

SEMINAR ANNOUNCEMENT



UNITED NATIONS
UNIVERSITY

UNU-EGOV

Operating Unit on Policy-Driven
Electronic Governance

WHERE

UNU-EGOV, Rua de Vila Flor 166
4800-445 Guimarães, Portugal

WHEN

15 May 2018 | 11h00 - 12h00

SPEAKER

Gatis Ozols

Head of Electronic Services Unit, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development (Latvia)



Gatis is working in the digital government field since 2005. Currently, together with a team, he is responsible for government service digitization strategy and service delivery modernization initiatives. In the last couple of years, his team was the author of a national regulation for basic requirements for public service digitization, regulation of government to citizen communication platform Latvija.lv, and regulation and coordination of implementation of the Official Digital Mailbox for citizens and businesses. Gatis and his team have developed and are coordinating the National eGovernment Benchmark for government institutions – Latvia's E-index – and currently are exploring co-creation and co-design practices for better public services design.

He is a passionate promoter of benefits provided by open, collaborative, and digitally enabled government. He is open to partnerships with government and non-government organizations in Latvia and across borders. Gatis holds a Master's Degree in Business Administration and a Bachelor degree in Communication Science. He is a Certified Scrum Product Owner (CSPO).

TITLE & ABSTRACT

From cables to artificial intelligence, from individualism to ecosystems: Digital Government in Latvia

Latvia is a small and agile country of 2.9 million people, with two important natural resources – wood and innovation minded people – backed-up by a strong ICT capacity. Latvia is amongst the world leaders of internet speed and uptake of mobile internet, and features a rapidly growing ICT sector. Latvia has gone through times of enormous economic growth, making it one of the fastest developing economies in the EU. Apart from a period of ruthless austerity in 2008-2010, when GDP fell by a quarter, the time to grow has returned again. It is evident that every one of these phases have made a specific impact on government and e-Government development.

Digital government has been seen as a helpful instrument for recovery, growth, more efficient and effective government work and empowerment of citizens. It has been strategically applied to government efficiency, transparency, citizen participation and availability of public services, and now strategically positioned to expand national competitiveness. Currently, knowledge and information products and services play an important and increasing role in Latvia's economy.

In this seminar, Gatis will focus on questions regarding how these influences have changed government practices, especially service delivery, influenced cooperation models, and empowered citizens. Gatis will share with the audience topics related to: 1) *Latvia's information society and digital government context*; 2) *digital government and public service delivery strategic initiatives and governance*; 3) *cooperation models and examples in public service delivery, provision of electronic identification and use of shared government services online*; 4) *main cornerstones in Latvia's Digital Government evolution and its current status*; 5) *the way forward*.

As an insider for most of these processes, Gatis will not only speak about initiatives and success stories, but will also share faced challenges and lessons learned.