DIGITIZATION OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN POLAND ON THE EXAMPLE OF THE EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL WELFARE SECTORS

Tomasz Gajowniczek[1]

University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn (Poland)

ABSTRACT

This article briefly presents the history of digitization of public administration in Poland. Statistical data of GUS and Eurostat (especially from 2012 to 2016) is used, based on which the profile of the Internet user and his/her expectations for the authorities and experience with e-government are described. The author attempts to understand why citizens–internet users (including the unemployed) do not use the Internet. The author points out three IT projects that were implemented in the citizen services sector under the supervision of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. However, the first attempts at computerization of the administration were not effective enough and – as it could be expected – they were not cheap either. The situation changed in April of 2016 when the family assistance program "Family 500 Plus" was introduced. It turned out that with 2 million applications submitted, almost 0.5 million were received electronically, 95% of which were sent via the Internet banking system. The author concludes that the simplest way to popularise e-government is to combine Internet banking systems with state administration systems.
KEYWORDS: *e-government, information systems, ICT in administration*.

Introduction

Problem. The development of e-government in Poland, despite time lapse and hundreds of millions of zlotys spent, is still not satisfactory. The term "computerization of administration" for many years meant buying new computers for officials. Meanwhile, the main reason for the implementation of electronic administration should be: on the one hand, facilitating the work of government agencies (lower costs, faster circulation of documents, etc.), on the other hand, making life easier for citizens (saving time, availability 24/7, simplicity of forms, etc.). This is not happening in Poland.

Purpose. The idea is to convince citizens to use e-government and to indicate what benefits and opportunities they can gain from it.

Object. The aim of the article is the attempt to answer the question: why in Poland, despite a steady increase in number of Internet users and the growing spending on Internet administration, citizens do not see opportunities that e-government gives them and do not want to use it? It was assumed that e-government does not have an attractive offer for citizens. It is also complicated (due to difficult procedures).

The subject of the study are government documents (plans, strategies) relating to computerization of administration. Based on the available reports, the appropriateness of spending of public funds was assessed and the effectiveness of the implemented IT systems was checked.

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[1] Tomasz Gajowniczek – assistant professor, Institute of Political Science, University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, Poland
Scientific interests: e-government, local studies, political communication
E-mail: tomasz.gajowniczek@uwm.edu.pl

Methods. In order to achieve the research goals, various scientific methods and techniques have been applied, such as critical analysis of literature, opinion polls, analysis of Polish IS projects in public administration, case studies, action research, as well as methods of creative thinking and logical deduction.

1. Electronic government as research problem

Electronic government (EG) is a domain of action and study addressing "the use of information and technology to support and improve public policies and government operations, engage citizens, and provide comprehensive and timely government services" (Scholl, 2007: 21). Development of e-government results in mutual benefits for public and private entities; it should be oriented to a citizen and build up relations with the market sector. As a result, it is possible to improve services and facilitate the life of "customers" of public administration. Multilateral communication between public communication, employees of public institutions and citizens is two-way and is available round the clock.

There is a growing consensus among public administration across the world about the need to revitalize public administration to facilitate customer centred, cost-efficient, and user-friendly delivery of services to citizens and businesses (Gnan et al., 2013; Gupta et al., 2008; Urciuoli et al., 2013). As a result of this, governments introduce innovations in management, processes, government services, organizational structure, practices, and capacities (Dolfsma et al., 2013; Reddick, 2011; van der Voet, 2014). This way they mobilize, deploy, and utilize the human capital as well as information, technological and financial resources for service delivery to citizens and businesses (Reddick et al. 2012; Torres et al. 2005; Tung at al., 2005; Weerakkody et al., 2012). ICT can serve a variety of ends: better delivery of government services to citizens, improved interactions with business and industry, citizen empowerment through access to information, more efficient government management, strengthening people's voice, fostering partnership and collaboration between different levels of government (local/regional, central), breaking bureaucratic barriers, reducing corruption, increased transparency, greater convenience, revenue growth, cost reductions, accessible government (immediate access to pertinent information), faster government, cheaper government, efficient government, improving the quality of service to citizens (citizens can get service within minutes or hours) (Sharma, 2004; Barthwal, 2003; Montargil, 2010). Consequently, efficient and effective public administration is an essential precondition for economic and social development (Adam et al., 2011).

Areas of information transfer and provision of public services online, in particular by the Internet, were designated by the European Union in the so-called Bangemann Report as early as in 1994 (Bangemann Report…, 1994). Among basic public services that can be accessed online, you can specify services for citizens, including in particular: settlement of personal income tax, job placement, vehicle registration, obtaining building permits, managing reports to the police, search through catalogues of public libraries, issuing acts of marital status, recruiting for the study, change of a registered address, the ability to make an appointment with a doctor, etc.

It had its "golden age" from the late 1980s to the turn of the century. In the 1990s, computerization also entered public administration (Danziger et al., 2002). However, as H. J. Sholl notes (2011: 12): "The first article referring explicitly to EG in a leading academic public administration journal in the United States appeared as late as 2002 (Ho, 2002). More strikingly, the top two academic ISR journals in the United States have completely ignored the EG phenomenon altogether." Since then, the scientific literature on e-government has grown a lot (exemplary literature reviews: Reece, 2006; Andersen et al., 2010; Zhang, 2014). It should be noted at the same time that in the initial period of development e-government and e-governance were used interchangeably (Grönlund et al., 2004).

Snellen (2005: 16) states that the criteria for assessing the success of e-government development are identical to those for evaluating the implementation of IT projects. According to him, you can talk about:
• Efficiency criteria (staying within the budget, staying within the set of time constraints, ease of use, speed of handling of cases, and cost savings).

- Effectiveness criteria, such as attainment of goals of all kinds of stakeholders, inside and outside public administration (responsiveness), sustainment of knowledge management and collaborative decision making.
- Legal criteria, such as equality before the law (no "digital divide"), protection of privacy and application of the principles of proper administrative behaviour.
- Democratic criteria, such as transparency of government policies, and opportunities to participate in political decision making.

As he points out, in most cases a compromise should be found between these criteria. This is normal with regard to public administration, where a balance must always be struck between legal, political, economic and scientific rationality.

2. The beginning of computerization of administration in Poland

By convention, the day of 1 April 2003 can be regarded as the beginning of computerization of public administration in Poland (Grabowska et al., 2013: 277); then the Ministry of Science and Information Technology was created (Rozporządzenie…, 2003). The new ministry was formed by transformation of the Committee for Scientific Research (KBN) – the government body enforcing state policy aimed at science and technology, whose structure included the Department of Information Systems of Public Administration and the Department for the Promotion of the Information Society. In December 2002, the KNB presented the document "The Gates. Preliminary concept of the project" (Wrota…, 2002). The intention of the creators of the Gates of Poland program was to coordinate the activities aimed at building e-government at the central level and its implementation on a continuous basis throughout the country. The initial concept of the Gates, apart from the definition of a public service, also contains the classification of priority groups of services for individuals (6) and businesses (5) (Kaczorowska, 2013: 101).

On 1 July 2003, the decree of the Minister of Science, introducing the statute of the Ministry of Science and Information Technology, entered into force (Zarządzenie…, 2013). §26 of the decree established the Department of the Information Systems of Public Administration (DIA) entrusted with, among others, the following tasks:

- Designing strategic tasks of the state in the field of computerization of public administration and directions of development of ICT systems for public use;
- Development of the rules for creation, operation and supervision of the ICT systems used by public authorities and technology standards to be met by the systems;
- Coordinating efforts to establish a system of e-government for the Polish public administration; elaborating rules for the development of ICT infrastructure of the system and the security principles necessary in processing information by the system.

The most important document prepared by the Ministry of Science and Information Technology was *The strategy for computerization of the Republic of Poland – e-Poland for the years 2004–2006*. Its authors chose three areas in which projects aimed at computerization of the country to be implemented. The Gates of Poland project was considered a priority (Strategia…, 2003: 4). By 2005, it was planned to introduce the electronic provision of basic public services at an average European level, increase the potential effectiveness of public administration by 40% and gain savings of 10 billion zlotys per year.

The Gates of Poland were implemented within the framework of the EU project "eEurope 2005". Other projects in the framework of "eEurope" are: Polish Internet Library, Sirius (the program integrates county employment offices), Intrastat (a system of statistical information on trade in goods with EU countries), and the White Paper XML for Public Administration (summary of standards for data exchange between government offices and citizens).

On the basis of the Gates of Poland project, the Electronic Platform for Public Services (ePUAP) was created, which was to be a coherent and systematic program of actions aimed at achieving the full functionality

of electronic administration in Poland. The project was divided into two phases: 2006–2008 and 2008-2013 (ePUAP 2) (Ganczar, 2009: 6–47).

From the point of view of a citizen, the most important programs in the first phase of creating e-government in Poland are ePUAP and Polish Internet Library.

The success of e-government initiatives and processes are highly dependent on government's role in ensuring a proper legal framework for their operation. A requirement for e-government processes to be introduced and adopted is their formal legal equivalence and standing with the paper process (Basu, 2004: 120). Two laws form the legal basis for electronic communication: the Law of 6 September 2001 on access to public information (Ustawa…, 2001a) and the Law of 18 September 2001 on electronic signature (Ustawa…, 2001b). Tasks in the field of computerization of public administration are set out in strategy documents for the years 2004–2006, including the above mentioned: *The Strategy for Computerization of the Republic of Poland – e-Poland* and *The National Strategy for Development of the Broadband Access to the Internet.*

All the documents discussed above emphasize the creation of ICT infrastructure (Ogonowska, 2013: 99; compare with Grodzka, 2009: 21). Decision-makers paid more attention to information society services only in 2004, when an action plan for electronic administration was adopted (National Strategy…, 2003).

By 2010, the State Computerization Plan (PIP) (Rozporządzenie…, 2007). It described priority services which should be implemented in electronic form. These include in particular the following processes: changes in a registered address, passports and identity cards service, obtaining information from a registry office, arranging medical visit, the process of data transfer to the Central Statistical Office (GUS), the transmission of data concerning health care to the minister responsible for health, public procurement service, submitting tax information (PIT 11), registration of a business carried out by a natural person, registration of the unemployed and job seekers, accounting for income tax on legal and natural persons, accounting for VAT, obtaining permits based on construction law, access to the electronic land register, search for statistical information and access to spatial data for the whole country, job placement, obtaining licenses or permits and payments for the use of environment, operating system of family benefits and alimony advance, electronic submissions to the court departments which conduct electronic repertories, access to legal services providers, inspection of authenticated deeds by legal services providers (Baron-Wiaterek et al., 2011: 8).

The research conducted in the European Union countries in 2002 showed that the level of development of e-government services in Poland in relation to its other members is very low. Only 4% of Poles in total and 23% of the population declaring Internet use during the last month surveyed, used the Internet as a means for accessing public administration in 2002, giving Poland 29th place among 31 surveyed countries (Baron-Wiaterek et al., 2011: 10).

Public e-services can be provided at five levels of maturity. The basic level of maturity is the level of information (1), which means that public administration institutions provide information to citizens and entrepreneurs on web portals. In the case of public e-services at the interactive level (2), stakeholders communicate with the authorities electronically, but this is one-way communication. Level three (3) is defined as bilateral interaction. The fourth level of maturity (4), referred to as transactional, involves the ability to perform all the actions necessary to handle an official matter by electronic means. The last, fifth (5) level of maturity, called personalization, ensures that an official matter is dealt with electronically and at the same time introduces personalization of the service (Ziemba et al., 2013: 430–431). The study commissioned by the European Commission in 2006 shows that the most basic public services – excluding the procedures for obtaining environmental permits and those health-related (making an appointment and obtaining medical advice) – had reached at least the level of online information) (Grodzka, 2009: 63).

3. Internet access and use of e-government

In September 2003, at the request of the Telecommunications and Post Regulator, the Public Opinion Research Centre (CBOS) conducted a survey on the use of broadband Internet access. The research showed that the access was used by 28% of the population. Among youth aged 15–19, the access to the Internet was

used by 65%, among people aged 20–29 – 37%, 30–49 – 32%, and in the age group of 50–59 – only by 16% of respondents. In the case of respondents who were aged 60 or 60+, only 2% of them used broadband access (Plan…, 2004: 33). Hence, in the PIP, the postulate of increasing the availability of broadband Internet connected with the interoperability of the public service access channel was noted. PIAPs were supposed to be a transitional way to provide citizens with the broadband Internet but, according to the report, they were missing in 75% of the total number of local governments. However, as the time showed, PIAPs were still built in 2011 (e.g., in Warmian-Masurian voivodship) and practically nowadays they confine to free Wi-Fi access in public places and to computer labs in public libraries.

However, it must be stated that public libraries are the cheapest and easiest way to activate citizens in the process of using e-government. All you need to do is to prepare a proper place for a computer, a printer and a scanner, and to provide access to the Internet. Librarians themselves also see benefits of such use of their space. New services attract new users to a library. The increasing number of users shows that a library is needed and justifies its maintenance costs. As a result, local authorities are no longer thinking about decommissioning the library, the local community can still use its services and librarians keep their jobs (Kozłowska, 2010: 17).

In 2006, 36% of households declared having internet access and that was one of the lowest results in the European Union (Społeczeństwo Informacyjne…, 2007; Consumers in Europe…, 2007). In 2015, already 75.8% of households declared having internet access, of which 71% had broadband Internet (Społeczeństwo Informacyjne…, 2015). Households with children are more likely to have access to the Internet (95%) than households without children (65%). The respondents who do not have access to the Internet usually, and invariably, give the following reasons: no need (in 2015 – 63%), lack of skills (49.5%), too high equipment cost (27.1%) and access cost (19.2%). The lack of auditorium argument should therefore be discarded – ¾ of households already have access to the Internet.

Table 1. Regular computer users in Poland (in % of total individuals in a group)

Specification	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total	60.2	60.8	63.5	64.8	69.1
Gender					
Men	61.4	62.0	64.1	65.8	69.6
Women	59.2	59.7	63.0	63.8	68.7
Educational level					
Primary or lower secondary	39.1	39.8	43,9	47.2	51.7
Upper secondary	55.8	55.0	57.7	57.9	62.5
Tertiary	92.6	93.3	94.1	95.7	96.8
Employment situation					
Students	98.1	99.0	98.5	99.1	98.2
Persons employed	73.7	74.6	76.2	78.5	80.6
Unemployed	56.8	59.9	56.8	55.9	60.7
Retired or other not in the labour force	26.2	27.1	32.4	31.8	36.5
Domicile					
Large cities (>100.000 habitants)	72.8	71.4	74.4	75.7	79.1
Small cities	60.1	62.4	64.5	65.1	70.9
Rural areas	50.2	51.4	54.8	56.0	60.5

Source: GUS (2016: 99-100).

As shown in Tables 1 and 2, the persons out of work (including retired) make the smallest proportion of Internet users (less than 50%). Taking into account the type of professional activity, the largest increase in

the percentage of regular computer users occurred in the group of the unemployed (compared to 2015 – by 4.8%, and to 2012 – by 3.9%). Interestingly, more than 60% of the unemployed use a computer, but 10% out of them do not use the Internet.

Table 2. Regular Internet users in Poland by employment situation (in % of total individuals in a group)

Specification	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Retired or other not in the labour force	24.9	26.7	31.5	32.2	36.9
Unemployed	31.6	30.4	40.3	45.6	49.6
Persons employed	53.8	59.3	56.7	57.3	64.1
Farmers	72.1	73.2	75.7	78.3	81.3
Self-employed	75.2	76.6	78.5	80.6	84.2
Employees	83.8	83.3	85.0	86.4	86.5
Students	97.2	98.6	98.6	99.0	98.6

Source: GUS (2016: 114).

Table 3 shows the purposes the Internet serves. Internet users mainly use e-mails. It should be noted that the percentage of people using Internet banking is growing systematically in both EU countries and Poland.

Eurostat also publishes research results in the "job search or sending an application" category. Approximately 17% of users in the EU used the Internet for this purpose (15% in Poland). There can be two explanations: (1) workers do not see the need to look for another job, and (2) the unemployed – as stated above – are excluded digitally (they do not have computers, do not use the Internet).

Table 3. Individuals using the Internet for private purposes

in the last 3 months by selected activities (in % of Internet users)

Specification	2012		2013		2014		2015		2016	
	PL	EU28	PL	EU28	PL	EU28	PL	EU28	PL	EU28
Sending/receiving e-mails	82	65	82	67	80	68	79	69	79	71
Telephoning or video calls	39	35	38	33	41	37	41	37	38	39
Participating in social networks	57	n.d.	56	57	55	58	61	63	60	63
Finding information about goods and services	76	84	72	79	75	82	62	77	77	80
Reading online news sites	48	61	43	64	71	67	67	68	79	70
Internet banking	51	54	51	55	49	57	46	57	54	59
Travel and accommodation services	20	49	19	51	21	50	25	50	28	49
Selling goods or services	15	22	12	25	17	25	18	23	21	22
Job search or sending an application	22	n.d.	18	23	17	n.d.	14	22	16	n.d.

Source: Eurostat (2017).

The types of behaviour of Internet users with regard to job search indicated in Table 3 do not correspond to the responses presented in Table 4. Nearly 90% of respondents consider access to job offers important, but less than every fifth look for such offers. Probably the choice of responses was irrelevant and hence the questionnaire was dropped in the following years.

Table 4. How important are the following for you? (the sum of "important" and "rather important" ratings in %)

Specification	2008	2010	2012	2013
Internet access to job offers, including the Labour Office bases	60	65	89	89
Online access to information and advice on consumer rights	86	85	88	88
Ability to work from home (via the Internet or phone)	76	67	83	82
Internet access to your health /disease record	88	52	81	81
Making an appointment to see your doctor via the internet /email	67	48	77	73
Internet access to library directories	71	78	77	82
The possibility of contacting by parents their children's schools	60	53	75	76
	N=1693	*N=3210*	*N=4902*	*N=4866*

Source: PBI (2013: 67).

Two explanations of the weakness of e-government were widely accepted: high costs of computers, software and Internet access (on the citizen's side), and no demand for using e-government (including weak offer and lack of awareness of potential applicants). After almost a 10-year period of growth in the percentage of e-government users (in 2012, 31.6% of the population used public administration services via the Internet over the past 12 months), in 2013 there was a collapse – the percentage decreased to 22.6% (Społeczeństwo Informacyjne…, 2015). Significant increase in percentage was observed in 2014 and 2016.

Among the electronic public administration services in the analysed European countries, the search for information on public administration websites was of greatest interest. In 2015, 40% of the population of the European Union benefited from this opportunity, which is by 21 percentage points more than in Poland. In 2016 the distance decreased to 18 points.

The Ministry of Administration and Digitization commissions periodic surveys of Internet users' opinions on e-government. The question "Have you ever tried to settle any official matter over the internet in the last 12 months?" was answered affirmatively as follows: in 2012 – 31%; in 2013 – 35%; in 2014 – 53% and in 2016 – 54% of the respondents. Table 5 presents limitations in using e-government.

Table 5. What limits you in using the services of public offices via the Internet?
(respondents could mark multiple answers; the results do not add up to 100%)

	2012	2013
At some point I have to appear in the office (for example to sign something or collect a document)	63	50
A small range of services available	49	40
Uncertainty whether the matter will be property dealt with	48	41
Insufficient information on how to settle the case	41	31
No services I care about	37	27
It is difficult to fill out the forms yourself	20	14
I prefer direct contact with an official	19	18
I'm afraid to use the Internet on official matters	16	13
I tried, but I have bad experience	9	6
I do not feel constrained	4	6
	N=4902	*N=4866*

Source: PBI (2013: 57).

4. Projects in the sphere of employment and social assistance

On 3 July 1991, the Government of the Republic of Poland signed a loan agreement with the World Bank – International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The agreement was for loan No. 3338 POL intended for: "Project for the Promotion of Employment and Services Related to Employment". Part of this project was the ALSO subproject (Automation of the Labour and Social Welfare Organisation), which consisted of two related elements:

System of Labour Offices (SUP);

Social Assistance System (SPS) (Olejniczak, 2013: 29).

The strategic objective of the program was to increase the flow of the unemployed into the employment sector. Among the specific objectives, the following were pointed out: improvement of employment placement (e.g., by improving the acquisition of information on the labour market); improvement of financial control (e.g., by optimizing spending and reducing fraud); improvement of work organization of agencies responsible for job placement and help for the unemployed.

The project was completed in 1999 with the implementation of the PULS IT system, which was developed on the basis of the ALSO experience. The PULS system was to become the only one to be used by employment services. In 1995, twelve different systems existed in labour offices in Poland. As the project was implemented, other applications were phased out to reduce their number to 2 in 2002 (excluding PULS) (Olejniczak, 2013: 34). There were also many other applications used in labour offices, for example 5 human resource and payroll systems, 10 finance and accounting systems and 34 others (money transfers, statistics). One of the many achievements of the PULS system is the standardization of IT solutions in labour offices.

The counterpart of the PULS system in the sphere of social assistance was the POMOST system, which was also implemented in 1999. However, while SI PULS was used by 90% of labour offices, only half of social welfare units used SI POMOST.

In 2002 it was decided to create a new system. It was considered that the new system (or perhaps only the deeply modified already existing system) should cover both the labour market and social assistance. The factual premise was that clients of labour offices (unemployed and jobseekers) had been also social welfare clients. The following properties were expected, among others, from the system:

- remote (electronic) access for customers to deal with the most important issues of interest to them;
- remote access for entrepreneurs to submit a free workplace, with access to information on state policy tools for jobs creation;
- access to forms and procedures for registering a new job and obtaining employment assistance;
- universal access to distance learning courses, organized for the purpose of acquiring new qualifications (distance education).

Other premises to the idea for developing the system were new technical possibilities (as compared to 1995) and the prospect of Poland's membership in the European Union (including the common policy for the implementation of e-government and the policy regarding social exclusion, including digital exclusion). SI SYRIUSZ (because the name was adopted) was designed as a single IT system for several areas, which were competently centred in the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, namely labour market, social security and family benefits. However, several reorganizations of the ministry caused that SI SYRIUSZ actually limited itself to the labour market area, while the other 2 areas implemented the achievements of SI SYRIUSZ to varying degrees, but in the form of separate solutions (Olejniczak, 2012: 84).

After many years of work, the system was finally implemented in December 2010 and – as SYRIUSZ STANDARD – is used by all 343 counties' (powiat) employment offices. Citizens are in contact with the system through a portal of public employment services (www.psz.praca.gov.pl). Similarly, the POMOST STANDARD system is used by social welfare centres.

On 27 February 2007, the government entered Emp@tia on the list of key projects of the Operational Program Innovative Economy. The ministry began work on the system in December 2008. In 2014, the first

features of the system became available. Further functionalities will be gradually introduced after legal changes and after the preparation of offices and agencies to use all capabilities of the system.

The "EMP@TIA – COMMUNICATION PLATFORM FOR SOCIAL SECURITY AREA" project (this is its full name), was supposed to be a combination of an internet portal and an IT system which will be addressed both to citizens and civil servants. The main problems of public administration units were related to the lack of integration of ICT systems, which led to the lack of possibility to quickly obtain information necessary for effective functioning and monitoring of the work of administration units, and inefficient flow of information between the units and cooperating institutions (for example, GUS).

The lack of cooperation between the system also made it difficult to monitor the allocation and disbursement of funds for social security benefits (such as collecting benefits by unauthorized persons or collecting a benefit in different places by the same person) and difficulties in monitoring funds used by individual administration units (Ziemba et al., 2014: 42).

For citizens and entrepreneurs, the lack of cooperation between the IT systems resulted in insufficient availability of services provided by the administration of social security area and uneven level of provision of these services, it also lengthened dealing with official matters – because various matters had to be handled in different places and in limited time (in opening times of the institutions involved). To receive information, download and submit applications and to obtain necessary attestations, persons entitled to benefits had to visit different offices several times, losing their time and money.

The project is based on the following assumptions:
- integration of systems operating within the social security area as well as integration with other systems supervised and maintained by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (in particular with the area of work);
- extending the current functionality of systems operating in JST;
- enabling cooperation and exchange of data between particular systems (adjustment of systems for integrity and interoperability);
- providing services through the Internet;
- implementation of electronic documents handling, including the possibility of transferring income statements electronically between a competent authority and a tax office;
- purchase of mobile terminals for field units to conduct family background interviews with beneficiaries (without the need to transfer data from paper to electronic form).

The cost of Emp@tia incurred by the state budget amounted to PLN 6.8 million, the remaining PLN 38.2 million came from European funds. At first it was assumed that the project cost would be much higher. It was supposed to amount to 90 million zlotys. The investment would allow to save 78 million zlotys a year from 2016, for example, thanks to cutting costs of handling applications and eliminating fraud.

The program was launched in early 2014 and has been controversial since the beginning. The main complaint is lavishness – it was claimed that for 50 million zlotys the government created a portal for the homeless. Such people, by definition, have virtually zero income, little computer skills and practically no internet access. Of course, they can use public internet access points, but they are usually located in public offices and libraries. People interested in benefits are likely to go to the office where forms will be filled by a clerk for them. Therefore, submitting online forms by social care clients really did not seem to make much sense.

Another difficulty in using the system was the fact that stakeholders needed to have a commercial electronic signature or a trusted profile in the e-government system called e-PUAP.

The ministry explained that the system would increase control over expenses and reduce bureaucracy (paper documents would be eliminated). Applicants for social assistance or family benefits would not have to obtain attestations from other offices themselves. Officials would, on-line, obtain information necessary to grant appropriate assistance requested by the person concerned. It would not only make life easier for the needy, but would also eliminate the abuse – for example, it would eliminate the possibility of giving false information or applying for the same benefit in two different municipalities.

In spite of the above explanations, Emp@tia did not earn a good reputation in the media, and its popularity among potential clients was not high either – in the first weeks of operation of the system, online applications were submitted by only a few dozen people (Zieliński, 2014).

Law and Justice Party (PiS), which won the parliamentary elections in 2015, started implementation of its electoral program. One of its elements was a family support project, which later adopted the official name – "Family 500 Plus". The program was launched on 1 April 2016 – ever since that time each eligible person can apply to the office. In the traditional (paper) version the application can be completed and submitted directly to the municipality office or sent by regular mail or as an attachment in an email. The online version uses any possible channels of communication between citizens and authorities, i.e., e-PUAP, Emp@tia portal, and the e-administration system of the Social Insurance Institution (ZUS). The government was aware that citizens did not use the above (mainly because of the necessity to have a trusted profile), so e-banking was involved in the process of collecting online forms.

By the end of 2015, almost 30 million individual accounts in banks were registered in Poland. 30.5 million people has access to internet banking (Netbank…, 2015). Of course, this number cannot be directly compared with the population of Poland (38.5 million). Many clients use the services of several banks simultaneously. Online banking access is not only allowed by personal accounts but also by deposits, credit cards and loans. In some banks, internet banking is counted as a separate product.

The number of people who logged at least once a month via the Internet to their personal accounts in the fourth quarter of 2015 amounted to 13,150 thousand. This means that about one third of adult inhabitants of Poland regularly use internet banking. The leader in this respect is the state-owned bank PKO Bank Polski (3.4 million users). The bank was the first to join the "Family 500 Plus" program. In April 2016, 13 other banks launched online application services and a total of 21 declared their participation in the program.

As the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy reported, 2 million applications were submitted after the first 3 weeks of the operation of the program, 472 thousand of which were online applications. Moreover, 95% of electronic applications were made through banks (2 mln wniosków…, 2016).

According to the above-cited Internet user survey, in 2016 the issue of online public services emerged. When asked, "Do you know that the following services are available online?", the applicants for the 'Family 500+' benefit answered as follows: 10% of them – "Yes, I do and I have used them" and 65% of them – "Yes, I do, but I have not used them". Business establishment, which was the next in order, received respectively 8% and 44% of indications.

Conclusions

E-government should not be an empty concept. The benefits of bureaucratic transition from paper to paperless form are evident. This article describes the most vivid programs for computerization of administration, which unfortunately have not met the goals set for them. On the basis of the analysed statistics and the results of the opinion polls it was stated that the settlement of official affairs via the Internet is not the most important thing for Polish Internet users. Even if they are interested in an official subject, the necessity to visit the office personally at some stage of the procedure puts them off. Therefore, simplification of procedures and forms should solve the problem, especially quitting the requirement of having an official trusted profile (due to space constraints this thread is not included in the article). The official matter which evoked a lot of emotions among the society in 2016 was the "Family 500+" program. It turned out that a combination of a convincing idea with a simple procedure can be successful. Of course, it is not clear yet if the use of online banking by government agencies will increase interest in e-government. However, this cannot be ruled out, therefore, further research on comparison with other countries will be necessary in the coming years.

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VIEŠOJO ADMINISTRAVIMO SKAITMENIZACIJA LENKIJOJE. ĮDARBINIMO IR SOCIALINIO APRŪPINIMO SEKTORIŲ PAVYZDYS

Tomasz Gajowniczek
Warmijos ir Mazūrijos universitetas (Olštynas, Lenkija)

Santrauka

Straipsnyje glaustai pristatoma viešojo administravimo skaitmenizacijos istorija Lenkijoje. Remiantis statistiniais duomenimis iš GUS (Centrinio statistikos biuro) ir Eurostat (ypač 2012–2016 metų), aprašyti vartotojo lūkesčiai institucijų atžvilgiu ir patirtys su e-valdžia. Tai bandymas suprasti, kodėl piliečiai – interneto vartotojai (įskaitant bedarbius) nesinaudoja internetu. Išskirti 3 IT projektai, kuriuos sukūrė piliečių paslaugų sektorius bendradarbiaudamas su atsakingomis darbo apsaugos ir socialinės politikos institucijomis. Nustatyta, kad pirmieji bandymai kompiuterizuoti administraciją nebuvo pakankamai efektyvūs ir, kaip buvo galima tikėtis, nepigūs. Situacija pasikeitė 2016 metų balandį atsiradus „Šeima 500+" šeimos paramos programai. Iš 2 milijonų išsiųstų paraiškų net 0,5 milijono išsiųstos internetu, iš kurių 95 proc. išsiųstos naudojantis elektronine bankininkyste. Autoriaus nuomone, lengviausias būdas populiarizuoti e-valdžią – susieti internetinės bankininkystės sistemas su valstybinėmis administracijos sistemomis. E-valdžia neturėtų būti tik tuščias konceptas. Biurokratijos posūkis nuo popieriaus į elektroninę erdvę akivaizdžiai naudingas. Straipsnyje aprašytos pačios ryškiausios administracijos kompiuterizacijos programos, kurios, deja, nepasiekė joms iškeltų tikslų.

Remiantis išanalizuotais statistikos ir apklausų rezultatais, konstatuota, kad oficialų reikalų tvarkymas internetu Lenkijos interneto vartotojams yra ne pats svarbiausias dalykas. Net jeigu jie susidomi oficialia tema, būtinybė asmeniškai apsilankyti biuruose kažkuriuo procedūros momentu dažnai juos sustabdo. Todėl procedūrų ir formų supaprastinimas šią problemą turėtų išspręsti, ypač reikalavimo turėti oficialiai pripažįstamą profilį (dėl vietos trūkumo ši tema straipsnyje neplėtojama). Oficialus sprendimas, sukėlęs nemažai emocijų 2016 metais, buvo „Šeima 500+" programa, kai bendrauti su valstybinėmis institucijomis galima naudojantis e-paslaugomis. Ji atskleidė, kad supaprastinus procedūras ir pateikus tikslias rekomendacijas, kaip šia programa naudotis, galima tikėtis sėkmės. Žinoma, dar neaišku, ar internetinės bankininkystės naudojimas susisiekti su valstybinėmis institucijomis padidins susidomėjimą elektronine valdžia, tačiau šios galimybės atmesti negalima. Būtina atlikti naujus tyrimu ateinančiais metais ir lyginamuosius tyrimus su kitomis šalimis.

PAGRINDINIAI ŽODŽIAI: *e-valdžia, informacinės sistemos, IT administravimas.*

JEL KLASIFIKACIJA: H75; H83.