

Goran Radman
**Crisis as an
opportunity**



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Goran Radman's academic backgrounds are in the studies of International Relations at the Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Zagreb, where he's currently pursuing a Ph.D. in theories of international integration. He has refined his management and leadership skills at Wharton School MBA and through many different executive programs, including the ones at INSEAD and London School of Economics.

Goran has started his professional career in 1984 as an International Relations Advisor to the President of Croatia and continued as General Manager of Croatian Television (1987). In 1992 he has moved on to private sector to manage MicroLAB, a computer engineering and consultancy company. He has joined Microsoft Corporation in 1996 to start up Microsoft Croatia and has expanded his responsibilities in 2000 as a General Manager of the Adriatic and later on South Eastern European region. He was appointed Microsoft Chairman SEE in 2004 and Chairman ECEE in 2007. In these roles he has worked with governments, business and NGO communities within EU, South Eastern and Central Eastern Europe in building strategic partnerships for ICT competitiveness, sustainable growth and corporate social responsibility. In 2008 he became the non-executive Chairman of SenseConsulting. In his community role, he's been proudly associated with and actively contributed to the missions of National Competitiveness Council, Business Advisory Council for Southeast Europe, The New Club of Paris, Mediterranean Institute of Life Sciences and Academy for Political Development.



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As Microsoft's Chairman for the Southeastern Europe, you had close collaboration with governments of South Eastern Europe. Using your knowledge and experience gained in the long history you act in some cases as an advisor. How are you involved in the development of eGovernment currently?

It's not specific to governments, but being in a position of trusted advisor to governments carries a lot of responsibilities within. It comes always along with personal relationships you build over time and understanding how governments work in general terms. Of course, you can't build that interdependency if clear and visible results are not achieved after all and public benefits are not visible. You can't survive in that space for a long time if you do not stick to transparent way of doing business as well.

In my current role as Chairman of the Business Advisory Council for Southeastern Europe I'm in position to advise on and influence both operational and strategic decisions of regional governments when business and investment climate is in concern. Not only those specific to ICT or e-government.

We are all facing the WW crisis. How will the world crisis reflect to the development of the public administration in the Southeastern region of Europe in short term and long term period?

This region has many specifics due to its complex far and close history, but current global crisis and economic downturn is reflecting all governments of the world and the way they deliver on public service expectations and needs. On one hand it's clear that public

administration is gaining powers as a final arbiter and key intermediary needed to stabilize and better regulate disbalanced, specifically financial markets. On the other hand, it's also clear that governments were not efficient enough in the past in matching the costs and quality of their services to those of the private sector. As result, they were not contributing well to the national competitiveness and productivity of the economy. All this apply to the regional SEE governments as well, but global crises may specifically force them to speed up and finally take seriously the needed administrative reforms, deregulate and modernize their services and apply more transparent procedures to their operations.

In your opinion, what will be the response of the international companies, Microsoft being one of them, to the current situation and their strategy for the region and specially in the the area of SW licensing, concessions?

All businesses are currently pragmatically turned to a 'cost saving and delay investment' mode, including Microsoft. At the same time, healthier companies who operated well and have substantial resources still available, will look at the crises as an opportunity to gain more market share, do acquisitions of weaker rivals and strengthen their structures to become ready when market conjecture comes back. In circumstances like this, more agile and innovative companies will get their chance to demonstrate courage and risk taking to gain business against more static rivals. That also includes more flexible business models that will adopt better to the conditions of their customers. Software and licensing in general is one of the areas where new models have been already in use for some time, like leasing, differed payments, 'free' or 'shared' licenses compensated with services or/and advertizing, public-private partnerships through concessions etc. We still need to see how those models are going to work in the times of crises, and it's not specific to our region.

In your opinion, what is missing most in the republics of ex-YU, to catch up the member countries of EU, based on their current development level / informatisation of eAdministration?

The most important element missing in these

countries today is modern political leadership. It's clear when leadership is there, all other needed elements may quickly come in place and be properly used, including the skilled and motivated people, that are also missing in a great deal. Good examples and best practices are all around and available for replication, there is nothing to be truly invented here.

Is there a possibility of knowledge, good practice and experience transfer from the existing EU members to countries which are in the process of joining the EU?

I really believe there is. I also believe this effort has to be structured and planned for rather than opportunistic. Ultimately, sooner the transfer is successfully done, sooner the new countries may become fully integrated into the European political and economic space. If this is done properly, I believe those countries may not only benefit from being integrated but may also start contributing to the others, thanks to their innovative and unorthodox legacies.

What in your opinion are the biggest hurdles of this kind of collaboration?

I think it's above all the inconsistent and fairly narrow, short term EU approach to his issues. The lack of appropriate regional institutions and their capacity is also an additional issue. Most of the EU programs aiming at this goals are very incomprehensive and lack regional and wider view on this matters. For example, I'm so proud of the success of the SEE Center for eGovernance Development in Ljubljana, but this achievement was possible only as the private sector initiative and through the framework of public-private partnership.

How do you see the role of the politics in the process of the informatisation of public administration?

As I said, the true problem is significant lack of modern political leadership in this area. Without political leadership all efforts by other stakeholders will not reach out to the interested beneficiaries.

You are a consultant to the Government of Vietnam. Why Vietnam and how you could contribute the most?

Yes, Government of Vietnam is one of our international clients today. As consultants, we are focusing on the reform of public

administration projects aiming at simplifying procedures, eliminating barriers, reducing costs and growing efficiency of government services to citizens and businesses. Results of this reforms should be easy to measure through savings in the government budget but also through the number of new jobs created in the market and more regionally and globally competitive Vietnamese economy. But Vietnam is not the only government we work with today. Since we built those references in Croatia, we service today many other governments, including the ones in Egypt, Montenegro and Serbia.

According to your current experience as Chairman of Bussines Advisory Council, founder of Nautar, member of National Competitvness Council, President of SenseConsulting and advisor to the government of Vietnam ... in which one of this functions do you see yourself in the next 5 year period?

Ah, that's a tricky question. One collects many roles and builds different identities through a lifetime. The only true reference is of course the one that comes in shape of visible and valuable consequences serving his own but also the wellbeing of his entire community. I aspire to spend more and more time in my academic and educational role in the future. Hope I'll not wait until too long to see this as my prime and dominant professional occupation.

