

E-Government From Theory to Application

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Extended Abstract

Almost all Developed countries -as well some of the developing ones- are in a big race to apply E-Government, which is the outcome of the latest achievements of ICT.

Although most people, whatever their education or specialization were, repeat exactly like parrot this term but the real dimension of this subject is not fully understood or clear, beginning from the basic concept ending with the rewarding benefits, passing by the best way of application and performance stages and measures.

What does “E-Government” mean? How & when it was borne?

What are the main concepts included in this term? And what “unique-window” means?

What is the importance of applying E-Government? What benefits (in General and particular for Syria) are expected?

How many stages to do so and how they could be performed? How can we evaluate performance in each stage? (We’ll discuss together the European measuring criteria to evaluate the performance)

What are basic procedures to apply E-Government in General, and in particular in Syria?

Do we have to adopt one single central committee for the entire public ministries for this mission? And start up a unique e-gate? Or leave every organization develop and launch its own initiative? If the latter is the best in which stage should we start to unite the sites in one national portal?

This paper will give scientific and practical answers for all these inquiries.

In brief, we all know that using computers has been developed through the last 25 years, till it becomes a highly sophisticated automation tool.

It’s too difficult to bind the term “E-Government” to any precise definition, due to the fact that it covers many concepts and a wide area of applications, but we can simply say that it’s: “carry out all transactions with government bodies through Internet”.

Benefits of adopting this style of service are uncountable, such as:

Saving of time & efforts lost in following up formalities, efficiently solving traffic problems, and participating in saving Environment, etc.

We have to look to the e-services as an alternative of classical or direct ones, but not as substitute. At least in the early stage of applying e-government.

But is it true that applying E-Government will confirm the overwhelming thought that this will end up in dismissing a lot of people from their jobs, increasing the unemployment?

The answer is definitely ...No. But nature of doing things will change, and we have to invest in people, i.e., continuous training and qualification.

Let's have a small example to see what will happen If e-government was applied.

This example assumes E-Government principle applied to a network connecting all organizations (public & private) related to import and export sector, they are Ministry of Economy & its Directorates (Import/Export Licenses) , Banks (Commercial & Central), and Ministry of Finance & its Directorates (Customs, Income Tax, etc) and evaluate the benefits gained to this sector.

What are the main obstacles to apply E-Government in Syria? Is it short of hardware? Or it is mental & environmental obstacles?

The answer is very clear and simple, it's a combination of many factors clear to everyone, such as:

Lack of qualified people and trained staff in ICT, absence of e-crimes protection laws, the old rigid mentality, Inflexibility of banking system, the overwhelming bureaucrat, the infrastructure of communications, high cost of internet and many others.

E-Commerce, as well, didn't grow up enough in Syria for reasons needs a dedicated paper to talk about.

The conclusion is a set of most important suggestions necessary for launching E-Government in Syria.

We have to work on several tracks in parallel; take necessary steps for administrative evolution, build up huge dBases, adopting GIS everywhere, raise training level on basic computer & Internet skills, move strongly towards E-Banking, drive different Chambers (Commerce, Industry, etc) to take their role Encouraging investments in ICT, etc.