



Title:	R6.1: Teaching Report – Estonia
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Reviewers:	Róbert Pintér (ISRI, Hungary)
Identifier:	R6.1
Type:	Report
Version:	Final version
Date:	30 December 2008
Status:	Final version
File:	NETIS_Estonia_teaching_report_FINAL.doc

Topic of report

This report summarizes the results of the teaching carried out by Estonian NETIS partner (Praxis Center for Policy Studies) during the project period in Estonia.

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NETIS Teaching Report, Estonia

By Tarmo Kalvet (Praxis Center for Policy Studies)

Tallinn, December 2008

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Background info

NETIS teaching, with the focus on eGovernance, took place in Estonia in April 2008. It was attended by 21 graduate students. The intensive course took place from April 21 until April 30 at the [Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tallinn University of Technology](#) (TUT). The course was coordinated by [Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Drechsler](#) and [Tarmo Kalvet](#), and assisted by Margit Suurna. Guest lecturers included Ülle Madise (expert on Internet-based voting), Tarvi Martens (expert on eSecurity and cyberwars), Rain Rannu (expert on m-Government), Ain Aaviksoo (eHealth). Margit Suurna taught a class on eLearning.

Details of course

1. Description and purpose

Estonia is known internationally as a well-developed ‘e-country’ that can be well described by the current advancement and activity in the field of e-governance. This is implicitly characterized by the wide usage of electronic applications in management, the submission of income tax returns over the Internet up to the Internet based elections, etc. At the same time, e-governance has raised several principal problems in the field of public administration, as well as democracy issues. On the one hand, this is about how e-governance fits into and what kind of impact it has on the current public administration system. On the other hand, the question is about the perceptiveness of citizens to use different e-applications.

The main aim of this course is to introduce main theories about and practice in information society in the context of public administration systems and reform. The course will cover topics as follows: the current state and development of the information society and e-governance (including issues such as Internet-based voting, e-security, m-governance, etc.) with special emphasis on the Estonian case; the impact of the information society on public service delivery (based on the examples of e-health and e-learning); the impact of e-Government on the private sector; and critique of e-governance. The course was conducted in English and in Estonian.

2. Participants

This was an elective course for all PA graduate programs; participants from other graduate programs from TUT, as well as outside guest participants (who may fully register), were welcomed as well.

3. Independent work

For every lecture, 1 to 3 articles from the compulsory reading list had to be read. All reading material was available on Moodle.

An independent research essay about the impact of ICT on one public service delivery OR on everyday functioning of one public sector organization was also required. The selection of the particular case-study was up to the student. The theoretical framework of the analysis had to apply to the theoretical literature dependent on the case-study. A typical case study topic was e.g. the impact of ICT on the submission of tax declarations in Estonia. Other criteria: length 3000-3500 words; font Times New Roman 12; line spacing 1.5.

The best case-study analyses were presented orally and served as basis for discussion in a seminar especially organised for this purpose.

4. Topics covered

The topics covered included information society theories, Estonian information society and eGovernance related developments, eGovernance and especially its role in public administration system and public administration reform, ICT and business environment, critique of information society and eGovernance theories, Internet-based voting, eSecurity and cyberwars, eHealth, eLearning and mGovernment. Altogether 7 classes took place running 2-3 calendar hours each:

- Introduction. Theories about Information Society – Tarmo Kalvet
- Estonian Information Society Developments, Different Layers of IT Users and Uses, and e-Governance in Estonia – Tarmo Kalvet
- E-Governance: the Role of it in Public Administration System and Public Administration Reform – prof. Wolfgang Drechsler; Public Procurement for Innovation. The impact of e-Government on Private Sector – Tarmo Kalvet
- Internet-based voting – Ülle Madise
- E-Security (ID-Card and e-Voting issues). Cyberwars – Tarvi Martens
- E-Learning: implementation of e-applications in different spheres of public sector – e-Learning in Estonia – Margit Suurna
- M-Governance – Rain Rannu

For most of the lectures students were expected to read 4-5 key articles on the topic. NETIS materials did prove useful and they were used extensively, for example:

1. Introduction. Theories about Information Society – László Z. Karvalics. (2007) Information society – what is it exactly? (The meaning, history and conceptual framework of an expression). NETIS: Network for Teaching Information Society. In Moodle.
2. Estonian Information Society Developments, Different Layers of IT Users and Uses, and e-Governance in Estonia: Kalvet, T. (2007). "The Estonian Information Society Developments since the 1990s". *PRAXIS Working Paper*, No. 29, Tallinn. Available at: http://www.praxis.ee/data/PRAXIS_WP_29_NETIS_Kalvet.pdf
3. Szilard Molnar. (2007) eGovernment in the European Union. NETIS: Network for Teaching Information Society. In Moodle.

All students that participated in the course received the NETIS course book as a gift. In addition, 30 copies of the book were allocated to the Institute's library for wider access as well as for use in future teaching activities.

5. Use of Moodle

The Institute is operating its own Moodle environment, where course-specific web-site was opened. All the reading materials were uploaded there; all the communication as well took place there as well.

The screenshot displays a Moodle course page for 'HUM1060' in the 'Humanitaar- ja sotsiaalteaduste instituut' environment. The page is viewed in Internet Explorer. The main content area features a forum post titled 'E-Valitsemine' (E-Governance) with the following text:

Tudengitele, kes esitavad essee uuesti augustis. Essee esitamise tähtaeg on 25. august kell 17:00!!!

E-Valitsemine

Rahvusvahelisel tasandil on Eesti suutnud endale luua väga edukat e-riigi maine. Tänapäeva riigivalitsemise seisukohast on sünjuures õheks enim tähelepanu väärimaks tegevus- ja arenguveldkonnaks olnud e-valitsemine, seda alates elektroonilisest asjaajamisest, e-maksametist kuni e-valimiseni välja. Samas on e-valitsemise erinevates valdkondades väga põhimõttelisi probleeme, mis puudutavad nii haldusjuhtimise kui demokraatia olemust. Ühelt poolt on tegemist küsimusega, kuid võrd e-valitsemine sobitub ja missugust mõju avaldab täna kehtivale avaliku halduse süsteemile, ja teiselt poolt, kuid võrd vastuvõetlik on erinevate e-lahenduste suhtes ühiskond.

Aine eesmärgiks on käsitleda infoühiskonnas toimunud muutusi avaliku halduse ja vastavate reformide kontekstis. Lisaks ja konkreetselt on vaatluse all e-valitsemise temaatika Eestis (sh e-rääk, e-valimised, e-turvalisus, samuti m-valitsemine, juue), e-rakenduste mõju avalike teenuste pakumisele (e-tervise ja e-õppe temaatika), e-valitsemise mõju ärikeskkonnale (sh rakendused nagu ID-kaart) ning viimaks e-valitsemise alane kriitika.

ÕPPEJÕUD: prof. Wolfgang Drechsler
KAASÕPPEJÕUD: Tarmo Kalvet
KOORDINAATOR: Margit Suurna
Kõikide küsimuste ja probleemidega pöörduda Margit Suurna poole,
e-mail suurna@staff.ttu.ee

SIHTRÜHM
Tegemist on doktorantidele mõeldud 4.0 AP ainega. Ainet võivad osa võtta ka magistrandid.

TOIMUMISAEAG
21. aprillil kuni 30. aprillil 2008. Loengud algavad kell 17:00. Sõltuvalt loengutemaatikaast võib loeng koosneda kuni 3-st erinevast sessioonist.

The right sidebar contains 'Latest News' with entries from June 2008 and May 2008, 'Upcoming Events' (none listed), and 'Recent Activity' (last activity on Saturday, 27 December 2008).

Conclusions and evaluation of the course

The general feedback has been positive and preparations for teaching a similar class in Spring 2009 started already at the end of the course. Due to the interest of international students studying at TUT, it was proposed that the course might take place fully in English (in the current course only some lectures were in English).

The course at TUT deviates from the original NETIS course mostly due to the fact that TUT's course is oriented towards graduate students for which original NETIS materials are too general. Thus, we rely on additional reading next to NETIS materials. Additional materials are widely popular (e.g. from authors like Webster, Castells, etc) and should provide deeper picture to the students involved.

NETIS course book has considerable additional value, though, as it is offering useful overview of different aspects associated to information society developments and can provoke additional interest from the side of students to study specific topics deeper.

Future plans

Due to the success of the course, it will be repeated in spring 2009. Course announcement is as following:

E-Governance HHL9060; HHL1150 (3 CPs)

Spring Term 2009/10

Prof. Wolfgang Drechsler (co-ord.), Tarmo Kalvet, Margit Suurna;

Guest-lecturers will be involved.

The course takes place as a two-week session from 20 April to 4 May 2009, Monday–Friday 16:00-17:30 (18:00) h.

Participants: This is an elective course for all public administration graduate programs; participants from other graduate programs from TUT, as well as outside guest participants (who may fully register), are welcome as well.

Independent work: For every lecture, 1 to 3 articles from the compulsory reading list should be read. All reading material is available on Moodle.

Case study: an independent research essay about the impact of ICT on one public service delivery OR on everyday functioning of one public sector organization is also required. The selection of the particular case-study is up to the student. The theoretical framework of the analysis has to apply to the theoretical literature dependent on the case-study. A typical case study topic is e.g. the impact of ICT on the submission of tax declarations in Estonia. The essay has to be fully referenced (at least 10 international scholarly sources) and written in English. Other criteria: length 3000-3500 words; font Times New Roman 12; line spacing 1.5. The essay has to be sent to suurna@staff.ttu.ee.

The best case-study analyses will be presented orally and will serve as basis for discussion in a seminar especially organised for this purpose.

Grade: yes

Grading: Grades are based on a case study analysis and written exam based on compulsory reading material (test/short open questions). Participation in the lectures and seminar is mandatory.

- Case-study analysis: 40%
- Participation in the lectures and a seminar: 10%
- Written exam: 50%

Location: J. Sütiste tee 21.

Several lectures within the course are based on NETIS, for example:

Date	Lecture
<p>20 April 2009</p> <p>16:00-18:00</p>	<p>Introduction</p> <p>Theories about Information Society – Tarmo Kalvet</p> <p>Compulsory reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karvalics, L. Z. (2007) "Information Society – What is it Exactly? (The Meaning, History and Conceptual Framework of an Expression)", <i>NETIS: Network for Teaching Information Society</i>. • Webster, F. (1995) <i>Theories of the Information Society</i> (pp. 6-29), Routledge: London and New York. • Castells, M. (1996) "The Information Technology Revolution", in Manuel Castells (ed) <i>The Rise of the Network Society</i> (pp. 29-65), Cambridge: Blackwell. <p>Background / voluntary reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perez, C. (2004) "Technological Revolutions, Paradigm Shifts and Socio-Institutional Change", in Erik S. Reinert (ed) <i>Globalization, Economic Development and Inequality: An Alternative Perspective</i> (pp. 217-242), Edward Elgar: Cheltenham, UK; Northampton, USA.
<p>21 April 2009</p> <p>16:00-17:30</p>	<p>Estonian Information Society Developments, Different Layers of IT Users and Uses, and e-Governance in Estonia – Tarmo Kalvet</p> <p>Compulsory reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kalvet, T. (2007) "The Estonian Information Society Developments since the 1990s", <i>PRAXIS Working Paper</i>, No. 29, Tallinn: PRAXIS. Available at: http://www.praxis.ee/data/PRAXIS_WP_29_NETIS_Kalvet.pdf. • Kalvet, T., Aaviksoo, A. (2008) <i>The Development of eServices in an Enlarged EU: eGovernment and eHealth in Estonia</i>. Seville: Institute for Prospective Technological Studies - Directorate General Joint Research Centre, European Commission, EUR Number: 23050 EN/1 - 2008. Read through the part about e-Governance (I.1, I.2, II.1.1-II.1.3, II.3, II.4, II.5.1, II.5.3- II.5.6, II.6-II.8, III-V) and conclusion. Available at: http://ipts.jrc.ec.europa.eu/publications/pub.cfm?id=1559. • Molnar, S. (2007) "e-Government in the European Union", <i>NETIS: Network for Teaching Information Society</i>. <p>Background / voluntary reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Castells, M., Himanen, P. (2004) "The Finnish Model of the Information Society", in Manuel Castells and Pekka Himanen (eds) <i>The Information Society and the Welfare State. The Finnish Model</i> (pp. 140-165), Oxford University Press.