Session 1: Transactional Systems

Decision assisted process in citizenship applications in Greece

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Presentation outline

- Introduction to Greek Nationality Code: facts and challenges
- Greek Integrated Informational Citizenship System Philosophy
- Evaluation of system performance
- Future steps
- Conclusions

Introduction to Greek Nationality Code:

Facts and Challenges

Greek Nationality Code (G.N.C) - Facts

- Ratified and in effect by L.3284 in 2004

- Has a background that covers the 200-hundred-year history of the modern Greek State

- After 1990 Greece had an influx of migrants originating mainly from the Balkan Peninsula and the successor states of the former U.S.S.R

- Major amendments in 2010, 2015, 2019-2021

- Covers three major areas of Citizenship Status (Acquisition, Loss and Re-acquisition) with each one having various subcategories

- Other Laws exist that regulate Citizenship and not included in the G.N.C

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G.N.C - Challenges

- Complex law provisions with many subcategories
- A sharp increase of Citizenship applications especially after 2006
- The organizational structure of Citizenship Services and the right of signature for the decisions (regional or central level) create multiple routes for citizenship applications

Solution

Development of an expert system to assist state officials in examining citizenship applications and the Greek Integrated Informational Citizenship System (Gr.I.I.C.S) was the outcome of this effort

Gr.I.I.C.S Philosophy

Act knowing
Pittacus of Mytilene
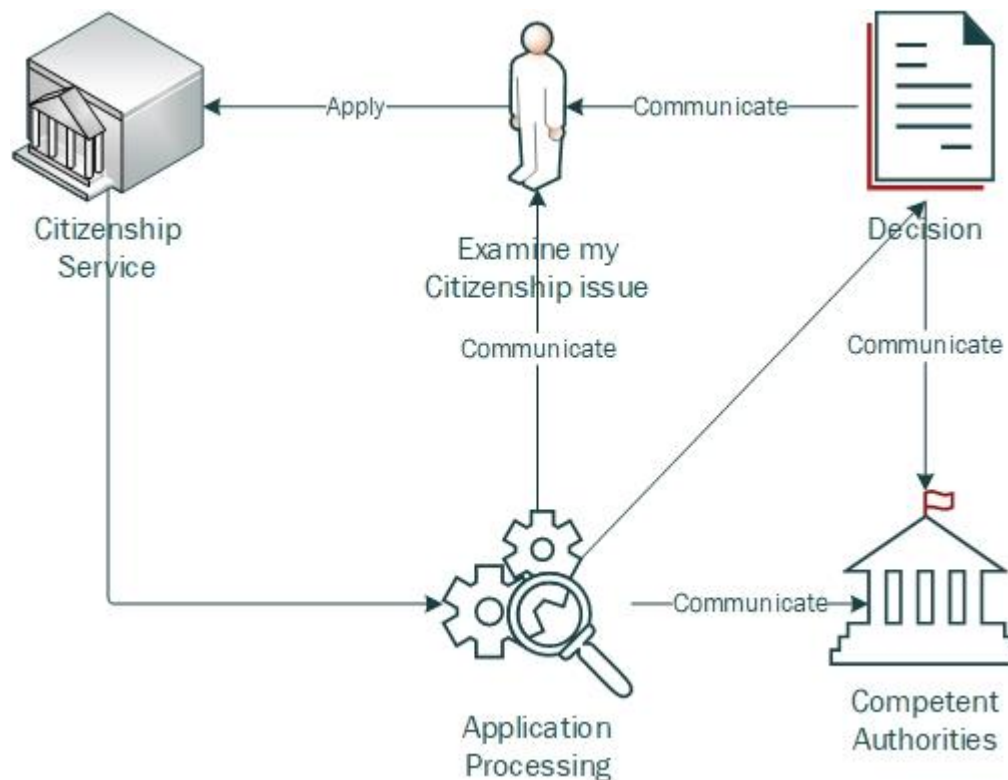**one of the seven ancient Greek sages**

Citizenship Procedures Overview

We identify a three-step process in examining Citizenship cases:

- Application submission
- Application processing
- Issuing of decision

The first part is usually quite straightforward, but the next steps can be further analyzed according to legal basis and outcome of the decision, but they too follow some general rules.

Each competent citizenship service keeps a physical case file and a manual filing system.

Citizenship Service — Apply — Examine my Citizenship issue — Communicate — Decision — Communicate — Communicate — Application Processing — Communicate — Competent Authorities

Decision assist from Gr.I.I.C.S

- Citizenship cases depend on two sets of data: static (category specific) and dynamic (case specific)

- Dynamic set also plays the role of a red-flag mechanism

- The two sets are compared, and the system presents a recommendation whether the application should be accepted or rejected.

- **The final decision is always human based**

Decision mechanism
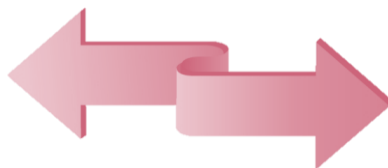
Law Requirements
(create checklist)

Supporting Documents
(data fill the checklist)

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Examples of requirements-documents

- Alien is adult or in certain age when applying

- Graduate of Greek University

- Valid Passport

- Application fee

- Birth Certificate

- Copy of graduation title

- Copy of passport

- Paid e-fee code

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Examples of questions-system remarks

- Case file complete

- No Pending answers

- Valid Passport

- No criminal impediment

- Not all supporting documents submitted, or incomplete
- Outbound Document with id XX not answered

- Passport expired {date}

- Impediment found

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Some more features

- Gr.I.I.C.S interoperates with other systems like the Criminal Records Database, the Police or the Migration System to obtain relevant data for the examination of a case

- All necessary documents are created through the system and can be physically or electronically distributed

- When the status of a case changes the system adapts and presents different options/actions to the rapporteur

Evaluation of Gr.I.I.C.S and future steps

The numbers

- Since 2016 almost 160.000 citizenship cases have been processed through "Gr.I.I.C.S" by all citizenship agencies

- An average sized Regional Citizenship Directorate like in Crete created around 76.500 documents in the same period

- 7.700 of these were decisions just for one mode of acquisition of citizenship (not naturalization)

- In 72 cases the system rejected one or more requirements while the rapporteur accepted it and in 6 cases the vice-versa occurred.

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Impact of Gr.I.I.C.S mechanism

The Good

- Inexperienced citizenship rapporteurs can be productive quickly

- Data entered once, so errors are minimized

- Automated some low-level tasks

- Same system for regional and central administrative level

- Application processing time reduced

- Linked with on-line tool for case status monitoring by applicants

- Valuable tool to assist policy change decisions

The Bad

- Rapporteurs may depend "too much" in the system's recommendation

- Extensive initial data-entry required

- System cannot be easily upgraded to adapt to new technological advancements

...and the Future

- Greece in the past two years made significant advancements to eGov area due to the efforts of the Ministry of Digital Governance
- General Secretariat for Citizenship created in 2021 a new portal for managing the new Knowledge Competency Test for Naturalization
- Merge Gr.I.I.C.S architecture with the new on-line portal to further digitalize the citizenship procedure
- Interoperate with other administration systems to automate more low-level tasks (e.g., registration to municipality records, communication with Government's Gazette etc.)

Conclusions

- Complex citizenship law provisions, increase on applications and multiple administrative levels engaged, main reasons for creating an expert citizenship management system

- Greek Integrated Informational Citizenship System helped improve quality of services and reduce application processing times

- There is room for improving the system itself, but also combining front with back-office tasks to further digitalize and potentially automate the procedures

More information on Gr.I.I.C.S

S. Piotopoulos and E. Sakkopoulos, "Smart eGov Services for Citizenship: Improving Personalized Services," *2020 11th International Conference on Information, Intelligence, Systems and Applications (IISA*, 2020, pp. 1-8, doi: 10.1109/IISA50023.2020.9284376.)

Thank you for your attention

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