Comparing levels of internet access, internet use and e-government use in the SmartCities countries

Abstract

In this report we summarize the main statistics on Internet access, Internet usage and e-government usage in the different Smart Cities countries (i.e. Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Norway, the United Kingdom and Sweden).

1 Summary

In most Smart Cities countries more than 70% of the households has Internet access at home, except for Belgium. Belgium lags behind with only 60% of the households having Internet access. With regard to individuals, Belgium and Germany don't reach 70% of the individuals aged 16 to 74, while the other Smart Cities countries reach over 70%.

In all Smart Cities countries more than 90% of enterprises have Internet access. E-government usage strongly varies between the different countries.

Belgium scores badly with only 1/4 of active internet users using the Internet for e-government. Norway and the Netherlands score much better: 62% (NO) and 54% (NL) of the individuals aged 16 to 74, use the Internet for e-government applications.

The use of e-government by enterprises is reasonably high for all Smart Cities countries. Again Belgium scores badly together with Germany: in Belgium only 69% of the enterprises use e-government, in Germany 56%. In the Netherlands, by contrast, 85% of the enterprises use the Internet for e-government applications.

1.2 Intended audience / Critical issues addressed

This overview is intended for the entire Smart Cities network. The aim is to provide background information for interpretation and comparison of Smart Cities results and reports.

2 Statistical comparison of ICT usage in the Smart Cities countries
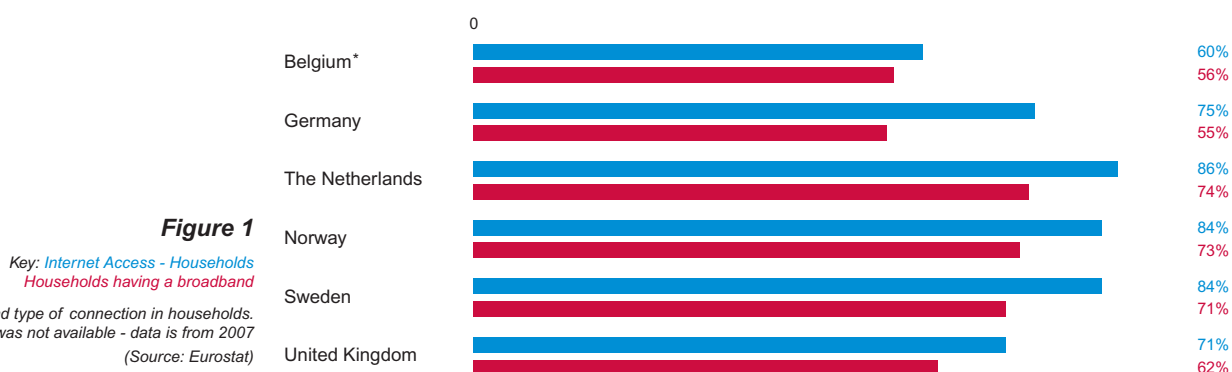
2.1 Introduction

This report summarizes **a statistical state of affairs on Internet access, Internet usage and e-government usage** in the Smart Cities countries. The Internet is the most important channel for e-government services.

The data and graphs presented for the Smart Cities countries are based on the Eurostat European ICT survey of 2008. Data were collected by National Statistical Institutes or by relevant Ministries.

The aim of these ICT surveys is to collect and disseminate harmonized and comparable information on the use of Information and Communication Technologies in households and by individuals and in enterprises at a European level. This survey has been carried out once a year since 2002.

2.2 Internet access

Internet access and broadband connection in households

Figure 1

Key: Internet Access - Households
Households having a broadband

Internet access and type of connection in households.
* 2008 data for Belgium was not available - data is from 2007
(Source: Eurostat)

Country	Internet Access - Households	Households having a broadband
Belgium*	60%	56%
Germany	75%	55%
The Netherlands	86%	74%
Norway	84%	73%
Sweden	84%	71%
United Kingdom	71%	62%

These indicators show the percentage of households which have Internet access at home and the percentage of households having a broadband connection. The population we studied was between 16-74 years of age.

Internet access and type of connection in enterprises

Figure 2

Key: Internet Access - Enterprises
Enterprises having a broadband

Internet access and type of connection of enterprises.
(Source: Eurostat)

Country	Internet Access - Enterprises	Enterprises having a broadband
Belgium*	97%	91%
Germany	95%	84%
The Netherlands	99%	86%
Norway	95%	86%
Sweden	96%	89%
United Kingdom	93%	87%

These indicators present the percentage of enterprises having Internet access and those having broadband connection. Both indicators measure enterprises with 10 or more employees.
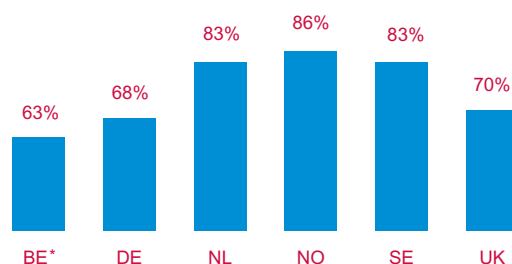
2.3 Internet Usage

Internet usage by individuals

This indicator covers all individuals aged 16 to 74 who accessed the Internet on average at least once a week, within the last three months before the survey.

By usage we mean all locations and methods of access.

2.4 Internet usage for e-government

e-government usage by individuals

The European ICT surveys also explore the kind of applications individuals use on the Internet. One of the questions asked, concerns the usage of e-government applications.

The surveys assess both the usage of e-government in general and the usage of a number of specific e-government services, i.e. obtaining information from websites of public authorities, downloading official forms and returning completed forms.

The indicators cover all individuals, aged 16 to 74, who have used the Internet within the last 3 months, before the survey.

	BE*	DE	NL	NO	SE	UK
e-government usage	23%	33%	54%	62%	52%	32%
for obtaining information	20.7%	31.1%	48.1%	54.8%	45.1%	26.1%
for downloading official forms	10.7%	16.2%	30.8%	29.5%	29.1%	14.2%
for returning completed forms	8.2%	10.5%	32.1%	27.2%	25.8%	12.1%

Table 1

e-government usage by individuals, broken down by purpose.
*2008 data for Belgium was not available - data is from 2007.

(Source: Eurostat)

e-government usage by enterprises

The ICT surveys also inquire about the Internet applications used by enterprises. As with the individuals, enterprises were asked about the use of e-government applications in general and about the use of specific e-government services, i.e. obtaining information from websites of public authorities, downloading official forms and returning completed forms.

The indicators cover enterprises with more than 10 employees.

	BE*	DE	NL	NO	SE	UK
e-government usage	69%	56%	85%	76%	78%	64%
for obtaining information	44%	47%	77%	70%	76%	60%
for downloading official forms	35%	48%	79%	70%	76%	57%
for returning completed forms	37%	45%	75%	63%	58%	51%

Table 2

e-government usage by enterprises, broken down by purpose.
* 2008 data for Belgium was not available - data is from 2007.

(Source: Eurostat)

Summary

3 Document information

3.1 Author(s) and Institution(s)

Memori is the research institute of the University College of Mechelen. MEMORI's expertise is in the following research fields:

- public communication;
- communication of non-governmental organizations;
- local participatory democracy;
- local e-government.

Lieselot Vandenbussche is researcher at Memori since January 2009. She has a master in the Educational Sciences and a bachelor in Journalism.

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This research brief does not summarise a Memori survey: it brings together relevant statistics from existing surveys.

3.2 References

- Information society statistics (2008). Consulted January 20th 2009, from http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page?_pageid=1090,30070682,1090_33076576&_dad=portal_&schema=PORTAL

- An overview of the eGovernment situation in Europe 2009. Consulted January 18th 2009, from http://www.epractice.eu/factsheets

3.3 Document history

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