Challenges in the use of electronic services in the public administration

EUPAN DIRECTORS GENERAL MEETING

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Summary of the presentation

- Introduction
- Challenges in the use of public electronic services in Romania – Insights from study
- Challenges in the use of public electronic services in other EU Member States – Insights from comparative study
- Challenges in the use of public electronic services – Insights from the questionnaires distributed through EUPAN
• **Study: Challenges in the use of electronic services in the public administration in Romania**

  ▪ Objective: Exploring the present institutional & strategic frameworks as well as the current eGov infrastructure in order to better understand the challenges to the use of public electronic services and identify the available options to increase their use.

  ▪ Methodology: Desk research and survey on a sample of Romanian citizens.

• **Study: Challenges in the use of electronic services in the public administration in other EU member states**

  ▪ Objective: Compare eGov development models from various EU member states, explore common difficulties in the use of e-services and analyse cases of good practice which could be emulated.

  ▪ Methodology: Desk research.
• **Preliminary Analysis**

- Questionnaire distributed through EUPAN (for comparative study), based on 17 questions with regards to: the institutional and legislative framework governing electronic services, the extent of use of e-services in the public administration, difficulties in the use of e-services etc. Data gathered from 20 countries (including Romania).
Challenges in the use of public electronic services in Romania – Main insights from study
In order to measure the progress made by member states towards a digital economy and society, the European Commission has used since 2014 a composite index of 34 indicators grouped around 5 policy areas called the Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI).

The DESI policy areas are: Connectivity, Human Capital, Use of Internet Service, Integration of Digital Technology & Digital Public Services.

Romania has the lowest score among the EU28, but in 2018 its overall DESI score increased thanks to improved performance in 4 out of 5 dimensions (Connectivity, Human Capital, Use of Internet, Digital Public Services).

Challenges in the use of electronic services in Romania – National context

- **Contrasts**: Digitisation of economy and digital skills (29% with at least basic digital skills) in the population are low, but 44% of homes subscribe to ultrafast broadband. At the same time, there is a substantial increase in the use of social networks (reaching 82% in 2017), above the EU average of 65%.

- **Connectivity**: Fixed broadband coverage stagnated at 88% (ranked 27th in the EU), urban-rural divide especially visible in next-generation access (NGA) coverage – 40% of rural areas covered.

CHALLENGES IN THE USE OF ELECTRONIC SERVICES IN ROMANIA – NATIONAL CONTEXT

• Institutional framework:
  ✓ Ministry of Communications and Information Society (MCSI) – executive control over eGovernment;
  ✓ Agency for Digital Agenda of Romania (AADR) – coordination of all operating systems related to the provision of eGov services.

• Strategic framework:
  ✓ National Strategy Digital Agenda for Romania 2014 – 2020 (Key areas for intervention: eGov, Interoperability, Cybersecurity, Cloud Computing, Open Data, Big Data, Social Media, ICT in education & culture, e-Inclusiveness, E-Commerce and ICT Innovation, Broadband and digital services);
  ✓ National Interoperability Framework (adopted in 2017; Key principles: transparency of complex public services, "no wrong door", digital by default, re-use of data).
Responses with regards to the degree to which public services could be fulfilled online

- **Services related to the issuing/change of personal documents (ID cards, passport, etc.)** – 7.4% responded that services were covered fully online; 46.6% that services were only partially covered online; 46% that services were not covered at all online.

- **Services related to payment of local taxes** – 25.7% responded that services were covered fully online; 35.3% that services were only partially covered online; 38.9% that services were not covered at all online.

- **Services related to the payment of taxes at central level** – 20.2% responded that services were covered fully online; 34.4% that services were only partially covered online; 45.4% that services were not covered at all online.

- **Services related to land registration and real estate advertising** – 3.2% responded that services were covered fully online; 22.9% that services were only partially covered online; 73.9% that services were not covered at all online.
Responses with regards to the degree to which public services could be fulfilled online

- **Services related to labour market, social security and pensions** – 8.4% responded that services were covered fully online; 36.8% that services were only partially covered online; 54.8% responded that services were not covered at all online.

- **Services related to health insurance** – 3.9% responded that services were covered fully online; 23.5% that services were only partially covered online; 72.5% responded that services were not covered at all online.

- **Services related to education (including registration for kindergarten)** – 8.4% responded that services were covered fully online; 36.8% that services were only partially covered online; 54.8% responded that services were not covered at all online.

- **Services related to personal vehicles (e.g. car registration)** – 3.8% responded that services were covered fully online; 45.6% that services were only partially covered online; 50.6% responded that services were not covered at all online.
Responses concerning to the degree of satisfaction with regards to the manner in which services were offered online

- **Services related to the issuing/change of personal documents (ID cards, passport, etc.)** – 10.3% high degree of satisfaction; 42.4% medium degree of satisfaction;

- **Services related to payment of local taxes** – 17.5% high degree; 39.8% medium degree;

- **Services related to the payment of taxes at central level** – 9.9% high degree; 40.1% medium degree;

- **Services related to land registration and real estate advertising** – 4.5% high degree; 35.1% medium degree;

- **Services related to labour market, social security and pensions** – 6% high degree; 39.7% medium degree;

- **Services related to health insurance** – 9.1% high degree; 27.9% medium degree;

- **Services related to education (including registration for kindergarten)** – 2.7% high degree; 34.5% medium degree;

- **Services related to personal vehicles (e.g. car registration)** – 9% high degree; 36.8% medium degree.
• **Ghiseul.ro** – Portal dedicated to the payment of local taxes by bank card has been used by over 69% of respondents;

• **Online website of General Directorate for Passports** – Portal that allows for appointments to submit request for issuance of passport has been used by over 47%;

• **Online website of General Directorate for Driving Licenses and Car Registration** that allows for documents issuance status check & appointments has been used by over 46%.
**Challenges in the Use of Electronic Services in Romania – Use of E-Services (Businesses)**

- **Private Virtual Space** – Portal dedicated to services related to taxation at central level has been used by 63% of respondents;
- **Ghiseul.ro** – Portal dedicated to the payment of local taxes by bank card has been used by over 59% of respondents;
- **Portal of National Trade Register Office** that facilitates the online registration of a company has been used by 54% of respondents.

![Use of electronic services (Businesses)](chart)
**Most frequent cited difficulties in the use (62% response rate):**

- Encountered navigation problems (items searched for cannot be easily found) – 62%
- Not all information needed has been found – 62%
- Not all of the administrative procedures could be undergone online – 54%
- The necessary forms could not be submitted online – 41%.
Other difficulties mentioned:

• “For various online public services, obtaining a username and password requires a visit at the local office of the managing authority”;

• “the platforms respond slowly and are not updated”;

• “many forms could be submitted online, but this option is not yet available”;

• “public institutions create their own platforms instead of working of a single integrated one, synchronised and correlated for all involved institutions”;

• “often public online platforms are affected by bugs, errors or are simply blocked”;

• “Public institutions websites are not optimised or intuitive”;

• “The online platform required multiple attempts in order to finalise an operation”.

CHALLENGES IN THE USE OF ELECTRONIC SERVICES IN ROMANIA – DIFFICULTIES IN USING E-SERVICES
• **Improvement suggestions:**

  • “Creating a single platform for online tax payment, health, labour, education and ID issuance, labour”;

  • “Extension of the existing platforms – e.g. in the ghiseul.ro platform not all local authorities are registered and hence online payment of local taxes can be done”.

  • “Better ICT training provided to the personnel managing the online platforms”.

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**Challenges in the Use of Electronic Services in Romania – Customer Needs**

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<th>Aspects considered necessary to be improved</th>
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<td>The protection of personal data must be better ensured;</td>
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<td>Online platforms should be better promoted among citizens</td>
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<td>Online platforms must be easy to use on both the computer / laptop and mobile phones</td>
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<td>Online platforms must be as user-friendly as possible</td>
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<td>Online platforms must be geared towards full service, not just certain procedural steps</td>
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<td>Creating integrated service databases in which data for one person is entered only once and automatically retrieved to all related databases</td>
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Challenges in the use of public electronic services in other EU Member States – Insights from comparative study
Countries selected: Malta, Portugal, the Netherlands, Belgium, Ireland, Great Britain, Spain, Italy and France.

Selection methodology: Malta, the Netherlands and Portugal – selected based on the top 10 performers according to the eGovernment Benchmark Report 2018.

Belgium, Ireland, Great Britain, Spain, Italy and France – considering similar values for context-specific variables/indicators such as Digital skills, ICT usage, Quality and Openness of Government, Connectivity and Digital in the private sector – that influence e-Governance performance.
CHALLENGES IN THE USE OF ELECTRONIC SERVICES IN OTHER EU MEMBER STATES

National context:

• Internet access – close values registered among all selected member states with regards to standard fixed broadband coverage/availability (a similar situation with regards to rural standard fixed broadband coverage – all values above EU average).

• Data security – Malta, Italy, Spain, UK, the Netherlands and Portugal above EU average with regards to % of individuals who experienced abuse of personal information/privacy violations.

• Interoperability – 4 EU member states strongly aligned with the European Interoperability Framework (Netherlands, Spain, Italy, and France), 2 well aligned (Malta, Belgium), 2 fairly aligned (Portugal, Ireland) – National Interoperability Framework Observatory Factsheets 2017.
Institutional framework

- eGovernment policies developed centrally in the cases of Malta, Portugal, Belgium, Ireland, UK, Spain, Italy and France.
- eGovernment policies in the responsibility of all government organisations in the case of the Netherlands.

Strategic framework

- Common assumed priorities: Digital citizens (providing everyone access to digital skills development opportunities), Digital business (encouraging development of digital businesses), Digital government (based on regulation, infrastructure and human capital), Digital trust and security.
Main eGov Platforms

- Malta - mygov.mt (access to all public e-services through single-sign on facility to access e-services);
- Portugal - eportugal.gov.pt (more than 2000 citizen-oriented services);
- Netherlands - Mijnoverheid.nl (access to personalised information and messages from the government by logging with a DigiD);
- Belgium – Belgium.be (single, multilingual point of information linked to all eServices);
- Ireland – gov.ie (first phase of a new Digital Service Gateway);
Main eGov Platforms

- UK – gov.uk (single point of access to all public services and related information);
- Spain – Citizen’s folder (one stop service where the user can access all the information that the administration possesses about them);
- Italy – Impresainungiorno.gov.it (single entry point to information and online services for businesses and entrepreneurs);
- France – Service-Public.fr (access point to information focused on the daily-life events, to online forms and to links to public e-services).
Good practice examples (selection)

• Denmark – **NgDP** is a digital post solution facilitating communication between government agencies and citizens (used by 4.3 million citizens). It has been designed so that persons with special needs would have facilitated access and has substantially reduced time spent by citizens at public administration offices.

• Italy – **InfoCamere** is an open source platform that facilitates access to information and dedicated e-services to businesses.

• Hungary – **Central Government Service Bus** is a platform that secures interoperability between data registries and IT systems specific to the public administration in order to secure standardised e-services.

• France – **MAREVA 2** is an IT solution for the economic evaluation of IT projects, facilitating the analysis of opportunity and added value of public IT projects.
Challenges in the use of public electronic services – Insights from the questionnaires distributed through EUPAN
Insights based on questionnaire analysis

• In the high majority of countries, the governance of the public administration electronic services is based on a multi-central approach, involving more public institutions/bodies.

• Only in 55% of the respondents’ countries the legislative framework is declared as fully compliant with the EU legislation. However, this percentage reaches 90%, when considering the countries where there are plans for further harmonization in the next future.
Insights based on questionnaire analysis

- E-taxes services are present in all the 20 respondents’ countries, but also e-health (17 out of 20) and e-education (14 out of 20) appear well spread. Respondents also mention with a certain frequency the presence of e-services related to people registry, social protection and welfare, justice, employment and property registry.

- On the contrary, e-services related to the exercise of political rights appear to be still in an incipient stage.
Barriers/obstacles in the use of electronic services (questionnaire analysis):

- Lack of awareness among citizens with regards to the electronic services that are available to them;
- Lack of digital skills of potential beneficiaries;
- Perceived complexity of the services and of online platforms;
- Lack of trust of potential users with regards to the safety of their personal data.
CHALLENGES IN THE USE OF ELECTRONIC SERVICES IN OTHER EU MEMBER STATES – QUESTIONNAIRE DATA

Barriers/obstacles in the use of electronic services:

• The insufficient user-friendliness of online public administration services;
• The dispersion of information over multiple websites;
• The lack of availability of e-Identification services (and of the e-signature).
Solutions implemented in order to overcome barriers in the use of electronic services:

- Awareness raising initiatives (wide-spread information campaigns being the most important solutions for example in the Netherlands and in Malta) and training solutions (either for citizens or for the public administration);
- Common guidelines and inter-institutional collaboration for designing of public electronic services;
- The development and implementation of one stop shops solutions;
- Solutions for the single authentication for multiple electronic services.
Challenges in the use of electronic services in other EU member states – Questionnaire Data

Barriers / obstacles in the providing of electronic services:

- Lack of specialised human resources and to the absence of financial resources;
- Organisational barriers - from difficulties in activating cooperation between different administrative institutions to the manner in which public administrations are organised;
- Legislative barriers.
Implemented solutions in order to surpass above mentioned difficulties:

- Complex large-scale programmes designed to sustain the development of digital skills;
- Allocating, where possible, EU-funding for the development of public e-services;
- Improving coordination between public entities through regular coordination (e.g. the Simplex+ programme in Portugal);
- Adopting digitally-friendly legislation as well as guidelines for legislators on how to design digital-friendly legislation (e.g. the Czech Republic).
• 60% of the countries represented at the level of the sample have responded affirmatively to the use of new IT technology in the development/provision of public electronic services.

• In the majority of cases, Blockchain technology is the most often quoted emerging technology solution that is implemented in the development and implementation of electronic services.
Thank you for your time and attention!

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