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D-DAY IN THE HUNGARIAN GOVERNMENTAL COMMUNICATION

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„*The most difficult and complicated operation of all times.*” — said Winston Churchill, Prime Minister about 6 June 1944. The D-day efforts and the military-political progress launched as a result of it have caused serious and positive changes in Europe within a short period of time. The previous comparison can be perhaps an exaggeration for the procedure of setting up the Hungarian governmental telecommunication system, however 30 June 2003 is certainly a milestone, as joining the Union programs means the introduction of electronic civil services in Hungary. The present publication provides a short summary of the participation of Hungary in the IDA/IDABC programs.

„*Minden idők legnehezebb és legbonyolultabb hadművelete.*” — nyilatkozta 1944. június 6-ról Winston Churchill miniszterelnök. A D-napon történt erőfeszítések és annak hatására megindult katonai-politikai folyamatok rövid időn belül komoly és pozitív változásokat hoztak Európában. Lehet, hogy a magyar kormányzati kommunikációs rendszer kialakításának folyamatában előző hasonlat kissé túlzásnak tűnik, azonban 2003. június 30-a mindenképpen mérföldkő, hiszen az uniós programokhoz való csatlakozás az elektronikus közszolgáltatások hazai bevezetésének kezdetét jelenti. Jelen közlemény rövid összefoglalót ad országunk IDA/IDABC programokban való részvétel kérdéseiről.

1. The IDA programs

Before joining the Union, on 30 June 2003 Hungary and the European Union concluded a contract for co-operation in the *IDA* (data exchange between the civil administration organisations) program, that has simultaneously provided a possibility for connecting the *TESTA* (pan-European telematics services between the civil administration organisations) system.

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The IDA program I² has set — *according to its name* — the supporting of electronic information exchange first of all between the civil administration organisations, secondly between public administration and the companies as a basic task for the realization of common policies and activities. In the first phase, together with the gradual spread of the Internet, the telecommunication and information-technology base (networks) had been installed simultaneously, and later in the second phase (1999–2004)³ the principles and regulations related to the operation of the system were set up in the following main fields:

- supporting the realization of branch networks in distinguished fields;⁴
- measures for the development of interoperability connected to the user activity of branch networks;
- spreading the advantages of the network in companies and among citizens;
- co-operation with national authorities;⁵
- co-operation with other common institutions.⁶

The most important decision making organisation of the IDA II program is the TAC Committee of Telematics Applications,⁷ where the full right representation of Hungary is managed by the Centre of Electronic Government operating in the framework of the Prime Minister's Office. National co-ordination of the horizontal programs⁸ of the IDA is

² The program was launched in 1995, based on the decision No. 1995/468/EK.

³ The program IDA II was launched in 1999 pursuant to the decrees No. 1999/1719/EK and 1999/1720/EK.

⁴ In the second phase the branch networks have been spread for assisting the free movement of goods, people and services and capital, and for ensuring the establishment of the economic and financial union and its efficient operation, furthermore for improving industrial competition in connection with small- and medium enterprises.

⁵ The purpose of co-operation is to clarify the benefits of participation in the network, in a way, that the action and election freedom of those affected is maintained.

⁶ The purpose of co-operation is to provide the participants of the IDA program with information.

⁷ The TAC assists the European Committee in managing the IDA program; adopts the reports preparing projects, the general realization plans of projects, the modifications of the work-plan of IDA and the adjustment of the annual budget to the programs.

⁸ In 2004, 62 public programs had been running. E.g.: DOCS (communication and management of official documents) — VIS (visa-information system) — TRIS (information system of technical rules); PLOETUS (education facilities throughout Europe) — OM, etc.

presently executed by the Governmental Information-technology Co-ordinating Interdepartmental Committee supported by the IDA Experts' Committee, the members of which are representatives of the ministries participating in public programs, and the secretarial tasks are executed by the Centre of Electronic Civil Services.

2. The IDABC program

According to the information of the European Committee the gradually developed pan-European electronic governmental services secure the strengthening of the interior market and at the same time assist the more effective exercising of rights of EU citizens in each member-country. The application of these possibilities is ensured by the IDA programs and the program⁹ published in 2005 as the integral instalment of the former [1]. The idea of the IDABC program is based on the fact, that the governments of the member-countries became more and more able to supply on-line data, content and communications services for the private sector and the citizens. A significant task of the new program is to develop the co-operation ability of civil administration organisations, the entrepreneur sector and the citizens with the application of electronic means across borders.

The IDABC program is a much broad e-government program, that holds together the aims of the IDA programs, and beyond that also establishes pan-European e-government services available for the entrepreneur sector and the citizens, and in the meantime the rapid electronic information exchange between the public administration organisations of the countries and the European organisations is also solved. The electronic governmental services — *except that those are supplied by local, regional, national or EU institutions* — shall be set up in the future so, that those were open and applicable for other member-countries without any problem. The demand for interoperability shall be applied not only for connecting the systems of the individual member-states and for ensuring common operation, but also — *as an important assurance for the*

⁹ The program was launched based on the No. 2004/387/EC common EU Parliament and Council Decree (21 April 2004). Period of duration 2005–2009, during which period in 2005–2006 for financing the projects altogether EUR 59 million will be available.

fulfilment of the first requirement — for the e-governmental networks already established or to be installed later by the national public administration organisations [2]. Controlling of the program is delegated to the activity of PEGSCO¹⁰, where Hungary is expected to be represented by the Centre of Electronic Civil Services beside the national co-ordination course presently being operated in the IDA II program, the main purpose of which is to co-ordinate the tasks of Hungary coming from its pan-European co-operation commitment.

3. Co-operation with the TESTA network

TESTA is the *IP-based* network of the Union, which consists of Euro-Domain main- and local domain¹¹ networks. The system allows the electronic information exchange between the European Union administration¹² and the national governments through extranet [3], that is the system is able to provide various free telematics services based on the IDA programs, both for the civil administration organisations of the member-countries and for the end-users too.

Taking into consideration general availability, the system is similar to the Internet, however it is adjusted to the requirements of data exchange and efficiency between the civil service organisations (TESTA in essence provides such telecommunication platform, which meets the increasing demands for safe data exchange between the European civil service organisations). The EuroDomain, as a network separated from the Internet provides limited availability, as only the civil administration organisations have the right to use the services of the system. At the same time the domain-based technical method permits the member-

¹⁰ Instead of the former Controlling Committee of the IDA programs (TAC).

¹¹ Domain: mathematically it means an explanation or value range. The domain name is the IP address of the user, it is the certain translated, textual equivalent of the address. The EuroDomain network is an European main line network for supplying the tasks of data exchange between the civil administration organisations, which fulfils network communications platform function between the local civil service organisations. It makes possible, that any destination connected to the EuroDomain system can set up connection with any other.

¹² The expression „administration” among the member-countries means generally other organisations set up for supplying civil service and public tasks (municipal, public utility etc.).

states to communicate with the European information resources in a way, that national networks can keep their autonomy.¹³

Hungary has been taking part in the work of the TESTA group — *as a monitoring party* — since 2002. After applying for joining the system (7 April 2003) Hungary was given the possibility shortly after concluding¹⁴ the related co-operative agreement, that was technically materialized in practice at the beginning of February 2004, by the operational connecting of TESTA and the Integrated Governmental Main Network. Pursuant to the related act¹⁵ reaching of the end-points connected into the TESTA network (and the national end-points) is executed through the Integrated Governmental Main Network, therefore similar to the IDA and IDABC programs national co-ordination is the responsibility of the Prime Minister's Office.

The essence of common co-operation in the field of governmental telecommunication is that efforts are made to realize the „one-gate” solution, which can be discovered in the fields of both planning and operation. Contrary to the complicated and rather separated development, maintenance and co-operation system of closed-purpose systems during the last 15 years the co-operation model of the Union emphasizes the closer and more efficient co-ordination between the member-countries. In this procedure the „one-gate” representation order of the member-countries has priority, which is represented in Hungary by the Prime Minister's Office Centre of Electronic Civil Services.

4. Summary

Perhaps the most important background for the establishment of the Centre of Electronic Civil Services — *expected* — by 1 January 2007, which is aimed to increase the quality of electronic government and electronic public administration is the joining of the IDA program by Hungary — *still outside the union* — and later the connecting of the Integrated Main

¹³ That also covers the use, operation and development.

¹⁴ On 30 June 2003. The application of Hungary for joining up the TESTA network was registered on 15 October 2003, at the registration No. 421. The hired line connection between „Brussels (Equant) and Budapest (Kopint Datorg Rt.)”, necessary for the joining of the system was set up on 10 December 2003. The connection is managed and financed by the EU administration.

¹⁵ Point 4, annex 5 of the Governmental Decree No. 50/1998 (III. 27.)

Network with the TESTA network. The day of joining the systems can be called the D-day, as such a centre of suppliers is to be set up at the beginning of next year, that can change radically the quality of electronic public services and the social acceptance of those in Hungary as well.

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