eGovernment

eGovernment use in EU28 has been flat

In 2013 eGovernment services have been used by 41% of the EU28 population, down from 44% in 2012 and almost at the same level as in 2011. Currently only 9 out of 28 countries are above the 2015 target, namely DK, NL, SE, FI, FR, LU, AT, SI, BE (although DE and EE are also close to it) and only 7 countries have seen usage increasing in 2013. In five countries (RO, IT, BG, PL and HR) online public services are used by less than a quarter of the population with generally little progress in term of catching-up (and even some big drops like in RO and PL).
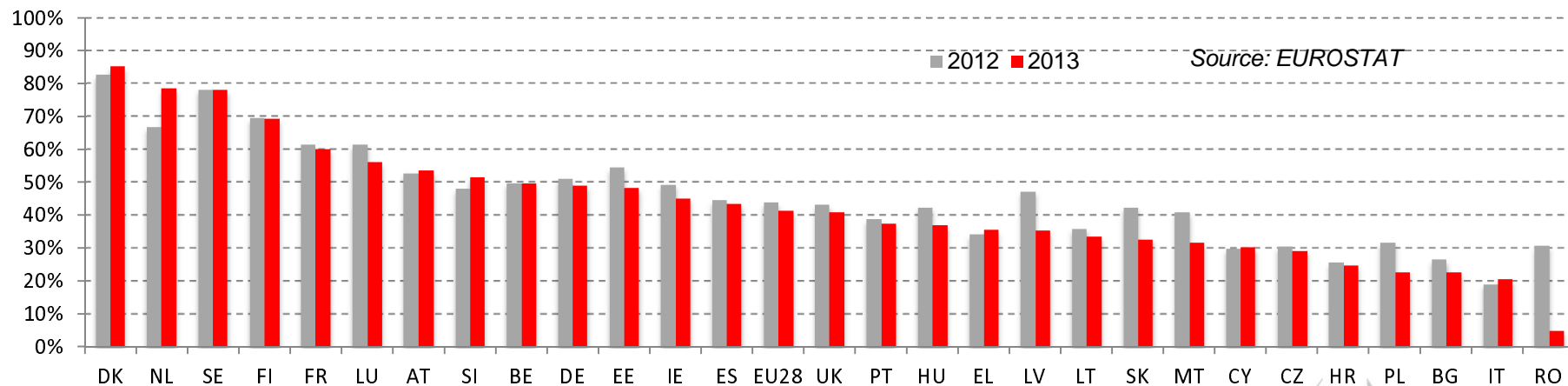
Our target

**Half the population using eGovernment by 2015**

Current performance

41% in 2013

eGovernment use by citizens in the last 12 months

Source: EUROSTAT

2012 ■ 2013

European Commission

Internet-savvy citizens often use the Internet to contact public administrations, but less so to conclude more complex interactions.

Almost three quarters (73.3%) of Internet users (in the last 12 months) who needed to contact a public authority (or to use a public service) did so online in 2013. A quarter of these used exclusively the Internet, while the others used also other channels of interaction. 26.7% of the internet users contacted their public administrations without using the Internet at all. The preferred offline channels of interaction were personal visits (54%), telephone (50%), email (25%) and other methods (e.g. SMS, post, 20%).

Internet users (in the last 12 months) contacting public authorities through the online and offline channels (EU28, 2013)

- contacted PAs only online
- contacted PAs both online and offline
- contacted PAs only offline
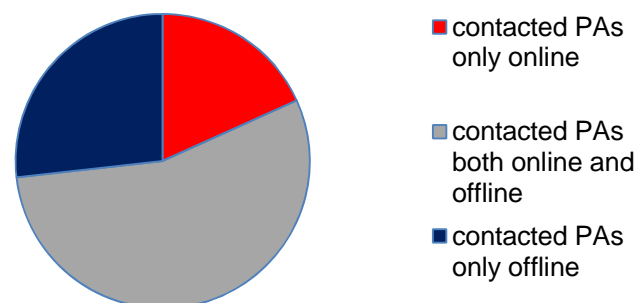
Source: Commission calculations based on EUROSTAT data

Citizens (internet users in the last 12 months) needing to send official forms to public authorities
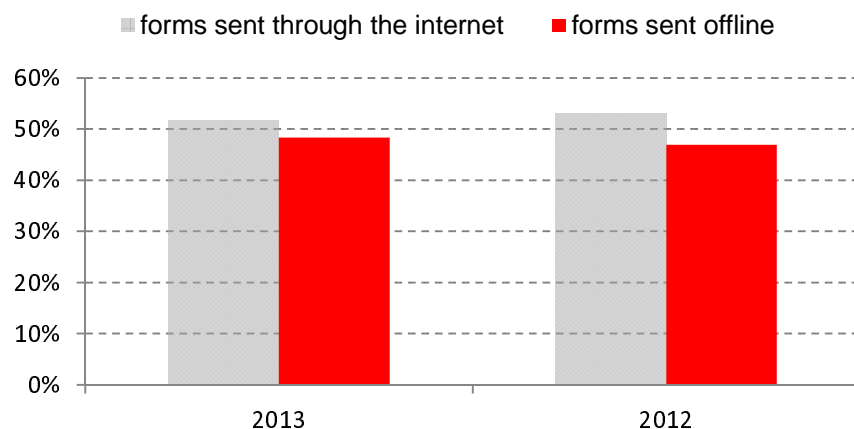
- forms sent through the internet
- forms sent offline

Source: Commission calculations based on EUROSTAT data

However, when more advanced interaction is required, Internet users are less likely to carry this out online. In 2013, among Internet users who needed to submit official forms to public authorities, only 52%* did so via Internet, down from 53% in the previous year

*The EU28 aggregate in 2013 does not include IT, LV and PL for which no data on need to submit forms was available

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Users of eGovernment services are in general satisfied, while the main reason for non-use is a lack of trust

Once citizens start to use online public services, they generally find the experience highly satisfying (75%), with only a minority feeling very disappointed (8%). The most appreciated feature is the usefulness of information (87% mainly satisfied), followed by the ease of finding information (84%), the ease of using online services (79%) and the transparency/follow-up (75%).

Citizens sending filled forms online and level of satisfaction with eGovernment services

Source: EUROSTAT
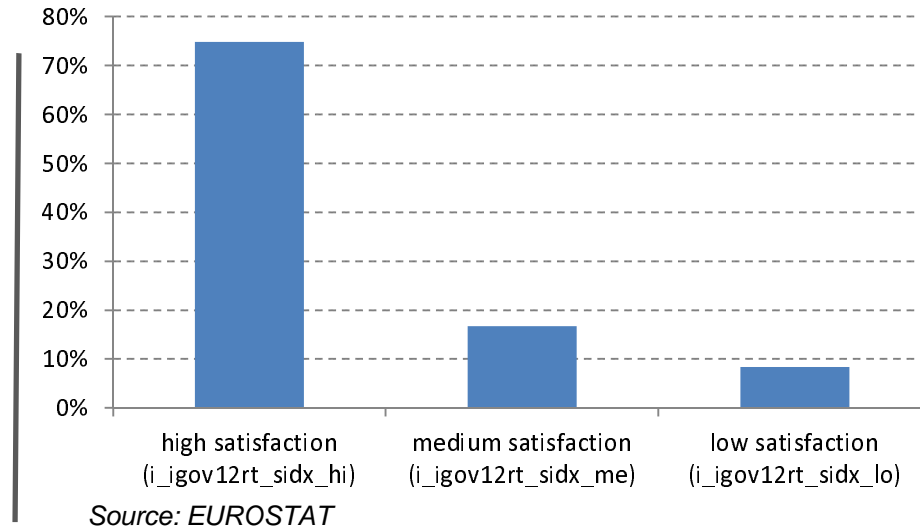
Reasons for not using the online channel for submitting official forms

Source: Commission calculations based on EUROSTAT data
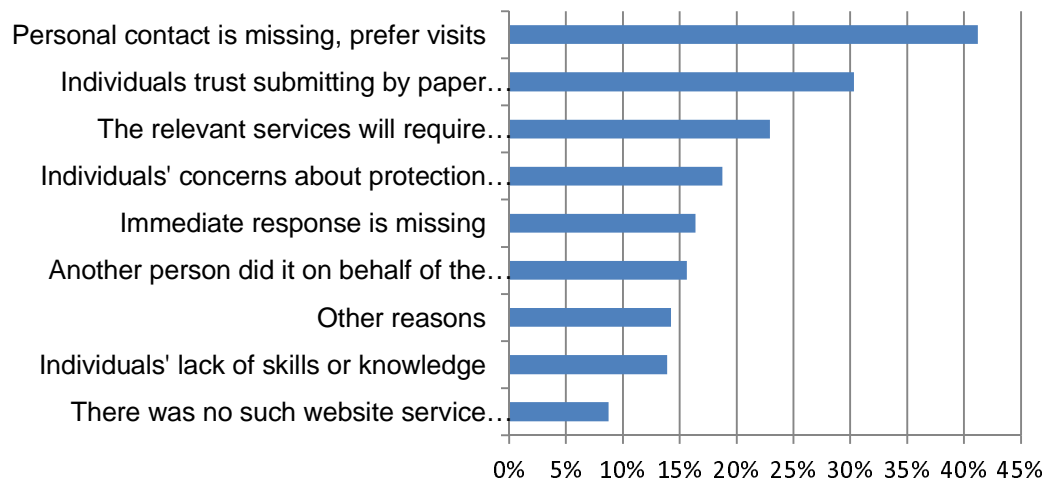
Lack of trust seems to be the main source of non-use. It comes in several forms: a preference for personal contact (41%), higher trust for paper submissions (30%), concern about personal data (19%), and a lack of immediate feedback (16%). Other main factors of non-use are a lack of skills and an incomplete digitalization of government services. The Commission, via the ISA programme, has taken up actions to help Member States strengthen interoperability between public services.

European Commission

The measurement of eGovernment supply, some methodological notes

The supply side of eGovernment is measured through a user journey approach. This is undertaken by researchers acting as mystery shoppers, that is, by posing as ordinary users of eGovernment services. The mystery shoppers simulate an event in the life of the citizen/entrepreneur requiring administrative action from the government (e.g. a marriage) and then go through public authorities websites in order to fulfil the related administrative requirements through the online channel when possible.

Seven of these life events are analysed in the course of two years (the first complete measurement is from 2012-2013) in different government domains:

- losing/finding a job
- enrolling to university
- moving
- starting a small claim procedure
- buying/owning a car
- starting a business
- regular business operations

Different aspects of service provision are examined in this new methodology, but the two examined here are the following : User-centric eGovernment and Transparent eGovernment. The User-Centric eGovernment indicator measures the availability of eGovernment services, their connectedness and their user-friendliness. The Transparent eGovernment indicator measures the online transparency of governments on the different aspects of online service delivery, treatment of citizens' personal data and activities of the public administrations. Both indicators range from 0 (complete absence of required features) to 100 (all features included).

The source for the eGovernment supply data is the eGovernment Benchmark Report (see https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/news-redirect/16475)

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On the supply side signs are more encouraging but important steps still need to be taken to improve transparency and win citizens' trust
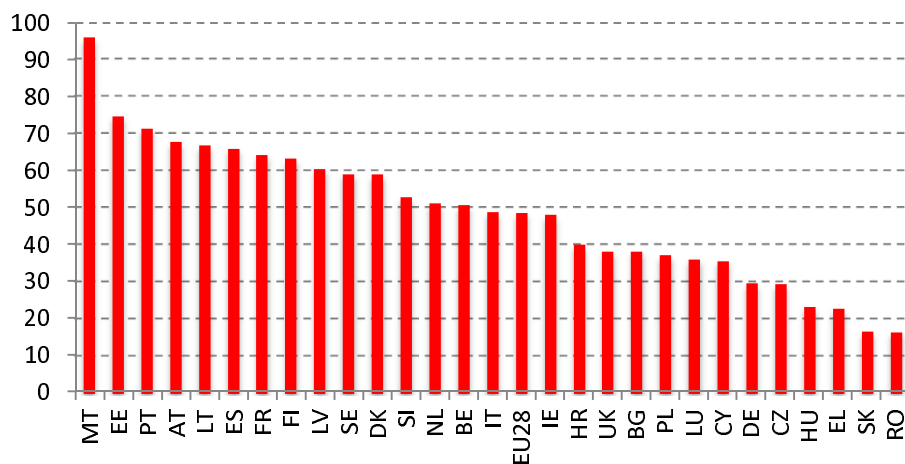
The results for EU28 show that for many countries the provision of user-friendly services is already a reality in most government domains, although on average there is still distance from the digital by default approach (a score of 100). Some countries still score 50 or less, displaying a rather analogue approach to public service delivery (SK, RO, HU, EL).

User-Centric eGovernment in the EU (2012-2013)
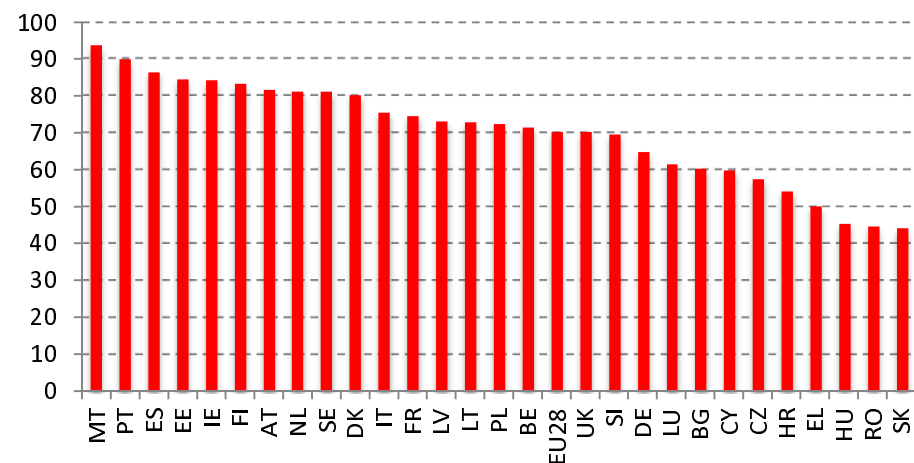
Source: eGovernment Benchmark Report

Transparent eGovernment in the EU (2012-2013)

Source: eGovernment Benchmark Report

Transparency is an important element for increasing the take-up of online public services, since it helps building trust of citizens in public administrations. The data show that this important feature is still not sufficiently at the center of eGovernment strategies for many governments, with few exceptions.

Digital Agenda Scoreboard 2014 – eGovernment

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