

Inclusive eGovernment: survey of status and baseline activities

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... Survey

The Inclusive eGovernment Expert Group has been established to help governments achieve the goal that by 2010 “no citizen is left behind” by eGovernment. The Expert Group commissioned an initial survey of the progress made towards achieving this goal between 2005 and 2007.

Prepared for the Inclusive eGovernment Expert Group

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Preface

No citizen left behind

The development of eGovernment is improving the delivery of public services to citizens, and it is essential that people without access to Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), or without the skills to use them, benefit from them too. The eGovernment Action Plan for 2010 seeks to ensure that no citizen is left behind, by promoting inclusive eGovernment, under which specific measures are developed to connect and deliver public services to vulnerable groups at risk of exclusion.

Governments at national, regional and local levels, together with their agencies and other intermediaries (e.g. NGOs, civil societies, volunteer associations and the third sector in general) which deliver public services, are increasingly integrating ICTs into their processes, both behind the scenes and in their interfaces with the public. Whilst eGovernment services should reduce the complexity of citizens' and businesses' dealings with government and its intermediaries, there is a danger that people without easy access to ICTs could find it even harder to deal with government. Public services should be available on equal terms to all, and therefore public authorities need to take account of the interests of all potential service users, following the principle of inclusive eGovernment.

The Inclusive eGovernment Expert Group, made up of representatives from Member States, has been established to help their governments achieve the above goals and to ensure that by 2010 "no citizen is left behind" by eGovernment. The Expert Group commissioned this initial survey of the progress made towards achieving this goal between 2005 and 2007, so as to assist with further actions which will be needed over the next few years. The survey thus charts important on-going progress as part of the roadmap to 2010, but also shows what still needs to be done to achieve these objectives.



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1. Executive summary

Impacts and achievements 2005-2007: translating policy into practice

Three times as many countries have **Inclusive eGovernment policies** focusing on disadvantaged groups in 2007 compared to 2005, whilst those with both eAccessibility and multi-channel policies have grown by over 40%. Many countries also report big improvements in **public sector website conformity** to eAccessibility Guidelines, although this is from a very low base, so needs continuing focus.

The **deployment** of Inclusive eGovernment shows even more dramatic change in emphasis and considerable advance. In 2005, about two thirds of practices were concerned with access and one third with training and skills, whilst in 2007 the situation has reversed with 39% of practices now directly focusing on actual service use by disadvantaged people. This shows a remarkable shift from preparing for the use of eGovernment services by disadvantaged people to them actually enjoying the benefits of service use.

Multi-channel, as opposed to single online channel, delivery is now the most common way of addressing disadvantaged groups, and represents 62% of all practices in 2007 compared to just 19% in 2005. With a much increased focus on skills and service use, this also reflects a greater sophistication and ability to 'tune' services to the specific individual needs of users.

Although only one-fifth of multi-channel practices are where **end-users do not themselves use ICT**, this is nevertheless a very new and successful strategy for delivering a service in 2007, and is likely to increase strongly in the future. Most of these practices involve ICT-empowered front-line staff acting as **intermediaries**, normally in traditional face-to-face mode but now enabled by the technology to do so in the end-users' own domestic, community or institutional context. Some new practices also rely on ICT-empowered back-offices through significant efficiencies in the design and delivery of services, which continue to be provided through traditional channels but now at much higher quality and with greater personalisation.

Future challenges: scaling-up and tackling multiple disadvantage

- Inclusive eGovernment still has very **low visibility** and suffers from widespread misunderstanding, as well as from a wide variety of unnecessarily disparate and conflicting policies and practices. The wide knowledge gap between policy makers, practitioners and ICT suppliers needs to be tackled by increasing focus on awareness raising, capacity building and identifying sustainable business and market models.
- Much effort is still highly **fragmented** in terms of both policy and practice, resulting in a failure to benefit from critical mass and mutual learning, and there is still too much focus on silo-specific solutions which are not joined up. The main option is to support the development and deployment of sustainable business models for service delivery value chains, including the roles of the different stakeholders (public, private and civil, as well as users or user groups themselves) in the context of joined-up service delivery. In particular, this must address the needs of many individual users who suffer from **multiple-disadvantage**, and who thus need a combined service approach.
- Given that 75% of practices are designed and delivered at the local or regional level in which targeted groups are considered within their specific geographical, social and cultural environment, there is a strong need for **scaling-up** and aiming for **critical mass**. Public agencies and central ministries need to act together as coordinators of all the stakeholders involved along the delivery value chain, perhaps through specific area or national agreements.

2. Introduction

2.1 Purpose of this report

This report has been prepared on behalf of the Inclusive eGovernment Expert Group, as an ad-hoc subgroup of the eGovernment subgroup, the purpose of which is to achieve the inclusive eGovernment aspects of the Manchester Declaration (2005) and the Lisbon Declaration (2007), through the eGovernment 2010 Action Plan (2006).

The report presents the results of an initial survey carried out by desk-research of inclusive eGovernment policies and practices across Europe at the present time. Sources include:

- Internet and literature search of main current sources
- Inputs by members of the Inclusive eGovernment Expert Group
- National Progress Reports on the i2010 eGovernment Action Plan, submitted to the EC in May 2007, by the EU27 plus Candidate and EEA countries (members of the eGovernment subgroup), with 30 countries responding.
- The European eGovernment Awards 2005 and 2007.
- The eGovernment Good Practice Exchange Framework, superseded by the ePractice portal in 2007 (<http://www.epractice.eu>)

2.2 Context of Inclusive eGovernment in Europe 2007

Over the last few years, much evidence has emerged that eGovernment can provide more inclusive services in an effective, appropriate and accessible manner for specific groups at risk of exclusion, such as younger people in situations of disadvantage, low-income groups, the unemployed, retired people, older citizens, ethnic groups and the disabled. (For example, European Commission, 2005; Prisma, 2003, Beep, 2003) However, it has also since become clear that for, the foreseeable future, no matter what is done to extend and improve access, there will be a large number of citizens who will continue to use traditional channels only. Up to one third of the EU population are unlikely themselves to be using eGovernment services by 2010, and these are often those who are most in need of social services because they are disadvantaged in some way. Moreover, these same people also tend to place the greatest demand on public service resources, whether or not they themselves access public services.¹



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Thus, the focus of Inclusive eGovernment is twofold. First, the beneficial social policy impacts eGovernment can have on the lives of disadvantaged groups, for example in terms of literacy, employability and social integration. Second, the service delivery arrangements, practitioners, access channels (both ICT and non-ICT) and types of use which can deliver this impact, including the business and value chain models for combined service delivery

which successful initiatives are using. The emphasis is not on the technology but on how the technology can be used to provide these beneficial impacts.

The benefits to be gained by disadvantaged groups, whether through the direct or indirect use of eGovernment services, can be manifold, for example:

- Better service access through complementary channels.
- Easing daily life burdens, including engagement with the public administration.
- Improvements to government-citizen relations.
- Better access to education, training, work and jobs.
- Improvements to personal capacity and skills, life chances, social networks and quality of life.

¹ Presentation by David Broster, Head of Unit eGovernment and CIP Operations, 19 June 2007, at the Inclusive eGovernment Stakeholders Workshop, Brussels. December 2007

In addition, one of the main challenges to both policy and practice, is that of achieving combined and joined-up services. Different services tackle different problems, but most disadvantaged people suffer from multiple deprivation so their unique individual situations need to be addressed. The different service providers need to ensure that their efforts do not overlap or counteract each other and that signals picked up by one service can act as early warnings for another. At present, many disadvantaged users are confronted with overlapping rules, different agencies, an enormous amount of paperwork and filling in complicated forms, all of which increase still further the trouble they have in trying to arrange their lives.

The barriers to inclusion are also highly varied. They can be health-related, financial, educational, related to unemployment, to geographical circumstances or there may be technical barriers to products and services. Addressing these barriers in a systematic manner is essential for a fully inclusive Information Society.

Building on the Declaration made at the November 2005 EU Ministerial eGovernment Conference in Manchester (UK Presidency, 2005), the i2010 eGovernment Action Plan of April 2006 (European Commission, 2006a) recognised that no citizen should be left behind, and that eGovernment should advance inclusion by fighting the digital divide: *“ICT-enabled public services help to consolidate social cohesion and ensure that disadvantaged people face fewer barriers to opportunities. Government websites still have much to do to comply with eAccessibility guidelines. Users will continue to want channels other than the Internet to access public services, such as digital TV, mobile and fixed phone and/or person-to-person.”*

On this basis, the Action Plan also stated that *“Member States have committed themselves to Inclusive eGovernment objectives to ensure that by 2010 all citizens, including socially disadvantaged groups, become major beneficiaries of eGovernment, and European public administrations deliver public information and services that are more easily accessible and increasingly trusted by the public, through innovative use of ICT, increasing awareness of the benefits of eGovernment and improved skills and support for all users.”*

Building on the Manchester Declaration and the Action Plan, a new eGovernment Ministerial Declaration was published at the European eGovernment Lisbon Conference in September 2007. In relation to inclusive eGovernment this committed Member States to *“Increase social impact by ensuring that all citizens benefit from eGovernment services. Contribute to the achievement of a better social environment; higher cohesion, greater effectiveness and impact of eGovernment services targeted towards groups in need of social support and those who do not themselves directly use ICT. Make available targeted, combined, flexible and accessible multi-channel services, including face-to-face delivery support and advanced ICT tools, whilst preserving and assuring traditional channels. Facilitate combined delivery of services and better coordination between the different stakeholders engaged in service delivery at all levels, with special focus given to intermediaries who need to be trained and be legally enabled to act, if required, on behalf of the citizen. **By the end of 2008 Member States shall identify and exchange information on their flagship eGovernment initiatives addressing the needs of disadvantaged and potentially excluded.**”*

The Manchester Declaration, the eGovernment Action Plan and now the Lisbon Declaration all invite Member States to improve access and skills for disadvantaged groups, but also to find alternative ways of using ICT to provide efficient and effective services when it is clear that many citizens will continue to receive them in traditional mode. The back offices and civil servants need to improve the way they work and cooperate with other practitioners and service providers, and ICT can play a very important role in this, and not only in the user interface.

3. Analysis of Inclusive eGovernment policy

3.1 Overview

Table 1 shows that when the 2005 eGovernment Ministerial Declaration was made only 9 out of 30 European countries had policies or programmes aimed at tackling the digital divide specifically through eGovernment, whether as part of their eGovernment or their social inclusion policy framework.

Table 1 Inclusive eGovernment: policy overview

Sources: National Progress Reports on i2010 eGovernment Action Plan, submitted to the EC in May 2007, and the country reports on the EC-supported website for supporting policy development for eInclusion: <http://www.ipolicy.eu>

| Inclusive eGovernment policy (as part of eGovernment or social inclusion policy) | | | Public website accessibility policy | | | Multi-channel policy | |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|----------------------|-------------|
| 2005: 9/30 | 2007: 26/30 | | 2005: 17/30 | 2007: 24/30 | | 2005: 4/30 | 2007: 17/30 |
| Belgium | Austria | Ireland | Austria | Austria | Latvia | Austria | Austria |
| Denmark | Belgium | Italy | Belgium | Belgium | Lithuania | Lithuania | Bulgaria |
| Germany | Bulgaria | Latvia | Czech R. | Bulgaria | Luxembourg | Luxembourg | Cyprus |
| Italy | Cyprus | Lithuania | Denmark | Czech R. | Malta | UK | Finland |
| Latvia | Czech R. | Luxembourg | Finland | Denmark | Netherlands | | France |
| Luxembourg | Denmark | Malta | France | Estonia | Norway | | Germany |
| Netherlands | Estonia | Netherlands | Germany | Finland | Poland | | Hungary |
| Portugal | Finland | Norway | Ireland | France | Portugal | | Latvia |
| UK | France | Poland | Italy | Germany | Slovenia | | Lithuania |
| | Germany | Portugal | Luxembourg | Iceland | Spain | | Luxembourg |
| | Greece | Slovenia | Malta | Ireland | Sweden | | Malta |
| | Hungary | Spain | Netherlands | Italy | UK | | Netherlands |
| | Iceland | UK | Norway | | | | Norway |
| | | | Portugal | | | | Portugal |
| | | | Spain | | | | Slovenia |
| | | | Sweden | | | | Spain |
| | | | UK | | | | UK |

Moreover, in 2005 all policies were exclusively focused on improving access to ICT or improving the eSkills of disadvantaged people. None had policies or programmes specifically to support social policies through eGovernment which did not also assume disadvantaged people would themselves be online. EU and Member State policy development was indeed focusing on intelligent, personalised, citizen-centric eGovernment services for all (European Commission, 2004a), but only through improved service access and skills.

Table 1 also shows that the number of countries with a specific Inclusive eGovernment policy increased from 9 to 26 between 2005 and 2007, which is a considerable advance. Thus, today, the overwhelming majority of European countries have some type of formal policy, either specifically for Inclusive eGovernment as such, or as part of a wider eGovernment and/or social inclusion policy framework. **Sweden** is the only country to specifically state that it does not have a specific policy for Inclusive eGovernment, but that it does have policies for particular target groups (like the disabled, the elderly, immigrants), and does not prioritise the different groups since all groups are equally important.

3.2 Policy area

Table 2 provides a content analysis of these policies and shows that most countries do not highlight specific policy areas for Inclusive eGovernment, but, for the minority that do, health and employment are most likely to be mentioned. This shows that most countries do not highlight specific policy areas for Inclusive eGovernment, but, for the minority that do, health

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and employment are most likely to be mentioned. For example, **Romania's** social inclusion policy cited as relevant for eGovernment includes reducing poverty, improving health and education, job training, child protection and family support, housing, social assistance, support for the disabled, and support for the gypsy minority.

Table 2 2007 Inclusive eGovernment: policy content
Excluding web accessibility and multi-channel policy. Source: National Progress Reports on i2010 eGovernment Action Plan, submitted to the EC in May 2007, and Member States' Inclusive eGovernment Experts,

| Policy area | Target group | Intervention |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Health -- 4 | 1. Disabled -- 7 | 1. Access (incl. PIAPs) -- 12 |
| 1. Employment -- 4 | 2. Older people -- 6 | 2. Skills & competencies -- 10 |
| 3. Education -- 3 | 2. Rural & remote areas -- 6 | 3. Broadband -- 4 |
| 3. Schools -- 3 | 4. Special needs/disadvantaged -- 5 | 3. Content -- 4 |
| 5. Poverty -- 2 | 4. Children/young people -- 5 | |
| 5. Housing -- 2 | 6. Families -- 3 | |
| | 6. Communities -- 3 | |
| | 6. Immigrants/minorities -- 3 | |
| | 9. Students -- 1 | |

3.3 Target groups



In contrast to this, Table 2 shows that most countries do highlight specific target groups, with the disabled, the elderly, rural or remote areas, and children and young people most prominent. Some countries, however, rather than highlighting specific target groups, simply use an umbrella term like special needs or disadvantaged groups.

In the **Netherlands**, policy focuses on specific target groups which have more information obligations (administrative burdens) towards government than the 'average citizen', specifically chronically ill people, the disabled, elderly people, and benefit recipients and volunteer organisations. The priority is to reduce the administrative burdens on these target groups using eGovernment tools such as the digital client file, automatic remission of local taxes, and pre-filled forms for application of the old age pension.

It is mainly the newer and the southern Member States which tend to specifically focus on rural and remote areas, often in the context of promoting broadband roll-out across the whole national territory, given that infrastructures are still some way off reaching the majority of the national population in these countries.

In **Poland**, the The eGovernment Implementation Plan for the years 2007-2010 provides for activities to reduce digital exclusion, for instance through a strategy for broadband access to the information society services for the years 2007-2013. Given the limitations resulting from the income level in Poland, inclusive eGovernment is focusing on facilitating Internet access and ICT training in schools, local government institutions and public Internet access points. For example the initiatives 'Broadband Internet for schools', the 'IKONKA network' of 2,500 PIAPs in communities across the country, and the 'N@utobus ICT training project have already significantly improved the level of ICT literacy especially among students, teachers and the population of rural and remote areas of Poland.

3.4 Types of policy intervention

In terms of types of intervention mentioned in national policies, the most common is access, including Public Internet Access Points (PIAPs), where there is again a tendency for the newer and the southern Member States to mention this as a specific focus because of their specific geographic situation and stage of technology development.



In **Spain** the Plan Avanz@ policy is to connect electronically all Spanish municipalities (more than 8.000), most of which do not yet have broadband access or public offices. This includes the eModel Program which finances projects in order to ensure that by 2010 all citizens will be able to communicate electronically with the administrations, without discrimination due to geographic (or other) reasons.

The **Czech Republic's** National Programme for Computer Literacy (NPCL) was launched in 2003 to enable the wider population to learn about computers and the Internet, especially those who had not used ICT before, to help overcome their fears of new technologies, to strengthen their social position and to improve their position in the labour market. Courses are delivered through easily accessible teaching centers spread throughout the country in the more than 6,000 public libraries, (more than 3,000 already having broadband access), and in schools. Some of them are also wheelchair accessible. Courses are much cheaper than commercial courses, and often free of charge, but still use highly professional staff. The typical participant is a woman over between 51 and 60 years of age, with more than 45% older than 51. Between 2003 and 2006 more than 100,000 people took part in these courses. The NPCL also focuses on the handicapped with about 10 specific projects each year, each one aimed at a specific group, e.g. lessons for people in wheelchairs, the partially sighted or blind, etc.

There are also examples of countries which have in place policies for subsidising access for groups which may have financial difficulty in themselves getting online.

The 2005-2006 **Belgian** 'Internet for all' policy aims to provide PC, broadband access, training and support at low cost (and with a VAT reduction) to families, old people and students. In total, 33,000 packages have been sold, 80% of which were new connections. This constitutes 10% of the increase in domestic Internet connections between April 2006 and April 2007 but also indirectly contributed another 10% through people who initially wanted to buy a 'Internet for all' package eventually buying a more sophisticated commercial package.

If access remains the most important policy focus in eGovernment, it is nevertheless closely followed by a strong emphasis on the skills and competencies of disadvantaged groups which they also need to enjoy the benefits of eGovernment.

For example, the **Austria** i2010 Strategy includes policies for eInclusion, accessibility, ICT for ageing, competencies and skills, closing the digital divide, and the expansion of broadband to guarantee 98% coverage by the end of 2007. In Estonia, the two main social inclusion policies of the Information society Strategy 2013 are broadening technical access to digital information, and improving skills and widening opportunities for participation. In Ireland, eGovernment policy since the Manchester Ministerial Conference in 2005 has focused significantly on fighting the digital divide, and the Access, Skills and Content (ASC) Initiative has been established as a key part of this effort.

Therefore, as the first stages of policy focus, initiatives related to first access and then to skills and competencies do seem to be the most effective in promoting Inclusive eGovernment, but cannot of course stand alone.

3.5 Public web-site accessibility policy

Access is not only concerned with ICT facilities, but also with the quality of the web interface itself. Table 1 shows that, by 2005, 17 out of 30 countries did have a public web accessibility policy in place. However, it was stated at the 2005 EU Ministerial eGovernment Conference that these had achieved very little impact to date.² This conclusion was based on the results of a survey of 436 European public sector web sites benchmarked against the W3C 1.0 A

² Presentation by Barry McMullin on research undertaken for EPAN and the UK eGovernment Unit (EPAN, 2005).
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Standard Guidelines set in 1999 using automated checking software, with 32 sites also checked manually, which showed that only 3% of the sites met the guidelines. (EPAN, 2005)

Access to, and the skills needed to use, eGovernment services by disadvantaged people are very important, but the concern of Inclusive eGovernment goes much wider than this. Other research presented at the Manchester 2005 Conference³ asked questions such as ‘who is not online?’, and ‘what are the barriers?’ The results indicated that a large proportion of the EU population was still not online with large social group and spatial differences, and Eurostat data has since shown that only 22% of citizens used eGovernment services in 2005 (Eurostat 2005). The conclusions were that people not online will miss the utility benefits (faster response for services, and some services give discounts for online use), whilst some services are only available online. A range of possible solutions was examined, from the enhancement of traditional channels, helping people to go online through cheaper and easier access, alternative modes of access, and then understanding the barriers that still exist (or are newly created) once people are online.

Table 1 shows that by 2007 24 of the 30 countries surveyed have an active public web-site accessibility (eAccessibility) policy, most of which have been put in place over the last five years, and 42% since 2005. This is, again, a considerable advance. According to each country’s own estimates or measurements where these are available, important overall progress in levels of conformity appear to have been made since the UK Presidency’s survey of eAccessibility across Europe in 2005 (EPAN 2005). It is interesting that many of the highest estimates are made by the New Member States, which may indicate the opportunity to leapfrog because of their more recent roll-out of eGovernment services and their ability to learn from countries which have been setting up services for a longer period. Another feature is the tendency for greater conformity to be seen in countries with smaller populations, with the exception of Denmark, which is likely to reflect both the reduced scale and complexity of the conformity task in countries with shorter lines of command.

In light of the apparently slow progress in **Denmark** to date, a new type of policy for eAccessibility was launched in 2007 to promote 3 alternatives to legislation, given it is felt that the country is too small a market for regulation as this would inhibit innovation. First, a comply or explain approach, where the focus is on open standards for public sector software of which web accessibility is one, and the obligation to explain non-compliance to be published on the web. Second, national annual benchmarking, starting in 2008, including WCAG AA standards, and again with results published on the web. Third, guidance, training and support on interpreting WCAG AA, given that many web masters find it difficult, and collecting existing implementation knowledge with the use of examples and instructional videos.

In contrast, most countries which do have an eAccessibility policy have adopted a legislative approach, such as France, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands.

In **France**, the eAccessibility Action Plan is based on the Law for Equality Rights and Opportunities, Participation and Citizenship for Disabled People, enacted in 2005. On this basis, a ‘Referential’ (guidelines) document for Accessibility in Administration (RGAA) is being designed for launch at the end of 2007. It will ensure the improvement of Accessibility for public on line services (Web, mobile phone, digital TV). Based on international standards and elaborated with all sector actors, it will integrate relevant rules, conditions of accessibility, auto-evaluation methods, and training, as well as include an enforcement scheme.

Germany has a basic law on equal opportunities for the disabled to which all federal web-sites must comply through a testing, evaluation and certification process, and the States have adopted a similar approach. An annual award scheme is also used to highlight and promote the issues. The next step is to develop an inclusive eGovernment strategy for eAccessibility which also covers channelling between authorities as well as to citizens and businesses. In Italy, there is a legal set of eAccessibility guidelines, developed independently but also reflecting international standards such as WCAG 1.0 or Section 508 of US Rehabilitation Act.

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³ By Kevin Cullen of The Work Research Centre, Dublin, Ireland. December 2007

In the **Netherlands**, all new national government websites need to comply with the web guidelines as of September 2006, and existing government websites have to comply by the end of 2010. The web guidelines consist of 125 quality requirements for websites so that they, and the information on it, will be accessible for all users (including people with (visual) handicaps, browsers and search engines). Web guidelines contain a collection of international standards on web accessibility (W3C, WCAG 1.0, priority 1 and 2+, XHTML 1.0 strict and CSS), and can be seen as a guide to an accessible website. There are several evaluation tools developed to measure the compliance with the web guidelines, and the result can be monitored on a special website open to the public. This is done with the aim to open the market for quality web design, as well as to get information on the percentage of government websites that are complying with the web guidelines.

3.6 Multi-channel policy



Even though Table 1 shows that only 4 countries out of 30 had a specific multi-channel policy by 2005, other evidence shows that, in terms of research and practice, multi-channel was somewhat more advanced than website accessibility. In 2003, it was already confirmed as one of the five main issues for the future eGovernment Roadmap being developed by the EC and Member States,⁴ and there was a significant amount of research and some quite important on-the-ground impact by 2005, despite very little of this being specifically directed to assisting disadvantaged groups. (European Commission, 2004b; OECD, 2005)

For example, there was very little recognition in 2005 of the role of the intermediary channel in which an individual (from the public, private or civil sectors) uses eGovernment services on behalf of a disadvantaged citizen, so that the latter only experiences a familiar personal service and may not realise the role of ICT in the delivery of that service. A survey based on 2005 data showed, however, that 42% of eGovernment users were informally acting as an intermediary for family or friends, and that each so-called social intermediary was assisting an average of 2.6 other people. (Millard, 2007) These data show that intermediaries were already, in fact, an extremely important aspect of eGovernment service delivery, even though very few policy-makers or practitioners had yet recognised this because it was operating in the informal space of family and community.

The evidence shows clearly that good progress in Inclusive eGovernment had been made by 2005, but that this was largely confined to policy and initiatives related to access and skills, whilst on-the-ground achievements were not widespread, despite pioneering examples.

Aware of this evidence, Ministers at the Manchester 2005 Conference started to look at Inclusive eGovernment issues beyond access or skills, important though these continue to be. They recognised that social welfare policy, inclusion and eInclusion are interdependent and reinforcing. When individuals, social groups or specific localities experience (usually a combination of linked) problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing or bad health in relation to other groups, or at a higher than average rate, the causes are interconnected, and the effects themselves become causes of further exclusion. For example, poverty is both a key cause of social exclusion and a key effect. It was recognised by Ministers that *“the digital divide is about a lot more than getting people online, and, indeed, may not always require this if services are enhanced through ICT and delivered by other means.”* (UK Government, 2005)

With reference to multi-channel, Table 1 shows that in 2007 17 of the 30 countries have a specific policy, all of which have been put in place since 2002, and over 41% since 2005. Once again, this is a very big advance. Moreover, at least two other countries are actively preparing a multi-channel policy which will bring the total of countries with such a policy to 63% of all countries.

⁴ Presentation by Paul Timmers, Head of eGovernment Unit, European Commission, January 2004, Brussels
December 2007

In **Cyprus**, there are plans to provide eServices through other channels, mobile, TV, kiosks, and call centres. In addition to web services, the **Netherlands** is developing a multi channel policy, the main principle of which is that citizens have freedom of channel choice for access, and government should guarantee the same level of quality of service for each channel. Part of this will be an interconnected system of telephone information desks at municipalities which citizens and businesses can use to put questions to the government as a whole. The **Norwegian** policy is that all suitable services shall be available through several channels in addition to the Internet, such as mobile phones, digital television and the post.

In **Spain**, the Law for Citizens Electronic Access to Public Administrations requires the use different channels for eServices and the right of citizens to choose between them without restrictions, including an Internet access point in street public offices. The single access code, 060, is now the multi-channel access point for all PA services. Every service provided by any PA can be accessed via the 060 network (offices, Internet portal, telephone), and the service is available 24x7 and coordinates all services offered by the national, regional and local administrations. It is not necessary for users to visit different offices as the goal of 060 is to offer the services without the need to know which administration is providing it.

The **United Kingdom** 2006 multi-channel policy views channels not in distinct silos but as components of an overall contact strategy, with customers that understand the true value and purpose of contact, and employs an end-to-end delivery whole system approach. The focus is to identify realisable savings for both contact and cost (for administrations and citizens / businesses) through end-to-end, cost-to-serve and 'customer journey' analysis.

The evidence⁵ also shows that many countries without a formal national multi-channel policy often do have de facto policies at local or sectoral level when services are rolled out or re-designed, such as the Walloon region in **Belgium**, and in **Denmark, Greece, Ireland** and **Sweden**.

It is clear from this evidence that the importance of the multi-channel agenda, particularly in relation to Inclusive eGovernment, is a relatively recent phenomenon but that it has become mainstream over the last few years.

Most multi-channel policies encompass face-to-face (either at physical offices or via human intermediaries), telephone call centres, mobile, PIAPs, kiosks, etc. The eUSER project⁶ showed both that in a number of countries (such as the **UK** and **Ireland**), call centres are in fact the most used channel for government services (even more important than traditional face-to-face), and that mobile and other handheld channels are particularly important for disadvantaged groups.



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⁵ Progress Reports on i2010 eGovernment Action Plan, May 2007, and Member States Inclusive eGovernment Experts.

⁶ eUser project (2006) evidence-based support for the design and delivery of user-centred online public services, eGovernment report prepared by Jeremy Millard (Danish Technological Institute), European Commission IST 6th Framework IST Programme: <http://www.euser-eu.org>. December 2007

4. Analysis of Inclusive eGovernment in practice

4.1 Overview

In terms of Inclusive eGovernment deployment, Table 3 and Table 4 provide an overview derived from a survey of documented practices over the 2005 to 2007 period. First, Table 3 shows that, in terms of deployment focus, training (32% of the total) and service use (35%) have become just as important as access (33%) as features of Inclusive eGovernment deployment over the last two years. Although access remains essential and is typically a necessary precursor or first stage, the need for training through developing appropriate skills and competencies, and then grappling with the challenges of directly supporting and promoting service use, are now in practice becoming more important as stages 2 and 3 in the progression to fully Inclusive eGovernment. The corresponding data for 2005 show that more than two thirds of practices were concerned with access and less than one third with training, and there was very little evidence of a service use focus, so this is a very significant change.

Table 3 Deployment focus of inclusive eGovernment, 2005-2007

| | Providing access | Training/skills development | Service use | Total |
|------|------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|-------|
| 2005 | 68% | 29% | 3% | 100% |
| 2007 | 33% | 32% | 35% | 100% |

Table 4 Mode of delivery of inclusive eGovernment, 2005-2005

| | Single (online) channel delivery | | Multi-channel delivery: targeted at individual (personalised) | | | Total |
|------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|---|---------------------------------|-------|
| | Targeted at group | Targeted at individual (personalised) | End-user uses ICT plus at least one other channel* | End-user does not use ICT but service provider does | | |
| | | | | ICT-empowered front-line staff | ICT-empowered back-office staff | |
| 2005 | 73% | 8% | 19% | -- | -- | 100% |
| 2007 | 26% | 12% | 51% | 8% | 3% | 100% |

* Channels include face-to-face, printed material and post, intermediaries, telephone (including call-centre), mobile/ hand-held (including SMS), ICT online (e.g. Internet, e-mail).

2007 data breakdown:

| | | | | | | |
|-------------|-----|----|-----|----|----|-----|
| Access | 13% | 4% | 16% | 0% | 0% | 33% |
| Training | 7% | 4% | 19% | 2% | 0% | 32% |
| Service use | 6% | 4% | 16% | 6% | 3% | 35% |

Sources for both Table 3 and Table 4:

- 2005: 72 cases relevant for Inclusive eGovernment (i.e. to support the disadvantaged) from the eEurope eGovernment Awards 2005 and Good Practice Framework 2005 (n=124, as each case can appear in more than one cell).
- 2007: 90 cases relevant for Inclusive eGovernment (i.e. to support the disadvantaged) from the National Progress Reports on the i2010 eGovernment Action Plan, the European eGovernment Awards 2007, Member States Inclusive eGovernment Experts, desk research, the <http://www.ePractice.eu> portal, April-July 2007 (n=178, given that each case can appear in more than one cell).

Evidence from the same sources as these two tables shows that the large majority (about 75%) of Inclusive eGovernment practices is designed and delivered at the local or regional level, and only then (if successful and cost-effective) may be rolled out more widely. This also reflects an analysis made in 2005 that the success of strategies for social and digital inclusion is largely dependent on a context-based approach, whereby targeted groups are considered within their specific geographical, social and cultural environment. (European Commission, 2005) Governments, especially local public administrations, are best placed to do this, but also need to act as coordinators of all the different stakeholders involved at different levels.

4.2 Impact of single online channel and targeted delivery

When looking at modes of delivery in Table 4, single online channel examples comprise 38% of all initiatives in 2007, and targeting different disadvantaged groups as a whole, rather than individuals in a personalised way, remains the most common approach (26% compared to 12%). This is a dramatic drop in the focus on group segmentation involving only the single online channel compared to 2005, but does not indicate that segmentation as such is less important. It instead shows that providing personalised services targeted at the individual is becoming more important, as is targeting the disadvantaged through multiple channels, as discussed below. Segmentation and personalised services represent important progress over the last few years, often described as ‘citizen centricity’ (cc:eGov, 2007), compared to the earlier ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach for eGovernment services which assumed that all users are more or less the same and have the same needs.

The ELAK electronic filing system⁷ is a cornerstone of **Austria’s** overall eGovernment strategy, providing seamless electronic services to users consisting of the Citizen Card, integrated electronic forms and delivery services, as well as electronic documents, electronic workflow and file management in the back office. These provide appropriate formats for different user groups with special needs, for example online reading tools for people with poor or no eyesight. Special needs are addressed throughout the service process chain, including interactive form design and use, electronic signature, authentication and validation of documents. Different interfaces, pop-up screens and dialogues allow the requirements of users with special needs to be taken into account. The use of electronic signatures and authentication mechanisms also makes it possible for the first time for blind people to sign contracts online without the help of an intermediary.

In terms of personalised single-channel services targeted at the individual, Table 4 also shows that these are much less likely to focus on access (only one third of initiatives) compared to the group examples which are mainly focused on access (one half of initiatives). Clearly, when services are personalised for individuals, it is an opportunity to successfully address all their needs (access, skills and use) as part of a single or linked process.

In **France** provision is currently being made for personalised portals (Mon Service Public).⁸ In the **United Kingdom**, the Reading Companion web site supports basic literacy. Users log on and are presented with material to read. An on-screen mentor, or companion, ‘reads’ a phrase to the user and then provides an opportunity for the user to read the material, using a headset microphone. This is checked for accuracy and gives the user an opportunity to try again, or offers the correct reading of the words on the screen. This means that the individual progress of a student can be monitored and fed back thus personalising the support provided.

4.3 Impact of multi-channel use by the end-user

Turning to multi-channel delivery practices, it is clear from Table 4 that these are now the most common, at 62% compared to single online channel examples at 38%. This demonstrates real progress compared with the situation in 2005 when the total was just 19%, and these examples also show a much stronger focus on training and service use compared to the single online channel examples which emphasise access much more. Again, this shows that the greater sophistication and ability to ‘tune’ services to the specific individual needs of disadvantaged users is much better facilitated by a multi-channel, as opposed to a single channel, approach, certainly in the context of disadvantaged users.

Amongst the multi-channel practices, distinction is made between examples where ICT is used by end-users themselves along with other non-ICT channels, and examples where end-users

⁷ <http://www.epractice.eu/document/1420>

⁸ <http://www.epractice.eu/cases/1941>

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do not use ICT themselves but where ICT is an important tool in delivering a service. The former contributes the large majority of examples (51% compared to 11%), and is typically dependent on upgrading skills and competencies to ensure that the disadvantaged are able to successfully use ICT, given the fact that training examples predominate over ones purely focused on access.

The Leicestershire CareOnLine initiative⁹ in the **United Kingdom** has assisted over 500 vulnerable adults through a combination of channels. The service provides a home outreach service to disadvantaged groups, such as older people, disabled people and carers, to provide them with ICT skills by assessing individual needs and providing assistive technology equipment. This is done through a volunteer network providing free one-to-one training in people's own home (8,000 hours each year) to give these groups confidence and motivation to use ICT themselves, a simple website designed for older and disabled people, and a telephone help desk. Providing isolated groups such as older people with ICT skills enables them to themselves use online government services or participate in initiatives such as online voting. One user said: "Today for example I filed a tax return with the Inland Revenue and arranged a hospital appointment. I could not function without it [a computer provided by CareOnLine]." – Carer, aged 75.

In **Portugal**, the ACESSO Programme¹⁰ is developing and disseminating ICT tools to allow citizens with special needs (such as the disabled, elderly people and those with long-term illness) to overcome some of their difficulties. The eAccessibility initiative within ACESSO provides a mix of technologies and types of support, such as on-line digital documents, assistive technologies for library reading rooms, support for people with special needs undergoing university-level studies, equipped resource centres with innovative technologies for braille printing, the preparation of spoken digital documents/books, the creation of on-line ICT tutorials for people with special needs, and support for autonomous living by senior citizens.

The Citizen Service Centres (KEP) in **Greece**, and the online platform (eKEP), together provide administrative one-stop services where citizens can have access to public service information and to over 1,000 standardised administrative procedures either in person or online. In **Luxembourg**, all important public services are delivered both online and through physical one stop shops (citizens and businesses). Services for job seekers and unemployed people are also delivered through self service kiosks. In **Austria**, all *.gv.at domain web-sites are also available without any fee via WLAN hotspots and public kiosks (PIAPs), and eGovernment identification and authentication is also available by means of mobile phone (A1 Signature). And in **Malta** citizens can access their personal social security records and payments by Internet and may also choose to be notified about their social security payments via SMS or by post.

Many of these examples also show the continuing importance of face-to-face service delivery via an intermediary as part of the mix of channels.

4.4 Impact of multi-channel use by service provider

Although only 11% of examples involve end-users who do not themselves use ICT, Table 4 shows that this is a very new practice which has become a clear strategy only since 2005. However, it seems likely that this will increase much more in future both in terms of services and countries. Three quarters of these practices involve human front-line staff acting as intermediaries, normally in traditional face-to-face mode but now enabled by the technology to do so in the end-users' own domestic, community or institutional environment. It is clear that ICT here enables staff to be more productive and releases them to provide highly personalised 'as-needed' services directly at the physical and human point of need. This is also underscored by the fact that most of these examples are for service use rather than access or training, which is clearly a natural consequence of the type of delivery demonstrated.

⁹ <http://www.epractice.eu/cases/1735>; <http://www.leicscareonline.org.uk>

¹⁰ <http://www.epractice.eu/document/2894>

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A major **Maltese** initiative is the introduction of eGovernment Agents (intermediaries) to service people who do not have the facilities to access the Internet themselves and thus cannot access eServices online. This initiative is resulting in improved accessibility for citizens who do not need to be physically present at a government office to receive a service, and also enables the government to reduce its workload in re-structured front offices through redeploying staff to work out in the community.

The **Austrian** eGovernment Law initiative¹¹ enables public administration eServices to be accessed via staff acting as official proxies (in-person intermediaries) on behalf of citizens who are unable to use eServices on their own. From April 2007, another type of intermediary also became possible, i.e., representatives of an organisation are able to retrieve official notifications on behalf of all the members of that organisation by using the citizen card as a virtual proxy.

Portugal launched its Public Internet Access Spaces (PIAS)¹² initiative in December 2006 with more than 1,000 free access spaces to multimedia computers and the Internet. Trained personnel ensure permanent support for users, and many also act as social (human) intermediaries direct to users in local communities, which has dramatically increased the use of eGovernment. For example in 2006 more than 50% of tax filings were completed on the Internet, and 54% of these were assisted by intermediaries. This also provided significant savings in the back-office, as far less time had to be spent on keying in data from paper tax forms.

One quarter of the 2007 examples where end-users do not themselves use ICT is related to ICT-empowered back-offices, leading to significant efficiencies in service design and delivery in which the end user continues to use traditional channels but now experiences a higher quality and more personalised service as a result.

The 'Communit-e' application¹³ in **Belgium** whereby municipalities can enter medical recognition requests for allowances for disabled persons directly into the Social Security Department's IT system. This leads to a better service for disabled persons through quicker processing of their dossiers. The system also enables automatic granting of benefit payments based on the social security status of a person (e.g. tax reduction, reduced telephone charges, free pass for public transport), without the person having to submit a certificate.

In **Slovenia**, the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs has developed a Social Work Centres Information System (SWCIS), one module of which is the 'Family Helper' with links for example to the population registry, the tax authority, and the employment services. This module protects personal data, increases control over the payment system, analyses data to improve decision making, planning, monitoring and implementation of various measures, and increases time savings (for families) and money savings (for the state budget). One result, is that by 2007 control over child benefit payments has increased with savings of € 3 million per year, whilst shortened data entry and evaluation time saves 300 hours every month.

The **United Kingdom** Job Centre Plus¹⁴ GIS Tool maps and analyses mainly sensitive personal information on work and pensions, combining it with other useful information on geographic boundaries and census data, to enable policy makers to understand local patterns of social exclusion, support evidence-based policy making and the more effective delivery of services. It also allows job centre staff to improve the way they market and deliver their services with partner organisations. For example, Liverpool has used the system to develop a full employment plan which also identifies localities where there are high numbers of incapacity benefit claimants in order to target its activities, whilst Kent has used the data to pinpoint lone parent 'hotspots' within the county and thereby more effectively focus policy action to engage these groups.

¹¹ <http://www.epractice.eu/cases/1863>

¹² <http://www.epractice.eu/document/3449>

¹³ <http://www.epractice.eu/cases/1866>

¹⁴ <http://www.epractice.eu/document/68>

5. Overview of impacts and challenges

5.1 Impacts

The analysis and evidence above shows that very considerable progress was made across Europe in Inclusive eGovernment between 2005 and 2007, as summarised in the following:

Policy impacts

1. The number of countries with a specific **Inclusive eGovernment policy** increased from 9 to 26 between 2005 and 2007, which is a considerable advance.
2. By 2007 24 of the 30 countries surveyed had an active **public web-site accessibility (eAccessibility) policy**, most of which have been put in place over the last five years, and 42% since 2005. This is, again, a considerable advance.
3. In terms of **conformity to the eAccessibility Guidelines** Member States report considerable progress since 2005, although it is not possible to quantify this. It is interesting that many of the highest estimates are made by the New Member States, which may indicate the opportunity to leapfrog because of their more recent roll-out of eGovernment services and their ability to learn from countries which have been setting up services for a longer period. Another feature is the tendency for greater conformity to be seen in countries with smaller populations, with the exception of Denmark, which is likely to reflect both the reduced scale and complexity of the conformance task in countries with shorter lines of command.
4. In 2007, 17 of the 30 countries reporting having a specific **multi-channel policy**, all of which have been put in place since 2002, and over 41% since 2005. Once again, this is a very big advance. Moreover, at least two other countries are actively preparing a multi-channel policy which will bring the total of countries with such a policy to 63% of all countries.

Practice impacts

5. The analysis of 2007 practice shows that **training** (32% of the total) and **service use** (35%) have become just as important as **access** (29%) as features of Inclusive eGovernment deployment over the last two years. The corresponding data for 2005 showed that about two thirds of practices were concerned with access and one third with training, and there was very little evidence of a service use focus, so this is a very significant change.
6. The large majority (about 75%) of Inclusive eGovernment practices are designed and delivered at the **local or regional level**, and only then (if successful and cost-effective) may be rolled out more widely. The success of strategies for social and digital inclusion is largely dependent on a context-based approach, whereby targeted groups are considered within their specific geographical, social and cultural environment.
7. In terms of delivering services, the **single online channel delivery** comprises 38% of all initiatives, and amongst these targeting disadvantaged groups as a whole rather than individuals in a personalised way remains the most common approach (26% compared to 12%). However, such group segmentation practices still represent important progress over the last few years compared to the normal 'mainstream' user approach for eGovernment services which assumes that all users are more or less the same and have the same needs.

8. It is clear that **multi-channel delivery** is now the most common way of addressing disadvantaged groups with 62% of examples compared to single online channel delivery at 38%. This demonstrates real progress compared with the situation just a few years ago, and these examples also show a much stronger focus on training and service use compared to the single ICT channel approach which emphasises access much more. Again, this shows that the greater sophistication and ability to ‘tune’ services to the specific individual needs of disadvantaged users is much better facilitated by a multi-channel as opposed to a single channel approach.
9. Of all the multi-channel practices, examples where **ICT is used by the end-user** her- or himself, together with other non-ICT channels, make up four-fifths. These are typically dependent on upgrading skills and competencies to ensure that the disadvantaged are able to successfully use ICT, as shown by the fact that training examples are the most common (19%) compared to access (16%) and service use (16%).
10. The fact that only one-fifth of multi-channel practices are where the **end-user does not use ICT** her- or himself, shows this is a very new strategy for delivering a service which has only become important since 2005. It also seems likely that this will increase much more in future both in terms of services and countries. In addition, three quarters of these practices involve ICT-empowered front-line staff acting as **intermediaries**, normally in traditional face-to-face mode but now enabled by the technology to do so in the end-users’ own domestic, community or institutional environment. It is clear that ICT here enables staff to be more productive and releases them to provide highly personalised ‘as-needed’ services directly at the physical and human point of need. This is also underscored by the fact that most of these examples are for service use rather than access or training, which is clearly a natural consequence of the type of delivery demonstrated.
11. One third of the examples where the end-user does not her- or himself use ICT are related to **ICT-empowered back-offices**, leading to significant efficiencies in service design and delivery in which the end user continues to use traditional channels but now experiences a higher quality and more personalised service as a result.

Overall, a clear pattern of Inclusive eGovernment development over the 2005 to 2007 period can be discerned from the evidence presented which reflects at least three cumulative policy and delivery stages towards ensuring that disadvantaged groups also benefit from eGovernment:

- i) Improving **access** by disadvantaged groups to ICT and thus access to eGovernment services.
- ii) Based on i), upgrading the ICT (and related) **skills and competencies** of disadvantaged individuals through training and wider support activities.
- iii) Exploiting i) and ii) to increase the actual **use of eGovernment services** (directly or indirectly) in order to derive real benefits for disadvantaged people at the same level as mainstream users, but reflecting the specific needs of the disadvantaged individual or group concerned.

The evidence shows that there has been a strong relative move away from i) access, to ii) skills and competencies, and especially to iii) service use, over the 2005 to 2007 period.

Each of these stages in turn employ different combinations of single and multi-channel delivery approaches, with a strong relative move towards more of the latter over the 2005 to 2007 period.

5.2 Challenges

Despite the clear and significant progress in Inclusive eGovernment between 2005 and 2007, evidenced above, there still remain important gaps, problems and challenges for the future which need to be tackled:

1. **Increasing focus and strengthening** is needed across all issues identified: access, public web-site accessibility, skills and competencies, service take-up and use, targeting and segmenting, personalising service delivery, multi-channel, and improvements to efficiencies and increased effectiveness/quality in both front- and back-offices.
2. Much **effort is still highly fragmented** in terms of both policy and practice, resulting in a failure to benefit from critical mass and mutual learning.
3. The main future challenge is improving understanding and implementation of **sustainable business models** for service delivery value chains, including the roles of the different stakeholders (public, private, civil, as well as users or user groups themselves) in the context of joined-up and combined service delivery.
4. There is a strong need to show that it is more costly not to tackle exclusion than to promote inclusion, and this involves clearly demonstrating both **the economic and social case** for Inclusive eGovernment. Part of this will be analysing the cost-benefit along the whole value chain, rather than just one part of it, given that, although some stakeholders may incur greater costs than benefits, the reverse will be the case for others, but overall there is likely to be a clear net benefit. One issue then becomes how the different stakeholders share the costs and benefits along the value chain, and how they negotiate this.
5. Inclusive eGovernment still has very **low overall visibility** and suffers from widespread misunderstanding, or at least from a wide variety of unnecessarily disparate and conflicting policies and practices. This is reflected in the wide knowledge gap, especially between policy makers, practitioners, and ICT suppliers, who do not cooperate sufficiently. One remedy for this is increasing focus on awareness raising, capacity building and identifying sustainable business and market models in which these stakeholders can participate for mutual benefit.
6. **Sustainability and scaling up** of solutions to get **critical mass** and critical impacts remains a huge challenge, especially given that 75% of practices are designed and delivered at the local or regional level in which targeted groups are considered within their specific geographical, social and cultural environment. Governments, especially local public administrations, are best placed to do this, but also need to act as coordinators of all the different stakeholders involved at different levels including national and, where relevant, European.
7. We should rethink how **value chains** can often function as **networked local organisations**, where Local Authorities are linked together at local and regional levels with civil and private actors by conducive legal and regulatory regimes. The role of the public sector in such local 'ecosystems' would typically be as 'orchestrator' of a wide range of practitioners, both within and outside the public sector itself, and thus enabled to deliver services which it could not accomplish on its own. This would involve both resource and service sharing through, for example, arrangements like Local Area Agreements (as in the UK) or Local Information Society Pacts (as agreed by the European Local Authorities Network, ELANET in April 2007) for designing and delivering services.

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Annex 1: Inclusive eGovernment policy overview

(Sources: National Progress Reports on i2010 eGovernment Action Plan, submitted to the EC in May 2007, and the country reports on the EC-supported website for supporting policy development for eInclusion: <http://www.ipolicy.eu>)

| eGovernment or social inclusion policy relevant for Inclusive eGovernment | Web accessibility policy | Multi-channel policy |
|--|---|--|
| AUSTRIA | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Austria i2010 Strategy includes policies for eInclusion, accessibility, ICT for ageing, competencies and skills, closing digital divide, expansion of broadband to guarantee 98% coverage by the end of 2007. March 2007 launch of regional eGovernment policy for all 2357 cities and municipalities aiming to reduce coverage 'blind spots' and promote universal provision and eInclusion of all citizens in all regions in Austria. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All PA internet sites must be compatible with WCAG 1.0 guidelines (Level A) by January 1, 2008. By summer 2007 results of national survey of compatibility will be ready. Styleguide 2.0 is used as standard for online forms to facilitate user navigation and ensure conformity with Level A of WAI guidelines. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through a PPP all *.gv.at domain web-sites available without any fee via WLAN hotspots and public kiosks (PIAPs). eGov identification and authentication is also available by means of mobile phone (A1 Signature). E-Government Law initiative enables PA eServices to be accessed via public officials acting as official proxies (intermediaries) on behalf of citizens who are unable to use eServices on their own. |
| BELGIUM | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National action plan for eInclusion (2005-2010) federates the action plans of all authority levels (e.g. Walloon regional action plan for eInclusion). National action plan for Social Inclusion (PAN Inclusion, 2006-2008) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 2004, all federal web sites are being screened for compliance with the BlindSurfer label, now AnySurfer label based on the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 1.0), but with minor modifications in order to improve accessibility for users using assistive software (e.g. screen-reading). In both Flanders and in Walloon Regions, government websites comply with the Anysurfer label. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No national policy, but in the Walloon Region, a 2006 study is underway to develop multi-channel delivery, which should result at the end of 2007 in deployment. |
| CYPRUS | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special consideration is given to people or institutions with special needs. Disabled population groups have telecommunication special rates which are significantly lower than the regular ones. Special rates will soon be offered for university students. In addition, there is a special agreement between the Ministry of Education and CYTANET (ISP) to provide Internet in schools at a lower cost. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public web pages are developed to conform to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. Languages used are Greek and English, and some also support Turkish. The Government Portal provides links to translators for easy and quick translation to required languages. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three Citizen Service Centres (one-stop-shops) provide various services to the public without the need of visiting any government office to obtain such services. Plan to provide eServices through other channels, mobile, TV, kiosks, call centres. |
| CZECH REPUBLIC | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Czech Web Accessibility Guidelines also includes the provision of information in a form suitable for handicapped people from 1 January 2008. | |
| DENMARK | | |
| <p>Four main priorities in order to avoid social exclusion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> avoid a digital divide between an A and a B team ensure candidates with IT skills research in IT and Communication access and accessibility | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Denmark is promoting 3 alternatives to legislation, given it is felt the country is too small a market for regulation as this would limit innovation. First, a comply or explain approach, where the focus is on open standards for public sector software of which web accessibility is one, and the obligation to explain non-compliance to be published on the web. Second, national annual benchmarking, starting in 2008, including WCAG AA, and again with results published on the | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The vast majority forms and applications can be filled in both physically and digitally. Furthermore, it is an explicit goal that public sector correspondence with businesses <i>must</i> be digital no later than 2012. In 2012 written correspondence with citizens <i>can</i> be digital. |

| eGovernment or social inclusion policy relevant for Inclusive eGovernment | Web accessibility policy | Multi-channel policy |
|--|---|--|
| | web. Third, guidance, training and support on interpreting WCAG AA, given that many web masters find it difficult, and collecting existing implementation knowledge with the use of examples and instructional videos. | |
| ESTONIA | | |
| <p>In Estonia there is no policy on social exclusion, but Estonian Information society Strategy 2013 covers policy on social inclusion. Two main action fields are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadening technical access to digital information. • Improving skills and widening opportunities for participation (including widening opportunities for participation in decision-making processes – eDemocracy). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estonian Information society Strategy 2013 includes 100% of all public sector websites must comply with WAI quality criteria so as to ensure their accessibility for all, including people with special needs | |
| FINLAND | | |
| <p>On 15 June 2006, the Government made a Policy Decision on the development of IT management in State administration which includes a customer-centric approach to online services.</p> | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tax Deduction Card can be ordered from the online service and also using a Call Center or Local Tax Office. The new Tax Deduction Card is sent by mail in all cases. • Applications for social insurance benefits are currently available only in paper form. However, citizens can review and check the most important benefits and subsidies both online and at a Call Centre. All official documentation of decisions are sent by mail. |
| FRANCE | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Directorate General for Social Affairs aims at setting an inter-ministerial strategy and action plan to reduce social exclusion in all ministerial sectors, improving the readability of global actions and measuring results. • Since 2005, the Social Cohesion Plan, integrating numerous actors, delivers a global answer based on three main objectives: Employment, Housing and Equality of Opportunities. • Other sector-based politics have reinforced this strategy concerning access to public rights, reduction of inequality, health rights, learning, access to culture, sports and leisure. • Good results have been obtained in reducing unemployment, improving insertion actions, reinforcing inclusive processes for social excluded people such as disabled people. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The French eAccessibility action plan is based on the law for equality rights and opportunities, participation and citizenship for disabled people (11/02/05). • A referential document for Accessibility in Administration (RGAA) is being designed for launch at the end of 2007. It will ensure the improvement of Accessibility for public on line services (Web, mobile phone, digital TV). Based on international standards and elaborated with all sector actors, it will integrate relevant rules, conditions of accessibility, auto-evaluation methods, and training, as well as include an enforcement scheme. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The French eGovernment definition is not only based on the use of Internet but also includes the use of ICT to facilitate the life of citizens and their relations and access to public administration services. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – telephone services on administrative information – physical access points using online services and ICT (Video-counters): 10 existing 20 planned. – “Signes en Ligne”(video on line access for deaf people) – Public Interactive Terminals – Personalized Portals : Mon Service Public (under development) |
| GERMANY | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting equal opportunities for vulnerable and disadvantaged people in a best way, and according to the “Act on Equal Opportunities for Disabled People” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Germany has a basic law on equal opportunities for the disabled to which all federal web-sites must comply through a testing, evaluation and certification process, and the States have adopted a similar approach. An annual award scheme is also used to highlight and promote the issues. A test at the end of 2006 showed that most federal web-sites are accessible, but not all. The next step is to develop an inclusive eGovernment strategy for eAccessibility which also covers channelling between authorities as well as to citizens and businesses. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income taxes can be filled in online, with the help of a call centre, and on paper. • The Bundesagentur für Arbeit has set up Service Centres that can be reached by telephone, e-mail or online. • At the local level many services, can be reached via the so called Bürgeramter where services at the local level are bundled (e.g. announcement of moving, car registration, personal documents). |

| eGovernment or social inclusion policy relevant for Inclusive eGovernment | Web accessibility policy | Multi-channel policy |
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| GREECE | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Strategy (January 2006) includes improving citizen welfare through ICT and developing citizen eServices The Broadband Action Plan (July 2006) has minimum targets to increase broadband penetration to 7% by 2008 (compared to 0,1% in 2004), the increase of broadband population coverage to almost 90% (compared to less than 40% in 2004) and the increase of broadband geographical coverage to 60% (compared to less than 10% in 2004). <p>To this objective, the Greek Government submitted to the EC services a € 210 million project plan entitled “Broadband Access Development in Underserved Territories”, which aims to co-finance broadband investments for local-access across Greece (excluding Athens and Thessaloniki) for boosting broadband penetration and coverage in regions where citizens and businesses currently have difficulties in gaining broadband access. By June 2006, the project was endorsed both by DG-Regio and DG-Competition, with the remark that “the project is to date the most significant broadband project undertaken by a Member State”.</p> | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Citizen Service Centres - CSCs (KEP) and the online platform (e-KEP) are the administrative one-stop service centres, where citizens can have access to public service information and to over 1000 standardised administrative procedures. The network of the KEP is also supported by an online platform - “e-KEP” |
| ICELAND | | |
| Addressing rural areas: Telecommunications Policy (end 2005) includes objectives for providing all citizens with the possibility to access high speed Internet, also those in rural and isolated areas. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The web accessibility policy (2006) was published together with guidelines for improvement based on WCAG 1.0. | |
| IRELAND | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Since Manchester, a fundamentally important aspect of attempts to achieve eGovernment goals is fighting the digital divide, and the Access, Skills and Content (ASC) Initiative has been established as a key part of this effort. This Initiative was established to assist voluntary, not-for-profit organisations and service providers to support the participation of late adopters of technology in an inclusive Information Society. 75 projects were funded in 2006 and applications for funding under the 2007 call are currently being evaluated. The National Action Plan on Social Inclusion 2007-2016 identifies a wide range of priorities with goals focusing on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensuring children reach their true potential supporting working age people and people with disabilities, through activation measures and the provision of services to increase employment and participation providing the type of supports that enable older people to maintain a comfortable and high-quality standard of living building viable and sustainable communities, improving the lives of people living | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Irish equality code is one of the most comprehensive in Europe. In 2005 the National Disability Authority (NDA) set up a Centre of Excellence of Universal Design covering all aspects of the environment of people. In June 2002, the NDA launched the NDA IT Accessibility Guidelines v1.1, covering a number of different technology areas and are intended to offer guidance and explanations that can be understood by the wide range of people who are involved in developing, procuring and maintaining ICT solutions. They provide meaningful and measurable guidelines in the areas of web, telecoms, public access terminals and application software accessibility. This is a significant resource for anyone involved in the development, auditing, procurement or maintenance of any accessible ICT product or service. Departments will aim to achieve a minimum of conformance level Double-A with the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines and complying with the National Disability Authority IT Accessibility Guidelines by 2010. It is not possible to give an estimate of what progress has been made at this time. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public services which are available online are also generally available through another channel. For example, motor taxation can be paid online at www.motortax.ie and can also be paid over the counter at a local motor taxation office. Citizens and businesses can interact with the Revenue Commissioners on taxation issues depending on the circumstances through a number of channels including online, through a mobile telephone SMS service or in person. Decisions on which channels are most appropriate for each particular service are made by the service provider. |

| eGovernment or social inclusion policy relevant for Inclusive eGovernment | Web accessibility policy | Multi-channel policy |
|---|---|--|
| in disadvantaged areas and building social capital. | | |
| ITALY | | |
| <p>Social inclusion initiatives focused on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting the network society, starting from the effective protection of the rights of digital citizenship. • Specific actions for literacy diffusion • Improving quality of relationship between citizens and the public administration. • Enabling access of all citizens to public services. • Fighting “ageing” divide • Including small municipalities. • Improving multi-channel access to public services • Enlarging citizens participation in decision making processes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a legal set of eAccessibility guidelines, developed independently but considering other extra-national experiences such as WCAG 1.0 or Section 508 of US Rehabilitation Act. • It is impossible to estimate the percentage of websites that are compliant to these guidelines, but it is surely a very low percentage, because still there is not an electronic tool able to provide objective results. | |
| LATVIA | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The eGovernment policy is a part of eInclusion policy being implemented in accordance with several policy planning documents such as National Development Plan, Information Society Development Guidelines 2006–2013, the Guidelines for e-Health and others. • According to the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2006-2008, there are three main priorities defined to combat social exclusion: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Improve the access of children and young people subjected to the risk of poverty and social exclusion to education and labour market services; 2) Improve the accessibility of resources and services to families, particularly large and single-parent families; 3) Improve the accessibility of resources and services to retired persons subjected to the risk of poverty, in particular to those living alone. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common requirements for public sector websites, according to the March 2007 policy, include different requirements for eAccessibility for disabled or elderly persons or other persons with special needs. | |
| LITHUANIA | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public internet access points are being established in the regions, mostly where communication infrastructure is poor. At present there are 475 PIAPs with plans for a network of 1,000 centres by 2008. <p>Priorities of social exclusion policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to include the disabled and citizens with specific needs into information society processes • establishment of public Internet access in rural areas • encouraging citizens and facilities purchasing computers and Internet connections (income tax refund) • training in computer literacy and Internet use | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public sector websites must comply with WAIG 1.0 recommendations. | |
| LUXEMBOURG | | |
| <p>Priorities of social exclusion policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Internet Access Points • eSkills (e.g. ECDL) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 70 websites have been realized since 2002 in conformity with the eAccessibility web guidelines and quality criteria of Luxembourg | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All important public services are also delivered through physical one stop shops (citizens and businesses) |

| eGovernment or social inclusion policy relevant for Inclusive eGovernment | Web accessibility policy | Multi-channel policy |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web accessibility and usability • Broadband access • Multi-channel delivery of services | <p>Government. Many of the goals pursued by the i2010 eGovernment action plan are covered through these guidelines. The new version of these guidelines (to be published this year) will guarantee that the templates and the technical infrastructure used for future governmental websites will be AAA-compliant (WCAG 1.0). Even the websites created in the context of the old version are nearly A-compliant. Luxembourg was the best placed country in the 2005 report on eAccessibility realized by the UK presidency (<i>eAccessibility of public sector services in the European Union</i>) if you consider the number of websites (40 %) that have achieved "Level A (Pass & Limited Pass)" and the third country of the report if you consider the number of websites (50 %) that have achieved "Level A (plus marginal fail)". The new framework defined for the websites of the Luxembourg Government will make it possible to produce AA-compliant websites in the future.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services for job seekers and unemployed people are also delivered through self service kiosks. |
| MALTA | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Foundation for Information Technology Accessibility (FITA) has been set by to ensure that all government websites and eGovernment services are accessibility and compliant with the Accessibility Guidelines WAI AA. • The Government is also reviewing its mobile Government operative framework with the mobile operators on the island to make include Push and Pull technology for full interactivity with the Government using mobile technology. The first set of pull m-Government services are planned for Quarter 3, 2007. The Government, in its commitment to accessibility of eGovernment, has kept cost free mobile interaction with the citizens for push services and will keep the of pull services to a minimum. | |
| NETHERLANDS | | |
| <p>One aim of the February 2007 eGovernment policy is a 25% reduction in administrative burden for citizens and businesses at provincial and municipal level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The policy focuses on specific target groups which have more information obligations (administrative burdens) towards government than the 'average citizen'. Nine role models have been identified based on the following disadvantaged groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – chronically ill people – disabled people – elderly people – benefit recipients and volunteer organisations. <p>The priority is to reduce the administrative burdens on these target groups using eGovernment tools such as: the digital client file, automatic remission of local taxes, pre-filled forms for application of the old age pension.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All new national government websites need to comply with the web guidelines as of September 2006, and existing government websites have to comply by the end of 2010. • The web guidelines are 125 quality requirements for websites so that they, and the information on it, will be accessible for all users (including people with (visual) handicaps, browsers and search engines). • Web guidelines contain a collection of international standards on web accessibility (W3C, WCAG 1.0, priority 1 and 2+, XHTML 1.0 strict and CSS), and can be seen as a guide to an accessible website. • There are several evaluation tools developed to measure the compliance with the web guidelines, and the result can be monitored on a special website open to the public. This is done with the aim to open the market for quality web design, as well as to get information on the percentage of | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a multi channel policy developing, the main principle of which is that citizens have freedom of choice in preferred channel for access, and government should guarantee the same level of quality of service for each channel. • This, in addition to the development of web services, an interconnected system of telephone information desks is to be developed at municipalities which citizens and businesses can use to put questions to the government as a whole. |

| eGovernment or social inclusion policy relevant for Inclusive eGovernment | Web accessibility policy | Multi-channel policy |
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| | government websites that are complying with the web guidelines. | |
| NORWAY | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The White Paper in December 2006 called “An Information Society for All” deals with several major topics and invites a debate on key choices of direction and challenges for Norwegian society. It addresses topics concerning skills and digital inclusion in which the preference should be for universally designed solutions. There is a declared aim to turn Norway into a leading knowledge and ICT nation and to ensure that everyone has the means and motivation to acquire the necessary skills for making optimal use of technologies and new services. A successful digital inclusion policy is prioritised towards three main pillars: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> access to the Internet, equipment and content universally designed solutions digital skills. Based on these, there is a need to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure the whole of Norway of provisions for connecting to broadband Internet by 2007 target universally designed technology strengthen the commitment to digital skills in the population. intensify ICT commitments in education. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The annual quality assessments of the official websites conducted by Norway.no indicate that the websites are observing WAI criteria more extensively than in the past. In 2006 448 local government websites and 243 central government websites were tested. The greatest improvement has been in the local government sector, while the central government sector is still rated below average. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The eNorway strategy will ensure that there is a broad and comprehensive range of digital public services driven by the needs of the population and contributing to simplifying the interaction between the population and the public sector. Suitable services shall be available through several channels in addition to the Internet, e.g. Internet, mobile phones, digital television, post. Most of the larger public institutions are now carrying out multi-channel services, such as income tax, state education loan fund, unemployment benefits, planning, building and construction, etc. |
| POLAND | | |
| <p>The eGovernment Implementation Plan (State Informatization Plan) for the years 2007-2010 provides for activities to reduce digital exclusion such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparing a Strategy for broadband access to the information society services in Poland for the years 2007-2013 Preparing the continuous education program, including support for eLearning taking into account the European ICT utilization skills certification programs Submission to the Council of Ministers of the draft Plan of Actions related to the children and youth education on topics associated with the functioning within the information society | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The eGovernment Implementation Plan (State Informatization Plan) for the years 2007-2010 provides for activities to reduce digital exclusion including compliance with the WAI requirements for government websites. | |
| PORTUGAL | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The National Initiative for Citizens with Special needs in the Information Society (1999, updated in 2003). A Network of more than 1,030 Internet Spaces all over the country provides free access to multimedia computers and the Internet to all citizens, with the help of trained personnel and equipped for accessibility to the handicapped. This is the most extensive in Europe and provides social mediators to computer and Internet technology in local, and frequently remote, communities. The Internet Spaces are installed in varied locations, such as public facilities in municipalities, public libraries, social | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no regular formal study/evaluation of public websites accessibility against WCAG. However, a survey at the end of 2003 showed nearly 15% of public websites conformed to WCAG 1.0 level A. What is periodically assessed is whether the Administrations themselves consider that their website was designed with e-Accessibility as a specific requirement. In Q4/2006 the replies were: Yes, completely 19%, Yes, partially 36%, No 35%, n/a or n/r 10%. Portugal does not have the technical capacity at this stage to ensure precise conformance to WCAG | |

| eGovernment or social inclusion policy relevant for Inclusive eGovernment | Web accessibility policy | Multi-channel policy |
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| <p>solidarity institutions, digital inclusion centres for immigrants, employment and training centres, culture, recreational and sports clubs, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fostering Social Inclusion is one the first level strategic axis of the Connect Portugal Programme: "...minimize content-related digital barriers, particularly in Public Administrations, using the Internet as a key tool for the inclusion and participation in society of Citizens with special needs." This later resulted in 2 action lines: fighting Info-Exclusion (4 measures) and fostering access for excluded groups or groups at risk of exclusion (2 measures). | <p>requirements, but is undertaking informed tests which show that most public sector web-sites are accessible, for example to blind people. Such tests could be done more widely as a quicker route to eAccessibility, perhaps supported by the EC. (Source: Portuguese Inclusive eGovernment Expert, 20 June 2007)</p> | |
| ROMANIA | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At present there is no policy for Inclusive eGovernment, but there are some actions that stimulate the inclusive character of eGovernment by addressing the rural areas and increasing awareness (see examples). <p>Romanian social inclusion policy covers reducing poverty, improving health and education, job training, child protection and family support, housing, social assistance, support for disabled, support for gypsy minority.</p> | | |
| SLOVENIA | | |
| <p>Action Plan for eGovernment 2010 covering (within the Riga declaration) cultural diversity, including the creation of accessible digital content, and wide access to digital information and cultural heritage of museums, libraries, audio/video archives.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action Plan on eAccessibility, by end of 2007 the upgraded portal for eGovernment will comply with WCAG 1.0, level A. | <p>As part of Action Plan for eGovernment 2010:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One-Stop-Shop - State Portal for businesses using online and intermediaries Help desk for eServices and digital certificates: call centres, email, web-forms eTaxes: Vida (Web 2.0) (virtual tax assistant) ePayment: web and mobile payment |
| SPAIN | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessibility to Public Services, (2007) with three main goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Street Public Office accessibility Ensure accessibility to the administrative documents and forms Ensure the accessibility to public services Plan Avanz@ to connect electronically all the Spanish municipalities (more than 8.000), most of them having not yet broadband access and no public offices available. This includes the eModel Program which finances the projects in order to ensure that by 2010 all citizens will be able to communicate electronically with the Administrations, without discrimination due to geographic (or other) reasons. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> eAccessibility policy 2005: WAI II the most of them, some WAI-III. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The o6o is the multi-channel access point for all PA services. Every service provide by any PA can be access via the o6o network (offices, Internet portal, telephone): single point access to multi-administration services. The o6o service is 24x7 available and coordinates all services offered by the national, regional and local administrations; no need to move from one office to another, the goal of o6o is to offer the services without the need to know which administration is providing it. The Law for Citizens Electronic Access to Public Administrations requires the use different channels for eServices and the right of citizens to choose between them without restrictions, including Internet access point in street public offices. |
| SWEDEN | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sweden does not have a single national social exclusion policy, but does have policies on different specific issues, e.g. disabled, elderly, immigrants, but have not a single national policy on social exclusion. There is no prioritisation of the | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidelines for content and usability of public sector web sites (2002, 2004, 2006) based on WCAG 1.0. About 80% of all national authorities are using the current guidelines. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no national multi-channel policy, but large agencies with a great deal of contacts with citizens and companies have their own policies on multi-channel deliveries. |

| eGovernment or social inclusion policy relevant for Inclusive eGovernment | Web accessibility policy | Multi-channel policy |
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| different groups since all groups are equally important. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public sector websites are measured quarterly by automated tests on the basic technical quality of web sites. The start pages of public sector web sites are tested. The test is limited to a few measurements based on WCAG 1.0. The tests check whether the start pages have validating HTML code according to W3C's Validator and correct use of headings. Further the test estimate the choice of layout technique (CSS, tables or frames). | |
| UNITED KINGDOM | | |
| <p>The UK's Social Exclusion policy priorities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better identification and earlier intervention (developing and promoting better prediction tools for use by front-line practitioners). Systematically identifying 'what works' (introducing a common approach across government to rate programmes by the quality of the evidence behind them). Promoting multi-agency working (strengthening the role of Local Area Agreements, publishing information about the cross-agency costs of social exclusion, and exploring how to extend data sharing). Personalisation, rights and responsibilities (piloting and exploring service delivery based on budget-holding lead professionals and on brokering as ways of providing tailored programmes of support built around strong and persistent relationships with those at risk). Supporting achievement and managing underperformance (work across Government to ensure that the next generation of Public Service Agreements adequately address the needs of the most disadvantaged). <p>Scotland's Social Exclusion policy priorities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To increase the chances of sustained employment for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups To improve the confidence and skills of the most disadvantaged children and young people To reduce the vulnerability of low income families to financial exclusion and multiple debts To regenerate the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods To increase the rate of improvement of the health status of people living in the most deprived communities To improve access to high quality services for the most disadvantaged groups and individuals in rural communities. | <p>eAccessibility Guidelines (2005) aiming for Level A conformance with WCAG 1.0 of WAI guidelines.</p> | <p>Multi-channel policy (2006):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> View channels not in distinct silos but as components of an overall contact strategy that understands the true value and purpose of contact and employs an end-to-end delivery whole system approach. Identify realisable savings for both contact and cost (for administrations and citizens/businesses) through end-to-end, cost-to-serve and 'customer journey analysis'. Analyse likely future business and citizen behaviour patterns, channel preferences and IT developments to inform longer-term strategic decisions. Consider any compliance, regulatory, or other factors, which a new channel strategy will need to reflect. Create win-wins through new forms of interaction and channel combinations, generating customer trust, lessening demand and physical/emotional cost to both customer and administration. Influence channel migration through customer education and support, understanding what drives current behaviour and what would entice them to change – focus in particular on customer empowerment and opportunities to give rather than take control. Take a broader view and inspire joined-up services across departments, local authorities and intermediaries through shared values and goals as well as shared transformation and data – when this benefits citizens and businesses. Learn and innovate continuously – plan ahead and balance incremental, short term change with long term vision, understand the implications of each approach. Monitor and review regularly to form a feedback loop to influence planning. |

Inclusive eGovernment Policy Overview

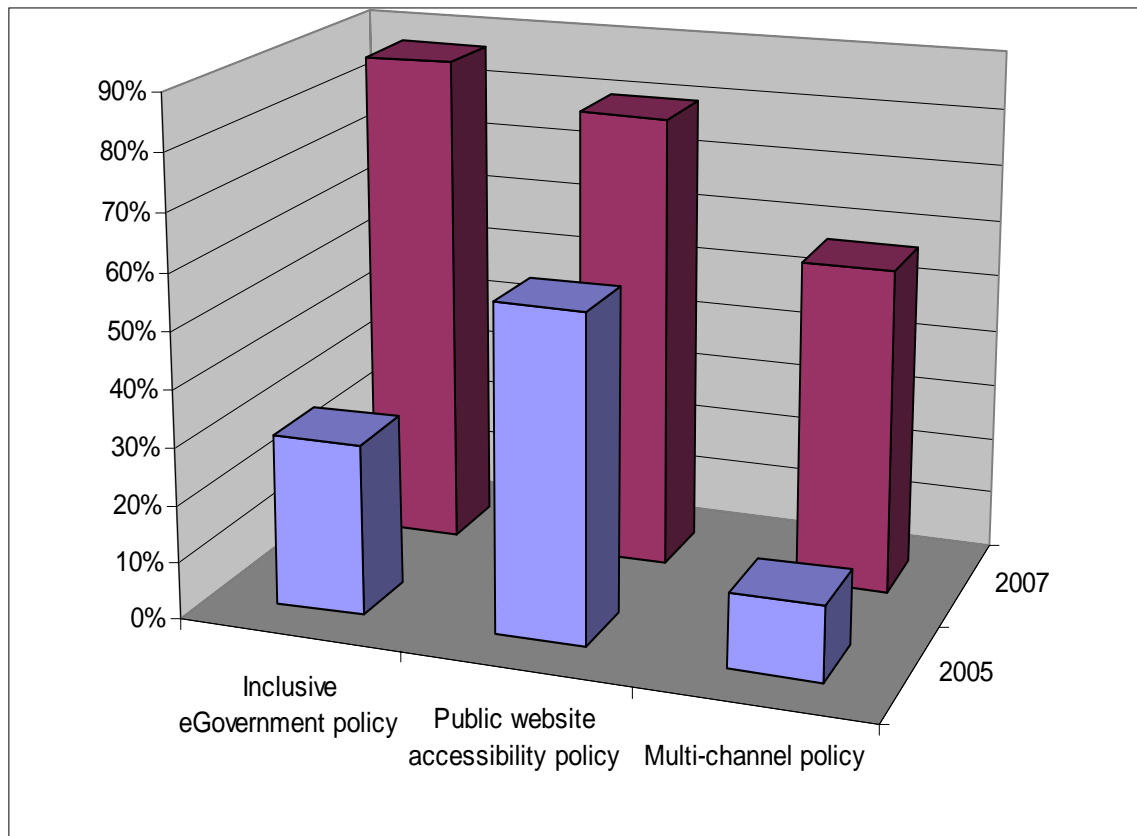


Table 1
% European Countries with Policies in place (n=30) 2005-2007

Annex 2: Inclusive eGovernment initiatives and examples

Base material used for the survey analysis. (Sources: as specified in each case).

AUSTRIA

1. In December 2006 **HELP.gv.at** was awarded the BIENE 2006 in Gold for the best barrier free German language information portal. The central Governmental portal www.help.gv.at provides a 'one-stop-shop' for citizens and businesses and complies with level AAA of the WAI guidelines in order to make the site accessible to the widest range of persons possible. HELP.gv.at received the BIENE Award in GOLD in 2006 as one of the best accessible websites in German language. Rising take-up figures of Help.gv.at are an indicator for the impact of the portal. It enjoys 380.000 visits with an average duration of 10,46 minutes per month. (Source National Progress Report on i2010 eGovernment Action Plan, May 2007)
2. In April 2007 the first e-government service employing **virtual proxies** became live. It is for instance now possible for natural persons who are representatives of an organisation to retrieve official notifications on behalf of that organisation using the citizen card. (could be used for Inclusive eGov, e.g. by intermediaries) (Source National Progress Report on i2010 eGovernment Action Plan, May 2007)
3. The electronic filing (**ELAK**) system was started in September 2001 and completed in January 2005 in order to replace paper based filing and archiving in all ministries of Austria. The project has since then been used by some 9.000 users.
 - The ELAK is a corner stone of Austria's overall "e-Government" strategy. This means seamless electronic services of public administration and consists of the Citizen Card, integrated electronic forms and delivery services as well as electronic documents and the electronic workflow and file management in the back office. Electronic documents are often a prerequisite for inclusive e-Government. The ubiquity of the "electronic document" gives predominance to on-screen visualisations of paper. People with **poor or no eyesight** can now use the reading tools for electronic documents, which is not possible for paper format. Electronic documents must therefore be available in such a way that they can be presented to and used by **people with special needs** in appropriate formats.
 - Care for special needs should be taken throughout the process chains, including interactive form design and use, electronic signature, authentication and validation of documents. Many interfaces, pop-up screens and dialogues are inadequate in supporting the needs of users with special needs.
 - Especially the rise of electronic signatures and authentication mechanisms makes it for the first time possible that blind people can sign contracts without the help of external people.
 - Source: Austrian Inclusive eGovernment MS Expert, May 2007
4. **E-Generation Austria** (www.e-generation.at)

E-Generation is an eParticipation project which took place by the end of 2005 in the Austrian city of Ebreichsdorf. The procedure consisted of a three steps process (two interactive and one internal) in which more than 1.000 young citizens from Ebreichsdorf were invited to take part. The aim of this project was to engage the youngsters in the city's planning process. A total of 550 contributions were received within the first step of the project, and 15 concepts were included in the memorandum of the commission. Finally two ideas were included as part of the planning of city of Ebreichsdorf.

Impact:

 - More than 200 out of the 1.084 invited young citizens contributed with at least one answer in the discussions
 - 15 scenarios were developed by the project's commission
 - Three concepts suggested by the youth were chosen in the last step, and two of them were included in the 2006 plannings.

Source: ePractice portal: <http://www.ePractice.eu>
5. **e-card in Austria: health card and citizen card for a modern administration** (<http://www.sozialversicherung.at/e-card>)

The Citizen Card function on the e-card is part of the e-government strategy in Austria and is contributing to the modernisation of administration. The e-card incorporates "sleeping" signature functions in line with the Signature Law and the Administrative Signature Regulation and includes three signature applications - the administration signature (for e-government applications), the customary signature (for standard applications) and the social insurance signature (replacement for the sickness certificate).

 - Source: European eGovernment Awards 2007, Theme 3: social impact and cohesion (<http://www.ePractice.eu>)
6. **Website-CMS for Local Communities with WAI-AAA in Austria** (www.kremsmuenster.at)

A cms-based website for communities which fulfills the WAI-AAA-rules is online since November 14th, 2006. The local community of Kremsmünster in Upper Austria developed with the software partner RiS (Steyr, Upper Austria - www.ris.at) in 1998 a content management system, called RiS-Kommunal, for local communities which has grown up to the market leader in Austria and is also installed in some neighbour-countries. More than 1.000 copies/installations are on its way. In 2006 the second relaunch (first 2002) was prepared and launched on November 14th, 2006 with new software tools. New and an important thing was to fulfill the E-Government-

Rules for disabled people. The cms of RiS-Kommunal is able to fulfill the WAI-AAA-criterias. E.g. blind people can hear the webcontent with a screenreader or any people are able to zoom the website in a stepless way.

Benefits: More than 1.000 local communities with about 2 million inhabitants are now able to fulfill the WAI-criterias (www.w3.org) and have more flexibility in the field of design and have more possibilities to interoperate with other public authorities, and also with the back office. Also the usability is better and the design is more flexible. In Austria the public authorities have to fulfil WAI-A on their websites from January 1st, 2008.

– Source: European eGovernment Awards 2007, Theme 3: social impact and cohesion (<http://www.ePractice.eu>)

7. **Information Platform “Equality law for people with disabilities in Austria”**
(www.gleichundgleich.gv.at)

bmskgleich is an information platform on equality law for people with disabilities in Austria. The development focus was on a website accessible to all. It was implemented with WAI guidelines of the W3C, but content was established as an easy-to-read version, along with videos in Austrian sign language.

– Source: European eGovernment Awards 2007, Theme 3: social impact and cohesion (<http://www.ePractice.eu>)

BELGIUM

8. **Awareness and training** campaign, plus website on the use of PC and security problems. (Source National Progress Report on i2010 eGovernment Action Plan, May 2007)

9. **Public computer spaces** in town halls and social centres, in schools (in Brussels, Internet access in primary and secondary schools with special facilities for blind and hearing-impaired children), street Internet kiosks in Brussels. (Source National Progress Report on i2010 eGovernment Action Plan, May 2007)

10. **Automatic granting of benefit payments** will be automated based on the social security status of a person (e.g. tax reduction, reduced telephone charges, free pass for public transport) without the person having to submit a certificate. The benefit-granting institution will instead consult the Crossroads Bank for Social Security to get information on social security status. (Source National Progress Report on i2010 eGovernment Action Plan, May 2007)

11. The service delivery to citizens and companies in the social sector is **multi-channel** enabled and based on an integrated customer relation management; the services are **personalized and self-service** is promoted (Source National Progress Report on i2010 eGovernment Action Plan, May 2007)

12. Use of the commercially available IDTV platforms to provide government information and **local job offers** to citizens (e.g. the Flemish Infolijn, the contact center of the Flemish government). (Source National Progress Report on i2010 eGovernment Action Plan, May 2007)

13. Monitoring **foreign workers** and lessening the administrative burden: at the end of 2005, the Belgian government expressed its wish to develop an electronic system to monitor and control all forms of foreign occupation of workers in Belgium, whilst at the same time, aiming at administrative simplification for all parties involved.

– This ambitious project was named LIMOSA (after the Limosa, a migratory bird) and its first phase is to enter into force on 1 April 2007.

– This phase consists of a mandatory declaration for foreign salaried workers, self-employed workers and trainees who come to Belgium for temporarily activities or who exercise their activities only partially in Belgium. A large number of activities is exempted, due to their short duration or their specific nature.

– In line with the e-gov principles, this declaration, to be made prior to the start of the activities, can be done electronically via the website <http://www.limosa.be/>. This site is accessible in four languages (NL-FR-DE-EN) and does not only allow the employer or the self-employed person to declare its activities, but also offers and overview of the Belgian rules and obligations in other sectors.

– Immediately after having done the declaration, a return receipt (called L-1) is offered. This L-1 document must be presented to the Belgian client (private persons exempted), if any. In case the form cannot be shown prior to the beginning of the activities, the Belgian client must electronically report this.

– If a correct declaration has been done, the employer can benefit from a greatly simplified system of social documents.

– Thus, foreign activities can be monitored and the Belgian inspection services can effectively target fraudulent activities and social dumping, detrimental to all actors involved. Accurate statistics will enable the decision makers to allocate resources accordingly.

– In a second phase (mid 2007), all information concerning foreign activities in Belgium (posting documents, work permits, residence permits, ...) will be centralized in one database, leading the way to the third phase (planned for the second half of 2007): the creation of a single point of contact, enabling the foreign employer, employee or self-employed worker to declare its activities or request a work permit, residence permit, professional card, This site will then dispatch the request automatically to all Belgian federal or regional administrations involved (implying the unique collection and multiple use of data, and the exchange of data among the administrations), where a file will be opened.

– The LIMOSA project is a first of its kind in Europe and will undoubtedly facilitate exercising professional activities in Belgium and guarantee the workers the rights granted under Belgian legislation.

– Belgium voluntarily offers this application to the European Commission and the other Members States as a basis for a possible Pan-European social service.

– Source: eGovernment News – 28 March 2007 – Belgium – eGovernment Services for Businesses / eGovernment Services for Citizens

14. **Internet for all package.** It is estimated that the Federal government one year action (2005-2006) “Internet for all package” (PC+broadband access+training+support at a very fair price including a VAT reduction) has contributed to about 20% of this increase. The target group (families, old people, students) were reached. In total, 33.000 “Internet for all” packages have been sold, 80% of those are new internet connections. This constitutes 10% of the increase in Internet connections between april 2006 and april 2007. It also indirectly contributes to another 10% of this increase : people who initially wanted to buy a “internet for all” package eventually ended up buying another commercial package (with more sophisticated hardware). (Source National Progress Report on i2010 eGovernment Action Plan, May 2007)
15. The “**Communit-e**” application, the municipality can introduce requests for **allowances for handicapped persons or medical recognition requests** for handicapped persons directly into the Social Security Department’s IT system. This leads to a better service to handicapped persons (quicker treatment of the dossier) (Source National Progress Report on i2010 eGovernment Action Plan, May 2007)
16. **Multi-channel** services (online, Citizen Service Centre, District Offices) include: income tax, social insurance contributions, road tax licence, vehicle registration, job search (Source National Progress Report on i2010 eGovernment Action Plan, May 2007)
17. **KlasCement - Educational portal – Exchange and share** (www.klascement.net)
KlasCement is a portal by and for Dutch-speaking teachers, with about 24,000 members. Here, it is possible to exchange documents, e.g. sites, learning objects, educational software, exercises, and photos for free. It is possible to announce events and make comments on and award stars for every item. In other words, it is a social network of teachers and students.
 - Source: European eGovernment Awards 2007, Theme 3: social impact and cohesion (<http://www.ePractice.eu>)
18. **Lifebadge** (www.lifebadge.org)
World Health Personal Record. A personal website for health data, managed only by patients themselves.
 - Source: European eGovernment Awards 2007, Theme 3: social impact and cohesion (<http://www.ePractice.eu>)

CZECH REPUBLIC

19. The National Programme for **Computer Literacy** (NPCL) was launched by the Ministry of Informatics of the Czech Republic in February 2003 to enable the wider population to learn ground of work on computers and with the Internet, and to those, who have had not opportunity to work with a computer so far, to help to overcome their fears of new technologies, to facilitate orientation in the society and to improve their position on the labor market. The Ministry accented the assistance disadvantaged too.
 - The NPCL is carried out on two main schemes: of topic and of financial frameworks.
 - NPCL for public - is made up of practical two-hour lessons that gradually train participants in the basis of computer work, Internet access, the basic rules of Internet browsing and of e-mailing. The lessons are taught according to a single text-book.
 - The NPCL-courses are master brained by professional PC-Training companies, which provide (in many cases) their own know-how to each teaching centers. Teaching centers are easily accessible, as they are disseminated around the whole country, e.g. in public libraries usually (in the Czech Republic is very wide network of public libraries (about 6 000), more than 3 000 has broadband access to the internet), or at schools. Some of them are wheelchair accessible. In comparison with commercial courses, the NPCL is cheaper and therefore affordable to most people. Participants pay 100 CZK (about 3,5 EUR) for a two-hours lesson and the rest (about 15 EUR) is reimbursed by the Ministry of Informatics.
 - Typical participant is a woman over 40, the most of participants (24,38 %) is between 51 – 60 years old and totally there are 45,23 % of participants older than 51 years.
 - Since 2003 to 2006 more than 100 000 people took part.
 - NPCL for **handicapped** – about 10 specific projects was dealt yearly (during a year). Each project helped to a group of specifically disadvantaged – for example – lessons for people on wheelchair, weak-eyed or blind, etc. These projects were 100 % funded by the Ministry of Informatics and usually took longer (a two-day or even a week-course...).
 - Source: Czech Inclusive eGovernment MS Expert, April 2007

DENMARK

20. **Equal Access to Information through Digital Library Service** (www.dbb.dk/Fakta/CV/etacv.asp)
Through the National Library for the Blind website, visually impaired or dyslexic individuals can order digital books in a fully automated system. The Danish National Library for The Blind (DBB) provides a digital library service for the visually impaired and dyslexic in the form of eBooks, digital talking books (DTB) and Braille materials. The process from the moment library users order material via the E17 Internet portal (www.e17.dk) to the production of the media is fully automated and the material arrives at the designated address within a day or two, either on CD or on Braille paper, with downloads of eBooks instantly available. This 24/7 service allows for the speedy delivery of library material that enables users equal access to information and, hence, social inclusion.
 - Impact
DLS enables a 24/7 automated digital library service with superior products – towards a Global Digital Library Network. The increasing number of users can be served at the same costs. Due to equal access to information, social inclusion is strengthened. In addition, the scalability of the DBB systems means that it is possible to accept people with dyslexia. The systems are also flexible, as they are built in modules and can easily be adapted to new ways of distribution, e.g. via the Internet at low cost. The investment in digitisation is therefore future-oriented and will have lasting effects. With the digital material, it is also possible for those users who are in the labour market to join in the continual upgrading of competences, which is

quintessential in this day and age. Previously, a user would not have been able to acquire the necessary education. This also applies to students, who can now successfully pursue higher education.

- Lessons learned
 - In terms of innovation, one must think outside of the box, and make useful alliances with various partners, with win-win situations envisaged for all stakeholders.
 - It is important to think digitally, rather than trying to simply superpose new methods on old strategies.
 - International co-operation can provide many benefits, particularly when a certain specific target group is concerned.
 - Source: European eGovernment Awards 2007, Theme 3: social impact and cohesion (<http://www.ePractice.eu>)

21. **Compensation for Sickness in Denmark** (www.virk.dk/sygedagpenge)

Danish companies can apply for economic compensation when an employee of the companies is absent from work due to illness or childbirth. Every year Danish companies submit about 1.5 million applications for compensation to the local governments. The paper-based compensation workflow is very time-consuming for both the companies and the local authorities. Therefore the Danish governmental and local authorities decided to provide an ICT solution that would permit effective online applications in a secure and legally binding way and provide a better service for the companies. As a result the companies have experienced significant reductions of their administrative burdens.

- Source: ePractice portal (<http://www.ePractice.eu>)

FINLAND

22. **Multilingual Infobank (Infopankki) - website for immigrants** (www.infopankki.fi)

A highly inclusive multilingual information website for the immigrant population of Finland, which has already seen growth from one city to several others in the country. Infobank is a multilingual web service targeted at the 120,000 immigrants living in Finland, as well as the authorities providing them with public services. The information on the website is available in 15 languages. The site contains basic information on everyday questions including healthcare, social services, education, employment and links to other relevant websites offering comprehensive and complementary information. This national web service was launched in 2003, and receives approximately 50,000 visitors per month.

- Impact

Originally, this website used to be part of the web service of the city of Helsinki, but due to the good results, others have joined in and started to use the information for their own needs. The Infobank currently has five partners and contacts with several others. In 2006, Infobank had 40,000 visitors per month and 1.9 million pages were loaded. In 2007, the number of visitors increased to 50,000 per month. A web-based questionnaire for Infobank users carried out in May 2007 had positive results: 70-90 % of respondents felt the information on the site was useful and the themes well covered. More than 90% of respondents felt that Infobank is easy to use and the information is easy to read and understand. The impact of Infobank is sustainable because it supports the long-term integration of the site users. 38 percent of the users visit the site 1-3 times a month. The site has also been successful with public administration officials themselves: 40 percent of the users are authorities providing services to immigrants.
- Lessons learned
 - Networking is highly important regarding the production and dissemination of information.
 - It is important to target the information through frequent surveys, etc. to find out the needs of the users. This requires a constant updating mechanism.
 - Source: European eGovernment Awards 2007, Theme 3: social impact and cohesion (<http://www.ePractice.eu>)

23. **AMKOPE - Online application for vocational teacher education in Finland** (www.opf.fi)

The aims of the AMKOPE are to provide equal service to all and to improve the level of information applicants receive about the processing of their applications. Online application reduces the time spent processing applications, and applicants can check the status of their applications any time and anywhere.

- Source: European eGovernment Awards 2007, Theme 3: social impact and cohesion (<http://www.ePractice.eu>)

24. **Safer Internet Day Finland** (www.ficora.fi)

The SID-FIN awareness raising project aims to improve safe use of the Internet among schoolchildren and home Internet users. The project has been effective and, according to many surveys, the deliverables and messages have been well received by the target groups.

- Source: European eGovernment Awards 2007, Theme 3: social impact and cohesion (<http://www.ePractice.eu>)

25. **Web Nurse Service** (www.verkkohoitaja.fi)

The WebNurse is a service whereby citizens can ask anything concerning their health and a registered nurse will give them an answer within 1-3 days. The population distribution makes this kind of service attractive as a means of enhancing services to rural and remote populations.

- Source: European eGovernment Awards 2007, Theme 3: social impact and cohesion (<http://www.ePractice.eu>)

FRANCE

26. **GeoPublic services Portal:**

- Offering **geographical data and public services information** (opening times, multi-channel offer) to facilitate access, location and geo access. Opened last week, this new French portal provides aerial views of the French territory with a high precision. By the end of 2006, this geoportal will integrate public services information.

- Evolutions needed: Using mobile phone technologies, some useful evolutions could be :
 - to offer the possibility for citizens to get public services geo-access information on their mobile phone
 - to re-enforce the **access for disabled** people using vocal technologies in order to facilitate their localisation and providing guiding information
 - to offer rationalized analysis of the different means of transport available to join a public service counter
 - and also to identify firms and shops selling products needed.
- Source: French Expert, Inclusive eGovernment Meeting, 28 June 2006, Directorate general for State Modernization (DGME)

27. **Multiservices counters:**

- Using ICT and public services data basis information, these multiservices counters will provide a large panorama of public services in one place, avoiding the complexity of our administration for all citizens. They will offer first level of administrative information to citizens. **Public agents will be able to act on the behalf of citizens** thanks to specific habilitations. A specific test will be conducted in two regions. A general reference document for developing Multiservices Counters will help local authorities to develop multiservices counters.
- Source: French Expert, Inclusive eGovernment Meeting, 28 June 2006, Directorate general for State Modernization (DGME)

28. **Besancon.clic** (www.besancon.fr): A case revealing the impacts of recycling computers for public spaces, which focuses not only on the digital access, but also cultural diversity and other social policy goals.

Since 1999, the city of Besançon and the Greater Besançon Community have been reducing the digital gap by financing IT equipment in the region. The computers were donated by firms and rebuilt in a centre for disabled workers. Recipients have included primary schools and hospitals, associations, retirement homes and, since 2006, some schools in Senegal, through the distribution of an eBook pack to all of the pupils in the third year of primary school (CE2). Common training courses between Besançon and Dakar universities are today considered, as well as an exchange network. The eBook pack comprises of a computer with a digital workspace and the installation of public multimedia access points in every neighbourhood. Computers use Open Source software downloaded from servers located either in the data processing Department of the city hall or in schools for external sites.

- **Impact**
Firstly, the case has contributed to the reduction of digital divide and the improvement of the social and cultural links. Besançon should be, very soon, one of the most well-connected towns in France. The free training sessions for parents bind families together, and allows for children to surf the web safely with parental guidance. The collective training sessions in municipal “cyber-bases” (digital access points) improve the exchanges and the desire for learning. Secondly, the extension of the programme is facilitated due to its low cost. The huge increase of IT equipment now being used in the city enables revitalised methods of teaching to be used. Pupils studying in Besançon gain more ICT-related skills than the national average. Thirdly, the valorisation of the handicapped workers is a benefit for the chat function available.
- **Lessons learned**
 - This case highlights how ICTs can be used positively for multiple purposes, including social and cultural goals.
 - Collaboration between the various parties has made the project far more successful than it would have been.
 - Allocated budgets do not constitute a major difficulty. Use your own resources.
 - Source: European eGovernment Awards 2007, Theme 3: social impact and cohesion (<http://www.ePractice.eu>)

29. **A Multimedia Plan for Schools in Saint-Etienne Métropole** (www.agglo-st-etienne.fr)

The PMé_A.SEM project has developed the Multimedia Plan for Schools, which promotes communication and information technologies for teaching purposes. The aim is to eliminate the digital divide at its source, develop the functionalities of the system, and provide equal access to means of acquiring knowledge.

- Source: European eGovernment Awards 2007, Theme 3: social impact and cohesion (<http://www.ePractice.eu>)

GREECE

30. **Multi-channel Citizen Service Centres (CSC): services to Greek citizens which reveals the importance of a high level of publicity for success** (<http://www.gspa.gr>)

An example of multi-channel service delivery, providing over 1000 products and services to Greek citizens which reveals the importance of a high level of publicity for success. The Citizen Service Centres provide an advanced multi-channel system for the delivery of public services to citizens and businesses, regardless of their digital literacy level, social orientation or locality. It has proven to be a high profile eGovernment project and its impact on citizens and administration alike has been remarkable. Several thousand citizens every day across Greece can walk into any of the 1,050 Citizen Service Centres, call the call centre 24 hours a day, seven days a week, or visit the dedicated website in order to carry out their affairs with the various departments in the public domain through this seamless suite of integrated channels.

- **Impact**
CSC-KEP has over 1,050 Service Centres, offering 1,025 products or services through 1,025 Standard National Forms. The number of transactions through all channels (via the portal, phone or face-to-face) has totalled 3,126,853 in 2006, with over two million interactions taking place to date in 2007. The number of customers was in 2006 1,920,000. The rolling total has now reached 4,945,681. Per day the Citizen Service Centres answer around 1,700 phone calls and count 6,000 visitors to the portal.
- **Lessons learned**
 - Central support, consensus, local implementation as well as a strong public image is needed for widespread success.

- National projects need strong political support. Project leaders should be high level politicians, such as a deputy minister.
- Technology alone can not achieve better services. It needs better use of information, people, processes and technology. Public relationship plus advertising support are essential.
- Source: European eGovernment Awards 2007, Theme 3: social impact and cohesion (<http://www.ePractice.eu>)

HUNGARY

31. eHungary **Access Points**: setting up an eInclusion Infrastructure with the objective to enhance ICT access by removing barriers and developing communal gateways (based on the so-called Swedish Model, which enhances individual access, through allowing tax allowances to the employers):
- at least one **Communal Access Point** at each township by the end of 2006 with coherent and innovative basic services as with extra applications and services as required
 - presence of an **IT mentor** at each Communal Access Points providing professional support to less experienced users.
 - in addition to existing Communal Access Points, new ones may work with completely different business models, but which are able to connect to one another, forming an widespread Access infrastructure network
 - Equal Opportunities: launching an eUmbrella Initiative based upon the principle of positive discrimination, in which concrete actions are to be taken to ensure equal opportunities in its three (societal, regional and interregional) aspects, with the aim of narrowing the digital divide.
 - (Source National Progress Report on i2010 eGovernment Action Plan, May 2007)

ICELAND

32. A recent report on the rehabilitation of **disabled persons**, published by a variety of stakeholders representing state authorities, employee and employer organizations as well as specialists in the field, recommended the rethinking of ideology and the need for new methods. Focus should be shifted from disability to ability and all available measures taken to rehabilitate those involved. It is stated that avoiding one person's severely impaired occupational function when young can save ISK 30 million (EUR 3.3 million) over a lifetime. This will include **courses to increase the ICT knowledge of socially disadvantaged people** to boost their self-confidence and urge them to seek jobs or rehabilitation to become active in the **labour market**. This would increase their ability to use eGovernment for that purpose as well as increasing their quality of life in general. (Source National Progress Report on i2010 eGovernment Action Plan, May 2007)

IRELAND

33. **Connect Project** (<http://connect.southdublin.ie>)

A high-impact initiative across a wide range of agencies, including social, education and community bodies to promote basic ICT literacy in the local area. Connect is a range of projects that are being implemented in South Dublin County. The combined impact of these projects working together will help achieve our objectives. Connect will place South Dublin County online by enabling all of its citizens to use technology in innovative ways to achieve their goals and change/shape Internet content to be more relevant to local interests and needs. Connect envisions a future in which everyone in South Dublin County uses the Internet as an everyday tool to improve quality of life and develop opportunities for lifelong learning, leisure, personal and social development.

- Impact

In the last 12 months, Connect has counted 30,372 users, with 3.5 million hits to the website. Usage increased by an average of 240% per month in 2007. There are 110 Community Group Websites live and approximately 30 in development at any one time. Connect has 14 Centres (Community Centres & Libraries), with five currently in development. Regarding the schooling environment, teachers say 60% of students engage better in the classroom, 78% of teachers want to utilise more of the virtual learning environment facilities than are currently used. Students say 46% are more interested and active in their own learning, 37% now do more school work beyond the scheduled hours they expected, 46% find classes more interesting, 40% now study or learn outside class time, 30% will access schoolwork on the virtual learning environment when they cannot or do not attend classes.
- Lessons learned
 - It is important to focus on evaluation & project outcomes to create an environment of innovation rather than measuring achievement of identified Targets and Indicators.
 - The data capture process should be embedded across Council work practices as part of Change Management and Performance Management processes within the Council.
- Source: European eGovernment Awards 2007, Theme 3: social impact and cohesion (<http://www.ePractice.eu>)

34. **Online Addiction Information and Support** (www.dap.ie)

The dab.ie online resource provides factual evidence-based information to individuals on the subject of substance misuse and addiction. Since the launch of the site, it has received well over 1 million requests for information and online support.

- Source: European eGovernment Awards 2007, Theme 3: social impact and cohesion (<http://www.ePractice.eu>)

35. **Taobh Tíre - A better library service for isolated communities** (www.donegallibrary.ie)

TaTi is a network of service points that consists of a collection of books and a PC with access to the Internet that gives access to the library's online catalogue and a range of online information resources through the library website. Service points are staffed by the partner organisation and supported by the branch library network.

- Source: European eGovernment Awards 2007, Theme 3: social impact and cohesion (<http://www.ePractice.eu>)

ITALY

36. **INPS, the National Social Security Institute in Italy**, manages pension schemes, social allowances and indemnities for citizens and immigrants living in Italy. It communicates with over 42 million people with different needs and languages through 600 contact points (branches), a contact centre and an online portal. **Vicky**, is the innovative interaction system that INPS has put in place on its web portal to extend its efforts for an always more effective way of communicating with citizens (over 50% of visits to desks are still for generic information and low value services which are also available online). A multi-channel **virtual human assistant** that can be reached on the web, mobile and in the next future also on Television with the ability to answer to complex questions understanding user's natural language and with the intelligence to learn from user's inputs. The intention is to provide an effective and clear dialogue and, most importantly, a way to understand the real needs of the citizens. Users can now "talk" with Vicky eliminating the barriers imposed by standard online navigation (where users are forced to choose single options from standard menus), and Inps can learn and respond properly adapting the delivery of its services and information.
37. **ETHNICITY – certification of accommodation eligibility** (www.comune.prato.it)
The ETHNICITY project has developed a software solution to organise the work of the internal administrative offices. The solution encourages friendly interaction with applicants via SMS and e-mail including agreement on date and the decentralisation of the issuing of certificate.
– Source: European eGovernment Awards 2007, Theme 3: social impact and cohesion (<http://www.ePractice.eu>)
38. **schoolhost -- A school for friends** (www.ao-umbertoprime.marche.it)
Children in hospital are given valuable integration to school life through video communication, enabling them to study from hospital, not only with a remote teacher, but also integrated in a remote class. The schoolhost project has developed learning procedures, video communication links to the schools involved, and training for teachers and students in the hosting classrooms
– Source: European eGovernment Awards 2007, Theme 3: social impact and cohesion (<http://www.ePractice.eu>)

LITHUANIA

39. The **unemployed** can use **SMS** to access newly registered **job vacancies** in the 46 local labour exchange offices, as well as physically visiting the offices. (Source National Progress Report on i2010 eGovernment Action Plan, May 2007)

MALTA

40. The aim of the Hello IT programme is to fight digital divide and to make ICT more accessible and easy to use to citizens. The target audience of this programme includes **people who still lack the means to purchase a computer or an Internet connection**; those who have the means but **lack the skills** to use technology; the **elderly** who may lack the aptitude to master the new ways of communicating; people with special needs who require special attention; the **unemployed** and other sections of society who for one reason or another think technology is not a priority for them, require the special attention of the rest of us. The initiatives include:
- myWeb- ICT education for all – this offers, at a minimal charge, all one needs to know to stop being afraid of using a computer and discovering the Internet
 - Community Technology Learning Centres will provide cheap (or free) broadband access, basic ICT training, ICT job counselling and personalised e-Government services
 - ECDL training
 - Set up of public internet access points and internet centres
 - Affordable hardware for all initiatives through Strategic Alliances with the private sector
 - Different broadband packages for different scales in society
 - Affordable software
 - Taking technology home - offering incentives to employees of private and public firms to purchase computer equipment for their personal use
 - e-Learning initiatives
 - Internet in the Maltese language
 - Learning ICT through the TC medium
 - Access to the internet through electric power lines.
 - (Source National Progress Report on i2010 eGovernment Action Plan, May 2007)
41. **Multi-channel:**
- Citizens can access their **personal social security records and payments** via the internet, and may also opt to be notified about their social security payments via **SMS** rather than receiving a printed payment advice by post.
 - Citizens can pay rent to Government for their leased property either electronically or through Local Councils which act as eGovernment Agents, delivering over the counter services to citizens and businesses.
 - The **Insurance Agents** act as eGovernment Agents and offer a one-stop-shop for citizens for the renewal and payment of both the insurance premium and the road license. Citizens also have the facility to pay for any contraventions, which if not settled, road license cannot be renewed. Once the insurance premium is settled, citizens can also pay online for the renewal of road license and contraventions.
 - (Source National Progress Report on i2010 eGovernment Action Plan, May 2007)

42. The major initiative on inclusive e-Government is the introduction of **eGovernment Agents**. This is aimed towards those **people in society which do not have the facility to access the internet and thus cannot access eServices online**. This programme is resulting in both improving accessibility to citizens who do not need to be presently physical at the respective Government department to avail themselves of the public service and on the other hand is giving the facility to Government to reduce workload in front offices, giving the possibility to Government to redeploy people and restructure such offices saving money. (Source National Progress Report on i2010 eGovernment Action Plan, May 2007)

43. **Online Application for Child and Supplementary Allowances** (www.mfss.gov.mt)

CASPA is an eGovernment service that allows citizens to directly submit applications for child and supplementary allowances. This service reaches 29,000 child allowance beneficiaries and 27,000 supplementary allowance beneficiaries. It affects approximately 25% of households and therefore has quite a significant impact.

– Source: European eGovernment Awards 2007, Theme 3: social impact and cohesion (<http://www.ePractice.eu>)

NETHERLANDS

44. It is calculated that the digital client file, **automatic remission of local taxes and pre-filled forms for application of the old age pension** will lead to a structural aggregated quantitative reduction of administrative burdens for the disadvantaged groups of 1,157,000 hours and € 1,420,000 out-of-pocket costs yearly. It will also cause less irritation. There are no calculations of the qualitative or quantitative results for public administrations, but it is expected that these eGovernment tools will lead to considerable reductions in time and money for the public administrations. (Source National Progress Report on i2010 eGovernment Action Plan, May 2007)

NORWAY

45. **Helsefilm.no - Film in healthcare** (www.sshf.no)

With the online Helsefilm (health film) service, audiovisual pedagogical content can be accessed by patients and their next of kin. Providing information and education for patients and their relatives constitutes an important and expensive part of modern healthcare. Communications and the exchange of personal experiences among peers are similarly important.

– Source: European eGovernment Awards 2007, Theme 3: social impact and cohesion (<http://www.ePractice.eu>)

POLAND

46. Considering limitations resulting from the income level in Poland, government actions in the area of inclusive government have focused so far on facilitating **Internet access and ICT training in schools, local government institutions and public Internet access points**. These activities (e.g. Broadband Internet for schools, IKONKA – network of 2500 PIAPs in communities across the country, N@tobus - ICT training project) improved significantly the level of ICT literacy especially among students, teachers and the population of rural and remote areas of Poland. (Source National Progress Report on i2010 eGovernment Action Plan, May 2007)

PORTUGAL

47. Examples of **multi-channel** services: income taxes; unemployment benefits; appointment in a hospital can be made by an intermediary, a health centre, via an electronic network that links him with the hospital; declaration of social contributions for employees; declaration of corporate; etc. (Source National Progress Report on i2010 eGovernment Action Plan, May 2007)

48. Other examples (Source National Progress Report on i2010 eGovernment Action Plan, May 2007):

- A publicly financed network with more than **200 NGOs for disabled** people connected to Internet.
- More sign languages and subtitling on TV programmes
- More concern with Web Accessibility in Public sectors and private key sectors like Banking
- More Public Libraries with assistive technologies
- Public Internet Access Points with assistive technologies
- An important market of technical aids with more than 100 enterprises. An amount of 12ME/Year of Public funds for **technical aids to people with disabilities**.

49. Connect Portugal Programme -- the need to increase **digital literacy and competencies** is stated as a primary objective in all political eInclusion related initiatives:

- the ConnectPortugal Programme states “Qualifications and Citizenship” and “Technologies and Knowledge” as two of its five pillars
- the *National Strategy for Sustainable Development 2006-2015* states as the first (of seven) strategic objectives: “*Prepare Portugal for the Knowledge Society*”;
- under the framework of the *Technological Plan* and of the *European Alliance on Skills for Employability*, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed early 2006 between the Portuguese Government and Microsoft Corporation, spanning a potential target population of 1 million citizens, covering (inter alia) Digital Literacy and Certification.
- Source: Portuguese Inclusive eGovernment MS Expert, May 2007

50. The most significant Portuguese initiative with an impact on Literacy, Employability and Social Integration is the national network of **Public Internet Access Spaces (PIAS)**
- As of December 2006, more than 1.000 PIAS provide free access to multimedia computers and the Internet to citizens all over the country. In all the PIAS, trained personnel assure permanent support to users, assuming a very important role as **social mediators** to computer and Internet technology in local, and frequently remote, communities. Most PIAS have at least one workstation properly equipped to make it accessible to **handicapped** citizens. Some of these PIAS are tailored to specific target groups, such as the **elderly and immigrants**. (see <http://www.umic.pt> and <http://www.espacosinternet.pt>)
 - PIAS are set up in various locations: Municipalities, Public Libraries, Employment & Training Offices, "Live Science" Centres, Social Solidarity Institutions, NGOs, etc.
 - Additionally, there are slightly over 2000 more Public Internet Access Points (PIAPS), where free internet access is provided, but no permanent support personnel is available.
 - The usage profile for PIAS and PIAPs spans: access to public e-Services, job search, basic ICT literacy competence training and certification, leisure, etc.
 - Source: Portuguese Inclusive eGovernment MS Expert, May 2007
51. The ACESSO Programme aims at developing and disseminating ICT tools to allow citizens with special needs (such as **handicapped people, elderly people and those with long-term illness**) to overcome some of their difficulties.
- Under the framework of ACESSO, an initiative was launched to support projects contributing to the above-mentioned objectives: There are 47 on-going national projects specifically targeting "**e-Accessibility**" have been financed by the *Knowledge Society Operational Programme* (FEDER + FSE), mostly initiated in Q1/2006 covering such areas as:
 - On-line digital documents
 - Assistive technologies for library reading rooms
 - Support people with special needs undergoing university-level studies
 - Equip resource centres of the Ministry of Education with innovative technologies for Braille printing and the preparation of spoken digital documents/books
 - Creation of **on-line ICT tutorials for people with special needs**
 - Support autonomous living for **senior citizens**.
 - On the 2nd April 2007, in a successful Workshop in the city of Leiria, these projects presented the results obtained so far.
 - Source: Portuguese Inclusive eGovernment MS Expert, May 2007
52. **eAccessibility** of Public Websites (targeting disabled and elderly people). Government Resolution 97/99 (August 1999) set requirements for the e-Accessibility of websites from Public Administration (central and local) There are 47 on-going national projects specifically targeting "e-Accessibility" have been financed by the *Knowledge Society Operational Programme* (FEDER + FSE), covering such areas as:
- On-line digital documents
 - Assistive technologies for library reading rooms
 - Support people with special needs undergoing university-level studies
 - Equip resource centres of the Ministry of Education with innovative technologies for Braille printing and the preparation of spoken digital documents/books
 - Creation of on-line ICT tutorials for people with special needs
 - Support autonomous living for senior citizens
 - Source: Portuguese Inclusive eGovernment MS Expert, May 2007
53. The Ministry of Education has several initiatives on "**ICT in schools**":
- All public schools have access to broadband DSL connection to the Internet (100 % coverage by end-2006);
 - All higher education institutions have wireless networking campuses (100% coverage by end-2006);
 - There are tax breaks/ incentives for students and families with students in charge.
 - A "*National ICT Competencies Certification Scheme*" will be launched in 2007, covering both the needs of the casual user and of professionals.
 - Source: Portuguese Inclusive eGovernment MS Expert, May 2007)
54. In Dec/2006 the High Commissioner for **Immigration and Ethnic Minorities** launched the CHOICES 3G Programme, with a potential target of 40 thousand children and young people. It spans an integrated set of actions (arts, ICT, leisure occupations) aiming at lowering school dropout and increasing digital inclusion in groups at risk, particularly ethnical minorities. It finances a total of 120 projects, totaling approximately 21 million euros.
- Source: Portuguese Inclusive eGovernment MS Expert, May 2007
55. Among other initiatives relevant for groups at risk of exclusion (**senior citizens, children and disabled people**), with impact on the use of eGovernment services, it is interesting to note that:
- 25% of public hospitals make computers available for use by in-house patients
 - 17% of hospitals with internet access make it available for use by in-house patients
 - 3% of hospitals with internet access have **videoconference facilities to allow in-house patients** remote access to schooling activities (particularly for children).
 - Source: Portuguese Inclusive eGovernment MS Expert, May 2007

56. **eGAIANIMA, cohesion in education: pupils, parents, teachers and administration** (www.gaianima.pt)

A tool providing managed forum and eLearning capabilities, thus promoting public debate and participation in decision-making in a learning environment for social cohesion. The Programme of Curricular Activity Enrichment in Public Primary Schools was a measure launched in May 2006 by the Portuguese Ministry of Education. In VNGaia, the programme is managed by GAIANIMA E.M., a local public enterprise to which the VNGaia authorities have delegated the project. eGAIANIMA, an online IT tool to facilitate and promote interoperability in the education community, was developed in complex circumstances. The aim was to provide a real-time and efficient class management (teachers and schools), report control and management tool (GAIANIMA EM) and to facilitate parental involvement in pupils developing the education process (parents and civil society).

– Impact

The impact of this case can be seen in technological, social, political, and environmental terms. Technological impact is reflected in the adoption of innovative and creative new skills and the broader use of ICTs by the target groups. Social impacts include the increase in the parents' participation in their childrens' education, and new methods to share experiences and best practices. The political impacts include faster and more agile processes, which reduce bureaucracy and an increase in citizen participation in decision-making, which fosters democracy. The case has served as a booster and facilitator for the introduction of new processes and procedures in participation in decision-making, which have resulted in broader change in attitudes towards democracy. Finally, the environmental impacts include the implementation of digital processes leading to a strong reduction of paper use.

– Lessons learned

- To bring the public administration closer to the citizen community, governments must use tools that are easily accessible, simple and easy to use and, above all, must provide targeted and relevant information.
- The use of IT in the administration acts as a tool towards gaining new skills, especially in parents and teachers, stimulating human and economic development.
- Use of eGovernment allows human resources to be freed from the back office and re-allocation to services in the front office.

– Source: European eGovernment Awards 2007, Theme 3: social impact and cohesion (<http://www.ePractice.eu>)

57. **AvDi-PT -- Aveiro Digital Region of Portugal** (www.aveiro-digital.pt)

AvDi-PT is based on a regional mobilising system in order to promote the social, economic and cultural development of the Ria Region through the use of ICT in the everyday life of companies and educational, social and cultural institutions, etc. The main objective is to increase the quality services by rising the qualifications of people and organisations (public and private).

– Source: European eGovernment Awards 2007, Theme 3: social impact and cohesion (<http://www.ePractice.eu>)

ROMANIA

58. **Access for rural areas**

- Knowledge Economy Project will digitalize 10% of Romania's rural areas (260 communities) offering both infrastructure and eServices to citizens and businesses.
- Power Line Communication (PLC) Pilot Project meant to test and to study the opportunity of adopting the PLC systems at national level
- Introducing WiMAX technology in order to assure the access to broadband services in rural and small-urban areas
- Telecentres, in the vicinity of people's homes, offering at affordable prices, telephone, fax and Internet services and non-stop access to emergency calls.
- (Source National Progress Report on i2010 eGovernment Action Plan, May 2007)

59. **KEP Knowledge-Based Economy Project** (www.ecomunitate.ro)

KEP finances the establishment of 260 local communities eNetworks, through which communities will be offered access to services and technologies in rural and small urban communities. The benefits are modern communication services, support for business and community development, improvements of education, etc.

– Source: European eGovernment Awards 2007, Theme 3: social impact and cohesion (<http://www.ePractice.eu>)

SLOVENIA

60. **Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs** made a submission to the 2005 eGovernment Awards for Social Work Centres Information System (SWCIS). This eGovernment case has high value for Slovenian Government, and has made significant progress since 2005.

- Our eGovernment initiative presented in our 2005 case (SWCIS) is still in operation and it has been upgraded since then.
- Until the end of 2005 twelve SWCIS modules and a module named **Family Helper** have been developed. In addition to that links to Central Registry of Population, Tax Administration of the RS (exchange of Personal Income Tax data) and Employment Service of Slovenia (data exchange about the unemployed) have been established.
- In 2006 individual SWCIS modules were upgraded due to minor changes in legislation. Due to Slovenian transition to the Euro, some extensive work had to be done on SWCIS in the second half of 2006.
- In January 2007 opinion polls on user satisfaction were introduced. Users of SWCIS from various Social Work Centres and their coworkers were included in the research. Their suggestions have been and will be used as a basis for further development of SWCIS.

- In the future many additional improvements regarding protection of personal data, connections to other State administration databases and many new modules are planned for integration into SWCIS.
- With the establishment of data connections between CWCIS and other databases the Ministry wishes to improve the process of decision making, increase control over the payment system, increase time (customers) and money (state budget) savings, build an analytical system that will support the process of decision making, planning, monitoring and implementation of various measures.
- Analyses have shown that since control over Child Benefit amounts has been increased, savings add up to 2 million EUR per year. State budget's yearly savings of over 1 million EUR have been achieved with reviewing entitled recipients of financial social assistance.
- Latest reports and analyses in State administration also show that due to shortening data entry and evaluation time on the level of individual application form approximately 300 hours are being saved every month.
- Source: Update of 2005 Awards submission by case owner.

SPAIN

61. The o60 is the **multi-channel access point** for all PA services. Before o60 there were 2,800 citizen service offices in General Administration (20,000 in all PA agencies), 1,000 phone numbers (500 in General Administration), over 600 web pages. After the launch of o60 there is just a single portal to access services, just one phone number and just one kind of office for all PA levels, resulting in 120,000 website visits per month, 40,000 phone enquiries per month, 5,132 office enquiries in last four months of 2006. (Source National Progress Report on i2010 eGovernment Action Plan, May 2007)
62. **AVAE Virtual classroom for educational support** (www.vigo.org)
 AVAE is a community initiative with the objective of integrating a system to follow up on basic education in hospitals and at home. This facilitates continuity of education for those students who are unable to attend school during long periods of hospitalisation.
- Source: European eGovernment Awards 2007, Theme 3: social impact and cohesion (<http://www.ePractice.eu>)

SWEDEN

63. **TPI The pocket interpreter** (www.pts.se)
 TPI: the pocket interpreter is a national communication service that makes it possible for deaf people using sign language to communicate with hearing people. Anybody can call the service, which is manned by several sign language interpreters located in different studios in different geographic locations in Sweden, free of charge.
- Source: European eGovernment Awards 2007, Theme 3: social impact and cohesion (<http://www.ePractice.eu>)

TURKEY

64. The **Central Civil Registration System** has been in service since 2002 and has been improved since 2005.
- Since 2005, information on disability of **disabled persons** has also been added to the personal information (name, surname, mother's and father's name, birth place, etc.) and civil status events (birth, death, marriage, divorce, etc.) of persons already been kept in the database. Furthermore, maintenance of all address numbering information in the country and address information of all persons is another addition to the system.
 - The most important development to the system is that the data maintained by the system has been opened to the use in electronic format to all public and private agencies. As of today, 255 institutions and agencies have access to the data kept in the system.
 - With the introduction of these developments to the system:
 - Institutions are able to obtain electronically the identity information of persons necessary for the provision of services.
 - The identity verification procedure, which is an important process for the public institutions, has been reduced to seconds. All identity authentication procedures are carried out via the system.
 - Population movements (internal migration and emigration) and the statistics based on these data have started to be produced using the system.
 - It is possible to carry out population determination using the system without the need for field applications.
 - The collection of information on disability of disabled persons has been initiated on a voluntary basis, and these data eased particularly the job application procedures for disabled persons when applying to the institutions and agencies.
 - The civil status information necessary for the provision of services by the institutions, which used to be requested previously in paper format from persons, is no longer required.
 - This application has resulted in significant time-saving for the end-user.
 - The identification and authentication procedures in the scope of the e-Government portal to be introduced very soon in Turkey will be carried out via the system.
 - The system has set up the foundation of the interoperability, one of the important phases of the e-Government in Turkey.
 - Source: Update of 2005 Awards submission by case owner.

65. **ESV Eskisehir Software Valley (Eskisehir Yazilim Ussu)**

ESV was established to increase the process of transformation of the City of Eskisehir. The project supports young entrepreneurs. At the end of the project, Eskisehir will have a technopark above international standards and an ESV Young Entrepreneur Training Centre, which is already in its initial phase.

- Source: European eGovernment Awards 2007, Theme 3: social impact and cohesion (<http://www.ePractice.eu>)

UNITED KINGDOM

66. Since 2005, the **Leicestershire CareOnLine** has increased the number of **vulnerable adults** assisted to over 500 individuals and provided 5000 hours of home **training to isolated people**. It has completed building the service model - the technical support function has received over 700 support calls in 2 years. CareOnLine is currently working with other areas of Leicestershire Adult Social Care such as Day Centres and Learning Disabilities.

- The service has provided training to a project in Manchester to improve their delivery of home ICT services to residents in a deprived area of the city.
- CareOnLine is also working with the voluntary sector to build a **volunteer network for home ICT training to older people, disabled people and carers** that aims to provide an additional 8000 hours support each year and reach 3000 more people over the next 5 years.
- Since 2005 CareOnLine has been a winner in the UK national eGovernment awards, and finalist in the Stockholm Challenge and UK Top Team awards. CareOnLine was also one of the 25 best practice projects chosen to exhibit at the Riga Conference on ICT for an inclusive society in June 2006.
- CareOnLine provides a **home outreach service** to disadvantaged groups such as older people, disabled people and carers to provide them with ICT skills through the following:
 - We assess individual needs and provide assistive technology equipment
 - **Free one-to-one training in people's own home** gives confidence and motivation
 - **A simple website designed for older and disabled people**
 - Help setting up computers and a Help desk/home visits
- Providing isolated groups such as older people with ICT skills enables them to use any online government service or participate in initiatives such as online voting. Here is an example from one user *"Today for example I filed a tax return to the Inland Revenue and arranged a Hospital Appointment. I could not function without it [a computer provided by CareOnLine]."* - Carer, aged 75.
- Source: Update of 2005 Awards submission by case owner

67. UK online centres for eGovernment inclusion:

- The UK Government has made a significant investment in developing online public services. Increasing the proportion of the population which has access to these services is important not just for economic reasons, but for social equity. In 2002, 36 online centres, plus 9 more outreach centres), as **physical walk-in centres** ranging from Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) centres to Public Libraries and Adult and Community Learning or Further Education Colleges. In 2006, pilot project was set up to assess their effectiveness in broadening the access to and use of Government e-services amongst the residents of the pilot area (South West of England), especially to the **digitally excluded**.
- The aim of this 2006 pilot was to increase the local marketing of the online centres, particularly to visitors not currently using their ICT facilities, especially the digitally excluded. It also involved **devoting more staff time to customer advice and support on ICT issues and eGovernment internet**, sites, and increasing the number of **training courses**, and using a range of innovative techniques to engage and support customers. These included themed sessions, course development and outreach activity.
- As part of the review of UK online eGovernment pilot initiatives in the South West of England, three phases of primary research were undertaken :
 - a residents' survey (market sizing) : to appreciate the overall market
 - a UK online centre user survey (market potential) : to understand centre use
 - an eGovernment user survey (market benchmarking) : to generate user and use profiles.
- In order to track the user's "journey" through the Digital Inclusion process a further follow-up study was conducted six months after the market benchmarking survey. The aims of this evaluation are to explore participants' progress along the Digital Inclusion process, and the impact of internet and eGovernment usage
- Centre usage impact: Respondents are regular visitors to the centres, 59% visit at least once a week, and among those receiving training, two-thirds say that the training has given them much more confidence in using the internet.
- Internet usage impact:
 - Four in ten respondents (43%) use the internet every day, four in five (82%) use it at least once a week. 42% use the internet at the centre at least once a week
 - respondents are more confident in their abilities on the internet and are now significantly more likely to describe themselves as able users of the internet (90% vs 74% six months ago), with half (51%) saying that most of this change is due to the training received at the centre
 - although none of the changes are significant in themselves, the trend indicates that over the last six months the profile of respondents has moved towards greater levels of Digital Inclusion: fewer are Digitally Dismissive or Excluded and more are Digitally Determined or Digitally Included.
- Impact of using the Internet impact:
 - 81% say using the internet has been a benefit to their lives – 45% say it has been a big benefit
 - the greatest benefits are seen as access to training, work and information as well as the confidence to initiate transactions online.
 - The most beneficial websites are seen to be: search engines such as Google and Yahoo, sites for public bodies and government departments, and shopping sites such as eBay, and retail/shopping websites.
- Source: South West UK online eGovernment project, December 2006.

68. **EXODUS** is an innovative **social and economic inclusion project enabling 500 ex-offenders** in London and the South East of England improve their work skills and employability, including eSkills and the use of Internet and computing tools. It is financed with £4.5 million from the EQUAL programme of the European Social Fund and is the largest of its kind in the EU. It seeks to address the barriers to integration and rehabilitation of ex-offenders in the probation system. EXODUS draws together good practice from UK delivery and prison services programmes across EU Member States such as France, Portugal and Italy. Led by the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) the project involves 11 delivery partners and stakeholders from the public, private and voluntary sectors and is testing and promoting new means of **combating discrimination and inequalities in the labour markets**, both for those in work and those seeking work through transnational cooperation. (Source: "ModernGov", March 2007, UK.)

69. State **pension claims** can now be made over the **telephone** in one single 20 minute call, rather than taking at least 2 hours and several contacts. (Source National Progress Report on 2010 eGovernment Action Plan, May 2007)

70. **IBM Reading Companion**

- Reading Companion is an example of technology supporting **basic literacy**. Users log on to the **Reading Companion web site** and are presented with material to read. An on-screen mentor, or companion, "reads" a phrase to the user and then provides an opportunity for the user to read the material, using a headset microphone. This is checked for accuracy and gives the user an opportunity to try again, or offers the correct reading of the words on the screen. As the user's skill improves, the technology reads less material so that the learner reads more.
- Since the Reading Companion software is available through the web, students can access it anytime and anywhere. Once students sign in with their own ID and password, the software resumes where the student left off reading and continues to update the student's reading results.
- The Reading Companion software is designed to supplement, not replace, existing literacy curriculum in the school setting or within an adult literacy program. Teachers can choose the right books for individual students to read by checking books out of Reading Companion's virtual library. To help them in their selection, teachers can read book reviews. The software also has a student evaluation feature that allows teachers to view the individual progress of a student and helps teachers make assessments and recommendations for the learner.
- Achievements and impacts
 - Independent evaluations of the technology have been positive. For example, young students using the software tested significantly higher on word recognition and comprehension tasks. For adults, the software improved English pronunciation and reading skills; contributed to learning gains; enabled greater comfort with technology; and provided students with opportunities to practice at their own pace in an interactive format. It also provides adults with an opportunity to learn in a new way by combining visual and auditory methods.
- Source: UK Inclusive eGovernment MS Expert, May 2007 (more info available on actors and practitioners, channels, business model, implementation, barriers and problems, measurement system, lessons learnt).

71. **Learning2go**

- The Learning2go project in Wolverhampton has distributed **Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) to more than 1000 pupils in over 20 schools**. These devices provide a bridge between school and home. They have been integrated into lessons and homework and have contributed towards measurable improved levels of literacy.
- Learning2Go partnership is currently the largest collaborative mobile learning project for pupils in the UK. The initiative, co-ordinated by Wolverhampton City Council, provides a pedagogical lead and shows how successfully mobile learning can be used to give students access to 'anywhere, anytime' learning. Learning2Go is developing new ways of delivering exciting and motivating learning both in and beyond school.
- During phase 2 of the project, launched in the second half of the autumn term 2005, more than 1000 pupils and their teachers in 18 schools are using Fujitsu Siemens Pocket Loox 720 PDAs, with Microsoft Windows Mobile software. Phase 3 started in October 2006 with an anticipated additional 1000 devices across all Key Stages.
- Project Ethos:
 - The learner has the device 24/7
 - The teacher is KEY to the whole project
 - Learners can and will become more expert than adults
 - There is complete wireless coverage in the school
 - Content and applications are of equal importance
 - Learning can take place at different rates and at different times
 - Collaboration and peer support are to be encouraged
 - Learners show their families the technology
 - "Plearning" (Play/Learning) is valued
- Achievements and impacts
 - In providing young learners with a sophisticated handheld computer 24/7, the learning2Go project has unleashed their ICT capability in a way that traditional lessons in the ICT suite never could. The learners have had to acquire new 21st century skills such as:
 - synchronising their data to their user area on the schools network,
 - closing down running programmes to conserve battery,
 - connecting to the internet wirelessly, bluetoothing files to your mate
 - coming to school with a full battery charge.

- Another key factor in the project success has been the ability to connect the devices to the Interactive whiteboard and projector, both for teacher demonstration in the introductory part of the lesson and for learner presentation during the plenary. Space prevents a longer review of applications but each visit to a school brings more ideas, such as one boy aged 10 who has set up an RSS news feed to his device for receiving news updates wirelessly – “Just because I can!” and is now becoming interested in current affairs
 - There have been improved attendance levels, increased interest in learning, higher levels of parental engagement (with some evidence that parents have developed their ICT skills as a result of their children’s engagement in the programme).
- Source: UK Inclusive eGovernment MS Expert, May 2007 (more info available on actors and practitioners, channels, business model, implementation, barriers and problems, measurement system, lessons learnt).

72. Computers for Pupils

- Lack of home access to a computer and the Internet among a minority of pupils is a clear barrier for teachers who fear greater use of ICT in the classroom and for homework could increase disadvantage for those without. **Universal home access for pupils** is therefore critical for embedding ICT into education more deeply. Computers for Pupils is a £60 million, 2-year programme led by Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and aimed at helping some of the most disadvantaged secondary children improve their education and life skills by putting a computer or other electronic learning device into their homes. Local Authorities (LAs) identified as having eligible schools and pupils in their area have been given funding to buy equipment, as well as help and advice covering all aspects of the scheme.
- The scheme also has broader social goals around engaging parents both in their children’s education, and in applications of information technology that can help improve their lives and life opportunities. It could ultimately impact 100,000 disadvantaged households and potentially double this number in terms of total people. A Home Access Taskforce has been established to extend the scheme in partnership with industry.
- Achievements and impacts
 - This initiative places the emphasis on personal access to ICT at home. Research shows that pupils’ use of ICT, including in the home:
 - raises standards
 - supports personalisation
 - improves their ICT skills
 - provides more options for what they learn and how they learn it
 - supports homework and revision
 - increases motivation
 - By putting ICT into the homes of the most disadvantaged secondary pupils in the most deprived areas the project aims to:
 - give these pupils the same opportunities as their peers;
 - provide the conditions which can contribute towards raising educational achievement, narrowing the attainment gap and supporting progress towards their targets
 - support personalised learning by providing access to ICT whenever or wherever is most appropriate for learning
 - encourage the development of ICT skills appropriate to the 21st Century for the pupils and their families.
- Source: UK Inclusive eGovernment MS Expert, May 2007 (more info available on actors and practitioners, channels, business model, implementation, barriers and problems, measurement system, lessons learnt).

73. Job Centre Plus GIS Tool

- GIS is the technology that has been developed to view and analyse data from a geographic perspective. The Jobcentre Plus GIS tool is an example of such a mapping system that can be accessed by designated Jobcentre Plus staff via the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) intranet. The GIS tools have been developed to allow the visualisation of the (mainly) administrative information available within DWP and to combine it with other useful information on geographic boundaries and Census data. As the tool contains sensitive personal information on the characteristics of our customers, they are subject to strict controls over access in line with departmental security standards.
- The GIS tool contains information relating to:-
 - the boundaries of different geographies (Local Authorities, wards, Super Output Areas, postcodes);
 - 2001 Census data of particular interest to DWP e.g.: ethnicity, employment rates, educational attainment, housing tenure, self reported sickness etc;
 - Shaded maps of benefit caseloads and claim rates at various geographical levels, such as Local Authority, census ward, middle and super output area levels.
 - characteristics of individual claimants e.g.: name, address, postcode, age, gender, benefits claimed, whether partnered, number of child dependants, duration of claims, amount of weekly benefit, method of payment.
- Of information contained on the GIS tool, the first 3 categories listed above are freely available and within the public domain.
- A decision to roll out nationally was taken by the Jobcentre Plus regional directors in December 2004. This roll out occurred for all Jobcentre Plus regions and districts during the period September to December 2005. Local Authorities will be given access to aggregate information derived from these tools.
- Achievements and impacts
 - The GIS tool helps **policy makers** understand local patterns of social exclusion, supports **evidence-based policy** and the more effective delivery of services. The tool also allows the DWP to improve the way it markets its services and works with partner organisations.
 - For example, Liverpool Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) has developed a full employment plan. The Full Employment Plan is a robust document, encompassing the Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) and

detailing the various interventions to be taken forward to achieve full employment in the City of Liverpool. In order to make the Full Employment Plan a reality, the LSP needed to work from the right level of management information. The GIS tool gave the LSP the accurate information it required to support this process. As a result the Partnership has identified wards where there are high numbers of Incapacity Benefit claimants and where it can target its activities.

- Similarly, Kent County Council has used the data to pinpoint lone parent 'hotspots' within the county and thereby more effectively focus policy action to engage these groups.
- Source: UK Inclusive eGovernment MS Expert, May 2007 (more info available on actors and practitioners, channels, business model, implementation, barriers and problems, measurement system, lessons learnt).

74. Slivers of time

- Slivers of Time is a service which **supports disadvantaged people in gaining employment. It brings employers with 2-3hrs of work together with people who are looking for work.** It uses **online marketplaces** set up by Local Authorities to match:
 - Individuals who need to work odd hours around other commitments in their life (e.g. lone parents, carers, those restricted by illness, students, retirees, starting their own enterprise, part-time workers) with...
 - Organisations that need a pool of top-up workers at irregular times (e.g. commercial service providers, caterers, retailers, manufacturers, leisure industry, local authorities).
- It is effectively a reverse auction of people's time and is particularly helpful to disadvantaged groups that might only be able to work for short and irregular periods of time.
- The first Slivers of Time marketplace launch in London Borough of Newham in December 2005. Newham received £500,000 of Government funding to pilot the initiative in recognition of its potential in tackling worklessness and increasing the efficiency of the jobs market. The initiative bedded in over 2006 and is now working to roll out over the UK in 2007.
- Achievements and impacts
 - Key findings from Government reports show that 13.7m people in the UK need this way of working at some point each year. 68% of target groups identified in the report want to try it immediately when it is explained to them and with just 5% take up the tax payer would save £400m a year by creating new work, not displacing existing roles.
 - People on incapacity benefit and income support can take on paid work for a certain number of hours each week without affecting their benefits, and Slivers of Time is a useful tool to encourage people back to work. Individual case studies show that it is also a system useful for those with ESL (English second language) to get experience in the UK jobs market.
 - For employees, the initiative has reduced much of the bureaucracy and costs associated with traditional methods of recruiting temporary staff. East Thames Housing Group, one of the main buyers in Newham, has made 329 bookings totalling 2, 280 hours, continuing to use the service beyond its initial six month trial. It has saved over £10,000 on recruitment costs (compared to agency fees) in that time. For Local Authorities the initiative aligns with the Sustainable Communities Strategy bringing work into the community, spreading skills and opportunity into multiple house holds. For employees it can offer flexibility, help develop experience and move workers into the mainstream jobs market by building a CV.
- Source: UK Inclusive eGovernment MS Expert, May 2007 (more info available on actors and practitioners, channels, business model, implementation, barriers and problems, measurement system, lessons learnt).

75. Voicemail4all

- VoiceMail4All (for **homeless** people) aims to **increase employability, social belonging and reduce isolation by increasing social interaction, extending social networks over greater distances and putting people in contact with their peers.** It is a free service offering a voicemail number to anyone who does not have a permanent place to stay and who does not have their own telephone number. This can be used to find a job, hear from family and friends, keep in touch with support workers, or look for more permanent housing.
 - Homeless people can register free of charge at St Mungo's projects
 - They are given a number with a London code (0208) and can then retrieve their messages from any telephone line.
 - Users leave a personal outgoing message when they register and can then access messages they have received for free at St Mungo's homeless projects or at local rates from any telephone.
 - Voicemail is issued for a maximum period of three months which can be extended.
 - Based on a telecoms network from Evoxus, a pilot scheme has been in operation for some time at a sample of St Mungo's projects.
 - St Mungo's and Tech4all launched the scheme across London in 2005.
- Achievements and impacts
 - Benefits to users of a VoiceMail4All number:
 - Secure and reliable - users need never miss a message again
 - Number stays the same, even if everything else in life changes
 - A landline number means there is no stigma of being homeless. This is especially useful in terms of communicating with employers.
 - It gives control back to individuals. They do not have to rely on keyworkers, shared telephones or mobile phones (which can be stolen, lost or run out of battery/credit)
 - Helps grow individual capacity as well as employability. The service can be used for contact with anyone including support workers, social networks and regarding accommodation
 - Available 24 hours a day
 - Easy to use
 - Testimonials from clients of Voicemail4all

- "It can be frustrating not having a telephone, especially when one moves out of an old residence. The voicemail really has helped me in having constant contact, especially from employment agencies."
- "I have had messages from potential employers which have led to interviews. Also messages from colleges, plus services such as the optician, family and friends."
- "My lawyer, who is impossible to get a hold of, was able to leave me a message which really helped me deal with my case."
- "I managed to get into detox because they were able to call me on the weekend when my day centre was closed!"
- "We have found the scheme to be of enormous benefit to our attendees – many want to be able to keep in touch with friends and family without necessarily letting them know where they are. It also proved useful for job interviews, and finding accommodation."
- Source: UK Inclusive eGovernment MS Expert, May 2007 (more info available on actors and practitioners, channels, business model, implementation, barriers and problems, measurement system, lessons learnt).

76. DigiTV

- Run by Kirklees Council, DigiTV is a former national project, which is run for local authorities by local authorities as a not for profit organisation. DigiTV is the **local government digital interactive TV** technology provider, allowing all local public services to publish transactions, information, polls, consultations, services and more on Sky, cable, interactive Freeview boxes and mobile. The project was started in June 2002 by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (which is now the Department for Communities and Local Government, known as DCLG)
- Every local authority is represented on DigiTV, and a range of national services is available to all. These include the ability to search for a job anywhere in the country in partnership with Job Centre Plus, national and local traffic news and journey planning from Transport Direct and a range of advice and services from Citizens Advice Interactive and the Community Legal Service.
- Local authorities are given the tools and training to create and manage a digital TV service or 'microsite', as well as given the benefit of best practice and technology sharing. As a local government cooperative, DigiTV undertakes technical developments on behalf of all partners and shares them without additional cost. Also available is a XML schema, which allows local authorities to integrate useful services and transactions with their back-end systems to offer real time end-to-end transactions, and to minimise any workflow issues.
- Digital interactive TV services are focused on people in the community without PC skills or access, most in the lower socio demographic groups. DiTV ownership is skewed towards this group, who often also have a high use of public services. From a recent DigiTV poll, nearly 50% of respondents did not have access to the Internet and were already using DiTV for a range of services. The local government portal Looking Local is how the citizen/ viewer accesses these services, which are free and designed to be as usable as possible. All screens are navigated and forms completed using the remote control.
- Achievements and impacts
 - Currently DigiTV is working with around 80 local authorities and a number of national organisations, who see that there is a significant swathe of their populations who are not being offered 24/7 services electronic services. Proof that further efficiencies can be made by moving non-Internet households to self serve, rather than calling or attending in person are plentiful.
 - Digital switchover is an opportunity to get those people with high use of services and little access, on a device they are happy with and will – if not now at some point soon – will have access to.
 - Currently Looking Local is getting in excess of 100,000 hits per week and with DiTV penetration growing, the trend is upward. Already local authorities are offering choice based lettings, doctor appointments, access to housing benefit systems, e-mentoring, access to local transport, police, fire, and event and community information.
 - In terms of the doctor appointments, since its launch there has been a decrease in DNAs (Do Not Attend) which is making significant savings for the Primary Care Trusts. Simply offering a consistency and equality of service is also important to many.
 - In terms of cost per transaction based on some national call centre figures, a local authority only needs to migrate around 60 calls a week from its call centre to DiTV to break even.
- Source: UK Inclusive eGovernment MS Expert, May 2007 (more info available on actors and practitioners, channels, business model, implementation, barriers and problems, measurement system, lessons learnt).

77. boys2MEN

- boys2MEN runs **personal development courses for vulnerable and challenging black teenage boys** in London, particularly those who have been in care. It aims to assist them to rediscover their potential and to successfully make the transition from childhood to adulthood.
- Technology - a music recording and editing suite - is used as a hook to get boys through the door. At the beginning of a 10 week course the boys are allowed to spend most of their session in the music suite, with a short group counselling/discussion session at the end. As the course progresses, the balance of music / discussion changes until the boys are comfortable enough to want to spend longer talking than playing.
- Using technology engages boys with poor communication and attention skills. Making video diaries helps them learn about themselves and their behaviour and work out how to change it for the better. 'Baby think it over' baby simulators are used to give the boys a taste of life with a small child and a phone counselling service for the boys and their parents is in development.
- The programme contributes to all parts of the Youth Development and Support objectives, particularly part 3 which seeks to: Encourage young people to realise and achieve their potential, Encourage and build active citizenship, contribute to developing a sustainable youth network for South Kilburn and increase access to facilities and services that meet the training, education and social needs of young people.
- Some of the innovative aspects of the b2M Project:
 - All group sessions are delivered by male workers
 - Each young person has an individual learning style assessment

- Group sessions are tailored to incorporate the life experiences of group members
- Each young person has a specially designed boys2MEN personal development plan
- boys2MEN has developed a creative and dynamic group-work model specifically designed to appeal to and engage young disaffected males. Technology is used to facilitate communication and engage.
- Each young person also receives on-going unconditional support beyond the duration of any group programme they may be attending. This usually takes the form of mentoring support.
- Each project contains key elements of a rites of passage experience.
- The work of the boys2MEN Project is both fun, solution focused and therapeutic in nature, based on cognitive, social learning, experiential and behavioural theories.
- Achievements and impacts
 - By providing mentoring and support at an early age, the project is playing a vital role in helping young people play a more active role in society and reducing the risk of social exclusion. The group's identity work is concentrated on "experiencing new behaviour...by becoming more self aware they realise they can make things happen and take more control of their lives...This is something different for them, something new....[the project's] biggest success is to give these young men positive experiences to counter the negative traumas they have been through in their early lives".
 - The project was visited by Tottenham MP David Lammy in 2005 who said " boys2MEN is an excellent project, targeting some of our most hard to reach and disillusioned young people. Melvyn and his team are a dedicated set of individuals who get admirable results from the men and boys they work with. I hope that this sort of initiative will be adopted throughout the country".
 - boys2MEN received national recognition for its work in December 2005 winning the prestigious Department of Health National Award for Social Care in 2005 was also a highly commended finalist in the Community Care Awards 2005. The boys2MEN Project Manager, Melvyn Davis, received an Inspirational and Innovative Leadership award at the NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement Breakthrough Conference in early 2006.
- Source: UK Inclusive eGovernment MS Expert, May 2007 (more info available on actors and practitioners, channels, business model, implementation, barriers and problems, measurement system, lessons learnt).

78. The Gorbals Library

- This project is based in The Gorbals area in Glasgow. It is a **library with strong ICT facilities and a resident digital inclusion team providing outreach to the community and community groups and training supported by ICT.**
- The Gorbals area of Glasgow has been one of the most deprived neighbourhoods in the city, with a history of poverty and social exclusion. The community suffers from **low levels of skills and educational attainment, high unemployment and workless households, high levels of Incapacity Benefit claimants, and low levels of self-employment starts.** It was also identified in the Scottish Executive's Digital Inclusion Strategy, *Connecting Scotland's People*, as an area of digital exclusion, which required specific support.
- The Gorbals Library and Real Learning Centre exists to break down these barriers, **enhance community participation and improve quality of life.** It aims to do this by working in partnership and encouraging local people to develop skills and confidence, increase learning and training opportunities, and provide routes to employment and better-paid jobs.
- The Gorbals Library and Real Learning Centre, was open on the 10th May 2004, part of the Crown Street Regeneration Project. Glasgow City Council's Cultural and Leisure Services manage the facility, which includes library and information services, a Real learning centre and a Digital Inclusion project team. It serves a population of 13,000, seven days a week.
- The community library provides a range of books from old favourites to contemporary authors. Libraries, Information and Learning also provides information, newspapers, magazines, CDs, feature film DVD and videos. There is also material for community language speakers, services for people with disabilities and a bright inviting space for children and young people to enjoy with lots of fun and activities throughout the year.
- The centre has 50 PCs, the latest digital technologies that provide state of the art video, sound and graphics, drop in workstations, free public internet access, email, a learning suite and refreshment area. The Digital Inclusion Team, as part of the new centre, seek to engage the local community in the digital age by increasing confidence with and awareness of the latest technology. The team encourage and enhance new learning and training opportunities helping to provide a route to employment and better paid jobs.
- Innovative approaches have been used to engage with the local community and to maximise the usage and benefits that the centre has to offer. Street workers from Youth Services engage with Gorbals teenagers to help them understand what the centre can do for them and tailored games-based learning programmes increase their confidence and communication skills.
- Achievements and impacts
 - Over 67% of the community engaged with library 105 people in the community assisted into employment 58 local community projects supported. More than 5,000 people having undertaken classes at the centre, 84% of whom had little or no experience of using computers before coming to the library.
 - The centre has:
 - Strengthened local partnerships and improved joint working between partner agencies and community groups in the delivery of ICT awareness programmes;
 - Increased engagement with library and learning resources - to date over 7,000 people have become members of the Library and Learning Centre, while over 4,500 people have taken part in classes;
 - Development of progression paths into 'formal' courses with local learning providers;
 - Increased awareness of and confidence in using ICT - 83% of learners had little or no computer experience before coming to the library;
 - Improved employability of local residents - since May 2004 86 people have been assisted into employment;

- There have been many awards and other recognition of success of the initiative.
- Source: UK Inclusive eGovernment MS Expert, May 2007 (more info available on actors and practitioners, channels, business model, implementation, barriers and problems, measurement system, lessons learnt).

79. **UK online centres and myguide** (www.dfes.gov.uk)

Access for communities to ICT tools in the UK is facilitated by a 6,000-strong network of UK online centres, which provide support to develop skills for ICT competence. The project, focusing on closing the digital divide, depends on 3,000 centres and an extremely large target group. Its large impact is therefore also ensured in terms of economic growth. The 6,000-strong network of UK online centres is a unique public asset, and could be a model for other EU states and regions. UK online centres support communities and regions in economic development and regeneration and provide outreach to the socially excluded, providing them with support and skills that build independence. The network improves lives and life chances by opening up ICT skills, the Internet and online government services to people who are not online at home or at work or who need support in using computers. The network provides community ICT access to close the digital divide.

- Impact

UK online centres engage over 8.67 million people per year and improve peoples' lives and life chances. Each year UK online centres take around 1 million digitally excluded citizens, a boost of €335 million per year of GDP from eGEP efficiencies alone.

- Lessons learned

- Community-based solutions and sense of ownership are critical to the sustainability of the network.
- Central facilitation, support and knowledge transfer are essential for the coherence and impact of the network.
- Ultimately, it is the assumption that groups like older or disabled people can be full 'e-citizens'.

- Source: European eGovernment Awards 2007, Theme 3: social impact and cohesion (<http://www.ePractice.eu>)

80. **NeAT Newham Advanced Telecare** (www.newham.gov.uk)

NeAT operates in two related EU policy contexts: ICT in ageing and digital inclusion. It is the largest assistive technology implementation in England, with some 3,000 users. Financial benefits net of costs are on target to reach € 6 million a year by 2010 and all users report a significant improvement in their quality of life.

- Source: European eGovernment Awards 2007, Theme 3: social impact and cohesion (<http://www.ePractice.eu>)

81. **Real Time Passenger Information - The Rural Dimension** (www.argyll-bute.gov.uk)

RTI: the Regional Transport Partnership and the local authority wanted to provide better information to passengers to improve confidence in services and increase patronage levels. They wanted to encourage more people to use public transport and introduced the first real-time passenger information system on a longdistance coach service in Scotland. S.E.M.P Swindon Electoral Modernisation Programme

- Source: European eGovernment Awards 2007, Theme 3: social impact and cohesion (<http://www.ePractice.eu>)

EU AND TRANS-EUROPEAN INITIATIVES

82. **eGovernment guide for Senior Citizens**, Germany, Italy, Norway, Austria, Bulgaria

- "Digital access" should not lead to "social exclusion".
- The fact is, the older generation, compared to the younger generation, is missing out on having proper access to many opportunities of Internet use. They are left behind when it comes to a "developed" use with new computer gadgets. Under competent leadership and guidance, barriers can be overcome and with respect to the citizen and e-government applications can be used positively. The project proposal operates under the premise to **aid senior citizens, opening their way to the Internet** so that they too can have a better quality of life. At the same time it is necessary for the local authorities to understand the need for e-government offers, which are purposely made for the senior citizens.
- **Persons need to be trained to become e-government guides, who accompany senior citizens during the learning process.** They have the task to train the elderly for:
 - opening access to the Internet
 - appropriating opportunities for e-government applications
 - giving training for e-government use, which will be required in the future.
- It is a prerequisite that an e-government user offer, which has been specifically created toward the needs of elderly people and their life styles, should have been filtered, so that away from the "jungle" of e-government applications, it is ready to use.
- (Source: EU Sokrates project, 2007)

83. **TRIN II, EC Social Affairs** research project with partners in UK (Staffordshire), Ireland, Spain, Slovakia, Romania

- The research focuses on **social exclusion and those at risk of social exclusion in rural areas** and their relationship and experience of Information and Communication Technologies. As a result, the research will look at producing **toolkits for local authorities** to use throughout Europe to identify 'e-Exclusion' and ways in which this might be addressed.
- In partnership with Staffordshire County Council, Staffordshire Women's Aid, a non-government specialist **domestic violence** support agency, has focused specifically on **gender in rural areas** to identify the level at which women are e-excluded and how e-inclusion may be used to support them.

- Obj 1. Research & Investigation on the relationship between ICT & Social Exclusion & Inclusion. The research is divided into 2 parts.
 - This focuses on understanding the point of view & expertise of the local agents in relation to 'digital gap' & their understanding of how it affects local people & excluded groups. The research results will help with defining a **typology of the social groups that suffer from exclusion in rural areas**, and will provide a vision of the eExclusion process.
 - This is dedicated to the analysis of people and excluded groups, focusing on their personal experience of exclusion & their specific relationship with ICT's. The results of this second part will allow the establishment of some specific & common indicators for the analysis of eExclusion in rural areas, and will allow measures to be developed to promote eInclusion.
- Obj 2. Analysis of existing eInclusion tools: There are a wide range of **existing tools & services** that are useful & effective in promoting eInclusion. It is essential that a **database** of such tools be prepared for use by local social agents. This can supplement their understanding of what is already available & currently in use. The project will list these tools & services & their contents, with a view to determining their application in rural areas. The tools examined will be classified into four groups – **tools for cultural, and social, labour & economic inclusion**. On the other hand, the project will develop a specific tools for the diagnosis of eExclusion to be used by the local agents. This tool will allow the identification of individuals & groups of people that may suffer from the type of exclusion defined in the research, as well as assisting with the development of actions to promote.
- Obj 3. Engaging of local agents: Throughout the project an important aspect will be the maintenance & development of contacts with **local social agents** so as to provide them with information in relation to the project, to disseminate information on eInclusion & ICT's & so as to get their assistance & participation in the project's activities. Besides the local social agents, it is also important that relationships are maintained with other relevant actors & social & economic at a national, regional & local rural level.
- Obj 4. Transfer of results to local agents: The final aspect of the project concerns the transfer of the knowledge acquired & the instruments developed to the local social agents in rural areas. It is intended to disseminate (at a national, regional & local level) and promote the work that has been carried out relating to eInclusion as a means of addressing social exclusion.
- Source: <http://www.ccas.ru/manbios/db-maps/eur/index.htm>

84. ACCESS-eGov -- Access to e-Government services employing semantic technologies (2006-2008)

By employing semantic technologies the Access-eGov project will support semantic interoperability among e-government services across organisational, regional and linguistic borders. For service providers (on all levels of public administration - local, regional, national, and European) Access-eGov will enable introduction of a (new) e-service to the world of e-government interoperability in an easy way.

The government service registered in the Access-eGov may be localized, contracted and used automatically through agents and other IT components. For citizens and business users the Access-eGov will provide two basic categories of services. Firstly, it will provide a meta-service - depending on the needs and context of the user Access-eGov will find (identify) traditional and/or e-government services relevant to the given life event or business episode. Secondly, once the relevant services are found, Access-eGov will generate a scenario consisting of elementary government services. Usually these scenarios will be of "hybrid" nature - i.e. combination of elementary traditional and e-services - realization of which leads to a requested outcome (e.g. to get a new driving license, if you lost both your ID and the old driving license etc.).

At the realisation of the scenario the user will be guided by a virtual personal assistant. Access-eGov is built on peer-to-peer and service-oriented architecture. Component-based security infrastructure provides a complete portfolio of necessary security services (authentication, authorization, attribute management, access control, data protection, auditing) that are accessible through web service interfaces. All the Access-eGov components will be delivered as an open source solution. The system developed will be validated also by the non EU project partner (GUC, Egypt), which will lead to increased employability of the system due to taking into account cross-cultural and language issues.

(Source: FP6 eGovernment RTD project)

85. ELOST -- E-Government for LOw Socio-economic sTatus groups (2006-2007)

Information and communications technology provides governments with new and powerful tools, which enable better and faster communications with the citizens. Recently, many governments are undertaking large and complex endeavours of developing e-Government services. However, the use of e-Government by the citizens is still voluntary. Thus, readiness of citizens to participate in e-Government becomes a crucial factor in the process. Usage of services depends on various factors such as ease of use, proficiency, accessibility and civic engagement. In most countries there are several disadvantaged groups that are less likely to use services.

These groups include elderly people, disabled people, immigrants and low socio-economic groups (LSG). Since the computer usage by LSG is very low, web-based e-Government services are not available to a relatively large segment of European citizens. The pace at which countries deploy e-Government services, including measures taken to include LSG, vary considerably across Europe. Excluding such populations from e-Government is a major cause of the digital divide within European countries.

The main objective of ELOST is to increase readiness to e-Government and civic engagement among LSG. ELOST aims to increase the number of people from this class that will use e-Government services as active citizens. ELOST will perform a multinational study on the policies and plans to introduce e-Government to LSG. Special attention will be given to age and gender aspects. The objectives are to study the status of e-Government services and tools for LSG in European countries. ELOST will evaluate the attitudes, needs and readiness of LSG by means of questionnaires, interviews and focus groups.

A foresight study will analyse the impact of emerging technologies on e-Government services. A cross-cultural analysis will be performed. The findings will lead to policy recommendations for effective and inclusive deployment of e-Government services in Europe.

(Source: FP6 eGovernment RTD project)

86. **ONESTOPGOV** - A life-event oriented framework and platform for one-stop government (2006-2008)

Online one-stop government enables 24 hour, single point access to public services that are integrated around citizens needs (usually life-events). Currently however, online one-stop government projects do not care about citizens needs and do not provide integrated services from different back-offices. The OneStopGov project aims to specify, develop and evaluate a life-event oriented, integrated, interoperable platform for online one-stop government. This platform will be accompanied by a coherent framework for realising and exploiting online one-stop government at all levels.

The guiding vision, challenge, innovation and unique selling proposition for the OneStopGov platform involve: the inherent support of life-events; the active, citizen-centric approach; and the definition and use of generic models (e.g. generic workflows, generic reference models). The OneStopGov platform will be based on a number of scientific and technological innovations. First, the life-event ontology will be specified to enable proper representation of the life-event concept. Second, the active life-event portal will be implemented to care for citizens' needs and circumstances. Third, a complete set of life-event reference models will be specified to allow implementing virtually any life-event. Fourth, these reference models will be implemented using generic workflow Web technologies.

The OneStopGov platform and framework will be deployed in three new Member States (Slovenia, Hungary and Poland) and one Accession country (Romania). The platform will be used for modelling, implementing and deploying 16 life-events. The consortium includes two organisations responsible for eGovernment at national level (Slovenian ministry of Public Administration and the company owned by the Hungarian Prime Minister's Office), one at regional level (the region that includes Bucharest), and one at local level (Polish municipality) thus ensuring maximum visibility and take-up of the project results.
(Source: FP6 eGovernment RTD project)

87. **eUSER** -- Evidence-based support for the design and delivery of user-centred online public services (2004-2006)

eUSER supports the IST programme to achieve its key objectives to put the user and his/her needs at the centre of IST developments. It cuts across key public eServices domains - eGovernment, eHealth, eLearning - identified as priorities by the European Council and in the eEurope 2005 action plan, also priority areas in the IST work programme. eUSER addresses generic user-related issues and develops an accessible repository of evidence-based knowledge, methods and best practice examples. It pursues an extensive programme of active knowledge translation, transfer and dissemination supported by sophisticated online knowledge transfer tools. The knowledge base will consolidate both existing knowledge and approaches, and novel data generated by the project through representative population surveys (demand side) in all Member States, and through comparative analysis of readiness to address user aspects of public eServices in each Member State (supply side).

Significant impacts will be achieved within the IST programme itself and more widely in the environment within which the programme operates. Support will be provided both at the overall programme level (strategic as well as detailed, evidenced-based operational guidance on user issues/priorities) and at the level of the individual RTD projects (help to better inform about and to address the specific needs of generic types of users at all stages of the project lifecycle, including requirements capture, design and development, and exploitation). The project will also provide robust benchmarking and prospective analyses that will be of value for the eEurope 2005 action and for EU public administration, public health and education policy. Finally, support will be provided to those who are practically involved in the design and development of public eServices throughout Europe. A significant contribution will be made to establishing a European Research Area on user issues this domain.
(Source: FP6 eGovernment RTD project)

88. **SAFIR** -- Speech Automatic Friendly Interface Research 2 any devices and transactions (2004-2006)

The Safir project will give each citizen or user groups an equal opportunity to access at any time and interactively existing up to date e-government information thru easy devices as TV, gsm, phone, PDA from anywhere by usage of own voice in his daily language, creating the demand for widespread use of broadband services to carry high quantity Voice and Images data: Safir will create an innovative paradigm combining Voice and Graphics Imagine the citizen at anytime everywhere simply speaking to his TV or GSM to request and fill egov forms and transactions. Objectives are: Offer easy transaction access to both PC illiterate citizens and special users like fire brigades, civil employees while on the move, eg: permit forms, adequate field reaction to hazards, anonymous e-payment. Establish the techniques and procedures to have up to date data to be used by the citizens and the special users, including multimodal automatic adaptations and preferences, Enhancing data modelling and voice domains thru ontology and semantic in a multilingual enlarged Europe.

These will be enriched thru: Pilots eg: mobile voice data capture to solve governmental database reliability, Security and other citizens concerns, Integration of e-Learning modules. The needed e-Work process redesign. The results will be: Software and Architecture for auto adaptive easy to use multimodal interfaces, Standards proposals and adaptations, Link local linguistic rules with egov and epay applications for interface's automatic creation, Methodologies and procedures to allow specific classes of workers (civil protection, police, regions, deciders) to increase the quality of data and services for people, Early visible adopters for pan European deployment. Creating the pillars for a better non digitally divided society. Imagine your life rescued, your permit fast granted, be never lost, securing your rights and get JIT help thanks to Safir.
(Source: FP6 eGovernment RTD project)

89. **Terregov** - Impact of eGovernment on territorial government services (2003-2005)

The objective of TERREGOV is to become the European reference for innovative technologies enabling the effective implementation of eGovernment services by local governments.

Considering that government services are offered by a number of administrations interacting one with each other and that local administrations often act as a front office to Citizens, the Project's goal is to make it possible for local governments, to become a channel for delivering online a large variety of services in a straightforward and transparent manner regardless of the administration(s) actually involved in providing those services.

From a technological perspective, TERREGOV focuses on the needs for flexible and interoperable tools to
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support the change towards eGovernment services, in emerging eGovernment interoperability frameworks. It unfolds in 3 technological R&D Streams:

- "Web Services and eGovernment Processes" combine flexible eGovernment interoperable services in end-to-end process workflows;

- "Semantic enrichment eGovernment Services" enable Web Services to discover each other on a semantic basis;

- "Support to Civil Servants" enable civil servants to focus on the added value of the service delivered to Citizens - increasingly acting as advisers. Most developments will be performed in Open Source to foster their dissemination.

Pilot Activities conducted in 4 European countries will provide User Drive and will address Social Care as a common application area. Experiments, trials and finally take-up will be implemented between 2005 and 2007.

Socio-economic Research will be conducted through an "Observatory on Interoperable eGovernment Services" to balance RTD and User drives. It will extend the specific pilot studies to a European-wide perspective and will address the impact of interoperable eGovernment technologies on Human Resource, Policy and Business Management in local governments. The Observatory's Annual Conference aims at becoming a major event.

(A good example is the FP6 Terregov project which is providing integrated services designed to empower civil servants deliver social and housing services to people who need them, whether or not these people themselves use the technology)

(Source: FP6 eGovernment RTD project)

90. **USE-ME.GOV** -- USability-drivEn open platform for Mobile GOVERNment (2004-2006)

Mobile communications and Internet technologies are enabling the access to new e-government services at any time and anywhere. However, we believe that current technology is not sufficient to promote the access to the most appropriate service at any time. This project focuses on a new open platform for mobile government services, supporting usability, openness, interoperability, scalability, thus facilitating service deployment and access, as well as attractive business models satisfying service providers, public authority and citizens. In particular, mobile services should address specific users needs, with different background, age and interests, overcome bureaucratic barriers, enhance quality of life for citizen and help private companies to streamline their business activities. - feature a high level of usability and user friendliness, allowing for easy search of information considering location, context and user interests. be easy to configure and deploy, not depending on expensive software-hardware products or demanding technological skills, allowing for shared use of technical resources and content. be cost-efficient to the public entity, create revenue to service providers, but also affordable to service users. -exploit opportunities for the promotion of local companies and support public authorities in their initiatives that aim at increasing competitiveness of local economical agents. Work will be based on a few selected service types with universal applicability and potential impact for different countries and regions. The main outcomes will be: 1. Open Service Platform for Mobile Government: satisfying the most critical interoperability and scalability requirements and shared use, 2. Attractive Business Models for Mobile Government: satisfying specific interests of all kinds of service providers and end-users, 3. Recommendations for service planning exploring opportunities for regional development and support to local businesses.

(Source: FP6 eGovernment RTD project)

OVERVIEW

Inclusive eGovernment Deployment

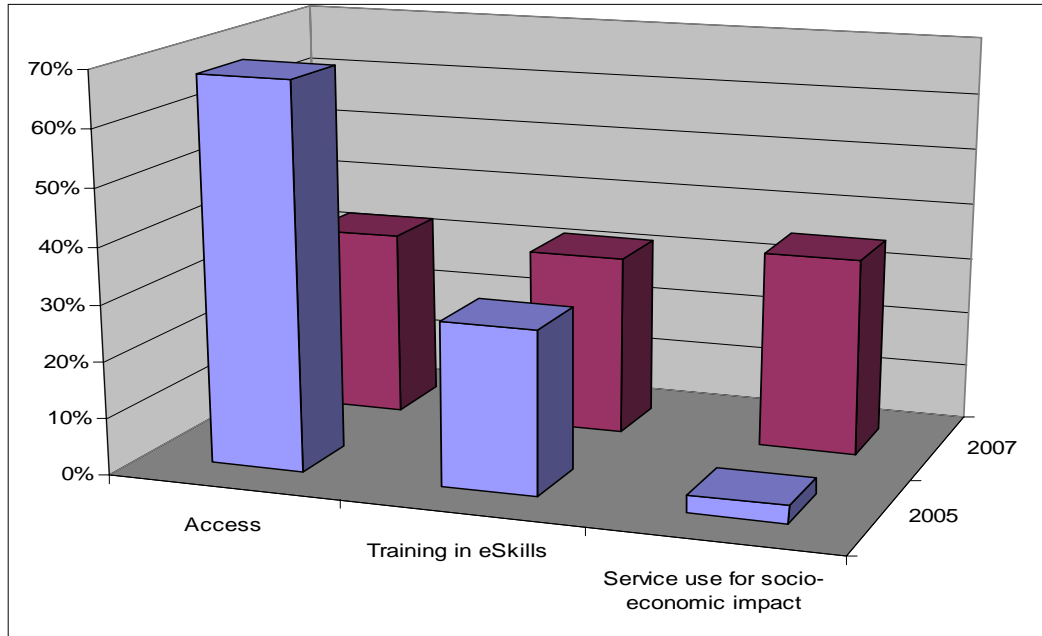


Table 2

2005: n=124 from 72 cases

2007: n=178 from 90 cases

Inclusive eGovernment Delivery

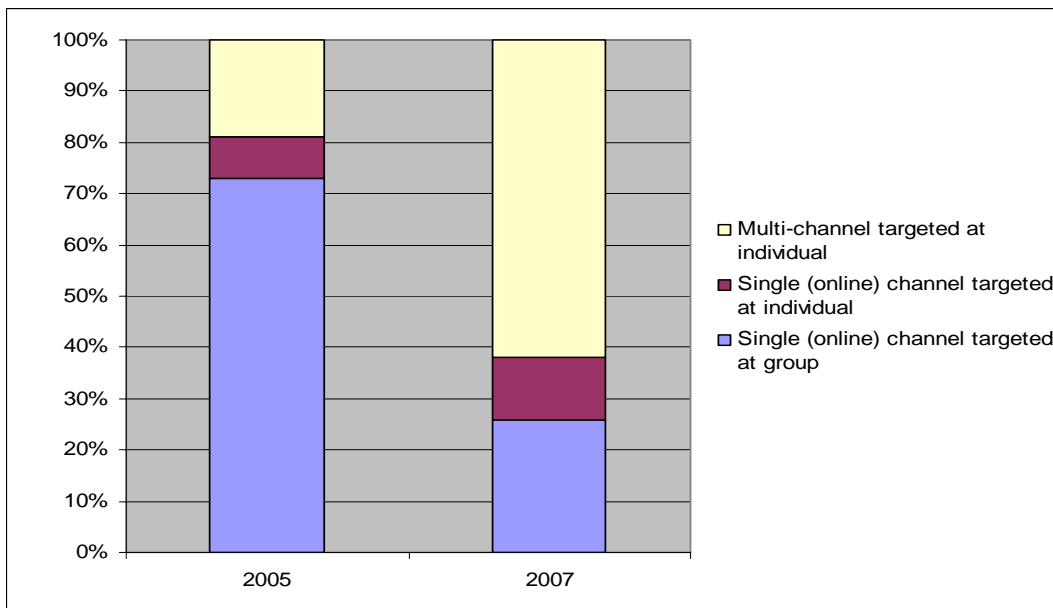


Table 3

2005: n=124 from 72 cases

2007: n=178 from 90 cases

Inclusive eGovernment: survey of status and baseline activities

Inclusive eGovernment Multi-channel

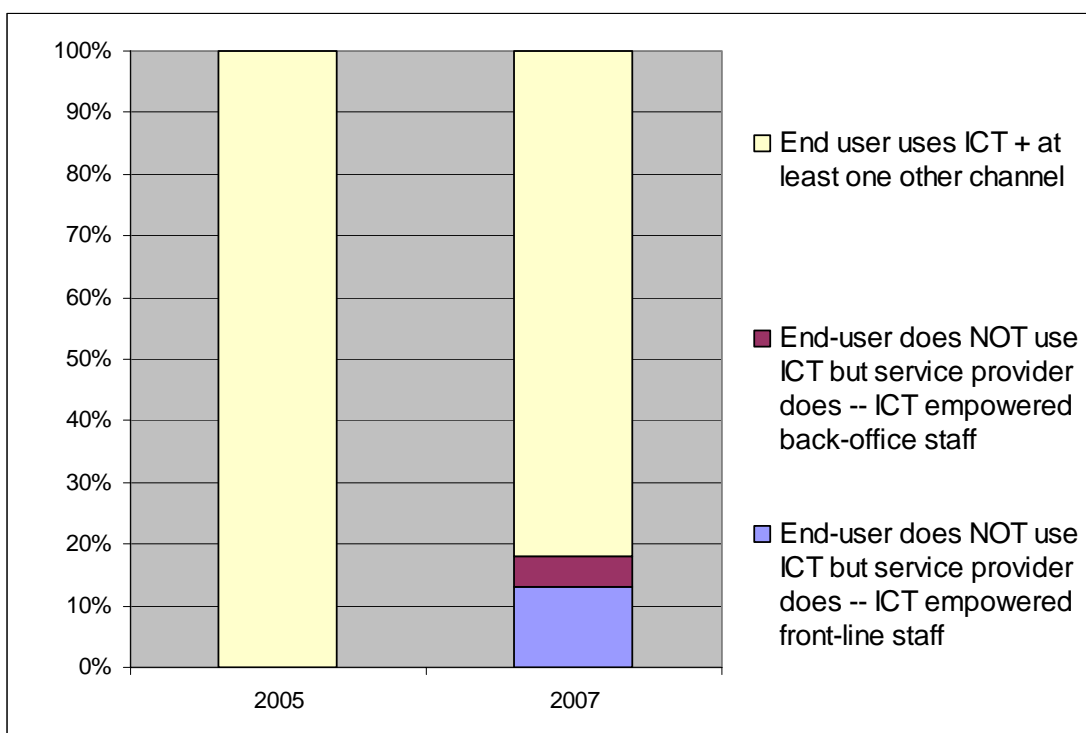


Table 4
2005: n=124 from 72 cases

2007: n=178 from 90 cases



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