

41st MEETING OF THE EUROPEAN DIRECTORS GENERAL RESPONSIBLE FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Rome, 2ND and 3rd December 2003

RESOLUTION ON E-GOVERNMENT

- 1 During the Italian Presidency the e-government Working group discussed and shared the experiences of the Member States in the issue of coordinating the different government levels in the e-government field. The approaches used by some member states were presented during the meetings and constituted the base for a fruitful discussion among the WG members.
- 2 To investigate this issue in more details, the Italian presidency conducted a study aiming to survey the different mechanisms and approaches used in the Member States to ensure collaboration among government levels in e-government.
- 3 The Directors General welcome the results of the study and are firmly convinced of the importance of ensuring the collaboration among the different actors involved in the e-government field as a fundamental element for the success of the e-government initiatives. In particular the lessons learned from the study concern:
 - The importance to include the local administrations in the e-government strategy definition from the initial phase.
 - The opportunity to increase the attention toward mechanisms of coordination as a way of integrating the different administrations.
 - The opportunity to enhance the horizontal collaboration with stakeholders' representatives, both in the service delivery and in the strategy definition.
 - The importance to assure that the adoption of standards happens always maintaining an enough level of local autonomy in the realization of the services. Interoperability become the principal problem.
 - The attention to transparency when dealing with service delivery to the users. Users don't want to know the process details but they want to know who is responsible.
- 4 The Directors General welcome the Communication of the Commission (following the Ministerial Declaration adopted in the Como ministerial meeting) on "The Role of e-government for Europe's Future", and the possibility of a deeper collaboration between the Commission and the e-government WG on the appropriate issues.

Future Activities

In accordance with the resolution of Ministers responsible for Public Administration and with the Mid Term Programme 2004 - 2005 adopted in Rome in December 2003:

- 5 The Directors General ask the Working Group to investigate, continuing the efforts already made during the Danish and Greek presidency, the measure of the benefits of e-Government in terms of the investment put into it and to study the changes required by the introduction of ICT in the back office.
- 6 The Directors General ask the Working Group to further investigate the factors/conditions that prevent or favour cooperation between government agencies at both different and same level of government, in view of the realisation of seamless government, looking at cases and experiences where the collaboration and the corresponding electronic exchange of data has improved effectiveness of government and where it has surfaced issues that require organisational development response
- 7 The Directors General ask the Working Group to contribute to the identification and development of prior pan-european services taking into account the ongoing activities in the European programmes. The Working Group will suggest appropriate solutions in order to improve the functional interoperability of the information systems and to facilitate the sharing of documentation resources and procedures between the national administrations.

Improvement of the exchanges of experiences and practices and transfer of good practices

- 8 The Directors General consider the exchange of experiences and practices as the main instruments of the EPAN cooperation. The Directors General ask the Working Group to contribute to the activities of the Commission aiming at establish a framework for the transfer of good practices.

Terms of Reference and Working Plan

- 9 The Directors General approve the revised Terms of Reference and Working Plan submitted to their attention by the Working Group.
- 10 The Directors General welcome the effort of the Working Group in looking for working methods that can guarantee a more constant involvement of the working group member in the activities, and urge the working group to consider the methods developed by the IPSG.



Rome, Autumn 2003

Terms of Reference of the e-Government Working Group of the Directors General responsible for public administration

1. During the French Presidency the informal co-operation of the Ministers and Directors General responsible for public administration in the Member States of the European Union (EU) was extended into the area of e-Government. At the 35th meeting of the Directors General held in Strasbourg on November 9-10, 2000, the Directors General agreed to the establishment of an e-Government Working Group (EWG) under their auspice.
2. In the resolution from the 38th meeting of the Directors General in La Rioja on May 28-29, 2002, the Directors General
 - Confirm the importance of exchanging views and experiences in the field of e-government.
 - Recognise the need to strengthen the working-relationship between themselves and their e-Government working group.
 - Agree to refocus the term of reference of the e-Government working group into a distinctive public administration approach to e-Government.
3. Thus, during the Danish Presidency the Terms of Reference were approved by Directors General. The overall objective of the e-Government Working Group is to facilitate and undertake the exchange of views, experiences and best practices among the Member States in the field of e-Government, in particular with regard to public administration aspects of e-Government – for example aspects and themes such as integrated services, ICT as a catalyst for reforming public administration and organisation, collaboration and back-office integration across levels and institutions of government, mechanisms to ensure return on investment, and the organisational aspects of data-sharing.
4. The declaration issued at the Ministerial Conference held in Como in July 2003, gave further relevance to the role of EPAN in proposing recommendations and in promoting the exchange of good practices. The Communication of the Commission, adopted in September 2003, explicitly indicated the close cooperation with EPAN as needed to the follow up of the identified actions. In view of this, the Working Group will strengthen collaboration with the activities of the Commission to further develop the issues discussed within the Group.
5. To fulfil its tasks the e-Government working group shall
 - Investigate public administration aspects of e-Government.
 - Carry out studies and analyses in areas under investigation, when appropriate.
 - Maintain a dialogue with the European Commission with respect to Commission e-Government related initiatives that have direct or indirect implications for Member State public administration policies.
 - Report to the meetings of the Directors General with regard to e-government issues.

- According to the decisions of the Directors General provide for content (e.g., on strategic and high light initiatives in the Member States) for a common newsletter managed by the IPSPG for the entire of the Public Administration Network.
6. The concrete tasks of the working group shall be outlined in a working plan to be annexed to these Terms of Reference. The working plan shall identify a prioritised list of areas related to public administration and the concrete tasks of the working group shall refer to the themes and areas thus identified. The working plan shall be continuously updated in order to reach 2 presidencies ahead and shall be annually submitted to the Directors General for approval.
 7. In those areas that will come under investigation, the e-Government working group shall aim at drawing lessons and identifying best practices. This can, for example, be achieved by comparing Member State strategies, approaches and initiatives. The importance of being attentive to international experiences of relevance to the European e-Government discussion shall, however, also be acknowledged.
 8. The e-Government working group shall comprise of representatives from the Member States of the European Union. The European Commission and the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA) are invited as members. It is the competence of the Member States to nominate participants for the meetings, including varying the participants according to the themes and issues to be addressed at each meeting.
 9. The proceedings of the e-Government Working Group should assume the character of co-operation through informal meetings, providing for discussion of prioritised themes and facilitating the maintenance of a network between national administrations involved the implementation of e-Government in the Member States of the European Union.
 10. The Chair of the e-Government working group is the Member State currently holding the Presidency of the EU. The Chair is responsible for the Secretariat of the working group. The Chair shall ensure that the proceedings and activities of the working group are held in accordance with the priorities of the Directors General, cf. relevant resolutions, mid-term programmes and working plans etc.
 11. The number of themes to be addressed in each meeting shall preferably be limited in order to allow for due consideration of the themes and issues to be addressed at the meetings.
 12. On the base of specific needs, spontaneous interests of the Member States, and subject to the direction of the Working Group, projects and learning labs can be formed to examine/progress elements of specific topics in the Working Plan.
 13. In order to avoid duplication of work, the e-Government working group shall work in recognition of other European and international e-Government activities, including the activities of the OECD. The e-Government working group shall liaise and coordinate its activities with activities of the European Commission, including the IDA programme and the eEurope 2005 action plan, and other Working Groups established under the auspices of the informal cooperation of the Directors General responsible for public administration.
 14. The e-Government working group shall keep written records of its proceedings.

15. Reports, declarations, resolutions or other documents that are to be presented to the Directors General will be submitted for consideration to the working group first.
16. Reports, minutes, and other documents will be made available on the CIRCA website. The responsibility lies with the Chair and the Secretariat. The e-Government working group can recommend to the Directors General that reports and other documents be made publicly available.
17. These Terms of Reference, upon ratification by the Directors General responsible for Public Administration, will supersede all previous mandates to the e-Government working group.



Rome, Autumn 2003

Annex: Working Plan of the e-Government WG of the Directors General

In order to make operational the Term of Reference of the e-Government Working Group, to provide for a stronger working-relationship with the Directors General, and to achieve better continuity and a more focused working approach, this working plan – annexed to the Terms of Reference – is submitted to the Directors General for approval.

In accordance with the resolution of the Directors General the overall objective of the e-Government Working Group (EWG) is to facilitate and undertake the exchange of views, experiences and good practices among the Member States in the field of e-Government, in particular with regard to public administration aspects of e-Government.

The EWG has engaged in a debate in order to arrive at a list of prioritised themes of public administration aspects of e-Government. In this process the preferences expressed by each Member State have been taken into account. First, the Working Plan identifies a list of prioritised themes of common interest for the Member States that define the scope of the EWG. Second, within this scope the Working Plan states the concrete tasks and deliverables of the present and the next two presidencies.

In dealing with the themes in the list, the EWG will consider the activities and the results carried out in other European fora or WGs of EPAN, avoiding to consider the underlying technical aspects.

During the Danish Presidency the EWG considered the strategic implications for the Member States of the challenges and the imperatives that relate to increasing demands on European public economies and increasing demands on e-Government to deliver results.

During the Greek Presidency the e-Government working group focused your attention on two themes: the implementation of PKI - Public Key Infrastructure - in the administrations and, in continuation of the work during the Danish Presidency, the use of economic business cases regarding e-government.

During the Italian Presidency the e-Government working group investigated and shared the experiences of the Member States in coordinating the different government levels in the e-government field.

List of prioritised themes

Adhering to the resolution from the 41th meeting of the Directors General, reflecting on the work carried out by other working groups in the field e-Government, taking into account the preferences of each Member State, the EWG proposes to focus on the

following list of prioritised themes (work areas) that are all considered to represent core public administration aspects e-Government:

Inter & intra governmental collaboration, interoperability and pan-European services

- State-of-the-art and good practices with regard to achieving seamless services provision (integrated services and joined-up government)
- ICT and e-Government as a tool and catalyst to achieving integration, more efficient processes and better quality in public service provision
- Best practices with regard to joining up efforts across levels and institutions of government
- Approaches to government business process re-engineering
- How does the back-office reorganisation impact on the delivery of e-government services?
- Implication of seamless e-government services on: service delivery policies and standards, skills and resource management, back office changes.

Organisational and policy perspective of Identity Management

- What constitutes an identity? What level of authentication is required?
- Single unique identifier for citizens: Is it desirable for all public service interactions? Does it add value to the citizen?
- Single unique identifier for business: Is it possible to achieve? Does it add value to the business?
- Ownership and management of identity services. Who should maintain registers? Who should govern standards?
- Legal issues and barriers to identity services
- Acceptance challenges by agencies, citizens and businesses
- Use of Public Service Cards: Is there a demand? Can they service all channels?
- The possible use of electronic identity card – public and private applications

Organisational changes, skills and the role of leadership required by e-Government

- Organisational changes required to implement e-government services fast
- Models through which organisational changes take place
- Requirements of modernised service delivery processes regarding the sharing of data, business process redesign and human resources
- Acquisition of the different skills (not only ICT skills) which are needed by managers and clerical staff to govern and manage change

Delivering on user needs

- User satisfaction: how do we know what users want?
- How do different types of users (citizens, enterprises, elderly, young people etc.) behave?
- Driving up take-up: What works, and what does not? Killer applications
- Experiences with regard to the use of user panels
- Does it always take a user interface (an online service) to deliver added value to the users?
- How can we make information provision more useful?
- How can we strength and improve citizen participation?

Monitoring and evaluation of eGovernment performance and benefits

- Understand the benefits of e-government for citizens and businesses
- Indicators to measure different aspects of e-government, both at organisational level and service level (efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, accountability, quality, etc.)
- Benchmarking methodologies used by MSs, taking into account both quantity and quality characteristics of service delivery

To achieve fulfilment of the overall objective of facilitating and undertaking exchange of experiences and good practices among the Member States, the e-Government Working Group will, in accordance with the Terms of Reference:

- Investigate the above themes of priority with regard to drawing lessons and identifying good practices, for example by comparing Member State approaches and by reflecting on international experience of relevance
- Liaise with the European Commission and other working groups under the auspices of the Directors General, in particular with regard to e-Government related initiatives that have direct or indirect implications for Member States public administration policies
- Report to the meeting of the Directors General on the themes discussed and conclusions drawn.
- The WG can analyse in depth one or more of the most relevant themes investigated during previous presidencies.

Deliverables during the two next presidencies

The Working Plan will be reviewed and brought up to date regularly in order to ensure the relevance of the list of prioritised themes, and to cover 2 presidencies ahead in terms of the themes planned for consideration during the coming presidencies.

- During the **Irish Presidency** the e-Government working group will focus on the issue of interoperability. It will examine the different levels of interoperability i.e. technical, semantic and organisational. A discussion paper will be prepared and distributed at the first meeting to focus the group's work on the differing approaches to technical interoperability within Member States; the policies, both at national and local level, dealing with the definition and governance of interoperability standards; the barriers to cross organisational business process fusion; and the elements of interoperability frameworks that can be defined at pan European level.
- During the **Dutch Presidency** the e-Government working group will focus on efficacy and transparency, the benefits and requirements. E-government is considered as an important tool for better performance, both in terms of individualised services and of 'traditional' policy areas. A study will be carried out, analysing cases of better services in terms of benefits and requirements and the lessons to be learned. ICT can also improve transparency of the public sector and creating democratic and economic benefits. The working group will explore these benefits. And continuing on the work of the Irish presidency, and in relation to the other themes, the issue of open standards will be given attention. Finally

the working group could discuss relevant policy conclusions from the 3rd Quality Conference organised by IPSG.

In view of the enlargement both the Irish and Dutch presidencies will give four new member states the opportunity to present their national e-government strategies.

Continuously bringing the Working Plan up to date

The Working Plan will be submitted for renewed approval of the Directors General once a year. The Terms of Reference and the (at any time) current Working Plan defines the basis for the proceeding of the e-Government Working Group.