

# TARTU, Estonia CASE STUDY

## 1. Title of the project

Tartu City Government's e-services for citizens

## 2. Background information

Citizen's portal was launched for public use on 12 March 2003.

The first e-form was filled in and submitted to Tartu City Government on 16 March 2003. City Government can currently receive about 150 electronically submitted applications quarterly

E-services in the context of that particular project are the long-term procedural handling services. Technically, it is an HTML format that will be filled in by the user and the information it contains reaches after the XML-transformations and through the server computer the file management system of Tartu City Government. Hence, there are at least two views in the process:

- A view seen by the citizen or the Citizen's portal
- A view seen by the institution, i.e. the city government's file management system GoPro

Citizen's portal is the environment, where

- Citizens and entrepreneurs have a chance to communicate with local governments and state authorities digitally, and
- local governments and state authorities provide e-services for citizens.

Citizen's portal can be entered at [www.eesti.ee](http://www.eesti.ee) by using the ID card and card reader or through internet bank.

Citizen's portal or the shared environment for e-services is managed by the state department of information system that is administered by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications.

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## 3. Description of situation earlier

A number of technical procedures were required before starting to process a matter. The links to application forms are presented on the homepage of Tartu City Government. The citizen will print the form out, fill in, sign and submit to relevant authority. The official will accept the application and scan into records' register. If it turns out that there is a need for additional documents, the whole process will start all over again. Hence, the same document will be issued by and entered into the city government's information system repeatedly, which is costly as well as time-consuming for both citizen and official. Not to mention, that the citizen is not interested in visiting several authorities but he or she wants to deal with his or her issue. But there are also exceptions ☺

## 4. Contents and description of services

### **4.1. Aim**

The aim is to make the services citizen-friendly and accessible for everyone by saving the time, money and trouble.

### **4.2. Legislative framework**

Several changes have been made in the legislation during the past 6 years that enable secured electronic procedures between citizen and authority. The most important supplement among them is the government's regulation **Implementation of data exchange layer of information systems**, which came into force on 23.12.2003. The regulation establishes the uniform

principles for management and operation of data exchange layer of information systems. That data exchange layer is called the X-road and it is a technical and technological environment that enables secured internet-based exchange of data.

**Digital Signatures Act** came into force on 15 December 2000. The act provides necessary conditions for using digital signature and monitoring procedures for provision of certification and time-stamping services.

### 4.3. Main functions

#### **4.3.1. Citizen's section; procedure for using e-services**

Citizen's section enables to submit documents (applications, proposals, complaints, etc.) to city government and to monitor their handling process. The communication process is the following:

- Citizen will choose in the KIT file server selection box the local government with whom he or she wants to contact;
- Citizen will choose among the services provided by that particular authority the application form he or she is interested in and will fill it in;
- If it is necessary, citizen will sign the completed application by using the ID card;
- Citizen will submit the content of the form to KIT file server;
- KIT file server will save the content of the form in XML format as well as in HTML or TEXT format to be signed by the citizen;
- The status of the document in the KIT file server will be 'ACCEPTED';
- Information system of the authority will inform the KIT file server about relevant (according to internal rules of institution) change of the status of the document, which will turn the status of the document in the file server to 'IN PROCESS: STATUS DETERMINED BY THE AUTHORITY', which could be PENDING, REJECTED, IN APPROVAL;
- The information system of the authority can send responding documents to citizen's document if necessary, and these are filed by the initial document in the citizen's information system;
- If the authority completes the handling process, it will send the responsive document and change the status of the document in the KIT file server and in the citizen's information system to 'COMPLETED';
- Citizen can check any time the status of the documents submitted by him or her in the file server.

#### **4.3.2. Authority's section**

Authority's file management system is connected with Citizen's portal. Connection can take place through two components: file router and T-connector. Institution's T-connector is a programme that

- will contact KIT file server in timely manner and take there new received documents to forward them to information systems of institutions;
- will place messages and documents received from authority's information system to KIT file server.

File router will process files in XML format at KIT file server and will convert them into other formats (CVS, plane text, etc.) if necessary.

If the document reaches the authority's information system, then

- document will be saved and city government's file management system will check to which department the received file has been sent;
- document will be registered in files of relevant department;
- file management system will inform the official responsible for matter about received document;
- official will set the status of the document that reflects the state of the handling process, and authority's information system will inform the KIT file server about the change of the status of the document;

- official will send responding documents to citizen's document and these will be filed at citizen's KIT file server and are connected with identifier by initial document;
- if the official completes the handling process of the document, he or she will send a responding document and change the status of the document to 'COMPLETED';
- authority's information system will send the relevant message and document to the KIT file server.

#### 4.4. Services offered

Citizen can currently submit applications through Citizen's portal to city government in 5 categories: social assistance, city management; culture and sport, architecture and construction, other correspondence. Examples of services:

- Child allowance application
- Application and registration of public assembly
- Submitting a request for information
- Simple correspondence
- Submitting application for money
- Submitting a challenge for financial penalty
- Submitting an application for exemption from land tax
- Applications for persons with special needs
- Registration of pet animals

#### 4.5. Conclusions

- Citizen can submit the applications to city government by using internet;
- Citizen does not need to submit information about himself or herself that the state already has;
- Citizen does not have to fill in inconvenient forms, bring them to the authority or print them out;
- Money payments (e.g. child allowance) are made easier;
- Official does not have to accept a huge amount of completed forms from the citizen;
- Official does not have to insert the data on paper into information system manually;
- Official does not have to check the data in different registers manually.

#### 4.6. Technical solution

Document management system GoPro is based on IBM Domino server and uses Lotus Notes client. Citizen's portal basic functionality is based on eCitizen software, which runs on IBM WebSphere application server.

#### 4.7. Partners

- IBM Estonia – connected city government's file management system with Citizen's portal
- RIA (Riigi Infosüsteemide Arenduskeskus – *development center of the state information systems*) – manages and develops the Citizen's portal

#### 4.8. Next steps

Correspondence between citizen and city government has been established. The state is developing AIT (*ametnike infosüsteem* – officials' information system) or the central file storage with which the information systems of different institutions will be connected. The aim of the file storage is to organise the correspondence between officials.