

Simplifying the Procedure of Issuing Extracts from the Business Register

Act No. 365/2000 Coll., on Public Administration Information Systems, which arose from the necessity to enact legally the management of information and communication technologies and systems in public administration, is being amended. For reasons and requirements stemming from practice, the amendment seeks to remove existing discrepancies in current legislation, at the same time responding to further developments of information and communication technologies. The chief principles of the drafted amendment to the Act on Public Administration Information Systems include the concept of issuing certified extracts from public administration information systems (including extracts from business registers), greater specification of the rights and obligations of persons related to the management of information systems, the introduction of a public administration portal, which alone offers comprehensive access to public administration services, and the obligation to adapt the web sites of public administration and self-government institutions in such a way that will make them accessible to persons with physical handicaps.

INTRODUCING THE ISSUE OF CERTIFIED EXTRACTS

The amendment introduces the issue of certified extracts. It will newly be possible for these to be issued by notaries and holders of postal licenses, i.e. Česká pošta, s.p. In practice this will mean that notaries and branches of Česká pošta (www.cpost.cz) shall print off a data report provided with a qualified time stamp and attach to it a certification clause together with their seal. This service is beneficial in that it increases the number of contact points, at which it will be possible to obtain document extracts from individual registers. The basis for enabling the issue of certified extracts was an amendment to the Electronic Signatures Act No. 440/2004 Coll. It enacted a new concept into the Czech legal system, the so-called qualified time stamp, thanks to which relevant documents may be issued by means of computerised authorised personnel, that is, without direct human control.

DATA SHARING ACT

The proposed amendment is related to the

Data Sharing Act, currently under preparation. According to this Act, the databases and registers of individual authorities shall become interlinked. In practice, this means that an official seeking the details of a certain person will be able to request this data via the information system and the citizen will thus not be required to present various certifications to individual authorities. Needless to say, the data sharing system places high demands on the security of the entire system.

Whilst the Act on Public Administration Information Systems creates the technical prerequisites for data sharing, the Data Sharing Act determines which data authorities are to share and under what conditions.

INTRODUCTION OF THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION PORTAL, THE ONLY COMPREHENSIVE POINT OF ACCESS TO PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION SERVICES

The amendment reinforces the role of the public administration portal by introducing



For more information, please see the web sites of the Public Administration Information Systems – www.isvs.cz and the Ministry of Informatics – www.micr.cz.

the public administration portal as the only point of access to public administration services. Members of the public will thus be able to communicate with the public administration electronically via one single point of access - the portal, without the need for complicated searches for the web site of each authority.

■ ACCESS TO THE WEB SITES OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND SELF-GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS TO USERS WITH PHYSICAL HANDICAPS

The draft bill also introduces the obligation to adapt web sites of public administration and self-government bodies in order to make them accessible to persons with physical handicaps. New auxiliary technology such as audio response and

Braille should be made available, mediating information from websites to users with physical handicaps.

■ BEGINNING DEVELOPMENT OF E-GOVERNMENT

It is undisputable that the draft bill will mean the beginning of the development of e-government in the Czech Republic.

The draft bill has so far been passed by the Chamber of Deputies and is currently (December 2005) being discussed in the Senate. If it is also passed by the Senate and the President, the Act will come into effect in the course of the year 2006. Considering that certain technical modifications cannot be carried out immediately, the legal force of the Act will be divided up into three different periods. On declaration of the Act, only those parts

of the Act will come into force that concern certified extracts from public administration information systems. As of 1 January 2007, the rest of the Act will come into force with the exception of the provisions relating to the accessibility of web sites to persons with physical handicaps. These provisions will not come into force until 1 January 2008.

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