



eGovernment Benchmark 2024 **executive summary**

*Advancing Pillars in Digital
Public Service Delivery*

INSIGHT REPORT

Written by Capgemini, Sogeti, IDC and Politecnico di Milano
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eGovernment Benchmark 2024

Executive Summary

**Advancing Pillars in Digital Public
Service Delivery**

Executive Summary

The eGovernment Benchmark: Monitoring Europe's digitalisation of public services

The eGovernment Benchmark monitors the digitalisation of public services in Europe. The digital transformation of our societies and our public services in particular is driven by government policies enabling digital technologies to flourish. As we approach the 2030 milestone set by the European Commission's Digital Decade policy programme, it becomes increasingly crucial for European nations to prioritise the development of resilient and sovereign digital infrastructures capable of upholding European values, while navigating the challenges of our era. This edition of the eGovernment Benchmark not only assesses the digital transformation of governments in 2022 and 2023 but also reflects on broader trends observed over the past four years. As we near the end of the current methodology cycle, it provides valuable insights and best practices for all those interested in eGovernment.

Analysing digital governments through the eyes of citizens and entrepreneurs

- The 2022/2023 eGovernment Benchmark sheds light on eGovernment in the 27 European Union Member States (EU27), as well as in Iceland 🇮🇸, Norway 🇳🇴, Switzerland 🇨🇭, Albania 🇦🇱, Montenegro 🇲🇪, North Macedonia 🇲🇰, Serbia 🇷🇸, Türkiye 🇹🇷, Moldova 🇲🇩, and Ukraine 🇺🇦.
- Across the EU27, Mystery Shoppers assessed 10,705 websites during October and November 2023, and in November and December 2022, across nine life events, related to key government domains. This equates to an average of 396 websites per EU27 member state. Moreover, these assessments occur biennially, with one set of life events examined every even year and another set during odd years.
 - Across the other countries, Mystery shoppers assessed 4027 websites, which equates to a little under 403 websites per country.
- This study evaluates online public services on four dimensions, which consist of 14 underlying indicators, broken down into 48 survey questions. The four dimensions can be described by the following key questions:





User Centricity – To what extent are services provided online? How mobile friendly are they? And what online support and feedback mechanisms are in place?



Transparency – Are public administrations providing clear, openly communicated information about how their services are delivered? Are they transparent about policy making and digital service design processes, as well as about the way people’s personal data is being processed?



Key Enablers – What technological enablers are in place for the delivery of eGovernment services?



Cross-Border Services – How easily are citizens from abroad able to access and use the online services? And what online support and feedback mechanisms are in place for cross-border users?

The User Centricity key dimension, through its online availability indicator, provides data that feeds into Digital Decade Key Public Indicators (KPIs) (Digital public services for citizens & Digital Public services for businesses).¹

Based on the four dimensions and 48 underlying survey questions, countries receive an overall eGovernment performance score. The composite score, ranging from 0 to 100 points, reflects the spectrum of eGovernment performance. Higher scores suggest stronger performance, while lower scores suggest areas for improvement.



1. Please refer to <https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/redirection/document/96937> for more information on these KPIs and <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/desi-methodological-note-digital-decade-report-2023> for the 2023 DESI methodological note.

European digital governments at a glance

The European leaders are Malta 🇲🇹 (97 points) and Estonia 🇪🇪 (92 points), maintaining their leadership positions, closely followed by Luxembourg 🇱🇺 (90 points) and Iceland 🇮🇸 (90 points). Other frontrunners within the European Union are Finland 🇫🇮 (88 points), Lithuania 🇱🇹 (86 points), Denmark 🇩🇰 (85 points), Netherlands 🇳🇱

(85 points), Latvia 🇱🇻 (85 points), Sweden 🇸🇪 (82 points), Austria 🇦🇹 (82 points) and Portugal 🇵🇹 (81 points). The EU27 overall performance averages at 76 points.

The best leaders in the other European countries are Türkiye 🇹🇷 (83 points) and Norway 🇳🇴 (82 points).

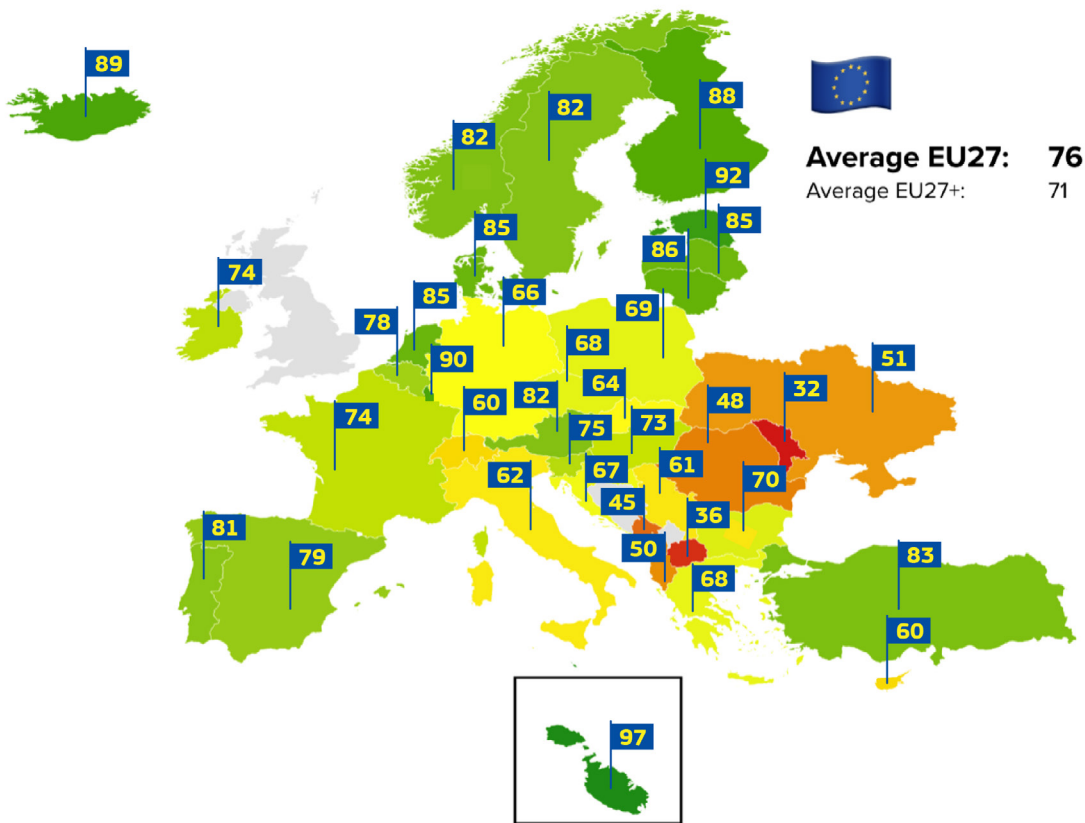


Figure 1: Country overall performance, biennial average 2022/2023

Compared to the previous year, significant growth was observed in several countries. Greece 🇬🇷 continued its upward trend, experiencing an 8-point increase for the second consecutive year. Additionally within the European Union, Bulgaria 🇧🇬 (+7 points), Cyprus 🇨🇵 (+7 points), Poland 🇵🇱 (+7 points), Slovenia 🇸🇯 (+6 points) and Sweden 🇸🇪 (+5 points) demonstrated noteworthy advancements.

Across the other European countries, Serbia 🇷🇸 (+5 points) demonstrated large advancements in comparison to previous year.

The dimension of *User Centricity* continues to shine as a top performer, boasting an EU27 average score of 93 points and indicating a high performance level across most European countries. The *Cross-Border Services* dimension (65 points) highlights the greatest scope for enhancement, especially in addressing deficiencies in cross-border eID capabilities. With an average of 78 points, the *Key Enablers* dimension shows promising performance, with more countries enabling safe authentication and pre-filling personal information capabilities. Lastly, the *Transparency of eGovernment* (currently at 67 points) can be improved, needing consistent service processes that are clear for both citizens and entrepreneurs.

Evolution across the four key dimensions over the past four years: The eGovernment Benchmark updates its methodology (i.e., the breadth and scope of digital public service provision that it measures to provide performance scores) every four years to maintain robustness and relevance. As we enter the concluding year of this four-year cycle, it is an ideal opportunity to reflect on the progress made throughout this period. Namely we notice:

- The overall digital performance of governments across the EU27 has shown clear progression, with a noteworthy 5-point increase between the years 2020/2021 and 2022/2023.
- The *User Centricity* score has consistently produced a high score (90+ points), while attaining a further 3-point increase over the past four years.
- The *Transparency* dimension has steadily increased in this cycle, experiencing the highest jump between 2020/2021 and 2022/2023, with a total increase of 4 points over the past four years.
- The *Key Enablers* dimension experienced the second most significant increase, with a 6-point difference between its 2020/2021 score and its most recent 2022/2023 score.
- The *Cross-Border Services* dimension is the most improved dimension in the EU27, with a 7-point increase in its biennial average over four years.

Reinforcing resilience of public administrations and digital sovereignty: The Digital Decade policy programme has ushered in a transformative era of digital advancement and strategic policymaking. Resilience and sovereignty are overarching principles that underpin some of the most pertinent policy trends in the field of eGovernment within European Union member states. This year's eGovernment Benchmark analysis spotlights topics such as:

Interoperability: The EU is paving the way for a Single Digital Gateway, setting a framework for administrative simplification and modernisation across the EU27 public administrations. The Single Digital Gateway has mandated the implementation of the Once-Only Technical System that will facilitate the cross-border delivery of public services by enabling the EU public administrations interoperable-by-design. The Interoperable Europe Act is an example of the EU's push for interoperability. This legislation represents a crucial step towards the provision

of key and accessible European public services online. To accomplish this objective, the Act establishes a new framework for shared interoperability solutions within the EU's public sector, empowering administrations at all levels to offer cross-border digital public services. The eGovernment Benchmark gives insight into interoperability through its *eID*, *Cross-Border eID*, and *Pre-Filled Forms indicators*.

- Large gaps remain between the percentage of national (76%) and cross-border (37%) services that provide eID capabilities. However, both these indicators saw consistent improvement over the past four years.
- While central governments excel in promoting interoperable public service enablers, local and regional entities show room for improvement, particularly in eID and pre-filling capabilities.
- The *Cross-Border User Support* indicator's average score of nearly 80 points, suggests that EU27 cross-border portals have user-feedback capabilities allowing them to comply with the Single Digital Gateway Regulation's rules for the collection and sharing of user feedback on cross-border portal websites.

Data sovereignty: Data sovereignty for citizens implies that they have control over their personal information and privacy. In the public domain this involves further transparency provided by governments around what kind of data they have about citizens and how they handle such data. The eGovernment Benchmark's *Transparency of Personal Data* indicator reveals that in nearly 9 out of 10 portals in the EU27, citizens have a high level of access in terms of accessing and managing their personal data while reporting inaccuracies. However, in less than 60% of portals, users are allowed to monitor who has accessed their data and for what purpose.

Cybersecurity: Safeguarding against cybersecurity threats is a major EU policy priority that is integral for maintaining resilient digital supply chains and infrastructure. The eGovernment Benchmark's pilot *Cybersecurity* indicator reveals that much improvement is needed across all EU countries in their cybersecurity capabilities with less than 1% reaching the pass (as opposed to fail) threshold for all 13 security criteria tests, as specified by the testing tool providers. Further, 50% of all the security criteria received a pass score. Nevertheless, top cybersecurity performers stand out because they have active policies in place to increase awareness and provide instruments and tools to improve resilience and security.

Artificial intelligence (AI): The growing prominence of AI-induced activities and operations in the EU has various regulatory implications. On the topic of sovereignty in particular, AI models must be created with design choices that reflect EU values. As a new indicator, the 2022/2023 eGovernment Benchmark data collection landscaped *AI Chatbot* capabilities provided on portal websites across the EU27. Across the five life events measured (Regular Business Operations, Starting a Small Claims Procedure, Moving, Transport, Health), 29% of portals offer a live support function that includes AI capability, with the Regular Business Operations portals having the highest percentage of AI capability.

Reducing disparities among public digital service delivery: To achieve the EU's digital transformation objectives, addressing performance disparities across countries, user groups and government tiers is crucial for fostering inclusive and efficient digital service delivery. This report highlights gaps in performance across various dimensions and addresses how they have evolved over the past four-year period. This provides the following insights:

- The average overall score of the 10 top-performers within the EU27 is 87 points, compared to 64 points for the 10 bottom-performers. This 23-point difference has decreased substantially (by 5 points) over the past four years.
- The average overall score for services for entrepreneurs sits at 83 points, compared to 74 points for citizen-related services. These citizen-related services have slowly caught-up with the business-related services, closing the gap by 3 points over the past four years.
- The online availability for national users sits at 91% for central government services, 82% for regional government services, and 71% for local government services.
- Availability of services for national users sits at 88%, compared to the 56% availability for cross-border users. Over the past four-year period, this gap has decreased slightly.

The trend evident in these different gaps is that the lower performing services and countries have been slowly catching up with the frontrunners. This is a desirable trend in the light of a sovereign and resilient digital EU because it builds towards a widespread digital performance across the continent.



Glossary of Key Terminology

eGovernment: electronic government (also digital government).

Dimensions: the four pillars against which indicators for eGovernment are aggregated and measured.

1. **User Centricity:** the extent to which information and services are available online, supported online, and compatible with mobile devices.
2. **Transparency:** the extent to which service processes are transparent, services are designed with user involvement, and users can manage their personal data.
3. **Key Enablers:** the extent to which digital, tools such as electronic identification (eID), eDocuments, Pre-filled Forms and Digital Post solutions, enable identification and communication between a user and a government service.
4. **Cross-Border Services:** the extent to which citizens and entrepreneurs from other European countries can access online information and services in a usable and integrated way through electronic identification and eDocuments.

Life event: a package of government services, usually provided by multiple agencies, that support citizens or entrepreneurs through key points of their lives, such as the birth of a child or starting a business. The eGovernment Benchmark covers nine life events (government domains) and these are measured on a biennial basis with one set assessed in even year dates and another set assessed in odd years:

- Assessed in 2023: *Regular Business Operations, Health, Moving, Transport, Starting a Small Claims Procedure.*
- Assessed in 2022: *Business Start-Up, Career, Studying and Family.*

Life event services: services within a user journey for national and cross-border users.

- **Informational services:** services and procedures that provide users with adequate and personalised insight into their situation.
- **Transactional services:** services and procedures needed to fulfil the essential requirements of a life event, such as registration.
- **Portal websites:** eGovernment websites that gather and provide information and services from multiple public administrations, also known as one-stop-shops.
- **National users:** citizens and entrepreneurs that seek information and services in their own country.
- **Cross-border users:** citizens or entrepreneurs that seek information and services in a European country other than their own.

Method: the way in which we collected the data.

- **Mystery Shopping:** the primary type of data collection in the eGovernment Benchmark – a proven evaluation method that makes the user journey and experience the primary focus of attention.
- **Automated tools:** online tests through which websites are entered and assessed on a number of criteria.

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