



## EISCO 2007 THE DIGITAL LOCAL AGENDA MANIFESTO

*Hameenlinna, April 18, 2007*

We, representatives of regional and local governments, experts from the associations of municipalities, provinces and regions of Europe and from the companies collaborating to support innovation at local and regional level, have met at the EISCO conference in Hämeenlinna, Finland, April 16<sup>th</sup> -18<sup>th</sup> 2007, to discuss the priorities of the Digital Local Agenda in order to make a positive contribution to the implementation of i2010 and the Lisbon strategy.

1. We welcome the active participation of the main European regional and local networks dealing with eGovernment and the Information Society in this event. We strongly encourage ELANET (CEMR), eris@, EUROCITIES, IT4ALL, eGOV SOCIETY research network and the thematic networks IANIS+ and DEMO-net to continue in this endeavour and expand their joint efforts to address the digital challenge.

2. We also make a special call to national governments and to the European Commission to take fuller account of our views and ideas, and to dedicate a greater place and financial support for our ICT policies and projects in the new framework programmes for the period 2007-2013. Local and regional governments are essential actors in implementing the i2010 strategy. The most important challenge is to achieve extensive take-up and implementation of eGovernment by local and regional public administrations throughout Europe, and a substantial improvement in their capacity to play an effective enabling role in the development of local economies and better living and working conditions for our citizens.

3. In June 2005, at the EISCO conference in Cracow, we openly analysed the problems and challenges faced by local and regional governments in relation to developments in eGovernment and Information Society. In particular, we launched the Digital Local Agenda as a strategic instrument of eInclusion to react to these challenges and to overcome the digital divide, especially between cities in large metropolitan areas and local governments located in small urban or rural areas. We also reached agreement on a platform of 10 goals to be reached by the year 2010.

4. Since then, important progress has been made in creating political consensus, discussing policies for implementation of the Digital Local Agenda, and in creating methodologies to move forward in using ICT as a main driver, to improve governance and delivery of public services.

5. The 2<sup>nd</sup> World Summit of Cities and Local Governments on the Information Society, held in Bilbao in November 2005, singled out the Digital Local Agenda as a fundamental instrument for ensuring that the benefits of the Information Society reach all regions and cities of the world. UNITAR, as well as the United Nations Global Alliance for ICT and Development, are giving special attention to the Digital Local Agenda in their decentralised



actions. The European Union and the national governments have greatly increased funds to co-finance innovation drawing on ICT at regional and local level and to support pan-European projects involving the public sector. The European Investment Bank offers good conditions to access credit funding for development of eGovernment and the Information Society in local areas.

6. At EISCO 2007 we have discussed how we can access these resources on time and with the right priorities, especially bearing in mind that our tight budgets do not allow us to implement a Digital Local Agenda process using only our existing budget resources. Our debate focussed in particular on five areas that we consider a priority for the coming years:

- **eParticipation** in public local decision-making of citizens and relevant stakeholders;
- **eInclusion** to provide solutions for those in danger of exclusion, making use of the opportunities provided by ICT, whilst at the same time ensuring that no new divides are created. Actions should focus in particular on boosting digital literacy and eCapacity building for all civil servants, administrators and citizens (especially those in danger of exclusion) to best manage and effectively use ICT;
- **Full access to communication networks** for everyone in Europe. These must be affordable, open, high bandwidth infrastructures, capable of accommodating current needs and emerging high bandwidth technologies. It would be necessary to combine all policy and financial instruments available to ensure the deployment of the communication infrastructure that is necessary to develop an inclusive knowledge society;
- **Develop secure digital infrastructures** at regional and local level, for both public and private sectors, in support of eGovernment and local development, affording adequate interoperability among systems and databases, standardised services and support to local authorities and SMEs;
- **Advanced municipal and local services** in a broadband and multi-channel environment, taking into account the aspect of data quality, security and integrity.

7. The following table offers a synthesis of the main conclusions of our debate sub-divided into objectives, which will be achievable at regional and local level by 2010 on policy, process, content and technology:

**The i2010 Digital Local Agenda Action Goals**

<b>eParticipation</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To develop monitoring and benchmarking tools to measure citizen engagement and compare the effectiveness of different tools, including the ability to identify regional and national differences in approaches required;</li> <li>2. To disseminate guidelines for those involved in eParticipation initiatives, ensuring that there is clarity on the scope of participation offered, whether it be information, consultation, active participation or direct decision-making;</li> <li>3. To facilitate multichannel content provision and dissemination of policy;</li> <li>4. To enable the use of heterogeneous data from a broad variety of representative sources in online debates;</li> <li>5. To increase transparency and accessibility to attain increased</li> </ol>
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	<p>trust via large-scale deployment of eParticipation tools.  <i>Precondition: clear political commitment and strategy to deploy eParticipation tools;</i></p> <p>6. To improve the quality of information through better integration and interoperability, when linking existing legacy systems and applications with new technologies.</p>
<b>eInclusion</b>	<p>7. To work towards a better dialogue between all levels of government in order to understand and respond to the needs of all our citizens;</p> <p>8. To enhance e-capacity, especially in smaller or socially-divided communities, by developing and sharing multilingual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Methodologies</li> <li>– Materials</li> <li>– Expertise</li> <li>– Training</li> <li>– Networking and peer support</li> </ul> <p>9. To strengthen the capacity of local civil society groups, enabling them to participate actively in the process of defining the local strategy (DLA);</p> <p>10. To implement communications networks, technologies and applications to facilitate eCapacity Building programmes, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Collaboration software</li> <li>– Project Management</li> <li>– Case Management</li> <li>– Records Management</li> <li>– Process Modelling</li> <li>– Knowledge management</li> <li>– Benefits Realisation</li> </ul> <p>11. To build good cooperative partnerships and social networks to develop and maintain their capacity to develop eGovernment applications and services. Partnerships will include experts and practitioners from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Local authorities</li> <li>– Regional authorities</li> <li>– National Government</li> <li>– Business</li> <li>– Universities</li> <li>– Community and Voluntary Groups</li> <li>– Citizens.</li> </ul>
<b>Full broadband access</b>	<p>12. To encourage regional and local affordable, open, high bandwidth infrastructures for everyone in Europe, capable of accommodating current needs and emerging high bandwidth technologies;</p> <p>13. To seek public intervention and support where market forces are not sufficient to guarantee the availability of adequate infrastructures;</p> <p>14. To identify and disseminate successful local economic development and infrastructure strategies;</p> <p>15. To build on successful take-up strategies that fully take into</p>

	<p>account the needs of users, rather than solely focussing on the needs of public authorities;</p> <p>16. To leverage the 2008 Green Paper on Universal Service Obligation, developing a clear statement - agreed with the Competition authorities and relevant Regulators - about the role of public sector investment in bridging the Broadband Gap;</p> <p>17. To provide a concise and coherent "roadmap" for the use of wireless technologies, including freeing up more spectrum, in developing Public Sector or PPP initiatives designed to correct "market failure".</p>
<p><b>Secured digital local networks</b></p>	<p>18. To develop a common learning and working environment, implementing a sustainable Information Society strategy and launching innovative local networks which provide secure and integrated eServices to citizens and enterprises;</p> <p>19. To set up regional service centres to support local governments in danger of digital exclusion, ensuring access to basic services and communication infrastructure and allowing them to deliver more advanced eServices;</p> <p>20. To collaborate in developing standards, enabling delivery of public services across geographic and organisational boundaries;</p> <p>21. To enable interoperability whilst ensuring security, quality and integrity of data;</p> <p>22. To encourage the European Commission to reconsider the interoperability framework so as to make it applicable at regional and local level and to support specifically the implementation of 'points of single contact' required by the Services Directive.</p>
<p><b>Advanced municipal and local services</b></p>	<p>23. To ensure that all citizens can interact with public authorities electronically or personally through a single access point;</p> <p>24. To ensure that national and EU-wide policies concerning multichannel services are aligned with the ones adopted by local and regional authorities;</p> <p>25. To find proper ways and ensure capacities to accommodate external (user generated) content into municipal channels;</p> <p>26. To develop models of seamless services delivery that are citizen-centred / oriented / constructed;</p> <p>27. To encourage optimum use of appropriate technology (appropriate access channels) for each user/stakeholder;</p> <p>28. To move eGov projects and pilots closer to the market (in line with the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme of the European Union) based on open interoperability and architectures.</p>

These goals will inspire our action during the next 18 months and their progress shall be assessed at the EISCO 2008 conference, to take place in Naples, Italy, in November 2008.

9. The i2010 Digital Local Agenda requires a consistent improvement of planning and implementation methodologies. We acknowledge the efforts made by ELANET, the European Information Society network of local and regional government associations and their daughter companies supporting innovation, together with the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), to:

- underline the need to open a **“mainstreamed” decision-making process** within each local and regional government establishing a sustainable strategy and a three-year plan for its Digital Local Agenda;
- establish networks with **common targets among the different levels of administrations** to solve urgent problems such as full access to affordable, open, high bandwidth infrastructures for everyone in Europe (capable of accommodating current needs and emerging high bandwidth technologies). Also to create service centres that provide basic ICT services and training, enabling advanced ‘egov’ and electronic services by small and medium sized local governments, as well as to share content, databases and applications in a cooperative and learning environment;
- organise a **forum in the community** on the development of the Information Society at local level as a means of addressing local priorities, stimulating public-private partnerships and regional innovation clusters.

10. We also acknowledge the important results produced by the IANIS+ initiative of 44 regions, coordinated by eris@, to **improve regional strategies** and **empower regional civil servants** on broadband policies and the use of ICT, as well as to **foster regional innovation networks** among their members. The human and knowledge capacities developed through these means represent a resource that should be extensively used in local areas.

11. EUROCITIES through its knowledge society forum – TeleCities – has generated significant outcomes, in particular the **Charter of Rights of Citizens in the Knowledge Society** and research into the eGovernment City Models based on in depth analysis of some of the most advanced European cities. The network of major cities in Europe can make a significant contribution to ensure an inclusive Information Society, by providing a platform for the collection and sharing of know-how and expertise in priority areas of the Digital Local Agenda.

12. IT4ALL is the worldwide network strongly promoting the Digital Local Agenda, backed up by the Euskadi region, as follow-up to the Bilbao Declaration and Action Plan agreed in the II World Summit. Particularly important are the network efforts to establish **training programmes for civil servants** for quick adoption and implementation of the Digital Local Agenda in regional contexts, as well as **close coordination** with the United Nations initiatives and with the Information Society Committee of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG).

13. The PPP project providing **eGovernment Good Practice Portability** and the efforts made to launch **long lasting private-public partnerships** in eGovernment, are important outcomes of the eFORUM network. These are two key aspects of the i2010 Digital Local Agenda process.

14. In EISCO 2007, we have learned that the research network of excellence on eParticipation technologies, DEMO-net, is organising a most-timely **stakeholders’ network** to support and gradually introduce new forms of democratic engagement in municipalities, cities and regions around Europe. The **best practices** analysis and eParticipation **models**

being worked out to involve citizens in decision-making at local level are a top priority of our agenda.

15. As underlined above, we have a strong interest that all these European networks work within a synergistic common-policy framework to reach the i2010 Digital Local Agenda goals. In this context, the creation of a network of Digital Local Agenda experts to shape and consistently improve the capacities of administrations to address ICT is a must. At the same time, the urgency should be recognised of giving encouragement and financial support to local administrations to enable them to take part in networking activities to accelerate progress on the Digital Local Agenda.

16. We call on the European Commission, national governments, associations of local and regional governments, and our regions and local administrations, to take a strong step forward by giving greater attention and support to this work. The European regional and local networks represent a fantastic human capital to move forward both the Lisbon strategy and the i2010 Digital Local Agenda. This collaborative work should also be extended, where possible, to neighbouring European countries, like Russia, the MEDA countries and other continents, like the USA, East Asian and Latin American countries.

17. Because of its horizontal impact on many other policy areas and the fact that the success of the i2010 Digital Local Agenda depends on a partnership of all levels of government, we call for a better coordination between sectoral policies as well as a better coordination of policies between the local, regional, national and European level.

18. We therefore recommend that municipalities, cities and regions are acknowledged and respected as equal partners in European governance. This implies:

- improving the opportunities for systematic involvement of municipalities, cities and regions in policy-shaping and decision-making;
- establishing clear channels and mechanisms for cooperation within and between the different spheres of governance;
- continuing the tradition of EU Presidency Ministerial Conferences on the knowledge society, engaging in a dialogue with their counterparts in other departments and ministries to ensure a holistic approach towards the development of the knowledge society;
- developing mechanisms at national level to involve local and regional authorities more closely in national policy-making;
- creating opportunities to bring together networks of municipalities, cities and regions cooperating at European level with the EU-27 ministers responsible for the development of the knowledge society;
- encouraging participative governance processes at local and regional level.

Hämeenlinna, April 18<sup>th</sup> 2007.