



**PUBLIC MANAGEMENT SERVICE
PUBLIC MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

Administrative Simplification – Best Practices in OECD Countries

Expert Seminar

OECD Headquarters, Paris, 18-19 October 2001

***“INFOCID – Portal of Portuguese Public
Administraion”***

Introductory presentation

By Ms. Graca Pombiero, Portugal

INFOCID _ PORTAL OF PORTUGUESE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

From Information for the Citizen to the Direct Public Service

Since its creation, ten years ago, INFOCID has been evolving towards the permanent optimisation of the project behind its existence. This has brought about a reconsideration of Infocid's aims, a redefinition of components and reinforcement in strategy.

It is, nevertheless, possible to point out several different stages in Infocid's development, since its creation until the present moment. They correspond to different strategic insights.



From 1991 to 1998, there was a development in Infocid-interdepartmental system of information for the citizen- based on the co-operative production of information by

several Public Services and its offer through multimedia Kiosks, later on through the internet and also, although in a lesser degree, the cyberkiosks.

1998 brings about an inflection in INFOCID, as far as its availability strategy is concerned:

it finishes the acquisition of the multimedia kiosks;

based on a Protocol with SIBS- Interbanking Services Company- Infocid is now available in ATM Kiosks;

Infocid's diffusion is amplified, aiming at making it known to the people nation wide and to the Portuguese communities around the world;

Infocid starts the publication of a journal and demand for Infocid Guides soon exceeded supply.

INFOCID's participation in fairs and events takes on a new dimension. As Infocid "travels" outside the Lisbon area, it reaches out for different addresses in the north part of the country and in the emigrant community in Paris.

Nevertheless, INFOCID's renewal was not restricted to increasing its availability.

It was understood that information itself should be revised and strengthened in order to adapt to new demands imposed by the public and EU norms.

We consider that contents should be accessible and complete in terms of language used and graphics present. It was decided that messages as short as these should need transparency and rigor.

It has been a work of revision and consolidation of information, undertaken by its producers, with the support of jurists working for Infocid. Besides, this has also been a procedure adopted by new producers joining Infocid. We have been trying to facilitate a task, the speediness and rightness of which, is in common interest.

The new procedure has been welcomed by the services, not only by those already detaining information in Infocid-many of whom await our availability to provide them with legal support to consolidate existing information- as well as by the 5 new producers who have joined the system since 1998.

We owe our respects to the producers for their effort and responsibility in providing and updating information. The support we provide them is but a small gesture in a co-operation that we wish to be bilateral.

The creation of the FORUM strengthened Infocid's role before the public, by providing them with a space in which questions are answered by jurists, regardless of the ever-growing need for multi-disciplinarity in Public Management. When the matter is citizen's rights, duties and responsibilities, information should be rigorous and evoke, when applicable, the norms in which it is based.

However, Infocid cannot afford to be a part from the current imperative to invent new policies, activities and procedures for Public Management in order to allow for the optimisation of new opportunities now opened to new economic developments, reducing its associated cost (privacy, security, social exclusion).

To this adds the paradox inherent to all state reform procedure: to a higher proximity between Public Management and the citizens there should correspond, on their part, an ever growing organisation capacity and a demand for better services at lower costs.

One does not question the pressure society and economic agents impose on Public Management. Not even the challenges brought about by the globalisation and the revolution caused by the Information and Community Technologies (ICTs)- besides budgetary and demographic factors and media influence- which clearly indicate a Public Management inevitably and irreversibly oriented by quality and improvement standards- at business, economic and Public Management levels- by the introduction of a new reality speed.

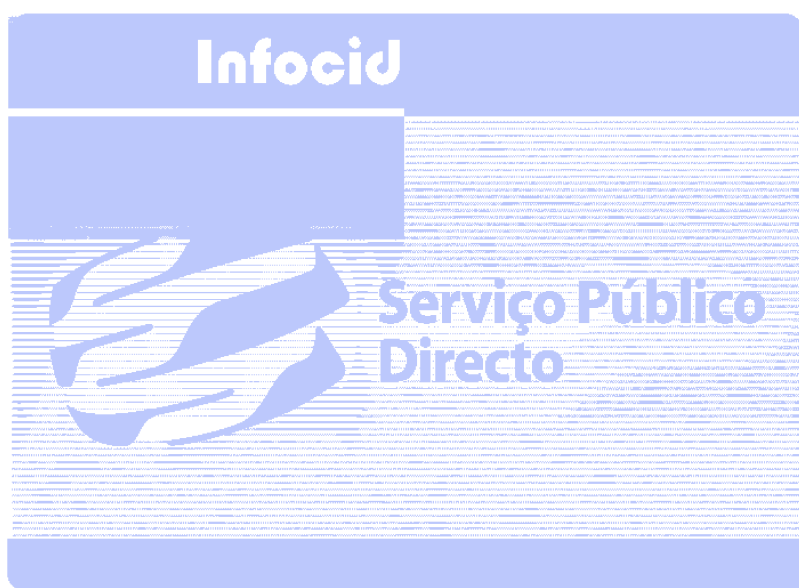
The implementation of digital procedures is an imperative for Public Management. The using of digital tools will allow for its re-invention, bringing Management and citizen's closer together.

The electronic approach changes the bureaucratic administrative logic installed, while modifying the existing culture and creating a new concept of providing goods and services as far as e-business and e-government are concerned.

Infocid could not be left out this context. It had to evolve in order to strengthen its innovating character by adopting e- business for Public Management.

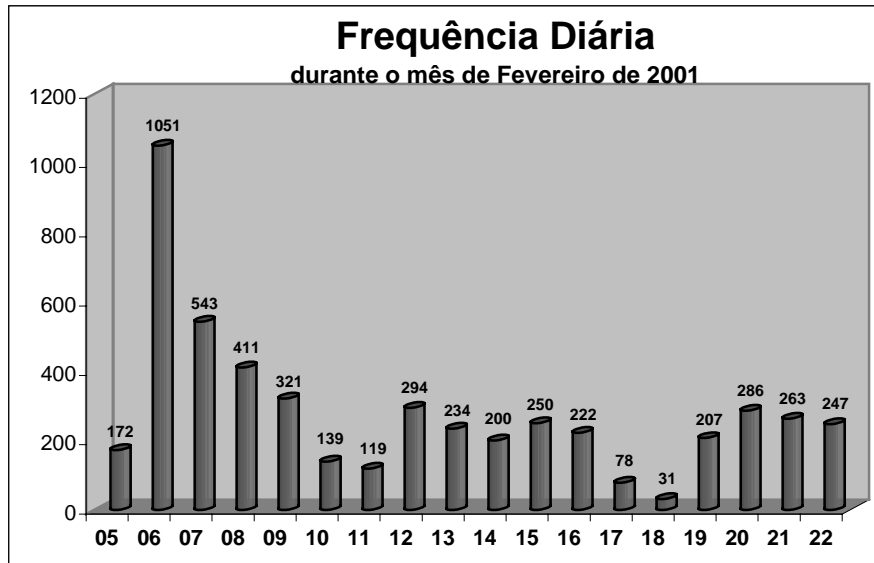
And so a new phase for Infocid is reached.

In February 5th 2001, Infocid is re-launched, assuming itself as a Portuguese Public Administration Portal. At the same time, the Direct Public Service is created by the Council of Ministers Resolution no 156/2000 of November the 20th.

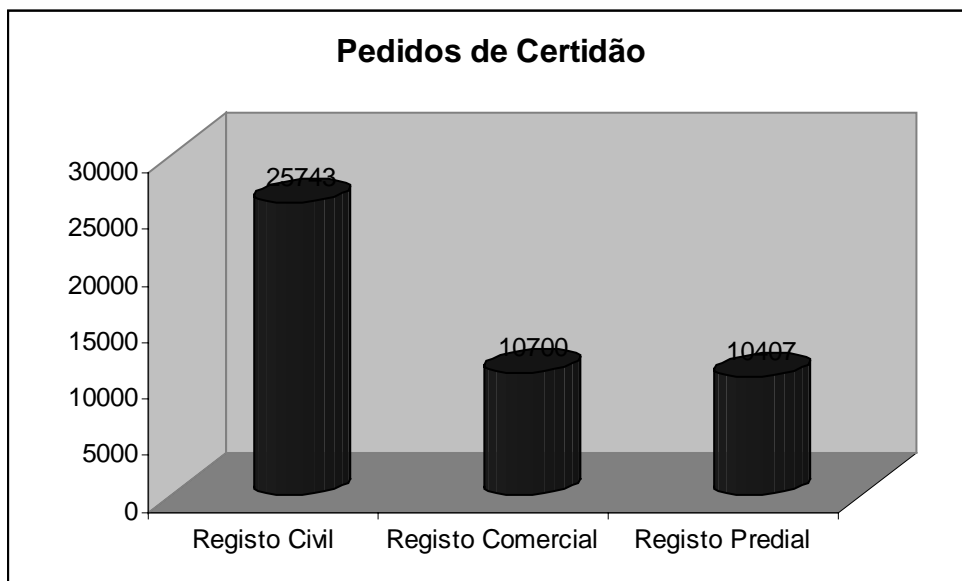


The On-line Service is a new feature of INFOCID as a provider for Public Administration Services.

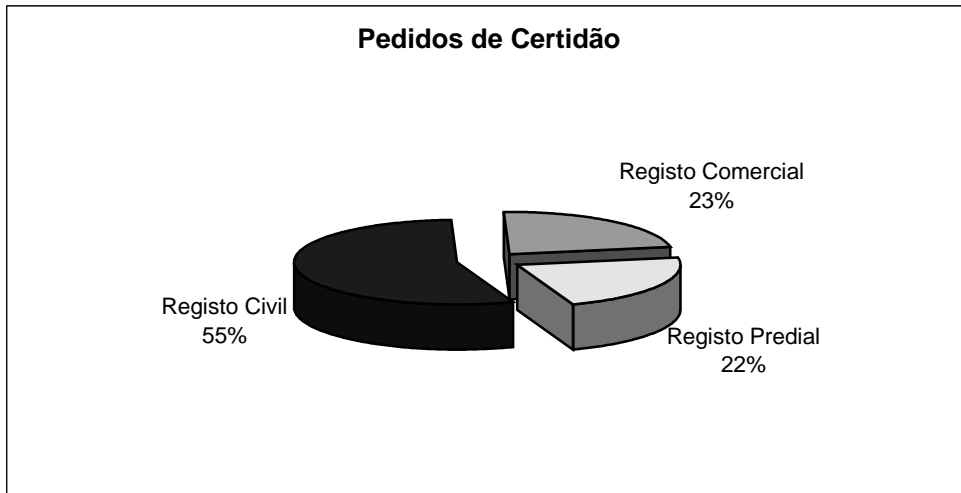
The first service to be created was the **electronic request of certificates** – civil (birth, marriage, death), property and business – and many others will be gradually made available.



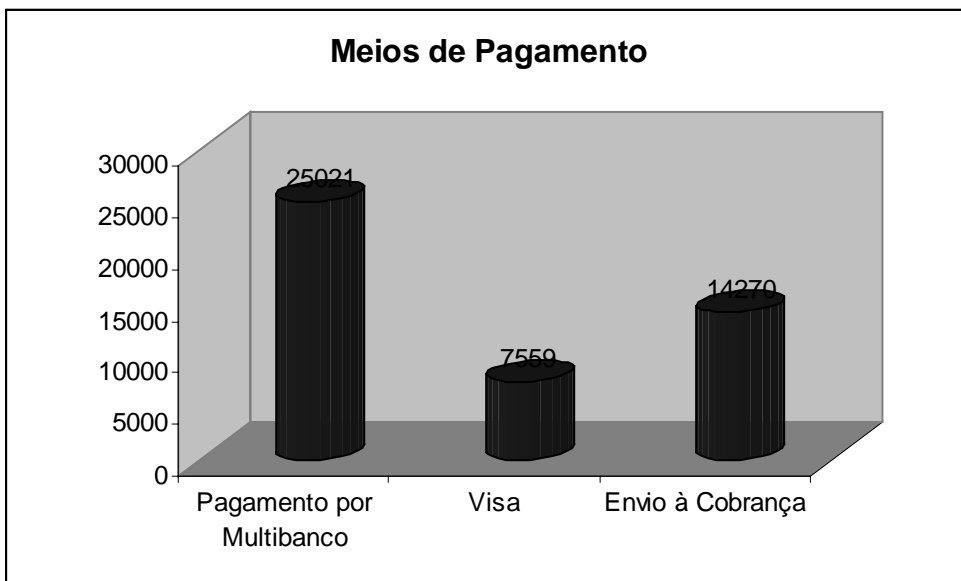
The outstanding interest of Direct Public Service is reflected in the high rates reached by citizens' requests.
 We can mention a modal rate of 200/300 daily requests.



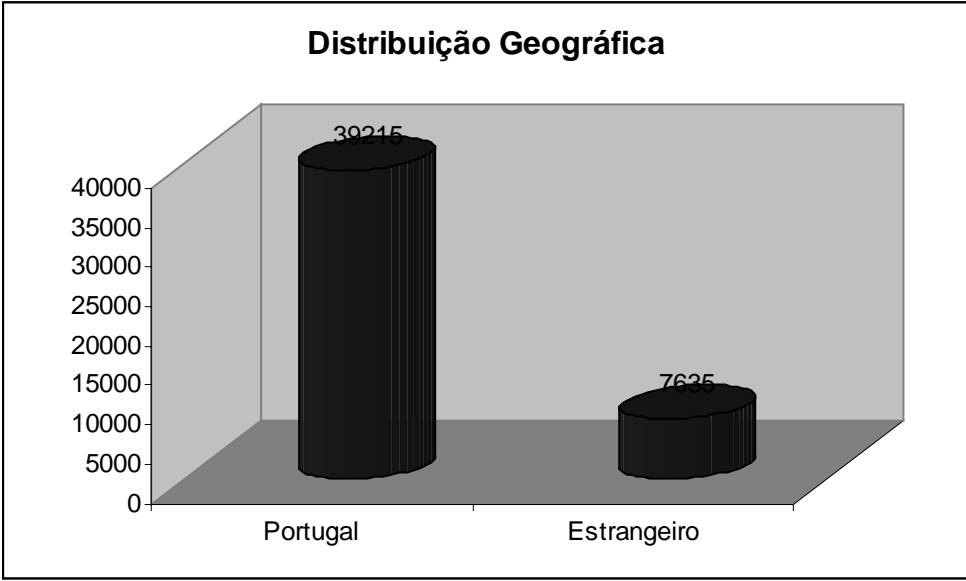
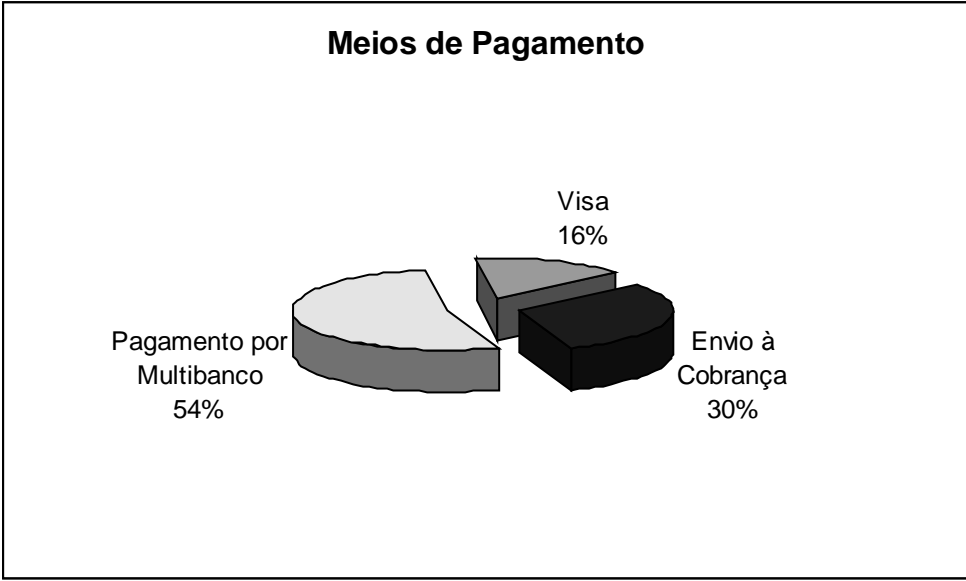
From February 5th to October 14th, there were 46850 requests for certificates, 25743 of which were issued by the Civil Registry (more than 50% of total), 10700 issued by the Commercial Registry and 10407 issued by the Property Registry.



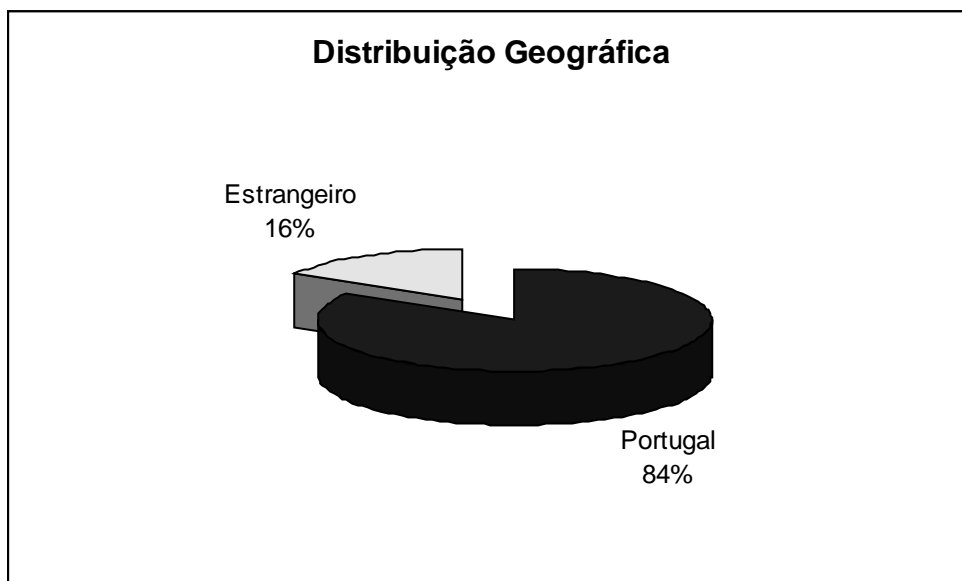
A number of different means of payment are to be used (cash on delivery and credit and debit cards), as the service is aimed not only at users residing in Portugal but also those residing abroad, mainly Portuguese emigrants. In this case, VISA is of the utmost importance.



In the before-mentioned period, there were 25021 requests registered through ATM machines, 7559 payable by credit card (since March 13th).



From the 46850 requests registered, 84% (39215) originated from inland, and 16% (7635), from abroad.



The service was set-up in a user-friendly way, for both citizens and officials, and it includes help features.

The universe of Registry and Conveyance is undertaking some changes. With the informatization of its services schedule to end by 2002/2003.

Nevertheless, it was understood that the lack of Internet in the Registry offices could not be an obstacle to the implementation of a product, which would facilitate citizen's access to their services. Therefore, the certificate requesting service was structured the following way:

The citizen will present its request through the Internet, by filling in the proper forms. A registration number is attributed, which will allow the citizen to check the status of his request at any time. As was mentioned before, there are 3 payment methods available: debit cards, credit card and on delivery.

Upon payment by debit or credit card, the system will issue the request to the Registry office. As most Registry offices do not yet benefit from electronic facilities, fax may be used as replacement. Approval or rejection of request will follow. In the former case, certificate will be forwarded by mail.

Direct Public Service will include the products to be developed in co-operation with Infocid.

The Direct Public Service supports a new form of service in which the image that emerges is that of the Public Service involved. As far as certificates are concerned, it is the quality of the work carried out by the Registry office that stands out in the fulfilment of the request. Infocid through the DPS, does not intend to replace Registry offices function before the public.

Infocid offers a service availability channel- DPS- as a complement to the forms of Public Services.

A nation-wide poll considered Infocid the best Portuguese Public Administration site of the years 2000 and 2001.

Infocid has taken another step towards improving, in the sense that it provides citizens with information, which allows them to demand quality services.

Infocid is also in itself a quality factor, by promoting innovative instruments in the scope of Public Administration.

It is a quality movement resulting, externally from the public's pressure and, internally, from Public Management's own initiative.

October/2001

Graça R. M. L. Pombeiro

Deputy Director of the Secretariat for Administration Modernisation (responsible for management of INFOCID- The Portal of Portuguese Administration)

Ministry for the State and Public Administration Reform
R. Almeida Brandão, 7
1200-602 Lisbon
PORTUGAL

Tel: ++ 351 21 392 15 35 / ++ 351 21 392 15 37

Fax: ++ 351 21 392 15 96

Graca.pombeiro@infocid.pt

Graca.pombeiro@sma.pt