

Realising the transformation agenda: enhancing citizen use of eGovernment

A key factor determining the benefits and impact of any eGovernment service is the number of users of the service and/or the frequency of use of a system. The use of electronically provided services is currently disappointing. UK and international analysis demonstrates a strong and consistent correlation overtime between eGovernment service uptake and Internet access. The increasing availability of eGovernment services and advertising campaigns do not appear to have enhanced the relative level of eGovernment service use.

The task of transforming services and enhancing efficiency is clearly much more complex than adding new delivery channels and passively waiting for users to migrate to them. More needs to be done to convince non-users who are willing to use eGovernment services to try them. Once attracted they will usually continue to use the new channel and cost savings provided by electronic channels should be realised more quickly.

In this paper, evidence is provided to demonstrate that despite low levels of uptake there is a relatively high level of willingness amongst UK citizens to use electronic services. Satisfaction and loyalty are high and large numbers of users are beginning to see tangible benefits from eGovernment. Recommendations to overcome barriers to uptake and catalysts for eGovernment use are provided.



Paul Foley
De Montfort
Graduate
Business
School, Leicester (UK)

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“ A critical factor determining the rate of return on most public sector ICT investments is the number of users or the volume of information processed electronically. ”

1 Introduction

2005 represented a watershed for eGovernment¹ activity in the UK and Europe. In the UK the target of providing all government services electronically was largely achieved and results from the £60 million investment in National Projects were published. The eEurope 2005 Action Plan, aiming to develop modern public services and a dynamic environment for e-business, reached its end point and was updated by the i2010 initiative (CEC, 2005). This document establishes a five year strategy, one element of which suggests that an increase in the benefits arising to society can arise if the use of ICT in public services becomes 'better, more cost effective and more accessible' (CEC, 2005 p9).

Policymaking emphasis is moving increasingly to how digital technologies² can be used to achieve efficiency savings (Gershon, 2004) or to transform activities (Cabinet Office, 2005). In several countries the term eGovernment has become a little passé. The growing emphasis on efficiency adopted in many countries requires a more sophisticated approach to ensure investments in ICT achieve anticipated returns and enhance service delivery.

A critical factor determining the rate of return on most public sector ICT investments is the number of users that utilise a new service delivery channel (Foley, 2008). A flaw in the original target of providing all government services electronically (PIU, 2001) was recognised in 2002, when the issue of low take-up of electronic services was addressed by revising the Public Service Agreement (PSA) target to include 'key services achieving high usage' with the objective of promoting usability and impact.

Where ICT is used in a 'back-office' to automate the processing of data or forms policymakers can generally determine the volume of information processed electronically and thus influence any return on an investment. Where the investment provides a service for citizens or businesses uptake and frequency of use of the new service channel by these groups becomes critical in determining the rate at which existing more expensive channels can be reduced and savings through the new channel achieved.

Regrettably, as Figure 1 shows, the number of users interacting with public authorities using the Internet is relatively low and barely increasing in many countries. In the UK the number of users rose by only three per cent to 24 per cent between 2003 and 2005.

¹ Defined by the OECD as "the use of information and communication technologies [ICT], and particularly the Internet, as a tool to achieve better government." OECD, 2003 p11

² This definition includes Internet access through a PC (i.e. desktop, laptop and palmtop), mobile phones, kiosks and digital television. The terms digital or electronic technologies and ICT are used interchangeably on occasions to prevent the awkward repetition of words.

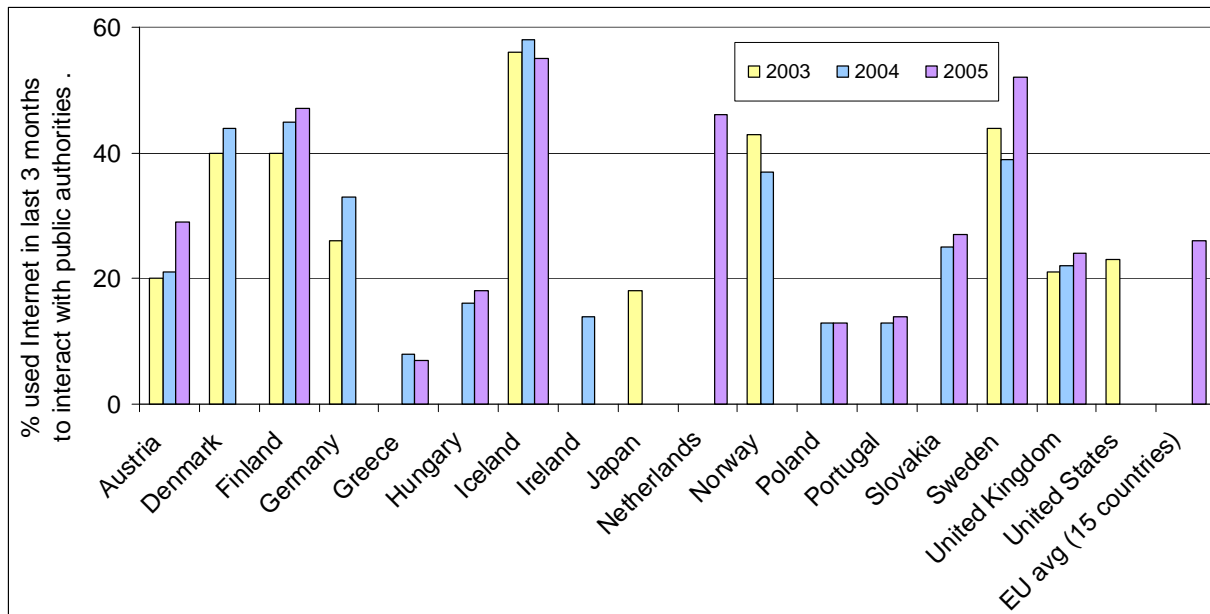


Figure 1. An international comparison of interaction with public authorities using the Internet 2003 to 2005. Source: Eurostat, www.europa.eu.int/comm/eurostat. Percentage of individuals aged 16 to 74 who have used the Internet, in the last 3 months, for interaction with public authorities

This paper analyses data from the Office for National Statistics Omnibus Survey to examine the use of eGovernment services in Britain and to identify the barriers and triggers for growth in use. Eurostat data is used to provide an international comparison of Internet and eGovernment use. The focus of this paper is on citizen use of electronic services. The use of eGovernment services by businesses are examined in a separate paper (McKinnon, 2006).

The first part of this paper examines the role of ICT in transforming government at the interface with the citizen and in 'back office activities.

The second section investigates the general (traditional or terrestrial) level and frequency of contact with government in the UK, user channel preferences and the willingness of citizens to use electronic channels.

Having established traditional channel preferences and use of government services the third section examines the uptake of eGovernment and the propensity of different types of users to migrate to new channels. A strong and consistent correlation overtime between eGovernment uptake and Internet access is observed.

The penultimate section examines the willingness of non-users to change channels. The barriers and catalysts for migration to new channels are investigated and the loyalty of eGovernment users to continue using new delivery channels are examined.

The paper concludes with a review of the key results and recommendations highlighted by this study.

2 eGovernment services: Efficiency and take-up

Achievement of the 2001 UK target (PIU, 2001) 'to provide all public services online by 2005' was largely confirmed through analysis of Implementing Electronic Government (IEG) statements. These required local authorities to report annually from 2001 on their progress to achieving 100 per cent e-enablement (ODPM, 2005).

In comparison to other countries the UK's progress is favourable (European Commission, 2004). Across a basket of twenty common European services the UK was ranked 5th out of 25 European countries for availability of services and 3rd out of 25 for the sophistication of the services made available online.

There has been progress on the supply side of eGovernment as measured against domestic targets and international benchmarks (CapGemini, 2005). In addition, the number of potential users should be relatively large because there is relatively high take-up of the Internet and other technologies such as Digital Television and SMS (text messaging). However, despite these favourable conditions evidence indicates that the UK has not been among the leaders in international comparisons of the take-up of electronic services (ONS, 2003), see Figure 1. In the UK only 24 per cent of adults had used the Internet in the last three months to interact with public authorities. This figure was below the 26 per cent average for EU (15) countries and less than half the levels achieved by Iceland (55 per cent) and Sweden (52 per cent).

Historically eGovernment policy has concentrated on the visible 'tip of the iceberg' of service delivery; focussing at the interface with the user by setting goals for the number of services delivered or measuring the uptake of eGovernment services by citizens. The new efficiency (Gershon, 2004) and transformational (Cabinet Office, 2005) agendas are likely to concentrate on 'behind the scenes' or 'back-office' activities to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of government in activities where inputs and outputs can be controlled more easily by those implementing the technology.

One of the problems of ICT use at the interface with the citizen is that high levels of uptake and utilisation by users can be difficult to influence, consequently the achievement of efficiency savings can be hard to estimate and control. Understanding uptake and the catalysts for use of electronic channels is therefore important for policymakers keen to enhance efficiency and reduce the use of more expensive delivery channels. This is particularly pertinent in relation to realising the benefits or returns on investments in eGovernment service provision, since all services should have been available electronically by 2005.

The results and analysis in this paper focus on the visible uptake of services at the interface with the citizen, concentrating on measuring the use and impact of electronic channels. This approach not only reflects the historical policy imperative, but also pragmatically the fact that aggregate progress in the front office is frequently much easier to measure than in the back-office. The rest of this paper should therefore be read with this in mind.

The task of transforming services and enhancing efficiency is clearly much more complex than adding new delivery channels and passively waiting for users to migrate to them. There is clearly considerable integration and overlap between back-office and front office systems, in this respect the front office activities, which form the focus for this paper, will also provide important information for those managing and implementing back-office systems.

It is important to highlight that recently it has been recognised that focussing on take-up through electronic channels can distort priorities and the allocation of resources (Cabinet Office, 2005).

One critical benefit arising from the introduction of ICT can be the reduction in form filling and the administrative burden for citizens in their contact and dealings with government (Cabinet Office, 2005). Establishing a target that promotes electronic contact with government potentially runs counter to burden reduction objectives. High eGovernment take-up could indicate a burdensome regulatory environment, where citizens and businesses are obliged to contact government frequently. Context is therefore critical when interpreting eGovernment statistics, especially in international comparisons.

3 Real world use of Government services and the propensity for eGovernment use

3.1 Real world use of Government services

Before looking at who is using eGovernment it is worth taking a step back to assess the general (traditional or terrestrial) level of use of government services and the willingness of the population to switch to electronic service delivery channels.

The National Statistics Omnibus survey uses stratified random sampling techniques to interview about 1,800 adults in Great Britain each month. Analysis of data collected in 2005 found that 82 per cent of the GB adult population have contacted government – either local or central - in the year leading up to the survey. Table 1 shows the key services used by British adults; health is the most frequently used by a significant margin.

Contact with local government is perhaps surprisingly low given the common perception that this is a frequently used area. However, these results are consistent over four surveys.

Table 1. *Contact with Government in the last 12 months*

Service Area	GB adult population who contact government
Health	65
Tax, pensions and benefits	40
Transport and travel	26
Local government	24
Education and employment	19
No contact	18
Law and order	14
General enquiry	7

Annual contact with government is relatively infrequent, see Figure 2. Over three quarters of the adult British population contact government less than once per month and this includes a significant number who do not even deal with government on an annual basis.

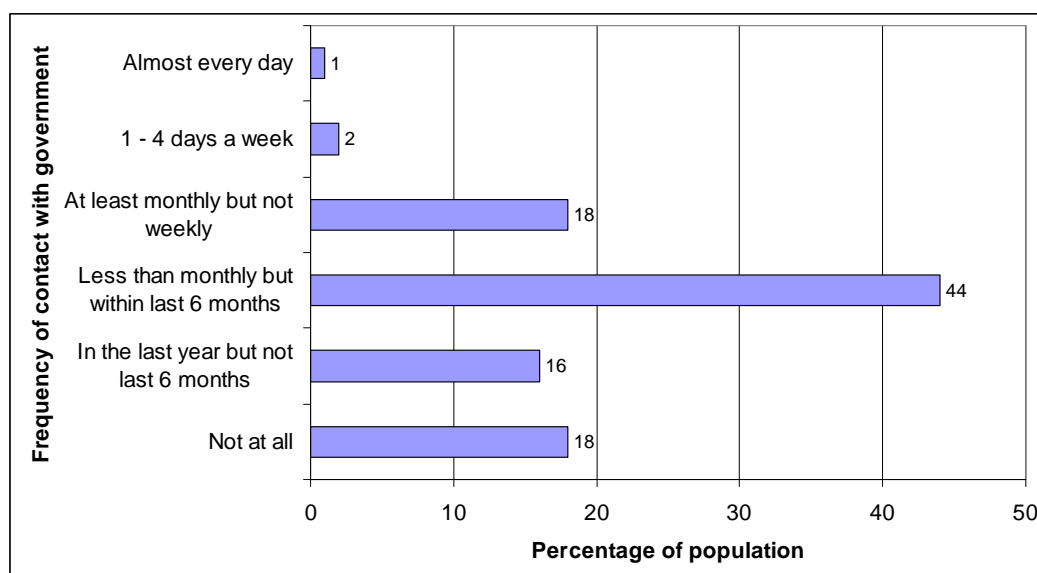


Figure 2. *Frequency of contact with government. Source: ONS July 2005 omnibus survey*

There are implications for service designers from this. If services are used infrequently then the 'business case' for providers to develop new channels is likely to be poor; the overall benefits to government are likely to be lower for an infrequently used service when accumulated over time in comparison to a more frequently used service. A strategy focusing on adding new channels or automating an infrequently used existing service is unlikely to change the frequency of contact between service user and the provider. Users are usually reluctant to migrate to new channels, preferring to stick with what they know. This switchover cost (for users) is heightened for infrequently used services because an understanding of how to access or use the service can be forgotten between infrequent visits.

Bundling together infrequently used services in a single electronic one-stop-shop, such as the direct.gov portal³, can reduce citizen switchover costs and provide a better business case for new channel delivery. The frequency of use of the one-stop-shop is higher than that of the constituent services.

Channel preferences, for dealing with government are shown in Table 2. The most popular channels remain the traditional ones of telephone, post or in-person visits. If the new channels, which make use of ICTs, are grouped together Omnibus survey results indicate that half of the adult population are willing to contact government using digital channels.

Table 2. Channel preferences for contacting government

Channel	% Population willing to contact government via channel
Telephone at home, work or elsewhere	86
In-person visit	56
Post	55
Post Office	39
Internet at Home	39
Internet elsewhere	15
Kiosk	13
SMS or Internet on a mobile	11
iDTV at home	8
None of these	3

3.2 Willingness to use eGovernment services

Figure 3 provides further analysis of channel preferences by different age groups. Younger age groups have a greater willingness to use eChannels (the Internet, kiosks, SMS and iDTV). Only 5 per cent of those over 74 are will to use these channels.

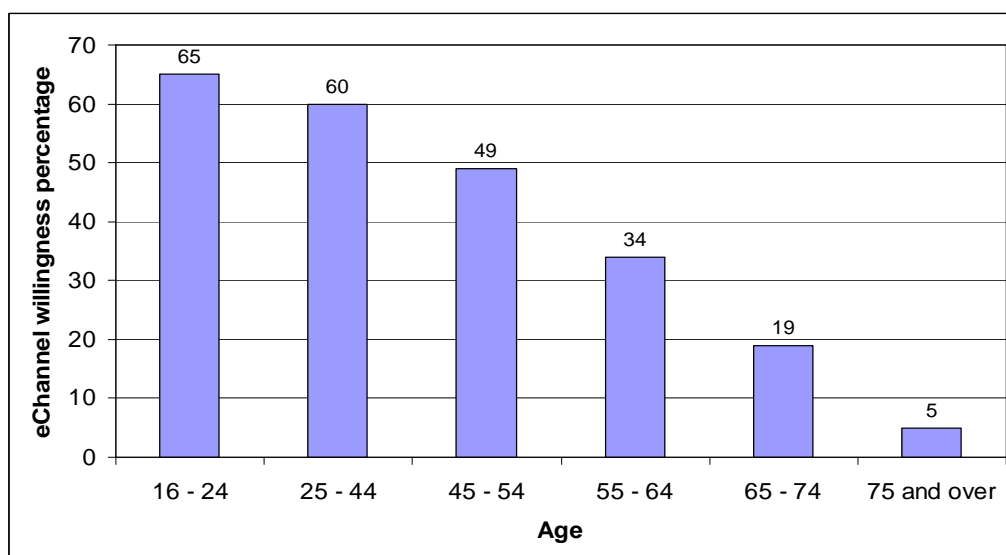


Figure 3. Willingness of different age groups to use eChannels. Source: ONS July 2005 omnibus survey

³ <http://www.direct.gov.uk>

Willingness to use electronic channels is strongly linked to age – older people are less inclined to use digital technologies than younger people. This has important implications for service designers. Strategies requiring channel migration to significantly reduce the use of (or possibly close down) conventional channels in order to yield major efficiency gains will compromise inclusiveness. New channel uptake will have to be targeted at those with the greatest propensity to migrate and traditional channels will have to continue to be made available to older people and others unwilling to migrate. Service designers will have to be aware of the channel preferences of their users and develop channel strategies accordingly.

This approach does not have to result in a trade-off between efficiency and inclusion objectives. The two are not mutually exclusive; efficiency gains are possible by transforming back-office processes and seamlessly integrating the right mix of channels together to deliver a more effective and inclusive service.

In the Omnibus survey respondents who stated they were willing to deal with government electronically were also asked what type of activities they would be willing to undertake. Ninety per cent are willing to use electronic channels to obtain information about government or services. However, willingness reduces with the sophistication of activities – three quarters are willing to book appointments online and around 60 per cent are willing to make payments to government online.

4 Take-up and use of eGovernment services

4.1 Take-up of eGovernment services

The previous section looked at real world use of government services and willingness to use eGovernment services. This section examines the uptake of electronic services and propensity of users to migrate to new channels.

Figure 4 shows that 58 per cent of GB Internet users have visited a government web site in the last twelve months (based on the July 2005 ONS omnibus survey). Statistics in Figure 4 (visits to a government web site in the last 12 months) differ from those in Figure 1 which provided an international comparison of visits to a government web site in the last three months, this found only 24 per cent of adults had used the Internet to interact with government in 2005. As section 3.1 revealed, real world use of government services is infrequent, it is probable that Internet contact is also equally infrequent, therefore the differing time-spans to 'capture' eGovernment use probably explain this discrepancy.

Between July 2004 and July 2005 there was a twelve per cent increase in government web site users. This is a reasonably high growth rate which could in part, be explained by the emergence and promotion of major government sites such as NHS Direct Online and Directgov. These have rapidly grown to be among the most popular online government services.

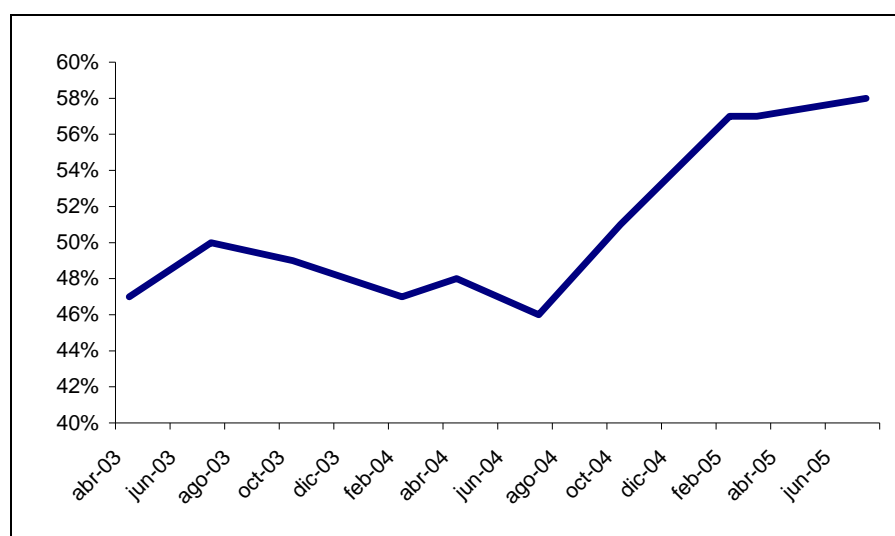


Figure 4. Percentage of GB Internet users who have visited a government web site in the last 12 months.
Source: ONS July 2005 omnibus survey

Analysis of the demographics of eGovernment web site usage, relative to the online population, indicates that those Internet users that do visit government web sites tend to be more likely to be economically active and of working age. Usage clearly drops off with age.

4.2 Relationship between Internet use and eGovernment services use

Previous sections have shown considerable diversity in the willingness of different groups to use the Internet and eGovernment services. Data from the 2005 omnibus survey was used to examine the relationship between wealth (by decile), Internet use and eGovernment use, see Figure 5. It is well known that Internet use increases with wealth. Interestingly, it appears that eGovernment use increases with Internet use. There is a strong correlation ($r = 0.78$) between the two.

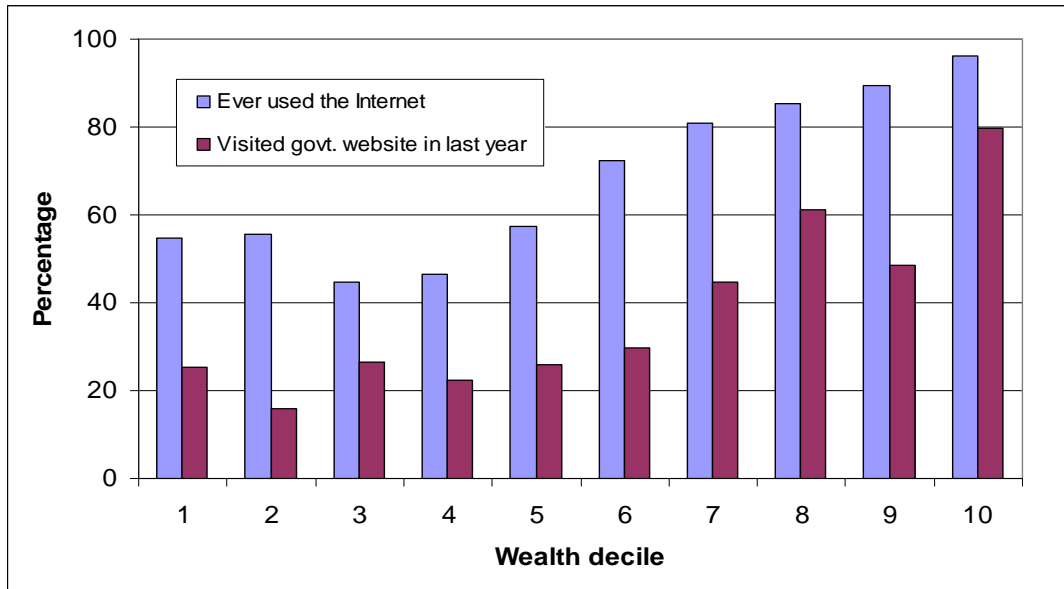


Figure 5. Internet and eGovernment use in Britain by wealth decile 2005. Source: ONS July 2005 omnibus survey. Adults who have ever used the Internet and visitors to eGovernment web sites within the last 12 months as a percentage of the Internet population. The least wealthy decile is '1', the wealthiest '10'.

The relationship between Internet use and eGovernment use is also evident at the international level ($r = 0.79$ in 2005), see Figure 6.

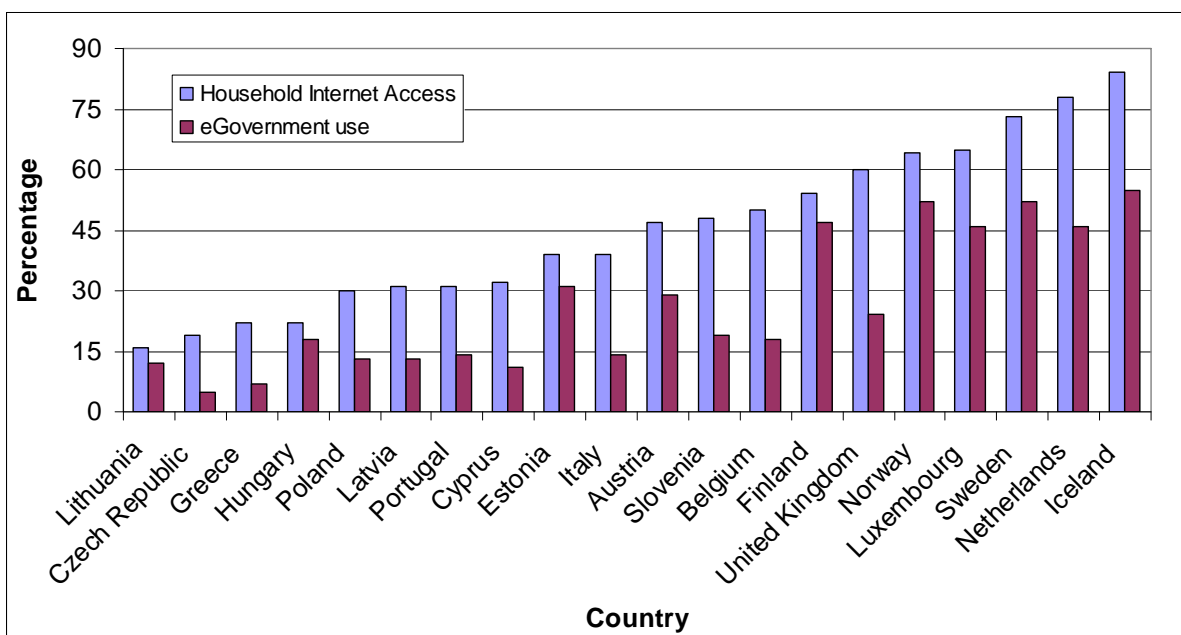


Figure 6. A comparison of Internet and eGovernment use in 2005 in Europe. Source: Eurostat. Household Internet access and the percentage of individuals aged 16 to 74 who have used the Internet, in the last 3 months, for interaction with public authorities.

Interestingly, longitudinal European analysis shows that the relationship between Internet and eGovernment use has remained relatively consistent between 2003 and 2005, see Figure 7.

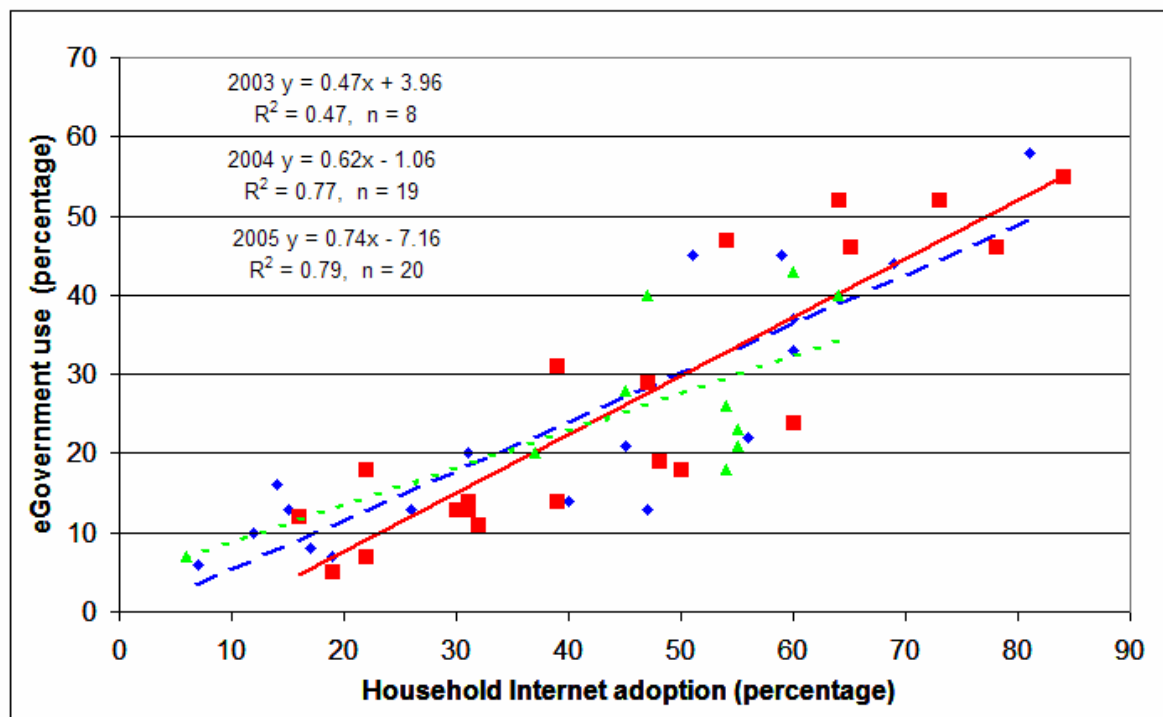


Figure 7. The relationship between Internet and eGovernment use in Europe 2003 to 2005. Source: Eurostat. Household Internet access and the percentage of individuals aged 16 to 74 who have used the Internet, in the last 3 months, for interaction with public authorities

The slight increase in the slope of the trendline between 2003 and 2005 may indicate a growing level of increase in eGovernment use by countries with higher levels of household adoption. However, the number of countries with Eurostat data has increased overtime (eight in 2003 and 20 in 2005) and this might account for any change. Further analysis of this trend in future years might clarify the nature of this relationship.

Countries above the trendline have higher levels of eGovernment use than might be expected, these included Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Lithuania and Norway in 2005. Countries with lower than expected eGovernment use include Belgium, Slovenia and the United Kingdom. The correlation between the percentage of people who had used the Internet in the last week in European countries and eGovernment use is even more consistent and stable overtime than the pattern shown in Figure 7. Correlation values of 0.96, 0.87 and 0.92 were observed in 2003, 2004 and 2005 (respectively).

A similar relationship between Internet and eGovernment use is evident when examining different socially excluded groups ($r = 0.85$), see Figure 8.

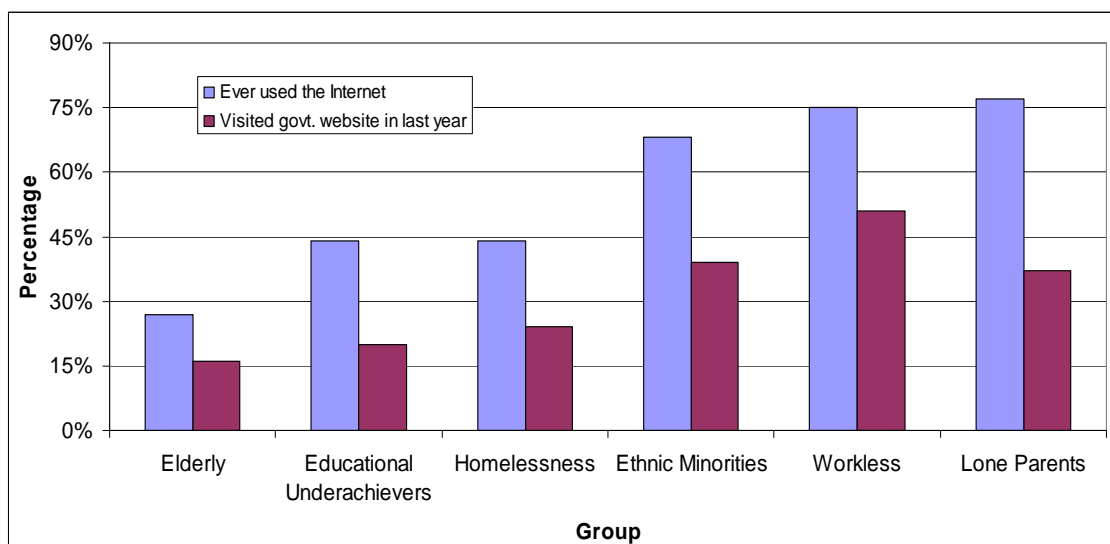


Figure 8. Internet and eGovernment use by socially excluded groups in Britain in 2005. Source: ONS July 2005 omnibus survey. Adults who have ever used the Internet and visitors to eGovernment web sites within the last 12 months as a percentage of the Internet population.

UK and European analysis demonstrates a strong and consistent correlation overtime and for different groups between eGovernment service uptake and Internet access. This indicates that eGovernment usage is increasing at a similar rate to Internet adoption, the increase in eGovernment services available online and advertising campaigns do not appear to be enhancing the relative level of eGovernment service use.

A relatively consistent pattern emerges across all countries and groups analysed in 2005 in Figures 5 to 7. On average between 55 and 60 per cent of those with access to the Internet use eGovernment services. Further analysis to examine if there is a consistent pattern in the nature of eGovernment services used (for example information, interaction and transaction services) by different groups would be beneficial to those trying to increase the uptake of online services. Further analysis of longitudinal analysis would also be useful to see if the relationship between Internet access and eGovernment use changes in the future.

4.3 Other eGovernment access technologies

The focus so far has been on government services delivered via the Internet. GB Omnibus survey respondents were also asked whether they accessed government services via non-Internet based electronic channels such as automated telephony, kiosks, interactive Digital Television or SMS (text messaging). Thirteen per cent of the population claim to have used government services via these 'other' channels and interestingly, of these, six per cent of the population have not used Internet based government services. This means that other electronic channels are beginning to have an impact. Including 'other' channels it is estimated that 38 per cent of the GB adult population have accessed government services via the various types of electronic channel available.

A final, but important point concerning eGovernment take-up is that so far only a few truly mass-market eGovernment services have been made available. A relatively high level of uptake of these services by particular segments of the population is hidden in the overall statistics presented in this paper, see Table 3. However, the operational data gathered by service delivery departments shown in Table 3 demonstrates that for some electronic services relatively high levels of take-up by potential users can be achieved.

Table 3. Take-up of electronic channels for specific services

Service	Take-up of Electronic Channels (electronic as a % of all transactions)
Driving Test Bookings – Theory Tests	51%
University Applications	73%
Land Registry Direct	19%
Tax Self Assessment Forms	17%
Pension Forecasts	11%

5 Catalysts, barriers and the impact of eGovernment services

The two preceding sections have examined potential or latent use for eGovernment services and the real level of eGovernment service use at web sites.

Policy imperatives to enhance the efficiency of their newly developed electronic service delivery channels necessitate a better understanding of the barriers to eGovernment service uptake and the catalysts that will encourage use. This section addresses these issues; it also examines the loyalty of eGovernment service users to continue using electronic channels

5.1 Barriers to the use of eGovernment services

To investigate barriers to eGovernment service use Internet users not accessing eGovernment web sites were asked why they did not use electronic channels. The highest barrier to use (40 per cent) is the lack of need to access services, see Table 4. This result is similar to the principle barrier given by non-Internet users for not accessing the Internet – 47 per cent of non-users in October 2005 did not want to or see a need to access the Internet (ONS, 2006). Interestingly, out of those non-users that stated they had no need, around three quarters claim to have contacted government in the last 12 months, albeit infrequently.

Table 4. Barriers to the use of eGovernment web sites

Barriers	% Internet users not visiting eGovernment web sites
No need to access services	40
Prefer to access in other ways	20
Other, None or Don't Know	11
No Benefits	9
Personal Details	8
ID Theft	5

5.2 Willingness to use of eGovernment services

All respondents not using eGovernment services in the Omnibus survey were asked about their willingness to use them, this includes both those that had and had not used the Internet. As would be expected there is a strong link between willingness to use the Internet to contact government and actual use of government web sites (46 per cent of respondents), see Table 5. Nonetheless, a sizeable number, 20 per cent of respondents, indicated that they would be willing to use eGovernment services in the future. The primary reason the 24 per cent of respondents who were not willing gave for not using government web sites was a lack of need or desire. Conversely, ten per cent of respondents stated they were unwilling to visit government web sites but they had already done so.

Table 5. Willingness to use eGovernment web sites

	Visit eGovernment web sites	Do not visit eGovernment web sites
Not Willing	10 %	24 %
Willing	46 %	20 %

It is sometimes hypothesised that those who are the most frequent users of government services are also the least likely to use the new electronic service delivery channels. This hypothesis was tested and found to be unsubstantiated by the survey. No statistical association between willingness to use electronic channels to deal with government and general contact frequency with government was found.

A comparison of eGovernment web site users' willingness to undertake activities online and the actual activities they undertake online are shown in Table 6. The most popular activity is obtaining information, 40 per cent of users are willing to do this and 28 per cent actually undertake the activity. Willingness to undertake other activities which involve interaction are also relatively high (above 33 per cent), see Table 6. Transacting with government by making a payment is also actively considered by 26 per cent of eGovernment web site users.

Interestingly, willingness to undertake an activity is not matched by action. Table 6 emphasises the significant gap between what people are willing to do and what they are actually doing. Less than ten per cent of eGovernment web site users have undertaken any of the services in Table 6, with the exception of 'obtaining information'.

This is further illustrated when the sophistication of eGovernment activities on the Internet are compared with the sophistication of general activities undertaken on the Internet. Over 90 per cent of eGovernment web site visitors who have used the Internet to send an email have not sent an email to government. Over three quarters of eGovernment users that have bought something online have not made a payment online to government.

Table 6 and the preceding review of email and payment capabilities of users demonstrates that people are willing and capable of undertaking more sophisticated interaction and transactional activities with government. But for some reason, at present, they are not.

Table 6. Activities on eGovernment Web Sites

	Willingness as % population	Actual as % population
Obtain Information	40	28
Download Form	35	8
Send Email	38	4
Submit an application	33	6
Make a Payment	26	3
Book an Appointment	33	1

5.3 Catalysts for eGovernment service use

Non-users were asked what would make them use eGovernment web sites. Tangible benefits such as speed of response, time and cost savings are the most popular potential catalysts to encourage eGovernment use, see Table 7.

However, a quarter of non-users did not choose one of the potential benefits presented to them as a possible catalyst to start accessing eGovernment web sites. This highlights a sizeable segment of the online population who are not yet convinced of the benefits of using government web sites.

Table 7. Catalysts to use eGovernment web sites

Catalysts	% Internet users not visiting eGovernment web sites
Time Savings	31
Reduced cost	30
Faster response	27
None of catalysts listed	24
Improved convenience and availability	17
Reduced need to submit data more than once	16
Easier to use service	11
Improved reliability/ fewer mistakes	7
Don't know	6
Improved quality and breadth of information	5

5.4 Impact, benefits and loyalty for eGovernment service use

Respondents using eGovernment services were asked about their impact - in particular the positive benefits and their negative experiences. 88 per cent of users identified at least one positive benefit from their use of eGovernment services. Improved convenience and availability was the most cited benefit along with time savings, see Table 8. Over 40 per cent of users had experienced either cost savings associated with electronic channels or faster responsiveness. The results indicate that in aggregate around 28 per cent of the population have experienced a positive benefit from eGovernment service use. Particularly encouraging is that users are reaping the benefits that non-users indicate could persuade them to use eGovernment (see Table 7).

Table 8. Positive impacts to enhance eGovernment experience

Positive impact	% of eGovernment users
Time savings	58
Improved convenience and availability	57
Faster response	45
Reduced cost	42
Improved quality and breadth of information	30
Easier to use service	30
Improved choice of ways to deal with government	19
Reduced need to submit data more than once	17
None of these	12

While the survey responses on positive benefits begin to demonstrate a return on eGovernment investment, respondents were also asked about any negative experiences. Encouragingly, around half of users reported that they had not experienced any of the negative impacts listed. However, there is room for improvement. The most common issues concerned technical problems with web sites (19 per cent of respondents). Difficulty in finding services online was also cited as an issue for 15 per cent of users, as were security problems (16 per cent). These results indicate that developers need to pay particular attention to usability testing and monitoring the quality of services periodically.

It appears that the positive benefits are generally outweighing negative experiences. Satisfaction and loyalty among eGovernment users both being high, see Table 9. 91 per cent of users rate services as generally good, and almost the same percentage indicate they will continue to use electronic services in the future.

Table 9. eGovernment Satisfaction and Loyalty (% of users)

		WILL USE AGAIN	
		No	Yes
SERVICE RATING	Generally good	7%	83%
	Generally Poor	2%	8%

6 Conclusions

In many countries there has been considerable investment in ICT and new service delivery channels. Policy emphasis is now focusing on how 'returns' on this investment can be achieved and the role of ICT in enhancing efficiency savings and transforming activities.

The task of transforming services and enhancing efficiency is clearly much more complex than adding new delivery channels and passively waiting for users to migrate to them. A key factor determining the benefits and impact of any eGovernment service is the number of users of the service and/or the frequency of use of a system. The use of electronically provided services is currently disappointing and growth in uptake in many countries is poor. However, this is perhaps not surprising because the level and frequency of traditional (or terrestrial) contact with government is relatively low. Over three quarters of the British adult population contact government less than once per month. This has implications for the developers of electronic channels and services. If terrestrial services are used infrequently the 'business case' for providers to develop new channels is likely to be lower than for more frequently used services. A major problem for infrequently used services is that users' understanding of how to access or use the new channel can be forgotten between sporadic visits. However, bundling together infrequently used services at a single portal or 'one stop shop' can reduce citizen switch-over costs.

UK and international analysis demonstrates a strong and consistent correlation (generally greater than $r = 0.77$) between 2003 and 2005 for countries and different groups (including the socially excluded) between eGovernment service uptake and Internet access. This indicates that eGovernment usage is increasing at a similar rate to growth in Internet adoption. The increase in eGovernment services and advertising campaigns do not appear to be enhancing the relative level of eGovernment service use.

Further analysis to examine if there is a consistent pattern in the use of different types of eGovernment services (for example information, interaction and transaction services) by different groups would be beneficial to those trying to increase the uptake of online services. However, a consistent general relationship was observed - on average between 55 and 60 per cent of those with access to the Internet use eGovernment services.

Willingness to use the Internet is relatively high. 20 per cent of the GB adult population are willing to use eGovernment services but have not used them. The primary reason for not using eGovernment services was a lack of need or desire. Interestingly the catalysts that non-users suggest would persuade them to use government web sites (most notably time savings, reduced costs and faster response) are the major benefits of eGovernment channels identified by users. If these real life advantages experienced by eGovernment services users could be conveyed to non-users it might provide the reasons and motivation they need to try new channels. Interestingly, once users try eGovernment services they usually regard them as good and use them again.

A critical factor determining the rate of return on most public sector ICT investments is the number of users or the volume of information processed electronically. Growth in the uptake of services has been low. More needs to be done to convince non-users who are willing to use eGovernment services to try them. Once

attracted they will usually continue to use the new channel and cost savings provided by electronic channels should be realised more quickly.

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Author

Paul Foley

Director of the International Electronic Commerce Research Centre and Professor of eBusiness
De Montfort Graduate Business School,
Leicester (UK)
pdfoley@btinternet.com
<http://www.epractice.eu/people/445>



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Email: editorial@epractice.eu



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