

Authentic Registers and Good Governance

Paul van der MOLEN, The Netherlands

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SUMMARY

The basic idea behind data infrastructures is that it provides for tools giving easy access to distributed databases to people who need those data for their own decision making processes. Although data infrastructures have a substantial component of information technology, the most fundamental asset is the data itself, because without data there is nothing to have access to, to be shared or to be integrated. Last decade it was understood that the development of data infrastructures not only provided easy access to distributed databases, but also gave good opportunities for re-thinking the role of information supply for the performance of governments. Based on this starting point, the 'Streamlining Key Data' Programme of the Netherlands' government took the lead in the development and implementation of a strategy for restructuring government information in such a way that an electronic government evolves that:

- inconveniences the public and the business community with request for data only when this is absolutely necessary
- offers them a rapid and good service
- can not be misled
- instills the public and the industrial community with confidence
- is provided at a cost that is not higher than strictly necessary

Jointly with 5 other government registers, the property registers & cadastral maps & topographic maps of the Netherlands' Cadastre, Land Registry and Mapping Agency are formally appointed in 2002 as 'base registers' of the governmental information infrastructure. The baseregisters will be the core of a system of so-called authentic registers, which might be any register that is maintained by a single government body and used by many others as the authentic source of certain data. If a register is formally designated as an authentic register, all other government organisations are strictly forbidden to collect the same data by themselves. In their budget allocation they will not find any money for data collection at this point.