Access to Environmental Information in a Shared Environmental Information System

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Survey on the Implementation of Directive 2003/4/EC

Thomas Pick

Environmental Information is

Nature Energy ...ture ...ealth Transport

Local Regio... ...rty

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Environmental Information as an Element of Democracy

Timely and innovative EI is the basis for **raising environmental awareness**, for active involvement of citizens in environmental measures and thus an **element of democracy**.
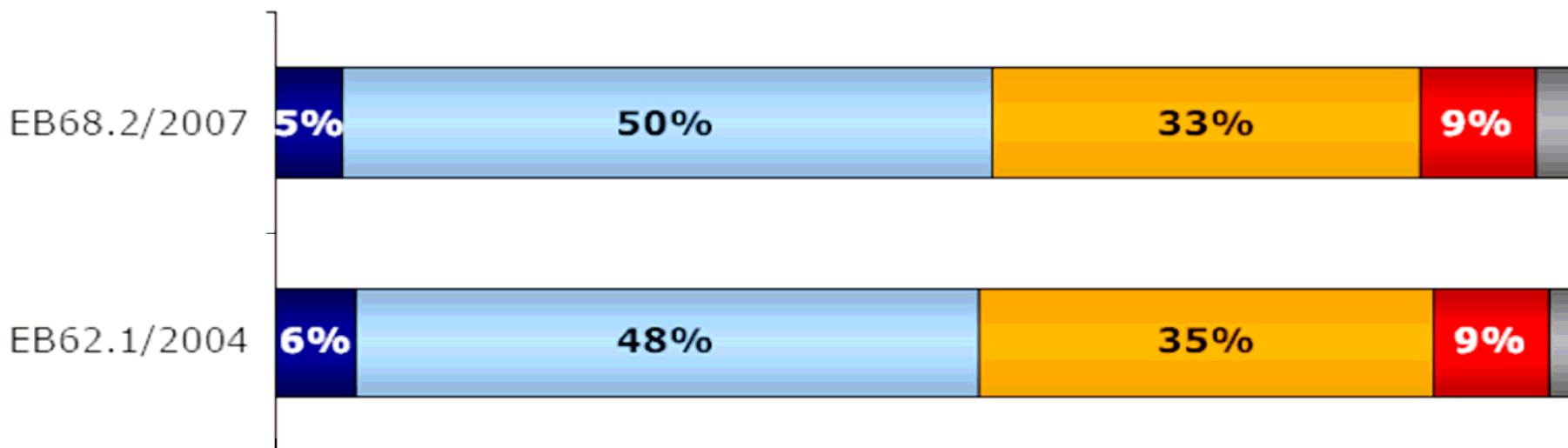
The right of access to relevant data increases **transparency** and enhances **public participation** in decisions taken by the public authorities. Access to EI is thus a step towards participation and democratisation of environmental law.

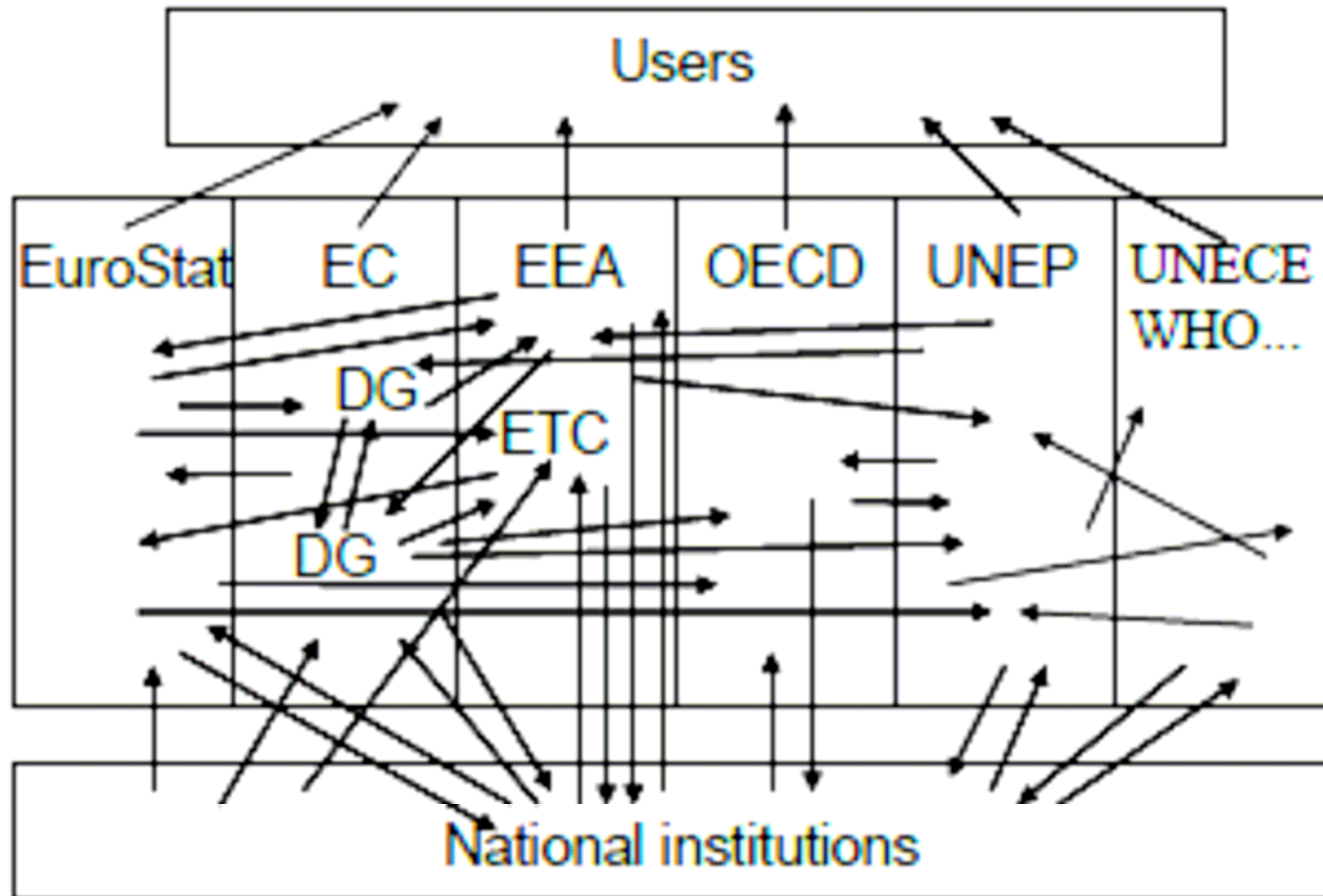However, Information is a keystone in the policy making process (DPSIR)

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42 % of EU citizens feel poorly informed about environmental issues

QF4 In general, how informed do you feel about environmental issues? - EU

Legend:
- ■ Very well informed
- ■ Fairly well informed
- ■ Fairly badly informed
- ■ Very badly informed
- ■ DK

	Very well informed	Fairly well informed	Fairly badly informed	Very badly informed
EB68.2/2007	5%	50%	33%	9%
EB62.1/2004	6%	48%	35%	9%

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Europe's Roadmap to Reporting

What are the SEIS Principles

- Information ... ... source;
- Information ... ... rs for many pur...
- Information ... ... and enable th...
- Information ... ... **arily public authoritie** ... m to assess in ... he effectiven...
- Information ... ... both public au... appropria... ...ent areas) an... ...d implemen...
- Information ... ... **ter due considera** ... bject to appropriate ... l in the relevant national language(s), and
- Information sharing and processing should be supported through common, free open source **software tools**.

A⁴ - Model

- **Availability**
- **Accessibility**
- **Accountability**
- **Accuracy**

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What SEIS is about...

1. Sharing (organisation)
  - Political commitment (legal framework)
  - Partnership (win-win)
  - Networking (connecting)

2. Environmental Information (content)
  - Horizontal integration (thematic)
  - Vertical integration (local to global)
  - Online access - real time
  - Multi-purpose (policy makers, public, research)

3. System (infrastructure and services)
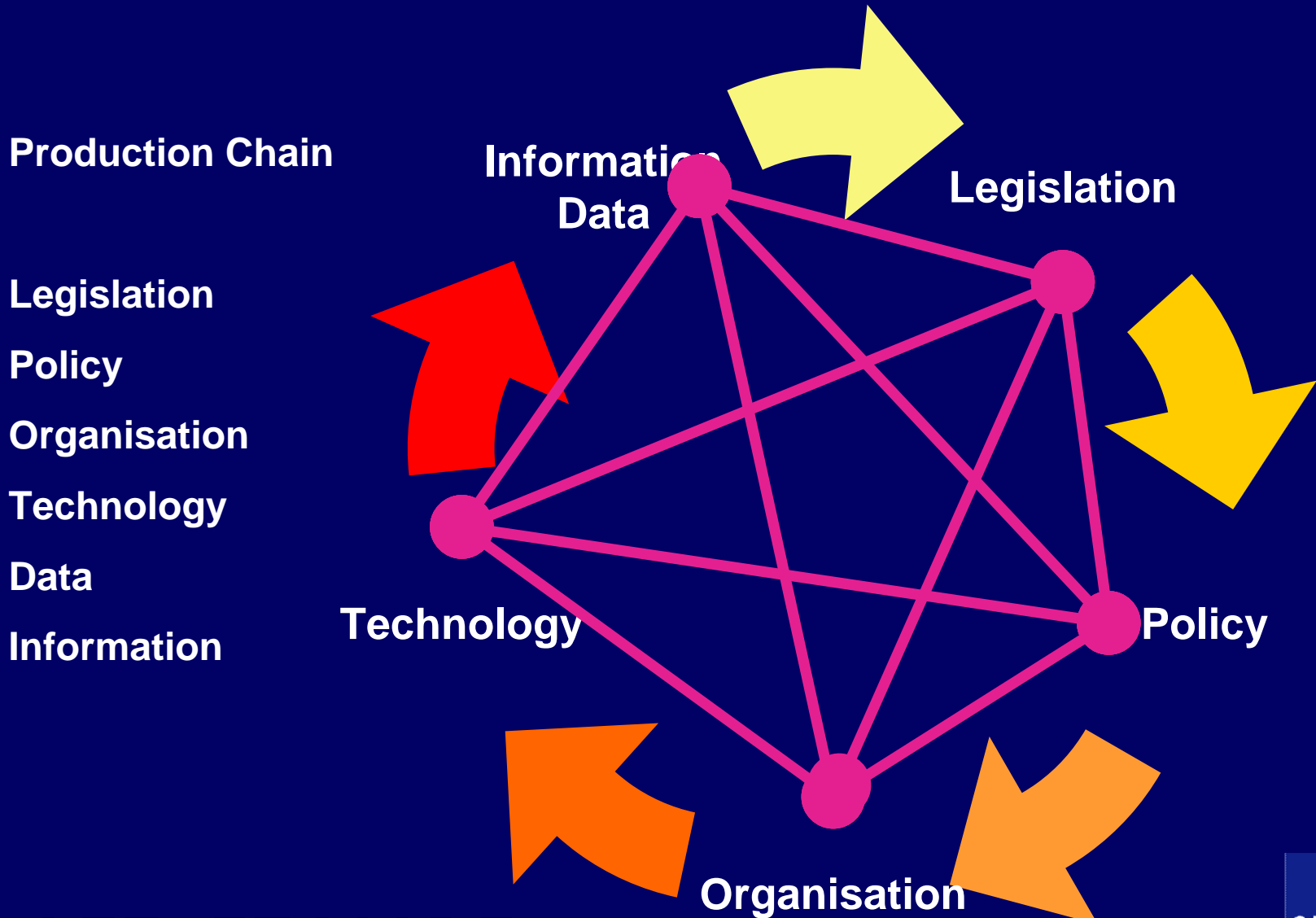 - Tools for interoperability
  - Mainly existing ICT Infrastructure
  - Inspire, Reportnet, GMES,...
  - New e-Services for environment

From Chris Steenmanns, EEA

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SEIS - SISE Dimensions

Production Chain

Legislation

Policy

Organisation

Technology

Data

Information

Information Data

Legislation

Technology

Policy

Organisation

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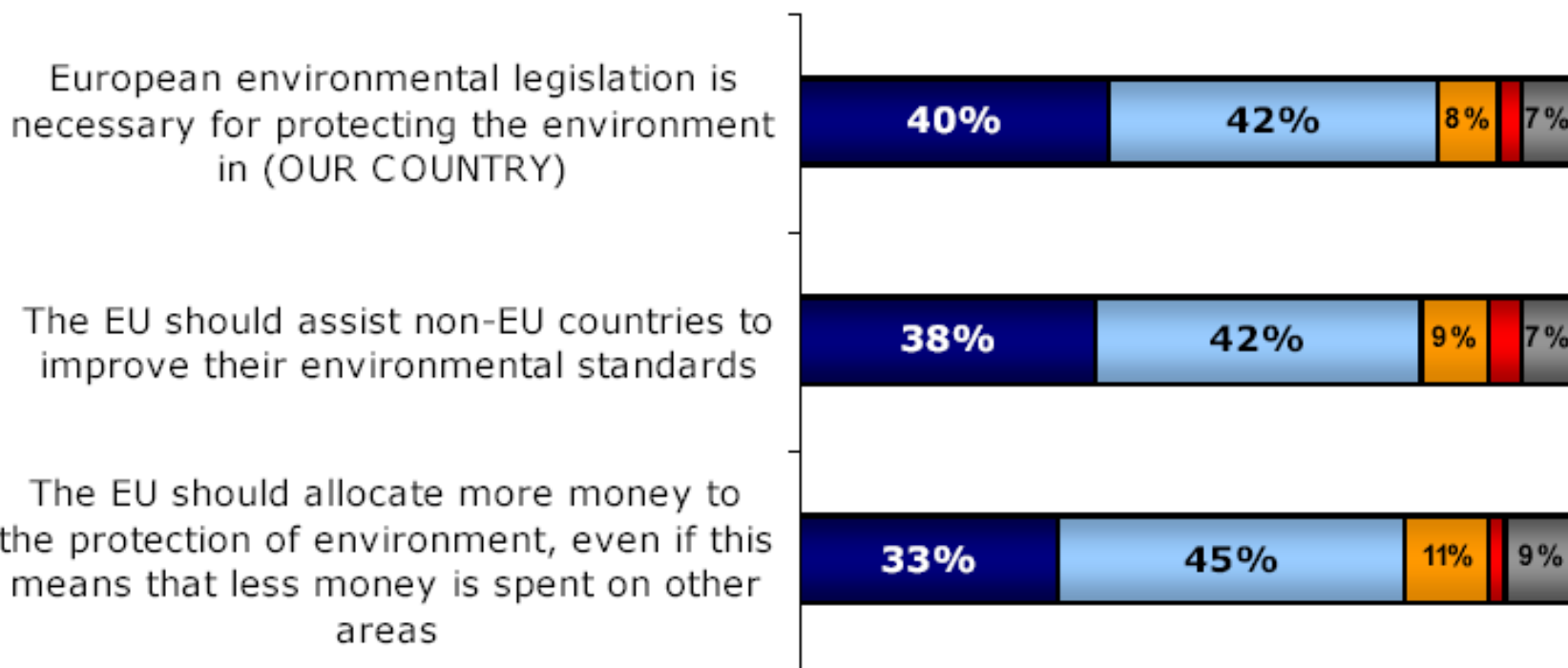
Legal Space

QF20 For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you totally agree, tend to agree, tend to disagree or totally disagree...? - EU 27

■ Totally agree □ Tend to agree ■ Tend to disagree ■ Totally disagree ■ DK

Statement	Totally agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Totally disagree	DK
European environmental legislation is necessary for protecting the environment in (OUR COUNTRY)	40%	42%	8%		7%
The EU should assist non-EU countries to improve their environmental standards	38%	42%	9%		7%
The EU should allocate more money to the protection of environment, even if this means that less money is spent on other areas	33%	45%	11%		9%

Eurobarometer 2008

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Why SEIS is needed

- **International Conventions and EU Env legislation: main drive for collection of environmental data**
- **A wealth of information is collected but:**

  - **Fragmented reporting systems**
  - **Shortcomings in relation to timeliness, availability, reliability, relevance of information**
  - **Shortcomings in ability to turn data into policy-relevant information**
  - **Underexploited opportunities offered by modern technologies**
  - **Many initiatives and processes in the right direction, but inadequate co-ordination**

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European environmental guidelines and regulations

Source: MNP (2004), Environmental balance sheet 2004

Legend:
- Air
- Chemical substances
- Waste management
- Water
- Noise
- Energy
- Agriculture
- Nature

Directive 2003/4/EC

- Published on January 28.01.2003
- Implementation Deadline 14.02.2005
- Evaluation every 4 years

- Currently reports are being prepared

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Scope of Survey - What

- ICT-Ensure - WP Workpackage 7.1. : Survey of the state of implementation of the Environmental Information Directive in the member states - not a scientific study

- Focus on 2003/4/EC - not INSPIRE

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Scope of Survey - How

- Internetstudy
  - Webpages of MS Ministries and Agencies
- Compilation and Distribution of Reporting Cards
- Telephone Recall
- Writing of Report

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SoI of Directive 2003/4/EC Member State Report Card

Reporting Country[3]:	**Date of Report[4]:**
CZ-Czech Republic	19.01.2009

Legislative Act implementing Directive 2003/4/EC[5]:

ACT ON FREE ACCESS TO INFORMATION - FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT
106/1999 Coll. Act of 11 May, 1999 on free access to information

Date of Implementation[6]:
May 11, 1999

Link to Legal Document (URL)[7]:
http://www.otevrete.cz./index.php?akce=clanek&id=642

Comments[11]:
Access to information is regulated in the Act No. 123/1998 Coll. on the Right for
Information on the Environment, as amended. Although the Act implements directly the
requirements of article 4 of the Arhus convention, in practice information is often asked for on the basis of the Act No.
106/1999 Coll. on Free Access to Information, and the obligated organizations do provide it on
the basis of this Act. This is why it is important to mention this legal regulation and its
application consequences as well.

Legislative Act implementing Directive 2003/4/EC[5]:

The Freedom of Information Act with signed changes by Amendment from 2006 -
Act of 11 May 1999 n. 106/1999 Coll. on free access to information

Date of Implementation[6]:
January 1, 2000

MS responses

Austria	**Greece**	Poland
Belgium	Germany	**Portugal**
Bulgaria	Hungary	Romania
Cyprus	**Ireland**	Slovakia
Czech Republic	Italy	Slovenia
Denmark	Latvia	**Spain**
Estonia	Lithuania	Sweden
Finland	Luxemburg	**The Netherlands**
France	**Malta**	**United Kingdom**

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Legal Implementation 2003/4/EC in MS

Country		Year	Country		Year
Austria	✓	2005	Latvia	⮕	2004
Belgium	✓	2005	Lithuania	⮕	1999
Bulgaria	✓	2005	Luxemburg	✓	2005
Cyprus	✓	2004	Malta	✓	2005
Czech Republic	✓	2005	Poland	✓	2006
Denmark	✓	2005	Portugal	⮕	1999
Estonia	✓	2004	Romania	✓	2005
Finland	✓	2005	Slovakia	✓	2005
France	✓	2005	Slovenia	✓	2006
Greece	✓	2005	Spain	✓	2006
Germany	✓	2005	Sweden	No Info	
Hungary	✓	2005	The Netherlands	✓	2005
Ireland	✓	2005	United Kingdom	✓	2005
Italy	✓	2005			

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Preliminary Results

- Database on Ministries of Environment
  - Incl. Contact-addresses
- Record on EID relevant legislation in MS (legislation information systems are not common)
- Distribution of information mainly through web-site (mostly bilingual)
- Only two countries use special tools for implementation of 2003/4/EC
- Many tools for thematic problems (Domainspecific Portals, often connected to GIS)
- Often connected to GIS

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Next Steps

- Email reminder
- Telephone call back
- Analysis of Reports
- Writing of Report
- Publication of Results

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Look OUT!

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