



## **Workshop: “Re-inventing the Wheel? – Transferring Best Practices in eGovernment”**

7th of November 2007 in  
Brussels

Workshop report

Stijn Quast  
Rüdiger Glott



## 2. Content

Introduction.....	3
Methodology.....	4
Morning plenary session.....	6
<b>Welcome to the participants</b> Constantijn van Oranje, RAND Europe	
<b>State of Play: eGovernment, Good Practice and PEGS</b> Trond-Arne Undheim, DG Information Society	
<b>Pan-Europeanization of eGovernment</b> Rifka Weehuizen, UNU-MERIT	
<b>Sharing Best Practices in eGovernment</b> Rüdiger Glott, UNU-MERIT	
Case presentations.....	11
<b>European Level eGovernment - the Case of SOLVIT</b> Marian Grubben, manager of SOLVIT EC	
<b>Diffusion across borders - the Case of HELP.gv.at</b> Michael Stergar, Director of Net Value	
<b>Inclusive eGovernment - the Case of e@SY Connects</b> Gary Simpson, Program Manager e@SY Connects	
Working groups.....	15
a) Barriers to good practice transfer	
b) Drivers of good practice transfer	
c) PEGS that appear most needed in the near future	
Afternoon plenary session/ wrap up and conclusions.....	24
List of participants.....	25

## 1. Introduction

This report presents an overview of the workshop “*Re-inventing the Wheel? – Transferring Best Practices in eGovernment*” which took place on the 7th of November 2007 in Brussels. The workshop was organized as part of the EUREGOV project by the research partners RAND Europe and UNU-MERIT. The workshop was co-branded by ePractice.eu.

There were 30 participants from a diverse set of countries and backgrounds (national and local government, academia and private sector). A list of names of the participants including their affiliations and countries of origin can be found in the last section of this working paper.

The workshop was organized around two main themes:

### EUREGOV project

The EUREGOV project is a project commissioned by the European Commission, DG Information Society and Media, to explore the policy challenges for creating a pan-European dimension to eGovernment.

For more information and the deliverables please visit the project website;  
<http://www.euregov.eu>

**Sharing good practices in European eGovernment:** How can we increase good practice diffusion between European Member States and among individual case owners? How can the EU effectively leverage the diversity of 27 Member States, to become a real laboratory for innovative solutions in eGovernment, where the best services are shared across the EU.. The combination of local experimentation, effective identification of good practice and platforms for sharing, support and exchange at the EU level holds the potential of making Europe the best environment for eGovernment innovation, dissemination and implementation. To materialize this potential we need to identify to what extent good practice transfer between Member States is actually taking place? If so, what are the drivers and how can we strengthen them? If not, what are the barriers and how can we overcome them? Why are good practices not transferred more to across Member States? What can we learn from existing good practices such as HELP, and e@SY Connects about the transfer (or lack thereof) to other Member States?



**Pan-Europeanization of eGovernment service provision:** How can public administrations cater to the growing cross-border needs of mobile citizens? How can national eGovernment reduce their administrative burden and increase their effectiveness by adding a cross-border and European-level dimension to their eGovernment service provision? How can eGovernment at the European level be realized through collaboration between national eGovernment bodies in Member States? Which different models and pathways are there? Should there be a European front-office working with national back offices? Or is bilateral and multilateral bottom-up cooperation of Member States the way to go for creating cross-border eGovernment services? What can we learn from existing good practices such as SOLVIT?

## 2. Methodology

**Pre-discussion on workshop website** – In the weeks before the workshop around 300 invitations have been sent out to participate in the workshop in Brussels. All these invitations included an invitation to participate in the online pre discussion<sup>1</sup> which took place on ePractice.eu. The comments made in the pre-discussion were used as input to the working groups and are included in the discussion of those.

**Morning plenary session** - The morning plenary sessions were about introducing the topics of the workshop in more detail, highlighting the trends in eGovernment development and sharing some of the insights the EUREGOV project produced so far. Trond Arne Undheim and Rifka Weehuizen spoke about the Europeanization of eGovernment after which all participants were asked to present them selves and their projects. Then Ruediger Glott spoke about the transfer of good practices in eGovernment.

**Presentations** - The workshop organization invited leading figures of three innovative eGovernment applications to share their experience with the development and transfer of good practices and the Europeanization of eGovernment. The cases presented were HELP.gv.at, an innovative one stop government portal of the Austrian government, e@SYConnects, an inclusive multi-channel eGovernment partnership in South Yorkshire (UK), and SOLVIT, an online problem-solving network of the EC.

**Working groups** – After the lunch break two parallel working groups were organized. The participants were divided over the two groups based on an even distribution of background, affiliation and country of origin. Moderators to the two working groups were Rifka Weehuizen (group 1) and Ruediger Glott (group 2). Both parallel sessions discussed the same topics to allow comparison of outcomes.



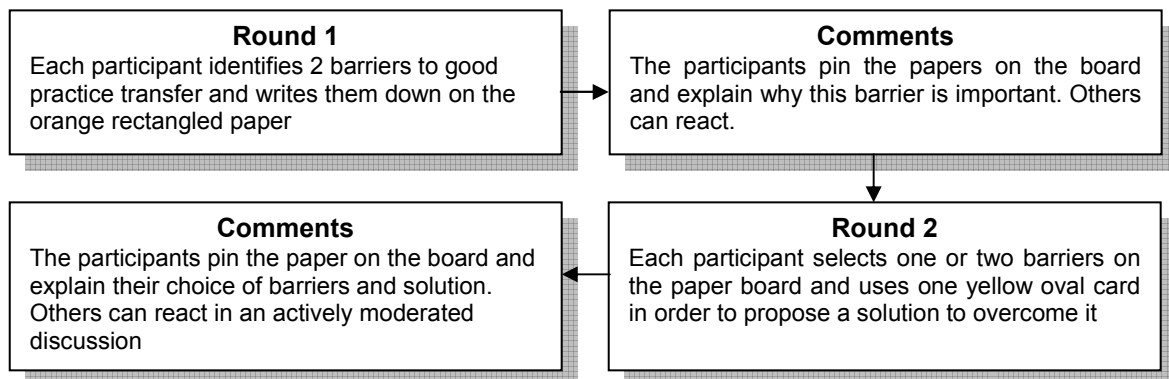
The topics were:

1. Topic 1 - Barriers to good practice transfer
2. Topic 2 - Drivers of good practice transfer
3. Topic 3 - PEGS that appear most needed within the near future

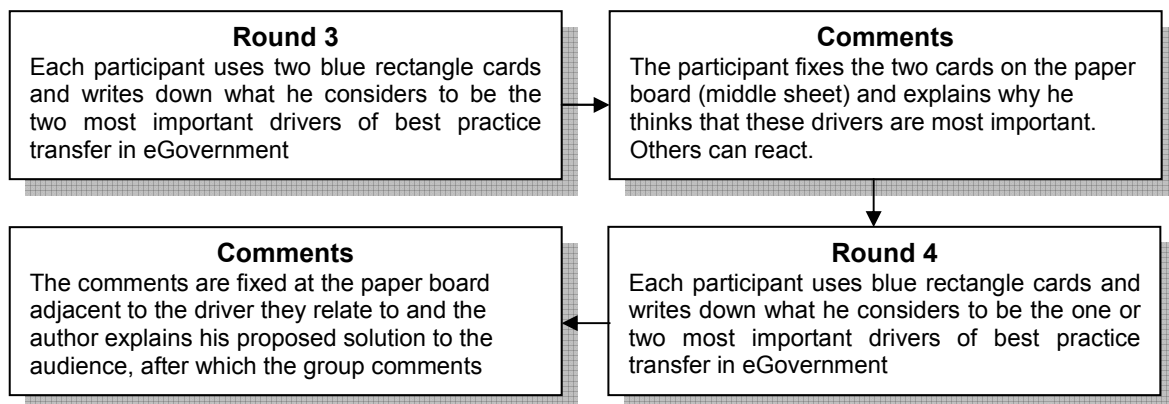
The first working group discussed topic 1 and 2 where the second working group discussed all 3 topics. There were 5 rounds in which these topics were discussed. The methodology of the working groups was as follows;

<sup>1</sup> The online pre-discussion can be found on <http://www.epractice.eu/workshop/transferringpractice>. You can still leave contribute to the discussion or leave your comments and thoughts here. Interesting observations may be included in the final report of the EUREGOV project.

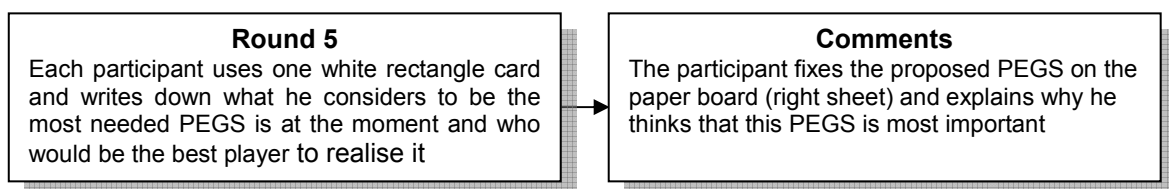
### Topic 1 - Barriers to good practice transfer



### Topic 2 - Drivers to good practice transfer



### Topic 3 – High priority PEGS



**Afternoon Plenary session** – In the afternoon plenary session the moderators from the working groups presented the conclusions from both sessions to all participants. Constantijn van Oranje from RAND Europe followed with a brief wrap-up of the most important observations of the day after which there was time for a last round of questions. The last word was for Trond Undheim of the European Commission to share his impression of the relevance of the Workshop for the ePractice.eu initiative and the role of the Commission in good practice exchange.

### 3. Morning Plenary Session

#### Welcome to the participants

Constantijn van Oranje, RAND Europe

Constantijn van Oranje opened the workshop on behalf of the EUREGOV project. He **welcomed** all the participants and briefly explained what the workshop is about and what we hope to achieve during this day. He made the observation that there are participants from both the supply and the demand side and that for most the objective seems to be a combination of learning and sharing. The study was particularly interested in the processes of good practice exchange and actual implementation. All 3 – supply, demand, and process – would be part of the Workshop content.

He encouraged the participants to be **real participants** and bring to the table their own experiences with the barriers, drivers and enablers they encountered in the transfer of good practices and the Europeanization of eGovernment.

After that he continued to explain **the agenda** for the day.

#### The Pan-European turn in European e-Government

Trond Arne Undheim, DG Information Society and Media

Trond Arne Undheim from the European Commission DG Information Society and Media was invited to speak about the state of play in (European) eGovernment from the **European Commissions perspective**. Mr. Undheim started the workshop with the observation that there seems to be a real turn towards European eGovernment.

He started by identifying the forces that were driving **a change in tides** towards the development of a pan-European dimension to eGovernment:

- The obligations related to the implementation of the EU Services Directive,
- The EU level administrative burdens reduction targets and
- Overall activity in establishing cross-border interoperability; in particular the European Interoperability Framework 2.0<sup>2</sup> (EIF from IDABC).
- And finally there is the impact of true high impact Pan-European services like the eProcurement for business project.

The **i2010 eGovernment action plan**<sup>3</sup> sets some priorities for the European Commission. The action plan largely aims at increasing cooperation among EU Member States to establish eGovernment services that have real tangible benefits to citizens and businesses across Europe. For this to happen the action plan identifies five key areas for the European Commission to focus on which can be found in the figure below. First there is a strong focus on the exploration of new projects and the consolidation of existing projects in the area of eInclusion and eParticipation. eProcurement was identified as a high impact service and it will be developed at a pan-European scale through a large scale pilot in the CIP ICT PSProgramme. New high impact services, also directly benefiting the citizens should be identified. One large scale pilot is developing applications in electronic patient records; the health care sector is often quoted (also in the EUREGOV project) as an area where high impact can be expected from Pan-European eGovernment services. Furthermore key enablers for the establishment of high impact services, like interoperable electronic identification management (eIDM) and more in general interoperability guidelines should be put in place. To address the challenge of a pan-European

<sup>2</sup> <http://europa.eu.int/idabc/en/document/3761>

<sup>3</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/idabc/servlets/Doc?id=25286>

eIDM framework the Commission is launching another large scale pilot. To increase efficiency and effectiveness, better ways to measure and benchmark the success of eGovernment applications are needed, and subsequently the sharing of experience (and good practices) among European States should be encouraged.



**Pan-European funding schemes** include: eTEN (which is concerned with the deployment of eGov, eHealth and eInclusion), CIP-ICT-PSP (Large scale pilots in eID and eProcurement, pilots in eDocuments and Inclusive eGovernment and thematic networks in eParticipation, Measurement and Service brokering) and finally the 7th Framework Program for R&D<sup>4</sup>.

Something that still deserves a lot of attention and that can be considered an important future research theme is the **Pan-European Semantic eGovernment space**.

Then there are the **European eGovernment awards**, which are there to reward excellence and to stimulate the visibility of innovative eGovernment solutions. He closed of by mentioning the role that **ePractice.eu** can have in the future of sharing good practices. This portal has by now 11.000 committed members (700% growth in 4 months), 643 learning cases, daily news, weekly newsletters and monthly workshops. Furthermore it's interactive (blog, email and wiki) which is why he wishes to encourage everybody to participate and contribute actively to the sharing of good practices in eGovernment on this portal.

#### **“Europeanization” of eGovernment**

Rifka Weehuizen, UNU-MERIT

Rifka Weehuizen identified three **important policy areas which necessitate** (and thus are driving) **the Europeanization of eGovernment**. The first area concerns the freedom of movement of persons within the European Union. The EC Treaty prohibits discrimination on the basis of nationality. EU citizens have the right to travel, study, live, work and retire in other Member States, in principle under the same conditions as nationals of that Member State. The second policy area is the administrative burden reduction, an important aim for at both the national and European level by. The third area is the European Union Service Directive, which among other things requires Member States to enable electronic processing of transactions by means of a single contact point (a so called one stop shop) and to use electronic means of handling procedures and formalities with public authorities from a distance, including a cross border dimension. In these three policy areas, the desirability and necessity of better, more inclusive, more accessible (cross-border) eGovernment for Member States are compellingly

<sup>4</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/eten>; [http://ec.europa.eu/ict\\_psp](http://ec.europa.eu/ict_psp); <http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7>

clear. These policy areas involve legal obligations for Member States that can only be met by developing high quality eGovernment with a European dimension,

But what then is the Europeanization of eGovernment? There are at least two **dimensions to European eGovernment**;

- European scale (or cross border) provision of eGovernment services (i.e. What can eGovernment do for Europe)
- European scale transfer of eGovernment good practices (i.e. what can Europe do for eGovernment. Good practice transfer is discussed in more detail in the presentation by Ruediger Glott)

### Lessons and recommendations

Key actors in Europeanization;

- Big cities with a mobile and international population
- Small countries with an open international economy,
- Euregions with a lot of cross-border activity,
- Public sector organizations in Member States aimed at certain professional groups (e.g. knowledge workers)
- The European Commission

**Key actors** in the process of ‘Europeanization’ of eGovernment service provision are big cities with a mobile and international population, small countries with an open international economy, Euregions with a lot of cross-border activity, public sector organizations in Member States aimed at certain professional groups (e.g. knowledge workers) and the European Commission itself.

**Key enablers** to creating a European dimension to eGovernment are the establishment of (technical, semantic and organizational) interoperability and European Identity Management which can enable service provision across borders.

**Possible pathways** to a European dimension to eGovernment are the following;

- Unilateral (making Member State public services accessible to citizens from other Member States, e.g. the provision of content in other languages)
- Bilateral, multilateral (intergovernmental cooperation between Member States, in certain service domains)
- European level (See the SOLVIT case presented by Marian Grubben)
- Parallel European public space (need-based, in principle accessible to all but in practice used by mobile citizens and businesses)
- Good practice diffusion (leading to European convergence of practices)

### Sharing Best Practices in eGovernment

Ruediger Glott – UNU-MERIT

Ruediger Glott from MERIT presented his findings from studying the cases in the good practice exchange data base of the Commission. He discussed the state **sharing good practices** in eGovernment. He started of by outlining the **fundamental trends in eGovernment**; namely service integration and geographical integration. An increasing number of services are integrated into one eGovernment solution and eGovernment solutions integrate more and more services provided by different authorities. Furthermore European eGovernment solutions integrate existing national eGovernment bodies in MS.

He mentioned that at the start of the EUREGOV project it was expected to find projects that have a European dimension. However to their disappointment they found out that, except for initiatives by the EC, at the national level there is a very **low dynamics** in this respect. This is why the project shifted attention to the conditions under which eGovernment services expand geographically, and provide opportunity to become pan-European in the future. Based on the

observed parallel and related trends towards service integration and geographical integration, the two main questions to answer are:

- What are the territorial, organizational and administrative limitations of service integration and geographical expansion of eGovernment services and solutions?
- Is there a need and a chance for pan-European eGovernment services (PEGS) to develop?

This shift requires the inclusion of an examination of the role of best practice transfer (BPT) as an enabler of increased service integration and of common eGovernment standards in Europe. The latter aspect is strongly related to geographical expansion of eGovernment services.

A review of best practice cases in the ePractice.eu database as well as the Capgemini study on Europe’s readiness for eGovernment<sup>5</sup> indicate that European governments have found solutions for almost all eGovernment problems - but many have been found many times in better or worse versions. Furthermore many best practice award winners observe little or no take-up. One could conclude that there is **a trend towards re-inventing the wheel** instead of towards standard solutions. This is why the workshop organization invited HELP.gv.at, e@SYConnects, and SOLVIT to share their experience on this matter. The first two cases are examples of national eGovernment solutions that provide access to a large number of different services in an integrated way and that have high potential for geographical expansion. HELP.gv.at has already been transferred to another country, e@SYConnects can potentially be implemented as an “umbrella” even on top of existing one-stop-shops like HELP.gv.at and thus increase the geographical scope of eGovernment provision. Also, parts of e@SYConnects have been implemented in other countries. SOLVIT is an example of an eGovernment service designed from scratch at the pan-European level with a “back-office” of cooperating national level eGovernment organizations.

In the “Breaking Barriers to eGovernment project”<sup>6</sup> barriers towards the establishment of effective eGovernment services are identified which include among others leadership failure, financial inhibitors, digital divides and choices, poor coordination, workplace and organizational inflexibility, lack of trust and poor technical design. These can be seen as **general barriers** to good practice transfer. As long as these barriers are not mastered an eGovernment organization will not be able to develop or implement a best practice solution. In the EUREGOV case studies a number of Good Practice Transfer **specific barriers** were identified. A selection of those can be found in the figure above.

#### Some of the barriers to good practice transfer as found in the EUREGOV case studies

- Lack of information (no best practice monitoring)
- Lack of marketing capacities
- Lack of technical competences
- Lack of funding
- Lack of capacities to provide technical and organizational advice to third parties
- Loss of visibility
- “Uniqueness” of public authorities
- Competition between different public bodies (power losses)
- Budget losses
- “Cultural heritage” of the public sector

The EUREGOV case studies also identified some **possible solutions**, like more project funding, more personnel capacity, transferability as a requirement from design,<sup>7</sup> a cultural change where public authorities see themselves as part of a European network of institutions providing similar

<sup>5</sup> Online availability of public services: how is Europe progressing? Web based survey on electronic public services. Report of the fifth measurement; October 2004. The report can be found on; [http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/soccul/egov/egov\\_benchmarking\\_2005.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/soccul/egov/egov_benchmarking_2005.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.egovbarriers.org/>

<sup>7</sup> As, for instance, provided by the APLAWS local government category list, a list of public services distinguishing 13 categories and applicable to all local governments in the UK.

services (=> sharing experiences and practices) and institutional help by a transfer agency or intermediary that takes responsibility for best practice monitoring and transfer

The presentation was closed off by touching upon the question whether all this (creating a European dimension to eGovernment and good practice transfer) should be done through a **top-down** approach with an active role for the EC as an enabler / initiator or whether it should be

#### Lessons & Recommendations

- More project funding for transfer
- More personnel capacity
- Transferability (in the form of interoperability and clear modules or building blocks) should be a requirement from design
- Cultural change required to ensure that public authorities see themselves as being part of a European set of institutions working on similar problems
- Creation of (national) transfer agencies that keep track of good practice monitoring and transfer
- The role of the private sector: make sure that the entities with an incentive for transfer are empowered to do so

done **bottom-up** with an expansion of existing eGovernment solutions from local / regional / national level to European level. The first, at least in theory, can be efficient in overcoming coordination problems. The second opportunity comprises the advantages that service integration and geographical expansion can take place based on existing experience with the service on smaller scope and knowing that a lot of innovative eGovernment solutions have been invented at the local level.

Another aspect that must be considered is whether an eGovernment service can better expand demand-driven or supply driven. The results of EUREGOV so far seem to imply that the some successful eGovernment solutions have been realized in a supply-driven top-down approach. This does however not imply that these solutions are not citizen-centered. In these case studies the public administration experts in a government organization seem to have considerable knowledge of what the user (citizens, businesses, other PA's) needs. A more demand-driven approach in the sense of active involvement of the user groups in the process of

developing a solution seems often confronted with the problem that these users (at least when citizens or businesses) have no insight in the procedures and rationales of public administration. This opaqueness of PA for the user may hinder a newly developed solution to work out good enough to become a best practice.

#### 4. Presentations

##### European Level eGovernment - the Case of SOLVIT

Marian Grubben, SOLVIT EC

*“SOLVIT is an on-line problem solving network in which EU Member States work together to solve without legal proceedings problems caused by the misapplication of Internal Market law by public authorities. There is a SOLVIT centre in every European Union Member State (as well as in Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein). SOLVIT Centers can help with handling complaints from both citizens and businesses. They are part of the national administration and are committed to providing real solutions to problems within ten weeks.”*  
(<http://ec.europa.eu/solvit/>)



A database is used for the intake of complaints, case handling, as an archive, to search for information, for statistics & reports and for communication. This **-e- component of SOLVIT** turned out to be of great value in imposing procedural discipline & deadlines, it provides transparency & measurable results, allows for quality control, encourages peer pressure and enables a harmonized approach.

Overall an informal approach to problem solving together with a structured and transparent on-line case handling database has created a **powerful tool**.

Some of the bigger **challenges** of the SOLVIT approach were that it requires administrative culture change at the national as well as at EC level, in particular a willingness to work on an informal basis within a short deadline, a willingness by other departments to accept intervention of the national SOLVIT centre, the need to adopt a client and result oriented approach and acceptance of a high degree of transparency.

##### Barriers to good practice transfer encountered with SOLVIT

- Lack of knowledge, time consuming to gather information
- Not invented here
- No culture in sharing expertise
- Organizational barriers
- Procedural barriers
- Legal barriers

Some examples of **diffusion of SOLVIT** are given; the SOLVIT database is now used as a model by European Consumer Centre network (ECC) and Internal Market Information system (IMI) which is about the exchange of information about Directive 8 and recognition of qualifications among a large group of public administrations from different countries. Furthermore the SOLVIT approach inspired other areas of **administrative cooperation**. Closer cooperation with other assistance services led to **shared experience** on an informal basis.

##### Lessons & Recommendations

- Informal contacts facilitate the exchange of lessons learned.
- “The exchange of good practices needs to be facilitated!!”
- The EC should give the example in learning from good practices.

An example of where diffusion went wrong is given by ASEAN. They wanted to take over the SOLVIT database but it took 6 months for there to be permission from the European Commission to do so. At that moment ASEAN was no longer interested. The good thing is that now a precedent is created for the next time an interested party shows up.

When being asked whether there is a risk for SOLVIT to drown in its own success because of the huge increase in cases Mrs. Grubben answered that there is a risk for this because especially the big countries have understaffed SOLVIT offices.

There was also a question on the future plans for SOLVIT. Mrs. Grubben responded that there should be investments in the integration of all the different legal services that are offered by EC. With the establishment of the One Stop information portal YourEurope<sup>8</sup> a step in this direction is made but according to some the design and presentation of content of this portal can be improved

### **Diffusion across borders - the Case of HELP.gv.at**

Michael Stergar, Net Value

The next one to speak was Mr Stergar from Net Value. He spoke about his experience with the cross border diffusion of **HELP.gv.at**, an innovative one-stop government portal from the Austrian government. This portal is one of the most innovative and successful one-stop government portals from Europe. It has information from a wide range of public institutions on around 150 life situations; it offers the possibility to process transactions and provides means for interaction with public institutions. The portal exhibits high usage and receives good user ratings and works as a driver for the integration of the delivery of public services.

Some of the factors which made this project such a **success** from the start were; a strong project owner at the ministry, the strict citizen orientation, the life situation approach, the strict central approach and the fact that technique was supporting, but never leading. According to Mr. Stergar also the outsourcing of project development to a private and independent content company was important in achieving above goals.

Net Value is a **small/ medium sized private company** that was involved in the development of the HELP concept since the start some ten years ago. They were among the first to come up with structuring citizen information according to life events and are specialized in the creation of to-the-point and easily understandable content, which are among the most innovative elements of the HELP

#### **Barriers to good practice transfer as encountered with HELP.gv.at**

- No clear idea of who is “selling” a practice
- Public servants are not trained for selling/marketing.
- No clear idea of what the practice is (is it the concept, or is it the technique, or the organization?)
- Not clear who to “sell” a practice to, who is responsible, who takes up the idea?
- Not invented here
- Different understanding of project organization/ targets (organizational culture)
- Applications are developed for one time implementation
- Too little attention for the creation of good and understandable content
- Too much focus on technique
- Insufficient attention for the start up phase in which the concepts and strategies are developed, to effectively identify and target the demands of the specific PA

<sup>8</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/youreurope/>

concept. Net Value is also the organization that has been most involved in the **transfer** of the lessons learned in HELP.gv.at to other institutions.

Transferring the concept started off with an invitation for tender by the state of **Baden Wurttemberg** (Germany). The ministry of interior wanted to create a HELP like portal. T-Systems, a large German technology provider won the bid and with Net Value as a subcontractor they started the development of the portal. Although the project can be considered a success

#### Lessons & Recommendations

- A central proactive “sales support” with top down approach
- Stronger focus on private business
- List with recommendable practices
- Good practice control by EU
- Supporting pre-start phases with money AND resource

there is one thing that could have been improved which is that the development was started with the technical design. This was already finished when they started thinking about the content, which meant that the whole organization and work flow, a wording guide and a style guide had to be produced when the project was already on its way.

A better approach was taken in **Saxony** where they started with a pre-project in which content definition, standards definition and the project organisation was planned. After this they followed

with a technical tender which ensured that the technique was supporting the concept. The pre phase took 2 months but because of the good preparations Mr. Stergar estimates that it actually saved time.

#### What was being diffused in both projects?

**Project development** (how to assure quality citizen-oriented texts with partners from ministries)

**Standards** (style guide, wording guide and proofreading)

**Organisation** (building up of editorial office, work flow, clearance system, partner management)

**Structures** (life situation system, details of content structure)

A new and promising development is the **dissemination of valuable content**. In a joint cooperation between Net Value (creation of content) and T-Systems (country wide sales partner) a new content product called Content Kommunal has been developed. A lot of the content that was created in the Baden Wurttemberg and Saxony projects is of course also valuable to municipalities in other German states which is why they can now subscribe to this content. Municipalities can present standard content on their own website with their own look and feel using RSS feeds and XML. In Austria basically the same dissemination of standard content is taking place but then as part of the HELP project. Municipalities but also ministries can present relevant content from the HELP database on their own websites.

#### Inclusive eGovernment - the Case of e@SY Connects

Gary Simpson, Programme Manager e@SY Connects

Gary Simpson spoke about e@SY Connects, an inclusive eGovernment application that was started in South Yorkshire in the United Kingdom. This service was started to ensure that all citizens and businesses have equal access to citizen information and services and that nobody is left behind. e@SY Connects delivers citizen-centered services thru multiple channels. The services offered include doctor appointments, municipality information, crime reports and job seeking. The channels to access the portal include digital interactive TV's, mobile phones, kiosks play stations and of course computers with internet access. This multiple channel and multiple platform approach is truly innovative and is one of the main reasons why e@SY Connects manages to reach groups that are usually left behind. An important enabler for its success is the trust e@SY Connects has from its partners allowing it to function across organizational and town/city boundaries, with the channel service work being an off-shoot of this trust.

The project simultaneously reduces the demands upon service providers (public, private and voluntary sector) enabling tangible benefits to be realized by both the citizens who use the services and the partners who collaborate to offer these new services. An example Mr. Simpson gave was the doctor appointment service where the bookings using e@SY Connects increased by 44% and where the amount of missed appointments fell from 13% to 0,5% achieving great

cost and service benefits. Because of its success this doctor appointment service is now being adopted nation wide.

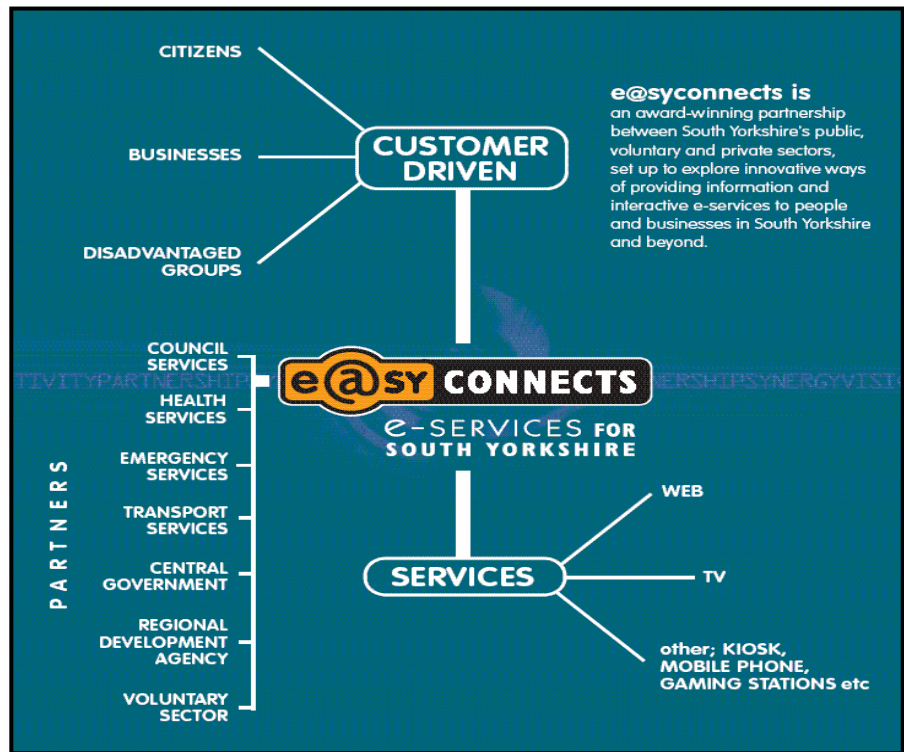
**Lessons & Recommendations**

- Marketing and dissemination of information is crucial for take-up
- Partnership with wide range of institutions (service integration) delivers true value
- Good practice diffusion is a two way street, learn and share
- Transfer of knowledge and experience is the core
- Multi channel approach makes service more “inclusive“
- Authentication and authorisation will become real important in the future

Some other interesting development with e@SY Connects takes place in the area of the exchange of eProcurement information and secondly in the area of eParticipation with a innovative transformational petitioning system. This system enables petitioning to be included in the platform in the same way as the other services creating openness (in the process and change in process/deadlines and access via any channel), transparency & accountability (active petition process reviewed by all and respondents are identified/ contactable) and participation (total and intuitive and generic, multi-lingual solution). This system has been implemented in and outside of the UK in South Yorkshire and in other UK towns

and cities. It is already live in Flevoland (Holland) with implementation also planned for the City of Riga (Latvia) and the City of Yangquan/ Beijing in China.

Finally it is interesting to mention that e@SY Connects can potentially be implemented as an “umbrella” even on top of existing one-stop-shops like HELP.gv.at and thus increase the geographical scope of eGovernment provision



## 5. Working groups

This section provides a joint discussion of the outcomes of the two working groups. Group 1 was moderated by Rifka Weehuizen and group 2 was moderated by Ruediger Glott. An overview of the comments made by the participants is given in the tables that follow the text. We grouped the obstacles and proposed solutions as mentioned by the participants in clusters to provide some structure in the observations where it should be noted that there is some overlap between the groups as well as between the solutions to the obstacles as discussed in topic 1 and the discussion of the drivers as discussed in topic 2 . The observations and contributions that have been made in the online pre-discussion have been included in this part.

### Topic 1 - Barriers to good practice transfer

It is important to be clear about what is meant with the term “good practice”; the discussion revealed that this term should be understood in a broad sense. With regard to good practice transfer, some participants indicated that they were interested in a “shop” offering directly usable and implementable solutions to specific problems, while others were more interested in ideas and concepts. Good practice can refer to concepts, innovative elements but also to concrete applications and software. Sometimes good practices concern the front-office of service provision, the way that information is presented to the citizen, the possibilities for interaction and transaction), and sometimes they concern the back-office, and therefore have large implications for the procedures and thus the institutions that are behind them. This should be kept in mind when speaking of barriers to the transfer and dissemination of good practices but also in discussing possible solutions. Different problems and situations require different solutions.



#### Transparency: sufficient, accessible information

##### *Obstacles*

In general the participants indicated that there was a **lack of relevant and complete information** on good practices. It is hard to determine what solutions there are, what they could mean for you given your specific context and needs, and what the conditions are under which the practice is transferable. Another problem is the **language**. Most information on good practices is provided in English while some participants indicated that especially in South and East Europe it is not at all common to expect government officials or technical developers to speak or read English, especially not when speaking of more complicated procedural or technical descriptions.

##### *Proposed Solutions*

Several participants called for a **“good practice shop”** where it is possible to not only look around for interesting concepts but also to “shop” for concrete solutions to specific problems. A transparent, problem-based list of recommendable solutions (sponsored by the EC?) and finished eGovernment building blocks related to eGovernment building could also be included in this shop. Especially concerning the information issue the **ePractice.eu portal** has the potential to significantly contribute to improving the situation by providing standardized information and

ordering them along themes. Improvements could be made in the completeness of information provided on the good practices, or the creation of a standardized “cookbook” which gives an overview of which financial, technical and organizational resources are required, what an application can exactly mean for your organization and where to go for information or help during the transfer process. The cookbook concept is a variation of the shop theme, and could also contain a playground where the implementers and service developers would be able to test solutions to assess their applicability in their own local context. ePractice.eu could provide this playground. Furthermore, especially as the portal keeps growing, the ranking and filtering of “real” good practices becomes more and more important.

## **Institutions and Culture**

### *Obstacles*

Cultural or/ and institutional factors were often mentioned as barriers to good practice transfer. On the demand side, participants observed that the public sector **lacks an entrepreneurial spirit** and is not used to looking beyond their immediate horizon to learn from other similar organizations in other countries (or even within their own country) and to pick up innovative ideas. On the supply side, public institutions that did develop innovative applications are not used to marketing and “selling” those. Also, they do not have direct benefits to do so, except for wanting to spread a good practice of which they are proud and to help the general good out of a ‘public spirit’. Marketing takes time and money which public sector organizations generally rather spend on their own direct goals. And the potential incentives that other organisations may have (like private service providers) to spread best practice are under utilised or even completely ignored. Furthermore **the “not invented here”** problem was mentioned several times; a tendency to say too early and without a good justification that a solution is not suitable for your situation. It is unclear why there is such low acceptance for solutions that are not developed within the organization, but participants mentioned that this is related to factors such as pride, and identity. It was also recognized that there are **real differences** between public administrations due to organizational, cultural, legal and procedural issues and technical capabilities which make good practice transfer difficult.

### *Proposed Solutions*

In overcoming the not invented here problem it is really important to communicate the advantages of learning from and possibly implementing good practices to policy makers. **Customization** of good practices, where for example a standardized back-end is combined with a customizable front-end could help in overcoming a feeling of lost identity and can create a sense of ownership which is crucial for success. The **private sector** could (and should) be used more to market and disseminate innovative solutions as, contrary to most public institutions, they are used to “sell” a concept and do have the incentives to do so. Another interesting solution that was proposed was to make use of **thematic networks**, or match making events, where specialists and experts from public institutions in different countries but working on similar problems/ topics are brought together (preferable also face-to-face) to exchange ideas and cooperate on the development of applications. It was mentioned that these networks already exist (and not without success) in some eGovernment areas, noticeably eProcurement and taxation. One of the participants mentioned that IOTA, OECD and to a smaller extent the EU (by way of a Fiscalis seminar in Romania) are the main facilitators to these networks in the tax area.

## **Technology**

### *Obstacles*

Two interesting observations were made here. The first one is that information systems are often part of a landscape and interconnected with other systems which makes it hard to replace certain applications, even when it could be replaced by a better solution. This means a lot of institutions are **locked-in** into existing solutions; due to ‘sunk costs’ (both financial and psychological) it is difficult to change. Furthermore a lot of good practices were never designed for transferring to

different situations. **Interoperability**, whether semantic, organizational or technical, was not kept in mind in the design phase which makes it hard to implement such a practice in a different context.

#### *Solutions*

The way the service is presented, has an impact on its transferability. If it contains **clear modules**, or building blocks it is easier to pick-play-and-choose. Furthermore the **European Interoperability Framework 2.0**, when enforced, has the potential to significantly improve the situation with regard to the lack of interoperability by supporting common standards; stimulating the use of existing standards, developed by the market and certified by standardization bodies. The enforcement or stimulation of adherence to standardization could be done by a European system of **accreditation** of eGovernment practices. Parties that receive such accreditation when developing their eGovernment solution could be offered special advantages such as a contribution from a European fund. One of the actors in the online pre-discussion noted that specially in the areas of e-Democracy, e-Participation and other "Technology for Social Change" areas there is a huge potential to establish "joint ventures" with civil society actors<sup>9</sup> by collaborating in (F)OSS projects.

### **Resources & Incentives**

#### *Obstacles*

A **lack of resources** and time can prevent government officials to “shop around” for solutions, especially when shopping is time consuming due to in transparency of the supply of good practices. As to organizations that have developed a good practice themselves, a lack of resources, budget and personnel to support the transfer of a good practice to other institutions is a barrier to the transfer of good practices. In addition, there is a lack of incentives to engage in active promotion and dissemination of best practices because **cost and benefits are not well aligned**. It is hard to justify for a public institution to spend tax payer’s money on supporting the transfer of a good practice to another country when there is no clear benefit involved. One participant noted in this respect that giving should mean receiving.

#### *Proposed Solutions*

**EU funding** to encourage institutions that actively engage in transferring their innovative eGovernment solutions could be part of a solution. Also a **licensing system**, where the receiving partner pays the transferring partner for its services could be a solution. Although one has to be preoccupied with the risks of IPR limiting rather than stimulating the transfer of good practices Furthermore the advantages of more public institutions jointly developing the good practice that is transferred, thereby accelerating the rate of innovation, should be stressed. In the **Web 2.0** context sharing means getting feedback. Transparency is rewarded by constructive inputs that can actually improve the design and delivery of services; and reduce development costs. There is thus also an awareness issue to help civil servants fully understand the new context and benefits of sharing (and mass-collaboration, including citizen involvement). And finally it was observed that rewards do not only have to be extrinsic, also recognition and praise for those who manage to develop good practices can be a powerful motivator.

### **Legal**

#### *Obstacles*

Legal issues can also hinder the process of transferring good practices as was shown by the example of SOLVIT, where necessary permission for transferring the database system took too long for the interested party. **Legal constraints** inhibit the free distribution of many good practice solutions. One of the participants noted that cooperation within the EU tends to be too complicated.

---

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.epractice.eu/document/3944>

**Table 1: Obstacles and proposed solutions (group 1)**

Obstacles	Solutions
<b>Transparency</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of marketing</li> <li>- No practical overview of good practices (they are hard to find)</li> <li>- No “shop” with free applications (open source or EU sponsored)</li> <li>- No cook book with more specific information on requirements for transferring best practices (costs, tech. platform, time, who to contact, playground)</li> <li>- Accessibility of information, e.g. language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce a “cook book”</li> <li>• Translation of ePractice.eu in languages that are more common in especially the East and South</li> <li>• Brokerage by the EC in bringing together supply and demand</li> <li>• EU shop with concrete and directly implementable solutions</li> </ul>
<b>Culture and Institutions</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of awareness of existence of interesting solutions (no looking outside of the box.)</li> <li>- Lack of entrepreneurial spirit</li> <li>- The idea that your city/ country is unique</li> <li>- Cultural barriers</li> <li>- Competition between public institutions this is not mentioned above</li> <li>- Not invented here</li> <li>- Lack of acceptance of good practices developed elsewhere</li> <li>- High level civil servants lack awareness and “feeling” for good practices at a conceptual level</li> <li>- The amount of people that use the internet and IT is very different across EU countries.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make more use of the private sector (more efficient in disseminating (selling) good practices)</li> <li>• Thematic networks (problem, need based)</li> <li>• Create customizable solutions, personalized front office with shared back-office</li> <li>• Stimulate a European feeling</li> <li>• Joint development of solutions to common problems (for example in (F)OSS projects)</li> </ul>
<b>Incentives</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of tangible incentives for transferring good practices</li> <li>- Costs and benefits should be better aligned between the transferring party and the receiver</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brokerage by the EC in aligning supply and demand</li> <li>• Provide incentives for being successful (in the form of fame, money)</li> <li>• Awareness raising; giving/ sharing means receiving.</li> <li>• Make successful projects budget neutral (don’t take away cost savings due to innovation)</li> <li>• Engage the actors that DO have an incentive (or at least do not block them)</li> </ul>
<b>Technology</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Information systems are part of a landscape and interconnected with other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• European Interoperability Framework</li> <li>• (financial) benefits to those that adhere to</li> </ul>

<p>systems (lock-in)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Non-modular solutions, good practices were never designed to be transferred to other context</li> </ul>	<p>the Interoperability Framework.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint development of projects in (F)OSS projects (open source).</li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of marketing (skills) at the supply side</li> <li>- Lack of time to ask and answer</li> <li>- Lack of capacity to “shop” for solutions at the demand side</li> <li>- No sufficient funds for transfer across borders for small private firms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide budget to enable them to support the transfer of knowledge to other institutions</li> <li>• Private sector is better equipped for marketing but the innovative small and medium sized firms often need support for cross border diffusion.</li> </ul>

**Table 2: Obstacles and proposed solutions (group 2)**

<b>Obstacles</b>	<b>Solutions</b>
<b>Transparency</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Difficulties to find the right information (information overload)</li> <li>- Difficult to determine whether something is really a good practice for your organization</li> <li>- Lack of prioritization of similar good practices (rank, order, what criteria?)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standardization of keywords and descriptions to ease good practice finding</li> <li>• Establishing a single and constant point of contact</li> <li>• Reducing the time between good practice generation and information on this solution on the internet</li> <li>• Mapping good practice developments at the EU level</li> <li>• Improve information spreading over more information channels than internet (media, public inst., etc.)</li> </ul>
<b>Culture and Institutions</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Different needs and procedures in public administrations in the EU</li> <li>- Good practice acceptance by decision makers</li> <li>- Lack of transparency and openness of Public Administration</li> <li>- Lack of awareness of the existence of (other) good practices</li> <li>- Language barriers</li> <li>- A “not invented here” mentality</li> <li>- Lack of creativity</li> <li>- Force of habit in public sector prohibits creativity and pro activeness</li> <li>- Culture in general</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raising awareness of latest good practice developments in the private sector</li> <li>• Providing guidelines, FAQ’s, checklists and “10 best reasons for transferring good practices” in order to convince people of the usefulness</li> <li>• Informing administrations in a more active and organized way (e.g. organize match making events.)</li> </ul>

<b>Incentives</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Lack of European strategy for good practice transfer (incentives for knowledge dissemination and harmonization)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Developing a EU strategy for good practice diffusion</li></ul>
<b>Regulation</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Cooperation within the EU tends to be too complicated. Each country has its own set of procedures and laws which makes harmonization difficult</li><li>- Legal constraints, e.g. licenses inhibit free distribution of many good practice solutions</li></ul>	
<b>Resources</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Lack of money</li><li>- Lack of time in public administration to do research on best practices</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Funding of good practices to those who do (academic research of secondary purpose)</li></ul>

## Topic 2 - Drivers of good practice transfer

The discussion provided here is a joint discussion of the outcomes in group 1 and group 2. An overview of the comments made by the participants is given below in figures 7 and 8. The **activators** that were mentioned in this part of the workshop had some overlap with those mentioned in the discussion on the barriers to good practice diffusion.

### *Drivers*

**Personal motives** of civil servants involved in the development of eGovernment applications were often mentioned as drivers in the development and transfer of good practices. This could go from recognition for good achievements to praise for those who manage to develop good practices, as is done with the eGovernment awards. Also material rewards in the form of salary or promotion were mentioned as drivers for good practice transfer. A thing that was also mentioned as a driver was the ‘public spirit’; often public servants have intrinsic motivation to serve the greater good of society and are thus willing to share. **Benefits for the organization** also seem to provide powerful incentives. Cooperation, benefits that can be derived from joint development of a good practice and extra budget (or at least budget neutrality so that practices are not being “punished” for being successful) are considered drivers to good practice transfer. **National Governments** have also been regarded as important contributors to the transfer of good practices. They were regarded by the participants as key actors in the process of establishing more bilateral collaboration between EU Member States in the development and exchange of good practices. When speaking of drivers of good practice transfer, especially in group 2, it became apparent that participants expect the **European Commission** to play a very important role in the process of diffusion, through a policy aimed at facilitating and stimulating good practice transfer. The fact that participants often refer to European institutions and cooperation seems to indicate that there is a European dimension inherent in good practice transfer in European eGovernment.

### *Activators*

On a **personal level** individuals should be recognized, and possibly rewarded, for achieving excellence. This also counts for **organizations**. Furthermore it should be made sure that the possible benefits to good practice transfer in the form of joint further development and accelerated innovation are well communicated to organization. Again parallel engineering on problems that are common to Member States was mentioned as a stimulant for good practice transfer. Also rewarding the investment in good practice transfer was considered important. As mentioned above, the benefits and costs for good practice transfer are not well aligned which does not make it really appealing to free manpower for transferring good practices. **National Governments** as well as the European Commission have a role to play when it comes to making it worthwhile to invest in the exchange of experience and the transfer of practices. A possibility to raise awareness for the issue of good practice transfer at the national level was to send high level civil servants around to learn about good practices in other countries, and to become ambassadors of good practice transfer in their own country. Very clearly it was stressed that the **European Commission** had a leading role. Not only in initiating and facilitating good practice transfer but also in giving a good example by learning from good practices for its own services and by being a good practice itself, which can inspire public administrations in Member States, to which these good practices can be transferred. Actively searching for solutions and implementing them, would also provide the Commission with a better understanding of the processes involved in good practice sharing and the transfer of knowledge. ePractice.eu was again mentioned as a noteworthy solution, which has the potential to contribute to good practice transfer in the future. As mentioned in the previous section a condition would be to continuously improve the portal (filters for relevant information, ranking of cases, more relevant information for each case) and to create communities around specific sub-themes. Also the European Commission is important when it comes to developing standards, interoperability guidelines and the creation of a common eID.

**Table 3: Drivers and proposed activators (group 1)**

Drivers	Activators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Extrinsic rewards; more budget/ salary. Making money with the knowledge transfer</li> <li>- Cooperation, learning from partners, joint development, adding functionality</li> <li>- Reduction in bureaucracy</li> <li>- Appreciation by the user, thus the citizen</li> <li>- Recognition, honor and fame (f.e. with awards)</li> <li>- Intrinsic reward: public spirit</li> <li>- Sector based workshops</li> <li>- ePractice (? explain)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Budget neutrality, reward successful applications instead of cutting in budget</li> <li>- Making success visible</li> <li>- More sector based workshop, bring together people that work on similar problems</li> <li>- EC should give good example by adopting good practices, being a good practice and transferring its good practices</li> <li>- Further development of ePractice, stronger ranking of relevant practices, encourage communities around experts working on similar topics</li> <li>- Funding for transfer</li> </ul>

**Table 4: Drivers and proposed activators (group 2)**

Drivers	Activators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- European Institutions</li> <li>- European Subsidies</li> <li>- Building of a European identity</li> <li>- Cooperation agreements</li> <li>- European development projects</li> <li>- Integration of national policies with European strategies (e.g. interoperability framework, Lisbon Agenda.</li> <li>- Cost Savings through good practices transfer.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More EC investment in good practice development and transfer</li> <li>- Development of one EU-wide eID</li> <li>- Decision makers should be strongly instructed to use and exchange good practices</li> <li>- Replacement of old decision makers by younger ones</li> <li>- Not only publishing of successes but also encourage learning from failures and mistakes</li> <li>- Parallel engineering on problems that are common to member states</li> <li>- Stress cost advantages of “re-using” good practices</li> <li>- eGovernment projects should be obliged to consult other European authorities in a pre-project phase before development</li> </ul>

### Topic 3 - PEGS that appear most needed within the near future

Only in the second group there was time left for a discussion the last topic. The workgroup members were asked which PEGS they consider to be most important to establish within the near future. An eID for European citizens and business (and related administrative challenges) and cross-country information provision provided the two focuses in the opinion of the members of workgroup 2.

#### Potential high impact PEGS

An eID for citizens and business in Europe

- Main actor in initiation; European Commission

PEGS information services on for example working abroad within the EU

- Main actor in initiation; European Commission

The establishment of a TV channel like “La Chaine Parlementaire” (which broadcast activities from the parliament and senate in France) at the EU level.

- Main actor in initiation: European Commission

## **5. Wrap up**

Constantijn van Oranje concluded the workshop by stating that clearly many factors influence the process of diffusion of good practices. It is important to view a good practice as a multidimensional process from the idea and design of a service; to development – implementation – measurement – marketing good practice – exchanging of practices – transfer – implementation. All the different steps have different actors (politicians, technicians, policymakers, consultants, IT providers), different drivers and barriers and different levels. Marketing/sales, finance, brokerage, modular design, cookbooks and toolkits, awards, etc. all have a function in improving the transfer of practice at different stages and for different stakeholders.

The role of the private sector in general and of small and medium sized private companies (as opposed to the large technical firms) in particular in the development of innovative eGovernment solutions should be recognized and is in need of better understanding. Small companies that are equipped with the knowledge and the incentives required for transfer often have to deal with a lack of resources and network for disseminating their solutions across Europe.

Setting up thematic networks aimed at stimulating the transfer of knowledge about good practices across Europe can be an instrument to bundle different ways of stimulating good practice transfer in a specific domain. In these networks experts from different countries would meet (in person but possibly also in the virtual world) to exchange ideas and experience becoming aware of the huge amount of knowledge available in Europe and helping to put it to more and better use.

## 6. List of participants

<p><b>Marc Hol</b> City of Kortrijk Belgium</p>	<p><b>Thomsen Bo Helbaek</b> SKAT Denmark</p>
<p><b>Gary Simpson</b> <a href="#">e@SY</a> Connects United Kingdom</p>	<p><b>Gabriela Rodica Hrin</b> ICI – National institute for research &amp; development in informatics Romania</p>
<p><b>Vintila Cornel</b> E-data Romania</p>	<p><b>Ruediger Glott</b> UNU-MERIT Netherlands</p>
<p><b>Tim Berklaar</b> ICTU Netherlands</p>	<p><b>Algimantas Padegimas</b>  Lithuania</p>
<p><b>Emmanuel Mouclier</b> Artificial Solutions France</p>	<p><b>Gudfinna Kristjansdottir</b> Gardabaer Municipality Iceland</p>
<p><b>Bert Janssens</b> AROHM (Administration of Regional Planning, Housing and Monuments) Belgium</p>	<p><b>Marit Schweiker</b> CCRE Belgium</p>
<p><b>Michael Stergar</b> Net-Value E-Government Contents Austria</p>	<p><b>Trond Arne Undheim</b> European Commission Belgium</p>
<p><b>Kjell Hansteen</b> European Commission</p>	<p><b>Bent Hauschildt</b> European Commission</p>
<p><b>Stefan Salz,</b> Bundesstelle für Informationstechnik im Bundesverwaltungsamt Germany</p>	<p><b>Gregoire Maurice</b> Artificial Solutions France</p>
<p><b>Sandy Hinz</b> European Office of the Saxon Local Authorities Germany</p>	<p><b>Tapio Rissanen</b> EuroConseils Belgium</p>
<p><b>Marian Grubben</b> European Commission DG Internal Market</p>	<p><b>Gertie Dullens</b> Kadaster-on-line The Netherlands</p>
<p><b>Kirsten Haaland</b> UNU-MERIT Netherlands</p>	<p><b>Amalia Velasco</b> Spanish Directorate General for Cadastre Spain</p>
<p><b>Constantijn van Oranje</b></p>	<p><b>Rifka Weehuizen</b></p>

Workshop report; "Re-inventing the Wheel? – Transferring Best Practices in eGovernment"

RAND Europe Netherlands	UNU-MERIT Netherlands
<b>Bruno Koninckx</b> MEMORI Research and Consulting Institute Belgium	<b>Julia Gludden</b> 21°Consultancy United Kingdom
<b>Francois Vis</b> ICTU Netherlands	<b>Stijn Quast</b> UNU-MERIT Netherlands