



PARTNERSHIPS FOR PROSPERITY (PPP) is a non-governmental non-profit organization, founded in January 2001 and officially registered in June 2001. We create public – private partnerships between the political, commercial and academic sectors, promoting concrete projects aiming at the development of the information society.

The main objectives of PPP are:

- 1) to provide a forum for an equal combination of interests of the government (public administration), the business sector and educational (scientific) institutions in the field of IT;
- 2) to propose and promote projects aiming at the modernization of the public administration in order to bring it closer to citizens;
- 3) to promote a more intensive dynamics of the use of opportunities provided by IT in the field of education e-Learning), public administration (e-Government) and entrepreneurship (e-Business) in Slovakia.

Our middle-term priority is the expansion of the access to the Internet for citizens and the promotion of e-Government in Slovakia.

A wide and cheap access to the Internet is a priority of the European Union. It facilitates the access to information and education for all citizens and thus is an

effective instrument against social exclusion.

E-Government is an extraordinarily topical challenge for Slovakia today. The reform of public administration leads to a creation of new institutions (offices). This is a chance to modernize them on the basis of new information technologies, which would not only increase the effectiveness and the speed of the provision of services to the citizens, but also highlight transparency in decision-making and extend the opportunities of citizens to access information and participate in decision-making.

In 2001, under the patronage of the Education Minister Milan Ftáčnik, who was responsible also for informatization, we organized a series of seminars on the government strategy of IT promotion in Slovakia. Under the patronage of the President of the Slovak Parliament Jozef Migaš we prepared a national conference on IT development in Slovakia. Top managers of IT companies and top representatives of the political sphere as well (President of Parliament, Education and Transport Ministers, State Secretaries of the Education, Transport and Economy Ministries, Members of Parliaments) took regular part at our events. The result of these events was several recommendations to the Government and Parliament.

In 2002 we organized the biggest conference on e-Government ever in Slovakia. The conference was held under the patronage of the President of Parliament Jozef Migaš. The single panel discussions were lead by Ministers of the Slovak Government. Deputy Ministers from the Czech Republic and Croatia and the Vice-Chair of the Union of Slovak Cities and Towns Jozef Mrva came up with presentations. Over 50

Members of Parliament, members of the governmental Advisory Board, chairmen and deputies of regional parliaments and mayors participated at the conference. Heads of all important IT companies in Slovakia and representatives of Slovak universities were present as well. This conference allowed us to initiate a co-operation with regional parliaments and big towns, to be continued this year. We also acquired useful contacts to Slovak parliamentary parties and could further present our views and projects.

We used this method when promoting amendments to the Telecommunication Act. In co-operation with the Association of Telecommunication Operators and the Association of Internet Providers, we prepared a proposal which created conditions for a real competition the telecommunication market, in accordance with EU directives. We organized four expert discussions on the proposal, with the participation of all operators, independent consultants, Transport & Telecommunication Ministry representatives and of the Slovak Telecommunication Office. We also contacted a group of MPs from various political parties who presented the amendments. We won the official support of the Slovak Government for our ideas as well. With a systemic work in Parliament we achieved the approval of the amendment in the form proposed by us. The amendment was finally stopped by the veto of the President of Republic towards the end of the legislative period. Even the European Commission appreciated this initiative in its regular annual report on associated countries.

The year 2003 started with an important success: after three months of negotiation with all parliamentary parties we established a Parliamentary Commission for the Development of Information Society. For the first time in the history of the Slovak Parliament, a multi-party group with such focus was officially established. Beáta Brestenská chairs the group from the governmental party Alliance of the New Citizen (ANO). Members of the Commission are: Herman Arvay (KSS), Jaroslav Baška (SMER), Ján Jasovský (HZDS), Iván Farkas (SMK) and Stanislav Janiš (SDKÚ). PPP will provide expert service for the Commission, organize meetings and co-operate with the Commission mainly in legislative issues. This year, Parliament will debate the law on e-Communications and the law on e-Business. We will also use the opportunity to prepare interpellations and surveys in relation to Government. On the basis of our proposals, State Secretary of the Ministry of Transport & Telecommunications Branislav Opaterný created a group of experts from the commercial and non-profit sectors which is to prepare several concrete projects for Government.

In the field of e-Government we will focus on regional and local self-government for which we prepared presentations of concrete successful projects on IT promotion in the public administration. We will also provide them with information on financial opportunities for such projects from both Slovak and European funds.

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