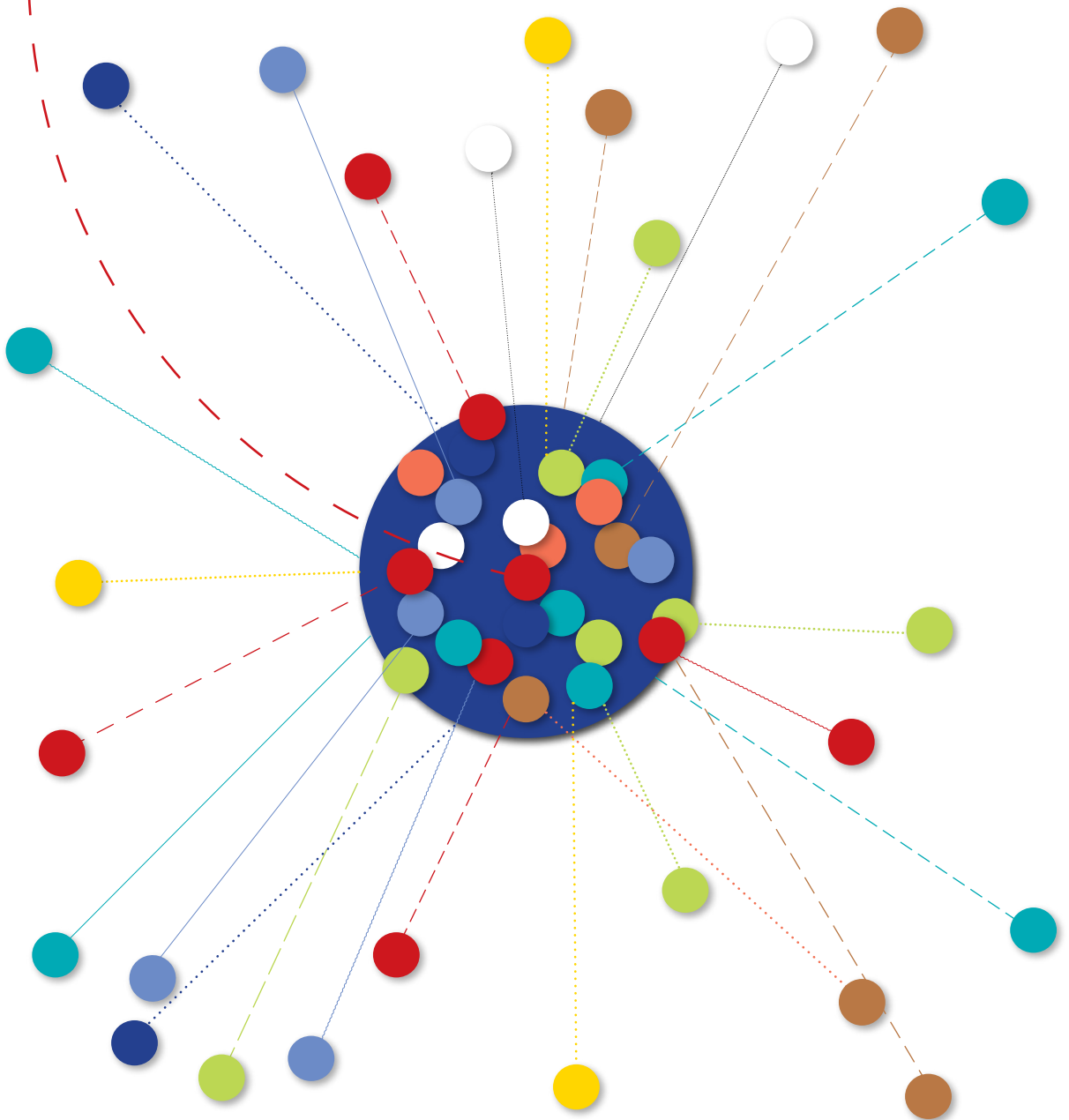
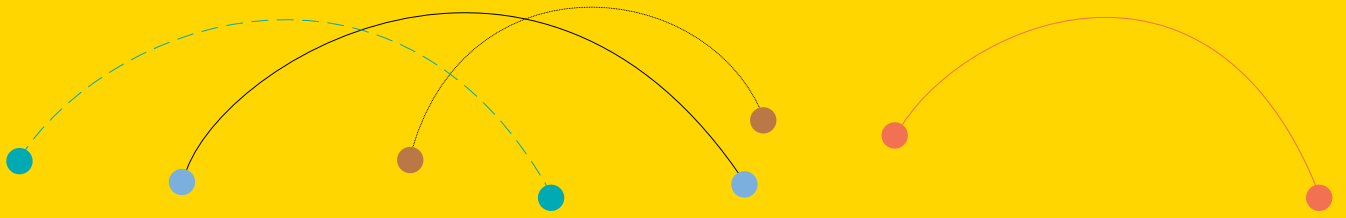


ICELAND THE e-NATION

**Icelandic Government Policy on the Information Society
2008 – 2012**





© Published by the Prime Minister's Office

May 2008

ISBN: 978-9979-9870-0-0

Web site: <http://eng.forsaetisraduneyti.is/information-society/>

Design and layout: PORT Design

Printing: Prentmet

© Photography: Ragnar Th. Sigurðsson



Address by the Prime Minister

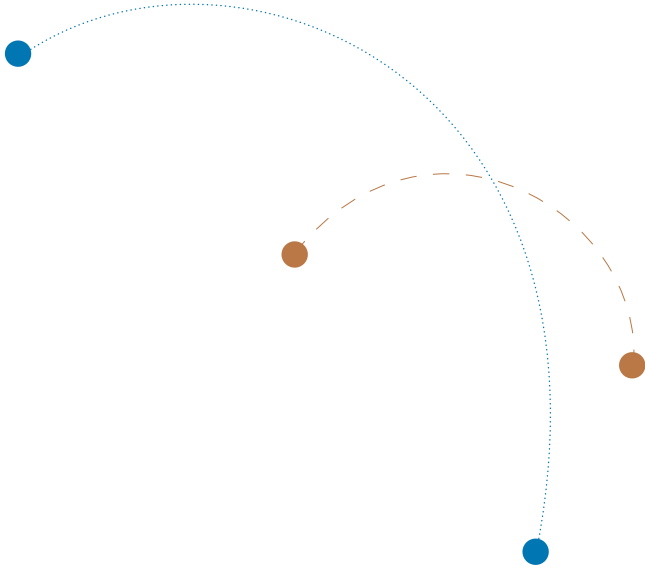
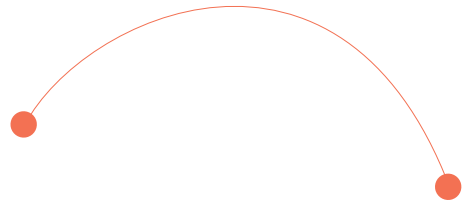
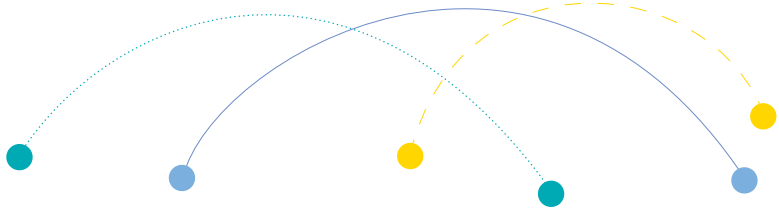
The Icelandic government has formulated its 2008 to 2012 policy on the information society, following the motto Iceland, the e-nation. This is the third time the Icelandic government has formulated such a policy, with the title referring to the online accessibility of all appropriate public services. Furthermore, this term entails all governmental authorities working together as one whole, or as a single coordinated network, since such coordination is the key to improving public services, increasing efficiency and encouraging significant progress.

Iceland ranks among the world's leading countries in terms of various aspects of information technology – not only in owning computers, for example, but also in using them, the Internet and any services offered online. Nevertheless, the supply of such services by public bodies has been quite deficient, leaving Iceland lagging behind the countries with which it wishes to compare itself. This calls for urgent change, making service the overriding aspect of the policy now being presented. The future vision is that Icelanders should become the leading nation regarding electronic services and the application of information technology. There will be extensive benefits for individuals and businesses if this is achieved, as improved services will save both time and money. In addition, the State will operate more efficiently, to the advantage of the entire community.

The effective implementation of this policy is of vital importance; however, its success will depend on the cooperation of public bodies in building an integrated public service network whereby data, rather than people, travels from one organisation to another.



Geir H. Haarde



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

FUTURE VISION

Icelanders shall become the leading nation in electronic services and the utilisation of information technology

GUIDING PRINCIPLE:

User-friendly, efficient service – no need to wait your turn

Service

Iceland shall become an e-nation – offering self-service of high quality at a single location

Self-service online – applications, certificates, notifications, appointments, data submission

Online centre – every service accessible at one site: www.island.is

Information services – access to personal and general data held by public bodies

The e-citizen – everyone's requirements fulfilled by quality service

Efficiency

The e-nation shall be efficient, simple and secure – data, rather than people, will travel from one public body to another

Integrated architecture – standardisation, coordination, cooperation and security

Simpler public administration – key enablers:

- Online payments, eIDs, e-procurement
- Coordinated access to index files kept by public bodies
- Reduced administrative burden, increased automation
- Eliminating barriers, for example legal impediments
- Jobs independent of location

Progress

The competitiveness of the Icelandic e-nation shall be based on active democracy, sound education and powerful industries

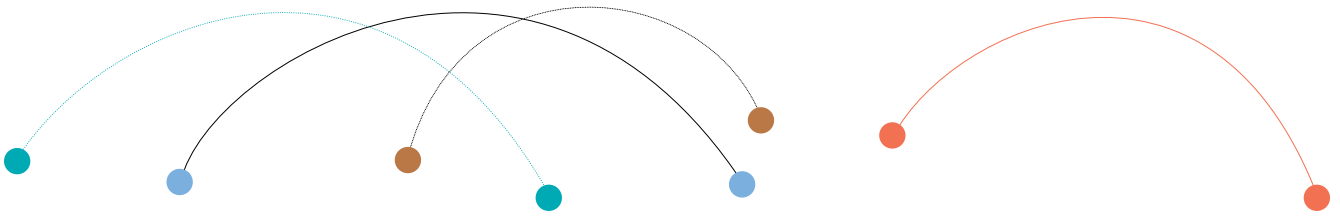
Innovation and research – always a step ahead

Education – constant application of information technology to learning and teaching

eParticipation and eDemocracy – e-voting trials in municipal elections, increased citizen options for participating in the decision-making processes of public bodies

The commercial sector – emphasis on outsourcing and information technology in order to improve competitive conditions for Icelandic companies on the international scene





Introduction

This policy builds on three pillars: Service, efficiency and progress. Certain objectives are connected to each pillar, together with a list of measures. Although the policy statement includes lists of the principal measures, the information society is developing at a swift pace and the environment continues to change rapidly, so that such a list can never become exhaustive, rendering it important to compile an implementation plan and revise it annually.

To achieve success in implementing the policy, ministries and public bodies must work towards fulfilling its aims by:

- Familiarising personnel with the future vision, guiding principle and measures in the policy
- Defining and understanding clientele needs
- Activating employees to find rewarding solutions that are easy to apply
- Constantly monitoring the implementation process to ensure constant adherence to the guiding principle of the policy

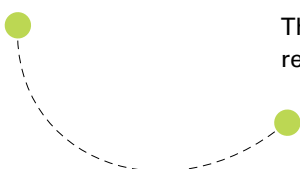
This policy statement contains the terms “e-nation” and “e-citizen”. E-nation refers to the future vision of state services, i.e. those of national bodies and ministries, being integrated and made accessible online. The term e-citizen refers to an individual or company utilising the online services of state authorities.

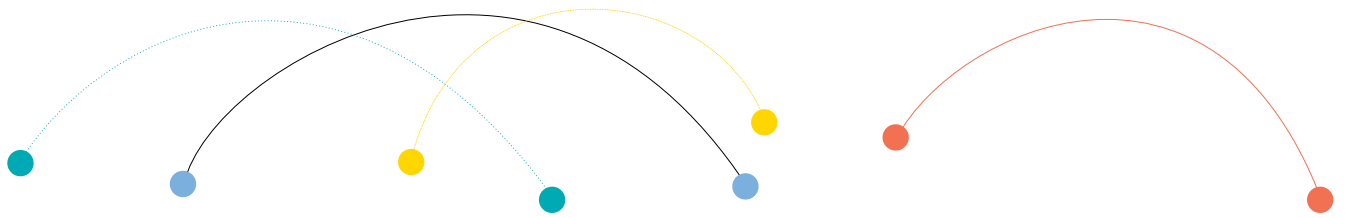
The present policy conforms to the government’s 2007 policy statement, which amongst other things declared:

Efforts shall be made to streamline and modernise public administration and to augment the use of information technology for the purpose of improving public services, adding to efficiency, and simplifying interaction between the public and governmental authorities.

In addition to the objectives stated in this policy, the government has established objectives in various specific areas which it is also important to pursue while implementing the policy. Examples of such tasks include the initiative Simpler Iceland; the Telecom Policy; plans of the Ministry of Health for electronic medical records and a health net; the strategy of the Ministry of Education regarding information technology in education, culture and science; the national government policy on free and open-source software; the strategy for effective government operations, and the Government Procurement Policy. Furthermore, the present policy is closely related to various environmental objectives, since telecommuting, teleconferencing, distance education and increased governmental services through the Internet help reduce travel and thereby decrease pollution. Finally, it might be pointed out that this policy takes note of i2010, the EU policy framework for the information society and the media.

This policy spans the period of 2008 to 2012 and its guiding principle reads: User-friendly, efficient service – no need to wait your turn.





Service

Iceland shall become an e-nation – offering self-service of high quality at a single location

OBJECTIVES

1. Self-service online

The e-citizen can serve her/himself without delay, anywhere and at any time. This must apply to every type of service where it is feasible, e.g. applications, certificates, notifications, appointments, data submission and other aspects of interaction with public bodies. It must become possible to fill out and submit a form online, observe how the matter is being handled and obtain a final resolution. Waiting around at service establishments will be relegated to history.

2. Online centre

An overview of online public services shall be available at www.island.is, which shall serve as an Internet centre, i.e. one site that gives access to information and services from any public body.

3. Information services

The e-citizen shall be able to access any information on her/himself which is stored in official data systems, as well as other important data held by public bodies.

4. The e-citizen

The quality of online public services is to be enhanced by adapting them to the requirements and advantages of the e-citizen. Consideration must be given to the needs and access of all social groups, such as people with handicaps, immigrants, those living in remote areas, foreign business entities, senior citizens and the youngest residents. Access to online public services shall allow for options in user equipment. In this way, the e-nation will develop in step with the needs of the e-citizen.

ABBREVIATIONS:

DKM - Ministry of Justice and Ecclesiastical Affairs
FJR - Ministry of Finance
FOR - Prime Minister's Office
FTR - Ministry of Social Affairs and Social Security

HBR - Ministry of Health
IDN - Ministry of Industry, Energy and Tourism
MRN - Ministry of Education, Science and Culture
SAM - Ministry of Communications

SLR - Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture
UMH - Ministry for the Environment
UTN - Ministry for Foreign Affairs
VRN - Ministry of Business Affairs

Principal measures

SELF-SERVICE ONLINE

Accountable

- Notifications of change of domicile within Iceland, birth certificates, certificates of marital status, and other National Registry services DKM
- Property registration, mortgage certificates, etc DKM/FJR
- Certificates from the Police Registry DKM
- An online police station, for instance for notifying the police DKM
- Founding a company / changes to the Enterprise Register FJR
- Sending certified copies of tax declarations to various parties, organisations and companies FJR
- Income estimates and provisional calculations regarding them, applications for old-age and disability pensions, and other services of the Social Services Administration FTR
- Applications for unemployment benefits, maternity/paternity or parental leave and other services of bodies under the Ministry of Social Affairs and Social Security FTR
- Health portal, i.e. booking appointments at health centres and with specialists HBR
- A personal health history, including for instance vaccinations, hospitalisations and medications HBR
- Educational background, from primary school through university MRN
- Applications for Ministry of Education, Science and Culture grants, e.g. from the Literature Fund, Film Fund and Music Fund MRN
- Aviation licences; the registration of vessels, vehicles and changes in vehicle ownership; further services of organisations under the Ministry of Communications SAM
- Applications for building permits SAM
- Tenders for customs quotas on meat, meat products and cheese SLR
- Applications for firearms training; permits for animal shows, keeping animals, import/export and so on from the Environment Agency of Iceland UMH
- Applications from designers and masters for official certification; sales permits for pesticides and toxins UMH
- Submitting data to the Environment Agency, for instance in regard to operating licences, green accounting and greenhouse gas emissions UMH
- Service portal for diplomats, consuls and peacekeeping forces UTN
- Applications to the Financial Supervisory Authority for operating licences and active shares VRN
- Payments and applications to the Patent Office for trademarks, patents and designs VRN
- Information and requests from parties subject to regulation by the Financial Supervisory Authority VRN

ONLINE CENTRE

Accountable

- Access to all public body forms via the national portal, www.island.is, along with personalised access to personal data FOR

INFORMATION SERVICES

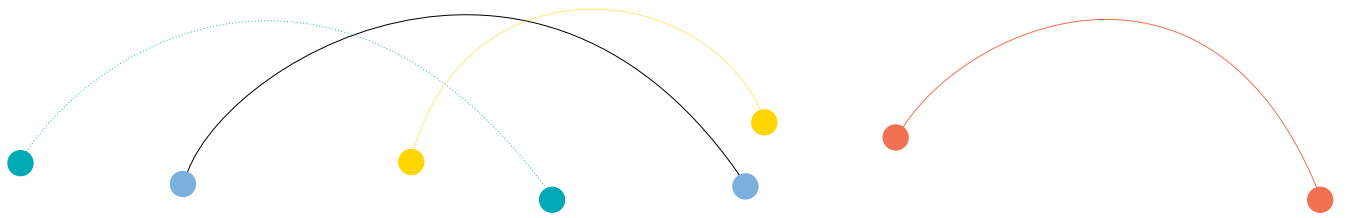
Accountable

- Reminders about renewing documents such as passports and driving licences DKM
- Information on entitlement to discounts for health service HBR
- Access to audio and visual material from the National Broadcasting Service MRN
- Access to hayfield maps at the National Archives MRN
- Access at a single site to libraries, local heritage museums and art galleries, archives and other collections of material MRN
- Current awareness services at libraries, i.e. informing academics and the public of new library acquisitions ... MRN
- SearchCity, an information resource on translated legislation under the EEA Agreement UTN
- Competition Authority resource, focusing on asset and corporate relations VRN

THE e-CITIZEN

Accountable

- The most up-to-date technology for providing public services through such devices as the latest generation of mobile phones All
- Rules, benchmarks, instructions and other possibilities for developing public websites in step with new technologies and progressive client demands FOR
- Developing ministry websites into models for content, usability, accessibility and service All ministries
- Compliance of public websites with accessibility requirements for the disabled (achieving at least W3C - Level A) All
- Guidelines on writing public body website texts; increased presence of foreign language translations FTR/All
- Teaching and learning materials, such as a picture dictionary, for students of Icelandic as a second language MRN



Efficiency

The e-nation shall be efficient, simple and secure – data, rather than people, will travel from one public body to another

OBJECTIVES

1. Integrated architecture

Iceland, the e-nation, shall work as a coordinated unit of public administration, with data flowing between bodies in keeping with clientele needs and information being shared and reused wherever possible. The multiple recording of information will cease. Key factors include standardisation, coordination, security, and cooperation between organisations.

2. Simpler public administration

The e-nation shall adopt online payment, eIDs and e-procurement, in addition to working on other key tasks. Access to index files kept by public bodies, such as the National Registry and Enterprise Register, shall be coordinated and simplified.

Internal systems shall be increasingly automated and processes simplified in order to reduce administrative burden. Barriers to the supply of online services shall be eliminated, for instance by reviewing current laws and regulations. Privacy protection shall be promoted, along with the sanctity of private life.

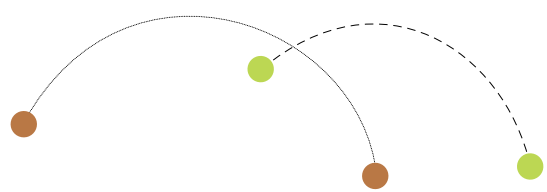
Information technology shall be utilised to support the goal of employing public servants independent of their location.

ABBREVIATIONS:

DKM - Ministry of Justice and Ecclesiastical Affairs
FJR - Ministry of Finance
FOR - Prime Minister's Office
FTR - Ministry of Social Affairs and Social Security

HBR - Ministry of Health
IDN - Ministry of Industry, Energy and Tourism
MRN - Ministry of Education, Science and Culture
SAM - Ministry of Communications

SLR - Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture
UMH - Ministry for the Environment
UTN - Ministry for Foreign Affairs
VRN - Ministry of Business Affairs



Principal measures

INTEGRATED ARCHITECTURE

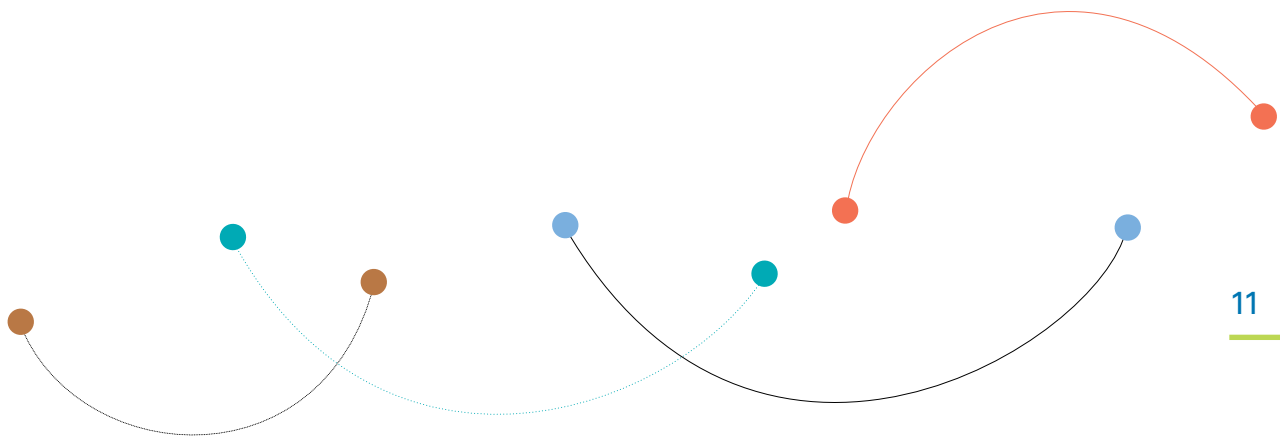
Accountable

- Reinforcing the basis of e-government through coordination, cooperation and support for organisations FOR
- Standardisation and coordination in e-government FOR/FJR
- Effective, uniform and secure communication between state government information systems FOR/FJR
- Electronic transactions between state government filing systems FJR
- An integrated, efficient e-commerce environment VRN

SIMPLER PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Accountable

- Eliminating barriers to e-services by reviewing and streamlining the framework of laws and regulations All
- Sharing and coordinating centralised databases, such as the National Registry, Enterprise Register and vehicle registry FJR, DKM, HBR, SAM and others
- Introducing eIDs in communications with public bodies FJR
- Services concerning eIDs and e-payments FOR/FJR
- State purchases will become electronic, including orders, invoices, payments and invitations to tender FJR
- Rendering all payments from the state electronic FJR
- Enabling e-payments for state services FJR
- Using IT to support the goal of public service jobs becoming independent of location FJR
- Coordinating and sharing files that contain geographic information UMH





Progress

The competitiveness of the Icelandic e-nation shall be based on active democracy, sound education and powerful industries

OBJECTIVES

1. Innovation and research

Icelandic competitiveness is to be heightened by increasing research, development and innovation in IT in order to benefit the public and the commercial sector. The e-nation Iceland shall stay a step ahead of others, utilising the very latest technology. Awareness of developments in the information society, both domestic and foreign, shall be kept up to date through various surveys and presentations, and standards shall be established for e-government.

2. Education

Information technology shall be employed to a still greater extent in education and teaching, and the diversity of education on IT shall be increased significantly. Cooperation between educational bodies and the commercial sector or interest groups shall also be strengthened. The e-citizen shall have wider options for pursuing a variety of studies wherever and whenever it suits her/him.

3. eParticipation and eDemocracy

The opportunities for democratic participation and communication with public bodies shall be expanded, for instance by allowing people to become involved in formulating policy, determining regulations and public body decision-making. Trials shall be conducted with e-voting in municipal elections.

4. The commercial sector

Outsourcing and IT shall be emphasised as a means of boosting the international competitiveness of Icelandic companies.

ABBREVIATIONS:

DKM - Ministry of Justice and Ecclesiastical Affairs
FJR - Ministry of Finance
FOR - Prime Minister's Office
FTR - Ministry of Social Affairs and Social Security

HBR - Ministry of Health
IDN - Ministry of Industry, Energy and Tourism
MRN - Ministry of Education, Science and Culture
SAM - Ministry of Communications

SLR - Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture
UMH - Ministry for the Environment
UTN - Ministry for Foreign Affairs
VRN - Ministry of Business Affairs

Principal measures

INNOVATION AND RESEARCH

Accountable

- Monitoring developments in the information society, for instance by comparing Iceland to other nations, compiling national standards and conducting surveys and presentations FOR
- Providing information on research infrastructure at a single site MRN
- Furthering the support of a guidance centre for innovators and small companies (Innovation Centre Iceland) IDN

EDUCATION

Accountable

- Increasing the use of information technology in education and teaching, for example by supporting IT leaders in compulsory and upper-secondary schools MRN
- Personalised online examinations (with an examination database) MRN
- Digital educational materials for compulsory and upper-secondary schools MRN
- Interactive study materials on soil conservation for preschools and compulsory schools UMH
- Distance learning in preparation for examinations in hunting and firearms UMH

ePARTICIPATION AND eDEMOCRACY

Accountable

- Getting the public more involved in formulating policy, determining regulations and taking other public body decisions All
- Trial with local government e-voting in two municipalities in 2010 SAM
- National campaign to collect and preserve place names, aided by the public UMH
- International forum for cooperation on translations and neologisms UTN

THE COMMERCIAL SECTOR

Accountable

- Public parties delegating software development, IT services and operations to private companies where practicable and economical All
- Public parties taking heed of commercial sector needs during development of the information society All

Supplement

The committee in charge of formulating this new Policy on the Information Society consisted of the following members:

Guðbjörg Sigurðardóttir, *Director, Committee Chair*

Guðfinna S. Bjarnadóttir, *Member of Parliament*

Hreinn Hreinsson, *Web Editor*

Lára Stefánsdóttir, *Deputy Member of Parliament*

Pórður Heiðar Þórarinnsson, *Financial Director*

In addition, Halla Björg Baldursdóttir, *Chair of the eGovernment Task Force*, worked with the committee, and Ingibjörg Guðlaug Jónsdóttir, *Political Scientist*, served as committee employee.

Committee work was conducted during the period of November 2007 to April 2008. Two groups were consulted: A core group of permanent secretaries of the ministries, and a consultation group comprising representatives from ministries and various other bodies and stakeholders. At the national portal to information and services, www.island.is, a discussion board was opened where the public and stakeholders could note and comment on suggestions regarding points of emphasis in the new policy.

The following permanent secretaries of ministries sat in the core group:

Áslaug Árnadóttir, *Ministry of Business Affairs (VRN)*

Baldur Guðlaugsson, *Ministry of Finance (FJR)*

Berglind Ásgeirsdóttir, *Ministry of Health (HBR)*

Bolli Þór Bollason, *Prime Minister's Office (FOR)*

Grétar Már Sigurðsson, *Ministry for Foreign Affairs (UTN)*

Guðmundur Árnason, *Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (MRN)*

Kristján Skarphéðinsson, *Ministry of Industry, Energy and Tourism (IDN)*

Magnús Jóhannesson, *Ministry for the Environment (UMH)*

Ragnhildur Hjaltadóttir, *Ministry of Communications (SAM)*

Ragnhildur Arnljótsdóttir, *Ministry of Social Affairs and Social Security (FTR)*

Sigurgeir Þorgeirsson, *Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture (SLR)*

Þorsteinn Geirsson, *Ministry of Justice and Ecclesiastical Affairs (DKM)*

The following were members of the consultation group:

Angantýr Einarsson, *Ministry of Finance*

Anna Guðrún Björnsdóttir, *Association of Local Authorities*

Ari Kristinn Jónsson, *Reykjavík University*

Birna Kolbrún Gísladóttir, *Ministry for the Environment*

Bragi Leifur Hauksson, *Social Security Administration*

Eggert Ólafsson, *Society for Information Processing*

Elfa Ýr Gylfadóttir, *Ministry of Education, Science and Culture*

Erna Guðmundsdóttir, *Association of Academics*

Friðrika Harðardóttir, *Ministry of Education, Science and Culture*

Guðbjörg Björnsdóttir, *Icelandic Standards*

Guðmundur H. Guðmundsson, *Ministry for the Environment*

Guðný Steina Pétursdóttir, *Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture*

Gunnar Alexander Ólafsson, *Ministry of Health*

Halla Einarsson, *Association of computer specialists*

Hanna Dóra Måsdóttir, *Ministry of Industry, Energy and Tourism*

Hannes G. Sigurðsson, *SA-Confederation of Icelandic Employers*

Haraldur Agnar Bjarnason, *Ministry of Finance*

Helga Óskarsdóttir, *Ministry of Business Affairs*

Hrafnhildur Sigurðardóttir, *Ministry for Foreign Affairs*

Inga Ósk Jónsdóttir, *Ministry of Industry, Energy and Tourism*

Ingibjörg Karlsdóttir, *Organisation of the Disabled*

Ingilín Kristmannsdóttir, *Ministry of Communications*

Ingimar Einarsson, *Ministry of Health*

Íris Björg Kristjánsdóttir, *Intercultural Center*

Jónas Ingi Pétursson, *Office of the National Commissioner of the Police*

Karl Alvarsson, *Ministry of Communications*

Kristín Jónsdóttir, *Ministry of Education, Science and Culture*

Margrét Erlendsdóttir, *Ministry of Social Affairs and Social Security*

Margrét Sæmundsdóttir, *Ministry of Business Affairs*

Pétur Ásgeirsson, *Ministry for Foreign Affairs*

Sigríður Anna Guðjónsdóttir, *Federation of Trade & Services*

Sigrún Klara Hannesdóttir, *Library and Information Science Association*

Sigurður Á. Friðþjófsson, *Federation of State and Municipal Employees*

Sigurður Davíðsson, *Ministry of Education, Science and Culture*

Skúli Þór Gunnsteinsson, *Ministry of Justice and Ecclesiastical Affairs*

Snorri Már Skúlason, *Federation of Labour Unions*

Sólveig Bjarnadóttir, *Ministry of Justice and Ecclesiastical Affairs*

Sveinn Þorgrímsson, *Ministry of Industry, Energy and Tourism*

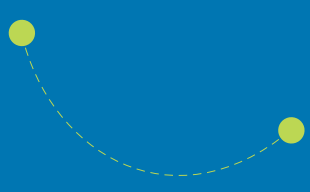
Þórólfur Árnason, *Iceland Chamber of Commerce and the association of IT companies*

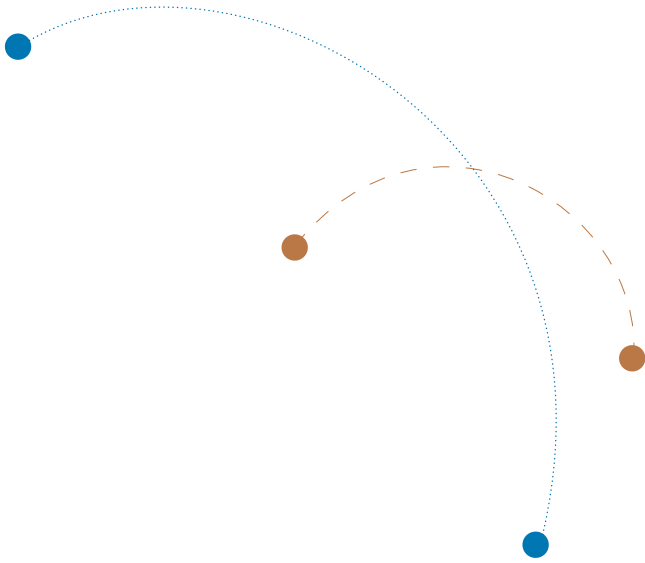
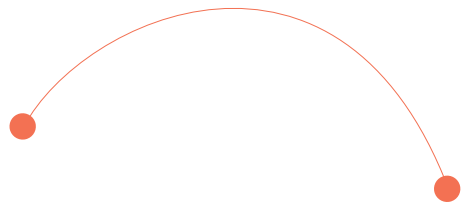
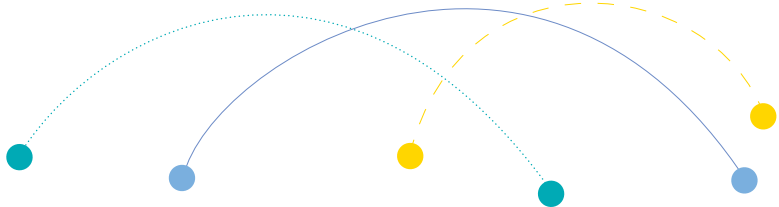
Þórunn Sæmundsdóttir, *Ministry for the Environment*

Puríður Hjartardóttir, *Consumer Association*

Ævar Ísberg, *Internal Revenue Directorate*

Örn S. Kaldalóns, *ICEPRO*





PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE