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How to establish trust in digital public services in the European Community

Abstract (Dutch)

Digitalisering zal de Nederlandse economie meer veranderen dan robotisering.

Met deze kop opent de redactie van het web blad Emerce een publicatie. Ondernemers zien technologie steeds sneller op zich afkomen en verwachten dat zij hun zakelijke modellen hierop aan zullen moeten passen. Is Nederland klaar voor deze verandering? In de ING Innovatie Index worden de economieën van de twaalf Nederlandse provincies beoordeeld op hun vermogen om te gaan met complexe technologische veranderingen. Samenvattend kan je stellen dat er nog een hoop werk moet worden verzet om flexibel met complexe technologische veranderingen om te gaan.

Onderzoek binnen het Nederlandse Midden en Klein Bedrijf (MKB) onder een kleine 800 ondernemers laat zien dat bijna de helft een versnelling van technologie ervaart. Mede daarom denkt 42 procent dat men in de komende vijf jaar het business model van de onderneming zal moeten aanpassen om relevant te blijven.

Niet onbelangrijk is de opstelling van de overheid en de daarmee verbonden instituties. Digital by default is de norm geworden. De gezamenlijke Europese Ministers van Binnenlandse Zaken en Justitie hebben in oktober 2017 deze conclusie getrokken tijdens een bijeenkomst in Tallinn. Een conclusie die eigenlijk geen verbazing meer wekken mag gelet op het Rijks brede programma de Digitale overheid. Een ambitieus programma waarin in het jaar 2021 de Nederlandse overheid volledig digitaal functioneert.

Burgers en ondernemers moeten in 2017 hun zaken met de overheid veilig en makkelijk digitaal kunnen doen valt te lezen op het web https://www.digitaleoverheid.nl/.

Nu zitten er tussen wens en werkelijkheid maar al te vaak wetten en praktische bezwaren, maar alle signalen uit de samenleving duiden op een volledige transitie naar de digitalisering met al zijn facetten.

Zelfs de Rechtspraak, een sterke pijler van onze democratische rechtstaat, maar ook een bolwerk van traditie en bezinning "Goes digital" Om dat mogelijk te maken zijn er meer dan 200 wetten binnen het Nederlandse rechtssysteem aangepast.

Samenvattend kun je stellen: Society in all its sections goes digital.

Digitale publieke diensten zijn daar een on-losmakend onderdeel van die gelet op de Europese ruimte waarin wij leven. Mijn presentatie voor de jaarvergadering van de EFNIL is zowel een exercitie om een community bewust te maken van een ingrijpende ontwikkeling als een eerste paal slaan voor de bouw van een brug. Een brug die dient om elkaar aan weerszijde van het water te kunnen ontmoeten of misschien beter nog in het midden.

Ladies and gentlemen,

before I start this presentation let me take the opportunity to thank the president, Professor Gerhard Stickel, the Executive Committee, and the general secretary, Tamas Varádi, for the invitation. I regard it as an honour and a pleasure. Aleksandra has given us a number of insights into the emergence of multilingual networked services in Europe. The transition to digital public services in the EU community does not in any way exclude multilingualism.

Language is not only a communication tool, it also supports cultural identity. Language and semantics also play an important role in digital public services.

So let me start my presentation.

Do you remember when the internet came into our lives, or when the Berlin wall fell? Two separate events that have had a major impact on the development of the European Union as a unique economic and political union, now made up of 28 European countries that together cover much of the continent.

If you wanted to travel in Europe at that time, you had to take into account customs at all borders. The European economic area was heavily in charge of entry and exit bans, with a lot of bureaucracy which businesses and citizens found it hard to break through. The damage was huge. The phenomenon of the traffic jam acquired a new meaning at these borders.

Thanks to the abolition of border controls between EU countries, people can travel freely throughout most of the continent. And it has become much easier to live, study, work and travel abroad in Europe. The single or 'internal' market is the EU's main economic engine, enabling most goods, services, money and people to move freely. Another key objective is to develop this huge resource in other areas such as energy, knowledge and capital markets to ensure that Europeans can derive maximum benefit from it.

It is less than 40 years ago that the internet became a reality through the sending of the first electronic mail. At that time there was great potential for its use, but it was hardly a world-wide web as it is today. To understand fully the aims of the e-Sens project in conjunction with the linked Europe facility digital programme (CEF Telecom), I will take you back to the old days and lead you into the digital era with its challenges and new solutions to timeless dilemmas.

In the early days of the EU there was no internet, no email, no mobile phones, no social media – ergo no digital communication whatsoever. International calls were expensive. Those doing business with other countries faced many difficulties, and even traveling was time-consuming. A lot has changed since then. Today we can hardly imagine life without computers, mobile or smartphones or the internet.

We study, travel, work, live and do business across borders. People, businesses and public bodies deal on a daily basis with e-mails, ICT systems and services. To do this smoothly, fast and easy electronic access to administrative services is required.

But are diverse ICT systems able to communicate across borders? Have the digital borders that hinder cross-border communication already been removed?

Our diverse IT landscape, with different e-systems built in different countries, needs to be connected by interoperable e-government solutions in order to communicate seamlessly. Member states and the professional communities within them have to agree on formats and use the same definitions to make sure we understand each other. Safe electronic delivery across borders and enabling acceptance of foreign e-IDs and signatures are essential for efficient and effective interaction between national systems.

The e-SENS project fosters interoperability, which is a key enabler for European electronic services. The project delivered generic and re-usable modules for the member states' professional communities in various areas. Those generic and re-usable modules have been adopted in various areas such as e-Health, e-Procurement, e-Justice and Business lifecycle. I will come back to this during the rest of the presentation.

Imagine you need to establish digital services within the European community. What do you need to establish digital services in the EU?

When our children were little we often played a game called "We go to … and we bring with us …"

So for instance: we go to the beach, and the children have to think about the things they want to bring, for example a bucket and spade. Or a windshield and comfortable seats. But the little things should not be forgotten – like your swimsuit and a towel, and of course sunscreen.

Besides a challenge for the children to be both careful and creative, the answers also gave you an indication of what was important in the child's experience for a nice day at the beach. A bucket, spade and sieve were important for building sandcastles to be decorated later with shells from the sand (or to dig a deep pit in which daddy had to sit).

Imagine you need to establish digital services within the European community. What would you like to bring?

A focused question to the conference: ladies and gentlemen, what do you think is an essential element?

The response: the smartphone.

So we have indicated one of the elements to be considered as building blocks for a solution.

Let me show you the way the EU Commission, in collaboration with 20 member states, did it.

Requirements & conditions

The European Commission's IT governance

IT governance provides the framework and processes for making and implementing the decisions required to manage, control, and monitor IT. The Commission has put in place an IT governance system based on de facto international standards. It addresses the leadership and organisational structures and processes which ensure that the Commission's IT is fully aligned with and sustains the organisation's objectives.

IT at the Commission is organised along federal lines, in keeping with the de-centralised internal organisation of the institution. Each Directorate-General has an IT function with an Information Resources Manager (IRM) who is responsible for the specific needs of that DG, and there is also a central IT function (Directorate General DIGIT) which provides common (corporate) services and support.

Well developed and smoothly functioning co-ordination mechanisms (princi-pally committees which jointly prepare decisions on the relevant IT issues) are in place to ensure the necessary coherence and communication between the local and central IT functions.

The reporting and authorisation chain ensures that IT strategy is set by top level Commission management. The IT planning and investment processes are integrated into the global activities and resource planning cycles of the Commission, thus ensuring alignment of business and IT objectives, requirements and conditions.

Of course good governance is important, but it is still only one of the require-ments for achieving digital cross-border services.

There is a lot more to do. In today's digital world, numerous challenges are faced by public administration in Europe. The increasing mobility of citizens and businesses requires change in governments' thinking, from a national to a Euro-pean approach. Governments are becoming more and more aware that changes in the way they perform their tasks are inevitable, as administrative burdens need to be reduced in order to reap the full potential of the European Single Market.

e-SENS is the pan-European project to strengthen the EU digital single market and facilitate public services across borders.This project is paving the way for the 'live' phase of cross-border digital public services.

The project was launched in 2013 by the European Commission and involves over 100 public and private actors from 22 countries of the 28 member states. Its job has been to consolidate and solidify the work done in previous large scale pilots, providing generic IT solutions for cross-border communication which can be applied to any policy domain. The project ended on 31 March 2017.

During its four years of operation, e-SENS succeeded in creating a pan-European set of IT building blocks for digital public services that embrace both national and sectorial diversity and facilitate interoperability.

The objective is to make available a comprehensive set of building blocks for an interoperable European infrastructure for cross-sector services.

The project focuses on providing architecture-driven solutions and technical specifications for state of the art technologies by engaging in close cooperation with various domain communities. The goal is to create general purpose components that can be extended to other various policy areas.

So what are those building blocks, and what kind of solution do they provide?

e-Delivery has the aim of establishing a common transport infrastructure to meet the requirements of cross-border communication between e-Government applications in different domains. Ladies and gentlemen, it is amazing that this has been realised. Every Member state has its own IT landscape, set of rules and standards. It is no less than a miracle that this has been achieved. But is it sufficient to cover all needs?

No, you need more than just a common infrastructure to transport your documents and files in all kinds of formats. For that you need:

Ok. Nice! We have a common infrastructure in the EU, and containers to store and ship our electronic documents and files in a secure way. Perfect so are we ready to set up cross-border digital public services? Sorry no we still miss some essentials, like e-ID.

E-Identity's goal is to establish cross-border recognition and validation. The objective of the e-SENS building block e-ID is to establish cross border recognition and e-identification validation that meets the requirements set for e-Government applications in different domains. Thus e-SENS permits businesses, citizens and government employees to use the presently widespread (national) identities in cross-border public and private services. Ok. Very Nice! So we have a common infrastructure in the EU, and containers to store and ship our electronic documents

and files in a secure way, and we can even be sure who we are dealing with. So are there still other elements missing for cross-border digital public services.? Yes I, am afraid so. But we are getting close.One of the key elements of the e-SENS project is The e-Signature Building Block.

The e-Signature Building Block (BB), it aims to establish cross-border interoperable components for a secure authentication infrastructure in different domains. e-Signature is one of the Digital Service Infrastructure Building Blocks (DSI-BBs) of the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) programme. It is part of the "electronic identification and authentication" The main purpose is to bind an e-Document to an entity so that legal value is associated.Many European states have defined various forms of e-Signature solutions. With the upcoming e-IDAS Regulation. The e-SENS e-Signature building block is based on and will support e-IDAS as a policy basis. Hurray! Now we are able to communicate with each other in a secure and solid way. Citizens, governments and businesses in the EU's economic sphere, finally are connected. Certainly, if we have been able to assign the same definitions to language and legal concepts within the Member States with their diverse cultures. I would not be surprised if in the future there is an important role for national linguistic institutes in, among other things, the multilingual translation of laws and semantic concepts. Language and semantics play an even more important role in the e-services. For FNIL members shine a new market on the horizon.

But let us not stray from the direct subject. Six areas of attention have been identified in which e-services are useful and can have a major impact. These areas of attention are E-Health that facilitates cross border access to health services within the EU member states. E-Procurement that enable participation in Europe-wide tendering as one of the services, e-Agriculture assist entrepreneurs in the food and agricultural sector. There is also citizen life cycle, that includes a broad collection of national e- services with one thing in common, they serve citizens digitally. And last but not leased the e-justice. The objective in the e-Justice domain is to simplify access to cross-border legal procedures and legal means by establishing electronic communication channels between courts, citizens, businesses and legal professionals. Dear visitors to this conference without noticing that we are on the eve of a revolution, a silent revolution but nevertheless a revolution. The impact on society and traditional institutions is often underestimated. In the course of 2018 you can already witness that these services are operational.

A Dutch saying goes: "Trust comes on foot and goes on horseback" What means so much as winning trust takes a lot of time and effort. When trust is put to shame, it disappears with great speed and can not be quickly regained. The sub title of this presentation is: "The journey made to establish trust"

As a citizen as well as an official I am prepared to trust this digital public service in the European community. I hope you come to the same conclusion. Thank you for your attention