

ICA Country Report 2004

MALTA

1 Brief description of the Government Structure

Malta is a parliamentary democracy. It has been an independent nation since 1964, a constitutional republic since 1974, and a Member State of the European Union since 1 May 2004. The Head of Government, the Prime Minister, is the leader of the party that gains a plurality of seats in the legislature. The President, the Head of State, is appointed by the Prime Minister in consultation with the members of the Cabinet of Ministers.

The main Government actors in ICT in Malta are the Ministry for Industry, Investment and IT [MITI], which is responsible for e-Government implementation across the wider public sector and for Information Society matters; the Central Information Management Unit [CIMU] in the Office of the Prime Minister, which is specifically responsible for Information Management and ICT in the Public Service (i.e. the Public Administration); and Malta Information Technology & Training Services [MITTS] Ltd, which is a company fully owned by Government that acts as its principal IT agency.

Information about the Government of Malta and specific details about the various ICT developments in Malta may be obtained from the following websites:

Government of Malta Portal: www.gov.mt

Central Information Management Unit: www.cimu.gov.mt

Ministry for Industry, Investment and IT: www.miti.gov.mt

Malta IT and Training Services Ltd: www.mitts.gov.mt

2 The strategic approach adopted by the Government towards e-Government

e-Government Strategy

The Maltese government's **White Paper on the Vision and Strategy for the attainment of e-Government** (available at the URL: <http://www.cimu.gov.mt/htdocs/content.asp?c=34>) was adopted as government policy by the Cabinet of Ministers in January 2001. It envisaged a comprehensive programme to act as a catalyst for transforming Malta into an advanced Information Society. It established the principles that underpin e-government in Malta and created a strategic framework and identified the required changes and drivers for the implementation of e-government.

Malta established the eEurope+ Action Plan as its roadmap in 2001, followed by the eEurope Action Plan 2005, and ingrained their basic principles in its two major ongoing information society initiatives, namely the e-Malta vision and the e-Government programme.

The following are the key principles of the e-Government Programme:

- e-Government Services should be easy to access in terms of speed, entry points, and multi-channel access
- There has to be universality of access to e-Government Services in order to ensure total social inclusion. Universality of access shall be ensured by the delivery of e-government services across multiple channels, which shall not exclude conventional channels.

- e-Government services should be widely affordable.
- Data submitted by users shall not be used without their prior consent.
- Services shall be focused towards customer needs and not government requirements.
- Users will be able to access the services at all times and on all days (24x7 access).
- e-Government services will be faster, more efficient and effective and have a higher quality than conventional services. Parameters relative to service quality in respect of each service shall be established and made public.
- e-Government services shall be more economic and cost-effective than conventional services, thereby ensuring more efficient use of taxpayers' money.
- e-Government services shall be consistent in terms of content and quality, across different delivery channels.
- Feedback mechanisms shall be available to all users in respect of all services.
- Feedback mechanisms shall be used to promote e-democracy.
- e-Government will enable the 'seamless' provision of public services – transcending the public service, the public sector and the public enterprises.
- e-Government will not consist simply of the placing on line of conventional services but rather the virtualisation of services across policy areas to attain service integration and service rationalisation.
- The architecture and technology that will be adopted for the implementation of e-services will be scalable and common across delivery channels wherever possible. It will also entail minimal disruption to back-office processes currently in existence.
- New back-office information systems shall be designed with a view to the provision of electronic services to the public.
- e-Services shall be provided through a central portal.
- There shall be one distinct corporate image of Government as the provider of e-services.

Legal framework

The main legal texts impacting on the development of e-government are those on Data Protection and Electronic Commerce.

The **Data Protection Act** was enacted on 14 December 2001 and came into force in July 2003. The Office of the Prime Minister [OPM] is responsible to ensure that Data Protection compliance is achieved in all Government departments. A collaboration agreement was signed between MITTS and OPM. As a result, a project team was established between OPM and MITTS to co-ordinate, advise and assist as necessary in the implementation of the data protection requirements in the Public Service, so as to bring Government departments compliant with the Data Protection Act.

The **Electronic Commerce Act** was adopted on 16 January 2001.

There is no specific legislation on 'Freedom of Information' or on 'Use of public sector information'.

The full text (in English) of all Maltese laws is found on the website: www.justice.gov.mt.

National ICT Strategy 2004-2006

On 22 July 2004, the Prime Minister and the Minister for Industry, Investment and IT launched a National ICT Strategy for the years 2004 to 2006. The published document captures Government's vision of where Malta will be in three years' time in the ICT sector.

The vision is complemented by an Action Plan with detailed objectives and a series of initiatives and programmes to help Malta attain that vision.

Malta aims to be one of the most advanced Information Societies in Europe and the Mediterranean through the use of technologies that improve quality of life for Maltese citizens and support the country's economic growth.

Both the Prime Minister and the Minister for IT explained that the strategy is the result of a wide process of consultation carried out since the setting up of the National Information Society Consultative Council [NISCO], which includes members from civil society (KNPD, KSU, NCW, etc.), trade unions, industry (FOI, etc.), ICT companies (Vodafone, Melita Cable, ISPs, etc.), political parties (PN, MLP, AD) and Government (Ministries, etc.). After the achievements of the years 2000 to 2003 were analysed, including the eMalta project, a multisectoral strategy was drawn up for the coming three years.

The 13 Strategic Objectives for 2004-2006 are as follows:

- SO1: Step up the fight against the digital divide across all levels of society
- SO2: Promote and extend holistic ICT education and accessibility to technology
- SO3: Use ICTs to improve further the quality of life of all citizens and to impact positively on the tourist experience in Malta
- SO4: Use ICTs as an effective management tool within the public sector as an efficiency-realisation mechanism and as a vehicle to improve the quality of working life of public employees
- SO5: Proliferate the delivery of first-class, accessible and secure Government services
- SO6: Promote the ICT culture in SMEs with the objective of making them derive the benefits of introducing ICT in their operations
- SO7: Enable and empower the local businesses to gain access to the larger global market by participating in the eBusiness community
- SO8: Consolidate the external ICT environment
- SO9: Make the Internet a secure place; build confidence, trust and security in the use of ICTs
- SO10: Strengthen the local indigenous ICT private sector and support ICT entrepreneurship
- SO11: Internationalise the Maltese ICT industry to compete in the global environment
- SO12: Transpose the benefits of EU membership in the attainment of a first-class information society
- SO13: Promote the role and the contribution of the Maltese information society in the global ICT

The published Strategy document may be downloaded from the following URL:

<http://www.miti.gov.mt/html/National ICT Brochure.pdf>

National Broadband Strategy

On 23 April 2004 a consultative document was launched on a national strategy on broadband Internet. This strategy is deemed to be complementary to the National ICT Strategy.

In Malta, in 2003, 30% of those using the Internet were using a broadband connection; 17% of Maltese households had a broadband connection, and 5.4% of the population used broadband. The EU average for use of broadband in 2003 was of 6.0%.

The consultative document may be downloaded from the website www.miti.gov.mt.

3 Organisational Issues

Since April 2003 the Ministry for Industry, Investment and IT has been responsible for specific e-government policy, strategy implementation, as well as for Information Society matters. It has developed a National ICT Strategy.

The Central Information Management Unit coordinates the development and implementation of information management policies, standards and procedures in the Public Administration. An Information Management Officer has been appointed in each Ministry to relay the work of CIMU, functioning as a CIO within the Ministry. CIMU is responsible for the implementation of corporate and shared government systems, while Government Ministries and departments are responsible for line-of-business departmental projects.

MITTS Ltd supplies IT systems and services to Government departments and to the wider public sector. It is responsible for operating the core e-Government infrastructure, including the Web Framework which hosts transactional e-services, the Government Portal, the national E-ID (registration and authentication) system, the Electronic Payment Gateway, the e-Procurement Gateway, and the m-Government system.

National Information Society Council (NISCO)

On 26 September 2003 the Minister for IT and Investment inaugurated the National Information Society Council, which effectively replaces the eMalta Commission. The first meeting of the Council was attended by representatives from fifty organisations, including Government ministries, trade unions, employers' organisations, governmental entities, ICT companies, political parties, local councils, and other organisations.

The terms of reference of the Council are the following:

- Monitor the development of the information society in Malta;
- Provide direct input to the development and implementation of the national information and communications technologies strategy;
- Devise structured initiatives on specific aspects, programmes or initiatives related to the development of the information society;
- Serve as a focused analytical forum on major information society themes;
- Serve as a vehicle for national networking, effort convergence and synergy attainment in the development of the information society;
- Facilitate the empowerment and extensive participation of civil society in all fronts of the information society;
- Ensure that all stakeholders in the public and private sectors and in civil society are informed of the major developments in the information society in Malta;
- Bring to the attention of all the stakeholders any concerns on specific situations or emerging problems in the local and global information society developments;
- Develop into an ICT knowledge-sharing platform;

- Serve as the national node for the World Summit on Information Society process;
- Actively participate in committees, fora and programmes of the European Union with a view of maximising the ICT-potential of Malta's membership in the Union; and
- Promote and facilitate the establishment of international partnerships between members of the Council and their international counterparts.

The scope of the Council is to be as representative as possible and aims to bring together the major stakeholders who influence and are influenced by policy decisions related to the information society. Within this context, the membership of the Council is composed of three distinct categories:

- Core group – are the central players of the information society in both the public and the private sectors, including policy-setting organisations, regulatory bodies and telecoms providers;
- Special interest members – are relevant organisations which albeit not having direct impact on the information society are still effected by its development in one or more specific areas;
- Individual members – are individuals invited on a personal basis on the grounds of their previous or current contribution to the information society or towards the engendering of the ICT private sector in Malta.

The Council affords the status of Observer to other organisations and individuals who may formally request such a status on the grounds of the conduct of their profession or in connection with their studies (should they be University students).

It is envisaged that the Council will convene three times every calendar year, specifically on the following months: January, May and September. Apart from the quarterly Council meetings, it is expected that the core group will convene on a more frequent basis to discuss in further technical detail specific issues which may arise from the Council meetings.

It is also envisaged that a number of *ad-hoc* sub-committees, working groups and task forces will be established to follow specific developments deliberated upon by the Council into greater detail, with a view of reporting back to the Council in due course.

The Secretary of the Council will be the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry for Information Technology and Investments. The Council Secretariat will be located in the Office of the Permanent Secretary and will be responsible for all logistics and communications related to the Council operations.

Email: nisco@gov.mt

4 Operational Issues

Developments in data management

The Central Information Management Unit is responsible for Government's Data Architecture function. In late 2003 and in 2004 attention was focused on two main areas, the Data Architecture standards and the Corporate Data Repository (CDR).

While the Portal (www.gov.mt) and the Intranet have high visibility outside and within Government, much less visible but potentially more important is the function of Data Architecture. Arising from Government's Information Systems Strategic Plans, CIMU has a clear mandate over this domain, and in fact has been the owner of this function since CIMU was set up in 1999. MITTS have provided invaluable expertise in support of this function. It is easy to underestimate the importance of Data Architecture in the pursuance of a truly joined-up Government. If software developers ignore data architecture principles, then they would be reinforcing the silo mentality that has often prevailed in information systems. CIMU has increased its efforts to enforce compliance to the Data Architecture Policy, Standard and Directive, as this is essential for the maturation of government's information systems.

The CIMU **Corporate Data Repository (CDR)** provides a tangible opportunity for the reaping of the benefits of successful practical implementation of data architecture principles. In strict compliance to data protection legislation, it holds commonly used data that is shareable across Government ministries and departments, including national Person and Address data from the Common Database (CdB). It is surprising how often officers collect the same data over and over again, often to uncertain levels of quality. The CDR makes the best available data accessible to all. The major development in this field is that the software application that will enable public officers to read and write data directly to and from the CDR has now gone live, and is accessible to data owners and users.

Enhancement of the Intranet for the Public Service

When CIMU launched the Intranet for the Public Service, in April 2003, the focus of the first phase was on content of relevance and importance to all public officers who can access the Intranet from all PC's connected to MAGNET by following the link <http://intra.gov.mt>.

Primarily, the content was mainly information on current affairs, news, a repository of circulars starting from 1996, job opportunities, and links to Government websites hosted at MITTS Ltd as well as to those on the open Internet.

During its first year, the Intranet evolved through the introduction of new sections. Following the coming into force of the Data Protection Act 2001, a separate Data Protection section was put online. This section provides as much information as possible on the implementation of data protection compliance in the Public Service. Another new section was dedicated to information related to information security warnings for public officers. Electronic transaction-based services are now a significant part of the e-Government programme. Those electronic services available only for public officers (G2G) were collated under a new section of the Intranet named E-Services.

CIMU recently launched the second phase of the Intranet. The most important feature of this phase is the introduction of a login and password whereby access to certain parts of the Intranet is restricted to particular users, thus enhancing security for specific information. Thus, password protected areas are present in the Intranet for use by closed groups of users. In this phase the software permits authorised members of these groups to maintain and upkeep their own area of the Intranet.

Presently, access to the protected area is through the Government's User Management System (UMS) login and password. Each individual is assigned one or more roles according to his/her designation. These roles are the keys to determine which data each individual is allowed to view. This entire scenario would not have been technically possible if it were not

for the Corporate Data Repository (CDR), which stores the information about individual roles and their corresponding privileges.

This new feature has already been welcomed by a number of groups, including Data Controllers, HR Managers and Information Management Officers. The number of closed user groups is expected to grow substantially, to the extent that a software review is already under way so that the Intranet may evolve into a fully-fledged Enterprise Portal.

E-Procurement Gateway

On 15 April 2004 CIMU launched the Government's E-Procurement Gateway. This system is now the sole means by which procurement officers in Government are able to purchase computer equipment up to a value of MTL 2,500 (ca EUR 5,875). The gateway was designed to meet the need of Purchasing Officers in Government to obtain computer equipment which meets both quality and price while at the same time giving participating suppliers an equal opportunity for offering their quotations on line. Behind the E-Procurement Gateway are the E-Procurement Framework and the Financial Procurement Regulations that govern the whole system.

The URL for the gateway is <http://www.e-procurement.gov.mt>. On accessing this URL one is presented with a menu which can be accessed by the various user types of the gateway. Starting at basic level, non-registered users can access a part of the menu which is available to the public. If a supplier who is not already registered wishes to do so, he or she may apply on line for a login and password. The login and password will be prepared and the supplier will be asked to call at the CIMU offices to collect the login and password and sign the documents in line with the use of the e-procurement gateway and the software that will be supplied for installations onto computers purchased through the gateway by the purchasing officers within government.

The system is presently envisaged to cater for purchases of a maximum of MTL 2,500. This is the current limit before one has to go to tender. It is worth mentioning that the same procedure as for quotation submissions applies. The process is triggered with the Purchasing Officer preparing a request for quotations and will designate a period by which the quotations are required. A countdown is then started. In the interim period before the closing date the Purchasing Officer is unable to view the quotations and the supplier is only able to view his or her submissions. Submissions may be deleted and replaced as long as the period has not been closed. Once the cut-off date has elapsed the quotations may be viewed by all those visiting the website. At this stage the Purchasing Officer may decide not to accept any of the submissions or adjudicate one of those presented as accepted. The final adjudication process is on three levels and involves the Purchasing Officer, the Information Management Officer (IMO), and the Director Corporate Services (DCS).

The system is designed to ensure fairness and transparency from both the suppliers and purchasing organisation (Purchasing Officer, IMO, and DCS). A Performance Monitoring board was set up to monitor transactions made using this gateway. The board is made up of the chairman, currently the Head of Contracts in CIMU, a member from the IT section of the Chamber for Small and Medium Enterprises, a member from the IT section of the Chamber of Commerce and Enterprise, a representative from the Contracts Department of the Ministry of Finance, and two IMOs, one from Malta and one from (the sister island of) Gozo.

eID (Electronic Identity) System

On 16 October 2003, the Minister for IT announced that the Maltese Government would provide an electronic identity (eID) to each citizen in the country, designed to enable secure access to e-government services. The electronic ID would be supported by means of a confidential PIN number such as the ones used with credit or debit cards.

The new electronic ID is meant to enable Maltese citizens to access a number of interactive and transactional e-services, such as Income Tax or VAT payments, registration for social services, and access to healthcare services. Citizens will also be able to access over the Internet their personal data held by public administrations. The Minister described the system as offering 100% security, explaining that the government would be operating the system but would not be issuing the 'passwords' itself. This would be done in a secret manner by a separate private consortium to ensure strict confidentiality - the same concept behind Personal Identification Numbers for credit cards.

The Minister described this electronic identification system as the 'last pillar in the building of e-government' and that it would give a decisive boost to the development of e-services. Around 95% of the government's services should be available online in the six to nine months following the introduction of the electronic ID, he said. The Minister augured that the new system would not only be used by government but would also be taken up by private companies.

On 18 March 2004 it was announced that the first e-services to be made available to citizens would be provided by the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity, allowing citizens to access their records regarding social security and related transactions. Other e-services expected to be integrated with the eID on the Government portal in the short to medium term will comprise services of the Employment and Training Corporation, the VAT department, the Inland Revenue department (see below), as well as the customer service website www.servizz.gov.mt and an ePassports application.

The electronic identity system in March 2004 was originally developed by Microsoft Corporation and subsequently customised by MITTS Ltd. The responsibility for issuing and administering the e-IDs was given to the consortium Accerta, comprising law firm Fenlex and local ICT companies DataTrak and Computime. In order to increase the uptake of the service and reduce the operating costs of the system for taxpayers, there are ambitious plans to make the eID available for the integration of e-services provided by public enterprises, and in the longer-term even private organisations. Since the model adopted can be replicated in other countries, the Maltese Government also intends to promote its eID system towards foreign governments.

Participation in EU TESTA network

As of 2 October 2003, the intranet of the Government of Malta is directly linked to that of the EU Administration by means of the TESTA connection set up as a result of Malta's participation in the IDA programme. TESTA (Trans-European Services for Telematics between Administrations) provides what in essence is a private Internet connection between public administrations in EU member states and EU institutions. The technical work was carried out by IDA contractors with the active collaboration of staff from MITTS Ltd, which hosts the 'Eurogate' between Malta and Brussels. The TESTA link is only accessible from computers directly connected to the Malta Government network (MAGNET), by means of the address <http://portal.eu-admin.net>. The activation of this direct electronic connection

between the administrations of Malta and the rest of the European Union was a small but highly significant step in Malta's path towards membership of the EU, which commenced formally on 1 May 2004.

Online crime reporting

A new website launched on 11 November 2003 by the Maltese Police allows the general public to report small crimes and lost property, request information from the Police or provide information about criminal activities or other public safety concerns.

Citizens submitting a report through www.pulizija.gov.mt are provided with a reference number and a password that enable them to track the progress of their request online. Information and claimants are undisclosed and kept confidential unless otherwise required during court proceedings.

The online report feature is a supplement to the Police Incident Reporting System (PIRS), the current official procedure. Every report submitted via the website is verified and validated by the police before being included in the PIRS, which grants an 'official status' to the report.

Crime notification is one of the 20 'basic public services' identified by the European Commission within the eEurope initiative and used to benchmark the availability of online public services in European countries.

IR Services Online

In August 2004, the Inland Revenue department launched an online tax payment system. This new payment facility allows individual taxpayers to pay provisional tax and social security contributions over the Internet.

To make a payment, all a taxpayer has to do is key in the 'Payment Reference' into the appropriate field on the online payment page of the Inland Revenue website. This reference incorporates all the necessary payment and taxpayer information, thereby ensuring that no mistakes are made in the data input process. The website then checks that the number is correct and displays the payment details.

Once the payment is done (via one of the three cards currently accepted, i.e., Visa, MasterCard and the Bank of Valletta Cashlink Card), the system provides the user with a transaction reference number. Those users who provide an e-mail address are immediately sent a message containing the payment details and the respective transaction reference. However, the Department will also issue the formal receipt and send it to the taxpayer by normal post.

The Inland Revenue is encouraging individual taxpayers to adopt the online payment facility in order to avoid problems associated with more traditional payment methods, such as long queues at the Department's Cash Office or late delivery of cheques sent by post. The new online service is currently only available for the payment of provisional tax and social security contributions by individuals. However, the Maltese Inland Revenue said it is planning the launch of further payment types in the near future.

The Maltese Inland Revenue online payment facility, available through the Department's website, is based on the Government's Electronic Payment Gateway [ePG], one of the cornerstones of the country's e-government programme. Created in 2002 to provide a central payment platform to Government departments, the ePG has inbuilt security features that safeguard the confidentiality of users' personal information and of credit or debit card data used for payment.

For more information, please visit www.ird.gov.mt.

MCAST Short Courses Online Registration System

On 29 March 2004 the Minister for IT launched a new e-service enabling online registration for the short courses given by the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology. This is the latest in a series of e-services in the educational sector, which include **eExams and eLibraries**.

The website provides an electronic prospectus on the courses and full registration facilities.

For more information, please visit www.mcastshortcourses.gov.mt.

5 Any other issues not covered above

Signing of a second Cooperation Agreement between the Government of Malta and

Microsoft Corporation

On 9 June 2004, during a press conference presided by the Prime Minister, the Minister for IT and Microsoft Senior Vice-President and Executive Head (EMEA region), Jean Philip Courtois, signed an agreement which created a strategic alliance between the Government of Malta and Microsoft Corporation.

This agreement adds to the benefits of the first agreement signed by the two parties in Paris in February 2003 in the presence of the founder of Microsoft, Bill Gates.

The agreement is valid for five years. As a result, the advantageous prices for Microsoft software used by Government are assured until the year 2009, with substantial savings in public expenditure. Moreover, the conditions that previously applied only to the Public Service have now been extended to those public sector entities within MITI's portfolio.

This should bring about substantial savings in companies such as the Water Services Corporation, Enemalta, Gozo Channel Company Limited, and others. Other companies to benefit include Air Malta and Maltacom.

Investment in education and in the fight against the digital divide

Microsoft is expected to invest in the Maltese educational sector to build an ICT society in Malta, as follows:

- Together with MITI, Microsoft will help to open Community Training Centres around Malta that will provide the public with access to broadband Internet and instruction in the use of ICT.
- Microsoft will provide software free of charge to schoolchildren and to students with disability.
- Microsoft will provide software free of charge for use on recycled computers used by NGOs.
- Microsoft will, at its expense, train persons who teach in technology academies of the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST), the University, and the Employment and Training Corporation.

- Microsoft will fund the participation of the University of Malta and the MCAST in the Microsoft Cambridge Research Programme, so that Maltese students receive direct funding for research and training.
- Microsoft will fund the participation of students from University and MCAST in the Imagine World Cup so that they may compete with the best students from all over the world in the field of technological innovation.
- Microsoft will help MITI and MCAST to create Help Centres for schools using computer equipment
- Microsoft will fund and deploy an Innovative Teachers Portal that will be a content repository in Maltese for all Maltese teachers at all levels of the educational system. This will allow teachers to rapidly share information and content in order to strive towards excellence in educational methods.
- Microsoft will set up an ICT Skills Academy Centre in Malta for training of trainers. This is aimed mainly at University lecturers involved in pedagogical field.
- In the specific field of technology teaching Microsoft will finance Government's share in the following programmes:
 - i) Foundation ICT Skills (Primary Years 5 to 6);
 - ii) Using Desktop IT (Secondary Years 1 to 4);
 - iii) Helpdesk Support (Secondary Years 4 to 5; MCAST);
 - iv) ICT-peer coach (MCAST; University; ICT teachers);
 - v) School leadership (Heads of schools);
 - vi) Basic networking administration (Secondary Years 4 to 5; MCAST);
 - vii) Developing applications (Secondary Years 4 to 5; MCAST).
- Microsoft will invest MTL 1.3 million in its programme called Class Server to create an environment where students, teachers and parents together use electronic learning tools. This environment caters for educational content, electronic counseling services, and student evaluation.
- Microsoft will again directly subsidise student software. Microsoft will offer Office Professional, Encarta Library and Visual Basic .NET at nominal prices (in Malta this software presently has a commercial value of over MTL 780). Microsoft will also provide all the licences required for the Electronic Learning environment described above.
- Microsoft will invest around MTL 3.4 million so that over the next five years public service employees who use Microsoft software at their place of work will be able to use it as well at home without additional licence payment.

Other benefits of the Agreement

- Microsoft agreed to invest in the strengthening of the local ICT industry. Every year for the next five years Microsoft will support the participation of seven Maltese software vendors in the international software market. It will also support four start-

up software companies in a similar way. Microsoft will also help in the creation of the Maltese Centre for Technology Excellence.

- Microsoft will help Government and also NGOs prepare proposals to the EU in programmes related to e-services, information security, ICT in education, the digital divide, and use of ICT by persons with disability. Microsoft has also offered technical advice related to the eEurope process, and consultancy on EU programmes.
- Microsoft will financially support international publicity on Malta's ICT environment, especially the developments within the Government sector. Microsoft will fund Malta's participation in the Governments' Leaders Forum, as well as publicity on specific Maltese e-Government initiatives.
- Microsoft will provide Government with technical consultancy services to strengthen its ICT architecture and to improve its use of ICT to improve the quality of Government services.
- Microsoft will open an entity in Malta called Microsoft (Malta) to serve as a base for the implementation of this strategic alliance. Besides, Microsoft is planning to use Malta as a bridge for its operations in North Africa.