

**e-VOTING**  
**FORUM**

منتدى البحرين للتصويت الالكتروني  
BAHRAIN e-VOTING FORUM

24-25 يناير 2006 مملكة البحرين

24th-25th January 2006, Kingdom of Bahrain

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# Forum Organizers

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**Organised by:**



**Bahrain Information Technology Society**

**Acknowledgments:**



# Forum Objectives



- Perspectives on e-Voting
- Lessons from other countries
- Create awareness of e-Voting
- Mutual Cooperation

## Sessions

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- There were 13 presentations and 1 panel discussion
- Experiences from UK, Korea, Estonia, Switzerland, Bahrain, Canada, U.S were shared
- A panel discussion with comments and discussions from the audience concluded the Forum

# Country Experiences – U.K



- The presentation gave a preview of the National Local e-Democracy Project
- Strategy was focused on
  - Participation outside election
  - Using modern technology to enhance existing representative democracy
- Over 100 products including
  - Online petitioning
  - Learning Tools on democracy
  - E-Consultation Tools
  - E-Panels etc
- Pilot e-Voting was conducted in 2000. Used a multi channel approach
- Changing the culture is a major challenge

## Country Experiences – Geneva



- Political will and technological advancement helped to have successful e-Voting in Geneva
- Swiss already had tradition of postal voting
- Used a secret code for authentication

## Country Experiences – Estonia



- 10,000 voters opted for e-Voting (About 1% of the total voters)
- Used smart card for authentication

# Panel Discussion – Key Points

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- e-Voting can solve many problems
- e-Democracy is the future of democracy
- e-Voting can be used for e-Consultation opens many possibilities outside formal elections
- Bahrain stand at an advantage as it is starting afresh on democracy.
- Technology is not the problem.
- Public perception need to be managed and influenced
- Role of the government is to act as facilitator, yet democracy or e-Voting can not be outsourced.
- Government has to take a leading role in bringing e-Voting.
- Government need to rely on other entities such as NGOs, private organizations etc to expedite the process.
- Political will is the most critical success factor

# Panel Discussion – Key Points



- There is need to set up an advisory panel involving all the stakeholders to review and further develop e-Voting in Bahrain
- A phased approach is more suitable for Bahrain.
- Bahrain Technology infrastructure is matured enough for the successful implementation
- Most of the panel members felt that e-Voting is doable in Bahrain and many pre-conditions that is required is already in place
- Panel members also felt that knowledge generated elsewhere such as Estonia, Switzerland and U.K could be used for the Bahrain context. However care must be taken to adapt what is suitable and achievable for Bahrain
- A lot of marketing and trust building need to be done. We need to involve the right people at early stage and make them ambassadors of e-voting and e-democracy.

## Lessons

- Technology is available
- There has been successful e-Voting implementations
- Technology is not the problem
- Political will is the most important issue
- Bahrain is well positioned to take advantage of the e-Voting benefits