

Panel: How to Make eProcurement in the EU Interoperable?

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PEPPOL – Pan-European Public Procurement Online – (www.peppol.eu) is a Large Scale Pilot funded by the European Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (CIP), Call 2007. The vision of the PEPPOL project is that any company, including SMEs, in the European Union can communicate electronically with any European governmental institution for all procurement processes. The objective is to foster the market more transparent and accessible, to realize interoperable structures and to force the market mechanisms for a general higher economic efficiency. National solutions will not be replaced; instead they will be aligned with common European standards and then linked. The PEPPOL project is implemented by the PEPPOL Consortium. A specific reference group – their members have observer status – is closely joined, its members may join the project in a later stage. The

PEPPOL project consists of **8 workpackages** which include the implementation of E-Signature; Virtual Company Dossier; E-Catalog; E-Ordering, E-Invoicing; Consortium Management; Awareness, Training and Consensus Building; Solutions architecture, design and validation. The **Virtual Company Dossier (VCD)** is a main issue of the project. Its realization is conducted by the University of Koblenz-Landau, Germany. The aim is a



l.t.r. Panelist: Prof. Maria A. Wimmer, Claudia Bachkönig and moderator Josef Makolm

consolidated electronic dossier of all attestations needed for bids, based on national registers, the EU-directives 2004/17 and 2004/18 and recognized by the EU-Member States. The concept will include existing national solutions but also technical and legal requirements.

Discussion results: The most important issue is to integrate all stakeholders, like the tenderers, the legal departments and the members of the EU-Commission in the project. The wishes and needs of all these stakeholders have to be collected and brought in the project to get user-friendly applications. In addition interactions with different government groups as well as reengineering and rethinking of several areas are needed to successfully implement E-Procurement. Also it must be considered how the reference group can be involved into the various project phases. Furthermore the legal requirements respectively the bureaucracy and the existing processes should be scrutinized. The problem is not technical but organizational and process-oriented. It is necessary to start with a change process including better regulation, reducing costs and shared services.

Although PEPPOL is an implementation project, the work package VCD has a need for applied research. Therefore the cooperation with the university is very important.

At this stage it should be thought of the future use of the software solutions and the publication of the outcomes. It is intended that after the project will be finished the running prototypes should be enhanced maybe through a rollout or a follow-up project.

The project consortium is inviting all other initiatives relevant to public E-Procurement to link with PEPPOL. Welcome are also new partnerships with other countries.

If you are interested to participate in the project, please contact peppol@uni-koblenz.de.