

ELOST - E-government for LOw Socio-economic sTatus groups

Press release

Modern information and communication technologies enable government services to develop new procedures for interacting and consulting with citizens. E-government is rapidly on the increase across European and neighbouring countries and is increasingly popular among European citizens.

Yet, not all citizens can equally benefit from e-Government. Persons of low socio-economic status are less likely to have access and/or use e-government services. Examples are minorities, unemployed people, low income people and people with low education levels. Excluding such groups from e-Government may have a diverse effect on social cohesion and increase the digital divide within European countries.

Against this background, a high-level consortium of European researchers have recently launched the ELOST project to look into the needs and expectations of these groups in order to improve their situation as well as the quality of e-government services.

The ELOST partners will evaluate the attitudes, needs and readiness of persons from low socio-economic status groups with regard to e-Government by means of questionnaires, interviews and focus groups. A special foresight study will analyze the impact of emerging technologies on future e-Government services with special attention to these groups. The findings will lead to policy recommendations for effective and inclusive deployment of e-Government services in Europe, including R&D priorities to address existing and future needs.

The ELOST consortium consists of the following institutional partners:

- Tel – Aviv University, Israel (project coordinator) including the Interdisciplinary Center for Technology Analysis & Forecasting (ICTAF) and the Netvision Institute for Internet Studies (NIIS).
- The Interdisciplinary Centre for Comparative Research in the Social Sciences (ICCR), Vienna, Austria
- Centre Interdisciplinaire De Recherche Comparative En Sciences Sociales, Paris, France
- Institute of Mathematics and Informatics - Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia, Bulgaria
- Zentrum Technik und Gesellschaft, Technische Universität Berlin, Germany
- University of Tampere - Department of Social Policy and Social Work, Finland.