

# E-Government for Efficient Governance: Instructive Cooperation of the Republic of Belarus and the Republic of Korea in the Sphere of e-Government

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## E-Government and Governance Efficiency

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### Book review

#### Abstract

The transformation of the processes of governance using the Information and Communication Technologies is aimed at bringing in faster and transparent service delivery, accountability, information sharing and people participation in the decision-making and government processes. The implementation of e-Government requires a comprehensive strategy that is not only sensitive to existing political and economic conditions and realities but is also benchmarked on global best practices. The article reviews the handbook E-Government and Governance Efficiency that provides an insight to research that is being undertaken in the e-Government area, gives an

in-depth understanding of critical issues involved in e-Government, and provides expert opinion and recommendations for the Republic of Belarus to augment its potential. It studies the Korean experience on e-Government with special focus on such concepts as e-Government benchmarking, mGovernment, Smart Government and u-Government.

**Keywords:** E-Government, E-Governance, E-Government Benchmarking, South Korea, Belarus.

### 1. Introduction

The effectiveness of the e-Government of Korea is widely acknowledged by the international community. The Korean experience one-Government and digital economy is very instructive for the Republic of Belarus too.

According to the Analytical Department at Artezio [1], an ISO 9001:2015 certified custom software development and consulting company, the Republic of Belarus occupies today the 18th position in the list of countries with the most

comfortable and technologically advanced e-Government services. Artezio analysts took into account such parameters as the availability of a single entry point (a portal), the convenience of information search, the possibility to get online services, and the simplicity of the authentication procedure. Additionally, Artezio evaluated the scalability of services taking into account technological development.

The Belarusian government has declared the e-development of the society as a priority. For the last ten years the Republic of Belarus has actively pursued e-development as a crucial means to make its government more competitive by leveraging the world's best e-communication technology including broadband Internet. Enormous efforts have been put into creating a favourable environment for the society's e-development in compliance with the global standards. Both efficiency and transparency of administrative work have been improved, administrative civil services have been enhanced, and opportunities for people to participate in the policy-making process have been expanded. People can now participate in the government decision-making process more easily through a single window linked to all administrative organizations that provides comprehensive civil services and receives public suggestions. People can request and check a range of administrative information online. The government's integrated computing center comprehensively manages all

information systems of the government, improving its capability to respond to system errors and security threats. Not surprising that the President of Belarus A. Lukashenko [5] strongly believes that Belarus "has a good chance to become at least a regional leader in the development of advanced fields such as artificial intellect, big data, block chain technology", and to become [4] "an IT attractive country". On December 21, 2017 the President of the Republic of Belarus signed Decree No. 8 "On the Development of Digital Economy" [2].

## 2. The significance of the Korean experience in the sphere of e-Government for the Republic of Belarus

The Republic of Belarus considers the South Korean experience of developing information technologies very instructive for studying and putting into practice. Thus, the Academy of Public Administration under the aegis of the President of the Republic of Belarus has launched a post-graduate course in e-Government with the key assistance of Im Sang An, a visiting professor from the Republic of Korea. The Korean professor and expert on e-Government was invited to give a course of lectures in e-Government for the undergraduates and post-graduates of the Academy. Professor Im Sang An is one of the four authors of the handbook E-Government and Governance Efficiency alongside with three Belarusian authors, i.e. professor I.

Hancherenok, assistant professor A. Shemarow and lecturer N. Gorbachev.

E-Government and Governance Efficiency is a collection of six independent papers. The scope of this handbook one-Government is to provide an insight to research that is being undertaken in the e-Government area, to give an in-depth understanding of critical issues involved in e-Government, and to provide expert opinion and recommendations for the Republic of Belarus to augment its potential. The papers discuss basic issues such as what purposes e-Government should serve, how the effectiveness of e-Government should be measured, how e-Government initiatives reduce government expenditures, how e-Government should draw citizens into more active dialog with governments, and how e-Government should reach its full potential. The handbook includes chapters written in two languages - Russian and English, that increases its value. It also contains a lot of illustrations such as figures and tables that are instrumental in perceiving the information.

Despite increased research interest on e-Government, the field currently lacks sound theoretical frameworks that can be useful in addressing two key issues concerning the implementation of e-Government systems. First of all that is a better understanding of the factors influencing the adoption of e-Government systems, and secondly that is the integration of various e-Government applications.

The objective of the Belarusian-Korean

handbook is to provide a foundation towards the development of a theoretical framework for the implementation of e-Government systems via extensive review of the existing empirical findings and theoretical perspectives related to e-Government adoption, and development of the premises of a conceptual model that would reflect the multi-level and multi-dimensional nature of e-Government systems' acceptance.

### 3. e-Government and e-Governance

At the start of the handbook it states the difference between e-Government and e-Governance as many think that these two are related to delivering government services through the Internet and social media. But the fact is they use information and communication technology as a tool for the development of good governance in any country. In the handbook e-Government is defined as the integration of information and communication technology in public administration with the purpose of enhancing transparency, efficiency, accountability and citizen participation. It aims to facilitate greater level of efficiency and effectiveness in government activities and process, enhance quality of public services, simplify administrative processes, improve access to information, increase communication between various government agencies, strengthen support to public policy, enable seamless government.

However, the concept of e-Governance is not clearly defined in the handbook. The definition

is narrowed to governing a country, state or organisation with the help of information and communication technology. Is e-Governance only a tool that makes various government services available to citizens in a convenient way? The answer to this question is very vague in the handbook. Probably the authors consider that e-Government is a system and e-Governance is a function. E-Government is a one-way communication protocol while e-Governance is a two-way communication protocol.

In light of this, the handbook examines and explains the essentials of various e-Governance models. G2G (Government to Government) implies the exchange of information between government agencies or departments. G2C (Government to Citizen) is the interaction between government and the citizens of the country. It involves establishing an interface to enable the general public to access information and services, whenever and wherever they want. They can also give their feedback with respect to policies and rules. G2B (Government to Business) means the dissemination of information between government and the business. It is G2B interaction. It focuses on reducing red-tapism, establishing transparency and accountability in the business environment. G2E (Government to Employees) is the interaction between government and employees to increase employee morale and satisfaction, it is made easier and faster with the help of information

and communication technology.

It is emphasised that e-Governance and e-Government are not a one-day affair. The entire system should work together and result in decreased corruption, increased trust in government, transparency in government activities, citizen engagement, growth in GDP, expansion in government reach and so on.

#### 4. E-Government Benchmarking

The main scope of the handbook is e-Government benchmarking and the barriers that arise on the transition from e-Government to Smart Government. This part of the handbook is written by Im Sang An.

E-Government benchmarking methods show that e-Government has already moved from merely a web presence and information dissemination to fully integrated or connected government. Benchmarking is defined as a process whereby an organisation evaluates its operations by comparison to similar organisations. In the context of e-Government, benchmarking means a review of e-Government performance status between nations or agencies. Benchmarking can help governments and other institutions responsible for the implementation of e-Government services monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of public spending; measure retrospective achievement; make strategic decisions and identify appropriate courses of action; measure e-Government progress and development. Two key benchmarks for e-Government are the

percentage of basic public services available online and the extent to which the public use on-line public services to find out information or submit forms.

## 5. M-Government

E-Government efforts to benefit from the use of most innovative forms of information and communication technologies, particularly web-based Internet applications, to improve governments' fundamental functions. These functions are now using mobile and wireless technologies and creating a new direction for e-Government: mobile government. Mobile Government (mGovernment) is defined as a strategy and its implementation involving the utilization of all wireless and mobile technology, services, applications and devices for improving benefits to the parties involved in e-Government including citizens, businesses and all government units. The technology and the services are rapidly taking its place in various mGovernment implementations. There is now a growing need to examine mGovernment related issues from the perspectives of their own and build a framework for the study of mGovernment efforts.

The handbook specifies that mGovernment is an inevitable natural extension of e-Government and cannot be seen as replacing e-Government and in many cases it will be complementary to e-Government efforts. The conventional e-Government provides services through wired network with interactive and relatively

intelligent web applications. The value of mGovernment comes from the capabilities of applications supporting mobility of the citizens, businesses and internal operations of the governments. Some of the early adopters of mGovernment services include law enforcements, fire fighting, emergency medical services, education, health and transportation, immigration, border and coastal security, disaster response and management. For example, South Korea is claimed in them Government report [2], released by OECD, ITU, and UN a world-class mobile government. The Korean government provides citizens and civil servants with about 917 mobile e-Government services in various fields such as social security, administration, procurement, and tax affairs.

MGovernment is in its early stage of development. The advances in e-business and m-business areas are influencing mobile technology adoption by governments. The handbook states some concerns connected with mGovernment services. First of all, wireless and mobile networks and related infrastructure, as well as software, must be developed. Many countries have not yet adopted legislation for data and information practices that spell out the rights of citizens and the responsibilities of the data holders (government). Im Sang An(Hancharenok et al., 2016) states, that "mGovernment is not a replacement fore-Government, but extension or new version of e-Government, which is expanding the concept of e-Government while complementing

each other” (p. 98).

## 6. Smart Government and u-Government

Therefore, the common infrastructure for the national-level mobile e-Government as well as u-Government (ubiquitous government) is the key to building a smart government. The infrastructure can create a smart society paradigm that brings changes to all parts of society, including lifestyle and business.

Smart Government is an advanced government promoting use of public services and active citizen participation, anytime, anywhere through integration of smart devices and government services. Smart Government is an active use of smart ICT mobile devices such as cloud computing, machine-to-machine services and an active response to social change such as evolving population, changing values, “network society”. With the emergence of a smart society, citizens can actively participate in managing overall national affairs. In other words, the government is transformed from a service-style government to a platform-style government. Under a platform-style government, government affairs are managed on the basis of public participation. The platform is the core foundation of a smart society, creating new values through the open innovation of service infrastructure such as networks and systems, and of society infrastructure such as future prediction and governance.

## 7. Conclusion

In summary, nowadays governments actively develop policies regarding informatising government affairs, and continue to make efforts to solve national and social issues through informatisation. As part of its efforts to informatise government services, the Republic of Belarus is constructing a system for national affair management considering the world’s best experience in this sphere. By collecting and analyzing a wide range of data, the system will support the establishment of strategies and decision making regarding important national affairs such as the environment, education, disaster, and security that directly affect citizens. Taking advantage out of the best international practices, Belarus is promoting e-Government that is focusing on utilization and convergence by consolidating services to maximize the convenience of users and implementing a seamless digital cooperation system connecting government departments and agencies, in order to improve the overall quality.

The handbook E-Government and Governance Efficiency is intended not only for specialist audiences who work in domain of or study, examine and conduct research in the field of e-Government but also for those who are interested in issues related to e-Government and Smart Government in Belarus as well as in South Korea.

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