Programme

e-Government: better services, better democracy?
Wednesday 9 – Friday 11 March 2011 | WP1104
To be held in Athens

The rapid development of new digital communication technologies and equally rapid acceptance of the internet by citizens in their social and professional lives creates huge opportunities and significant risks for democratic governments.

At one level, the web should enable governments to deliver better and more effective services to its citizens in a more equitable way. However, there is a risk that those without access to online services will be left behind, creating a 'digital poverty gap'.

Citizens are demanding greater transparency in government policy making, and access to the information on which decisions are based. What does the internet add to existing vehicles for transparency? How much can it improve policymaking and contribute to reform? What do Governments, media, civil society and citizens need to take into account if e-government and e-transparency is to make a positive contribution to democracy? What are the risks? Britain and Greece have been particularly innovative in their commitment to e-Government. Using the experience of these two countries as a platform for global discussions, this conference will bring together ministers for e-Government and Local Government; Chief Information Officers; Digital engagement and political communications experts; journalists and bloggers; civil society groups and business leaders to explore the prospects for effective e-Government as a positive tool of democracy and accountability.

In association with
The British Embassy in Athens

With support from:
HSBC
Singular Logic
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Wednesday 9 March

1930-2100	HM Ambassador's Reception

Welcome remarks
David Landsman
HM Ambassador, British Embassy, Athens

Theodora Tzakri
Deputy Minister for Interior, Decentralisation and e-Government, Athens

Thursday 10 March

0900-0915

Introduction to the conference

Richard Burge
Chief Executive, Wilton Park, Steyning

David Landsman
HM Ambassador, British Embassy, Athens

0915-1030

1. e-Government: Challenges – current and future

Can e-Government encourage a more citizen focused process of governance; improving efficiency and increasing accountability? What factors are driving the development and use of e-Government at national and European levels? How will the internet look in 5 years time and how will changes affect government services provided online? What are the challenges for the citizen, the politician and the civil servant?

Theodoros Karounos
Head of eGov Team, Prime Minister's Office, Athens

Maria Manuel Leitão Marques
Secretary of State for Administrative Modernisation, Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Lisbon

1115-1245

2. Addressing the digital gap: Improving education, access and services for all

What is the digital gap? What social, geographic and demographic factors create digital poverty? How can local governments tailor services to these groups? How can e-government tackle social exclusion and not reinforce it?

Martha Lane Fox (recorded message)
UK Digital Champion, Digital Inclusion Team, Cabinet Office, London

Graham Walker
Policy and Strategy Director for Race Online 2012; Director, Digital Delivery, Cabinet Office, London

Michail Bletsas (via video link)
Director of Computing MIT Media Lab, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge MA

Jimmy Leach
Head of Digital Diplomacy, Foreign and Commonwealth Office;
Former Digital Director, The Independent Newspaper Online, London

1430-1600

3. Reaching remote communities: Challenges and opportunities

What are the unique challenges faced by local governments dealing with rural and remote communities? What are the particular needs of remote and local communities? How are emergency services and education using new technologies? Where are local governments forming partnerships with the private sector to provide shared services?

Stefanos Gritzalis
Special Secretary for Administrative Reform, Ministry of Interior, Decentralisation and E-Government; Department of Information and Communication Systems Engineering; University of the Aegean, Samos

Alex Butler
Lead, Big Creative Challenge, Creative Industries, Big Society Network, London

1630-1800	**4. Shaping policy using digital channels: Ensuring effective public consultation**

How does 'policy crowdsourcing' create both opportunities for and threats to democracy? How are new communication technologies altering the balance of power between citizens and policymakers? How can policy makers ensure the quality of consultation in crowdsourcing exercises?

Thanasis Priftis
Political Scientist; Member of the Digital Team; Coordinator, Information Technology and Telecommunications, PASOK, Athens

Eleanor Stewart
Head of Digital Engagement, Efficiency & Reform Group, Cabinet Office, London

Scott Wright
Lecturer in Political Communication, University of East Anglia, Norwich

1900	Visit to New Acropolis Museum

Tour by Professor Dimitrios Pandermalis, President of the Museum

Followed by dinner hosted by the Ministry of Interior

Friday 11 March

0900-1030	**5. Transparency and accountability: Overseeing governance while managing public perceptions**

How can governments balance the need for transparency while managing the risk of misinterpretation or misuse of information? To what extent are citizens able to interpret raw data? What is the role of the media and civil society? Is transparency about more than providing access to data? How can citizens be assured their voice has been listened to?

Andrew Stott
Former Director of Digital Engagement, Cabinet Office, Sevenoaks

Simon Jeffery
Story producer for Guardian.co.uk, The Guardian, London

Costas Bakouris
Chair, Board of Directors, Transparency International Greece, Athens

1100-1230	**6. Data protection and the new politics of personal information**

How can we limit users' vulnerability? Self-regulation or imposed standards on online services? What can the experience of the private sector teach us on the subject of data protection and privacy and online services? What are the ethics of identity management and storage? What influence do individuals have on the range of information held on them?

Ain Aaviksoo
Chief Executive Officer, Secudax Ltd, Tallinn, Estonia

Lilian Mitrou
Assistant Professor, Department of Information and Communication Systems Engineering, University of the Aegean-Greece; Visiting Professor at the Athens University of Economics, Karlovassi

Susan Daley
Government Relations Manager UK & Ireland, Symantec Corporation, London