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# 2014 SURVEY ON USE OF AND SATISFACTION WITH PUBLIC E-SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE STATE

## Main findings



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## Objective and implementation of survey

This summary is prepared on the basis of a relevant survey conducted among Estonian undertakings during the time period of September 8 – September 30, 2015. The survey was commissioned by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, and funded from structural instruments of the European Union.

The objective of the survey was to ascertain whether and how undertakings used public e-services provided by the state in 2013 and 2014. The survey also covered user satisfaction and expectations as pertaining to relevant services.

The target group of the survey included companies (public and private limited companies), self-employed persons, and branches of foreign companies operating in Estonia. Respondents included top-level managers of companies or employees whose duties involve communication with the state in forwarding reports, declarations, statistical data etc. The survey was conducted using an online questionnaire of which respondents were previously informed. 475 undertakings responded to the survey.

## Summary of results

In 2013-2014, the following state portals and e-service environments were most used by Estonian undertakings:

- The Tax and Customs Board's website
- The state portal eesti.ee
- E-Tax Board/e-Customs tax related services
- E-Business Register

The above websites and online environments were most used also in 2012.

The following websites received the highest rating:

- GoSwift electronic border queue management system; average rating 4.57
- Road information portal "Smart Road"; 4.35
- Road Administration's e-service; 4.34
- The Police and Boarder Guard's website; 4.32
- E-Business Register; 4.26

In the previous survey, ERAA – Association of Estonian International Road Carriers (4.24) and the public information portal on road weather information systems and road and traffic cameras (4.22) received the highest satisfaction ratings.

In 2013-2014, use of e-services increased in most surveyed public service domains. Use of online services remained at roughly the same level only in the domains of culture and agriculture.

User satisfaction with relevant services also improved in the course of the two years – this year's average ratings are mostly higher than those in the previous survey. The statistics domain stands out as an exception here, showing decreased ratings given to all e-services.

Similarly to the previous survey, the principal reason behind user dissatisfaction is the complexity of portals and websites, excessive time spent on using relevant services, and

insufficient reliability of operation. With a number of significant websites, users pinpointed specific shortcomings that should be addressed.

85% of undertakings have used the state portal eesti.ee and use of the portal has increased by 15%. While at the time of the previous survey, the main reason for not using the state portal was scant knowledge of what the portal offers, reasons more often listed in this survey included lack of need or interest. User satisfaction continues to be high and has improved for a number of domains as compared to the previous survey.

Undertakings undoubtedly appreciate the usefulness of e-services provided by the state. Consequently, 92% stated that online services save time, 90% said such services make transaction of affairs more convenient, and 86% claimed online services enable one to obtain more information. 74% found that state e-services also help undertakings save money. As compared to the previous study, assessments of the usefulness of online services remain on practically the same level – there have been no significant changes in usefulness assessments. 79% of undertakings are generally satisfied with e-services provided by the state, and this overall indicator has gone up somewhat as compared to the previous study.

As a fairly serious issue, it was once again revealed that, regrettably, undertakings do not assess their knowledge of online services to be very good – again, relevant knowledge was most often rated at 3. Only 6% assess their related knowledge as very good, and 31% rate their knowledge as good. Nevertheless, compared to the previous study, undertakings' knowledge has improved by 5 percentage points. The youngest and the oldest age group give their knowledge a poorer assessment than the intermediate age group.

While at the time of the previous study, 60% of undertakings were happy to use online tools only to communicate with the state, the indicator now has risen to 70%. Thus, support of the relevant notion has increased significantly. Younger undertakings support the relevant notion the most with the corresponding indicator at 83%. At the same time, 23% of undertakings are against completely switching to electronic communication (the previous time around, the corresponding percentage was 34%). Economizing on time and money, rationality, and the precondition that relevant environments be as user-friendly as possible were identified as advantages of online communication as the only means of addressing the state. Currently, the greatest disadvantage is the complexity and insufficient reliability of operation of certain environments. A further disadvantage is the fact that, at times, it is difficult to grasp all of the relevant information, on account of which undertakings would like to benefit from an opportunity to ask for clarifications.

In conclusion, it is safe to say that undertakings are happy with most e-services provided by the state. Use of online services has increased in the past two years, and user satisfaction has mostly improved as well. The general level of e-services in other walks of life is continuously improving, equaled by user expectations as pertaining to increasingly more convenient services.

Moving forward, undertakings expect representatives of the state to continue improving the ease and reliability of operation of e-services, as well as a clear and comprehensible layout of relevant websites. Let's recall here that it was the excessive complexity of portals and websites that was highlighted as a principal reason for discontent, next to excessive time spent on using said portals and websites, and, partially, insufficient reliability of operation.

General awareness of the existence of online services must be increased among undertakings. It is difficult to keep up-to-date with everything when the amount of information provided is large, and, predominantly, undertakings assess their knowledge of provided e-services to be fairly low. One possible solution would be to establish certain websites that would provide information on all of the existing e-services, thus ensuring the information reaches the undertakings concerned.