

‘Towards a next generation of digital services’

Isle of Man

eGovernment Benchmark

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For more information about this survey, please contact:

Niels van der Linden

Managing Consultant, Capgemini Consulting

Programme manager Isle of Man and EU eGovernment Benchmark

e-mail: niels.vander.linden@capgemini.com

Michiel Ehrismann

Senior consultant Capgemini Consulting

Lead researcher

e-mail: michiel.ehrismann@capgemini.com

Executive Summary

Context of the measurement

‘Don’t measure anything unless the data will help you make better decisions’. Benchmarking can be done for many reasons, but one of its key objectives is to gain insights from the data collection and comparisons that are of importance for decision makers that can increase public value.

This is also the aim of the 4th benchmark for the Isle of Man Government (since 2001). The benchmark continues to validate the vision established at the start of the e-Commerce and e-Society Strategy in 2001 and continued through the Onemann Online, e-Services and Customer First strategies developed since 2004. All are led by a clear Policy mandate from the Council of Ministers established in 2007. The Isle of Man Government is currently in the process of developing the next wave of their Digital Strategy and this measurement is one of the inputs for that process comparing to other jurisdictions. Hence we named this report ‘towards a next generation of digital services’.

The eGovernment Benchmark has been a monitor of eGovernment performance in Europe for over a decade. Commissioned by the European Commission, it now covers 33 countries and annually presents its findings on modernising public sector. It builds on a solid methodological foundation which was developed in close collaboration with Member States and the Commission. The method has evolved since 2001 to keep up with technological and organisational developments and is aimed at supporting public administrations to achieve cheaper, better and faster digital services. This is the promise of eGovernment: doing more with less. Better quality services to meet customer’s needs and satisfy users of public services, provided in an efficient and joined-up way that could result in cost savings and cutting of red tape.

The eGovernment Benchmark assesses the various steps of a customer’s journey when encountering a certain event often referred to as “life events”. These measures focus on the need of the citizen rather than the Government as the focus of the service. The seven life events in this assessment are:

- Starting up a business and early trading operations
- Regular business operations
- Losing and finding a job
- Moving
- Starting a small claims procedure
- Owning and driving a car
- Studying

Each life event was assessed by mystery shoppers who set out to experience the online customer journey and evaluated this experience through four top-level benchmarks:

- **User Centricity:** assessing the extent to which services are available online and their ease of use;
- **Transparency:** evaluating how ‘open’ public administrations are as regards service delivery process, personal data and public organisations;

- **Cross-border services:** comparing user centricity of services for foreigners to country nationals;
- **Key Enablers:** measuring the level of implementation of five key technological enablers that enable eGovernment services.

The benchmark evaluates the maturity of eGovernment services on the Isle of Man and to compare these to European averages. This puts the Isle of Man Government's performance into a broader perspective and a meaningful comparator to exemplar jurisdictions right across Europe.

Of course, this report should be read in the context of the Isle of Man's current available resources and budget for eGovernment developments. Nevertheless, being small is not per se a disadvantage, as was also concluded in the European Commission's eGovernment Benchmark Insight report in 2014¹. On the one hand, (ICT) budgets and staff are smaller in size and might limit public ambitions because of budget constraints or lack of specific knowledge. On the other hand however, a small public service can imply a degree of agility that larger, more 'bureaucratic', governments cannot offer. Being small might also allow for public servants to 'be creative' with the available funds and find focused, efficient solutions. The results for the mobile accessibility test, which you will read about below, are testament to that. Indeed in some aspects the IOM is leading Europe, such as mobility and accessibility of service, proof that by focused effort and collaborative joined up approach can deliver transformative results.

Key findings

The measurement resulted in the following findings:

On User Centricity:

- The Isle of Man ranks just into the third quartile, an achievement that is mainly driven by good results for the life event of 'regular business operations'. The life events 'Moving' and 'Losing and finding a job' and 'owning and driving a car' are slightly behind. The life event of 'starting up a business and early trading operations' lags behind compared to Europe, as does 'small claims procedure' and 'studying'.
- The results show that even though the Isle of Man could bring more services online, the ease and speed of using these services compares to the EU average, indicating an attitude of 'quality over quantity'
- A key strength of the gov.im website is that it functions as an open door to information and services, allowing customers to easily find what they are looking for.
- As regards mobile friendliness of its websites, the Isle of Man tops the chart in Europe. This is remarkable, but a logic consequence of the choice to design the gov.im website in such way that users of both desktop/laptop as well as mobile devices have the same experience when accessing the website and builds upon a strategic approach to accessibility indicated in 2006.

¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/eu-egovernment-report-2014-shows-usability-online-public-services-improving-not-fast>

On Transparency:

- Transparency seems to be an area for improvement in the Isle of Man. It is positioned in the end of the fourth quartile. In general, this indicator needs improvement in all Europe.
- Transparency of service delivery could be improved in all life events to increase clarity on duration, expected delivery times of a service, allowing customers (entrepreneurs and citizens) to schedule their interactions with government in a flexible way, according to whenever it suits their personal needs.
- Enhanced Transparency of personal data is required to meet citizens demands to be aware of the data that government holds about them, if it is correct and up to date

On Cross-border services:

- The Isle of Man ranks in the middle of the pack of European countries, with the cross-border mobility for citizens reaching up to the European average. In general, information is well available (language provides a slight advantage here) and ease and speed of using the services and finding information is according to European standards. It must be noted however that the European average is relatively low across Europe, indicating the single digital market is not yet within reach.
- There is room for improvement though in the business life events which lag behind the cross-border services for citizens, in particular in increasing the online availability of services for foreign entrepreneurs with the aim to attract and further grow businesses on the Island.

On Key Enablers:

- The Isle of Man's key strength is that all government information and online public services are accessible through the central gov.im portal and reinforces Governments desire to maintain one central access point for all public services. This is confirmed by the fact that the enabler Single Sign On (SSO) is very well developed and even exceeds the European average.
- Results for the other Key Enablers reveal that more work is required to match European standards across the life events. In particular electronic identification and use of authentic sources could boost quality and quantity of online public services for the seven measures.
- In general the implementation of Key Enablers seems driven by business life events, in particular as regards services in the life event of 'regular business operations' (such as Tax and VAT). This could provide a solid basis to scale up to other business related services (in 'starting up a business' through the Company Registry service for example) and to citizen services.

This results in the following overview of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT).

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simple, easy to understand services Leading in Europe regarding mobile platforms One unified domain enables excellent user experience Very open to citizens from other European countries Supports regular business operations well 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A number of services not (fully) available online eGovernment not externally focussed Sub-par digital services for life events Studying and Start-up Digital skills in workforce
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quick gains to be made in transparency Building out eID capabilities from tax to other domains Unified domain makes new services easy to introduce 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing excellent eGov for businesses Keeping pace in providing Key Enablers Forward funding models

Figure 1: Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of eGovernment in Isle of Man

Since the last measurement in 2011 the delivery of the new Gov.im website has moved the Isle of Man closer to focussing services and content on the customer. Government should be commended for the migration of information from the previous departmentally orientated websites. The much improved Gov.im is more customer centric. It provides customers with access through one “front door” to information, tasks and services. With the adoption of an open source platform, these are increasingly built to further drive innovation through the website and online services frameworks.

The measurement shows some noteworthy results compared to EU and illustrates the Isle of Man has a firm foundation that offers potential to further advancement. All progress and achievements are testament to the solid foundations built around a common approach to Key Enablers and their continuing relevance as a catalyst for improving public service delivery on the Isle of Man. It could be said that the challenge is not a technology one, but one of changing the perception of delivering information and services around the customer.

The foundations are set to now build out the life event orientated services being experienced throughout Europe. This is essential to tackle two aspects that currently act as a brake on further developments:

- Most services and processes develop step-wise without looking at the whole and without being sufficiently conscious of the needs and experiences of customers and employees;
- It is not easy to design and create integrated and consistent customer experiences over various functional units and channels.

Way forward

Digitization can extend the reach of organizations, improve management decisions, and speed the development of new products and services. At the same time, the excessively rapid adoption of technologies can disrupt traditional business models. Organizations need to carefully tread the path towards digital transformation with a concrete strategy to harness its strengths and mitigate its challenges.

From our research together with MIT into digital transformation², we believe that digital transformation is first and foremost a business transformation. People, not technology, are the most important piece in the digital transformation puzzle.

We distinguish five recommendations for the way forward:

- **Be service minded.**
 - Organise public services around the customer instead of around government. Apply the concept of life events to focus the customer journey of citizens and businesses on the Isle of Man.
 - Know your customers by collecting demand-side statistics. The gov.im portal gives the Isle of Man a distinct advantage in accelerating the adoption of digital services. Analytics show an exponential growth of registered users and payment uptake, which could indicate that Isle of Man Government is enabling efficiency reforms in line with the Governments direction. However, more is needed to determine how people use and experience online services and why (and why not).
 - Analysis into who is using public services, through which channels, and for what benefits is important information, just as encountered barriers and level of satisfaction. It will provide valuable insights that could support the user-centric design of services, and customise the approach to stimulate use of online services.
- **Deliver on the potential of technology enablers.**
 - Enable more online transactions through online authentication. Bring more services online. Currently, only few fully online transactions are available. Users will expect more, and there is room to deliver on their expectations, especially where it concerns business start-ups. Key technological enabler to accelerate this process is electronic identification (eID).
 - Implementing the 'once-only principle' across government services: asking customers for their data once, and re-use it multiple times when needed. This implies using authentic sources for pre-filling of information on forms and to deliver services 'automatically' (without the user having to ask for it). Sharing data across agencies could reduce red tape and administrative burden, and increase efficiency of the organisations involved.
 - Mobile is nowadays the first communication channel we think of and rightfully so, as it often provides the best way to connect to customers, business partners and employees. Mobile channels are not just another way of getting access to the same information and applications that are available through laptops and desktops at home or the office. It requires more than simply providing existing, complex processes with a mobile front end. The Isle of Man has clearly understood the importance seen its performance as regards mobile friendliness, and should now further explore what can be done to improve the mobile online experience – e.g. by increasingly pre-filling information, or possibly explore mobile signatures (as in some countries). Besides mobile, other 'disruptive' technologies such as Social, Analytics and Sensors could offer huge potential for improving public services.

² <http://ebooks.capgemini-consulting.com/CC-MIT-SMR-Research-Embracing-Digital-Technology/>

- **Open up.**
 - Meet expectations from customers who want to be informed about the service delivery process (time, duration, response deadlines etc) enabling entrepreneurs and citizens to use digital services when and where most convenient.
 - Besides transparency of service delivery, more is needed to reach a next stage of eGovernment maturity. Access to personal data, and being able to modify and/or send notifications, reflects trends towards increased autonomy of citizens. It is also vitally important for governments to ensure data is correct, as it would enable re-use of that data for other service processes.
 - Governments can anticipate new models for public service delivery by addressing and capitalising on the changing role of citizens. The potential shift is from a model that is largely designed around the delivery of services to people, towards a model that is designed to better enable co-production of services with people. Compelling user experiences – for the customer, for the employee, for the partner – are must haves for the ‘competitiveness’ of governments. To create and sustain them, governments have to create the platforms that make it easy for users to turn into producers.
- **Collaborate and join-up.**
 - Designing services around user’s needs also includes mapping the customer journeys to understand how customers typically interact with various government channels, functional silos and technical solutions. These *silos are not a bad thing per se* – they represent thorough knowledge and expertise in a particular field. The challenge is to prevent silos working inside-out and focusing on output rather than the value they can create. An online customer journey, using online services provided by different departments, will hugely benefit from cross agency collaboration. This will enable services to be organized around customers’ needs instead of from an administration centric point of view.
 - Using one authentic source for personal data instead of each department keeping its own register makes perfect sense, and will produce benefits for both user and administration ('more with less').
- **Continuously develop skills.**
 - Both user skills - the extent to which the Isle of Man population is capable of using technology, going online, etc. - as well as skills of the civil servants and leaders of the Isle of Man government. The latter is required to understand the potential of technology for public services and to apply it, and to design and lead the execution of the new Digital Strategy.

These recommendations tackle key elements as regards customer experience, operational processes and business model, as well as the required digital capabilities to deliver this. They will help to flourish eGovernment on the Isle of Man, fully in line with the ambitions put forward.