Experience of the Republic of Moldova and Georgia in the framework of e-Government

BURGUDJI Serghei,
MOLDOVA STATE UNIVERSITY, Faculty of International Relations, Political and Administrative Sciences, Republic of Moldova,
kerpet@mail.ru

IRSES
Marie Curie Action, EU-PREACC—Possibilities and limits, challenges and obstacles of transferring CEE EU pre-accession best practices and experience to Moldova’s and Georgia’s pre-accession process (2013-2017)

The article focuses on analysing the role and of e-governance in the Republic of Moldova and Georgia. Along with its inception, as a new phenomenon of the country, it meets different challenges and new positive indicators in the process of democratization. However due to certain factors on the development of e-governance in Moldova and Georgia it is necessary to find out news strategies and priorities for a new level, in this way the best practices taken from the foreign countries can be a good start.

E-government refers to the use by government agencies of information technologies (such as Wide Area Networks, the Internet and mobile computing) that have the ability to transform relations with citizens, businesses and other arms of government. These technologies could serve a variety of different ends: better delivery of government services to citizens, improved interactions with business and industry, citizen empowerment through access to information, or more efficient government management. The resulting benefits can be less corruption, increased transparency, greater convenience, revenue growth, and cost reductions. One of the success stories of e-government is ‘eEurope’. The eEurope initiatives have been both highly politicized and highly results oriented. The EU has showed its ability to track, monitor and evaluate the implementation of each Action Plan, using a comprehensive system of key indicators and benchmarking reports produced and submitted to leaders for review and further action. The deliberately detailed implementation of eEurope and the political commitment of the
EU leaders to construct and actually enforce a knowledge based economy and society ‘for the benefit of all’, distinguish the EU from other global, regional and sub-regional actors. The positive effects of political will and enforcement through effective implementation benchmarking are perhaps the first lessons that developing countries may well learn from eEurope. The social and economic model in which interaction between the state, the enterprises and citizens is described is presented. The background of the invention of the electronic government in the state is declared, the definition of the notion "the electronic government" is given. The basic problems arising in introduction of the electronic government and the categories of forms of interaction from more simple to more difficult: such as public distribution of the information, electronic forms and transactions are listed.

Republic of Moldova and Georgia are very similar, as they are the former republics of the Soviet Union. According with global ranking our countries occupy the following positions (pictures 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country (2012)</th>
<th>place</th>
<th>e-government development index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Republic of Korea</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.9125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.8960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.8889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States of America</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.8687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.8635</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.8599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.8593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.8505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>55</td>
<td>0.6240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of Moldova</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>0.5626</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A distinctive feature of the e-Government of Georgia and Moldova developers call it transparency and simplicity. Before to automate the system, the Georgian authorities greatly simplified the business, have established public-private partnership.
Therefore, e-government for developing countries raises some hopes and demonstrates opportunities. Before going into the details about the legal implications, it is essential to trace here the required infrastructure of the developing countries in this context. The objective here is to understand the balance of revenue spent to develop such capability and level of utilization. It is beyond any argument that in the context of developing countries, ICT is one of the most significant forces of modernization. Investment in communication infrastructures, and in training and learning, would enable developing countries to increase their competitiveness as external service provider.

In the Republic of Moldova was founded **E-Government Center**, which was responsible for the development and implementation of the e-Transformation agenda, which includes, among others, the development of the national platform for electronic governance and of a national electronic system, creating digital services and increasing the population access to digital public services.

Rising public demand for government is a common characteristic of modern societies, and it is an important dimension of democracy. This is especially important in the states of Former Soviet Union (FSU), including the Republic of Moldova, that suffered long decades under the totalitarian Soviet regime.

The government of Moldova is democratically elected, but in many ways it still has highly centralized government functions and little autonomy for local governments. It was therefore necessary to carefully consider how to create and nurture e-government in this kind of environment.

Moldova and Georgia definitely lags behind world average and European Union countries on e-government implementation. Information technologies are currently used in many spheres of State Governance: starting from the electronic processing of information, then Official Electronic Pages organized for each state institution became now the main source of information for our people. Although the government of Moldova has undertaken a range of best practices of advanced countries, it would seem to be necessary to recommend an increase in the role of the central government in promoting and organizing the further development of e-government and
extending it at all levels of local governance. Indeed, given the current political environment in Moldova, it would seem essentially impossible to accomplish anything without such an increase.

Information is the power and now the State has managed to spread it in a very short time and in a very useful way. The achievements are the following: The State Register of Population, The State Register of Legal Entities, The State Register of Transport and the Electronic Register of Election Officials, this one is currently a pilot-project, which is just in a couple of steps from implementing it into the state practical usage. Also there was offered an opportunity to Moldovan Citizens to book documents via Internet without staying into queues and spending so much time for the registration. Electronic Voting became a very attractive tendency managed by Central Election Commission. Electronic conferences and communication via Internet makes public officials to stay much closer and any question can be solved shortly.

Moldova definitely lags behind world average and European Union countries on e-government implementation, therefore it is necessary to identify the main problems:

1. Inefficient Law implementation
2. De-facto monopoly in the telecommunications sector and unfair public tendering often favouring state-owned software developing companies
3. Government IT systems developed / under development are geared more towards control and monitoring functions rather
4. The mechanisms of use electronic document with digital signature in public administration authorities/business/citizens is not widely implemented.
5. Frequent turnover of Public Authorities employees is delaying achievement of the planned results of UNDP and other donors assistance

Government has a responsibility to provide leadership in developing a culture of privacy protection and security. It should provide this leadership through its roles in the development of public policy, as owner and operator of systems and networks, and as user of such systems and networks. As a user of information systems and networks, government shares a role with businesses; other organizations and individuals for ensuring secure use of the system and network.

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Why does Georgia have such great successes in the construction of E-government? Why did 92% populations in 2012 positively speak about his work? Certainly, main direction is correctly certain: administrative procedures. Certainly, achievements are the basis of in of informatively-communication technologies. But obviously, that a not less role in the achievement of success was played a competent decisions on reengineering of administrative procedures.

We came to the opinion that implementing of Information-Communication Technologies has achieved a deserving level in Moldova and Georgia as became the part of human life and is on its way to become the inseparable part of State Governance System. During the process of studying we came to the conclusion that Information Technologies can help public officials to make their work more qualitative and useful, to spend less time for routine performance of everyday tasks. The state’s governance in made for its citizens and information technologies can offer a great possibility to be informed anytime and keep ourselves updated

Notes and References