IMPLEMENTATION OF E-GOVERNMENT IN ROMANIA

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ABSTRACT

With the technological boom of the twentieth century that intertwined politically with the growing assertion of liberal ideas about a minimal state, having as attributes the provision of services to citizens paying taxes, the concept of "Government" has undergone significant changes. Information technology has been the new challenge of the world economy for several decades. Rapid progress in this area is increasingly influencing the way we live and work. Through the profound impact on society, the phenomenon is unanimously appreciated as a feature of the new industrial revolution "information society". E-Government is important for both OECD and EU member states. The usefulness of this activity is necessary for public institutions, private agencies, where different alternatives must be chosen for the implementation of projects or e-Government activity. The advance towards the information society, based on knowledge is considered, at a global level, as a necessary evolution for ensuring sustainable development in the context of the new economy, based on products and intellectual-intensive activities. The novelty of the new society is the speed with which knowledge is renewed (the volume of knowledge available doubles every five years). The article aims to identify the main elements of novelty in the IT sphere at government level, a component of great notoriety in the context of globalization.

KEYWORDS: *e-governance, informational society, public administration, Romania*

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the current context of the contemporary society- of the information society and of the emergence of a new decade of the 21st century, of a new geographical extension of the European Union, of the change of political paradigms and of the balance of powers, more and more aspects of citizen life. personal life, are now computerized / digitized and made with the help of electronic devices. Thus, taking into account these premises, it can be said that the daily presence of electronic services has led to the construction of a new social order that has in turn created a generation of citizen familiar with the services and operations of the information society - so-called digital natives.

Information technology has been the new challenge of the world economy for several decades (Albesher, 2016). Rapid progress in this area is increasingly influencing the way we live, work, learn or have fun (Guida, 2009). Through the profound impact on society, the phenomenon is unanimously appreciated as a feature of the new industrial revolution "informational society".

The concept of the information society became known in the 1990s, being in fact a natural extension of the older ideas regarding the emergence of the post-industrial society, in which the production-based economy is gradually replaced by the service-based economy (Dawes, 2008). In contrast to industrial society, post-industrial society is based on knowledge, not work. Knowledge, especially

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scientific and practical knowledge, becomes the main means of production in post-industrial society, just as capital and labor have been the strategic and development resources of industrial society (Faid, G., 2020). It designates the central element of the post-industrial society: information (production, use and dissemination), in any form- paper, magnetic, optical, microfiche and microfilm media, or held directly by the human factor.

The information society is based on the Internet and in correlation with globalization- a phenomenon specific to the information society (Aust, 2018). The information society is the society in which the production and consumption of information is the most important type of activity, information is recognized as the main resource, information and communication technologies are basic technologies, and the information environment, along with social and ecological- an environment of human existence.

2. MANUSCRIPT

2.1 The concept of e-government

The knowledge-based information society means more than the progress of information and communication technology and applications, it also integrates the social (health, solidarity, social protection, work, education and continuing education, etc.), environmental (resource use and environmental protection) dimensions, cultural (conservation and development of national and international cultural heritage, promotion of cultural pluralism, protection of minors, development of multimedia industry and production of information content) and economic (development of new paradigms of digital economy and new economy based on knowledge, innovation, entrepreneurial and managerial culture, citizen and consumer education).

An important role in this process is played by governments, government institutions and the public sector, which, through the policies adopted, must ensure the regulatory framework specific to the new type of society (Hein, 2014), the development of national information and communication infrastructure, non-discriminatory access to public information and provide a model for efficient use of information and communication technology in their own institutions and in public services (health, education, culture, transport, etc.). E-government or e-government is placed within the broader framework of the knowledge society; moreover, it is not possible in its complete form and only really makes sense in connection with the knowledge society (Fung, 2015).

E-government is the way of applying and using information and communication technologies in order to ensure access to information and provide public services in an interactive way (Ali, 2018). It is a tool that contributes to the harmonization of relations between citizens and public authorities, based on mutual respect and self-interested collaboration between the state and citizens.

E-government is increasingly asserting itself as a major feature of the new information and knowledge-based society (Alshehri, 2010). The phenomenon is complex and relates to the connections that exist between the authorities and the natural and legal persons in the society (Meijer, 2015). Thus, the aim is to open a road that will be completed by the complete reform of the public administration, so that it will be put in the real service of every citizen.

In Romania, the first concrete steps in the field of IT solutions of wide interest for the citizen in his interaction with public administration institutions were taken at the end of 2001.

2.2 The European Union and e-Government in Romania

The expansion of the new company in various countries is influenced by the degree of use of IT&C technologies (Butt, 2019). Thus, it turned out that there are important discrepancies even between EU countries. Thus, over 75% of employees in Sweden use a computer at work, while in Greece only 26%. At EU level, 48% of people use a computer at work. A similar situation was recorded in terms of Internet access, with the Nordic countries accounting for the highest share (Shkarlet, 2020).

Romania lags behind in terms of computer use and Internet access, compared to the average of the EU-27 states, but also compared to the average of the new member states. This has negative effects on Romania's competitiveness, because the use of computers and Internet access are major factors in the development of the economy.

Figure 1. The evolution of personal computers in Romania 2016-2020

Source: INNSE

Poorly developed regions do not have the basic infrastructure to ensure their connection to the Internet, and in some cases no access to fixed telephony. The segment of telephony services provided through public fixed networks registered an upward evolution in the period 2000-2020 (see figure 2).

Figure 2. The evolution of fixed telephony networks in Romania 2015-2020

Source: INNSE

Also, the digitization rate increased by almost 42%, reaching 72% in 2020 compared to 54.8% in 2017. The digitization rate is still low, especially in rural areas.

Figure 3. The evolution of Internet users in Romania 2017-2020

Source: INNSE

If until the interval described, one of the reasons for the low penetration of the Internet was that in some situations, even if there was the technical possibility of connecting to a network, the tariffs are much higher than in large urban areas it can be seen that its situation changed lately, the internet usage rate being in a continuous ascent.

For businesses, 55% have access to the Internet, compared to 92% in the EU-27. An important difference is found between SMEs and large enterprises: if 90% of large enterprises have access to the Internet, the percentage is much lower in the case of SMEs 50%.

Figure 4. Businesses connected to the Internet 2020

Source: INNSE

Broadband connections in the total number of Internet access connections represent, at the end of 2019, 41%. At the level of the entire population, the penetration rate of broadband connections was about 3.7%, well below the EU-27 average of 9.5%. There is also a very big gap regarding the share of enterprises that have broadband connections, this being only 12% in Romania, compared to the EU-27 average, respectively 62%, in our country being 5 times lower than in the EU. A wide spread of broadband infrastructure is essential for the development and distribution of services and

applications, like e-sănătate, e-business, e-government and e-education, which are essential for Romania's development. These major infrastructure deficits can be remedied by major investments, both from private companies and from public institutions.

3. CONCLUSION

Increasingly, e-Government is asserting itself as a major feature of the new information and knowledge-based society. A complex phenomenon that relates to the connections that exist between the authorities and individuals and legal entities in society, e-Government aims to open a path that wants to be completed by the complete reform of public administration, so that it is put in the service of every citizen. E-government is the way of applying and using information and communication technologies in order to ensure access to information and provide public services in an interactive way.

E-government is used by public authorities to improve access to public information and services of central and local authorities, eliminates bureaucratic procedures and simplifies working methodologies, considerably improves the exchange of information and services between central public administration authorities, quality public services at the level of central public administration increases. E-government solutions aim to solve through specific IT tools the way of communication, data exchange, activities within institutions, services to citizens, to other institutions or to the business environment.

E-government provides direct and instant access, reduces queues and bottlenecks, shortens the time allocated to routine procedures, contributes to the rapid and interactive resolution of citizens' requests, information is always up-to-date, and internal costs are reduced. The provisions of e-Europe have been echoed in Romania by consolidating the national information infrastructure and the ICT industry, providing large-scale communication services, developing the national industry of ICT products and services, accelerating the construction of a foundation of the information society.

All this has been achieved or is being achieved through fast and cheap access to the online environment, the development of high-speed networks for research and education; education and training of human resources and youth for the information society, optimal conditions for the use of information society – specific services, acceleration of electronic commerce, ICT – based medical services, as well as environmental control.

The electronic information and payment system for local taxes and e-Taxes is the best way for all citizens to have quick access to relevant information on local taxes and duties, offering a viable, fast and convenient solution for paying debts to local budgets. The systems already reach level 5 of interaction in e-Government, which involves connecting / integrating IT systems in town halls and banks.

The electronic public procurement system, through its impact and international recognition, is the most successful e-government project, being fully functional, accessible to businesses and public institutions, bringing annual savings of tens of millions of Eur to public institutions. what uses it. Through e-government, the connection between the citizen and the local or central authorities is expected to become easier to achieve, to become closer, more transparent, more efficient. The Internet facilitates communication, and governments use this feature to meet the demand for services of the citizen-citizen and to receive feedback from him on the services provided.

If in the modern world a political system comparable to Athenian democracy has become impossible to achieve, the Internet can still create a virtual world that allows as many citizens as possible to participate in political life. At the level of MCTI we are working on the elaboration of the E-government strategy, which will take into account the current state of use of IT & C in public administration, as well as the degree of use of electronic services by citizens, so that it can be established clearly the next stages of implementation of this concept in Romania. However, in view of the developments of the last two years in the field of alignment with EU standards and especially of the sustained efforts to provide the public with high quality public services, through virtual find utilities on the Romanian market, though, perhaps a little slower compared to other countries.

The endowment and access to the Internet can increase rapidly, being a matter of allocating resources, their use depending on education and changing mindsets. An easy-to-use tax payment system will make many businesses and citizens want to use information technology instead of facing the current waste of energy and time. investment for their future.

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