



The Citadel Statement: Making Malmö 'Real' by Identifying What Local eGovernment Really Needs

On November 18, 2009, EU Ministers signed the Malmö Ministerial Declaration outlining a forward-looking eGovernment vision to be achieved by 2015. We aim to help 'make Malmö real' by producing a pan-European 'Call to Action' - known as The Citadel Statement – that will help local government deliver on the key objectives of the Malmö Declaration.

In most countries throughout Europe, local government has the greatest amount of contact with citizens, and is in the forefront of service delivery. Despite numerous policy documents and 'how to' manuals on local eGovernment, nearly one year on, the 'Malmö Vision' is still not being translated down to the on-the-ground, local level. Smaller communities are especially finding it difficult to implement innovative ICT projects.

Supporting local e-government delivery activities needs to be a higher priority than it has been in the past: EU, national, regional and local governments need to work together to deliver the benefits of e-government to citizens.

We, the signatories of The Citadel Statement, believe that European and National decision makers should look to local government to see how their e-government policies are being delivered in practice, and whether national and regional e-government programmes are helping to improve service delivery at the local level. The Citadel Statement aims to help in this effort by better understanding why local communities are finding it challenging to implement eGovernment in an innovative, cost-effective and efficient manner and by identifying practical solutions to combat working barriers at the local level.

Based on extensive consultation across Europe, we propose five core areas where European and national decision makers can provide tangible support to improve local eGovernment:

1. Common Architecture, Shared Services and Standards:

Incorporate EU best practices into a common service delivery architecture (information, process and application-layer) that provides one common language and helps local governments share services and learn from other 'best practices' such as how to work with authentic registrations, how to create personalized access to services, etc. Bolster this architecture by creating standards for government communication that helps citizens find their way in all governmental websites.

2. Open Data, Transparency and Personal Rights:

Show a commitment to making public data open and accessible by establishing a well maintained repository of definitions and taxonomies that makes data consistent throughout Europe. Develop clear guidelines and data models for the use of personal details about citizens. Mandate five key areas where data can reasonably be expected to be shared nationally and across Europe by 2013. Areas could include: public service lists, standard information on citizens, standard information on businesses, transport timetables, environmental information and geodata (GIS-data).

3. Citizen Participation and Involvement:

Demonstrate political leadership and courage by actively championing the advantages now offered by ICT to improve the democratic process and facilitate citizen participation in decision-making across Europe. Promote the value of co-designing services in conjunction with citizens as a first step in making government more people-focused. Provide guidelines, training and methodologies on involving citizens in decision making and service design.

4. Privacy and Identification of Individuals

Create a robust political and policy framework to address common privacy issues across Europe associated with personal data. Provide protocols that enable the easy identification of individuals over the Internet and facilitate mobility by developing shared standards for the identification of people that makes it easier to travel and do business all over Europe.

5. Rural Inclusion

Promote the concept of Broadband as a public utility that - like electricity and water - should be available to all communities no matter how small or geographically dispersed. Enhance and improve the Broadband capacity of both rural and urban

areas alike by supporting EU regulation to set a minimum standard for broadband access in all of Europe to be achieved by 2015. Equality of access is an important precondition for the growth of superfast broadband - an economic necessity in today's growing marketplace.

In addition, supporters also call upon European and national decision makers to provide greater support to local government around *Shared Quality and Benchmarking* and the *Simplification of Processes* particularly in the areas of *Procurement and Funding* where regulations often conflict with the mandate to 'build once, deploy many times.'

Supporters of the Citadel Statement hope that this Call-to-Action becomes a 'living document' that continues to evolve in the run-up to 2015 in a manner that spurs local government to achieve better eServices for citizens.

Supporters of The Citadel Statement

To create the basis for the online consultation, the Flemish eGovernment Authority joined forces with LOLA, the Linked Organisation of Local Authority ICT Societies to host a one day workshop at the recent SOCITM – the UK society for ICT and related professionals in the public and civil society (third) sectors –conference in Brighton. The workshop, which included the InterregIVB North Sea project 'Smart Cities', gathered experts from across Europe to identify top actions that local governments need from National and EU decision-makers in order to better implement eGovernment.

Feedback from this workshop was used to launch a European-wide online consultation at: <https://egovernmentstatement.uservice.com> on the content of the Citadel Statement. More than 120 users from 18 countries all over Europe, including 64 organisations representing over 200 cities across five continents, contributed to the Statement throughout November 2010.

About The 'Citadel' Statement

The declaration has been named the 'Citadel Statement' for two strategic reasons:

1. The word citadel is originally derived from the phrase 'citta ideale' or 'ideal city' and stands for a fortress that is used to protect a city.
2. The launch event for the declaration will be in the Ghent Citadel Park on the site of a former fortress built at the beginning of the 19th century.

The Citadel Statement will be signed by practitioners from across Europe at the site of the old Ghent Citadel on December 14 - the perfect place to launch an 'Ideal Cities Statement.'

NOTES:

The key 'Malmö' objectives that EU Member States have pledged to achieve in the next five years are:

- To empower businesses and citizens through 1) eGovernment services designed around users' needs, 2) better access to information and 3) active citizen involvement in the policy making process;
- To facilitate mobility in the single market by providing seamless eGovernment services for setting up business, studying, working, residing and retiring in Europe;
- To enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of government services by reducing the administrative burden, improving the organisational processes of administrations and using ICT to improve energy efficiency in public administrations.