

**GOVERNMENT RESOLUTION ON THE OBJECTIVES OF THE NATIONAL  
INFORMATION SOCIETY POLICY FOR 2007-2011**

## **1. Introduction**

Information and communications technology (ICT) plays an ever greater role in everyday life of citizens and businesses. In Finnish society the key processes and interaction are largely based on the utilisation of electronic communications and information technology. ICT applications contribute to service provision and availability and create new operating models and new skills. This changes the ways of interaction and societal participation and increases the citizens' social and regional equality and democracy. The new ways and improved competencies also improve businesses' productivity and competitiveness and open up new markets and business opportunities. In public administration the information society provides opportunities to improve customer service, to increase productivity and efficiency and to allocate resources from administrative routines to more demanding tasks. The aim of active information society policy is to gain full advantage of information and communications technology and ICT-based innovations and operating models.

However, the development also involves threats such as a growing digital divide, a lower level of privacy protection and information security, and difficulties in adjusting to a new, more technical operating environment. At its most critical, the functions of society and economy are at risk since modern societies have become ever more dependent on information and communications technology and systems.

This Government resolution includes the most important aims and priorities for speeding up the information society development in 2007-2011.

The resolution is based on the third national information society strategy "A renewing, human-centric and competitive Finland", drawn up in 2006 for the years 2007-2015. The strategy implements the information society programme of the previous Government. The strategy outlines a national vision for the Finnish information society.

In autumn 2007 an action programme will be prepared for the practical implementation of this resolution and of the information society strategy drawn up in consultation with a wide range of interested parties. A minister-led advisory board will be appointed to oversee the implementation.

## **2 Vision for the information society development**

### **Finnish information society in 2015**

Finland is an internationally recognized, competitive, competence-based service society with a human touch. In the increasing global competition it has been successful in providing individuals and organisations with opportunities for a good life by developing competencies, know-how and creativity and by adopting substantial reforms in structures and operating models.

A strong national vision and state of will, and investments in the information society development have led into a positive circle that has brought Finland from producing and exploiting information and communications technology to generating growth as one of the global forerunners. Finnish businesses and public sector are among the international leaders in utilising information and

communications technology and making use of the new, global business opportunities provided by the information society development.

The Finnish information society is based on balanced social and regional information society development; a compatible, information-secure and accessible information society infrastructure; and great trust in the involved actors and services. The information society is flexible and user-oriented in all everyday situations.

Finland has transformed into a knowledge-based service society in a way that improves businesses' competitiveness, provides high-quality services in public and private sectors, and promotes the well-being of society and individuals. This has called for significant changes in service provision, innovation systems and work life.

### **3 Aims and priorities of the information society policy**

Information society policy is horizontal by nature and integrated in all activities in society. It is important that the national information society strategy is being carried out in practice. In order to speed up the development, concrete measures and new operating methods are needed. The information society development requires active cooperation between the public and private sectors, organisations and citizens.

#### **The aims and priorities of the national information society policy for 2007-2011:**

##### **3.1 Development of the communications infrastructure**

The communications infrastructure will be developed to provide households, businesses and public sector organisations throughout the country high-speed data transfer connections which enable versatile use and provision of contents, carrying on of business, and provision of high-quality electronic public services. Wireless broadband networks and mobile networks will be developed to provide more and more versatile contents. The spectrum policy will be moderately reformed with a more commercial approach. Introduction of next generation network technologies will be accelerated and information security of networks and services will be promoted. Special attention will be paid to defining and ensuring the critical infrastructure of the information society.

##### **3.2 Towards customer-oriented public services**

###### **Improvement of IT activities and services in public administration**

A consistent and safe IT environment which is compatible in terms of technology and information content will be created in public administration. The use of open interfaces in information and communications systems will be promoted in competition-neutral way. Public administration IT activities will create the right conditions for providing customer-oriented, interactive and proactive electronic services. A new multi-channel IT model of shared services will be developed and introduced. Administrative services will be provided to the user in electronic form through one centralised portal. This calls for a reform of public service structures, close cooperation in administration, and introduction of a service-based architecture. Processes and systems in financial

and personnel administration will be harmonised to support cost-efficient services and service centres.

Usability of basic databanks, and shared use of data will be promoted. It will be ensured that public administration data is easily available in all public organisations. Citizens' information needs will be attended to and it will be ensured that businesses can take advantage of databanks competitively. Guidelines for information disclosure and shared use will be clarified and the related issues of responsibility will be harmonised. Technological interfaces and public electronic services for businesses will be developed.

#### Introduction of a national information system architecture in social and health care services and service development

An economical, reliable and secure national information technology infrastructure will be created for social and health care services enabling customer-oriented and cost-efficient provision of high-quality services. By 2011 all public actors in health care services have joined the national electronic archiving services of patient documents, and all health care organisations and chemists' have access to e-prescriptions. Electronic customer information systems in social care will be updated in accordance with national guidelines. Support will be provided to citizens who take personal responsibility for actively maintaining their health and capacities. Flexible use of on-line services will also be supported. Citizens will be provided with information and interactive services concerning health promotion and medical treatment.

#### Development and introduction of a national spatial data infrastructure

The most important geospatial data in possession of the authorities will be described and the compatibility of the data improved, and new information technological interfaces will be introduced. Search, view, load and change functions that support widespread use of spatial data in a national portal will be developed and introduced. Efficient use of data among the authorities will be promoted, and commercial applications and cooperation of the actors involved will be advanced.

#### Development of electronic purchasing, invoicing and payment processes

The purchasing process in public administration, from invitations to tender to invoicing and payment, will be made electronic so that it fosters the development of new business and can be utilised in cross-border purchases. Standards and other common procedures will be agreed.

#### Development of public libraries and their on-line services

On-line services of public libraries will be developed and advantage will be taken of the possibilities of the semantic web. A new type of a search function in the title register of literature will be piloted. Opportunities for life-long learning and electronic transactions will be ensured. Support will be provided for renewing hardware, particularly in middle-sized public libraries and in rural areas, and further education will be provided for library personnel.

### **3.3 Promotion of electronic identification**

Coherent procedures of electronic identification in public administration will be agreed and widely introduced. There may be several identification procedures in use at the same time. On the basis of the existing methods an extensive joint operating model for the public and private sectors will be created with the aim of providing citizens and businesses, for example, reliable identification

services with as easy access as possible. A regulatory basis for the use of biometric identification will be formed and cooperation among actors in electronic identification will be promoted.

### **3.4 Promotion of electronic business**

Digitalisation of small and medium-sized enterprises will be promoted. Skills and competencies of business personnel will be enhanced, and training will be especially directed to new entrepreneurs. New ways to increase business efficiency by means of information and communications technology will be devised, and information security awareness and skills in businesses will be improved. Businesses will be encouraged to use public electronic services more extensively.

### **3.5 Resolution of practical issues relating to copyright agreements and legislation**

Operating and agreement models for digital and network environments concerning copyright will be provided. Where necessary, legislation will be drafted to meet the requirements of the information society development and to support the Finnish content production industry. Operating and agreement models for multi-channel distribution will be designed. Cooperation between the sectors and actors involved will be encouraged. The need to review the copyright system will be examined in terms of works made under contractual or public-service employment relationships. Awareness of copyrights and their use will be increased.

### **3.6 Education, training and science affairs**

#### Utilisation of ICT in education

A project *OpetusTIME* will be implemented. Projects requiring national architecture, solutions or guidelines will be carried out in ICT-centred areas of technological infrastructure in education. These include projects regarding **information service for education service providers, teaching material service, national intellectual capital register, information service for education and training applicants, and electronic search**. The use of ICT in teaching and studying will be promoted.

#### Development of a science infrastructure

A national ICT infrastructure for Finnish science and research will be developed. Prerequisites for modern science, particularly computational science, will be improved and cooperation between universities and research institutes will be increased in acquisition, use and maintenance of infrastructures. Digital databases, computation servers and information networks for computational science, in particular, will be developed.

### **3.7 Establishing of a national digital library**

For the purpose of establishing a national digital library the most important cultural material of museums, archives and libraries will be digitised, if necessary, and made available on-line. A national digitising strategy will be drawn up and implemented. Digitisation activities of the National Library will be reinforced and expanded.

### **3.8 Development of digital contents and a secure media environment**

#### Promotion of online digital contents

Finnish and international online distribution markets for cultural contents will be established. Production of cultural contents and services, concept and demo versions of high-quality games, entertainment and intellectually inspiring products will be promoted in order to improve product development. Projects that make use of multiple channels and seek innovative ways of narrative in the fields of culture and entertainment will be supported.

#### Improving the opportunities for a secure media environment for children and young people

The media environment for children and young people will be made more secure by means of media education and promotion of media literacy. The Finnish Board of Film Classification will be given more responsibility for research and education in media education.

### **3.9. Promotion of innovation activities**

More funding will be provided for public research and development with the aim of increasing the total amount of public and private R&D funding to four percent of the gross national product. The framework for business risk financing will be improved. Intellectual property rights will be developed as part of the national innovation strategy so that businesses and other innovators are familiar with immaterial rights and know how to make use of them in innovation activities.

### **3.10. Promotion of telework**

Opportunities for mobile work will be promoted. A Government resolution for promoting telework and e-work will be implemented.

### **3.11. International contribution**

The public and private sectors will work for the implementation and steering of EU information society policies such as the i2010 Strategy. Cooperation will be intensified with countries that play an important role in the information society development.

## **4 Implementation and monitoring of the resolution**

Each Ministry will start implementing the resolution immediately within its own administrative sector as regards the matters that are its responsibility. The Ubiquitous Information Society Advisory Board referred to in section 4.2 will coordinate and monitor the implementation of the resolution.

### **4.1 Action programme**

In autumn 2007 an action programme will be prepared that will focus on the practical implementation of this resolution and the information society strategy drawn up in consultation with a wide range of interested parties. The action programme includes the most important individual **measures and projects** arising from the aims of the resolution and to be realised during this government term. The action programme will be updated and an annual implementation report will be submitted to the Government.

**The following projects, among others, will be launched in this Government term:**

- The need to introduce electronic voting also outside polling stations will be examined.
- A uniform and reliable method of electronic voting will be taken into use in the public sector and development and introduction of new electronic identification methods will be promoted.
- A pilot project on computer-aided teaching will be carried out and used as a basis to estimate the opportunities to increase the use of computers and information networks in teaching.
- Electronic invoicing will be taken into use and electronic purchasing processes will be introduced in the public sector.
- A new, IT-based, multi-channel model of shared services will be introduced.

**4.2 Ubiquitous Information Society Advisory Board**

For preparing the action programme an Advisory Board for the Ubiquitous Information Society will be appointed for the entire government term. It will be chaired by the Minister of Communications. The Advisory Board will have representatives from the Ministries, public administration organisations, business and industry relevant to the implementation of the resolution. It will hear experts and opinion leaders in the field of information society.

The Ubiquitous Information Society Advisory Board will coordinate the sectoral themes that are essential to the information society development. Such themes and responsible parties related to the Government programme are the following:

- Developing public electronic services and the ICT environment, Ministry of Finance;
- Utilising the benefits of ICT in education, research and culture, Ministry of Education;
- Developing the information society infrastructure, and promoting communications and media services and business, Ministry of Transport and Communications;
- Promoting innovation and electronic services in social and health care, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health; and
- Information society affairs related to research, innovation, competitiveness and productivity, Ministry of Trade and Industry.

In coordinating the sectoral themes the Ubiquitous Information Society Advisory Board will build on the existing structures and decision-making bodies as much as possible. The responsible Ministry will report to the Advisory Board on the progress of the themes in the Government programme.

In addition to committees, expert groups will also be established for matters relating to **information security** and to the **electronic identification**. The task of the information security group will be to promote, monitor and suggest improvements for information security in the information society. The group will work in close cooperation with other involved parties. The task of the group for developing electronic identification will be to determine and ensure that identification methods used in services requiring reliable identification are compatible and feasible.

In connection with the Advisory Board a project will be established to **examine the use of ICT in teaching and studying**. A working group will be appointed for the implementation of the project.

The Ubiquitous Information Society Advisory Board will annually report to Government on the proceedings of the key information society projects in the action programme.

### **4.3 Copyright group**

In connection with the Advisory Board a copyright group will be established that will convene when necessary to discuss copyright issues from the viewpoint of information society policy. Members of the copyright working group will be:

- Ms Suvi Lindén, Minister of Communications;
- Mr Stefan Wallin, Minister of Culture;
- Ms Tuija Brax, Minister of Justice; and
- Mr Mauri Pekkarinen, Minister of Trade and Industry.