

Communiqué de presse

Digital Gov' Survey 2019:

Digitalisation of public services, both a necessity and a concern. Sopra Steria Next and Ipsos are giving Europeans a voice

Paris, 18 November 2019 – For the fifth consecutive year, Sopra Steria Next has published its barometer* on the digitalisation of public services and its perception among European citizens, in partnership with IPSOS:

- While 75% of Europeans surveyed believe that public services are increasingly digitalised, only 62% of them believe that they are increasingly easy to use.
- The French confirm their confidence in the Government's ability to develop digital public services (44%). This is much more optimistic than their neighbours in Germany (10%), UK (19%), Norway (29%), or even Spain (38%).
- As part of this digitalisation, European citizens favour local support provided by a universal agent (71% in France, 78% in the United Kingdom, 64% in Spain) rather than having to travel to meet with a specialist.
- Ultimately, data protection remains a key issue, with 67% of European citizens surveyed fearing that someone else might have access to their personal data.

The transformation of public services is still very heterogeneous. In Europe, it is necessary to meet the new expectations of citizens while guaranteeing the digital inclusion of all users. The barometer also reveals a disparity in services, between the expectations of citizens and the services they consider to be the most advanced.

Digitalisation of public services: a multi-faceted challenge

Only the French place taxes at the top (77%) of the most satisfactory digital public services. In Norway (85%), Germany (54%) and Italy (54%) it's all about personal data. In the United Kingdom, the digitalisation of education and higher education is considered the most satisfactory (75%) and Spanish place social security at the top of the most satisfactory digital services (60%).

The research also emphasises the common expectations of the Europeans surveyed, who agree that health is the priority sector to be digitalised.

A citizen-based approach for the transformation of the State

Among Europeans, the French have the most confidence in their government's commitment to develop digital public services, with 44% of them believing that it "has the will and is

committed to making things happen". This finding is much more optimistic than the Germans (10%), British (19%), Spanish (38%) or even the Norwegians (29%).

The digitalisation of public services is clearly positively perceived by the European surveyed who identify 3 tangible impacts: facilitating the systematic analysis and cross-referencing of personal information to improve protection against fraud (85%), simplifying and facilitating citizens' lives (82%) and also reducing environmental impact (73%).

A real need to make life easier for citizens

There is still a significant gap between the number of digital public services and their ease of use. Although 75% of Europeans think that public services are more digitised, only 62% consider that they are easier to use. The Germans are the most critical with 53% believing that public services are increasingly digitised and only 44% of them thinking they are easier to use.

Simplifying these procedures involves several changes, including the simplification of the language and terms used (50% of French and 42% of Germans), the ability to use a unique username/password to access all these services (56% of Spanish and Italians), or even the improvement of their user-friendliness (55% of British and 50% of Norwegians).

"The digital relationship has been strengthened between European citizens and public services, and is generally not perceived as lagging behind the private sector. Nevertheless, Europeans have high expectations in terms of simplification of digital uses and of trust, which suggests that European governments should work on education and communication in this digital transformation, around three key areas: removing persistent doubts, facilitating use, and developing local assistance." says Helen Zeitoun, CEO of Ipsos, France.

Europeans concerned about the digitalisation of public services in an inclusive and protective way

Digital inclusion remains a major concern for European citizens, with 74% of them considering that digitalisation of public services will make access very difficult if not impossible for people without access or who are unfamiliar with digital technology, as well as those who do not speak the national language.

Data security also remains a major concern. 67% of European citizens surveyed fear that someone else may have access to their personal data or that it may be used against their personal interest for 65% of them. Nevertheless, the implementation of the GDPR seems to have reassured citizens, since 61% of respondents have expressed their trust in the administration for the protection of their information. However, only 49% of respondents would be willing to store their personal data on a single platform to facilitate their online identification.

Finally, when it comes to managing their personal data on a single platform, Europeans have much more confidence in the public sector (81%) than in the private sector (19%).

"For the first year, our barometer measures the satisfaction of European citizens with the digitalisation of public services. Therefore, we note that they wish to obtain guarantees on the ethical dimension of the digitalisation of public services in terms of data security and digital inclusion, both for public service agents and users," concludes Claire Ducos, Head of Business Development at Sopra Steria Next.

**Methodology: This survey has been carried out by Ipsos for Sopra Steria Next, based on a sample of 1000 people in each country (France, United Kingdom, Germany, Norway, Spain and Italy), interviewed online via the Ipsos online Access Panel. The survey was carried out between 02 and 22 September 2019 using the quota method (sex, age, profession of the interviewee, region and urban area type). This report has been produced in accordance with international standard ISO 20252, "Market, opinion and social research".*

About Sopra Steria

Sopra Steria, a European leader in consulting, digital services and software development, helps its clients drive their digital transformation to obtain tangible and sustainable benefits. It provides end-to-end solutions to make large companies and organisations more competitive by combining in-depth knowledge of a wide range of business sectors and innovative technologies with a fully collaborative approach. Sopra Steria places people at the heart of everything it does and is committed to making the most of digital technology to build a positive future for its clients. With 45,000 employees in 25 countries, the Group generated revenue of €4.1 billion in 2018.

The world is how we shape it.

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For more information, please visit our website www.soprasteria.com

Press contacts

Sopra Steria : Elsa Estager, Tel. : +33 (0)1 40 67 30 99, elsa.estager@soprasteria.com

Burson Cohn & Wolfe: Vincent Darricarrere, +33 (0)6 76 05 95 63, vincent.darricarrere@bcw-global.com

Burson Cohn & Wolfe: Carine Currit-Nikaes - +33 (0)6 29 46 98 20, carine.currit-nikaes@bcw-global.com