Minitrack eGovernment

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Abstract

After eCommerce and eBusiness there is a new domain of electronic communication being developed. It is called eGovernment. With a few years of delay compared to the private industrial oriented approaches, eGovernment is just about to get in line for its start and promises to give significant impulses in the area of new media during the next few years. By the state’s interest aroused for electronic communication eBusiness will also profit from it and be elevated onto a higher level of integration. The confidence of the citizens in the new media will be enforced with the help of specific measures of the public administration, e.g. in the field of legal basis.

The term “eGovernment” is still very young in the field of research. Some see it as the electronic version of New Public Management, for others it is one more of these “e”-buzzwords.
New Public Management (NPM) is the generic term of the reform of the administrative organization taking place relatively homogeneously worldwide. The change from the input to output orientation is characteristic. NPM is with this a primarily organizationally oriented approach for a management philosophy in public administration. The relevant reorganization of the administration is by no means dependent on electronic media, but it can definitely also exclusively be based on traditional communication channels and technologies.
The roots of eGovernment lay in the fact that it makes use to the maximum of the technological possibilities for the performance of services of the state.
Very often eGovernment is defined as “eBusiness of the state”. At first sight this point of view may have its logical justification. Both use the same infrastructure and the same hardware, sometimes even the same software.

However there are clear differences between the market models of the private and public sector. These two different businessmodels justify to deal with eGovernment as an own research area.
The large scale and rapid dissemination the information and communication technologies (ICT) confronts the state with challenges in two respects:
On the first hand the question arises how the state departments want to implement the new technological possibilities in order to carry out their services, in other words how the state would like to act and profit as a participant on the market in this new domain. This formulation of the question is concerned with the domain of eGovernment. It takes the implementation of the ICT by the institutions of the public law into consideration. This suggests a certain relation to the concept of eBusiness in the private industrial sector.
Besides the use of electronic media to fulfill its commitments the state also has a more far reaching task: eBusiness and eGovernment are in need of reliable basic conditions so that they can unfold their full potential. Here the state has to intervene in a regulating function by means of relevant legal foundations. However next to these restrictive measures it can also promote certain developments by incentives such as subsidies. These measures, which are supposed to have a regulating effect on the development of the electronic communication, are defined as eGovernance. In this connection the relation between the communication partners - for instance by means of the relevant arranging of the law of contract for electronic contracts - as well as the communication partners directly - for example by the relevant arrangement of the company law for virtual enterprises - can be influenced.