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Digitizing Public Services in Europe: Putting ambition into action

9th Benchmark Measurement | December 2010

DRAFT HIGH LEVEL RESULTS

Prepared by Capgemini, IDC, Rand Europe, Sogeti and DTi

For: European Commission, Directorate General for Information Society and Media

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Introduction

This Executive Summary report captures the findings of the 2010 eGovernment benchmark survey, conducted over the period May to December 2010. This year's edition features a significantly expanded wealth of information in familiar areas as well as new domains. It covers a detailed profile for each of the benchmarked countries, and an extensive range of data tables with rankings. Qualitative insights complement the picture and comprehensively illustrate the way forward for Europe. The full and extensive report will be published in February 2011, including downloadable data.

The full method paper on which the study is based is available on:

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/eeurope/i2010/docs/benchmarking/eGovernment_Benchmarking_Method_paper_2010.pdf

This study is carried out by Capgemini, Sogeti, IDC, RAND Europe and the Danish Technological Institute for the Directorate General Information Society of the European Commission.

For more information about this survey, please contact: *European Commission*

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The opinions expressed in this study are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Commission

Digitizing Public Services in Europe - putting ambition into action

Setting Benchmarking - to improve!

The European Commission, DG Information Society's annual eGovernment benchmark is one of the flagship studies in measuring public sector performance. The benchmark is, notably, a collaborative exercise, designed by and involving both the European Commission and Country Representatives. The benchmark uses a comprehensive ranking system to identify those European countries that have implemented the most mature eGovernment services.

The 2010 benchmark includes a considerable increase in scope, including the likes of life-event measurement, regional / local service analysis, and status across nine common horizontal IT-enablers. The benchmark is now part of a continuous improvement cycle, with annual method reviews, pilot measures (Open Government and Transparency now ongoing), and Action Learning Groups amongst Member State Representatives.

Given the scale and scope of the work, the benchmark would not have been possible without the commitment and enthusiasm of representatives of the 32 participating countries¹, who have shaped and contributed to the measurement throughout the year.

The report shows that performance measurement is more relevant than ever and that Europe is increasingly acting collectively to strengthen performance.

Executive Summary Content

This executive summary addresses the following topics in relation to eGovernment developments in Europe:

1. Policy Context
2. European Development of Public Services
3. European Governments: Empowering Users
4. The Challenges that lie ahead
5. European Governments: Empowering users
6. Behind the Web: Common Horizontal Enablers
7. Forward Plans

¹ The EU27 and Croatia, Iceland, Norway, Switzerland and Turkey. In this document the 32 participating countries are also referred to as EU27+

Policy Context

Policy: a decade in context

The European Commission's *eEurope initiative* in 2000 aimed to accelerate Europe's transition towards a knowledge-based economy. The two successive eEurope Action Plans (2002 and 2005) resulted in the *2010 eGovernment Action Plan* - intended to accelerate eGovernment in Europe for the benefit of all. The 2010 Action Plan set specific objectives for 2010:

- *No citizen left behind*: advancing inclusion through eGovernment so that by 2010 all citizens benefit from trusted, innovative services and easy access for all;
- *Making efficiency and effectiveness a reality* - significantly contributing to high user satisfaction, transparency and accountability, reduced administrative burden and gains in efficiency by 2010;
- *Implementing high-impact key services for citizens and businesses* - by 2010, 100% of public procurement will be available electronically, with 50% actual usage, with agreement on cooperation between member states on further high-impact online citizen services;
- *Putting key enablers in place* - enabling citizens and businesses to benefit from convenient, secure and interoperable authenticated access across Europe to public services by 2010;
- *Strengthening participation and democratic decision-making* - demonstrating, by 2010, tools for effective public debate and participation in democratic decision-making.

The *Malmö Ministerial Declaration*, November 2009, sets four imminent priorities for eGovernment:

- Empower citizens and businesses
- Reinforce mobility in the Single Market
- Enable efficiency and effectiveness
- Create necessary key enablers and pre-conditions for the above priorities.

So how do European countries measure up to these goals, how have we progressed over the past decade, how have we built a learning system that will help accelerate improvement in this fast changing technology-enabled world? The 2010 eGovernment benchmark presents a significantly enriched set of findings compared to previous years, and addresses these questions.

The fundamentals are now in place

The majority of the "20 basic public services" are now available online.²² Services are increasingly interactive and transactional and the quality of service delivery has significantly improved.

Administrations now see eGovernment as an enabler to transform the public sector, significantly changing their relations with citizens and businesses and harvesting the gains in efficiency and effectiveness of the services in the process.

Availability is however only a first step. Focus must be placed on understanding and addressing the motives for use, so that *take-up* of online services is increased-whilest also reducing the digital divide. The ultimate goal is to demonstrate the *better public outcomes* that can be achieved through deploying eGovernment solutions. It is this "ICT dividend" that will help European countries demonstrate the value of their investment in technology, supporting them in addressing short term economic and budgetary challenges, and supporting the countries and the EU in delivering on longer term public service improvement and democratic goals.

² The full online availability indicator has been recalculated based on amended thresholds this year. The thresholds are largely based on previous estimates and have only changed for the following services: job search, (birth and marriage) certificates, announcement of moving, submission of data to statistical offices.

European Development of Public Services

State-of-play of service provision

Better services are designed around users. Each contact with government makes sense, fulfils the user's needs and adds value. The uptake of services supports policy outcomes such as leaner government and increased user satisfaction.

The **Online Sophistication** ranking assesses service delivery against a 5-stage maturity model: (i) information, (ii) one-way interaction, (iii) two-way interaction, (iv) transaction, and (v) targetisation/automation. The EU27+ score for this indicator now stands at 90% (an increase of 7% since 2009). In this comparison, the top performers are Ireland, Malta, Austria and Portugal (all at 100%), followed closely by Sweden, Germany and Italy (all at 99%).³

On Full Online Availability (measured introducing a threshold to the 5-stage maturity model which is mostly above the fourth or fifth sophistication level, depending on the service in question), the EU 27+ average reaches 82% in 2010 (compared to 69% in 2009). The benchmark reveals that in Italy, Malta, Austria, Portugal and Sweden all 20 services are now 100% e-enabled. Switzerland, Italy, Bulgaria, Croatia and Latvia have shown marked improvement (more than 25 percent) over the past year.⁴

In general, Europe's eGovernment performance has greatly converged in geographic terms since the expansion of the EU in 2004 - both "old" and "new" Member States populate the leading eGovernment nations.

We assess four **Service Clusters**: (i) income generating, for government; (ii) registration e.g. births, company, moving; (iii) service returns e.g. health, social, libraries; and (iv) permits and licences e.g. building, education, passport. In the past decade, countries have given priority to the improvement of services which generate income for government (such as taxation) which, with an average score of 98%, remain the most advanced service cluster. The registration and the returns cluster currently both stand at 88%. Permits and licenses once more bring up the rear but strikingly, have leapfrogged by 12 percentage points and now reach a sophistication score of 83%.

Similarly, services to businesses have been prioritized over the past years and these services now display a sophistication score of 94%. However, since last year, the sophistication of citizen services has also improved significantly and now stands at 87% (compared to 78% last year), reducing the gap with business services to 7% (compared to 12% in 2009).

³ Turkey did not participate in the benchmark last year, hence the 2009 data point is unavailable.

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Clear efforts are being made to improve the **User Experience** of services and portals. We measure 5 features for services and three for portals (see illustrations 4a and 4b respectively).

The eServices of the Malta (100%), Sweden and the United Kingdom (both 99%), Estonia (94%), and Denmark (92%) have been particularly well-rated in terms of transparency of service delivery, multi-channel service provision, privacy protection, ease of use, and user satisfaction monitoring. France (100%), Malta (100%), The Netherlands (96%), Spain (95%), and Portugal (94%) have the best portals as regards usability, user-centric design, and service bundling.

The increased focus on user needs is also strongly reflected in the continuing implementation of both online and offline user satisfaction monitoring. This jumped from 9 countries in 2007, to 23 in 2009, and 26 in 2010.

eProcurement for better public services

eProcurement is one of the high impact services representing a major portion of Europe's economy - some €1.3 trillion of public administration expenditure. Increase in trans-EU procurement serves the goal of a single market, can make Europe more competitive for particularly SMEs, and offers substantial efficiency gains.

Motivated by clear benefits of better efficiency and productivity, European administrations are accelerating their transition towards eProcurement. The Manchester Ministerial declaration's goal of making 100% of procurement available electronically by 2010 has not been reached. However, in one year only, from the first measurement in 2009 to 2010, the visibility of eProcurement on the websites of public buyers - helping potential suppliers to look for business opportunities - increased from 56% to 71% for the EU27+. The availability of eProcurement services including eTendering and eAwarding is also growing, and is now at 70% for the EU27+. More importantly, the total number of notices processed increased by 41% (and their estimated overall value by more than 10%) according to the survey of eProcurement platforms managers. This shows significant overall development towards the political goals set out in 2005.

Compared to 2009, the group of best performers with scores over 80% has significantly increased. Only one country, Ireland, leads the way with 100% scores for both indicators, but several others come close. Concerning visibility, 4 more countries (Estonia, Lithuania, Malta and Slovenia) reach the top score, while Cyprus, the Czech Republic and Sweden score more than 90%. National authorities show higher visibility -with 10 countries reaching 100% - but regional and local authorities are not much behind, as shown by the increasing visibility of eProcurement on regional and city websites in large countries, such as the UK, France, Spain and Italy.

Central governments are stepping up their coordination and support of contracting authorities, national and local: eProcurement services are provided through national or regional platforms, or offered at favourable conditions through national portals who act as "virtual" central platforms. eNotification - the online publication of tenders - is becoming a must across Europe: 15 countries in the last year added regulation to mandate online publication of procurement opportunities, and this is clearly reflected in their visibility and availability scores.

Cyprus scores 100% for the availability of pre-award services, as well as Ireland, followed by the UK, Sweden, Norway, Romania, Denmark and France with scores above 90%.

The availability of eProcurement services tends to decrease gradually, from the initial phase of the process (eNotification, with 88% availability across Europe) to eSubmission (60%) and eAwarding (59%). For the post-award phases (after the contract is assigned) the scenario is more complex. About a third of the sample of eProcurement platforms offer eOrdering services (including also electronic markets, for small, repetitive purchases). The availability of eInvoicing and ePayment services instead is more problematic, suffering from legal and practical barriers. More generally, in most countries eInvoicing and ePayments are directly managed by contracting authorities, rather than by the specialized eProcurement platforms.

The challenges that lie ahead

We explore 4 topics here:

- eGovernment maturity through the tiers of administration from national to regional to local
- Trans-European interoperability
- Efficiency
- Take-up and impact

Regional and local eGovernment: significantly challenged

This year, the benchmark takes an in-depth look at the difference in performance across the tiers of government (NUTS Levels: Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics)⁵. It sheds light on the difference between eGovernment service maturity at national, regional and/or local levels, which poses the question of the efficacy of governance within and across administrative layer, an area that may deserve further attention.

Evidence shows indicators lagging at the local level. For the services Announcement of moving, Building permission, Certificates and Public libraries, the Sophistication of local service delivery only reaches 39% on average (see Graph 7), leaving a massive gap of up to 57 percentage points compared to national web sites. Europe's largest cities perform significantly better than their smaller or rural counterparts. Even within clusters of municipalities of comparable size, the difference in performance within countries is significant. The User Experience of *local* web sites varies markedly from one country to another, ranging from excellent to very poor.

Some services are naturally more location-based, and so delivery, control of, and investment in improving these should be governed locally. Several services are influenced by multiple tiers, and the approach varies significantly across EU - much for historical reasons. In many cases, service offerings are insufficiently integrated across administrative levels. The results suggest that local administrations' capacity (strategy, funding, capability) to embrace their role as providers of typically local services varies considerably.

Trans-European Interoperability

European-level collaboration plays an increasingly important role in the technical integration of Member State solutions, and thus the advancement of trans-EU services. It ensures cross-border interoperability and avoids unnecessary duplication of resources. The ongoing Large Scale Pilots: PEPPOL (Pan-European eProcurement), STORK (European eID Interoperability Platform), SPOCS (Services Directive); epSOS (Electronic Health Record Systems in Europe), and e-Codex

⁵

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/nuts_nomenclature/introduction

(improving cross-border access to legal means) are testament to this, and now have active participation of between 12 and 17 countries.

There would appear to be a growing recognition for the need to open up the administrative boundaries at all levels (within and across Member States), and indeed across multiple domains, in order to reap the benefits of investment in technologies and streamline the passage of information throughout service delivery systems.

Efficiency

No matter the governance structure of a country, diligent coordination of eGovernment activities and collaboration remain key success factors to achieve more consistent progress. It is vitally important for each country to address the often deeply rooted cultural and institutional factors that make administrations operate within their silos. For example: In Austria, the platform 'Digital Austria' serves as the overarching institution for all eGovernment activity, engaging all levels of government and other stakeholders. It is chaired by the federal CIO and contains a number of task forces, and thematic working groups. Coordination at the federal level is done by the 1CT Strategy Unit. Apart from overall strategy, coordination and cross-cutting projects for which the Federal Chancellery is responsible, each ministry and agency carries out its own projects. In Germany, the implementation of the new article 91c of the German Constitution (Grundgesetz) established a new IT Planning Council which had its founding meeting on 22 April 2010. The new body encompasses representatives of federal, federal state and local level to govern important cross-cutting IT issues such as secure IT infrastructure and standardisation. In Belgium, the federal agency FedICT is in charge of coordinating and ensuring the uniform and consistent implementation of the eGovernment strategy within the Federal Administration for example by providing building blocks for re-use to all government tiers. Similar governance structures can be found in highly decentralised countries, as is the case for Spain. Spain has in 2005 set up an eGovernment Council for coordination of activities at the national level and in 2007 an eGovernment Sectoral Committee for coordination between the national, regional and local levels. Both the Council and the Committee are anchored in law.

In the aftermath of the recent global financial crisis, most government organizations have already gone through one or two cost-cutting cycles and are bound by active cost-control regulations. Despite depleted budgets, very few countries seem to systematically assess the business case behind their eGovernment projects. The eGovernment business case is likely to go beyond administrations' organizational borders and governmental tiers. For example: Switzerland introduced a new methodology to evaluate qualitative benefits and cost-effectiveness of its eGovernment solutions. The so-called UTILITAS method assesses performance focusing on five key areas such as: modernisation/image, cost savings, process optimisation, quality enhancement and fulfilment of legal and organisational requirements. The method has been applied to evaluate 45 eGovernment solutions in 2010 and has received positive feedback. Questionnaire and evaluation instruments will be made available in early 2011. In France, MAREVA serves as methodology to assess the value of public sector transformation projects since 2005. MAREVA has been designed to help administration in prioritising initiatives, managing them and building knowledge for further projects to optimise their value. In Germany, the WiBe-Framework serves as dominant method to assess economic

efficiency of federal administration. The methodology is in full operation and widely applied at federal, state and municipal level.

In the field of **eProcurement**, potential savings are the driver of implementing new systems and procedures. Many countries do not however structurally monitor the benefits achieved from eProcurement. There are notable exceptions to this with a region in the UK, Scotland, having reported *audited* savings of almost £800 million over a 4-year period. Sweden has reported a reduction on prices between 10% and 30% as well as efficiency improvements in the procurement process of 20% going up to 30% when the entire tender is processed online. In Ireland, over 62,000 suppliers are registered in the national eProcurement system, of which 25% are foreign. This high level of foreign registration is quite an exception as in most countries eProcurement solutions tend to focus on domestic suppliers. In terms of increase in volume and transactions of eProcurement platforms, in Malta almost 20% of purchases of departments are made online and in Cyprus, the number of potential suppliers participating to a call for tenders has increased threefold with reported efficiency increases. In Portugal there is a much shorter time to process tenders accompanied with a greater level of transparency and in Turkey there is also a significant decrease in procurement process errors, increase in transparency as well as more compliancy. Efficiency and process savings of eProcurement also have savings on what otherwise would have been done offline. For example, PECAP, the Plataforma Electrónica de Contractació de les Administracions Publiques in Spain, documents savings between 15 and 45% on overall prices of energy and telecom services for the local administrations. Similarly, the Basque Country Regional Government has announced overall savings of 20% on purchase prices due to the increase in competition made possible by the electronic channel.

Take up of services

Take up of eGovernment services is slow, obscuring the overall benefits of eGovernment itself. Recent figures⁶ for the European Union (EU27) highlight that only one 42% of individuals aged 16 to 74 use the Internet for interaction with public authorities.

The gap between the availability of services and their take up, shows that the public sector is facing important challenges to re-think how public services can become more citizen-centric. Many countries now formally use methods for user needs identification and are moving away from a one-size-fits-all approach to eGovernment services towards greater segmentation and personalisation. Leading practice can be seen, for example, in Finland which has developed national guidelines for online service design based on a wide range of approaches, including the use of personas, such as "first-time buyer" or "looking for rented accommodation" which characterise different user needs in a range of usage scenarios. Also very common is to segment users in terms of demographics, for example, Spain segments into the elderly, women and youth, Malta by age groups, and Iceland into gender, age groups, residence, education and occupation. Additionally, some countries also segment by the user's relationship to technology, as in Malta in terms of volume of internet usage and in Finland including the use of old computers and slow connections as well as

⁶ Source: Eurostat (2010)

mobile services. Some countries are now also experimenting with full personalisation of services in which the user has more control over selecting the type, format and configuration of a given service, as can be seen, for example, in the "MyPage" approach recently adopted in both Denmark and Norway, or in the UK's "data.gov.uk" initiative.

Initiatives focusing on the usage and impact of eGovernment services, beyond their simple availability, will become more and more important in what many are now calling the "age of austerity".

European Governments: Empowering Users

Business life-event: "Company Start-Up"

Empowering businesses means providing an environment, which fosters competitiveness and good business practice. In this context, the benchmark looks at the life-event of starting up a company to assess to what extent bureaucracy is being streamlined, and Governments are taking down the hurdles that can stifle entrepreneurship in Europe. In the current economic climate this is a priority, particularly for the smaller businesses, where administrative burden is disproportionately high and capacity is low.

E-enabling the business start-up procedure has been a key policy goal for years. In 2006 the European Council called for the creation of One-Stop-Shops for in-country business registration in all Member States, although not stipulating the form that these should take - online portal, physical access or both. Subsequently targets were set to bundle procedures and to reduce both costs and time spent to start a company. The situation changed significantly with the adoption of the EU Services Directive⁷ end 2006. The Directive introduces for the first time a legal obligation on the Member States to provide comprehensive e-government services for businesses, through so-called "Points of Single Contact". According to the Services Directive (Article 8) the Member States are obliged to *"ensure that all procedures and formalities relating to access to a service activity and to the exercise thereof may be easily completed at a distance and by electronic means through the relevant Point of Single Contact"*. The implications of this in policy, collaboration, procedural, operational and technical terms are profound. And impact all tiers of administration. The Services Directive had to be implemented in all Member States by end 2009.

Eight of the 20 basic services relate to businesses. A number of these are associated with the life-event of business start up. The current measurement took a more comprehensive approach, assessing 21 process steps encompassing services that are about compliance with government regulations in the start up phase of a business (like getting a VAT number or registering a company, some of the core 20 services measured since 2001). These services are typically, though not always provided by public administration. For each of the required steps the benchmark assessed whether the step was available online, online through a dedicated 'start up' portal or whether at least information was available on the service (possibly through the dedicated portal). In addition, an expert assessment was carried out of each start up portal to determine the quality of information provided and whether this focused purely on regulatory requirements or also focused on other needs of the business community. In this expert assessment, additional features (e.g. personalised access, eSignature) of the online service delivery process were mapped.

Our findings reveal that despite strong political ambitions, the online implementation of the life-event of starting up a company is patchy (see Graph 8). The review shows that only Austria, Denmark, Estonia, Ireland, Norway, Sweden and the United

⁷ Directive 2006/123/EC of 12 December 2006 on services in the internal market

Kingdom have fully e-enabled all mandatory steps of their start-up procedures on dedicated business start up portals. In the vast majority of countries, the chain of events required to set up a company is frequently "broken", with some steps available on dedicated portals, others available online though on different web sites, while again other steps remain paper-based. Whilst additional efforts are required to e-enable services, the benchmark clearly shows that extensive information about the start up procedure and its requirements is already available online.

The expert assessment of portals focused on user experience. Although the availability of information and interactive services is satisfying, the services' quality and usability needs to be improved. In many countries, business start-up portals are still not user-centric. Web sites tend to be difficult to navigate and the information provided is not always appropriate (too much, too little, too wordy, out-of-date, etc.). The quality of services strongly depends on the professions concerned, the administrations involved, and the administrative levels providing the service. Where dedicated portals for example lead to other government web sites for the completion of a selection of process steps, our findings have revealed significant differences as regards the level of quality and coherence of service offerings, often posing serious challenges to the successful completion of the start-up life event.

Austria, Norway, Turkey, Spain, Slovenia, The Czech Republic, Denmark, Portugal and Estonia have very user-centric solutions in place. Their portals are characterized by personalization, a high degree of interaction, tailor-made information provision and automation. The user only perceives and sees what is effectively relevant to his personal concern: specific legislation to consider, licenses to apply for, forms to fill in etc. ePayment, eSignature and track-and-trace functionalities are in place. These portals engage and empower the user. This will ease the burden of business start-up, and can benefit the economy as a result.

Citizen Life-Event: "Losing & Finding a Job"

Empowering citizens means encouraging and stimulating citizens to become engaged, self-sufficient users of government services. This year's benchmark takes a close-up look at the status of the life event of "losing and finding a job", focusing on the adequacy of administrative procedures and online services that support people who have lost a job and help return them into the productive economy.

Every European Public Employment Service has a web presence and provides basic services online. These agencies' role has shifted from passively registering and financing, to actively stimulating and guiding jobseekers. These citizens are in turn increasingly encouraged to demonstrate sufficient and verifiable efforts to find employment such as actively carrying out job searches, posting CVs, participating in training programs and similar activities. The web is increasingly useful for jobseekers.

Twelve of the 20 basic services relate to citizens. Two (job search and applying for unemployment benefits) are associated with the life-event of losing and finding a job. By measuring 27 process steps encompassing services that relate to the life-event of losing and finding a job, the life-event measure of this year is much broader in scope.

Online offerings are insufficiently joined up within and across government, and with the social and private sectors (which is increasingly active in providing vocational and job search support). Again, the User's journey is broken. The delineation of roles and

competences amongst organizations too frequently poorly matches the citizens' requirements during this change of circumstance.

Just over 50% of the assessed services are available online via a dedicated Employment Portal. The services that are the most frequently e-enabled include: job search, obtaining labour market information, posting a CV, and obtaining information about eligibility for benefits.

Few Member States have integrated additional value-adding services into the life-event chain, such as debt counselling, health and housing guidance and the like, as part of a basket of potential services. These can play a vital role to prevent circumstances spiralling out of control, such that the socially disadvantaged moves from unemployment to illness, family strife, homelessness and so forth.

Some good practices for truly integrated services do however exist. These examples offer a single entry-point i.e. a dedicated portal to the job seeker, guide the unemployed and are focused on the desired *outcome* rather than simply fulfilling an agency's legal obligations. Countries that offer leading examples include Finland, Ireland, Spain, Malta, Portugal and Austria.

The bottleneck for Europe is the speed with which jobseekers are put back into employment. Further investigation is required to better understand the awareness, take up and impact of online services for jobseekers.

Behind the Web: Common Horizontal Enablers

A backbone of eGovernment delivery is the so-called horizontal enablers or "building blocks". These provide the foundations for robust, streamlined and sustainable eGovernment services. Indeed a quality user experience, particularly that of a life-event, can only be provided with these building blocks in place. In this year's benchmark, the availability, usage and take up of nine horizontal enablers have been analyzed through country survey and independent (part) assessment? These are listed in the table below.

Table 1

Back Office Enabler		Description
(i)	Authentic Sources	Authentic Sources are base registries used by governments to automatically validate or fetch data relating to citizens or businesses.
(H)	ePayment	Electronic Payment (ePayment) is an electronic money transfer between government and citizens or business in eGovernment service delivery.
(iii)	elidentity	Electronic Identification (eID) is a government-issued document for online identification, and authentication
(iv)	Open Specifications	Open Specification are free and possibly standard specifications that can be used throughout eGovernment applications. ⁸
(v)	Single Sign On	Single Sign On (SSO) allows users to get access to multiple systems without the need to log in multiple times.
(vi)	Architecture Guidelines	Architecture Guidelines are common architectural principles and guidance targeting a uniform and re-usable service-based approach.
(vii)	Catalogue of Horizontal Enablers	Catalogue of Horizontal Enabler are a collection of technological enablers to be used across governmental environments.

⁸ This definition is based on the European Interoperability Framework's version 1.0.

Back Office Enabler		Description
(viii)	Secure eDelivery	Secure Electronically Delivery (eDelivery) is a legally recognized secure delivery for electronic exchange of documents and data between government and citizens or businesses.
(ix)	eSafe	Electronic Safe (eSafe) is a legally recognized system that allow for secure storage and retrieval of electronic documents.

High availability, low (monitoring of) take up

The picture revealed for the EU27+ countries shows that the availability of these enablers in Europe is generally sound (Graph 11). 75% of countries have at least six out of the nine enablers in place. And countries like Austria, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany and Hungary have all nine.

However, simply making the building blocks available is insufficient to ensure administrations' transition from paper-based to digital service provision. For instance, even though all countries do have authentic sources in place - the quality, machine readability, and regulatory access to authentic sources will differ markedly across Europe.

These enablers need further development to cause them to be seen to be adding value, and thus adopted: eIDs need to become eSignature-enabled; the coverage of Single Sign On can extend to additional administrations and services; architectural guidelines and open specifications policies can be applied more thoroughly; eID mechanisms allowing users to authenticate and request a service can be complemented with secure eDelivery using eSafe mechanisms to provide requested services online.

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Though *availability* of the enablers is generally fair, *take-up* is disproportionately low. There is a lack of monitoring of the adoption, usability and impact of key enablers. Only about half of countries are monitoring the usage of their enablers. Fed-eView/A in Belgium⁹ and www.landkaarte-overheid.nl in The Netherlands are leading examples of systematically monitoring these building blocks.

Countries report the following factors as critical to the deployment of enablers:

- Fitness-for-use in multiple applications, multiple government levels, multiple sectors, public and private sectors - to achieve critical mass;
- Leadership and continuous political support - to sustainably allocate budget and resources to the development of building blocks;
- Simple, standardized and interoperable technological infrastructures- to enable administrations to benefit from economies of scale and 'plug and play' capabilities;
- Security-to build the levels of trust that underpin adoption;
- Usability— to foster ease-of-use and the overall attractiveness of enablers to users.

Cooperation at EU level (including the European Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (CIP), and other such EU-funded initiatives), play a vitally important role to foster commonality, and accelerate progress across Europe to adopt and operate these common enabling platforms.

Forward Plans

eGovernment benchmarking, amidst turbulence in Europe

New ambitious policies and strategies are being set for the forward planning period. The implications of a far-reaching economic crisis linger, and will for some time. Received opinion is that the exit to the crisis will result in a future changed forever.

The recent **Europe 2020 strategy** explains how the EU can emerge from the crisis stronger and how it can be turned into a 'smart, sustainable and inclusive economy delivering high levels of employment, productivity and social cohesion'. The **Digital Agenda** covers those aspects of Europe's competitiveness, which call upon the digital economy to 'maximise the benefit of the Digital Revolution for all'. The new **eGovernment Action plan 2011-2015** outlines the way forward to implement the Malmö Declaration.

The way the public sector is organized, the services it delivers, indeed the very role of Government have become focal points of debate. What we know is that:

- *Technology* will continue to advance in leaps and bounds and that the technology-savvy will have ever-higher expectations from government. Evidence of which is the rapid advancement discussions and actions on 'G-Cloud';
- *Funds* available to administrations will shrink, and government will be forced to rethink how it can provide quantum improvements in services: '*twice as good, in half the time, for half as much*'. This will pose the question of fundamental transformation;
- *Globalisation* will continue in all senses, unfettered, and Europe must affirm its position in the world, giving a boost to Europe's economic competitiveness and socio-ecological sustainability. And also provide a benchmark to influence developing countries.

These all emphasize the importance of mapping out clear strategies to get Europe's public sector back on a solid footing - and monitoring progress.

Meanwhile, efficiency remains high on the agenda. Customer expectations not just of service quality, more so now engagement and participation, continue to rise. In the current climate, many will be seeking evidence of the ICT-dividend - in terms of cost savings, efficiency and productivity gains, service level improvements, democratic participation, openness and trust.

This pan-EU benchmark is a core element in putting Europe's ambitions into action. Measurement drives *de facto* targets, so strong attention has been paid to upgrading the measurement framework to cater to current political objectives of European policy makers. The changes introduced to modernise the benchmark in 2009 and more significantly in 2010 will provide data, information and insight to support policy setters, decision makers, and implementers of eGovernment. We fully intend to continue to develop the benchmark to support this process:

1. To **stabilise the 2010 scope of measurement** - and provide a new broader set of benchmarks for countries (and regions) to compare and learn from;
2. To establish **Action Learning Groups** (ALG) - a process for indicator innovation; piloting; and (leading) practice sharing. This is in process addressing: Open Government & Transparency, and Life-Events;
3. To increase reference to **international leading practices** - to ensure that Europe remains competitive on a worldwide stage

Overview of the Pan-European eGovernment Measurement

Core Measurement

The following indicators have featured in previous editions:

- **Online sophistication:** The extent to which government services allow for interaction and/or transaction between the administration and citizens or businesses. This measure covers 20 basic public services such as online tax filing, obtaining permits, enrolling in schools and many others.
- **User experience:** The extent to which the 20 basic eGovernment services are easy to use. This covers aspects of usability, transparency, privacy and multi-channel policy as well as the possibility for users to give feedback on the quality of services to administrations.
- **Full online availability:** The extent to which there is fully automated and proactive delivery of the 20 key public services. A comparison over time illustrates the speed and extent of convergence in performance in Europe.
- **Portal sophistication:** Identifying the most mature, user-centric and personalized portals that provide direct access to a wide range of eGovernment services.
- **eProcurement visibility:** showing to what extent potential suppliers find information and links to eProcurement on contracting authorities' websites
- **eProcurement availability for the pre-award phase:** Measuring to what extent the procurement process is e-enabled throughout its pre-award phases from its notification, through requests for proposals to awarding contracts.

2010 Enhancements

This year, the benchmark includes two additions to the indicators that have traditionally been used.

- **Sub-national analysis:** for the first time, the 20 service metrics have been applied at NUTS (Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics) levels, providing an unprecedented granularity of eGovernment performance across regional and local administrations.
- **eProcurement availability for the post-award phase:** an analysis of eOrdering, eInvoicing and ePayment services provided by eProcurement platforms in the public sector.

Moreover given the continual evolution of the use of ICT by European governments, entirely new indicators have emerged as a so-called "proof of concept" (i.e. indicators tested for the very first time), including:

- **The maturity of "life events":** customer journeys and related services are benchmarked for:

- "Starting up a business" and
- "Losing and finding a job".
- ***The availability and use of key enablers:*** Assessing what organizational and technical frameworks govern the implementation of back-office building blocks such as eID, authentic sources, interoperability guidelines, the adoption of open standards and Single-Sign-On.

Data Sources

Three main sources of data used for the benchmark are:

(i) Online automated and non-automated service analysis across some 10,000 portals and websites;

(ii) Surveys carried out with nominated representatives from the administrations in the Member States;

(iii) Impartial evaluations carried out by experts from the eGovernment domain,