

FUTURE SIGHT PODCAST

Ep. 32: The Evolving World of eGovernment





Future Sight Podcast by Capgemini Invent

As business and technology move forward at a rapid rate, it has become increasingly important to explore new ways to adapt and grow for the future. This podcast is your guide to that future journey.

Join us as we explore a new topic in business, technology, and transformation. Find out more about the challenges businesses are facing today and what they can expect in the future. Listen to leading industry experts as they break down need-to-know, actionable approaches with strategic insights and provide tangible takeaways.

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Episode Transcript

Oliver Jones: This is Future Sight, a show from Capgemini Invent. I'm Oliver Jones. On this show, we explore new ways for you to adapt and grow for the future in business or today, in the public sector. Citizens and businesses across Europe are engaging more with their governments digitally. From paying taxes to tolls, to administering healthcare or applying for subsidies, countries like Estonia have led the way.

Now that eGovernment is here to stay, what does its future hold and what does it mean for you? Joining me today to explore this, our experts from here at Capgemini...

Niels Van Der Linden: Hi, everyone. I'm Niels Van Der Linden. I'm a vice-president at Capgemini invent.

Oliver Jones: and from IDC...

Max Claps: Hi everyone. I am Max Claps. I am a Research Director with IDC Government Insights.

Oliver Jones: Tell us, first of all, what is eGovernment?

Niels Van Der Linden: So, usually eGovernment is defined as the use of technology for more effectively and efficiently delivering government services to citizens and businesses.

Oliver Jones: And for us as citizens, what does eGovernment really mean? What are the benefits for us?

Niels Van Der Linden: I think in general; the main benefits are in saving time, saving costs and increasing your flexibility on when or where to use the service instead of always having the obligation to go to a physical place.

And it can also increase the trust and the security of the services. Maybe even more than the paper processes that we had in the past.

Max Claps: Yeah, absolutely. And I think you made a point even in your definition of eGovernment, Niels. Because somebody else could have said eGovernment is about putting services online. But you said eGovernment is about making services more effective, efficient and responsive.

And I think the only element that I would add to what you said is the convenience, not to worry about the bureaucratic silos. As we have seen the evolution of eGovernments in the past 20 years, there's more a one-stop shop, multi-channel, omni-channel approaches, that makes it a little bit more intuitive to deal with an institution that may deliver multiple services.

And the citizen doesn't have to call 10 different phone numbers or go to 25 different offices. I'm not sure we are at the end of the journey but it's definitely one of the potential benefits.

Niels Van Der Linden: I like that point because, eGovernment is often mistaken for online services. Whereas it's much more about the quality of the online services rather than just having something online.

Oliver Jones: What approaches have governments been taking to deliver eGovernment in different countries around the world?

Max Claps: Niels, I'll go first. I think, putting services online is not the intended outcome, but that's where everybody has started. Then with the evolution over time, the need to make those services available through other channels as well like mobile phones, through intermediaries like third parties that could act on behalf of the government such as post offices.

And it was all enabled by technology. One other element that we can reflect upon is [the difference between the national, regional and local governments](#). So there's not so much of a difference in terms of approach among different countries. There are different stages of evolution but they're more or less, trying to do the same thing. However, there are quite a few differences between a big national government department like a revenue agency and a small municipality: what they can afford to do, what they need to do, the breadth instead of the depth of services that they need to make available in digital format.

Niels Van Der Linden: And maybe to build on that, one of the concepts that you hear often in this space is the phrase "digital by default". So, this is our approach to government services with the idea of being digital by default where services are so straightforward and easy to use, that everyone who can use online services will do so without excluding those who can't.



That's still one of the big challenges for governments in advancing digital government. We also need to consider that everybody might not have the skills. And I think that's one of the interesting things. At least that's what I liked from the study that we did for the commission, you see different approaches, at least variations on the same team is probably a better word.

But for instance, in digital by default, countries make some online services mandatory for businesses. That might be an easy gauge because you can say, "businesses should have the skills, or at least they can take care of it better than any citizen". But even some countries take that step into making online services for all the citizens mandatory.

And that is a bolder move. Though not common, it's interesting to see how different countries take different blinds there.

Oliver Jones: eGovernment isn't a new concept. It's something that we've been hearing and talking about for a couple of decades now. So, do you think this idea has reached maturity and we're all at the point of accepting that we'll be able to transact with the government online where we need to? Or does it have a lot further to go? What will come next in your view?

Niels Van Der Linden: Maybe I can give a first inch and then Max you can build on that, because I'm sure you have a view here.

But at least from what we see in the study, in [the eGovernment benchmark](#), there is progress, but it's incremental. So it's always smaller steps. And I think one of the reasons for that is also that at a certain stage, you can only make a small improvement unless you do it in a different way, in a different model.

And I think that also builds on Max's earlier comment on cross-agency collaboration. I guess in terms of maturity, that would be the next big step to take.

Max Claps: Yeah, absolutely. First of all, I hope we're not at the end of the journey. Otherwise I'll have to look for another job tomorrow. But kidding aside, I think it goes back to your previous question. There are different styles, approaches, and themes that different member states in Europe have focused on.

I can think of Nordic countries that have done a lot of work on interoperability. The UK, no longer an EU member country, has done a lot of work on front-end one-stop shop with *gov.uk* for the longest time. But they have struggled with one of the enablers of eGovernment, which is digital identity.

I think there are different kinds of gaps that still give us hope for more work to be done. So far, eGovernment has been about making the same process available for citizens in a more convenient manner, through a more convenient channel. But, by reversing the paradigm and the government having access to a set of data, and proactively delivering services to citizens, providing a pre-filled tax return that I only have to approve or sending me a check for child support. Such a proactive government that works in a transparent and trusted manner is still a long way to go.

Niels Van Der Linden: Yeah, I agree, but that is the key next step. The more you start reusing data to make the services proactive or efficient also begs the question: "as a citizen, can I still see who within government is using my data for what purpose and what do they actually know about me?"

So the balance of reusing the data and some transparency or ownership on that data as an individual, I think is also one of those next steps that eGovernment or , digital government or GovTech need to include.

And maybe one more thing. There is something that I also see around what's next around this concept of eGovernment. It is more and more the attention to include new technologies that are being developed that are on the rise. There is so much, "buzz" around startups, technology startups, and all these interesting solutions need to find their way into public sector and eGovernment services as well.

And I guess that is also one of the next big challenges for governments to handle.

Oliver Jones: We're talking here about government being able to provide quite sophisticated proactive services, very personalized, very data-driven services to people. What are the barriers that governments and public sector organizations have to overcome in order to be able to do that? What are the obstacles to achieving eGovernment and reversing that paradigm?



Max Claps: We just talked about one of them, which is the citizen trust. It is not just about protecting privacy but really establishing a relationship and engagement with the citizen. It builds on being confident that the government is doing a good job, in an accountable and transparent manner.

And that varies by culture and by country. I mentioned that UK struggled a little bit with digital identity. It's not because they didn't try and they didn't have good intentions, but the UK never added a paper ID to begin with. So culturally, it was difficult to build the trust that would enable to scale digital ID.

Whereas I am Italian and in Italy, we always added a paper ID when it was time to create something like SPID, which is the federated digital ID. Although it took some time, it became commonplace. So, the trust element is one of the challenges to overcome. I would say a legacy technology is also one of the challenges. Of course, not all the technology that the government has been using for the past 50 years is easy to rearchitect and redesign for the new opportunities and new capabilities that emerging technologies are bringing in.

And quite honestly, like in every technology project, some organizational change and organizational resistance needs to be taken into account because it's about redesigning that paradigm and having the government civil servants think with the new mindset.

Niels Van Der Linden: Yeah, I agree, and there is not much to add. It's about the interoperability of technology solutions that exist. But just implementing them in a broader scope requires a different way of organizing. There are still examples of government services where you actually fill in online forms, they get printed in the back office and then the print is taken to another system within the same organization to be again inserted into a different system, because that's the legacy quest, That's definitely one of the key things.

And one of the other challenges is in the design of the services itself. The whole user journey from awareness to finding a service, to accessing it, to using it through the whole feedback loop: that requires a really coherent approach to how you design services.

Some people call it human-centric. I prefer the word user-centric because my Latin teacher once said, human comes from "homo", which means men. I think we need diverse services.

But in that part of the designing, the user journey is also a big step ahead. Also making sure that everyone with visual impairments can easily navigate a website and understand what the text actually means. And one of the things that you mentioned—interoperability and collaboration across agencies. We see that in the research and the eGovernment benchmark, there is a difference between how services are provided at the national level versus the local level. And most of that is because not all cities or regions are using and reusing the solutions that are already there, that are provided either at national or even European level.

Oliver Jones: Are there any areas where eGovernment has failed in the past and where it's not worked out? And if so, what can we learn from those experiences?

Niels Van Der Linden: From what I've seen, the key lesson that we can learn is not just about online services. There are some services that may work better if they are done offline. I recall a discussion we had in the past on employment services.

So do you need to digitalize all services related to job seekers or is it more effective in the long-term to have a face-to-face intake at the beginning and maybe one or two physical catch-ups in that process? In the end, that proved out to be more efficient and effective in getting people back into work faster than when you would just have an online environment. You need to do all the steps online and people who have lost their jobs, also lost the inspiration to get back to work.

So "online services" is not only about online. I think that's one of the key things.

Max Claps: Yeah, I would entirely agree. I was thinking of a similar example. A long time ago, I had a conversation with the CIO of a national revenue agency. And he was telling me the story of how they went too far. They even put online services like fuel tax collection, but fuel taxes are usually collected and taken from one or two large oil companies that operate in the country. And once a year, this stack of paper or PDFs are uploaded on a website.

And it doesn't make the process easier for them because it's a conversation and a lot of reconciliation. It's looking through a lot of complex transactions with two entities. It doesn't make a lot of sense to have it fully digitized.



It's still important to have a dedicated case officer that understand the context of the operation, that understands all those transactions. So, it's really about trying to get a sense of the impact that the government can make. Is it a high volume, relatively less complex, easy-to-use type of service, or is it a highly sensitive issue, very complex which needs re-employing and retraining somebody for collecting fuel tax. and with a relatively small number of transactions?

You could build a matrix that says there's a sweet spot for high level of automation. And there's a frontier that probably moves slowly towards more complex services. I think that's one of the key lessons that we've learned over the past 20 years.

Oliver Jones: So do you think all public services can be delivered digitally? What can't be delivered as an eGovernment service and how should the different channels work together?

Max Claps: Yeah, maybe I'll pick this up since I started earlier. As I said, there's a frontier. When we started 20 years ago, we thought only information could be made available online. And then, some services like renewing a driving license could be executed entirely online. And then, more complex transactions with better technology and understanding became available online.

The other angle I always think about is the journey. Because the service and consumption of the service is not just one-step. You look for information, you check if you're entitled to it, you register for something, you have questions about registration and then the government sends you back something.

You then apply for the service, receive the service, file a complaint and so on. So in that journey, there are probably steps that are easier to automate and digitize than the steps that require a phone interaction or a face-to-face interaction. That's how I see it.

Niels Van Der Linden: You mentioned the complexity of the service as one of those indicators. And there might also be another indicator—the essence or the security of a service. So, you just don't want to avail some services like the employment app online, because it's more effective.

But also think of an instance when you register a business. In the Netherlands, there was a hue and cry over the first step not being online. It was actually because they wanted to see who was actually at the counter and whether or not that was a strong man working for some criminals to open legal entity.

This is also one of the checks that they had in mind for taking the service offline. So that might also be one of the angles to consider.

Oliver Jones: What strategies for achieving the government have been most successful so far? What kinds of things have helped governments deliver these services and have them adopted by the public?

Niels Van Der Linden: In general, the strategy is more a quest of transformation. We already talked about the "digital by default" approach and ensuring that there is more cross-agency collaboration. I really believe that is at the heart. It's not about making one service or one website available online or even for one public entity, but it's really orchestrating that journey across multiple entities.

And that can only be done in most of the countries differently than they are doing it now. Denmark was one of those countries that actually managed to restructure the municipalities, provide a larger scale and also implement that digital infrastructure across all those tiers of government to make it work.

And you see some good examples of the same popping up. So, for instance, surprisingly in Hungary, they have a good shared municipal services platform where you can basically access all the local services in one place. So that helps to build the one government approach.

Max Claps: And I think the other element is having the trusted digital identity. It's about the ability to keep track of the documents and the transactions that are being exchanged in a transparent manner and record them.

It's about automating the workflow. So, what happens with those key enablers that citizens don't necessarily see apart from the identity maybe, but what happens in that middle office also makes a big difference. And we see some variations across countries, also from the benchmarking around those key enablers.

Oliver Jones: We've mentioned Denmark. And we mentioned Estonia earlier. I am very interested to know which countries are leading the way in eGovernment and what they're doing. What other countries could learn from them? What did you learn when you evaluated that in the benchmark?



Niels Van Der Linden: Yeah, that's a good question. I find it tricky to compare countries because every country is so different. But usually, the countries that take the lead in the benchmark are the Nordics, the Baltics and Malta as well. But we also see, for instance, Austria climbing up the ranks, who have a really good approach to how they deliver services on mobile applications.

And yeah, I think you can pick the good things from every country, if you want to. But there is a huge difference between Malta and Germany in terms of size and how it's organized. So I always find it a bit unfair to say Malta is better than Germany. Because, you can't really say that! It's just that you look at certain indicators where they are better off because it's more centralized a country without any real municipalities. It's just one platform. Whereas Germany and other larger countries have different challenges.

Max Claps: Yeah, I would agree entirely. I recently got an invite from the colleagues at IDC in Czech Republic to speak at an event. And they asked me if I had suggestions for other European countries and speakers on eGovernment. But they said, "not from Estonia, please."

Everybody loves Estonia because they've done so amazingly well. But if you take that in a different context, it's difficult to replicate. Yes, there are leaders, and everybody has different areas where they have excelled. It's super important to put those best practices in context and understand how you can apply them. I think that's a very important point.

Niels Van Der Linden: Yeah. We have made an attempt to do that in a different way. Not just by looking at the performance indicators in the benchmark but also considering all kinds of contextual factors. So, you can cluster countries that are similar to each other. But that needs much more research, to really make it work because devil is in the details.

You cannot just say, "oh, we put in the generic indicators on scales and GDP and related measures". And then you have clusters of similar countries. But I think this is the thinking that is required to make this work.

Oliver Jones: Okay. Let's think about the [digital divide](#) and how government can bring everyone with them in the move to delivering services increasingly through eGovernment and online. How do they make sure that no one's left behind? And how do they support people with lower levels of digital literacy in developing these services?

Max Claps: I was speaking with someone in Ireland, a high-level executive in government and he was telling me the story of his 80+ year-old mother who got a letter from a local bank branch. The letter said, "we're closing the branch, but don't worry because we're scaling our digital services."

And that didn't mean anything to this 85-year-old lady. Because she had no smartphone or PC at home. So I think the digital divide is super important, not just from the government perspective, but in general for "digital" across any industry.

And it's about accessibility, be it a visual impairment or other disabilities. But it's also about awareness. And Niels mentioned it earlier. The more governments collaborate across silos and the more they share data, digital literacy is about being aware of how those mechanisms play out in the back office, how the data is shared while being accessed in a transparent manner. And it's even more complicated than explaining to someone how to turn on a PC and log into a website.

Niels Van Der Linden: Actually, your example triggers me. Because I think one of the things that governments might sometimes forget in triggering people also to use the online channel is to really make it clear what the benefits are. I think every grandmother sees the benefit of FaceTime because they can see their grandchildren more often at any time when they want to.

And these kinds of examples demonstrate what can public services mean for you? Why is it easier? Why will it save you time and increase your flexibility? So, governments also need to think about increasing digital inclusion apart from the obvious things like investing in trainings and easily accessible places where you can be helped to use online services like libraries and the design of the services. Of course, these are key. I think that's also part of the evangelism of eGovernment.

Oliver Jones: You talked earlier about trust in eGovernment. Obviously, the public sector handles extremely sensitive information about all of us in areas like tax or health or justice, and so on. It's carefully regulated. What data privacy and cybersecurity considerations to public sector organizations need to take into account when they're developing digital services?



Niels Van Der Linden: Yeah, at least what I would like to bring in first is that as part of the benchmark, we've done a pilot study on cybersecurity of public websites. So basically, this is an assessment using automated tools that are developed by open standards, and one tool by the Dutch government.

It helps assess whether the basic hygiene or cyber security is in place so that the protocols take care of that. And that assessment was quite worrying because we saw that many of the 3000 plus URLs that we have in a sample or so do not pass most of those elements of the assessment.

Definitely in terms of building a platform, I think there's a job to do. And we see all the messages in the news every day. There was a frequent media attention for that too. So, I think it is really important.

I'm not a cybersecurity specialist, so I can't say with expertise. I know what I like from, say the Dutch government at least. They provide tools and assessments to make at least their public administrations aware of the situation and provide guidance and advice on how to follow up. So I think that's an interesting approach to make it better across the board.

Max Claps: And I think the other element, training in the context of organizational change, where government and training applies here as well, and awareness. Because a lot of the incidents in terms of data losses that we've heard about (luckily not many, but they happen), have to do with the fact that some civil servant was not aware that they were breaking a rule or not using some tools in a cautious manner.

So raising the awareness internally in the civil service about what are the implications, what needs to be done beyond the regulatory requirements of GDPR, for instance. Particularly in the context of using data as a valued asset and sharing that data, there is a lot of work and it's a big focus area for the European commission as well on data sharing and data governance. And there's not enough awareness at various levels of government.

Oliver Jones: So we talked about citizen services, but how does the eGovernment benefit business and what opportunities does it create for them?

Niels Van Der Linden: I think we can refer to the benefits. So what's in it for businesses. I think mostly flexibility, cost savings, time savings, and especially for an entrepreneur, that is essential because they're working to achieve their goals, their dreams in creating and building their business.

One thing that might be sometimes overlooked is how to best support the entrepreneurs in that digital journey. Because even if everything is online and user-friendly, and you can use it whenever you want, government services are not your core business. So you would need some time to help, but if it becomes more complex in terms of tax administration, I think it's important to make sure that people can ask their questions.

Max Claps: Yeah. I think that last element is super interesting. And we were doing some research outside of the government benchmark, around tax and customs, and it's amazing how many intermediaries have specialized in helping businesses. So, businesses have been created and grown to help other businesses deal with customs declarations, import and export declarations with VAT declarations.

So, there is that layer that has become very important and technology plays a role in automating the work that layer does. And a lot of these government agencies have created committees and working groups to bring along digital transformation journey. There's an entire ecosystem of intermediaries. It's a whole industry, if you will.

Oliver Jones: Let's move on to the European question then. Across the European union, is there an ambition to have eGovernment services that enable people to access the government support they need wherever they are within the member states? Will there be one day a frictionless experience for government users across the whole of the EU?

Niels Van Der Linden: Let's hope, eventually! At least that is the goal. I think it's one of the, premises of the European idea to be able to work, travel and reside in any country in the union. But it will take time. We've talked about barriers for national and local governments.

If you project that on a European scale, the challenges are even bigger because you have to make all these systems that are developed in different countries interoperable. But in a sense, that is moving forward and especially the European commission plays an important role in my view. They are in a position to set up certain regulation.



For instance, everyone needs to use an electronic identification that needs to be recognized in other countries. They can set standards around web accessibility. For instance, every public website needs to comply with the WCAG standard. And these things really help to drive cross-border services in Europe.

And we see already in the benchmark that the gaps between the front runners and the laggards is narrowing a bit. It means that the countries that were behind are moving up the chain to deliver more services. And it's amazing how some things are already possible.

So for instance, Finns can retrieve ePrescriptions in Croatian pharmacies. I still think that is an amazing example of what it could be in the end. And you can talk about students submitting applications in other countries or entrepreneurs starting up businesses elsewhere.

There are great examples. We just need to make sure that the examples become the norm instead of exceptions.

Max Claps: Yeah, I agree with Niels. It's a super interesting area, particularly if you think of it from a business perspective. We're so integrated from a trading point of view. But trading doesn't necessarily mean that you can set up a business and work somewhere else. And making that possible is a huge potential benefit that cross-border eGovernment can enable.

Oliver Jones: Let's think about sustainability. Is eGovernment inherently more sustainable or less? How does it impact the environment and climate objectives?

Max Claps: Maybe I'll start on this one Niels. It's of course a topic that gets a lot of "buzz", as you said earlier. Sustainability gets a lot of attention, particularly in Europe, with the Green Deal and the recovery plans that have put the accent on sustainability as an engine for European innovation.

And "digital" definitely plays a role. eGovernment plays a role. On the one hand, you have the ability to carry out a lot of transactions online. So there are fewer people who have to go to offices, drive a car. So, there's definitely a benefit there in terms of reduced CO2 emissions because of eGovernment.

I'm not sure anybody has fully considered that, but there is a benefit. The other side of the coin is that by scaling all these eGovernment services, you consume a lot more energy. You need more computing power. And probably, that offsets a little bit of the advantage in terms of more transactions that are carried out online.

And then the third element, probably Niels can comment on this a little bit more than I can, there are a set of eGovernment services that are related to sustainability-like tax credits for putting up a solar panel on my roof. That's not easy to do. I've done it recently.

Niels Van Der Linden: Yeah, I agree. Indeed, in that category, there are quite a few services for businesses and entrepreneurs to make it easier to become more sustainable themselves. And government can facilitate it, whether they are charging poles or solar. What is important in this sense, as Max already said it, is that I'm not sure if someone has actually measured it.

I think that is the key here. So how do we not only have a strategy to make eGovernment sustainable, but also measure that and understand the whole value chain of the way services are delivered and the footprint that comes with it? We need to monitor the benefit (of eGovernment) compared to the physical or other channels and see what the effects are of improvements that we make in that process.

I think that is the key in moving forward. That's one of the positive signs in the post-COVID recovery plans, they are moving us in the right direction as there is lot of attention. And there needs to be a rationale behind the investments that are being made.

So, that's a good development but we need to measure. I'm a benchmark guy, so we need to have data. for the insights. I guess that's the key here.

Oliver Jones: What factors should governments be considering then as they move forward with eGovernment services from today? What should they be looking at when they're developing their digital strategy?

Max Claps: I'll start, and Niels can bring us to a close. The way we think of it at IDC at the moment really goes back to the initial definition that Niels gave. When he said that the government is about efficiency, effectiveness and responsiveness, it's about the outcomes. And to achieve those outcomes, [there are five elements that we think governments should look at](#), in terms of technology, but they're not only about technology. Technology is only the enabling factor.



The first one is purpose. What is the purpose, the outcome and the impact that we're trying to make with eGovernment? And we need to measure that impact and deliver on the promise where it matters for the group of citizens or businesses that are the target for that service.

The second one is resilience. And it has to do with being agile and speeding up the deployment of new services. Being able to reuse services that already exist instead of re-inventing the wheel because that increases the agility by putting those best practices into context as we said earlier.

So purpose, resilience and imagination. Rethinking our services that are being delivered, as we discussed earlier. It's about thinking of the paradigm and sometimes reversing the paradigm, instead of the government asking for information from citizens to validate their eligibility for the service. There's enough data in government of which probably only 5-10% is being used to let the government identify citizens that are entitled businesses, that are entitled for some kind of service and proactively deliver. So re-imagining that approach to delivering services is really important.

Then of course, mastering the technology, the business workflows, the automation, user-centric design. So mastery is the other element.

And then the ecosystem is about working across silos. There's not one entity in government that can solve all the problems we are facing, big societal challenges. And it's only through collaboration that it can happen. And data sharing for instance, is at the core of this ecosystem approach.

So purpose, resilience, imagination, mastery, and ecosystem is how we think about the next stage in the journey to eGovernment or digital government.

Niels Van Der Linden: Yeah, I agree with that. And of course, I won't debate with the analyst here. The previous question on sustainability triggered me a bit.

We're also after a sustainable digital government. And we need to think about how we can make that happen in the future. And there used to be this old motto, "reduce, reuse, recycle".

And I think we need a similar one for eGovernment. So reduce - we need to remove any burden for people taking advantage of online services including skilling of people.

Reuse relates to the technology part. Most of the solutions exist but they require broader implementation across board.

And then recycle, a bit trickier. Usually recycling is with bottles, you don't throw anything away. We need to keep the knowledge that exists in public sector. We just need to recycle the model of how it's organized. Reduce, reuse, recycle might even be a good one also for eGovernment.

And I wish to add the R on responsiveness. Because I think that's also what the pandemic told us. We need to be able to adapt and respond to needs in society quickly. That will be definitely a key to move forward. So in a different flavor to the same model, we need to convey the message of why it's important and what are the benefits that we bring.

So we need strong messaging. And one of the other things that I said before in line with the thinking of bigger, well-known authors in this domain is that we talk about e-government. But what we definitely need is also an entrepreneurial government.

So a government that is willing to take the risks as they've done in the past investing in many of the innovations and technologies that came about. And we also need that here in e-government services, because it does require some entrepreneurial spirit and guts or boldness to do it in a different way than we used to do it.

Oliver Jones: If you had to hazard a guess about the types of breakthroughs or firsts that we might see in e-government in the years to come, what would they be? You talked earlier Max, about the frontier being expanded into new areas. What's next on the list?

Max Claps: I guess one of the things that I've been thinking in the past couple of years, and one of the progressions that we put forward, around 25% of governments will try to make the bureaucracy invisible.

And it's back to one of the points that we discussed earlier. It's eliminating the need for the citizens to understand if they must go to that welfare agency. Or if that welfare service is delivered by the national agency,



but the front-end office is with the municipality. That will really redesign the entire government operations from the perspective of citizens.

And technology is a big part of that. It's going to take quite some time, but over the next three or four years, for particularly, the large, very thought-leading frontier type of governments. Pension, unemployment and tax programs are really investing in that direction of bureaucracy.

Niels Van Der Linden: Yeah, I guess some call it "Society 5.0", but you see an increasing blurring of physical and virtual space. And that requires different capacities from governments on innovation to make it happen.

And apart from that the "e" is not only for electric, but also for entrepreneurial.

Oliver Jones: It's clear from today's discussion that eGovernment has come a long way but can still go much further. The next generation of eGovernment services, the ones that create the new proactive paradigm Max described could change what it means to interact with the public sector for future generations.

Thanks to both today's guests, Niels and Max. You can find links to the eGovernment benchmark report and other publications by Niels and Max in the show notes.

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Capgemini Invent is an integral part of Capgemini, a global leader in partnering with companies to transform and manage their business by harnessing the power of technology. The Group is guided everyday by its purpose of unleashing human energy through technology for an inclusive and sustainable future. It is a responsible and diverse organization of 270,000 team members in nearly 50 countries. With its strong 50-year heritage and deep industry expertise, Capgemini is trusted by its clients to address the entire breadth of their business needs, from strategy and design to operations, fueled by the fast evolving and innovative world of cloud, data, AI, connectivity, software, digital engineering, and platforms. The Group reported in 2020 global revenues of €16 billion.

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