THE EVOLUTION OF THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION INFORMATIZATION AS WELL AS THE EVOLUTION OF ITS PUBLIC SERVICES

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Abstract: Members of a society are responsible for their own fate as well as for the fate of the community to which they belong, only after they provide, only after having provided the legal framework for active participation in the decisions concerning their lives. As a partner of the community, the public administration must ensure full transparency of decisions.

As a model of the future society – the Information Society – has put before the European Union issues of the highest priority and urgency: a regulatory framework, promoting a new culture of entrepreneurship and business, achieving leadership in new technologies, educating and training citizens' and the implementation of new methods of doing business.

The formation of an information society is a global matter which has been a concern of many countries as the "Declaration of Tartu – Estonia" proves. The document was adopted on May 31st 1997, by 59 experts from 19 countries, specialized in issues related to communication in an 'informational society', in which information is addressed to people and it definitely does not have a technological characteristic'. In other words an information-based society is man-oriented as the focus is on the man. The initiative for "Global Information Society" originated in the 1994 summit held at Napoli by the heads of states and Governments belonging to the G7 countries. A year later, in 1995, the Conference for the Information Society held in Brussels, has generated numerous discussions on the implementation of a global competitive information infrastructure. In 1996, a forum was held in Prague to which EU countries from Central and Eastern Europe gathered more than 400 participants who concluded *inter alia* that the information society makes it possible to create new services and activities based on modern information processing and telecommunications, which will have an impact on every sector of the citizens' life whether economic, public administration, social and cultural.

The information society is characterized by the democratization of information, communication, comprehension and cooperation. From this perspective European countries have defined strategies and programs referring to all areas of life in order to make a smooth transition to the Information Society.

Priorities have been made on:
- Creating a new regulatory framework;

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- Promoting a new culture of entrepreneurship and business;
- Achieving the role of leadership in new technologies;
- Educating and training citizens;
- Implementation of new methods of doing business.

A strategic document is "*e-Europe – An Information Society for All*", officially issued during the European Summit in Goteborg, in June 15 – 16th, 2001.

In this context the EU, through its political and executive bodies has been acting since 1993 through a series of strategic decisions and programs, the latest document being "*e-Europe – An Information Society for All*", dated December 8th, 1999, which suggests the acceleration of the implementation of digital technologies in Europe together with the ensuring of all necessary skills in order to widely use these technologies. This initiative has a central role in the economic and social renewal that EU suggests, while constituting a key element for modernizing the European economy, for the transition to the new knowledge-based economy of 2010.

The "*e-Europe – An Information Society for All*" plan was made public at the European Summit in Goteborg, on June 15 – 16th, 2001.

Applying digital technologies has become a vital factor in the growth of and the providing of jobs in the new economy. Although Europe is a technological leader in many areas (e.g. mobile communications, digital television), in others – particularly in internet use – it lags behind if compared to the US and Canada. Consequently, the e-Europe initiative aims to bring Europe in a position to fully benefit from the advantages of digital economy, to fully exploit its technological priorities and to increase its necessary educational and entrepreneurial potential.

Key objectives of e-Europe are:
-    Providing communication on-line for every household, school, company and institution of public administration;
-    Creating a European digital and entrepreneurial culture, which dynamic investors willing to finance and develop these new ideas should benefit from;
-    Ensuring the principle according to which the transition to the digital era should be a process that includes the entire society, it should ensure customer confidence and should strengthen social cohesion.

In order to implement these objectives a European acting plan – e-Europe (Feira, 2000) - was adopted, which was updated in 2002 in Seville (the first e-Europe 2005 action plan). The first plan suggests a series of actions to ensure cheap, secure and fast Internet access, so that human resources capable of developing and using the new technologies could be ensured and stimulated into using the internet all over Europe. The important development of the EU countries during 200 – 2001 has allowed the shaping up of a new action plan with a larger horizon defined for the year 2005. e-Europe 2005 relies on the technological progress in the field of broadband communications as well as in that of multi –platform access, counting on the synergy between the development of broadband on one hand and the industry of IT services and digital content on the other.

As compared to the objectives and actions forecast for the EU, the e-Europe plan has an additional objective to accelerate the ensuring of the fundamental elements for Information Society in the countries candidate to the adherence to the EU. This could be made by developing and ensuring the accessibility to communication services and by adopting elements of the community's acquis which are characteristic to the information society.

The computerization of society can be successfully achieved provided that there is a well organized and efficiently driven informational infrastructure.
By 2005, Europe should have:
- On-line public services:
  o E-Government;
  o Services for e-learning;
  o Services for e-health;
- A dynamic environment for e-business.

e-Europe objectives are of utmost importance not only for EU Members States but also for the countries of Central and Eastern European candidate countries. The rate of development and use of TIC in all economical and social sectors will have a direct influence on the pace at which European integration process takes place and will also provide new opportunities for overcoming

the difficulties faced by countries undergoing reform. The ministerial conference of the countries in Central and Eastern Europe and the European Commission the representatives (Warsaw, May 2000) decided to develop an action plan called e-Europe+ for countries candidate to EU, complementary to that of EU countries but convergent as far as their objectives are concerned.

During the e-Europe 2002 program on a European level we can speak of a progress which records:
- Doubling the percentage of internet penetration;
- Installed telecom infrastructure;
- Decrease in the prices charged for internet access;
- Internet connection for most companies and schools;
- Europe currently holds the fastest research network;
- Implementation of e-commerce laws and regulations at a large scale;
- More government services available online;
- Initiating the necessary infrastructure for smartcards;
- Adopting guidelines on web accessibility by Members States in EU.

At the level of public services, the e-Europe 2005 program's main objective is to stimulate the main areas that can bring added value. The program also includes an action plan that aims at granting access to online services to disabled persons.

Another important direction is to ensure the security of web transactions. In most EU Member States there are initiatives to implement e-Government. These are complemented by actions at a European level such as IDA (Interchange Data between Administrations), which supports interoperability of systems, back-office service provision and standardization at European level, IST (Information Society Technologies) which finances research activities in the IT area. In this respect within the European Council in Barcelona heads of state and government took the decision to establish a portal "One Stop European Job Mobility Information Web Site". This portal together with the administration portal (developed under the IDA) will provide a multi-lingual entry point for information and services to EU citizens and companies.

The e-Government program includes the following measures:
- Cooperation with local authorities to develop networks that function as regional networks for learning and group responsibility;
- Cooperation with mayors, public services to create metropolitan communication networks – City Net – as an information management system.

The ultimate goal of the e-Government (G) program is to increase the quality and accessibility of government services, whose beneficiaries are citizens (C), business (B) and public employees – civil servants (E). We consider that our efforts made in recent years, through special programs to support schools, universities, research institutions, local administrations, etc. have contributed to the record of natural successes in the unfolding events of the transition to a, information society.

More and more EU countries apply the principles of good governance, namely: opening, participation, accountability, effectiveness and coherence. Each principle is important to establish democratic governance. They are the very basis of democracy and the ruling law in Member States and apply to all levels of government – global, European, national, regional and local.

Opening – each institution must work in a much more open manner, being able to actively communicate the decisions of the EU and their implementation.

Participation – ensures a wider participation in the chain of policy – from conception to implementation. Improved participation is created in order to build up a greater trust in the final result and in the institutions which disseminate the EU policies. Definite participation depends on the manner in which central governments pursue a comprehensive approach when developing and implementing EU policies.

Responsibility – each of the EU institutions should take responsibility for what they do in Europe.

Effectiveness – depends on the implementation of EU policies as decisions are taken at the appropriate levels.

Coherence – all applied policies and actions must be coherent and understandable. The necessity of coherence in EU is increased as countries abide by the rules, creating a widening

diversity. The challenges both climatic and demographic meet the boundaries of sector policies on which the Union was built.

Since policies can be effective only when properly prepared and implemented, the information system plays a particularly important role in applying these principles, for all EU countries and especially the structure of the administrative system.

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