

PORTALS IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND ASSUMPTIONS OF ITS EFFICIENCY

EVA MIHALIKOVÁ¹

ABSTRACT. Electronization of public administration what means offering information and services to public on-line gets into foreground in many countries including the Slovak republic. The article deals with conditions of effective portals which are standard instruments of e-government.

Key words: informatization, public administration, e-government, portal

1 Introduction

Informatization of society as a medium of transformation Slovak republic to knowledge economics is today regard as a phenomenon of modern society. Its component is informatization of public administration which could be eventually named electronization of public administration (e-Government).

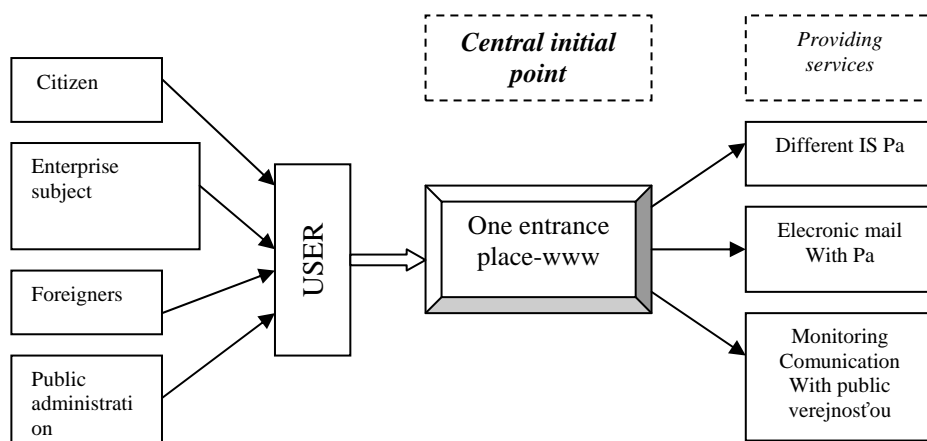
The idea of electronization of public administration is according Vokorokosová (2001) in its content very simple. The gist consists in making information of executive agency

and local government available to each other as well as available to citizens through nowadays instruments – internet which could be characterized as a medium joining informative, communication, advertising and commercial function. From citizens side is important find this information on the basis of their demands and interests what allows portals of public administration.

2 Portal and its types

Portal could be perceived as a virtual environment in which citizen meets with public administration, where portal represents one initial point which allows access to services and information provided by public administration

¹ Ing., PhD Student, Head of Economics Science Department, UPJŠ in Košice, Faculty of Public Administration, Slovak republic

**Figure No. 1.** Portal functioning

Portal should allow in final stage full functional alternative of traditional communication while it shouldn't eliminate common way of communication. Its implementation will accelerate and improve information flows of public administration towards public. According draft of building up public administration portal it expects:

- increase of public administration availability
- easier searching and acces to information and services
- increase of ability quickly and efficiently reply on public demands
- increase of resistance public administration against corruption, clientelizmus and abusing
- increase of efficiency public administration in performance

From natural development of portal results some its types:

Table No.1

Type portals

| <i>Nr.</i> | <i>Type</i> | <i>Description</i> |
|------------|---------------|--|
| 1. | Basic | Setting basic web side with element static information |
| 2. | Strengthen | Functions of basic type extended about larger amount of information, more qualitative content and actual inforamation |
| 3. | Interactive | Against previous types supplemented about possibilities of getting blank forms, information demanding and allowing contacts with responsible employees |
| 4. | Transactional | This type allows legal relevant communication as well as carrying out financial payments |
| 5. | Integrated | It allows transactional communication without regard to institutional competences |

3 Process of forming portal

To become central portal real gate to services and information which has public administration provides it is necessary to comply with following steps:

1. Setting goal (it starts from building initial point of central portal and subsequently widening functionality of national point)
2. Determining target groups (identifying who for public administration carries out its services and gives information , whom is obligatory to publicise information and which information needs public administration)
3. Institutional securing (identify who will be responsible for portal and who will cooperate by its formation and management)
4. Financial security (appointing demand of financial facilities, resources of its obtaining and intention of its utilising – education, hardware, software, changing of processes and communication)
5. Determining risks, which could real results from not satisfactory financing, not prepared legislative conditions and institucional securing
6. Apointing time schedule of realization, which connects with transmittion of four phases- basic, technological, digital and integrated as it goes about financial demanding process
7. Support dissemination (providing publicity, formation of positive image in public perception)

Schematically it is possible to record algorithm of steps as follows:

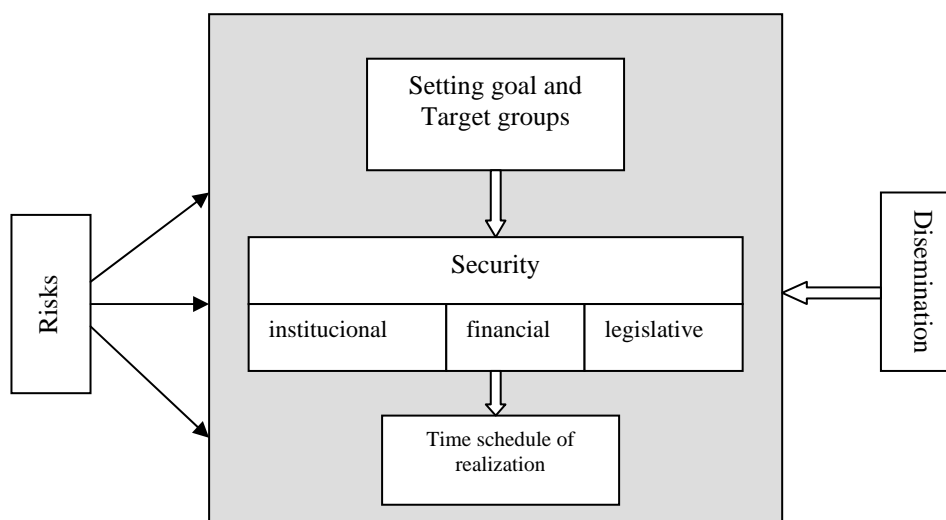


Figure No. 2. Algorithm of portal formation

4 Criterions of portal efficiency

Basic starting point of portal building is respect of rules and principles Human Centred Design. It means priority of real demands of users before another aspects on the basis which could portal be built. Portal of public administration should come out from principle of equality in approach too. Eliminated should be therefore language (multilanguage portal) as well as physical (directive in Braille writing, colourity) or education (formation of instruments navigation help so called call centres) hendicaps.

In respect of transition of portal through different implemental phases it is necessary its ability of adaptation and flexibility.

Frequent criterions efficiency of portal from users side becomes its accessibility, usability and content focus. Fullfilment of these criterions increases satisfaction of users with offering information , services , visiting of portal and thanks this it is raising its efficiency.

Accessibility- is aimed at side to be opened for maximum number of users. Its basic principle is forming of equal opportunities for everyone through public accessible electronic services including handicap users. To better accessibility could contribute:

- colourity, size of letters, software handglass, conversion in Braille writing (for eye sight hurting people). Information providing colourful should be available without colourful discernment too, it should be provided picture of colours contrast by colour of foreground and background, on the background should be pattern which would decrease reading

- control of side by user, content of side should be static only when user activates some element

- transparency and understandability of information- introducing side should clearly describes sense purpose of portal, title should be obvious, extensive content blocks is necessary to divide into smaller, accuracy units, publicized information should be available as well as textual content of side

- clear and understandable operations, each side should have purposeful title , exact content, text on side should user alone arbitraly enlarges, position of basic elements (logo, navigation, main headline) should be consistent on all sides of portal.

Usability means to be the users the most satisfied. It determinates how easy users orients, how quickly they understands organization and control of portal and which user experience they receives (Nielsen, 2003). To be it fullfills it is necessary to follows:

- good navigation – each side should contains besides introduction side reference to higher level in hierarchy in web and reference to introducing side, content and code of side should assume which side have already be visited by user, all sides of more extensive web contains reference to transparent web map

- adequate feedback – user should have possibility turn with his query which should be liable on web administrator, there should be contact places – email, phone, fax.

- effective searching- portal should be really extensive from aspect of information and services therefore it is necessary provides possibility of advanced searching with help of exactly determining conditions and criterions. Such a searching allows users irrespective of their knowledges in public administration area satisfies their demands (Usability of web sides, 2006)

- language mutation – except official language should contain possibility of using portal at least in one world language.

Content – by analysis content it is necessary to monitor wheather the content is understandable, transparent organized and wheather it has sufficient information value regularly updated. Therefore it is necessary concentrates on:

- transparent organization – information part should be divided according individual sections and that`s by suitable way, it should provide information through dividing according users groups too, on portal should be separated static content from dynamic content what contributes to easy and fast usability

- updating- by each information block has to be listed the date of last updating, it is especially important by law. Each thematic unit should contain date of last updating, user should be able to easy find out by which information content was carried out change of updating

- information value – user should have on portal of public administration access to information (basic data, reference to web side) about authorities, institutions (obligatory authorities), who are obligatory on requirement and from own effort provide information – however up to now obligatory authorities don't have legal obligation to publish information on central portal, user should have possibility on portal require information according act number 211/ 2000 about free access to information.

Conclusion

Portals are one of the many instruments which should contribute to increasing of civil comfort as well as to image of public administration. In the Slovak republic is the first project of portal city.sk which serves as a central database providing datas about all cities, parts of the cities and teritorial finacial bodies in whole Slovakia. Another successful project is citizen.sk, it is central communication portal of public administration for citizens and entrepreneurs which nowadays substitutes position of the new-formed central portal of public administration which supposes to become component of public life in 2008.

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