

eGovernment for an inclusive society

**eGovernment and Social Inclusion:
Barriers, Opportunities and Future Direction**

11 March 2008

Brussels

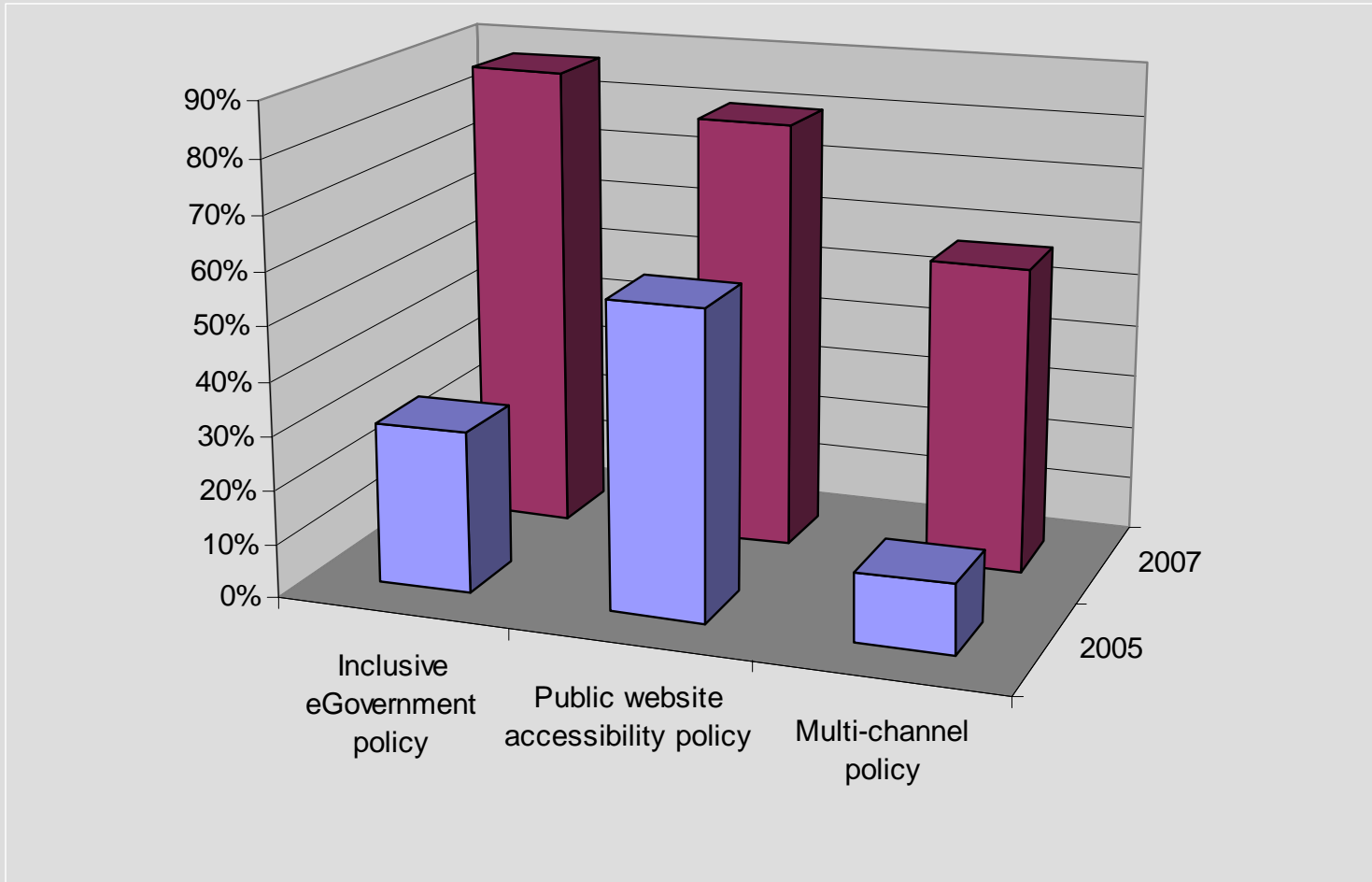
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Preview

- **What European governments are doing**
 - policy, deployment, delivery
- **What (disadvantaged) people are doing**
 - opinions, behaviour, characteristics
- **So what?**
 - evidence, research, challenges, conclusions

Inclusive eGovernment policies

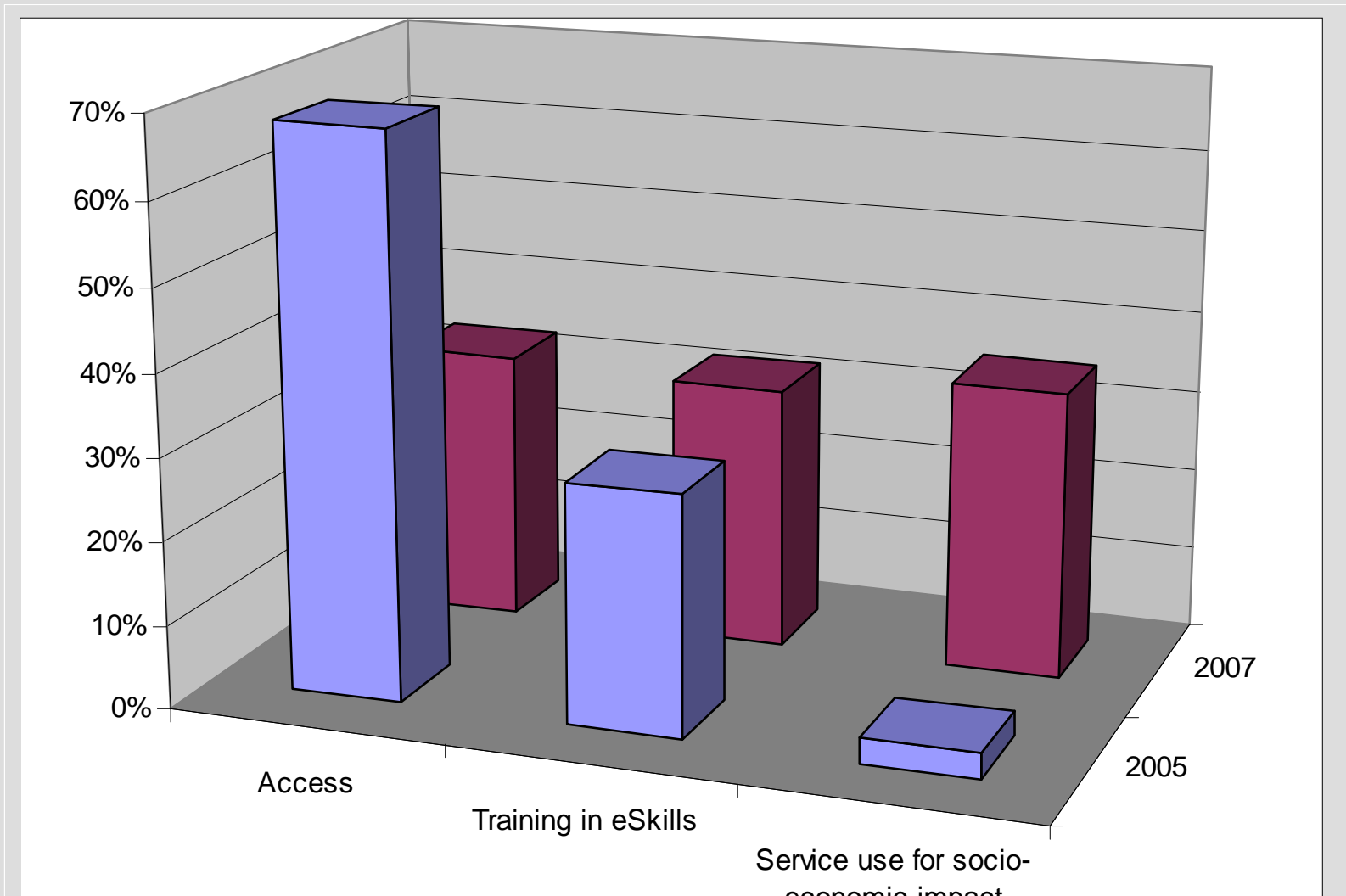
% MS with policies in place (n=30) 2005-2007



More policies (the first step): MS are getting their act together ??

Inclusive eGovernment deployment

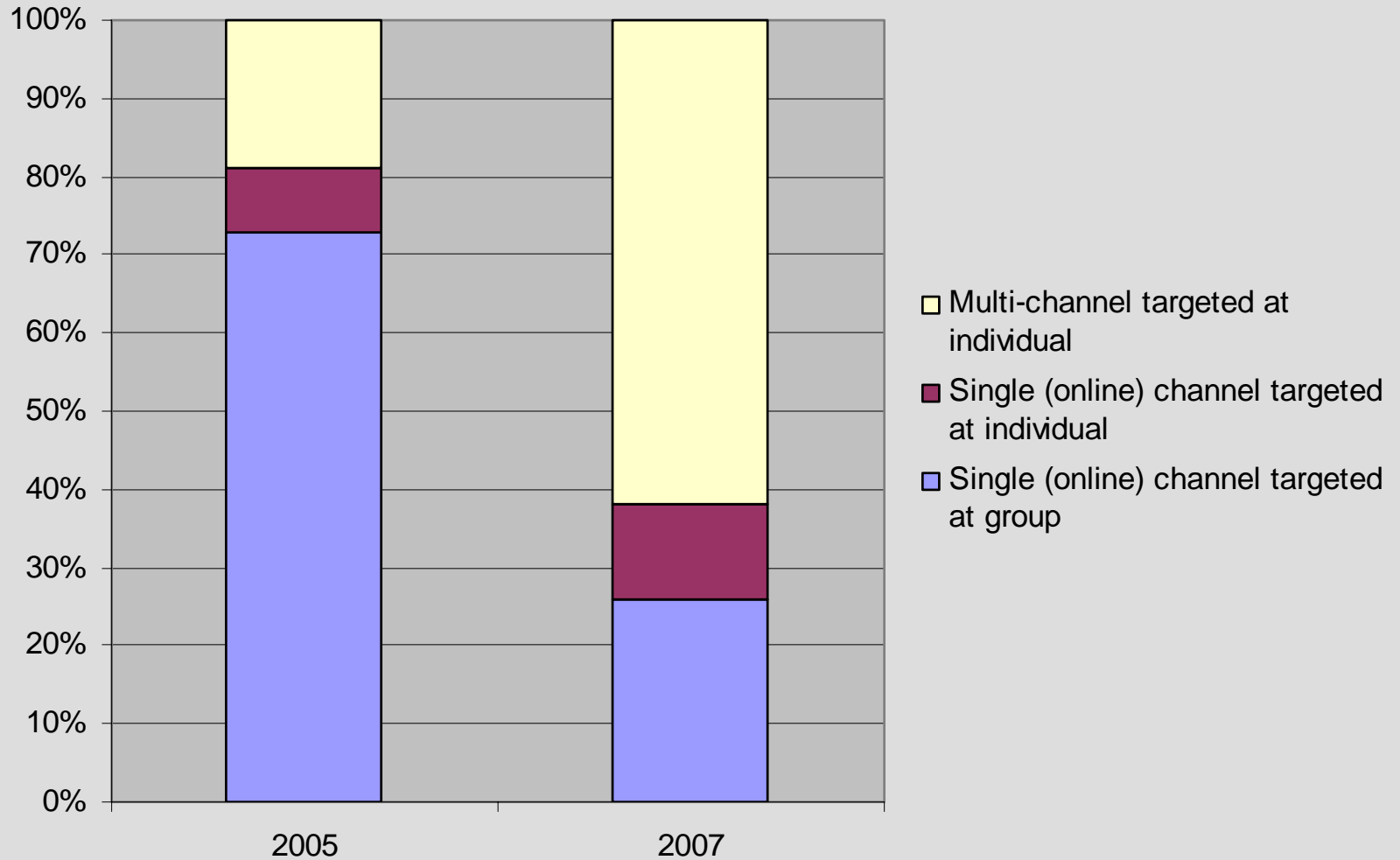
2005: n=124 from 72 cases: 2007: n=178 from 90 cases



Deployment is moving on from necessary to sufficient conditions ?

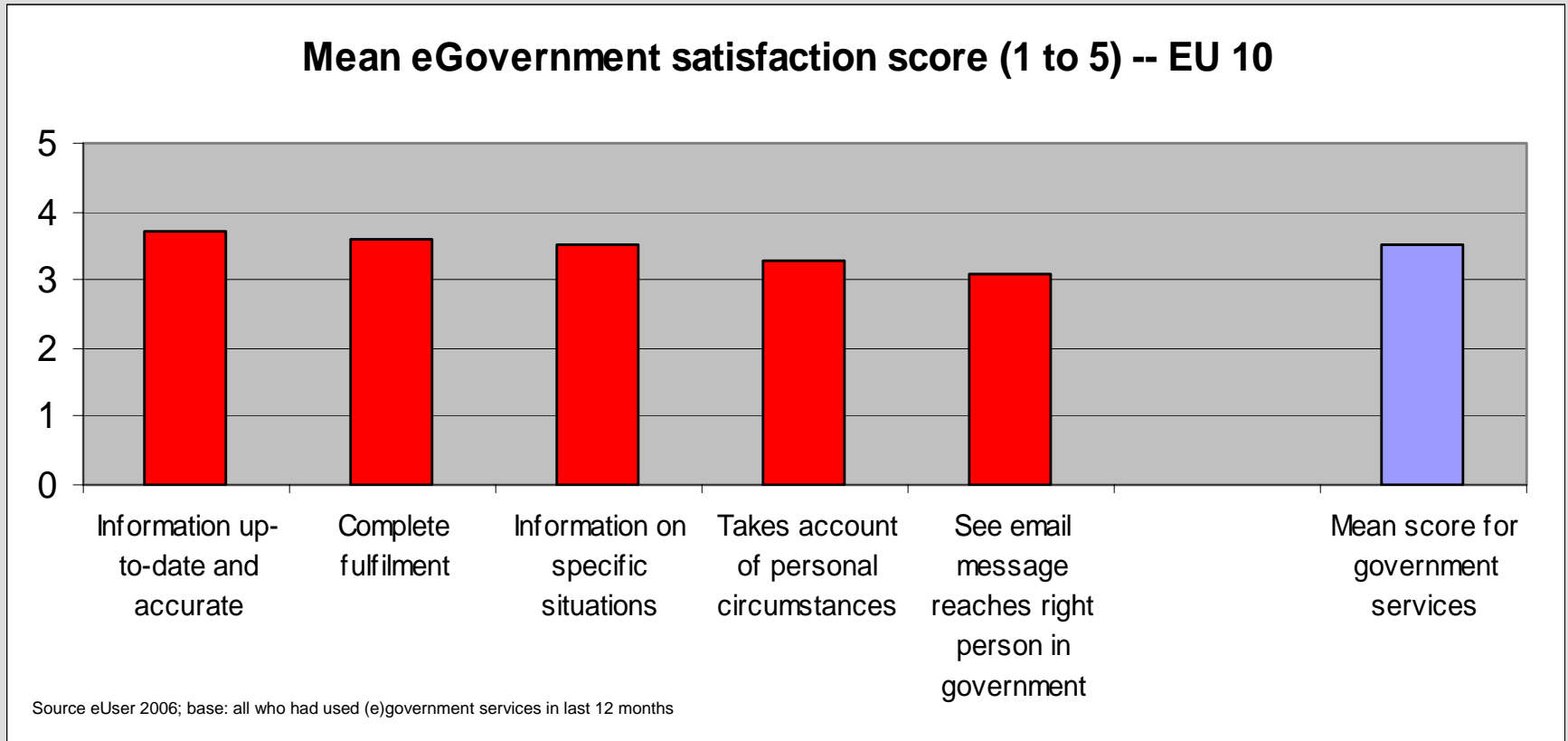
Inclusive eGovernment delivery

2005: n=124 from 72 cases: 2007: n=178 from 90 cases



Treat people as individuals and do not see the 'e' channel in isolation

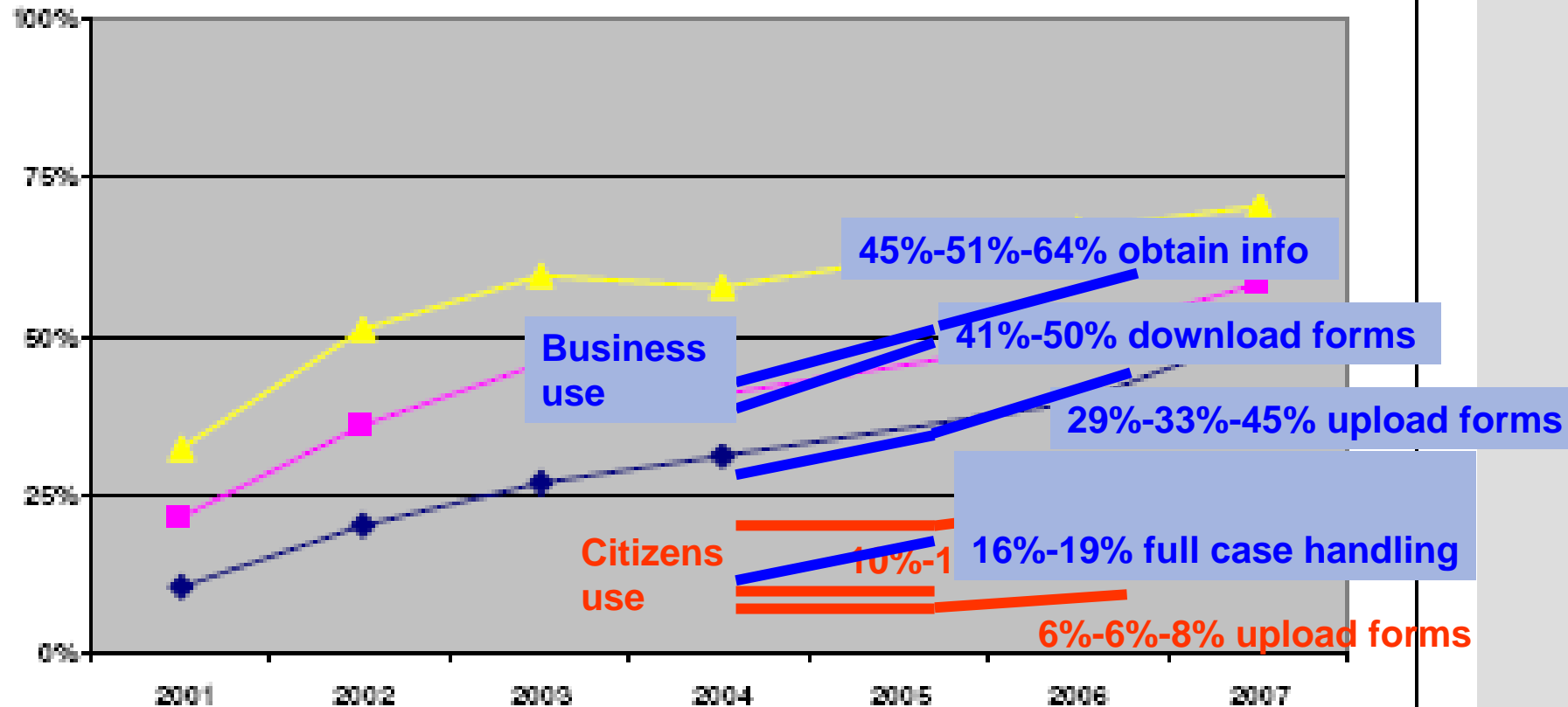
What people think of (e)government services



- eGovernment rated as high as government services
- But not (yet?) higher

Supply & use of eGovernment services

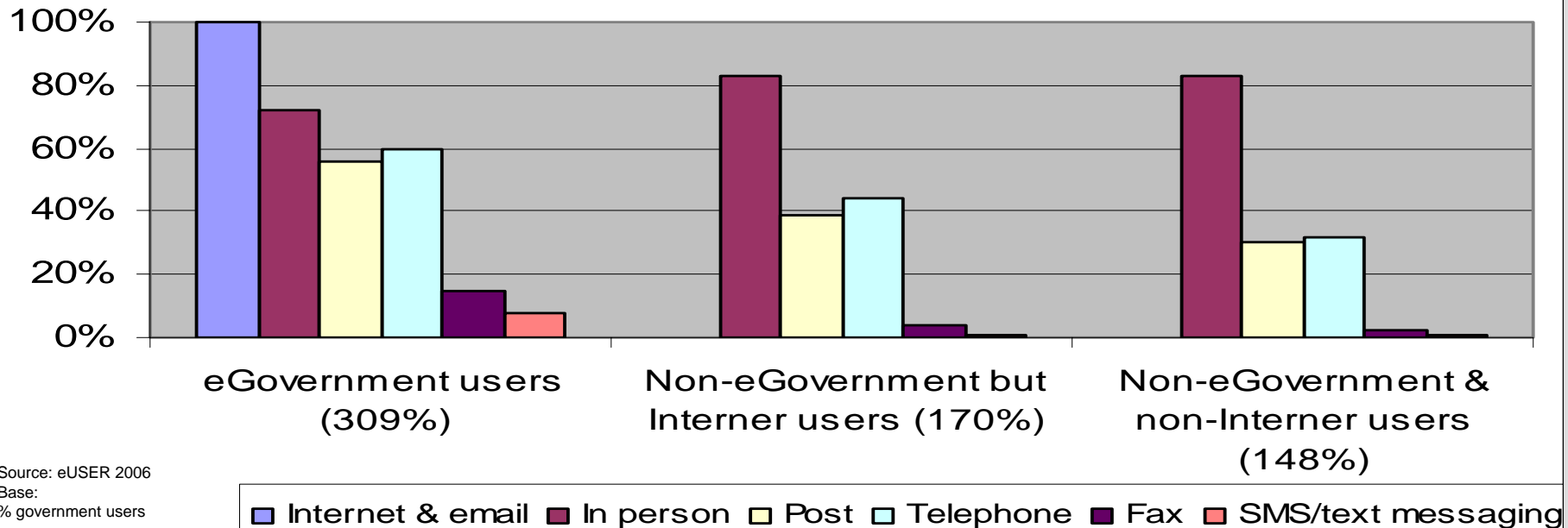
EU27+ - Fully Online Availability



- But take-up is woefully low and set to continue
- Indeed, 30% of adults won't even be online in 2010, let alone using eGovernment – many of these are the 'disadvantaged'

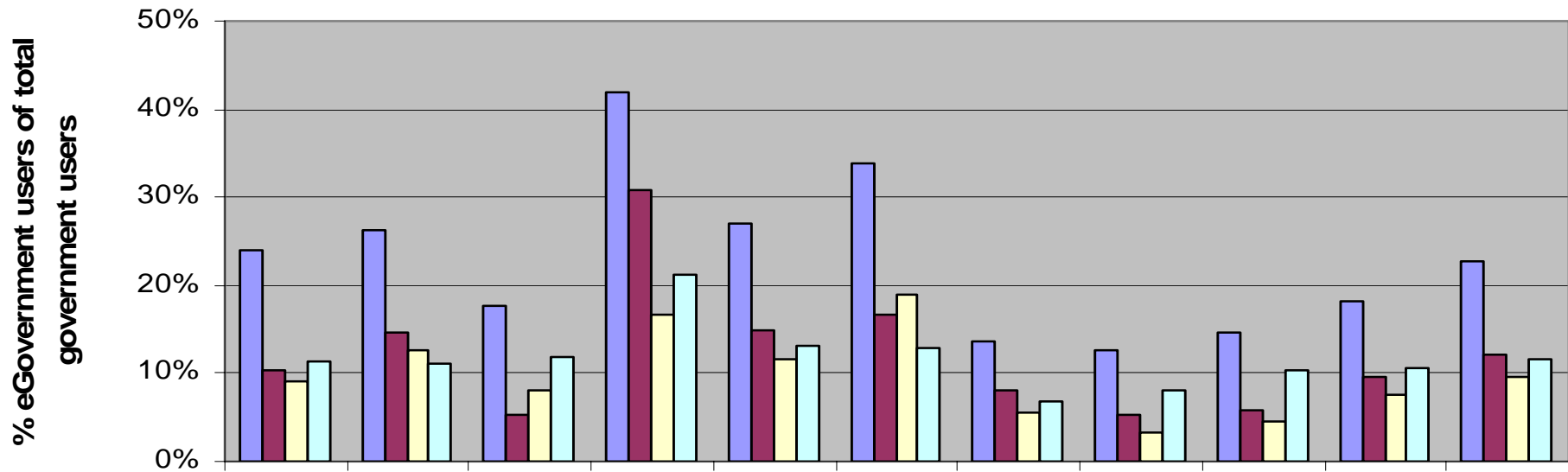
Using government services: to 'e' or not to 'e'

**Government users and media combinations used (EU
10 mean)**



- Are there some things people can do better than technology ?
- More 'e' tends to lead to more of everything else

Using eGovernment services: the role of social intermediaries



Ratio to total eGov use:	DE	FR	IT	DK	UK	IE	PL	HU	CZ	SI	EU 10
for own use >>	44%	56%	29%	73%	55%	49%	60%	42%	39%	52%	53%
for family etc use >>	38%	48%	46%	40%	43%	56%	41%	26%	31%	42%	42%
for employer use >>	47%	42%	67%	67%	49%	38%	50%	63%	70%	57%	51%

- **Social intermediaries (family & friends): 42% of eGov users do it, each supporting 2.6 other persons !**
- **PA intermediaries: 13% of inclusive eGovernment initiatives have civil servants actually acting as civil servants (ICT-empowered frontline staff, on the streets, in the community, with the company)**

Who are (e)government users

(in rank order of importance)

eGovernment user characteristics:

1. live in a country with high eGovernment & internet roll-out
2. internet access at home
3. well developed eSkills & eAttitudes
4. further or tertiary education
5. employed

eGovernment non-user characteristics

1. live in a country with not very high eGovernment & internet roll-out
2. no Internet access at home
3. low eSkills & eAttitudes
4. basic education only
5. not working or retired

eGovernment social intermediary characteristics

1. live in a country with not very high eGovernment & internet roll-out
2. internet access at home
3. well developed eSkills & eAttitudes
4. secondary or lower basic education
5. not working or retired

eGovernment user behaviour compared to non-user behaviour:

- use government services more often
- use a wider range of government service types
- use a wider range a different channels to access government services, not only 'e'

Evidence and research needs

- **Have some evidence, but is patchy, inconsistent and not easily comparable:** EC and OECD now trying to collect more but will be at a quite general and unsophisticated level
- **Ethnography of user behaviour** & their service fulfilment (i.e. holistic approach to use of services), including through flexible channelling and use of intermediaries
- **Flexible channel and channel balancing**, identify channel switch points, and reasons for switching between channels as suited to user preference, service and task
- **Role of intermediaries, champions, activists, support groups**, in supporting (disadvantaged) users, developing a user & community voice, etc.
- Civil servant as **'citizen service activist'** (a type of formalised intermediary) especially for the often **multi-disadvantaged**, cf. business account manager in private sector
- Need evidence to show is **more costly not to tackle exclusion than to tackle it**
- From **'user-centric'** to **'user-driven'**: citizens as (co-)creators of eGovernment services, cf. Linux, games, media, Web 2.0, etc.

Inclusive eGovernment challenges

- Need to be more flexible with **different ICTs and other channels** and processes to deliver impact
- Need increasing focus on **service use for socio-economic impact**, plus evidence to show it is more costly not to tackle exclusion than to tackle it
- 75% of initiatives are local/regional, often fragmented and invisible → need **sustainability and scaling up**
- Need innovative but practical **business models** for service value chains involving all stakeholders
- → **local networks** involving public, private and civil actors combining, coordinating and sharing resources and services through local partnerships and agreements.

Overall conclusions

- **Do NOT treat 'e' as the only or even most important channel:** it sometimes complements but never substitutes (?)
- **Using 'e', and especially eServices is often (perhaps mainly) a highly social activity:** WE have only recently realised this – our kids have known for a bit longer !
- **The 'digital divide' is not 'solved'** (perhaps not solvable) there is a threat of huge social bifurcation coming
- **Start bottom-up with individual peoples' and communities' wishes and needs** -- but top-down (or a broad society, public value, view is also important, and may sometimes take precedence over bottom-up)
- **Need a 'joined-up' strategic approach:** especially necessary for the multiple-disadvantaged -- difficult but coming slowly (not least data security issues and trust)