



ReSPA

Regional School
of Public Administration

Study visit to Finland of ReSPA eGovernment and
Ethics & Integrity Working Groups

Open Government and Transparency

*Digitalisation, Innovation and Deregulation through eGovernment,
Transparency and Open Data*

21-22 September 2015, Helsinki (Finland)

Discussion Paper and programme



Background

One of the main focus areas of the ReSPA working programme 2015 for the eGovernment network are the interlinked issues of **open government and trust underpinned by anti-corruption measures**. These issues will lay the basis for more user-centric services and better government-user relationships, as well as for improved public sector performance countering corruption and greater impact on societal development.

Global and European experience shows that **trust is essential** in eGovernment and that it has at least three components:

- i) **Users and society at large trusting government**, by being offered high impact quality eGovernment services, eParticipation, open government data, as well as transparency, responsiveness and accountability
- ii) **Government trusting users** and society at large, by showing it is both open and transparent supported by open government data in order to invite and empower users and enable them to participate and engage in the business of government
- iii) Underpinning i) and ii) is the need to **tackle and reduce corruption** which also requires that the **different parts of the government and public sector need to trust each other** in order to collaborate and share, and thereby develop a whole-of-government culture and to present 'one-face' to users and society as a whole.

In 2014, ReSPA brought together the expertise of the eGovernment and the Ethics & Integrity working groups, resulting in several cross-disciplinary actions and products. Starting with the joint comparative study and launch event "Abuse of Information Technology (IT) for Corruption" (2014), piloting a "Checklist for Assessment of Risks for Abuse of IT for Corruption" (2015), and a joint meeting of the two working groups in Belgrade (April 2015) focusing on "**Open Data and Open Governance**". In Belgrade, it was initially planned to have separate meetings for each of the two working groups, but several participants from the Ethics & Integrity group expressed interest in the issues of Open Data and Open Governance, as it is key to many of **anti-corruption standards**. The fruitful interdisciplinary cooperation between the networks thus continues with this joint visit to Finland.

Finland has consistently been in the top 10 eGovernment countries globally as measured by the United Nations biennial surveys¹, and for many years it been one of the top eGovernment nations in Europe as measured by the regular EC eGovernment benchmarking surveys². The UN survey also shows Finland as a global leader in open government data, and Finland is a leading participant in the global Open Government Partnership³. Finally,

¹ See for example the latest 2014 survey: <http://unpan3.un.org/egovkb/en-us/Reports/UN-E-Government-Survey-2014>

² See for example the latest 2015 survey: <http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/eu-egovernment-report-2015-shows-online-public-services-europe-are-smart-could-be-smarter>

³ <http://www.opengovpartnership.org/country/finland>

Finland ranks amongst the top 10 countries in the world on the public perceptions of control of corruption, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, rule of law, and voice and accountability⁴.

In May 2013, Finland hosted a joint high level United Nations and European Commission Conference for Government CIOs and key officials entitled "Leading the way in eGovernment Development", demonstrating the country's commitment to high level eGovernment cooperation.

In terms of **integrity**, for several years since 2000, Transparency International's yearly corruption perception index (CPI) ranked Finland in the first place, as the country with the lowest perceived level of corruption. In 2008 Finland "fell" to the fifth rank. In the years that followed, the perceived level of corruption improved again according to the CPI and Finland regained the first rank in 2012. According to the European Commission's Eurobarometer, the percentage of those surveyed who think that corruption is widespread among politicians at national level in Finland was 38% in 2011, as compared to 57% in the EU. According to the Eurobarometer on corruption the percentage of those surveyed who think that corruption is widespread in the judiciary (6%) is noticeably below the EU average (32%). In 2013, the Group of States against corruption (GRECO) found that "Finland has an effective system for preventing corruption among members of parliament, judges and prosecutors. However, there is still room for improvement – particularly with regard to conflicts of interest among parliamentarians."⁵ GRECO recommended drawing up a Code of Conduct for parliamentarians, as well as clarify exactly what is meant by "conflict of interest" and tightening up rules on gifts and the disclosure of outside links.

Transparency International's National Integrity System Assessment on Finland (2012)⁶ comes to the following conclusions among other: "Finnish society functions in a formal rational manner. For the integrity system, this means that if there is legislation on a subject, it usually also works in practice. The law must be sufficiently specific so that an equitable solution can be guaranteed in various situations, since the Finnish administrative tradition appeals to the law. This often leads to less attention being paid to other kinds of ethical deliberation. In practice, staring at legal articles leads to officials rarely resigning from public positions or offices when abuse occurs, since juridically minor offences do not create external pressure to resign." In terms of transparency, the Assessment noted: "People are used to documents being openly available and to having matters discussed openly."

⁴ See the Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) project by the World Bank Institute <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.aspx#home> an aggregation of governance indicators for 215 economies over the period 1996–2013.

⁵ http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/greco/news/News%2820130327%29Eval4Finland_en.asp.

⁶ http://www.transparency.org/whatwedo/nisarticle/finland_2012.

Objectives

The overall aim of this Finnish study visit is to gain insight into how government can facilitate **user centric** and **transparent government services**, that also collaborates while **protecting** and **securing citizens' and business' data**.

The two ReSPA working groups eGovernment and Ethics & Integrity have jointly been invited to the Finnish Ministry of Finance for joint sessions on

- **Digitalisation**, innovation, and deregulation in government
- An introduction to **eGovernment in Finland**, outlining the legal and institutional framework, leadership and steering eGovernment development, coordination of eGovernment policies, and transformation from off-line to on-line services
- **Transparency** of public institutions and free **access to public information** in Finland, legal framework, openness principles, and ethics of the civil service.
- The **Open Data Policy** of the Finnish government, including background, policy, concepts, examples, challenges.

The **eGovernment** working group will further gain insight into

- Public sector **data registries** and **data management** policy in Finland
- Finnish national **architecture** for digital services
- **Consolidation of IT services**

The **Ethics & Integrity** working group will in addition focus on the following topics:

- What are **key factors** in becoming the country ranking top in the Transparency International CPI index?
- What are still the **challenges** in a country with minimal corruption if compared internationally?
- How do key **stakeholders** of the Finnish integrity system function?

A specific objective of the study visit is that these insights might result in **a future ReSPA eGovernment study** on how the governments in the Western Balkans can become more open and user centric, while ensuring **personal data protection** is upheld.

Open government, open government data, base registries, and cloud computing are areas currently being investigated in the ongoing ReSPA eGovernment study “E- to Open Government”. This visit will feed into the present ongoing study and inform the eGovernment working group on real-life implementation in areas being investigated for the study.

The visit will also give the participants a practical example on a collaborative, **whole-of-government** approach, where sector-independent ICT services are organised and produced without requiring any significant sector-specific expertise (the example of VALTORY, the new Finnish government ICT centre).

Target audience / Participants

Participants will be members of the eGovernment and Ethics & Integrity working groups, senior public servants working in governmental institutions in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo* at national level, as well as selected civil servants involved in piloting of the Checklist for Assessment of Risks for Abuse of IT for Corruption.

Participants should have some theoretical and practical knowledge about eGovernment/ ethics & integrity issues, as well as significant practical experience in eGovernment, transparency, and open government/open government data.

ReSPA Experts

Ms. Louise Thomassen is an independent consultant, eGovernment, and technology expert with 25 years of experience in IT, working in the cross field of technology and society. She works with analysing, designing, implementing, and evaluating IT systems and tools. Louise has extensive experience in evaluating, benchmarking, and guiding eGovernment websites and projects. She has worked with both national and international, government as well as private customers. In 2012-13 she was co-author of the “ReSPA comparative eGovernment Study”. In 2014 she was the international ICT expert responsible for and co-authoring the ReSPA study “Abuse of Information Technology (IT) for Corruption”. She has also assisted ReSPA in creating the “Checklist for Assessment of Risks for Abuse of IT for Corruption” (2015). She is presently international review expert on the ongoing ReSPA “E- to Open Government” analysis.

Ms. Rozarta Dodaj, worked in the High Inspectorate of Declaration and Audit of Assets and Conflicts of Interest (HIDAACI), for six years exercising several public functions (including administrative, managerial and auditing positions related to assets disclosure and conflict of interest issues). For 2 years she worked in the General Prosecution Office (GPO), initially as a Director of International Judicial Cooperation and later on as a Director of Criminal Studies and EU Integration. Her experience at GPO deepened her knowledge and expertise related to criminal justice, trends of criminality in our country, international judicial cooperation, including a thorough knowledge of international acts and conventions ratified by Albania. Currently she works as a Lawyer for PAMECA IV, an EU Project in Albania. The main focus of her work are related to ethics, corruption, investigation and prosecution of criminal offences related to corruption, organised crime and money laundering are

ReSPA supporting staff:

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**This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and it is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence*

STUDY VISIT PROGRAMME

Agenda

DAY I, 21 September (Monday) 2015

- 10:00 – 10:15** Welcome
*Ms Anna-Maija Karjalainen, ICT Director (Government CIO)
Public Sector ICT, Ministry of Finance*
- 10:15 – 11:15** Digitalisation and e-Government in Finland
- Digitalisation in Government Programme (May 2015)
 - Digitalisation of public services
 - streamlining regulation
 - legal and institutional framework of e-Government
 - leadership and steering the e-Government development
 - coordination of e-Government policies
 - transformation of traditional government to e-government/ from desks services to digital services
- Mr Sami Kivivasara, Head of Unit and Mr Juhani Korhonen, Ministerial Adviser, Ministry of Finance*
- 11.15 - 11.30** Coffee break
- 11.30 – 12.30** Transparency of Public Institutions and Free access to public information in Finland
- legal framework
 - Openness as overarching principle
 - “My data” – policy (not yet agreed)
 - Ethics of Civil Service
- [speaker tbc, Ministry of Justice]*
- 12:30 – 14:00** Lunch
- 14:00 – 15:00** Open data policy in the Finnish Government
- background for the policy
 - current policy on open data
 - concepts of data, big data and open data
- Ms Anne Kauhanen-Simanainen, Ministerial Adviser, Ministry of Finance*
- 15:00 – 15:15** Coffee break

15:15 – 16:15

Open data policy in the Finnish Government

- examples and experiences of open data
- the impacts of open data and major challenges
- examples of using open data

*Ms Anne Kauhanen-Simanainen, Ministerial Adviser,
Ministry of Finance and Ms Margit Suurhasko, Programme
Manager, Ministry of Finance*



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DAY II, 22 September (Tuesday) 2015 – eGovernment working group

- 09:00 – 10.00** Public sector data registers and data management policy in Finland
- management of citizens' and businesses' data
 - privacy policy and data security
 - sharing the data with other governmental organisations (example: pre-completed tax declaration return)
 - commercial use of public data (selling data)
- [speaker tbc]*
- 10.00-11.00** National Architecture for Digital Services (a major e-Government Programme)
- Data exchange layer - Cooperation with Estonia
 - Citizens' view to public services
 - New e-identification policy
 - Roles and authorizations (to do something behalf of someone)
- Ms Maria Nikkilä, Project Manager and Mr Pauli Kartano, Ministry of Finance*
- 11.00-11.15** Coffee break
- 11.15-12.00** Consolidation of IT services
- At the Government (ministerial) level – the new Government Administration Department (est. March 2015)
 - in the whole government – VALTORI, a new Government ICT centre (est. March 2014)
- [speaker tbc]*
- 12.00-12.30** One Stop Shop – current policy in Finland
[speaker tbc, Ministry of Finance]
- 12.30 - 14:00** Lunch
- 14.00 – 14.30** Transportation to Leppävaara, Espoo
- 14.30 – 15.30** Visit to the One Stop Shop of City of Espoo in Leppävaara
- 15.30 – 16.00** Transportation to City centre of Helsinki

DAY II, 22 September (Tuesday) 2015 – Ethics and Integrity Working Group

- 09:00 – 11:00**
- Good Governance policy in the Finnish government
- ..
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- Ethics in civil service in Finland
- The Committee on Ethics of State Civil Servants
 - trust among citizens to government
- Finnish experience of the Open Government Partnership
*Ms Katju Holkeri, Head of Unit and
Ms Johanna Nurmi, Ministerial Adviser,
Ministry of Finance*
- 11.00 – 11.15**
- Coffee break
- 11.15 – 12.30**
- Participatory policy in Finnish Government
- new e-services to encourage participation (initiatives in demokratia.fi)
- Ms Liisa Männistö, Communications expert (?), Ministry of Justice*
- 12.30 - 14:00**
- Lunch
- 14.00 – 14.30**
- Transportation to Leppävaara, Espoo
- 14.30 – 15.30**
- Visit to the One Stop Shop of City of Espoo in Leppävaara
- 15.30 – 16.00**
- Transportation to City centre of Helsinki