

Weathering the Storm: Creative EPSA Solutions in a Time of Crisis



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Opening Words

By László Andor

EU Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

The 2013 European Public Sector Award chose the right theme: ***‘Weathering the Storm: Creative Solutions in a Time of Crisis’***. There is continued pressure on public administrations, as several Member States are facing their fifth year of austerity. All over Europe, administrations are expected to ‘deliver more with less’, in terms of providing better services, despite tightened budgets and often reduced staffing levels. The awareness that the quality of institutions is a key aspect of ensuring a country’s long-term competitiveness raises expectations of public administrations’ contributions to leading Europe towards recovery. Moreover, public administrations are expected to adapt to the changing needs of an online and networked society. To meet these expectations of citizens and business, public administrations in many European countries still need to develop a pro-active culture of openness to change, experimentation and innovation.

The EU has several instruments for encouraging ‘quality of public administration’. In the context of the European Semester, modernising public administration has been one of five priorities of the last two editions of the **Annual Growth Survey**, which sets out the priorities for action at the national and EU level, on the path towards sustainable growth and job creation. Furthermore, in 2013 more than half of the Member States received **Country-Specific Recommendations** related to improving public administration.

This is where EPSA can be of great help by highlighting the efforts public administrations in Europe are making to improve and to deliver better services to business and citizens. Through the EPSA we have an instrument to show that public administration is not always part of

the problem, but that it can also be part of the solution.

As we celebrate the fourth EPSA edition in 2013, we realise that EPSA is much more than just a bi-annual award of excellence for public administrations in the EU. In fact, by systematically collecting and structuring examples of good practices, EPSA has been building a considerable knowledge base of how administrations across Europe are getting better organised and providing better services. In total, EPSA has collected and assessed more than 800 such practices over the last three editions, coming from 36 European countries. The wide range of practices provides an insight into the proactive approaches of hundreds of public administrations – at national, regional and local level – and exemplifies how they develop practical responses to the current challenges.

EPSA has thus emerged as a framework for mapping innovative practices, including a comprehensive set of criteria, definitions and categories. This provides a basis for carrying out meaningful analysis and comparisons of countries’ innovative practices. I therefore encourage EPSA to continue with the development of a dissemination strategy in order to make this knowledge available to all those with an interest in performance of public administrations in Europe. Through collecting and sharing these practices EPSA is adding genuine European value, encouraging learning and inspiring a culture of public sector innovation.

I am also pleased to note the increasing number of EU co-funded initiatives that were submitted to EPSA, namely 59 applications (more than 25%) out of 227, from 16 countries. This is an increase by almost 10% compared to 2011, and

includes five EU co-financed projects among the top-ranked 15 nominees (33%).

As we enter the new European funding period 2014-2020, institutional capacity and an efficient public administration is one of the 11 thematic objectives for investment. The new funding period requires a stronger results orientation. In this regard, the telling of stories and journeys of 'excellence' through EPSA provides a good indication of the drivers and conditions for success. The practices rewarded by the EPSA

scheme lead by example and can serve as inspiration to other public administrations for building a results-oriented approach.

I thus sincerely congratulate the EPSA for the continuous effort to promote, disseminate and reward those 'in search of public excellence' across the European territory, and therefore encourage EIPA and the sponsoring Member States to keep up and further shape this excellent work.

Foreword

By Prof. Dr Marga Pröhl

Director-General, European Institute of Public Administration

The year 2013 marks the fourth edition of the European Public Sector Award – EPSA, which has been run and managed for the third time by the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA).

In close cooperation with the members of the EPSA 2013 Steering Committee, a number of novelties were introduced to this latest edition. In the previous years, EPSA would award projects under various changing specific themes; whereas now, the projects are awarded according to the administrative level (European and National, Regional and Supra-local and Local) of the submitting authority. Moreover, the Steering Committee accepted the proposal of having only one overarching theme for EPSA 2013, i.e. ***Weathering the Storm: Creative Solutions in a Time of Crisis***, which reflects the demand by many European countries for new solutions. The choice of this theme turned out to be most appropriate, as shown by the high response: 227 eligible projects were submitted from 26 countries and several European institutions.

Another novel feature of the EPSA 2013 scheme is the fact that it – this time – shows recognition for those projects that demonstrate outstanding achievements resulting from cross-administrative and cross-border cooperation respectively, by awarding them two honourable mentions. Needless to emphasise that a strong collaborative approach to public administrative reform and modernisation processes is key to arriving at the desired outcomes and ensuring its sustainability. This is confirmed by the fact that 60% of all projects put forward are based on cross-administrative cooperation and 9% on cross-border cooperation.

From among the 227 entries, the EPSA Evaluators and Jury finally identified 47 projects submitted by 18 countries and one European institution as Best Practice Certificate recipients; from among these, 15 projects originating from 9 countries were subsequently nominated to be in the running for the three awards and the two honourable mentions.

I am particularly pleased to stress that, despite the difficult times all administrations are going through, EIPA once again managed to secure the institutional and financial support necessary to run the EPSA 2013. This support came from 10 European countries (Austria, Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland and Switzerland), the European Commission, and our local partners, i.e. the Municipality of Maastricht and the Provincial Government of Limburg. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all of them for their continued support and trust in EIPA. I would also like to extend my special thanks to the European Commission, and more particularly to Directorate-General Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, in the person of Commissioner László Andor, and to Directorate-General Human Resources and Security (DG HR), in the person of Vice-President Maroš Šefčovič, with their respective services, for their financial and institutional support.

In spite of the persistent crisis, the fact that EPSA still attracts a substantial number of applications from a large number of European countries, demonstrates that this unique European award scheme is a must for all those administrations with an interest in showcasing their creative solutions and benchmarking them with their peers all over Europe.

Running the EPSA 2013 has once again proven to be very rewarding for EIPA, since it puts us in a position of being first to observe the main trends, ideas and practices implemented in European public administrations at all levels. This in turn feeds our training and development activity portfolio, and in this way the solutions developed and implemented elsewhere can be usefully transferred to other administrations – be it through our training or specific EPSA knowledge-transfer activities (e.g. cooperation with the City of Bilbao, several Norwegian Universities among many others).

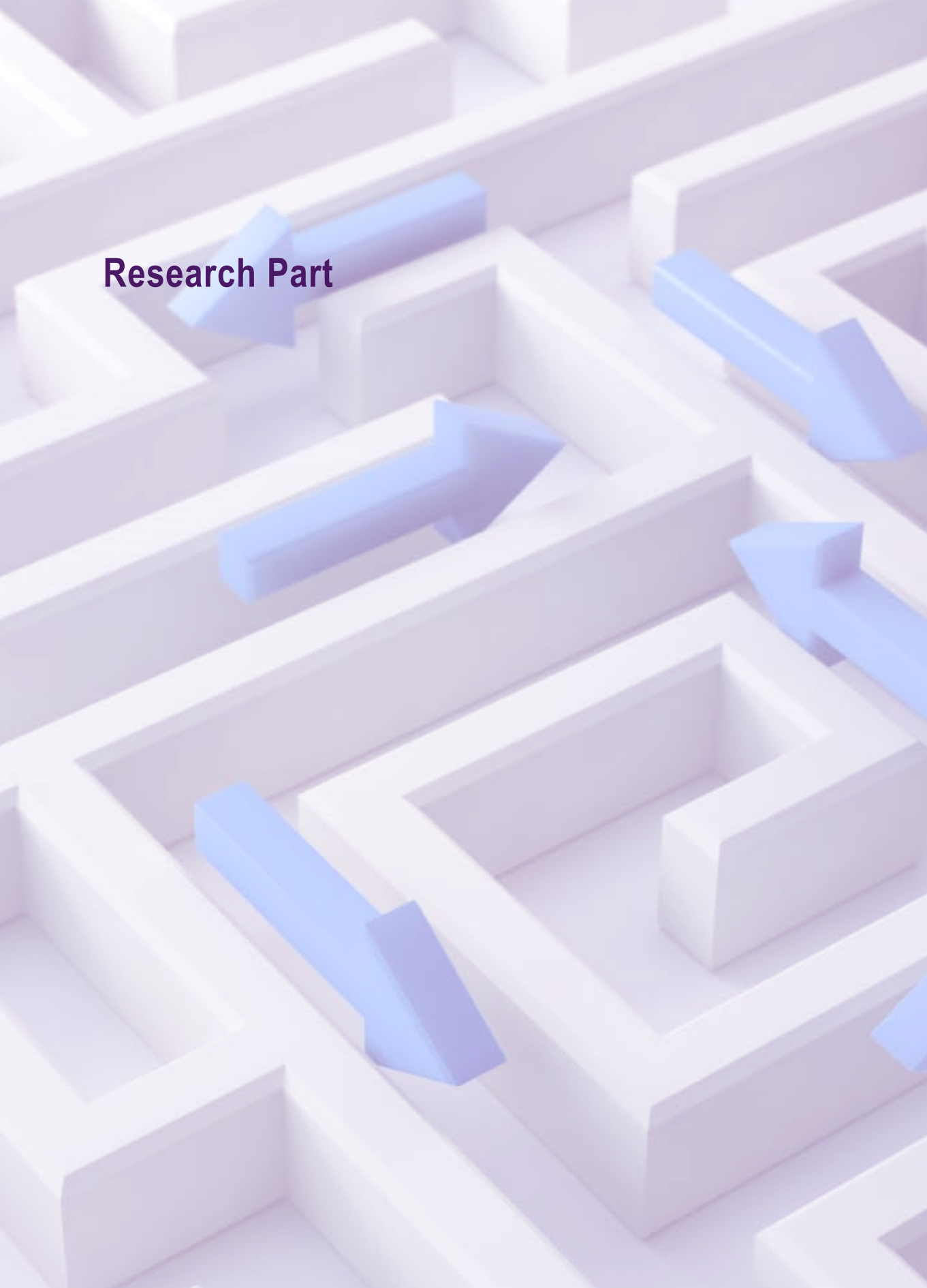
In this respect, I should like to highlight that after three successful EPSA editions, we have now built up a solid database of over 800 cases that are well structured and thoroughly assessed. This valuable well of information will soon be ‘activated’ and widely offered electronically, thereby making these cases available to everyone interested in boosting their learning potential, in Europe and beyond.

Once again, the EPSA Team has spared no efforts in making this new and face-lifted edition successful. My particular thanks go to Alexander Heichlinger, Manager EPSA and EIPA Expert, and the other team members, Michael Burnett, EIPA Expert, and Harrie Scholtens, Dutch National Seconded Expert at EIPA, respectively the theme and category leaders. I would also like to acknowledge Claude Rongione, EPSA Information Officer, Julia Bosse, Research Assistant, Jolanda Peters, Project Assistant, and the other persons involved, for their dedication, commitment and support to the project.

The present publication is the result of the joint efforts of all the above-mentioned EPSA Team members and supporters, and marks – together with the Final Event and Award Ceremony (25-27 November 2013) – the end of this year’s edition. Nevertheless, rest assured that EIPA will continue to be at the forefront of the continuous changes Europe’s public sector will be facing.

I wish you an enriching and inspiring reading.

Research Part



Introduction

Introduction and context

Governments at all levels are being confronted with the need to ‘weather the storm’ in this time of crisis. Budget cuts from the side of the governments are increasingly becoming the rule rather than the exception. However, citizens also continue to ask for improvements in the performance of governmental institutions. This seems to be a paradox. How is it possible to improve quality of government in times when there is no extra money available for such an improvement? The EPSA 2013 team was therefore curious to know how governments deal with this dilemma.

Administrations were invited to share their achievements with others and to show how this kind of dilemma can be combined with a tool that works.

In the EPSA 2013 leaflet, the call for applications was motivated as follows:

‘In the past five years, public administrations across Europe have been facing mounting strain on their public finances. In turn, this has led to pressure for changes in the way public services are delivered, as well as a re-assessment of the scope and nature of services to be provided by public authorities, independently of how they are delivered. Yet, it is precisely in times of economic crisis that citizens have a greater need for public services.

In response to these pressures, public administrations are trying out innovative ways of problem solving in service provision, by designing better processes, as well as through new structural solutions in cooperation with partners.

Some public authorities are responding well to the challenges of the crisis with measures targeting effectiveness, efficiency and productivity gains, whilst trying to maintain the high level and quality of their operations. This theme will give them the chance to be proud of their achievements and to showcase how they are dealing with these tough challenges.’¹

Reducing costs while improving quality is not an easy task – this sometimes requires courage to find new and not always previously accepted ways to change working methods and visions of working by governmental institutions.

We were looking for those types of developments at government level and found them. Creative solutions were demanded; creative in terms of having the courage to walk a different way and deliver solutions, because of the fact that the creative way of thinking has paid off by reducing costs in a structural way.

Some of the projects will be described in this publication. Hopefully, they will provide administrations, at every level, with enough ideas and energy to also find their own way to: **‘Creative Solutions in Time of Crisis, in order to Weather the Storm.’**

State of affairs in Governments in Europe (and beyond)²

The central part of the theme is, as already mentioned: **‘Weathering the Storm.’** This shows how difficult the time-period is, in which administrations have to operate. Of course ‘the storm’ is a metaphor for the economic crisis, but

¹ EPSA 2013 leaflet, p.8: http://www.epsa2013.eu/files/Promotion_BrochureWEB.pdf.

² OECD, The State of the Public Service, OECD Publishing, 2008. DOI: 10.1787/9789264047990-en.

there are so many other changes in the whole society which are true challenges for governments. This is not only the reality for European countries, but a worldwide phenomenon.

Nowadays there are also other factors which play a role in the difficult decisions governments have to take. Citizens are more demanding. Social media have an important role in citizens making up their minds. Knowledge of these developments can increasingly be found for free on the Internet. Governments do have to realise this. It means that governmental decision-makers must realise that it is necessary to tell true stories and no political fairytales. People no longer accept it when politicians do not tell the truth, and governments are forced to use the same technical instruments as their citizens. It is there that the opportunities for the future also lie. Citizens no longer want a government which tells what they have to do. They want a government which enables them to develop into independent inhabitants. And the opportunity for governments is that they can save money by not doing activities that citizens want to and can do.

Within this timeframe it is not always easy for governments to operate. It demands special competences from politicians and also from civil servants. It demands a certain thinking pattern. So what we see is also the trend that governments want to prepare their staff for this kind of change in society. We can see this illustrated in the applications for EPSA 2013.

All government levels in European countries have to face difficult times and weather the storm. How they do that depends on governmental cultures in the countries and the organisation of the governmental levels. In almost every country, the way of facing problems is more or less different. Sometimes there is a radical cut in expenses; but very often we also see that facing the problems can lead to totally different organisational forms and another governmental culture. So then there is a package of cuts and other measures; measures to show, what a government can look like in the future, with faith and not with fear.

Besides the measures which have to be taken due to the crisis, there are always independent developments in society. The accent often lies on the client orientation. A result of this focus is deregulation to make it easier for citizens to do what they want to do, but also decentralisation: bringing the products as close to the citizens as possible. This process starts with the decentralisation of governmental tasks from national and regional level to the local level of government.

Within the governmental organisations and especially on the local level, deregulation is also a process which is gaining ground. All these developments need a holistic approach of governmental tasks and therefore also civil servants with a vision of society. They need to know what is happening outside the (front) doors of their offices. This also means a different style of leadership. All over Europe there are movements towards these developments; civil servants are being trained to work in customisable ways; leaders are trained in other forms of leadership. Instead of giving orders they now have to motivate their personnel. Therefore, it is necessary to have the ability to think strategically. 'Which goals do we want to reach for our citizens?' This way of strategic thinking must be based on a holistic view³.

One of the most important challenges is that politicians and civil servants, who have to implement the political decisions, have the ability to think strategically. Strategic thinking means that (political) leaders can see in general where developments are leading. The next step is to translate that way of thinking into concrete measures which will affect the citizens.

Governments nowadays are very often orientating towards new work forms within the private sector. They can learn a lot from their methods of reaching the public. The big difference with the private sector is, however, that the public sector offers their products as a monopolist. Citizens have to come to the town hall for the products they need. This gives an extra dimension to the

³ Kuf, J.P., *The need for an holistic approach*, July 2013, <http://governanceconnect.eu/?p=3102>.

way governments have to perform. Combined with political influence, it is not always easy to act in the expected way. Working from a holistic approach combined with a strategic vision can make this a little bit easier. This also requires political and organisational leadership.

Political leaders will have to set the direction within the country/region/municipality in which it has to develop. In certain cases they can give this development an extra dimension by legislation. They have to explain to the public why certain measures have to be taken.

Civil servants have to perform. But then, leadership is also very important as it builds a bridge between politics and governmental organisations. The result of this could be that civil servants take part in the democratic decision-making process as advisers of what is possible and what is only possible with additional measures. That is the balance which has to be found. In addition, both public officials and politicians in governments are surrounded by and faced with other challenges and influences which are briefly highlighted below.

Influence of social media

As already mentioned, social media are a very important development for governments nowadays. Almost everybody knows the role played by Twitter during the Presidential elections in the United States of America. The way Barack Obama used this instrument during his campaign was inimitable and unprecedented. And now that he has been re-elected as President, he continues to use this tool, for instance, when an important vote in the Senate has taken place. His followers retweet his position/theorem about a subject.

Other people are commenting on it. The result is and was that Twitter has become a platform where discussions are being held about governmental action. Governments must be alert to those discussions, because they are opinion-making. The best way is to be active on social media too and use these new techniques to develop an interactive democracy. Administrations can use

Facebook to start discussions with their citizens. Civil servants must be stimulated to use LinkedIn for networking and start group discussions on events which happen in their daily practice. Free consulting or advice could be the result of such active use of social media. Employers in the public sector must not be afraid of staff using this medium during working time. The new generation is used to communicating through this media. Thereby, the borders between working at the office and at home are disappearing. Youngsters want freedom and trust. It is more useful to make appointments when tasks have to be delivered than to discuss how.

Role of information technology

Social media are part of the developments in Information Technology. This technology is even more important for back offices, databases and web technologies. A good combination of these technologies can improve the quality of the work of governmental institutions, and, if governments are lucky, it can also lower costs. (EPSA) projects in the field of Information Technology are often very difficult to control. The result is often that the sustainability is not always guaranteed. But the fact is that if the preparation for these kinds of projects is good, the results can and will often be very profitable. It is really a way to do more at lower costs. Another important factor is the connection of databases and the use of it in a mid-office. Front- and back offices can work with the same information and therefore faster and with fewer errors. This is very important because of the image of governments. Nothing is worse than a government with good exposure on, for instance, the use of social media, but with a badly functioning system of mid-, back- and front offices. This is then a case of 'window dressing', which will be discovered quickly by the public.

Governments are searching for cooperation in this field. In many countries the idea of a Shared Service Centre for ICT has been brought into practice. This concerns cooperation between municipalities or different levels of government. The goal is to get benefits by working together and making it possible for smaller organisations to work with modern systems.

Very often a cooperation between governments is expanded with private companies, in this case, ICT companies, where it will occur in the form of Public Private Partnerships. The *Generalitat* of Catalonia has chosen the form of a public company – a company owned by governments and functioning as a private company⁴.

Enlarging the governmental scale can also be realised by merging governmental organisations of civil servants or even, for instance, municipalities.

Information Technology also makes it possible to try totally different ways of working. In the Netherlands for instance, the merged municipality ‘Molenwaard’ is experimenting with the system of a Municipality without a town hall⁵. Civil servants will be working at home (in a cloud) and only visit citizens when necessary. They receive a certain amount of money to organise their own working space. Meetings are held in local community buildings or even pubs. Although it saves costs, and is therefore a good solution in this time of crisis, it is also a kind of revolution, because in many visions municipalities need a symbolic home such as a town hall. In cases of merging municipalities in the Netherlands, one of the most important issues among the inhabitants is always the location of the town hall, even though the development nowadays is that many products can be bought online.

The use of new technologies is nevertheless an opportunity. The upcoming generation of civil servants will ask for it. Otherwise the attraction of a job in government will be reduced to a very low level. It will require bold decisions.

Social inclusion

Social inclusion now takes a prominent place in strategic thinking of governments. It is very important to reach all levels of population in society. The more levels of population we

can distinguish, the more ways of reaching the population we see. This could be in the form of working groups to work on specific projects, but also in the form of decentralisation. Decentralisation means for instance, decision-making power for certain subjects and/or for the use of budgets. In all these forms it must be clear who is politically responsible for the results. There is often a very small balance between overly strict regulations or too much freedom. Although trust is the basis for these forms of organisations, some regulation is necessary.

The experiments in this field show that it is important to guide people in order to help them find the right education or even a new job. What is important is how to find the right level, to reach the people who are concerned. Further institutionalisation can make the gap between government and citizen even bigger.

It is important to join existing groups of people. This can be in organisations, but also for instance, a small village. Within such groups people know each other and the effect of working together with those groups can be bigger than in the case of individual cooperation. If governmental decisions are targeted towards villages for instance, decentralisation is a good option to improve social inclusion of such a group. Give them the power to take part in a discussion within a holistic framework about subjects that are important for their village.

Modern technologies also play a significant role in this case. For example, citizens can communicate via Twitter, Facebook and the website of governmental institutions. The involvement of citizens does not mean that it will take more time to come to a decision, but the support for a decision will increase.

Social inclusion is necessary, because social polarisation would cause more trouble for governments. However, in times of crisis, the latter is more likely to happen more than it would be

⁴ See the EPSA Nominee project ‘New ICT Model: *Generalitat de Catalunya* – an Innovative Sourcing Process through Public-Private Collaboration’ in the Catalogue, Regional Level.

⁵ <https://www.gemeentemolenwaard.nl>.

necessary. Reality makes it necessary to mention this. Several EPSA best practices have developed interesting and creative approaches in this regard.

Human resource management

As mentioned above, all these changes have consequences for organisations of civil servants. The development in the whole of Europe is that they are being educated to work in other ways. Client orientation is very important. Education means that the budgets of governments must obtain financial means to be able to educate governments' employees. Otherwise the necessary developments will not take place. This also means that governments sometimes have to make a choice in favour of the education of their employees instead of building a road. However, in times of crisis, these kinds of decisions are very difficult. Budgets of this sort are the first to be reduced, because it is easier for organisations to say that they have cut their own budgets instead of cutting budgets which help people to survive during the difficult times. It is a kind of vicious circle; finding new ways of working is also a manner of finding a way out of the crisis.

Leadership is always very important for the development of organisations, and in particular in the situation of crisis. Governments need a leader with a vision of how to lead organisations out of crisis. In publications we see the opinion of many professionals expressing a need for leadership: political as well as organisational leaders⁶. The competence of situational leadership is indispensable in this type of situation. Extra education for leaders is necessary, but as we already concluded, education budgets are almost always the first to suffer from cost reductions.

Leaders must have knowledge on how to motivate their staff. They have to do more with less. Inventiveness is part of the toolbox of modern civil servants. This is sometimes difficult for the growing population of older civil servants. The use of modern technology is difficult and

sometimes not understandable. Coaching within the goals of human resource management is thus very important.

And when coaching does not lead to a good result, talks with the civil servants have to lead to other solutions, such as another position within the organisation, or outside through outplacement.

Governments should be aware of the coming of new generations – generations who know how to use modern technology. The 'generation Y' does not want to communicate without electronic means. Chat facilities will be part of future government structures. It is not important to know when they work, but rather that they deliver the tasks as agreed.

The personnel departments have to deal with this in the form of other working conditions, other work regulations and another approach of staff. It also gives the opportunity to find ways other than the traditional ones for getting out of the crisis.

Decentralisation

In many countries we see a development of decentralisation. Power is handed over from national to regional and local level. The aim is to bring government closer to the citizens. The result is that governmental organisations lower than the national level have to improve the knowledge level of their civil servants organisations. All kinds of different forms of decentralisation can be distinguished. Higher governments can hand over tasks with or without financial resources. Mostly this appears in the form of handing over tasks with fewer financial resources than the performance costs by the higher governments. In this way the aim is also cost reduction. However, the decentralisation of powers and execution means a centralisation of regulations and setting of frameworks. The problems resulting from this kind of decentralisation affect the lower levels of government, and require profound decisions on that lower level.

⁶ Blog entry by Wladawsky-Berger, Leadership in Time of Crisis, 19/01/2009, <http://blog.irvingwb.com/blog/2009/01/leadership-in-a-time-of-crisis.html>.

Risk management

Within a holistic approach it is necessary that governments not only look at the developments as mentioned above. To complete the view into the future, it is also wise to have a view of the risks for governmental organisations. This view must be as wide as possible through investigations of experiences in other organisations. Organisations do not only learn from positive experiences or projects in other organisations, but also from their failures. For instance, ICT projects are known as high-risk projects. Organisations need this kind of project to improve their performance, but must be aware of using the right tools at the right time otherwise the costs could be huge.

All of this also requires a very good system of internal control. Governments need to have a good system of budgeting and control of expenses within the budgets. These budgets are available by decisions of political identities in a governmental organisation. The political identities must be in the position to control the expenses of the organisation. They are the identities which are chosen in a democratic way and are accountable at the time of elections.

Besides concrete projects, organisations need knowledge about economic and financial developments. Known are the problems with real

estates and the financial risks for governments. They can be prepared for the future with a good risk management by taking provisional financial measures.

Risk Management is part of a system of Quality Management. It must be incorporated in the work processes of a governmental organisation. The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) developed by the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA) is a good example of system of quality management.

The following chapters will sketch out the trends, ideas and solutions in the various creative public management change efforts and service reforms from the EPSA 2013 rewarded practices, whilst pinpointing common elements (strengths) in their delivery. Although this will be done separately in the three administrative categories (European and National, Regional, Supra-local and Local), many findings suggest that governments are ultimately facing the same issues. Our concluding section will demonstrate this, as evidenced by the EPSA 2013 cases.

In this way governments can have a good basis for taking the necessary decisions and actions for their developments in the (near) future.

European and National Level

Overview and analysis of applications in the European and national sector

A total of **83 eligible applications** were received from the European and national applications sector. These applications are analysed in the statistics shown on page 49 by country of origin¹. The key points illustrated are that:

- the applications came from 25 different countries (with three applications from European institutions) and broadly reflected the diversity of projects which might have been expected based on previous EPSA experience;
- the balance of applications broadly indicates the balance of intensity of budgetary pressures across the EU, with 14 applications from Spain, 6 from Greece, 5 from Italy and 4 from Portugal, reflecting the state of public finances in those Member States;
- it is not surprising that more than one-third of the applications relate to the modernisation and reform of public administrations, given the widely recognised need for fundamental changes driven by budgetary pressures arising from the economic downturn;
- since nearly 80% (66 out of 83) applications were from entities with more than 100 FTE staff, there continues to be particular pressures on smaller entities to identify the resources to pursue reform even when they are facing equally severe pressures to the larger ones.

Weathering the Storm: Creative Solutions in a Time of Crisis – emerging best practice at European and national level in response to current challenges

This section analyses emerging best practice in developing creative solutions to the economic crisis amongst the applications from the European and national sector in two categories, i.e. the elements of best practice demonstrated by the 17 applications which were awarded best practice certificates (including those nominated for the theme trophy), and elements of best practice identified amongst applicants who did not, overall, qualify for a best practice certificate.

Strengths displayed by nominees and best practice certificate holders

The distinguishing features of the strengths of nominees and best practice certificate holders fell into **six broad themes** i.e.:

- 1. Active strategies to promote economic growth.**
- 2. Protecting diversity at a time of economic crisis.**
- 3. Using transparency as a means to promote better governance and/or citizen experience.**
- 4. Use of technology to significantly improve service delivery and/or reduce costs.**
- 5. Collaborative ventures to improve the quality of public services.**
- 6. Innovative solutions to difficult issues for public administrations, including issues of European concern.**

¹ In analysing these applications, it should be noted that participation in the EPSA competition is on a voluntary basis; therefore, EIPA makes no claim that the process represents a comprehensive survey of the reach of public service reform across the EU. This also applies to the chapters 'Regional Level' and 'Supra-local and Local Level'. It should also be noted that these sections are not intended to be a detailed assessment of all the entries which were nominees or awarded best practice certificates, nor does it necessarily include all of the strengths of those applicants, or any limitations that they may have.

Active strategies to promote economic growth

GreenEvo

It is widely recognised that in the medium term the recovery of the EU economy from the current crisis can only be sustained by a return to economic growth. One of the nominee projects, a scheme sponsored by the *Polish Ministry of the Environment* to support the development of products promoting environmentally-friendly technologies and thus to facilitate exports, was directly related to the promotion of economic growth as well as demonstrating both the contribution that environmental technologies can make to growth, and the potential compatibility of the promotion of growth with continuing to address the climate change agenda.

Protecting diversity at a time of economic crisis

SignWiki Web and Mobile Access to Sign Languages and *Librodigital*

One of the main issues facing public administrations needing to stabilise their finances is the concern that this might mean abandoning attempts to address diversity issues (such as plurality of staff and service access based on gender, race, age, disability, etc).

Following the banking crisis of 2008, *Iceland* suffered economic problems as severe as those faced more recently by Eurozone economies. However, two projects from Iceland, which, respectively, promoted access to sign language for the deaf and hard of hearing (by the *Communication Centre for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing*, a collaborative venture supported by various public institutions) and to talking books for the blind and others with print disabilities (by *Icelandic Talking Book Library*, an entity overseen by the Ministry of Education and Culture), demonstrated that public service objectives can be pursued with limited budgets and thus in parallel with the need for fiscal consolidation.

Using transparency as a means to promote better governance and/or citizen experience

In taking difficult decisions associated with fiscal consolidation in the current political climate, public administrations are also faced with a reduced level of trust in government (at any level) to gain acceptance for decisions made and to demonstrate the added value of public expenditure. Two projects which gained recognition in the European and national category – one from Spain and one from Italy – focused on transparency as the means of addressing these issues:

RISP Fuel Prices

An initiative by the *Ministry of Energy, Industry and Tourism in Spain* to enable mobile access to real-time information about fuel prices at petrol stations across the country.

The Compass of Transparency

An initiative by the *Department for Public Administration in Italy* to directly enable citizens to monitor compliance of different entities within the Italian public administration with their transparency obligations.

Use of technology to significantly improve service delivery and/or reduce costs

Though it is generally recognised that, in itself, new technology does not necessarily lead to improved service delivery and/or reduce costs, it can be a vehicle for doing so, as demonstrated by seven of the nominees and best practice certificate holders, i.e.:

Business Service Portal

The establishment and operation (coordinated by the *Austrian Federal Chancellery and Federal Ministry of Finance*) of a single access point for businesses to interact with the Austrian Federal Government by the creation of a portal to enable businesses to obtain information from government, to meet their reporting requirements and to simplify other transactions with government.

Towards a Paperless Administration

An initiative by the *Ministry of Finance and Public Administration in Spain* to give practical effect to the right of Spanish citizens to communicate with public administrations electronically (given by the Law on Electronic Administration) by creating new inter-connection platforms between different public entities, thus improving the quality of service by aiming, for example, to improve response times and to enable citizens to track communications with the public sector.

Risk-Based Trade Control System (TAREKS)

The creation of a risk-based electronic inspection and control system for export and import consignments at customs points by the *Ministry of the Economy in Turkey*, replacing systems which were primarily paper-based, and allowing for inspection resources to be focused more easily on potentially unsafe and non-conformant consignments.

EDM Environment

An e-Government tool developed by the *Austrian Federal Lebensministerium* (quality of life) in cooperation with Land governments to create clarity and legal certainty in the application of European and national environmental legislation, particularly for the benefit of businesses in understanding their obligations and how compliance with them is verified by public administrations.

Multilingualism and New Technologies:

Sharing Know-How with the Next Generation

The creation of an online teaching tool (Virtual Classes) by the *European Parliament's Directorate-General for Interpretation and Conferences* to standardise the dissemination of information about the role of European Parliament interpreters and thus to assist universities in training potential future interpreters in a way which raises standards and improves access to such training.

Portugal Did IT: The National Public Procurement System – Developing and Implementing an e-Procurement solution

An e-Procurement initiative (under the overall supervision of the *Ministry of Finance*) in parallel with a new public procurement law, the creation of a national public procurement agency and central purchasing bodies to give practical effect in *Portugal* to the introduction of mandatory e-Procurement by creating a platform through which the application of public procurement procedures could be applied using standard tools.

InterMediation Platform: Data Query and Verification Services and SCSPv3 Portfolio

An initiative by the *Ministry of Finance and Public Administration in Spain* to digitise the process by which public sector agencies can automatically check the identity, residence, tax and social security status and education, etc. of citizens submitting information or requesting services from the public sector, thus enabling them to reduce fraud and error, while giving practical effect to the right of citizens to refuse to re-submit documents already in the possession of a public agency.

Collaborative ventures to improve the quality of public services

Voluntary cooperation between public administrations is rarely straightforward but has the clear potential to help to resolve one of the tensions created by the public sector financial crisis, i.e. that between the need for affordable and high quality public service delivery in a climate of constrained financial resources, and the sustainability of large numbers of small public administrations in decentralised political systems.

Three examples amongst the nominees and best practice certificate holders included:

Transforming Federal IT Services: Doing More with Less and Helping Others Do Better

An initiative by the *Federal Office of Administration in Germany* to improve the quality of the design and implementation of IT projects by federal agencies in Germany.

NEDA Platform

The creation of the *Computer Technology Institute and Press* as the technological pillar of the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs, Culture and Athletics *in Greece* to support ICT projects within the Ministry (the creation of which itself formed part of the structural re-organisation of the Greek state administration), including the digitisation of educational and lifelong learning materials, by creating a single platform for managing all the processes of the Institute.

Partnership for Internal Audit in Local Administration

A collaborative venture launched by the *Ministry of Public Finance*, supported by the *Association of Communes in Romania*, currently including 540 Romanian municipalities, to pool resources and skills for the delivery of internal audit services and thus to enable a more effective response to the challenges of enhancing the scrutiny of the effective use of public expenditure in Romania.

Innovative solutions to difficult issues for public administrations

Nova Belgica

One of the key features of truly innovative public administrations is their ability to address issues which public authorities often find difficult to tackle. One example of a best practice certificate holder which did so was a collaborative cross-border project initiated by the *Dutch Prison Service* to ease overcrowding in Belgian prisons and utilise spare capacity in Dutch prisons by relocating Belgian prisoners to Dutch jails.

3000 Ambassadors for Road Safety

At a time when citizens are also becoming more inclined to question the core principles and value of European integration, finding creative solutions to address difficult issues of European concern, such as improving road safety by offering free safe driving courses to foreign born residents *in Italy*, is also an indicator of imaginative action by the public sector. The project is also an example of public-third sector cooperation, being delivered by the not-for-profit *Automobile Club D'Italia* with the support of government ministries and sub-national entities.

Elements of best practice displayed by other applicants

The majority of elements of best practice identified in the European and national applications sector derived, as might be expected, from schemes which were recognised through the award of best practice certificates. However, the following representative elements of best practice were identified amongst applicants who did not, overall, qualify for a certificate. They have been included in the report, both to ensure that the lessons of these projects are not simply lost because the projects did not happen to be prize winners, and also to recognise the achievements of these projects.

These schemes included a number of horizontal initiatives such as:

Pan-European Public Procurement Online (PEPPOL), Belgium

A cross-border e-Procurement initiative involving a variety of partners (11 countries) across a wide spectrum of e-Procurement standards, an area in which implementation of EU objectives has historically fallen well short of expectations.

National University of Public Service, Hungary

A recent initiative to modernise and improve public sector performance through the merger of three previously separate institutions to create a new institution. This aims to promote an integrated approach to career management for

public officials, including recruitment, internal mobility and through-career training, at a time of significant budgetary constraints.

Information System for the Control of Transposition and Implementation of the European Union Law, Latvia

The Latvian government's approach to the transposition and implementation of EU law, a methodology which has the clear potential to assist future EU Member States with similar needs.

Simplification programme, Hungary

A recent initiative to promote administrative reform and improve citizen experience through the simplification of more than 200 procedures within six ministries by digitisation of procedures, reduction in number of documents, increased use of online information, etc.

Best practice demonstrated by service-specific projects included:

A New Gaze on Culture and Museums: Women Change the Vision – A Cooperative Project Amongst Universities, State Museums and the Women in Visual Art Not-For-Profit Organisation, Spain

A project to promote social inclusion at a time of economic crisis through encouraging female participation in the arts.

Pharmacy of Your Choice Unit, Ministry for Health, Malta; and The Map of Latvian Pharmacies

Two projects in the health sector to promote consumer choice by providing better information about pharmacy services.

Electronic Epidemiological Reporting System for Infectious Diseases, Austria

A project to improve the reporting and surveillance of infectious diseases and the prevention of their spread by moving from a paper-based reporting system to an electronic one.

Cooperation with Local Authorities to Promote Renewable Energies, Germany

A cooperative project between a central government agency and more than 100 local authorities to promote the use of renewable heating technologies and thus to reduce energy costs for consumers.

Energy for Mayors, Italy

A cooperative project between 80 municipalities in seven EU Member States to develop and monitor the implementation of sustainable energy plans and thus to enable them to better comply with EU energy efficiency objectives.

Project of Central Purchasing Platform in the National Health System, Spain

An initiative to coordinate procurement in the complex multi-layered Spanish healthcare system using a central purchasing platform at national level and thus to improve the efficiency of government spending on health at a time of severe financial pressures.

Portugal Did IT: Centralised Management of the State Fleet

A project to reduce vehicle operation and administrative costs of the government vehicle fleet through centralised procurement and fleet management, also in an environment of severe financial pressures.

Regional Level

Overview, analysis and the role of the regions in EPSA

In total, **31 eligible submissions** were registered under the regional administrative category, from **eight countries**. Following the multi-step assessment process seven of them are rewarded with an EPSA best practice certificate (incl. the five nominees), and thus are ‘at the innovation or creativity top’ of the EPSA 2013 scheme. Compared to the other categories – in terms of quantity – there is a lower number of regional applications, which may be explained by different reasons. It certainly reflects the constitutional setup of the various European countries, i.e. applications were received from more federal and/or regionalised nations, such as Spain (15 as the ‘top-runner’), Italy, Austria and Belgium, naturally with fewer or none from more centralised or unitary countries. In addition, there seems to be an indication that those regions (within their respective nation states) that ‘weather a tougher storm’ (e.g. economic downturn, budgetary pressure, fiscal imbalances, etc.) – again like in countries such as Spain, Italy, Portugal and/or Greece – have a greater need for and/or are more actively in search of creative solutions than other European territories where either, the economic crisis has not yet arrived, or is at least not yet perceived.

In terms of quality and content, a first observation suggests that many of the regional projects reflect actions in thematic areas which are often related to their direct competences (e.g. health, education) or which contribute to the overall (economic) development of the territory. Certainly, in order to maintain consistent progress in European

territories, three interacting principles are generally being considered: economic and social cohesion, sustainable development, and balanced competitiveness¹.

At regional level there is a rich source of best practices covering and showcasing achievements in these areas, and will thus be highlighted subsequently.

Finally, another interesting data calls for attention, particularly since the regions are embedded in other administrative levels, i.e. the successful projects resulting from cross-administrative cooperation. In total, two-thirds (21) of the regional projects contain distinctive elements of both horizontal and vertical partnerships, providing them with a privileged and often unique position to stimulate, coordinate, steer and/or manage such partnerships, networks and actions.

Four general lessons or key findings to be drawn from the regional cases and evidenced by the various emerging best practices

The following chapter analyses and highlights several distinguishing features identified among the regional applications, and will try to support and evidence these key findings with not only holders of best practice certificates or nominees, but also with other cases regardless of their final ranking.

In general, **four broader elements** were displayed or key lessons/findings learnt from the examination of the regional practices:

¹ Magone, J.M., ‘The Third Level of European Integration: New and Old Insights’, *Regional Institutions and Governance in the European Union*, Praeger Publishers, Westport, 2003, pp. 1-27.

1. **Going social – inclusion, cohesion and equity (solutions) at its best at regional level.**
2. **Intelligent ICT-enabled solutions and architectures, including the ‘next’ generation, with its multi-faceted benefits are a reality in the regions.**
3. **A critical mass (‘economy of scale’) for service improvement/delivery and for economically successful impulses to development is provided or found by regional bodies.**
4. **The regional players/layers at the heart of any form of partnership working (horizontal and/or vertical), whilst assuring sustainability of the action.**

An important note needs to be added before outlining the four wider elements identified in this category, i.e. the mentioning and describing of the respective best practice cases under one (or two) strength or feature does not exclude the fact that these achievements do not contain excellent results or performances and ingredients from the other headings.

Going social – inclusion, cohesion and equity (solutions) at its best at regional level

This year the overall theme of EPSA addressed the multi-faceted financial and economic threats across the European continent. As a consequence, the pressure on public spending has actually increased due to factors such as elderly care, decreasing workforce and unemployment, and expenses related to education, health and welfare development in general. Against this panorama, there is no surprise that several cases from the regional category have taken on these challenges seriously and thus provide sometimes extremely creative solutions with little, or often no costs (please keep in mind that Europe persists in suffering from a sovereign debt problem in the majority of the public administrations) in their initiatives to counteract social exclusion and to ensure and promote cohesion in its society.

Not only is the sensitive issue of ‘going social’ displayed in the regions, but one of the criteria in the EPSA scheme of this edition has been heavily discussed and considered in the regional

group; namely Social Equity, or how did the (assessed) case provide evidence of consideration and application of social equity issues, e.g. consideration in decisions of gender, age and geographical impact.

Regions suggest – at best – ‘going social’ and trying to institutionalise this often difficult and emotional area. If handled with adequate care by the partners and activated wisely, not only is a better utility and capacity use ensured, but this can also result in having economic benefits and an impact. Strong political leadership is requested in this area; but more important is the true involvement of the target group or beneficiaries in the design and delivery of the actions. Some impressive achievements from the EPSA can be highlighted below.

Upper Austria Winter Sport Week

This project is about offering free vouchers to children and their families via an online solution for winter sports weeks/days in Upper Austria, motivated by several emerging reasons and concerns:

- a lack of exercise and sports activities during the compulsory years of education;
- the number of participants in ski courses had been declining considerably due to the cost, and the parents and pupils having little relation with ski sports (striking in a country such as Austria);
- a decreasing number of teachers were completing the training necessary to teach ski course groups;
- the winter sport is still of high economic significance for areas in Upper Austria that lack infrastructure.

It was realised thanks to a good and well-established cooperation between the Regional Authorities in charge of family affairs, the Local Education Authority, the Platform School and Snow Sport (grouping most of the stakeholders), the tourism authorities, the Youth and Family Hostels Austria, the Upper Austrian Ski Federation, the Parents’ Association of Public Schools in Upper Austria, cable car associations, associations of ski instructors, ski schools and bus companies.

This collaborative architecture results in economically feasible offers for ski courses in Upper Austria. Social inclusion is assured, among others, by involving schools where otherwise not all children and families would be reached. There are in total 140 schools and 757 kindergartens covered, which represent a potential of over 100,000 pupils concerned, so there is still room for additional growth. The satisfaction rate is over 90% (very satisfied; 5000 families). The voucher system is the best rated grant in the family surveys of 2011 and 2013 among other social allowances/grants.

All in all, it can be stated that there is an enormous increase (30% from 2009 until now, i.e. from 7000 to 9156 students) in the number of winter sports weeks. It is a pragmatic and creative solution combining public-private partnership and online vouchers, and addresses social inclusion (strong point) and economic policies whilst being didactically relevant.

Living with Cancer, Catalonia

The Catalan Institute of Oncology (ICO) is a public company, one of whose objectives is the promotion of corporate social responsibility as a guarantee of economic and environmental sustainability and social commitment. It aims to promote a healthcare management model based on this principle and focusing on, for instance:

- promoting measures of economic sustainability;
- improving the work climate and increasing the company's commitment, through the application of measures that are people-focused, especially in the area of equal opportunities for employees;
- positioning the organisation as a responsible company in the social and institutional sphere.

These values led to the implementation of activities of support and accompaniment to patients and caregivers, which complement the healthcare and promote an environment of a 'friendly hospital'. In order to do so, it develops alliances with different institutions and a series of initiatives to support and accompany the patient and his or her family. To this end, the not-for-

profit programme, 'Living with Cancer', one of the flagships of the ICO, and conforming with the approach of a 'Friendly Hospital' and other principles such as 'We think as a patient', delivers three lines of action:

1. Improving the process of welcoming the patients and their family, promoting the welfare and improving the comfort and facilities (Friendly Hospital).
2. School of patients: promoting the training and information of the patients and their family to enable them to make the right decisions during their illness, in addition to monitoring side effects.
3. Support Services: developing and offering resources to help cope with the disease and adapting to the new personal, family and social circumstances.

As a result of the initiative, in 2012, the satisfaction survey of hospital care places the institute with an overall score of 8.95 out of 10, above the average of Catalonia which scored 8.46. The degree of loyalty obtained by the ICO is 96.4% compared to 91.4% on average in Catalan hospitals. Although its (direct) economic impact is difficult to measure or to value, it was praised highly by the evaluators as a bottom-up solution, without any economic costs, building on a human network and emotions during the illness, thus strongly addressing the social aspects. In addition and when delivered successfully, as it is in this case, it shows potential to improve the hospital's image positively.

Development of Wellbeing and Civil Safety in Municipalities, Lapland

This is a cross-sectoral network project strengthening inter-jurisdictional cooperation and administrative efficiency, aiming at improved service delivery at local level and counteracting exploding costs in the social welfare and health sectors. In strengthening the stable rural development in the context of an ageing population they are successfully addressing one of the major challenges of citizens' wellbeing, which is a big issue also for other European regions.

The cooperation model applied in this project was developed with the specificities of the region

of Lapland in mind. In 2012, it counted 182,856 inhabitants living in a total area of 100,367 km², which means a population density of 2 persons/km². Lapland has 21 municipalities, out of which four are towns. Due to the low population density, some villages of the five piloting municipalities of the project are as far as 100 km away from their town hall, which is a challenge for the coverage of and access to high-quality public services. Therefore social and health NGOs are essential for the Finnish welfare system. In Lapland, there are approximately 7000 registered NGOs, consisting of over 400 which focus on social and health issues, mainly through volunteering.

The developed model enables more citizen-centric services resulting from a bottom-up perspective, by including NGOs (with a strong connection to citizens and their needs) and the private sector in the different phases of service design and by aligning the deliberations of municipal cross-sectoral working groups to the municipalities' budget cycles. Regarding the assurance of common goal achievement, a number of service contracts exist where new services and formal cooperation are in place.

The impact and results of the project are impressive; not only because it is cherished by all participating actors (local, regional and national level), but also as a tool to create faster and better citizen-centric services, to reach administrative efficiency and be able to use savings for new services as well as to increase the competitiveness for local communities in terms of business location and local tourism. For instance, the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities pointed out and praised the economic and social relevance of this project as it presents an alternative to service cuts or tax increases in order to maintain services in times of rising costs for well-being and health.

Other EPSA good practices in this domain are:

Volunteering University: Essential Elements for University Social Responsibility, Catalonia

Streamlining the Process of Managing and Dispatching the Emergency Crews to Improve Quality of Emergency Healthcare, West Pomerania

Intelligent ICT-enabled solutions and architectures, including the 'next' generation, with its multi-faceted benefits are a reality in the regions

Regional (and local) administrations are closest to the citizen. This statement is not new and has actually not changed with the introduction of the 'virtual world' in the public sector. On the contrary, and as also shown by several EPSA cases, they remain key players in the successful implementation of any e-Government project, not only because of their essential role of coordination and cooperation with other administrative levels (sub-regional, national or even European) and actors as well as with the private sector (e-PPP), but also because of the benefits from economies of scale (especially with regard to infrastructure and interoperability actions). In addition, successful ICT-enabled solutions or architectures require an integrated, strategic and coherent approach. To this extent, the regional level is the best one at which to initiate such developments as its remit is broader than that of the often fragmented local authority level². In addition, it has the power to scale up smaller or under-sourced (local) initiatives.

Regarding the 'new' generation or revolution created by today's dynamic social media society, it seems that administrative 'borders' continue to or begin to be abolished as open data principles and standards become entirely 'borderless'. The purpose of the use of the new social media is to simplify processes and increase efficiency, leading ultimately to more transparency and also

² Heichlinger, A., *eGovernment in Europe's Regions: Approaches and Progress in IST Strategy, Organisation and Services, and the Role of Regional Actors*, EIPA, Maastricht, 2004.

trust in the public sector. To this end, the EPSA 2013 showcases that several of the successful initiatives have their origin at regional level where apparently the respective launch of common guidelines, standards and actions within overall legal frameworks are both meaningfully placed and launched.

As a consequence, the EPSA is a good observatory for ICT-dominated good practices. Already in 2009 and 2011, in almost 50% of all submitted projects (574) across the seven themes, and in nearly 10% of the rewarded projects, ICT played a major role³. In the regional category in 2013, this figure has increased even further, in which five of the top-ranked and rewarded seven applications are (strongly) ICT-enabled; some of them are illustrated subsequently.

DISCIMUS, Flanders

The project concept is 'simple' (straightforward), i.e. the replacement of data submission from schools in Flanders from paper and by file transfer to a single electronic database, so that data entries in school ICT systems are automatically entered and with the availability of web service calls for schools.

It was driven by the local need to improve school capacity planning at a time of financial constraints and, at a political level, for faster responses to ministerial questions. It is thus an integrated platform for management and planning primary schools and schooling in Flanders. In order to maximise the chances of smooth implementation, the system was introduced by the Flemish Agency for Educational Services (AgODi) in close consultation with schools and suppliers of school software and, for its first year, using parallel running with legacy systems – a clear re-engineering effect. To develop and operate the system, the agency has a partnership contract with HP-Belgacom (HB) on which €2.7 million has so far been expended. The connection of data – and as consequence a better allocation of resources – has a high potential for

economic impact and was thus evaluated and ranked positively.

DISCIMUS is a project where clarity of objectives, effectiveness of planning and careful implementation, including effective stakeholder consultation, have delivered concrete solutions to a specific problem in a way which renders essential tasks more efficient, provides more information for the Agency (transparency), improves the service for schools and has the potential for wider exploitation than the current uses (transferability) should the decision be made to apply them.

Open Data Piemonte, Piemonte

The Open Data Piemonte initiative has been designed to promote and stimulate accessibility and re-use of the Public Sector Information (PSI) owned by the region, in order to contribute to speeding up transparency and enhancing access to the public sector. The commitment of the Piemonte Region in matters of open data started in 2009 with the adoption of a first version of regional guidelines on reuse of public data. These guidelines marked the first step in the process of implementation of the policy of open data, in alignment with the principles of the European Directive.

To date, more than 140 institutions have joined the project, and 76 of them have published data for a total of 142 data sets. The total number of published datasets in April 2013 was 402 (192 owned by the Region Piemonte). The prevailing formats are CSV and SHP files for the geographic data. Among the most relevant data available, the graph of the transport of the region was noticed, which was also used for the implementation of a commercial application (<http://www.3drte.com/viabilitaPiemonte>). Currently, the portal counts an average of 1200 visits per week and an average of 2000 data downloads per month.

³ Heichlinger, A. and J.O. Vanebo, 'Public Sector and the New ('Old') Technology', Busch, T. et al., eds., *Public Management in the Twenty-first Century. Trends, Ideas and Practices*, Universitetsforlaget, Oslo, 2013, pp. 81-97.

Piemonte was the first Italian region that took on the challenge of public data, by not only providing a portal to release the data, but also a proper regulatory and organisational framework. Following the adoption in December 2011 of the Regional Law on open data, Piemonte was declared by the European Commission as one of the most virtuous European Regions in terms of sharing of public data.

A New ICT Model: An Innovating Sourcing Process through Public-Private Collaboration, Catalonia

In a difficult context, since Catalonia is facing not only a financial and economic crisis, but also a political and a social harsh scenario, with rising unemployment, failed companies and a global recession, the Catalan Government planned concrete measures based on three guiding principles: austerity, service agility, slimming down and reorganisation of public administration with a focus on citizens, companies and economic growth.

To this end, the Telecommunications and Information Technology Centre, CTTI, a public company, plays an important role in being responsible for all ICT programs, strategies, policies and technologies of the government. Having 500,000 workplaces and 500 different patterns are just two impressive figures from this ICT initiative of the *Generalitat de Catalunya*. CTTI has the capacity to design, plan, oversee, manage and execute projects related to ICT in the region. It also promotes innovation through ICT and is an intermediary between the Catalan Government and its suppliers.

Particular mention must be made of the procurement procedure in the project – a cornerstone of its delivery and success. Part of this procedure was a competitive dialogue with selected companies to create partnership in the solution. The result was that the selected companies take over outsourced tasks, including staff. As a spin-off characteristic there is the fact that some private companies which are part of this process made some huge investments in Catalonia due to the multi-annual contracts.

These developments support the economic developments.

In a nutshell, it is a very inclusive, comprehensive and convincing initiative, with clearly defined objectives and results are driven (and fulfilled so far!). It is an impressive re-engineering project involving PPP in a competitive way and the employment creation included in the operations. Internal resources shift while creating external economic growth effects.

Other EPSA good practices in this domain are: ***Building e-Administration Tools Based on an Integrated Management System for Linked Government Administration, Kuyavia-Pomerania***

Castilla y Leon Open Government Model, Castile and Léon

Optimisation of Public Procurement through e-Procurement in the Region of Lombardy, Lombardy

A critical mass ('economy of scale') for service improvement/delivery and for economically successful impulses to development is provided or found by regional bodies

Being of sufficient size and having (usually) sufficient resources and capacities (both human and financial) to hand, the regional level often provides the required momentum and scale for the improvement of (certain) service delivery, its pooling, channelling and optimisation of efforts, whilst setting the agenda and direction for the entire territory. A critical mass or economy of scale to both initiate and launch ambitious re-engineering or modernisation projects in an administration, and to boost growth and job initiatives, are often prerequisites for its subsequent success. In addition, the regional level seems to suggest that it offers an ideal location for the creation of a clear (corporate) identity (or 'brand') of the innovation practice in question, benefiting and reaching out to a wider audience.

To this end, regional practices can show real practical results and impacts which are beneficial to a sufficient number of users – public employees, citizens and/or businesses – and which makes it likely that similar results could be reproduced elsewhere, i.e. the evidence of gains are not insignificant, and thus are able to demonstrate a continued sustainability.

Managing Human Public Resources with an Integrated Vision and Looking Towards the Future of the Azores

This project has been initiated based on a very specific reality and situation of the Azores Archipelago, i.e. an ultra-periphery region, with a distanced geographical distribution of the nine islands and its inhabitants, as well as of its dispersed and often small-scale public service delivery; a small economy with a strong and dominant role for the public sector, i.e. from among the approx. 250,000 inhabitants, roughly 18,000 are public employees.

The submitted application is a well designed and complete reorganisation of the HRM within the Azores public service, deploying a long-term strategy and is thus fully embedded in the overall political vision which focuses during its current mandate on three strategic axes; i.e. Enterprise, Citizens and Public Sector.

The initiative consists of two interrelated ICT-enabled solutions, i.e. the SIGRHARA HRM tailor-made software system (not a market bought standard solution!) which implements three HRM laws accordingly. It is a key tool for enabling public decision-making in the government based on the availability and accessibility of full data of all public employees (incl. the educational sector with 40 schools, or the health sector with approx. 6000 staff members). The other flagship is the BEPA (*Bolsa de Empleo*) software application, which was internally designed and developed, and which also manages the public employment portal. Both applications allow for a full set of processes and aspects inherent to HRM to be centralised, such as recruitment, appointment, careers, mobility and the daily management – a holistic shift is thus achieved.

BEPA and SIGRHARA, both operating since late 2006, now show some very impressive results, such as savings since 2007 of approx. €1.6 million, simplification of internal procedures (faster), reduction of financial costs and full transparency of the public sector staff costs, which amount to approx. 55% of the total budget – all strategic prerequisites for policy decisions and better service delivery. User-friendly application and both high awareness level and stakeholder satisfaction level (SIGHARA internally, but BEPA also externally) have also been measured; finally, their public finances are in good shape and a stability of public employment has been achieved.

Boost an Entrepreneur, Community of Madrid

The current macroeconomic environment, particularly in Spain, has produced a number of unexploited assets such as office spaces, warehouses, industrial equipment, vehicles, business contacts or business know-how. Each year, in the Community of Madrid, there are many entrepreneurs who need access to such resources to start or accelerate their business activities. Many companies, public entities (e.g. municipalities, science parks and business incubators) or even individuals have resources available or which are not used and they would be willing to share this value with an (young) entrepreneur.

This regional initiative aims to connect investors and entrepreneurs through a public service creating a unique virtual public platform that hosts both collectives and eases the smart connection between entrepreneurship needs and unexploited corporative assets. ‘Boost an Entrepreneur’ (or in Spanish, *Impulsa a un emprendedor*) forms part of a wider business-oriented strategy within the Community of Madrid. It is well established at the regional level, so to create the critical mass for the creation of new businesses remaining the best source for innovation-based economic growth.

Since it started in 2012, currently the initiative counts more than 18,000 assets of which approximately 60,000 m² consists of workspaces. Additionally, more than 300 potential investors

and 200 entrepreneurs are interested in the scheme.

This practice was considered by the evaluators as a simple, but intelligent (engagement with business community) and sound initiative with high replication potential. Per se, it has a high added value and is beneficial for economic growth in the short and medium run, since it optimises the access to resources already available and their management. The costs (for launching it) are marginal and once afforded, like other web-based social networks, it may remain self-sustaining.

Other EPSA good practices in this domain are:
Administrative Reform Styria 2011-2015, Styria

Towards a New Model for Managing a Leading Tourist Destination, Balearic Islands

The regional players/layers at the heart of any form of partnership working (horizontal or vertical) whilst assuring sustainability of the action

It goes without saying that, and as stressed before on several occasions, the regional level is ‘born’ to be the ideal location and platform from which to coordinate individual initiatives, which are launched and implemented in the various thematic areas, and to make sure that they are channelled in the same direction. As a consequence, any type of partnership working both horizontally and vertically with other public and private actors lies at the heart of any regional action. Moreover, in a similar notion, the regions happen to serve well when assessing the feasibility of ‘transfer’ of skills (technical), ideas and solutions (informational) or managerial matters in best practices.

In order to avoid overlapping, possible disfunctions and impediments to the progress of the projects, the region seems to be the best layer of administration to mediate both top-down and bottom-up, and to establish a harmonised set of prerequisites or standards for collaboration. Our cases illustrate well the power of regions in order to create an equal balance of power and function

among the various partners, with the aim of generating the needed (co-)ownership and quality of the activities.

It is up to the regional authorities/actors to seize the opportunities they already have and to bring the whole territorial interests and actions to the desired outcomes. The secret to succeeding and assuring sustainability, then, seems to lie on the administrations themselves, and more particularly, in their (partnership/collaborative) capacities (building).

Andalusian Health e-Library

The Health e-Library is a powerful knowledge sharing platform set up in June 2006 by the Andalusian Health Ministry. The European Digital Agenda inspired the Andalusia Government to take the initiative for this project which was built – bottom-up – with the help of librarians from the different hospitals. It thus serves as a centre for information and scientific documentation for non-medical purposes for 41 hospitals, 1500 primary care centres, and 28 centres. As such it is a large scale, unified and dynamic system, which is ICT supported, cost-effective and inclusive.

This initiative made it possible for the health professionals to have access to the most prestigious information resources, through the most advanced services, to help to take the decisions in healthcare, teaching and research. Stakeholders (users) can now deliver much faster and better medical treatment than they could before the virtual library existed. Enthusiasm is a consequence among the partners and project owners, because they are delivering a product with quality. This project makes a difference in the region and seems to deserve attention in Spain and also beyond. In this time of crisis, this best practice is succeeding in delivering a better product against lower costs. During the change process, their tasks were changed from looking after paper books and journals, to taking care of an up-to-date database.

Supporting a balanced (rural) development through a wide-ranging architecture of partnership working is high on the European agenda;

sustainability is achieved through decentralised small service units in the medical sector.

Development of Wellbeing and Civil Safety in Municipalities, Lapland

This project has been already highlighted above, but deserves also further explanation as a built-up network with both strong horizontal and vertical cross-administrative features. It builds on and enhances the Lapland model for Internal Security Network cooperation applied at regional and national level, involving public authorities, NGOs, education and research organisations and the private sector in the field of security, which has been incorporated into the new structure of the Regional State Administrative Agency Lapland. The agency has a central role in this model acting as a ‘middle man’ bringing local needs to the attention of the national level and translating national goals to the regional and local level.

The strength of the network lies in its openness to and equal treatment of all partners, coupled with a proactive approach and outcome-orientation (‘getting things done’). In fact, all partners, regardless of whether they are public authorities or NGOs meet at the same level and appreciate each other for their various contributions and complementarity of activities. To this end, trust is an important component of the functioning of this relationship.

REDEJA Network:

Energy Management Network, Andalusia

The Energy Management Network of the Andalusian Regional Government, REDEJA, is a project approved by Agreement of the Governing Council on 26 June 2007, whose main objective is to improve energy efficiency, encourage the incorporation of renewable energies and achieve the optimisation of energy contracts in public

buildings and installations of the Regional Government, including administrative buildings, schools and elderly residences.

Currently, the REDEJA network consists of more than 4500 public buildings and consumption centres of the Andalusian public administration, with an overall estimated energy consumption of 1200 GWh, equivalent to an annual consumption of 650,000 houses.

The REDEJA network is a public project, which through public procurement, counts on the participation of more than 20 private companies (e.g. Gas Natural, Iberdrola) in the implementation of integrated energy actions in addition to the mentioned public agencies and institutional partners. The management of REDEJA is entrusted to the Andalusian Agency of Energy. Since 2007, REDEJA has provided an overall energy saving of 24 GWh, and a saving of 22,000 tons of CO₂ emissions as well as an overall economic saving of €25 million. The REDEJA network is a member of the Campaign for Sustainable Energy for Europe of the European Commission.

It is praised by the EPSA assessment process for its bold demonstration that a joined-up and holistic cooperative network and *modus operandi* in such an important domain is realistic and feasible, if the political will and control are strong and sustained. In addition, the positive effects in savings are reallocated to other potential growth areas and direct and indirect jobs are created in the regional economy for the long term.

Other EPSA good practices in this domain are:

ReHeNUE: Re-engineering Health Network Emergency Urgency, Calabria

Andalusia, Innovation for Sustainability

Supra-local and Local Level

Introduction

The points highlighted earlier naturally also have an influence on the functioning of administrations at supra-local or local level, whose main characteristic is their proximity to citizens. This makes this administrative level pre-eminently suitable to have direct contact with the inhabitants. In many situations it also requires another way of thinking on the side of civil servants. And this is a huge challenge!

Whatever anybody can say about these developments, in practice many governmental institutions are already working with this challenge. The result of **113 eligible applications** from **20 countries** is a rich harvest of practical situations which can act as an example for other governments in European countries and perhaps even for countries all over the world. Top submitters in this administrative category were Poland (27 projects), Spain (17 projects) and Romania (13 projects). The selected applications presented here have been labelled ‘best practices’ (in total 23) and are presented in this publication so that everyone can learn from them. These best practices are presented randomly and do not reflect any ranking. They all deserve being mentioned and are presented in alphabetical order of the submitting country.

Best practices

Improving Administrative Quality: Merging of the Districts Judenburg and Knittelfeld, District Authority Office ‘Murtal’

Merging governmental institutions is one of the ways to reduce costs and improve quality.

The extent to which such an initiative can be successful very much depends on the regulation in force in a given country. A good example is the merger of two governmental districts in the Federal State of Styria, which greatly benefits the districts. The merging process and its results could be a possible solution to reduce costs and improve quality of the work of the governmental institutions. It should not be forgotten that merging districts or municipalities is an emotional decision, through which it is not obvious that it will bring benefits in a short term.

Vienna Charter: Living the Future Together, City of Vienna

This is a good example of how it is possible to create social cohesion through an interactive discussion about the future of a city – a discussion between the different nationalities, represented by their organisations. The result was that they had an agreement about future developments, which is very important for the necessary decisions which have to be taken and therefore translates into (economic) benefits for the city government.

Co-creating with Youngsters, Municipality of Ballerup

The city of Ballerup in Denmark was concentrating on youngsters who did not get the education they needed after elementary school, in order to have a good chance of success in society.

New services were innovated in a public-private cooperation, together with youngsters, aged 14-19, targeting the challenge as mentioned above.

Police and Social Media, Reykjavik Metropolitan Police

This is a perfect example of how to use social media and get the full (financial) benefits of using these media in practice and how to survive severe cuts. The reduction in the number of police officers was compensated by an excellent use of Facebook and Twitter.

Ennis Innovate: Regional Innovation Centre, Clare County Council

This is a cooperation between key partners and a non-profit organisation; ‘Ennis Innovate’ supports start-up/pin out generation and business development. The result is that participants were engaged in a systematic process of market validation and business development, leading to the creation of new business and the subsequent creation of jobs in the region.

Reorganisation of Judicial Offices in Italy: the Project of the Monza Court and the Redesign of Voluntary Jurisdiction, Court of Monza

This project is an example of how to reduce costs in a complex organisation. In Monza, a comparison was made between several European countries about the average costs for citizens for the ‘service’ of Judicial Offices; they came to the conclusion that in Italy the costs are almost the highest in Europe. A change was achieved by rethinking structures, operating mechanisms and word processes and support systems.

Together in the Neighbourhood, Municipality of Milan

The city of Milan searched for social cohesion – social inclusion as a solution for giving people a goal in their life.

The accent of the project is safety. The concept is to manage urban security, in which citizens are considered as potential partners who can work together with their government. This is Milan’s answer to the growing fear of crime: a focus on shared security.

The Creation of a New Economic Zone in Southern Luxembourg: Efficient Urban Planning and Social Integration through Cross-Municipal, Cross-Border and Cross-Sectoral Cooperation, Municipality of Esch-sur-Alzette

A totally different way in which to ‘weather the storm’ is seen in a project from Luxembourg, which is cross-municipal but also cross-border.

After the downturn of the steel industry in the South Western part of Luxembourg, Esch-sur-Alzette was searching for new developments. In cooperation with municipalities in Luxembourg and France, the area was developed into a totally different way, with a important role for the University of Luxembourg.

The ‘Zdolna Dolna Partnership’ as the Incubator of Local Community Development in Szklarska Poręba, Municipality of Szklarska Poręba

This is another project with social inclusion as a red thread in the attempt to give the future of citizens a positive change.

The main thought in this project is to build a network of statutory and community organisations aiming to address social inclusion issues. It is a problem-solving approach which resulted in increased social capital and facilities, innovative methods of cooperation between communities and a more positive image.

e-Ticket Within the Electronic City Card, City Hall of Rybnik

For governments, it is important to find a way to reduce costs. This is possible by gaining information to be able to deliver public services at the right moment, combined with a high level of service to the citizens. A good example for such an approximation is the introduction of the e-Ticket in Rybnik.

Citizens of Rybnik were familiar with the Electronic City Card. With this e-City Card they can now travel on all public transport with the incorporated e-Ticket. The use of this e-Ticket saves paper tickets, and furthermore, the city can

find out exactly when the use of buses is most required. The result of all this is a more efficient use of vehicles and therefore cost reductions.

***Educational and Promotional Campaign:
Bielsko-Biala Protects the Climate,
City of Bielsko-Biala***

Education and promotion are still important issues in terms of reaching and involving citizens in the case of energy savings, and thus costs reductions in society. Bielsko-Biala provides such an example of cooperation between all kinds of organisations in a city, to reduce CO2 pollution and realise significant energy savings at a low cost. All social and age groups have been involved in project activities – toddlers, children and adolescents, university students, young entrepreneurs, older people, shopping malls, private companies and energy suppliers. ‘Education sells’ may be the conclusion of this project. But there is of course more than education. The project makes use of very good promotion material and social media and organises a yearly Good Energy Festival attracting over 50,000 visitors. All new developments on energy saving are given attention (Eco-driving, solar panels, e-Bikes, etc.) and climate ambassadors, influential people from politics, sports and culture, disseminate and promote the campaign.

The Programme of Construction and Exchange of Municipal Flats in Poznań, City of Poznań

How can a city reduce housing costs whilst guaranteeing social inclusion and appropriate flats for underprivileged families, and complying with legal obligation?

The City of Poznań has put in place a system of exchanging flats, alongside the construction of new municipal flats. The city is facing a deficit of social flats allocated to families with the lowest income – a group growing rapidly, among others, due to the economic crisis. The municipality has the obligation to provide social flats as adjudicated by courts, to persons with an eviction order concerning the flat occupied previously. The municipality may be summoned to pay compensation to owners of flats occupied by these persons. A good flat exchange system

is therefore beneficial, both for the municipality (since it pays less compensation), and for citizens (they get a social flat or move into a municipal flat of a higher standard). Thanks to the extrajudicial settlement system put in place, the city pays less compensation and also saves on the cost of proceedings. To cope with the demand, the city will build some 250 new municipal flats a year over the next five years.

Integrated System of Exchanging Municipal Flats in Gdańsk, City Hall of Gdańsk

The starting point for this project was an issue that was very important in Poland. Gdańsk was the inventor of the exchange system and many cities followed this good example and modernised it or tailored it to their city. The basic value of the project is that people live in the house which is most suitable for them, so the municipality does not need to pay compensation.

***Simplis: Lisbon Simplification Programme,
Municipality of Lisbon***

Lisbon sought to ‘weather the storm’ through a simplification of the administration.

The keywords of this best practice project were streamlining services and processes. The project led to a general increase of efficiency and effectiveness, as the figures showed. The programme has become part of the city, with many stakeholders using the annual presentation to suggest improvements.

Local Telecare Service of the Barcelona Provincial Council and the Municipalities of the Barcelona Province

Cooperation between municipalities to deliver a form of support to elder people; this is realised in the Barcelona Provincial County.

The project is a pro-active approach to telecare for elderly or vulnerable citizens. It not only provides emergency responses, but also contains preventive, monitoring and information elements. It now uses second generation devices, such as fall detectors. It has created new systems and protocols for the provision of social care for the elderly in Catalonia.

BiscayTIK

Information technology was part of many applications for EPSA 2103, also in the case of BiscayTIK. The remarkable part of this project is that it is a model for many municipalities in the region.

In many cases it is profitable for administrations to make use of the most recent information technology. This gives a possibility to deliver products at a high and fast level to citizens. However, the investments in this kind of technology are mostly very high, and for small municipalities it is very difficult to make the necessary investments. This project based on a foundation between governments and private companies made is possible for investments to be made in the Biscay Region.

GOTA2020, Municipality of Gotarrendura

A good environment is very important for a feel-good experience of citizens. The project of Gotarrendura is a good example of this.

The project shows the level which a small municipality can reach. Strategic thinking is necessary to come up with good detailed plans for the surroundings. In this case it concerns a strategic vision for the rural development until 2020.

More Than One Story, Municipality of Simrishamn

Social inclusion by a card game. Making your message attractive is one of the most important principles of this project.

It has been a great success in Sweden already, and is also being implemented in other countries. By answering different questions included in a card game, youngsters get to know their position in society. The object is to let them think about their own future, to reach a social inclusion at the end. And of course it can be played via smartphones.

LOTS, Municipality of Hultsfred

Economic developments are not possible without active entrepreneurs; entrepreneurs who need a cooperative government.

LOTS is a project to realise a cooperative local government. The objective is to organise a 'lot' of opportunities in a governmental organisation for entrepreneurs to get the information they need. A form of client thinking.

Youth Square, Municipality of Umeå

Nowadays it is very important for youngsters to get a job and a good education. It improves their chances for a good future. Umeå has a project built upon this principle.

To access support, youngsters (some of them with disadvantages) need support. In this project the objective is to find a form of project organisation which can provide this support. For more than three years the chosen form of cooperation of local government with other (non-governmental) organisations proved to be the way to help youngsters aged between 18 and 25 to find a good education and/or a job.

No Ifs. No Butts., City of London Corporation

Clean streets are important, particularly in footfall areas. People feel better and it is good for the image and economic development of those kinds of areas.

The City of London had an initiative to reduce the amount of cigarette litter. With a communication plan and facilities on site, they succeeded in reducing this problem.

The North Dorset Model of Community Planning, North Dorset District Council

When digital solutions, even in these times, are not the first option for maintaining cost-effective services and retaining facilities, other solutions must be found. This was accomplished in North Dorset (UK).

It found a solution in community authorities. These authorities can make development proposals, and grant capital funding to commission their own buildings. This distinctive method of government in the form of decentralisation shows how it can be done in a different way.

Economic Development Funding Strategy,
Aberdeen City Council

‘To do more with less’, this is the starting point for almost all projects developing activities to ‘weather the storm’. The application from Aberdeen City Council starts with this short sentence.

The aim of the project is: ‘to use the available funding as leverage to bring in additional funding from the Council’s external partners, allowing specific strategic projects to go ahead’. Through a new organisational structure of the Economic and Business Development department, the City of Aberdeen was successful in gaining additional funding to realise the goals of the department, i.e. doing more with less governmental money.

Conclusion

Overview

The period since the previous EPSA research report in 2011 has been characterised by continuing pressures on public administrations and little evidence that the crisis in public finances will be eased in the short-term.

However, the signs of positive and creative responses to the continuing crisis in the applications for EPSA 2013 – particularly reflected in the response of the nominees and best practice certificate winners – indicate the willingness and capability of many public administrations to adapt to the pressures that have been created by severe constraints on public budgets.

The common factors present in many successful applications are a combination of administrative capacity, stakeholder support and political support, factors demonstrated in EPSA 2013 projects at all levels of government.

Key messages

A number of key conclusions have already been highlighted above regarding the responses by projects submitted to the crisis emerging, from a range of applications submitted to EPSA 2013 at all levels of government and across the EU, i.e. examples of:

- Active strategies to promote economic growth, in some cases consistent with the pursuit of environmentally-friendly objectives, such as the promotion of green technologies for export, and the economic re-balancing of a region to respond to decline in traditional industries such as steelmaking. A similar example was observed in EPSA 2011 with the award-winning city of Bilbao.
- The ability to continue to pursue and enhance social inclusion at a time of economic crisis; for example for women, groups disadvantaged by physical disability or age-related mobility restrictions or those facing barriers to entry into the labour market, and attempts to promote more effective use of limited resources such as social housing.
- The use of transparency as a means to promoting better governance and minimising opportunities for corruption by ensuring that the public sector's obligations are clearly stated and that compliance with them can be monitored by citizens.
- The continuing potential for the use of ICT to enhance trust in government, particularly through the use of community dialogue using social media to promote government to citizen interaction.
- The use of ICT applications to significantly improve service delivery, reduce costs and enhance citizens' experience, such as by increasing access to services, reducing the need for physical citizen-to-government interaction, streamlining documentation procedures, improving service planning as an alternative to increases in spending and as an essential tool for the simplification of internal procedures within administrations. Such measures have, as might be expected, resulted in the more effective use of limited resources and thus an improvement in the fiscal sustainability of public administrations.
- The emergence of partnerships, mergers and other collaborative ventures between administrations to improve the quality of public services, particularly in circumstances where they might not otherwise have been

considered. One example was cooperation between autonomous municipalities for the delivery of internal audit services – a key component for the promotion of value for money in public administrations and thus, again, with the potential for improvement in the sustainability of their finances.

- The potential role of more centralised and coordinated procurement and service management, whether horizontally or in specific sectors such as health, business services or vehicle management, in reducing costs and promoting innovative solutions to service needs. This trend will be further facilitated by recently agreed reforms of the European public procurement regime.
- The recognition by public administrations (including small ones such as in Sweden and geographically dispersed ones such as the Portuguese Autonomous Region of the Azores) at a time of crisis of the need to ensure that human resources are used effectively and staff feel valued (thus aiding staff retention and the quality of service delivery). These projects show that employee-friendly outcomes need not be inconsistent with the modernisation of corporate procedures or the development by public administrations of a more public service-based orientation to both regulation and to service delivery.

In addition, we have also observed:

- The ability of projects to continue to implement actions consistent with the key components of the Europe 2020 policy agenda (smart, sustainable and inclusive growth), such as the encouragement of the development of SMEs, creation of links between research clusters as an engine for economic growth and cross-border transport links (Luxembourg), enhancing trade between the EU and Turkey, the pan-European promotion of e-Procurement (11 countries) and the delivery.
- Public services with a regulatory and control function, such as the police (in Iceland), which are often regarded with caution by citizens, are not excluded from the possibility of establishing high levels of public trust and encouraging active public support and participation, while recognising that such trust may need a significant degree of existing community cohesion, requiring an incubation period to emerge. The need to lay sound foundations for active public support and participation was previously observed in EPSA, in the context of urban planning and environmental protection, in Borne (the Netherlands) and Münster (Germany).
- The continuing recognition of the role of the state or region as facilitator rather than service deliverer, with examples of its role in promoting improved consumer information in different sectors (in Spain and Latvia) and for the delegation of service provision to not-for-profit entities (such as for road safety training in Italy).
- While successful outcomes of ICT projects cannot be taken for granted in the public sector, the evidence from projects submitted (for example in the education sector in Flanders) suggests an improvement in the likelihood of success if there is effective stakeholder consultation and partner selection, and a realistic implementation timetable, with manageable, phased implementation.
- The European Parliament's programme to widen access to information about, and training in, the role of its interpreters, thus promoting social inclusion and therefore enhancing links between the European institutions and citizens.
- Public administrations willing to take policy risks to address pressing issues of managing resources effectively, such as the innovative cross-border solution to manage overcrowding in Belgian prisons and utilise spare capacity in Dutch prisons by relocating Belgian prisoners to Dutch jails.

Finally, the volume of applications across different levels of government from Spain (46 applicants in total) is indicative of a seriousness of intent to reform (and progress in doing so) in the face of severe budgetary constraints. The volume of applications from Spain has not been at the expense of quality. There were three Spanish award nominees, and in addition six further best practice certificates.

Summary

There remain difficult choices ahead for European public administrations to stabilise public finances while continuing to deliver the services, which increasing numbers of citizens need more than ever as a result of the economic crisis. Moreover, trends over time which exacerbate those pressures, such as an ageing population, a diminishing working population and increasing competitive pressures from outside Europe are unlikely to be reversed in the medium term.

Continuing pressures for creative solutions still remain the focus for future responses by the public sector, and thus our recommendations lie within the need for enhanced responses to challenges such as:

- How to further harness creative policy responses to the management of rising health and social spending pressures on public budgets, for example, from the ageing population, changes in household composition, difficulties in some cases in reducing levels of welfare dependency and service pressures arising from increases in migration.
- How to further promote in parallel both economic growth and fiscal consolidation as core components of a sustainable route out of the economic crisis by:
 - developing policy responses to positive factors which promote business innovation and growth (e.g. public sector seed financing, financial instruments to leverage private investment in innovation, tax incentives, education and training

geared towards innovation, creating collaborative clusters, etc.);

- effective policy responses to negative factors which discourage enterprise (e.g. business regulation, rigid labour markets, restrictive bankruptcy laws, cultural attitudes to bankruptcy, etc.)

- How to further exploit the potential use of ICT for widening and deepening the use of transparency in, and thus accountability for, decisions made by European public administrations, for example the provision of information about public contracts and analysis of public expenditure. This could have the effect of enhancing trust in government which is needed to gain acceptance for difficult decisions about public expenditure and services by enhancing citizens' ability to judge whether optimal decisions have been made, and thus to gain greater acceptance for the costs incurred by the state in providing them.

The main conclusions of EPSA 2013, with the evidence of creative solutions at all levels of government, are, however, that innovative policy responses are potentially within the reach of all European public administrations, though smaller administrations may, again creatively, need to apply them in partnership with their peers. And, since effective adaptation to local circumstances of good practice from other sources can be as effective as the search for ideas not previously applied elsewhere, one of the points of departure for creative solutions to weathering the storm, often as seen here driven by the need to change, is the desire to actively seek out existing good practice from other public authorities.

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Catalogue

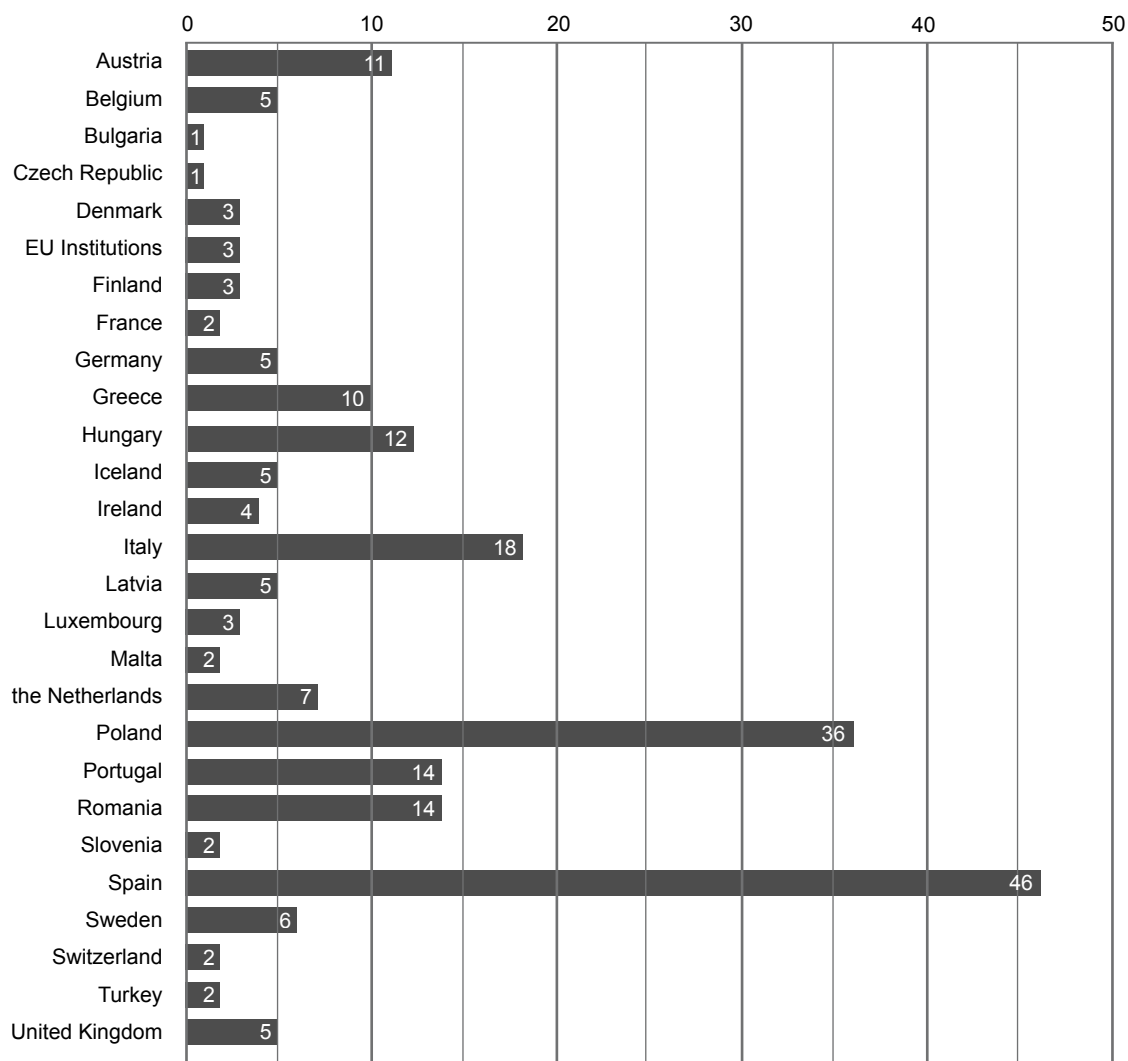


Statistics



General Statistics*

Applications by Country (227 in total)

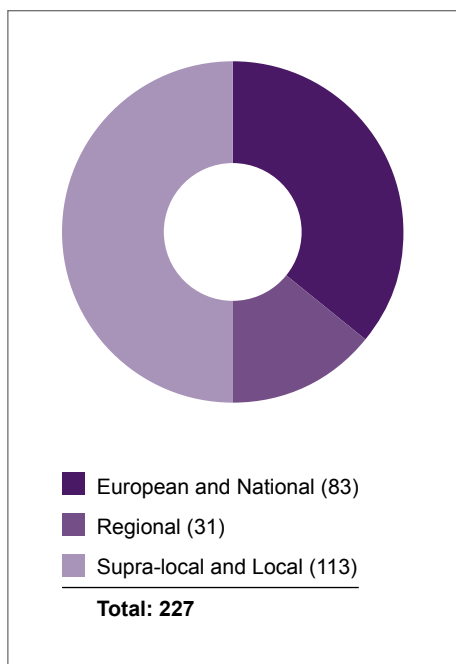


* All statistics presented refer to the eligible applications.

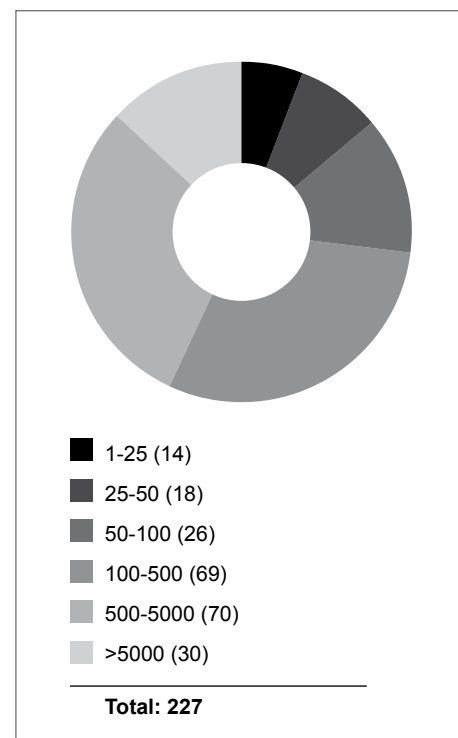
Applications by Sector

Public administration, modernisation, institutional affairs, reform	76
Public health and social welfare/affairs	24
Other...	22
Economic affairs, competition, SME	19
Environment, climate change, agriculture (incl. food safety) and fishery	19
Information society, technology, media and audiovisual	16
Education (higher and lower), training and learning	13
Justice, police, human rights and security	13
Transport and infrastructure	8
Employment, labour related affairs and gender equality	7
Taxation, customs, finances	4
Sports, youth, culture and art	2
Science, research, innovation	2
Regional policy and development, decentralisation	2
External relations and aid, development and enlargement	-
Total	227

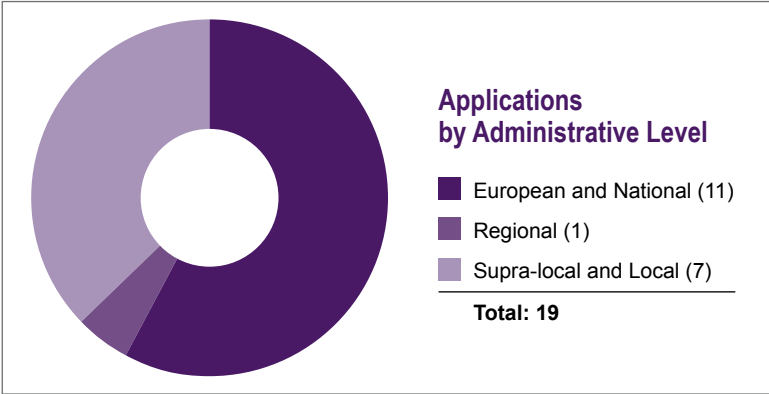
Applications by Administrative Level



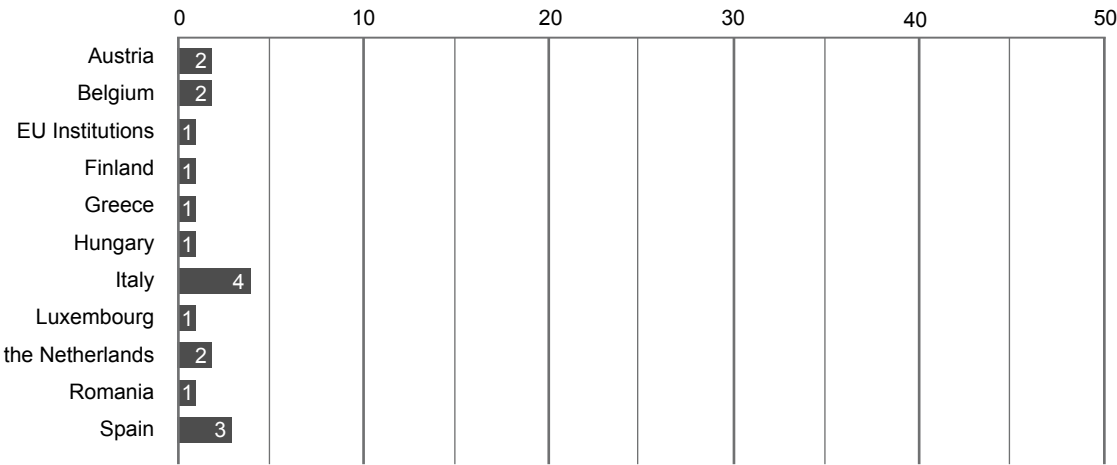
Applications by Size of Organisation



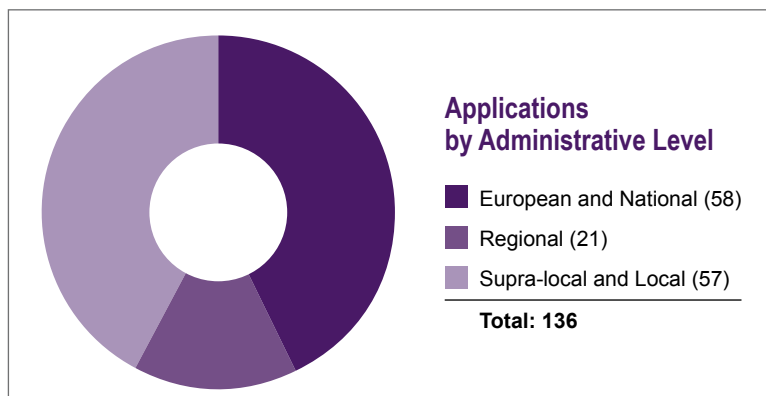
Cross-Border Projects



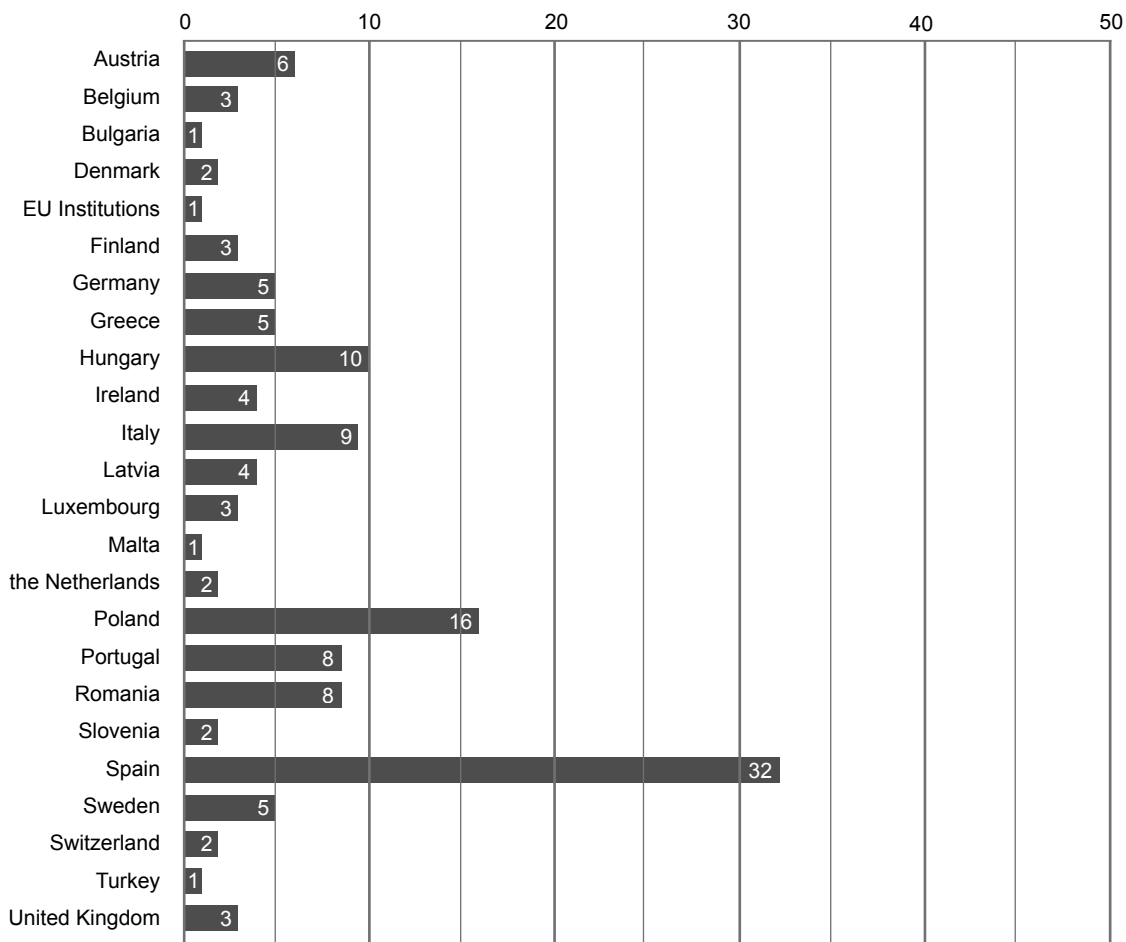
Applications by Country (19 in total)



Cross-Administrative Projects

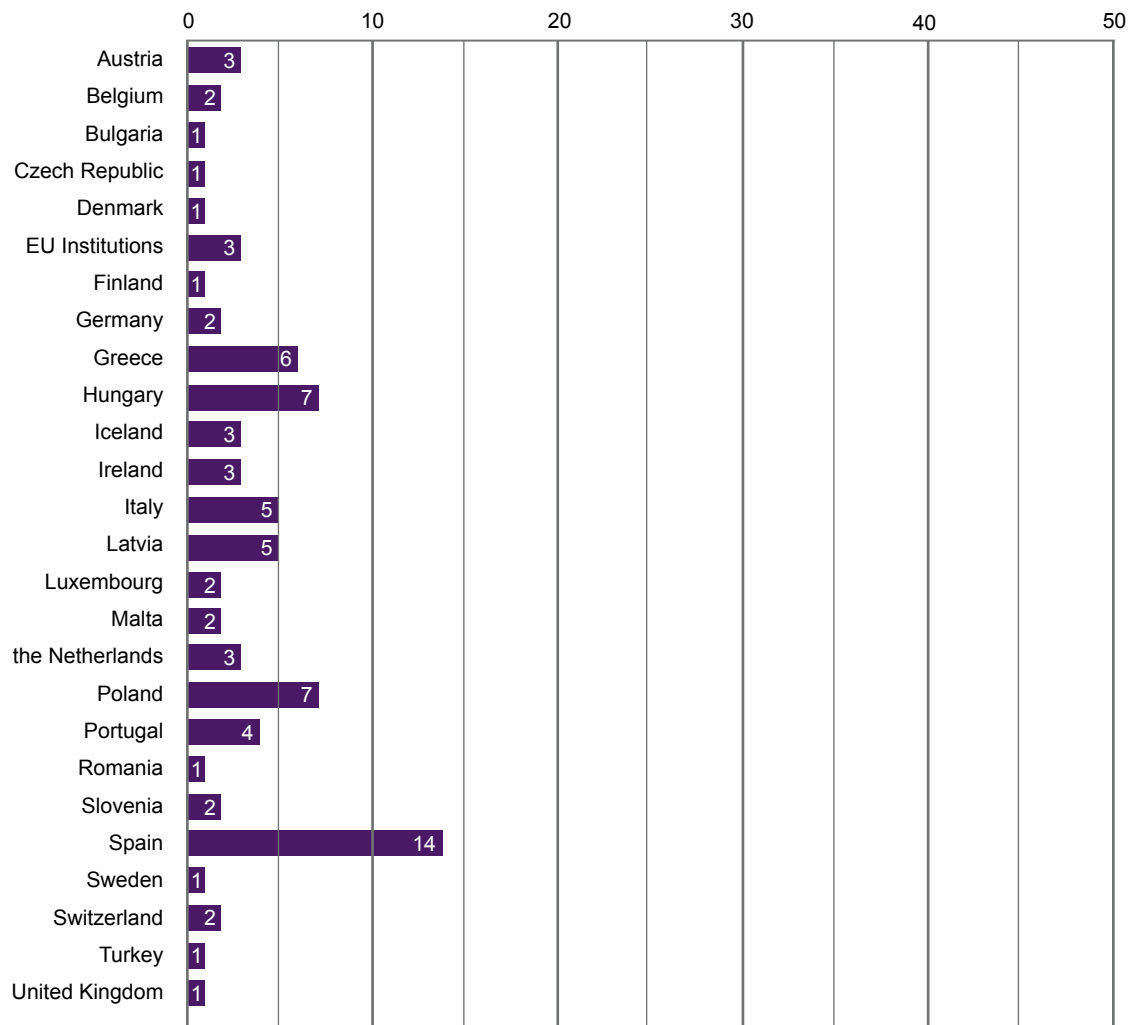


Applications by Country (136 in total)



Statistics at European and National Level

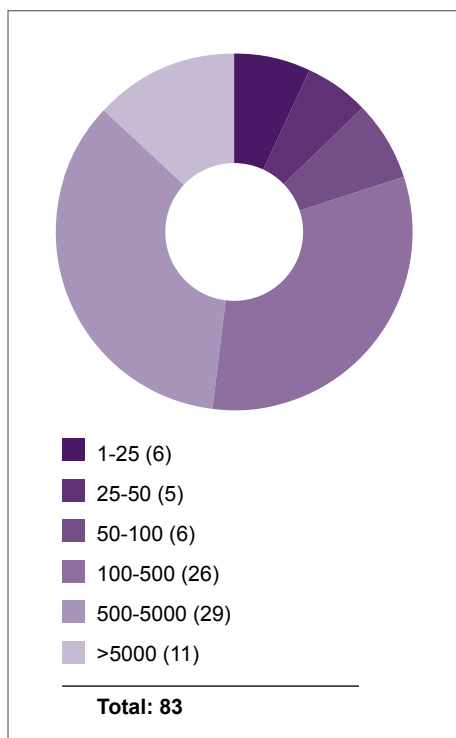
Applications by Country (83 in total)



Applications by Sector

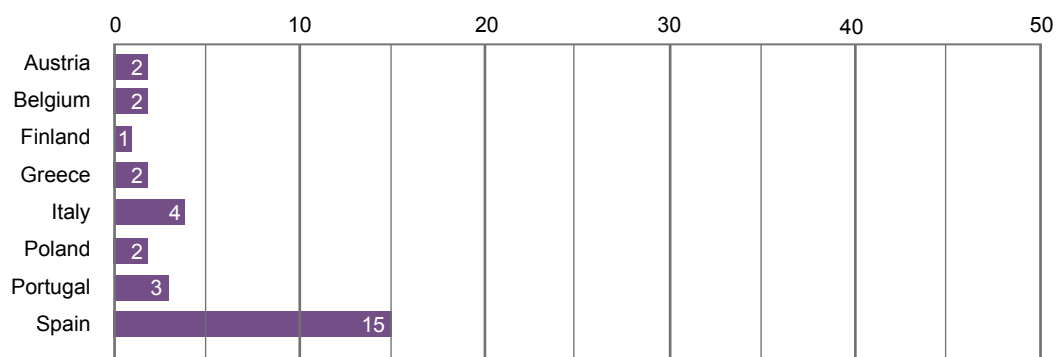
Public administration, modernisation, institutional affairs, reform	29
Economic affairs, competition, SME	14
Environment, climate change, agriculture (incl. food safety) and fishery	9
Public health and social welfare/affairs	7
Justice, police, human rights and security	7
Information society, technology, media and audiovisual	5
Education (higher and lower), training and learning	5
Other...	4
Employment, labour related affairs and gender equality	1
Sports, youth, culture and art	1
Transport and infrastructure	1
External relations and aid, development and enlargement	-
Science, research, innovation	-
Regional policy and development, decentralisation	-
Taxation, customs, finances	-
Total	83

Applications by Size of Organisation



Statistics at Regional Level

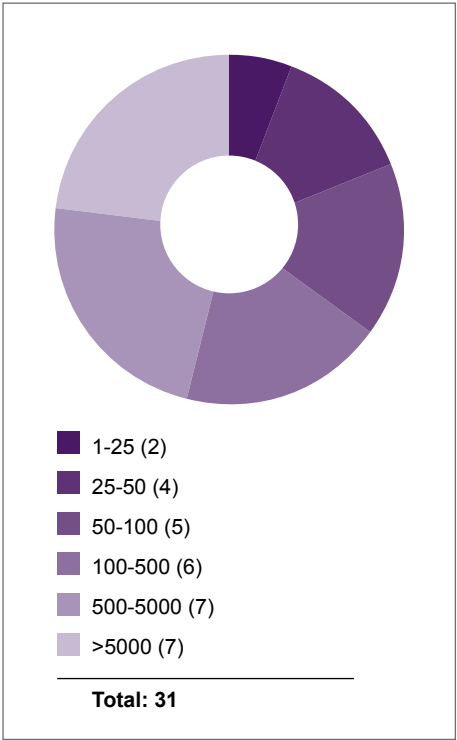
Applications by Country (31 in total)



Applications by Sector

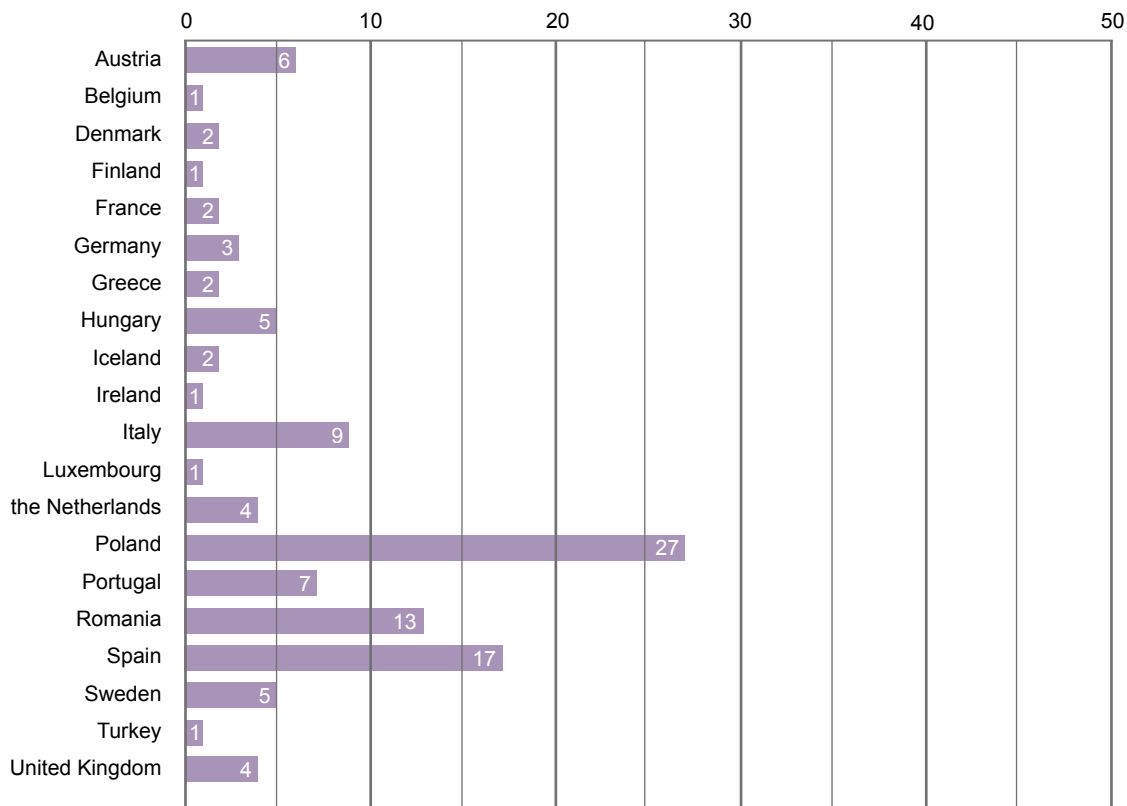
Public administration, modernisation, institutional affairs, reform	13
Public health and social welfare/affairs	4
Information society, technology, media and audiovisual	4
Environment, climate change, agriculture (incl. food safety) and fishery	3
Education (higher and lower), training and learning	2
Economic affairs, competition, SME	2
Justice, police, human rights and security	1
Regional policy and development, decentralisation	1
Other...	1
External relations and aid, development and enlargement	-
Sports, youth, culture and art	-
Science, research, innovation	-
Employment, labour related affairs and gender equality	-
Taxation, customs, finances	-
Transport and infrastructure	-
Total	31

Applications by Size of Organisation



Statistics at Supra-local and Local Level

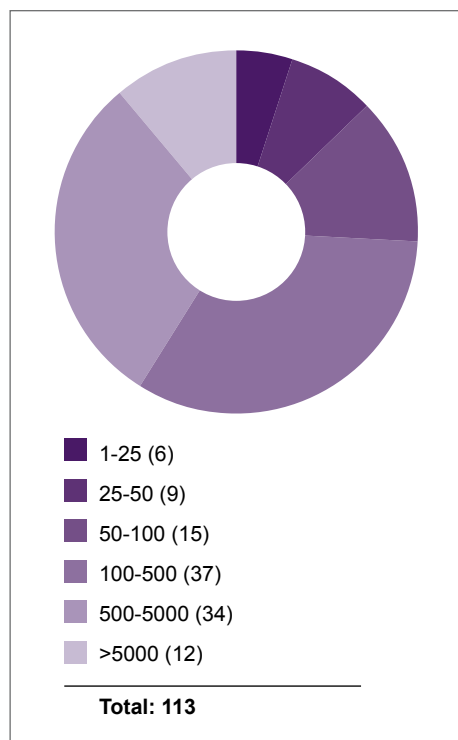
Applications by Country (113 in total)



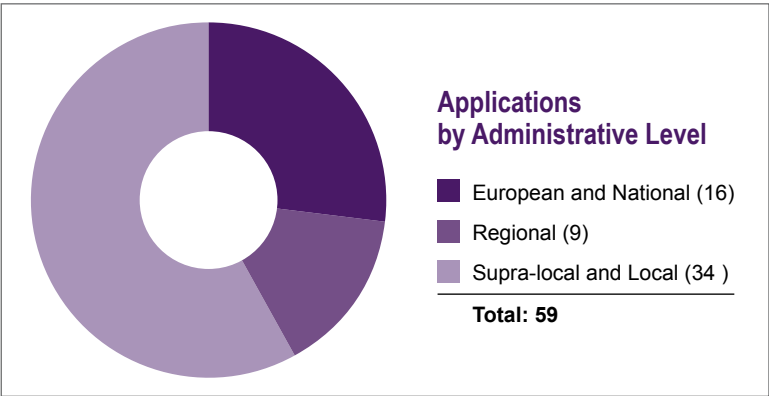
Applications by Sector

Public administration, modernisation, institutional affairs, reform	34
Other...	17
Public health and social welfare/affairs	13
Environment, climate change, agriculture (incl. food safety) and fishery	7
Information society, technology, media and audiovisual	7
Transport and infrastructure	7
Education (higher and lower), training and learning	6
Employment, labour related affairs and gender equality	6
Justice, police, human rights and security	5
Taxation, customs, finances	4
Economic affairs, competition, SME	3
Science, research, innovation	2
Regional policy and development, decentralisation	1
Sports, youth, culture and art	1
External relations and aid, development and enlargement	-
Total	113

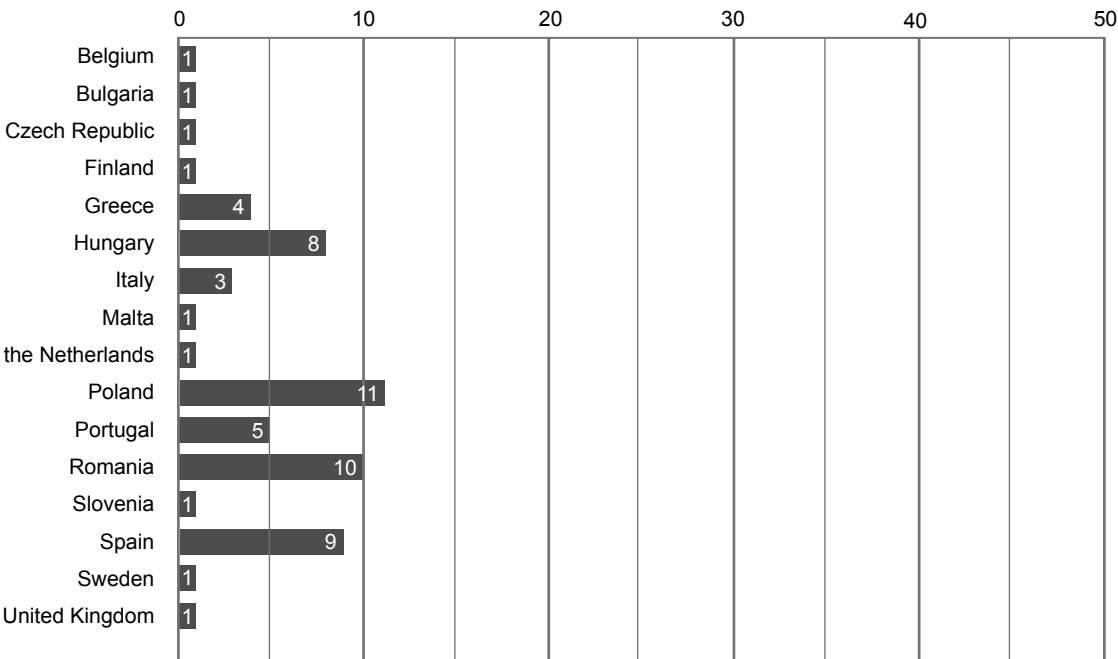
Applications by Size of Organisation



EU-Funded Projects



Applications by Country (59 in total)



Projects



The projects presented in the Catalogue are classified according to administrative level, and within each category, by Nominees and Best Practice Certificate recipients. Following this categorisation, projects are firstly ordered alphabetically by country (English version of the name), and secondly, in ascending project number.



15 Award Nominees (5 per category)



32 Best Practice Certificate Recipients (12 EU/National, 2 Regional and 18 Supra-local and Local level)



Fully or partially financed by EU supportive actions

European and National Level *Nominees*



SignWiki Web and Mobile Access to Sign Languages

Submitted by the Communication Centre for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Communication Centre for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

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Size of organisation

25-50, people involved: 1-5

Type of sector

Information society, technology, media and audiovisual

Key words of project

Sign language, mobile platform, offline app, social media, Wiki, knowledge webpage, cooperation, open access

SignWiki is a collaborative web and mobile platform which enables the collection, dissemination and analysis of sign language (SL) resources and knowledge via a dictionary and various materials for teaching and learning.

The methodology and didactics build upon ideas of open and active participation of the SL community. Deaf people and those interested in SL participate and can both, use the material and contribute with their own comments, materials and signs. SLs do not have a written or standardised form. However, a certain formal standardisation takes place through the active participation of deaf signers in the decision-making and commenting of signs via the SignWiki. Thus, politics and language policy is formed, independent of age, gender or residence.

SignWiki Iceland has created a ground for new and innovated solutions that can be used worldwide to give people access to the local SL and also to other SLs. SignWiki adopted a generic approach and is set-up as a wiki 'farm', which means that numerous different sites using different SLs can be set up with little additional technical cost based on the Wiki template, which also allows materials to be made available across platforms.

Open source software was chosen for financial reasons and for open access to SL resources. Everything on SignWiki is open and under CC license. Descriptive pictures are from the Wiki community for teachers and other content creators to copy and use for their own purposes in teaching.

Through SignWiki, Icelandic sign language is now for the first time open to everyone; all the information is easily accessible for all users on an interactive basis. The system is unique in its integrated pedagogical, open and participatory approach. It is user-friendly and easy to handle at a very low cost.

The system is a true pioneering work, the first of its kind and therefore easily accepted by many countries. It has brought forward new solutions on a worldwide scale and has already been implemented in Norway, the Faroe Islands, Tanzania and Namibia, with training and support from the staff at the Communication Centre for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in Iceland. Finland has already implemented it and further countries have also shown interest.

The Compass of Transparency

Submitted by the Department for Public Administration

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Type of sector

Public administration, modernisation,
institutional affairs, reform

Key words of project

Transparency, Open Government,
eGovernment, citizen engagement,
interinstitutional cooperation, ICT, social
media



The compass of transparency (www.magellanopa.it/bussola) is an automated online instrument that gives citizens the possibility to monitor in real time the implementation of all data and information requirements imposed by Italian law on the websites of more than 20,000 Italian public administrations (PAs). It aims to support government, through the direct involvement of citizens, in the continuous quality improvement of online and digital services. It is a system of rules, processes and technologies that combines the three basic principles of Open Government: transparency of public administrations; citizen participation; and collaboration.

The compass yields returns in terms of increased efficiency, reduction of corruption and lower costs across the whole Italian public sector. The social collaboration of citizens is extremely important, as a different kind of verification system would be very slow and expensive given the high number of PAs. Therefore, the socially-friendly control can be seen as a new collaborative relationship between citizens and administrations, becoming a highly efficient tool.

The heart of the system is a validation mechanism, composed of software sensors and mathematical algorithms, with the ability to analyse PA websites in

both real time and at certain intervals. The analysis is performed by comparing the found data and information with contents defined and standardised by the laws of transparency and guidelines on websites. The data is then collected in a data warehouse which, through dedicated interfaces, is able to provide different types of users with results on the transparency compliance of all institutional websites.

The most important functionalities of the compass, all of them being publicly accessible and multilingual, are the following:

- checking the site;
- comparing the sites of the different PAs;
- ranking between public administrations thanks to a set of ranking features for transparency;
- giving your opinion in a completely anonymous way via logging in to the compass through social networks;
- graphic dashboard giving an overview of the transparency process at national and regional level.

Transferability of the 'Compass of Transparency' to other administrative systems is fully assured by its simple methodology, terms of rules, processes and technologies.

GreenEvo: Green Technology Accelerator

Submitted by the Ministry of Environment

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Type of sector

Environment, climate change, agriculture
(incl. food safety) and fishery

Key words of project

Eco-innovation, green technologies,
environmentally-friendly solutions,
international technology transfer,
innovation, sustainable growth, support for
international activity, natural environment

GreenEvo: Green Technology Accelerator is an innovative project from the Ministry of Environment, with the task of promoting environmentally sound technologies and supporting the growth of this sector domestically and abroad. The project aims to support organisations pursuing the development of green technologies in navigating and promoting their unique solutions in international markets. The project can be divided into four stages: selection of technologies for the project; acceleration (training courses, first experiences in technology transfer, reports and analyses concerning strategic foreign markets and the Polish market, analysis of policies for supporting green technologies), selection of laureates; international promotion of the winning technologies; and support for foreign governments interested in the transfer of technologies through the exchange of experience and access to information.

The enterprises selected in the GreenEvo project have gone through a series of specialist training courses. They have been prepared thoroughly to promote and transfer their products, and they have acquired knowledge concerning legal regulations, norms and technical standards applicable in foreign markets. It can be said with certainty that the winners of the GreenEvo project are ready to share their technologies,

experiences and knowledge with countries struggling with problems in the following areas:

- waste water treatment and water purification
- waste management – including hazardous waste
- processing agricultural biomass
- renewable energy sources – including solar collectors
- clean coking processes
- energy-efficient and low-emission technologies
- protection of biodiversity
- passive and energy-efficient buildings
- low-emission transport

The GreenEvo brand is the result of the project's experiences, and the desire to share it with other countries that find themselves in the same position Poland was in just a short time ago. Furthermore, it is a guarantee of technological quality. The project winners constitute a group of the best green technology producers in Poland.

The 2010 edition was the first edition of GreenEvo, and the fourth edition took place in 2013.

Towards a Paperless Administration

Submitted by the Ministry of Finance and Public Administration

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Type of sector

Public administration, modernisation, institutional affairs, reform; Regional policy and development, decentralisation

Key words of project

Paperless administration, citizen-centricity, efficiency



According to the Law on Electronic Administration, Spanish citizens have the legal right to present any application to public administration, either face to face or using the electronic channel. Moreover, despite the different levels of administration in Spain – central, regional and local – citizens can present an application in whichever office of whatever tier of administration, without knowing which is the competent authority and the ever-changing administrative structure.

These legal requirements pose a problem to regional and local entities as they oblige them to invest in technological resources beyond their economic means. Moreover, an interoperability infrastructure needed to be developed, which would allow the interconnection between all the public administration offices using a common format.

To face the challenge, an innovative suite of platforms has been developed: the offices interconnection system (called SIR), an Application for Face-to-Face Offices (called ORVE) and a Generic Electronic Office (called ACCEDA). SIR was implemented and deployed in 2011, allowing in a first stage the interconnection between the electronic offices of all the central administration departments (embedded in their websites), and

in a second stage the interconnection of their physical offices. ACCEDA was introduced in 2011 to set up Electronic Offices of several Ministries (Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Public Administration). ORVE has been applied since 2012 for the physical offices of several local councils of Madrid and units of the Madrid Regional Government.

ACCEDA and ORVE are provided in a cloud-like model, while SIR is the logic infrastructure for connection of the physical offices on top of the internal public administration network, SARA. The implementation of the suite SIR-ORVE-ACCEDA in all the tiers of the Spanish administration will introduce a new way of delivering public services with the following benefits:

- operational and cost efficiency: reducing the cost of communication between two local councils;
- higher quality of service: dramatically reducing the time lapse between sending an application and its reception by the responsible administrative unit;
- higher user satisfaction: services are delivered in less time and citizens can also track the state of their applications.

In a nutshell, this project paves the way for quality and citizen-centric services in a decentralised country.

Risk-Based Trade Control System (TAREKS)

Submitted by the Ministry of Economy, DG Product Safety and Inspection

Ministry of Economy, DG Product Safety and Inspection

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Type of sector

Public administration, modernisation,
institutional affairs, reform

Key words of project

Trade, web, risk analysis, e-Signature,
inspection

The Ministry of Economy is responsible for the conformity assessment of certain imported goods such as toys, medical devices, telecommunication products, personal protective equipment, machinery, electrical equipment, gas appliances, etc. and also some industrial raw materials and the quality control of some agricultural products at both export and import stages.

Since inspecting 100% of goods at export and import stage resulted in a heavy burden on government and the private sector, the Ministry of Economy launched a tailor-made system 'Risk-Based Trade Control System (TAREKS)' designed to carry out quality and safety checks electronically and on a risk basis.

Upon the completion of the system's software framework, a pilot implementation phase started in December 2010 with some selected agricultural products. Following successful results, the scope of the pilot was widened both in export and import. During this phase, firms started to apply for inspection and uploaded supporting data or documents via the 24/7 system by means of electronic signature. In this way, firms are now able to follow their inspection applications and results. For this new type of service, all inspectors were equipped with notebook computers and wireless internet access.

Creating this project and involving all potential actors (customs authorities, designated inspection bodies, private companies) required institutional strengthening and capacity building. Thus, tailored training programmes were organised in different regions and cities for companies, inspectors and other stakeholders. The scope has been expanded to include programmes in IT and legislation, case studies and exercises. Integrating all transactions into the system – a good database comprising all applications and statistical data – has been established to determine the inspection policy and conduct the risk analysis.

Rather than subjecting all export and import consignments to controls, TAREKS applies risk assessment procedures and focuses on high-risk consignments. Thereby, the scarce inspection resources are only concentrated on unsafe and poor quality products; thus reducing the waiting period at customs, and increasing the efficiency of inspections.

Consequently, Turkey has acquired an advanced quality and safety inspection system which reduces bureaucratic procedures, replaces paper documentation by trustworthy and updated electronic data, and enables the efficient use of public resources.

European and National Level

Best Practice Certificate Recipients



EDM Environment Austria

Submitted by the Ministry of Life

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Type of sector

Economic affairs, competition, SME

Key words of project

Environmental, e-Government, electronic applications, administration, reporting obligations, cross-administrative, legal compliance, business support



EDM is a cloud-based e-Government tool developed by the Austrian Ministry of Life, in cooperation with the federal regions over a period of many years. It is one of the most extensive and complex e-Government tools in Europe and comprises a network of 22 applications with which reporting obligations (e.g. of emission data), applications for permits and verification requirements are processed uniformly in compliance with different environment-related laws. The objective of EDM is to create clarity and legal certainty for all stakeholders by supporting a uniform application of Austrian and European legislation in the environmental sector; thus majorly contributing to maintaining the high standard of Austrian environmental protection.

The clearly arranged, well-structured and in part menu-guided design of EDM makes even highly complex processes manageable. For instance, environmental inspections can be carried out efficiently by the authority with fewer personnel, and EDM applications can be used for the complete waste management process (e.g. generation, transportation and treatment of waste).

EDM is an extremely extensive and complex software as a Service (SaaS) application. It can be accessed online via standard protocols, is not bound to any

specific terminals nor does it require any local installation. Provision of the service is automatic, needing no interaction with the EDM operator. All resources and data are freely available for several users in the form of a pool. The EDM services are mainly provided free of charge and without requiring a licence. Access and export of data are carried out in compliance with the strict requirements of Austrian data protection legislation. Highly automated processes can also be supported by EDM via a series of web service and XML interfaces available for import and export.

EDM is completely integrated into the Austrian e-Government environment – including data pertaining to companies in the Austrian business register – and is an integral part of the Austrian Portal Group. A key EDM principle provides that data are collected and managed only when they first arise. Afterwards they are transmitted and processed exclusively without media discontinuity.

EDM enables the integration of authorities at different administrative levels and with different areas of competence (four federal ministries, all regions and district authorities) as often more than one authority is responsible for a specific permit or report.

Austrian Business Service Portal (BSP)

Submitted by the Federal Ministry of Finance

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Type of sector

Economic affairs, competition, SME

Key words of project

Cutting red tape, eGovernment procedures, administrative reform, process optimisation, one-stop-shop information and transaction

The Business Service Portal ('*Unternehmensservice-portal*') is the flagship project of the Austrian Federal Government's initiative to cut red tape. It is jointly coordinated by the Federal Ministry of Finance (BMF) and the Federal Chancellery (BKA). The portal serves as a single entry point to Government for businesses. By offering information and transaction services it enables businesses to meet their reporting obligations to the authorities as simply and efficiently as possible. This single gateway to government information and transaction services will significantly increase the attractiveness of doing business in Austria.

Businesses can use this portal to find relevant information, submit data to meet their information requirements and use online procedures to interact with the authorities. A single access point is offered for previously existing applications, such as '*FinanzOnline*' (virtual tax office), the electronic data exchange with Austrian social security institutions (ELDA), and the Data Processing Register (DVR). Furthermore, information on reporting and information requirements will be combined and offered in one platform.

The project submitted is Phase 1 of the BSP, in particular the implementation of the information part and single sign-on functionality, including central administration of roles and rights in the transaction part and business register. In 2010, a fully-fledged information portal was set up, and since 2012 the BSP provides single-sign-on services to the most important e-Government applications such as taxes, insurance and environmental reporting. Already existing and all new e-Government applications will be integrated in the BSP. Phase 2, which started recently, focuses on the support of processes for enterprises, with special emphasis on interfaces to Enterprise-Resource-Planning (ERP) systems, streamlining administrative procedures and avoiding multiple reporting of the same information; regional and local e-Government applications will also be integrated.

The added value for enterprises at a glance:

- register once to use various e-Government applications: now businesses have to register separately for each application and manage numerous passwords and user IDs;
- deal with all administrative issues online and resolve them faster;
- central user management for various procedures;
- 24/7 information around the clock provided by government offices;
- maximum security standards.

Multilingualism and New Technologies: Sharing Know-How with the Next Generation

Submitted by the European Parliament, Directorate-General Interpretation and Conferences

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Size of organisation

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Type of sector

Public administration, modernisation,
institutional affairs, reform

Key words of project

Democracy, interpretation, multilingualism,
e-Learning, virtual classes, new technologies,
universities, sharing of knowledge



Underpinning democratic debate in the European Parliament (EP) is a cutting-edge multilingual conference service that allows members to express themselves freely in any of the 24 official languages of the Union. As the lawmaking powers and stature of Parliament have grown steadily since the Treaty of Rome in 1957, so has the importance of delivering a competent, professional and flexible interpreting service, provided by the Directorate-General for Interpretation and Conferences (DG INTE).

DG INTE is aware of the need to nurture a new generation of conference interpreters capable of meeting the combined challenges of a growing shortage of skills as experienced interpreters retire, the new linguistic demands created by successive EU enlargements and the proliferation of new forms of communication and conference technology in the workplace. Thus it has harnessed state-of-the-art technology to bring the expertise of its staff into university classrooms across Europe to enhance the quality and harmonise the standard of interpreter training to benefit future interpreters.

These Virtual Classes held using a high-resolution video link-up between the EP and one or more universities foster the highest professional standards and offer students a real-life insight into how conference

interpreting in the European institutions is done. With the physical locations of trainer and student rendered immaterial by technology, the limitation of the number of language combinations that can be taught is eliminated.

Whereas in the past interpreting students relied almost exclusively on the trainers at their own university, they are now able to participate in Virtual Classes bringing together their own teachers, the students and staff at other universities, and professional interpreters from the EP and partner institutions. Both, students and universities stand to gain from a greater insight into the needs and expectations of prospective future employers, and the EP will have the opportunity to offer more structured pedagogical input and to assess the progress of future graduates over the duration of their courses.

The Virtual Classes offer a cost-effective, technology-driven solution that delivers high stakeholder satisfaction, is inclusive and sustainable, and projects a positive image of the EP as a future employer. The project has won enthusiastic accolades from the growing network of partner universities and inspired them to build on the format in cooperation among themselves.

Transforming Federal IT Services: Doing More with Less and Helping Others Do Better

Submitted by the Federal Office of Administration

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Size of organisation

500-5000, people involved: >15

Type of sector

Modernisation, IT, transformation

Key words of project

Paperless administration, citizen-centricity, efficiency



The Federal Office of Administration (*Bundesverwaltungsamt, BVA*) is one of the most important service providers for federal agencies in Germany. Its mission is to unburden federal ministries and agencies from non-critical mission tasks allowing them to focus on their core tasks. With a current staff of around 2500 and an annual budget of €222m, it offers more than 100 tasks with a strong share of IT-related services.

Since the 1990s, BVA faces the challenge of 'doing more with less'. Its key to mastering this challenge consists of utilising and expanding its strong IT competencies – for the BVA, 'Public Administration is IT'. It has shown what a huge contribution IT can make in difficult financial times.

To guide its decisions given scarce resources, BVA has identified five success factors against which each action and results are measured: quality of delivered services; increased efficiency and flexibility; long-time sustainability; transferability to other institutions; and appropriateness of the chosen measures.

BVA has implemented a series of measures over the past couple of years. A first set of initiatives was set to improve quality of delivery: focusing on the best projects and tasks, improving the project controlling process, and operating IT in a more secure stable manner – for itself and especially its clients. Another set of measures concerned efficiency and flexibility: the standardisation and modularisation of software development, a clever management of enterprise architecture helping to avoid double work, and managing and improving processes in IT and administration in general.

Finally, there were initiatives regarding the transferability of BVA's own approach: it established competence centres and took on a 'one-for-all' approach to software development to achieve wide-ranging applicability. All measures actually led to concrete, measurable results which could be tested against the key factors of success. Two innovations stand out in particular: BVA's competence centre for large-scale project management, and its unique 'Register Factory' for efficient and flexible implementation of large registers, a key tool in modern administration.

Each of the measures mentioned above is designed to have long-term and sustainable effects, and the results are merely seen as stage wins on a continuous track towards modernisation and improvement.

NEDA Platform

Submitted by the Computer Technology Institute & Press

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Size of organisation

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Type of sector

Education (higher and lower), training and learning; Public administration, modernisation, institutional affairs, reform; Science, research, innovation

Key words of project

Project management, process monitoring, workflow management, e-Procurement

The Computer Technology Institute and Press 'Diophantus' (CTI) constitutes the technological pillar of the Greek Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs, Culture and Athletics (MINEDU) for the support of ICT in education.

The long-term structural transformation initiated by the Greek government in 2009 because of the crisis profoundly affected the relationship between the CTI and MINEDU, requiring CTI to increase the volume of service delivery, while maintaining its quality and significantly reducing costs by more than 30%. In its new role, CTI is (a) responsible for organising and implementing all the ministry's actions related to ICT, leading to a broad range of activities; (b) responsible for developing media outlets for all the educational units, thus collaborating with a large number of people with different technical background and expertise; and (c) deploying the actions across all public schools in Greece, which inevitably involves numerous people located all across the country.

In order to deal with these challenges, in 2009 CTI started to re-engineer its core processes so that efficiency, effectiveness and economy are maintained for all its business activities. A key aspect of this change management endeavour was the design and development

of a holistic platform (called NEDA) that integrates six legacy software systems and establishes a unified approach for administering and managing all the processes and workflows related to the operational tasks of the institute. NEDA is designed to enhance existing knowledge, decision-making, workflow, and interaction of middle and senior managers. It is developed using modern web technologies allowing all stakeholders to access the business processes from anywhere, anytime and anyhow. Currently NEDA provides a multi-dimensional, cross-functional solution for project management, financial administration and knowledge management.

The re-engineering project examined the seven most critical and high-volume processes of the institute, involving more than a thousand users working on a regular basis in projects supervised and/or implemented by CTI. The new processes radically change the way CTI is conducting business, as well as enabling CTI to deliver services at higher volumes, lower overall costs and achieve increased transparency. The processes are easier to execute and monitor, and result in more than 60% reduction of the time required to complete.

Librodigital

Submitted by the Icelandic Talking Book Library

The Icelandic Talking Book Library

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Size of organisation

1-25, people involved: 6-10

Type of sector

Public administration, modernisation,
institutional affairs, reform

Key words of project

Digital access for the print disabled

The Icelandic Talking Book Library's role is to make printed media accessible to people with print disabilities, such as the blind and people with dyslexia. In 2008 it was based on analogue techniques and media was distributed through cassettes. The production and library system was homemade and based on DOS techniques. Only the designer knew how it worked. But the library faced huge technical changes: since cassettes were no longer on the market the distribution needed to be digitised so it could be downloaded, or streamed on CDs, etc. The library needed a system that could be used for the production of DAISY digital books in library studios, as well as a loaning system offering self-service via the web.

The first step was to swiftly digitise the library using the inheritance from a late patron (some 14 million ISK – approx. €90,000). Around 6000 titles were digitised in two-and-a-half years. Meanwhile the library was looking for a system solution.

Since the library faced challenges during the crisis in Iceland, it could either wait on stand-by for an indefinite time, or search for other solutions. They started by

looking at existing systems in Europe in their sister institutions in the Nordic countries. However, it turned out that the other systems were also not ideal; either the systems had been adapted with rather poor results for talking book libraries, or the existing system was not adequately serving the needs of the library.

After a long search, they found a young company named Programm ehf in Iceland. They had designed a serving system for the Public Insurance Services in Iceland that worked well. Programm was the only company that wanted to help 'Librodigital' on their terms, so they decided to design a new production and loaning system, based on the needs of the library.

Programm and the library staff (seven people) had weekly meetings for a year, where the functions and the possibility of the system were discussed within a cost frame of 5 million ISK. The result was an excellent production and loaning system that works both in-house and on the net. It uses CD-burning robots and material can be downloaded from the library website. It was set up in May 2011 and has been gradually improved ever since. Programm and The Icelandic Talking Book Library share 50/50 ownership of the system. They are starting to present the system to digital libraries in other countries. The system received an Icelandic innovation price in the public sector in 2012.

3000 Ambassadors for Road Safety

Submitted by the Automobile Club of Italy (ACI)

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Size of organisation

500-5000, people involved: 1-5

Type of sector

Public administration, modernisation, institutional affairs, reform

Key words of project

Social inclusion, vulnerable road users, safer mobility models

Automobile Club d'Italia, a non-profit public body, represents and protects the general interests of Italian motorists, performing its activities through its own network of local clubs to serve the whole national territory. The philosophy behind the Club's policies and actions towards improving mobility is aimed at spreading the culture of road safety and integrating foreign-born residents into the country.

A survey from the beginning of 2012 on road accidents in Italy showed that 13.5% of the foreign-born driving population (estimated at 2.7 million people) is involved in road accidents – the Egyptian, Peruvian and Albanian communities being those most affected. This is a highly significant rate with regard to the social expenditure related to road accidents, which is borne by the whole national community, and amounts to €30 billion, or the equivalent of 1% of the Italian GDP.

This led to an investigation of the reasons behind the statistics, and a study on what actions could be taken to curb the phenomenon, while also making an impact on the integration of foreign-born residents in the fabric of Italian society.

The identified action consists of a programme offering free safe-driving courses to foreign-born residents

driving in Italy. The teaching format is based on the European standards of excellence. The relevant communication plan stresses the values of safe mobility and social inclusion. After attending the course participants are certified 'Ambassadors for Road Safety' not only to behave and drive in a safe way, but also to promote a road safety culture within their own national communities.

Language difficulties – especially for speakers of non-European languages – and a number of differences in comparison with the countries of origin concerning traffic rules, road signs and markings, the road environment, climatic conditions, etc. are undoubtedly among the main reasons interfering with safe mobility for this category of vulnerable road users. Foreign embassies, consulates, and the relevant foreign communities in Italy have been identified as the driving force of the project.

Since the very beginning, the programme has been under the patronage of the Italian Prime Minister's Office and the Ministries for Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Integration, and Regional Affairs, Tourism and Sport; it has also been supported by the embassies and all the representatives of the national and international communities.

Nova Belgica

Submitted by the Dutch Prison Service

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Type of sector

Justice, police, human rights and security

Key words of project

International cooperation, prison, treaty

Nova Belgica is the result of a unique cooperation between Belgium and the Netherlands, in which Dutch prison capacity is used to (temporarily) house Belgian prisoners. To put this cooperation into practice, a special treaty was drawn up between the two governments, followed by a formal cooperation agreement.

As a result, the prison in Tilburg, the Netherlands, received the status of a branch (Flemish: *bijhuis*) of the prison in Wortel, Belgium. The prison in Tilburg is staffed by Dutch personnel, working under a Belgian executive officer. It houses Belgian prisoners exclusively. Transport from Tilburg to the main prison in Wortel and vice versa is also taken care of by the Dutch Prison Service. For this complete package the Belgium government pays an annual fee to the Dutch government. The cooperation is evaluated half-yearly, and so far both parties are very satisfied with it.

This is the first and only example in Europe, and maybe worldwide, in which two countries work together to have the prisoners from one country housed in the other.

For this cooperation, complex legal problems had to be solved to create a Belgian prison environment on Dutch territory. Linguistic and cultural training for the prison staff in Tilburg was also needed, as Belgian prisoners differ from Dutch prisoners, both in terms of language and cultural behaviour.

Prison capacity is a very expensive commodity, difficult and time-consuming to create, and, apart from the social implications for the workforce, even more expensive to close down. The demand for prison capacity varies depending on the time, country, and administration. When a high demand for prison capacity is confronted with too few places, there is a danger of worsening prison conditions. Therefore, this type of inter-state cooperation is also in the interest of the prisoners themselves.

In terms of sustainability, this cooperation contributes to better and more efficient use of property which is already built. Getting out of the circle of creating and closing buildings means using fewer natural resources, producing less rubble and maintaining more environmental stability.

Portugal Did IT: The National Public Procurement System – Developing and Implementing an e-Procurement Solution

Submitted by the eSPap, Public Administration Shared Services Unit, IP

eSPap, Public Administration Shared Services Unit, IP

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Size of organisation

100-500, people involved: >15

Type of sector

Economic affairs, competition, SME;
Information society, technology, media
and audiovisual; Public administration,
modernisation, institutional affairs, reform

Key words of project

Public procurement savings, efficiency,
aggregation, reform, savings, e-Procurement



The Portuguese Public Procurement reform of 2007 created a new paradigm in Portugal and affected all aspects of the system (legal, regulatory and economic). One of the most central and powerful elements of the reform was the adoption of e-Procurement, which led to impressive results in terms of savings, transparency and enhanced competition. Portugal is considered a best practice of public procurement across the EU, regarding e-Procurement, centralisation and the use of framework agreements.

Three major pillars supported the reform:

1. The new Public Procurement Law of 2008, the Code of Public Contracts (CPC) to transpose the EU Directives 2004/17 and 2004/18 and to consolidate, modernise and adapt the legal building for public procurement;
2. The creation of a Central Purchasing Body (CPB) – *Agência Nacional de Compras Públicas*, EPE (ANCP), since 2012 the Shared Services Entity for the Public Administration, ESPAP, IP – the entity in charge of managing the newly created mandatory public procurement system, *Sistema Nacional de Compras Públicas* (SNCP), for central administration and public institutions;

3. The introduction of mandatory e-Procurement for all public bodies for tendering and awarding all public procurement procedures above €5000 as of 01/11/2009.

The top-down approach, the substantial role of the CPB in connection with the SNCP and the usage of e-Procurement were essential for the broad consolidation of the Portuguese e-Procurement plan.

Being inspired by different European experiences, ANCP's key values, such as transparency, equal treatment, fair competition, promoting sustainability, etc., are aligned with EU and international standards. ANCP's main objectives concern economic goals, by increasing savings in public procurement (contributing to sound and better usage of tax payers' money) and environmental goals (green public procurement) by gradually incorporating environmental requirements in the selection/qualification and awarding criteria in public tenders. At the same time, SNCP involved all major players in the reform.

SNCP is a hybrid system, based on a CPB (ANCP/ESPAP) which operates a network structure, with the Ministerial Purchasing Units – one in each ministry – acting as mini-CPBs and focal points between the agency and the contracting authorities from central administration and public institutions. The SNCP can also be used voluntarily by other public bodies establishing direct relations with ANCP/ESPAP.

Partnership for Internal Audit in Local Administration

Submitted by the Ministry of Public Finance, Central Harmonisation Unit for Public Internal Audit



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25-50, people involved: 6-10

Type of sector

Public administration, modernisation,
institutional affairs, reform

Key words of project

Partnership for internal audit



Since the implementation of the internal audit function in the Romanian public administration in 2003, significant progress has been achieved at the central level, but there is poor progress at the level of local public administration (functionality of only 27%), especially in rural areas.

Difficulties relate to recruiting qualified personnel as internal auditors due to scarce human resources available in rural areas, the non-attractive salary level in local public administration, and the heavy financial burden for small public entities with 10-15 staff. Institutions like rural town halls would have to make great financial efforts to sustain an internal audit unit, requiring at least two internal auditors by law. In view of other challenges at the local level, such as applying and implementing European funds, or introducing new working methods (managerial control and operational procedures), mayors lacked a tool offering them objective support to take appropriate decisions. This void was filled by the internal audit function. Hence, its proper implementation was of utmost importance.

The proposed solution – a partnership model between small public entities – came from national and

European experience, implemented locally; while the project's aim was to implement it across all local public administrations in Romania. Partnerships were already functioning in other areas of town halls, like civil safety (e.g. fire brigade) or waste management. This existing cooperation was a good basis for the start of the new internal audit function.

In 2009-2010 a twinning project with partners from Austria and France was carried out to identify good practices regarding the association process of small public entities for assuring the internal audit function. Eight partnerships were set up as pilot centres. At the end of the project, the Romanian partners continued disseminating the partnership model. Crucial support was received from the Association of Communes from Romania (ACoR) that later became an indispensable partner in assuring the sustainability and the dissemination of the association process throughout the country.

It was crucial to get on board the Mayors of communes as key actors of the internal audit model. The result of the joint efforts is partnership agreements linking 540 communes (out of 2861), where 107 auditors are working and the process is expanding step by step.

RISP Fuel Prices

Submitted by the Ministry of Industry, Energy and Tourism

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Size of organisation

500-5000, people involved: 6-10

Type of sector

Economic affairs, competition, SME;
Information society, technology, media and audiovisual; Public administration, modernisation, institutional affairs, reform; Energy

Key words of project

Open Data, fuel prices, petrol, Geoportal

RISP Fuel Prices is an Open Data initiative in the field of web 2.0 by the Ministry of Industry, Energy and Tourism, which provides citizens with information on current fuel prices, allowing them to save money while refuelling. It gathers information in real time about different fuel prices throughout Spain, including biofuels, thus increasing transparency and making it possible to analyse the state of affairs of the energy sector in Spain. Citizens can access fuel prices online and via any mobile device through the petrol stations' Geoportal (<http://geoportal.mityc.es/hidrocarburos/eess/>), which is based on a geographic information system. It also offers information about public opening hours of petrol stations.

The scope of the system covers all processes, from the receipt of gas prices to citizens' online consultation. Petrol station owners and operators send weekly information about the prices – or whenever there is a change in the fuel prices – via internet or by SMS. This information is collected and processed automatically by the system for publication.

The information made available by the Geoportal is not only used by citizens to find the most economic fuel prices, but also by several organisations (National Energy Regulator, Ministry of Economy) in order to study the energy markets and to promote competition

in oil prices. In addition, many enterprises use this information in their studies and reviews about relevant sectors. Regarding innovation, RISP has a presence on social networks for users of Facebook (Find the cheapest fuel prices in your city) and Twitter (GeoPortalMityc) using the original data of the Geoportal.

The main benefits the project brings to the public are:

- creating new business opportunities for companies, thanks to information provided by the Ministry, creating business opportunities in the computer industry and thus employment;
- increased transparency in the sector and increased competition in the energy sector;
- cost savings for citizens due to the lower fuel consumption;
- energy savings (an estimated 1.81 million barrels of oil saved).

RISP Fuel Prices Geoportal is the most visited page within the Ministry of Industry. It was recognised as a Finalist in the European Awards for e-Government. It is also included in the project Aport@ for the reuse of public data and information.

InterMediation Platform: Data Query and Verification Services and SCSPv3 Portfolio

Submitted by the Ministry of Finance and Public Administration

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Size of organisation

500-5000, people involved: 11-15

Type of sector

Public administration, modernisation, institutional affairs, reform

Key words of project

Data verification, mediation broker, base registries, interoperability, SOA, user centric, SCSP

Citizens' right in administrative procedures to refuse to re-submit documents already in the possession of the intervening agency is established by Spanish law (Law 30/92). Endorsed by Law 11/2007, on Citizens' E-Access to Public Services (LAECSP), such right had not really been exercised before the Data Query and Verification Services of the Data InterMediation Platform (DQVS).

Thanks to DQVS, public bodies in charge of administrative procedures can automatically check the required information online: identity, residence, tax and social security status, unemployment benefits, cadastral information, education, etc. In this way, it saves citizens unnecessary document submission and prevents fraud in administrative requests or procedures. DQVS acts like a broker, a Single Point of Service for all base registries information, following a clear data interchange specification – SCSPv3 (Paper Certificate Removal Protocol). There are many services and many different data, but only one solution. DQVS has also been selected as a potential service to be used by the European Interoperable Infrastructure Services (EIIIS). It has also been published as an official proceeding in the 2nd European Summit on Interoperability in e-Government.

The operation of the system has resulted in:

- improved public services, saving time and money as fewer documents are required;
- better data quality by avoiding fraud, misreading and mistakes;
- lower volume of administrative files as a result of lighter reporting burden;
- enhanced internal efficiency in public organisations;
- more organisational interoperability between departments and bodies in public administration;
- simplified administrative procedures;
- more than 125 agencies and public bodies at all levels are satisfied users of the platform.

The Mediation Platform has become the cornerstone of interoperability in the Spanish public administration, a key tool meant to facilitate citizens' dealings with the public administration, saving about €51 million in 2012 (€40 million saved during 2011). Steady double-digit growth in the coming years is reasonably expected (up to €65 million savings for 2013).

Aligned with the Intermediation Platform, the SCSPv3 Solutions Portfolio has led to a remarkable rise in the number of services offered by and to other public administration agencies, with annual savings of €3.5 million in software development, by using it instead of developing own solutions. It contributes to 40% of total savings.

Regional Level *Nominees*



Upper Austrian Winter Sport Week

*Submitted by the Regional Government of Upper Austria,
Directorate for Education and Society, Family Affairs Department*

Regional Government of Upper Austria, Directorate for Education and Society, Family Affairs Department

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Size of organisation

1-25, people involved: 1-5

Type of sector

Economic affairs, competition, SME;
Education (higher and lower), training
and learning; Public administration,
modernisation, institutional affairs, reform;
Sports, youth, culture and art

Key words of project

e-Government, Upper Austrian sports week,
online application, cooperation with the plat-
form school and snow sport, voucher system



The Upper Austrian Winter Sports Week is a pilot project of the platform 'school and snow sports' based on an innovative e-Voucher system to counteract the following trends:

- lack of exercise and sports activities during the compulsory education years;
- sinking number of participants in ski courses due to costs and little relation of parents' and pupils' with skiing;
- decreasing numbers of teachers trained to teach ski course groups;
- winter sport is of high economic significance for areas in Upper Austria that lack infrastructure. The absence of winter sportsmen/women would deprive many inhabitants in the valleys and outskirts in this region of their livelihoods.

Since 2009, the state of Upper Austria provides all participating pupils from Upper Austrian schools – and since the 2013 winter season, also kindergarten children – with a voucher for each winter season, to make children more familiar with skiing and snowboarding while reducing the financial burden of winter sports for parents/legal guardians. This voucher allows the free use of lift-type services (lifts, cable cars) in Upper Austrian ski regions in connection with a winter sports week, or schools' winter sports days.

The simple online process of filing an application from the school side, as well as the easy processing of the cost reduction from the side of the ski region led to highly positive responses, a reduction of administrative work, and thus substantial savings (personnel, postage, etc.). Furthermore, it is possible to consistently evaluate the funding required. Each voucher has an individually generated EAN-Code which guarantees its validity. The ski region concerned deals with the deductions and the redeemed vouchers online by feeding them into the system via a hand scanner. In turn, the redeemed voucher is automatically credited and becomes void. On the first of every month the e-Billing is automatically carried out and the payment process is activated at the Upper Austrian authorities. The EAN-codes guarantee that every voucher can only be redeemed once.

Thanks to this initiative, the number of participants in ski courses rose by over 20%. In particular the customer-friendly online process, which was developed together with partners, and the little administrative effort required, are seen as success criteria. The e-Government solution facilitates exact documentation and statistical analyses. The increased demand for accommodation also led to investments in hotels.

Development of Wellbeing and Civil Safety in Municipalities

Submitted by the Regional State Administrative Agency for Lapland



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Type of sector

Public administration, modernisation, institutional affairs, reform; Public health and social welfare/affairs

Key words of project

Network, safety, security, wellbeing, public administration, resource management

The project on Civil Safety in Municipalities has found novel, nationally recognised solutions to implement wellbeing and safety services in municipalities, by bringing in the resources and skills of NGOs and voluntary organisations to complement the services provided by the private sector and municipalities. The developed model is piloted in municipalities in Northern Finland. All five of the project's pilot municipalities have convincingly shown that the shift in focus to preventive work and the utilisation of existing resources increase citizen wellbeing and reduce public sector costs. Even in small municipalities the savings are estimated to be €2-3 million per year.

Because of the current budget cuts and decreasing resources, which threaten maintenance and quality of services, there was a focus on remedial work and the costs of social and healthcare have doubled in municipalities during the 2000s. There is a risk that the Finnish welfare state is becoming a society taking care of citizens' welfare only when it is lost. Each actor does what has to be done by law, but with limited resources. Remedial work is expensive and there is no future if we try to do things alone. The focus must shift to preventive work and the pooling of existing resources. The project presents solutions for municipalities having the principal responsibility to provide services for citizens.

The developed model is attached permanently to the municipality management structure and brings additional resources to proactive wellbeing and safety work by pooling existing resources. Enhancing public safety and the prevention of health problems are the most important tasks from the perspective of daily life in local communities.

The results of the project are encouraging. Municipalities have established inter-sectoral working groups on wellbeing and safety, and the national level is involved in piloting a single approach, in which dozens of administrative WGs and programmes participate to bring about more effective resource management.

The project overcomes traditional administration thinking that has led to a myriad of wellbeing and safety policy programmes, papers and initiatives in municipalities, which have resulted in overlapping tasks wasting scarce resources. According to the Mayors of the pilot municipalities, the new working model helps them to find new resources and to save a remarkable amount of money. This working model is practicable – not only in Finland, but also in the rest of Europe.

Managing Human Public Resources with an Integrated Vision and Looking Towards the Future of the Azores

*Submitted by the Vice-Presidency of Regional Government,
Organisation and Administration Regional Department*



Vice-Presidency of Regional Government, Organisation and Administration Regional Department

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Size of organisation

25-50, people involved: 11-15

Type of sector

Public administration, modernisation,
institutional affairs, reform

Key words of project

HR management, recruitment and allocation
process, shared services, efficiency,
centralisation, reducing costs, interoperability,
standardisation and elimination procedures,
dematerialisation, normalisation and process
automation, vision

Since the Azores are an archipelagic, wide-spread and asymmetrically-inhabited region, a strong emphasis on the organisation and functioning of its administration is imperative. More than 100 services are located on the nine islands and each island has the required infrastructures to support any activity. The ports and airports are two good examples, as well as schools, health and social security facilities, emphasising the need for public investment made by the Azorean Government across the archipelago. In 2006, three main strategic vectors were identified in the study 'Strategy for the Quality in the Autonomous Region of the Azores', namely, companies, public service and citizenship.

Focusing on the public service vector, the Azorean government made the improvement of service quality one of its main objectives regarding administrative modernisation. The new management model is based on three pillars: 1. Human resources management; 2. Organisation of services; 3. Services assessment. The human resources management is supported by a Human Resources Management Information System (SIGRHARA). Since 01/01/2011 it is the only software for processing the salaries of all employees of the Azorean Administration (14,632) – a pioneering example and, to date, the only one in the Portuguese public administration. It replaces the former Personnel Central Database, which was 'fed' monthly by decentralised databases sent by the Azorean administration's services.

- **Island's Regional Boards.** In December 2006, all personnel boards of the services were revoked and, since January 2007, all employees have been integrated in their respective Island's Regional Boards. This new organisational model improved mobility of employees within each island and between islands, allowing a better allocation of human resources in view of improving the quality of service provided to citizens.
- **The Azores Public Employment Pool (BEP-Azores).** In December 2006, the Azorean Government created BEP-Azores, an information system that simplified and streamlined the dissemination of recruitment processes, of geographical mobility between the Islands' Regional Boards, and of interdepartmental and professional redeployment of human resources for regional public administration. It pursues three main objectives: to create a tool for HR management; to grant easier access for stakeholders and transparency in the disclosure of the offers in public employment; and to reduce advertising costs.

Andalusian Health e-Library

Submitted by the Virtual Library of the Andalusian Public Health System

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Size of organisation

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Type of sector

Information society, technology, media and audiovisual

Key words of project

Library, virtual, scientific information, e-Library, health, Andalusia

The Andalusian Health e-Library (*Biblioteca Virtual del Sistema Sanitario Público de Andalucía*, BV-SSPA) set up in June 2006 allows health professionals to access the most prestigious resources to facilitate decision-taking, healthcare, teaching and research activities. It is considered the undisputed medium for health research and clinical healthcare in Andalusia, being consolidated as the Health Knowledge Manager in the region. It is directly linked to the II Quality Plan 2005-2008 of the Andalusian Health Ministry, which aims towards:

- enabling health professionals to obtain necessary resources for their task development;
- helping citizens to find unbiased, comprehensible and established information to be able to participate in decisions which could affect their health;
- coordinating the Andalusian Public Health libraries to sustain an institutional network for the expansion of the Virtual Library services to every health professional and to establish strategic alliances with organisations for this purpose;
- promoting the Andalusian Public Health System Knowledge Management.

Thus, the Andalusian Government created a Centre for Information and Scientific Documentation (BV-SSPA) which coordinates all of the health science documentation centres. Since the Andalusian public health system (SSPA) is composed of 41 hospitals and multiple other centres (investigation, primary healthcare, etc.), all with their own libraries and resources, this endeavour was very complex. In a first step, collaboration was created to:

- rationalise library collections to avoid duplication;
 - evaluate the journal collection against individual hospitals' subscriptions to decide on their relevance;
 - guarantee instant access to journals because of subscription to more resources and a resulting strong negotiation position in front of suppliers. All the signed licenses are without embargo;
 - reach economies of scale: with the same budget, more resources are subscribed to and reach more users;
 - access the same information and services all over the SSPA, also for primary healthcare and hospitals without a library;
 - increase partnerships with institutions;
 - enable access to the e-library for every professional of the Health System, regardless of his/her professional status, from the workplace or home (remote access), requiring only an internet connection.
- This easy accessibility is a key success criterion of the BV-SSPA.

The functions and scope of the library are continuously being expanded.

New ICT Model: Generalitat de Catalunya – an Innovative Sourcing Process through Public-Private Collaboration

Submitted by the Telecommunications and IT Centre, Government of Catalonia

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Size of organisation

100-500, people involved: >15

Type of sector

Information society, technology, media
and audiovisual; Public administration,
modernisation, institutional affairs, reform

Key words of project

Public-Private collaboration, innovation,
invest, social equity, cost reduction, service
improvement

CTTI is a public corporation assigned to the Department of Enterprise and Labour of the Generalitat de Catalunya to integrate all computer services, telecommunications infrastructure and their administration and management. The Generalitat de Catalunya is organised in 12 ministries or departments; CTTI serves all of them and their public companies regarding ICT.

Until 2011, the Catalan ICT model was organised in a decentralised way, with manifold contracts, suppliers and infrastructures that required excessive resources, thereby hindering investment, service improvement and innovation, whereas ICT had the potential to improve productivity. The challenge was on the table. CTTI's working model needed to be transformed regarding service improvement at a lower cost, using public-private cooperation for new infrastructure, more effective procurement, and attracting investment to Catalonia while transforming the Catalan ICT sector. CTTI decided to use Competitive Dialogue as the procurement formula, as designing and validating the model with suppliers enhanced the chances of getting the best solution in each case, and taking advantage of public-private-partnerships allowed long-term contracts, creating interest in the bidding process and attracting investment. For the competitive dialogue the CTTI was re-organised in three major teams, one focusing on the

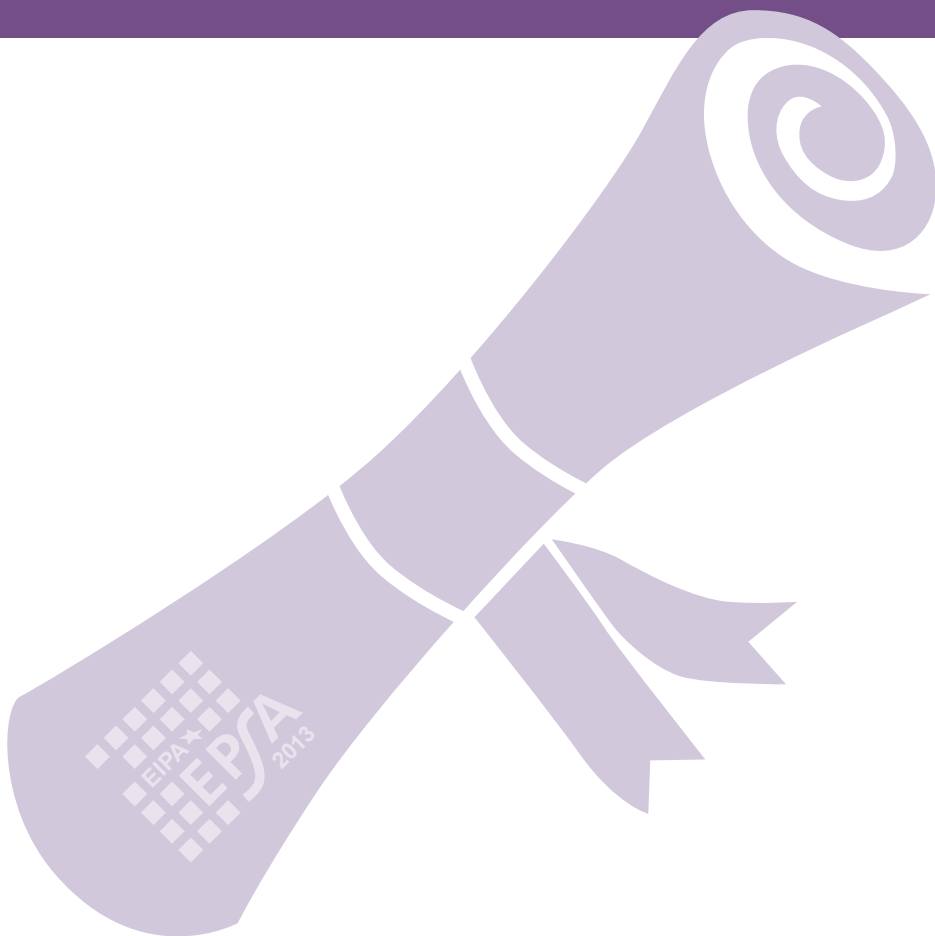
new ICT Model (design, developing and bidding), another on guaranteeing service delivery, and the last on designing the governance model.

The competitive dialogue had three phases: the bidding announcement of the project through a public presentation to the whole ICT sector; the competitive dialogue phase which involved all the selected companies developing the most suitable solutions for each area in three dialogue rounds so that the contracting authority could define the most appropriate solution at the end; the bidding process and tender awarding.

During this process, the governance model was also discussed with the companies of the competitive dialogue and subsequently tendered for the machinery parts. A transformation office started to work preparing supplier changes, and a continuity plan was activated to assure services. The results of the project are: managing efficiency (from 300 suppliers to 21), cost reduction (28%), CTTI structure reduction (43%), investment from companies (€2.808 million), job creation (8454), empowerment of the ICT sector in Catalonia (16%) and a high capacity network available.

Regional Level

Best Practice Certificate Recipients



DISCIMUS

Submitted by the Agency for Educational Services, AgODi (Flemish government)

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Size of organisation

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Type of sector

Public administration, modernisation,
institutional affairs, reform

Key words of project

Less administration, more education!

The Agency for Educational Services (AgODi) is the Flemish government agency responsible for funding all Dutch-speaking public and private (publicly-funded) schools, as well as the implementation of educational policies of primary education, secondary education, student guidance centres, etc. The agency helps to solve problems of school capacity, pupil registration, teacher shortage, etc. and collects data from about 1,100,000 pupils (across 3600 schools in Flanders and Brussels).

Schools used to upload large data files to the AgODi database using a web application which was not integrated in their internal software, which meant manual and error-prone processes. DISCIMUS connects schools' software applications with the AgODi database and enables schools to send information directly from their software application and registers. The data transfer works in two ways: schools can consult data from AgODi; while AgODi can consult data from schools.

As schools receive instant feedback when they record data, a faster data exchange and more accurate

information are possible, which allow for better support and lead to a reduction of the administrative burden.

Since September 2013, all pre-schoolers' and school-age pupils' registrations in the Flemish Region and in the Dutch-speaking schools of the Brussels-Capital Region are being carried out via DISCIMUS. Currently more than 95% of the pupils enrolled in school for 2012-2013 are already registered in DISCIMUS. AgODi also started registering absences in February 2013 and will in the future also register study results.

Thanks to the automatic exchange of enrolment data, schools will have easy access to data, such as children's previous enrolments upon transfer to a new school or double school registrations. Moreover, the Flemish government is able to anticipate better potential capacity problems, to control compulsory education, and calculate – according to the number of pupils – schools' operating budgets and the teaching hours received. Crucial information about socially relevant phenomena will also be available, such as educational participation rates or truancy, which is partly used to decide education allowances or the transfer from kindergarten to primary school.

DISCIMUS represents a great value for schools and for the government. AgODi believes that schools should spend as little time and effort as possible in paperwork, so as to be able to put more effort into education itself!

Living with Cancer

Submitted by the Catalan Institute of Oncology

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Size of organisation

500-5000, people involved: >15

Type of sector

Public health and social welfare/affairs;
Public administration, modernisation,
institutional affairs, reform; Science,
research, innovation

Key words of project

Cancer, alliances, commitment,
patient care, quality of life, healthcare,
comprehensive healthcare model

The Catalan Institute of Oncology (ICO), in its mission to reduce the impact of cancer in Catalonia, integrates a model of patient care that combines clinical excellence and human affectivity – acting beyond the disease, being aware of the impact that the situation of vulnerability generates in the family, social and professional environment.

Cancer is a disease that often has a significant physical and emotional impact. That is why we need a comprehensive approach, which includes, in addition to treatment, supplementary support services, such as psycho-oncology, physiotherapy, social work or diet and nutrition.

One of the main programmes the hospital 'Living with Cancer' embodies is the approach of a 'friendly hospital' and the principle 'We think as a patient', by promoting, supporting and accompanying actions for the users – patients and family – thus complementing healthcare services. In order to do so, it develops alliances with different institutions and a series of initiatives to support and accompany the patient and his/her family.

It comprises three lines of action:

1. Friendly Hospital: improving the process of welcoming the patient and his/her family by meeting their specific demands in the oncologic process, promoting their welfare and improving the comfort of the facilities.
2. School of patients: promoting the training and information of patients and their family to enable them to make the right decisions during their illness and monitoring side effects.
3. Support Services: Developing and offering resources to help cope with the disease and adapting to the new personal, family and social circumstances.

A fourth line of action of 'Living with Cancer' fosters collaboration with different institutional (city councils, county councils, schools, etc.), economic (business) and social actors (patient associations) to obtain the economic resources needed.

Initiatives like 'Living with Cancer' contribute to high user satisfaction confirmed by surveys, and to the hospital's reputation as the most valued in Catalonia. 'Living with Cancer' received the national award 'Premios Corresponsables' for the most innovative and sustainable initiative in the field of social responsibility in the category of public administrations.

Supra-local and Local Level *Nominees*



Police and Social Media: Reykjavík Metropolitan Police

Submitted by the Reykjavík Metropolitan Police

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100-500, people involved: 11-15

Type of sector

Justice, police, human rights and security;

Information society, technology, media

and audiovisual; Public administration,

modernisation, institutional affairs, reform

Key words of project

Police, social media, modernisation,

security

In its effort to actively distribute information to the general public, the Reykjavík Metropolitan police added social media to its toolkit in December 2010. The Reykjavík metropolitan police (RMP) began utilising social media in its approach to actively distribute information to the public via all types of media, to enhance visibility and increase access to the police.

Using social media to solve many of the tasks of the metropolitan police is essentially broadening the ways the public experiences the police. This is especially important now, when budget cuts have resulted in reduced patrols. Instead, social media gives police the ability to be 'seen' and 'experienced' by more people than they would if they were only in cars, on bicycles, motorcycles or foot.

When the RMP was founded on 1 January 2007, one of its main objectives was to 'enhance the security and feeling of security amongst those who live, work or stay in the metropolitan area'. Ten focus points were defined to guide the RMP towards this objective, including increased visibility of the police, pro-active policing in conjunction with stakeholders and increased dissemination of information. The RMP started a

number of projects to meet these goals, for example giving regular information to the media. During these projects the importance of having direct access to the general public was eminent since the local media was not always accessible and the target groups were not always being reached.

At the same time much had happened regarding the use of social media. A large part of the population in Iceland was for example using Facebook and/or Twitter. It was therefore decided within the RMP to use these advancements to increase the visibility of the police force, increase security, the perception of safety and thereby the overall wellbeing of the community; a tall order.

This new way of policing has been well received by the Icelandic public. Today the RMP Facebook page, one of many social media tools used by RMP, has over 40,000 followers, over 20% of the total population in the area, and a high reach every week. This effort has also proved to be vital for the Icelandic police in the early measurements of trust towards institutions in Iceland. The police is now measured at an 82% trust level, i.e. 82% of the population in Iceland have a great deal of trust towards the police. That is the highest level the police has seen since the beginning of this measurement 20 years ago.

Reorganisation of Judicial Offices in Italy: the Project of the Monza Court and the Redesign of Voluntary Jurisdiction

Submitted by the Court of Monza



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Size of organisation

100-500, people involved: >15

Type of sector

Justice, police, human rights and security

Key words of project

Justice services, organisational change, voluntary jurisdiction, administration of support

The Italian justice system is the most expensive in Europe: other citizens pay, on average, €69 for 'services' provided by the 165 Italian Courts, 220 sub-offices and almost the same number of Prosecutor's Offices. Costs are lower in other European countries: Sweden (€61), Spain (€56), France (€47) and the UK (€23). With regard to civil justice, in Italy the ratio of pending cases to the annual number of the new ones is more than 100%, whereas it varies from 10% to 40% in other countries. The economic impact of this slowness is estimated at an amount of around 1% of the GNP.

In 2009 the Minister of Public Authority, the Minister of Justice and the Regions agreed with the EU on the need for an interregional project called 'Diffusion of Best Practices in Judicial Offices', financed under the European Social Fund; 23 regional financial bids were prepared and assigned to 97 Judicial Offices taking part in the project. The Court of Monza is one of these. The project is based on the idea that exemplary projects can disseminate solutions and methods throughout the entire system, and enable the members of the Court to rely on their own capabilities and eventually operate

without the help of consultants. Consultants from *Fondazione Irso* established a steering committee led by the President of the Court, the Chief Prosecutor and different teams. This group supported the participatory analysis and the:

- design of new support systems such as a website, corporate social responsibility, Common Assessment Framework;
- redesign of operations such as the reunification of Chancelleries and organisational support, training during digitalisation of penal processes;
- analysis and redesign of single processes such as execution of bankruptcy processes, processes for drink driving, voluntary jurisdiction and others.

Among them, voluntary jurisdiction has been identified as an area of intervention with the potential to consolidate and develop the territory of 'inter-institutional cooperative relations', which is of great interest for the improvement and modernisation of services of justice.

Some results achieved through the project are: the elimination of backlog; the reduction of waiting time for citizens and lawyers; the elimination of trivial activities with a focus on more critical ones; increased cooperation among prosecutors, judges and clerks to improve processes; and increased confidence that change may happen also without new laws or additional resources.

The Creation of a New Economic Zone in Southern Luxembourg: Efficient Urban Planning and Social Integration through Cross-Municipal, Cross-Border and Cross-Sectoral Cooperation

Submitted by the Municipality of Esch-sur-Alzette

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Size of organisation

500-5000, people involved: >15

Type of sector

Regional policy and development,
decentralisation

Key words of project

Urban development, social cohesion,
cross-border cooperation

After the decline of the steel industry, the Luxembourg government decided in 2000 to implement a decentralisation and diversification policy, shifting part of the public administration and services to the southern region, i.e. to the city of Esch-sur-Alzette, formerly an industrial town that still hosts offices and a production plant of the steel giant ArcelorMittal. This led to the decision to reconvert the industrial wasteland located on the site of Belval – a territory shared by the City of Esch-sur-Alzette and the Municipality of Sanem – by creating a national research hub including the University of Luxembourg, public research centres, innovative companies, as well as residential and leisure areas.

The reconversion of Belval is creating new jobs and provides the whole region with a reinforced international standing. A year before the opening of the University, the local authorities had a major role to play in the integration of this new site into their cities. For this reason, they developed several strategies to prepare their territories for the new area. Infrastructures, leisure facilities and commercial offers were, for instance,

not sufficiently developed for a new population of approximately 5000 to 7000 inhabitants, and a forecast 25,000 daily users of Belval.

The socioeconomic context of Luxembourg, i.e. the large number of cross-border commuters and the small size of the country, create the need to develop the whole region and not only one city or territory in isolation. The Municipalities of Esch-sur-Alzette and Sanem are thus working together closely. In addition, the respective governments of France and Luxembourg have decided to develop the territory of Belval, which also borders France, in concertation with each other. An informal exchange has been taking place at local level, but the cross-border region has recently been provided with an autonomous legal structure, thanks to the creation of a European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC).

The multilevel and cross-sectoral cooperation has led to the elaboration of several sustainable projects. Much has been achieved thanks to the multilevel cooperation and since the Luxembourg government's reconversion decision in 2000. In 2008, the French government declared the urbanisation of Belval to be an operation of national interest, aiming at the construction of an ecocity on the French side, supplying new urban living styles and additional leisure possibilities to French commuters.

Educational and Promotional Campaign: Bielsko-Biala Protects the Climate

Submitted by the City Hall of Bielsko-Biala



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Size of organisation

500-5000, people involved: 1-5

Type of sector

Local energy policy, technical services

Key words of project

Sustainable development, energy efficiency and savings, environmental and climate protection, cooperation with local community, eco-friendly attitude, municipality for the inhabitants, local community integration



The campaign called 'Bielsko-Biala Protects the Climate' consists of the educational and promotional activities addressed to the inhabitants of this city to promote the conservation of energy and the environment, planned until 2020. In 2009 the city was the first Polish city to join the European initiative called Covenant of Mayors, aimed at implementing new objectives in the field of EU energy policy '3x20'. However, since the city authorities have a direct influence on just 10% of the city buildings, it became necessary to include the greatest number of institutions and inhabitants of Bielsko-Biala in the action.

The campaign was initiated by the participation of Bielsko-Biala in the EU project ENGAGE in 2010-2012, which aimed at engaging the municipality inhabitants in the actions to reduce energy consumption and to promote environmental protection.

The campaign is aimed at reinforcing the effects and continuation of actions within ENGAGE. To this end, the ecological awareness of the local communities must be increased by means of various events and the establishment of lasting cooperation with stakeholders. Teachers play a key role in promoting the campaign and educating children. The campaign has a very good communication strategy and uses social media effectively. Over 50 social groups support it.

The major tool for communicating with the society is a poster action consisting of various individuals, institutions and companies (Climate Ambassadors), who present their images on the poster and also their commitments to simple ways of saving energy. The exhibition comprising 300 posters accompanies various events in the city, e.g. the culminating event of the campaign, called 'Beskids Festival of Good Energy' (October 2011, May 2012 and June 2013). In addition there are numerous attractions, such as the award ceremony in the urban ecological competitions 'Respect energy, protect the climate' for the participating children and youth, spectacular energy conversion shows, energy competitions and workshops, stands representing renewable energy sources and free advice from energy experts.

Results achieved: immediate participation of 3000 people; distribution of 6000 useful energy-campaign gadgets, hundreds of articles, press and internet publications, and more than 16 municipalities interested; energy savings: over 7.6 million kWh and reduction of 3.9 million kg CO₂ emissions.

The Programme of Construction and Exchange of Municipal Flats in Poznań

Submitted by the Board of Municipal Housing Resources limited corporation (ZKZL sp. z o.o.)

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Size of organisation

100-500, people involved: 6-10

Type of sector

Municipal housing management

Key words of project

Municipal construction, exchange, compensation

In its housing resources, Poznań City currently holds 13,100 municipal residential premises rented to inhabitants who cannot afford to buy their own flat. This includes 864 social flats, allocated to families with the lowest income – a growing group due to the economic crisis. Given the lack of social flats for eligible persons, they stay in their former flat. However, due to Polish legislation, the municipality may be summoned to pay compensation to owners of flats occupied by persons who are entitled to social flats until they leave and move to the social flat.

So the decision was taken to transform some municipal flats of a low technical standard to social flats. It was therefore necessary to offer other flats to the inhabitants. In 2009, the Flat Exchange Office was established. In addition to the standard exchange, the Office also implemented a programme providing a possibility to move to new municipal flats of a higher standard. This was thanks to the launching of the Municipal Construction Programme in 2009, funded from Poznań City budget, through which about 100 municipal flats are acquired by the municipality annually (260 new flats will be built each year over the next five years). These

flats are offered to municipal flat tenants who have regularly paid their rent, and the flats they leave are used for development of social flats.

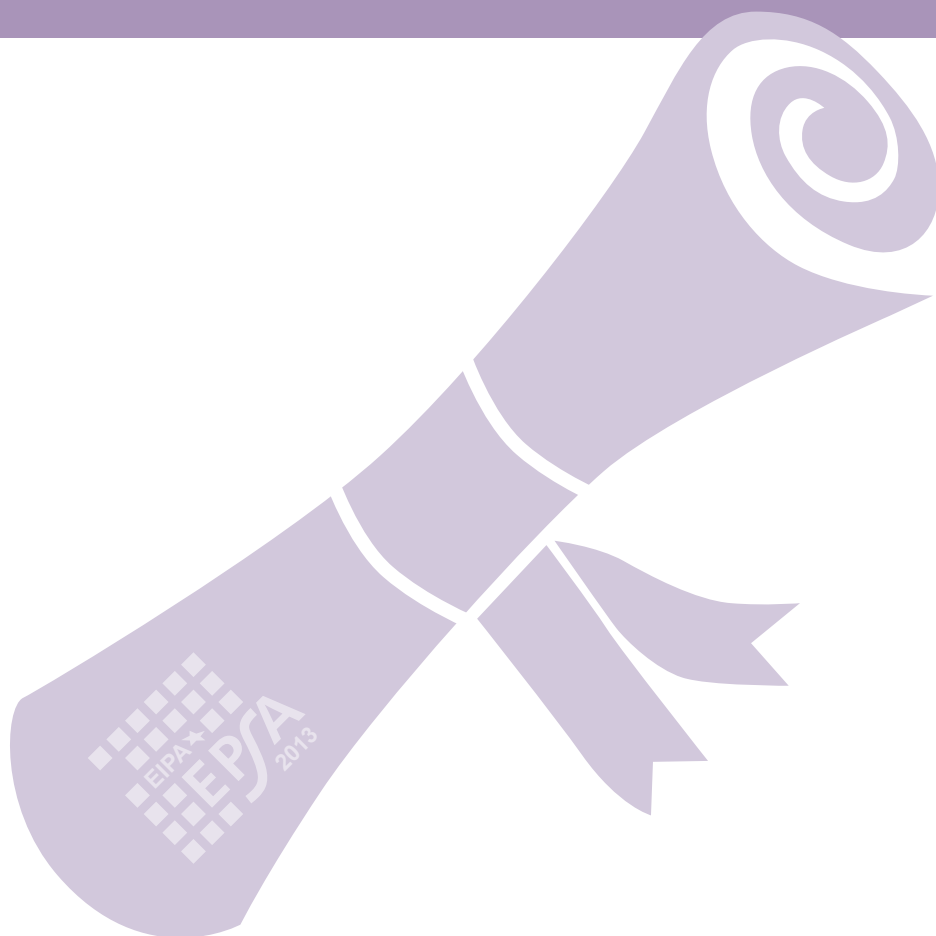
In order to prevent the increase in claims for damages, the city introduced the system of extrajudicial settlements with owners of flats where tenants entitled to social flats are staying. A system was also created for the fastest possible development of flats abandoned by tenants, for instance, due to eviction. Each abandoned flat is offered as a social flat or for exchange of a flat which may be allocated as a social flat.

Between 2009-2012, 184 flats were constructed, including 11 flats adjusted for the disabled; the number of social flats increased significantly from 499 to 864; and it was possible to slow down the growth rate of compensation claims irrespective of the considerable growth of demand for social flats (from €4.5 million to €2.5 million).

As a result of settlements with flat owners, in 2011 and 2012 the amount of €1.2 million was saved. Results of three years of implementation of the project show that Poznań managed to control the crisis and to curb the level of compensation payments. The Project 'Build-Exchange-Save' contributes to keeping the balanced level of City debt.

Supra-local and Local Level

Best Practice Certificate Recipients



Improving Administrative Quality: Merging of the Districts of Judenburg and Knittelfeld

Submitted by the District Authority Office 'Murtal', Federal State of Styria

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Size of organisation

100-500, people involved: >15

Type of sector

Public administration, modernisation,
institutional affairs, reform

Key words of project

District commission, district, cost
savings, increase in efficiency, regional
development

Austria is a federal republic divided into nine federal states. The administrative tasks taken care of at federal state level are carried out by the district commissions who belong to a specific district. These authorities have to implement federal and regional laws, e.g. the authorisation of businesses, monitoring of public health, protection of the environment, etc. District commissions contribute greatly to regional development, especially in rural areas. The federal state of Steiermark was divided into 16 districts with 16 district commissions.

In the framework of this project the existing administrative framework was substantially changed for the first time in Austria since the 19th century. A process model was developed on how to merge two districts, namely Judenburg with some 44,000 inhabitants, and Knittelfeld with some 30,000 inhabitants, and its two district commissions to form one bigger administrative unit. All administrative tasks that can be executed quickly and non-bureaucratically are offered in two locations, enabling the authorities to remain accessible to citizens. All administrative tasks that, however, require expert knowledge by the authorities, were centralised. The new district 'Murtal' came into existence on

1 January 2012, having some 74,000 inhabitants and a new district commission. The project has been implemented without the help of external experts. The new district commission provides the same range of services for its citizens and functions more efficiently at lower costs. The administrative costs of the new district 'Murtal' and thus the costs for its citizens were lowered. The first year of the new structure led to savings amounting to €550,000, which should reach €850,000 by the end of 2013. Further savings are expected. These financial means can be used to foster innovative projects and to strengthen the local economy in the future.

The cost savings mainly result from centralisation and reduction of human resources. The reduction of staff is, however, not based on dismissals; the choice was, to not fill the posts of some staff members that left for retirement. Moreover, high-qualified staff members are now used in different positions requiring expert knowledge. This results in faster and better services for citizens. Six other districts in this federal state have been merged, from 16 to 13 administrative units. The potential financial savings is estimated at €10 million per year in the long term.

Vienna Charter: Living the Future Together

Submitted by the City of Vienna, Municipal Department 17, Integration and Diversity

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Size of organisation

50-100, people involved: 6-10

Type of sector

Public administration, modernisation,
institutional affairs, reform

Key words of project

Charter, living together, diversity, respect,
social cohesion, participation



Large cities are diverse and heterogeneous, and diversity increases with internationalisation. Therefore, it is crucial that everyone living in a city is able to deal with this diversity calmly, objectively, and without fear, but also with a critical and open mind. This is indispensable for us to feel comfortable and increases the individual quality of life. It is just as important for social cohesion and solidarity. It was in this context that the City of Vienna launched the Vienna Charter project, an initiative that is unique in Europe.

People of all ages, and with different outlooks on life, ethnic backgrounds, professions, and opinions came together to discuss and develop the Vienna Charter. The Viennese themselves chose the topics and participated actively in the development of the Charter. The Vienna Charter is a mutual agreement between all people living in the city.

An open process such as this one, where the people of Vienna would determine the contents of the Charter, requires fundamental principles and clear rules: in a democratic constitutional state there are some things that are not open for discussion. The core document consists of three parts: democracy and the rule of law; human and fundamental rights; women's and children's rights.

The city defined its role as that of an initiator and enabler of a process rather than the sole manager – a completely new way of establishing a partnership with civil society, whilst the main responsibility in the problem-solving remains with the people concerned. The Viennese themselves chose a total of 1,848 topics and participated actively in the development of the Charter in discussions, which were published on the project website. The people were able to participate both online and offline. Based on the input provided, the Advisory Committee identified three aspects to be addressed: behaviour, attitude and space.

In total, 651 Charter talks were held with approximately 8500 citizens investing a total of 12,700 hours of discussion for good neighbourly living. More than 47,000 online contributions were submitted. The participants represented a true cross-section of Vienna's population: children, young people, senior citizens, blue and white collar workers, entrepreneurs, non-working persons as well as people with different mother tongues and countries of origin, people with special needs, with different religious beliefs, worldviews and political opinions, and different sexual orientations.

Co-creating with Youngsters

Submitted by the Municipality of Ballerup

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Size of organisation

500-5000, people involved: > 15

Type of sector

Public administration, modernisation,
institutional affairs, reform

Key words of project

Innovation, co-creation, service design,
empowerment, radical innovation, public
efficiency, public-private cooperation

About 20% of young people in Denmark do not get an education after elementary school. Why is this, and how can we rethink public services? The Municipality of Ballerup and the Innovation Agency FUTU have innovated new services.

Starting the innovation process, municipality staff were open-minded and curious. They asked the target group – local youngsters – to show them the way before making any strategic decisions. The user-driven innovation process helped the municipality to realise there was a mismatch between the intentions of the relevant public service and the perception of young people. With this in mind, new solutions were developed, co-creating with 70 youngsters and approx. 100 professionals, thus increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of youth education. The co-creation process strengthened the cooperation between: the Centre for Social Health and Employment, the Centre for Schools and Institutions, the Centre for Children and Youth Counselling, and the Secretary of Development and Communication.

A spin-off initiative from this project – the development of a dialogue tool targeting respectful and transparent

dialogues between young unemployed people and Ballerup job centre – was nominated for 'The LGDK Innovation Prize 2012', awarded by Local Government Denmark (LGDK), the member authority of Danish municipalities. 'Through this user-driven innovation process, the municipality discovered that there is great potential to support young people better. This project shows that we should rethink the way we deal with young people', said the director of the Municipality.

The user-driven innovation project shows that many young people have difficulty connecting their interests and dreams with the education system. They miss real dialogue with educational institutions and workplaces. Regarding the daily experiences of the youngsters, the municipality learned that many felt that a 'lack of Respect, Involvement and Overview' of their educational options were barriers hindering their study choices and well-being at school.

Respect, Involvement and Overview (RIO) gave the municipality three new important values. These led to a new comprehensive political strategy aimed at all those aged 0-25 years. Furthermore, the new values also provided an evaluation tool (RIO) helping the municipality to focus on the new priorities. In addition, there are six new concrete public services targeting young people and a guidance bus to promote the fundamental changes and new approaches derived from 'Co-creating with Youngsters'.

Ennis Innovate: Regional Innovation Centre

Submitted by the Clare County Council

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Size of organisation

500-5000, people involved: 1-5

Type of sector

Economic affairs, competition, SME;
Education (higher and lower), training
and learning; Employment, labour-related
affairs and gender equality; Public
administration, modernisation, institutional
affairs, reform

Key words of project

Enterprise, innovation, business support,
commercialisation, entrepreneurship,
business planning

Ennis Innovate: Regional Innovation Centre is a collaborative initiative between Clare County Council and a number of key partners in the fields of public administration, education, enterprise, research, technology and community development. The initiative – a unique off-campus enterprise support innovation – provides practical support to entrepreneurs as they navigate the start-up path in order to support business development activity, job creation and the establishment of new businesses in the region. The programme provides direction, leadership and guidance so that common pitfalls and obstacles that a start-up company would commonly encounter can be avoided.

The Ennis Innovate programme is an entirely unique offering involving all key funding agencies, development agencies and public bodies in the region. For the partners in Ennis Innovate, this collaboration allows them to pool their respective resources, ensuring that all relevant supports are readily available to participating companies. For participating companies, the Ennis Innovate programme provides a central point to access all information, funding resources and relevant practical supports and expertise available in the region.

The programme enhances the skill set of the entrepreneur and provides assistance which was previously unavailable in the area. The programme provides support as follows:

- training and mentoring, tailored to support the development of start-up companies;
- technology transfer through linkages with the Technology Transfer Offices (TTO) in NUI Galway and University of Limerick;
- assistance with market validation and business planning;
- introductions to funding agencies that can support the businesses;
- introductions to industry experts, investors, funding providers, potential collaborators/customers;
- information hub for support services required by start-up companies;
- opportunities to network with other entrepreneurs and industry experts;
- one-to-one clinics in key business areas with confidential engagement with mentors/industry experts;
- guidance from experienced Programme Manager and Review Panel.

The support actions provided by Ennis Innovate are designed to be hands-on, practical and tailored to each member company who wants to fast track their business ideas, validate its commercial potential and proceed to commercialisation.

Together in the Neighbourhood

Submitted by the Municipality of Milan

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Size of organisation

>5000, people involved: > 15

Type of sector

Justice, police, human rights and security

Key words of project

Local police, territorial control, citizens involvement, active listening, shared security, work in progress

The ageing and multiculturalism of the population, the fear of diversity and the economic crisis have created pressure on the Milan Council Administration to provide neighbourhood services and social cohesion policies. In 2011, voters in Milan supported the programme presented by the current Mayor Pisapia, which placed great emphasis on cohesion, social inclusion policies and shared security.

'Together in the Neighbourhood' is an intervention project, which aims to improve social cohesion and security in the city, by increasing and redefining the role of the *'vigili di quartiere'* – local police officers working in a specific neighbourhood – with the active participation of the different stakeholders who live and work in Milan's neighbourhoods. The project has reformed the role of the *vigili di quartiere*, who promote respect for rules by working with citizens, sharing the problems of urban security to work together to solve local problems. For this reason, the *vigili di quartiere* are easily identifiable by the red and white chequered cap bands and the badges on the right sleeve and the right pocket of the jackets.

The operating model referred to by the project is that of shared security. The design of 'Together in the Neighbourhood' was created by looking at other systems of Urban Security and Police, both in Italy and abroad, particularly Turin, which has adopted a Closeness Police model, and London with its model of Community Police.

The essential elements of the project are:

- active listening to the citizen, at home and in the workplace;
- interaction with authorities and the neighbourhood citizens' representatives.

The citizen is at the centre of the work of the *vigili di quartiere*, not merely to provide a response to a request, but to build a relationship with continuous contact, the aim of which is to listen, to create trust and to fulfil the task. The everyday actions of the *vigili di quartiere* are: patrolling the streets of the neighbourhood, observing phenomena related to security and mapping the area, listening to people, managing critical situations, interacting with other local services, providing the citizen with feedback.

'Together in the Neighbourhood' helped to improve security in Milan in 2012 and it is one of the major initiatives to ensure peace for visitors to Expo 2015.

The 'Zdolna Dolna' Partnership as the Incubator of Local Community Development in Szklarska Poręba

Submitted by the Municipal Social Welfare Centre of Szklarska Poręba



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Size of organisation

1-25, people involved: 1-5

Type of sector

Public health and social welfare/affairs

Key words of project

Partnership, networking, social equity, commitment and participation, citizens' activity, social education

The project of Municipal Social Welfare Centre (MOPS) called 'Zdolna Dolna Partnership' [*zdolna* means 'capable, talented'], consisted of initiating and supporting local partnership involving active members of local communities, representatives of local institutions, entrepreneurs and NGOs. They were united by the idea of acting for the benefit of inhabitants of spatially isolated and neglected district of Szklarska Poręba Dolna.

The project responded to problems reported by inhabitants of this district and employees of social welfare institutions. The most important issues raised by inhabitants included: physical and mental distance from the city centre and lack of municipal transport; insufficiency of institutions and lack of their representations; lack of jobs; alcoholism; lack of leisure spaces. Problems reported by social workers included: unemployment and habitual use of social welfare; alcoholism and addiction, ageing of population and loneliness of the elderly resulting from migration of the youth in search for work. The consequence for the sick and the elderly was the deficit of support from family

and neighbours mainly due to the lack of tradition of spending common time together and the assistance of neighbours. A deficit was also found of places for leisure and offer of activities addressed to children and the youth.

The innovation in the project was the change in manner of cooperating with entities implementing their tasks in the social welfare area and in other sectors. Another innovation involved launching cooperation between entities representing various sectors and setting the goals and scope of cooperation in the partnership agreement. The approach to joint activities based on using resources existing in the local environment was also new (while reducing municipal financial resources), in order to solve problems of common concern. Another factor was the change of perspective: from intervention to prevention of persons threatened with exclusion.

The most important achievements of the project include: maintaining the financial resources spent by MOPS at the former level, under significantly developed environmental activities; reorganising the work in the centre and enhancing the effectiveness of activities undertaken, leading to radical change in the standards of service provision; strengthening the local community through creating the network of entities of similar statutory goals.

e-Ticket within the Electronic City Card

Submitted by the City Hall of Rybnik



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100-500, people involved: 6-10

Type of sector

Transport and infrastructure

Key words of project

Synergy, innovativeness, good practices,
inter-municipal cooperation, information
society, city transport management,
e-Ticket

'e-Ticket within the Electronic City Card' is the first component of a larger project: 'Electronic City Card and Public Internet Access Points in the City of Rybnik'.

Since 2001 the Board of Public Transport in Rybnik had been looking for a solution that would increase the inflows from organised city transport lines. One of the issues was to find a solution which would not only eliminate negative occurrences related to transport, but also to be modern and provide actual data. The solution was founded upon the replacement of traditional paper tickets with electronic contactless cards ('e-Cards') constituting a carrier for an electronic ticket (e-Ticket).

Since 2006 this has been the main tool for paying fares on public transport in Rybnik. The card has replaced both traditional one-time and season tickets. The passengers pay for or register their travel using their card when boarding the bus. The registration of the travel is obligatory, both for persons holding season tickets as well as those travelling free of charge. These persons' personal e-Cards are provided with an additional photo.

The registration of persons boarding and leaving the buses provides valuable data on passenger traffic. It is possible to know how many persons board the bus at a particular bus stop or what kind of tickets they use. This information allows for proper management of buses and is a guideline for a rational route selection for the particular bus line. The system not only registers the usage of the e-Ticket, but also tracks the workflow of the bus and indicates its location on a map being a part of the passenger information system. It indicates precisely the time at which the bus arrives at the bus stop. This allowed departures before the due time to be eliminated, as well as informing passengers of delays due to the current traffic situation.

The project was developed thanks to funds from the European Regional Development Fund, within the framework of the Integrated Regional Operational Programme and from the city budget. On 17 November 2006 the last paper ticket in Rybnik was punched.

This project has been developed and continued in other towns and has been awarded several recognitions. It relies on the collaboration of organisational units of the municipality with the neighbouring ones, based on strict cooperation with all stakeholders, whilst taking into account the needs of the elderly and disabled city dwellers exposed to social exclusion.

Integrated System of Exchanging Municipal Flats in Gdańsk

Submitted by the City Hall of Gdańsk

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Size of organisation

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Type of sector

Public administration, modernisation,
institutional affairs, reform

Key words of project

Flat exchange, municipal flats, social flats,
streamlining of municipal flat management,
municipal housing resources, tenant,
debtor, eviction, project, programme



The city of Gdańsk administered 29,000 municipal flats at the beginning of the programme in December 2004. The Flat Exchange Office established in the Municipal Real Property Board of Gdańsk implements the integrated flat exchange system aimed at: rational management of municipal housing resources, removal of discrepancies between size of flats occupied by tenants of municipal resources, and number of inhabitants versus income of their households, and capacity of regular rent payment, improvement of housing conditions of tenants of municipal resources, decreasing the number of debtors and persons waiting for social flats.

Following eight years of operation, Gdańsk city has only 19,000 municipal flats in its resources. During this period, 1132 exchanges were conducted; 606 families had their debt relieved, maintaining their title to council housing; 2344 families improved their housing conditions. Gdańsk Municipality recovered PLN 13,813,637 (about €3,453,000) of practically uncollectible debt.

The opening of the Flat Exchange Office was positively received by the tenants in debt. The number of applications submitted for flat exchanges makes up 70% of all offers in the database. The system allowed

flats to be exchanged between municipal tenants and owners of private flats. The database contains detailed data on residential units, the form and scope compliant with the data obtained during stock taking process, allowing for comprehensive presentation of the offer. Full integration with financial software enables monitoring of cash flows associated with exchanges.

The effects of this project were recognised by other local governments facing similar housing problems. All applications of the interested municipalities were approved and the solution was made available to applicants free of charge. Until 2008, over 10 cities have already applied the solution. Gdańsk was the predecessor of this movement at the national level and it is still the leader in terms of the number of families assisted. The solution used in the project has significantly improved financial results of the city in municipal flat management. The programme allowed for improvement of housing conditions of 2344 families, including over 600 families exposed to social exclusion. It was possible due to a change of municipal flat management procedures, good communication and cooperation, both inside the office and with inhabitants, and effective application of IT technology.

Simplis: Lisbon Simplification Programme

Submitted by the Municipality of Lisbon

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Size of organisation

>5000, people involved: >15

Type of sector

Public administration, modernisation,
institutional affairs, reform

Key words of project

Simplification, customer service,
modernisation

Back in July 2008, Lisbon Municipality launched its simplification programme 'Simplis', a new impulse for the city: with that, a new age of delivering efficient services to the citizens began. This is a yearly programme, built with the participation of several levels of the organisation, from the elected to road menders; and all levels of the civil society, from structural organisations to individual citizens.

More than a hundred measures and actions were taken, crossing many branches, such as service delivery, internal improvement and citizens' engagement. A couple of them clearly stand out from the others in terms of the level of improvement in the way services are delivered and the recognition of it by the citizens, as well as knowing that this was achieved with a low (or no) budget.

Within this simplification programme, with a strong link between services, the municipality managed to increase citizen satisfaction levels; they stated that measures that allow access to the services via the web, that create multiple points of entrance or that decrease the number of days between instruction and decision simplified

their life, thus allowing them faster services, more information and lower costs. To respond to this call, the approach is focused on the following measures: *Na Minha Rua* (Fix My Street); *Plantas de Localização* (Location Plans); *Horários de Funcionamento* (Business Schedule Map); *Atendimento Personalizado Online* (Personalised Chat); *Licenciamento Aberto* (Open Licensing); *Balcão Único e Descentralização do Balcão Único* (One-Stop-Shop Start and Grow); *Serviços na Hora – Certidão/Reprodução* (Just in Time Services – Certified Copies and Plans); *Gestor do Município* (Citizen Manager); and *Filmar Lisboa* (Filming in Lisbon).

The choice of these measures is not random, they are the result of a survey taken at the beginning of 2013 among Lisbon's citizens; these were the measures quoted by citizens and those which they use the most. They represent 70% of the overall measures.

Nowadays the Municipality of Lisbon is preparing the sixth edition of the programme, where the main focus will be a macro programme of the virtualisation and the dematerialisation of information and requests, aiming to achieve even higher satisfaction levels from citizens, as well as internally gaining data storage space, and promoting in the near future an electronic data interchange (EDI) within similar organisations so as to store documentation as metadata.

Local Telecare Service of the Barcelona Provincial Council and the Municipalities of the Barcelona Province

Submitted by the Area of Services for Citizens, Barcelona Provincial Council

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Type of sector

Public health and social welfare/affairs

Key words of project

Elderly people, social welfare, public and private partnership, social psychological and health assistance, new technologies

Barcelona Provincial Council (BPC) is an intermediate local authority, which supports municipalities through technical and economic assistance. The Area of Service for Citizens helps to ensure welfare, quality of life and social cohesion in the entire territory of the Barcelona province.

Among the services addressed to elderly people (17% of the total province population), priority is given to those which promote active ageing and help people to live in their homes with greater independence.

The Local Telecare System (SLT) was created in 2005 in the framework of BPC's Local Home Assistance Network and it has grown progressively from its 3,800 initial users to its current 61,000 in 310 municipalities. The service ensures the safety of dependent elderly people 24/7, 365 days a year, in a preventive proximity-based local social service.

The telematic tool consists of one pendant, which users could press to get attention in cases of a fall, health crisis or social emergency. Moreover, it is a proactive service that monitors users through calls and visits of

mobile units and area coordinators to prevent high-risk situations such as extreme temperatures, loneliness or other factors.

The service is promoted jointly by BPC and councils of the province. According to the subsidiarity principle, BPC coordinates the service at provincial level, carrying out contracting tasks, controlling quality and providing training and tools to manage and improve the service. The municipalities deal with the service in their territories, selecting and awarding the service to users needing it. This model is based on economy scale, providing the service at a low cost, but guaranteeing the maximum quality and equity all over the territory. The service is also based on a public-private cooperation model, which gives the option for constant appraisal and improvement, trying to offer an innovative response, such as adaptation to people with disabilities such as impaired hearing, or the incorporation of ICT tools in safety units.

The points that highlight the innovation of the service are, its provision in a proactive, preventive and integral basis that adds to the maintenance of the subsidiarity principle and the promotion of public-private cooperation. The most visible outcomes of its good impact are the increasing number of people receiving it and the socioeconomic impact, creating 254 new work places of which 86.64% are indefinite contracts.

BiscayTIK

Submitted by the BiscayTIK Foundation



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Type of sector

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Key words of project

Electronic local administration, information
society, e-Government, town councils,
e-Administration

The BiscayTIK Foundation was created by the Regional Government of Biscay in order to modernise the computer systems in local administrations in Biscay. The Region of Biscay with high numbers of users and penetration rates relating to information society was the ideal context for an e-Administration.

The BiscayTIK Foundation has developed a management tool, in collaboration with the town councils of Biscay, to keep all of them up to date in ICT systems and give all of the towns the opportunity to modernise on the inside, and provide them with a totally renovated web portal, in order to offer citizens the chance to communicate in a new way with their administration and file local procedures, wherever and whenever they like, on the internet, 24/7. In this way, local bodies in Biscay become state of the art examples of how ICT helps build the society of information.

It brings citizens closer to the administration whilst also increasing transparency.

As a result of the development and implementation of this project, expert knowledge is now in the hands of the ICT companies that have been working with BiscayTIK

in order to create this unique and pioneering experience in e-Administration. This project has no precedent, and therefore the Bake Eder Knowledge Centre has been created to keep up this experience and help in the internationalisation of BiscayTIK as a model, and to propel local companies, national and international, so the synergies created around BiscayTIK also become a motor for the local economy.

The result of the whole idea would make no sense without focusing its attention on citizens. Modernising people's daily life with the use of ICT introduces Biscay into the society of information. But to reach this goal, an important factor that the BiscayTIK Foundation has always had in mind is that it is necessary to approach, inform and convince users to adopt the system. There is a wide range of direct targets, from civil servants, to interested citizens who are happy to have a renovated way of doing their paperwork that is cheaper, easier and quicker than in the past. But there are other citizens who shouldn't be left behind, such as senior citizens or people who are not computer literate; for this reason BiscayTIK also carries out special activities in order to bridge the digital gap and reduce digital illiteracy, both with online courses and face-to-face activities.

GOTA2020

Submitted by the Municipality of Gotarrendura



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Type of sector

Science, research, innovation

Key words of project

Europe 2020, sustainable development, innovation, I+D+i, participation of all the citizens, quality of life

This project is about activities which have been put into practice in the area of the Municipality of Gotarrendura (Province of Ávila) in recent years, and which resulted in a considerable improvement of life of the local population as a measure of sustainable development which has been executed from 2005 onwards.

Gotarrendura is a small municipality of 174 people, who are living in the area of 'Moraña' situated 22 km from the capital of the Ávila province. Gotarrendura is a reference in the region in the field of renewable energies and energetic efficiency. The project supports the protection and organisation of natural resources, while promoting economic activities with respect to the natural environment.

Gotarrendura has converted itself into the village of the energies, and is a point of reference for sustainable development. Gotarrendura is a small town that is committed to sustainability and offers a model of rural development. It is a benchmark for sustainable development and an example of good environmental practices. Its action is innovative, responsive and

efficient, and is a model for action at local, national and international level. The project supports local economy and employment while assuring a better quality of life and wellbeing for its population. It also supplies training for all citizens.

Gotarrendura is a sustainable town, which raises awareness of and disseminates renewable energies and energy efficiency; it has been able to engage the entire population in creating a scenario of future progress for the town.

All this is developing because they:

- build a model of rural development through sustainable management of the environment and ensure the viability and future of Gotarrendura;
- are the benchmark of sustainable development functions, a steering axle in the municipality in the province, Castilla y León;
- make the municipality an example of good environmental practices, prevent ecological disasters and promote economic development process using clean techniques;
- are innovative, responsive and efficient, to facilitate the activities of their citizens, through a transparent way, respectful of the rights of citizens, improving the degree of their satisfaction, and their quality of life and social welfare.

More Than One Story

Submitted by the Department of Culture and Leisure of the Municipality of Simrishamn

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Type of sector

Sports, youth, culture and art

Key words of project

Integration, social inclusion, intercultural understanding

Our European societies are facing many challenges connected to increasing migration and cultural diversity. Problems including segregated communities, racism and various forms of intolerance and extremism endanger our welfare and our sense of security.

These challenges inspired the staff of the youth centre, part of the Department of Culture and Leisure of the Municipality of Simrishamn, Sweden, to look for solutions. Together with secondary school students and some adult volunteers, they developed More Than One Story, a practical method of working actively towards integration, understanding, healthy curiosity and respect between people of all ages, backgrounds and cultures. From the very beginning, the aim was to create an accessible, inexpensive and popular tool; a method which would produce such a powerful affect among individuals and groups that it would inspire participants to work with them.

Staff from the municipality's youth centre spent over six months developing the More Than One Story card game, together with secondary school students and adult volunteers. As they worked together, they tested

many possible cards and began to notice which ones produced the desired effect, to help people let go of prejudices and come closer to each other. This method is now being introduced at schools, youth centres, homes for the elderly, festivals, conferences, meetings and events. Most of the work and time invested in spreading More Than One Story is done by private individuals and the hundreds of public service employees or non-profit association members in the Simrishamn municipality and other municipalities who have chosen to use and promote this method.

This project has received an incredibly enthusiastic reaction from schools, institutions, families and organisations all over Sweden which are now using More Than One Story as a tool for social integration and inclusion. More Than One Story is being used all over Sweden, as well as in some other countries, to create increased harmony and appreciation across generations, amongst students and teachers, parents and children, immigrants and other residents.

Because of the minimal cost of each card game, it is possible even in difficult economic times, for municipalities, organisations and individuals to use More Than One Story to increase social inclusion and intercultural understanding. This method requires no specific training and everyone is able to lead the game after reading the simple instructions.

LOTS

Submitted by the Municipality of Hultsfred

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Type of sector

Education (higher and lower), training and learning; External relations and aid, development and enlargement; Public administration, modernisation, institutional affairs, reform; Regional policy and development, decentralisation

Key words of project

Knowledge, competence, development, education, company errands, business contacts, streamlining, new model, standard, efficiency

When a company or an entrepreneur has an errand to run at the municipality, they expect a high level of service. They also expect that this high level of service should be equal in all municipalities, since companies do not operate according to municipal borders. The problem is that many municipalities have one or two officials who are responsible for answering and handling all the questions from every company. In short, there is only one way into the municipality, and every company has to take the same route.

The LOTS Project wanted to change the perspective, and creates many contacts for the private sector to use when they have an errand at the Hultsfred Municipality.

In 2010 the LOTS Project was launched in Hultsfred Municipality. Throughout the project they have developed a model that has become a new Swedish standard regarding how municipalities in Sweden can work when it comes to company contacts.

LOTS is a model to spread responsibility and knowledge throughout the organisation, to create lots of possible ways for companies to get help, support and guidance from the municipality. This means that the officials need to have a wider knowledge about the different areas covered by the municipality, as well as about conditions of running a company.

The LOTS Group of Hultsfred Municipality currently comprises about 23 persons from different departments. Each of these persons, who all have other main tasks outside of LOTS, can be the first contact for a new business that wants to establish itself in Hultsfred, and they can all answer the most common questions from the private sector. The biggest cost of the LOTS Project has been the time and effort spent by all of the persons involved with it. Apart from that, only minor financial investments have been made in the project. The success is based on dedication – not budget.

Apart from becoming a new Swedish standard (certified by Swedish Standards Institute) and the fact that major cities such as Stockholm, Gothenburg and Helsingborg have begun to adapt the LOTS model, this has yielded some significant results for Hultsfred Municipality. Since the project was first launched, Hultsfred has climbed 58 positions on the ranking of the most corporation-friendly municipalities in Sweden, and the trend is that it will continue climbing for the next couple of years.

Youth Square

Submitted by the Municipality of Umeå

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Type of sector

Employment, labour-related affairs, social welfare, work rehabilitation

Key words of project

Young adults, employment, studies, social welfare, coordination, work rehabilitation

Youth Square (*Ungdomstorget*) started as a project in 2009, and has proved to make an impact. Youth Square aims to identify and improve quality of services delivered to young adults on their way to studies and employment. The target group is young adults between 18 to 25 years old (in some cases 16 to 29 years old), in need of support from public administration on their way towards becoming economically independent of state subsidies.

One of the key factors to success is the advanced and complex coordination between the participating parts of public administration. The staff consists of professionals from four organisations. *Viva Kompetenscentrum*, an entity within the Municipality of Umeå, is the project owner. Therefore, Youth Square brings together knowledge and experience from different parts of public administration in order to improve efficiency for every young adult in need of support.

Youth Square has 31 working professionals, 28 of them are located in the same work place. The aim is to work together in well-functioning and coordinated teams to

deliver high quality services to the participating young adults.

The staff is organised in different teams, focusing on different issues, and they all work closely with other professionals within their team. The teams have weekly meetings. At these meetings they prepare and discuss each young adult's case based on each individual's need for support. Before these meetings the young adult concerned has to agree in writing to having his/her case discussed. The psychologist and occupational therapists are always present at these meetings. After the support needs have been identified, Youth Square offers an introduction course. The aim is to produce material for a common platform in order to give the young adult adequate support. When all partners involved have agreed on a common platform, the young adult enters the adequate specialised programmes/efforts carried out by Youth Square.

The project has been evaluated (from 2009 until 2011) by two academics at the Department of Social Work at Umeå University. In May 2012 they presented the final results. The results show that Youth Square has been successful.

Youth Square has attracted a lot of recognition at a local, regional and national level. Not only has the media recognised the achievements of Youth Square, but several members of Swedish Parliament have also shared an interest in the activities carried out by Youth Square.

No ifs. No Butts.

Submitted by the City of London Corporation

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Type of sector

Environment; City cleaning policy; Public health

Key words of project

Cigarette litter reduction, ashtrays, smoking

The City of London Corporation has created an effective, integrated initiative which reduces smoking-related litter (SRL) in cities and high footfall areas.

The 'No ifs. No butts' (NINB) initiative has delivered significant improvements in the quality of local environment and cleansing efficiency in the City of London for the benefit of citizens, commerce and tourism. As a direct result of this initiative, cigarette litter in the City has fallen by 64% with an estimated 27 million pieces of SRL and gum kept off the pavements each year. The NINB initiative is effective, scalable and transferable.

The strategy comprises five key components:

1. Provision – Co-development and widespread deployment of patented 'City of London Smartbins™' which have been installed across the City.
2. Engagement – Awareness raising by Street Officers to energise citizens and businesses to make them partners in the developed solution, i.e. through communication campaigns.
3. Education – Advice and practical assistance to local businesses through

Environmental Best Practice Meetings and regular visits/presentations to businesses.

4. Enforcement – Fixed penalty notices (FPN) given to people caught dropping cigarette ends, reinforcing the City's policy on cigarette litter; the City of London is also developing an option for offenders to choose to attend a 'Help Quit Smoking' course in lieu of a FPN.
5. Partnership and Recognition – Promotion of an annual Clean City Awards Scheme, which aims to develop partnerships with City businesses, by raising the profile of responsible waste management and recognising and rewarding good practice.

This combination of tools forms a holistic, people-centric strategy. The 'NINB' initiative benefits residents, commerce and tourism by delivering cleaner streets. It is estimated to be 95% more cost effective to collect litter from bins than it is to pick it up manually off the streets. This supports the business case for improving bin infrastructure and implementing a comprehensive engagement strategy to change people's behaviour and encourage considerate disposal.

This partnership approach empowers citizens to make a significant contribution to the cleanliness of the City and encourages shared responsibility to solve an aesthetic, social, environmental and public health issue.

This initiative has been funded from existing City budgets, and has proven highly effective for reducing micro litter in the City of London.

The North Dorset Model of Community Planning

Submitted by the North Dorset District Council

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Type of sector

Local government

Key words of project

Citizens' involvement, local communities' participation, shaping the future together, participatory process

Crucial drivers for change in North Dorset are maintaining cost-effective services and retaining facilities, in a rural area with a dispersed settlement pattern, which is expensive to serve. Poor public transport, telephone coverage and slow broadband speeds make it difficult for citizens and businesses to access services. At the same time, the Council is necessarily reducing costs in times of economic austerity.

The North Dorset model of community planning won the award as the Best in Britain in 2010. It demonstrates a long-term investment in supporting communities to build strong and sustainable community partnerships. Over many years these have been involved in decision-making, budget-setting and influencing policy. The Council trusts the partnerships to work with local public administration to develop and manage assets, take over and run facilities and some local services such as leisure and tourism. The Council took a proactive approach to include the citizens in a project called Local Delivery. Through their community partnerships they worked alongside local councils to decide which services and

facilities should be retained in their area, during times of austerity and severe cuts in budgets. Those valued by citizens have been retained through innovative solutions and are now being managed through new working arrangements.

What sets this model apart from others is the degree to which it influences long-term sustainability. The Council gives genuine power to the community to shape its own sustainable future. Partnerships have delivered award winning, ambitious schemes involving people in improving prosperity and appearance of their towns, attracting about £20 million in the last seven years. The model has proved its capacity to deliver and shown that local government can be a galvanising force for social and economic change in an age of austerity. With a delivery of over 200 projects and the sustained involvement of around 250 volunteers, it really is at the cutting edge of community improvements. It has demonstrated that public services can be delivered even more successfully through partnership with civil society. These partnerships have been proud to showcase their achievements as exemplars of good practice.

The Council's vision is that people who live and work in the area know best what is needed to build a sustainable future. By giving power to local residents and putting them in the driving seat, there is ample proof that this approach can succeed.

Economic Development Funding Strategy

Submitted by the Aberdeen City Council



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Type of sector

Public administration, modernisation,
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Key words of project

Partnership, funding, effective, efficient,
projects, budget

The objective of this project is to do more with less, for the Economic and Business Development team of Aberdeen City Council to achieve as much as and even more than in previous years, but with a vastly reduced budget. The aim is to use the available funding as leverage to bring in additional funding from the Council's external partners, allowing specific strategic projects to go ahead. These projects contribute towards achieving the strategic objectives of the Economic and Business Development service as outlined in their business plan.

The City Council is responsible for delivering a wide range of services that strongly influence the performance of the city economy. Economic and Business Development provides a range of services and support for local businesses, from those starting out, to third sector enterprises and successful international organisations. However, Aberdeen City Council does not have unlimited resources at its disposal to both facilitate long-term sustainable growth and meet shorter-term goals related to the current economic recession. Therefore, the EBD funding strategy was

designed to use limited Council resources in a more effective, efficient and targeted manner.

In order to achieve these objectives and targets of the Economic and Business Development Service's business plan, activities, people and funding resources were allocated appropriately within a new organisational structure for the service.

Since the EBD service can no longer contribute as much financially to projects within the City, they are now focusing instead on contributing to partnerships their time, knowledge resources, experience and their network of contacts within the private and other sectors and at various levels. This has resulted in securing financial buy-in from other sources who were reassured of the Council's commitment and professional approach to partnership working.

Against a background of reducing revenue and significantly decreased capital budgets Aberdeen's Business and Economic Development Service has managed to increase spending from external sources and deliver the large-scale projects that were detailed in its business plan while contributing to the delivery of the objectives in that business plan. This is a success story and the direct result of the EBD team's own capabilities and professionalism, as well as effective and strategic partnership working and funding structures within carefully selected projects across the city.

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Weathering the Storm: Creative EPSA Solutions in a Time of Crisis

The economic storm faced by European public administrations continues unabated. Budget cuts and austerity measures coupled with unpleasant tax increases have been extensively applied, though they have not always delivered the expected results.

Difficult choices lie ahead for Europe's public sector in order to stabilise public finances, while continuing to deliver the services needed more than ever by an increasing number of citizens as a result of the economic pressure. Trends over time which exacerbate such pressures are unlikely to be reversed in the medium term.

The **EPSA 2013** edition has collected a rich harvest of **230 solutions** from across all levels of public administration and from **26 European countries** and EU institutions, which can all be proud of their achievements and also showcase how they are dealing with these challenging times.

This publication aims to sketch out the trends, ideas and solutions in the various creative public management and service reforms on the one hand, whilst pinpointing common elements or obstacles in their delivery – **The Research Part**. Key findings, among many others, include active strategies to promote economic growth, the ability to enhance social inclusion, the use of transparency as a means to promote better governance, or the smart deployment of ICT to boost trust in government and improve service delivery.

On the other hand, the best and top-ranked **47 practices** (15 nominees and 32 additional best practice certificate recipients) are subsequently described, allowing the reader to not only get an idea of the innovation and drivers behind the cases, but also to directly contact the owners behind the applications in order to encourage the learning and transfer potential. These outstanding public achievements span sectors such as economic and urban development, sustainable development, justice and police, education and training, sports and youth, public health, social media, and human resources management. This part – **The Catalogue** – is supported by data and statistics on the applications (e.g. type, country, size, fully or partly EU co-financed).

In a nutshell, the EPSA 2013 book demonstrates – again! – how the public sector has tried to resolve the various urgent challenges linked to the current crisis, by combining creativity and sustainability, accompanied by an often needed passion in their solutions.

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