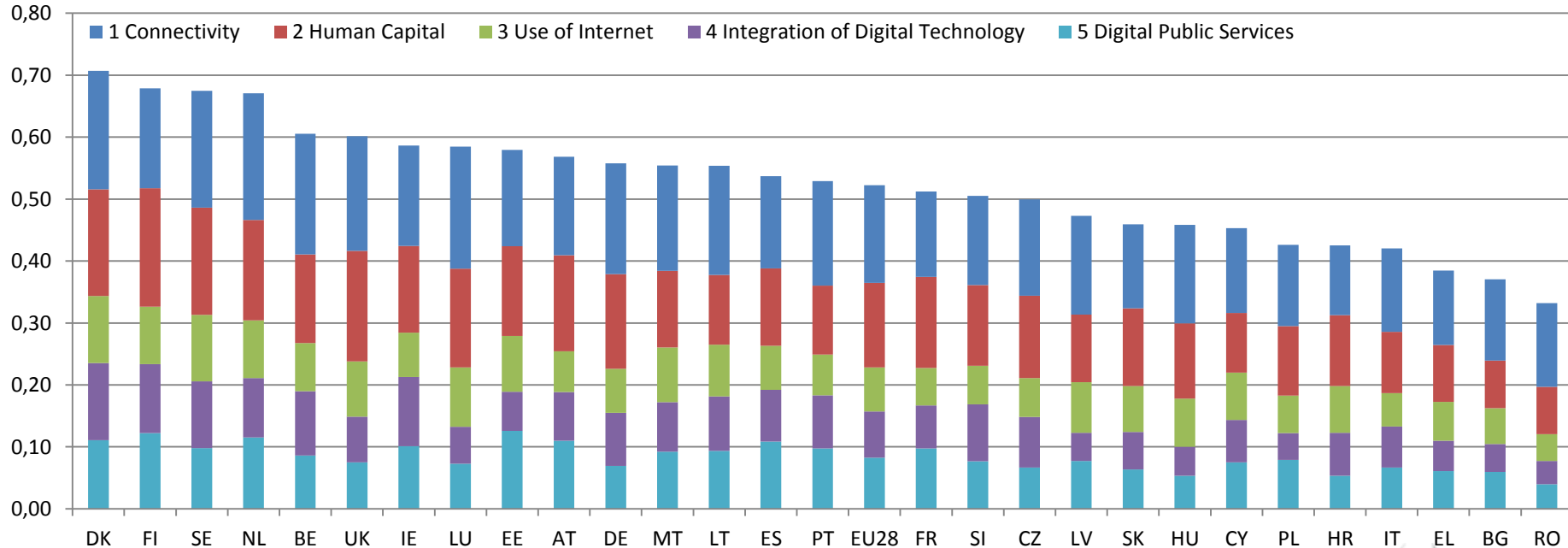# Digital Public Services

The Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) is a composite index that summarises relevant indicators on Europe's digital performance and tracks the evolution of EU Member States in digital competitiveness.

Denmark, Finland, Sweden and the Netherlands, have the most advanced digital economies in the EU followed by Belgium, the UK and Ireland.

Romania, Bulgaria, Greece and Italy are at the bottom of the list.
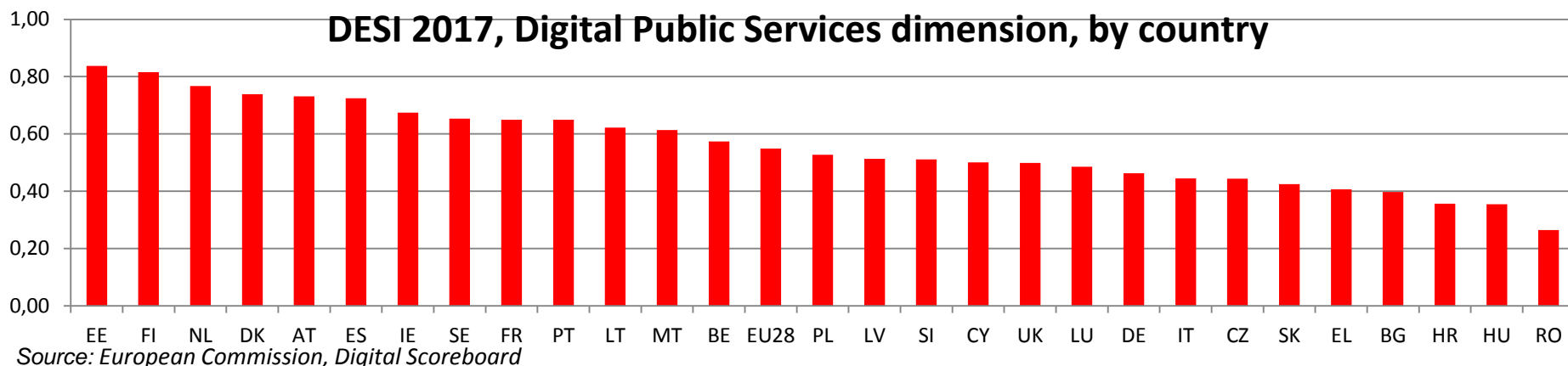
The five dimensions of the DESI

1 Connectivity	Fixed Broadband, Mobile Broadband, Broadband speed, and Affordability
2 Human Capital	Basic Skills and Usage, Advanced skills and Development
3 Use of Internet	Content, Communication and Transactions on line
4 Integration of Digital Technology	Business digitization and eCommerce
5 Digital Public Services	eGovernment

European Commission

For Digital Public Services, Estonia had highest score, followed by Finland, Netherlands and Denmark. Romania, Hungary and Croatia had the lowest scores.

The Digital Public Services dimension consists of four indicators: the percentage of internet users who have sent completed forms to a public administration via the internet (eGovernment users indicator); the level of sophistication of a country's eGovernment services (the pre-filled forms indicator, which measures the extent to which data that is already known to the public administration is pre-filled in forms presented to the user); the level of completeness of a country's range of eGovernment services (the online service completion indicator, which measures the extent to which the various steps in an interaction with the public administration can be performed completely online), and the government's commitment to open data (open data indicator).

Digital Public Services Indicators in DESI 2017	EU28 value
5a1 eGovernment Users	**34%**
% internet users (last year)	2016
5a2 Pre-filled Forms	**49**
Score (0 to 100)	2016
5a3 Online Service Completion	**82**
Score (0 to 100)	2016
5a4 Open Data	**59%**
% of maximum score	2016

DESI 2017, Digital Public Services dimension, by country

Source: European Commission, Digital Scoreboard
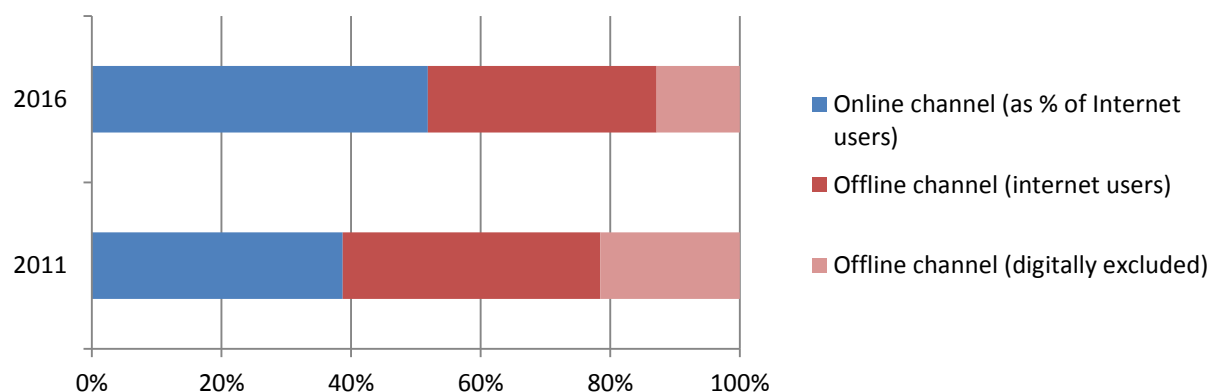
European Commission

More than half of the population needing public services chooses the online channel - both old and new internet users alike

Among the citizens needing to submit forms to the public administrations in 2016, 13 % used the offline channel because they did not use internet at all. Of the remaining 87%, all of them internet users, 52 % chose the online channel, while 35% preferred an offline interaction with the public authorities. This marks considerable progress compared with 2011 when only 39 % of the population was sending completed forms online, and the percentage of those who couldn't because they were not internet users was of 21 %. Overall progress on eGovernment use (13 p.p.) is greater than the reduction in the digitally excluded (8 p.p.) meaning that also previous internet users are starting to use more complex services like eGovernment. In total, in five years more than 28 million citizens in the EU27 (excluding IT for lack of data) abandoned the use of paper forms in order to embrace digital solutions.

The percentage of citizens needing to submit forms (for which information is lacking) has been assumed to be analogous to the percentage of internet users needing to submit a form (for which information is available).

eGovernment usage potential (preferred channel for submitting forms to public authorities by citizens), EU27

- ■ Online channel (as % of Internet users)
- ■ Offline channel (internet users)
- ■ Offline channel (digitally excluded)

Source: European Commission calculations based on Eurostat - Community survey on the ICT usage in households and by individuals. EU27: EU28 excl. IT

European Commission

'Digital natives' and their grandparents learn eGovernment. Their lowly educated parents…not so much

Among young people with all levels of education there has been a marked progression in the use of eGovernment, proving that digital natives' online activities are not only limited to social media and consumption of digital content, but also extend to the use of more complex services. Similarly, among the elderly there has been a marked progression (between 5 p.p. and 11 p.p.), and again across all education levels (even after taking into account demographic effects, i.e. the transition between age classes between 2011 and 2016). Considering that internet use (and therefore potential eGovernment use) has expanded greatly in this age group (i.e. from 48% to 65% of the population), this progress is remarkable, signalling that eGovernment services are one of the applications of choice for older users, and possibly one of the driving factors behind their digitisation. On the other hand, the middle-aged population with lower education has one of the lowest uses of eGovernment (39%) and also shows the least progress between 2011 and 2016. This is unfortunate because they are probably one of the categories more in need of public services like services for the unemployed, public subsidies (since low education correlates with low income and unemployment).

Age-education classes	Individuals who submitted completed forms to public authorities over the internet by age groups and education levels (as % of internet users who need to submit official forms), EU27, 2011 and 2016								
	16-24 years low education	16-24 years medium education	16-24 years high education	25-54 years low education	25-54 years medium education	25-54 years high education	55-74 years low education	55-74 years medium education	55-74 years high education
2011	32.6%	44.5%	61.9%	37.3%	43.3%	64.9%	32.9%	40.1%	57.6%
2016	46.6%	64.5%	73.5%	39.3%	53.7%	74.6%	37.9%	48.3%	68.7%
pop growth of respective class	-7%	1%	18%	6%	1%	20%	42%	38%	39%

Source: European Commission calculations based on Eurostat - Community survey on the ICT usage in households and by individuals. EU27: EU28 excl. IT

European Commission

The measurement of eGovernment supply, some methodological notes.

The supply side of eGovernment is measured through a 'user journey' approach. Researchers pose as ordinary users of eGovernment services in an event (i.e. life event) that requires some official action (e.g. a marriage). They go through the steps of meeting the relevant administrative requirements using public authority websites and the online channel where possible.

Eight life events are analysed over two years (with data for four complete measurements in 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015 and 2015-2016) in different areas of government:
- losing/finding a job
- enrolling at university
- moving
- starting a small claims procedure
- buying/owning a car
- Family life
- starting a business
- regular business operations

This new method looks at different aspects of service provision, but the two examined here are the following: Online Service Completion and Pre-filled Forms. The Online Service Completion indicator measures the share of the life event(s) that can be completed online. The Pre-filled forms indicator measures the amount of data that is pre-filled in Public Services' online forms. Both indicators range from 0 (complete absence of required features) to 100 (all features included) and are components of the DESI dimension 'Digital Public Services'.

The source for the eGovernment supply data is the eGovernment Benchmark Report

There is progress in putting government services online but more effort needs to be done by countries lagging behind. Administrative burden reduction through the use of interconnected databases is still in its infancy

Five countries in the EU-28 are very close to having a fully developed digital channel for public services with scores above 95 %: MT (100%), AT, EE, PT and DK. Although countries at the bottom are (mostly) catching up, seven of them still have one out of four services not available online (RO, HR, HU, EL, SK, BG, CY).

Online Service Completion (2012-2013 and 2015-2016)

■ avg. 2012-2013   ■ avg. 2015-2016
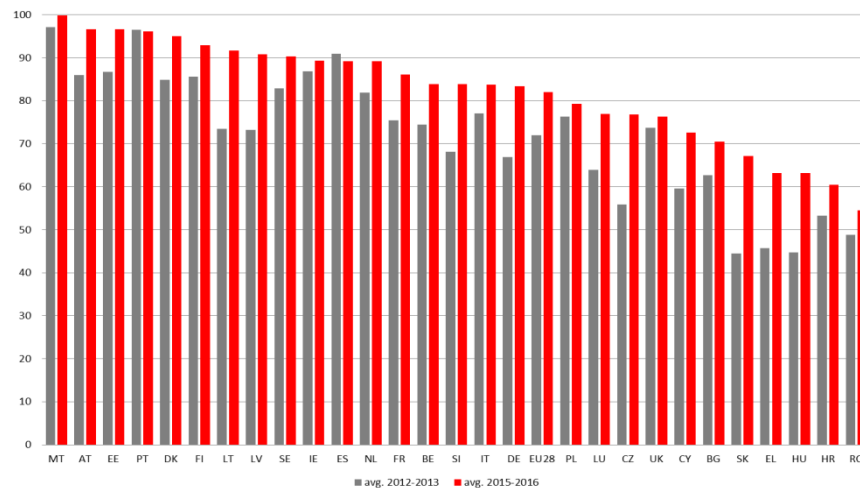
Source: eGovernment Benchmark Report

Pre-filled Forms (2015-2016)

■ avg. 2015-2016
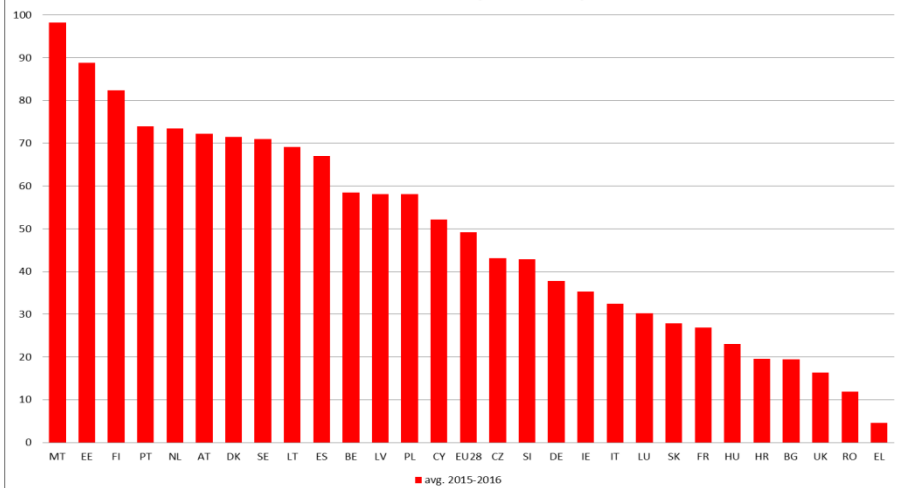
Source: eGovernment Benchmark Report

The use of inter-connected registers with the purpose of avoiding re-submission of data by the user is not yet widespread. Pre-filled forms are available, for half of EU countries, for less than half of the cases where this could be possible, and sometimes much less than that. Some notable exceptions are MT, EE and FI, with seven other countries following suit.

European Commission