

Tallinn, November 24, 2006

The Perspectives of the European Commission: Initiatives on eGovernment and eParticipation

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Is it Friday yet....?

eParticipation



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Policy Context

Why eGovernment and eParticipation?

➤ Key to Competitiveness (Lisbon)

The i2010 strategy was launched to increase growth and jobs in the European information society, to make a major contribution to the Lisbon Agenda and other European Community policies

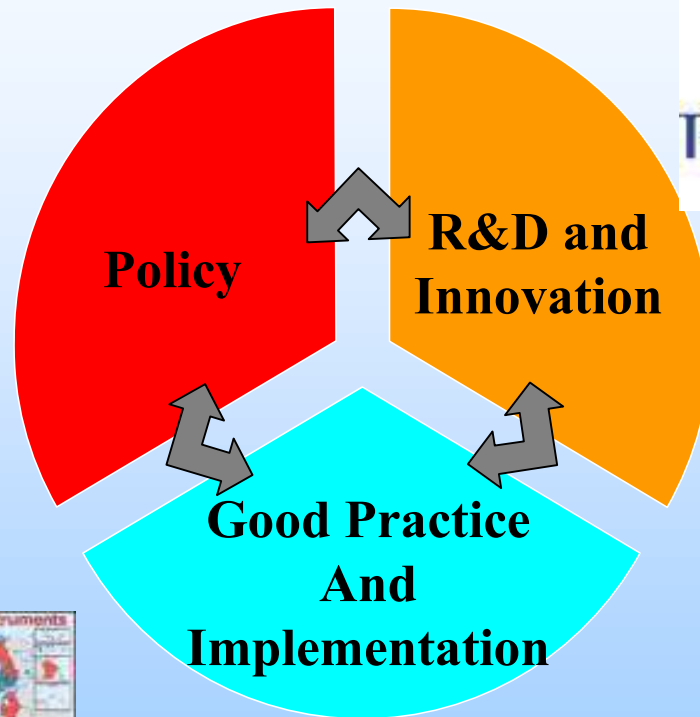
➤ Modernise Public Services

The eGovernment Action Plan was launched this year. It helps to offer better public services to all EU Citizens

➤ Reconnect with Citizens: eParticipation



Current state of Play: eGovernment in EU context - a three-pronged approach



Structural Funds



The eGovernment Action Plan focuses on five major objectives for eGovernment and sets specific targets



➤ **No citizen left behind**

**Target : all citizens major beneficiaries of eGovernment
broadband coverage to reach at least 90% of the EU**

➤ **Making efficiency and effectiveness a reality**

**Target: significantly reduce administrative burden;
significantly increase transparency and accountability**

➤ **Implementing high-impact key services for citizens and businesses**

Target: 100% of public procurement available electronically and 50% actual usage

➤ **Putting key enablers in place**

**Target: convenient, secure and interoperable authenticated access
across Europe to public services**

➤ **Strengthening participation and democratic decision-making**

Target: tools for effective public debate and Preparatory Action (launched in 2006)

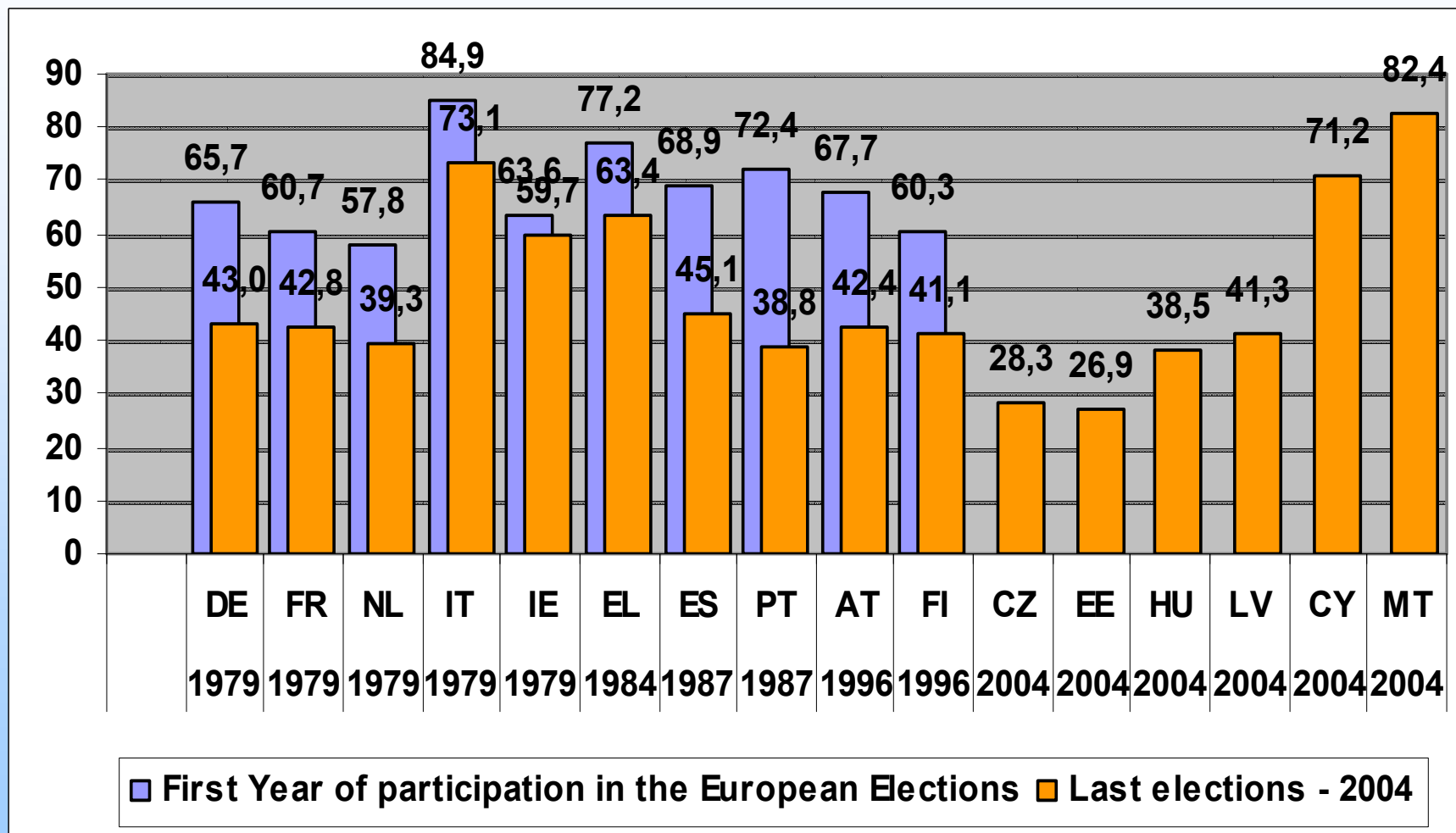


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Turnout trends in European Elections



Closing the 'Democratic Deficit' – eParticipation

➤ Inform Citizens

- ↪ Accountability
- ↪ Open procedures, open decisions,

➤ Involve Citizens

- ↪ ICT has great potential to involve large numbers of citizens and businesses in public debate and decision-making, from municipal to European level
- ↪ Emergence of new communities, within and across geographic borders
- ↪ Strengthen European citizenship via Citizens involvement in EU level decisions

➤ Engage Citizens

- ↪ Active citizens, shared decisions & shared responsibilities
- ↪ It can lead to better legislation
- ↪ It can change the way Parliaments interact with Citizens & Businesses



Existing activities on eParticipation

- **eGovernment Research activities**
- **11 Framework Programme 5 (FP5) IST projects with 15 m€**
- **8 FP6 IST projects (19 m€ funding) now running**
- **Includes eParticipation projects in Western Balkans, currently under negotiations**
- **A strong basis of results to date and on-going research and networking activities over the next 3 years.**



A few examples of our FP6 research projects



<http://www.demo-net.org>



<http://itc.napier.ac.uk/ITC/ProjectInfo.asp?ID=27>



<http://www.alisproject.org/>



<http://www.estrellaproject.org/>

http://www.qualeg.eupm.net/my_spip/index.php



http://www.epri.org/epriknowledge/contents/About_EPRI_knowledge.php



<http://arki.uiah.fi/icing?topics=Project%20info>



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A large number of diverse initiatives are deployed throughout the EU. Some examples:

↪ **Citizen participation in public debate in Denmark**

The overall objective has been to establish a democratic forum where citizens, public administration and politicians could engage in debates

↪ **Direct democracy portal 'Today I Decide' in Estonia**

Aim is to increase public engagement in the decision making process. After five years of activities (on June 5, 2006) the portal has over 6000 registered users having submitted all together 1807 ideas, from those 622 were voted positively for submission to the ministries.

Approximately 5% of the ideas sent to the ministries have been actually implemented.



- We launched a preparatory action on eParticipation for the first time in July 2006 initiated by the European Parliament (Budget 2m€)
- Aimed at harnessing the benefits of the use of ICTs for better legislative process at all levels of decision making and for an enhanced public participation.
- Objectives are to demonstrate concrete cases where, with the help of modern ICT tools, improvements of the legislative process and its outcomes can be achieved, and at the same time, enhance the participation of the public in the decision-making process, amongst others through improved interaction with decision-makers.
- Both topics, legislation and public participation, are relevant at EU, Member State and local level.



eParticipation Preparatory Action

- The eParticipation action will provide funding through the following three instruments:
- Call for Proposals – will address trials to test ICT based tools in concrete legislative situations (Call finished in October 2006)

Results from the call: we received 36 proposals, ranging from National Parliaments, local authorities to Universities--ideas proposed were very diverse

- Call for tenders – This call will complement trial projects by assessing conditions, costs, benefits and impacts of scaling up these trial projects. These will be launched before the end of the year.
- Targeted workshops and conferences for possible continuation into 2007



eParticipation Preparatory Action

- A crucial step for this preparatory action, is to identify and bring together the key stakeholders in the use of ICTs in the legislative processes.
- These stakeholders include CIO's of Parliaments, representatives of Ministers and Members of Parliaments as well as local and regional authorities in their role of users of the proposed ICT solutions.
- NGOs and their increasing contribution in his field should also be integrated, including civil society organisations working in relevant fields.
- It also includes ICT industry experts who have experience in developing, installing and maintaining relevant ICT systems and tools.
- Through targeted workshops and experts' seminars with the above mentioned type of actors there will be a definition of future requirements for tools and applications, based on exchange of experiences, needs and opportunities identified.
- Awareness raising activities will be supported in the form of ad hoc information events, publications of reports for wider dissemination of results and perspectives, including appropriate reporting to the European Parliament



More information available at
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Tänan
Thank you

