E-Government and Open Government

Chile's Government Modernization Agenda does not end with the progresses achieved to date and it will neither end when the goal of becoming a developed country is fulfilled. This Agenda is permanent; it requires a detailed follow-up of its outcomes and of the improvements to past processes. At the same time, it is the State's main tool to adapt itself to global changes.

The essence of modernity is the capacity to adapt oneself to the changes that human kind develops and even to get ahead of what is coming. Therefore, a Government Modernization Agenda must focus on adapting its structure to the new technological means in order to offer its government services, receive citizens' participation and open up to transparency.

At present, the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) have become the main communication media between citizens and Government in many countries. This has contributed to the people's greater participation in the Government's decision taking process, in citizen control and expressing their complaints and needs. The Chilean Government Modernization Agenda is centered on how to deliver a better service to the people and, at the same time, in how citizens participate in the decisions in a multidirectional data exchange process, which is only possible through the social networks, the Internet and, in general, the ICT.

Electronic Government

The Government's capacity and willingness to make use of the Internet and the information technologies to execute their functions, with the purpose of better fulfilling the needs of the citizens, is known as "*e-government*".[i]

Adequate policies in the development of e-government have become an excellent tool to considerably increase human development levels, thus highly contributing to the UN "Millennium Development Goals". Several countries have experienced positive and relevant transformations in a short time, thanks to the renovation of public administration processes, transparency, accountability and communication with the citizens. Successful examples are those of Singapore, the United States and Colombia that have made great progress in e-government thanks to online government portals offering multiple transactions with the government.

The United Nations carries out a biannual survey which determines the e-Government Development Index (EGDI), that interrelate 3 sub-indexes: quality of online services, infrastructure and human capital. In this survey, Chile held, in 2008, position number 40 in the global EGDI ranking. In 2010, Chile ranked 34th in the global ranking and it was the region's number two.

Among the initiatives developed by Chile, we can mention the Digital Action Plan of the Government of Chile, 2010-2014 and the e-Gov Strategy.

The Government has the obligation to offer services to the citizens and ensure that these services are interconnected among them to make their use easier. At present, many of these services can be made available through information technologies. This is known as *e-service*s in the EGDI.

The research quantifies a direct cause and effect relationship among the very satisfied citizens with online services and the cost savings for the Government. The higher the number of satisfied users with the web services, the greater the savings, since it replaces other more expensive channels such as call centers, traditional postal service and customer service centers.[ii]

Chile holds a good EGDI position regarding e-services, ranking 18th at global level and 2nd at regional level. Its relatively privileged position is partly due to the implementation of public policies focused on ICT development, such as the "Digital Strategy Plan 2007-2012" and the website www.Chileclic.cl which offers information and procedures in a Government Services guide.

Open Government

An open government is the one holding a permanent conversation with the citizens, with the purpose of hearing what they say or ask for, that takes decisions based on their needs and preferences, facilitates the cooperation of citizens and officials in the development of offered services, and communicates every decision in an open and transparent manner.[iii]

• Transparency
The idea of transparency in the public sector is entirely related to the *Open-Data* concept and it refers to the way in which the government uses its own Internet platform to provide information, data and services to the people, so that they can use it to their convenience. If we want this information to be really useful, it is important that data is presented in an open format, that is, that they can be seen, copied, used, modified, analyzed in programs and opened from any computer and, if possible, from mobile devices.

Among the most relevant international cases, we can highlight the United States with the "data.gov" portal, a world example of a platform where people can easily find and handle interconnected data. There is also Spain with the "Desafío *AbreDatos*" (Open Data Challenge), a contest for developing technological services and applications to the citizens, in only 48 hours, using public data.

In Chile there is the initiative "*Gobierno Transparente Chile*" (Transparent Government Chile), which seeks to strengthen the compliance with Law Nr 20,285 concerning information access through a directory of institutions and document search. Furthermore, there is the newly opened *www.datos.gob.cl* , a centralized catalog with a relevant data offer (coming from operations, surveys, evaluations and registries, among others).

• Participation
Effective interaction between citizens and Government, where the former are able to influence on the decision taking process through their participation in the consultations made by the Government through the web. We have also observed that when transparency indexes increase, participation also increases; "this is partly due to the fact that when we are conscious of the way things are being done, either right or wrong, we can react by expressing our opinion, and moreover, when we see that our opinion has been taken into account, we shall have incentives to participate again".[iv]

In the e-participation index ranking, Chile holds position 34th, that is, 16 places below the e-service index. Therefore, the Government must not only aim at offering a good service, but also consider the number of people who really have access to these media, and it must inform the citizens through campaigns on the procedures and participation platforms which are available by electronic means.

In order to increase the citizen participation indexes, the Chilean government has created the website *www.modernización.cl* where, among other things, users are invited to express and propose ideas contributing to Chile's modernization.

Transversal Features

There are factors which have a bearing on the Modernization Agenda and which are associated both to the e-government and government concepts. These issues are transversally relevant and require special attention. It is impossible to reach the agenda's goals without policies aiming at: first, interconnecting public organizations; second, creating a technological infrastructure in line with the progresses being proposed and, finally, training public officials and people, both in managing technologies and regarding its usefulness in their daily life, and its contribution to the State through participation.

One of the most critical challenges faced by governments today in e-government matters is how to reduce the digital divide. In order that e-government and open government are inclusive and all citizens may exercise their right to participate and get informed, it is necessary to cover all the population's segments.

Most of the world's countries are discussing the importance of optical fiber and broadband spreading. These discussions include at least the three following economic factors: investment, quality at low prices and access.

The main government goals for 2014 are that households having access increase from 40% to more than 70%; to cover 100% of schools and businesses with high-speed connection and that individual's internet share improves from the current 13% to 33%.

It must be considered that only citizens with access to the Internet and minimum digital knowledge can directly use all the described services embracing e-government and open government. Therefore,

countries must focus on education, and specifically in digital literacy, from the smallest children to the elderly people who have never used a computer.

In the website www.comunidadtecnologica.gob.cl there are a series of initiatives and projects focused on ICT training for public officials. And *ProgramaBiblioRedes* deals with community training, and since 2010 has offered the possibility of getting free face-to-face-training, through a network of 412 public libraries and 18 regional laboratories across the country, and online, under the e-learning feature by means of virtual classrooms.

Proposals

E-services:
- Stimulus to the Registry Office: a free temporary campaign of all services, whose aim is promoting the use of tools offered by e-government to the citizens.
- Existing networks: to strengthen the capacity of the existing services via the Internet is much economical and effective than to continue using the most traditional channels that require specific personnel and schedules, thereby cutting down the possibilities.
- Greater information engineering and easy access: design guidelines which foster good use, clarity and simplicity.

Transparency:
- To publish the information in formats allowing citizens to have access, reuse, combine, visualize, make maps, and share. To create a single version for data consolidation of all pertinent sources.
- To improve feedback: to provide citizen participation platforms where the Government can receive ideas from the citizens and, at the same time, provide valuable information to the interested parties and political officers in charge of the programs' expenditure and efficacy.

Interoperability:
- To disseminate and promote successful cases with interoperability solutions as a way of inducing and stimulating the people in charge of other organizations, to make aligned actions.

- To draw up a doctrinarian framework as a legal support ensuring data exchange within the State, and respecting the protection regulations.
- To implement a unique digital identity for all services, so that with an ID number (RUT) and a password you can have access to all services requiring attestation.
- To facilitate the advanced digital signature: it would allow making different proceedings without dealing with complex procedures.
- To promote interoperability with local and regional governments.

Digital Divide:
- To generate fiscal incentives so that telecommunication companies invest in the most remote regions of the country.
- To make public investment in areas where there is not enough demand for private companies investment.

Human Capital:
- To foster a training and digital literacy program for small and medium businesses (PYME).
- To find a mutual agreement with the different municipalities regarding the strengthening of digital training programs.
- To implement SIMCE[v] analysis and surveys on ICT, so as to have a feedback on Chileans' needs and failures in knowledge gaps matters.
- Training officials in ICT.

Conclusions

In Chile, e-government is in full swing. Although we are leaders in access to the Internet in the Latin American region, if we compare ourselves with other developed countries, we still lack infrastructure and the implementation of policies on the matter.

Chile's Modernization Agenda does not end with the progresses achieved to date and it will neither end when the goal of becoming a developed country is fulfilled. This Agenda is permanent; it requires a detailed follow-up of its outcomes and of the improvements to past processes. The Modernization Agenda is the State's main tool to adapt itself to the global changes.

Therefore, we conclude in the present analysis that, in relation to e-government and open government, the progresses achieved

represent only the first step to obtain a State which is more modern, integrated, decentralized and digitalized, really dedicated to the citizens and finishes with complex procedures.

Chile is pioneer in Latin America, but when we compare ourselves with the OECD countries, there is still a long way to go until we become a really developed country in ICT issues.

[i] Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations (2010).

[ii] ACSI E-Government Report Links. Good Federal Websites with Cost Savings and Better Democracy. (April 2011).

[iii] Linares, Open-Government-La Idea (2007)

[iv] Calderón and Lorenzo (2010), p.79.

[v] Quality of Education Measurement System