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On-line public services are increasingly mature, “intelligent” user centric inclusive services are the next frontier, says new eGovernment report

Brussels, Paris, June 29th 2006 - A survey, carried out for the European Commission by Capgemini, one of the world's foremost providers of Consulting, Technology and Outsourcing services, shows that the maturity of online public services across the EU keeps growing and has now reached an overall level of sophistication where full two-way interaction between citizens and governments is the norm, and nearly 50% allow citizens to conduct the whole process online. The sophistication index has risen by 6% in the year to April 2006 in the EU 15 Member States, but 16% in the EU10 reflecting the considerable efforts made in recent years. Austria leads the on-line public service league, followed by Malta and Estonia.

Introducing the report, Graham Colclough, Vice-president, Global Public Sector; Head of eGovernment at Capgemini, says: *"2010 targets may feel far off, as the 2005 ones once did, however that is no excuse for us to get complacent about making continued aggressive progress in using ICT¹ to improve Government services across Europe. It is vital for ensuring we retain high levels of digital literacy and thus vital for our economy. Making services available on-line is not enough. We must put heightened attention to user centric inclusive services. It is evident that some countries have the former licked, but are languishing rather in the latter. It's also a delight to see some of the progressive new Member States taking eGovernment very seriously and making impressive progress – indeed 'leapfrogging' several original Member States. eGovernment – or ICT-enabling Public Services – has entered a new and exciting era. One that is perhaps more complex, yet holds far more potential. The immediate challenge will be one of showing the evidence of better outcomes. This must remain at the forefront of our minds."*

Welcoming the findings, Information Society and Media Commissioner Viviane Reding said: *"On-line service delivery is now a mature service delivery model in the EU, and a new paradigm of 'intelligent', user-oriented e-services is beginning to emerge. According to our estimates², the economic impact of eGovernment research and development programmes may be as high as 1.54% of EU GDP by 2010 (€166 billion with 2005 GDP), provided that research and deployment initiatives are supported. This is why we launched the ambitious i2010 eGovernment Action Plan. Measuring Member States progress in making their online services more available, more effective and more user-centric is now more important than ever. I hope that these results further encourage Member States to implement the Action Plan, as they have committed themselves to doing recently in the Council."*

About the Capgemini Group

Capgemini, one of the world's foremost providers of Consulting, Technology and Outsourcing services, reported 2005 global revenues of 6,954 million euros and employs approximately 61.000 people worldwide.

¹ ICT stands for Information & Communication Technologies

² www.rso.it/egep

General conclusions of the report

In 2006 the online sophistication of public service delivery in the EU Member States has reached an overall score of 75%, while almost 50% of the measured public services are fully available online. The different degrees of sophistication of online public services range from ‘basic’ information provision over one-way and two way interaction to ‘full’ electronic case handling (fully available online).

Both indicators of the survey have recorded a significant global progress of 10% for the 28 surveyed countries.

At the start of this century, the Commission's e-Government initiatives focussed on developing eServices (projects aimed at providing online access to public services). These are now mostly in place, and governments are moving on to the next stage, of developing intelligent, user-oriented e-services.

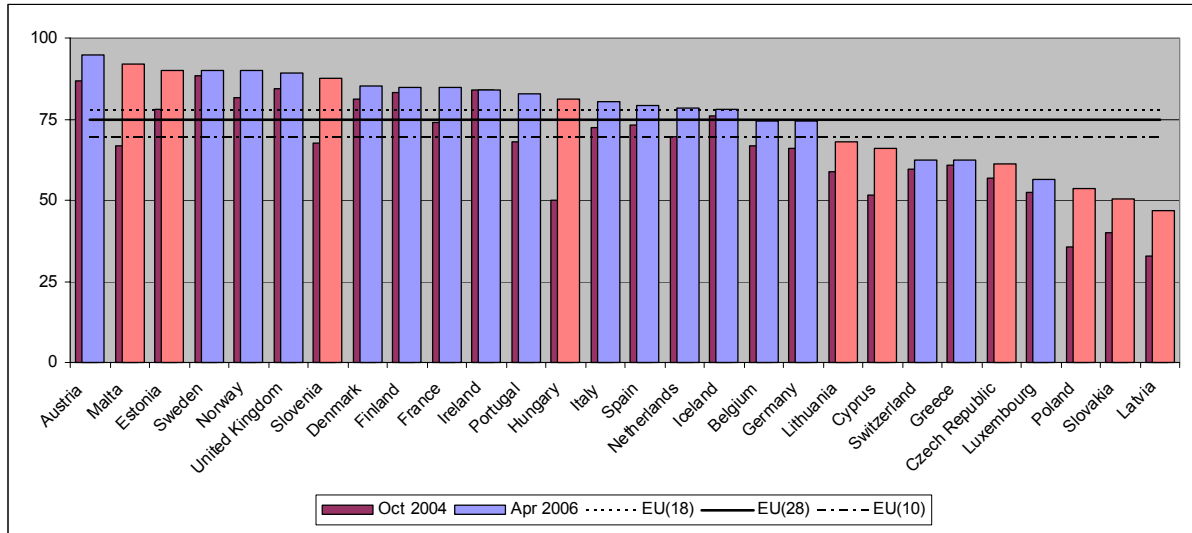
Sophistication and full availability indicators show that Austria now leads the way in all 20 services measured³. Austria’s “eGovernment platform” is a class-leading example of how to optimize a government’s eServices offering and make it almost 100% transactional. Malta achieved the most outstanding progress ever recorded, moving from 16th to 2nd place, while Estonia moved up from 8th to equal 3rd with Sweden. Hungary has moved up from 23rd to 14th and Slovenia from 15th to 7th.

One of the i2010 eGovernment Action Plan priorities is to “make efficient and effective eGovernment a reality”. Future editions of this survey will be geared to measure this objective. Furthermore, this supply side measurement will be combined with measurement of take up and government reorganisation to allow the assessment of the impact of the i2010 eGovernment Action Plan.

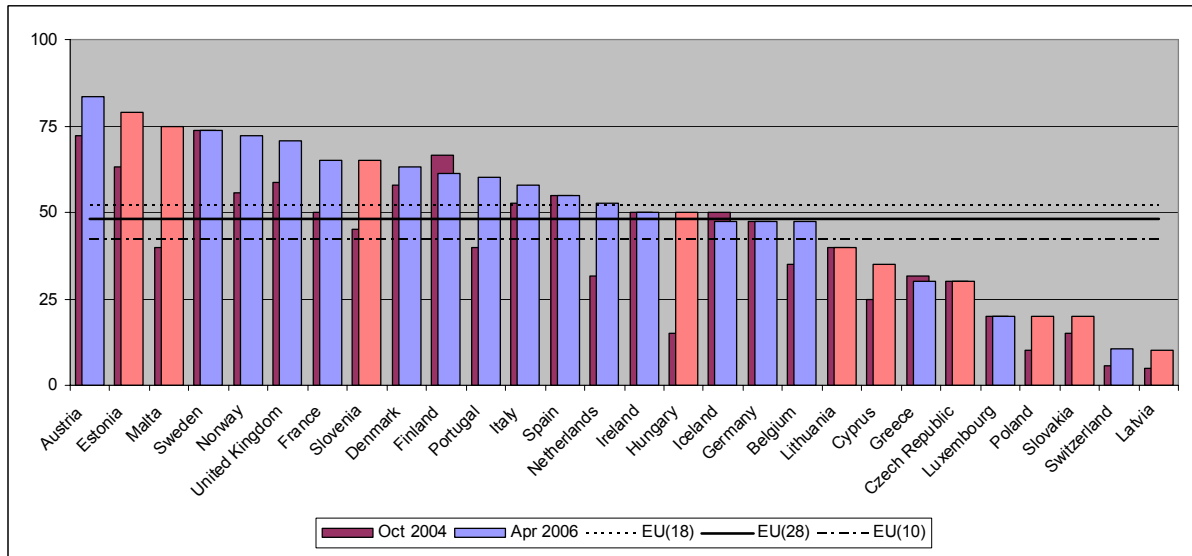
³ The 20 basic public services

Citizens	Businesses
Income Taxes	Social Contribution for Employees
Job Search	Corporate Tax
Social Security Benefits ³	VAT
Personal Documents ³	Registration of a New Company
Car Registration	Submission of Data to the Statistical Office
Application for Building Permission	Custom Declaration
Declaration to the Police	Environment-related Permits
Public Libraries	Public Procurement
Birth and Marriage Certificates	
Enrolment in Higher Education	
Announcement of Moving	
Health-related Services	

Country Results – online sophistication



Country Results – full availability online



Notes to editor:

The objective of the survey is to provide a benchmark for the different European countries to compare progress and share best practice. The survey, conducted in April 2006 for the sixth time, is a core part of the i2010 initiative launched by the European Union to bring the benefits of the information society to all Europeans. The measurement criteria used covered the level of on line interaction and the overall availability of public services online.

The full report is available on the Capgemini website on: http://www.capgemini.com/resources/thought_leadership/2006_online_availability_of_public_services/