



Single Market Scoreboard

Performance by governance tool

Points of Single Contact

(Reporting period: 03/2012 - 02/2013)



About

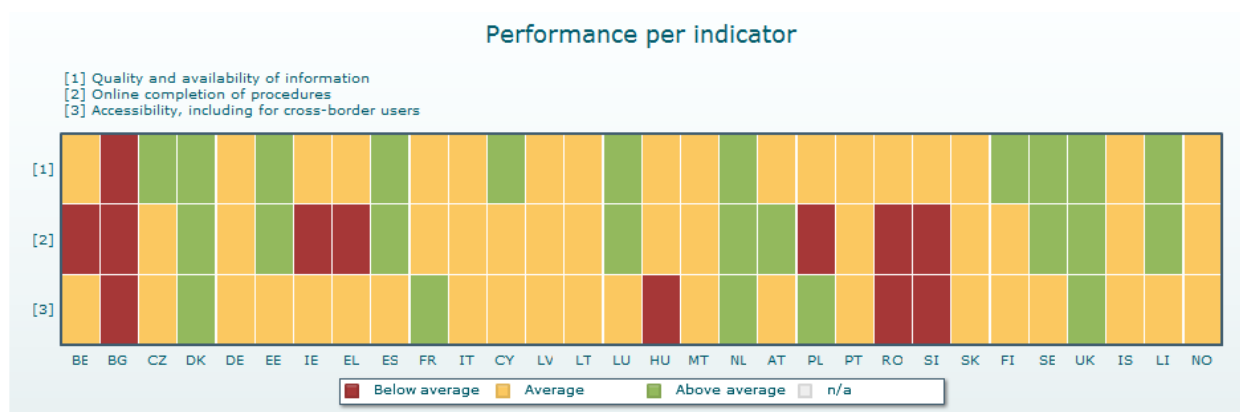
The Services Directive provides for Points of Single Contact (PSC) to be set up in each Member State.

PSCs allow service providers to:

- Obtain all **information about the procedures** they need to complete to provide their services at home or in another EU country (e.g. company registration, business licences, recognition of professional qualifications);
- **Deal with all formalities** via one single contact point; and
- **Complete** the necessary **steps remotely** by electronic means.

PSCs have to make it possible for users to complete **administrative procedures** both for **national situations** (a travel agency in Rome that wants to open a branch in Palermo) and for **cross-border situations** (an architect in Warsaw who wants to take on a building project in Berlin). They are encouraged to provide their services in several languages and to offer **personalised advice** to users.

Performance



This assessment reflects mostly the state of play for 2012 (as outlined in the Commission staff working document) but it also takes into account recent efforts to improve the functioning of the **Points of Single Contact**.

Quality and availability of information (1) measures how much of the required information is online and when available online whether the information is comprehensive, well-structured and easy to understand to the users: the scores above 75 % were rated as "green", below 40 % as "red", and "yellow" in the middle.

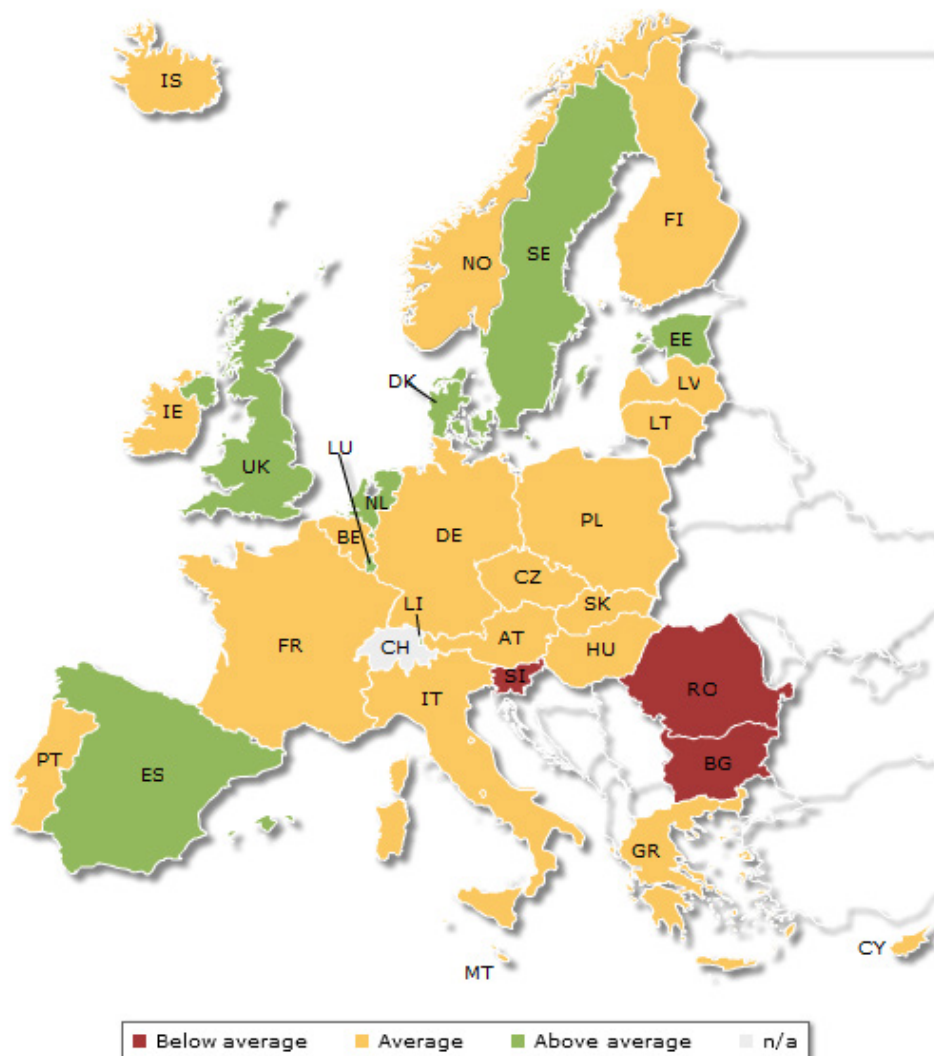
Online completion of procedures (2) measures the degree to which the completion of procedures is possible online (from simple downloading of the forms to most advanced webforms), additional tools allowing to pay the fees online or track the status of the application were also included: the scores above 70 % were rated as "green", below 40 % as "red", and "yellow" in the middle.

Accessibility, including for cross-border users (3) measures if the portal can be used by the foreign users and particular whether it is technically possible (e.g. if e-signatures are required for the completion of procedures, if there are means to handle e-signatures issued abroad) and whether it is easy for the foreign users to understand requirements applicable to them: the scores above 65 % were rated as "green", below 40 % as red, and "yellow" in the middle.

The three indicators ([1], [2] and [3]) are weighted differently, with most emphasis given to indicators [2]: 50 % and [1]: 30 % and least to indicator [3]: 20 %.

The overall assessment takes this weighting into account. This assessment is not based on the assessment categories and their weightings as proposed to the Member States in the form of the PSC Charter.

Overall performance



Achievements

The diversity of **Points of Single Contact (PSC)** in the EU makes it difficult to monitor and compare their development. However, there has been significant progress in a number of areas:

- All Member States have now set up at least a "**first generation PSC**". However, many Member States need to step up their efforts in making their PSCs respond to users' needs.
- The Communication on the implementation of the Services Directive, published in June 2012, highlighted the necessity of **making the PSCs fully functional**. In an accompanying commission staff working document, the Commission took stock of the development of the PSCs.
- In cooperation with Member States, the Commission proposed to establish a **set of common criteria** for the further development of PSCs in the form of a PSC charter.

Why are there such big differences between PSCs?

In contrast to other governance tools, PSCs do not use a centralised electronic system.

Member States are free to choose the most appropriate structure to reflect their legal and administrative realities.

A number of PSCs are embedded in mature, well-developed eGovernment structures, while others have been set up from scratch to comply with the Services Directive.

This often impacts on the scope of services available online.

Facts and Figures

- PSCs have made **significant progress**, in particular in providing information. Member States are now working on improving the way the information is being presented online.
- There has also been some progress in making it possible to **complete procedures online**. However, the online completion of procedures remains a challenge, for domestic users and even more so for cross-border users. This is the case above all where strong authentication and e-signatures are required but not yet supported technically, which makes it often impossible for a foreign user to complete the procedures online. On a positive note, several Member States are currently putting in place the necessary technical solutions which should improve the situation.
- Most Member States recorded a **slight increase in web traffic**.
- The **number of procedures** launched through the PSCs is still **rather low**.
- PSCs are also still largely **perceived as serving domestic users only**.
- The **awareness** about PSCs among the business community is also limited.

Priorities

- **The Commission will monitor the performance** of PSCs closely by organising user testing of the PSCs. The Commission will also engage in a direct dialogue with Member States to ensure that PSCs that are seriously lagging behind are improved.
- Member States also need to do more to **increase the accessibility** of PSCs for cross-border users:
 - At information level, a **clear distinction should be made** between procedures applicable to establishment cases and those applicable to cross-border provision of services;
 - Further work is needed to support cross-border authentication and e-signatures;
 - Potential users should be **targeted** better, in particular in border regions.
- Member States should also step up their efforts to create "**second generation PSCs**" which go beyond the legal requirements of the Services Directive and offer comprehensive services to businesses (such as VAT and social security registration). This is crucial for the broader uptake and success of the PSCs.
- The Commission services will **engage with business organisations** to make businesses more aware of the possibilities offered by the PSCs and to promote their use.