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Automation of Policy Implementation

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Challenges and Perspectives for IS in Public Administration 1

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The Role of Enabling Technologies for New Public Management

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Abstract

New Public Management envisages a product-oriented relation towards its clientele. So it is characterised by a segmentation in highly autonomous substructures in that reversing the historical way of Taylorism. For achieving this goal, new forms of communication and a new way of leadership are necessary conditions. All in all, this means a paradigmatic shift in the relation between IT and organisations. This new order is also well mirrored in the arising term for "enabling technologies": electronic document management, electronic document interchange, and computer supported cooperative work.

Automation of Policy Implementation

Ignace Snellen
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Abstract

Policies directed at citizens are increasingly being implemented by governmental bureaucracies using information systems to process cases. Generally bulk and routine administrative decision are involved. However, decreasing costs make IT applications available also for less bulky and less routine decisions.

An overview of some of these systems and of the parts of the trajectory of administrative decision making will be covered. These parts cover: 1) the request-entry phase, 2) the data-collection phase, 3) the assessment decision-making phase which takes place from the back-office (the administrative processing phase) to the front-office (the request-entry phase).

The relevant 'dimensions' of the decision making will be discussed in the context of process dimension, a scope dimension, an assessment dimension, and an accountability dimension. Some relevant implication of a development in the direction of comprehensive approaches to case handling will also be presented. In view of the likelihood of increasing automated case handling systems in public administrations, there can be no doubt that a watchful eye on developments is needed. Comparative research in different countries may be helpful in this respect.

New Public Management: Challenges for IS in Public Administration

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Abstract

All over the world, public administrations are trying to meet today's challenges by turning to concepts and structures which are summarised under the term "New Public Management" (NPM).

The paper analyses the impact of NPM on administrative information systems and vice versa, by looking into five features: object-oriented segmentation, process orientation, coherence and leadership, client relations and human resources. Based on the results of these analyses the author comes to the conclusion that effectiveness and efficiency of public administrations can be improved if the tradition to develop organisational concepts for administrations on the one hand and information systems on the other independent of each other is given up. The effort to reorganise public administrations and the effort to develop information systems need to be combined.