

Sixth Annual Global E-Government Study

South Korea Climbs To Top Rank in Global E-Government

A study of online government has just completed its sixth year, and finds that many nations are improving services and providing information for users. The United States ranks fourth, behind South Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore.

Providence, RI—Asian countries once again dominate e-government ratings and take three of the top five spots in a global e-government study undertaken by researchers at Brown University. South Korea earned the top rank, followed by Taiwan, Singapore, the United States, and Canada. The study shows that 29 percent of government agencies around the world are offering online services, compared to 19 percent in 2005.

The sixth annual survey conducted by Professor Darrell M. West of the Taubman Center for Public Policy at Brown University and a team of researchers evaluates online government websites of 198 countries around the globe. The researchers evaluated government websites based on two dozen criteria, including disability access, the existence of publications and databases, the presence of privacy policies, security policies, contact information, and the number of online services. Previous studies of global e-government have been released annually since 2001.

This year's study reviews 1,782 government websites in 198 countries during June and July 2006. A variety of different sites were analyzed, including executive, legislative, and judicial offices as well as departments and ministries of the government such as health, education, foreign affairs, interior, finance, natural resources, foreign investment, transportation, military, tourism, and telecommunication.

Researchers found that 94 percent of websites have online publications and 72 percent have links to databases. Only 26 percent (up from 18 percent in 2005) show privacy policies and 14 percent present security policies (up from 10 percent in 2005). Software provided by the company Watchfire, Inc. assesses whether websites provide assistance for the vision- or hearing-impaired. According to this software, government websites are still lagging on disability access. Only 23 percent of sites provide disability access, although this is up from 19 percent in 2005.

In addition to analyzing particular features, researchers rated countries for overall e-government performance. By evaluating the aforementioned features as well as others including PDA access, user fees, and foreign language translation, each country is rated on a 0 to 100 point scale. The following table illustrates the rankings of the 198 countries in 2006 and changes from the previous year.

Sixth Annual Global e-Government Rankings

Rankings from 1 to 50:

(Previous year's rank and score are in parentheses)

Rank	Country	Score	Rank	Country	Score
1 (86)	Korea (Republic)	60.3 (26.2)	25 (35)	Swaziland	34.0 (29.0)
2 (1)	Taiwan	49.8 (57.2)	27 (70)	Turkey	33.7 (27.7)
3 (2)	Singapore	47.5 (54.5)	28 (142)	Kazakhstan	33.6 (23.0)
4 (3)	United States	47.4 (50.5)	28 (42)	Malta	33.6 (28.8)
5 (6)	Canada	43.5 (43.3)	30 (10)	Vatican	33.5 (34.5)
6 (11)	Great Britain	42.6 (34.3)	31 (115)	Libya	33.0 (24.0)
7 (9)	Ireland	41.9 (34.6)	31 (21)	Liechtenstein	33.0 (31.0)
8 (7)	Germany	41.5 (35.3)	31 (14)	Macedonia	33.0 (32.0)
8 (53)	Japan	41.5 (28.3)	34 (13)	Chile	32.9 (32.1)
10 (88)	Spain	40.6 (26.0)	34 (53)	Italy	32.9 (28.3)
11 (35)	Dominica	40.0 (29.0)	36 (157)	Malaysia	32.7 (20.8)
12 (8)	Australia	39.9 (35.1)	37 (51)	Slovakia	32.3 (28.4)
13 (55)	Sweden	38.3 (28.2)	38 (48)	Brazil	32.1 (28.5)
14 (26)	New Zealand	37.6 (30.4)	39 (181)	Bhutan	32.0 (18.0)
15 (19)	Netherlands	37.4 (31.4)	39 (183)	Equatorial Guinea	32.0 (16.0)
16 (20)	Switzerland	36.9 (31.2)	39 (115)	Monaco	32.0 (24.0)
17 (115)	Azerbaijan	36.0 (24.0)	39 (35)	Tuvalu	32.0 (29.0)
17 (183)	Korea (Dem Republic)	36.0 (16.0)	43 (109)	Russia	31.9 (24.2)
19 (14)	Finland	35.6 (32.0)	44 (30)	Denmark	31.8 (29.7)
20 (4)	Hong Kong	35.4 (46.2)	44 (45)	Slovenia	31.8 (28.6)
21 (34)	Norway	35.0 (29.2)	46 (45)	Czech Republic	31.7 (28.6)
21 (93)	Ukraine	35.0 (25.8)	47 (150)	Georgia	31.4 (21.3)
23 (48)	France	34.7 (28.5)	48 (43)	Portugal	31.3 (28.7)
24 (27)	Qatar	34.5 (30.1)	48 (56)	Serbia and Montenegro	31.3 (28.1)
25 (14)	Estonia	34.0 (32.0)	50 (29)	Syria	31.2 (30.0)

Rankings from 51 to 100:

51 (32)	Iceland	31.1 (29.3)	76 (5)	China (People's Republic)	28.8 (44.3)
51 (98)	Nigeria	31.1 (25.4)	77 (103)	India	28.7 (24.8)
53 (35)	St. Lucia	31.0 (29.0)	77 (71)	Jordan	28.7 (27.5)
54 (74)	Peru	30.8 (27.1)	77 (73)	Lebanon	28.7 (27.3)
55 (81)	Luxembourg	30.7 (26.8)	80 (35)	Colombia	28.6 (29.0)
56 (57)	Austria	30.6 (28.0)	81 (76)	Kuwait	28.5 (27.0)
56 (83)	Latvia	30.6 (26.6)	82 (104)	Belgium	28.4 (24.6)
58 (107)	Hungary	30.5 (24.4)	83 (87)	Lithuania	28.3 (26.1)
59 (76)	Philippines	30.4 (27.0)	84 (74)	Cyprus (Republic)	28.3 (27.1)
60 (80)	Nepal	30.3 (26.9)	85 (88)	Oman	28.1 (26.0)
61 (69)	Egypt	30.2 (27.8)	86 (115)	Bangladesh	28.0 (24.0)
61 (84)	Romania	30.2 (26.4)	86 (183)	Bolivia	28.0 (16.0)
63 (92)	Poland	30.1 (25.9)	86 (109)	Croatia	28.0 (24.2)
64 (115)	Belarus	30.0 (24.0)	86 (161)	Cyprus (Turkish Republic)	28.0 (20.0)
65 (21)	Bahrain	29.6 (31.0)	86 (57)	Ghana	28.0 (28.0)
66 (27)	Arab Emirates	29.5 (30.1)	86 (101)	Greece	28.0 (25.1)
67 (21)	Israel	29.4 (31.0)	86 (152)	Guatemala	28.0 (21.0)
68 (30)	Mexico	29.3 (29.7)	86 (14)	Guinea-Bissau	28.0 (32.0)
68 (179)	Sudan	29.3 (18.7)	86 (57)	Haiti	28.0 (28.0)
70 (106)	South Africa	29.2 (24.5)	86 (57)	Laos	28.0 (28.0)
71 (45)	Bosnia and Herzegovina	29.1 (28.6)	86 (115)	Sri Lanka	28.0 (24.0)
71 (95)	Pakistan	29.1 (25.5)	86 (161)	Tajikistan	28.0 (20.0)
73 (115)	Eritrea	29.0 (24.0)	98 (72)	Saudi Arabia	27.9 (27.4)
73 (93)	Maldives	29.0 (25.8)	99 (107)	Ecuador	27.5 (24.4)
73 (57)	Mongolia	29.0 (28.0)	99 (159)	Kenya	27.5 (20.7)

Rankings from 101 to 150:

101 (43)	East Timor	27.4 (28.7)	125 (115)	Marshall Islands	25.0 (24.0)
102 (25)	Iran	27.3 (30.7)	125 (76)	Vietnam	25.0 (27.0)
103 (81)	Iraq	27.0 (26.8)	128 (88)	Algeria	24.6 (26.0)
103 (138)	Panama	27.0 (23.5)	129 (177)	San Marino	24.3 (19.3)
103 (115)	Uzbekistan	27.0 (24.0)	130 (104)	Morocco	24.2 (24.6)
106 (35)	Brunei	26.8 (29.0)	130 (141)	Uruguay	24.2 (23.2)
107 (99)	Afghanistan	26.7 (25.3)	132 (51)	Albania	24.0 (28.4)
107 (145)	Angola	26.7 (22.7)	132 (35)	Andorra	24.0 (29.0)
107 (32)	Benin	26.7 (29.3)	132 (12)	Bahamas	24.0 (34.0)
110 (95)	Jamaica	26.4 (25.5)	132 (57)	Congo (Dem. Rep)	24.0 (28.0)
110 (136)	Tunisia	26.4 (23.6)	132(115)	Côte d'Ivoire	24.0 (24.0)
112 (85)	Argentina	26.1 (26.3)	132 (147)	Gabon	24.0 (22.0)
113 (115)	Bulgaria	26.0 (24.0)	132 (88)	Gambia	24.0 (26.0)
113 (115)	Mauritania	26.0 (24.0)	132 (161)	Guyana	24.0 (20.0)
113 (136)	Nicaragua	26.0 (23.6)	132 (57)	Liberia	24.0 (28.0)
113 (115)	St. Vincent, Grenadines	26.0 (24.0)	132 (57)	Moldova	24.0 (28.0)
113 (161)	Zimbabwe	26.0 (20.0)	132(115)	Mozambique	24.0 (24.0)
118 (176)	Seychelles	25.5 (19.7)	132 (115)	Sierra Leone	24.0 (24.0)
119 (115)	Armenia	25.3 (24.0)	132 (197)	Somalia	24.0 (12.0)
119 (102)	El Salvador	25.3 (25.0)	132(115)	St. Kitts	24.0 (24.0)
119 (112)	Fiji	25.3 (24.1)	132 (183)	Suriname	24.0 (16.0)
119 (100)	Myanmar	25.3 (25.3)	132 (161)	Turkmenistan	24.0 (20.0)
119 (147)	Paraguay	25.3 (22.0)	148 (57)	Antigua and Barbuda	23.7 (28.0)
124 (140)	Senegal	25.1 (23.4)	148 (155)	Mauritius	23.7 (20.9)
125 (161)	Congo (Republic)	25.0 (20.0)	150 (112)	Zambia	23.5 (24.1)

Rankings from 151 to 198:

151 (112)	Thailand	23.4 (24.1)	173 (115)	Indonesia	20.0 (24.0)
151 (107)	Trinidad and Tobago	23.4 (24.4)	173 (57)	Madagascar	20.0 (28.0)
151 (144)	Yemen	23.4 (22.9)	173 (183)	Mali	20.0 (16.0)
154 (155)	Rwanda	23.3 (20.9)	173 (183)	Niger	20.0 (16.0)
155 (115)	Cambodia	23.2 (24.0)	173 (161)	Niue	20.0 (20.0)
155 (142)	Venezuela	23.2 (23.5)	173 (183)	Palau	20.0 (16.0)
157 (178)	Cuba	22.7 (19.1)	173 (161)	Somaliland	20.0 (20.0)
158 (95)	Uganda	22.5 (25.5)	173 (183)	Vanuatu	20.0 (16.0)
159 (142)	Kyrgyzstan	22.4 (23.0)	184 (183)	Cameroon	19.0 (16.0)
160 (149)	Djibouti	22.1 (21.9)	185 (196)	Solomon Islands	18.0 (14.0)
161 (21)	Belize	22.0 (31.0)	186 (194)	Tanzania	17.5 (15.2)
161 (76)	Botswana	22.0 (27.0)	187 (146)	Burkina Faso	17.0 (22.4)
161 (161)	Cape Verde	22.0 (20.0)	188 (195)	Lesotho	16.7 (14.7)
161 (48)	Cook Islands	22.0 (28.5)	189 (161)	Central African Rep.	16.0 (20.0)
161 (115)	Dominican Republic	22.0 (24.0)	189 (183)	Grenada	16.0 (16.0)
161 (115)	Ethiopia	22.0 (24.0)	189 (161)	Guinea	16.0 (20.0)
161 (157)	Samoa	22.0 (20.8)	189 (183)	São Tomé and Príncipe	16.0 (16.0)
168 (152)	Namibia	21.4 (21.0)	189 (161)	Togo	16.0 (20.0)
169 (152)	Micronesia	21.0 (21.0)	189 (57)	Tonga	16.0 (28.0)
169 (182)	Papua New Guinea	21.0(17.1)	195 (197)	Kiribati	12.0 (12.0)
171 (160)	Honduras	20.8 (20.2)	195 (161)	Nauru	16.0 (20.0)
172 (150)	Malawi	20.7 (21.3)	197 (14)	Chad	9.0 (32.0)
173 (179)	Barbados	20.0 (18.7)	198 (57)	Burundi	8.0 (28.0)
173 (161)	Comoros	20.0 (20.0)			
173 (161)	Costa Rica	20.0 (20.0)			

In order to improve electronic government, the report suggests that governments take several steps to reach their full potential in terms of accessibility and effectiveness. Governments should make their sites more user-friendly by improving site design. Clutter such as too much text in the navigation bars should be reduced and the number of ads on each page should be kept to a

minimum. When governments have a portal page, the page should have links to other departments or ministries; this is a useful way to integrate e-government so each department is not just a single, separate entity on the World Wide Web. Sitemaps help citizens locate information.

Communication between the government and its citizens is crucial to progressing towards a more effective online presence. Feedback forms, e-mail addresses, polls, and other means of communication are vital to improving the sites to cater to citizens' needs.

Site maintenance is increasingly important in the technological age, but it is often overlooked. Web designers add features and services to sites without ensuring their constant functioning. Many sites are under construction or have not been updated. Designers should keep their sites up-to-date to ensure that all information is accurate and complete.

Numerous sites already provide services revolving around tourism, such as hotel and flight bookings. However, the government should not only target tourists, but offer services that are fully executable online for citizens as well. In some cases, online services exist, but they are not utilized by citizens. To help increase the use of e-services, countries could follow Canada's model of publicizing its services, which posts links to personalized online services in the navigation bar of their sites. In addition, a comprehensive list of all of the services offered should be located on one page in order to make them easy to find and to increase citizens' awareness of the available services.

For more information on this study, contact Professor Darrell M. West of Brown University at (401) 863-1163 or email Darrell_West@brown.edu. The full Global E-Government Study is online at www.insidepolitics.org. The Appendix of the report presents detailed profiles of each of the 198 national governments.