

Presentations of Associations

Meeting of representatives of CEEC Associations

Hradec Kralove, 23rd March 2003

The main goal of the ISSS/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.

During Meeting of representatives of CEEC Associations that took place in Hradec Kralove on Sunday late afternoon, all 16 CEEC national associations provided participants with short presentation of Association focused on current status of the Association and level of electronic access to services. All presentations are collected in this document (more you can find on www.issc.cz/loris):

Table of Content

The Association of Municipalities and Cities of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina ...	2
National Association of Municipalities in the Republic of Bulgaria (NAMRB).....	4
Assosiation of Towns and Municipalities of Republic of Croatia.....	6
Union of Towns and Communities of the Czech Republic.....	7
Association of Estonian Cities	11
National Association of Intelligent Settlements (Hungary).....	15
Union of Local and Regional Governments of Latvia IONAL.....	17
The Association of Local Authorities in Lithuania (ALAL).....	20
Union of Municipalities of Montenegro.....	22
Cities on Internet Association (Poland)	23
Association of Municipalities and Towns of Republic of Srpska	28
National Association of IT Specialists from Public Administration – ANIAP (Romania)	30
Romanian Federation of Local Authorities	32
Association of Towns and Communities of Slovakia (ZMOS)	35
SCTMY – Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities of Yugoslavia.....	36

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

First of all, I need to tell you something about Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has approximately 4 million inhabitants. It is spread over an area of 51.129 m², with the state capital which is the City of Sarajevo.

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.

The entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina are the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Srpska. Capitals of these regions are Sarajevo and Banja Luka. The Federation is also divided into 10 cantons which also represent the central government level.

Considering such an administration division, there are two Associations of Municipalities and Cities operating at the territory of the mentioned entities and they are 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. Head offices of the two mentioned associations are in Sarajevo and Bijeljina. Presidents of these two associations are today, the Mayor of Bijeljina in the Republic of Srpska and the Mayor of the City of Mostar in the Federation.

In the entire Bosnia and Herzegovina, in total there are 150 local self-government units which presents 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 is the legal follower of the Union of Cities and Municipalities of the Socialist Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, * established in 1973 and constituted in its current form in July 2002. This Association 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.

The relationship between central and local authorities, as well as non adequate distribution of public income, are the factors determining the status of local communities in BiH, which absolutely reflect on the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

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.

Our 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 their project results today that our Association is equipped with 60% of our needs

and that an initial web page has been created and officially set up. In the nearest future, we have a plan to develop this page and to make it interactive and open for wider discussions as a serious service and tool for our members.

We are currently not satisfied with the number of cities and municipalities which are using their email and having their web page, but the process is really increasing rapidly and we are 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 drastically.

Unfortunately, there is no state support in financing of this activity and we really need international support regarding this. Until now, only VNG International was ready to support us financially and through expert consultations.

On this topic we have a large number of concrete ideas; however, we are developing them gradually, according to our current possibilities. What we can say for sure today is that we need to continue with this process because it is an absolutely natural institutional development.

Unfortunately, for a certain number of years, Bosnia and Herzegovina was stopped in its own development and that is why we cannot be compared with other countries in the region but at the same time, in front of us, there is a huge task and responsibility to make up for the time that was lost.

You may find all general information about our Association in English, at the web site: www.sogfbih.ba

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.

We also view the role of Bulgarian municipalities in the context of growing importance of local and regional governments in EU. By means of our contacts in the Council of European Communities and Regions, the International Union of Local Authorities and EU Committee of Regions we take 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 an 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.

Assosiation of Towns and Municipalities of Republic of Croatia.

Mr. Chairman, dear colleagues,

My Name is MARIO SOSIC, City of Rovinj-Croatia

At first, I will her present, very shortly, my Assosiation of towns and municipalities of Republic of Croatia.

Croatian Assosiation is emerging in recent form in the Year 1993, after the big teritorial, financial and funkcional reform of Croatian local self government.

On the local level, there are two sort of local units: towns with more then 5.000 inhabitans, and municipalities with less then 5000 inhabitants.

We have 124 towns, and 442 municipalities, and approximatly 70 per cent are member of Croatian Assosiation of towns and municipalities. This Association is, in accordance with low act, unique national representing Asosiation.

Leading board of Assosiation is Presidentship, with acctually president Mr. Vladimir Štegl, mayor of Vukovar, and the exsecutiv board is secretariat.

Association is financial supported by membershipfee, and so she is independent from government side.

The main task of Association is to strengtheing the proces of democratisation and decentralisation of local government.

For fulfill this task, it is very important to cooperate with all organisations which are occupate with these issues, as CoE, CEMR, etc., and collect good praticies and experances for other countries and regions.

I am very hapy to participat on this seminar, and I thank organizator for invitation. Rebuilding the peace and the role of twinning is extremely important for all countries on SEE. It is, of my point of view, one of main precondition for democracy and stability on this area.

I am sure, we will have the oportunity to hear, during the work, and same good expiriens on this field, in Croatia too.

Second, I am personly very engage in last five years, as member of Council of City of Rovinj, as member of Croatian Delegation in CLRA of CoE in Strasbourg, and momentary as LO to Network of NALAS, to many questions and problems of local democrati and stabilisation in countries of new democracy in SEE.

Same of this goodf experance I wish to implement in our day s work.

Thank You!

Union of Towns and Communities of the Czech Republic

Ladies and gentleman, dear colleagues,

let me introduce shortly Union of Towns and Communities of the Czech Republic and its Committee for Towns and Communities Information Systems and their activities in the field of ICT.

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 nonpolitical 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. It is necessary to see mayors of the towns when the Union is mentioned. The mayors who beyond the responsibilities in their communes care for the common problems of the local authorities.

The Union of Towns and Communities is directed and supervised by the Council. The 91 representatives of the local authorities are elected into the Council and the Council members elect 11 representatives for members of the Executive Committee

The Union Office serves to ensure the performance of decisions by the Union's official bodies. It has 16 staff members and they deal with all services of an administrative nature of the whole Union, they serve the Executive Committee and the Council. 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. This committee cooperates with other UTC bodies.

The main goals of the Committee for Towns and Communities Information Systems 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.

International activities of UTC

The Union of Towns and Communities of the Czech Republic 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 cooperates with similar associations in other countries and in the same time serves to prepare the conditions for cooperation between communities in our country and abroad. 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.

CEMR (The Council of European Municipalities and Regions www.ccre.org) is a voluntary organization, which has, lead by a group of European mayors, worked in favor of promoting local freedom and the contribution from local and regional authorities towards European Construction. Today, CEMR unites 44 large national Associations of local and regional authorities in 31 European countries. To mention the activities of UTC, it prepared a meeting of twinning coordinators and the leaders of the CEMR associations in February 2002 in Prague. Czech representatives participate in the CEMR conferences on a regular base.

The Union of Towns and Communities participates in many other events thanks the activities of the Committee for Towns and Communities Information Systems. For example the Committee members took a part in EAP project (the cluster Information Society).

The Committee for Towns and Communities Information Systems cooperates with TeleCities (next TC, www.telecities.org). It is the major European network of cities committed to leadership in the Information and Knowledge Society. It was established in 1993 in the framework of Eurocities. TeleCities provides a platform of over 120 local authorities from 20 different European countries. Czech towns Prague and Ostrava are its members. Prague entered the TeleCities in May 2001. On the basis of the candidature (also supported by the Committee for Towns and Communities Information Systems of the UTC of the CR), Prague representative was elected to the Executive Committee as the only representative of the candidate countries. He has got the statute of an observer.

Another activity of the Committee is the support of the consortium directed by ELANET (www.elanet.org - European Local Authorities' Telematic Network) and ERIS@ (www.erisa.be - The European Information Society Association) which coordinates the project PRELUDE. Nine regions from various European countries are involved in the project. One of them is **Region Vysocina** (CR). The goals of the project are:

- to support the aims of the eEurope+ making the information accessible and to take a part in the projects and exchanging of experiences between regions of the countries involved in the project,
- to prepare the conditions for formation of the clusters to achieve the development and exchange of experiences between institutions (universities, companies...),
- to initiate the appropriate cooperation between European institutions and local administrative.

Communal www pages in the Czech Republic

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.

State support for the internetisation and informatisation of municipalities

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 (communities unions) and the Ministry of Interior provides more other grants to achieve the development of informational network in the communes.

Levels of electronic access to services

The level of the electronic services in the Czech Republic does not reach a good level when reviewing in global. In my opinion 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 few language translations. Some informational services of the central organs achieve a very good level using the new technologies: the Ministry of Justice provides the Commercial Register, the Ministry of Interior provides registers of the stolen property, the Ministry of Industry and Trade provides the portal Bussinesinfo, the Ministry of Finance also provides various registers... But recently we have very missed a well developed government portal, which would serve as a crossroad of information resources.

Ideas and trends

My idea how the public services should work, mainly now in the time of reforms, is to change the attitude of the offices and officials toward the citizens – the desirable is the new attitude – "the citizen at first ". To achieve this state it is necessary that the separate elements of the public services would systematically coordinate their activities. The system and procedural attitude should be used in the public services. Now we often have a departmental view.

The implementation of the information systems to the offices and their mutual connection should help to achieve this state using **e-Government**. It is the communication between offices and citizens or companies using electronic channels, mainly the Internet. It is necessary that the offices of the public services have an access to all the important information so that they would be able to use them effectively, evaluate them and to give an effective response.

Association of Estonian Cities

Current status of the Association:

- Total number of inhabitants of the country – 1, 370, 500
- Total number of towns and municipalities. – 39 + 202
- Number of municipalities – members of the Association; how many % of inhabitants or cities they represent. - 45, ca 67%
- Co-operation of the Association with authorities of self-government and local administration in Europe and other countries of the world; membership in networks of towns: AEC 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

INFORMATION POLICY

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;
- State 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.

Levels of electronic access to services:

- Public administration services for citizens, business and/or tourists provided by web sites on either one of the following levels: Information, Interaction, Bi-directional interaction, Transactions.

E-GOVERNMENT

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. Several virtual servers and websites of state institutions and projects use the domain's resources, e.g. www.peaminister.ee, www.valitsus.ee, www.eesti.ee (in Estonian), www.sisemin.gov.ee (Ministry of Internal Affairs), www.tsm.ee (Ministry of Transport and Communications), www.bcmvs.net (Baltic Council of Ministers Virtual Secretariat), www.riigiteataja.ee (State Gazette, in Estonian), www.riso.ee, www.riik.ee/riigikantselei/, www.riik.ee/dhp/ (Document Management Program, in Estonian), www.riik.ee/ekodanik/ (e-citizen, in Estonian), www.riik.ee/ristmik/ (X-road, in Estonian), www.riik.ee/evalimised/ (e-elections, in Estonian) etc. 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. At the same time it has served as a basis for several new projects like "e-citizen" and "X-road".

OTHER PROJECTS

IT projects in the administration of other state agencies and organizations:

☛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. KulaTee is in the administration of the Estonian Informatics Centre.

<http://www.kylatee.ee/sisue.htm>

☉ **Tiigrihüppe Sihtasutus** (Tiger Leap Foundation):

- Tiger Leap Plus - development plans for ICT education in Estonian schools 2001-2005.

The program is in the administration of the Ministry of Education.

<http://www.tiigrihype.ee/> (only in Estonian)

- Tiger Leap - program for the computerization of Estonian schools 1996-2000
<http://www.tiigrihype.ee> (only in Estonian)

Contact: [Enel Mägi](#), Director of Tiigrihüppe (Tiger Leap) Foundation

☉ **Estonian Government of Ministers Session Information System**

A support system for the organization of minister's sessions to automate the preparation processes and proceedings of the Estonian Government Cabinet meetings. The final objective is to prepare all materials digitally and thus to reduce coping costs and delivery time. The program is in the administration of the State Chancellery.

Contact: [Reet Ringo](#), program manager

<http://www.riik.ee/valitsus/viis/viisengl.html>

☉ **Pilot project of digital coordination of legal acts**

As of June 2001 the Digital Signatures Act was implemented in Estonia, the State Chancellery has started the program of document administration of the Government agencies, in the course of which the problems of taking into use of digital documents will be discussed. In this context the State Chancellery has started a pilot project, together with the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Justice.

<http://www.just.ee/index.php3?cath=1573>

☉ **Document Management Program of government agencies**

Document Management Program of government agencies is a cooperation

program for the transition to inter-agency digital document management. It is a program in the administration of the [State Chancellery](#). The program pays attention to the creation of a common application methodology of digital signature; electronic records management training; elaboration of rules for preserving documents; development of an integral information system of legislation, etc. Further information about the document management program and its realization can be found at <http://www.riik.ee/dhp/> (only in Estonian).

Contact: [Ülle Laur](#)

☉ **Project eJustice**

Project eJustice aims to create an information system of legislation and to elaborate amendment motions for its legal regulation. Such a system would be a user-friendly cooperation environment where drafts for coordination as well as the whole information about the draft's life cycle would be available. The system will relate draft legislation between different institutions into an

integral whole. The project is mainly aimed at officials who elaborate and coordinate draft legislation but the public will also be able to use the project. Citizens will be able to express their opinion about the content of drafts already during the coordination and have the right to present ideas for initiating creation of supplementation of necessary legislation. Further information can be found at http://www.just.ee/oldjust/e_oigus/eoigus.html (only in Estonian).

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.

Project eCounty develops cooperation with the document management program of government agencies (see above).

e-TaxBoard

- The e-TaxBoard application launched on 18 October 2000 enables the taxpayers to communicate with the Tax Board quickly, easily and safely. Using the e-Tax Board application, the taxpayers or their authorized representatives can file, view and correct their VAT returns; file, view and correct their social tax and withheld income tax returns; submit their VAT refund applications; view their tax account balances; view their taxpayer account cards; make inquiries about other persons' outstanding tax debts; file their personal income tax returns; view their social tax calculated, paid by employers and transferred to the Social Insurance Board etc. To access the data, one can use either the Tax Board's website www.ma.ee, or the Internet banks of Ühispank (U-Net) or Hansapank (hanza.net). As of February 2002 ID-card owners can enter e-TaxBoard via the Tax Board's website (www.ma.ee) by using ID-card.

e-services of National Land Information System

The National Land Information System (LIS) makes the administration of information related to Estonian lands easier and conveniently available and usable over the Internet. The creation of cadastral information system laid a foundation for LIS, which made the development of public services possible. Access to the public services of LIS is available on the website of the Land

Board at <http://www.maaamet.ee> (in Estonian).

e-State Treasury

e-State Treasury is an Internet application for agencies maintained by the State Treasury, which provides an opportunity for the agencies to communicate with the State Treasury via the Internet. Agencies can make payments, reservations, send notices, and receive statements of payments and returns. All this is performed quickly and safely by using the authentication services offered by banks.

- Ideas and trends concerning further development

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 fulfill 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)

Current status of the Association:

- Total number of inhabitants of the country
10 million
- Total number of towns and municipalities.
3185
- Number of municipalities – members of the Association; how many % of inhabitants or cities they represent.

Nr of municipalities: 15, cca. 10%

- Co-operation of the Association with authorities of self-government and local administration in Europe and other countries of the world; membership in networks of towns e.g. CEMR, ELANET, Eris@, TeleCities

Membership of Telecities

- How many towns and communities have their own www page and how many municipalities actively use e-mail.

We have data on municipalities with more than 5000 inhabitants.

Here 62 % of municipalities have own web page and ~81 % of it actively use E-mail.

- State support for the internetisation and informatisation of municipalities - grants
A complex system exists and the opportunity of applications for municipalities is continuous.

Levels of electronic access to services:

- Public administration services for citizens, business and/or tourists provided by web sites on either one of the following levels: Information, Interaction, Bi-directional interaction, Transactions.

Information – on-going, widely used

Interaction – high number of solutions but individual realizations

Bi-directional interaction – some examples

Transactions - exceptionally

- Ideas and trends concerning further development

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.

The main functions of ITOSZ

- 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-organizations³, 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

The Union of Local and Regional Governments of Latvia (ULRGL) 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 ULRGL has authority to represent local and regional governments in the negotiations with the Cabinet of Ministers as the ULRGL associates:

- all the 7 major cities,
- all the 59 towns,
- all the 26 districts (*rajons*),
- 396 rural municipalities (*pagasts*) from total 461,
- 13 amalgamated municipalities (*novads*) from total 15.

The Union of Local and Regional Governments 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 ULRGL and its members in state authorities and administrative institutions;
- to develop opinion of the ULRGL 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.

Members

The members of the ULRGL can be districts, rural and amalgamated municipalities, town and city local governments. Self-government becomes a member of the ULRGL at the moment its Council decision about the joining the ULRGL is registered in the Board of the ULRGL.

Congress

The highest decision making body of the ULRGL is the Congress which is convened at least once a year. The Congress has an authority to make decisions if it is represented by more than a half of the members of the ULRGL. The resolutions of the Congress are adopted by the majority of votes of participating delegates

Council

The Council conducts the activities of the ULRGL between the Congresses. Not more than 118 representatives of local and regional governments are to be elected to the Council. Council consists of the Chairman and the representatives from the local/ regional governments:

- 7 representatives from Riga City Council;
- 6 representatives from the Councils of republican cities (major cities);
- 26 representatives from the Councils of regional (district) towns;
- 26 representatives from district Councils;
- 26 representatives from rural municipality Councils;
- 26 representatives from amalgamated municipality Councils.

Council meetings take place at least once in a quarter. The Council has an authority to adopt resolutions if more than a half of the Council members participate in the meeting. The resolutions are adopted by the majority of votes of participants.

Board

The Board of the ULRGL administrates the work of the ULRGL between the Congresses. Not more than 15 members are to be elected to the Board, usually it is the Chairman of the ULRGL, its 5 Deputy-Chairmen, all Committee Chairmen and some other members of the Council.

The Board authorises separate Board members, managers of standing committees, as well as developers of separate draft laws and normative acts to represent the ULRGL and to inform about its opinion on a particular issue in the *Saeima* (Parliament) of the Republic of Latvia, in the Cabinet of Ministers and other institutions of state administration, as well as in international organisations

Associations and Unions of the Members

In the framework of the ULRGL at present there operates:

- Association of Latvian Rural Municipalities
- Association of Executive Directors of Latvian Local Governments

Committees

There are 5 committees working in the ULRGL:

- 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

ULRGL 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.

Association of 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 of Local and Regional Governments of Latvia (ULRGL).

In 1993 rural municipalities established Association of Rural Municipalities at the ULRGL (Regulations are registered at the ULRGL Board on 5 October, 1993, amendments made in 1994). It was established in order to unite on voluntary principles these rural municipalities which have joined the ULRGL.

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 ULRGL and on the state level.

The Association of Local Authorities in Lithuania (ALAL)

THE MAIN DATA ABOUT THE MUNICIPALITIES IN LITHUANIA

There are 60 Municipalities and 10 regions in Lithuania.

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 of elderly and disabled people
- Communal economy (water supply, heating, repair of streets and local roads, waste arrangement, etc.)

Short history of Association.

- 11 March 1990 – upon the restoration of Lithuanian independence, new councils of local governments were elected.
- 1990 – Four local government unions were established: the union of Big Cities, the Union of Districts, the Union of Cities, and the Union of Lower-Level Local Governments.
- 28 March 1995 – the Law on Basic Regulations of the Association of Local Authorities in Lithuania was adopted.
- 22 June 1995 – the Constituent Congress was convened and the Association of Local Authorities in Lithuania – a non –profit organization – was founded.
- At the present time all 60 local authorities are members of the Association.

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 ALAL

- 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

ALAL cooperation with international organizations

- Council of Europe (CLARE)

- European Commission
- IULA, CEMR
- Committee of the Regions (JOINT Committee)
- LOGON GROUP

Levels of electronic access to services

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 are 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.

It operates in accordance with the Statutes of the ULRGL and the Regulations of the Association of Rural Municipalities.

Once in a year the meeting of rural municipality chairmen is convened.

Association of Rural Municipalities has established the board consisting of 26 persons. One representative from rural municipalities of each district – ULRGL member organizations – is elected to the Board. Board meetings take place once a month. In September 1996 the first board meeting took place, but since 1999 they regularly take place in some of the districts of Latvia, which gives opportunity to participate in the board activities also to those rural municipality chairmen, in the district of which the respective meeting takes place.

The chairperson of the Association of rural Municipalities is elected in the Congress of the ULRGL. He is at the same time the ULRGL Deputy Chairperson.

The duties of the secretary are performed by the ULRGL Adviser on Issues concerning Rural Municipalities.

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 kilometers of air line three regions can be emphasized: costal region (Montenegrin coast), the region of the central Montenegro and the mountainous – valley region.

UNION OF MUNICIPALITIES OF MONTENEGRO 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 twenty one municipalities in Montenegro. The association has its Assembly, Executive Board, Supervisory Board and Committees (4).

THE GOALS OF THE UNION ARE THE FOLLOWING:

- 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.

There are 21 municipalities in Montenegro, and they are all members of the Union. Every municipality adopted decision on their Assembly sessions to join the Union.

Six months ago, only seven 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 it 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.

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.

“Cities on Internet” Association 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, seminars 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 Cities on Internet 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

The Cities on Internet 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 COI 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 (IST-1999-12115)** – project that creates flexible and open system for the use of local and regional governments, based on a shared knowledge management model. The researched system is intended to enable deployment and integration of existing information at local and regional government level, through intelligent supports favouring their provision, semantic classification and exchange. Among the consortium partners involved in the project are: Ancitel SpA, National Association of Local Administration in Denmark, Engineering Informatica and Neurosoft.

(<http://www.eusland.org>)

- **Visual Admin (IST-2000-28248)** – in the framework of the project a universal communication system between local administration and citizens is being developed. Project is run by the Consortium consisting of Aerial Conseil, Fast Forward, Ratio Consulta, Alcatel Polska and local administrations from France, Italy and Poland. Project is intended to produce a modern system that supports administration - citizens' relations operating in web portal format.

(<http://www.visual-admin.net>)

- **MAP (IST-2001-34001)** -project by international consortium coordinated by Siemens Informatica, including France Telecom, Ancitel SpA, AEC, Oulu Polytechnic. Main goal of MAP project is to create system for public sector employees, which will support their efforts in citizens' cases settlement as well as it will establish interactive contact with customers. Main task of this system based on the new informatics technologies is to „watch” over interaction between administration officer and citizen and through interpretation of key words gives to the administration officer information, which could be beneficial for efficient case settlement process.

(<http://www.map-project.net>)

- **eForum (IST-2000-29213)** - Since September 2002 the Cities on Internet Association is participating in the E-FORUM project. The main objective of the project is to create an association at the crossroad of the eGovernment initiatives and to stimulate the use of internet in this area. The project is to be kept with the general pattern of the eEurope 2002 Action Plan. The association will create a web „meeting-place” (rather than a marketplace) where Public Services, citizens and Industry could exchange ideas and requirements. One of the aims of the project is to address the so-called European democratic deficit. In addition, authors believe that by using Internet, the citizen will be at the centre of the “game”. Moreover, the project wants to develop the entrepreneurship by helping to improve the procurement processes of the Administration at all levels (local, regional, national and European). “Cities on Internet” Association is a contractor and a coordinator of an expert group consisting of experts from CEEC.

(<http://www.eu-forum.org>)

COI experts are also involved in the following projects:

- **E-POLL (IST-1999-21109)** – the idea behind the project was to build and test a network based electronic voting system. The center of the project is European Virtual Ballot Network, which has been developed by technological partners of the consortium. The E-POLL project aims to demonstrate that an EVBN (European Virtual Ballot Network), to which every European administration involved in the voting process would be connected in future, could accommodate every election type. The consortium is lead by Siemens Informatica and includes France Telecom, Ancitel SpA, AEC and Italian Ministry of Interior.
- **LOGIN** – the project is sponsored by World Bank, Open Society Institute, United Nations Development Programme and United States Agency for International Development and Council of Europe. It is dedicated to local governments from

Central Eastern European Countries and to states of former Soviet Union. 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. LOGIN will do this by facilitating the exchange of timely and useful information at the municipal, regional and national level throughout the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Currently is being implemented in: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Lithuania, Latvia, Slovakia, Ukraine and Poland.

CoI supports the programme with data and document delivery.

- **Development of Master Plan for eGovernment in Poland** – the project financed by Flemish – Polish Fund. This is the only project in Poland directly aimed at creation of the strategic plan for eGovernment development. The project is to describe the present state of advancement of Polish public administration covering the subject of information and communication technologies; present alternative plans for implementation of ICT (with consideration for eGovernment), based on experiences of firms and public bodies from Flanders in particular and the European Union in general; and attempt to use funding possibilities in the 5th and 6th Framework Programme of the European Union. CoI key experts are involved in the project.
- **Poland Development Gateway (PIDG)** – project financed by the Development Gateway Foundation (from World Bank Group) is envisioned as an Internet portal on development issues, from which users will be able to access information, resources, and tools, and into which they will be able to contribute their own knowledge and experience. The PIDG will create a common platform for shared materials, dialogue, and problem-solving that is easy to access and navigate through. PIDG will be operating as a part of family of Country Gateways, World Bank initiative and will reflect its mission and objectives at local and regional level. CoI is the member of Stakeholder Committee.
- **PANISCO (IST-2001-38718)** – proposal submitted to the European Commission during the last IST call of 5th Framework Programme. Proposal's main goal was to create a center for eGovernment studies. It has been rated highly and was placed on the reserve list. It was not chosen due to the lack of funds. Having received encouraging references from the European Commission the COI decided to rework and improve it to resubmit the proposal in the near future.
- **eContent programme.** "Cities on Internet" Association is participating in works of eContent programme. Associations' experts were cooperating with the consortium of PSINET project. Presently, after Poland's accession to the eContent programme, Association together with international partners is preparing a new proposal, which is an extension of existing EPSINET project in order to include candidate countries.

2. CONSULTANCY AND ADVISORY FUNCTIONS

a) "Cities on Internet" Association participated on May 21st – 23rd , 2002 in a workshop, organized by EMCom Ltd. requested by Soros Foundation in Kazakhstan. The workshop dealt with the subject of practical use of eDemocracy and eGovernment in order to tackle "Transparent City Ust- Kamenogorsk" project.

b) Based on the agreement signed with the authorities of Slask Voivodship the Association has taken on the role of the principal advisor in the PRELUDE project (IST-2000-32321) which goal is to prepare ground for the 6th Framework Programme and rise knowledge about information society and eEurope programme in participating European regions. The Cities on Internet Association will support Slask Region authorities mainly in creating regional strategy for information society development and consortia to establish IST innovation centres.

- c) Experts of Cities on Internet have contributed to the launch of Infoport - largest Internet portal for public administration in Poland (<http://www.infoport.pl>).
- d) President of Cities on Internet Association, Krzysztof Glomb received “Kryształowa Brukselka” – prestigious Polish award given for successful implementation of innovative projects under Framework Programmes of European Union. The “Kryształowa Brukselka” was awarded to COI President by Polish minister of science and informatics.
- e) Experts of Cities on Internet Association have worked for Polish local governments and IT firm addressing local and regional market report entitled – “*Phare – IT components in EU Programme*”. The core idea of this publication was to give local government’s clear picture on IT financing opportunities deriving from Phare programme. There is still deficient awareness among local government’s decision makers and employee of opportunities to co-finance their developments from European sources. There is an apparent lack of valuable sources of information about models of financing local governments’ development (specifically with use of ICT) such like: public-private-partnership, open sourcing and outsourcing. This publication was intended to contribute to bridging this knowledge gap.
- f) The experts of Cities on Internet Association have participated in creation rules for implementing the *Freedom of Information Act enacted by the Polish Parliament on September 6th, 2001*. They contributed to issuing executive decree to the Polish FOI. The Association has signed an agreement with the Ministry of Interior and Public Administration to cooperate in the field of the promotion of the access to public information law and the implementation of pilot projects in this regard. One of them is the project named *Open Office – Mazovian Public Information Bulletin* which is currently being run under supervision of Cities on Internet Association. The project is aimed at creating first regional portal of public information built in the ASP model. The activities are focused not only on the front-office, but also on the back-office of the local governments.
- g) Experts of Cities on Internet Association closely collaborate with State Committee for Scientific Research. President of COI – Krzysztof Głomb is an expert and advisor to Michal Kleiber – minister of science. The main sphere of his consulting is information society and eGovernment.
- h) Experts of Cities on Internet Association are the authors of report - “*Analyze of local government’s expenses on products indispensable for their current activities*”. The analyze has been ordered by Polish.
- i) IT company - Marketplanet and it will determine base for assessment of possibilities of introducing e-procurement (e-tenders) in Polish public administration sector.

3. FLAGSHIP INITIATIVES

a) Cities on Internet Conference – annual forum on information exchange and sharing expertise in terms of using information and communication technologies in public administration sector. The latest edition of the conference The Conference was attended by over 300 participants from 20 states, representing EU members, CEEC, NIS and United States. They included: Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Great Britain, Romania, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Hungary, France, Austria, U.S., Germany, Netherlands, Italy, Poland Slovakia and Norway. The foreign guests mostly represented:

- local government
- international organizations and institutions
- firms IT acting on local and regional market

During the Conference a seminar for CEEC and NIS was organized. Representatives from nine

Central and Eastern Europe Countries and Newly Independent States as well as partners from

EU countries took part in this seminar. The main objective of the workshop was dissemination of information, sharing experience and establishing contacts for further co-operation in the field of eDemocracy and eGovernment enrichment.

During the conference a session entitled “*Civic empowerment through access to public information*” was organized. The main objectives of the session held under patronage of Open Society Institute were:

1. to promote best practices in the access to public (government) information and new ICT solutions
2. to promote models of the innovative use of public-sector information by civic actors
3. to facilitate and strengthen the discussion on how public information access should be treated: to what extent as a civil right, to what extent as a commercial transaction.

Web site of the conference is available at: <http://www.mwi.pl/konferencja>

b) Public Information Bulletin – in June 2002 the Association has signed an agreement with the Ministry of Interior and Administration to promote a topic of Public Information Bulletin and

to create the bulletin’s pilot implementations following recently passed Act of Public Information. Realization of pilots in Mazowieckie and Lubelskie Regions is being prepared.

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-Mr. Jovicic Brano-General Secretary of the Association- is the liaison officer of NALAS for Republic of Srpska
 2. Committee of experts on the framework and structure of local and regional authorities of the Europe (LR-FS), Mr. Jovicic is also one of the experts in mentioned organization.
 3. CDLR-Our Association has got membership in the Steering Committee of the Congress of local and regional authorities of the Europe
 4. CLRAE-Our 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 Association in BIH, we have 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 web-pages of the municipalities is very small.
 - Banja Luka, www.banjaluka.com
 - Samac, www.opstinamac.com
 - Bijeljina, www.bijeljina.com and www.bijeljina.net
 - Lopare, www.
 - Laktasi, www.laktasi-rsbih.com (will be active in the next week)Some of them are using theirs e-mails:
 - Berkovici- berkovici@yahoo.com
 - Kotor Varos-okv@blic.net
 - Kozarska Dubica- soko@inecco.net
 - Laktasi-koir@inecco.net
 - Doboj-opstina@doboj.net
- State support for the internatisation (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.

www.alvrs.org (alvrs means asocijacija lokalnih vlasti and in English association of local authorities)

Generally, having IT technologies is very complicated issue in our country, and most of important bodies of country do not want to recognize that as problem.

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

I just want to mention a fact that some municipalities still have old manual-typing-machine. This is a huge problem for further development.

Most of step must be start that things go better.

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

Current status of the Association:

- Total number of inhabitants of the country
 - 23 millions
- Total number of towns and municipalities.
 - 41 - counties
 - 101 – municipalities
 - 188 – towns
 - 2500 – communes
- Number of municipalities – members of the Association; how many % of inhabitants or cities they represent.
 - In our association – ANIAP - are enrolled 140 IT experts from 78 local government authorities
- Co-operation of the Association with authorities of self-government and local administration in Europe and other countries of the world; membership in networks of towns e.g. CEMR, ELANET, Eris@, TeleCities
 - ANIAP is the official partner for all the local governments associations for implement the e-government concepts
 - ANIAP is the official partner (nominated by the Romanian Government) to develop standards for soft-ware applications for public administration
 - ANIAP is the official partner (nominated by the Romanian Government) to coordinate the IT training for civil-servants
 - ANIAP is partner on GIS matters with Chesapeake of Urban and Regional Information Administrator Systems Association from USA
- How many towns and communities have their own www page and how many municipalities actively use e-mail.
 - Counties – 41 web-pages from 41
 - Municipalities – 55 web-pages from 101
 - Towns – no information available
 - Communes – no information available

 - Counties – e-mail use : 41 from 41
 - Municipalities – e-mail use : 101 from 101
 - Towns – no information available
 - Communes – no information available

ANIAP – 140 members use e-mail

- State support for the internetisation and informatisation of municipalities – grants
 - No grants from state

Levels of electronic access to services:

- Public administration services for citizens, business and/or tourists provided by web sites on either one of the following levels: Information, Interaction, Bi-directional interaction, Transactions.
 - 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

The Romanian Federation of Local Authorities - R.F.L.A. 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.

R.F.L.A. 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 R.F.L.A. is to become the unified voice of Local Governments from Romania in representing their interests in front of the Central Government and Parliament.

R.F.L.A. 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. R.F.L.A., 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 R.F.L.A.

The objectives of R.F.L.A. 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 collectivities 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 collectivities 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)

The representative of 95 % of local governments in Slovakia.

- the largest non-governmental organization in Slovakia, associating towns and communities
- a democratic, representative, independent and non-partisan organization
- engaged in solving of real problems of towns and communities
- established on March 21st, 1990, in Zilina by representatives of 176 municipalities
- 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 in 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

Our 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 ZMOS

- *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

ZMOS Organizational Structure

- the association is governed by elected bodies consisting of elected representatives of towns and communities
- the principal governing body is the annually convened General Assembly
- between the meetings of the General Assembly, the supreme executive body is the Council of ZMOS, consisting of representatives of 57 regional local government associations
- head of the Association is the President, elected by the General Assembly

ZMOS Office

- The executive Office of ZMOS is charged with professional, organizational, administrative, economic and technical tasks relating to all activities of the Association

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

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, favorable 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.

AIMS AND PRINCIPLES

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 relying 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.

INTO THE FUTURE

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

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

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.

ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTIONING

The supreme organ of the SCTMY is the Assembly, consisting of the representatives of the municipalities. Assembly is a chance to define the strategic guidelines of the future work of the SCTMY.

The Presidency, consisting of 29 members, has a task to manage the work of the organization in the period between two meetings of the Assembly.

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 SCTMY has the Secretariat, which 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.

CURRENT STATUS OF THE STANDING CONFERENCE:

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)

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

Number of municipalities that have web address

- 44 (27 %)

Number of local self-governments that actively use email

- 135 (83 %)

State support for the internetisation and informatisation of municipalities – grants

- No data

LEVELS OF ELECTRONIC ACCESS TO SERVICES:

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.