

Template for Country Reports on Portals

1. INTRODUCTION

The focus of this project is the application of web portals in the public sector. This may encompass topic-specific portals, general central government information portals, or other types of portal. The aim is to set out GOL countries' use of portals: the status, the trends, and the challenges facing the future development of portals. You are invited to describe these aspects of portals in a country report.

The template proposes a general structure for the country report, which we assume, is applicable for all countries. In order to capture the diversities that we expect exist throughout the participating countries, we have decided to make the questions open-ended. We believe that itemised questions may limit your responses and would make it difficult to find mutual challenges. It would be appreciated if you were to include a brief discussion to each of your answers. Therefore, please follow the template only as far as you regard it useful for your report.

Please describe briefly the current status and strategies on portals in your country. In addition, discuss whether the definition of portals, as suggested in the accompanying letter, complies with the ideas of portals in your country. In short:

- Status in your country
- Visions and targets for the application of portals
- National strategies.
- Comments on the suggested definition.

2. DRIVERS OF CHANGE – DRIVING FORCE, INCENTIVES, AND MEANS

Certain means work as triggers, supporters, accelerators, or obstacles to the development of portals. It is expected that the operative means vary between the GOL countries. In general, means are special funds or subsidies, legislation, or administrative arrangements and co-operation that may trigger, support, or accelerate change. At the same time, the authorities may experience users demands that trigger the process. In this section you are invited to report on the drivers of change/ incentives/ means in use in your country.

2.1 User Orientation

Does your country conduct enquiries in order to monitor users satisfaction, expectations, and use of government electronic service delivery? If any, what are the “lessons learned”?

2.2 Other Incentives

Please briefly present the means/incentives that may work as triggers, supporters, accelerators or obstacles to the development of portals in your country. Relevant subjects for the presentation would be:

- funding/financing arrangements
- legislation that may work as accelerators, (e.g. electronic signature), or obstacles, (e.g. acts that require manual processes), etc
- expertise or Research & Development resources
- central co-ordination in public sector
- incentives/means for smaller communities or units with limited resources and web solutions skills
- projects or co-ordination of portals within - or between - public sector/ private sector/ NGOs. (Terms of interest could be enabling the private sector, branding, charging for services, public advertisements, etc.)
- experiences to date with the current means.

3. PORTALS – FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND CHALLENGES

3.1 Status and development

Due to variations in government structures, culture, and political systems, one would expect there to be differences in the way that portals have developed.

Please briefly present the development pattern/direction of portals in your country. Relevant dimensions and keywords in the presentation could be:

- Development towards governmental top nodes (e.g. “one stop shop”) vs. diversification of portals and services, etc
- Services directed to specific usergroups vs. General services directed to a broader range of usergroups, portals with a customer focus or subject specific approach, etc

- Evolution based on guidelines from central government (“top down”) vs. evolution based on local/sector initiatives (“bottom up”) conducted processes, etc
- Integration of government services vs. maintaining specialised and/or sector specific services
- Main dimensions to status and development of portals not already mentioned

We would like you to reflect on the development of portals in relation to your country’s governmental structure and system. Finally you may highlight other (cultural, economic, etc.) vital aspects that may explain the development direction of the solutions.

3.2 Applying metadata criteria (“cross-portals standards”)

Please briefly present your country’s current policy/thinking about metadata standards, and whether your country has established guidelines or requirements for

- Quality of content on government web sites
- Information structures (Dublin Core, etc.)
- National standards for information meta labelling (xml etc.)

3.3 Future challenges

Please indicate what you regard are areas that need further investigation , either as a domestic matter, or as a matter of international concern. One subject for discussion would be whether the identified challenges call for new working projects in the GOL network.

3.4 Portals samples

Please supply a selection of relevant Internet portal site addresses that may illustrate central points in your country report. Please give brief information about each portal, the role and function of the portals, and other characteristics that may illuminate points in the country report.

WWe very much look forward to receiving your country reports and discussing this subject more thoroughly at the next GOL meeting!