



Digitale Verwaltung Schweiz
Administration numérique suisse
Amministrazione digitale Svizzera



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Economic Affairs,
Education and Research EAER
State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO

National eGovernment Study 2022

The use and implementation of e-government services from the perspective of the general public, businesses and the public administration



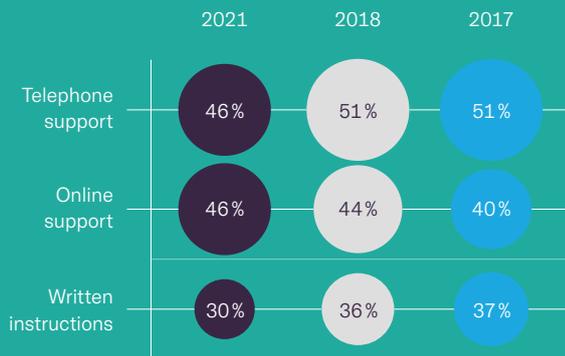
In 2021, the eGovernment Switzerland Programme Office and the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) jointly carried out the National eGovernment Study. On 1 January 2022, the eGovernment Switzerland Programme Office was integrated into Digital Public Services Switzerland (DPS), the new cooperative organisation established by the Swiss Confederation and the cantons. This National eGovernment Study 2022 has been jointly published by DPS and SECO.

The third version of the National eGovernment Study published in 2022 describes the availability and the use of e-government services in Switzerland. A survey was carried out among the general public, businesses and public authorities to obtain the information. New themes for this study include «access to personal data» and the «legal framework».

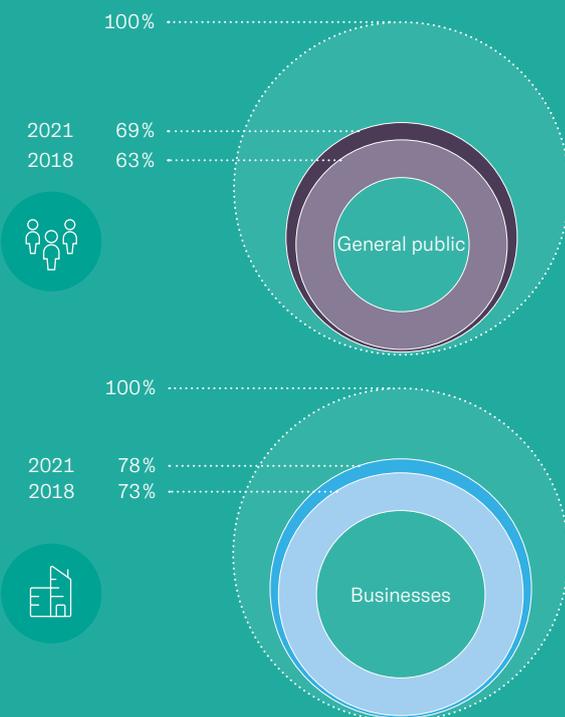
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Key results

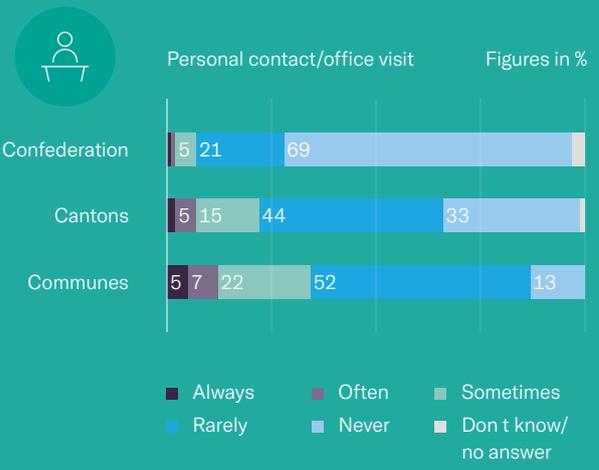
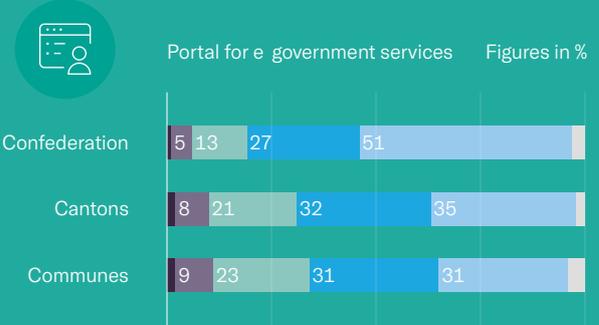
On all levels of the public administration, online support for using services is growing. Fewer people and businesses are requesting written instructions.



The use of digital services is continuing to grow. Almost 70% of the general public use online services at least half of the time. It is more common in particular among 25- to 54-year-olds. Among businesses, the figure is almost 80%.

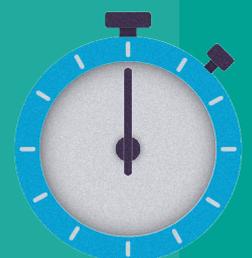


The general public increasingly makes contact with public authorities online (by e-mail or via a portal). The possible reason for this is the COVID-19 pandemic. Contacting the authorities in person or by post is becoming less common.



The ability to use the services at any time and the resulting time savings remain the main reasons for choosing online services.

The most popular service among the general public is completing a tax return (75% use this online service).



The main criticism from the general public about the use of digital services relates to the fact that it is too complicated to find the right services offered by the public authorities.



2021

The public prefer web pages that can be used on mobile devices.



The demand for digital public services remains high. The demand is currently greater than the supply, which means that online services need to be expanded on all levels of the public administration. This applies in particular to services with format continuity, although these have already increased in number since 2018.

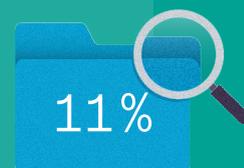
E-participation is still relatively uncommon among the general public. Digital participation channels remain rare in communes and cantons, but are gradually being developed.

The public authorities are starting online services in particular with the aim of improving the efficiency of their processes and meeting the needs of the general public. However, the lack of a legal framework and a shortage of staff are making the implementation of digital services more difficult.

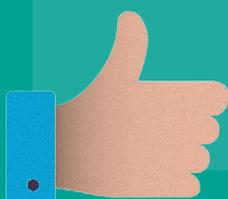


Little interest in personal data access to data: Only one in ten people has requested access to their data.

79% have never made use of the option of accessing their data.



Levels of satisfaction and trust in the public administration remain consistently high among the majority of survey respondents.



Around 29% of the businesses surveyed are familiar with the [EasyGov.swiss](#) online desk for companies. In the case of the SME Portal for small and medium-sized enterprises, the figure is 38%.



Businesses use the online channel most often to take part in statistical surveys and to complete and file their tax returns. The most popular services are registrations and changes to the commercial registry.



Foreword

Digital public services are widely used

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the majority of Swiss people were forced to work from home and, in the lockdowns, shops, restaurants and the offices of public sector bodies were closed. As a result, it was not only the online stores of the major supermarkets and clothes retailers that proved to be popular. Online public services were also widely used, particularly when the task in question could not be postponed.

«The ability to use the services at any time and the resulting time savings remain the main reasons for choosing online services» P. Giarritta

For example, the digital service for registering a house move – eUmzugCH – processed 400 registrations per day, which represents a new record. Businesses made extensive use of the online forms for hardship case applications and the Swiss Confederation's COVID-19 loan scheme in

particular. Bridging loans were paid out quickly to firms hard hit by the pandemic via EasyGov.swiss – the online desk for companies. Apps for contact tracing and for vaccination certificates also (COVID certificates) made a significant contribution to managing the crisis.

This study highlights the other e-services that are highly popular and those that users would still like to see introduced. The online tax return remains the most widely used e-government service provided by the Swiss authorities. Around three quarters of taxpayers now prefer to file their tax return online, because it is convenient and saves time.

The results of the National eGovernment Study 2022 paint a very clear picture. The use of digital public services is constantly growing and the services are in increasing demand. Businesses turn to these services more often than the general public do. Four out of five companies use online services for at least half of their contacts with public authorities and, in many cases, this is done via EasyGov.swiss. As the number of servic-



Peppino Giarritta, Officer for the Confederation and Cantons for Digital Public Services Switzerland



Martin Godel, Deputy Head of the Promotion Activities Directorate and Head of the Small and Medium Size Enterprise Policy Division

es available online grows and companies become increasingly aware of them, more and more are using this business portal for their authorisation, application and notification processes.

However, not all of the e-services are as attractive as the EasyGov.swiss offerings and the online tax return. As the study shows, many digital public

«Around one third of the businesses surveyed are familiar with the EasyGov.swiss online desk» M. Godel

services are not widely known about and some can be difficult to find. Concerns about data protection and data security also result in some of the members of the public who were surveyed preferring offline to online services in some cases.

However, this year's results also confirm the impression from the previous years, which is that the demand for user friendly online public services is greater than the current offering from the public authorities. In addition, the standards expected by users have risen. Public services are being compared with private sector offerings. Anyone who has done some shopping on their smartphone during a train journey or completed an online banking transaction on their tablet expects similarly simple, mobile-friendly, easily accessible services from the public sector.

We hope that the study provides you with interesting insights and valuable information.

With kind regards

Digital Public Services Switzerland (DVS)

Peppino Giarritta

Officer for the Confederation and Cantons for Digital Public Services Switzerland

There are still gaps in the online offering from the public administration. Basic services such as e-IDs and a network linking the public bodies across all the levels of the federal system are key requirements for effective e-government. Digital Public Services Switzerland (DPS) is the new co-operative organisation established by the Swiss Confederation and the cantons on 1 January 2022. The aim of joining forces in this way is to push ahead with the digital transformation across all three levels of the Swiss state and increase its effectiveness. In the future, the online channel will be the first choice for the general public and for businesses in their contacts with the public authorities.

18%

used more online services during the pandemic than they had done before.¹

This study identifies important guidelines for achieving this goal on behalf of the Swiss people, businesses and public sector employees.

State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)

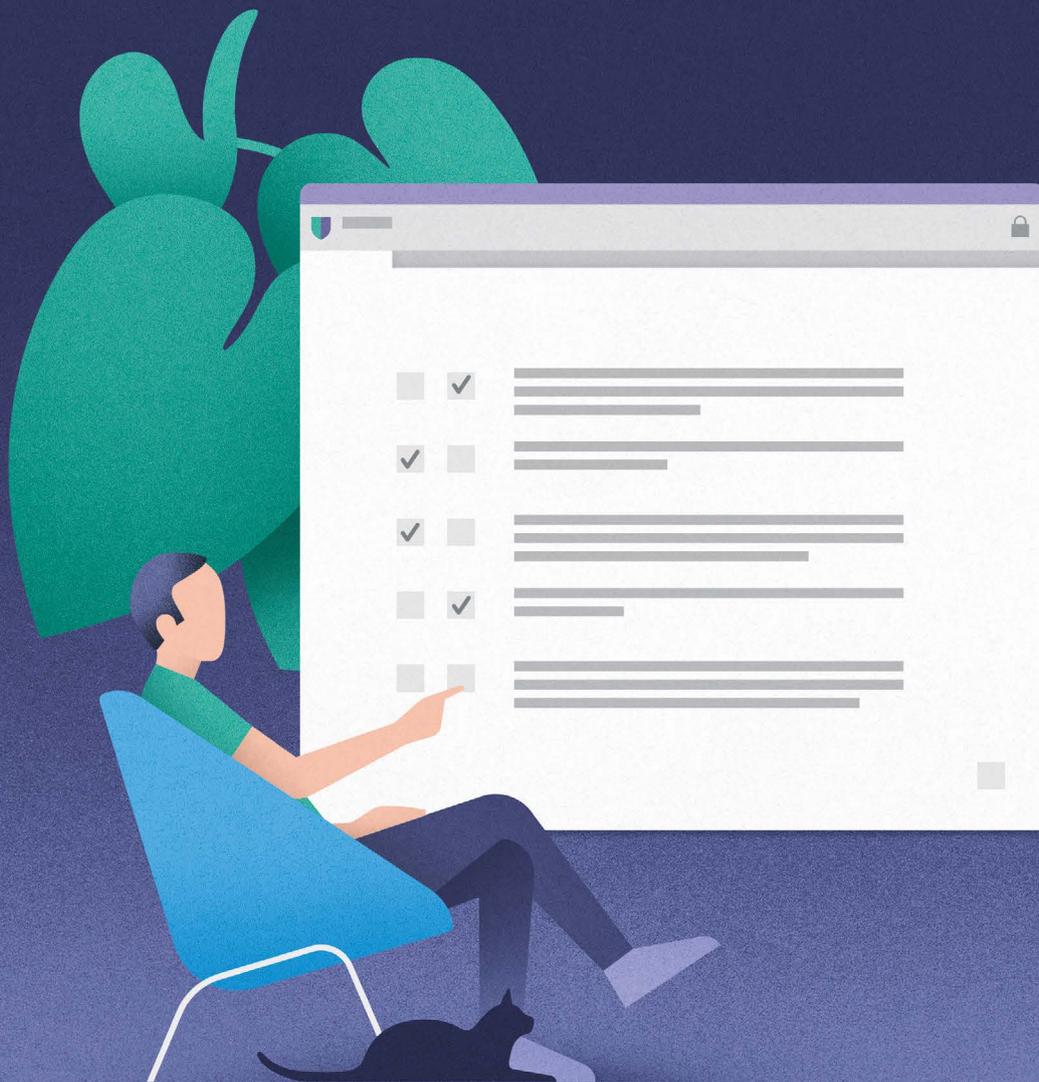
Martin Godel

Deputy Head of the Promotion Activities Directorate
Head of the Small and Medium Size Enterprise Policy Division

¹ Source: eGovernment Monitor 2021 [initiatived21.de/egovernment-monitor](https://www.initiatived21.de/egovernment-monitor)

Study profile

This is an abridged version of the full report on the National eGovernment Study 2022. It contains a summary of the most important results. The full report includes detailed information about the supply and demand for e-government services and also covers other areas, such as familiarity with the websites of public authorities and an analysis of the existing legal framework for e-government services.





The Swiss Confederation, the cantons and the communes are working together on an institutional basis with the aim of ensuring that contacts with the public administration are made primarily online. To achieve this, they have adopted a joint strategy. The National eGovernment Study is an important tool for monitoring and updating the current **strategy**.

The National eGovernment Study is repeated every three years in order to highlight changes over a longer period. This third version of the study has once again been carried out by the eGovernment Switzerland Programme Office (now Digital Public Services Switzerland (DVS))

and the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO). The study consisted of a simultaneous survey of the Swiss general public, businesses and the public administration concerning the use and implementation of e-government services. The **survey respondents** could choose whether to take part online or on the telephone. During the eight weeks of the survey period in the autumn of 2021, around 5000 interviews took place. In addition, a telephone survey of 18 members of the general public was held concerning the use and the importance of the right to access data (the right to information about personal data in the possession of the public authorities).



| Target group | Survey population | Valid interviews | Response rate ² |
|---|-------------------|------------------|----------------------------|
| General public | | | |
| Language assimilated ¹ resident population of Switzerland aged between 18 and 70 | 5069 | 2619 | 52,7% |
| Businesses | | | |
| Businesses based and trading in Switzerland in the 2 nd and 3 rd sectors according to BER | 4000 | 1407 | 37,1% |
| Public administration | | | |
| All departments and offices of the federal administration | 83 | 15 | 18,1% |
| All cantons in Switzerland | 26 | 25 | 96,2% |
| All communes in Switzerland | 1600 | 1007 | 62,9% |
| Total | 10 778 | 5073 | 47,1% |

Legend BER = Business and Enterprise Register of the Federal Statistical Office (FSO);
2nd sector = Industry and construction; 3rd sector = Services.

¹ Everyone who was able to take part in the survey in German, French or Italian.

² The response rate is based on the survey population minus all the people who could not be reached (letters undeliverable) and the net random sample for each target group.

Survey results

→ Target group: General public

Contact with the public administration is increasingly taking place online

The general public primarily makes contact with the public authorities by e-mail, via a portal or by telephone. When compared with 2018, personal contact with the authorities has reduced significantly (-4 percentage points for people who always/often/sometimes had personal contact). This is possibly due to the COVID-19-related closures of the offices of public authorities and the requirement to work at home.

1. How often do you use the following options when contacting public authorities?



Legend The basis is all the survey respondents who use the internet (n = 2592).

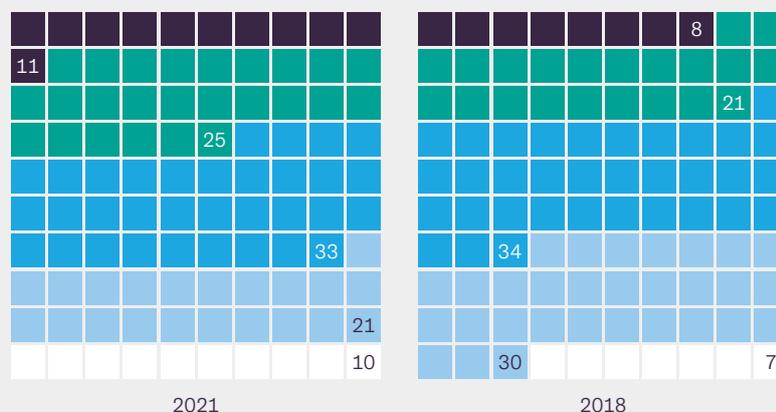
Use of online services is increasing, particularly among younger people

The general public makes active use of government services relatively rarely. Almost half of the survey respondents use one to two services a year, while 16% use no services at all. When services are used, almost two thirds of people opt for online services in at least half of all cases. One third of people choose the online option for

almost all the services they use. One fifth do not use digital services at all to contact public authorities. Overall, the public authorities' services are used online more often than in 2018, in particular by younger people (aged 25 to 54).

2. How many of the services provided by public authorities that you use are online services?

1% = 1 box/ 100% = all boxes



- All
- Almost all
- Around a half
- None
- Don't know/no answer

Legend The basis is all of the survey respondents who use public authorities' services (2021: n = 2180, 2018: n = 2080).

Significant increase in the use of online services – the main reason is time

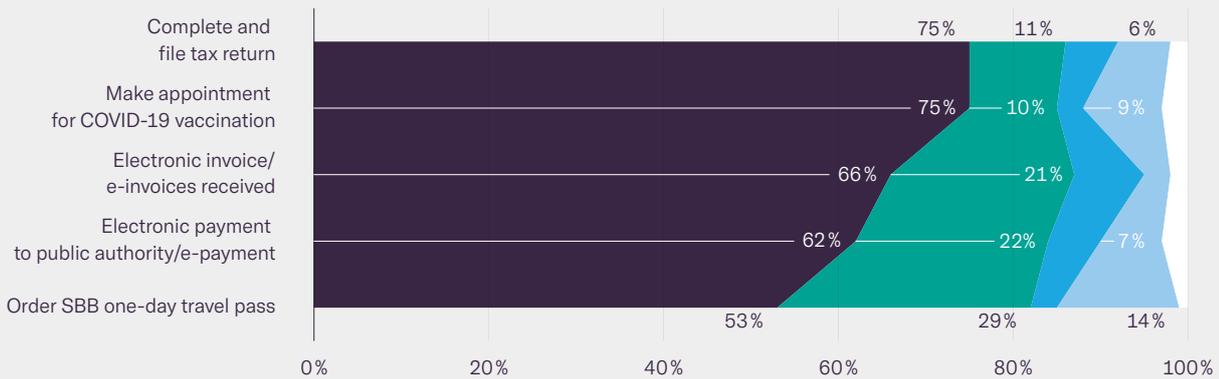
The most important arguments for the choice of online services remain the ability to use the services at any time and anywhere and the resulting time savings. The task carried out by far the most frequently online is completing a tax return. The same number of people have booked an appointment for a COVID-19 vaccination online. E-invoices are also often received by public authorities and e-payments (payment to a public authority with a credit card) are made.

The demand for digital public services remains high

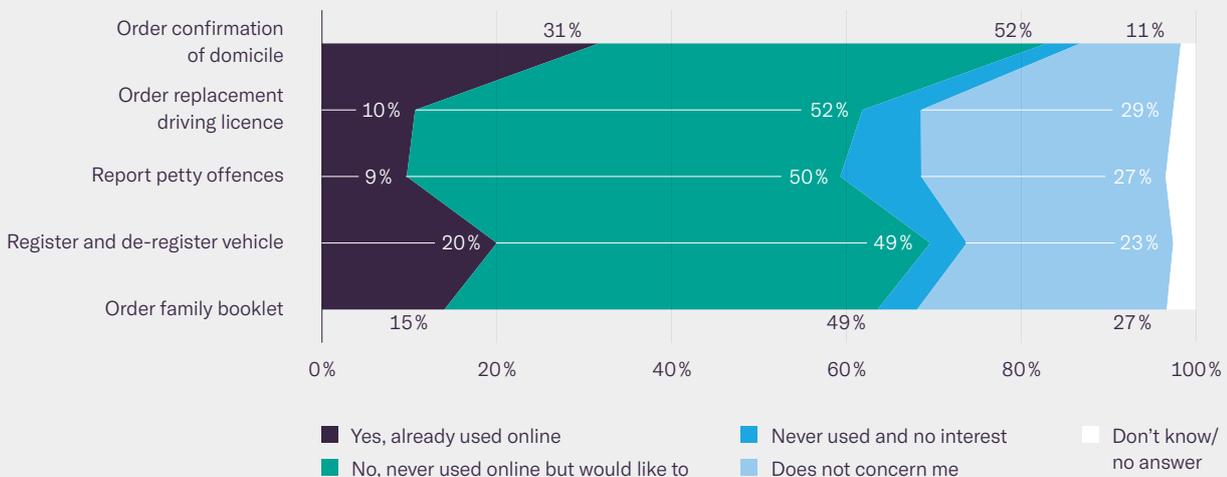
The survey respondents would like to be able to use many services online that are not yet available in digital form. They are particularly interest-

ed in ordering a confirmation of domicile, registering/de-registering a vehicle, ordering a family booklet, ordering a replacement driving licence and reporting petty offences.

3. Which of the following services are most frequently used?



Which of the following services are most frequently needed?



Legend This question was only put to people who said that they had used an online public service at least once or wanted to do so in future. The services requested were broken down (n = 826).

Fewer obstacles to the use of digital public services

A total of 19% of survey respondents – slightly fewer than in 2018 – are critical of the use of online services or have identified factors that make them difficult to use. The biggest obstacle is the difficulty in finding the right offerings from the public authorities. In second place comes a lack of trust in data protection and data security.

Other factors that make the situation more difficult and that affect the users themselves, such as age, language barriers etc., are seen as being much less important. In addition, digital services are more often used on mobile devices, which is why websites not optimised for mobile use are more often seen as an obstacle than was the case in 2018.

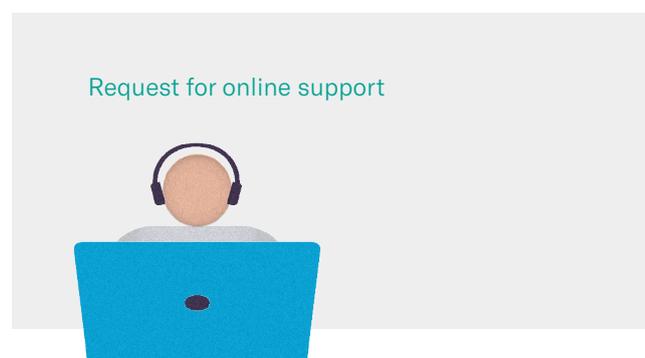


4. What is it that makes the use of e government services most difficult for you?



Legend This question was only put to those people who had had problems using online offerings (2018: n= 560, 2021: n= 480).

The survey respondents wanted (fast) online or telephone support for digital services from public authorities. By contrast, fewer were interested in written instructions than in 2018. There is potential for increasing the telephone and online support offered by the communal authorities in particular, because the communes provide this less often than the other two levels of the public administration.



E-participation is not widespread

In 2021, survey respondents were asked for the first time whether they used online channels to participate in politics and government in the commune or canton where they live. This is only the case for 6% of survey respondents. By contrast, almost 60% have never used an online

administration (see the section Public administration). According to the [UN E-Government Survey 2020](#), Switzerland rose 23 places in the rankings between 2018 and 2020 and is now ranked 18th out of a total of 193 countries.

The people who had already used a digital channel for the purposes of participation in politics did this primarily via a website (23%). The second most common method used for e-participation is e-mails, followed by online surveys and social media.

maintenance.un.org

The general public is interested in digital participation.

channel for political participation and have no need to do so. Around a quarter of the survey respondents have never used a digital channel for political participation, but would like to or have plans to. This shows that there is an interest in e-participation among the general public. Efforts are being made in this respect by the public

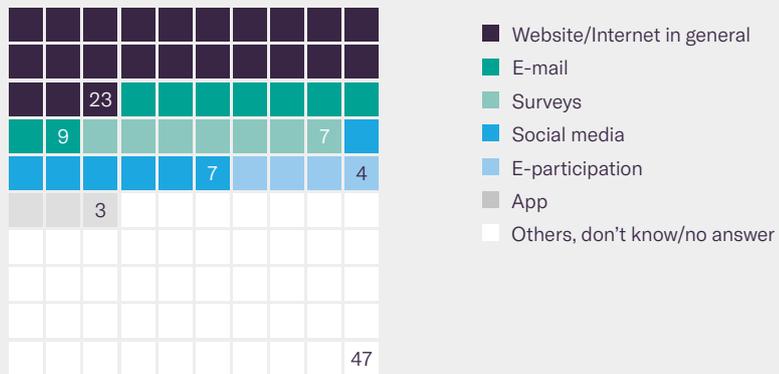
Switzerland ranked 18th out of 193¹

+23

places in the e-participation index

5. Which digital channel or channels have you used to participate in politics or government in the commune/canton where you live?

1% = 1 box / 100% = all boxes



Legend The basis consists of all the survey respondents who use the internet and who answered yes to the question about whether they had ever used a digital channel for participation (n = 156).

Lack of interest and knowledge are the main reasons for not accessing data

In 2021, the subject of the traceability of the use of personal data was newly included in the survey. The aim in particular was to find out whether the general public makes use of the statutory right to access their data and, if so, for what rea-

sons. Almost 80% of the survey respondents said that they have never made a request to the public administration or a business to access their data. Only one in ten of the survey respondents has made use of the right of data access. The qualitative interviews highlighted three reasons why people would request data access: An inter-

¹ Source: UN E-Government Survey 2020 [maintenance.un.org](#)

est in finding out which personal data was being stored by the public administration or the business, security concerns about the processing of data by private companies and/or public authorities and disputes with authorities and other or-

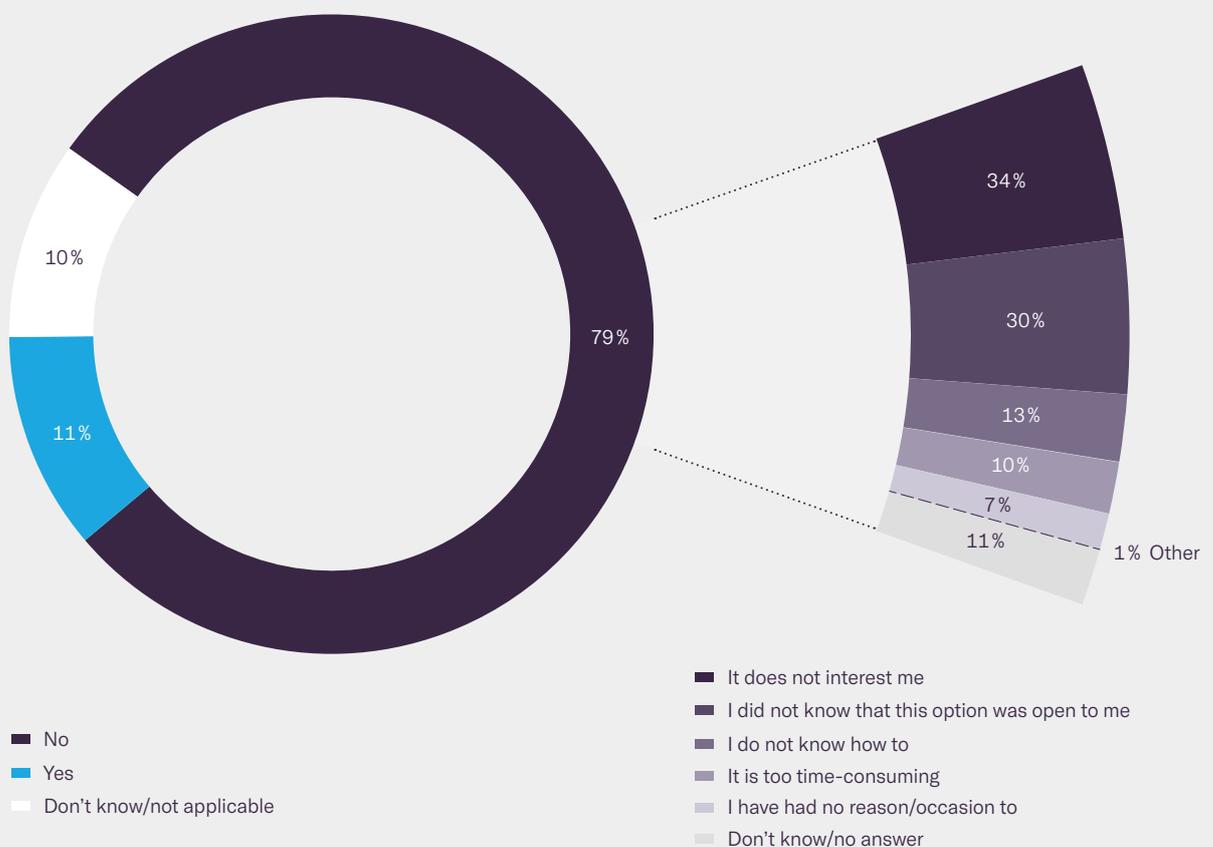
ten understand data access to mean something quite different (for example, ordering an extract from the debt enforcement register).

The lack of demand is also reflected in the survey of public authorities. Half of the representatives of authorities who were surveyed have never received a request from a natural person to access their personal data under the terms of the Data Protection Act. More than one third receive between one and nine requests a year and around 6% have ten or more enquiries. Cantonal and federal authorities receive data access requests much more often than communal authorities.

Little demand for access to personal data from natural persons.

ganisations or businesses. On the other hand, a lack of interest (34%) and a lack of knowledge of this option (30%) are given as reasons why data access has never been requested. The qualitative interviews also show that the general public of-

6. Have you made use of your statutory right of data access with the public administration or a business? If not, why not?



Legend The basis is all the survey respondents who use the internet (n = 2592).

→ Target group: Businesses

Online options for contacting the public administration are becoming more important because they save time

Businesses make contact with cantonal and communal authorities primarily via e-mail or telephone. Their contacts with federal authorities are mainly via e-mail or online portals. Businesses make more active use of e-government services than the general public. Almost half of them use online public services at least three times a year. In total, four out of five companies use online services for at least half of their contacts with public authorities. Almost half choose the online option for nearly all the services they use. As with the general public, the most important reasons for preferring digital services are the ability to use the services at any time and time savings.

7. How many of the services provided by public authorities that your company uses are online?

1% = 1 box/ 100% = all boxes



Legend The basis is all the companies who, according to the survey respondents, use public services (2018: n = 1226, 2021: n = 1317).

Online social insurance services are increasingly popular

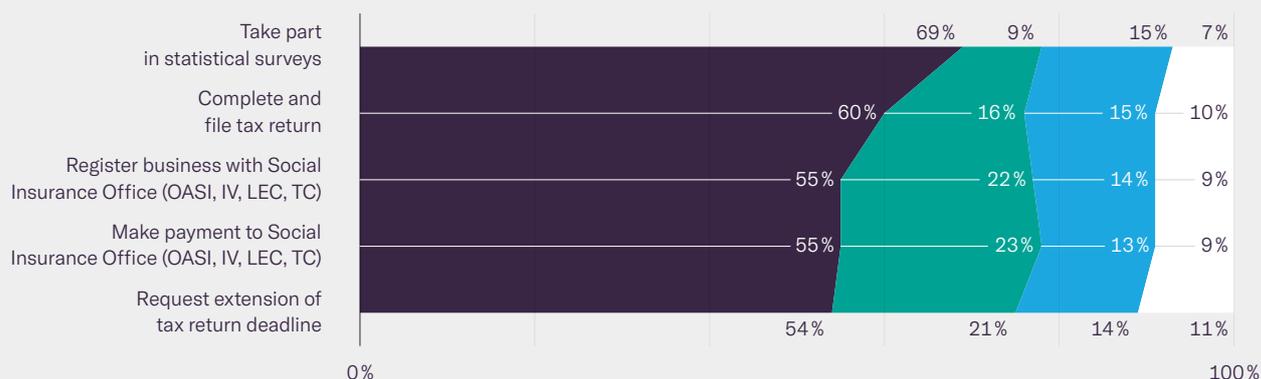
According to the survey respondents, businesses most frequently take part in statistical surveys (figure 8). Almost 70% have already done this online. A total of 60% of businesses filed tax returns online. Just over half have registered a business online with the Social Insurance Office, made payments to the Social Insurance Office online, applied for an extension of the tax return deadline or reported VAT online. Overall, far more e-government services were used online than was the case in 2018. Services such as registering a business online with the Social Insurance Office (+13 percentage points) and making an online payment to the Social Insurance Office

(+18 percentage points) in particular have become more popular.

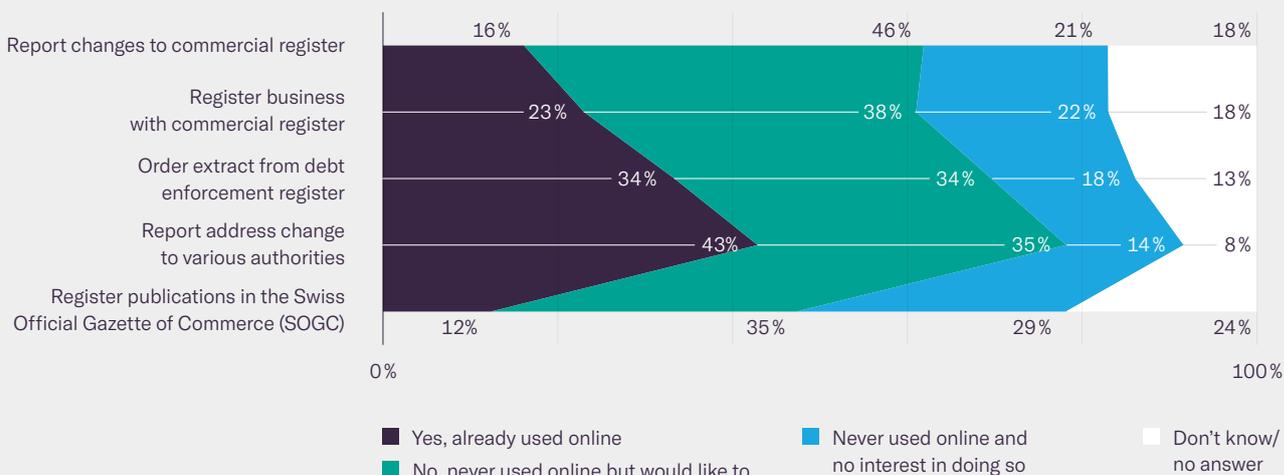
The majority of the companies in the survey which had not yet used an online service wanted the opportunity to do so in almost all areas. The services at the top of businesses' wish lists are – as in 2018 – reporting changes to the commercial register, followed by registering with the commercial register and making requests for debt enforcement. However, these businesses are apparently not (yet) aware of the existing offering of [EasyGov.swiss](https://www.easygov.swiss).



8. Which of the following public services have you already used online on behalf of your business?



Which of the following public services would you like to use online on behalf of your business?



Legend The basis is all the survey respondents from businesses (n = 1407).

Little criticism of the user friendliness of e-government services

Only 9% of the businesses surveyed are critical of the online services or highlighted factors that made them difficult to use. This is a much lower percentage than among the general public (19%). The main difficulties mentioned are that finding

the right offerings is too complicated and registration is too complex and time-consuming. However, an improvement can be seen in the most common areas of criticism when compared with previous surveys.

54%
of businesses cannot find the offerings.

9. What is it that makes the use of e-government services most difficult for you/your business?



Legend This question was only put to those people whose businesses had had problems using online offerings (2018: n = 121, 2021: n = 142).

→ Target group: Public administration

A variety of opportunities for contacting the authorities

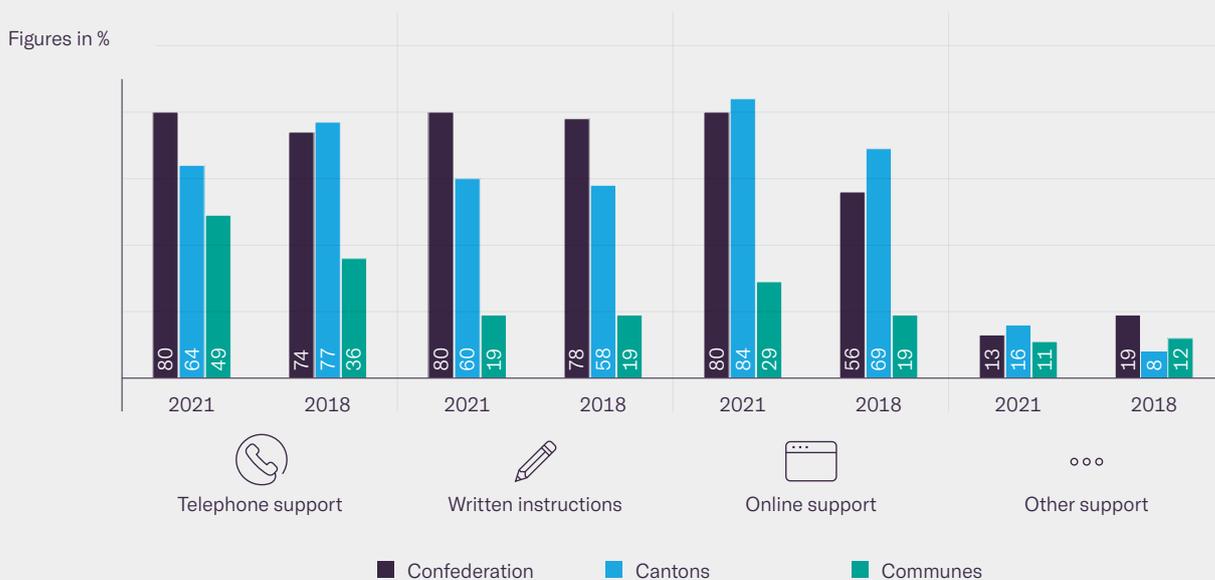
The authorities can be contacted by e-mail, telephone and post. Personal contacts are also available in (almost) all cases. The cantonal and federal authorities are also actively open to contacts via social media (cantons: 76%; Confederation: 67%) or via online portals (cantons: 76%, Confederation: 53%). Apps are used most widely by the cantons (28%), compared with the Confederation (13%) and the communes (15%).

Online support increasing on all levels of the public administration

The support services provided by all three levels of public administration are similar in terms of their order of precedence. Communal authorities most often provide telephone support, followed by online support, and written instructions. The cantons most frequently offer online support,

with telephone support and written instructions coming in second and third place respectively. The availability of online support has significantly increased on all levels of the public administration. In 2018, only 19% of communes, 69% of cantons and 56% of federal authorities offered online support. Today these figures are between 10 and 24 percentage points higher.

10. What support do you offer users of your online processes/e government offerings? (Comparison between 2018 and 2021)



Legend The basis is all the survey respondents from federal, cantonal and communal authorities (2018: communes n = 1010, cantons n = 26, Confederation n = 27; 2021: communes n = 1007, cantons n = 25, Confederation n = 15).

Fully transactional services increasing but expansion still needed

The fully transactional services offered most often by cantons are booking/changing motor vehicle inspection appointments (84%) and requesting an extension of the tax return deadline (80%). Many cantons also offer accepting a tax return (56%), e-payment (40%) and obtaining an extract from the commercial register (36%) in fully transactional form. A variety of services are

also available from a large proportion of the cantonal authorities in partially transactional form, such as registering/de-registering a vehicle (48%) and e-invoices (56%). In contrast to the cantonal authorities, the communes provide only a few fully transactional services. The most common is registering with the communal authority in your place of residence (39%), followed by ordering a confirmation of domicile (24%) and an SBB one-day travel pass (20%).

Transactional Services

A **fully transactional** service from a public authority is a service where all the steps in the process, including data entry, processing and output, can be carried out online with continuity of format. Examples of fully transactional services are e-invoices, e-payment and the publication of statistical data that is made available online.

Partially transactional services include forms that can be downloaded online. An illustrative example of a partially transactional service offered by some cantons is the tax return. It can be completed in an online software package and then printed out and sent by post (together with any enclosures in printed form).

Online tax returns



Optimising processes and the needs of the general public are the main reasons for launching e-services

The motivation for cantonal and communal authorities to provide additional digital services, such as services that are available at any time, is the desire to meet the needs of the general public and the possibility of improving the quality of services. In addition to meeting the growing demand from the general public for online services, the focus for the federal authorities is on opti-

mising their own processes. This has also become more important for the communes and cantons.

The main objective relating to e-government offerings for the Confederation and the cantons is the provision of basic national services for online interaction with public authorities. Among the communes, the objective of increasing awareness of the digitisation of the public administration and building trust has the highest priority.

Requirement to expand online offerings on all levels of the public administration

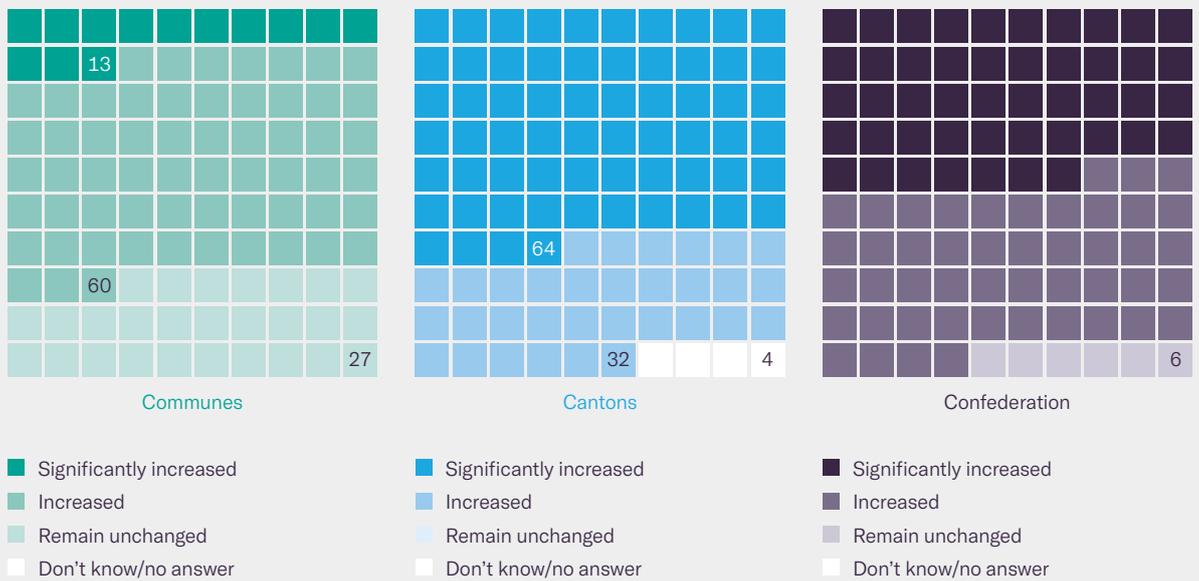
The representatives of the federal administration strongly believe that the number of e-government services needs to be increased. Almost half feel that a very considerable expansion is required. The cantonal authorities express an even clearer preference for increasing the amount of online services. Everyone who expressed an opinion on this subject is of the view that the current offering requires expansion. The representatives of the communal authorities are more satisfied with the status quo, but the majority of the survey respondents still want the volume of services to be increased. By expanding the online offerings, the representatives of the public authorities, in a similar way to the general public and businesses, are hoping for time savings and increased flexibility. Flexible forms of working were necessary in particular during the COVID-19 pandemic, because of lockdowns and staff absences.



96% of cantonal employees want more digital services.

11. In relation to the current needs of the residents of Switzerland / your commune / your canton, should the online offering of the public administration in your view be ...

1% = 1 box / 100% = all boxes



Legend The basis is all the survey respondents in public authorities (communes: n = 1007, cantons: n = 25, Confederation: n = 15).

The lack of a legal framework and the shortage of staff is making the implementation of digital services more difficult

According to the public authorities surveyed, the biggest obstacles to the implementation of digital services are the lack of a legal framework and the shortage of staff. Both of these points also came top of the list in 2018. In addition, it is noticeable

Digital participation in government and administration rarely possible.

12 %

that overall both of these reasons are much more frequently seen to be obstacles. Almost half of the representatives of public authorities believe that there is too little work-time percentage available. Almost one third are of the opinion that the

The general public and the authorities want more – the problem is the lack of resources and legal framework.

available work-time percentage is sufficient for e-government matters. However, the representatives of the cantons are less satisfied (80%) with the number of staff available to work on online

services than the representatives of the federal authorities (47%) and communes (50%). The ICT infrastructure, budget restrictions and the knowledge levels of employees are also often cited as factors which make the implementation of digital public services more difficult.

Digital participation channels rarely available in communes and cantons

Among the representatives of the communal and cantonal authorities, 12% stated that they enable participation in politics and government via an online channel. This figure is double the percentage of users among the general public. More than one third of the public authorities in the survey offer no online channel for participation and see no need for one. Around half of the authorities are in the process of putting a channel in place or at least have an interest in doing so. The representatives of the communes express the opinion that a digital participation channel is not needed more frequently than the representatives of the cantons. However, **e-participation is growing in importance**. According to the UN E-Government Survey 2020, Switzerland rose 23 places in the rankings between 2018 and 2020 and is now ranked 18th out of a total of 193 countries. Some cantons and communes now offer opportunities for digital participation, including the cities of Lucerne (dialogluzern.ch) and Lausanne (participer.lausanne.ch), the commune of Wipkingen (quartieridee.ch) and the canton of Geneva (participer.ge.ch). E-Government Switzerland is also supporting e-participation projects as part of the implementation of its strategy.



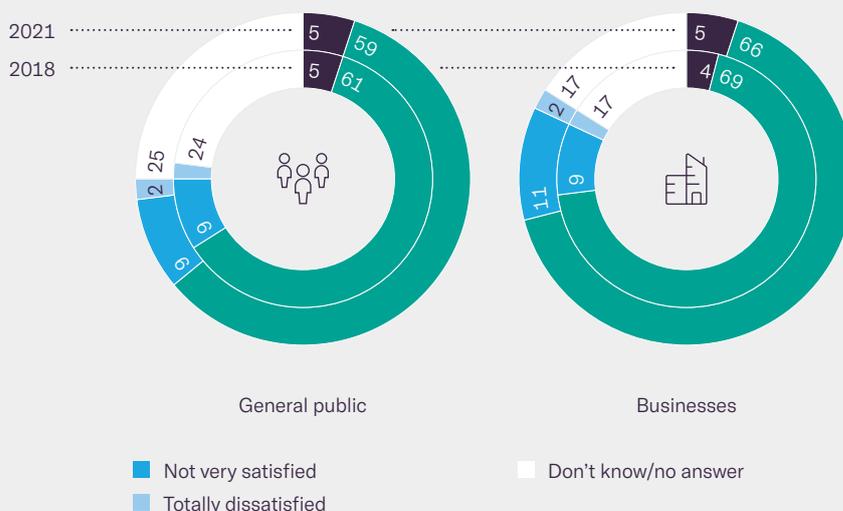
→ Comparison between supply and demand

Levels of satisfaction and trust in the public administration remain consistently high

The majority of users are satisfied with the e-government offering from the public authorities. The representatives of the public authorities take a positive view of the users' level of satisfaction and this view is clearly correct. However, the employees of the federal authorities are much more critical than those on the other levels of the administration. The communal authorities have the most positive perspective on the level of user satisfaction.

12. How satisfied are you/is your business in general with the internet/e-government offering of the authorities in Switzerland? Are you ...

Figures in %



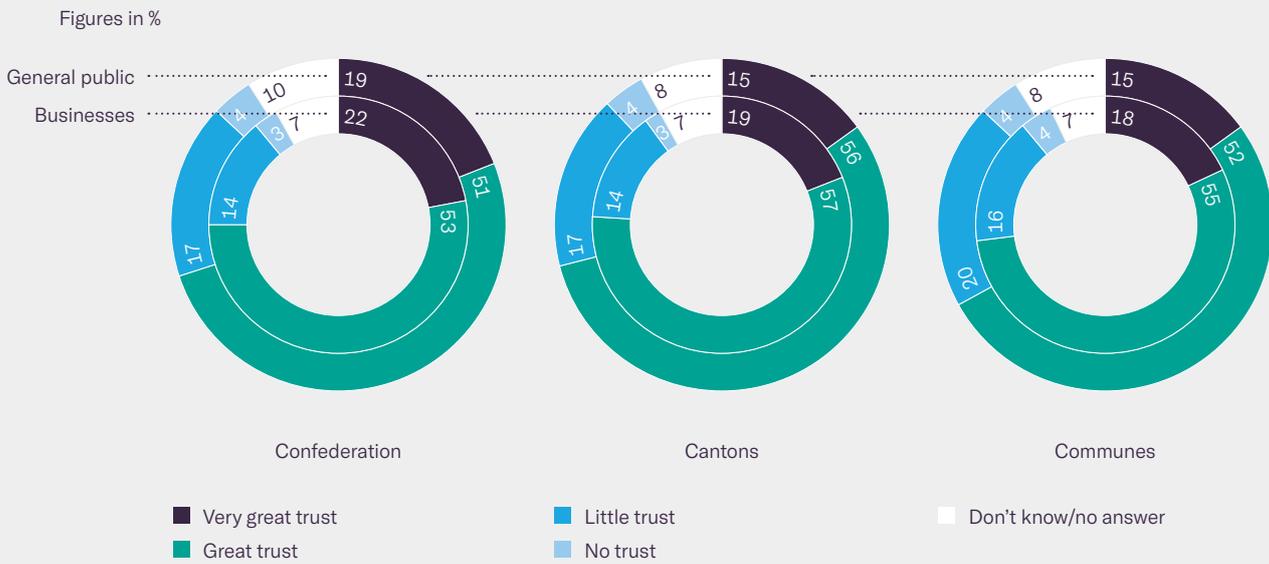
Legend The basis is all the members of the general public in the survey who use the internet (2018: n = 2549, 2021: n = 2592) and all the representatives of businesses (2018: n = 1331, 2021: n = 1407).

The representatives of the authorities also have a positive opinion about the trust of the general public in online public services. The most self-critical in this respect are the representatives of the communes and federal administration. The opinion of the survey respondents in the cantonal authorities is more positive, but is nevertheless more critical than in 2018. The responses of the general public and businesses to the question about their trust in the online services provided by public authorities with regard to data privacy and data protection confirm the views of the authorities. Around 70% of the members of the general public who responded to the survey have a very high or high level

of trust in the authorities. At 75%, the percentage of businesses is even higher. Among the general public, the level of trust has risen slightly since 2018, but there was no change in the figure for businesses. However, there is some criticism with

regard to data protection and data security, in particular on the part of the general public, as shown by the question concerning the factors that make using digital public services more difficult.

13. How much trust do you have in the online services provided by authorities on a local, cantonal and national level with regard to data privacy and data protection?



Legend The basis is all the members of the general public in the survey who use the internet (2021: n = 2592) and all the representatives of businesses (2021: n = 1407).

Demand for e-services greater than supply

The majority of users believe the current online offering of the federal and cantonal authorities to be adequate. There is a greater need to increase the e-services on a communal level, with around 40% of users wanting to see more services available. The general public feels that the greatest need for expansion on a federal level is in the area of e-voting. With regard to the federal authorities,

The public wants the option of e-voting in elections and referendums.

the general public approves of the clear design/user friendliness of the websites, the expansion of e-voting and the general offering of online services. Businesses believe that the greatest need for improvement on a federal level lies in

the area of digital tax returns. Almost the same number are of the opinion that the federal administration should offer all services online. The cantonal authorities, businesses and the general public see the most urgent need for expansion on a cantonal level as being in the area of digital tax returns. On a communal

level, the general public has identified the greatest need for improvement in the general online offering, e-moving¹, the ease of use of the websites, general information and digital tax returns. Companies are most often of the view that the digitisation of planning permission and of tax returns requires improvement by the communal authorities.

The current demand from the general public for digital services corresponds to the activity most frequently carried out online, which is completing tax returns.²

Online tax returns are popular. Paper tax returns are becoming outdated.

This service is offered by almost all the cantonal authorities in the survey in at least a partially transactional form. The demand among users for individual services such as e-invoices or e-payments is high, but these are offered in online form by only relatively few of the communes and cantons. There is therefore potential



for improvement in these areas too. In the case of ordering a confirmation of place of residence online, the demand is only slightly higher than the supply of services.

- ¹ Online reporting and processing of change of residence.
² To determine the demand, the response categories Yes, already used online and No, never used online but would like to were added together to give the total demand for each service.

In the case of requesting an extension of the tax return deadline and completing and filing tax returns, the authorities are doing well at meeting the demand from businesses, if the partially transactional services for completing the tax return are also taken into consideration. The application for planning permission service also covers the current demand. By contrast, in the case of the application for work permits service, the demand for online services exceeds supply, even if partially transactional services are taken into account. There is also a need for improvement in

the area of making online payments to and registering with the Social Insurance Office. However, it is important to note that the service report/record unemployment does not correspond exactly with the demand for making a payment to or registering with the Social Insurance Office.

Communes believe that a significant expansion of their online offering is needed.

13%

14. Demand versus supply of online public services

15. Demand versus supply of online public services

Demand ■ Yes, already used online ■ No, never used online but would like to

Offer ■ Fully transactional (Commune) ■ Fully transactional (Canton) ■ Partially transactional ■ Not transactional/not offered online



General public



Businesses



Legend 14 The basis is all the members of the general public surveyed who use the internet (n = 2592) and all the representatives of the cantonal authorities (n = 25) and communal authorities (n = 1007).

Legend 15 The basis is all representatives of businesses (n = 1407), cantonal authorities (n = 25) and communal authorities (n = 1007).

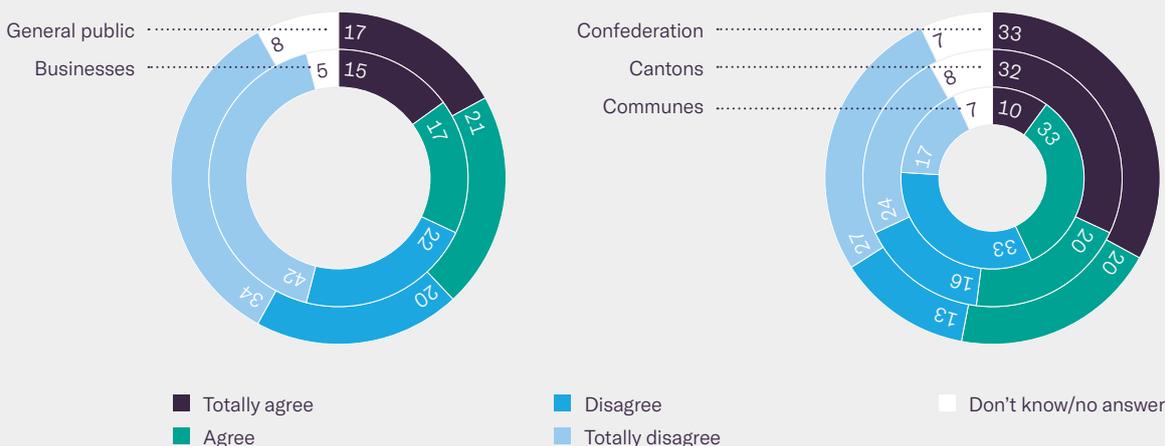
Users opposed to reduced charges for digital services

In both groups of users, more than half of survey respondents do not agree with charges for online services being lower than for non-online services. More than one third are strongly opposed. Just under one third agree with a reduction in charges. The public authorities take a more positive view of this solution, but even among the providers many were not in favour of **reducing the charges** for online services. The opposition is strongest among the communes. The fact that the users in the survey do not fully agree with lowering charges indicates that they are not intending to use more digital services or still want the freedom to choose between non-digital and digital services. By contrast, the authorities as providers – in particular on a federal level – are more interested in moving towards the further expansion and permanent establishment of online services.



16. Would you agree to the state requiring private individuals and businesses to pay lower charges if they make use of a public service over the internet?

Figures in %



Legend The basis is all the members of the general public surveyed who use the internet (n = 2592) and all the representatives of businesses (n = 1407) and the authorities (Confederation: n = 15, cantons: n = 25, communes: n = 1007).

Conclusion

The trend for digitisation is clearly making itself felt in the area of e-government. In 2021, much more frequent use was made of digital public services than in 2018, with users making contact with public authorities more often via e-mail or online portals.

By contrast, contact by telephone, by post and, in particular, in person has reduced, despite the fact that survey respondents took a critical view in 2018 of the lack of personal contact with the authorities that resulted from the use of online

with the plans of the authorities themselves to improve the quality of services and offer services and support at any time. Very few members of the general public make use of digital channels to participate in politics or government in the commune or canton where they live, although **e-participation** is becoming more common and some cantons and communes already offer digital participation options. In the next few years, a further increase in the availability and use of e-services and opportunities for online participation can be expected.



69 %

of the general public use at least half of public services online.

services. Alongside the general increase in digitisation, this is possibly due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The key reasons for the use of online services remain the ability to use the services at any time and the accompanying time savings. However, users are critical of the fact that it is too complicated to find the right offering from the public authorities and see this as the main obstacle to the use of e-services. In addition, the mobile use of services is becoming increasingly widespread, which is why the websites not optimised for mobile devices are more frequently seen as an obstacle than in 2018.

Therefore, alongside telephone support, users want (fast) online support for the use of online services. Fewer of the survey respondents feel the need for written instructions than was the case in 2018. The federal and cantonal authorities offer online support more often than telephone support. There is still room for improvement in this area on the part of the communal authorities, which urgently need to provide support either by phone or online. This corresponds

The level of trust in public authorities and their online services remains consistently high, although it is slightly lower than the authorities believe. In addition, lack of trust is mentioned much less frequently as an obstacle to the use of digital public services. The high level of trust forms a good basis for the use of online services and Switzerland is on the right track in this respect. This trust is also reflected in the limited use of the right to access data. Only one in ten of

Four out of five companies use online public services.

the survey respondents has requested access to their data. Alongside the trust in the authorities, a lack of interest and a lack of knowledge about this option also contribute to the fact that members of the public do not access their data.

The majority of both groups of users are satisfied with the e-government offering from the public authorities. When users are asked about the need to expand the online services, almost half of them say that the services currently provided by the federal and cantonal authorities are suf-

ficient. It is likely that some users are not (yet) aware of certain offerings and therefore want to see the number of services increased, despite the options that are currently available. Around 40% of respondents feel that the communal authorities need to provide more services online, while almost the same percentage are in favour of simply retaining the services that are already in place.

The number of public services available online in Switzerland has increased since 2018, but the communal authorities offer fewer fully transactional services than the cantons. This means that there is potential to expand individual services so that they are fully transactional and the businesses which took part in the survey are particularly interested in seeing this happen. The authorities are of the view that the necessary legal framework and sufficient resources and expertise must be put in place to enable the services to be expanded. In addition, the employees in the communal authorities need greater knowledge of digitisation.

The current demand for online services among the general public and businesses is only partial-

The general public wants more online services than the authorities are offering.

ly covered by the existing offering. The demand among users for individual services is high, but these are only offered in online form by relatively few of the communes and cantons. However, the users' assessment of the online offering depends on how the question is put. If users are asked about the need to use a particular service online, the demand is greater than when they are asked a general question about the requirement for an increase in the number of online services. Users also want to see additional fully transactional services and few of these are currently offered by the public authorities. This observation puts into perspective the fact that users do not feel a significant need for the expansion of online services. This is because users can only assess offerings that they are already familiar with or that they can imagine being provided. The greatest need for expansion on a federal level is in the area of e-voting and on a cantonal level in the area of digital tax returns.

In general, businesses are more familiar with the use of digital public services than private users. For example, more than two-thirds of the general public make use of digital services in almost half

Around **70**%

of those surveyed trust online public services.

of cases. Among businesses, the figure is almost 80%. Only one third of the general public would prefer not to use online public services in future,

Businesses are more comfortable with online services than private individuals.

in contrast to businesses, which would like to have access to **online** services more often. In addition, the fact that the users do not fully agree with lowering charges for online services indicates that they are not necessarily planning to use more of these services in the future or still want the freedom to choose between non-digital and digital services. Nevertheless, the positive and negative answers to the question of whether users want certain public services to be available online in future are evenly balanced. Overall the proportion of people who would consider online services in future, in particular among the younger sections of the population, has increased. We can therefore safely assume that the demand for digital public services will continue to grow.



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