

REGIONAL FINANCIAL AUTHORITY: ELECTRONIC FILES FOR SUBSIDIES – A SUCCESSFUL DIGITISATION PROJECT

Since the middle of 2016, applications for subsidies in case of sickness and other situations for public officers in Bavaria are being processed completely digitally. This process is based on PublicSuite by Macros Reply which in turn is based on Macros eWorkplace. A well-prepared tender, state-wide project coordination and active change management were the success factors for this complex digitisation project.



“The shift to completely digital, paperless subsidy processing in the Regional Financial Authority has become a showcase project for the digitisation offensive. In doing so, we did not develop a special software which is associated with high risks but instead adapted a configurable standard software to our requirements with Macros eWorkplace.”

Mario Rother, Project Manager, Regional Financial Authority

THE CUSTOMER

The Regional Financial Authority was created as part of the administrative reform “Administration 21” by the Bavarian state government. Starting on 1 August 2005, six Municipal Financial Authorities (Ansbach, Augsburg, Landshut, Munich, Regensburg and Würzburg) were dissolved as their own independent intermediate authority of the Bavarian State Financial Authority and combined to a central Regional Authority Office located in Würzburg. The Regional Financial Authority is responsible for the tasks of financial administration which do not fall under the jurisdiction of the Bavarian Regional Tax Office. It is primarily responsible for determining, ordering and invoicing the benefits for public officers, employees and old age beneficiaries of the Free State of Bavaria, including child allowance (family benefits office), subsidies, aid for accidents at the workplace/compensation for damages, housing assistance, central invoicing of travel expenses, separation expenses and relocation assistance, for the legal representation of the Free State of Bavaria as per the measures of the Representation Regulation (VertrV) including dunning procedures, for extrajudicial and legal handling of estates as part of inheritances of the Free State of Bavaria, for the handling of treasury tasks for the majority of the authorities of the Free State of Bavaria (Main State Treasury of Bavaria in Landshut), and for the tasks of the Regional Compensation

partners for the approval of allowances for public officers. The Free State of Bavaria is interested in quick and efficient processing of claims for benefits as well as a positive service experience for its employees. That is the reason why the Regional Authority was looking to enter the world of digital, paperless processing.

and State Debt Administration as well as the occupational health service for the Financial Authority. The Regional Financial Authority is also one of the leading IT service providers within the regional administration in Bavaria. The resulting programming and administration tasks are being executed by the offices in Munich and in Regensburg. In addition, the staff section Bavaria-CERT serves as contact point for urgent security problems (IT security line for the Bavarian State Authorities) to the participants of the Bavarian authorities network at all times.

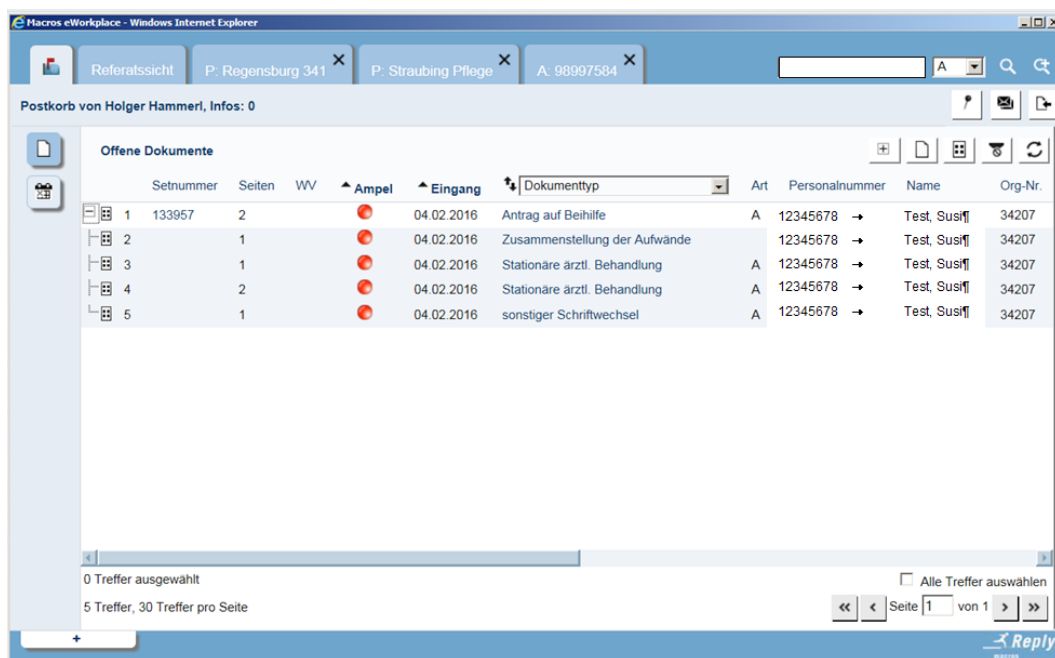
THE PROJECT

The aid services of the Bavarian state are organised as allowances in cases of sickness, birth and home care and other cases, similar to the process of a private health insurance. The regional offices of the Regional Financial Authority in the Bavarian municipal districts are the contact

“What became evident immediately was the high level of quality of the tender. The requirements were functionally and technologically documented in detail and explicitly described. References from the area of private health insurances were mandatory. People frequently forget that precise tenders also represent a great advantage for the bidder: Project planning becomes simpler, the calculation for expenses becomes more reliable”, according to Ralf Scheuchl, Managing Director for Macros Reply.

The high level of quality of the tender was the result of good preparations in the Regional Financial Authority. “Very early on, we added an external, independent DMS consultant to our internal team: to support in creating the requirement specifications as preparation for the tender as well as for knowledge transfer so that we were able to independently assess the received bids. This step significantly reduced the

risks of the project from the beginning”, explains Mario Rother, Project Manager in the Regional Financial Authority. Another aspect: The tender for the hardware of the high-performance scanners ran separately from the software tender. Macros Reply, a subsidiary of Insiders Technologies, was then able to prevail against two other competitors in the tender for software. The crucial aspects were: The possibility to configure Macros eWorkplace’s standard software to the specified requirements as



well as long-term experience in digitisation projects with private insurance companies.

DECENTRALISED STRUCTURE

Applications and documents submitted by staff by post are received, scanned and temporarily archived in Augsburg, Regensburg and Würzburg in a decentralized manner. The seven Bavarian municipal districts are assigned to the four scanning locations. The digital workflow then takes place in the regional allowance offices:

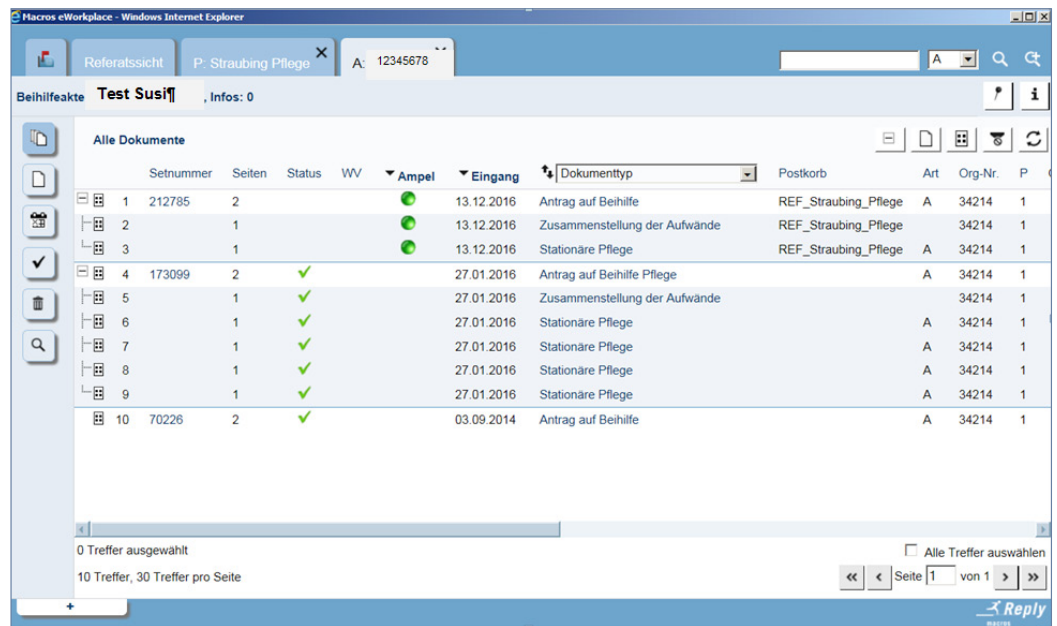
read-out and indexing via the OCR software smart FIX from Insiders Technologies, early archiving, processing in an electronic mailbox by the case handlers in the software Macros eWorkplace and in combination with the Bavarian invoicing system BayBAS.

The team around Rother utilised the decentralised structure for tests and a gradual roll-out of the solution. In July of 2014, the solution went live in Straubing in combination with the scan location in Regensburg. Subsequently, other scan and allowance locations were added step by step until the middle of 2016.

VIGOROUS CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Paperless processing for allowances is part of an ambitious digitisation offensive of the State of Bavaria. "In my experience, the success of such projects largely depends on the participation of the eventual users. They must be informed and integrated early on and the project team must react quickly, sensibly and flexibly in case of problems", explains Rother.

For this reason, not only the case handlers but also the allowance recipients were informed about the digitisation project in a timely manner before the go-live date. The project plans and deadlines were openly communicated, the regions closely



Macros Electronic File

integrated and a lead-user structure created. Approx. 14 days before each go-live, the project team conducted intense trainings for the affected region. This was a conscious decision so as to keep the time between training and first application as short as possible. Service hotlines and feedback events in all allowance ranges represent additional active measures employed for the process of change management. Macros Reply Managing Director Scheuchl was quite impressed with the Regional Financial Authority's team: "The project staff was extremely motivated – all the way to cancelling holidays in order to conduct additional trainings requested by users. That was quite exemplary."

VERY DETAILED AUTHORISATION CONCEPT

The processing procedure for allowances is similar to that practised by private health insurance companies. Those eligible for allowances submit their applications with the required documents and expense receipts. After the documents

have been scanned, they are indexed. The case handlers in each allowance location retrieve the scanned documents from a digital mailbox. One of the advantages of the integration of Macros eWorkplace and the invoicing system BayBAS: amounts are no longer manually entered in BayBAS by a case handler but are entered automatically and only need to be checked. In addition to this integration, there are more special features when accessing data and applications. The case handlers, for example, do not have direct access to the digital department mailbox. That means that the case handler does not yet know which allowance beneficiaries are associated with the application when processing is begun from the digital department mailbox. This process ensures that the applications of the allowance beneficiaries will be handled by random case handlers. In addition, the existing rights and role concept in eWorkplace needed to be reconfigured due to the special requirements.

SUCCESSFUL DIGITISATION

“The shift to completely digital, paperless subsidy processing in the Regional Financial Authority has become a showcase project for the digitisation offensive. In doing so, we did not develop a special software which is associated with high risks but instead adapted a configurable standard software to our requirements with Macros eWorkplace. The crucial factors for this success were excellent preparation – especially in terms of specification of requirements – as well as the intensive preparation of the case handlers for a completely different way of working with the electronic filing system”, summarised the satisfied Project Manager Rother.



As a specialist for document management systems within the Reply Group, Macros Reply uses innovative software to optimise its customers' business processes. Company-wide information and document management systems, archive solutions, process monitoring and mailbox / file systems from Macros Reply have won over numerous renowned customers.

For more information visit us at www.macrosreply.com or www.reply.com

Macros Reply GmbH
Hackerbrücke 6
80335 München
Tel. +49 89 411142-400
Fax +49 89 411142-499