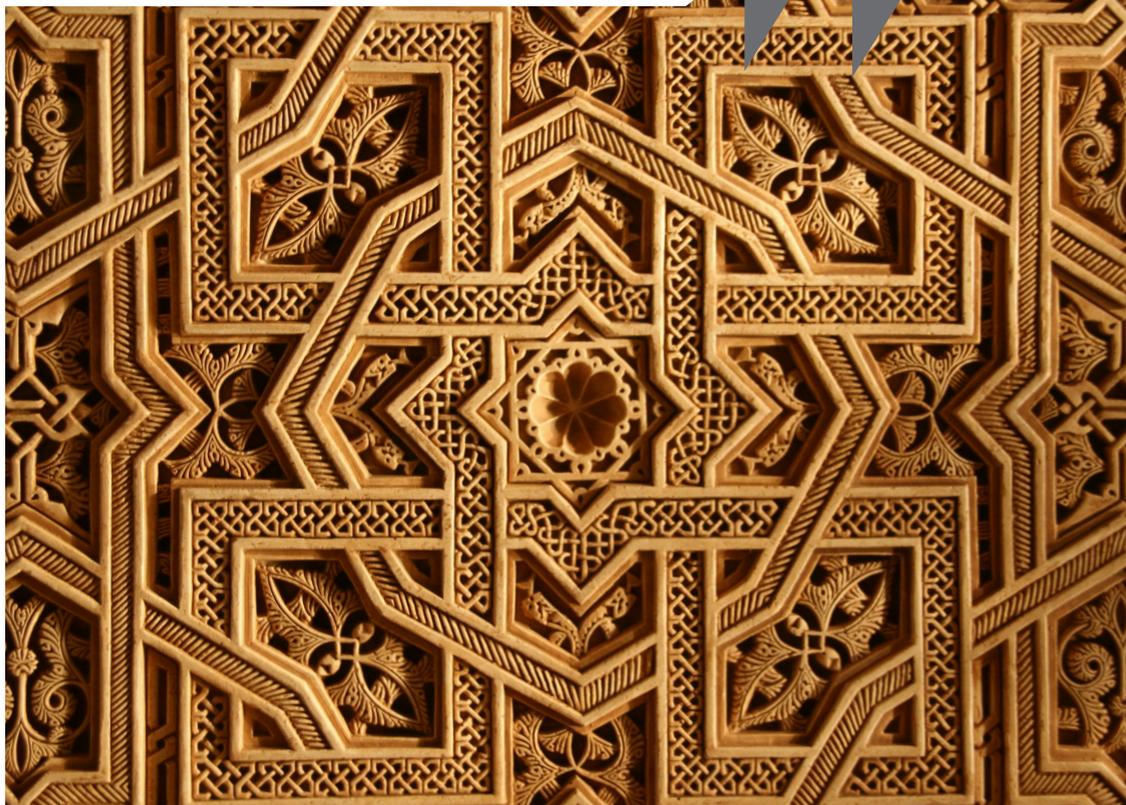


Modernising the Public Administration

# The Case of E-Government in the Palestinian Authority



### Summary

The report provides an overall picture of e-government policies and implementation in the PA. It identifies main trends, highlights opportunities for improvement and suggests further developments, based on MENA and OECD countries' experiences and good practices.

- The PA is in a crucial moment of its e-government implementation;
- It aims at a full-fledged modernisation of its public sector through extensive use ICT ;
- Its goals are: to increase efficiency, effectiveness and transparency of the state machinery, to offer better services to citizens, to increase the participation of civil society in policymaking and to promote business sector development and economic growth.

The analysis highlights areas for improvement and gives concrete recommendations in various fields, with a special focus on the following:

- Institutional coordination among line ministries and across levels of government;
- ICT literacy and users' take up of e-services within the public sector and in the Palestinian population

### Impact

- Provided the PA with *data and analyses* on e-government implementation and an assessment of its *strengths* and areas for *improvements*;
- Increased *institutional coordination* by raising awareness on the cross-sectoral nature of e-government systems and on the need to *share information and to increase collaboration* on all ongoing projects in this area;
- Stressed the importance of *including the use of ICT in all relevant policies*, both at the national level (i.e. administrative simplification) and in the sectoral strategies (i.e. HR management);
- The *recommendations* contained in the report have been included in the new *e-government strategy* currently being developed by the PA's Ministry of Telecommunications and IT.
- As result of the policy dialogue promoted by the Programme, the University of Milan - Bicocca and the Birzeit University of Ramallah joined forces and created an *academic exchange programme* to teach and research on e-government issues.

### Relevance

The report has direct relevance for the implementation of the following national and sectoral policies of the PA:

- Ministry of Planning, Palestinian Reform and Development Plan 2008-10;
- Ministry of Planning, Administrative Development Plan, 2010;
- Ministry of Telecommunications and IT, National Strategy for ICT and Post in Palestine, 2010;
- PA, First year programme of the 13th Government of the Palestinian Authority: "Ending the Occupation, Establishing the State", 2009;
- PA, Second year programme of the 13th Government of the Palestinian Authority: "Homestretch to Freedom", 2010.



## *Foreword*

The first phase of the collaboration between the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Technologies (MTIT) aims to present an evaluation of the Palestinian Authority's (PA) e-government policies and their implementation. The Report, titled "*Modernising the Public Administration: The Case of E-Government in the Palestinian Authority*", includes an overview of the current situation in the relevant Palestinian institutions and presents policy options and good practices based on OECD countries' experiences.

In order to assess policies in place and provide appropriate recommendations, the OECD and the MTIT distributed an adapted version of the *OECD E-Government Survey* to all Palestinian officials in charge of e-government and IT, analysed its results, and produced technical figures on the state of the art of e-government systems and applications in the PA. This constitutes the technical background of the Report.

The Survey results and the main analytical features of the Report were discussed with representatives of various institutions of the PA during an *ad hoc* workshop organised by the MTIT in November 2010. The collected data were validated, and the interpretation was presented to the participants, whose comments have been incorporated into the final draft.

**Acknowledgments.** This report is based on the information gathered through the submission of the OECD E-government Survey, workshops and interviews carried out by the OECD Secretariat in May, July and November 2010 in Ramallah. The OECD expresses its gratitude to the Palestinian Authority for its active engagement in preparing this report and, in particular: in the Ministry of Planning and Administrative Development to Minister Ali Jarbawi and to the Special Advisor to the Minister of Planning and Administrative Development and Head of Aid Management and Coordination Directorate Dr. Estephan Salameh; in the Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Technology to Minister Mashhour Abudaka and Deputy Minister Sulaiman Al-Zuhairi; to the E-government Coordinator Dr. Safa Nasser Eldin and to the members of the E-government Core Team and to all e-government leaders of the Palestinian institutions who actively contributed to the Report by providing information and valuable comments. The OECD Secretariat is also grateful to Dr. Sabri Saidam, Advisor to the President of the PA; Mr. Adam Gronlykke Mollerup, Head of Section of the Centre for Administrative Efficiency and E-government of Denmark; Prof. Fabio Pistella, Commissioner of DigitPA, Italy; and Dr. Viscusi of the Department of Informatics, Systems and Communication of the University of Milan Bicocca, Italy. Finally, we would like to thank Mr. Reginald Graham and Ms. Lily Habash of the UNDP office of Ramallah for their collaboration and participation in our events.

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## The Case of E-government in the Palestinian Authority

### Introduction

This Report is based on: a review of published e-government policies of the PA; the technical assessment of the results of the OECD E-Government Survey (the Survey); and information collected through interviews and workshops with Palestinian officials in charge of e-government in their organisations, which were conducted within the framework of the MENA-OECD Initiative to Support the Palestinian Authority from January to December 2010. The analysis provides an overall picture of e-government policies and implementation in the PA, attempts to identify main trends, highlights opportunities for improvement, and suggests further developments.

### Strategy

*E-government is well integrated in all broader national policies of the Palestinian Authority and is described in detail in ad hoc strategies. An updated e-government policy document could improve alignment with current PA priorities and address some of the issues highlighted in this Report.*

For the past decade, the Palestinian Authority has included e-government as a national priority in all its main policy documents and strategies. With varying degrees of relevance and depth, ICT – as applied to the public sector – has progressively gained importance and is now fully integrated in all Palestinian efforts to develop a modern, efficient and well-functioning government administration.

The Ministerial Committee for E-Government, established under the impetus of President Abbas, produced a first comprehensive E-government Strategic Plan in 2005. The document was part of the Palestinian Authority vision “to provide a better life for our citizens by being a Government that:

- *Empowers* citizens to participate in government;
- *Connects* citizens, the private sector and institutions to drive economic growth and meet community challenges; and
- *Delivers* real public value through citizen-centric government services.”

Like OECD countries, and in line with OECD recommendations in the field of e-government, the PA chose to focus on demand-driven reforms that would aim at bringing government activities closer to citizens and businesses – and would help the government to better understand and serve societal needs and identify suitable solutions to problems. Elements of public sector efficiency and effectiveness – commonly regarded as the other side of the citizen-centred approach – were already included in this strategy. In fact, only an efficient and effective public administration is capable of delivering services that significantly improve peoples’ lives and business practices.

This broad consideration has been kept at the centre of the PA’s e-government vision and policies, and is reflected in later documents such as the *2010 Administrative Development Plan of the Ministry of Planning*, which again focuses on “a public sector that provides citizens with high quality services and value for money”. This plan stresses that the e-government strategy should, over time, help improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery; it also states that the Ministry of Telecommunications and IT has an important role to play in driving these initiatives forward. In addition, both the first and second year programmes of the 13<sup>th</sup> Government of the PA (*Ending the Occupation, Establishing the State and Homestretch to Freedom*) cite public sector reform through the use of ICT, and e-government in particular, among the most important national priorities.

Analysis of these sources suggests that e-government policies seem to be well integrated in the broader national plans of the PA. They have been described in more detail in *ad hoc* strategies, as is recommended by OECD good practices. However, the *E-government Strategic Plan* of 2005 could be updated to reflect the new policy priorities included in more recent documents. Moreover, greater focus on e-government governance and implementation mechanisms would be important to address some of the

problems highlighted by the Survey and described below. These issues could also be properly dealt with in a new E-government Implementation Plan. The Ministry of Telecommunication and Information Technology (MTIT) has indicated its intention to develop such a plan, in collaboration with the OECD, as a tool to transform these new policies into concrete actions.

**Proposed Actions:**

- Update the E-Government Strategy by producing an E-Government Policy Document that articulates the PA's new vision in the field of ICT in the public sector.
- Involve all stakeholders in the process by creating *ad hoc* mechanisms for broad institutional involvement and wider public consultation.

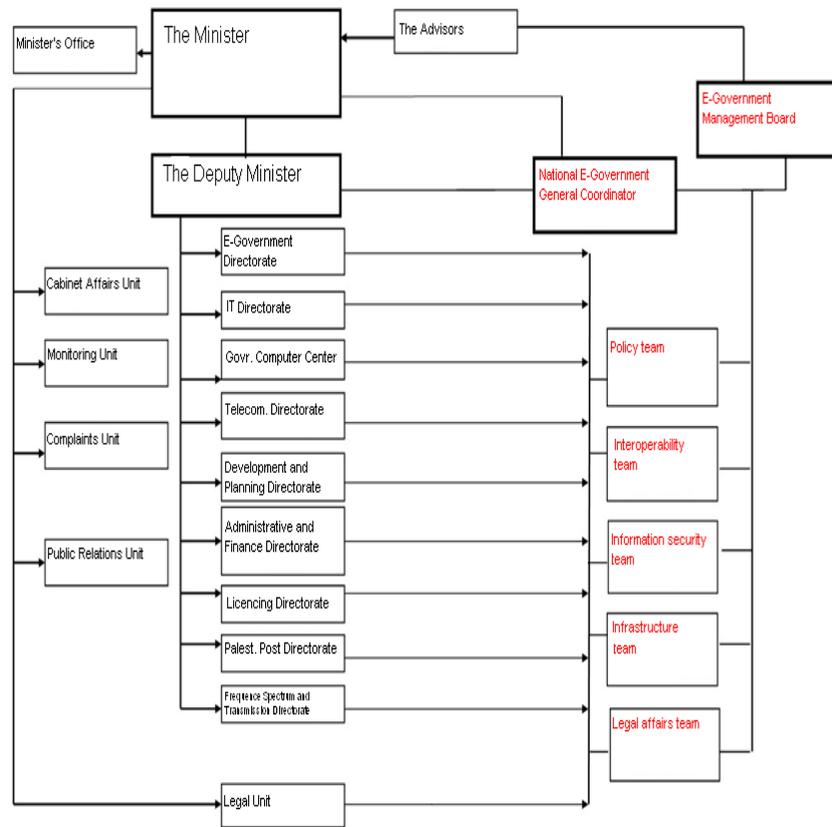
### Co-ordination

*The greatest drive for e-government comes from central government, and all Palestinian institutions perceive e-government as a priority. The co-ordination role of the MTIT could be reinforced to improve the implementation of e-services.*

E-government enjoys a very high level of political support in the PA. Technically, all e-government programmes are co-ordinated by the MTIT, which collects, analyses and articulates the needs of the entire Palestinian public sector and articulates government-wide strategies. Supported by an appointed e-government general co-ordinator and a dedicated team, the MTIT is currently in charge of horizontal and vertical co-ordination and supporting implementation.

The MTIT is also responsible for regulating the ICT market in the PA. It has taken steps to liberalise the market, which are expected to allow the private sector to expand more rapidly and to become more capable of meeting the technological needs of the Palestinian Authority and citizens.

**Structure of the Ministry of Telecommunication and Information Technology**



Source: MTIT.

These institutional arrangements are effective in the Palestinian Authority, for the great majority of survey respondents (87%) declared that the greatest drive for e-government activities comes from central government (See Figure 1.1), and most perceive e-government as an important priority in their organizations (73%, See Figure 1.3). Moreover,

all ministries of the PA seem to have effectively incorporated national e-government goals in their own organisational strategies, to the extent that 79% of respondents expressed satisfaction that specific objectives were stated in their ministry's e-government plans (See Figure 4.1).

However, e-government implementation has been uneven across government institutions in the PA. Specific strategies for horizontal and vertical co-ordination are not detailed in the policy documents, and the MTIT is not given enforcement power to make sure that official and approved strategic directions are coherently transformed into concrete implementation. It is probably for this reason that 80% of survey respondents described a lack of incentives to work together as the single most important obstacle preventing full horizontal collaboration (See Figure 6.2). At the same time, however, cross-government collaboration on technical standards is taking place (See Figure 6.1). The MTIT has clearly been given responsibility for defining standards, which seems to lead public officials across the Palestinian government to recognise its institutional right to co-ordinate IT policy, and share relevant information with MTIT and follow its directions in this area.

Establishing a committee for e-government at the Deputy-Minister level, as proposed in the MTIT's National Strategy for ICT and Post, could be an effective way to improve co-ordination. This would put the MTIT in a more officially and widely recognised position to co-ordinate all aspects of e-government implementation, not only technical standards. Similarly, the proposal to raise awareness among public officials of all ICT projects and initiatives would facilitate a common understanding of the objectives and the importance of partnering to achieve them.

As they address these considerations, Palestinian e-government leaders (e-leaders) could also be more proactive in reaching out to their colleagues in other institutions. As many OECD countries' experiences have shown, initially e-government has to prove the value added it brings to other institutions. The case for e-government needs to be made – not only at the political level, but also inside the organisations that will eventually be transformed by it – well before it is officially recognised as an essential tool for modernisation and improvement. Providing early technical support is an effective way to create both a common technological platform and a common e-government culture, which is not to be underestimated. The fact that 83% of Survey respondents declared that technical guidance on all issues (from standards to privacy) is either provided within their own organisation or not at all could signal a strategic entry point for the MTIT to improve the diffusion of common e-government principles across the whole institutional spectrum of the PA (See Figure 3.6).

The MTIT's attempt to transform the Government Computer Centre (GCC) into the official IT support / capacity-building provider for the PA goes in the right direction. Modernising the CGG and offering IT literacy courses to public officials are effective ways to start addressing some co-ordination issues, while also reducing the digital divide within Palestinian institutions.

**Proposed Actions:**

- Map administrative processes and existing applications in order to gain a clear picture of administrative workflows and institutional responsibilities.
- Redefine the PA's e-government-related procedures with a "whole-of-government" approach and guarantee a more effective co-ordination role for the MTIT.

**Enabling environment**

*The enabling environment has a direct impact on a government's capacity to transform its stated goals into e-government services. The Palestinian Authority has recently established E-Government Teams of the MTIT to focus on this area.*

E-government policies, and especially their implementation, are directly affected by the quality of what the OECD calls the "enabling environment". Constituted of the legal and regulatory frameworks along with the basic infrastructural needs of the public sector, the enabling environment has a direct impact on a government's capacity to transform its stated goals into e-government systems and applications that have a real impact on public officials' *modus operandi* and on the way services are envisaged by competent authorities and ultimately used by citizens and business.

According to the MTIT National Strategy for ICT and Post in Palestine, the Palestinian legal framework currently lacks some key basic provisions:

- The E-Signature Law;
- The Electronic Transactions law;
- The Law of Protection of Individual and Personal Data;
- The Intellectual Property Protection law;
- The Electronic Commercial Transactions, and Internet and IT Laws;
- The Law of Freedom and Confidentiality of Information in Electronic Communications; and
- The Cyber Crimes Law.

This legal gap is also reflected in the Survey, where 60% of respondents identified legislative and regulatory barriers as the most relevant challenge to e-government implementation, along with privacy and security concerns, which also have important legal components (See Figure 3.1).

Many Palestinian officials interviewed expressed concern that the lack of specific e-signature legislation might prevent effective implementation of e-government services. The PA's national e-government strategy also identified e-signatures as the highest priority for e-government laws. This view is common in both OECD and MENA countries: e-signature is often identified as the panacea for e-government implementation. It is indeed a formidable tool that can pave the way to many important and useful services.

However, experience from OECD and MENA governments shows that e-signature might be overrated, especially when it is considered a pillar of e-government implementation. Although e-signature is extremely important, many OECD and most MENA countries have implemented numerous well-functioning e-government services in the absence of e-signature or by using alternative methods of secure identification. Other legal issues –the “*lack of an easily accessible registry of e-government laws and regulations*” and “*the complexity of the existing legal framework*” – are more significant (See Figure 3.1). Tackling these areas would not require the PA to implement the complex legal and infrastructural architectures that need to be in place to allow e-signatures; and, if properly addressed, they could produce a comparatively bigger impact on e-government implementation.

Interviews and secondary sources show that the PA already enjoys a robust technological infrastructure: a government network through which all ministries are currently connected to both the Government Computer Centre and the Ministry of Finance. The ministries of Finance and Local Governments are also connected to all major municipalities. In terms of capacity, the PA is equipped with broadband, Wi-Fi and is currently acquiring the necessary licenses to install WiMAX connections. Voice-over IP and other advanced services are also available in some institutions and generally provided by the market. In the coming years, the overall situation should considerably improve thanks to the liberalisation of the communications market by the MTIT. However, if the government is equipped to run sophisticated e-government systems and applications, the same cannot be said for the Palestinian people, with only 15% of households with access to the Internet and 18% of the overall population using the Internet, according to the Central Bureau of Statistics (ESCWA 2009).

Finally, the absence of unified technical standards and inter-operability frameworks, and the lack of a common culture and practices of data sharing among most Palestinian institutions (as noted in the National ICT strategy), lead to underutilisation of the available infrastructure. Several steps are being taken by the PA to address these issues and realise the full potential of the technology framework. Although there are some exceptions – notably the ministries of Finance, Interior, and Justice – this is an aspect of e-government implementation that needs to be tackled, as it bears direct consequences for the capacity of the entire system to deliver expected results. The most recent policy documents make clear that Palestinian e-leaders are well aware of the obstacles and are ready to work to overcome them.

The MTIT's various e-government teams (see Structure of the MTIT above) have made significant progress in interoperability, legal frameworks and infrastructure. PA officials in charge of e-government are now meeting more regularly, and have started to consider several key issues from a collaborative perspective. Common actions are expected to be taken in the forthcoming months; their effects will have to be evaluated to better understand the efficacy of these new governance arrangements.

**Proposed Actions:**

- Prioritise legislative actions and infrastructure projects that enable the immediate delivery of key strategic services.
- Develop a medium- and long-term plan to increasingly implement all the remaining legal and infrastructure reforms.

## Implementation

*Basic e-government systems and applications are present in all ministries. Implementation could be improved by greater involvement of the private sector and by increasing the availability of dedicated funds.*

As stated earlier, e-government implementation has not been uniform in the PA; several ministries are moving ahead quickly, while others have not yet fully exploited the potentialities of ICT. As Figure 1.2 shows, the Ministry of Finance paved the way for e-government when it implemented ICT-enabled services in 1995 and published the first institutional website in 1998. With time, more and more Palestinian institutions have opened their doors to ICT and now all major public organisations have access to Internet and have institutional websites. The MTIT's work in collaboration with PALTEL, the national telecommunications provider, has facilitated this process.

The PA is currently running or implementing several advanced e-government systems and services, autonomously or with the support of external actors (donors, international organisations, private companies). Key e-government programmes in the PA include:

Institution	E-government system, application and services
Ministry of Finance <i>www.pmf.ps</i>	<i>Human Resources System, Electronic Protocol and Archives, Payroll System, Bisan (financial application)</i>
Ministry of Interior <i>www.moi.pna.ps</i>	<i>Palestinian ID Card System, Palestinian Passport System, Transport System, Document Management Systems: NGO Archives System, ID Card and Passport Archive System, Bureau of the Minister Archive System, Salary Document Archive System</i>
Ministry of Justice <i>www.moj.gov.ps</i>	<i>Ministerial Decisions, Meeting Minutes, Consultations, Work Assignments, Internal Correspondence, Contacts, Emails, In/Out Archiving System, Ministry Calendar, Committees, Announcements, Ministry Plans, Non-Conviction Certificates, Arbitration Certificates, Translation Certificates, Complaints, Archives :Documents, Images, Videos, Events</i>

Ministry of Labor	<i>HR System, Archiving System, Labour Market Information System</i>
Ministry of Local Government <i>www.molg.pna.ps</i>	<i>DACSI (Document Archiving &amp; Control System), HR System, In-Out Archiving System, Project Management System (PMIS), Free Balance IFMIS (Budgets Department).</i>
Ministry of National Economy <i>www.mne.gov.ps</i>	<i>Archiving System, HR System, Unified Database System (company registrations, import &amp; export), Trademark registration, Couta, Company Aims, Company Check Name, Enquiry System</i>
Ministry of Planning <i>www.mop.gov.ps</i>	<i>Electronic Archiving, Electronic Payroll System, Human Resources System, Development Assistance and Reform Platform [DARP] system for managing donor-funded projects</i>
Ministry of Public Works and Housing <i>www.mol.gov.ps</i>	<i>HR System</i>
Ministry of Social Affairs <i>www.mosa.pna.ps</i>	<i>Web Application Emergency Aid Program (www.ssnrp.ps/eas), Web Application Cash Transfer Program (www.ssnrp.ps)</i>
Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Technology <i>www.mtit.ps</i>	<i>Mail System Gateway, Mail Server, Caching Server, Domain Name Server and Hosting Servers for the entire PA</i>
Ministry of Wakf and Religious Affairs <i>www.pal-wakf.ps</i>	<i>HR System, Security Applications</i>
Office of the President <i>www.presidency.ps</i>	<i>Email System, HR System, Electronic Archiving System, Electronic Payroll System, Electronic Supplies System, Electronic Procurement System, Electronic Monitoring System for Media Department, Media Monitoring Website, Electronic Protocol System, Presidency Portal</i>
Palestinian Land Authority <i>www.pla.pna.ps</i> (under construction)	<i>Electronic workflow system to identify and track citizens' applications</i>

Several shared applications, which are available throughout all ministries, have not been included in the table. These are: email systems and institutional websites/portals provided by the MTIT, and financial and HR applications provided by the Ministry of Finance (Bisan, HR and payroll systems).

In addition, several other initiatives are currently being implemented. The Ministry of Finance is evaluating e-procurement applications, and more citizen- and business-oriented fiscal and financial services. The Ministry of Justice is connecting all its courts and will provide them with a complete case management system to automate their processes. The Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the MTIT, has connected several schools to the Internet, is working on a network for all schools and is finalising a dedicated network for all universities (The Academic Network). These infrastructure projects are supported by an initiative: to provide all school teachers with laptops; increase the level of ICT awareness and its use in classrooms through an e-learning programme that addresses the needs of the student population; and through a project (currently under evaluation) to provide all students with the Negroponte laptop. Moreover, the General Personnel Council is in the process of implementing an automated human resources management system; the first services are already available on a new HR portal that includes an online recruitment system. Finally, in addition to providing the other services, the MTIT is rehabilitating Palestinian post offices with the aim of connecting them to the national government network to transform them into one-stop shops that will provide e-services to the population, even in remote areas.

A map of administrative processes, matched with e-government applications and electronic services for citizens and business would be particularly helpful, in creating a comprehensive picture of e-government implementation in the Palestinian Authority. This map could later be completed with an assessment exercise to fully evaluate programme quality and their impact on administrative procedures, and citizens and businesses in general. However, this would be difficult to undertake at the moment because monitoring and evaluation are very limited in the PA, and efforts focus mainly on users' access and cost/benefit analysis (see Figure 8.1). More structured procedures in these areas could also support better policy prioritisation and resource allocation.

Notwithstanding the good results already achieved, the high level of political support, and the clearly articulated policy objectives, e-government implementation in the PA still suffers from various problems. In addition to the legal and infrastructure obstacles, the Survey shows a generalised difficulty in managing technology. From dealing with the legacy of previous choices to procuring new hardware and software, more than half of

the respondents (See Figure 3.1) cite technology issues as one obstacle to smooth development of ICT in the public sector. This is confirmed by Figure 5.3, which shows that 79% consider management (*i.e.* lack of implementation skills) among the most important skills to be improved among public officials.

It is important to note that the lack of management skills has a significant effect beyond e-government implementation; it prevents the effective application of collaboration frameworks and has an important negative impact on procurement choices. However, skills upgrade is a common topic across OECD and MENA countries, and the PA has made it a top priority in all major policy documents analysed for this report.

Outsourcing selected tasks to the private sector is a typical short- and medium-term strategy to address an under-skilled workforce. According to the Survey, the PA is using outsourcing to deal with the development of IT infrastructure and applications, which can be easily bought on the market. In this sense, the greater openness and increased competition of the ICT sector initiated by the MTIT seems to be a supporting measure, as it would allow the market to expand and to meet the demands of the Palestinian public administration (see Figure 5.4). However, according to Figure 6.3, only IT infrastructures and their maintenance are currently outsourced, with limited collaboration for service provision. The Palestinian IT Association (PITA [www.pita.ps](http://www.pita.ps)), for example, seems to be willing to further engage with public authorities in order to meet their demands. Nonetheless, its representatives admit that there is a lack of planning capacity in the private sector, and companies often do not collect sufficient information on public priorities to be able to invest in relevant fields. Again, more co-ordination and major involvement of private actors in policy planning and formulation could overcome these obstacles. Initial steps in this direction have been taken by the MTIT, and there is common understanding that more efforts need to be made by the PA to support the development of its ICT companies.

As a matter of fact, the private sector has proven to be very effective in supporting service delivery at lower costs and in guaranteeing the sustainability of e-government processes in both OECD and MENA countries. Banks, as well as supermarkets or telephone companies, are partnering with governments all over the world to provide public services to citizens; and the PA might find these business models easy to replicate and both financially and economically advantageous. Unfortunately, in order to create public-private partnerships, the PA should work on updating its legal framework while increasing its public servants' awareness of the advantages of such partnerships, possibly associating them with economic incentives and *ad hoc* procurement strategies, as indicated by Figure 6.4.

Finally, budgetary concerns are also perceived as an important impediment to e-government implementation. Even though the PA has spent USD 35 million for the development of an Information Society (according to ESCWA estimates, and including both e-government and purchases of information technology and infrastructures), Survey respondents declared that a lack of funding is directly undermining e-government projects. Mechanisms for joint funding across government institutions have proven to be an effective way to better use existing financial resources in OECD countries, but these do not seem to be in place in the PA: 47% of Survey respondents cite the lack of these agreements as the second most important budgetary barrier (See Figure 3.4).

#### **Proposed Actions:**

- Increase awareness among the PA's public officials of the benefits and modalities to support a more direct inclusion of the Palestinian private sector in electronic service design and delivery.
- New strategies based on the principles of good management (*i.e.* management by objective and performance-based budgeting) could increase the allocation and effective use of existing funds for e-government projects.

### **User centricity**

*The delivery of user-centered services is a priority for the PA. More citizen engagement in policy formulation, and increased efforts to bridge the digital divide in the population would help transform this policy priority into practice.*

User-centred services are identified as a top priority in both the E-government Strategy of 2005 and the current National ICT Strategy. This is, in fact, in line with both OECD and MENA countries' approaches, and has proven to be among the most effective uses of e-government applications. According to the Survey, the PA is currently assessing citizens' needs and expectations, mostly using customer surveys and website polls (See

Figure 7.5), which is coherent with the stated goal of using e-government service to increase citizens' participation and trust in government. This is also reflected in Figure 2.1, which shows that 67% of respondents rated citizen engagement as a very important objective.

However, citizens' involvement in designing and evaluating e-government services is limited. Organised civil society, as well as consumers' associations and professional unions, are currently not involved in any stage of the process of formulation and assessment of e-government services. Alternative strategies could be developed to address this issue, such as the use of focus groups, *ad hoc* meetings or simply more frequent and wide-spread surveys. Online consultation should also be more consistently used to reach out to citizens, as stressed in the OECD "*Practitioners' Guide on public consultation in the law drafting process*" in the PA. This would permit the PA to better identify citizens' needs and priorities and would allow for more focused and better-oriented public policies.

Furthermore, a digital divide in the population is preventing citizens from fully exploiting all the possibilities offered by ICT within the Palestinian public administration. Citizens, however, seem to be very proactive in pushing the PA toward more and more sophisticated services; Figure 7.3 shows that citizens are considerably more interested than any other social actor in the provision of online information and services and in electronic consultation. The MTIT is working on infrastructure projects (*i.e.* the introduction of WiMAX) to increase Internet penetration, which is currently particularly low. These kinds of projects, if associated with training and financial support to buy computers, could quickly bridge the digital gap and considerably increase users' take-up of existing services. Several Palestinian NGOs are also actively trying to address the digital divide, especially among students – although they actually seem to be less affected by this problem, as is often the case in both OECD and other MENA countries.

**Proposed Actions:**

- Creating focus groups, using online surveys and institutionalising public-private forums would allow greater involvement of Palestinians in policy making, and service identification and delivery.
- Implement specific actions to increase access to the Internet and reduce the digital divide through *ad hoc* training programmes and infrastructure projects.

## Conclusions

*The PA is in a key moment of its e-government implementation. After the initial phases, it is now moving toward modernisation of its public administration through extensive use of ICT to increase efficiency and effectiveness, to offer better services to citizens, and to promote economic growth.*

Data gathered by the Survey shows that the PA's overall e-government scenario is multi-faceted and presents various opportunities for improvement. There is a clear sense of direction in the policies developed in the past and in the current strategies. The PA is strongly prioritising reform of its public administration based on efficiency gains, more effective procedures, and citizen-centred services. This is in line with the current trends in most OECD countries and seems to be appropriate considering the results of the Survey. Moreover, this direction is endorsed by the highest political levels, as the strategies and national policies clearly show, and is also fully understood and supported by public officials; this will eventually guarantee its smooth implementation in the various institutions involved.

From an institutional point of view, the PA has envisaged different governance mechanisms to implement and manage Information Society initiatives and e-government projects in particular. Currently, the MTIT has been given political responsibility for these areas; however, further steps are advisable to equip it with effective co-ordination mechanisms to guarantee more homogenous e-government implementation horizontally and across all levels of government. Monitoring and evaluation activities, currently performed only on a limited scale, should be greatly increased, and their co-ordination could be assigned to the MTIT. This would not only give it an overview of e-government implementation in the PA, but would also put it in the position to concretely evaluate the impact of the current policies and propose specific corrections when needed.

The PA presents some structural and infrastructure problems that are a consequence of the complex political scenario and of the many years of conflicts. In particular, the inactivity of the Legislative Council following the latest elections has made it more difficult to update and modernise the legislative framework; however, a provision of the Basic Law that allows for ruling by decree in these circumstances is allowing progress in this area. Even if an operational solution has been found, the lack of broad political discussion on laws and policies (within the Legislative Council, but also between the members of the Council and the public) is contributing to

reduced citizen participation and to the PA's difficulty in aligning its work with citizens' needs and expectations. The OECD is currently helping the Legislative Council to reinforce its capacities with the production of an "Assessment Report and Recommendations for the Legislative Drafting Manuals".

At the same time, the PA's ICT infrastructure has often been damaged by local armed conflicts, and many ministries had to be relocated. This has delayed creation of an appropriate infrastructure, even though much progress has been made to guarantee the basic service of a full-fledged government network. Finally, the PA is still facing difficulties in importing goods and services from abroad, as entry permits and custom clearance at the Israeli borders are administratively so burdensome and lengthy that they often make it impossible or at least inconvenient to procure experts and products from other countries.

In addition, the Palestinian citizens and private sector need to be better supported to allow them to fully enjoy the benefits of e-government. Palestinian citizens still face low Internet penetration and a digital divide that does not allow almost half of the population to access the Internet and use the available e-services. The PA has started to address these issues by implementing major initiatives that will make the expansion of online applications more meaningful and effective. Some are already in place, but more intense efforts are needed, perhaps in conjunction with civil society organisations, the private sector and the international community. As for the private sector, the recent liberalisation of the ICT market definitely constitutes an important supporting measure, and the many economic investments in this area are expected to create an important market for ICT products, both within and outside public administrations.

Finally, many Survey respondents cite budgetary constraints as an important problem; they must be viewed in the bigger context of the Palestinian economy and the influence of international donors. New approaches (*i.e.* management by objective and performance-based budgeting) could increase the PA's capacity to use existing funds in a more efficient, effective and strategic way. This will have to be included in an overall whole-of-government budget management reform applied horizontally and vertically across levels of government.

## Way forward

At the end of the first year of the MENA-OECD Initiative to Support the Palestinian Authority, as outlined in this Report, the PA is in a good position to build on the results it has achieved so far and pave the way for a more modern and citizen-oriented public administration through extensive use of ICT. In order to do so, a well structured and articulated *E-government Implementation Plan* would be key in transforming the identified policy priorities into concrete actions.

Such a Plan would also support the appropriate planning of the available resources and would increase the value for money of every single investment by envisaging collaboration frameworks aimed at maximising the impact of each programme. If coupled with effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, it could reduce waste and support the clear identification of priority programmes. With an enhanced, active role for the MTIT in co-ordinating e-government implementation, the Plan could be instrumental in improving the capacity of the entire PA to deploy available resources effectively, take full advantage of all possible synergies and considerably increase the number of services available to the public sector, citizens and businesses alike. The OECD will assist the PA in designing and drafting the E-government Implementation Plan by supporting the transformation of strategies into actions, providing examples of success stories and good practices, and facilitating the involvement of peer policy makers and practitioners from both MENA and OECD countries.

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## **Annex I**

### **E-Government in the Palestinian Authority**

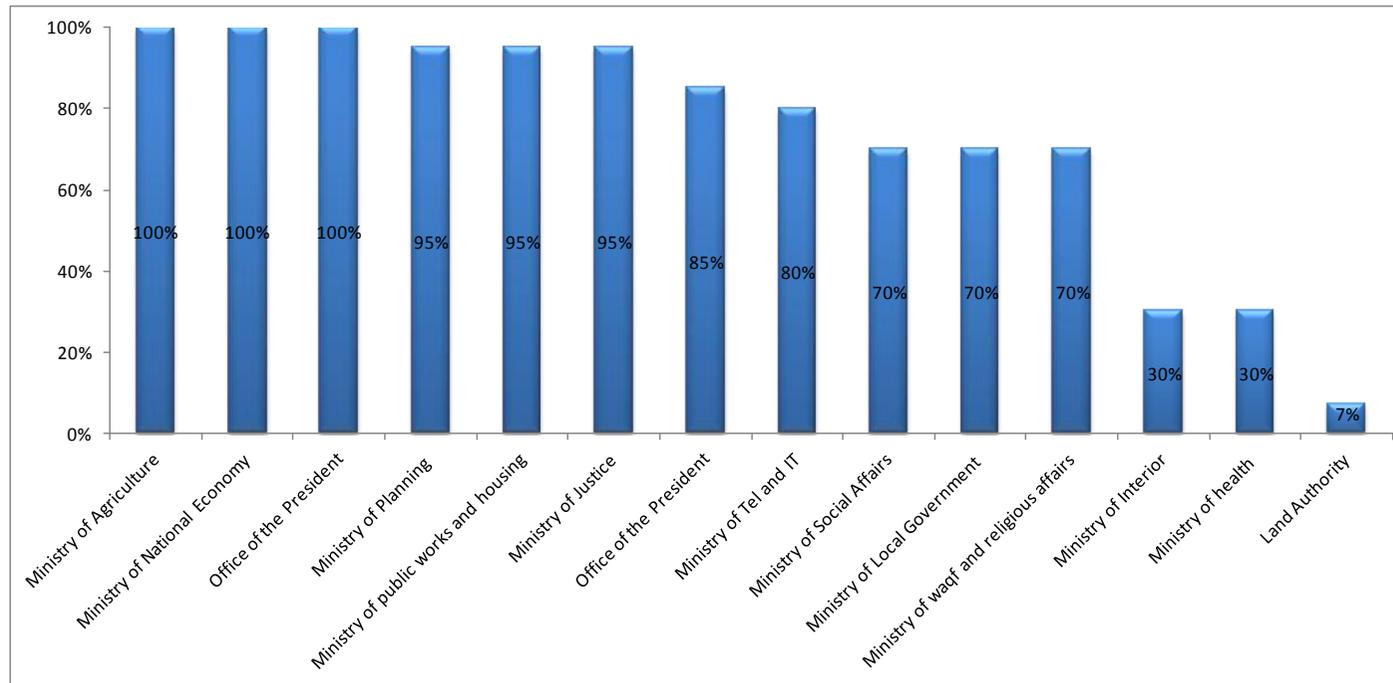
#### **Technical Figures**

*BASED ON THE RESULTS OF THE OECD E-GOVERNMENT SURVEY*



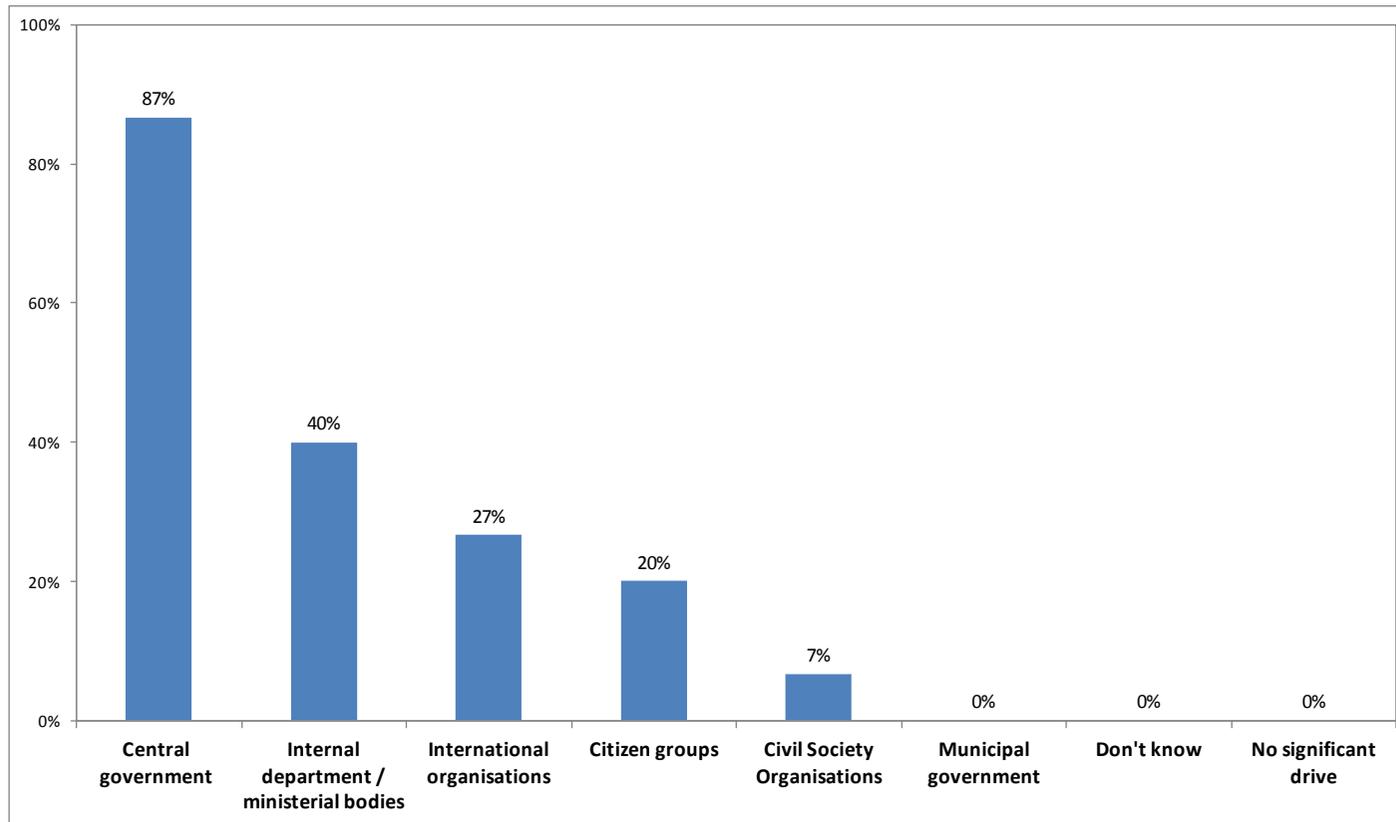
## Background Information

### Percentage of staff with access to e-mail and the Internet



## 1. e-Government context

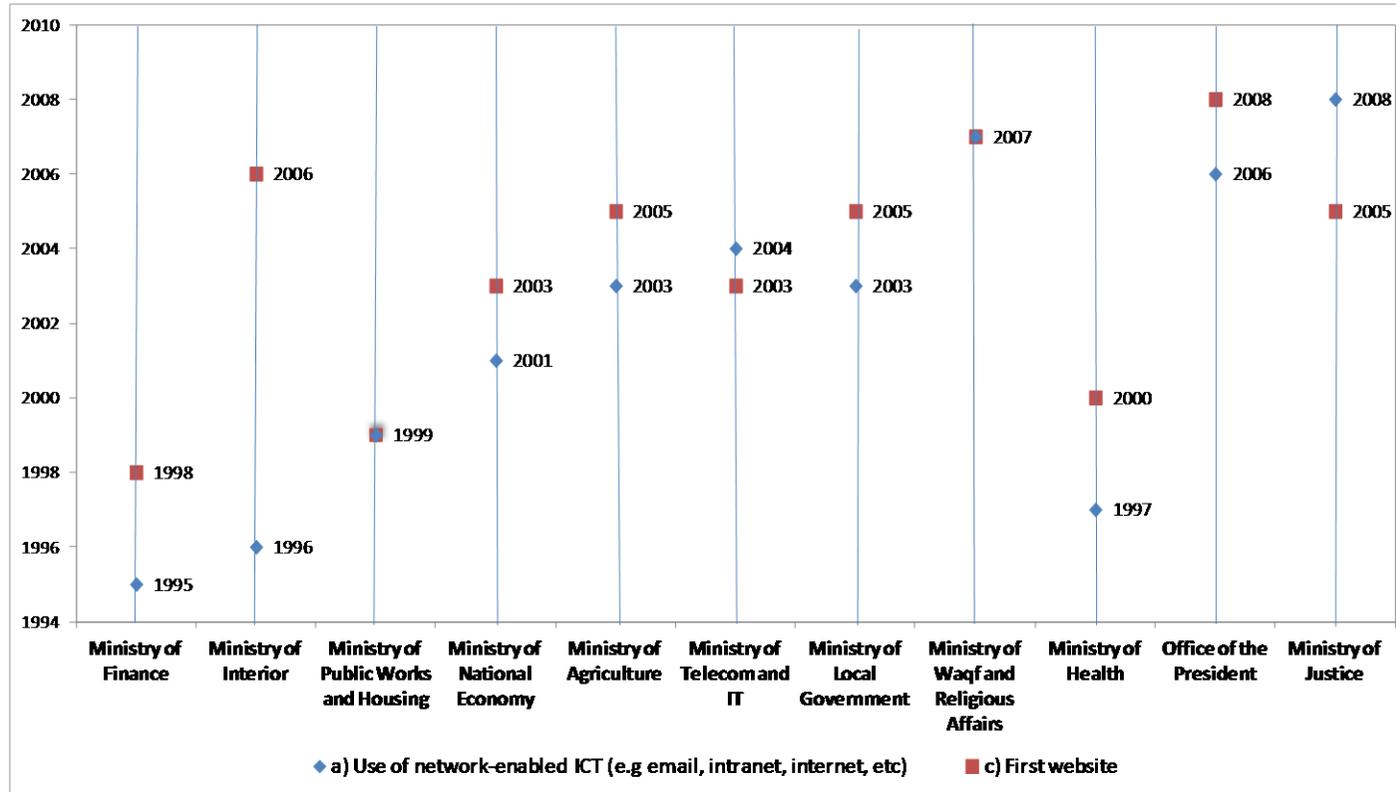
### 1.1. Where is the greatest drive for e-government activities coming from, in your experience?



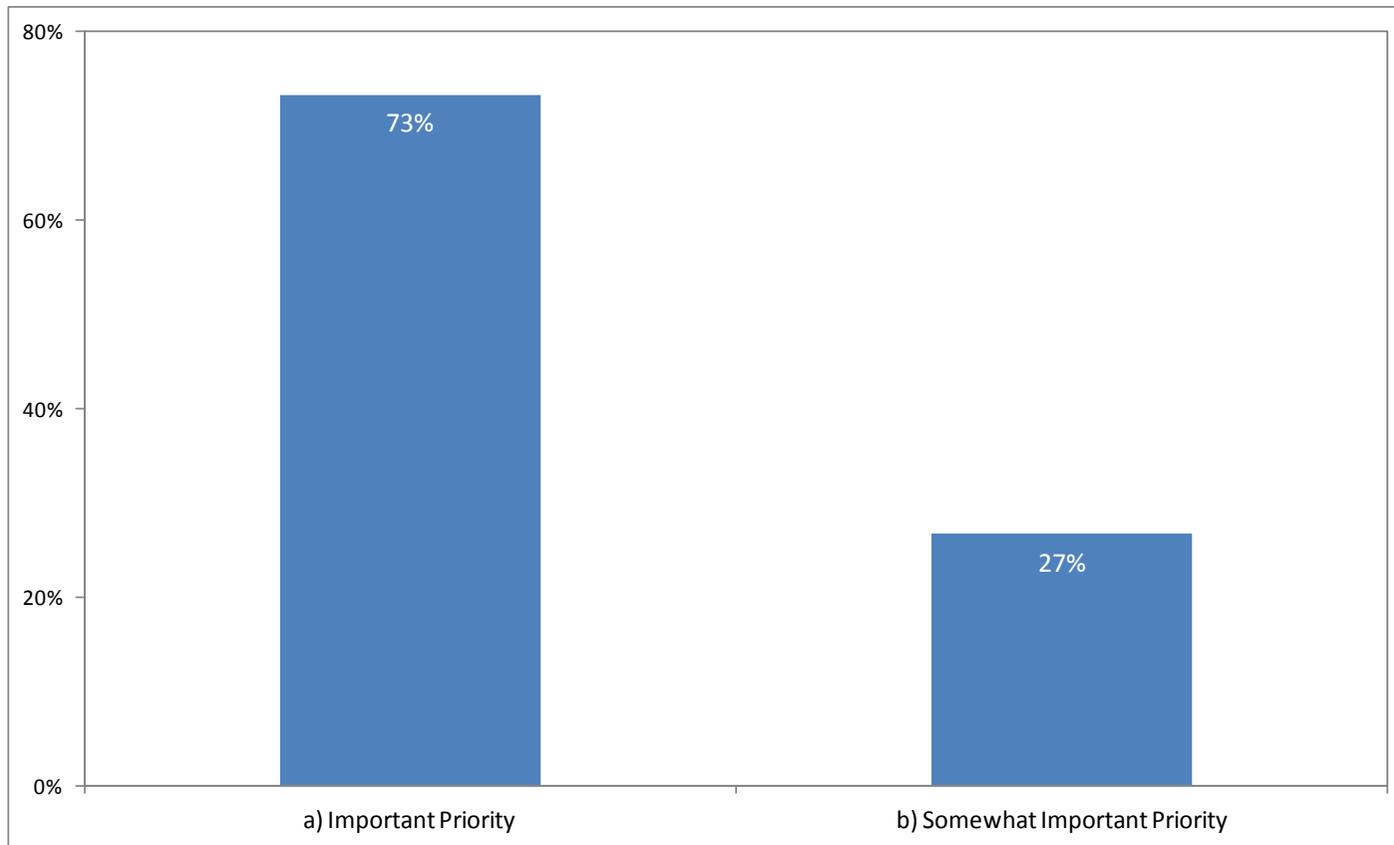
## 1.2. When were the following first introduced in your organisation?

a) Use of network-enabled ICT (*e.g.* e-mail, Intranet, Internet, etc.)

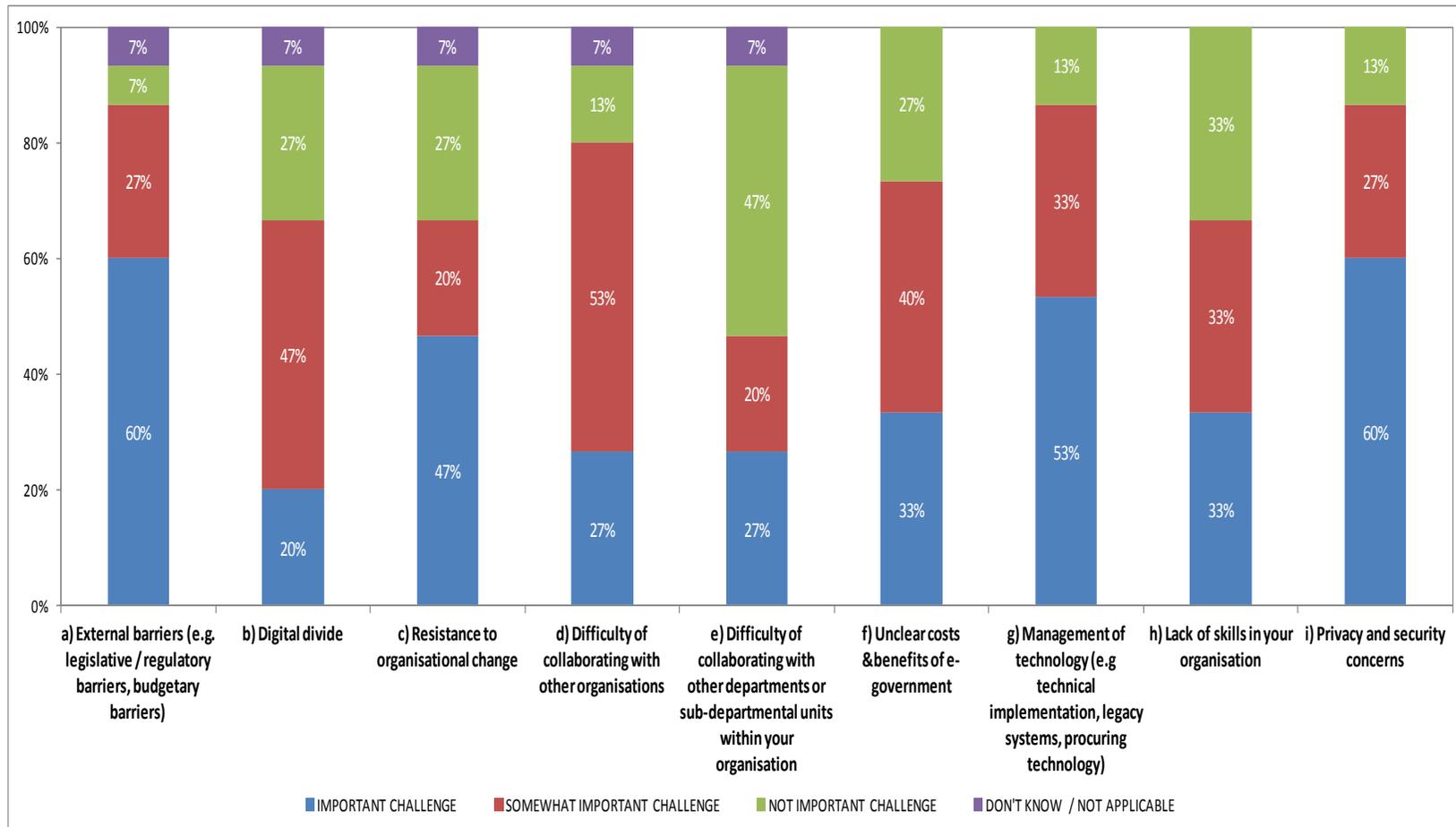
c) First website



**1.3. Among the many priorities of your organisation, would you say that e-government is:**

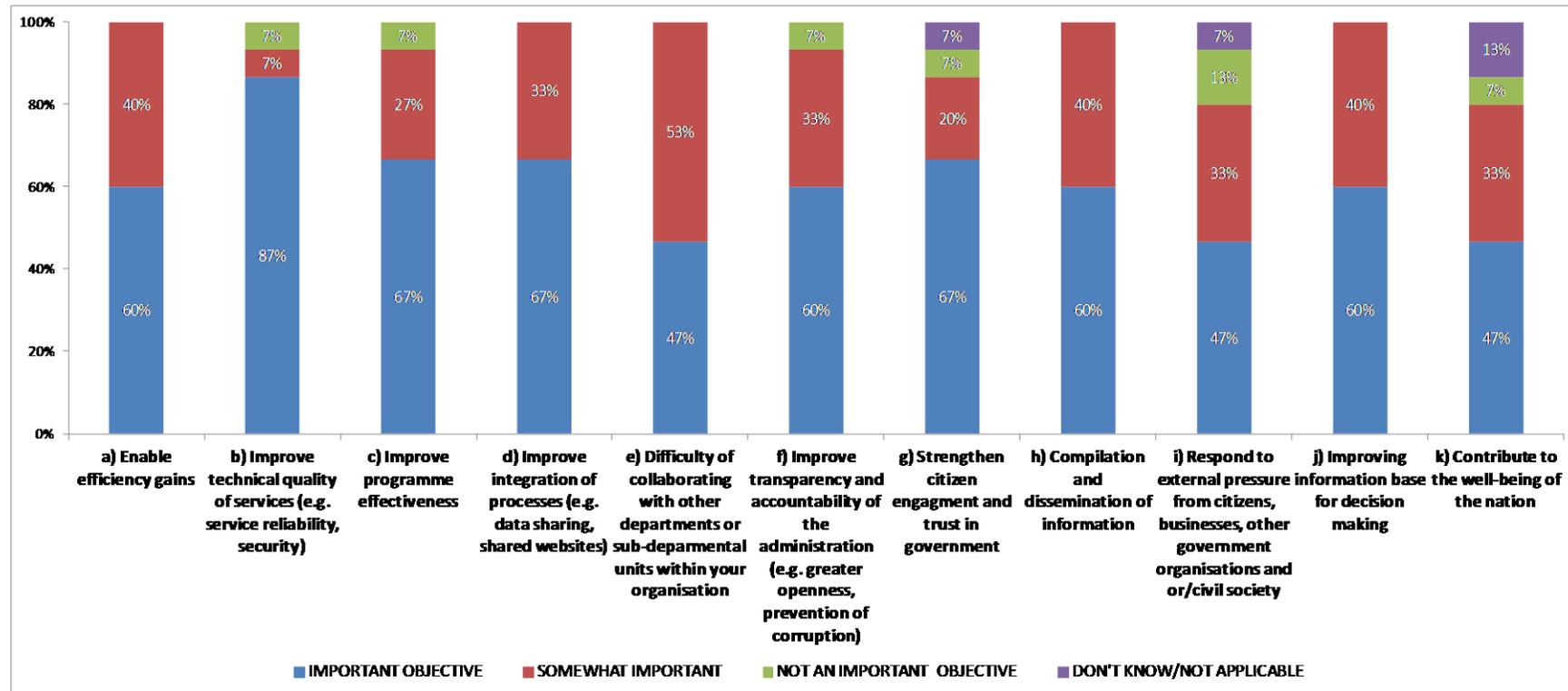


**1.4. Please rate the importance to your organisation of each of the following potential challenges to e-government implementation:**



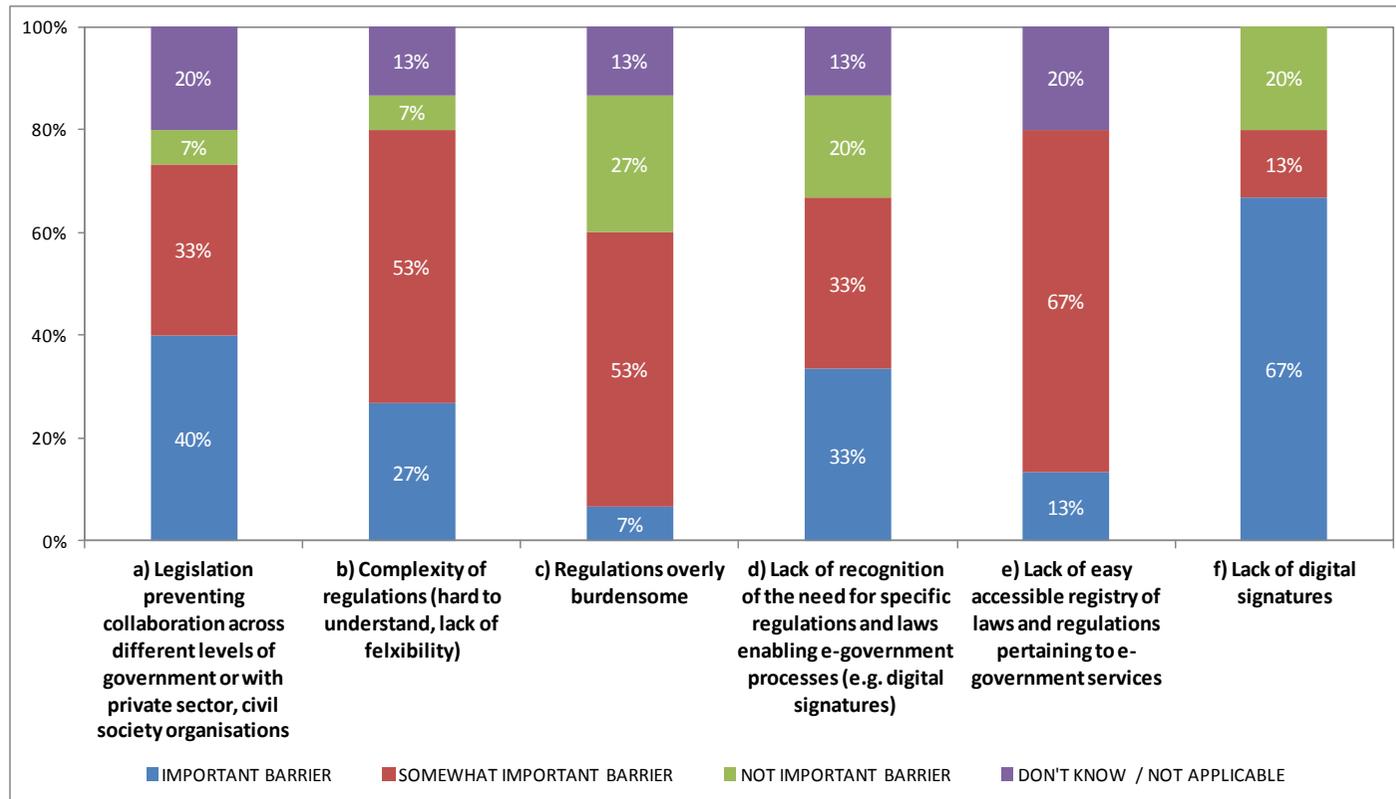
## 2. The case for e-government

### 2.1. Which of the following objectives were explicit reasons for the implementation of e-government in your organisation, and what was the importance attached to them?

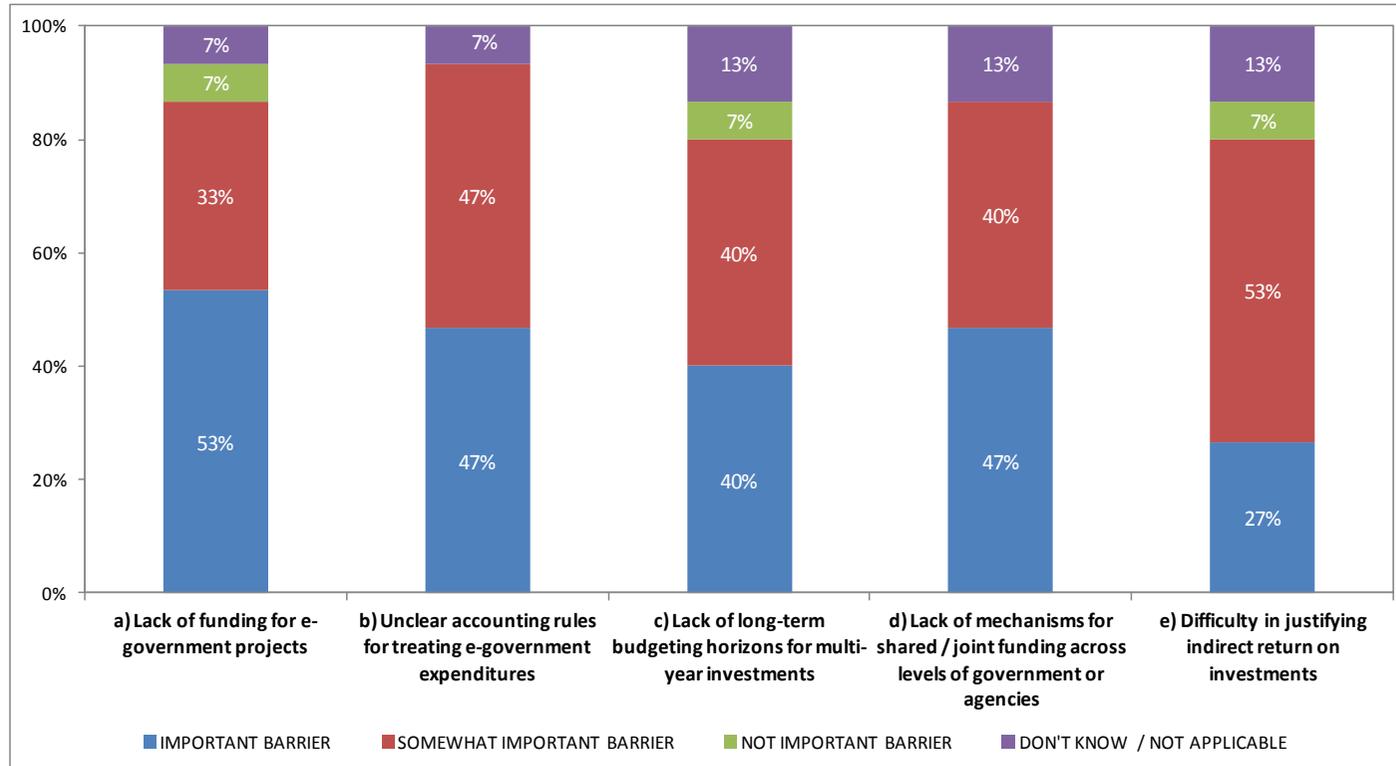


### 3. External barriers to e-government

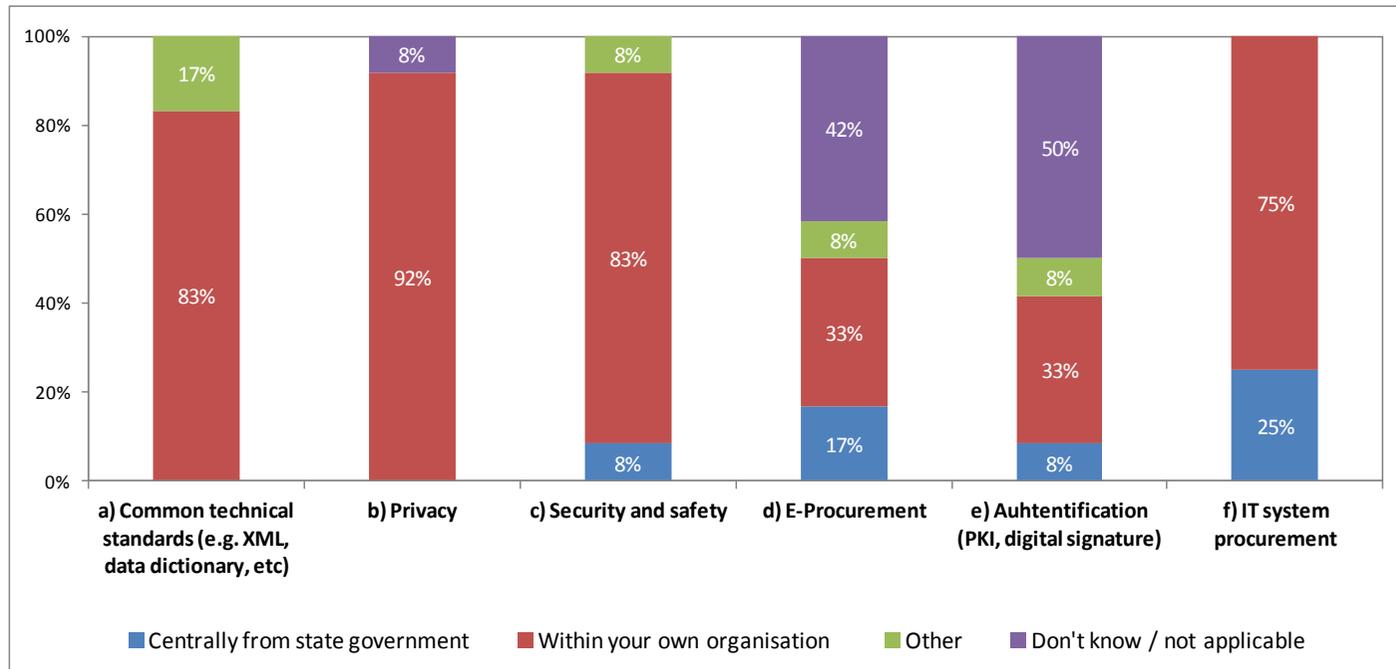
#### 3.1. Please rate the importance of each of the following legislative/regulatory barriers to implementing e-government



**3.2. Please rate the importance of each of the following budgetary barriers to implementing e-government**

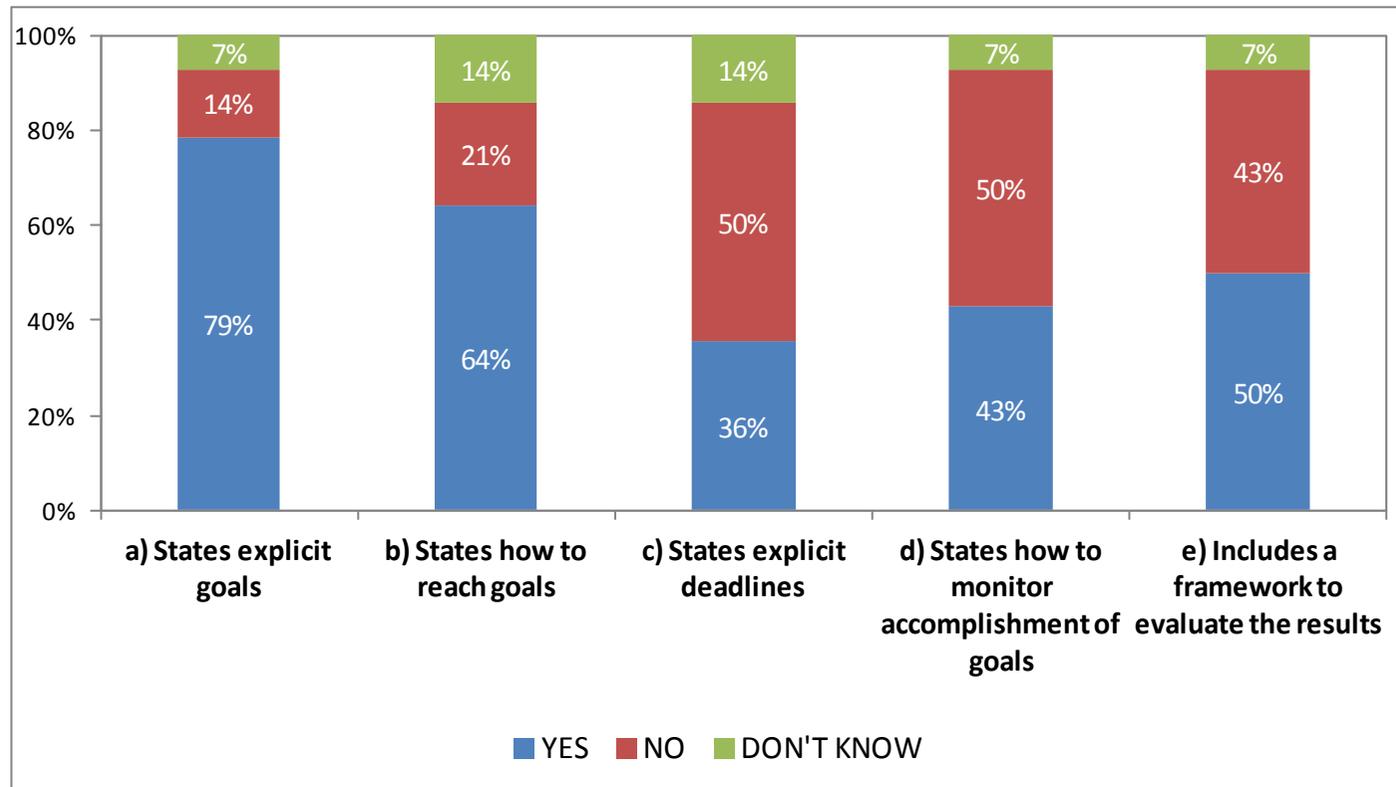


### 3.4. Where is your main technical guidance coming from, and is it satisfactory?

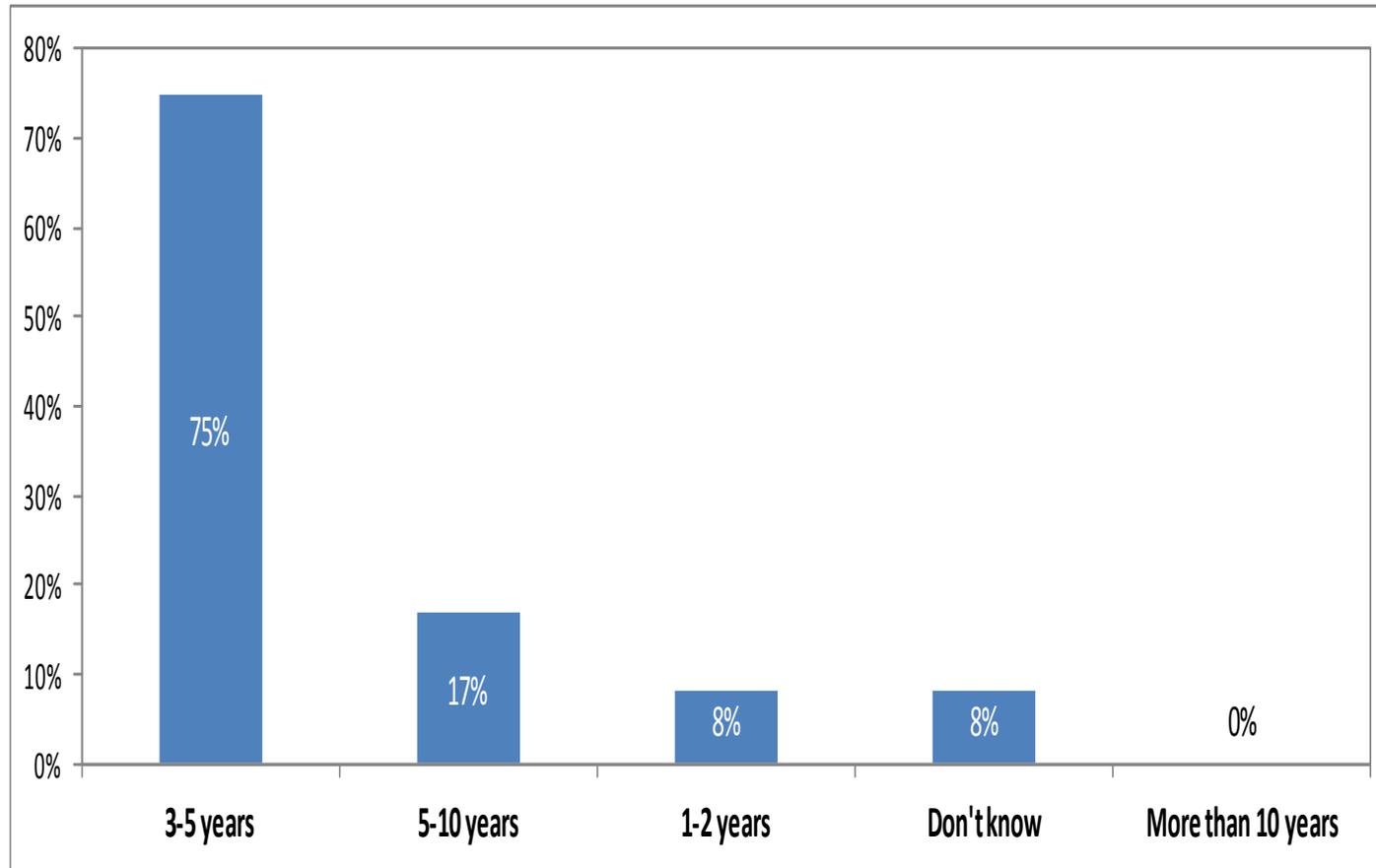


## 4. Leadership and planning

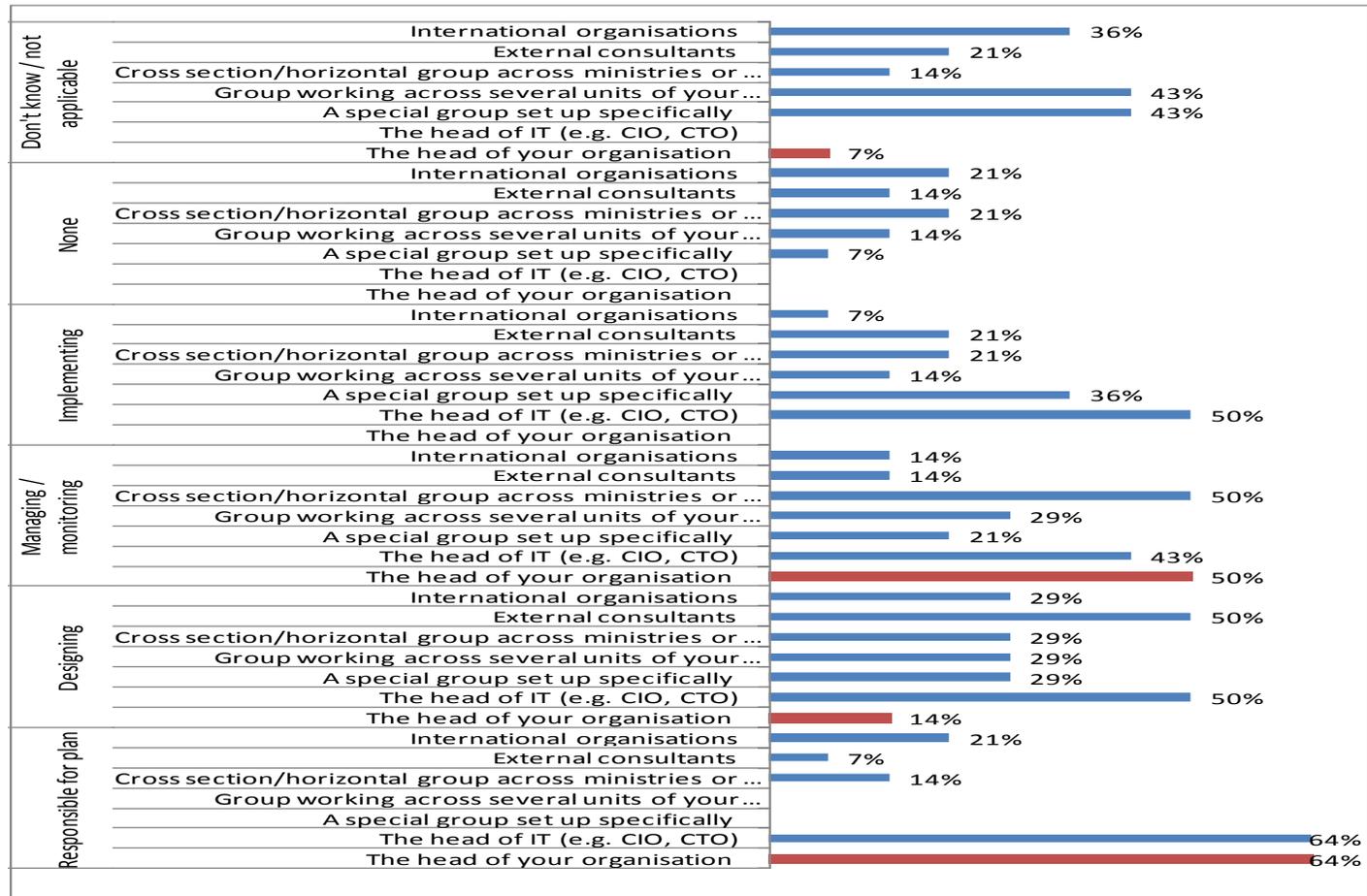
### 4.1. The e-government plan in your organisation:



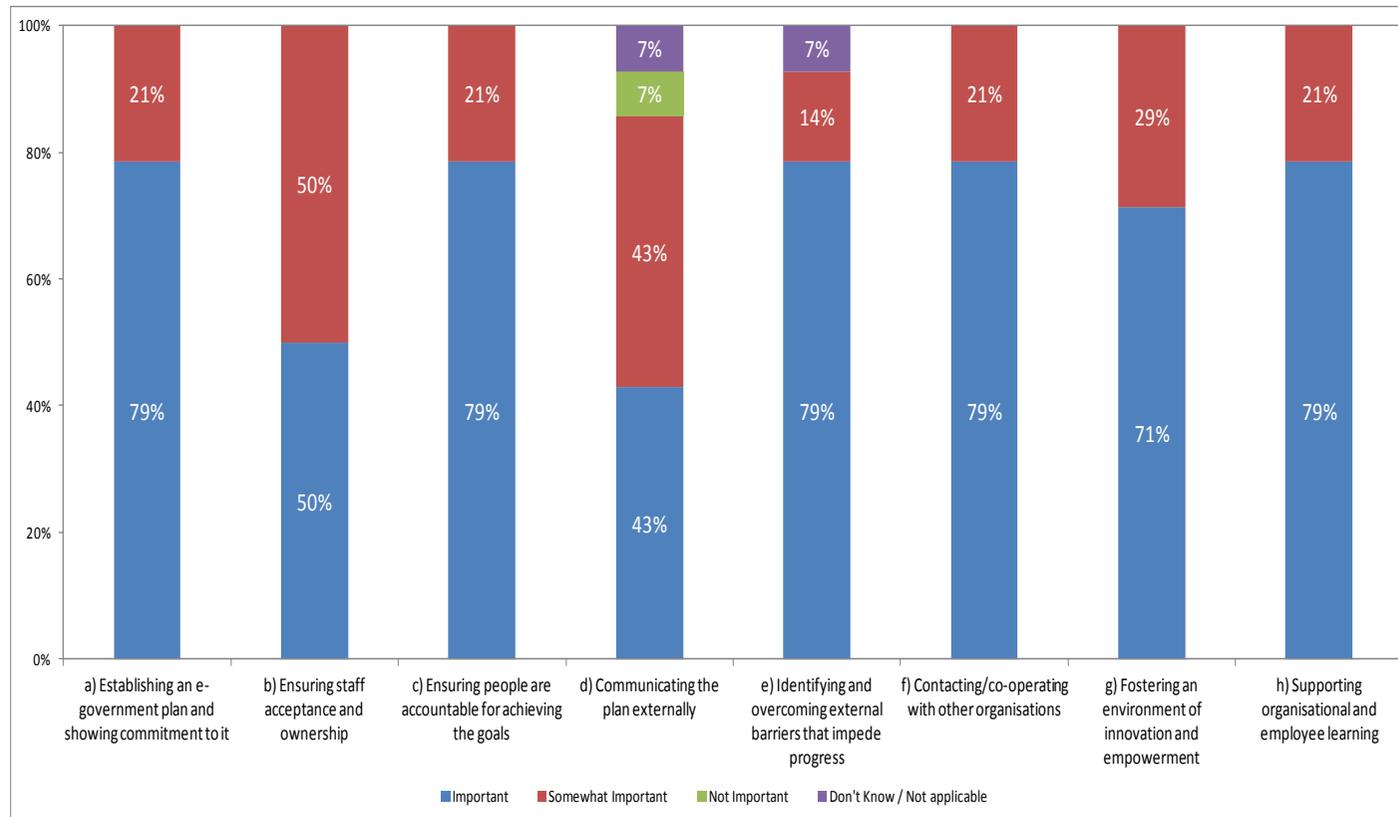
#### 4.2. What is the time frame for achieving your organisation's e-government goals?



### 4.3. What functions does each actor have in your organisation with respect to e-government plans?

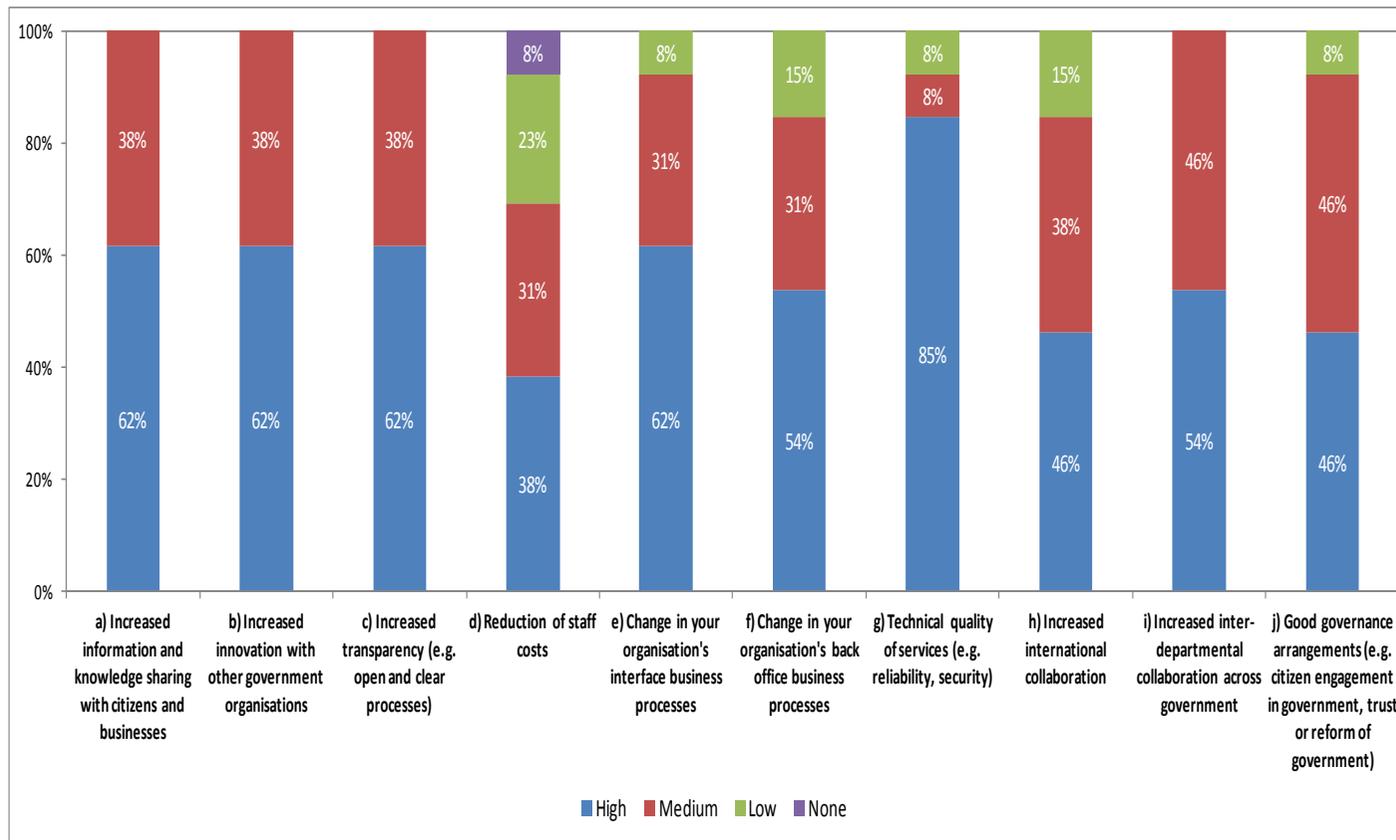


#### 4.4. What importance do e-government leaders in your organisation place on the following aspects of e-government?

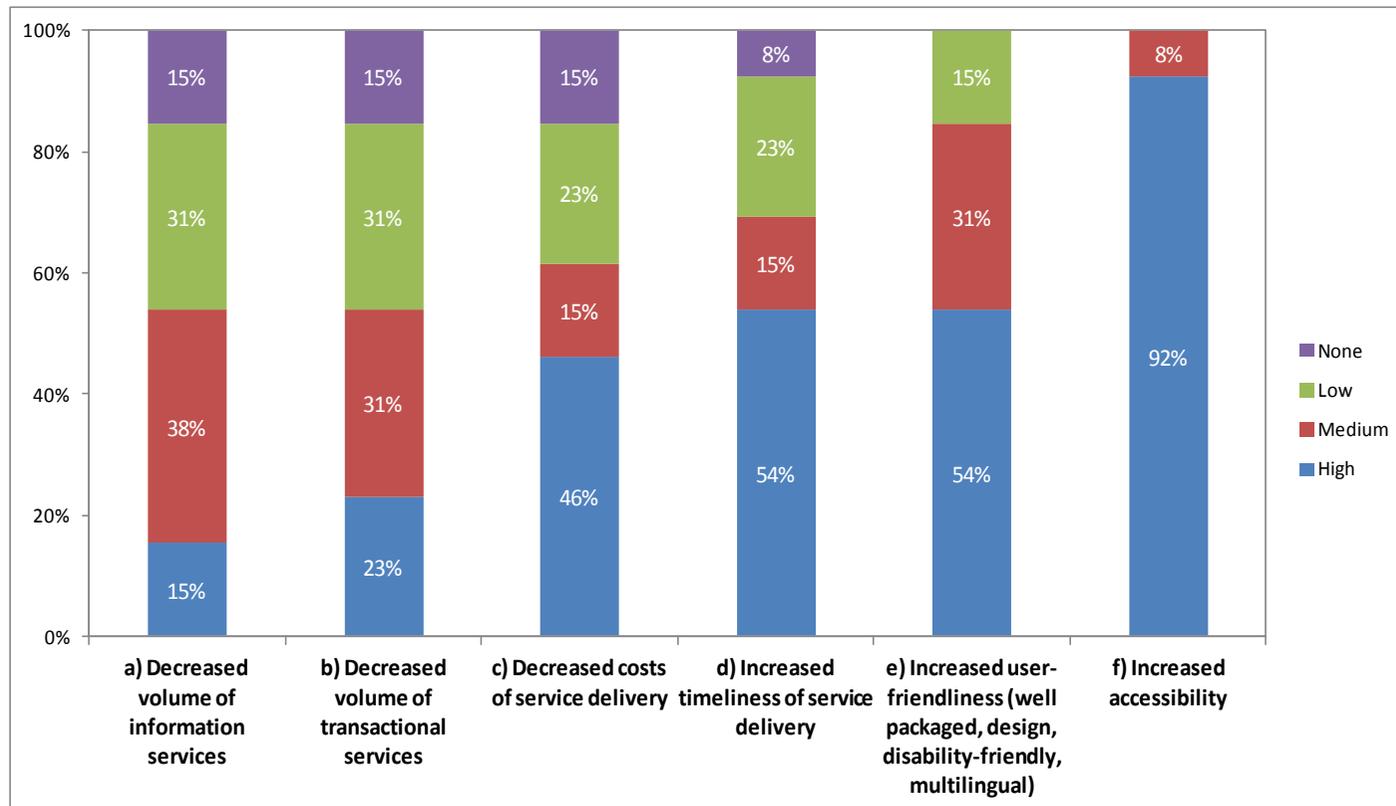


## 5. Organisational change

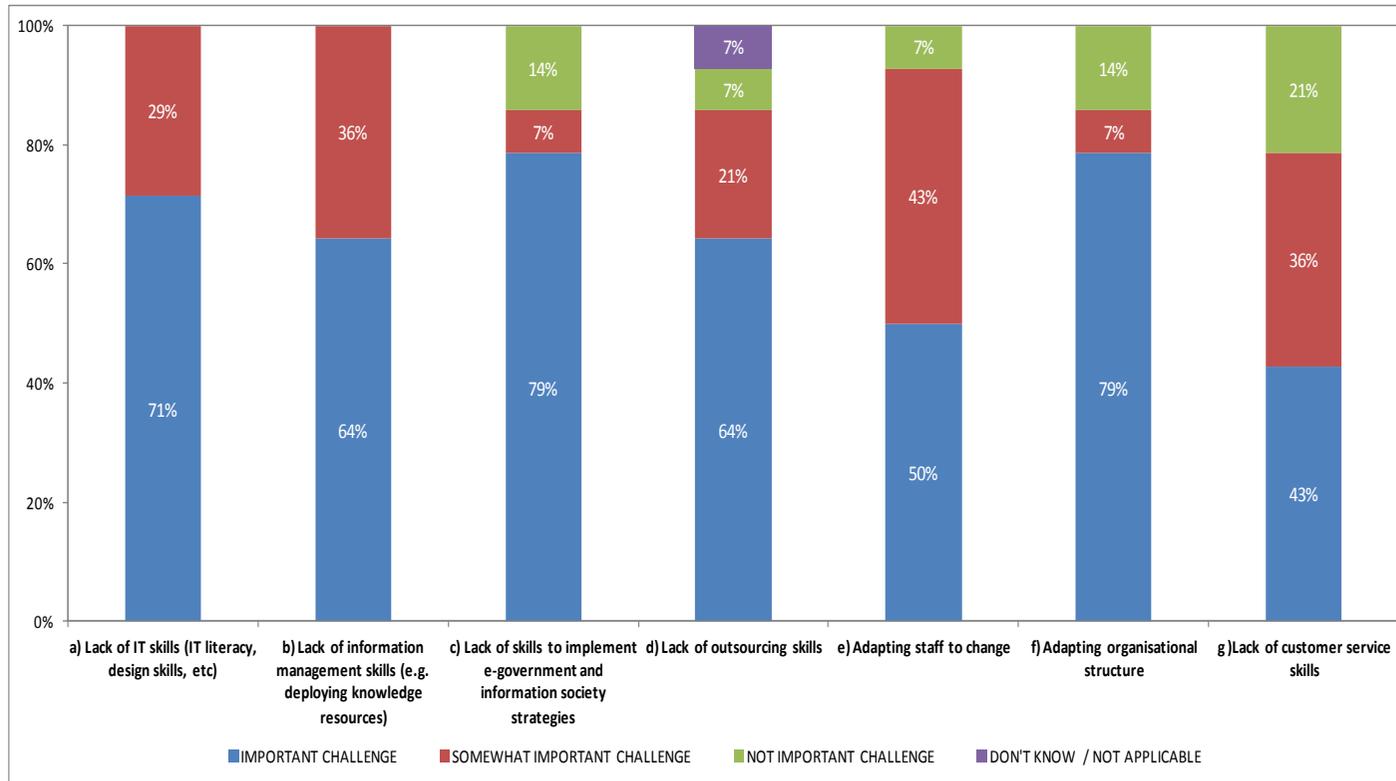
### 5.1. Please indicate whether you feel that e-government activities have had impact on the following aspects of your organisation:



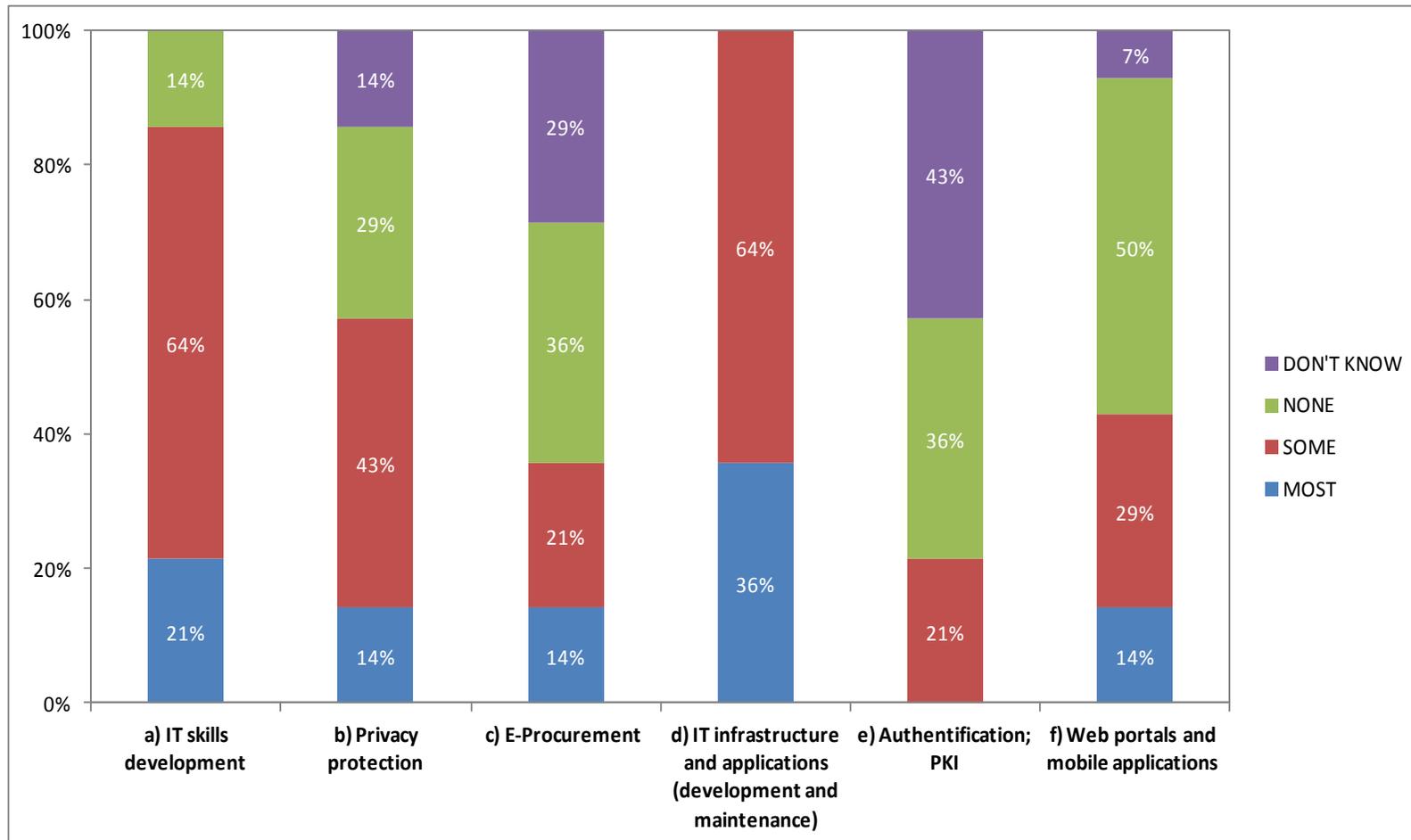
**5.2. Please indicate the impact (if any) e-government activities have had on the services your organisation provides:**



### 5.3. How important are the following skill in implementing e-government?

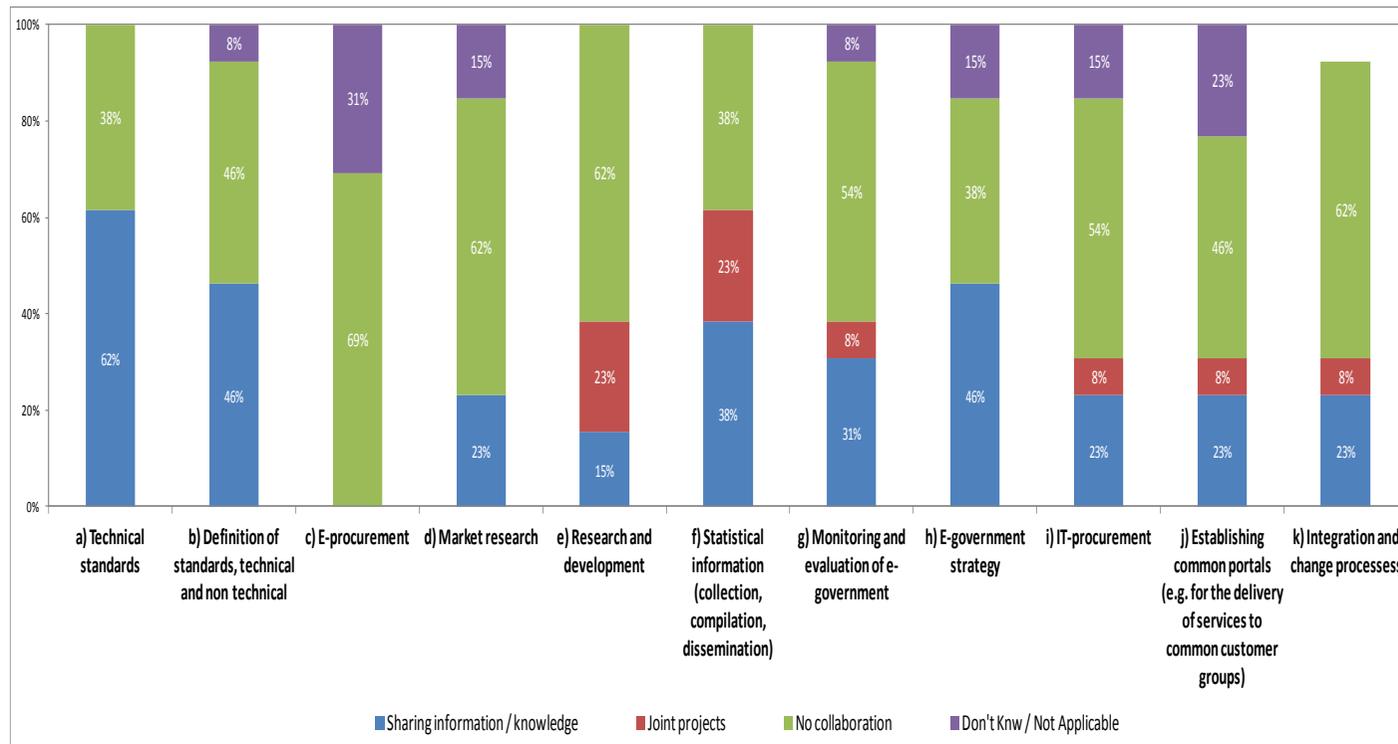


#### 5.4. Are you outsourcing parts of your budget for the following areas?

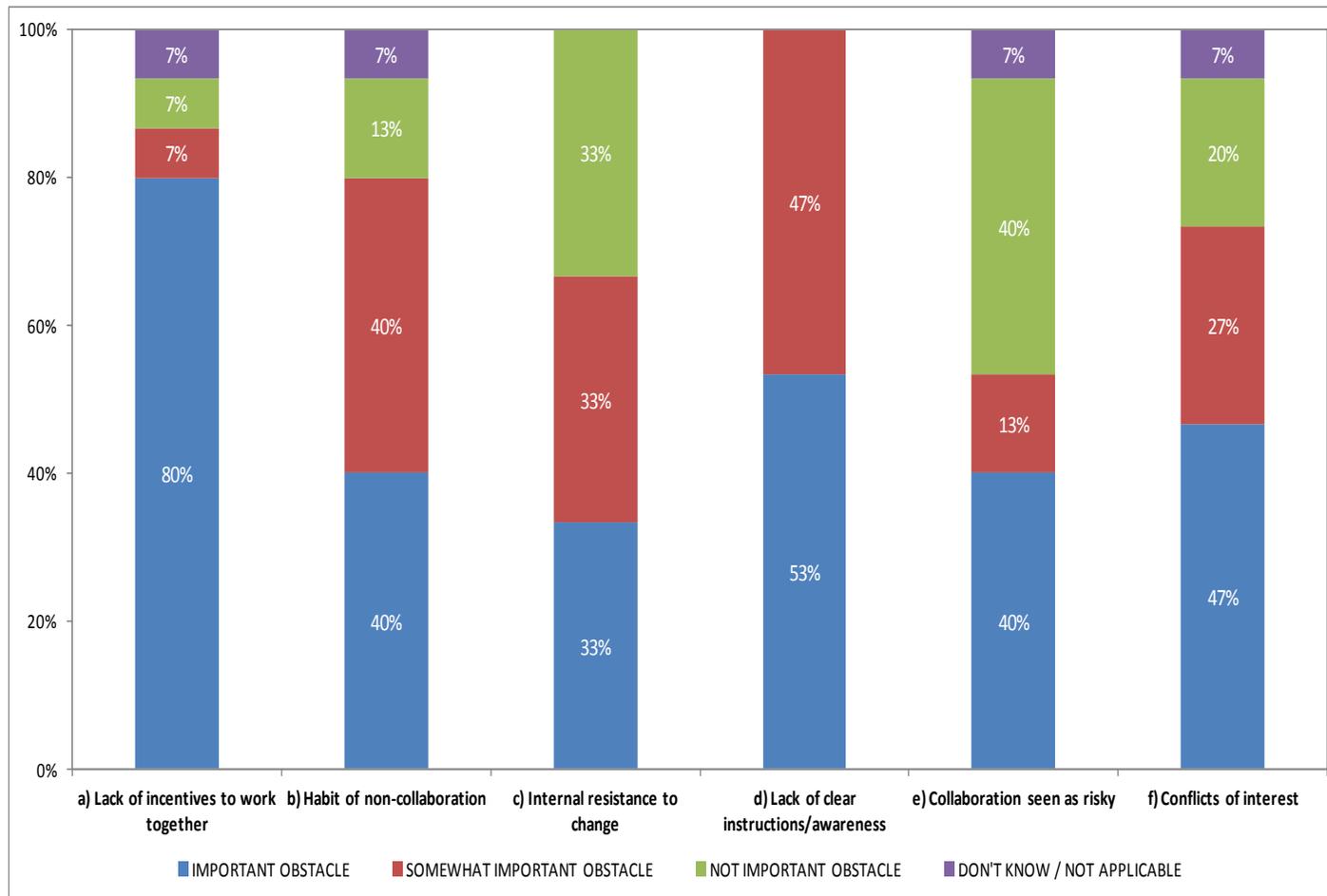


## 6. Collaboration

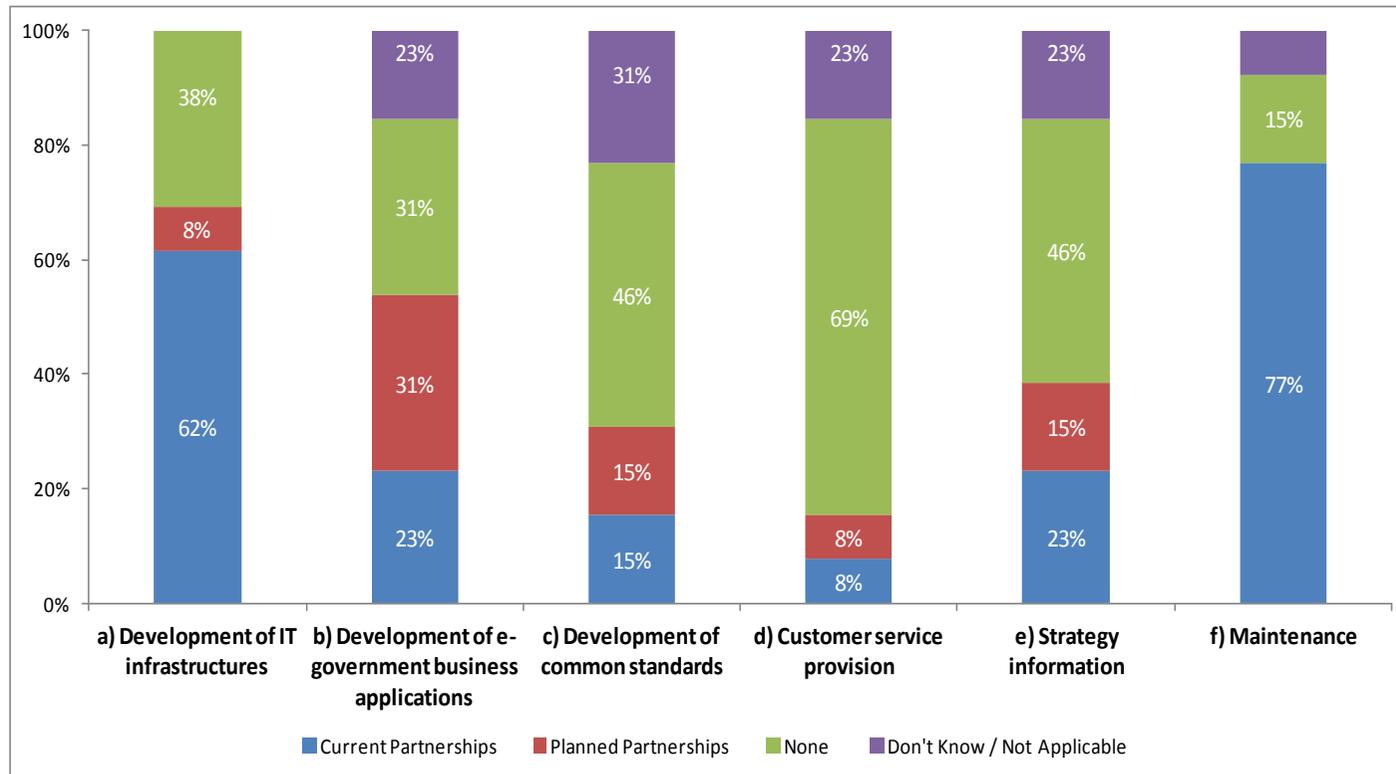
### 6.1. In which of the following areas is your organisation collaborating with other government organisations?



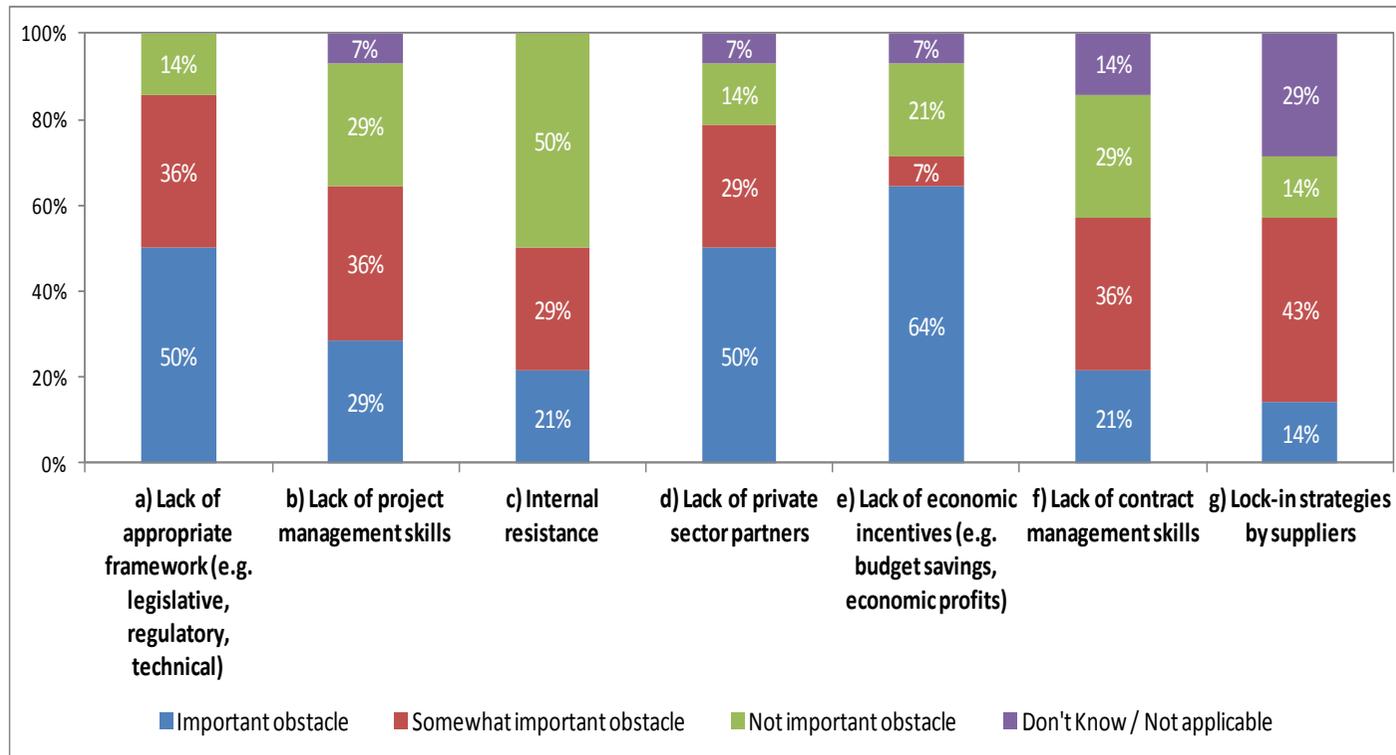
## 6.2. How important are the following obstacles in preventing working together with other organisations?



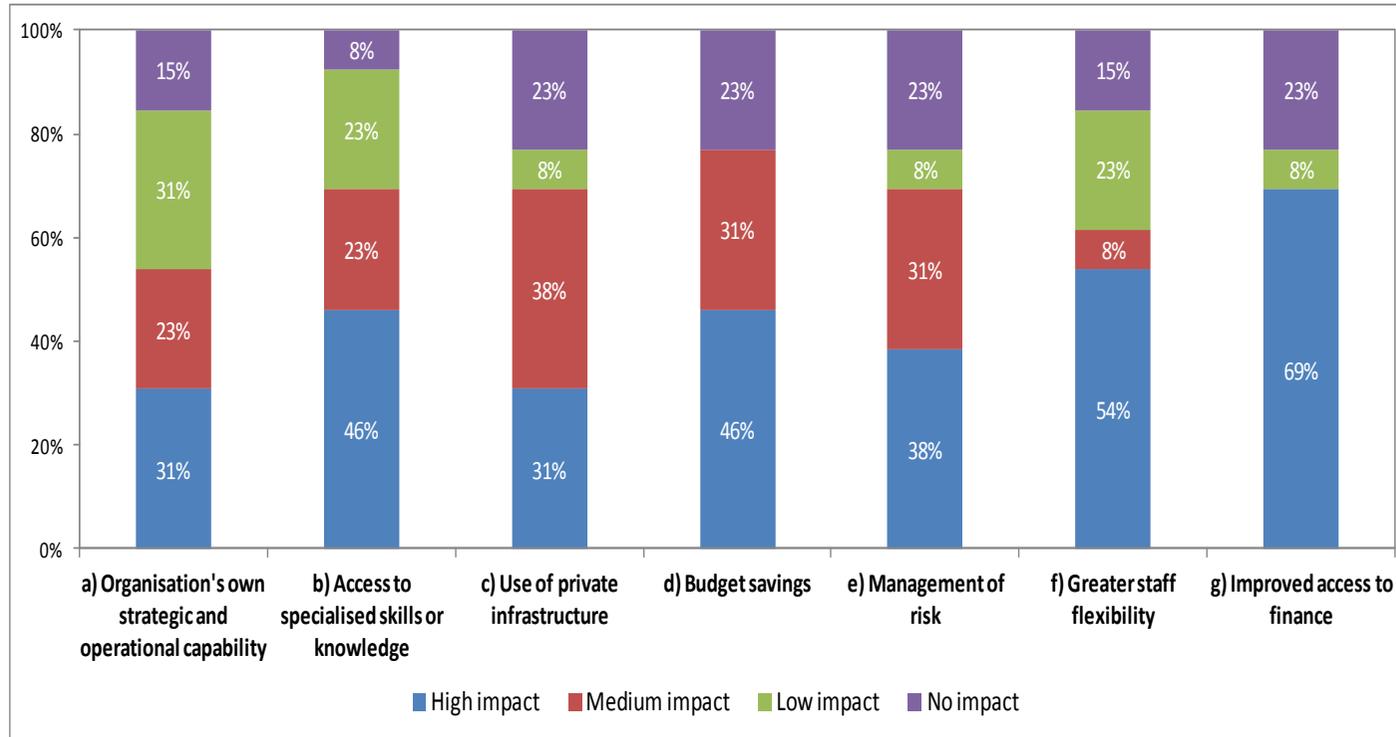
### 6.3. What areas of engagement does your organisation have with the private sector?



#### 6.4. Which of the following obstacles does your organisation face in partnering with the private sector, and how important are they?

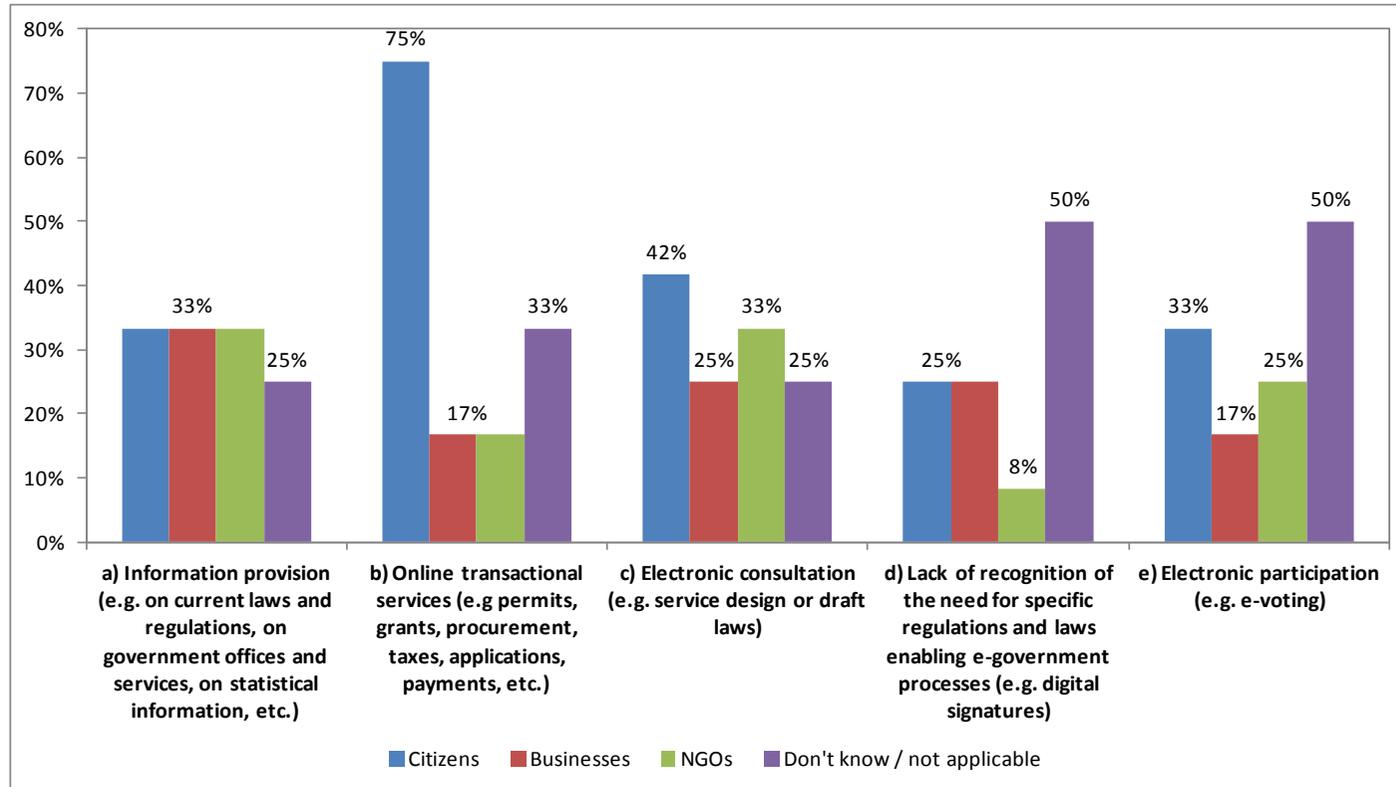


**6.5. What kind of impact has partnership with the private sector had on the following factors in your organisation?**

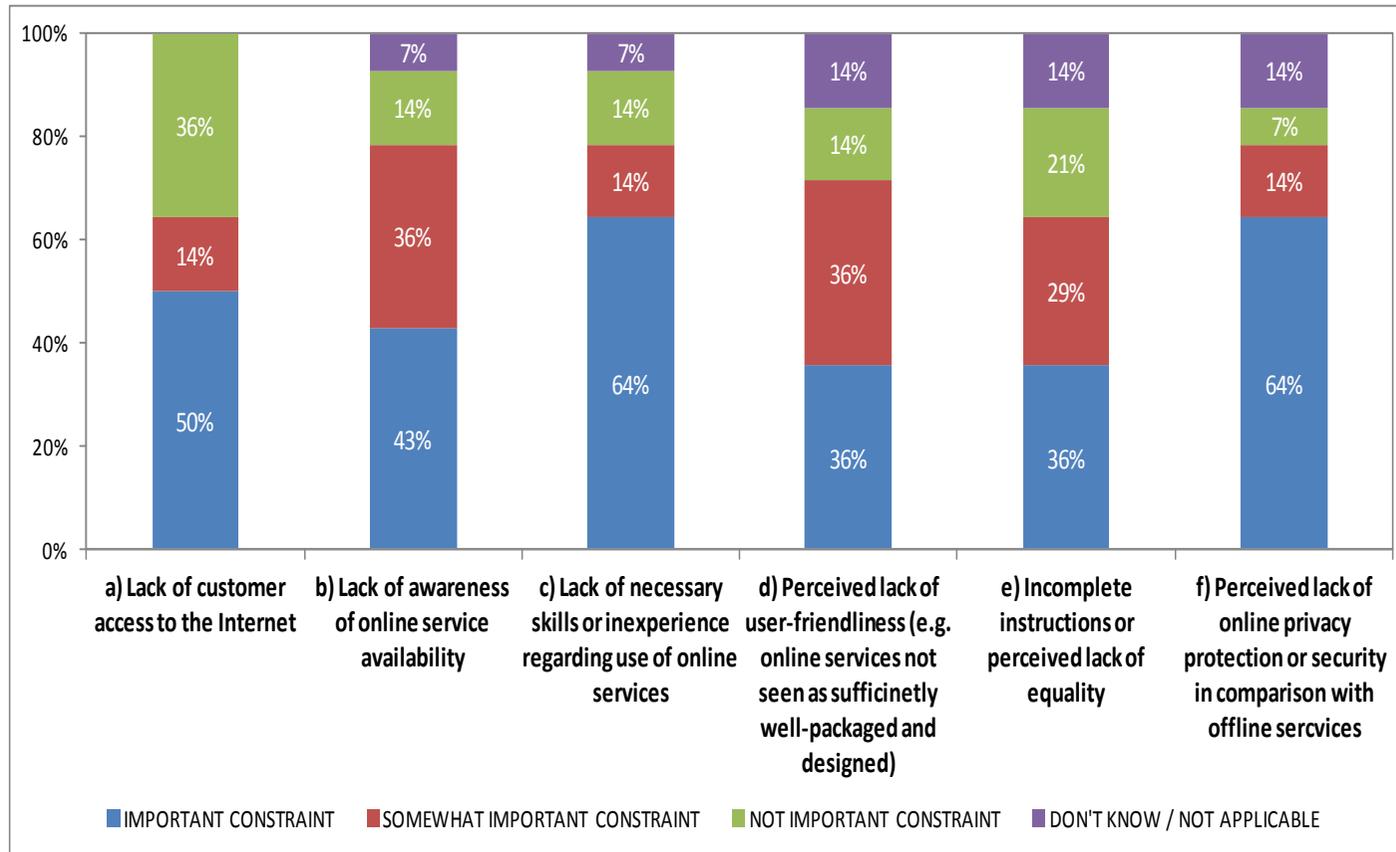


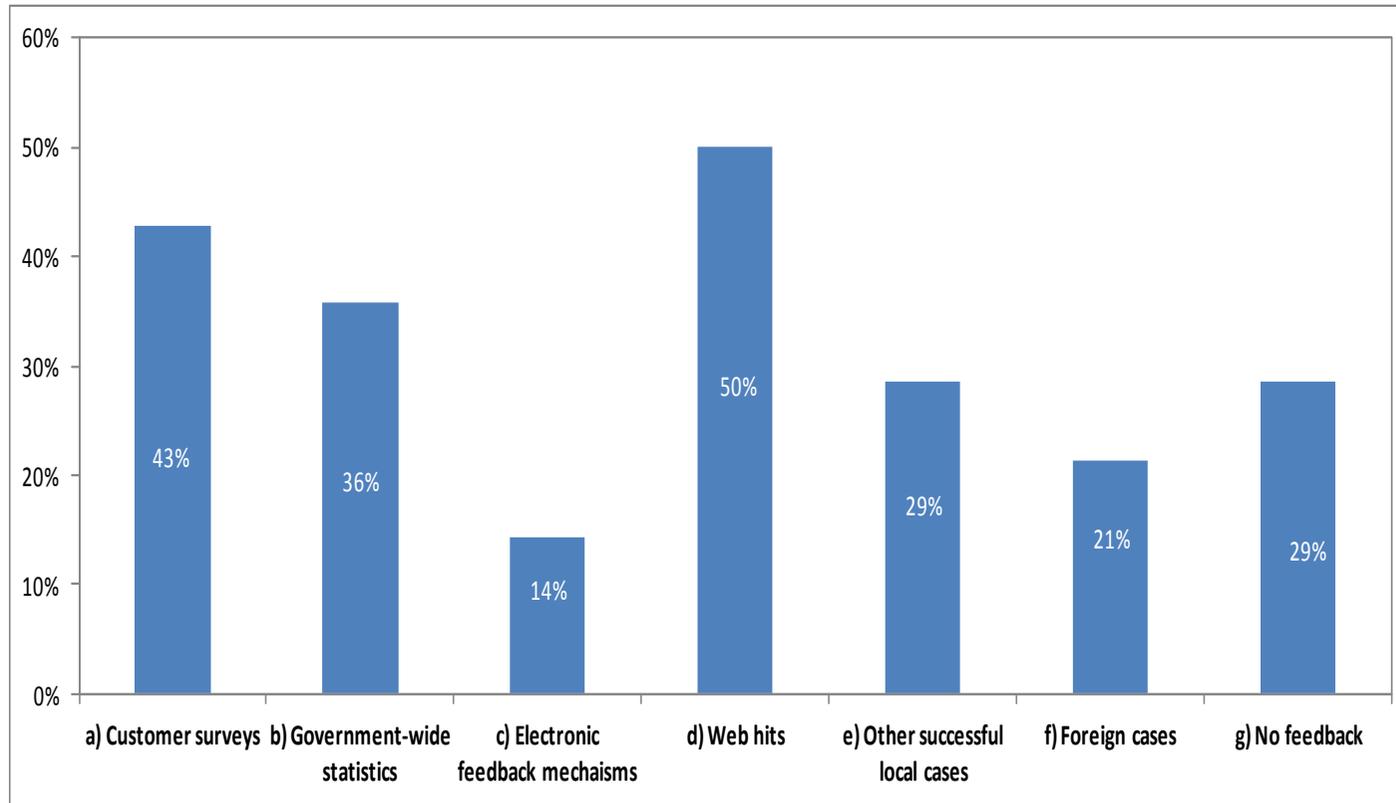
## 7. Customer focus

### 7.3. From which customers do you experience the largest demand in each of the following areas of e-government?

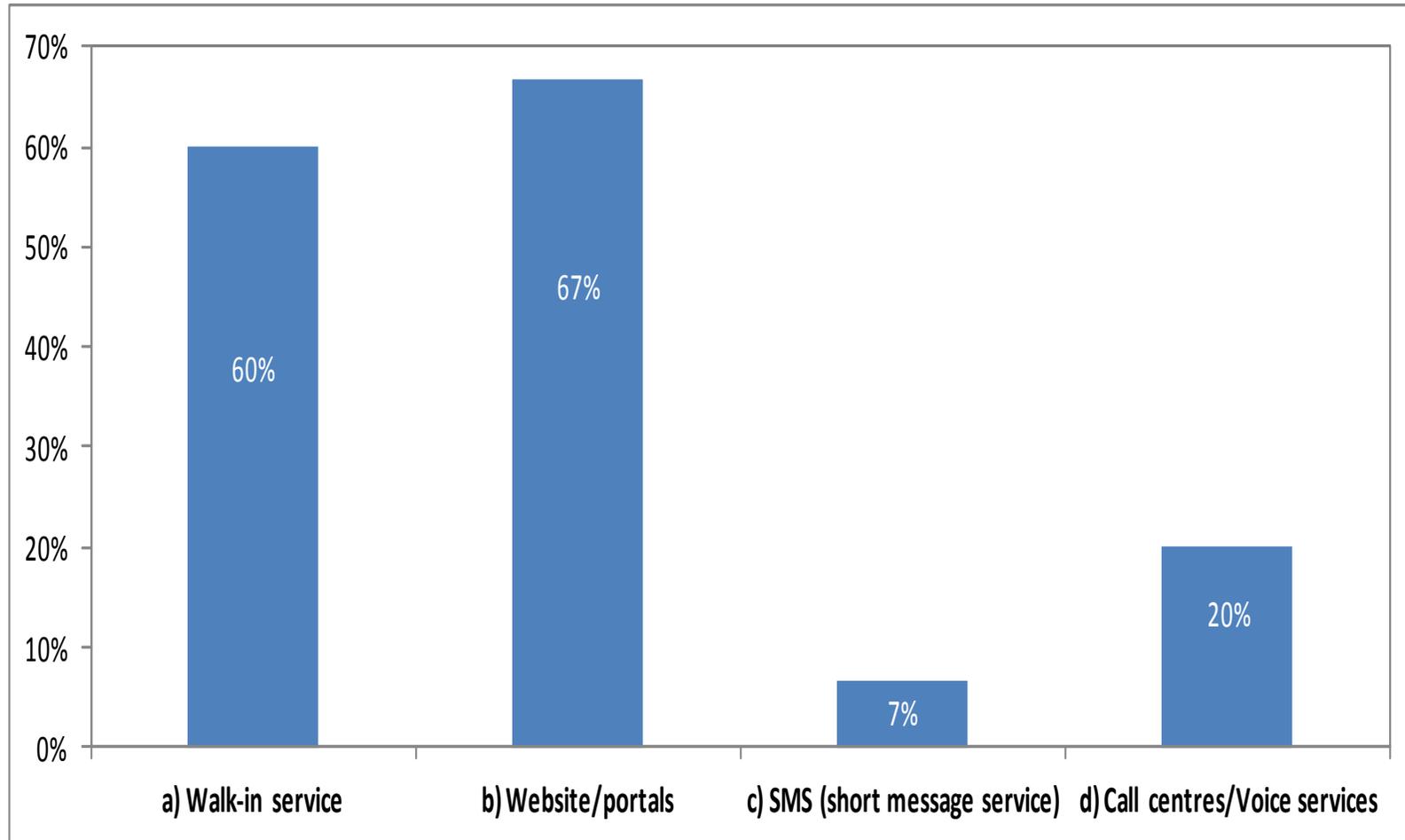


**7.4. Do the following factors constrains customer demand for the online services provided by your organisation, and how important are they?**



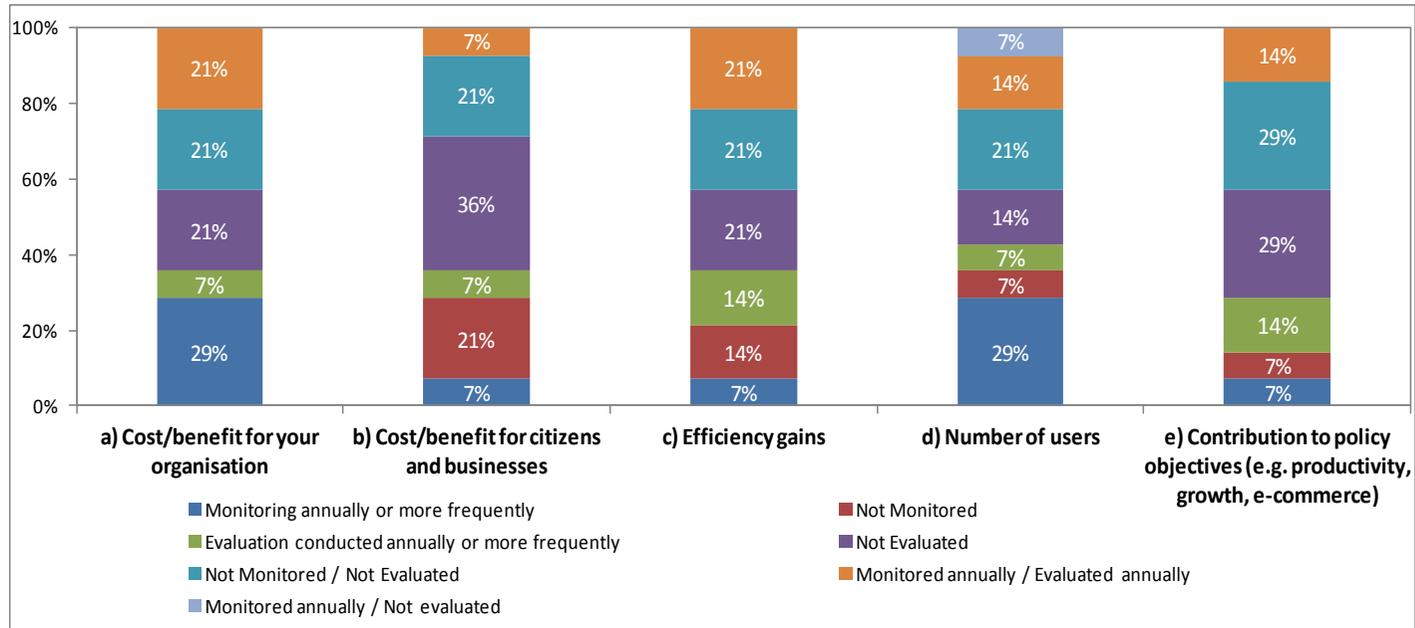
**7.5. How does your organisation find out demand for online services? Please check all that apply:**

**7.6. Which channels does your organisation use to provide services? Please check all that apply:**

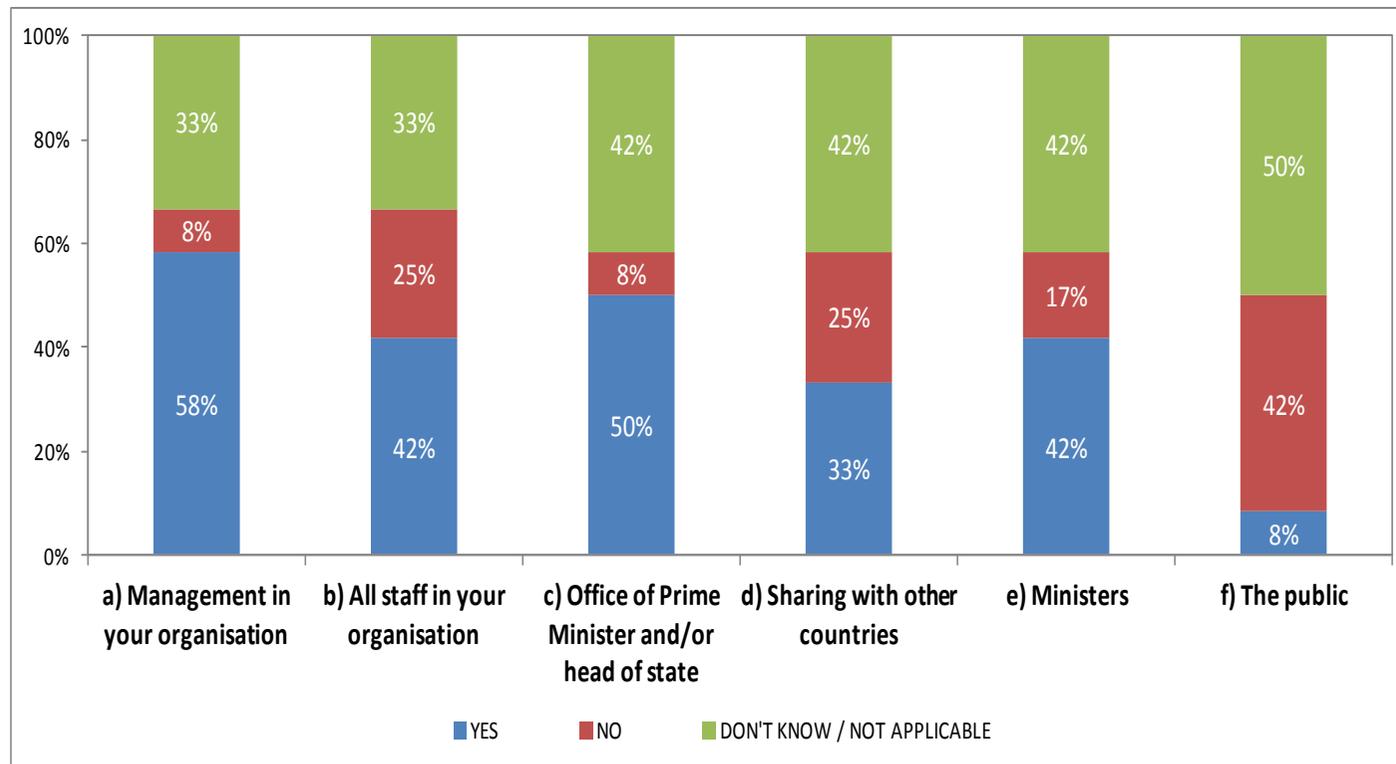


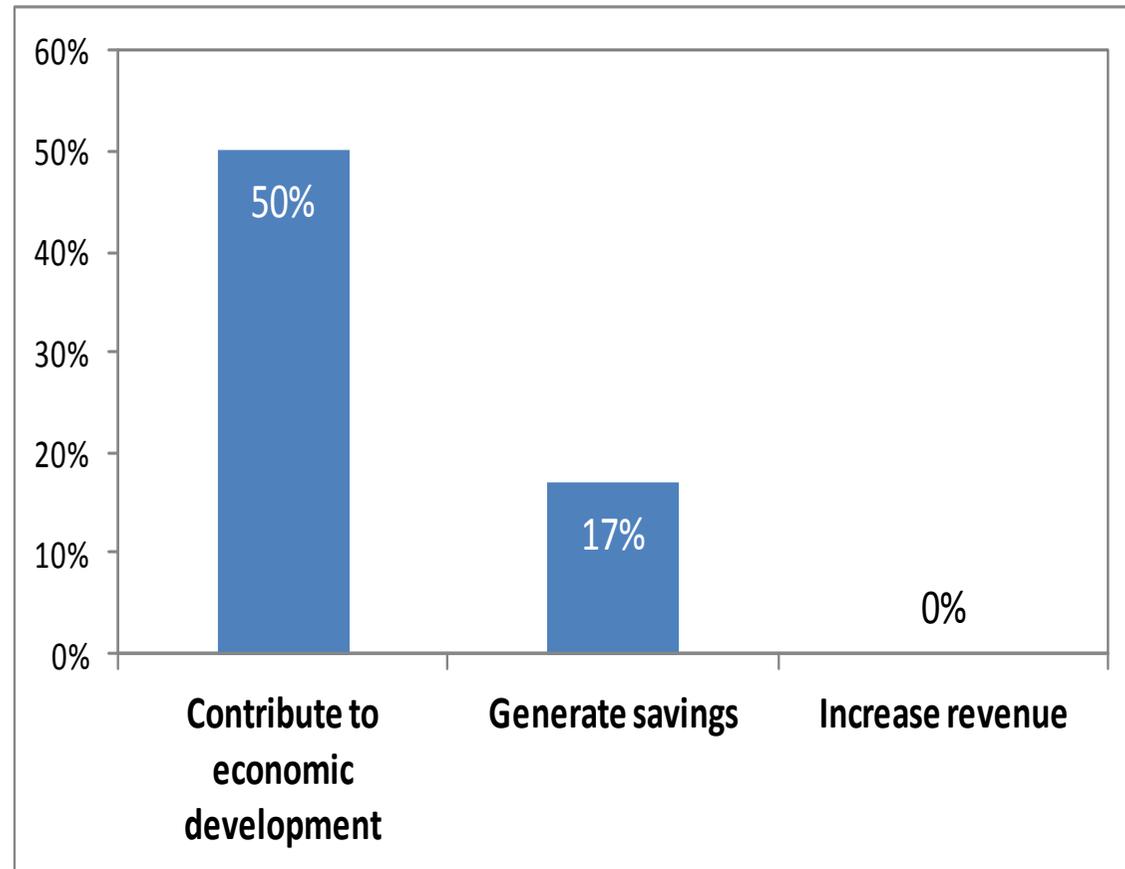
## 8. Responsibility and future priorities

8.1. For each of the following aspects of e-government, please indicate whether or not monitoring and evaluation is conducted or not:

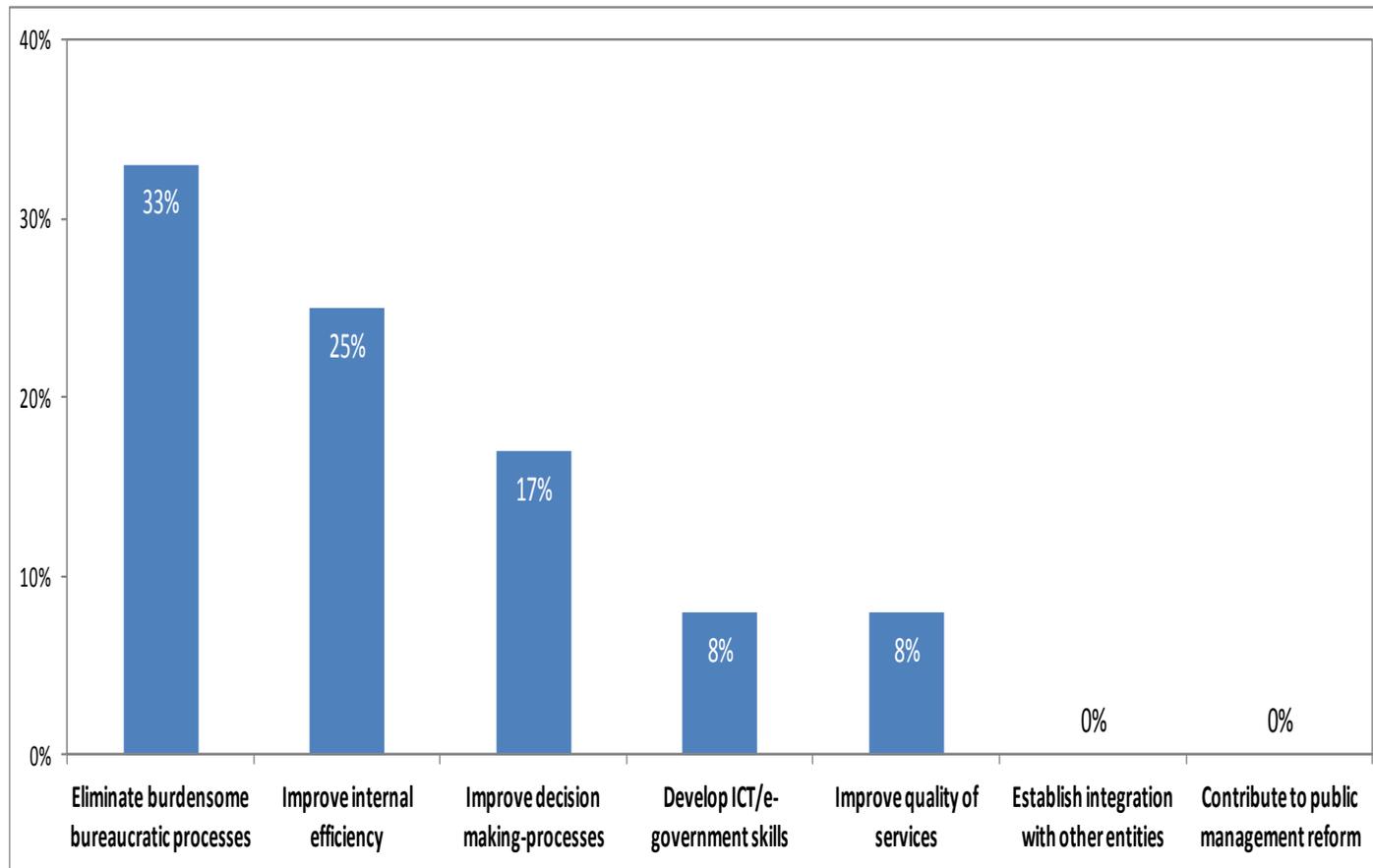


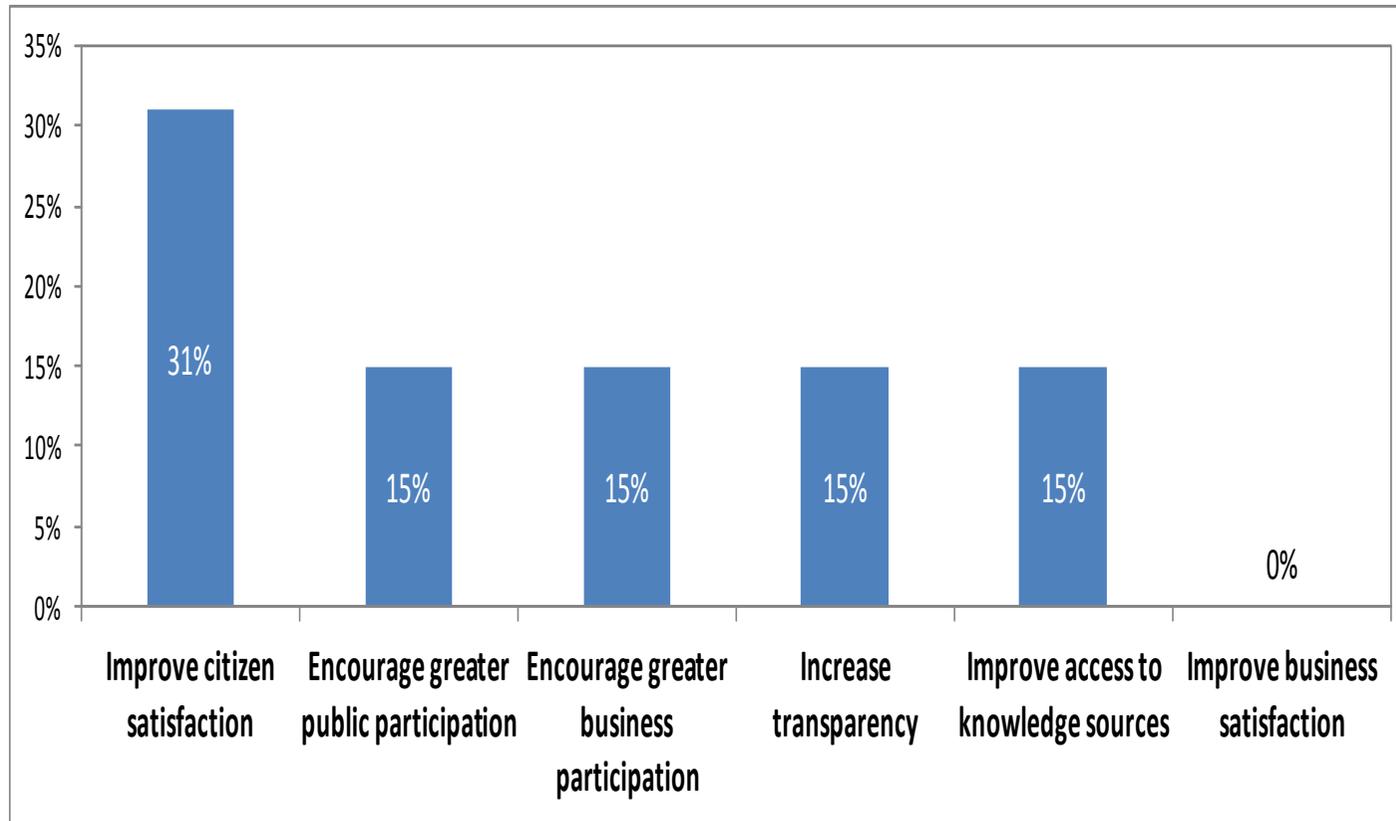
**8.2. Are the results of your monitoring and evaluation made available to:**



**8.3. Over the next three years, what is the first future priority for each category:****Economic benefits**

### Administrative improvements



**Customer orientation**



## Annex II

### OECD E-Government Survey

For completion by leaders and managers in Ministries and Agencies of the PNA

#### **Process**

The questionnaire offers, with few exceptions, the “tick-the-box” format: for each question please tick the box(es) which correspond to your answer(s).

It should take less than 30 minutes to fill out the questionnaire.

Please respond on behalf of your organisation. If you have been sent this survey as the head of an agency, you should respond on behalf of your agency only. Your name and the name of your organisation will not be directly linked to survey responses, and personal information will not be shared.

#### **Content**

This questionnaire is divided into eight parts.

## **Background information**

1. Contact details for the main respondent of this questionnaire
  - a) Job title:
  - b) Telephone:
  - c) E-mail:
2. Name of your organisation:
  - a) English translation of the name of your organisation:
  - b) Please check the level of government your organisation belongs to:
    - i. Central government
    - ii. Advisory or quasi-governmental body
    - iii. Autonomous administrative authority
3. URL of main web site:
4. Background information on your organisation:
  - a) Percentage of staff that have access to e-mail and internet:
  - b) Approximate total annual budget of the whole or your organisation (please specify currency):
  - c) Share of ICT expenditure of your annual budget (if available):

## 1. e-Government context

### *Definition of e-government*

The term e-government, as used in this questionnaire, refers to the “use of information and communication technologies (ICTs), and particularly the Internet, as a tool to achieve better government”. In particular, the focus is on the potential offered by the Internet and related technologies to transform the structures and operation of government and optimise internal procedures in order to provide seamless services to citizens and businesses.

1.1 Where is the greatest drive for e-Government activities in your experience coming from?

- a) International organisations
- b) Central government
- c) Governorate administration
- d) Municipal government
- e) Internal departmental/ministerial bodies
- f) Citizen groups
- g) Don't know
- h) No significant drive
- i) Other, please specify:

1.2 When were the following first introduced in your organisation?

- a) Use of network-enabled ICT (e.g. e-mail, intranet, internet, etc.)
- b) Explicit e-government strategy
- c) First website
- d) First transactional e-service

1.3 Among the many priorities for your organisation, would you say that e-government is:

- a) An important priority
- b) A somewhat important priority
- c) Not an important priority
- d) Don't know

1.4 Please rate the importance to your organisation of each of the following potential challenges to e-government implementation:

	Important challenge	Somewhat important challenge	Not an important challenge	Don't know/Not applicable
a) External barriers (e.g. legislative/regulatory barriers, budgetary barriers)				
b) Digital divide				
c) Resistance to organisational change				
d) Difficulty of collaborating with other organisations				
e) Difficulty of collaborating with other departments or sub-departmental units within your organisation				
f) Unclear costs & benefits of e-government				
g) Management of technology (e.g. technical implementation, legacy systems, procuring technology)				
h) Lack of skills in your organisation				
i) Privacy and security concerns				

Other challenges:

(Please write here)

## 2. The case for e-government

2.1 Which of the following objectives were explicit reasons for the implementation of e-government in your organisation and what was the importance attached to them?

	Important objective	Somewhat important objective	Not an important objective	Don't know/Not applicable
a) Enable efficiency gains				
b) Improve technical quality of services (e.g. service reliability, security)				
c) Improve programme effectiveness				
d) Improve integration of processes (e.g. data sharing, shared websites)				
e) Difficulty of collaborating with other departments or sub-departmental units within your organisation				
f) Improve transparency and accountability of the administration (e.g. greater openness, prevention of corruption)				
g) Strengthen citizen engagement and trust in government				
h) Compilation and dissemination of information				
i) Respond to external pressure from citizens, businesses, other government organisations and/or civil society				
j) Improving information base for decision making				
k) Contribute to the well-being of the nation				

Other cases:

(Please write here)

2.2 Please provide the complete list of ICT applications and e-services available in your organisation (email systems, ERPs, electronic archiving, electronic payroll systems, etc.)

(Please write here)

### 3. External barriers to e-government

An external barrier can be a constraint, an impediment, or a rigidity that limits or prevents the implementation of e-government and that concerns responsibilities that are broader than the sphere of activity of an individual agency.

3.1 Please rate the importance of each of the following legislative/regulatory barriers to implementing e-government.

	Important barrier	Somewhat important barrier	Not an important barrier	Don't know/not applicable
a) Legislation preventing collaboration across different levels of government or with private sector, civil society organisations				
b) Complexity of regulations (hard to understand, lack of flexibility)				
c) Regulations overly burdensome				
d) Lack of recognition of the need for specific regulations and laws enabling e-government processes (e.g. digital signatures)				
e) Lack of easy accessible registry of laws and regulations pertaining to e-government services				
f) Lack of digital signatures				

3.2 Please rate the importance of each of the following budgetary barriers to implementing e-government.

	Important barrier	Somewhat important barrier	Not an important barrier	Don't know/not applicable
a) Lack of funding for e-government projects				
b) Unclear accounting rules for treating e-government expenditures				
c) Lack of long-term budgeting horizons for multi-year investments				
d) Lack of mechanisms for shared/joint funding across levels of government or agencies				
e) Difficulty in justifying indirect return on investments				

3.3 Please select the main sources of funding for e-government projects and indicate approximate percentages of total funding:

- a) Your organisation's general budget: %
- b) Your organisation's IT budget: %
- c) Central government funding for special projects: %
- d) Joint funding with other public organisations: %
- e) User fees on e-government: %
- f) Foreign sources (bilateral or multilateral): %

### 3.4 Where is your main technical guidance coming from, and is it satisfactory?

	Centrally from state government	Within your own organisation	Other (e.g. international or national standards body)	Don't know/not applicable	Is the guidance satisfactory?
a) Common technical standards (e.g. XML, data dictionary, etc.)					Y N
b) Privacy					Y N
c) Security and safety					Y N
d) E-procurement					Y N
e) Authentication (PKI, digital signature)					Y N
f) IT systems procurement					Y N

## 4. Leadership and planning

E-government leaders include government officials who are driving forces in development. They could be ministry personnel, agency heads, e-government managers, or national leaders.

### 4.1 The e-government plan in your organisation:

	Yes	No	Don't know
a) States explicit goals			
b) States how to reach goals			
c) States explicit deadlines			
d) States how to monitor accomplishment of goals			
e) Includes a framework to evaluate the results			

4.2 What is the time frame for achieving your organisation's e-government goals?

1-2 years

3-5 years

5-10 years

More than 10 years

Don't know

4.3 What functions does each actor have in your organisation with respect to e-government plans?

	Responsible for plan	Designing	Managing/monitoring	Implementing	None	Don't know/Not applicable
a) The head of your organisation						
b) The head of IT (e.g. CIO, CTO)						
c) A special group set up specifically						
d) Group working across several units (e.g. finance, human resources, comms)						
e) External consultants						
f) Cross section/horizontal group across ministries or agencies						

4.4 What importance do e-government leaders in your organisation place on the following aspects of e-government?

	Important	Somewhat important	Not important	Don't know/not applicable
a) Establishing an e-government plan and showing commitment to it				
b) Ensuring staff acceptance and ownership				
c) Ensuring people are accountable for achieving the goals				
d) Communicating the plan externally				
e) Identifying and overcoming external barriers that impede progress				
f) Contacting/co-operating with other organisations				
g) Fostering an environment of innovation and empowerment				
h) Supporting organisational and employee learning				

## 5. Organisational change

5.1 Please indicate whether you feel that e-government activities have had an impact on the following aspects of your organisation:

	High	Medium	Low	None
a) Increased information and knowledge sharing with citizens and businesses				
b) Increased innovation with other government organisations				
c) Increased transparency (e.g. open and clear processes)				
d) Reduction of staff costs				
e) Change in your organisation's interface business processes				
f) Change in your organisation's back office business processes				
g) Technical quality of services (e.g. reliability, security)				
h) Increased international collaboration				
i) Increased inter-departmental collaboration across government				
j) Good governance arrangements (e.g. citizen engagement in government, trust or reform of government)				

5.2 Please indicate the impact (if any) e-government activities have had on the services your organisation provides:

	High	Medium	Low	None
a) Decreased volume of information services				
b) Decreased volume of transactional services				
c) Decreased costs of service delivery				
d) Increased timeliness of service delivery				
e) Increased user-friendliness (well packaged, design, disability-friendly, multilingual)				
f) Increased accessibility				

5.3 How important are the following skill challenges in implementing e-government?

	Important	Somewhat important	Not important	Don't know/not applicable
a) Lack of IT skills (IT literacy, design skills, etc.)				
b) Lack of information management skills (e.g. deploying knowledge resources)				
c) Lack of skills to implement e-government and information society strategies				
d) Lack of outsourcing skills				
e) Adapting staff to change				
f) Adapting organisational structure				
g) Lack of customer service skills				

5.4 Are you outsourcing parts of your IT budget for the following areas?

	Most	Some	None	Don't know/not applicable
a) IT skills development				
b) Privacy protection				
c) E-procurement				
d) IT infrastructure and applications (development and maintenance)				
e) Authentication; PKI				
f) Web portals and mobile applications				

## 6. Collaboration

6.1 In which of the following areas is your organisation collaborating with other government organisations?

	Sharing information/knowledge	Joint projects	No collaboration	Don't know/not applicable
a) Technical standards				
b) Definition of standards, technical and non-technical				
c) E-Procurement				
d) Market research				
e) Research and development				
f) Statistical information (collection, compilation, dissemination)				
g) Monitoring and evaluation of e-government				
h) E-Government strategy				
i) IT-Procurement				
j) Establishing common portals (e.g. for the delivery of services to common customer groups)				
k) Integration and change processes				

6.2 How important are the following obstacles in preventing working together with other organisations?

	Important	Somewhat important	Not important	Don't know/not applicable
a) Lack of incentives to work together				
b) Habit of non-collaboration				
c) Internal resistance to change				
d) Lack of clear instructions/awareness				
e) Collaboration seen as risky				
f) Conflicts of interest				

6.3 What areas of engagement does your organisation have with the private sector?

	Current partnerships	Planned partnerships	None	Don't know/not applicable
a) Development of IT-infrastructures				
b) Development of e-government business applications				
c) Development of common standards				
d) Customer service provisions				
e) Strategy formation				
f) Maintenance				

6.4 Which of the following obstacles does your organisation face in partnering with the private sector, and how important are they?

	Important obstacle	Somewhat important obstacle	Not an important obstacle	Don't know/not applicable
a) Lack of appropriate framework (e.g. legislative, regulatory, technical)				
b) Lack of project management skills				
c) Internal resistance				
d) Lack of private sector partners				
e) Lack of economic incentives (e.g. budget savings, economic profits)				
f) Lack of contract management skills				
g) Lock-in strategies by suppliers				

6.5 What kind of impact has partnership with the private sector had on the following factors in your organisation?

	High	Medium	Low	No impact
a) Organisation's own strategic and operational capability				
b) Access to specialised skills or knowledge				
c) Use of private infrastructure				
d) Budget savings				
e) Management of risk				
f) Greater staff flexibility				
g) Improved access to finance				

## 7. Customer focus

The “stages of electronic service delivery” are conceived as being cumulative and defined as follows:

Stage 1: Web site publishes information about government services

Stage 2 (simple interactivity): Additionally allows users to access agency database(s) and to browse, explore and interact with data

Stage 3 (vertical integration): Additionally permits users to enter secure information and engage in transactions with the agency

Stage 4 (horizontal integration): Additionally shares information provided by user (with user’s prior approval) with other government agencies

7.1 Please provide examples of e-services at stages 1, 2, 3 and 4.

(Please write here)

7.2 Describe plans to extend services at stages 1 and 2.

(Please write here)

7.3 From which customers do you experience the largest demand in each of the following areas of e-government?

	Citizens	Businesses	Non-governmental organisations/ Civil society	Don't know/not applicable
a) Information provision (e.g. on current laws and regulations, on government offices and services, on statistical information, etc.)				
b) Online transactional services (e.g. permits, grants, procurement, taxes, applications, payments, etc.)				
c) Electronic consultation (e.g. service design or draft laws)				
d) Lack of recognition of the need for specific regulations and laws enabling e-government processes (e.g. digital signatures)				
e) Electronic participation (e.g. e-voting)				

7.4 Do the following factors constrain customer demand for the online services provided by your organisation, and how important are they?

	Important constraint	Somewhat important constraint	Not an important constraint	Don't know/not applicable
a) Lack of customer access to the Internet				
b) lack of awareness of online service availability				
c) Lack of necessary skills or inexperience regarding use of online services				
d) Perceived lack of user-friendliness (e.g. online services not seen as sufficiently well-packaged and designed)				
e) Incomplete instructions or perceived lack of quality				
f) Perceived lack of online privacy protection or security in comparison with offline services				

7.5 How does your organisation find out about demand for online services? Please check all that apply:

- a) Customer surveys
- b) Government-wide statistics
- c) Electronic feedback mechanisms
- d) Web hits
- e) Other successful local cases
- f) Foreign cases
- g) No feedback
- h) Don't know

7.6 Which channels does your organisation use to provide services? Please check all that apply:

- a) Walk-in service
- b) Website/portals
- c) SMS (short message service)
- d) Call centres/Voice services

## 8. Responsibility and future priorities

8.1 For each of the following aspects of e-government, please indicate whether monitoring and evaluation is conducted or not.

	Monitoring annually or more frequently	Not monitored	Evaluation conducted annually or more frequently	Not evaluated
a) Cost/benefit for your organisation				
b) Cost/benefit for citizens and businesses				
c) Efficiency gains				
d) Number of users				
e) Contribution to policy objectives (e.g. productivity, growth, e-commerce)				

8.2 Are the results of your monitoring and evaluation made available to:

	Yes	No	Don't know/not applicable
a) Management in your organisation			
b) All staff in your organisation			
c) Office of Prime Minister and/or Head of State			
d) Sharing with other countries			
e) Ministers			
f) The public			

8.3 Over the next three years, what are the future priorities? Please rate from highest to lowest in each category:

**Economic benefits (rank 1-4):**

- Generate savings
- Increase revenue
- Contribute to economic development
- Other, please specify:

**Administrative improvements (rank 1-7):**

- Improve quality of services
- Improve internal efficiency
- Improve decision-making processes
- Eliminate burdensome bureaucratic processes
- Establish integration with other entities
- Contribute to public management reform
- Develop ICT/e-government skills

**Customer orientation (rank 1-6):**

- Improve citizen satisfaction
- Encourage greater public participation
- Improve business satisfaction
- Encourage greater business participation
- Increase transparency
- Improve access to knowledge sources

Many thanks for completing this questionnaire. Please feel free to send it, with any additional information relevant to e-government in your organisation, to:

Alessandro Bellantoni ([alessandro.bellantoni@oecd.org](mailto:alessandro.bellantoni@oecd.org)).

Thank you for your collaboration!

## **ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

The OECD is a unique forum where governments work together to address the economic, social and environmental challenges of globalisation. The OECD is also at the forefront of efforts to understand and to help governments respond to new developments and concerns, such as corporate governance, the information economy and the challenges of an ageing population. The Organisation provides a setting where governments can compare policy experiences, seek answers to common problems, identify good practice and work to co-ordinate domestic and international policies.

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Modernising the Public Administration

# The Case of E-Government in the Palestinian Authority

The first phase of the collaboration between the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Technologies (MTIT) focused on producing an evaluation of the Palestinian Authority's e-government policies and their implementation. This Report, titled "Modernising the Public Administration: The Case of E-Government in the Palestinian Authority," includes an overview of the current situation in the relevant Palestinian institutions and presents policy options and good practices based on OECD and Middle East and North African countries' experiences.

This Report is based on a review of official e-government policies of the Palestinian Authority, the technical assessment of the results of an adapted version of the OECD E-Government Survey and information collected through interviews and workshops with Palestinian officials in charge of e-government in their organisations, which were conducted within the framework of the MENA-OECD Initiative to Support the Palestinian Authority from January to December 2010. The Report provides an overall picture of e-government policies and implementation in the PA, attempts to identify main trends, highlights opportunities for improvement, and suggests further developments.