

Publicly Available Register of Data

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Organisation: Ministry of the Environment

Country: Poland

Level of government: Central government

Sector: Environmental protection, General public services

Type: Data, Digital

Launched in: 2005

Overall development time: 2 years

Link to the innovation's website

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Description

The Publicly Available Register of Data is an innovation implemented by the Polish Ministry of Environment. It allows the government to collect, organise and share environmental information provided by local, regional and central government institutions in Poland. The register is a part of a larger website: www.ekoportal.pl.

This innovative tool is a cost-free online application which grants all citizens access to information about the environment and its protection.

Why the innovation was developed

The main reason to create the Publicly Available Register of Data was the implementation of the Directive 2003/4/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2003 on public access to environmental information, in particular the following three provisions of the directive: (1) public authorities disseminate automatically, systematically and actively the environmental information which is held by them or for them; (2) environmental information becomes progressively available by means of computer telecommunication and/or electronic technology; (3) public authorities organise the environmental information which is relevant to their functions, maintain it in forms or formats which are readily reproducible and ensure that any information compiled by them is up-to-date, accurate and comparable. Additionally, pursuant to the Polish Act, public authorities involved in environmental matters are under an obligation to hold publicly accessible registers of data on documents containing information on the environment and environmental protection.

Objectives

Develop staff capacity, Enhance transparency, Improve access, Improve efficiency, Improve service quality, Improve user satisfaction

- Improve service outcome through transparency.
 - Improve service quality by making data readily available.
 - Improve cost efficiency by providing data free of charge.
 - Improve user satisfaction by making cooperation and exchange of information more available.
 - Provide useful and transparent information for government employees.
 - To meet European Union regulations.
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Main beneficiaries

Civil Society, General population, Government bodies, Government staff

- Employees of local, regional and central government institutions (data providers). At this moment, there are more than 5 600 users representing more than 1 500 different government offices.
 - Citizens – people who regularly visit our web page to search and download the information they need. The register gives access to 1 115 000 information cards that have been published so far. In the first half of 2013, nearly 110 000 cards have been uploaded.
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Existing similar practices

Rios, Arisco

In public administration of my country

Six government organisations

There are about 6 organisations which provide similar solutions for government administration, but most of them are private and their services are not free of charge.

Results

Efficiency

Thanks to the Publicly Available Register of Data, the exchange of information on environmental protection is free of charge. The centralisation of the information saves money and time, because the users in administrative organisations don't need to provide any additional technical facilities. The organisations also don't need to administrate the application nor pay for the employees' training.

Service quality

Accessibility:

The application made the exchange of information easier and information more available, e. g. the interface is easy and user-friendly even for employees that are less familiar with ICTs. The application has an integrated web functionality, which makes exchange with other IT systems possible.

Reliability:

The data is safe and regular back-ups are made by employees of the Ministry of Environment.

User satisfaction

- The government offices are satisfied with the application that lets them introduce and update their own information via an online form.
 - Users can call the Ministry and ask for help or further information about the services and the application.
 - Citizens who utilize the Publicly Available Register of Data are satisfied with the quick and easy way of getting information about the environment and its protection. The centralisation of the information lets them save time and money.
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Evaluation

The evaluation of the costs and benefits has been prepared for the complete project, which means it contains information concerning not only about the Publicly Available Register of Data, but also about the website Ekoportal.pl, courses in government departments, e-learning courses, manuals for users and other elements.

Our methodology is to constantly collect information about incurred costs and benefits during courses that we organise or while consulting users about their expectations. We ask users about the advantages that they obtained thanks to the application, which gives us direct information about the utility of the Publicly Available Register of Data.

Development

Design

The idea for the innovation originated in the Environmental Information Centre, which implemented the project. It took its final shape after talks with government employees, who communicated their most important needs and requirements. There had also been many consultations with experts specialising in environmental information dissemination. From January 2013, the Ministry of Environment has managed this innovative tool.

Design time: 8 months

Implementation

Tools used:

- Paper and electronic user manuals for potential users from government offices.
- 50 training sessions for potential users from government.
- E-learning.

Resources used:

Direct costs:

- Offices for servers.
- Equipment (blade server with 4 blades, 8TB array, backup system).
- Computers.
- IT team training (3 persons).

Indirect costs:

- Reallocation of internal staff while introducing new technologies and systems.
- Office space used for new installations.
- The innovation was financed in whole by public funds.

Implementation time: 6 months

Diffusion

When the application was ready, our main target was to inform as many administrative offices as possible about our new tool, to encourage them to learn how it works and how to upload their documents into our system. Our application is being used by over 5 000 government agents, who represent more than 1 500 administration offices.

We are constantly working on better dissemination of information to Polish citizens on how to take advantage of our application.

Diffusion time: 8 months

Partnerships

Consulted government

To improve the application's functionalities, we consulted government offices (in particular voivodships, marshals, district and commune offices) for their help and opinions.

European Phare Project

Other

The European Phare Project which intends to implement the European Fund of Regional Development in Poland, Germany and France financed most parts of the implementation of the Publicly Available Register of Data.

Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned

The Publicly Available Register of Data is compatible with most regulations. It uses the most ergonomic tools, so that everyone can easily use the application.

The most important task when creating and implementing an application for public use is to observe the activity of all users: both government offices and citizens. We ask users for their feedback, and try to improve the service together with users' growing operational needs.

Other information

While developing the system, we thought about how to avoid data redundancy in the future. That is why we created a tool which allows sharing existing documents on the server with applications created by any other government office. We believe it will reduce the quantity of information existing on the internet. We also allow other applications to "consume" our data and create their own information.

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