WOMEN EXCLUDED OR EMPOWERED? A CASE FOR DIGITAL LOCAL AGENDA IN EUROPE

Iva Walterova
EPMA – European Projects and Management Agency
Jankovcova 53 – Hall Office Park, 17000, Praha 7, Czech Republic
E-mail: walterova@epma.cz

Irina Zalisova
EPMA – European Projects and Management Agency
Jankovcova 53 – Hall Office Park, 17000, Praha 7, Czech Republic
E-mail: zalisova@epma.cz

─Abstract ─

The paper explores the issue of eInclusion of all into eGovernment services with the help of Digital Local Agenda (DLA). Information and Communication Technologies are essential for today's society and economy; however, the problem of exclusion of various groups from the emerging digital society – the digital divide – persists. The paper explores causes for the digital gap focusing primarily on exclusion of women. Exclusion of this group is brought into focus in particular because women represent roughly half of the population. Solutions to the problem are then explored noting that many experts look to DLA as being one of the remedies, since it is designed to be customized to local conditions. This paper therefore explores the option of DLA as a solution, providing the reader with several examples of the Agenda being applied. The paper concludes that DLA seems to be effective in a number of settings and should be taken into consideration when policies to close digital divides are being devised.

Key Words: *Digital Divide, Digital Gap, Digital Local Agenda (DLA), eGovernment, eInclusion, Gender Digital Divide*
JEL Classification: H76, J16, O33

1. INTRODUCTION

"If one is not connected, one is excluded." This quote by a renowned media scholar Pierre Levy defines the topic of the present paper. In the following pages the issues of eInclusion, eGovernment and Digital Local Agenda will be explored in depth. Stressing that Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are indispensable in modern life and remain the driver of economic progress, the first section of the present paper briefly explores directions, in which policies and societal trends connected to ICTs are likely to evolve. One of the main areas to be explored today is eInclusion of all. The following paragraphs then describe steps the EU has taken towards eliminating its persisting digital divide.

Next section of the paper explores which groups face the digital gap, probing deeper into the gender digital gap because women represent roughly half of the entire population. Their voices must therefore be heard and they must be given a chance to fully participate in this rapidly emerging area. In the following subsection the paper briefly explores digital divide that stems from geographical differences.

Many experts and practitioners look to Digital Local Agenda as being one of the remedies for the existing digital gaps since it is designed to be customized to local conditions and problems. This paper therefore explores the option of Digital Local Agenda as a solution by providing the reader with four examples of the Agenda being applied.

The paper then concludes that despite more research necessary DLA seems to be effective in a number of settings and should be taken into consideration when policies about ICT-enabled inclusive service delivery and about bridging the existing digital divide are being devised.

2. ICTs AND FUTURE SOCIETAL TRENDS

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are indispensable in modern life and remain the engine of economic progress. Developments in digital technology over the last decade have been rapid and widespread in most societies and this trend will most certainly continue. This has had effect on almost every area of human activity in many places and it certainly applies in the European Union. Despite the recent economic slowdown, ICTs continue to be the drivers of growth (OECD, 2003). Overall the ICT sector directly accounts for 5% of EU GDP and 25% of the EU GDP growth (European Commission, 2009). It contributes significantly to overall productivity growth with 20% coming directly from the ICT sector and 30% from ICT investments (European Commission, 2010a).

Besides their economic importance, ICTs are becoming an inseparable part of Europeans' everyday lives. These Technologies have a major effect on improving the quality of Europeans' lives and their social participation, facilitating access to information, media, content and services and to improved and more flexible job opportunities, and enhancing opportunities to fight against discrimination (Ministerial Declaration approved by the Ministerial Conference "ICT for an Inclusive society," Riga, Latvia, 11.6. 2006).

Taking into account recently predicted (Misuraca, 2010) societal trends, governmental trends and policy visions, in the future we may expect in this area a stronger demand for greater transparency and accountability of the public sector on the one side, and for improved accessibility of public services in terms of an increased awareness and perception of the needs and wishes of citizens, a drive towards more choice and accessibility of public services on the other.

Furthermore, in the area of governance and policy modeling there is a rising need for new models of governance and the emergence and active participation of new stakeholders. This trend that can be discerned in most public sector domains is the emergence of new partnerships, the involvement of intermediaries and the acknowledgement of new stakeholder roles. Citizens, civil society and advocacy groups are increasingly empowered to organise themselves and play a role in public service delivery. As in all domains technologies increasingly play an important role in the provision of public services and in all sectors questions arise as to the ICT skills of citizens required to have access to those services` therefore, there is a rising need for improved digital competencies, and for bridging the existing digital divide[1].

[1] "Digital gap" or "digital divide" referring to the gap between people with effective access to digital and information technology and those with very limited or no access at all. It includes the imbalance both in physical access to technology

3. FIGHTING FOR eINCLUSION IN THE EU

ICTs and digital services are still not available to all on equal terms. About 30-50% of Europeans still get no benefit or too little benefit from public services supported by ICT and millions of persons are at risk of being left behind in the emerging knowledge society. The European Union has realized that it can overcome the challenges it is facing such as unemployment, debt, slow economic growth, population aging etc. only with the help of ICTs. The EU has also been most sensible to the danger of leaving anyone behind and has underlined the needs of the persons and social groups at risk of exclusion, as well as established policies and relevant programs to address them both at European, national and regional level through different means and European institutions.

In 2002, the European Council made a first call urging for utilizing ICTs "particular account of the needs of people with disabilities" (Council of the EU, 2001). The document eEurope 2005 Action Plan then went much further stressing the need "to give everyone the opportunity to participate in the global information society" (European Commission, 2002:2). Later promotion of an inclusive information society in Europe became one of the three pillars of the EU's i2010 Strategic Programme (European Commission, 2005).

The above mentioned documents represent only a few examples of texts originating in the European institutions, summits and high level meetings, which point out the existence of a gap between people living in the EU who use digital technologies and who do not.

However, sustainable development cannot be achieved without broad public participation in decision-making (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs). Ministers participating at the Ministerial e-Government Conference "Transforming Public Services" in Manchester UK in 2005 took this significant fact into account when they declared that "providing inclusive services is an explicit objective of governments and the innovative exploitation of technology can play a key part in reducing exclusion" in their Ministerial Declaration. ICTs should be utilized fully in order to achieve better and more inclusive eGovernment. Their Declaration calls for creation of an Action Plan for eGovernment under the framework of i2010 so that "no citizen [is] left behind" and promotes the idea that by 2010 all citizens, including socially disadvantaged groups, should become major beneficiaries of e-Government.

A number of latest European Union documents focus on the importance of including all those living in the EU into services provided by government – ICT enabled: eGovernment. A significant step in this direction was taken in a Ministerial Declaration approved by the Ministerial Conference "ICT for an Inclusive society" in Riga, Latvia in 2006, where priorities to be implemented at the European, national and local levels were declared. These included in particular a reduction of the geographical digital divide; improvement of digital literacy and competences through formal or informal education systems tailored to the needs of groups at risk of exclusion; and innovative designing and delivering of key services and public service policies so that no one is left behind.

---

and the resources and skills needed to effectively participate as a digital citizen typically marked by gender, income, race, and location.

The Inclusive eGovernment Roadmap published some months later (Inclusive eGovernment ad hoc group, 2006) focused on two main objectives:

- Fight the digital divide by countering digital exclusion when public services are provided online;

- Use ICT-enabled inclusive policies to exploit the new possibilities offered by eGovernment.

The Lisbon Ministerial Conference then called for ensuring that all citizens benefit from eGovernment services and asked governments to "identify and exchange information on their flagship initiatives addressing the needs of disadvantaged and potentially excluded" (Inclusive eGovernment ad hoc group, 2006:4).
Another significant document in this area, the i2010 e-Government Action Plan (European Commission, 2006) seeks to ensure that no citizen is left behind, by promoting inclusive e-Government, under which specific measures are developed to connect and deliver public services to vulnerable groups who are at risk of exclusion.

Governments at national, regional and local levels, together with their agencies and other intermediaries (e.g. NGOs, civil societies, volunteer associations and the third sector in general), which deliver public services, are increasingly integrating ICTs into their administrative processes, both behind the scenes and in their interfaces with the public. However, whilst eGovernment services should reduce the complexity of citizens' and businesses' dealing with government and its intermediaries, there is a danger that people without easy access to ICTs could find it even harder to deal with government. Public services should be available on equal terms to all (citizens, businesses, etc.), and therefore public authorities need to take account of the interests of all potential service users, following the principle of inclusive eGovernment.

Up to today, the digital divide persists in the EU. It must be dealt with, if Europe is to reach the objectives of its latest 2020 Strategy (European Commission, 2010b), which highlights the importance of reaching high levels of employment, low carbon economy, productivity and social cohesion through seven flagship initiatives, one of which is the Digital Agenda for Europe (European Commission, 2010a). The Agenda, which is in some way a result of all the previous efforts on eGovernment, defines the key role the use of ICTs must play if Europe is to reach its goal of smart sustainable and inclusive growth. Among other significant steps to be taken, the document highlights the significance of working towards inclusive eGovernment.

4. Digital gap persists

4.1 Causes for the Digital Gap

Currently many Europeans derive only few or no benefits from ICTs and major gaps in their use of ICTs persist. According to a Declaration from the Riga Ministerial Conference (2006) 57% of individuals living in the EU do not regularly use the Internet, only 10% of persons over 65 use Internet, against 68% of those aged 16-24, only 24% of persons with low education use the

Internet, against 73% of those with high education, only 32% of unemployed persons used the Internet against 54% of employed persons. Only 3% of public web sites surveyed comply with the minimum web accessibility standards and guidelines, hindering access to web content and services for people with disabilities who comprise some 15% of the EU population (European Commission, 2010a). And the list of digital gaps between various segments of the population could continue. Because of the importance of ICTs in everyday life, it is however essential that people without access to ICTs, or without the skills to use them, benefit from them too.

It is broadly true that socially excluded people normally have a very limited opportunity to use or access ICTs, and their participation in the knowledge society is seriously damaged. Three major elements determining the digital divide are education, age and income. The digital divide is also influenced by other factors, the most common ones include:

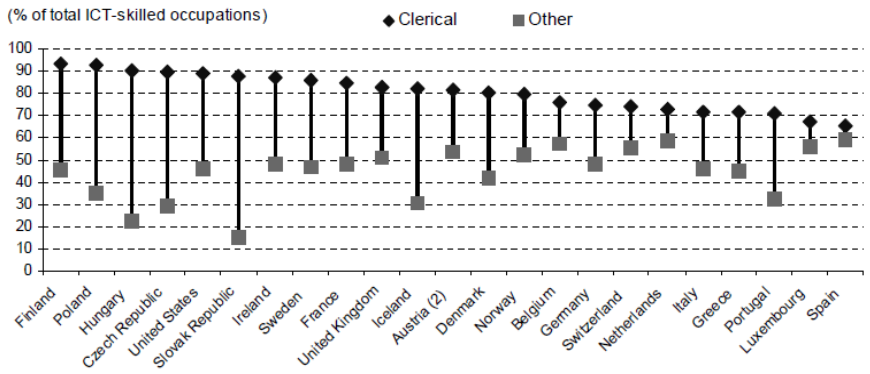
- Gender inequality;
- Geographical factors (such as living in rural or remote areas where broadband communication and infrastructural ICT services practically do not exist or are very limited or scarce public access points in their local community to the Internet);
- Lack of computers at home;
- Lack of basic ICT skills combined with the complexity of technology being used (many times the problem in groups lacking education in this domain but also in small administrations); and
- Permanent social isolation (as a result, for example, of unclear integration policies of immigrants in local communities, which is generally speaking the case of many non-EU immigrants or even of some immigrants groups within the EU itself).

4.2 Gender and ICTs

In accordance with the above, women are one of the largest groups facing eExclusion. In its 2006 report on ICTs and Gender, the OECD concludes that "…gender gap with regard to ICT continues" (OECD, 2007:41) in the OECD countries. There are considerable differences between women and men in ICT-related employment. Women have low share of employment in ICT specialist occupations (such as software engineers or IT specialists). Among intensive users of ICTs women are furthermore most heavily represented in office and secretarial occupations rather than in professional ones (Figure-1).

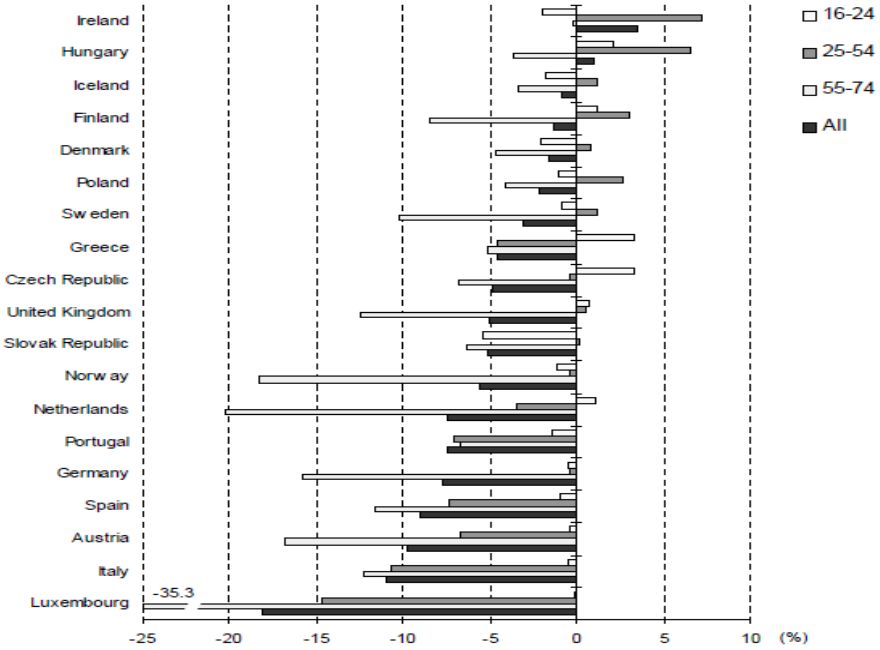
These gaps tend to persist over time and in some cases increase. Such differences are also a reflection of educational patterns, with women tending not to go into ICT education to the same extent as men do. In terms of ICT access across the whole population in OECD countries, differences are significantly lower, but women are found to have overall lower access to ICTs (PCs and the Internet). Figure 2 represents this difference for selected OECD countries.

Figure-1: Share of women in ICT-using occupations with detail for clerical occupations in selected OECD countries, 2004



Source: OECD, based on EULFS and US Current Population Survey.

Figure-2: Gender differences[2] in computer use[3] in 2005, selected OECD countries

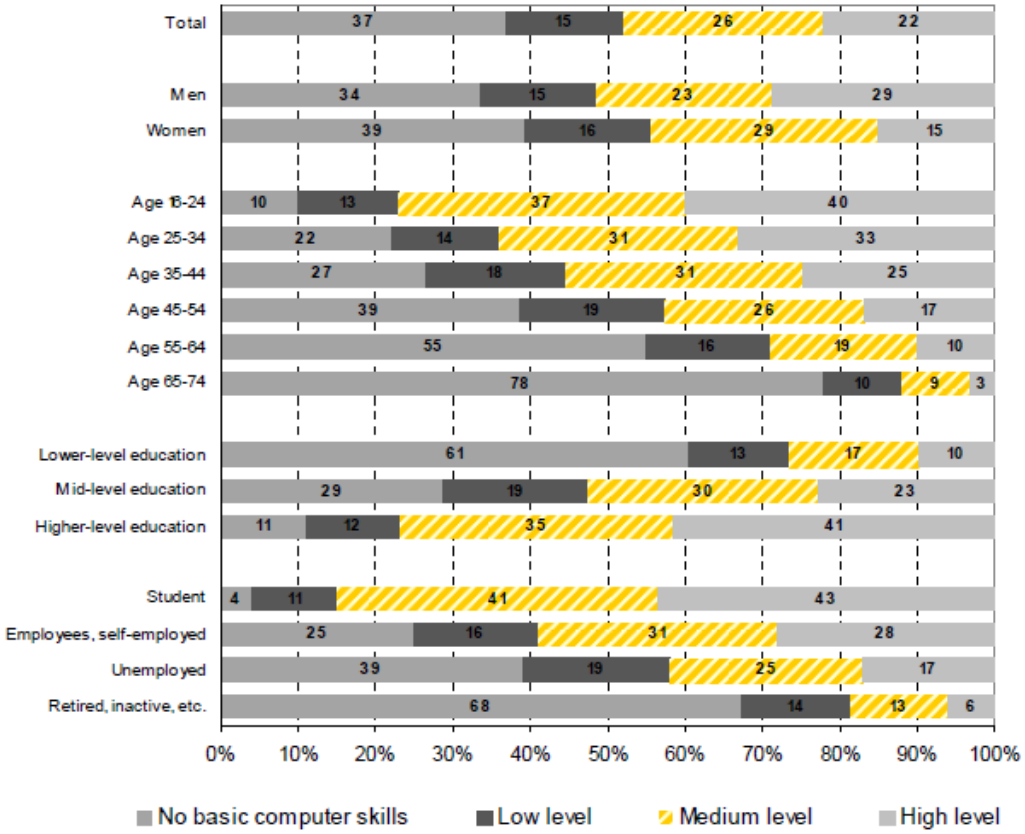


Source: OECD, based on data from Eurostat, Newcronos database, 2006.

[2] Difference calculated as percentage of women minus percentage of men, in percentage points.
[3] Computer used in the last 12 months.

Furthermore there are gender differences in basic computer skills. In the EU, like elsewhere, this difference is especially apparent in older groups (Figure 3).

Figure-3: Individuals' level of basic computer skills, EU25, 2005 (as a percentage of the total number of individuals aged 16 to 74)



Source: Eurostat, Community survey on ICT usage in households and by individuals, as used by OECD (2007).

In terms of actual use of ICTs, the OECD found that women and men tend to use their access differently (OECD, 2007). This difference combined with the other above mentioned conclusions results in the fact that women are generally more often the users of ICTs while men tend to be the creators of content.

It is apparent that women as a group do not suffer such a major ICT exclusion problem other groups such as the elderly, young immigrants or NEETs (people who are not in education, employment or training) suffer, but women do represent half of the population and their equal involvement as users, creators of content or employees in the ICT industry is absolutely essential

for the society, communication, economy and all connected aspects of the human life. These differences not only prevent the EU economy, which is in growing need of ICT professionals from utilizing a major part of the female population, but it also prevents this half of the population from influencing the "new public space" (Guntherova, 2009), utilizing all available communication channels and eServices and taking full advantage of rapidly evolving eGovernment.

5. BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE: DIGITAL LOCAL AGENDA

Digital divide often stems from local conditions and causes; therefore, many ICT, eGovernment and policy experts and practitioners believe the issue must be dealt with through policies and agendas at the local level. Thus the Digital Local Agenda (DLA) also called Local Digital Agenda in some countries, a strategic eInclusion instrument to support eGovernment planning by local governments in regional areas, has been developed by World Summits of Local Authorities on Information Society. The main aim of DLA is enabling all people in the world to enjoy the benefits of ICTs.

The DLA is an instrument designed to be used by local governments to plan their participation in Information Society and eGovernment, establish a common strategy with other public and private stakeholders in their territory to build strong local networks in this domain, organise provision of services, modernise their establishment, improve dialogue with their citizens and enhance their citizens' participation in local decision-making.

In order for these functions to be possible the DLA was designed as a flexible instrument adaptable to each context and its specific conditions in which it is to be implemented, ultimately bringing the strategies that are being implemented closer to the real needs in the region. Although the DLA is a bottom-up instrument, every local government operationalises it in cooperation with other authorities in charge in its territory and with the national government.

In the future the implementation of a Digital Local Agenda in a region should allow for understanding the actual priorities and needs in that region and ways, in which regional and national programmes could support them, especially in terms of advanced eServices, eInclusion, eParticipation, broadband access and infrastructural services and eCapacity building in civil servants from local governments and citizens in danger of digital exclusion (Ossandon, 2008).

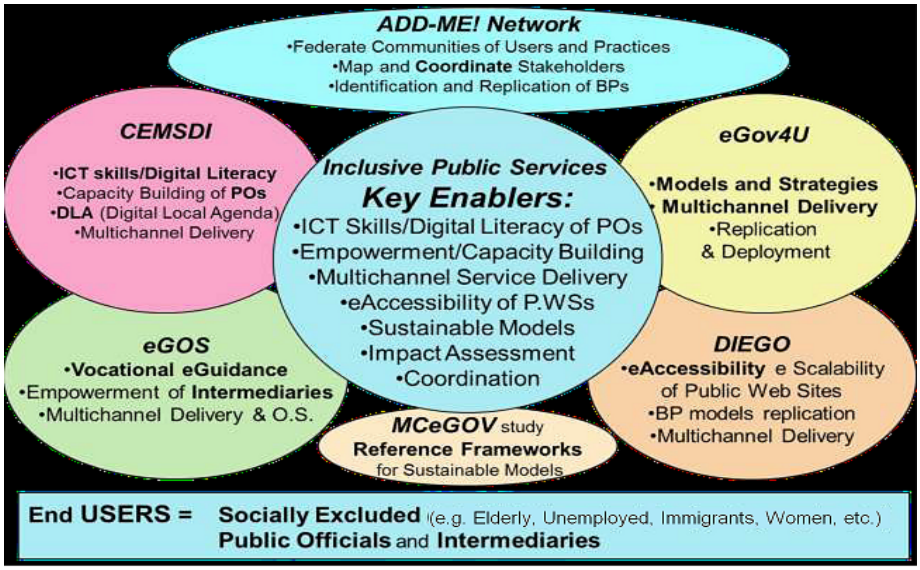
4.1 Development of DLA in Europe

In the EU the DLA gained in significance in 2005, when it was proposed as an answer to the i2010 strategy of the European Union. The DLA was brought to the 2nd World Summit of Cities and Local Governments on Information Society by the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) and the European Local Authorities Telematic Network (ELANET). The Summit, which was held in Bilbao, Spain, approved the Agenda and it was first discussed in June of the same year at the 2005 European Information Society Conference (EISCO) organized by ELANET. The DLA was then launched through CEMR's 2005 "Cracow Declaration on Local Agenda i2010: Europe's towns and regions shape tomorrow's information society." The Declaration established 10 objectives in the field of eGovernment and eInclusion that local and regional governments should accomplish by 2010. The following annual EISCO conferences made

significant progress within the Agenda bringing it to the attention to the European governing bodies and local administrations, some of which are currently beginning to implement it.

Currently a number of initiatives throughout Europe are taking place with the objective of promoting the DLA approach. There are initiatives supported by the European Commission as well as initiatives supported by local governments or other stakeholders. Some current major initiatives, which include actors from several EU Member States and are aimed at eInclusion are outlined in Figure 4.

Figure-4: Main Inclusive eGovernment on-going activities in the EU



Source: ADD-Me project report

From among the initiatives pictured in Figure 4, those focusing most closely on the DLA are the CEMSDI and the ADD-Me projects. Therefore, these projects are discussed in the following section. An example of a smaller scale project is also added there.

5.2 Selected initiatives dealing with the Digital divide

According to the figures shown above, women represent a major group facing ICT exclusion. Because the DLA is designed as a flexible instrument to be adapted to the specific conditions of each local context where it is implemented, it can have major influence on the elimination of the gender digital gap. In this context the paper turns to closer description of initiatives that can help with extinguishing the existing gender digital gap.

Several cases have been selected for the purpose of this paper. The first two cases described below focus on implementing DLA on all-European level through projects involving a certain number of

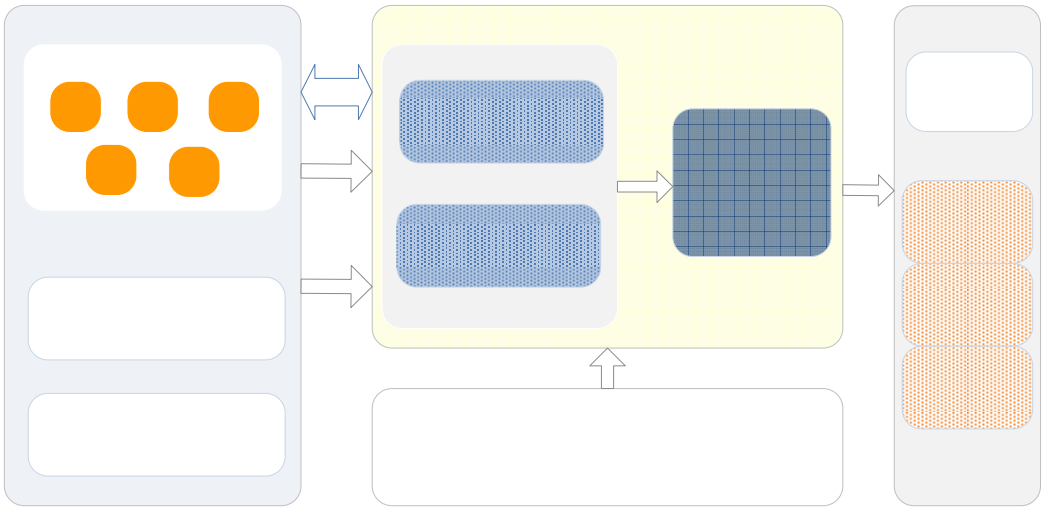
Member States (as also shown in Figure-4). Each case applies differing method but both utilize DLA to reach disadvantaged groups.

Later, a local case, which shows how a local administrative body attempts to close a digital gap affecting rural women, is described. This project aims at re-including women after maternity leave into the workforce by providing them with ICT training. It is being implemented in a small town in a new Member State where digital gender gaps tend to be the highest in the EU.

5.2.1 Selected case: CEMSDI (Civil-servants Empowerment for Multi-media Service Delivery ICT)

The CEMSDI Project[4] focuses on capacity building of civil servants and other practitioners forming part of the service delivery chain in territories in need of active eInclusion and eGovernment policies.

Figure-5: CEMSDI Conceptual Background



Source: O. Lacigova, 2010 (CEMSDI Project team)

The project focus lays in particular on local governments in non-metropolitan areas, where the digital divide tends to be the largest. For these administrative units the empowerment of public officers and their administrations is vital to ensure the implementation of digital inclusion policies targeting the socially disadvantaged, to modernise the organisations of public administration and to efficiently deliver eGovernment and other local services. To realise the project's inclusion objectives, special attention is given to the development of a pro-active approach towards people in danger of exclusion from those public services which are ICT enabled including unemployed people, women, older people members of minorities and others.

[4] CEMSDI is ICT PSP project, started in June 2010, www.cemsdi.eu.

As shown in Figure 5, the Project uses the Digital Local Agenda as key instrument to achieve its goals, therewith tailoring the policies according to the needs of the excluded groups. One of the main routes through with CEMSDI hopes to accomplish its goals is organization of trainings for civil servants aimed at introducing them to DLA and inclusive eGovernment and at empowering them to utilize their newly acquired skills in their day to day duties. At this stage of the project training and empowerment instruments are being created and the ground is being set in the five pilot countries (Italy, Norway, Portugal, Spain and the UK), where the CEMSDI tools will be piloted. This will be a step towards the CEMSDI goal of creating a trans-European methodology that can later be implemented in other territories in European countries. CEMSDI will also create a roadmap outlining how can the CEMSDI DLA methodology be utilized in other contexts.

5.2.2 Selected case: AddMe! (Activating Drivers for Digital eMpowerment in Europe)

The AddMe! Network[5] aspires to gather pertinent social and institutional organisations into a common framework creating a learning environment that supports disadvantaged groups in becoming major beneficiaries of public services, to which they are entitled. The AddMe! Network is aligned with the priorities set-up in major EU documents including the i2010 Action Plan (European Commission, 2006) and earlier outlined in the Manchester and Lisbon Ministerial declarations. The network focuses primarily on eCapacity building of intermediaries and is to become a valid instrument to discuss recommendations on new legislation, policies and action-lines that to be undertaken at regional, national or European level to fight digital exclusion of socially disadvantaged groups and enable intermediaries to act on their behalf.

To shape inclusive eGovernment policies and deployment, especially at the European level the AddMe! Network campaigns to gather national and regional/local administrations interested in inclusive e-Government policies; intermediaries from the third sector (NGOs and non-profit) or from the private sector interested in implementing forms of horizontal subsidiarity or in supporting the public sector initiatives; and administrations and local stakeholders forming part of the service delivery chain and interested in using the Digital Local Agenda as their main instrument towards inclusive eGovernment initiatives.

At present, inclusive eGovernment national policies are relatively weak and fragmented. The economic recession and its impact on European countries, especially on those where eInclusion is most needed (in particular Central and Eastern European countries that recently joined the EU), results in major restrains on national and local budgets. The lack of resources for public services deteriorates growth in employment and worsens other social problems. These realities are likely to have most significant negative effect on people who are facing exclusion from ICT services, including rural populations, the unemployed, women and others. AddMe! is investigating how these many disadvantaging conditions affect different social groups and proposes solutions mainly basing them on the DLA approach.
This two year long project began in October 2009 and in its first year the twenty-two participating partners have undertaken preparatory work such as mapping of relevant stakeholders in the EU Member states, preparation of the platform, on which the stakeholders are to be able to acquire

[5] AddMe! Project started in October 2009, network at http://addme.inescporto.pt.

information, cooperate and learn about best practices, and selection of best practices in the use of DLA throughout the EU. The major challenge the project currently faces is convincing stakeholders that it is worth their time to allocate resources on joining the platform and learning about DLA and its advantages. If successful however, the result of this project will be a sustainable source of information and networking, which can be used by all who would like to see how DLA is utilized elsewhere to apply it to their local conditions and narrow existing digital gaps including their local gender digital gap.

5.2.3 Selected case: Back to Work project

This project (Dvorakova, 2007), which took place between 2006 and 2008, was initiated by a maternity center in a small town in the Czech Republic with the support from European Structural Funds, specifically the "Support of social integration in regions" program. It was later widened to neighboring villages where access to employment is even more difficult.

A group of women using the center realized that there is a dire need for the requalification of mothers returning to work after their maternity leave especially if this leave has lasted several children, i.e. four or more years. Because the use of ICTs is required in nearly all skilled jobs, these women were trained to use PCs. At the same time the center provided babysitting for the children of the mothers who took the courses. The women were also taught how to work in a team, discussed career choices etc. Currently, plans to widen the project to provide the alumna with traineeships in local administrations and firms are being made.

The project was successful because it attracted even women who have never used ICTs and do not even have a computer in their home and 91% of those who entered the courses successfully completed them (Mateřské centrum Dobříšek, 2008). However, there is no publicly available data on how many of those who completed the courses actually utilized their newly acquired skills to find any or better work. The Back to Work project brings forward a local initiative and shows the will of a specific group of citizens, women, to use all benefits of ICT, create a projects tailored to local needs of a group of digitally excluded citizens.

6. CONCLUSIONS

This paper highlighted the importance of the inclusive public services delivery in an emerging digital society and pointed to the fact that despite efforts, a great part of the population is not included. This fact results in the excluded groups' inability to create content, receive information, utilize many public services or participate in decision making. This paper focuses on the exclusion of one significant group – women. Although there are other groups facing more significant exclusion, the exclusion of women is crucial because they represent half of the entire population. Their underrepresentation in the new digital public space has serious repercussions as much of its content is formulated and utilized without taking into account the opinion of approximately 50% of the population. The inability of many women to use public services provided through digital technologies creates significant issues with eParticipation and the effectiveness of eGovernment.

This issue is apparent throughout the world as most governments everywhere have now realized that ICTs are essential for sustainable development and are actively promoting them. Successful

sustainable development cannot however happen if any segment of a society is left behind. Therefore, the policies being created must deal with the digital gap.

In Europe the existence of the digital gap prompted many ICT, eGovernment and policy experts and practitioners to steer the creation of solutions for the digital gap towards the local level. Many in Europe and elsewhere see the DLA as the solution. Therefore, a number of initiatives are taking place in the EU now, which utilize the DLA as a tool to prevent digital exclusion. As described above, the DLA may become a powerful instrument to offer a strategic perspective to improve organisation and services through ICT, to respond all local needs of citizens in order to provide ICT-enabled inclusive Service delivery. This can be possible because DLA is a strategy for the development of digital society by local governments keeping in mind their citizens' needs and wishes as well as the local socio-economic, cultural and institutional specifics. Therefore, it is applicable to any context.

The paper provides brief overview of selected cases, which represent bottom up initiatives, responding to the need for local solutions. They furthermore show, how different social forces and players may actively work in bridging the digital divide, and in order to consider, how to make their work more effective and efficient. Although a more proliferation of the DLA is needed, these cases show that DLA can be a useful tool anywhere, because of its flexibility and adaptability to local conditions.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Council of the EU (2001), "Council Resolution of 8 October 2001 on 'e-Inclusion' – exploiting the opportunities of the information society for social inclusion," *Official Journal of the European Communities*, (2001/C 29 2/02), 18.10. 2001, pp. 6-8.

Dvořáková, M. (2007), "Zpět do práce", (in: L. Sokačová-Ed., *Informační Technologie – Prostor pro Ženy*,) Prague: Gender Studies o.p.s. a Síť MC v ČR, pp. 53-54.

European Commission (2002), *eEurope 2005: An information society for all*, COM(2002) 263 final, Brussels, http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/eeurope/2002/news_library/documents/eeurope2005/eeurope2005_en.pdf, [Accessed 14.2. 2011].

European Commission (2005), *i2010 – A European Information Society for growth and employment*, COM(2005) 229 final, 1.6. 2005, Brussels.

European Commission (2006), *i2010 eGovernment Action Plan: Accelerating eGovernment in Europe for the Benefit of All*, COM(2006) 173 final, Brussels, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2006:0173:FIN:EN:PDF, [Accessed 23.1. 2011].

European Commission (2009), *Commission Staff Working Document – Better access for rural areas to modern ICT*, COM(2009)103, Brussels, http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/rurdev/employment/ict/sec2009_254_en.pdf, [Accessed 1.3. 2011].

European Commission (2010a), *A Digital Agenda for Europe*, COM(2010) 245 final/2, Brussels, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0245:FIN:EN:PDF, [Accessed 2.3. 2011].

European Commission (2010b), *Europe 2020 – A European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth*, COM (2010) 2020, 3.3. 2010, Brussels.

Guntherova, E. (2009), "Žena v informační společnosti: Část II: Žena (ne)gramotná," *Inflow – Information Journal*, Vol. 2, no. 2, http://www.inflow.cz, [Accessed 12.12. 2010].

Inclusive eGovernment ad hoc group and European Commission (2006), *A roadmap for Inclusive eGovernment: towards making all citizens, and especially disadvantaged groups major beneficiaries of eGovernment*, http://www.umic.pt/images/stories/publicacoes/inclusive_egovernment_roadmap.pdf, [Accessed 14.1. 2011].

Mateřské centrum Dobříšek (2008), *Projekt „Zpět do práce"- Závěrečná zpráva*, www.mc.dobris.net/kurzy.htm [Accessed 14.12. 2010].

Misuraca,G., D. Broster, C. Centeno (2010), "Envisioning Digital Europe 2030: Scenario design on ICT for governance and policy modelling," *Paper in proceedings of the 4th International Conference on Theory and Practice of Electronic Governance (ICEGOV2010)*, ACM Press, pp. 347 – 356.

OECD (2003), ICT and Economic Growth – Evidence from OECD Countries, Industries and Firms, France: OECD Publications.

OECD (2007), *ICTs and Gender*, DSTI/ICCP/IE(2006)9/FINAL, http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/16/33/38332121.pdf , [Accessed 24.1. 2011].

Ossandon, J. (2008), "Towards a European Model of the Digital Local Agenda," *Paper presented in EISCO 2008 Conference 5th session*.

UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, "Chpt. 23, Section III: Strengthening the role of Major Groups," *Agenda 21*, http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/agenda21/res_agenda21_00.shtml, [Accessed 12.1. 2011].