



Barriers to eGovernment: A Case Study in “Digital Citizen Rights” (DCR)

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Three relationships



- (1) Barriers to asserting DCR
- (2) DCR as a barrier to eGovernment
- (3) DCR as an *enabler* to eGovernment





Barriers to asserting DCR

$$Rights_i = \beta_0 + \sum_{n=1}^N \beta_n \cdot X_{ni} + e_i$$

- *Rights as the dependent variable*
- *“eGovernment usage” as an explanatory variable (X)*
 - *But this contradicts a stronger hypothesis of ours that Rights may be used to encourage/enforce greater e-Government provision/take-up*





DCR as a barrier to eGovernment

- “Non-interference rights” (or classic “liberal rights”). e.g.
 - Privacy and data protection
- Probably founded on “moral”/philosophical principles, so no great scope for circumvention
 - Academically interesting
 - But probably less useful from the Commission's perspective





DCR as an enabler to eGovernment

- 2- or 3-country qualitative analysis
 - Selecting countries that are broadly similar across all variables, except *Rights (and, hopefully, eGov)*
- Multi-country quantitative analysis
 - But only limited “N” of around 25 (or possibly less)





Danish “eDays”

- **eDay 1** (September 1, 2003)
 - “From this day on, all Danish state, regional and local government authorities have a general right to demand that communication with other authorities be exchanged electronically, and thus the right to refuse paper-based communication.”
 - http://e.gov.dk/english/egov_projects/eday2/eday/index.html
- **eDay 2** (February 1, 2005)
 - “even sensitive communication had to be exchanged electronically”
 - “eDay2 will also mean that citizens and businesses will be given the right to communicate electronically with the central public authorities, using digital signatures”



- http://e.gov.dk/english/egov_projects/eday2/index.html





Quantitative Research (1)

$$eGov_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \cdot Rights_i + \sum_{n=2}^N \beta_n \cdot X_{ni} + e_i$$

- *eGov as the dependent variable*
- *Rights as explanatory variable*
- *Various control variables*





Quantitative Research (2)

- *Control variables*
 - *GDP per capita*
 - *Internet/broadband penetration rate*
 - *Age of democracy*
 - *Younger democracies less encumbered by old organisational or technological practices?*
 - *Younger democracies lacking large scale organisational capacity of experienced bureaucracies?*
 - *Population*
 - *Returns to scale?*
 - *Greater complexity*





Quantitative Research (3)

- Problems

- *The empirical model for “DCR as enabler” is identical to that for “DCR as barrier”*
- *So the measure(s) used for Rights become crucial*
 - *We want to measure “legal rights” that have been asserted and led to higher e-Government*
 - *But we need to control for those “barrier rights”, too*
 - *Freedom of Information?*
 - *Data Protection?*





Questions

- Are there comparative *Rights measures for the EU and/or the OECD countries?*
- *Which rights would it be possible and/or sensible to measure?*
 - *General or specific?*
- *Which countries would yield the best Rights-comparisons?*

<i>High eGovernment</i>			<i>Low eGovernment</i>		
Country	Availability	Usage	Country	Availability	Usage
Sweden	74	39 and 52*	Belgium	35	18*
Austria	72	21 and 29*	Ireland	50	14 and 18*
Denmark	58	44	Netherlands	32	46*

• Source: Eurostat

