



## **Conclusions from the 9th Meeting of the European Forum of Official Gazettes**

The 9th Meeting of the Forum, which took place in Malta in September 2012, explored issues related to transparency in official publications.

A taste of Maltese experiences was shared with those present. Guest speakers gave encouraging words about embracing change, while keeping legal obligations in mind.

Reports from the working groups were presented during the meeting, together with an overview of the EURLEX and the UK experiences with tendering procedures.

Three workshop sessions were held, all related to the opportunities and challenges for transparency in official publications.

The first workshop discussed social media as transparency tools in official publishing. Discussions were based around the concept that social media provides a model for information, not just communication. It may be considered as the next debate, now that the online/print debate is solved. There is currently a broad spectrum of use in different countries, ranging from supporters to the undecided. The Forum could provide a platform to share links, case studies and experiences.

The second workshop discussed the consultation of citizens. The discussions showed that while all countries have some form of citizen consultation, the levels of development of this process differs between countries. Its expected advantages are the legitimating and simplification of texts, which ideally are to be less technical and more comprehensive. The difficulties being faced in this process are the lack of tools which distinguish between automated and human input, and the importance of correct interpretation and selection of messages. Consultation of citizens ties in with the role and future of official publications.

The third workshop discussed open data and open data portal. Following the conclusion of the working group, "Access to Legislation", discussions led to the formation of a new working group called "Open Data/Linked Open Data". The mandate of this working group is to be discussed on the next meeting. However it was agreed that the main aim of this working group would be to assist member states with the implementation of ELI.