

E-government in the Belgian social sector coordinated by the Crossroads Bank for Social Security

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Actors in the Belgian social sector

- about 2,000 public and private institutions at several levels (federal, regional, local) are dealing with
 - the collection of social security contributions
 - the delivery of social security benefits
 - child benefits
 - unemployment benefits
 - benefits in case of incapacity for work
 - reimbursement of health care costs
 - holiday pay
 - old age pensions
 - guaranteed minimum income
 - the delivery of supplementary benefits based on the social security status of a person

The problem

- a lack of well coordinated service delivery processes and of information management leads to
 - a huge avoidable administrative burden and related costs for
 - the citizens
 - their employers
 - the actors in the social sector
 - service delivery that doesn't meet the expectations of the citizens and their employers
 - suboptimal effectiveness of the social protection
 - higher possibilities of fraud
 - suboptimal support of the social policy

The solution

- a network between all 2,000 social sector actors with a secure connection to the internet and other networks
- a unique identification key
 - for every citizen, electronically readable from an electronic social security card and an electronic identity card
 - for every company
- 185 electronic services for mutual information exchange amongst actors in the social sector, defined after process optimization
 - nearly all direct or indirect (via citizens or companies) paper-based information exchange between actors in the social sector has been abolished
 - in 2005 half a billion electronic messages were exchanged amongst actors in the social sector, which saved as many paper exchanges

The solution

- 34 electronic services for employers, either based on the electronic exchange of structured messages between software applications of the employers and software applications of the actors in the social sector, or via an integrated portal site
 - 50 social security declaration forms have been abolished
 - in the remaining 30 declaration forms the number of headings has on average been reduced to a third of the previous number
 - declarations are limited to 3 events
 - immediate declaration of recruitment and discharge (only electronically)
 - quarterly declaration of salary and working times (only electronically)
 - 23 types of declarations of social risks (electronically or on paper)
 - in 2005 15,7 million electronic declarations were made by all 220,000 employers, 98 % of which from application to application

The solution

- 4 electronic services for citizens via an integrated portal
 - 2 services to apply for social benefits
 - 2 services for consultation of social benefits
 - about 30 new services are foreseen
- an integrated portal site containing
 - electronic transactions for citizens and employers
 - information about the entire social security system
 - harmonized instructions and information model relating to all electronic transactions
 - a personal page for each company
- an integrated multimodal contact centre supported by a customer relations management tool

The solution

- coordination by the Crossroads Bank for Social Security
 - definition of the vision and the strategy on E-government in the social sector and of the common principles related to information management
 - definition, implementation and management of an interoperability framework
 - secure messaging of several types of information (structured data, documents, images, metadata, ...) with business logic and orchestration support
 - coordination of business process reengineering
 - stimulation of service oriented applications
 - management of a reference directory for
 - preventive control on the legitimacy of the information exchange
 - organisation of the routing of information
 - automatic communication of changes of information

The solution

■ reference directory

- directory of available services/information
 - which information/services are available at any institution depending on the capacity in which a person/company is registered at each institution
- directory of authorized users and applications
 - list of users and applications
 - definition of authentication means and rules
 - definition of authorization profiles
- directory of data subjects
 - which persons/companies have personal files in which institutions for which periods of time, and in which capacity they are registered
- subscription table
 - which users/applications want to automatically receive what services in which situations for which persons/companies in which capacity

Advantages

■ gains in efficiency

- in terms of cost: services are delivered at a lower total cost due to
 - a unique information collection using a common information model and administrative instructions
 - a lesser need to re-encoding of information by stimulating electronic information exchange
 - a drastic reduction of the number of contacts between actors in the social sector on the one hand and citizens or companies on the other
 - functional task sharing concerning information management, information validation and application development
 - a minimal administrative burden
- in terms of quantity: more services are delivered
 - services are available at any time, from anywhere and from several devices
 - services are delivered in an integrated way according to the logic of the customer

Advantages

- gains in efficiency
 - in terms of speed: the services are delivered in less time
 - benefits can be allocated quicker because information is available faster
 - waiting and travel time is reduced
 - citizens and companies can directly interact with the competent actors in the social sector with real time feedback
- gains in effectiveness: better social protection
 - in terms of quality: same services at same total cost in same time, but to a higher quality standard
 - in terms of type of services: new types of services, e.g.
 - push system: automated granting of benefits
 - active search of non-take-up using datawarehousing techniques
 - controlled management of own personal information
 - personalized simulation environments
- better support of social policy
- more efficient combating of fraud

Lessons learned

- define a long term vision on
 - integrated, customer-oriented service delivery
 - management of information as a strategic resource for all government activity
 - interoperability
- make the vision enforceable by citizens and companies and amongst government institutions, by formalizing it in regulations
- combine long term vision, profound process optimization and quick wins
- do not look at e-government as a pure ICT event, but put the emphasis on an improvement of services and use a multidisciplinary approach
- optimize processes within each government institution, at each government level and across government levels before their automatization

Lessons learned

- standardize concepts and, where necessary, adapt regulations in order to introduce those concepts
- also regulate aspects such as privacy protection, information security, the protection against ICT crime, unique identification keys, the probative value of electronic information, the electronic signature, the equal access to public services, the transparency of administrations, ...
- see to a close cooperation with policymakers, other government departments, other governmental levels, users, mandated intermediaries and interest groups
- attune the service offer maximally to the needs and the logic of the users and involve them actively in the development of the services
- match the governmental processes with the own processes of the users and assure user-friendliness

Lessons learned

- concentrate on a qualitative and interactive service offering, instead of a mere presence on the web
- support users by the implementation of data quality controls, before these are transmitted to the government authorities, and use the available data proactively for an automatic granting of rights, prefilling of information in forms during data collection and a targeted provision of information to the users
- make sure that available ICT components and information (networks, data bases, ...) are re-used to a maximum; through this, the efforts can be directed towards developing added value services
- also develop multifunctional components yourself, conform open standards, and based on a flexible, modular, expandable and service-oriented architecture, so that other developers of services can re-use your components

Lessons learned

- pay attention to change management, communications and training
- see to a good project management
- work incrementally and with prototyping, and give special attention to the roll-out by providing test and simulation environments, training and coaching for the users, and a multimodal contact centre for the personal support of end-users
- see to it that proper measuring facilities are available, so as to assure permanent monitoring and improvement
- make sure that the users have confidence in the electronic services that are provided; develop an information security policy, which is designed to guarantee the availability, confidentiality, integrity, authenticity and auditability of the information systems
- create an institution that stimulates and coordinates

More information

- Crossroads Bank for Social Security

<http://www.ksz.fgov.be>

- Federal Public Service for ICT

<http://www.fedict.be>

- social security portal

<https://www.socialsecurity.be>

<http://www.belgium.be>

- personal website

<http://www.law.kuleuven.ac.be/icri/frobbe>

Th@nk you!