

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE REPORT FOR THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF SEPTEMBER 16, 2011 ON THE SITUATION OF E-GOVERNMENT AT THE GENERAL PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

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MINISTRY OF TERRITORIAL  
POLICY AND PUBLIC  
ADMINISTRATION

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF  
STATE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This document is a summary and overview of the **development of e-government, especially in the General Public Administration (AGE)**. It describes its evolution over the past few years, its present situation, and its future challenges, associated with the **coordination of all government agencies in the provision of citizen-oriented services and the common fulfilment of the obligations** under Law 11/2007, on Citizens' Electronic Access to Public Services, the Digital Agenda for Europe, and the **European E-Government Action Plan 2011-2015**

## 2. POSITION OF SPAIN IN THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE

The Spanish public administration has made significant efforts over the past few years to guarantee citizens' right to an e-relation with government agencies –an effort that has resulted in a **leading position in e-government development**.

According to the **UN Global E-Government Readiness Report** (the most complete report at the international level), Spain ranks ninth at a global level (fifth for the specific indicator for online services) and fifth in Europe. This has earned our country a UN award for the progress made in this field.

Country	E-Government 2010	Rank 2010	Rank 2008	Rank Change
 <a href="#">Republic of Korea</a>	0.8785	1	6	+5 
 <a href="#">United States of America</a>	0.8510	2	4	+2 
 <a href="#">Canada</a>	0.8448	3	7	+4 
 <a href="#">United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland</a>	0.8147	4	10	+6 
 <a href="#">Netherlands</a>	0.8097	5	5	--
 <a href="#">Norway</a>	0.8020	6	3	-3 
 <a href="#">Denmark</a>	0.7872	7	2	-5 
 <a href="#">Australia</a>	0.7863	8	8	--
 <a href="#">Spain</a>	0.7516	9	20	+11 
 <a href="#">France</a>	0.7510	10	9	-1 

Table 1. Position of Spain in the international scene. UN report.

Spain's evolution in terms of the global indicator for e-development (infrastructure and training) in UN report has been the following:

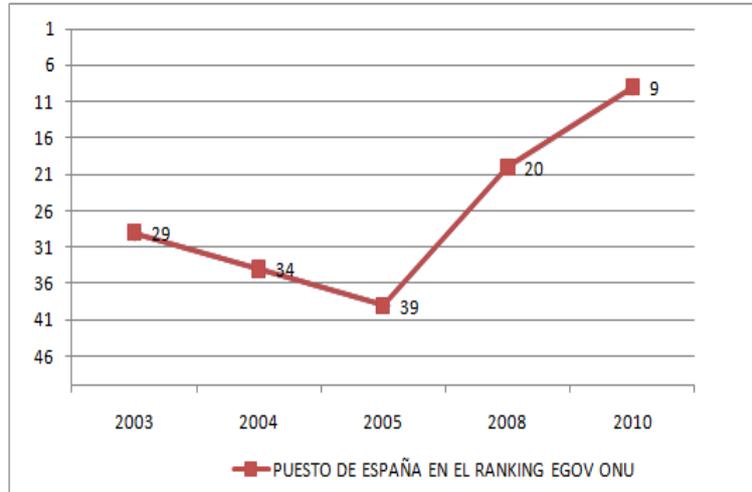


Chart 1. Spain's evolution in UN reports.

For the past decade, the **European Union (EU)** has also released an annual comparative report on e-service, comparing 20 public services (12 for citizens and 8 for companies) in different countries. For the first time, in the latest report Spain ranks among the first ten countries (it is eighth), in terms of both the availability and the sophistication of e-service.

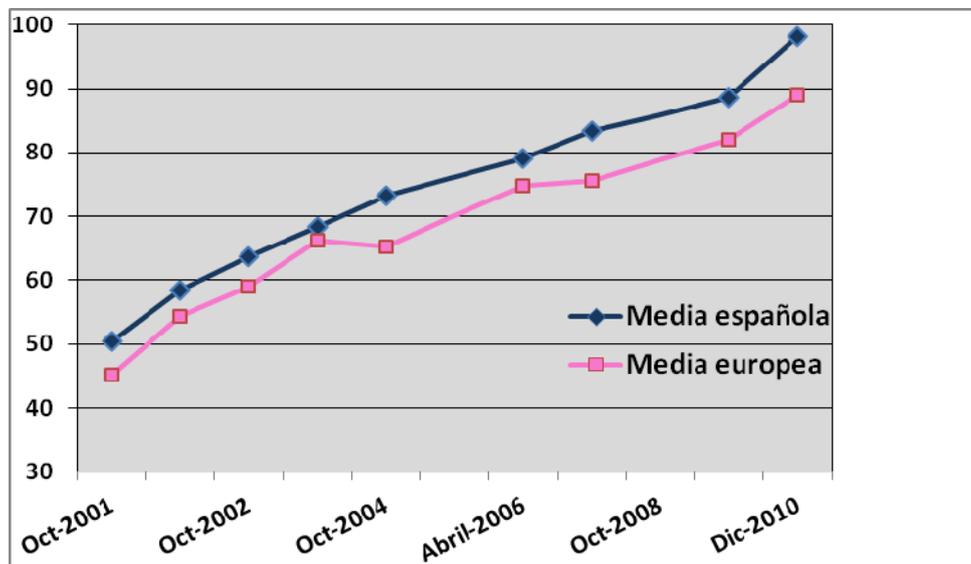


Chart 2. Evolution of the maturity indicator for e-service in Spain as compared to the European average.

### 3. DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC E-SERVICES

Such evolution has been possible thanks to the common efforts of all Spanish government agencies to fulfil the obligations under **Law 11/2007, on Citizens'**

**Electronic Access to Public Services (LAECSP).** This ground-breaking law in its recognition of the right to hold e-relations with government agencies grants citizens the right to access public service through e-channels and exempts them from submitting information or documents already in possession of the public administration. This involves the obligation for all government agencies to guarantee these two rights in **all** their procedures and services.

So far, **more than 2,300 AGE e-procedures and e-services** have been adapted to meet the provisions in the law. This means that about **90% procedures and 99% of all annual administrative processes** can be done through e-channels. The chart below shows the increase in the number of e-procedures and e-services available to citizens and companies.

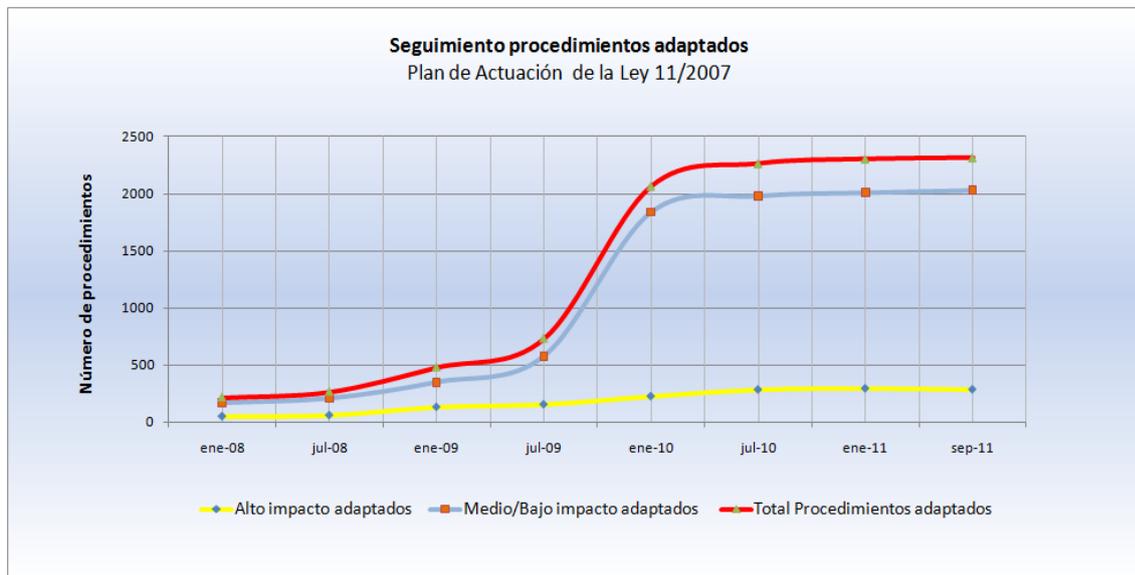


Chart 3. Evolution of adaptation of AGE procedures for e-government.

Moreover, currently **all AGE procedures** can be initiated **using electronic media** (even those that have not been adapted yet) with the **Common E-Register (REC, available at [www.060.es](http://www.060.es)) and department e-registers.**

This is the **greatest accomplishment** of the common efforts made by the AGE ministries and bodies, coordinated by the High Council for E-Government.

### 3.1 Electronic ID

Spain is a **global leader in the development of e-signature**. By the end of 2010, the various certificate authorities had issued over 2 million by the end of 2010 for individuals and 400,000 for institutions. By the end of August 2011, 24 million **e-ID cards** (in Spain,

DNle) had been issued, and it is estimated that the whole population will have their DNles in 2015.

The importance of the DNle is that it can be used both for procedures with government agencies and with the virtual offices of most **big companies**, including banks, insurance brokers, telephone operators, gas or electricity companies, and so on.

Although the use of DNles is becoming widespread, it **takes time to ripen** and be fully implemented in society, **as is usual with technology developments**. As it is an ever-evolving project, it is compatible with the **technological and legal improvements leading to DNles that are easy to use** and comply with all security standards.

Spain is the coordinator of one of the working groups of **STORK, the project to establish a European e-ID** interoperability platform that will allow citizens to establish new e-relations across borders, just by presenting their national DNles –one of the **platforms of the Digital Agenda for Europe**. In addition, a **cooperation agreement** was signed **with Portugal** for the interoperability of national DNles. These developments give Spanish companies a competitive advantage in international markets, so that they can successfully enter international projects like the Certificate Authority of the European Commission.

### 3.2 Infrastructure, tools, and common services

The accomplishment of such ambitious goals (compliance with the law by adapting all AGE procedures) on a limited budget has been possible thanks to the development and intensive use of common services and infrastructure, which the General Public Administration has made available to all government agencies for free. Some of the infrastructures were chosen by the European Union ([www.eupractice.eu](http://www.eupractice.eu)) as examples of best practices to be shared by other public administrations. They include the following:

- A highly secure high-speed **administrative communication** network (SARA) connecting all AGE ministries and bodies, the regional governments, the university network IRIS, the EU network s-TESTA, and about 3,000 local governments (around 80% total population).
- An **e-certificate and e-signature validation** system (@firma) integrating the e-certificates issued by all certificate authorities and thus simplifying the process for the rest of the government agencies. More than 800 are integrated into this system, which has resulted in a three times higher number of validations.
- An **e-data exchange** system **between government agencies** to make procedures shorter, avoid making mistakes, and prevent citizens from submitting documents that are already in possession of the public administration. Communication procedures between government agencies are now available to exchange more than 60 different types of administrative certificates for identity,

registration, land registry, social security, tax agency, university degrees, and others. More than 16 million exchanges took place in 2010.

- A **payment gateway** to pay for AGE fees.
- A **common e-register** (REC) where citizens can submit documents to AGE agencies in a centralised way. Under an agreement to be developed, the register can be extended to new government agencies.
- A **change of address e-communication system** whereby systems can inform of their new address to the main AGE agencies with a single, centralised procedure.

### 3.3 E-notifications

A system of e-notifications was created through the development of the **Authorised E-Mail Address (DEH)** under the Ministry of Territorial Policy and Public Administration, managed by Correos under a pay-per-use system.

The General Treasury of the Social Security agency, the State Tax Agency, and the General Traffic Directorate, which are major issuers of notifications, were the first AGE agencies to implement this system as **mandatory** for some groups through DEH, notifications to appear at their virtual offices, or edict e-boards.

This means a quantitative and qualitative leap in the development of e-government, bringing us a step closer to the paperless administration. Moreover, **economic and environmental savings** are significant (estimated at **€100 million per year**), and companies are encouraged to use ICTs to improve and increase productivity and competitiveness.

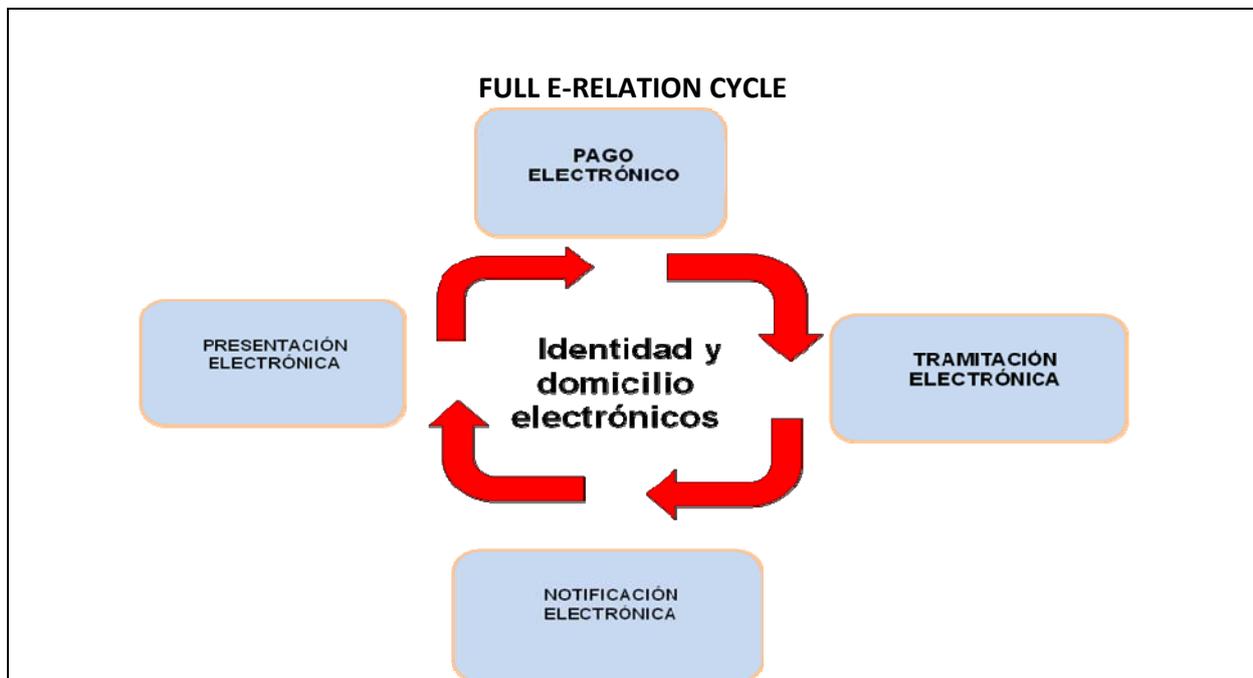




Chart 4. Full e-relation cycle.

### 3.4 Single windows

The **integrated citizen service network 060** is now consolidated and keeps evolving. There are 1,882 traditional offices for registration and administrative procedures, the 060 line receives over 2 million calls a year, and the website [www.060.es](http://www.060.es) is the gateway to thousands of e-services from all government agencies.

The **Services Directive Single Window (VUDS)**, which can be accessed at [www.eugo.es](http://www.eugo.es), is in full operation, in compliance with Directive 2006/123/CE of the European Parliament and Law 17/2009, of November 23. Integrating all Spanish ministries, regional governments, and major local governments, it facilitates the establishment and exercise of service activities through electronic media. VUDS integrates the various traditional and electronic aid initiatives for business set-up, including the Single Business Window, CIRCE, or the Points of Advice and Initiation of Procedures (PAIT) of the Ministry of Industry, Tourism and Trade.

## 4. USE AND TRANSFORMATION OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

In 2010, **cooperation agreements** were signed for all regional governments to access common services and infrastructure. This process must be strengthened by supporting local governments so that they can effectively use the infrastructures at their disposal.

The use of these services and infrastructures facilitated and sped up adaptation to Law 11/2007 and, more importantly, it has resulted in **significant economic savings**. For instance, **citizen and company e-government savings** from reduction of the administrative burden in only the most widely used 20 AGE services with the strongest impact amounted to **over €3,100 million**.

Certainly, the use of e-government in the General Public Administration has increased significantly over the past few years from a global perspective, both direct use by citizens and companies, and indirect use by intermediaries (administrative agents, tax consultants, social workers, etc.). In 2011, 49.7% income tax returns (**9.5 million**) were processed using digital media (phone, mobile phone, or the Internet), which means a **15% growth over the previous year**.

The increase in availability has been so fast and furious that **the offer of e-services is now higher than their demand**. Therefore, the next challenge is the **intensive use of e-services by citizens and companies**. This requires advertising, information, and dissemination efforts.

The chart below shows **Eurostat data on direct use by citizens and companies and government agencies' data on completed procedures**, based on measurements of processed files. The difference has to do with the fact that many citizens and companies do not hold direct relations with government agencies; instead, they hire agents to complete their procedures.

As an example of the savings introduced by the use of e-media, we can mention that users have to pay a €80 fee for a traditional administrative procedure, whereas the same procedure has a €5 fee when managed electronically. Thus, each procedure means user savings for €75. Therefore, the use of e-service is a key factor in the reduction of administrative burdens.

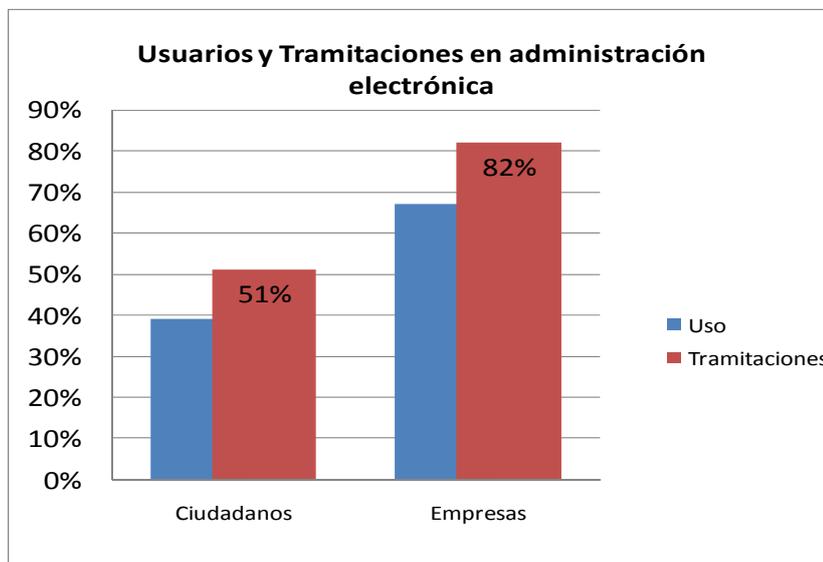


Chart 5. Percentage of e-procedures in the total number of procedures.

In addition, according to Centre of Sociological Research (CIS) surveys, the level of satisfaction among the citizens using the Internet as the channel for their relation with government agencies is higher than average, as shown by the chart below.

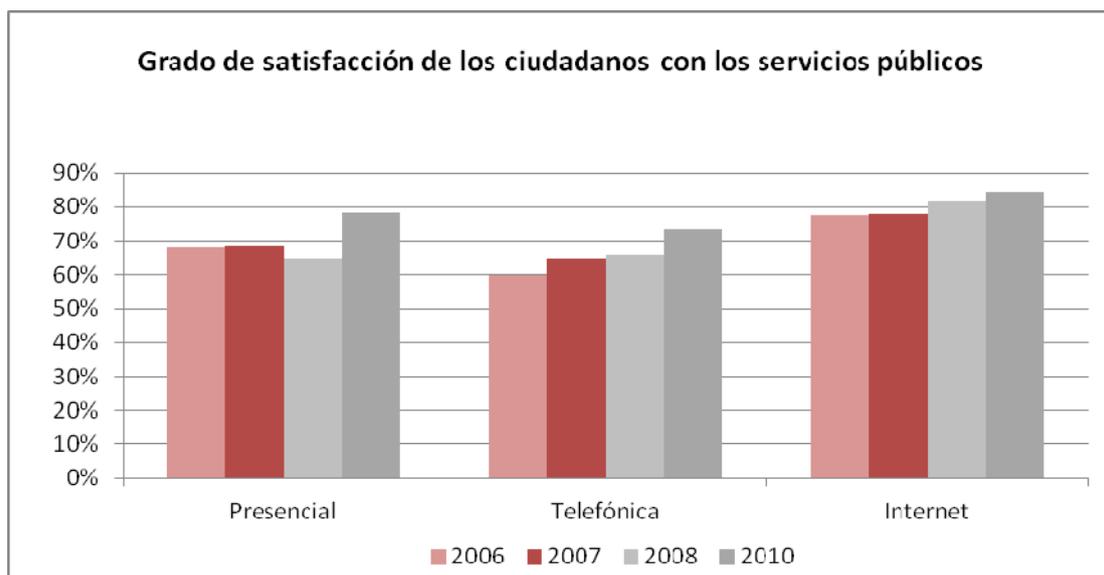


Chart 6. Quality perception of public services among citizens.

The latest CIS surveys show that the use of the Internet by citizens aged 18 and up in their relations with government agencies has grown considerably, from 23.6% in 2009 to 32.3% in 2010.

According to the latest Eurostat data, the Internet-based relation of Spanish citizens with the public administration has reached the average for Europe. Our country used to be below the average. Moreover, in the case of young citizens, Spain ranks above the European average, and this is bound to lead to a **considerable increase in the use** of e-public services in Spain.

In line with this, the **widespread implementation of the appointment system** online or by phone for traditional administrative procedures has proved to be a strategic factor in quality perception of public service, for citizens tend to appreciate the time dedicated to administrative procedures.

The use of e-signature, already in full swing in companies, is still a challenge with citizens. Although big and medium-sized companies already use e-channels, the use is not so widespread among SMEs and freelancers.

Therefore, additional promotional efforts must be made to give e-signature a boost for these two groups, so that the administrative burden can be reduced here too. **Alongside the simplification of e-services and procedures**, encouraging the use of DNIs and e-signature is considered to be essential for their use to become widespread. In any case, these challenges must not be faced by the Spanish Government only; OECD comparative surveys have identified them in various countries.

Training plans for civil servants have been designed bearing this in mind, and special selective information campaigns on e-services have been launched targeting citizens.

## 5. REGULATORY DEVELOPMENT

Legal certainty is crucial to the implementation of e-government. After **Royal Decree 1671/2009, on the partial enforcement of LAECSP**, Royal Decrees 3/2010 and 4/2010 were promulgated, on national security and interoperability programmes (**ENS and ENI**), describing the necessary principles and guidelines to guarantee the reliability of technology systems and cooperation between different government agencies.

In addition, in 2010, over 100 regulations establishing **e-offices and e-registers** were published, as well as ministerial decrees and agreements to develop e-notification through the **Authorised E-Mail Address (DEH)**. In 2011, the main **Interoperability Technical Regulations (NTI)** were released as the common language for all government agencies to share information.

E-offices and e-registers are now operative, and the growing use of **e-notifications** (which in many cases is now mandatory) will lead to considerable **savings** over traditional paper notifications with acknowledgement of receipt through the **gradual and full computerisation of administrative procedures**, thus coming full circle in the e-relation between the public administration and citizens or companies.

## 6. BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

All these developments were made **optimising the financial resources** fuelled by various ministries **into the public administration**. Law 11/2007 was promulgated in a moment of a booming economy, but then it had to be enforced with **more limited budgets**, as can be seen in the chart below.

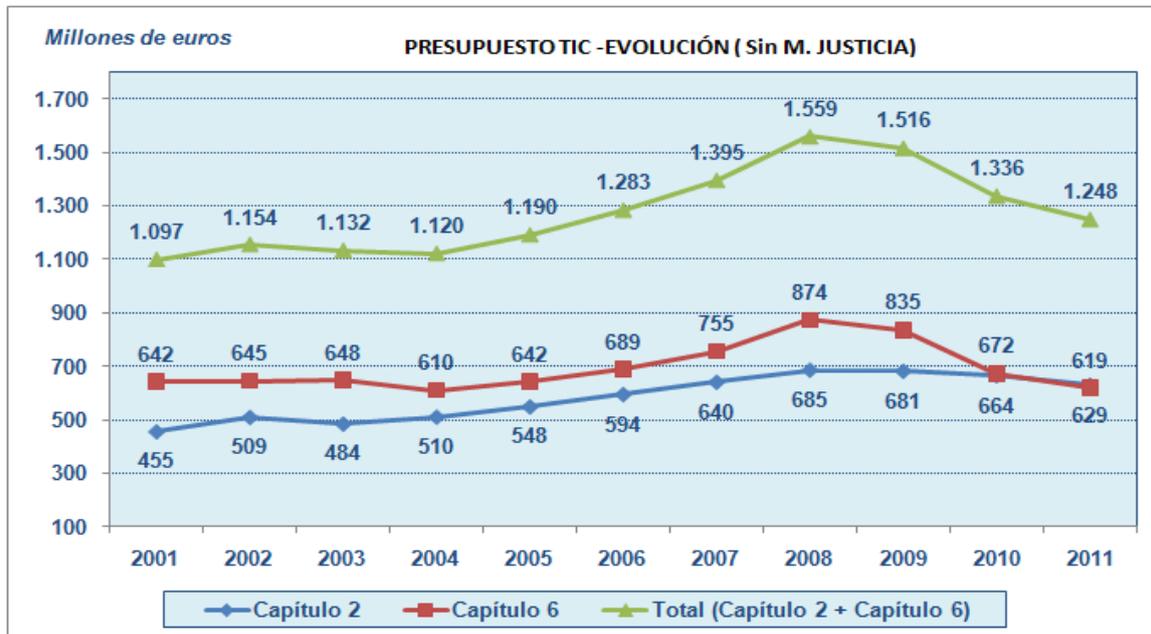


Chart 7. ICT budget evolution for AGE.

A wise use of investments and the development of already-created common infrastructure allowed us to **maintain service quality** (as reflected in citizens' perceptions). **At present, many more services are offered through a greater number of channels, at a higher quality and under stricter quality standards, and at a lower cost than in 2005.**

Moreover, Plan E aids boosted the development of e-government by local governments. Projects involving an investment of over €218 million introduced significant improvements in those governments facing the greatest challenges to fulfil the obligations under Law 11/2007.

## 7. EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT

The Digital Agenda for Europe is the first of the seven **flagship initiatives of the Europe 2020 Strategy**. It is aimed at boosting the potential of ICTs, the Internet in particular, as a fundamental medium of social and economic life.

**E-government plays a key role in the Digital Agenda for Europe**, seeking to fight digital exclusion in the next few years by reaching high levels of access to and use of the Internet and increasing communication ratios through e-channels between citizens or companies and the public administration.

**Inter-agency administrative cooperation** at all levels, even in Europe, is essential to provide citizen-oriented services, effectively developing e-ID and **basic pan-European**

**services** that will enable citizens to set up businesses, change address, or retire in any EU country. Implementing national security and interoperability platforms at a national level under the coordination of European initiatives will be a top priority in the near future.

The regulatory framework and common services developed so far place Spain in a good position to contribute knowledge for the development of pan-European services.

After the Digital Agenda for Europe and the Malmö Ministerial Declaration, in late 2010 the European Commission adopted the **E-Government Action Plan 2011-2015**. In 2011, the Action Plan is focusing on the definition of cross-border services, metrics, and other governance tools. Spain is to follow-up and extend the goals set in the Action Plan in the National Strategy 2015.

## **8. E-GOVERNMENT STRATEGY 2015**

Having achieved the goals in the Action Plan of LAECSP, we need a new strategy for the next few years. Being in the avant-garde as we are, we must reinforce the transformation to meet the goals in the Digital Agenda and face Europe's three main challenges in the short term: economic crisis, environmental degradation, and an ageing population.

A plan has been designed based on a three-goal strategy. The three goals interact: sustainable public administration, cohesive and productive society, and participatory and collaborative society.

### **8.1 Sustainable public administration**

We must maximise efficiency and effectiveness with fewer financial resources, optimising administrative management costs, integrating services, dramatically reducing the use of paper, and creating a sustainable public administration from the economic, social, and environmental perspectives, in the context of a close relation with citizens. The development of digital services, which makes the initiation and completion of administrative procedures independent processes, will make the use of all kinds of resources much more flexible, which will in turn result in more efficiency and higher service quality.

### **8.2 Cohesive and productive society**

Administrative costs for citizens and companies must be reduced as much as possible through simplification and use of technology. This initiative will lead to company modernisation, improving companies' productivity and competitiveness and favouring internationalisation. The design of integrated customised services for all groups (with an emphasis on the disabled and the needy) and through new mobile communication

channels will encourage the widespread use of e-government in a more cohesive society, making it easier to accomplish the common goals in the strategy.

### 8.3 Participatory and collaborative society

Strengthened cooperation between citizens or companies and the public administration, based on the use of the new communication channels made available by the social media and stimulating reuse and accessibility will lead to a participatory, collaborative society and a more open, transparent government.

## 9. CONCLUSIONS

Over the past few years, e-government has gone through significant development in Spain, placing the country in the leading positions of world rankings. This development was possible thanks to political efforts that culminated in Law 11/2007.

Since the Law did not force regional and local governments to adapt all their procedures by January 1, 2010, the process was important but not complete.

Moreover, **the ultimate goal goes beyond e-service availability to encompass effective use by citizens and companies.**

Now that the foundations of e-government have been laid, we must narrow the gap between availability and use. The widespread use of the services developed is an **opportunity for the transformation and modernisation of the public administration**. This will bring about (in fact, it is already doing so) **global economic savings, environmental improvements, reduction of administrative burdens**, and company modernisation, which is bound to have a positive effect on **competitiveness and productivity, thus contributing to internationalisation**. This is a fact acknowledged by all international studies on this subject. It is a golden opportunity that we cannot miss.

**The implementation of ICTs in the General Public Administration has allowed the provision of more efficient quality public services** over the last decade while keeping the **number of civil servants constant** after transferring the relevant competencies and staff. **Meanwhile, the number of citizens and companies requesting services increased considerably, the volume of administrative management grew, quality improved, and more channels became available.**

Citizens and companies perceive their relation with the public administration as a whole. **Therefore, regional and local governments need to bring adaptation processes to completion in order to comply with Law 11/2007.** A risk of **digital gap between citizens** exists depending on geographical location rather than communications infrastructure –a gap between those governments that have not focused on LAECSP enforcement and those that have (according to the law, the obligation to adapt services and procedures depended on budget in the case of regional and local governments).

Also, e-government will **help the public administration face the challenges of the next decade**, guaranteeing quality improvement in the public service given to citizens and companies in a time of economic restraint. Therefore, we need to keep considering the development of e-government as a strategic aspect and stick to ongoing improvement to meet the challenges we will have to face.

Our short-term **priority** will be the **development of a strategy for 2015**. Based on Spain's current situation, the main goal will be the full development of e-government in society and the fulfilment of the goals in the EU E-Government Action Plan 2011-2015.