

ALBANIA
The e-Government portal of Albania, *e-Albania.al*

What did the commitment seek to achieve, and why is this important?

For the 100th anniversary of its independence, Albania unveiled a new way for the government to interact with citizens, with the e-Albania portal.

The e-Albania government portal is a powerful tool for administrative reform and for fighting corruption, which enables citizen-oriented, transparent, accountable, effective, efficient and empowering governance. The portal aims to provide a one-stop online access point to all government services, with interactive and transactional e-services. The overall aim is integrated delivery of all government services for citizens, businesses, state employees and visitors alike.

The information published on the portal is organized around “life events”, topics and user groups, based on the back-office integration of information systems and business processes through the shared e-Government infrastructure. With regard to the services, users can get information on the documents needed to get a particular service, including any tariffs and costs, addresses and locations of the official office and the contact information.

How did you go about implementing the commitment? Who were the key advocates both within and outside of government during the implementation phase?

The first release of the portal was on November 28th, 2012, in time for the 100th anniversary of Albania independence. Currently the portal is supported by a cutting-edge integrated infrastructure that means it can access and cross-reference all state databases, using a system known as the e-Government Interoperability Framework (e-GIF) and offers a secure authentication and authorization mechanism. The portal was financed by the European Union and is implemented by the National Agency for Information Society (NAIS) as the beneficiary, in cooperation with the consortium of CSI Piemonte and Infosoft Systems.

A modern CMS solution is implemented for hosting and managing the content on the e-Government portal. The CMS has a check-in/check-out mechanism for working documents with automatic version control, detailed audit logging functionality, workflow support and search capabilities. The government portal is able to host dynamic content, updated either manually by the editorial team or automatically, triggered by changes at the original content location. This includes news, information about government and public institutions services, government

newsletters, citizens' reports and complaints, linkage of the database of existing legislation, syndicated content from external sources.

How have citizens benefitted from this reform? If possible, please include evidence of results or uptake, e.g. links to news coverage, quotes, and/or quantitative measures, such as web analytics.

The portal offered a rich user-friendly catalogue of information related to all services offered by government institutions and agencies. The total number of page views reached 3.6 million and the average number of views per day is about 11,000.

One of the most beneficial services the e-Albania portal provides is helping students to access higher education. In the beginning of March the portal began allowing students that want to enroll in public higher education, to register online for the state entrance exam, the Matura Exam. For the provision of this service, a secure information exchange between the National Civil Register and the State Matura Information System is enabled through the e-GIF. Within two weeks, about 50,000 students registered to the exam, through the e-Albania portal and by mid-March the portal reached the highest level of daily unique visitors of 14,980.

The portal makes life easier for citizens in other ways too. Other e-services provided include registration to the driving license theory and practical exam, tracking the status of business registration and licensing applications, tracking the status of public procurement procedures for businesses and tracking the complaints regarding public procurements. These e-services help to reduce bureaucracy and time spent for citizens and business and increase processes transparency in the battle against corruption.

Every citizen can customize the site according to their own preferences, giving them a personal and individual way to interact with the government. All authenticated users are able to customize the visual layout of the portal, with preferences stored in the users' profiles. The site is also safe and secure. All back office users are authenticated through the Active Directory, using single sign-on authentication. In order to access electronic services, such as e-forms, all users must be registered, authenticated and authorized to use e-services and specific e-forms. During the registration process citizens need their personal ID card and some personal information, such as father's name, birthdate, etc. The portal provides video tutorials and forum topics in order to help users during the registration process.

Additionally, citizens can get periodic updates, which are citizen focused, other information concerning Albania, a calendar with important events for the citizens and other information, too. More details on the portal functionalities and navigation are provided in the videos, listed under Annexes.

The portal also offers free access to services and more efficient ways to submit forms. It is part of a cloud environment, located on the Albanian National Agency for Information Society servers, facilitating government interaction with citizens and businesses.

The E-Albania.al portal is not only useful to Albanian citizens. It serves as a single window through which even foreign visitors can get information about the services offered by the Government of Albania, as well as other relevant information including a calendar containing important dates, emergency contacts and news. The portal represents the image of Albania in Europe and for this reason the content is published in Albanian and English language, too.

The e-Albania portal acts like a gateway through which every Albanian citizen interested in public services offered in Albania can interact with the institutions or public offices easily through their computer.

What did NOT go as planned, and what did you learn from this? What is the unfinished business, e.g. how might you take this work forward in your next OGP action plan?

In the future, the government has even greater ambitions for the portal. The National Agency for Information Society (NAIS) aims to enrich the content of the portal by offering ever more useful electronic services to citizens, businesses and public employees.

Annexes:

https://www.dropbox.com/s/4piyst54jt2cb3e/Portal_Navigation.mp4

https://www.dropbox.com/s/zq70q4tllpc5204/Portal_Description.mp4