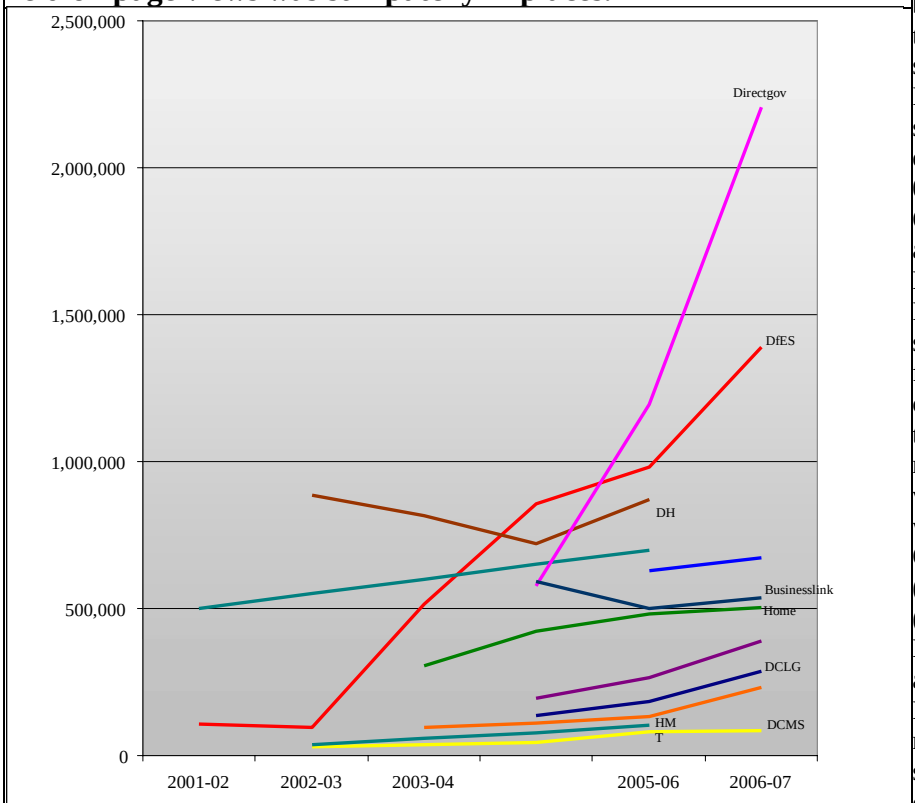
Section A: Supplementary Information from Main Report

PART 1: THE QUALITY OF ONLINE PROVISION

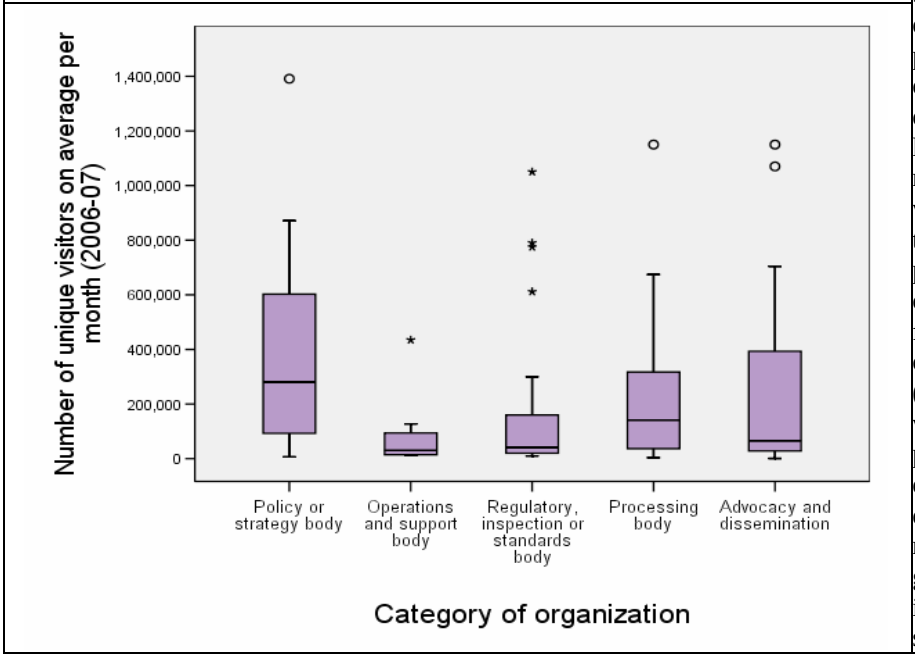
Starting with data from our survey of government departments and agencies:

Figure 1: The rates of growth in average number of page views per month on major departmental websites varied widely. Data held on page views was still patchy in places.



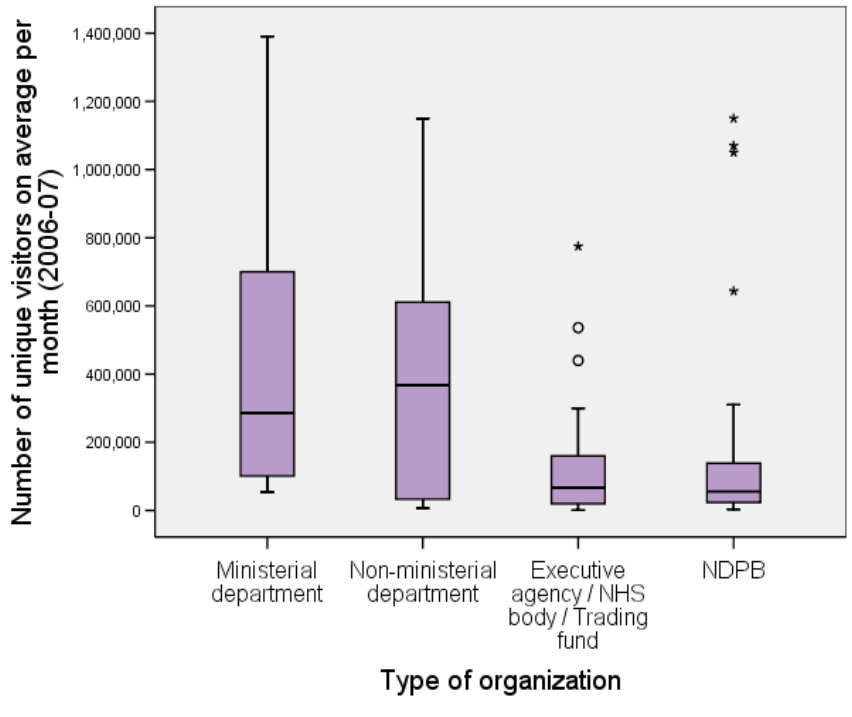
Data for 2000-01 is taken from the *Government on the Web II* study carried out by this research team on behalf of the NAO. Data for 2001-02 to 2006-07 is taken from the 2006 survey of government organisations. In cases where departments could not supply a full 6 years of page view data, we have used data from 2001-02 collected in the 2002 survey. Organisations marked with an asterisk in the graph above (Defra, DFES and HMRC - previously Inland Revenue and HM Customs) show where we have combined data from 2001 and 2006 to give as complete a picture as possible over time. In our survey, 9 organisations reported monthly averages of page views higher than 7 million. These were: Companies House (40m), Met Office (30m), National Archives (20m), Student Loans Company (23m), Ministry of Defence (17m), Legal Services Commission (14m), and the British Council (7.4m). Departments use a variety of tools to measure and report on website usage, so data shown here may not be comparable.

Figure 2: The average number of unique visitors per month to central government websites was around 242,000. Policy or strategy bodies (mainly major departments) had the highest median number of visitors.



This Figure is based on data from 90 organisations (out of 128) on the monthly average number of page views to their main website. The blocks contain the range of organisations from 25 per cent to 75 per cent (inter-quartile range containing 50 per cent of the organisations). The horizontal black line inside the box shows the median number of unique visitors. The vertical bars show the range from 0 to 25 per cent and 75 per cent to 100 per cent. Outliers are shown by circles and stars (see Note 1 below for a comprehensive list of our categorizations).
(One Executive Agency reported very high numbers of unique visitors per month (4.6 million) compared to other organisations in our survey. In order to illustrate more clearly the range of unique visitors to central government websites, we have not included this organisation in the scaling for this graph.)

Figure 3: On average 242,000 users visited central government websites per month. Non-ministerial departments had the highest median number of visitors.



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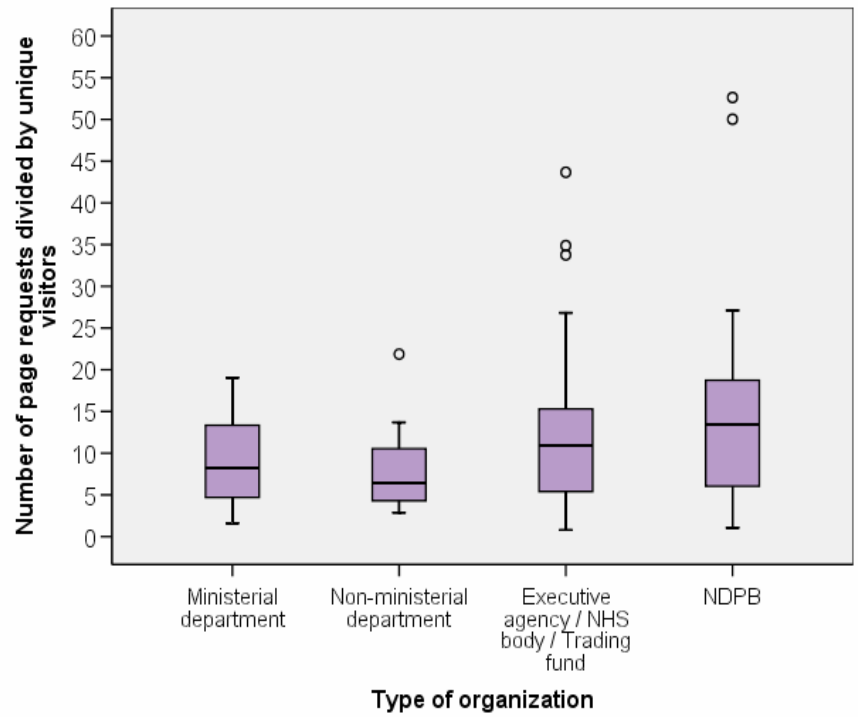
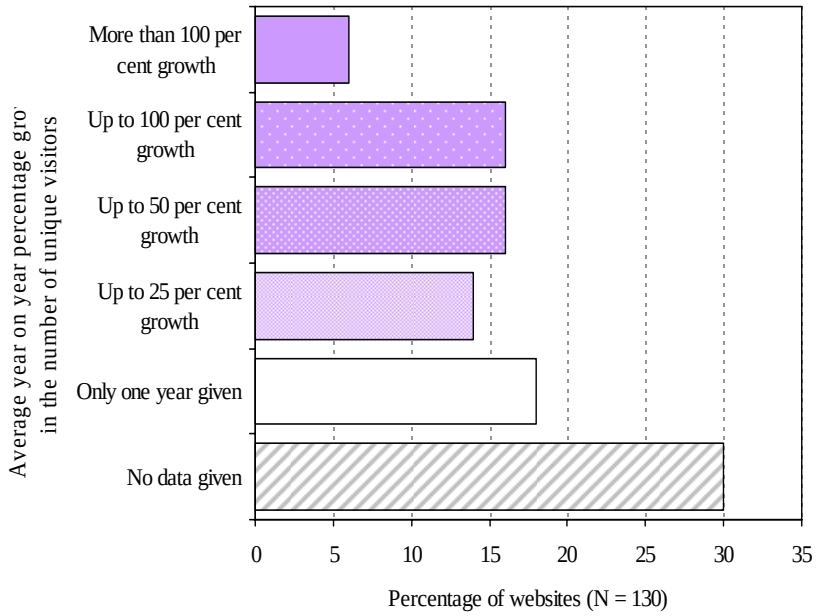
(One Executive Agency reported very high numbers of unique visitors per month compared to other organisations in our survey. In order to illustrate more clearly the range of unique visitors to central government websites, we have not included this organisation in the scaling for this Figure.)

Figure 4: On average visitors to central government websites clicked through 12 pages before leaving(*). NDPBs had the highest median number of page views per visitor – suggesting that people lingered longer on these websites.



(*)This number is only a rough guide to the number of pages viewed per visitor. It is common that page view data will count documents stored on individual pages, and so the average may well be lower than 12. In total, 77 out of 130 organisations provided data for average number of page views per month and average number of unique visitors per month. Average page views per unique user varied between 0.8 to 53. Twelve organisations returned an average above 21.

Figure 5: Central government organisations had shown varying degrees of growth in the number of people visiting their main website each month. Just over one fifth of websites were growing visitors by at least 50 per cent year on year.



All organisations providing data on average monthly unique visitors to their website have seen varying degrees of growth in the number of unique visitors year on year. Out of 130 organisations, just under one third did not provide data on unique visitors. A further one sixth of organisations could only provide data covering one year (taking into account new organisations which have been established in the last year). Organisations with average year on year percentage growth greater than 100 per cent included 1 large citizen-facing Ministerial department, 1 non-ministerial department, 1 Executive Agency, and 3 NDPBs.

Figure 6: A selection of well-visited websites showed the wide scope of e-government development in recent years.

Organisation	Number of unique visitors per month (000s)	Average cost of running the website per unique visitor (pence)
Companies House	4,600	0.25
Department for Education and Skills	1,390	*na*
National Saving & Investments	1,150	35
Visit Britain	1,150	17
British Council	1,070	15
Department of Health	871	*na*
Office for Standards in Education	790	5
National Statistics	705	*na*
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	700	*na*

Companies House receives an impressive 4.6 million visitors on average per month at a cost to the organisation of 0.25 pence each (see also Case Example 2 in the Main Report).

This Figure only shows data from organisations responding to our survey. We have not reported visit rates for organisations not responding to the survey or not responding to this particular question in the survey.
Note: Data shown for National Statistics includes the complete suite of ONS sites: NS Online, GRO, About, EU Stats, Stats4schools and NeSS.

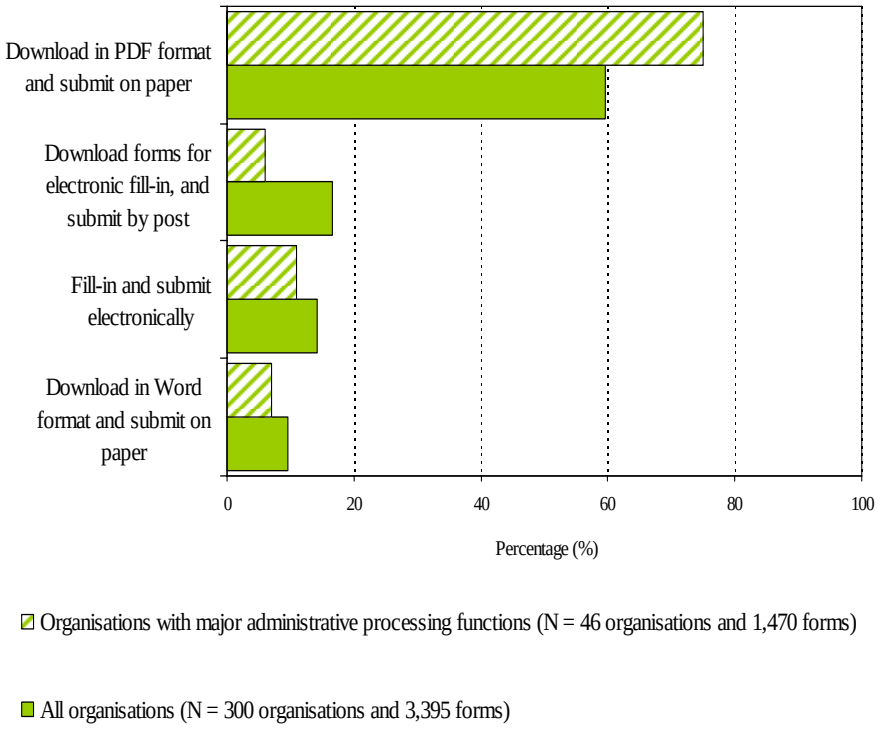
Moving on to data from our census of 300 government department and agency websites:

Figure 7: Central government websites had made significant improvement since 2001 on making available access aids, online complaints forms, and search engines on their websites. It was harder however to find email contact details for senior officials in the organisation.

Website feature	Percentage change 2001 to 2006
Tools or technology for users with special needs	+38
Online facility for making a complaint to the organisation	+37
Site map on or near the homepage	+35
Information for assessing the organisation's performance	+32
Free email news service that you can register for	+30
Search engine	+26
Link to UK Online / Directgov website	-7
Telephone numbers listed for senior management officials	-8
Details for contacting the website team	-13
Clickable emails for senior management officials	-16
Email or online facility for ordering publications	-27
Information about when the website was last updated	-50

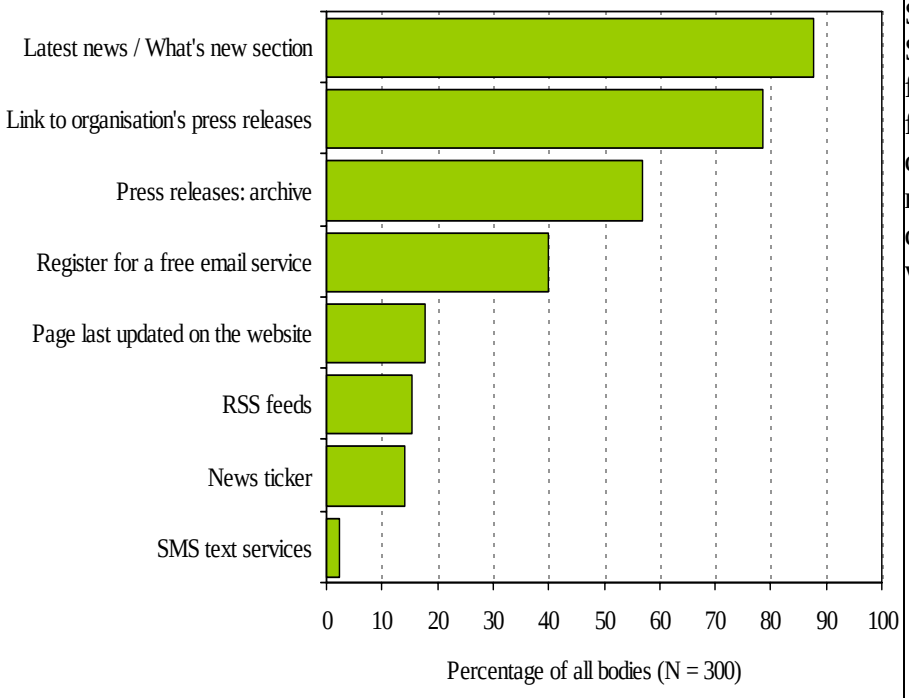
We list here six features which have increased and six features which have decreased most obviously since our 2001 census. The percentage figures show the difference between the percentage of websites with the coded feature in 2006 minus the percentage of websites with the equivalent coded feature in 2001. Positive scores denote increase and negative scores denote decrease since 2001. For example, the proportion of websites with a search engine in 2001 had increased by 26 per cent in 2006. We have not shown all 60 features in this Figure for reasons of limited space. See Figure 6 in the Main Report for the overall picture of progress on available website features since 2002.

Figure 8: We estimate that just under two thirds of administrative forms in government were only available as PDF downloadable documents. Around 15 per cent of forms could be completed and submitted fully online.



We asked our coders to provide an estimated count of the number of administrative forms available on websites, and record the way in which forms could be accessed, filled in and submitted. In total we found around 3,395 forms, including major application and registration forms, feedback forms, and other types such change of address forms. This graphs shows the proportion of total forms in each category. The cross-hatched bars show the distribution of forms for organisations which have specific and major administrative processing functions.

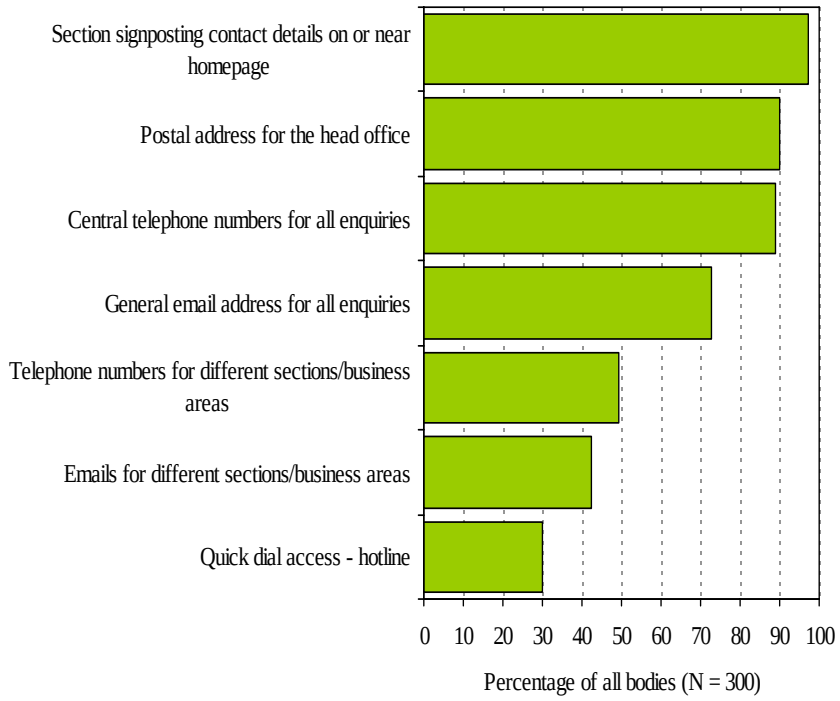
Figure 9: Over four fifths of websites had sections such as 'What's New' or 'Latest News'. Less than one fifth were using RSS feeds or SMS messaging services.



RSS (Really Simple Syndication or Rich Site Summary) is a family of web feed formats used to publish frequently updated digital content such as blogs, newsfeeds or podcasts. Users can have updated content from websites delivered to them.

Figure 10: A high proportion of government organisations used their websites to provide basic information about their functions and responsibilities.

Figure 11: Websites serve as important sources of information about how to contact the organisation. It was still comparatively hard to find information about how to contact directly specific parts of the organisations by email or telephone.



We asked our coders to find any features on the website which provided a hotline telephone number for any enquiries about the organisation's work or services. This covered any telephone services which were explicitly designed for quick access to information and were advertised in such a way. A basic listed number for the organisation in the Contact Details section would not count in this case.

Figure 12: Websites serve as important sources of information about employment and jobs at the organisation. Just under four fifths of websites had information about current employment opportunities. Two fifths of websites allowed applicants to download job application or personnel forms.

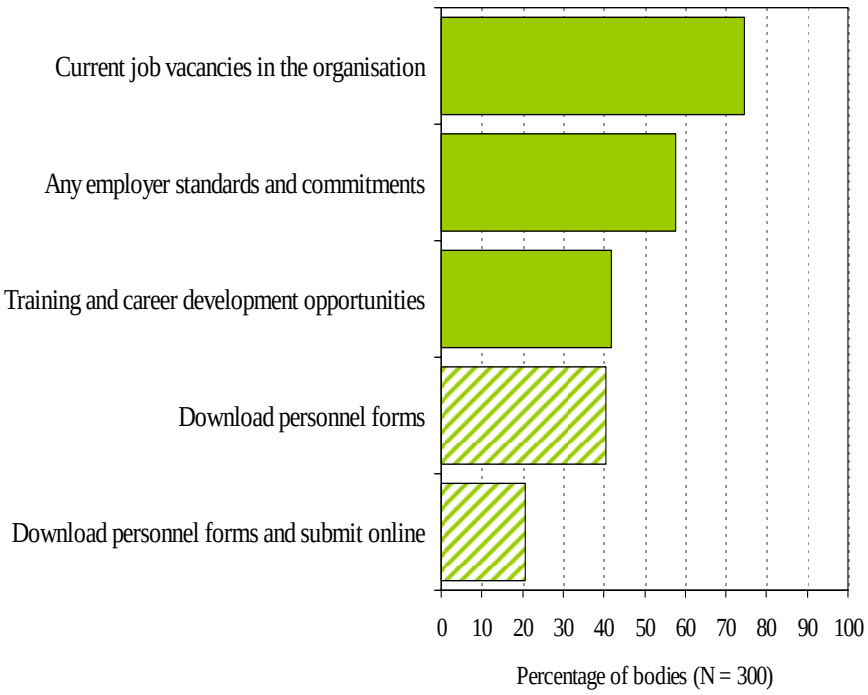


Figure 13: Websites are important sources of information about how to access information under Freedom of Information (FOI) legislation. Over four fifths of government websites in our census contained information about FOI provisions, and just under two thirds had a specific email address for people to register FOI requests.

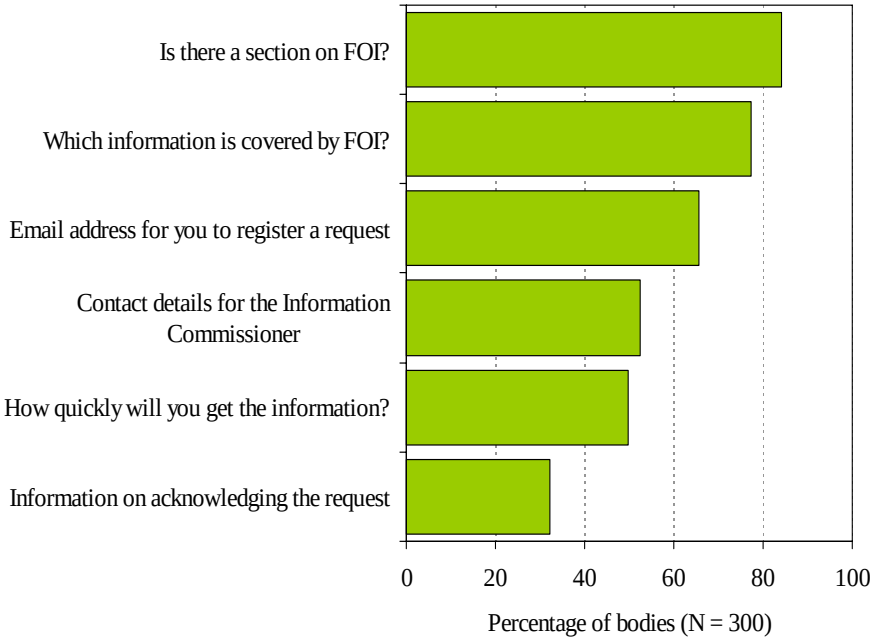
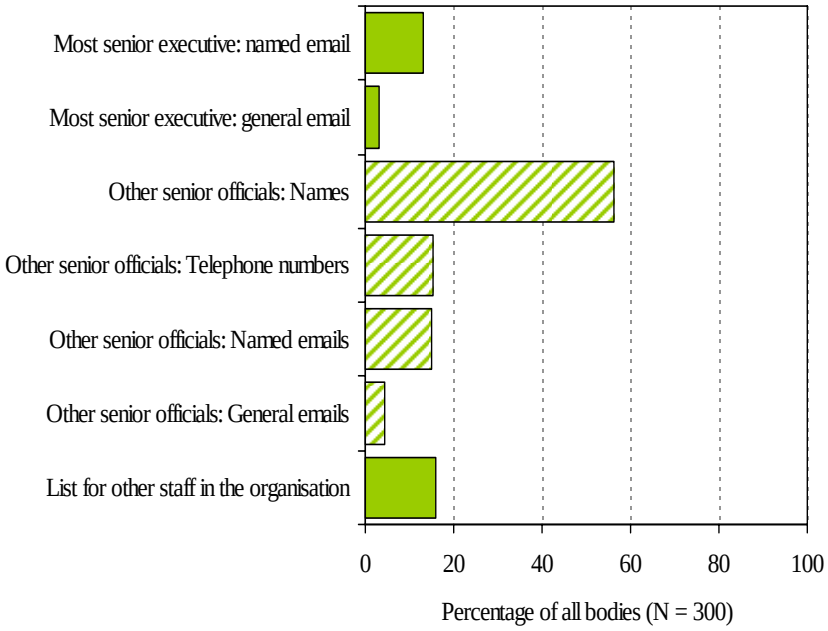


Figure 14: It is still relatively difficult to find information on government websites about how to contact directly senior officials at the organisation, either by telephone or email. Just over half of the websites covered provided names of senior officials. No more than 20 per cent of all organisations provided telephone numbers or email addresses for these officials. Features that are relatively common at local authority level such as 'Email the Chief Executive' were quite rare at central government level.



In two of our comparator countries, the USA and Canada, it was more usual for email addresses for relevant officials to be provided on federal government sites. In Sweden it is normal practice for all civil servants' emails to be provided and for officials to be extensively emailed.

Figure 15: Around half the websites in our census contained specific invitations to users to submit evaluative comments about the organisation through the website. Far fewer websites offered surveys or question and answer sessions with officials.

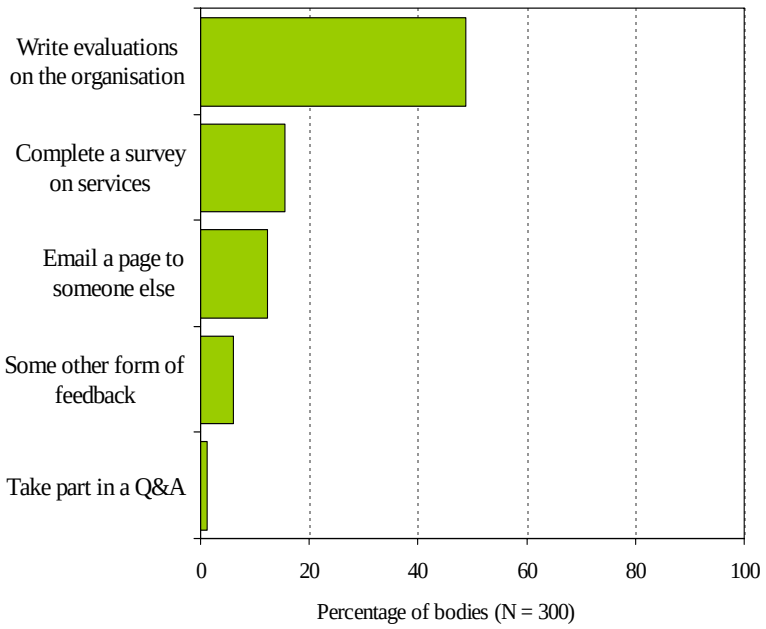


Figure 16: Multimedia features commonly associated with popular private sector websites were scarce on central government websites. Only 12 per cent of organisations offered any video files and 8 per cent offered audio files. Few had any more sophisticated multimedia such as podcasts or WIKI tools.

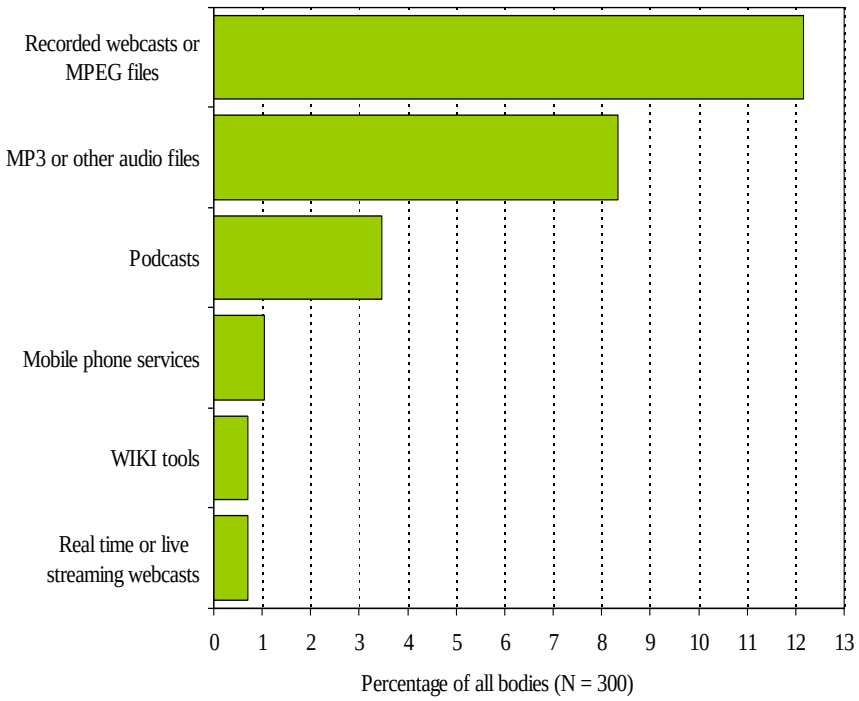


Figure 17: Very few government websites provided any information about the most popular aspects or sections on that website, or provided feedback to users about what other users were doing. Data provided in our survey of government organisations suggested that many organisations had information available which identified the most popular sections and downloaded documents, but this was not being communicated to users.

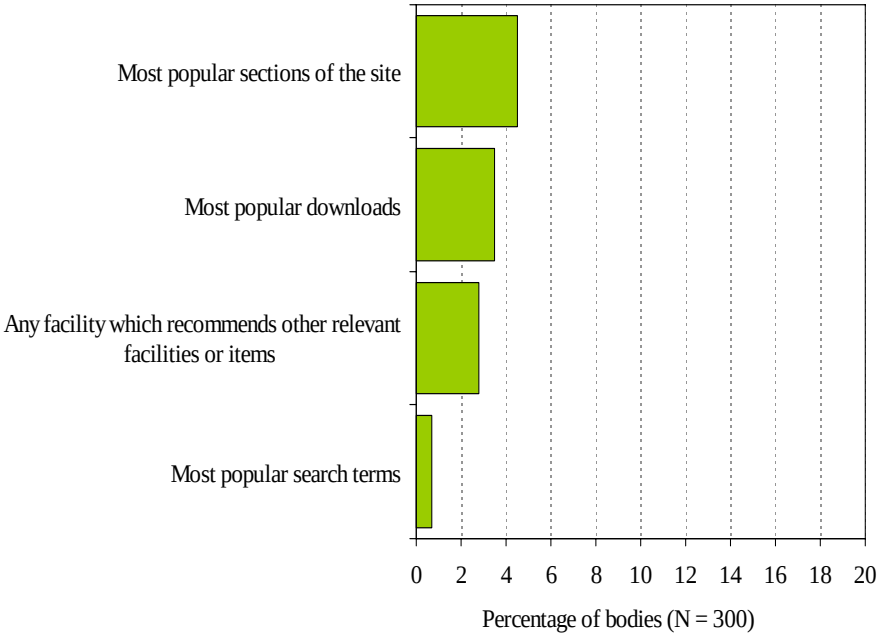
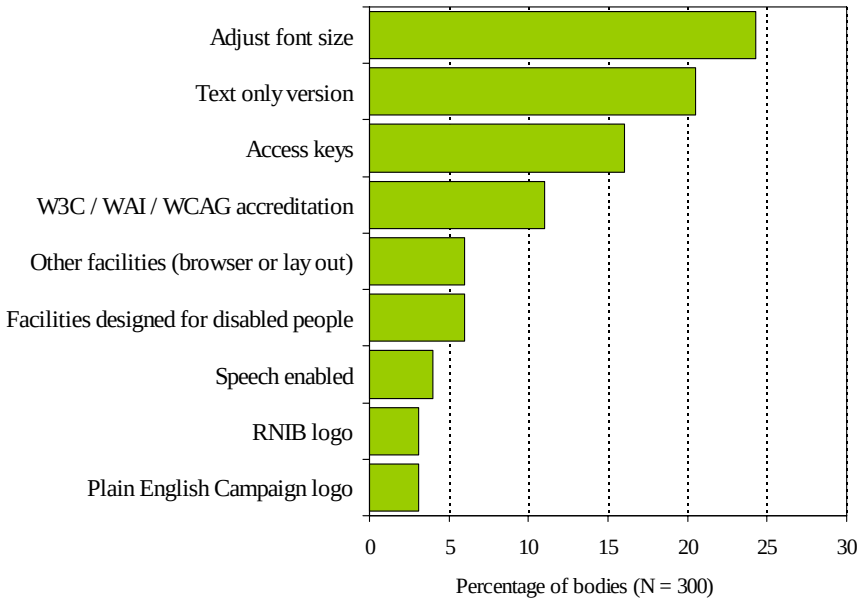
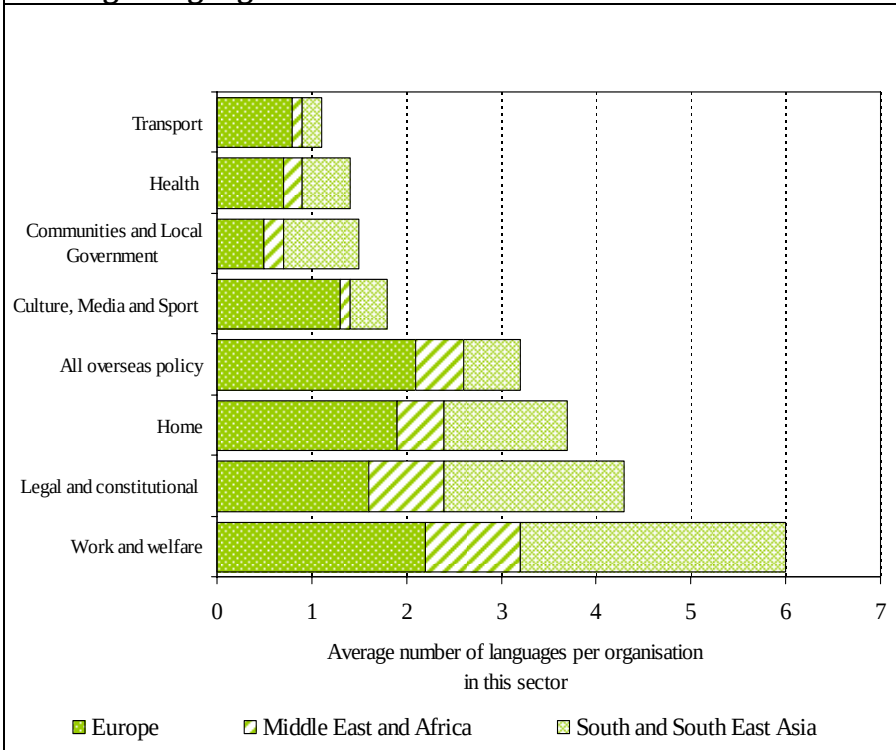


Figure 18: Major progress had been made since our 2001 survey to improve the availability of accessibility aids and standards marks on government websites. Around one fifth of websites were available in 'text only' format and one quarter allowed users to adjust font sizes. A smaller minority had speech enabled tools or 'browse aloud' adjustment features.



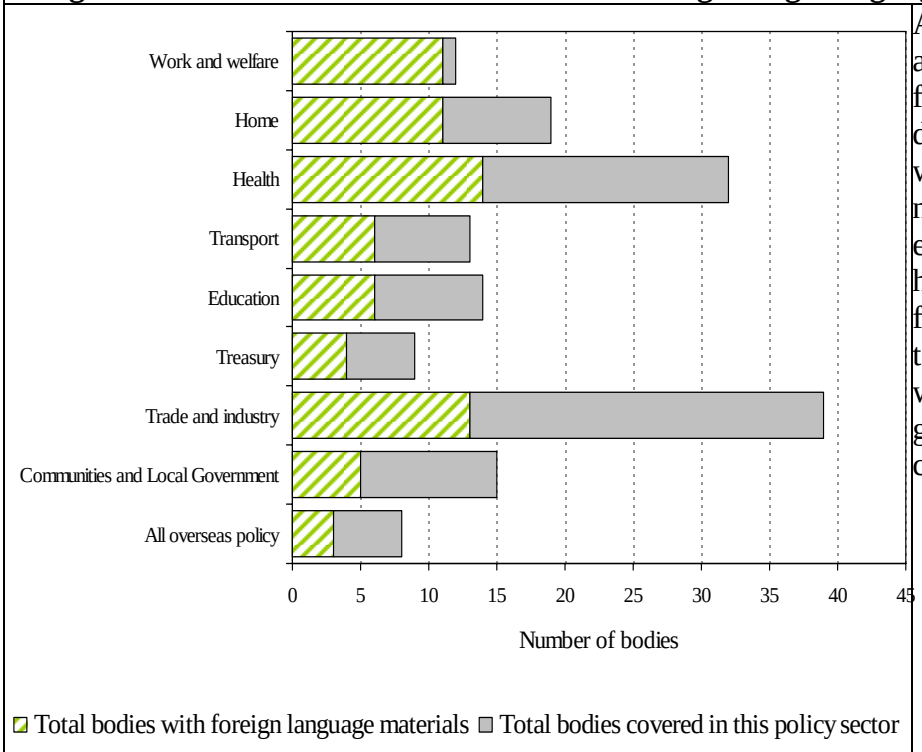
Note: W3C is the main standards organisation for the web. WAI stands for Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) organised by the W3C to improve the accessibility of the web particularly for people with physical disabilities. WCAG stands for Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, a set of guidelines developed since 1999 focusing on making the content of the web more accessible. Our census coders were asked to note down any reference to any of these three acronyms displayed on government websites. It may be the case that organisations are accredited through W3C but our coders were not able to find any information or logos verifying this.

Figure 19: We found 45 different foreign languages on central government websites. Work and welfare, legal and constitutional, and home affairs were the policy sectors with the largest number of foreign languages.



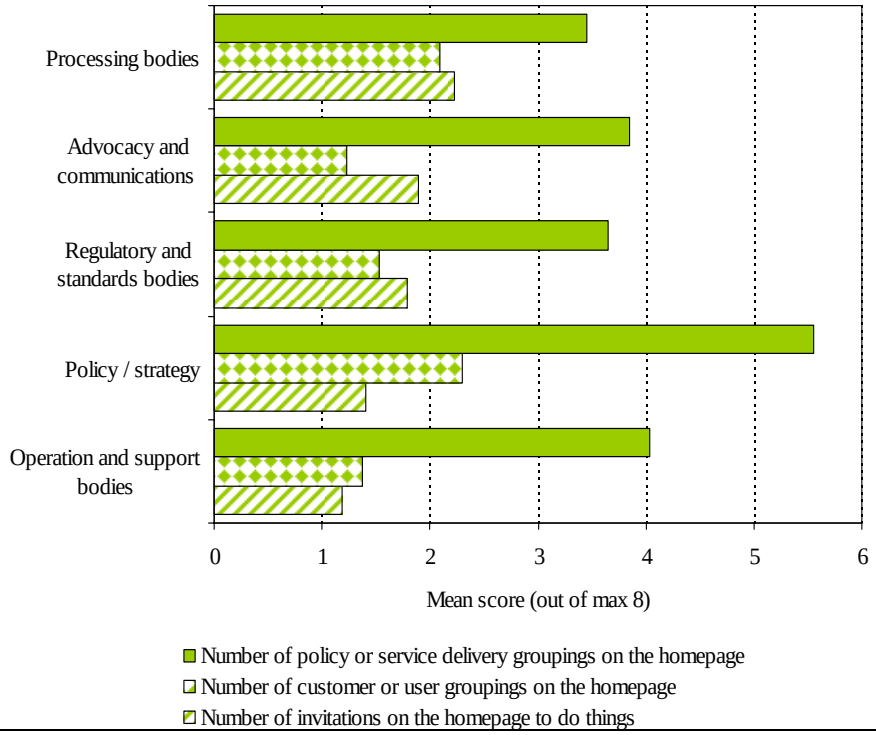
We asked our coders to record any foreign language material or documentation on government websites. This Figure divides total number of languages found for each policy sector by the number of organisations in the policy sector. This gives a proxy indication for the extent to which different policy sectors are providing information and material in foreign languages. Work and welfare organisations on average provided around 6 foreign languages, of which just under three are languages from South and South East Asia. Some government organisations produce content in a large number of languages, for example the Foreign and Commonwealth Office produce web content in 43 different languages The most commonly found languages were as follows: Welsh (34 per cent), French (10), Mandarin Chinese (9), Urdu (9), Arabic (9), Punjabi (8), Spanish (8), Bengali (7), Gujarati (6), German (6), Hindi (6), Somali (5), Turkish (4). Note: The 'All Overseas Policy' category (used here and in future Figures) covers departments and agencies relevant to this area (10 bodies in all), and includes the Department for International Development and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Figure 20: The work and welfare and the home affairs policy sectors had the highest proportion of organisations with at least one website containing foreign language material.



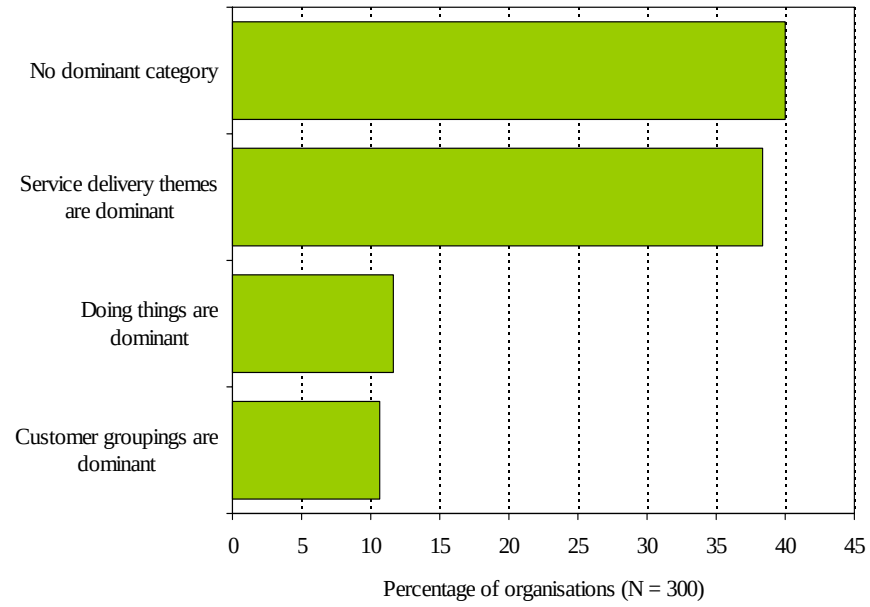
As shown in Figure 19, we asked our coders to record any foreign language material or documentation on government websites. This graph shows the number of organisations within each policy area grouping that had websites containing foreign language material. The total number of organisations within each policy area grouping is also shown for comparison.

Figure 21: Policy and strategy bodies tended to arrange information on their home pages around service delivery themes. Government bodies whose predominant functions are either administrative processing or advocacy and communications tended to have the highest proportion of home pages inviting users to do things on the website.



In our 2006 census we looked at how key information is organised on the homepage of central government websites. We counted the presence of three distinct types of label or signposted section: [1] information organised by service delivery themes (e.g. agriculture, benefits, navigation); [2] information organised by customer groups (e.g. claimants, mothers, lawyers); and [3] information organised by things that users can do on the website (e.g. check your account, make a claim, tell us what you think about us). We counted these items (up to 8 maximum) and then compared the balance. (See Note 1 below for a comprehensive list of our categorizations.)

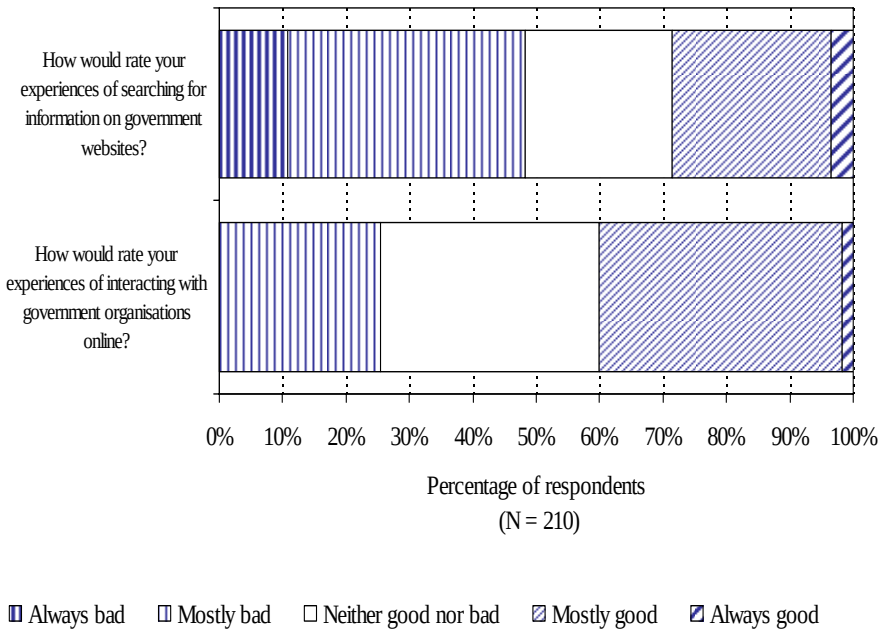
Figure 22: Around 40 per cent of websites organised the information on their home page predominantly around key service delivery areas or themes. One in 10 websites focused the home page more predominantly on things that users could actually do on the website. A further 1 in 10 websites segmented information on the home page predominantly around customer groups.



Following on from Figure 21, we counted the presence of 3 distinct types of label or signposted section: [1] information organised by service delivery themes (e.g. agriculture, benefits, navigation); [2] information organised by customer groups (e.g. claimants, mothers, lawyers); and [3] information organised by things that users can do on the website (e.g. check your account, make a claim, tell us what you think about us). For each website home page we looked at the prevalence of these three features and which of them were in dominant. No dominant category means that all three are low. For categories to be dominant, they must score 4 or above. In cases where more than one category is dominent, we coded them according to the following rules: If 'Doing Things' scores more than 4, we code as 'Doing things are dominant'. If Customers Groupings score more than 4, we code it is as 'Customer Groupings are dominant' providing 'Doing Things' is less than 4. If Service delivery themes score more than 4, we code as 'Service delivery themes are dominant' providing 'Doing Things' and 'Customer Groupings' are both less than 4.

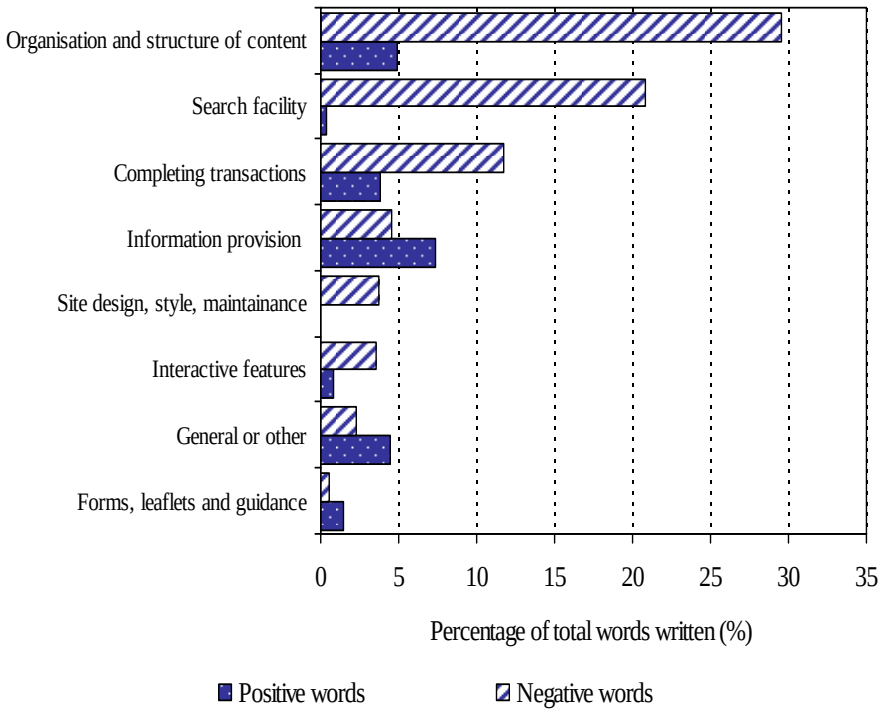
Turning to data from our public access website (where we asked people to comment about their experiences of using government sites):

Figure 23: Just under half of those people commenting and who had used government websites to find information would describe their experience as bad or very bad. People were more inclined to have better experiences with completing transactions with government online than searching for information.



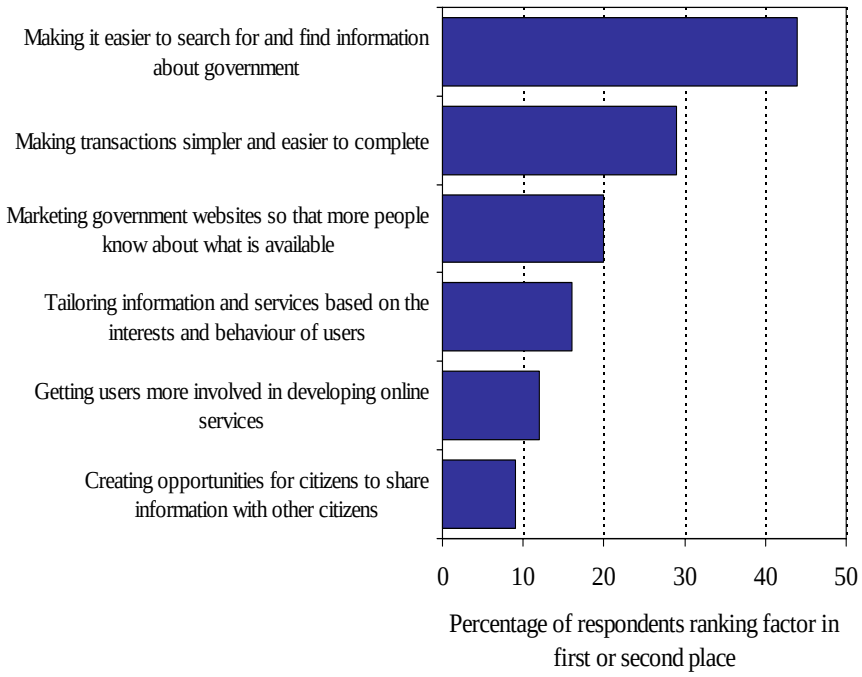
This data is from a short online survey for members of the public hosted on the NAO website. We advertised this survey widely across major organisations with an interest in the UK e-government community. This graph is based on the 210 responses received. We would point out that this data is in no way statistically significant, and should only be used as a guide to some views on government websites.

Figure 24: On average three in every four words submitted as comments to our public access comment site were part of critical points about government websites. The main points of concern for people were weak organisation and structuring of content on websites, and the quality of the search facility. People had positive comments about the degree of information provision.



In our public survey hosted on the NAO website, we asked respondents to answer a number of questions on their experience of using government websites. We asked respondents to write in free text boxes things they liked or disliked about government websites. Over 7,000 words were written by 147 individual respondents. This Figure separates positive and negative comments made, counts the number of words attributed to each, and displays some categories of comments as a percentage of total words written.

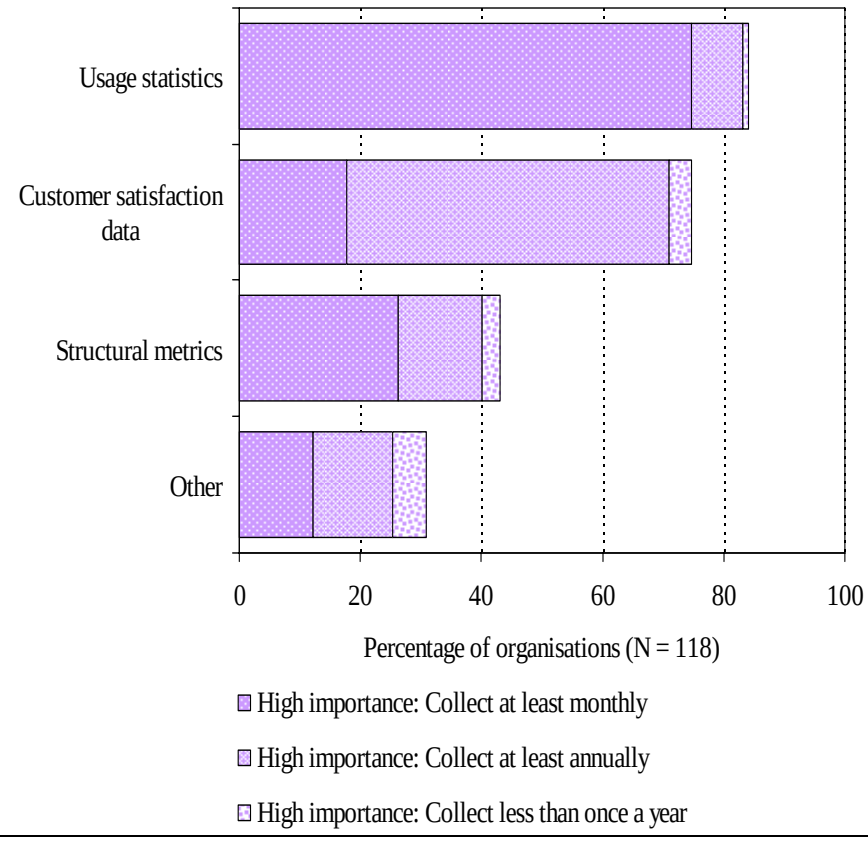
Figure 25: For people commenting, the most important priorities for government websites were to make it easier to search for and find information, and to make transactions simpler and easier to use.



We asked our public survey respondents to rank different priorities for government organisations focusing on how they could improve their websites. This graph shows the distribution of rankings for different priorities.

Returning to our survey data:

Figure 26: Government organisations placed high importance on collecting usage statistics and customer satisfaction data. Over three quarters of government organisations collected usage statistics at least every month. Customer satisfaction work was equally as important but was more likely to be carried out at least once a year.



We asked respondents to give a score for how important different kinds of website metrics are to their overall website strategy. The scale ran from 1 to 7, where 1 = Not at all important and 7 = Very important. We also asked organisations to estimate roughly how often they collect these different types of web metric data. This Figure shows organisations assigning a high importance (scoring either 5, 6, or 7) to certain types of metric and how often these organisations collect each type of data.

Figure 27: Keeping track of how people use government websites.

QUOTE BOX 1:
Keeping track of how people use government websites

We use deep interviewing of a cross-section of our target audience about their needs and views of the corporate website (Major citizen-facing Department)

Work coming into the content team is monitored and reported to Directors every 3 to 4 months. Our online reputation is monitored using Google and blog sites every month (Research council)

We recognise the importance of cross-linking between relevant content within the sites that we manage, and with external sites with related content (Major citizen-facing Department)

Another key metric is the website's technical performance, such as the amount of unscheduled downtime (NHS body)

The redesigned website has been trailed to customers at the regulator's stand at [policy area] *events to pick up on additional feedback on the redesign prior to going live (Regulatory NDPB)*

We do an annual impact survey that takes a sample of those that have used the website […] to measure the economic impact they attribute to it. This is balanced by a counter-factual look at those who have not used the site (Business NDPB)

Figure 28: Using metrics to inform changes to government websites.

QUOTE BOX 2:
Using metrics to inform changes to government websites

Our programme to make all our past reports back to 1950 available on the website was influenced by the popularity of the reports section of our site as shown in our user statistics and by requests by site users (Regulatory NDPB)

Peaks in visitor numbers (especially during emergencies) are used as an input to ensure our infrastructure can support potential future needs (Ministerial department)

We used responses to change the home page to reflect what customers wanted to do, for example downplaying the corporate About Us contact, […] introducing new topic-based summaries, and structured RSS fields (Citizen-facing Ministerial department)

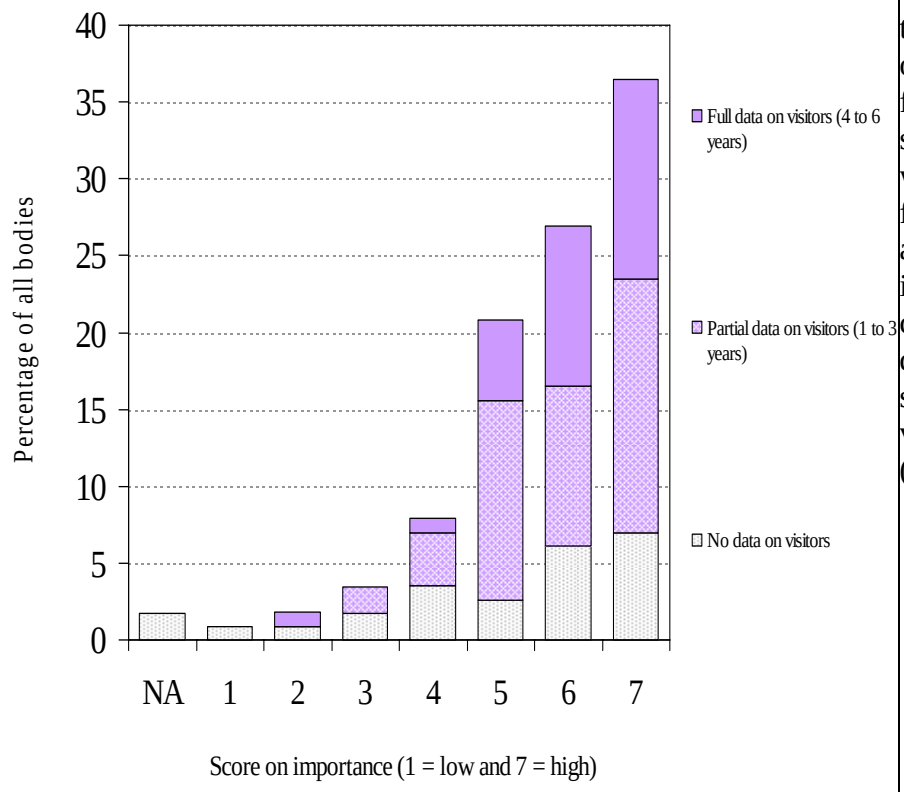
Customer research indicated that users would like an area where they could sign up for discounts and email alerts. This led to the development of a new area called My [name of organisation] (Executive Agency)

The website was restructured in 2005 based on the results of traffic and usage surveys. The home page was divided into three top-line sections to provide clear routes through the site based on user activity and traffic (Culture NDPB)

The homepage now displays prominent links to the most looked for and most downloaded PDF forms, leaflets and applications. These were placed on the home page after analysing website statistics (Executive Agency)

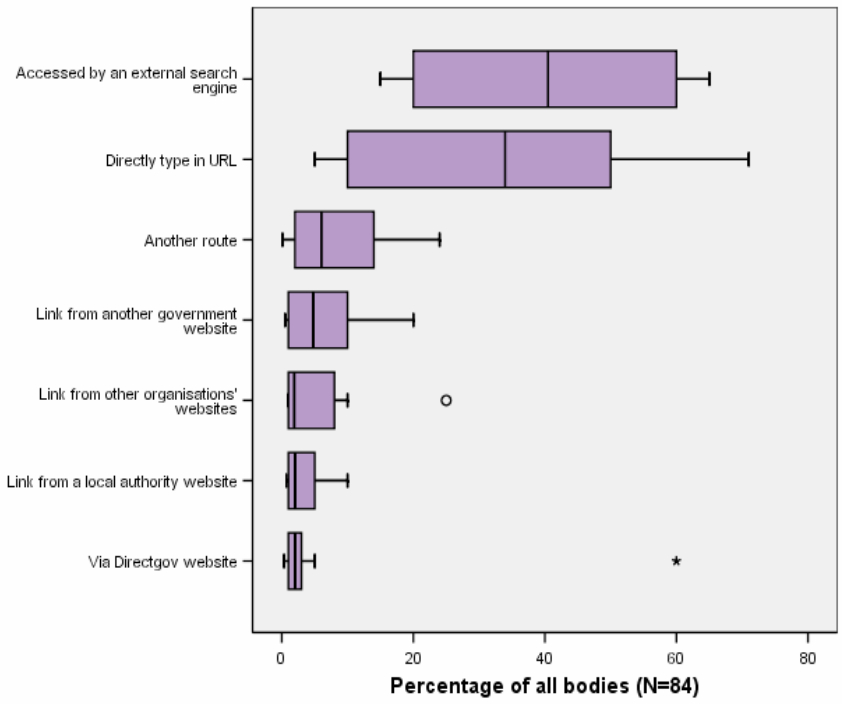
The popularity of a printer-friendly version of each key guide became the basis for building a more sophisticated facility that allows users to pick up items of content as they travel across the site, and have them bundled into a higher-quality PDF file, with cover page and table of contents (Business NDPB)

Figure 29: Around 15 per cent of organisations who said that usage statistics were important to them (i.e. giving a score of either 5, 6 or 7) were not able to provide us with usage statistics from the last five years.



This Figure follows on from the previous one. We asked organisations to give a score for how important usage statistics are to their overall website strategy. The scale ran from 1 to 7, where 1 = Not at all important and 7 = Very important. These data are cross-referenced here with the quality of data provided in the survey on usage (i.e. unique visitors or page views) (N=118).

Figure 30: Government organisations estimated that the most common routes for people coming to their websites were either from an external search engine (38 per cent) or by typing in the URL or using a bookmark (39 per cent). On average less than 2 per cent of people coming to government websites came via Directgov.



We asked organisations to estimate what proportion of total visitors to their website originated from different sources. Out of 130 organisations responding to the survey, 84 (65 per cent) provided estimates. These organisations account for approximately 95 per cent of total visitors recorded in our survey.

Figure 31: How people access government websites.

QUOTE BOX 3:
How people access government websites

From experience I would expect the majority of our traffic is split between typing in the URL directly and using specific terms in search engines (Large NDPB)

We have a core of regular users who would type in the URL or use a bookmark (Defence Executive Agency)

It is possible to get the exact data for this question but this would require analysis of a 700-row table. We have instead made estimates based on a sample of rows (Government Office)

We recognize that the most common way to navigate to our website is usually through Google (Transport Executive Agency)

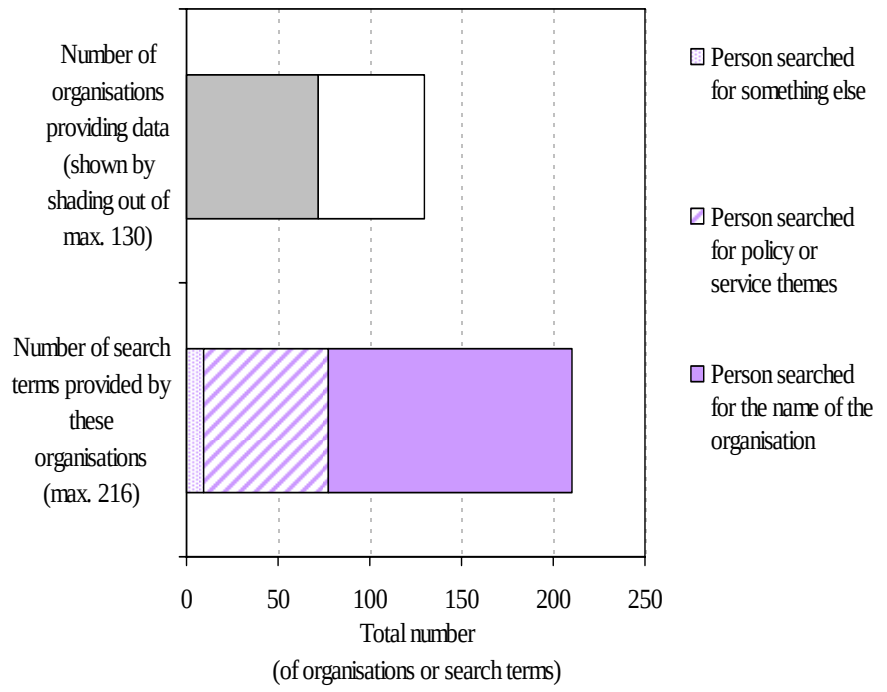
Our stats show 65 per cent as 'no referrer'. We assume these users typed in the URL or had it bookmarked (Regulatory NDPB)

The majority of our visitors come direct to our website using the address that we have provided to them through written communications or information leaflets (Large NDPB)

We collect information on top referrals – search engines are listed but government websites, local authority sites and other organisations are too few to show up […] Most referrals are from search engines (Culture NDPB)

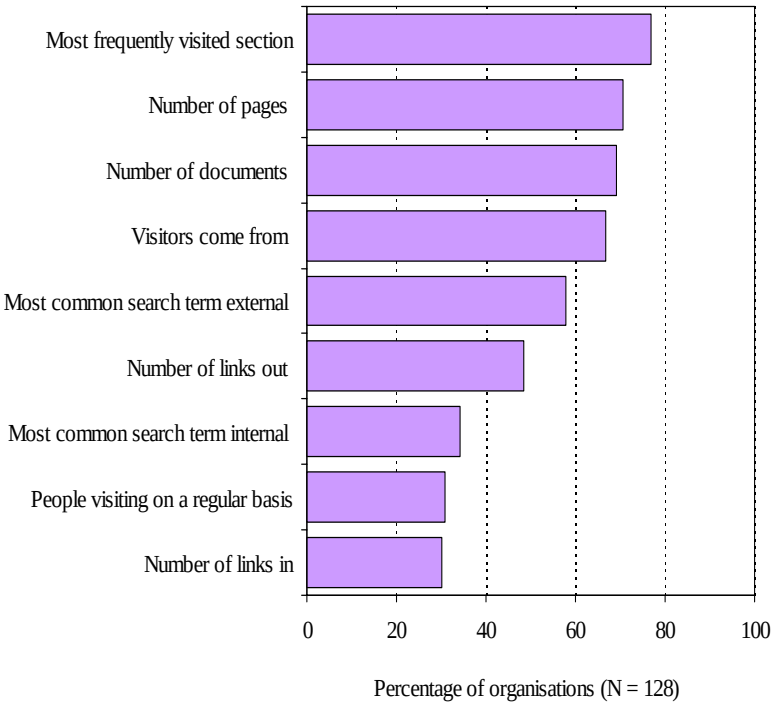
We are not listed on Directgov and therefore no traffic comes through this source (Large NDPB)

Figure 32: According to departments and agencies responding to our survey, a high proportion of people visiting government websites via external search engines used the name of the organisation (or a variant of it) as their primary search term. Out of 220 search terms provided by 72 organisations, 133 (60 per cent) were a variant of the name of the organisation.



In our survey of government organisations we asked for details on the top 3 most frequently used search terms by people visiting their website. Seventy-two organisations out of 130 provided this data.

Figure 33: Just under four fifths of organisations provided data on which sections of their website were most frequently visited. Far fewer reported which groups of users visited the website on a regular basis, or how many links pointed to their website from other websites.



We asked government organisations to provide estimated data on the size of their website, how people used their website, and how many links come into and out of their website. The Figure shows the percentage of all organisations which provided at least estimated figures.

Figure 34: Knowing who are the regular users of the website.

QUOTE BOX 4:
Knowing who are the regular users of the website

The friends and family of those currently working in the Antarctic visit our site on a regular basis to read the online diaries written from each research station and ship (NDPB)

Content is event specific… I doubt we have the concept of a regular user (Non-ministerial department)

It is very difficult to get reliable information from the stats about who visits our website. From anecdotal evidence and seeing where they go we can make assumptions (Large NDPB)

The repeat visitors figure was based on two weeks of traffic to [the website] using Google Analytics (Non-ministerial department)

Our stats show that 5,000+ people visit the site more than once in any one week, but we cannot estimate from this how many use the site on a regular basis (Regulatory NDPB)

We can only track repeat visitors which is not necessarily the same as regular visitors. We know from feedback that the application that allows the user to look up their business rates is consistently used by rating agents but how many we do not know (Executive Agency)

Repeat visitors is not a figure that can be relied upon. Multiple individuals from a single organisation may appear as one IP address and stats will therefore suggest repeat visitors (Education NDPB)

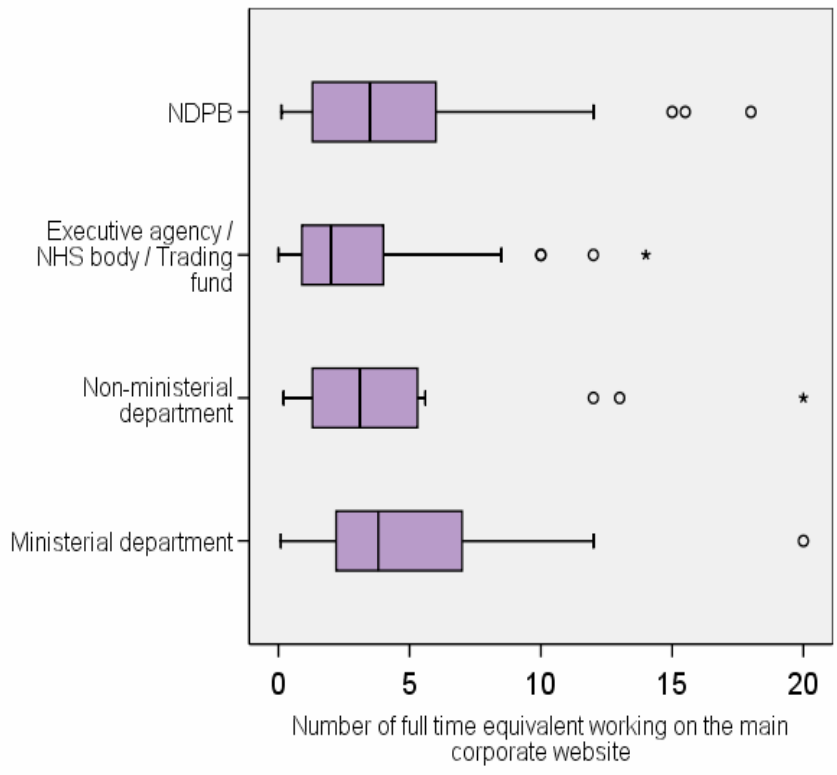
PART 2: HOW GOVERNMENT ONLINE PROVISION IS CURRENTLY ORGANISED AND WHAT IT COSTS

Figure 35: Nine in every ten organisations responding to our survey of departments and agencies had an in-house capacity to update content of their website. Just over two thirds of organisations had in-house capacity to modify the structure or main design of the website.

Percentage %	In-house	Private firms	Other
Looking after technical operations	59	55	16
Modifying structure or main design	69	41	18
Updating content	89	8	8

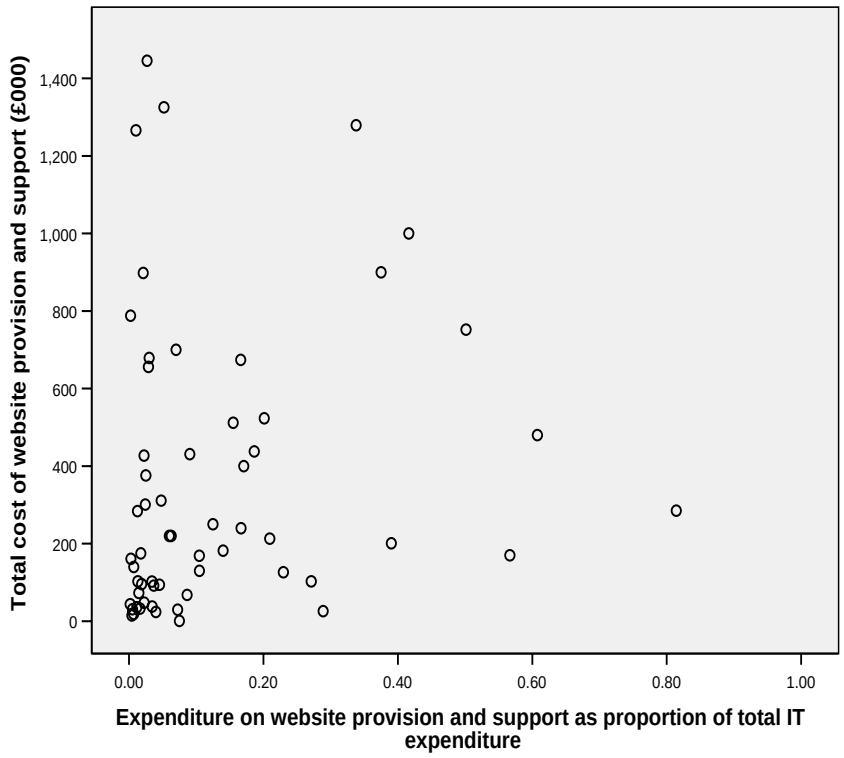
These figures are percentages of all organisations responding to our online survey. Columns and rows do not total to 100 as each field is a percentage of the total (N = 128).

Figure 36: On average central government organisations had 4 full time equivalent staff working specifically on their main websites. This figure varied significantly across different types of organisation. Ministerial departments and NDPBs tended to show the largest variation in numbers of website staff.



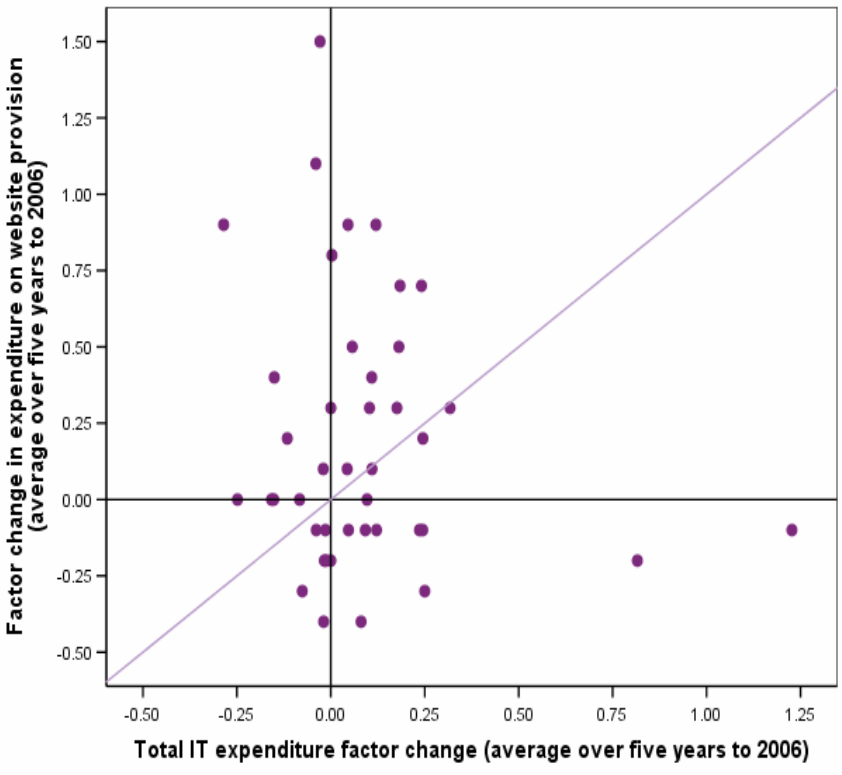
Nine organisations had high numbers of staff working specifically on the website. These included 1 large Ministerial department (30 staff), 1 large Executive Agency (30 staff), 2 non-ministerial departments (26 and 35 staff respectively) and 4 NDPBs (21, 23, 25, and 75 respectively). We have not included these organisations in the Figure.

Figure 37: On average, organisations said that they spent around 12 per cent of their total IT expenditure on website provision and support. This figure varied widely across different organisations. Of 67 organisations that provided sufficient data, 13 organisations spent more than 20 per cent of their IT expenditure on website provision and support.



Comparing total cost of website provision to total expenditure on IT gives a proxy for the level of importance of website services in relation to wider spending on information systems. There is no strong relation between these two variables.

Figure 38: There was no discernible direct positive correlation between the change in expenditure on websites and change in expenditure on IT. Most organisations which have increased expenditure in both areas had increased expenditure on website provision by relatively more than on IT as a whole.



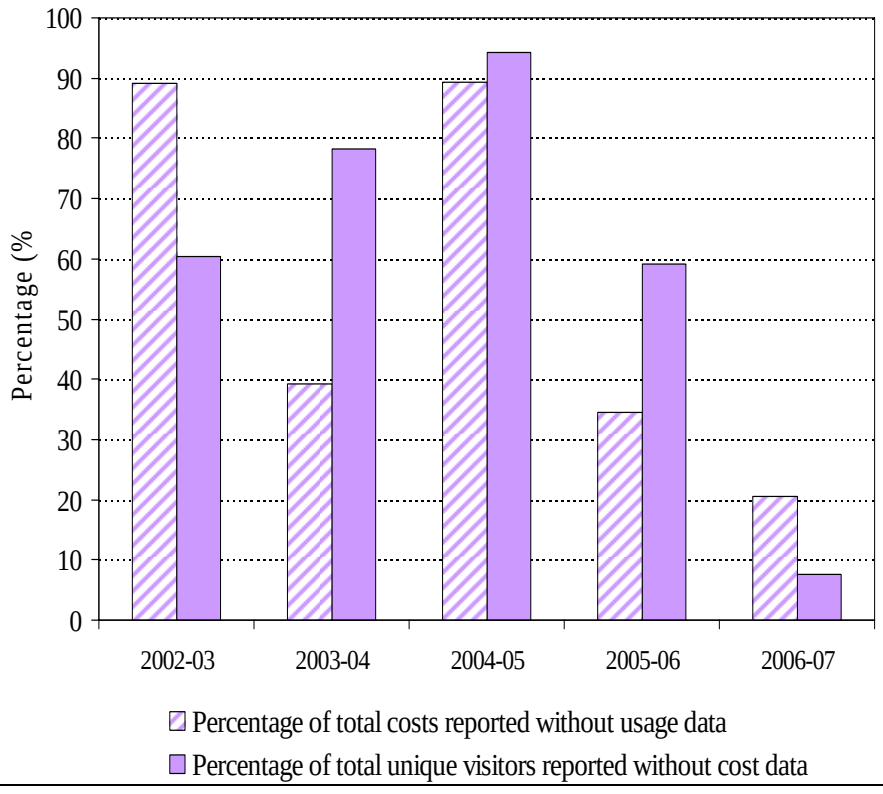
Only 42 out of 124 organisations supplied sufficient data for us to calculate change over time for expenditure on IT and expenditure on all website provision and support. The line is at 45 degrees as a guide. It is not a regression line and does not show correlation.

Figure 39: Forty-three percent of organisations provided full data over 4 or 5 years on expenditure on website provision and support across their organisation. Fifteen per cent of organisations could not or did not provide data on costs. Seven out of 15 ministerial departments responding to the survey could not provide costs of total website provision and support across the organisation.

	Data on costs of website provision			TOTAL
	None or negligible	Partial data *(1 to 3 years)*	Full data *(4 or 5 years)*	
Ministerial department	7	4	4	15
Non-ministerial department	3	12	7	22
Executive agency	2	13	19	34
NDPB	8	25	26	59
TOTAL (N)	**20**	**54**	**56**	**130**
TOTAL (%)	15	42	43	**100**

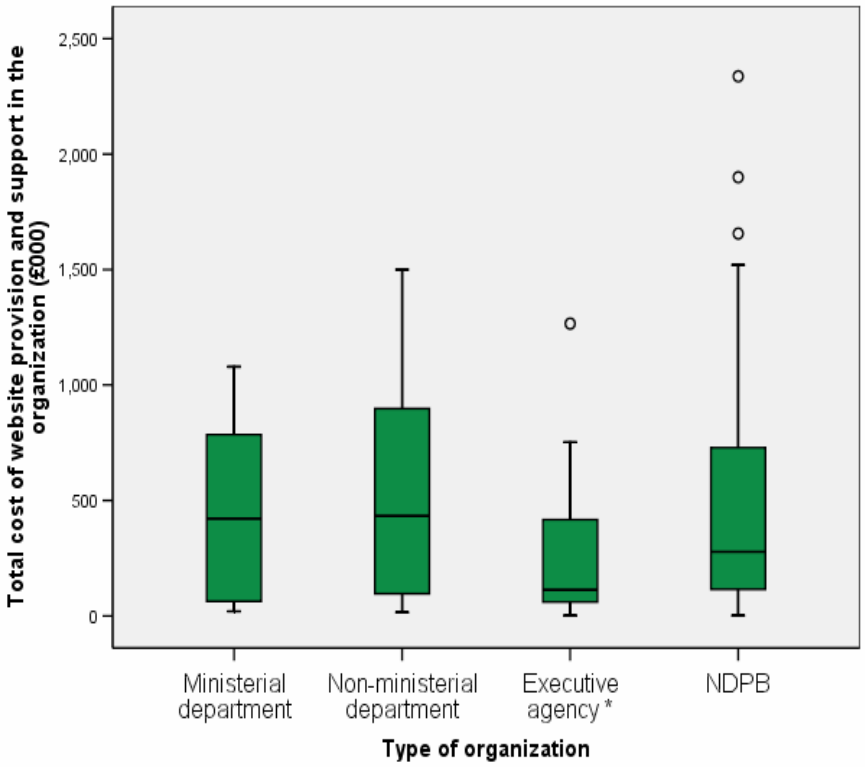
We asked organisations to provide annual cost figures for the most recent year and previous five years. We assessed each response using the following criteria. Full data – organisation could provide at least 4 out of 5 years including the most recent and could provide full data for the breakdown for the current year. Partial data – organisation could provide 1 to 3 years of data and a total for the current year. None or negligible – no data provided or figures that seemed grossly unrealistic. A judgement was made on borderline cases between Full and Partial in favour of Full (i.e. benefit of the doubt).

Figure 40: The extent to which organisations could provide annual figures on the costs and usage of their main website has improved over recent years. For 2006-07, 20 per cent of organisations' total reported costs of running websites did not have accompanying usage data. Around 8 per cent of total reported usage did not have accompanying cost data.



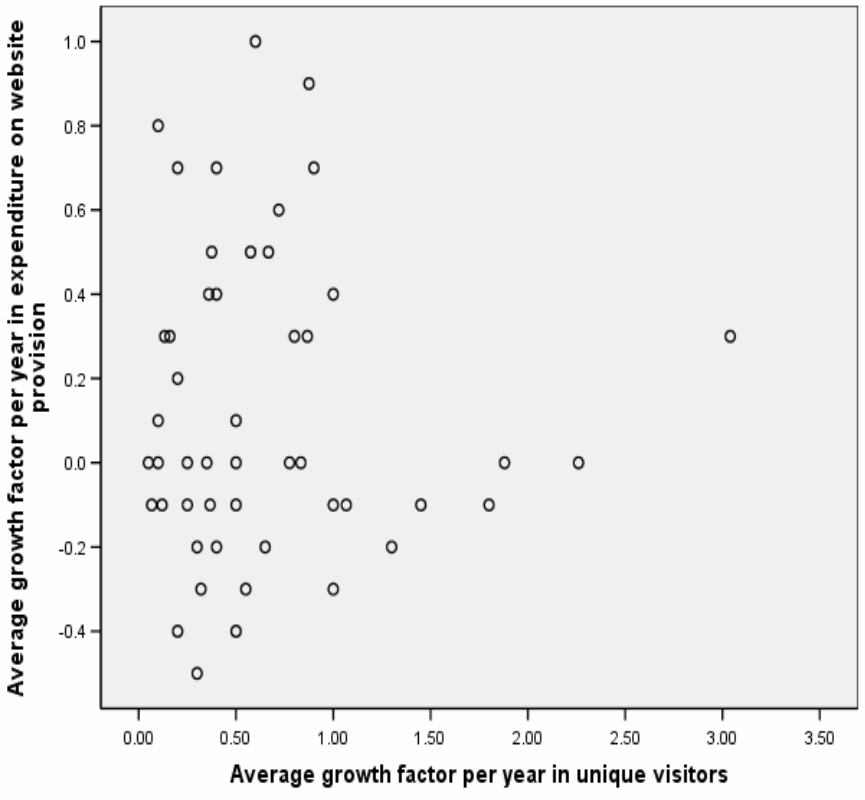
We asked organisations to report figures for: [1] the annual cost of running the main website; and [2] average number of unique visitors coming to the website per month. Figures were requested for the following years 2002-03, 2003-04, 2004-05, 2005-06, and 2006-07. For each year we calculated the proportion of total costs given where the equivalent usage figures were not given, and vice versa, the proportion of total visitors where the equivalent cost figures were not given.

Figure 41: Average expenditure per organisation on website provision and support reported in our survey responses was around £430,000 per year. This figure varies greatly across different types of organisation.



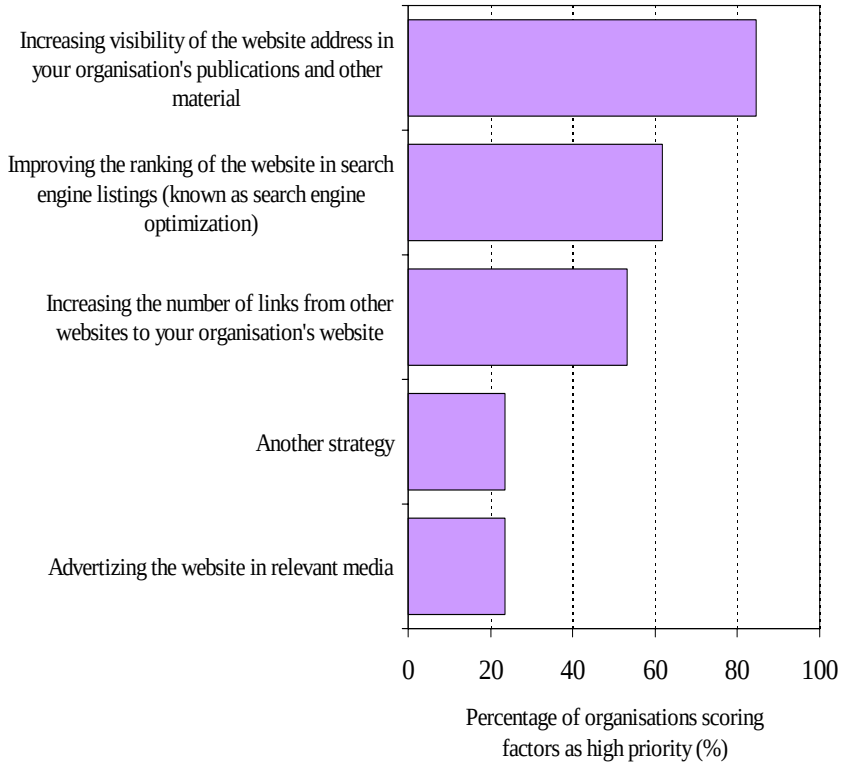
We have not included expenditure figures for seven organisations in this graph. These are as follows: Two large Ministerial departments (£28.5 million and £11.9 million respectively); 2 non-ministerial departments (£4.85 million and £3.58 million respectively); 2 NDPBs (£14.3 million and £4.05 million respectively); and 1 cross-government site (£18.62 million).

Figure 42: We could find no discernible direct relationship between growth in expenditure on the main website and growth in the number of unique visitors to the website, as reported in responses to our survey.



We calculated average growth factor for expenditure on the main website year on year. As in the previous Figure, expenditure on websites is rarely gradual or smooth over time. It tends to show lumpiness as some years incorporate development spending while others do not. For each organisation, we took the first figure as a baseline, took an average figure for all years, and then subtracted the baseline year figure from the total average figure. This gave an indication of whether total average spend had risen or fallen over the period. A growth factor of 0.2 for example means that expenditure has on average increased by 0.2 of the original baseline figure. We calculated a growth factor for visitors coming to the website. These figures tended to show gradual increase year on year. The average growth factor was calculated by subtracting the first figure given from the last figure, and dividing the result by the number of years for which data had been provided. A growth factor of 1.0 means that each year the number of unique visitors has doubled or increased on average by 100 per cent.

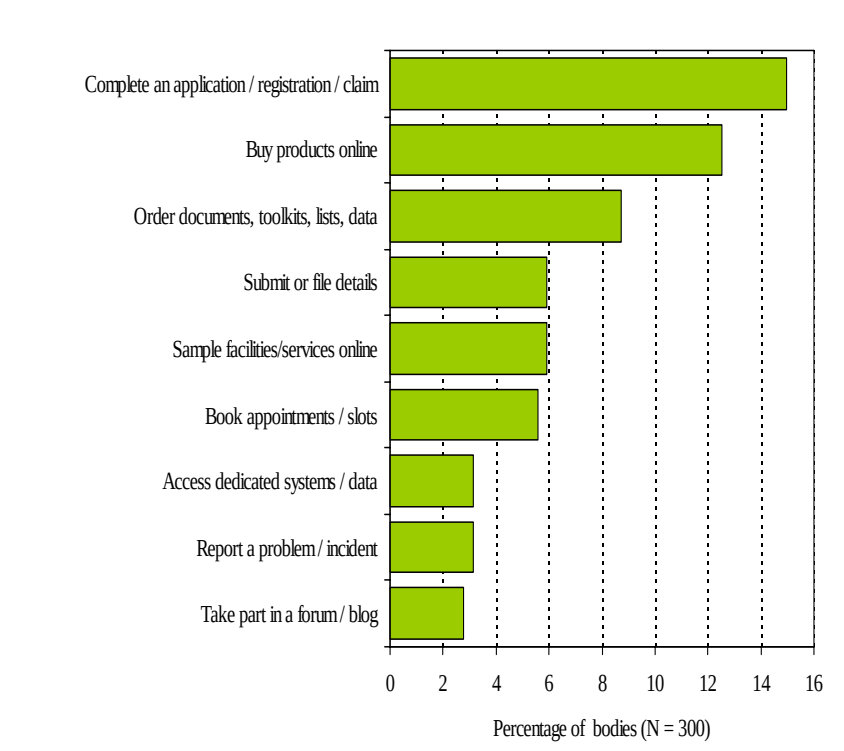
Figure 43: Most organisations placed high priority on increasing the visibility of the website address in published corporate material. Around 3 in every 5 organisations used search engine optimization methods. Only 1 in 5 organisations attached high priority to advertising the website in relevant media.



We asked respondents to tell us how much of a priority each of these strategies were in terms of growing traffic to their website. Respondents gave a score from 1 to 7, where 1 = Very low priority and 7 = Very high priority. This Figure shows the percentage of organisations scoring each factor as a high priority (score of 5, 6 or 7).

In our web census:

Figure 44: We found that around 15 per cent of organisations allowed users to complete a substantial transaction online, either an application, registration or another administrative process. Only a very small minority had web logs, web chats or forum applications.



In our website census we asked our coders to identify any features on websites which are transactional, in the sense that they allow the visitor to complete a substantial process such as filing an application, submitting information, receiving information, or buying items. We asked coders to note down the exact transaction and we recoded all our findings into five general categories featured in this graph. Figures are percentages of all organisations included in the census (N = 300).

Figure 45: Around one quarter of organisations had facilities on their websites that allowed people to search databases or access collated data of some description. This included the small minority of websites which provided personalized evaluations (i.e. postcode searches). Around 1 in 6 websites allowed for electronic submission of applications, claims, registrations or other administrative processes.

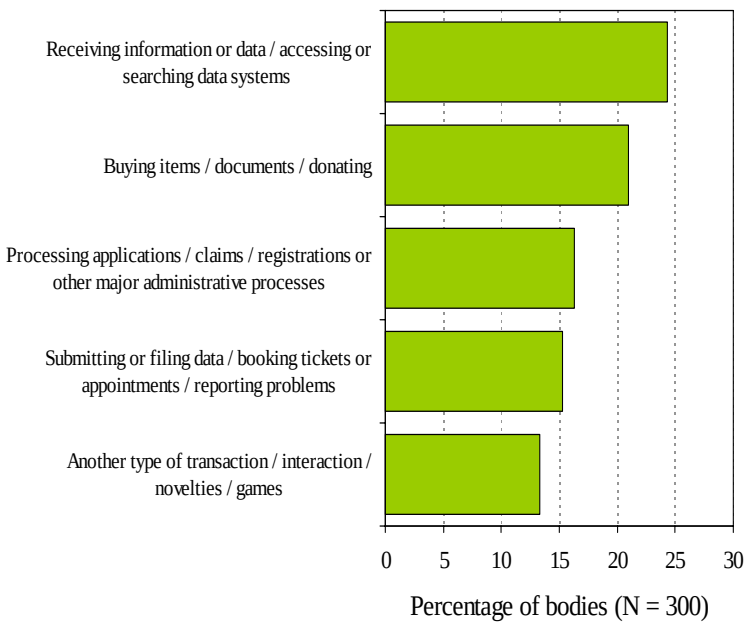


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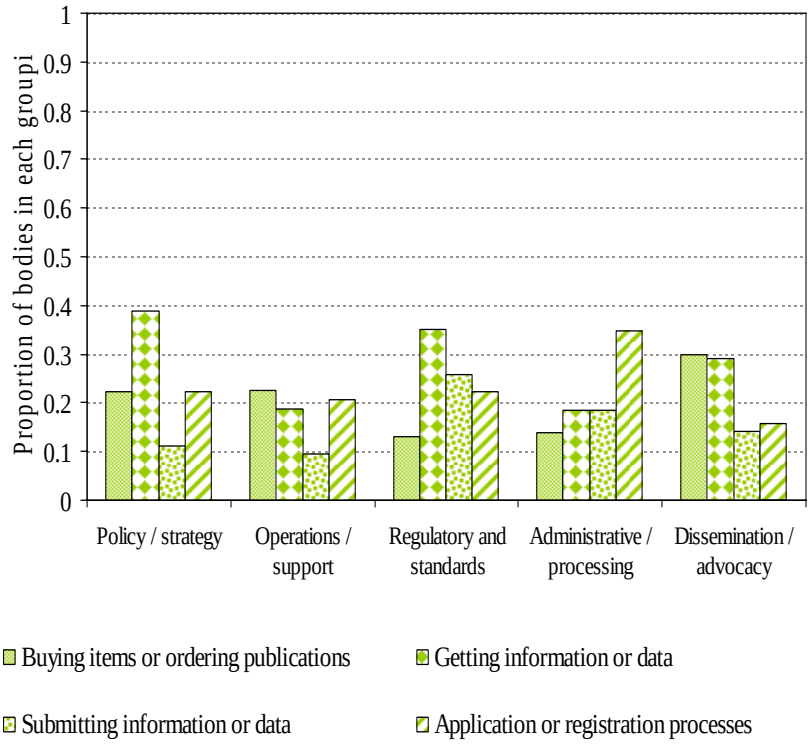
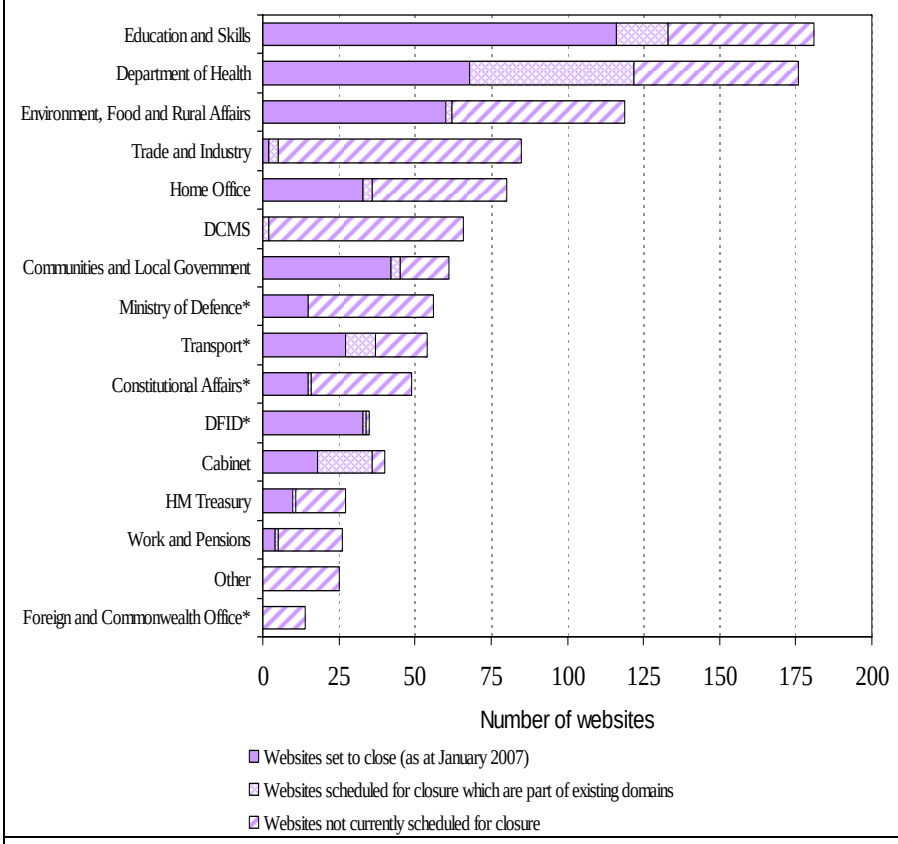
Figure 46: We found that around one third of organisations with significant administrative processing functions allowed users to submit or process applications or registrations online. Around one third of organisations with significant advocacy and dissemination functions allowed users to make purchases online (these included museums and galleries).



See Note 1 below for a comprehensive list of our categorizations.

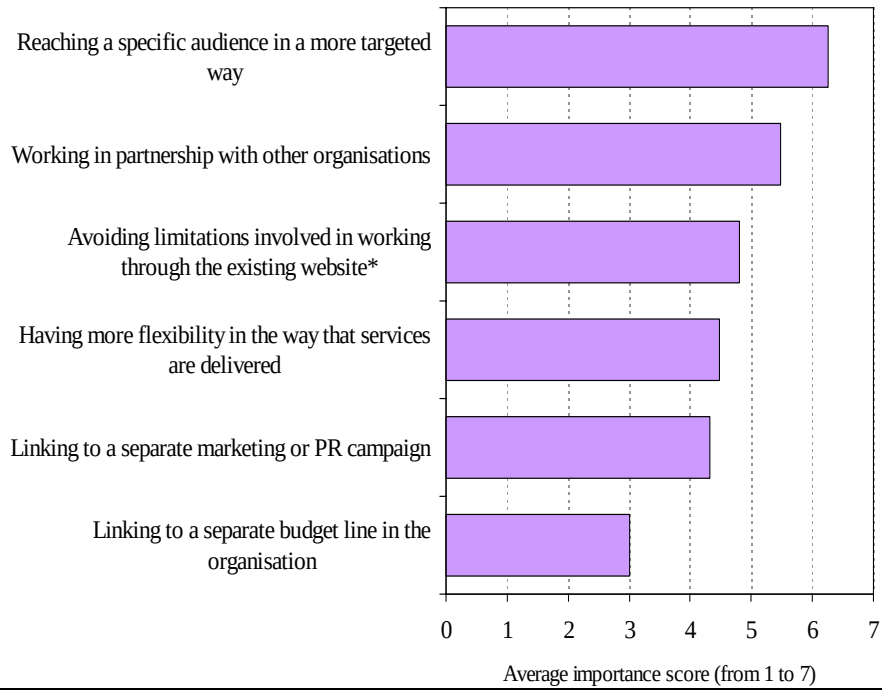
PART 3: FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS AND STRATEGY

Figure 47: From Cabinet Office data published in January 2007, education and health are the main policy areas which have undergone significant reduction in the number of government websites as a result of the Transformational Government strategy. Our own survey data allows us to estimate the number of websites in existence and not currently scheduled for closure*.



(*) Data for websites not currently scheduled for closure is taken from our survey of government agencies and department. The following Departments did not provide data on supplementary websites and therefore figures for these policy areas in the chart above may be underestimated. We have marked those areas with an asterisk. We reviewed the documentation in the 2006 Transformational Government annual report listing websites to be closed as at January 2007. This lists around 551 websites scheduled for closure. We estimate that around 140 of these websites are part of existing domains. The remaining 430 websites scheduled for deletion include 17 corporate websites of organisations not currently scheduled for merger or abolition.

Figure 48: In our survey, teams managing supplementary websites (separate from their organisation's main site) saw their main benefits in being able to reach a specific audience in a more targeted way and avoiding limitations involved in working through existing websites.



We asked organisations to give a score from 1 to 7 to each of the following factors influencing the decision to set up a new website separately from the main corporate website where 1 = Not at all important and 7 = Very important. N = 122 for all factors above apart from 'Another reason' where N= 36.

(*) Limitations of working through existing websites involved both organisational and technology issues. Two examples from the survey returns are 'The XXX is a complex website that could not be supported in-house, in-house expertise are not available' and 'The server on which this website is hosted has PHP installed. Our main website does not use PHP and is installed on a server without dynamic capabilities'.

Figure 49: In our web census we found that just under one third of 300 central government organisations had a link on their main website to Directgov.

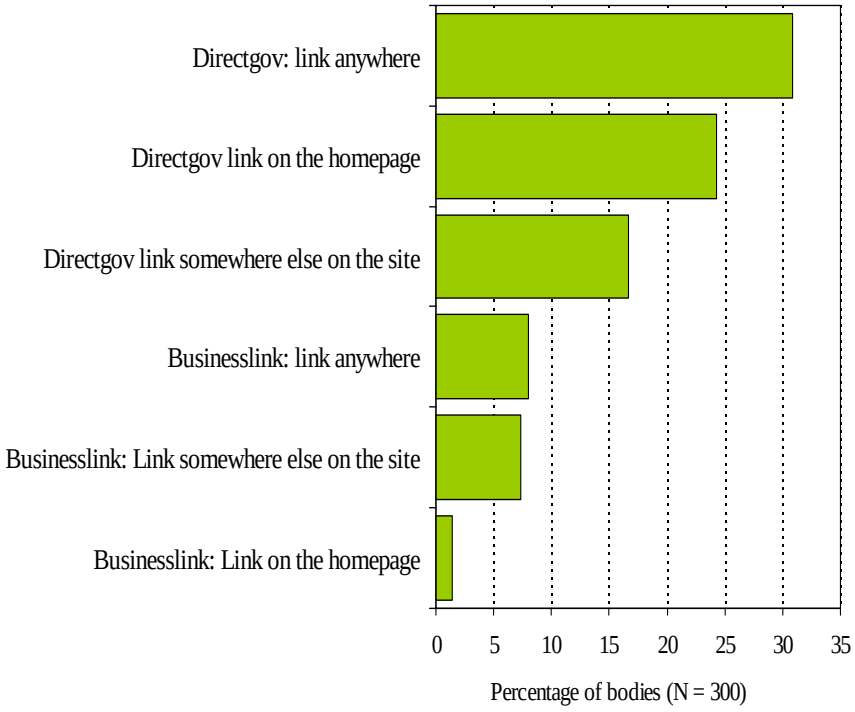
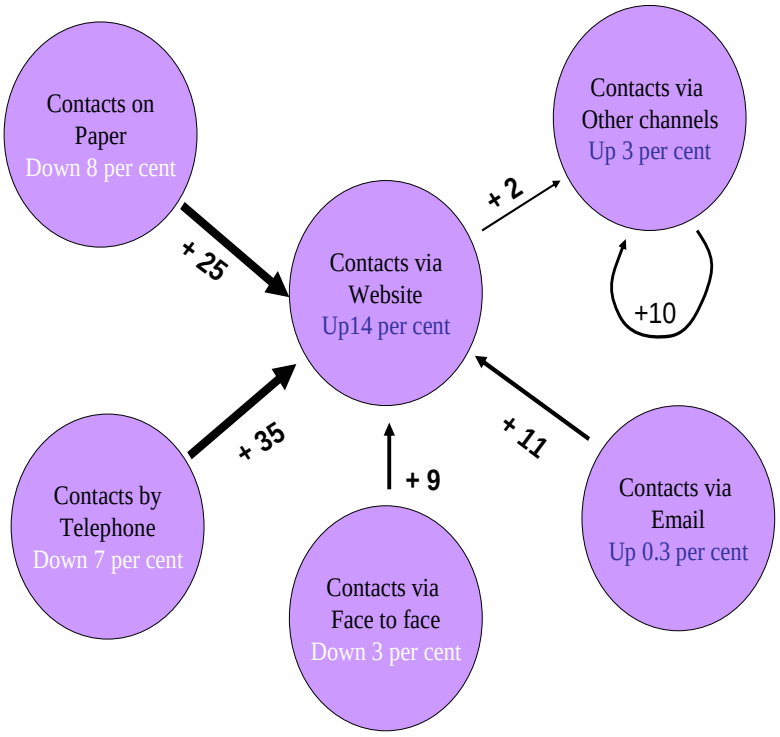


Figure 50: By 2010 central government organisations plan to increase contacts via their website by an average of around 14 per cent of all contacts. Paper and telephone communication will reduce by around 7 or 8 per cent.



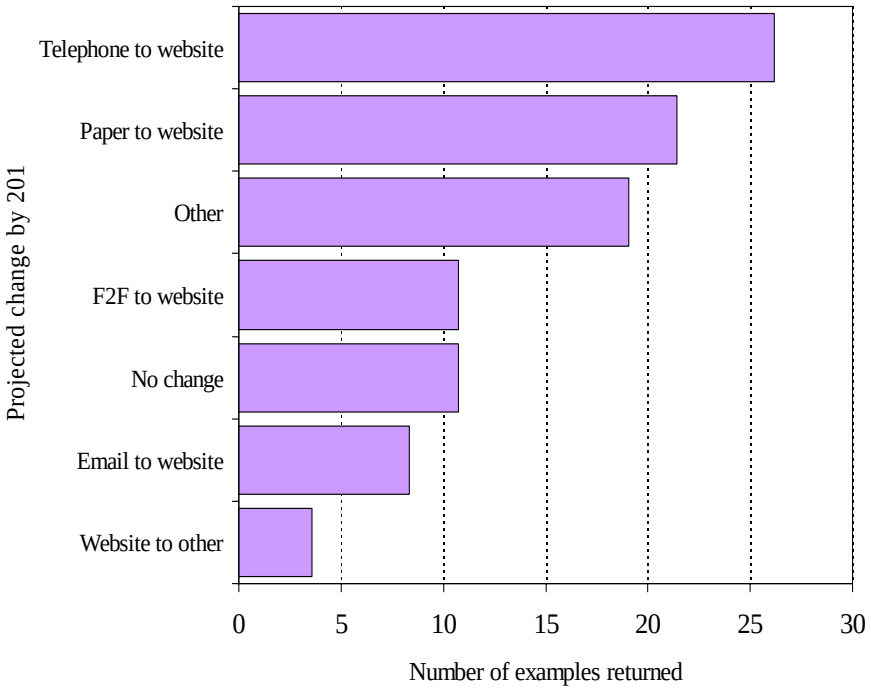
For each of the 158 business areas identified, we asked organisations to estimate the current mix of channels through which all contacts with the organisation take place. We then asked for estimated projected channel mix for delivery of this business area in 2010. Organisations were able to provided current and projected data for 84 of these business areas (54 per cent).

Bold numbers on arrows: For each of the 130 returns we identified the largest positive gain and largest negative reduction. E.g. the largest positive gain is Website +10 and largest negative reduction is Paper -20. This gives a major shift from Paper to Website of magnitude 30. Bold numbers on arrows therefore signify the average of all major shifts across all 158 returns.

Numbers in circles: We also calculated the average +/- net shift between 2006 and 2010 for each channel.

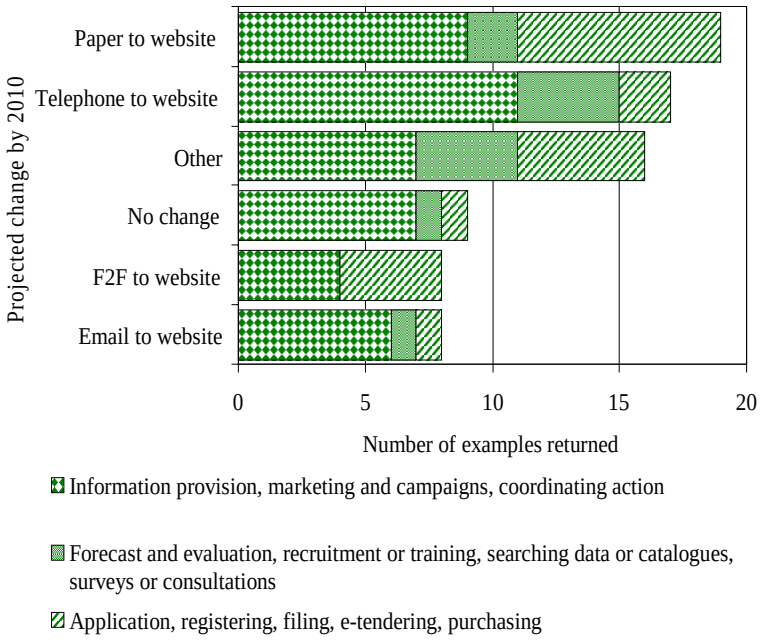
'Other' includes digital television, SMS or text messaging and other new forms of communication technology.

Figure 51: The most commonly cited projected shifts between the current channel mix and 2010 involve moving contacts from telephone and paper onto the website.



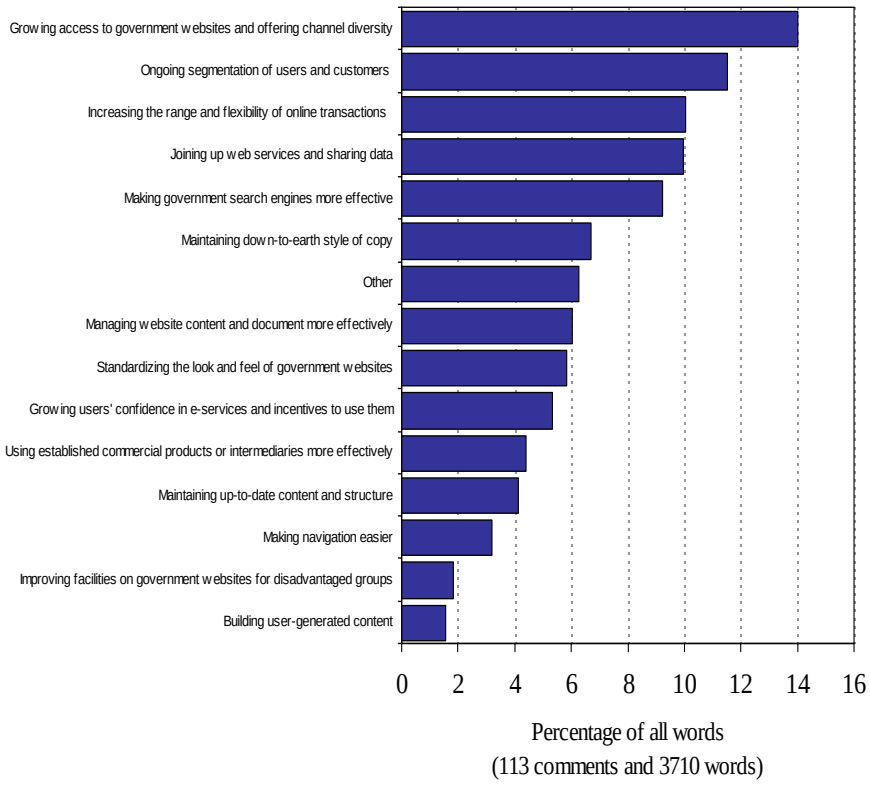
For each of the 158 business areas identified, we asked organisations to estimate the current mix of channels used to deliver this area of business and then give an estimated projected channel mix for delivery of this business area in 2010. Organisations were able to provided current and projected data for 84 of these business areas (54 per cent).
For example, organisation A states that in 2006, 40 per cent of contacts with customers are on paper, 20 per cent on telephone, 20 per cent on email, and 20 per cent through the website. By 2010, organisation A aims to achieve the following: 20 per cent on paper, 30 per cent on the telephone, 10 per cent on email and 40 per cent through the website. This gives a change of Paper -20: Telephone +10: Email -10: Website +20. The major change, as would be coded for the purposes of this graph, is Paper to Website (net change 40). 'Other' includes Paper to email (3), Paper to telephone (4). 'Website to other' includes digital television, SMS or text messaging.

Figure 52: The main shift for transactional services is to move processes from paper to website. While a high proportion of activities involving information provision, marketing and campaigns will shift from telephone to website.



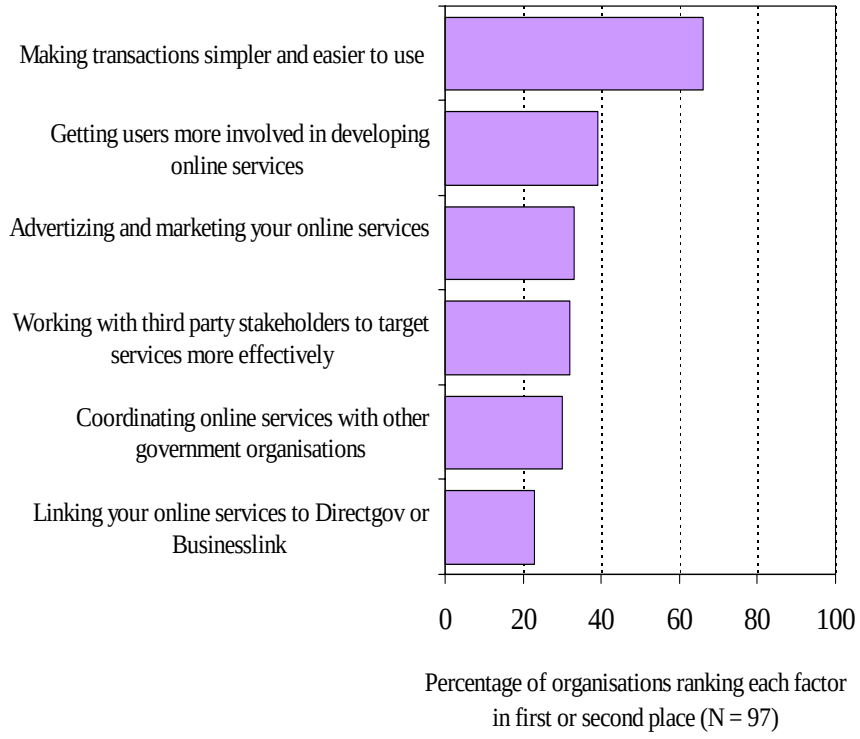
In this Figure we use data from the previous one but identify the type of business activity which was highlighted by the organisation for change. We focus on three different activities here: [1] General information provision, marketing and campaigns; [2] More interactive information provision such as forecasting and evaluations, data searches, surveys or consultations; and [3] Transactional and administrative processes such as filing applications, claims or registrations.

Figure 53: The two ideas for improved governing of websites that were most commonly cited by respondents to our public survey focused on growing access and channel diversity, and improving the segmentation of users and customers.



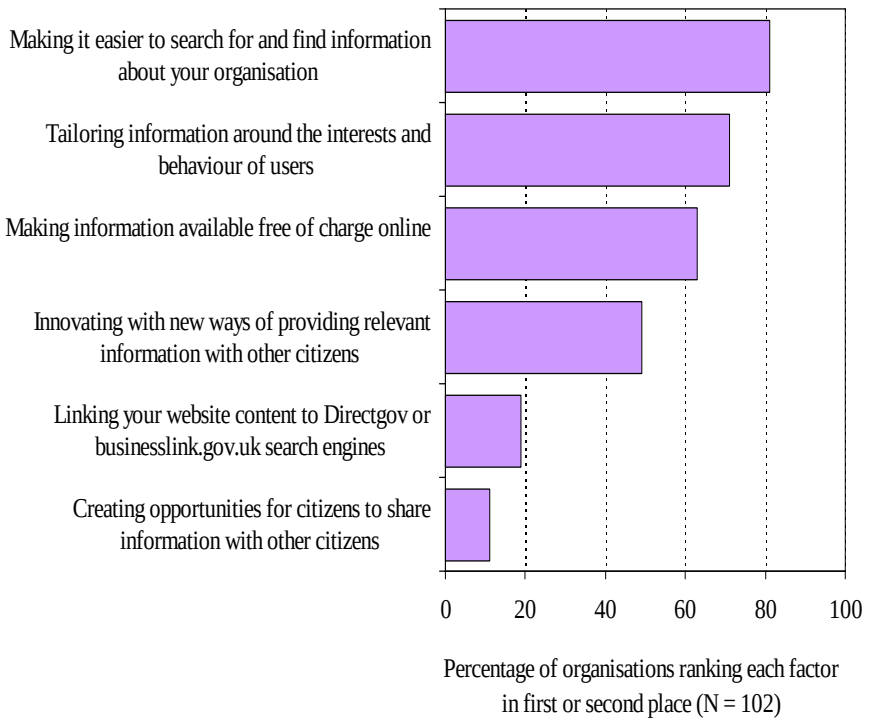
We asked public survey respondents the following question: 'If you have any ideas or views about how government can improve its websites, please write them in here'. We received 153 written responses and a total of 5,210 words. We reviewed all suggestions made and coded them into the following categories for improvement. The Figure shows the proportion of total words in each category. The categories do not necessarily reflect exact comments made by respondents, for example 14 per cent of respondents did not specifically ask for greater 'channel diversity', rather they suggested in general that government organisations could expand the range of options available for contacting the organisation depending on the needs and situation of their customers.

Figure 54: On transactions, the priority for government organisations was making transactions simpler and easier to use.



We asked organisations to rank different factors in terms of how much each one is a priority to their organisation. Respondents ranked factors where 1 = Highest priority and 7 = Lowest priority. This Figure shows the percentage of respondents ranking the factor in first or second place.

Figure 55: On providing information, central government organisations prioritized improving structure and search facilities on their websites, and tailoring information to the interests and behaviour of customers and users.



We asked organisations to rank different factors in terms of how much each one is a priority to their organisation. Respondents ranked factors where 1 = Highest priority and 7 = Lowest priority. This Figure shows the percentage of respondents ranking the factor in first or second place.

Figure 56: The performance of the Directgov website.

QUOTE BOX 6:
The performance of the Directgov website

Really like Directgov, it has an important part to play in future service delivery (Ministerial department)

The fact that [we] have been prepared to site all its information and services on Directgov is evidence of our satisfaction and support (Transport Executive Agency)

While Directgov is considerably well known within government, I am under the impression that a large number of the public are still unaware of its existence (Large NDPB)

The idea behind Directgov is fine in principle, but I don't think it has been promoted enough to encourage use by the general public (Welfare Executive Agency)

Figure 57: The performance of the businesslink.gov.uk website.

QUOTE BOX 7:
The performance of the businesslink.gov.uk website

Businesslink has been very focused on a section of the business and employer market […] and has not yet moved to many of the needs of central government departments (Citizen facing ministerial department)

[Businesslink] makes it very easy for people to get the information they need (Ministerial department)

We have a good relationship with Businesslnk which we are planning to develop further. They have a suite of products with text and links to [our] guides which we comment on regularly. Their site provides very comprehensive information to exporters (Non-ministerial department]

Businesslink has a high profile in the business sector (Executive Agency)

Figure 58: The role of the e-Government Unit

QUOTE BOX 8:
The role of the e-Government Unit

Delivery of Transformational Government is having a high impact on our future e-plans (Welfare Executive Agency)

EGU's lead on the Transformational Government website rationalization process should mean that they are at the heart of setting the agenda for e-communications over the next few years (Ministerial department)

EGU has a large potential part to play, if it has the resources. Transformational Government is focused on how we join up our services as opposed to developing our own sites and applications (Non-ministerial department)

The EGU needs to be more proactive and identify named contacts or posts within each Agency so that they build a relationship for sharing best practice and networking. There is a lot of experience and inexperience across government and the EGU could be providing a forum for working together (Education NDPB)

When this survey was designed and sent out, in November 2006, the e-Government Unit was the relevant unit. However, this is now the Delivery and Transformation Group.

Figure 59: Departments and agencies responding to our survey said that the most important barriers to growing online transactions involved the complexity of existing information systems. Other factors which were viewed as barriers by some organisations included difficulties in orienting culture towards the web and difficulties in coordinating online applications with other organisations.

Percentages (%) Positive net scores = larger barriers	Top scoring %	Bottom scoring %	***Net score %***
Complexity of our existing information systems	42	13	**29**
Another factor	11	4	**7**
Difficulties orienting the culture of our organisation towards web	33	31	**2**
Difficulties coordinating our online applications with other government organisations	20	37	**-17**
Lack of incentives for customers or end users to use online services	15	34	**-19**
Lack of an agreed vision for the development of web services in our organisation	14	41	**-27**
Lack of opportunities to access the Internet amongst our customers or end users	17	57	**-40**

Figures are given in percentages of total organisations responding to this question (N = 97). We calculated the percentage of responses in which each factor came top or bottom, and subtracted Bottom from Top to get a net score of importance. By far the highest net score was the complexity of existing information systems.

Figure 60: In our survey responses, lack of resources in the organisation was clearly the most important factor limiting what organisations could do in terms of providing information to customers or users.

Percentages (%) *Positive net scores = larger barriers*	Top scoring %	Bottom scoring %	***Net score %***
Complexity of our existing information systems	42	13	**29**
Another factor	11	4	**7**
Difficulties orienting the culture of our organisation towards web	33	31	**2**
Difficulties coordinating our online applications with other government organisations	20	37	**-17**
Lack of incentives for customers or end users to use online services	15	34	**-19**
Lack of an agreed vision for the development of web services in our organisation	14	41	**-27**
Lack of opportunities to access the Internet amongst our customers or end users	17	57	**-40**

Figures are given in percentages of total organisations responding to this question (N = 97). We calculated the percentage of responses in which each factor came top or bottom, and subtracted Bottom from Top to get a net score of importance. By far the highest net score was the lack of resources within the organisation to make information available online.

Figure 61: Factors reported by organisations as constraining growth of online services.

QUOTE BOX 9:
Factors constraining growth of online services

Our overall resources are limited and have been cut back in real terms. This means we can only realise a small proportion of our ideas (Large citizen facing NDPB)

Customer inertia and contentment with paper or postal services is a major factor constraining growth of online services (Business Executive Agency)

It is not that there is a lack of incentive for our customers to use online services, but that our target users have difficulty accessing the Internet (Ministerial department)

Proactive content management by business units is still sketchy and requires in-depth education (Ministerial department)

The complexity of our services is such that they can never realistically be done online (Non-ministerial department)

Figure 62: Factors reported by organisations as constraining growth of information provision online.

QUOTE BOX 10:
Factors constraining growth of information provision online

There are many issues surrounding commercial confidentiality about what material we can make available online […] It is technically quite difficult to make on-line tabulation available in a fully flexible way while ensuring that inappropriate information is not disclosed (Regulatory NDPB)

Organisational culture is still rooted in a 'need to know' communication basis as opposed to openness and transparency (Ministerial department)

Lack ownership of content is a big problem (Ministerial department)

Putting information online might mislead customers and create an unrealistic expectation about the services that [we] can provide and at what price (Non-ministerial department)

This isn't as simple as a lack of resources. We are undergoing restructuring, redundancies, and change of focus in locations. It is too early to say if we are under resourced for new ways of working online (Government Office)

Like many organisations we have large stores of historical information (non-digital) that will take some time to become available online (Defence Executive Agency)

We are providing authoritative government information to businesses, so the need for accuracy is exceptionally high (Business NDPB)

Figure 63: Organisations covered in the census, by type.

2006	Number of bodies covered	Percentage of total bodies covered
Ministerial departments	17	6
Non-ministerial departments	33	11
Executive agencies	61	20
Non-departmental public bodies (NDPB)	168	56
Other	21	7
TOTAL organisations	**300**	**100**

Other includes 15 NHS bodies and 6 public corporations.

Figure 64: Organisations covered in the web census, by predominant function or role.

2006	Number of bodies covered	Percentage of total bodies covered
Policy and strategy	21	7
Processing and administrative	46	15
Regulatory, standards and inspection	57	19
Operations and support	53	18
Advocacy, communications and dissemination	123	41
TOTAL organisations	**300**	**100**

See Note 1 below for a comprehensive list of our categorizations.

Figure 65: Organisations covered in the web census, by policy area.

2006	Number of bodies covered	Percentage of total bodies covered
Culture, Media and Sport	47	16
Trade and Industry	41	14
Defence	32	11
Health and social care	31	10
Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	28	9
Home Office	21	7
Education	16	5
Other	15	5
Legal and Constitutional Affairs	13	4
Transport	13	4
Communities and Local Government	12	4
Social welfare and employment	11	4
Treasure	10	3
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	9	3
International Development	1	0
TOTAL organisations	**300**	**99**

Figure 66: We achieved an 85 per cent response rate on our survey of central government organisations.

2006	Number of bodies contacted for a response	Number of bodies completing the survey	Response rate *(%)*
Ministerial departments	16	15	10
Non-ministerial departments	24	22	14
Executive agencies	47	34	22
Non-departmental public bodies (NDPB)	65	59	39
TOTAL	152	130	85

This is a summary Figure of total organisations covered in our survey of government organisations. Four organisations looked at the online survey but did not enter any data. We have not included these organisations in our analysis. Total N therefore in some of these Figures is equal to 124.

Notes

1. For a number of Figures included here, we established 5 categories of organizational definition as follows: [1] Policy and strategy – includes all Ministerial departments and other organisations with strategic responsibilities; [2] Operational and support – organisations providing logistical and support services within the government sector, such as agencies in defence and health providing services within their own sector. No discernible interface with civil society or business; [3] Regulatory, inspection and standards – includes all bodies with responsibilities for regulation, inspection and maintenance of standards; [4] Processing bodies – organisations primarily responsible for carrying out administrative functions such as processing applications, filing, registrations, claims, and other checks: [5] Communications and advocacy – organisations representing specific interests or communicating knowledge, for example museums and galleries.

2. For Figure 45, the categories are as follows:
Detailed category General category; **1. Ordering documents** Buy items / documents / donate money; **2. Buy products** Buy items / documents / donate money; **3. Sample facilities / services** Another service / novelty / game / web log or forum; **4. Subscribe to news services / RSS** Receiving information or data / accessing or searching data systems; **5. Contacting staff in sophisticated online way** Another service / novelty / game / web log or forum; **6. Booking appointments / slots** Submitting or filing data / booking tickets or appointments / reporting problems; **7. Completing an application / registration / claim** Processing applications / claims / registrations or other major administrative processes; **8. Joining or becoming a member** Submitting or filing data / booking tickets or appointments / reporting problems; **9. Booking tickets** Submitting or filing data / booking tickets or appointments / reporting problems; **10. Amending details** Submitting or filing data / booking tickets or appointments / reporting problems; **11. Submitting or filing data** Submitting or filing data / booking tickets or appointments / reporting problems; **12. Donating money** Buy items / documents / donate money; **13. E-tenders or e-procurement** Processing applications / claims / registrations or other major administrative processes; **14. Searching online databases** Receiving information or data / accessing or searching data systems; **15. Accessing dedicated or secure data systems** Receiving information or data / accessing or searching data systems; **16. Reporting a problem / incident** Submitting or filing data / booking tickets or appointments / reporting problems; **17. Taking part in a blog or forum** Another service / novelty / game / web log or forum; **18. Novelties / games** Another service / novelty / game / web log or forum; **19. Other** Another service / novelty / game / web log or forum.