E-Government for Low Socio Economic Status:
The ELOST Research Project

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General introduction to ELOST

The ELOST project was set up with the support of the EC Sixth Framework Programme to make recommendations on e-inclusion and e-Government. The ELOST consortium comprises seven research centres from six different countries, namely, Israel, Austria, France, Germany, Bulgaria and Finland. The overall goal of the ELOST project is increasing awareness and readiness to innovative e-Government participation and usage among low socioeconomic groups (LSGs).
The ELOST Consortium

TAU – Tel-Aviv University - Israel
Interdisciplinary Center for Technological Analysis & Forecasting (ICTAF)
Netvision Institute for Internet Studies (NIIS)

ICCR - Austria
The Interdisciplinary Center for Comparative Research in the Social Sciences

CIR- France
The Interdisciplinary Center for Comparative Research in the Social Sciences

IMI - Bulgaria
Academy of Sciences - Institute of Mathematics and Informatics

TUB - Germany
The Technology University of Berlin

UTA - Finland
University of Tampere-
Department of Social Policy & Social Work

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The objectives of ELOST

A. Analysis:

• To investigate the **current status** of e-Government in the participating and some other countries with special focus on LSGs.

• To understand the **LSGs needs** for e-Government services and to analyze similarities and disparities.

• To investigate **national policies and priorities** in participating countries with regard to e-Inclusion of LSGs.
The objectives of ELOST (cont’)

• To analyze the impact of emerging technologies on the usage of e-Government services by LSGs.
• To zoom-in on cross-cultural aspects: differences between policy attitudes, programs, needs and readiness among LSGs in participating countries.
• To identify the barriers and the incentives for increasing awareness and readiness among LSGs.
Who is included in the definition of LSG?

a. Unemployed persons
b. People with low/very low income
c. Homeless
d. People with a low education level
e. Immigrants
f. Ethnic minorities
g. Refugees
h. People in isolated or underdeveloped regions
i. Prisoners
## ELOST Structure

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WP2: Policies and tools survey

The data collection includes:

- **literature survey** for all partners’ countries and the four selected according to the plan – Italy, Spain, Poland, Ukraine, UK and Portugal.

- **personal interviews** with relevant key actors and decision makers in governments and local authorities - up to 10 interviews in each participating country.
WP3: Field survey on LSGs (citizens’ views)

A survey on patterns of Internet use and attitudes to e-Government among low socio-economic status groups.
Collect and compile data on citizens’ perceptions, needs and values concerning e-Government.
Define a questionnaire, conduct a pilot survey and then a full scale survey (250-350 interviewed).
Conduct focus groups - each focus group comprised 8 to 10 citizens in each country.
WP3: Field survey on LSGs (citizens’ views)

Major findings of the survey and of the focus groups.

• **Lack of access** to the internet is explained, first and foremost, by **lack of funds** and **lack of technical skills**.

• Negative attitudes can be as much the result of **lack of access**, as the cause.

• On the subject of **costs**: a major problem is the lack of transparency – the **many offers** available albeit **presented in different ways** are an inhibiting factor for people with little money that cannot afford ‘experimenting’.
WP3: Field survey on LSGs (citizens’ views)

• A related concern is the life expectation of computers. The prospect of having to engage in regular upgrades of either hardware or software de-motivates people of low income to introduce modern communication technologies in their lives.

• In some countries (Israel, Bulgaria and France) negative attitudes expressed vis-à-vis e-government were clearly a result of hostility vis-à-vis government and dissatisfaction with some practices of public authorities.
WP4: ELOST Foresight Expert Survey
(150 respondents)

Respondents per country

34 countries

19 countries, 1-3 resp.
ELOST Foresight Expert Survey

Emerging technologies: Overall impact & time of widespread use

Highly beneficial=3
Beneficial=2
Not beneficial=1
Irrelevant=0

Likely time of widespread use

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ELOST Foresight Expert Survey

Emerging technologies: Ranking by overall impact

(Please rank the 3 technologies likely to have the highest impact on the inclusion of LSGs in e-Gov in the year 2020)

1. Interactive TV
2. Advanced Mobile networks
3. Broadband Communications
4. Advanced speech recognition
5. Smart Cards
6. Future Web Technologies
7. Advanced security technologies
8. Ambient Intelligence
9. Automatic translation
10. Virtual/Augmented Reality
11. Wearable Computing
12. Automatic translation
13. Future Web Technologies
Recommendations regarding technology

- make sure that each citizen will have access to an electronic channel, regardless of his or her economic or physical status
- develop friendly interfaces
- allocate resources and focus on the use of ITV for e-Government
- Adapt to a variety of means for communications (e.g., cellphone, ITV, desktop/laptop computer, interactive kiosk, and the like)
The ELOST Toolbox – e4
www.eGovernment-Exchange.eu

Information on

- Wiki like site on e-Gov. information, policy tools and best practice case studies with focus on LSGs.
- Easy extraction and addition of new and existing information.
- Intended for the use of policy and decision makers as well as experts in the field.

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W6 -- The Final Step: Recommendation for future Policy and research priorities for the EU

1. Map the barriers
2. Map the Solutions
3. Relate barriers to solutions
4. Policy
5. Prioritize based on criteria
6. Action plan
BARRIERS

- Accessibility
- Literacy and Skills
- Awareness
- Attitudes
Measures to Overcome Barriers and Solutions

- Technological tools and infrastructure
- Distribution of means
- Education, training and support
- Attitude change
Examples of quantitative success criteria
(should be measured along a certain interval of time)

- **Accessibility:** Number of PIAP for LSGs per district; number of PIAPs per person; coverage of communication lines; coverage of wireless communications; number of citizen who do have access to e-gov services.

- **Literacy and skills:** Number of courses and workshops offered to LSGs; number of participants; number of instructors per communication center.
Examples of quantitative success criteria

(\textit{cont'})

• \textbf{Awareness:} Increase in the number of e-gov users from LSGs; increase in the number of people (belonging to LSGs) who know what is e-gov; increase in the number of different services exploited by the users.

• \textbf{Attitudes:} Change in attitudes measured through surveys over time; increase in the number of e-gov users from specific groups.
A Framework for a Policy

1. Identify the groups that belong to the LSG category in the country (e.g., minorities, immigrants, etc.).

2. Determine the priority among the groups and select the groups to be treated firstly.

3. Determine the priorities of needed services within each group that have been selected.

4. Identify the barriers within each group that have been selected.
A Framework for a Policy (cont’)

5. Choose the technologies and solutions that best fit the group and the services.

6. Prepare an implementation plan with timetable, budget and resource allocation.

7. Prepare criteria of success and quantitative measurements to assess them.
A Framework for a Policy (cont’)

8. Form the organizational structure that will implement the plan and from a steering committee that will oversee the progress of the project.

9. Launch the project

10. Maintain a continuous follow up of the project by the steering committee, including quantitative measurement of the success criteria.

11. Based on evaluation and conclusions of the previous and current projects, go to the next one.
Thank You!

See you in ELOST website

www.elost.org