, up-to-date and user friendly navigation system. In 2002 the project was implemented, a modern database, web structure and design were created and put online. At present we are expanding our collaboration between cities in the field of elaborating and developing the principals of e-services.

Brief description:

The website objectives are to reflect city government, city council, departments and districts activity and public documentation. The website navigation structure is divided and consists of two sides: the city administration structure and so called virtual information halls. Website's left menu consists of the city administration structure. Therefore citizens can easily find the needed city office departments, districts, etc and enter the city office's, council's, department's or district's sub web. Website's right or center menu consists of virtual information halls. Virtual information halls contain main subjects concerning information about city life, for example social and communal info, e-registers, news and announcements, culture and education, etc. There are separate links to tourism and entrepreneur web portals for better servicing of local and foreign tourists and entrepreneurs.

Public services objectives:
The public services objectives are to change the website from only possibility to out print documentation forms and receive information to full mode interactive website with e-services, which would reduce paperwork, bureaucracy and "racing" the citizens from office to office, instead of submitting and ordering services online.

Public services benefits:
In public service benefits the primary goal is to make all the information available to citizens and it has been guaranteed by that every department can add its own online materials.
The point is in diffused website administering. If two years ago there was only one central web administer, who did all the content changes on Tallinn's website, then today there are more than 200 white collars of whom some are more active than others in adding new online information to the website.
Practically every structural unit has it's own main administer who distributes local sub web user rights, educates users, also adds information or documents if needed. The benefits from diffused website administering are in time consuming, faster web content renewal and divided responsibility of online information creator. The responsibility can now be divided between officials who enter their information online, before there was only one person, who could not had been held responsible for all entered website information.
Every city official can have a user name and a password for entering online information. Today adding new online document is very elementary – web interface looks like editing text in MS Word working environment.

Impact on reorganization of government processes:
The most important changes are due to the implementation of electronic city government and city council meetings information system. The change has a contemporary and flexibility effect in conducting leadership processes, also has greatly minimized paperwork. All decisions, legislative regulations and prescriptions are accessible for citizens through our website.

Operational implementation aspects:
The website has been built in co-operation with a private sector company. A concrete description of services required (public procurement) was represented to private market. A competition took place and the best offer was selected to conclude an agreement with the winner company. In co-operation with the private sector firm the new web interface and database were created. The system started online in 2002. The administrative interface is web based. Services, maintenance and development is performed by the above mentioned collaboration partner.

Experience and future prospects:
Website development has provided additional skills and experience on bases for advancing towards the creation of e-services environment. The future objectives are to establish complex services, which would bind several databases, for allowing citizens transact inquiries, fill in e-forms, submit applications and change individual data in city databases.
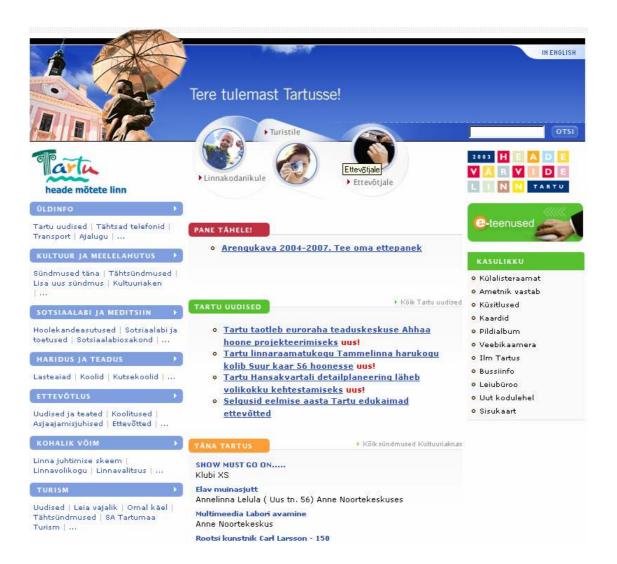
Availability and accessibility:
Website has no offline version. All information is online, there are no group restrictions.
Apart from official online website an Intranet is developed for use of city officials only.

Interactivity level:
Website interactivity is at first and second level. Citizens can retrieve information and download forms/applications. Interactively most advanced is the possibility to fill in a special online form for requesting of public information.

Tartu
Web address: www.tartu.ee

Public services focus:
The homepage of Tartu city is visited by the city officials themselves as well as by the townspeople. It is a source of information for other public offices and local authorities too. There is also an English version of the homepage, which is visited by tourists, by authorities of other countries, etc. By the end of the year, Finnish, German and Russian versions of the homepage should be finalized.

Brief description:
Tartu is the only pilot city in a national project – Citizen's Information Portal (CIP). The portal is meant for the web publishing of different forms and documents by all public offices and authorities on national, regional and local level.

Interactivity level:
A person wishing to enter the portal will be identified on the basis of an ID card or via an internet bank, which automatically provides a digital signature for the person. This type of identification equals with handwritten signature that is usually required on official documents. Currently, the following official forms of Tartu city are accessible through the system:
• Letter to Tartu city government (options: different departments)
• Application for acknowledgement of accommodation providing enterprise
• Trade license application for selling goods and/or catering
• Trade license application for selling services.
More than 30 forms that are currently in the preparation process should be accessible by the end of May.

Public services benefits:
In addition to the national project, the homepage of Tartu city includes different kinds of municipal application forms and other types of forms. Citizens can print the forms required by them, fill them out and only then submit them – there is no need to go to a municipal office to fill out a form. Before submitting a form, the citizen can check via the homepage the list of documents required with an application.

In case of any questions that might arise, there is a special link on the homepage titled "city official answers". All questions will be answered either instantly or on the following working day at the latest. Thus, there is personal communication with citizens.

There is a special person in the city government who is responsible for the administration of the webpage, for gathering, adding and updating information. The homepage of Tartu provides immediate information and the latest news every day (for example, "the cultural window" where different cultural events get listed and advertised, and that can be supplemented and refreshed by citizens themselves).

Operational implementation aspects:
In collaboration with the private sector, a "lost property office" has been established. This enables the townspeople themselves to make announcements about lost and found things. The environment is provided by the city, administration by a private company.

Availability and accessibility:
Since the legislation stipulates full public accessibility of public offices and local authorities, Tartu utilizes a document administration programme GoPro. The programme is joined with the homepage so that all information from legal acts, directives and regulations is

immediately and publicly accessible.

Experience and future prospects:
Another project to be developed this year is the so-called "problem/concern map". Citizens can put down notes and remarks on the city map, for example, if a tree has fallen down somewhere or there is a dangerous hole in a street, etc. This constitutes additional information for our officials, but it also gives citizens an opportunity to help with putting things in order and making the city safer and more beautiful. The city of Tartu wishes to maintain its public accessibility and involve its citizens in changing the life in the city for the better. The city also aims to give its citizens the floor for voicing their opinion in different decision making processes and forums.

Turku
Web address: www.turku.fi

Public services focus:
The city website has taken on a new appearance according to the new graphical guidelines. The structure and navigation have been made clearer, so the user can easily find and read what they want from the large amount of information available. In the services section, for example, subjects have been grouped by theme and target group. Entrepreneurs, tourists, families with children, the youth, the elderly and the handicapped have all been given their own sections where the appropriate information and services can easily be found.

Brief description:
There are also different themes, like housing and construction that make finding the right information easier. Of course, information is also still available through keyword searches and the directory. The different sections of the new pages have received greater amounts of current information than before. All press releases are now one click away from the front page. Links to the most popular services, like timetables and the library, can now also be found there. The events section opened last spring is available from the front page, complementing the list of services. Similarly, the popular map service is now easily accessed from the front page.

On the city pages, you can handle your affairs with the city through an electronic form and participate in discussion about the city. The right sidebar contains links to the city's job openings, available real estate, press releases and other announcements. From the same location, you can also get acquainted with the mayor.

The City of Turku website has been renovated according to the city's graphical guidelines. The structure and navigation of the Internet pages have been made clearer, so that users can more easily find the information for which they are looking.

Public services objectives:
"The City of Turku WWW-pages have taken yet another step forward. Our goal is that all the information and services related to the city can be found at one address," says Mayor Armas Lahoniitty proudly.
"The web pages also make dialogue with citizens and other customers possible," Lahoniitty reminds us.

Interactivity level:
The recently renovated pages have already completed some of the city's Internet reform goals. The web pages host more current information than ever. The events section that was opened at the beginning of the summer has added to the available services. Soon there will also be more e-services and interaction. Frequent interactive communication, electronic transactions, a more unified overall appearance and user-friendly structure and navigation are all important parts of the development work. The overall goal for the web pages is to continue development as a core component of the city's communications network.

Experience and future prospects:
Development work on the new pages is continuing. User feedback on the pages is very welcome. They can be sent to the email address internet.projekti@turku.fi . You can also use the feedback form on the front page.

Ventspils
Web address: www.ventspils.lv

Public services focus:
Citizens, business, and tourists

Level of implementation:
Regional, local

Brief description:
Ventspils city portal was created in 1st of august, 2002. The mission of Ventspils portal is to provide closer link among Ventspils citizens, government and business sector. One of the main goals of the portal is to provide full exposure of e-government services, however at the moment only first depositions are available – news of the city life, comprehensive information about city local government, Ventspils enterprises, information about government services.

Public services objectives:
- To provide closer link among Ventspils citizens and government.
- To enable use of electronic services provided by local municipality and other organizations.

Public services benefits:
- Possibility to view Ventspils city tenders in one place.
- Ability to find out official, sport, cultural and entertainment events for the next week in one place.
- E-Address book is available for faster communication with government.

Interactivity level:
- Discussions on sensitive topics about city.
- Free of charge labour exchange to post work offers and proposals.
- Free of charge message board for trading with goods and services.
- Possibility to comment news.
- Possibility to personalize portal layout for better personal use.
- Free of charge SMS sending function
- Free of charge E-mail @mail.ventspils.lv.
- My Reminders – can be sent either to e-mail or mobile phone on selected time or before event.
- News subscription means – to receive to the given source (e-mail or mobile phone) already published and by user selected news from news categories.
- Portal users can publish personal data as well as other public information.
- Free of charge training and knowledge testing in these areas:
  - Computer basics
  - Windows 2000
  - Internet
  - Microsoft Word 2000
  - Microsoft Excel 2000
  - Microsoft PowerPoint 2000
  - Microsoft Outlook 2000

Availability and accessibility:
- In future there is a plan to implement technologies gained from participation in European Union project IST 2000-28585 AVANTI.

Impact on reorganization of government processes:
- Impact on government reorganisation processes in the time of being on-line is statistically insignificant.

Transferability:
- By portal means it will be possible to connect with DOCLEAD system which is the system in which works cities administration.
- Portal is also available as single portal solution.

Operational implementation aspects:
- Portal was developed in parallel with DOCLEAD system and it was half a year's time.

- Possible implementation depends on level of localisation needed.

Experience and future prospects:
- In future there is a plan to implement technologies gained from participation in European Union project IST 2000-28585 AVANTI
- To enable use of electronic services provided by local municipality and other organizations.

Vranov
Web address: www.vranov.sk

Public services focus:
Citizens, tourists

Level of implementation:
Local

Brief description:
The web pages of the town of Vranov nad Topľou contain information intended for several target groups:

Town´s citizens – they are the primary focus of attention. They are subdivided into
- pages on the self-government; they perform the following functions: educational, by explaining citizens functions and competence of individual self-governing bodies,

informational, by informing citizens of the activity of the self-government, publicizing, by making public the documentation which is intended for the citizens, and communication, by offering the citizens materials for discussion,

- pages on services (catering, accommodation, transportation, education, commerce, worship services, emergency, advertising),

- pages on recreation (cultural and sporting events, interest groups, courses, etc.),

- references to social, medical, social, advisory and other institutions in the town,

- pages devoted to the unemployed contain information about activities aimed at helping them, besides the reference to the labor office,

Tourists – besides information on historical monuments and the two principal recreational areas in the town´s vicinity, the pages point to several unique areas (opal mines, geyser) and interesting recreational programmes. Besides, a map of the town shows local accommodation and catering services. The whole part is brief and contains references to web pages dealing with particular problems in greater detail.

Investors – information on the possibilities of investment in the town,

Entrepreneurs – offers of entrepreneurial activities (properties for rent, auctions), possibility of free advertising of services for citizens (a list of companies), hints for entrepreneurs (grants)

Non-profit institutions – town´s pages present brief information on non-profit organizations (social, medical, educational) which can not afford their own pages, or offer them space for placement of ready-made pages of smaller size

Villages of the region of Vranov – information (esp. on grant projects) acquired by the town is further transferred to villages in order to enhance region's further development

Public services objectives:
To reduce the time spent by citizens in the offices of town-hall.

Public services benefits:
Information access – some information is published only on the web pages (decrees, regulations, town's documentation, medical emergency service availability, and search for commercial services)
Time saving – when interacting with offices (the pages provide for citizens information on the procedure of settling official matters, on the required documentation; citizens may print out some forms and, when filled out, these may be dispatched by mail) or when searching information on town's life (phone numbers, transportation, services)

Interactivity level:
The web pages enable interactive management of administrative affairs. They offer detailed description of responsibilities of individual offices, of procedures of management of administrative affairs, of individual regulations, and enable printing out of various forms and applications. They invite open discussion on the matters of documents under preparation (development plan, changes in the regional plan). Also they enable contact with the management of the self-government, council members and managers of the town's office and invite citizens to activities organized by the self-government.

Availability and accessibility:
The web pages are accessible through the town's information centre practically to every citizen free of charge. They are operated in the off-line version and are updated on the weekly

basis, but only in computers connected to the internet. This allows for an e-mail contact with the given addresses.

The problem of security of services has not been solved yet, since at present the electronic signature is not in use in the public service in Slovakia and the web pages do not use personal data.

Operational implementation aspects:
While creating the web pages, we have had a most positive experience with relying on our own sources (students and employees of the local schools). The content of the pages, however, is taken care of by the employees of the municipal office only. In this way, we have managed to keep the expenses to the minimum (we pay actually only for their placement on the internet) which, along with a possibility to update them immediately, has proved to be of a great advantage.

Experience and future prospects:
The intention of the town is mainly to strengthen the interactive aspect of the web pages. As the process of introduction of electronic signature is in Slovakia under way, we intend to create web pages as an instrument of filing room. Also, we wish to use the pages as a forum for the discussion about the development of the self-government and as a means of acquiring suggestions from citizens as to the town´s development and opinions on the activity of the town´s offices as well as on all other aspects of the town´s life.

Winners of the Golden Crest Contest 2003

Jihlava
Web address: http://www.jihlava.cz

Public services focus:
The jury of the competition The Golden Crest appreciated especially comprehension of the page and it's asset for objective groups as tourists, citizens and businesses. On the sites Citizen, Tourist and Businessman are mentioned links on the information with respect to different demands of each target group.

Brief description:
The web site of the city Jihlava captivates with it's strong design which indicates copious history of heretofore the second biggest city in the Bohemia. The home page offers in two synoptical columns references to actual and longtime important information separated by the theme.

The official web sites of the town Jihlava include a lot of information that are lucidly segmented and continuously updated.

There are different language versions where you can find basic information about the city and tourist information including questionnaire for foreign visitors, for example. Worth is the view of actions of municipality species for the next week. The attention of few hundreds of people from Jihlava has held running the knowledge competition about history, present days of the city and surroundings and local ZOO at these days

Operational implementation aspects:
The whole board of Jihlava city uses editorial software for publishing information. Seducing of links to the author of information and it's department and alternative non-barriers navigation are just two examples of it.

There is one accredited person which supervises content of the web site and it's continuous filling. The emphasis in page design is put on practical functionality and lucidity and cohesion.

Availability and accessibility
There is also running distinctive e-learning programme for seniors. The page was designated as blind – friendly. The web sites correspond to project Blind Friendly web from 90 %. This is the reason to include it to database of pages accessible for visual handicapped.

Interactivity level:
Everybody can find information how to process an application on the municipal government or down load blanks that he must complete. From the most visited sections we can notice guides for expedition common acts of citizens and forms to download.

From multimedia applications we can notice interactive map with the possibility to find sightseeing and other places only with one click. The visitors can make a virtual perambulation of interior of some churches.

Most

Web address: http://www.mumost.cz

Public services focus:
Citizens, business, tourist

Brief description:
The home page offers thematic articulated links and recommended internal links and links to the coherent regional and other important resources outside the municipality web site. The summary of all newly published information makes the orientation on the web site more comfortable.

The jury appreciated high-quality map application, the prize map of the city Most with possibility to find information about each parcel and object. There is also an ortophotomap and photo gallery (the most of the pictures were supplied by the citizen of the city Most) including historical views at already non-existing part of the city which succumbed to prior coal-mining.

From the most attractive sections of the web site we can notice the web cam which scans the center of the city. Also a thermometer with graphic processed archive of measured out values is useful.

Really unique feature is the language version presented in Esperanto. Translation is provided by the local club of Esperanto for free.

The big attention is dedicated to a public transport, culture, education, sport and the like information about the activity of each department of the municipality and affairs which citizens usually go to fix at the authority. As new feature we can mark the list of available jobs.

Operational implementation aspects:
The web exceeds because of its high comprehension and up-to-dating. It is made manually by one specialist without any use of editorial software. Information is provided by municipality departments. The webmaster's qualification enables use of many of internal hypertext links to coherent information and to add attendant pictures with previews to the documents, for

example. Each theme of the page is individually processed with consideration for it's specific needs.
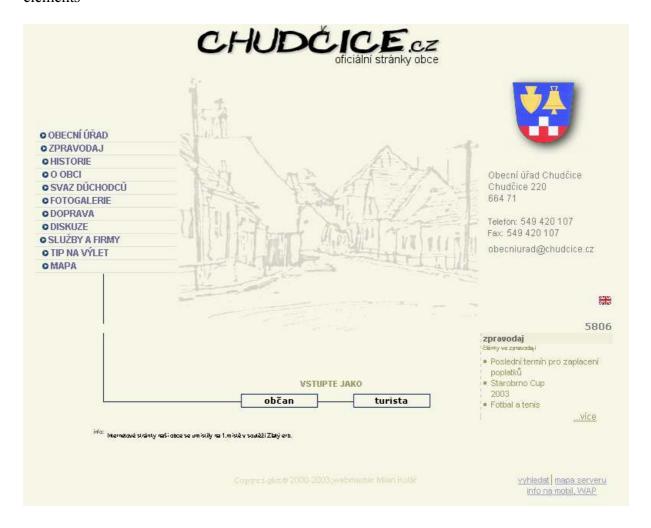

Chudcice
Web address: http://www.chudcice.cz

Public services focus:
The jury appreciated exceptional care and creativity at the web site of the small community Chudcice with only 600 citizens. In regard of location of the community in tourist attractive area and nearby the big city there is a considerable attention dedicated to tourism. On the web site you can find forecast, the list of accommodation and restaurants in the community including, for example, open hours of shops and banks in the closest surrounding and also the photo gallery including panoramatic views at the neighborhood of the community. The web site welcomes a visitor with the invitation to the actual action, the traditional costumed junket

with the link to archive photographs from the past. There is well done worked up particular map of the community and its neighborhood and information about significant regional elements

.
Brief description:
The attention is also dedicated to the common life of the community and its authority. In the extreme is processed the Chudcice Bulletin with possibility to post your own articles, to use the discussion forum and, for example, to post planned events. The list of the local businessmen and companies sorted by branch is constantly updated. The history of the community is particularly presented beginning from the first time mention of the community sorted by each period of the history including capacious photo documentation and historical map including information about the natives. Here you can find particular heraldic description of the coat of arms and the flag of the community.
The records from the municipality sessions are completed even with photographs from the sessions.

Interactivity level:
The web site offers possibility to register for receiving news via SMS and the access also through WAP is available.

Vysocina region

Web address: http://www.kr-vysocina.cz

Public services focus:

The official web sites of the Region Vysočina purvey a lot of information for different target groups. For easier orientation is defined five specific categories of users: Citizen, Municipality, Journalist, Region's self-government and Region's organizations. With the assistance of these categories, accessible directly from the homepage, each target group can find quickly such information that it usually needs.

Brief description:

The web site with it's thematically width covers wide scale of activities which are provided by the Vysocina region. The documentation of the transparency of the regional authority is the particularity and the speed of publishing of information. There are published not only single decisions but also corresponding tasks by detail on regular basis, including all preliminary documents for the sessions and full records from it. There are also published concrete votes of all politicians in all polls. Among the most visited sections on the web site is the information on self-government.

The good idea is the database „Actions in the region Vysočina"with the current and extensive offer of for example cultural, sport, educational actions. It is also possible to find a lot of information about cultural and sporting activities in the region with capacious database of regional events. At the disposal there is a particular purpose of the territorial plan, list of the

current grant programmes and well used principle of FAQs. There is also running discussion forum about the work of the authority. The web site is updated nearly constantly.

The special emphasis is put on the communication with mass medias: the web site of the Vysocina region is known as one of the most important source of regional news. The journalists can find the whole schedule scheme of regional representatives and sessions here.

Operational implementation aspects:
A lot of specific applications and editorial software are used for building up the site. The web site is a very notable example of the transparent self-government authority.

Interactivity level:
Next noticeable section is, for example, daily monitoring of press with scanned news and system for applying of electronically signed up requests. There are at one's disposal the descriptions of life-situations, different blanks for download or e-registry etc on the websites. Special attention has been focused at the database of departments and their agendas with the possibility of effective searching up including sophisticated GIS map application. To the web site the database of the communities called ePUSA has been newly implemented.

Bludov
Web address: http://bludov.zde.cz

Availability and accessibility:
The special accessibility prize (the Blind friendly web) the jury gave to the community of Bludov. The web site is systematically created with conscious emphasis to keep the web site accessible to visually disabled people. The code of the web site complies with the regulations of HTML 4.01 a XHTML and respects standards of the W3C Consortium as well as the initiative The Dogma W4 Manifesto (W4D) for generally accessible and synoptical documents. The selected documents are published in three formats: HTML, Text602 a Microsoft Word. Magnificent is also the collection of photographs of all residential buildings.

Microregion Sdruzeni ruze

Web address: http://www.sdruzeniruze.cz

Public services objectives:
Microregion Sdruzeni ruze won special publicity prize in 2003 because of the biggest amount of votes given users of the Internet. The web site is significant because it is updated by several communities – members of the Microregion. All documents published by each community can also be found at the Microregion's site. The attention is put on tourist information from

the region. Particular list of places of interests, tourist paths, cycling paths and the like is provided in form of the interactive map on the web site.

Regional round of the Golden Crest Competition in the region Vysočina

The Golden Crest is the competition for the best web sites of towns, municipalities and regions. There was 204 competitors, 37 was from the Region Vysočina in this year. In the category Towns put 9 competitors, in the category Municipalities put 21 competitors and in the category Regions put 7 competitors. The jury was composite from the representatives of regional government and from the regional authority's offices. The jury judged each web site by four criterions and selected three the best web sites in all categories.

Great interest of competitors in the regional round illustrates increase of number cities and municipalities with own web site. Likewise increases design and content level of web sites. This all makes demands on jury's work, especially on the time needful for evaluation.

The competition contributes to propagation of internet in the public sector.

Golden Crest: How to organize the competition--some practical notes

Best of the web annual competition of towns, municipalities and regions **The Golden Crest** has been established in the Czech Republic in 1999. Since that time we can observe **steady annual growth** of the number of competitors (242 in year 2002) and also the attention of the public is growing (more than 3000 votes received). The competition has the **real motivating power** for the municipality representatives as well as their webmasters to compare the own online services with the best practices and to improve it.

The aim of this paper is to point out some experiences and practical advices gained during the four years of running the Golden Crest.

Prestigious Partners and Sponsors

The most respected the best of the web competition need to and can attract prestigious partners. The competition could be announced by your Ministry of informatics or your Association of towns. Do not hesitate to offer the cooperation to the most reputable personalities as ministers, famous politicians, well known journalist and top persons of relevant associations. You need to appoint the following authorities:

- a director of the competition,
- members of the board of honor,
- a chairman of the jury,
- and the judges.

Special care should be focused on the jury. We use to appoint:

- representatives of towns and municipalities, personalities responsible for the contents and the design, representatives of the winners of the past years competitions, they can not participate in the competition (approx. 1/3 of the staff),
- prominent publicists in the field of the public administration and internet (approx. 1/3)
- experts in related fields in the public administration (approx. 1/3)

Keep up regular contact with competition bodies per e-mail newsletter during the competition time.

Try to find **sponsors** for valuable prices. Digital cameras or software are examples of suitable prices.

Open Competition

The key factor of being long term successful and to gain broad attention of even small villages is the transparency of evaluation. The competition should be open as much as possible. All evaluations both relating to the nomination and the election of the finalists should be published on the net including all details up to the level of individual points granted by individual evaluators. We have also made good experience with participation of the competitors themselves in the evaluation (see Rules, par. 5). Despite lots of competitor's work involved, this usage is seen positively and the competition as such is perceived as objective.

Clear Rules

You can use as an example the Rules applied in the Czech Republic. The competition is announced for the local government bodies and departments. The Golden Crest, the main prize of the competition, will be awarded to the winners of the following three categories:

1. towns, including municipal, district and area councils;
2. municipalities; and
3. associations and unions of municipalities, districts and regions, including but not limited to, microregions and servers of regional local government bodies.

In the first year of your own Golden Crest it is recommended to start with just two categories: towns and municipalities or even only one common category.

Modify your procedure of evaluation according to the expected number of competitors. If you expect up to 30-–50 municipalities engaged, the nomination tier is not necessary. Nominations prevent the jury being overloaded. The evaluation in the Czech competition with 242 competitors (year 2002, 105 towns, 107 villages and 30 associations) has relative complex procedure in the form of the nomination and subsequent selection of the finalists and winners in each category.

The nominees are identified by three groups of evaluators:

1. Three representatives of a specialist jury (they determine 5 nominations)
2. The competitors themselves (they evaluate all other competitors and they can not nominate themselves, 5 nominations)
3. Members of public (they send one nomination and the number of such nominations is divided by the number of the inhabitants of the individual municipality, 1 nominations)

Thus 11 competitors are to be nominated in each category (i.e. $3 \times 11 = 33$ competitors in total). The specialist jury shall elect three finalists and one winner in each category out of all the nominated competitors.

Detailed rules, members of competition bodies and news should be published on the contest web site.

Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation takes into consideration three criteria:

1. **Contents**
   What is to be evaluated is the contribution of the web site in terms of the scope of the information provided, the level of the detail and practical usefulness with regard to the needs of the users. Information of the execution of the public administration will be the key factor. A natural pre-condition of a success are the statutory obligations (the Act No. 106/1999 Coll. on free access to information in the Czech Republic) and the quality of the preparation. Emphasis will be placed on the provision of information exceeding the scope required by the said act. However, the evaluators may take into

consideration the care after the attractiveness of the pages by including other subjects such as information on the life of the municipality and good ideas.

2. **Topical relevance**
   The key emphasis will be placed on the contribution of the point of view the scope and topical relevance of the information published. Another criterion of the evaluation will be the planning and consistent and timely publication. What can be a success are in particular those pages showing a commitment and adequate, day to day work with the page and its incorporation to the communication infrastructure of the authority.

3. ***Availability of the information and its graphic design***
   Emphasis will be placed on a synoptic and logical lay-out of the information and the outfit of the pages with searching tools. At the same time, another evaluation criterion is the adequacy of the graphic design and the contents and the possibility to optimize graphic elements from the point of view of the rate of the loading of the information providing for the professional presentation function of the pages. Another criterion taken into account will be a barrier free access for those handicapped users.

The main prize will be awarded to the competitor whose web site got the highest number of points for the three criteria. Individual criteria will have the same weight for the final evaluation. The specialist jury may award an additional Special Award of the Specialist Jury or the award called the Most Popular Pages.

The subject-matter of the competition will be the competitors' home page, whereas all the web pages related to an Internet presentation will be voted on as a whole web site.

Scheduling

Each step of evaluation takes up its specific time. Take into your consideration the Czech scheduling scheme of the Golden Crest 2002.

Step	No of Days to Ceremony	No of days since the previous step	Comment
The competition will be announced	70	0	
Applications will be accepted	53	17	
The list of competitors will be published on the Internet and nomination process will be started	49	4	Reserve 4 days for solving lost applications at least
Nominations will be accepted	38	11	Next year we give more time for nominations, 3 weeks preferably
List of nominated competitors will be published on the Internet and evaluation by jury will be started	25	13	

Finalists for each category will be published on the Internet	5	20	
The winners of the competition will be announced at an award ceremony	0	5	

Price Giving Ceremony

Cooperate with some popular eGovernment Conference in your country. The Golden Crest gives an attractive dimension to the conference. Consider following check list:

- Discuss the run of the Ceremony with the conference leaders and staff.
- Prepare the diplomas and prices in advance.
- Pay careful attention to official inviting the partners and finalist to the Ceremony. Do not forget free tickets also for the journalists!
- Check in advance the presence of winners and celebrities on the conference.
- Instruct them and the speaker what to do during the Ceremony.
- Check the prices and diplomas in the Ceremony Hall.
- Coordinate who will hand over to whom and what. Mistakes are fatal at this point.

If you call out only the winners (first places) at the Ceremony, do not forget to sensitive communicate with all the finalists. We organize a **Finalists meeting** just before the Ceremony, for example. We call out the 2nd and the 3rd place there.

Good Luck with your own Golden Crest!

The aim of this competition is to encourage the use of the Internet for provision of information by the local government bodies and departments and online presentation of towns and municipalities in support of their further development. Establishing the Golden Crest competition in your country would be a visible step toward the eGovernment principles.

Keep us in touch! Winners of your competition could be honored in **EuroCrest Award** announced by the **Golden Crest Association** in the cooperation with the **European Commission** and with **European IT networks**.

Best practices

Development of Cohesive Geographic Information Strategy at the European Level

Organization EUROGI (The European Umbrella Organization for Geographic Information) is an independent non governmental organization, which mission is
- To maximize the effective use of geographic information for the benefit of the citizen, good governance and commerce in Europe
- To represent the views of the geographic information community
- To promote, stimulate, encourage and support the development and use of geographic information and technology.

One of the main projects of EUROGI is project GINIE - EC funded project in IST Programme.

The aim of GINIE project is to develop a cohesive Geographic Information Strategy at the European level.

GINIE Key activities are:
- Develop a sound <u>knowledge base</u> through the comparative policy analysis of frameworks for access, use, and dissemination of GI
- <u>Raise awareness and capacity building</u> which includes targeted actions for policy-makers at national and European levels
- Establishing <u>government and industry panels</u> to help formulate a cohesive European Strategy for GI, and a business model to make it work.

The objective of GINIE is to establish a fully functioning Advisory Board on Geographic Information (ABGI) with representatives of governments, industry and research.

Proposed ABGI mission is: To provide the strategic vision and leadership necessary to maximize the use of GI by all sectors of society for the purposes of good governance, commerce, research and citizenship**.**

Results are published on website: www.ec-gis.org/ginie.

The Use of IT and Territorial Data in the Process of Preparations of Flood Control Measures during 2002 Floods in Prague

In the half of August 2002 a flood that surpassed all expectations and historic records hit Prague. The flood culminated on the level of 785 centimeter at the flow rate roughly 5.300 m3 per second. For comparison the long-term average flow rate is 145 m3 per second.

The Department of Crisis Management of the Prague City Hall plays the crucial role in the support to the City crisis management and development of preventive measures. The crucial part thereof was mathematical model of floods enabling to determine the extent of territory affected by floods at various flow rates. Outcomes were created both in the map form and the form of lists of affected streets and buildings and provide valuable background documents for the decision-making on closures, construction of flood control barriers, evacuation of inhabitants, and other measures.

The Department of Informatics of the Prague City Hall has developed a dedicated server for the floods: www.praha.mesto.cz/povoden offering thematically classified list of information

including, for instance, contacts, technical information, list of evacuated persons, transport, offers of and demands for assistance, links, and references to other sources, etc.

The Internet played a very beneficial role in August 2002. Except for the providing of and searching for information on Internet pages, services of email were also extremely high used by all those who organized, required, or provided fast aid.

Besides the systematic preparations, professionalism of those participating in crisis management and rescue system, dedication of citizens and volunteers, the use of information and communication technology also brought its part contributing to flood-control activities to cope with the extreme flood situation. It was undoubtedly demonstrated in practice that terms as the development of information society, e-government, or e-citizenship are not mere fashionable slogans.

Although many matters were managed owing to the previous preparations or spontaneous response of the information community experience acquired shall be duly evaluated and utilized for further works. A couple ideas, which are worth of developing in systematic approach, were put on the list below by Department of Informatics of the Prague City Hall, of course, not meaning the list as an exhaustive one.

- Close co-operation of crisis committees and workplaces of informatics of public administration institutions
- He use of mathematical models and interconnection of their outcomes with GIS, the application of GIS and territorial data in the development of flood-control plans in a digitized form
- The connection to the Intranet/Internet, use of the Internet for preventive education and information dissemination among population under crisis conditions
- The utilization of mobile communication including transmission of textual, image, and map, and other documents, the use of public information terminals
- The solution of information system security under emergency conditions (power, location of servers, data back-ups, recovery, etc.).

Experience sharing and exchange are certainly of great importance as well as promotions of good practices and co-operation in the new solution development. Not only in between entities of public administration and other organizations in the Czech Republic yet also at international level.

Information Technology and Disabled – EC Initiatives

The European Commission has got the obligation and intention to take into account the needs of persons with disabilities when developing the European contribution to the Information Society. The eEurope initiative "Towards an Information Society for All" underlines, among other areas, the eParticipation theme and gives strong priority to accessibility and universal design issues.

It is recognised in the eEurope Action Plan that special attention should be given to people with disabilities to avoid info-exclusion and to ensure a fully inclusive Information Society. Five specific actions were set to obtain this specific objective:

- A better co-ordination of European policies
- Publication of Design for All standards for accessibility of IT products
- Revision of relevant legislation and standards to ensure conformity with accessibility principles
- Adoption of the WAI guidelines for European and National public websites

- To create a network of centres of excellence in Design for All and creating an European Curriculum in Design for All aimed for designers and engineers.

All these actions are well on the way and will be continue in the recently launched eEurope 2005 Action Plan together with some new activities.

Also the intention of the 6th Framework Programme for Research and Development is to further develop the theme the "eAccessibility for All" within two inter-related areas of research and technological development work to be pursued in parallel: Barrier-free Technologies and Empowering Technologies.

- Barrier-free technologies focus on mainstream Information Society products and systems, including public services, which must be designed in such a way that they can meet in requirements of the widest possible range of users and use situations.
- Empowering technologies focus on a broad range of intelligent assistive devices and systems for persons with disabilities, which must be developed and improved. Leading-edge technologies must be identified and harnessed to the tasks of enabling users to live independent lives, to achieve self-fulfilment and to realise their full potential.

Municipality for the Disabled Competition

Within the framework of the European Year of the Disabled the Union of Towns and Communities of Czech Republic is organizing a competition entitled Municipality for the Disabled. Measures aimed at meeting the goals should entail support for meetings and social events, information and promotion campaigns, including manufacturing of tools and aids available for the disabled, co-operation with the media, removal of social and physical barriers, participation in municipal life, making the Internet accessible to the disabled, etc. The criterion will be that the intention's implementation within a very short time improves disabled persons´ quality of life in their place of residence.

The competition is organized in co-operation with the respective committees of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, the Office of the President of the Czech Republic, the Chairman of the Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, the Ministry of Health, the National Coordinating Committee for the European Year of the Disabled and the Association of Regions of the Czech Republic.

Internet for the Elderly

The pilot project Internet for the Elderly was launched in 2001 by the Statutory Town of Jihlava. It is aimed at teaching the elderly how to manage a PC to such an extent as to be able to connect to the Internet and orientate them within its space. A grant from the Statutory Town of Jihlava allowed 80 citizens aged 58 or above to attend this course free of charge. The course took place in the premises of the Jihlava House of Children and Youth.

The uniqueness of the Jihlava project lies in the idea that each elderly person learns together with his/her own tutor, part of the youngest generation. For pupils and students, mastering a computer is a natural skill they are able to hand over with lightness and without a complicated didactic approach. In addition, the contact between "grandparents and grandchildren" in the reversed role of "pupil and teacher" proved to be so interesting for members of both generations that it had a motivating effect.

Prague Declaration on the Information Society Development

Introduction

We are aware of Europe's strategic goal to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world. To achieve the goal, it is necessary to support the development of the Information Society and meet the objectives outlined in the eEurope 2005 Information Society for All Action Plan.

We are aware that the Information Society development is an important factor for the effective and transparent public administration, development of an open society, citizens' involvement in democratic processes, and improvement of the overall quality of life. To meet these objectives an active approach of administrations at the regional and local levels is required.

In the process of the Information Society development, large cities play an important role due to their large number of inhabitants, concentration of economic and creative potential and quite frequently, their more complicated internal workings of administrations. A particularly important role is played by the candidate countries' capitals which, thanks to their position and ambitions on the international scene, must become the bearers of ideas and solutions on par with state-of-the-art information and communication technologies and their application in an advanced Europe.

The basis for effective action of cities and regions' in the development of Information Society is their mutual co-operation and exchanges of experience. We place a special emphasis on co-operation with European networks and associations and on mutual co-operation between the candidate countries' cities and regions, while pursuing the objective of influencing the EU's strategic decision-making, its policies and programmes, and gaining access to the EU's resources.

Goals and Commitments

Recognise the EU's strategic objectives related to Information Society development (*e*Europe 2005) and their implementation in cities' strategic plans (eStrategies).

Through the Information Society development, contribute to efficiency and economic growth of cities; development of an open society; stimulation the participation of citizens in the democratic process and improvements in the quality of citizens' life in all spheres.

Improve access, dissemination and exploitation of public sector information, ensure that all group of citizens have easy access to essential public data, as well as promoter on line interaction between citizens and government.

The changeover to electronic interaction involves major changes to the internal workings of administrations which can be complex to manage. The challenge for administration is therefore to adapt themselves and introduce innovative ways of working including a systematic approach to the education and training of public administration employees.

Promote the role played by cities and regions in the implementation of eStrategies in co-operation with national and European structures; strengthen mutual co-operation with international networks and associations; and provide for exchanges of the experience with this co-operation. Pursue systematic documenting and benchmarking of the implementation of the

objectives set out in eStrategies. Jointly seek participation in EU projects and programmes. For these activities, create the optimum preconditions including proper and stable partnerships with the private sector and scientific institutions.

For achieving the above objectives it is desirable to take the following actions in the near future:

- Set out a road map for achieving the EU's goals, and then, based on specific conditions and priorities, implement the programmes and projects in practice.

- Analyse the situation in each city with a special regard to best practice; promote best practice through exchange of experiences across Europe and participate in the benchmarking of the results achieved.

- Through participation in European conferences and workshops to enhance collaboration and exchange of best practice.

- Enhance mutual cooperation and networking, provide information about events, and seek solutions in working on joint projects.

- Become actively involved in the activities pursued by national associations and international organisations that brings together cities and regions in the area of Information Society development (for example, TeleCities, ERISA, ELANET, Global Cities Dialogue, and possibly others).

- Take an active part in debates on European strategies and programmes, and participate in selected structures (for example, the Co-ordination Committee of the eEurope 2005 Action Plan)

- Proceed jointly in preparations for international Information Society summits (Geneva 2003, Tunis 2004).

This Declaration was adopted at the meeting of IT representatives of the candidate countries' capitals, held in Prague on 23 March 2003 on the occasion of the ISSS/LORIS 2003 Conference.