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OPEN GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE IN EUROPE

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Call for an open government initiative in Europe

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WHAT IS OPEN GOVERNMENT?

The term 'open government' describes the aim to provide public, civil and commercial groups with access to the worlds of politics and administration. It is based on three main ideas: transparency, which helps others to understand the motives behind governmental decision-making; mutual cooperation of governmental authorities with the public and the business world; and finally, participation, namely, the concrete integration of citizens and businesses into state (decision-making) processes.

The technological developments of the last few years have paved the way for an entire country as a whole to participate in the processes of its government. For instance, almost every citizen now has access to the common information network online — the internet. The 'global village' is becoming a fixture in the lives of many members of the public, as well as the work flows of private businesses, particularly on the back of the increasing availability of interactive Web 2.0 internet applications.

Since 2005, the concept of open government has been a key issue on the academic agenda internationally, where it has been the subject of various research efforts, conferences and projects. Since 2008, numerous civil-society and governmental players have also picked up on the topic of open government. The projects these bodies have initiated on open government will have an impact on the worlds of politics and administration in Europe, as they face increasing demands from the public and business community for greater transparency. As a result, there is a growing need for proactive action among political and administrative authorities.

THE POTENTIAL OF OPEN GOVERNMENT

In the medium term, open government could become one of the most important and defining developments for both the modernisation of administrative authorities as part of the e-government initiative, and for democracy itself. The concept of open government is based on the idea that having free access to all available information and data that supports the administrative process helps a society improve its trust in political and administrative authorities, while at the same time bolstering the competitiveness of its companies and the country itself as a centre for business. The advantages provided by open government, for example, in relation to the current challenges for modernising administrative authorities, are still underestimated by many key players. In addition to enhancing the credibility of political actions and boosting acceptance of administrative decision-making, open government can also make administrative work substantially more efficient through greater cooperation with the public, businesses and academics. It can also have other impacts. For instance, the availability of governmental data and information (open data[1]) can form a significant driver of innovation for business.

As the core concept of open government is cooperation 'on equal terms', governmental and administrative authorities which aren't getting involved are quickly seen by society as slowing, blocking or delaying progress. This is another reason why open government has now been internationally integrated into the systems of many countries. The points listed in this article under 'Open government worldwide' are not just theoretical predictions, but verifiable results from pioneers of open government around the world.

OPEN GOVERNMENT AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE INFORMATION SOCIETY

Open government is a modern, integrated strategic concept that offers many advantages for society, while also providing substantial added value for political and administrative authorities. Open government is already part of many government programmes, and with good reason. Therefore, the question of whether administrative bodies should be active in this area is purely rhetorical: they are already active, but not nearly active enough!

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1   Open data refers to the structured digital provision of raw data by administrative authorities, allowing third parties to correlate, evaluate or visualise it

The reason for this could be that the introduction of open government will bring about a substantial change of culture in public administration. Reluctance to make this change is understandable. On the other hand, open government and its fields of action offer the chance to boost economic growth, increase efficiency in administration and establish a mutually advantageous cooperation between governmental authorities and civil society — and all at a reasonable cost and against a reasonable workload. Furthermore, open government promotes sustainable development.

Opportunity: use established technologies

Numerous tools and services from the Web 2.0 interactive generation of internet applications are highly suited for facilitating the technical implementation of open government. The technologies available are good value or even free of charge, and have already established themselves among private businesses and in the daily lives of members of the public. The emphasis is therefore not on developing something new; it is much more on making the most of available tools in government.

Opportunity: learn from the experience of others

The pioneering work of a range of countries in realising open government offers several advantages: there are now many examples of how the concept can be implemented in practice, which can in turn be easily adapted by different administrative bodies[2]. The 'first movers' are now taking the next step, while others now have the chance to follow in their successful footsteps and avoid known mistakes as a 'fast follower'.

Opportunity: pick up on existing initiatives

It is not only civil-society players that have got involved in implementing the concept in specific areas. Open government initiatives have already been formed within city and municipal authorities. These should be pooled and transferred to other bodies.

Opportunity: start cheaply and effectively

International examples have shown that many efforts to open up administrative bodies begin with open-data initiatives, because quick and comparatively cheap sustainable successes can be achieved in this area. The engagement and demands of civil-society players, as well as discussion and reporting on the matter, often focus on open-data measures. The publishing of governmental data and information demanded here has the potential to be a driver

of innovation in business: experts can often achieve more with valid data than their administrative counterparts, both in terms of speed and financing. Last but not least, open data as a measure for developing open government can also address political goals.

OPEN GOVERNMENT WORLDWIDE

The first step towards open government was made in many countries with their respective laws governing freedom of information (which are, in principle, also open-data initiatives). The shaping or supplementing of these legal regulations is therefore a fundamental part of open government activities in numerous countries.

The following overview of selected governmental and civil-society open government initiatives in various countries provides an impression of what form open government can take in practice and how it can work.

USA

When President Barack Obama entered office in January 2009, a memorandum covering the subjects of transparency and open government was published. Almost one year later, specific targets and time frames for authorities to implement open government measures in the USA were announced. This guideline included the following plans:
- Every agency had 45 days to publish at least three high-value data sets online.
- Every agency had 45 days to name a high-ranking point of contact for implementing the open government initiative.
- Every agency had to produce its own plan within 120 days of how it would develop open government in the long term, integrate it in its development of specific topics and establish a suitable online information platform.
- A review and stock-taking process was planned after 90 days.

At the same time, ideas and suggestions for transparent government were pooled as part of an open government dialogue, and various data and information portals were established. These portals provide available data from political and administrative authorities. They all have different aims in terms of their content:
- data.gov[3] is intended to offer more transparency for data and information
- regulations.gov[4] is aimed at increasing participation
- artistotle.com[5] promotes collaboration and political campaigning

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2   See, for example, http://www.opendata-showroom.org/

3   http://www.data.gov/
4   http://www.regulations.gov/
5   http://www.aristotle.com/

- the Peer-to-Patent portal[6] focuses on promoting innovation through collaborative patent registration
- business.gov[7] is dedicated to increased transparency for SMEs
- the Idea Factory[8] is the platform for crowdsourcing.

Portals like these make data both easier to find and freely accessible. In addition, they facilitate their connection with other information by offering these data sets centrally, in a structured way and in a machine-readable format. The public benefit from the opportunity to find answers to their most important questions: how are my taxes being spent as part of the economic recovery programme? What areas are they being used in? What statistical data relating to agriculture, environmental protection, education, and so on, is recorded by administrative authorities? What is being done about environmental protection in my local area?

As this data can be viewed not only in standard formats (XML, Excel) but also via application programming interfaces (APIs), there is now the simple possibility of using them in specific and new ways. They can be evaluated, correlated and visualised in any combination, or even embedded in websites and blogs via widgets[9]. At the end of 2009, the US government published a progress report featuring numerous examples. These show how open government has already developed in specific agencies. The national portal data.gov was named as a prime example. The portal's data volumes are constantly on the rise. There are now more than 379,000 data sets (raw data, including geodata) from 172 agencies available online. In addition, the portal also offers access to various applications that have been developed for using the raw data, particularly the government apps (as of March 2011: 938) and apps developed by civil-society players (as of March 2011: 236). Furthermore, other projects currently in development have also been presented, such as 'Virtual USA', in which the Department of Homeland Security provides information on catastrophe protection, or a project from the United States Patent and Trademark Office aimed at making all published patents available for viewing online.

In addition, numerous regional projects have also been set up with the aim of continuing the development of the open-data initiative with a local focus:
- CivicApps.org[10] is a project established by the Bureau of Technology in Portland. It publishes data on local and growth programmes.

- With the CityWide Data Warehouse[11], Washington DC provides citizens with access to over 450 data sets from various agencies, including a record of inquiries to the call centre at the mayor's office relating to practical issues, for instance, in areas such as transport and infrastructure.

- San Francisco built on the experiences of other initiatives and focused on providing the most popular data sets on its portal DataSF[12]. Initially, information provided included the water quality of the beaches, wifi availability in the city and the spending of city authorities. The public has the opportunity to request data sets in other areas and in doing so help mould the range of published data on offer.

- New York has set up both the Open-Data Portal NYC Data Mine[13] and the competition NYC BigApps. The latter awards relatively large cash prizes (US$20,000) to developers who create specific applications (apps) for the data sets made available by city authorities. One of the first winners was WayFinder, a program for mobile telephones. This shows users which trains are available going in the direction in which they hold their mobile phones.

The White House's open government initiative remains unparalleled up to now. However, there are also critical views of the project. For example, it has been criticised for not taking a wider, more comprehensive approach. Also, individual agencies tend to focus too much on their own areas of responsibility. In particular, the initative needs to establish a comparable level of data quality for all data warehouses and portals in the medium term. The technologies and data formats of the published data should also be made uniform. However, the most prominent challenges in the implementation are issues relating to security, data protection and confidentiality. There has to be clarity about what happens if individual agencies within the government do not implement the open government guidelines. No rules governing this have (as yet) been set up.

Germany

More and more citizens in Germany are demanding that governmental and administrative authorities take a more proactive approach to establishing open government. The issues outlined in the Bundestag e-petition[14] in 2009 and the large number of signatures collected were an early indication that civil society is very interested in this topic and is increasingly making new demands. The petition

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6   http://www.peertopatent.org/
7   http://www.business.gov/
8   http://www.whitehouse.gov/open/innovations/IdeaFactory/
9   Widget = a small application that can be very easily integrated into existing programs. The basic functions and resources have to be made available by these programs (for example, weblog software)
10   http://www.civicapps.org/

11   http://dcstat.octo.dc.gov/
12   http://datasf.org/
13   http://www.nyc.gov/html/datamine/
14   https:/epetitionen.bundestag.de/

requests, for instance, that a 'German API'[15] is set up, and that research results paid for with public money should be proactively published.

The establishment of a nationwide open-data platform was announced for 2013 during the fifth National IT Summit (Nationaler IT-Gipfel) in Dresden in December 2010.

In contrast to the federal government, several German cities, including Munich and Berlin, have already recognised the potential of open government — both for the cities as centres for business, and for their citizens. They have successfully launched several local initiatives, including MOGDY[16] (Munich Open government Day) and BODDY[17] (Berlin Open-Data Day).

United Kingdom

The UK is also experiencing various initiatives aimed at developing open government. As early as March 2009, Tom Watson (then-minister for Transformational Government) set up a Power of Information Taskforce[18]. In addition, the British government gained the 'inventor' of the World Wide Web, Sir Tim Berners-Lee, as a supporter of its efforts in this area. In December 2009, the British government published the position paper 'Smarter Government'. It describes setting up comprehensive services that are compatible on a cross-medial basis and establishing a road map to greater transparency within the next five years. Publishing data (open data) is also one of the most important and central aims of the initiative.

The ideas competition for open-data applications 'Show us a better way'[19] has now become widely accepted as the international best-practice example in this area. The competition challenged people to come up with suggested projects for open-data applications. The key questions in the competition were: what data should be made available? How should this data be presented?

On the back of the competition, data.gov.uk[20] was launched in January 2010 as the government's official open-data portal, offering users 3,000 data sets. Since then, this number has risen to over 5,600 (as of February 2011). The most popular data includes weather information, data relating to the generation of renewable energy and the budget spending of city councils. The source code of the website was also published. Nigel Shadbolt, who initiated the platform together with Berners-Lee, was very positive about the site's first year online: "It works because people take government data and use it to hold power to account, to re-engineer public services or to create new businesses."

Also in January 2010, the large civic open-data portal London database[21] was launched online. As in other cities, publishing the raw data is only the first step in London. This data will only provide added value for society when it is visualised in an appropriate manner and evaluated in context.

Following the success of the first initiatives, new guidelines on open data were drafted in the UK. In the future, more data should be made available under an open licence and its use for commercial projects accelerated.

The current coalition government formed in 2010 has made transparency a key focus[22]. This is embodied by the Public Sector Transparency Board, chaired by the Minister for the Cabinet Office and composed of five experts, including Berners-Lee.

Key data has been made public, including, for example, senior officials' salaries over £150,000, interactive crime maps, lists of ministers' interests outside government, and so on. These sources are regrouped at data.gov.uk, together with discussion forums, and a place to submit ideas for new data-sets and mash-ups.

Significantly, the government has relaxed current licensing provisions on public sector information covered by Crown copyright and database rights, making it faster and easier for developers and entrepreneurs to re-use it through a new Open Government Licence.

Developed by The National Archives, the new licence (for which users do not need to register) provides a single set of terms and conditions for anyone wishing to use or license government information. It's also designed to be machine readable and to work in parallel with other internationally-recognised licensing models, such as Creative Commons[23].

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15   API (Application Programming Interface) describes a programming interface that supports access to data and information (such as from a database), as well as additional programming for graphical user interfaces. An API can basically be seen as a method of interacting with a specific piece of software in a controlled way
16   http://www.muenchen.de/mogdy/
17   http://opendataberlin.wordpress.com/einladung -zum-berlin-open-data-day-am-18-mai-2011-boddy11/
18   http://powerofinformation.wordpress.com/
19   http://www.showusabetterway.co.uk/
20   http://data.gov.uk/

21   http://data.london.gov.uk/
22   http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/transparency/
23   http://de.creativecommons.org/

Finland

As part of the civil-society initiative Mindtrek[24], a kick-off conference accompanied by various small public events on open data was held in summer 2009. The events centred on conducting the competition 'Apps for Democracy'. This competition challenged IT developers to program new applications for processing and presenting available data. All entries were assessed and prize money was awarded to the best entries. One particularly impressive and visually stimulating entry was the Tax Tree — an app that depicts tax collection and spending in the form of a tree. This simple presentation allows more people to understand this public data and information than was previously possible, allowing them to get involved in politics.

Netherlands

In the Netherlands, the project Overheid20[25] first established the foundations for practical implementation across all authorities. In particular, this meant pooling information about open data and publishing it on a platform. What does open data mean? How can authorities make open data available? What requirements exist for making open data available?

Aside from promoting data portals, the Dutch Interior Ministry is also focusing on internal networking in its open government development efforts, as well as boosting the motivation to develop Web 2.0 apps further. The Ambtenaar 2.0[26] network was set up as a basis for employees familiar with Web 2.0 to share information with each other. This exchange of knowledge takes place online or at informal meetings — so-called open coffee clubs (Open Koffie).

Australia

Australia has also set up a task force for developing and utilising the potential of new internet technologies. The Government 2.0 Task Force is made up of experts and IT developers from the worlds of administration, corporations, academia and culture. The aim of the task force is to support the government and administrative authorities in:
• making more public information available and useable
• establishing a culture of proactive publication
• strengthening consultations, transparency and participation
• promoting online innovations for government-related topics (such as technologies for collaboration)

• encouraging cooperation between different administrative bodies.

The Government 2.0 Task Force has also published a position paper on open data. It outlines in which areas governmental and administrative authorities should make information easier to access and use in the future. The stated aim is to make data available free of charge, machine-readable and free to use in open standard formats. The paper also recommends publishing the data under a Creative Commons licence.

In addition to the strategic locations and aims defined in the position paper, practical measures are also being implemented in Australia. The MashupAustralia competition[27] in autumn 2009 was aimed at developing new applications for the presentation and evaluation of data from governmental and administrative authorities. The starting point for the competition was formed by the first data sets being released as planned under a Creative Commons licence. Interested parties and civil-society groups then supported the competition during the following six-month online consultation phase. In the end, numerous apps were developed for visualising infrastructure and boosting the transparency of administrative authorities' work.

The measures peaked for the first time in July 2010 with the release of the official 'Declaration of Open Government'[28] by Australian Finance Minister Lindsay Tanner. The paper provided a manifesto on the core principles: 'Inform, engage, participate'.

New Zealand

There have also been efforts from both civil-society and governmental authorities to establish open government in New Zealand. In July 2009, the non-governmental blog Open New Zealand[29] was set up, complete with a news service and Wiki. The blog supports an open-data catalogue which pools information about all the freely available data. In an effort not to get left behind by the civil initiative, New Zealand's government has announced that it will soon be publishing its own open-data catalogue.

In August 2009, the government publicly discussed and published its 'Government Open Access and Licensing Framework'[30] online. The key points of the paper include copyright and Creative Commons issues connected to open data, collaboration and the role of open source. Several

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24   http://www.mindtrek.org/
25   http://www.overheid20.nl/
26   http://www.ambtenaar20.nl/

27   http://mashupaustralia.org/
28   http://agimo.govspace.gov.au/2010/07/16/declaration-of-open government/
29   http://open.org.nz/
30   http://www.e.govt.nz/

governmental bodies responded by publishing initial data on their own initiative.

Canada

In Canada, the move towards open government also came from civil society to begin with. One example is the 'VisibleGovernment'[31] campaign, which ties in with the open-data projects in other countries and promotes the creation of online applications for increased transparency. VisibleGovernment has more than 45 members (NGOs, industry associations, and so on) as well as supporters and advocates in political offices. The campaign is based on the assumption that government 'secrets' are a danger to democracy and make for more expensive mistakes. In an effort to avoid this, open government should be bolstered by increased freedom of information.

Since then, the Canadian capital Ottawa has begun publishing data from a range of different areas. First and foremost, this consists of geographical data and information relating to public projects. These measures are being implemented according to security and data protection guidelines.

The first Canadian open-data competition 'Apps4Ottawa'[32] was launched in September 2010. The winners included applications in the categories 'Environment and sustainability', 'Economic development' and 'Fun in Ottawa'. Guy Michaud, spokesman for Ottawa city authorities, also indicated that the progress made in the area of open data has also boosted economic development in the city.

Slovakia

The Slovakian government, under Prime Minister Iveta Radicová, has been in office since July 2010. It has already passed its first resolutions stipulating that all business contracts signed by ministries and other public institutions have to be made public. This resolution is retroactively effective back to July 2006. Contracts not published online are not even counted as being legally enforceable.

However, the publishing process has not run quite as smoothly as hoped in practice. In particular, the feature for searching through documents still needs to be optimised due to incomplete indexing. In addition, many documents are not machine-readable. Although improvements are still necessary, this step has generally been praised as being courageous, important and correct.

European Union

The Ministerial Declaration on e-Government[33], agreed in November 2009 in Malmo, Sweden, set out a new road map for the further development of e-government within European member states. With the new aims of 'greater transparency, collaboration, open data and less red tape', the new agreement addresses, in principle, the key elements of open government. The member states are to act more transparently and openly in the future and make the most of the potential offered by the internet. The additional goals for making data public are clearly more aimed towards open data, with demands for more straightforward accessibility, machine-readability, suitability for further use and more benefits for private companies and the public.

By implementing this declaration, the EU member states are obliged to create the basis for open government. The impacts of these new goals were already clear to see in practice just days after the Malmo deal was agreed. As part of the discussion into new areas of focus for the annual e-government benchmarking in the EU, the following additional criteria were identified at the first workshop with member states in December 2009:
- Basic services for the public and for private companies.
- Increasing efficiency with back offices.
- Participation.
- User dialogue and feedback.
- Open government with focus on transparency.

New standard requirements for e-government are expected to be defined by the EU for the areas of participation, user dialogue and transparency.

PRACTICAL ROAD MAP TO OPEN GOVERNMENT

So how can political and administrative authorities implement their own open government measures? Due to the many potential synergies with other governmental tasks and measures, as well as the scarcity of resources, the following plan is recommended:

1. Identify requirements and categorise measures strategically
   Define the connections and synergies of the plan with existing strategies and service portfolio, and determine addressees and players involved.

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31   http://visiblegovernment.ca/
32   http://apps4ottawa.ca/

33   http://www.egov2009.se/wp-content/uploads/Ministerial-Declaration-on-eGovernment.pdf

2. Produce and publish an action plan
    Define aims, make strategy and plans transparent and publish an action plan and time frame.

3. Establish cooperation and dialogue
    Identify active or affected internal and external governmental players and initiate dialogue and/or cooperation.

4. Implement projects or measures in practice
    Set realistic goals adjusted to the level of resources available and implement them gradually.

Four approaches are outlined below, all of which are aimed, from a strategic point of view, at the growing community externally and the administrative employees internally. They tie in with concrete key e-government projects and give open data a vital role for boosting the momentum of the process by involving civil society. The 'Open government Action Plan' goes into more detail about these approaches to implementation.

• 'Open government' position paper and strategy
  A position paper, a strategy or a declaration, presents an initial message and often attracts a lot of public attention. The position communicated on open government serves to open dialogue with civil-society players and defines the further scope of action on the matter.

• Mobilise internal 'change agents'
  The first step involves making the most of the potential already present within administrative organisations and building on this. Administrative employees should be introduced to Web 2.0 or motivated to take part in projects. This step demonstrates to the public that there is a concrete willingness to act. However, tangible changes from mobilising internal change agents can only be expected in the medium term.

• Open dialogue on the open-data initiative
  In an effort to prepare and initiate a national open-data initiative or an initiative on a state or municipal level, cooperation should be initiated with civil-society players (academics, businesses, NGOs, initiatives, and so on). Together, the first measures for providing public data can be identified, checked for viability and then planned. The aim should be to mould sustainable cooperation and establish a basis for regularly exchanging information.

• Apps competition, such as 'Apps for Democracy'
  By launching a public programming competition, civil-society players and experts from the worlds of academia and business can be included and universal cooperation established. This approach has proven successful

internationally. The anticipated participation in the competition leads to the development of low-cost and modern software relating to administrative processes within a very short space of time. The apps developed should make it possible to visualise and evaluate the data published as part of open-data initiatives, and in doing so create added value. In addition, it will generate plenty of attention for a long period of time.

OPEN GOVERNMENT ACTION PLAN

I. Open government position paper and strategy

In addition to adjusting the system in keeping with technology and social changes, open government is primarily about adopting a specific positioning from a political strategy point of view — a commitment to transparency, dialogue and innovation. Both the public and civil-society players expect political and administrative authorities to keep pace with the latest social developments and trends.

Step 1: Define strategic positioning
When agreeing a position on open government, it is important to integrate and/or place this position within other strategic frameworks, such as current federal master plans or national e-government strategy, including existing e-government initiatives, in order to contribute to the information society.

Step 2: Draft concrete goals and measures
In the end, the paper should lead to dialogue with experts and interested parties, paving the way to implementing the first projects. All further steps are built on this 'opening' foundation. To do this, political goal setting, strategic placement of the initiatives and the announcement of concrete measures are required. Recommendations also have to be made for the authorities affected.

Step 3: Name contacts and adopt a position
The paper should be published by the responsible political leader. On a national level, the federal commissioner for information technology could express his acceptance of open government in relation to the necessary conditions and their aims, and position himself as the contact and driver of policy for open government.

Step 4: Connect measures in all directions
In concrete terms, open government could be implemented as an overriding strategic framework for other initiatives. Defining it as a sub-area within e-government policy or information society strategy is also viable. To ensure that open government is sustainably and successfully implemented, projects have to be initiated that are aimed

at both internal and external groups. Open government is an integrated approach. It will add value across both society and all areas of government with the number and scope of its projects and their implementation. In order to facilitate the involvement of other authorities in addition to concrete suggestions on how to implement prioritised measures, a transfer of knowledge and opportunity for discussion between governmental bodies should definitely be planned.

Step 5: Establish a culture of proactive action
One basic foundation for all measures is a culture of proactive action among politicians and administrative personnel. This allows many more opportunities for cooperation and collaboration on forming the overall concept and sustainably strengthens the position of governmental and administrative authorities in relation to other players (some critical). After all, the stronger and more concrete the demands from civil-society players become, the more it appears that any governmental action is taking place due to pressure. This bolsters the position of civil-society players and, at the same time, puts governmental bodies on the back foot. On this basis, governmental and administrative authorities are not able to establish themselves as partners on equal terms.

It's now time for proactive action. Within Europe's civil society, a diverse and well-networked web of groups has already been formed. These initiatives focus on achieving more transparency in relation to governmental and administrative action with the help of new Web 2.0 technologies. On the back of the increasing emancipation, organisation and information of non-governmental groups, as well as the establishment of new forms of action, such as e-petitions, online networks and smart mobs, it is highly recommended that government adopts a position on the matter very soon.

II. Mobilise change agents

Administrative modernisation efforts are focusing heavily on the use of IT and increasingly on the employment of new internet technologies such as Web 2.0. Administrative employees have to be more strongly integrated into this development. After all, they are the ones who will be setting up the apps and tools within organisations and using them to communicate with society. Just as the public should be involved at an early stage in creating the internet services relating to e-government, so administrative employees should also be included in development from day one. Groups can only be perceived as partners on equal terms by truly integrating both sides.

Step 1: Identify and use internal potential
To mobilise internal forces, it is vital to make use of potential and the existing know-how within the organisation.

Employees who are already familiar with Web 2.0 should network and provide their colleagues with an insight into the technology. Particularly in the case of Web 2.0 and social media applications, one key to success is the motivation of participants and the personal interest of users. The applications work because they are 'lived by users' and because their personal value is appealing. The enthusiasm of individuals can be used as a trigger for a whole range of different topics. In areas where there is a lack of knowledge, media skills and experience relating to Web 2.0, 'new' technologies should be encouraged in order for them to be used efficiently and successfully.

Step 2: Support an exchange of knowledge and establish knowledge management
The first change agents can be acquired at internal events. One possible concept is to carry out regular lunchtime meetings on different aspects of social media. The first discussions could focus on experiences from collaborative events like Bar-Camps, for example, or the potential of open government in general. This plan can be supported by setting up a central (virtual) contact point for information, knowledge exchange and discussion — for example, within an authority's intranet system or the federal government's intranet. The first change agents should be closely involved in setting up and developing the initiative.

Step 3: Grow and network from the inside outwards
The networking between change agents should be built up gradually and should first begin locally. The next step involves establishing contact with other local authorities, with a view to networking with authorities in other municipalities, cities and states, as well as on a national level in the medium term. To complement the national networking of change agents, an exchange of information should also be planned with similar initiatives in other European countries and the EU.

Step 4: Use action to create a new image
This approach not only maximises potential synergies, it also draws attention and appreciation to the most creative and committed employees. This 'innovation from within' can go a long way towards enhancing the image of a modern administrative authority that is developing positively. A change-agents initiative can provide new impetus. For example, it can:
- offer an incentive for IT-savvy employees to work in administration
- create synergies for training and further education
- qualify employees for new requirements
- boost the motivation of committed employees and those familiar with the technology
- promote the exchange of information and networking within the organisation or on a cross-organisational/multi-state basis

Step 5: Share experience internally
The experience gained within administrative organisations with Web 2.0 has to be made available for other administrative personnel. Concrete use of collaboration software should be documented on a central information platform and provided as best-practice examples, including contact details for the projects. An online discussion area could be set up to allow interested employees to exchange ideas, and in doing so, gradually build up a community of users. This synergy allows administrative authorities to develop new applications substantially more quickly, save on costs and work, and avoid unnecessary duplication. There is a great need to discuss the available software, its functionality, strengths and weaknesses, particularly for IT managers and project leaders. That is why experience reports on implementing and using applications, process reorganisation, user motivation and security are an important part of this communication.

III. Open dialogue on the open-data initiative

To ensure a successful and sustainable implementation of an open-data initiative, discussion with non-governmental groups is absolutely vital. Their commitment to open-data issues has been growing for some time, and is increasingly leading to concrete demands. In addition, many of these groups already have specific expertise in this area. Cooperating with them allows the workload from various tasks and measures to be spread over a broader base. Open data cannot be effectively implemented without the involvement of civil society. As a result, the civil players involved should be given as important a role as the governmental personnel.

Step 1: Establish contact in person
This process can initiate an open discussion on open data by inviting civil-society players. An open-data brainstorming session should be carried out with representatives from the government, administrative authorities and civil society (experts, communities, and so on). The main aim should be to establish dialogue in person, develop a mutual understanding, define standpoints and views and exchange ideas.

Step 2: Build up trust and plan joint measures
Meeting personally not only allows direct contact between players but also enables both sides to assess their respective positions and demands. This avoids critical confrontations with entrenched sides unwilling to compromise in the discussion. If trust can be built up, this can be used as the springboard to plan joint projects. This then allows critical players to be integrated and made into partners striving for a joint goal. By implementing the ideas and potential of multiple partners, a realistic overall image of current projects emerges, as well as their possible synergies, thus providing

fresh ideas for subsequent measures. The following points are possible areas for discussion:
• Measures for making public data available.
• Viability and time frame of initial measures.
• Moulding future cooperation.
• Establishing regular discussion.
• Working together to prioritise initial measures.

Step 3: Expand the discussion process into the online arena
In addition to an exchange of ideas in person, the internet can be used to integrate further groups into the process. Involving other groups also helps generate more ideas and effective approaches. It is very important to have good moderators in order to oversee the online discussion process and make it as results-oriented as possible. This can be made possible by setting a focus or working on the basis of the topics initially suggested from the governmental side. The added value provided by an internet-supported dialogue is in the profitable use of the results at state and municipal level.

Step 4: Share tasks and support initiatives
Integrating other groups not only promotes the exchange of knowledge and ideas but also forms the prerequisite to making many measures possible. For instance, the visualisation or critical evaluation of data will not be part of the key tasks of the government in the future. This would not be credible. The guidelines for cooperation with non-governmental players should therefore also function according to shared responsibility.

IV. Apps competition, such as 'Apps for Democracy'

An open online competition for gathering ideas and prioritising project and software concepts can identify which open-data projects are desired by civil society and which ones should be prioritised. This inquiry into the needs and wishes of the population has already proved its effectiveness in the USA, the UK and Finland. In many other countries, the implementation of applications in the area of open data is foreseeable and might possibly take place without the involvement of governmental players. For that reason, the question is not whether political and administrative authorities should get involved but much more when they will position themselves as key players in this process and what their aims will be.

Step 1: Gather ideas with focus and openness
An opportunity to manage dialogue and suggested projects can be achieved by initiating a programming competition from the governmental side or supplementing already established e-government competitions. This can be strengthened by focusing on specific issues. The initiative in the UK, 'Show us a better way' (2009) ran the competition with the question

'What would you do with public information?', with the competition fields limited to health, education, society and justice. However, this type of competition should be open to all suggestions above and beyond the planned focus, not least as the voting patterns of the participants are not foreseeable. Similar initiatives in other countries have proven to be successful and have encouraged intensive dialogue between citizens and administrative authorities. The large number of ideas submitted and the scope of the suggestions are not only evidence of the interest among civil-society players, but also clearly demonstrate the know-how and expertise of the groups involved.

Step 2: Multi-step selection process and recognition for the best suggestions
The suggestion and selection process should feature multiple phases. The first phase should focus on gathering ideas online and prioritising them. The suggestions deemed to be best are then presented to an expert jury made up of representatives from the worlds of business, academia and administration. There can also be a public presentation for the finalists featuring an audience vote. The best ideas should then be awarded prize money. Although the prize money awarded in other countries was often not enough to cover the project costs or the development of the ideas, it went a long way to sustainably promoting the commitment of civil-society players.

Step 3: Committed implementation of the best ideas
Even though only a low number of the submitted ideas could be quickly implemented from the governmental side, the competitions in other countries still proved to be an immediate and wide-ranging success. Some ideas were quickly rolled out by the initiators themselves or were adopted by other non-governmental players, who then financed and/or managed their implementation.

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