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Assessing and Comparing E-Mail Responsiveness in the Bavarian Public Sector

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Abstract. E-mail is the most important electronic communication medium for governments with their constituents. While there are a lot of maturity models and benchmarking studies focusing on the technological and organizational integration of information technology in governments, the “customer side” of e-government maturity has been often neglected. Replicating studies from Australia, New Zealand, Slovenia and Denmark, this study explores the responsiveness concerning customer-government e-mail correspondence for the Bavarian Public Sector. Our study assesses the response rate and quality of 375 e-mails send to public administrations in Bavaria. Our results show that the Bavarian Public Administration has a poor responsiveness compared to other countries in terms of both quantity and quality. Based on our results, we provide recommendations for future research and practice.

Keywords: E-Mail, Responsiveness, E-Government, Public Sector, Bavaria

1 Introduction

“E-government is an important asset in the competition between regions because in the digital era citizens, investors, companies and research institutions have the right to expect that public administrations are just as fast, flexible and uncomplicated as the private sector”[4]

According to the e-government guide of the Bavarian Government [4], e-government readiness is a major concern for the Bavarian public administration. Specifically regarding e-mail communication the digital agenda of the German Federal Government [7] states that one of the main aims is that the government should ensure that it [the government and administration] is easily reachable. Therefore “De-Mail” [which is a standardized encrypted e-mail format according to a special law] will be introduced widespread [7]. This statement shows that there is a specific plan for using e-mail communication in governmental topics. But this raises the question: How well is e-mail communication adopted among public institutions now? Because if there are problems and difficulties in the current situation in using e-mail technology a more

integrated e-government system for e-mails will make the communication via e-mail much more important for both sides.

In the private sector information technology (IT) is deeply adopted into the structure of companies and their processes [10]. Although there are some barriers (e.g. the digital divide and other legal issues) which complicate the transformation for the public sector in this topic, the inclusion of IT is an important issue for the public service sector nowadays [12]. Therefore, a new research field called e-government has emerged [5]. Like in business, many authors have called for research that dedicates the attention to the “customer” of government. Since the customer wants a fast, transparent and high-quality service the government has to satisfy these demands. Further, as benchmarking of responsiveness is an indirect indicator on how seriously governments treat their citizens [6], the responsiveness level of public institutions becomes more and more important to observe for quality reports, which are a part of the government’s overall service quality.

However, most maturity models for digital government development assessment only focus on the technological and structural implementation of IT in the public sector and do not explore the demand side of the government-customer relationship. Mainly these models only show the capabilities of the system, but not really their performance [1, 3, 5]. So these models usually lack a user-centered, citizen-based approach and do not measure if the “customer” (=citizen) is satisfied with the service or response he receives within this system [10].

Since e-mail is one of the most common used communication channels in citizen-government interaction via internet nowadays [6], the responsiveness concerning this medium in Government-to-Citizen (G2C) and Government-to-Business (G2B) communication is highly interesting and relevant for research and can be seen as a benchmark for digital government maturity from the customer side of view. Considering the fact that digital government management is an emerging issue in today’s public institutions, this topic is also highly interesting for practical purposes. The question to be raised now is: What is the quality of e-mail responsiveness of the Bavarian Public institutions and how is the performance compared with other countries? Replicating studies from New Zealand, Australia, Slovenia and Denmark, this study examines the responsiveness rate, pace and quality of the public sector in Bavaria concerning e-mail correspondence.

The structure of the paper is as follows: First of all, the basic details about e-government maturity are explained and discussed. Afterwards a literature review on the importance of responsiveness will demonstrate the relevance of responsiveness in digital government maturity. Section three introduces our study context. The subsequent section presents the methodology of our empirical study. In the next step the findings of the e-mail study will be presented and explained. Afterwards the main results and findings of the paper will be discussed. The next section will then give an outlook on possible future research in this field. Lastly the most important findings will be summed up.

2 Theoretical Foundation

In this section, an overview on the theoretical basics for this paper is provided before the empirical study is presented. First a short definition of digital government is given. Afterwards, we show that most maturity models deal only with the provider sided view of e-government and highlight the importance of responsiveness for assessing e-government maturity.

The main idea of digital government is to improve the relationship between government and his customers (citizens or businesses) through the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) [4, 12].

One of the main markers for describing the customer-government relationship is trust [11]. If society's trust in government is declining, the political participation of society declines as well. And with the descending political participation, the willingness to accept the government's decisions decreases accordingly. This is a serious problem for democracy because without the willingness to accept government decisions the political system loses his legitimacy [12]. To sum it up, it is possible to say that trust and hereby also political participation are the key factors of democracy. Since the declining public trust in government is one of the most crucial problems of democracy nowadays [11] this topic becomes a more and more emerging issue.

Maturity models are used in research to assess, compare and benchmark e-government maturity [1]. Although Layne and Lee [9] claim for their model that e-government maturity depends on technological and organizational complexity, Andersen and Henriksen [2] state that without a user perspective the model misses measuring the real effectiveness of the observed e-government tool or system.

Therefore, according to Banister [3] most e-government rankings are unreliable, i.e. their predictions on the real service outcome for the customer are inaccurate. In the case of e-mails according to West [13], it is not only important to have an e-mail address shown on the website of the institution, it is more important that actually someone reads and responds to the request of the customer. Andersen and Henriksen [2] therefore applied a user focused view to one axis of the stage model and potential digitalization driven activities on the other one in order to shift the focus from technical capabilities more onto the customer outcome.

Besides the fact of the response itself, the time and content of the response are also important. Scott et al. [10] identified some net benefits of e-government usage and pointed out that the response time or pace has an important role in the responsiveness perception of the user. Nevertheless, besides the response pace the response quality is also a crucial issue, as an incorrect or incomplete answer is totally useless for the customer although it might have come in very fast [1]. In general, the interaction quality with government will influence whether people trust in government, that is whether people feel that government is benevolent, competent, honest, and predictable [14]. Therefore, responsiveness (in particular e-mail responsiveness) is an im-

portant aspect to transform the relationship between government and their customers in a positive manner by means of ICT.

3 Case presentation for Bavaria.

The former Bavarian Minister for the Bavarian State Chancellery Erwin Huber wrote in 2002 in the Bavarian Concept for e-government that, due to the digital revolutions the expectancies of citizens concerning pace, quality and transparency towards the public administrations increased heavily [4]. The strategy agenda published in 2002 states that e-government is for the Bavarian Government to be understood as an extension of public services and that their self-stated aim is to connect customer and provider closer through the usage of IT in government matters [4]. Since e-mails are the easiest way for contact establishment via IT between two sides and Bavaria is the financially strongest federal state in Germany, the Bavarian public administration is an interesting study object for e-government maturity. Bavaria also has published its e-government strategy in 2002 stating that e-mail responsiveness is a major concern for them. If we would observe any difficulties in using e-mail, this finding will question the implementation of this strategy agenda which was published more than a decade ago.

4 Empirical Study

In November-December 2013, 375 Bavarian administration units were selected to conduct a study on their e-mail responsiveness towards their customers. In the following part the methodology and findings of this research will be presented.

In the second step of the empirical section the Bavarian results will be compared with the results from the previously presented studies. Afterwards the findings for Bavaria will be discussed with inclusion of the self-assessment phone interviews. Lastly a conclusion and outlook will be given.

4.1 Methodology

The methodology of this study is mostly based on the study design of Gauld et al. from 2009 [8], which also was adapted by Andersen et al. in 2011 [1]. For the collection of the e-mail addresses of the municipalities, counties and regions the websites of the communal central associations for each of these administrative levels was accessed and the stated contact e-mail addresses of the members were included for the study. This resulted in 267 e-mail addresses for municipalities, 71 for counties and 6 for regions. Since the number of regions is utterly low and the responsibilities are similar, the counties and regions were categorized into one group.

For the ministries and other agencies the government portal “Bayern|Direkt” (www.bayern.de) was used. It was possible to find the contact information for all federal state ministries and agencies of Bavaria on “Bayern|Direkt”. All in all this

provided the e-mail addresses for the 10 ministries and subjectively chosen 21 important other agencies and governmental institutions (e.g. Bavarian Tax Agency, Bavarian Administration of State-Owned Palaces, Gardens and Lakes). In sum 375 administrative units were in the focus of this study.

To all public institutions the following e-mail in German asking regarding a package pick up at their institution was sent:

Dear Sir or Madam,

We, the Citykurierdienst, were supposed to pick up a package at your institution today. Unfortunately our colleague had problems in finding your responsible post office. Therefore I would like to ask you for your post office's address and opening times. Thank you.

*Best Regards,
Johannes Becker
City-Kurier*

The test e-mails were sent about eight o'clock in the evening to make sure that no institution had the chance to answer the e-mail before the next working day. To avoid being rejected by spam filters all e-mails were sent individually. So the address from which the e-mails were sent was not classified as a spammer in grey or black listing procedures. Only 16 e-mails came back with failure messages because of errors in e-mail addresses which were published wrong in the portals or just did not exist anymore.

Only the successfully sent 359 e-mails were considered for the analysis. It is notable to see that the official government sites provided 16 wrong e-mail addresses which revealed that 4.2% of the investigated e-mail addresses were wrong listed in official portals. This indicates that the websites, which provided the e-mail addresses, are not updated regularly. This can be seen as a first hint for a poor quality level of the Bavarian public institutions concerning e-mail and e-mail correspondence.

All e-mail responses were read and the time until the receipt for a response was noted and the quality was rated: "2+" similar to Gauld et al. and Andersen et al.'s "A" for responses which answered both questions and gave additional information (e.g. GPS coordinates, information about construction works on the roads). "2" ("B" in Gauld et al. and Andersen et al.) was the rating for answers where both questions were answered. And finally "1" (Gauld et al. and Andersen et al. "C") for one answer and "0" (Gauld et al. and Andersen et al. "D") for answers which provided no information concerning the questions. Only directly in the e-mail stated answers were considered as valuable answers. Information from the signature or references to the website were not counted as an valuable answer because they did not answer the question specifically. For example the information in the signature does not guarantee that the department, where the e-mail came from, has the same opening hours like the department which the inquirer needs.

Also auto-responses, which only provide a "your message was received" response, were not included into the study as a response, only human written e-mails were

counted. The information about time and quality per unit were added in a Microsoft Office Excel Sheet and documented for the analysis. About three months after the data collection for the e-mails, phone interviews to examine the reasons for non-responses and the satisfaction for the own responses were performed on a small sample of randomly chosen units.

To be able to better interpret our findings from our primary data, we also made use of secondary data provided by three previously conducted studies. These background and context of these studies will shortly be explained. Mitja Dečman [6] conducted one of the first studies on e-mail responsiveness for the public sector in 2005 for Slovenia. Dečman's "research method focuses on measuring the responsiveness of a customer's demand towards public administration organization or special employee" [6]. In sum Mitja Dečman sent 355 e-mails to Members of Parliament (90 e-mails), Ministries (15 e-mails), Administrative districts (58 e-mails) and Municipalities (192 e-mails). The questions were specifically written for every organization type [6]: Municipalities were asked where the meeting protocols of council meetings could be found online. Administrative districts had to answer the question, what the tax amount for an official name changing is. A question regarding the online search for currently prepared law proposals from the considered ministry was asked to ministries. And finally the Members of Parliament were asked, if it is possible to join a parliament session as a visitor.

Gauld et al. assessed the e-mail responsiveness for the public administrations of Australia and New Zealand. For this purpose, the research team sent 273 e-mails to two different levels of government in November-December 2006. To all public agencies the same e-mail was sent and their responds were analyzed considering their time for sending a response. Unlike in Mitja Dečman's research, also the quality of the responses was assessed here [8]. The e-mail contained a query asking for the opening times and address of an institution. The e-mail stated that a package had to be picked up from this institution by the inquirer. These two questions were used to assess the quality of the responses.

Andersen et al. replicated the study from Gauld et al. from 2009 for Denmark and adapted the methodology of the whole study according to the original study from New Zealand. The Danish research included 175 administrative units from Denmark into the study whereas 98 were municipalities, 5 were included in the group regions, 19 in ministries or federal institutions and 51 in agencies and other governmental institutions [1]. The content of the e-mail was similar to the e-mail designed by Gauld et al.'s from 2009.

4.2 Results

Comparing the total response rate of 43.2% for Bavaria with the corresponding results of Australia (67.5% → +24.3%), New Zealand (89.3% → +46.1%), Denmark (88.3% → +45.1%) and Slovenia (53.6% → +10.4%) shows that Bavaria falls considerably behind all of them. Also a comparison of the Bavarian results with the other countries' results per administration level shows that the other countries achieve higher response rates:

The difference for Bavaria (with 45.2%) in the group regions/state compared with Slovenia is -42.8%, with Denmark -54.8% and with Australia -23.0%. In the group ministries/federal the differences between Bavaria (20.0%) and the other countries is -40.0% compared with Slovenia and Australia, -58.9% with Denmark and -64.3% with New Zealand. Since the group of agencies and other governmental institutions was only assessed for Denmark and Bavaria, only a comparison between these countries can be made in the last group, where the difference between the response rates is -41.2%.

Only on the municipal level the Bavarian units have once a +4.3% rate compared with Slovenia. The comparison with all other countries shows again that Bavaria has a lower response rate with a difference of +55.7% for Denmark and with +47.0% for New Zealand.

	C	MUN	R/S	M/F	AGN	Total
No. of e-mails sent	SLO	154	58	15	n.a.	227
	AU	n.a.	145	15	n.a.	160
	NZ	81	n.a.	32	n.a.	113
	DK	98	5	19	51	175
	BAV	255	73	10	21	359
Replies (% out of e-mails sent)	SLO	40.0%	88.0%	60.0%	n.a.	53.6%
	AU	n.a.	68.2%	60.0%	n.a.	67.5%
	NZ	91.3%	n.a.	84.3%	n.a.	89.3%
	DK	100.0%	100.0%	78.9%	74.5%	88.3%
	BAV	44.3%	45.2%	20.0%	33.3%	43.2%
Replies within 24h (% out of e-mails sent)	SLO	30.5%	58.6%	33.3%	n.a.	37.9%
	AU	n.a.	63.4%	46.6%	n.a.	61.8%
	NZ	90.1%	n.a.	84.3%	n.a.	88.5%
	DK	93.8%	100.0%	78.9%	72.5%	86.3%
	BAV	36.9%	41.1%	20.0%	33.3%	37.0%

Table 1. Overview on response rates for tested countries
(C: Country, MUN: Municipalities, R/S: Regions/States, M/F: Ministries/Federal, AGN: Agencies and other governmental institutions)

Since a quick response is not the mere criteria, also the response qualities of the countries have to be compared too. However, Dečman [6] did not assess the quality of the responses for Slovenia. Therefore a comparison concerning the quality can only be made among Australia, New Zealand, Denmark and Bavaria.

Looking at the response quality for sufficient answers (2 and 2+) shows that with about three-quarters (74.3% of all test e-mails) New Zealand has the best response quality among all countries and shows a difference to Bavaria of +47.3%. With 63.5% Denmark comes next and shows a difference of +36.5% to the Bavarian result. Australia has with 34.3% besides Bavaria the second lowest rate in this category and shows a difference of +7.3% in comparison with the Bavarian result. It is noticeable that either the municipalities or the regions/states have the highest quality rate in all four countries. This indicates that the lower ranked and more citizen near government offices, show a higher e-mail response quality than the higher ones.

Breaking the received answers down on the four different quality levels shows that 41.9% of the Australian administration units did not provide any answer at all with their provided responses, a quite remarkable score. For New Zealand this number falls to 15.9% and for Denmark to 11.6%. Bavaria has here the lowest number with 3.6% which indicates that the Bavarian Public Administrations are most likely to deliver an informative response rather than providing no information with the response. Level 1 answers for Australia show with 27.4% which makes a plus of 14.8% compared with New Zealand, a plus of 1.9% compared with Denmark and a plus of 15.1% compared with Bavaria.

Splitting the numbers for the sufficient level up again to the different levels 2 and 2+ shows for level 2 responses that Bavaria has here the majority of its responses throughout all administrative groups. But again Bavaria shows the lowest performance when these numbers are compared with the other countries. Only in the group ministries Bavaria has a plus of 0.5% compared with Australia. In all other groups compared with the other countries the Bavarian results show again negative differences.

For level 2+ it can be stated that municipalities are most likely to give a more qualitative feedback than the other groups. Particularly the New Zealand municipalities show here again a remarkable performance with almost one quarter (23.8%) of their responses being ranked as 2+. In Bavaria only the 1.3% of the municipalities included into the study gave additional information (besides opening time and address) with their response.

For all other administrative groups reflected in this study, the numbers show that an efficient answering (quality level 2) of questions seems to be in the focus of most public service providers.

	C	Q	MUN	R/S	M/F	AGN	Total
Answered at least both questions (% out of e-mails sent)	AU	2/2+	n.a.	35.8%	20.0%	n.a.	34.3%
	NZ	2/2+	81.5%	n.a.	56.2%	n.a.	74.3%
	DK	2/2+	74.4%	100.0%	21.1%	58.8%	63.5%
	BAV	2/2+	29,0%	24,7%	10,0%	19,0%	27,0%
Overall quality of response (% out of e-mails sent)	AU	0	n.a.	40.0%	57.1%	n.a.	41.9%
		1	n.a.	27.2%	28.5%	n.a.	27.4%
		2	n.a.	23.0%	9.5%	n.a.	21.5%
		2+	n.a.	9.7%	4.7%	n.a.	9.1%
	NZ	0	11.9%	n.a.	25.7%	n.a.	15.9%
		1	8.3%	n.a.	22.8%	n.a.	12.6%
		2	55.9%	n.a.	42.8%	n.a.	52.1%
		2+	23.8%	n.a.	8.5%	n.a.	19.3%
	DK	0	0.0%	0.0%	21.0%	25.4%	11.6%
		1	28.5%	0.0%	57.8%	15.6%	25.5%
		2	71.4%	100.0%	21.0%	58.8%	62.8%
		2+	3.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%
	BAV	0	2.7%	5.5%	0.0%	9.5%	3.6%
		1	12.5%	13.7%	10.0%	4.8%	12.3%
		2	27.8%	24.7%	10.0%	19.0%	26.2%
		2+	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%

Table 2. Overview on response quality for tested countries
(C: country, Q: Quality, MUN: Municipalities, R/S: Regions/States, M/F: Ministries/Federal, AGN: Agencies and other governmental institutions)

All comparisons lead to the clear result that Bavaria has the least responsive public administration concerning the response rate for e-mails and also speed and quality of their responses in this study. Bavaria not only responds to less of the test e-mails compared with other countries, but also has a not satisfactory quality rate with only 27.0% of the tested e-mails being answered with the needed information.

4.3 Discussion

The findings and comparison suggest that Bavaria with responding to 43.2% of the e-mails sent has a less responsive public administration concerning the overall rate of responses for all tested countries. Concerning the response rate with a sufficient response quality Bavaria has with 27.0% again the worst performance.

The first question to raise in this context is: what can be the reasons for this response performance? To find an answer for this question, four public institutions from Bavaria, which did not answer at all, were chosen for a phone interview. The called phone numbers were searched on the contact site of the institutions' websites. They were called three months after the data collection. After a short introduction about the

setup and aim of the study, the employee was asked whether he or she could explain, why no response from their administration unit was received. Although the interviewed people were told in advance that the interviews will be kept anonymously, so that neither the person's nor the institution's name will be revealed in the study, it is noticeable that none of the called administration employees was ready at first to give any information at all. After ensuring them again that all information would be handled anonymous and that it is essential for the studies discussion part the public employees agreed to comment on the situation.

The received answers for non-responses could be classified in two groups by their statements. Group one: "We did not receive an e-mail at all" group and group two: "Your e-mail might be overseen" group.

For the first group it was not further possible to investigate why or where the e-mail was lost since the employees could not find the test e-mail. It was only stated that "such a situation occurred not often and that they could not explain the current situation".

For the other group all employees stated that the e-mail was forwarded to the e-mail office of the institution. After that the employees could not track the e-mail and were also not willing to establish contact to the e-mail office.

It was only stated that it might be the case that someone of his coworkers in the post office might have seen and even read the e-mail. But he might not have had time to respond to the e-mail. So according to this case the e-mails were received and were also handled/forwarded by an employee, but could not be delivered successfully in the internal process. This indicates a less professional management concerning the e-mail administration for this public institution in particular and probably for other public institutions as well. The interviews showed first of all that public institutions hesitated to answer critical questions concerning their responsiveness. This might be due to the fact that they seem to have forgotten or even lost some e-mails they received.

On the other hand it is also interesting to know if the institutions, which answered, were satisfied with the response rate, time and quality they achieved. Therefore, again four institutions were chosen for a short telephone interview and after being introduced to the setup of the study and the achieved response time and quality of their institution. The employees were asked for their function and whether they are satisfied with the response time and quality of their institution. The phone numbers were again found on the contact site of the institution's website.

It was noticeable to find out that this time the employees did not hesitate to answer the questions or establish contact to other departments of their house. Except one little municipality, which did not have an extra post office, all employees forwarded the interviewer to an employee of the post office. This discrepancy suggests that the employees from non-respondent public institutions were unlikely to talk about this critical subject. This might be due to the fact of the question asking directly for reasons for non-responses.

The interviewed employees for a middle-large municipality and a security service, which both had a response time in the 24 hour time span and achieved the quality

level 2, said that they were fully satisfied with their response pace and quality. They stated that they did not understand why any additional information for the level 2+ should be given, since this information is fully enough to answer the asked questions. The municipal employee stated also that the reason for this was a national policy which aims to control a secure handling of information to make sure that sensitive information will not be given away. Trying to get a confirmation for this statement from another public employee in the next two interviews was not successful which leads to the assumption that either this policy does not exist or that the employees are not well informed.

The two administration units which also answered in the 24 hours but achieved only quality level 1 as response quality were also questioned for a self-assessment. The interview showed that one administration unit admitted that the quality level 1 was not satisfactory for them and that a full response concerning the address should have been given too. The other one claimed that they were fully satisfied because the information for the address could have been found on the website to which the link was provided in the e-mail signature. Since the public employees all justified their response quality, these findings indicate that they are satisfied with their responsiveness achieved in this study.

4.4 Conclusion and Outlook

All these findings now lead to the question how bad benchmarks like these can be encountered in future. In the private sector the professionalism of communication in general is tracked and monitored to ensure a high quality service for the customers to keep him satisfied. Possible solutions might be adopting commonly used standard techniques and strategies from the private sector such as:

- Reviewing the responsibilities for all group e-mailboxes
- Moving away from simple e-mail systems (e.g. Outlook) to more professionalized ticketing systems, including satisfaction surveys for the customer
- Expansion of training the staff to answer to requests digitally and also work more professional with IT at all
- Ongoing quality management and benchmarking by central office

With these actions it can easily be ensured that the quality levels of e-mail communication towards the customer will achieve a higher quality level than before.

Although the number of tested institutions from Bavaria was higher than for the other countries, all studies based on almost the same setup and methodology which makes it possible to compare the Bavarian results with the other results. The comparison showed that all other countries had a better performance concerning almost all issues. Only on the municipal level Bavaria could compete in some issues with the other countries.

This paper was limited by some restrictions. First of all, although no error or failure

messages were received during the e-mail sending process, which leads to the assumption that all e-mails were delivered, it cannot be certainly said that all e-mails were delivered correctly to the inbox of the receiver. Another shortcoming of the paper is the investigation for non-responses, therefore an explicit investigation in this topic could also provide helpful information to avoid e-mails getting forgotten or lost in the e-mail handling processes in the future. Also asking for information, which can already be found on the website easily, seems not to be an ideal query for the e-mail. Nevertheless this study was conducted with this methodology, since one of the aims of this research paper was to compare the results with similar studies. Therefore conducting this study again with a more specific question could lead to other findings.

Since this paper had a predefined scope to sum up the most important findings in the allowed size, only the most important benchmark numbers as response rate, response rate within 24 hours and the response quality were under investigation. The data sample itself could be used for a much more detailed research in this field and could so provide even more information about the current status of the responsiveness of the Bavarian public sector.

Further research in this area could be the assessment for whole Germany including a comparison among the federal states. It also would be interesting to see how the responsiveness concerning e-mail correspondence develops after some time. Therefore such a study could be repeated again after 5 or 10 years. Also it could be interesting to conduct a large-scale survey to research if citizens or businesses are satisfied with the e-mail services and quality provided by their public administration units.

A similar research with a comparison concerning the responsiveness between private sector institutions and public sector institutions could answer the question whether the responsiveness level in a country is specific high or low for the public sector. If there are no discrepancies between the private and public institutions, it can be assumed that the general responsiveness in this country is on that certain level.

5 Short Summary

This study assessed and showed the current status of e-mail responsiveness for the Bavarian sector in comparison with other countries. The main finding is that Bavaria should improve its response rate and response quality significantly to improve its overall responsiveness which is an important success factor for citizens' and business' trust in government.

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