

Executive Summary: eGovernment Benchmark Study

Cap Gemini Ernst & Young finished the third measurement of the study on the availability of the public services on the Internet. This study is a core part of a benchmarking programme that assesses the progress of the **eEurope** initiative launched by the European Commission to bring the benefits of the information society to all Europeans.

Cap Gemini Ernst & Young did a first measurement in October 2001 and a second one in April 2002. The overall report published here describes a comparative analysis of progress made between October 2001 and October 2002.

The European Commission defined a common list of twenty basic public services to be analysed, divided into citizen-oriented (12) and business-oriented (8) services. Participating countries are the 15 member states of the European Union, plus Norway, Iceland and more recently Switzerland.

Main Findings

From the 10.500 public service providers analysed in this study across the 18 participating countries, 86% are available on line. This shows a growth of 12% in one year (from October 2001 to October 2002).

To measure the online *sophistication*, a four-stage scoring framework was developed:

Stage 1 “Information”,

Stage 2 “One-way Interaction”,

Stage 3 “Two-way Interaction”

Stage 4 “Transaction” meaning full electronic case handling

The findings of the study reveal that Europe made an important progress in one year of 15%-point on the overall online *sophistication* of the provision of public services: from 45% to 60%.

Still there is a significant difference however in the result for services provided to citizens, and those to businesses. The online sophistication of the services of business is more developed than the services for citizens (72% against 52%). Also availability growth for businesses is higher than for citizens (19% against 12%).

The 20 defined public services have been grouped in four types of services: *income-generating* services (e.g. taxes and social contributions), *registration* (e.g. car registration), *returns* (e.g. public libraries) and *permits and licences* (e.g. building permit). With an average cluster score of 82% the income-generating cluster has the highest online sophistication, followed by registration and returns. The average growth rate of the income-generating service cluster is 20%-point, which is also the most important growth of all four clusters.

Analysis by country ranks Sweden on top (26% progress), followed by Belgium (24%) and Denmark (23%). Sweden also has the highest overall score of 87%. Together with Sweden three other countries – Ireland, Denmark and Finland - score higher than 75%, corresponding to the third maturity level of “two-way interaction”. The online sophistication of public

services in three countries – Belgium, Germany and Luxembourg – still needs a little additional effort to reach the level of “one-way interaction”.

Analysis

When analysing the progress over one year, one of the key conclusions is that the organisation of the service provider – centralized or decentralized – together with the approach to delivery complex or straightforward services – is a key determinant of the position of online sophistication. Each service and service organization needs a specific approach, combining citizen access channels (e.g. portals) and back-office reorganization.

To conclude, Cap Gemini Ernst & Young believes that further growth beyond the stage of interactivity requires a clear political vision and committed leadership to eGovernment as an integral part of a national governmental change programme; and a greater emphasis on the citizen. This is required to achieve not just the target of availability, but to deliver the more important aspiration of a transition to a citizen-focused governmental approach.