

E-government: a curse or an opportunity for Posts ?

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Context

- **What is e-government ?**
 - The use by government agencies of ICT to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their services, transform their relationships and facilitate communications with citizens and businesses
- The development of e-government is the result of the digital revolution transforming societies
- **The establishment of e-government can appear detrimental for postal operators**
 - Digitalisation of some administration processes is harmful to traditional mail activities
 - Example of PostNord in Denmark
- Postal operators have physical and immaterial assets
 - A large physical networks
 - Trusted and reliable institutions

Objectives of the paper

- The goal of this paper is to focus on the way postal operators provide services to support e-government implementation
- We first investigate what are the leading countries in e-government policies and we identify levers of success for e-government
- Three strategic aspects of e-government are studied where some postal operators can play a role
- We provide example of such actions

Contents of the presentation

1. E-government benchmark

- Six leader countries are identified

2. Levers of success for e-government

- How the six leader countries implement these levers ?

3. Active role of postal operators in e-government

1- E-government benchmark

- Investment in e-government policies differs among countries. **What are the most advanced countries in this field ?**
- We build out analysis on different and recent benchmarks
 - DESI 2017(*Digital Economy and Society index*) from the European Commission;
 - E-government benchmark 2017 from the European Commission
 - United Nations e-government survey 2016
- Benchmarks reveal different leading countries depending on their focus and main indicators
- Our analysis is based on two part
 - The use of ICT by the citizens and businesses
 - Instruments of e-governments offered by countries
- Based on our findings we focus on **six countries where usage of ICT and e-government tools are well developed**
 - **Australia, Denmark, France, New Zealand, Norway and United Kingdom**

2- Levers of success for e-governments (1)

- Each country built its own e-government strategy depending on its own particular characteristics and challenges
- However it is possible to detect three factors that influence success of e-government policies
 - **Internet infrastructure and digital literacy**
 - **Digital underlying tools**
 - **Government ambitions and policies**
- The six countries identified in our benchmark have all implemented these different levers leading to e-government success

2- Levers of success for e-governments(2)

Infrastructure and digital literacy

Countries have implemented specific policies to not exclude citizens and foster digital literacy

- *In Denmark people who are unable to use ICT can still receive letter from the authorities by post*
- *“Councils for Digital Inclusion” in United Kingdom*

Digital underlying tools

- **Digital identities**
- **Document management tools**

Government ambitions and policies

- **Implementation of e-government strategies**
 - *Proactive governments which took early actions like Denmark (“Towards eGovernment: Vision and Strategy for the Public Sector in Denmark” 2001-2004)*
 - *Dedicated task forces to ensure the coordination between the different administrations levels : “Digital Transformation Agency” in Australia since 2015*
- **Need for regulatory changes to create a legal framework to use ICT**
- **Open data policies to enhance transparency of government actions and to promote citizens participation**
 - *“Open Government Partnerships” multilateral partnerships in Europe since 2011*
- **Partnerships with private stakeholders**
 - *In UK the “Government digital inclusion strategy” implies collaboration between public and private actors*

3- Active role of postal operators in e-governments (1)

- **Postal operators (POs) benefit from several assets to invest in e-government strategies**
 - They benefit from a large physical assets, i.e posts offices networks and mailmen that could be a bridge between the physical and the digital world
 - They are trusted third parties and provide services of general economic interest (SGEI)
 - They provide secure communications services. Data protection and privacy are associated with POs

- **In all three levers identified, postal operators are playing a significant role in the six countries studied**
 - Widening public access to internet through their networks of postal outlets and favoring digital literacy
 - Providing digital tools allowing a wide and secure use of e-government procedures
 - Supporting Governments' ambitions and policies in participating to open data initiatives and platform strategies implemented by States

3- Active role of postal operators in e-governments (2)

POs role in facilitating access to internet and digital literacy

- **POs are playing an active role to reduce the digital divide based on their physical assets**
- POs play a role in facilitating access to internet infrastructures
 - They implement internet access inside some of their post offices
 - They enable people to get access to online postal products and services
 - Experience WIFI 63 in France
- POs are playing an active role for digital literacy with dedicated programs to improve digital literacy
 - “WetakeCare” partnership between La Banque Postale and Emmaus
 - Digital tablet Ardoiz by La Poste France
- POs provide physical services throughout the territory. They are access points for public services
 - Royal Mail provides lot of services for governmental departments and local councils in its post offices
 - Australia Post provides passport services across its national post offices
 - “Maisons de services publics” in France

3- Active role of postal operators in e-governments (3)

POs are providers of digital tools

- **POs have are playing a growing role in digital services as key enablers for e-government services**
- **POs offer to citizens secure digital mailboxes** to share and control online transfers of data and documents
 - Numerous services are provided by POs : My Post (Australia Post), Connect (NZ Post), Digipost (Norway Post), E-boks (Post Denmark), Digiposte (French Post)
 - E-boks is used by 4.3 millions of users in Denmark and Digipost by 1.6 million of users in Norway
 - These results are linked to e-government strategies
- **POs are engaged in providing digital identities**
 - By their historical role POs can naturally manage digital identity registrations and verifications
 - Used by public authorities as well as the private sector
- They play a strategic role in providing digital identities in UK, France and Australia
 - Royal Mail and Post Office Limited are certified companies for Gov.uk Verify
 - In France La Poste in one of identity providers of France Connect
 - In Australia, AusPost launched its digital ID solution in 2017

3- Active role of postal operators in e-governments (4)

POs role in platform strategies

- Government can implement platform strategies (“Government as a platform”, O’ Reilly, 2011) based on three key principles :
 - Transparency and open data initiatives
 - Co-construction of public services with the private sector (open API)
 - User centric government to integrate services that are already efficient

- POs are partners of platform strategies by participating in open data initiatives
 - Some are part of open data initiative like La Poste France
 - POs data are strategic assets and some decided to monetize their datasets in a changing economic environment related to the decline of mail volumes

- POs interact with government to provide efficient services to construct platform strategies
 - Digital identities
 - Digital mailbox solutions

Conclusion

- E-government initiatives cannot be restricted to paper procedures turned into PDF documents
 - E-government strategies are more complex and have to take into account how digital transformation changes the way citizens interact with authorities and businesses
 - To be efficient, e-government strategies have to be inclusive for all the populations

- **Postal operators have a special place into the society which make them natural partners fo government to implement e-government strategies**
 - Trusted third pary
 - Physical presence, with access points throughout the territory

- E-government is an opportunity for postal operators

Thank you for your attention !

Annex

E-government country ranking for 2016 life events (European Commission benchmark 2017)



Use of internet and integration of digital technology ranking according to the DESI 2017

