



### Digital Government Strategies: Good Practices

#### Latvia: Social e-petition platform My Voice

The OECD Council adopted on 15 July 2014 the Recommendation on Digital Government Strategies. The Recommendation provides a set of 12 principles structured around 3 pillars. The OECD Secretariat is developing a Digital Government Policy Toolkit to support OECD member countries and non-member adhering countries with the implementation of the Recommendation. This practice was submitted by the government of Latvia to be considered as a good practice in the implementation of one or more of the principles contained in the Recommendation.

#### Description of the practice:

<b>Organisation:</b>	Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development
<b>Name of the practice:</b>	Social e-petition platform My Voice – 100% respected by Parliament.
<b>Principles implemented:</b>	<u>Principle 2</u> – Encourage engagement and participation of public, private and civil society stakeholders in policy making and public service design and delivery.
<b>Description:</b>	<b>Social e-petition platform My Voice</b> ( <a href="http://www.manabalss.lv">www.manabalss.lv</a> )

ManaBalss.lv is a social initiative platform – a legitimate way to submit an initiative, gather supporters and present finished initiatives to the Parliament. Each initiative, signed by at least 10 000 citizens will be passed to the Parliament to be included in official agenda of the Parliament.

Law "[Rules of Procedure of the Saeima](#)" [Article 131](#)<sup>3</sup> provides that "at least 10,000 citizens of Latvia who shall have reached the age of 16 on the day of filing a submission have a right to file a collective submission with the Saeima". Collective submission might be submitted electronically ("*a collective submission that is filed electronically shall be supplemented with technical information confirming the signing of the collective submission and ensuring the possibility to verify the number of signatories, their names, surnames and ID numbers*").

In such way social e-petition platform is legally determined and binding to Parliament.

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- ManaBalss.lv is a social initiative platform - a 100% legitimate way to submit an initiative, gather supporters and present finished initiatives to the parliament.
- This platform provides an opportunity submit initiatives and improve, and will get help from community volunteers improving and communicating citizen's idea.
- Authors of initiatives can freely contact volunteer experts in legal system, politics and other sectors, who will be happy to provide assistance in improving initiatives.
- Initiatives are checked to comply with ManaBalss.lv and Parliament's legal standards, however the legal consulting provided is community based and the site holds no liability with regards to the political or legal consequences initiatives may entail.
- An initiative can be submitted and signed by any citizen of the Republic of Latvia at least 16 years of age, after authorizing through a state-registered online bank. ManaBalss.lv ensures privacy and the security of personal data.
- Since ManaBalss.lv was launched three years ago, eight laws have been passed or changed thanks to the activity on this site. ManaBalss.lv is recognized as an open government success story all across the globe.
- Platform has been highly valued by leaders and organizations around the world.

### Results

#### **Results 3 years later:**

- 14 e-petitions have received more than 10 000 votes (+ 2 more "jumped" on Parliament's agenda anyway)
- 8 e-petitions have received a vote on Parliament and become law amendments.
- Over 35% of Latvia's population has visited ManaBalss.lv
- Recognized as an Open Government success story world wide

### Development

2011/June

**Design:** Amendments of Law adopted in 2012/January

**Testing:** The first initiative was published in 2011/June

**Implementation:** Second initiative

Tools: N/A

Resources: Two persons, plus one person for communication, public and private financing

**Diffusion and scaling:** In future it is planned to provide platform as Open code.

Public relations, media relations and social media activities were used to inform key stakeholders.



## Digital government toolkit



**Partnerships:** Private sector, Civil Society, Academics and Research Bodies and Public Sector Organisations.

Partners: NGO Foundation “Sabiedrības Līdzdalības Fonds” (Public Participation Fund)

Nature of the partnership: e-petition platform – informed about own procedure, initiative assessment

### Lessons learned

Public and private/NGO cooperation plays important role in citizens' involvement in decision making and enhancement of public administration processes.

The cooperation is working well and is sustainable if it is backed up by regulation.

### Conditions required:

- 1) Overall democratic values
- 2) Supportive legal regulation
- 3) Supportive architecture (defined API interface)
- 4) Cooperation and partnership between public and private sectors and leadership
- 5) Ownership

### Additional information: