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The European Commission eGovernment Benchmark 2017 calls for smarter and more open eGovernment services to augment general progress

The pan-European study, carried out by a consortium led by Capgemini, reveals that 3 in 5 European public services are already online, more than half (54%) of which are mobile friendly

Paris, November 27 2017 - Europe continues to mature in electronic government: mobile friendly public services are picking up and online public service delivery is progressing. These findings are among the main conclusions of the 14th Benchmark Measurement of European eGovernment Services. Today, the European Commission published the study's report, carried out by Capgemini and other leading consortium partners in digital innovation. A focus on greater transparency and investing in key digital enablers (such as electronic identification) is now crucial for strengthening eGovernment and fully establishing the Digital Single Market in the coming years.

The 2017 eGovernment Benchmark puts a spotlight on the state-of-play of the digital transformation of European public administrations and the extent to which they are 'on track' with regard to achieving these objectives. This year's eGovernment Benchmark, which surveyed over 10,000 websites across the EU28+ countries, evaluated the digital service quantity and quality in relation to four life events: starting a business, losing and finding a job, studying, and family life. The report shows that the European public sector continues to bring more services online. While countries quantitatively increased the online availability of public services, qualitative measures (e.g. more transparent delivery procedures and prepopulating online forms with personal data) are necessary to improve the overall digital service experience.

Ample room for increasing transparency and fostering digital key enablers
Overall, eGovernment performance in Europe is moving in the right direction. For instance, good progress was made on the mobile friendliness dimension, with more than half of the services (54%) being mobile friendly (compared to 27% in 2015). User centricity of European public services reached the average of 85% which indicates a mature level of online availability of services and of interaction and feedback possibilities between citizens and public administrations. Furthermore, cross-border mobility increased modestly. Extended implementation of the eIDAS[1] Directive is likely to even further boost the availability of information and services for EU citizens when starting up a business or studying abroad.

In order to take the next step, transparency measures and investments in digital key enablers, such as electronic identification (eID) and Authentic Sources to re-use data, are priorities. In terms of transparency, public authorities need to catch up on disclosing information on the process of service delivery, their own responsibilities and performance, as well as personal data usage. Besides transparency, the use of technological pre-conditions (key enablers) such as eID and Authentic Sources, still has room to accelerate. Improvements were observed in 2016 on the availability of each of these. However, progress is still modest given the two-year timeframe between measurements. For instance, the use of electronic identification was

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[1] eIDAS : electronic Identification Authentication and trust Services

only possible in 1 out of 2 European public services (52%), and pre-filling of online forms with data the government already knows about the user holds at 47%.

Niels van der Linden, Principal consultant and project lead at Capgemini said: *"The 2017 eGovernment Benchmark research shows positive signs and the recent Tallinn Ministerial Declaration[2] is testament to the fact that the public sector takes digital transformation seriously. Governments now need to challenge the way they are organized, upskill their civil servants, and in general increase their openness to really benefit from the public value that can be created through digital services."*

The Digital Single Market, just around the corner?
Completing the Digital Single Market could contribute €415 billion per year to Europe's economy, create jobs and significantly improve public services.[3] This year's findings reveal that the vision of the Digital Single Market is further taking shape. The gap between service provision for national and foreign users is becoming smaller, as three out of five (60%) online services are now available across country borders. The usability for cross-border services improved as well (standing at 78%). This shows that citizens and businesses find themselves with access to advanced online help, support and complaint functionalities. Continuity in sharing best practices allows public authorities across Europe to keep learning in order to improve their online services. Persistent eGovernment innovation will realize the benefits of the Digital Single Market and change the relationship between public organizations and citizens for the better.

Dinand Tinholt, Vice President and Global EU Account Director at Capgemini said: "*Technology offers public administrations huge opportunities to create public value. It's more than eGovernment – it's about a digital strategy to deliver on those opportunities. A strategy that can also look forward to integrating new technologies such as Artificial Intelligence into public service delivery."*

For more information or to download the report, visit: here

More information about the digital agenda of the European Union can be found here:
https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/.

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[2] The recent Ministerial Declaration emphasizes the need to strive towards '*open, efficient and inclusive, providing borderless, interoperable, personalized, user-friendly, end-to end digital public services to all citizens and businesses – at all levels of public administration*'. The Declaration also includes '*User-centricity principles for design and delivery of digital public services*'. Talinn Ministerial Declaration on eGovernment, 6 October 2017, available online: http://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/document.cfm?doc_id=47559

[3] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/policies/shaping-digital-single-market