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New Policy Brief

Help Where It's Most Needed

How Leading Administrations are Using 'Proactive Public-Service Delivery' to Aid Citizens
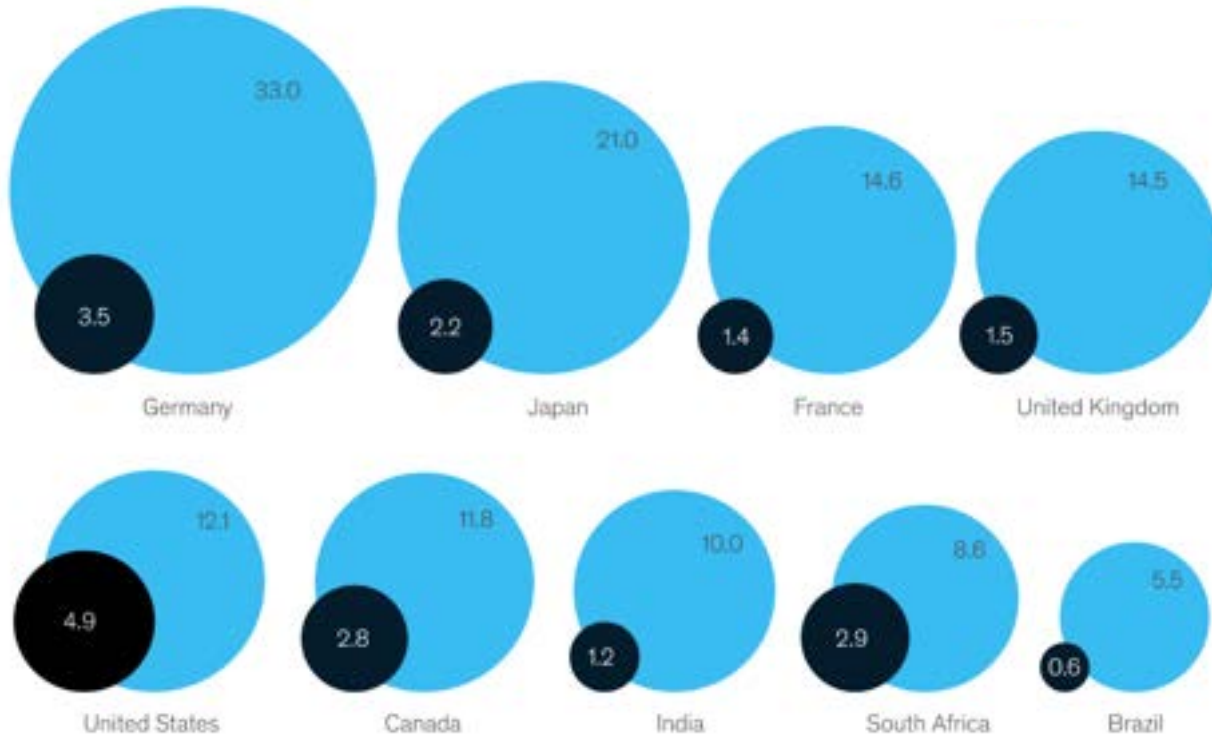
David Osimo, the Lisbon Council
UserCentriCities Summit
15 November 2022, Barcelona

Unprecedented public spending in the age of disruption

Economic-stimulus crisis response, % of GDP[1]

Country	COVID-19	2008
Germany	33.0	3.5
Japan	21.0	2.2
France	14.6	1.4
United Kingdom	14.5	1.5
United States	12.1	4.9
Canada	11.8	2.8
India	10.0	1.2
South Africa	8.6	2.9
Brazil	5.5	0.6

Grants €338 bn

Recovery and Resilience Facility total €723.8 bn

Loans up to €385.8 bn

Source: McKinsey

● 2008 financial crisis[2] ● COVID-19 crisis

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2

But help doesn't always reach those that most need it

Gaps in take-up of social benefits, selected countries

| Country	Benefit	Gap
Belgium	Guaranteed income 2007	57%
United Kingdom	Family credit 2002	47%
Czech Republic	Material need benefit 2010/2011	72%
Germany	Social assistance 2007	46%
Ireland	Family income supplement 2005	70%

Source: Eurofound

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Reasons:
- Stygma
- Lack of awareness
- Cumbersome process

Making services fully digital helps, but not everyone

Source: Eurostat
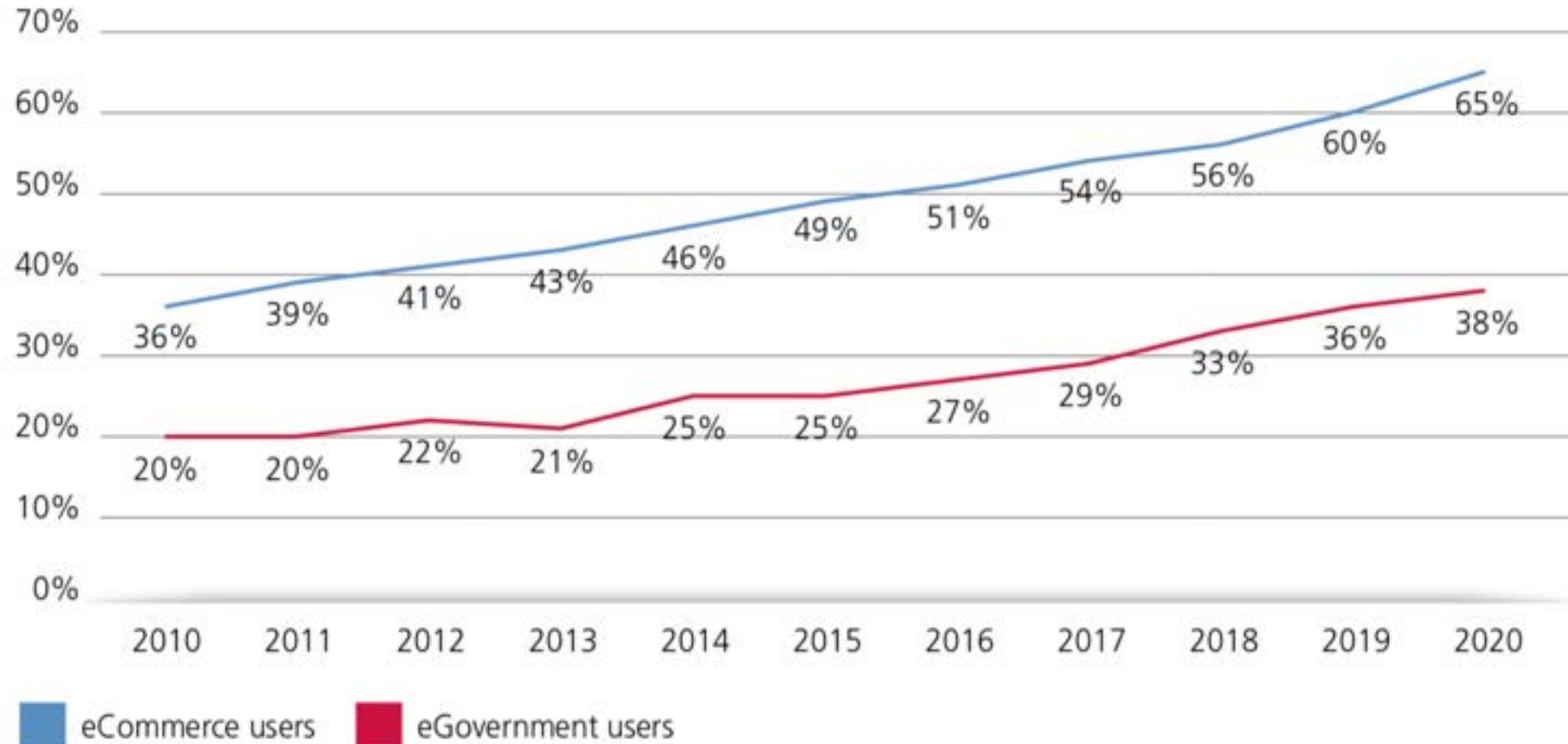
The next step: proactive service delivery

Services and benefits automatically provided to those who qualify, based on data already held by government

No need to apply
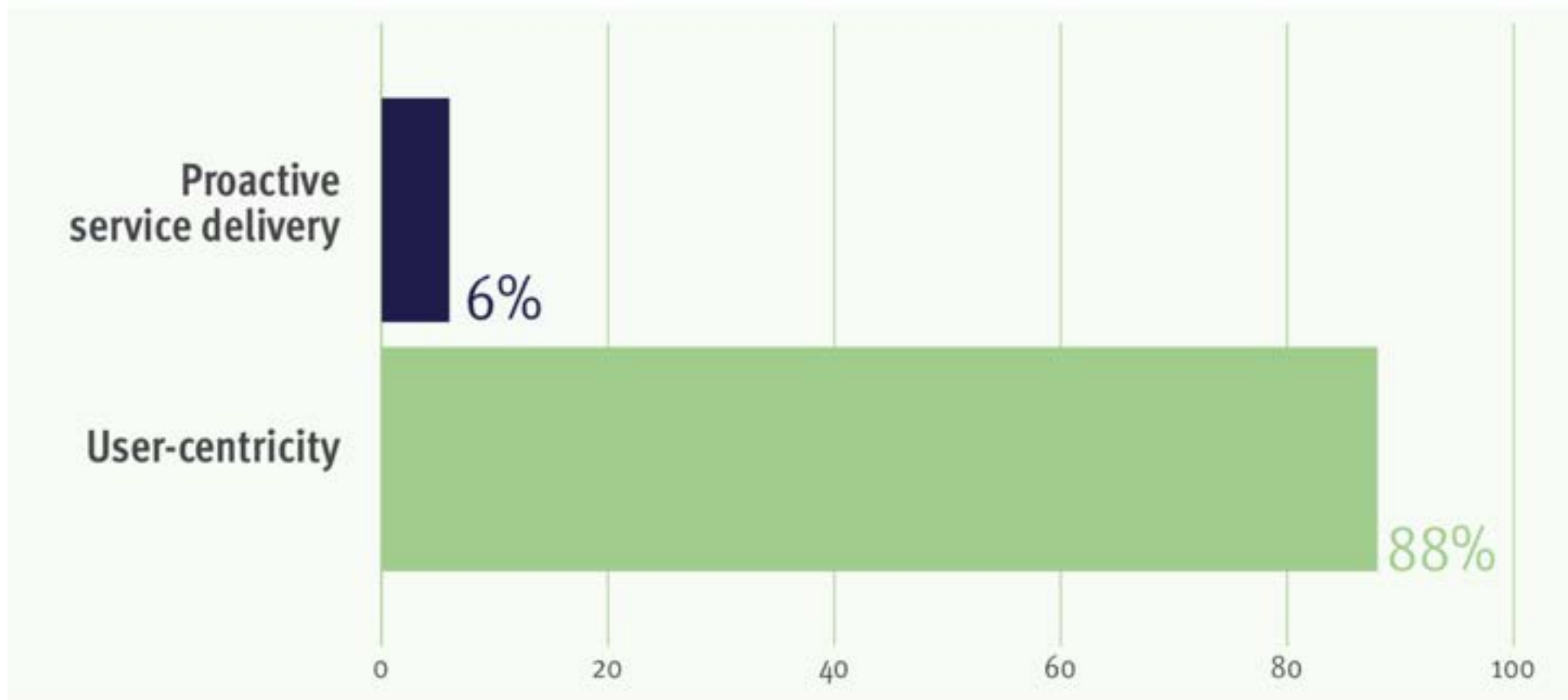
No-stop-shop

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Inspiring cases

- Portugal social energy tariff

- Helsinki pre-registration to childcare

- Catalonia enrolment to university scholarships

Total Number of Beneficiaries of the Social Electricity Tariffs in Portugal
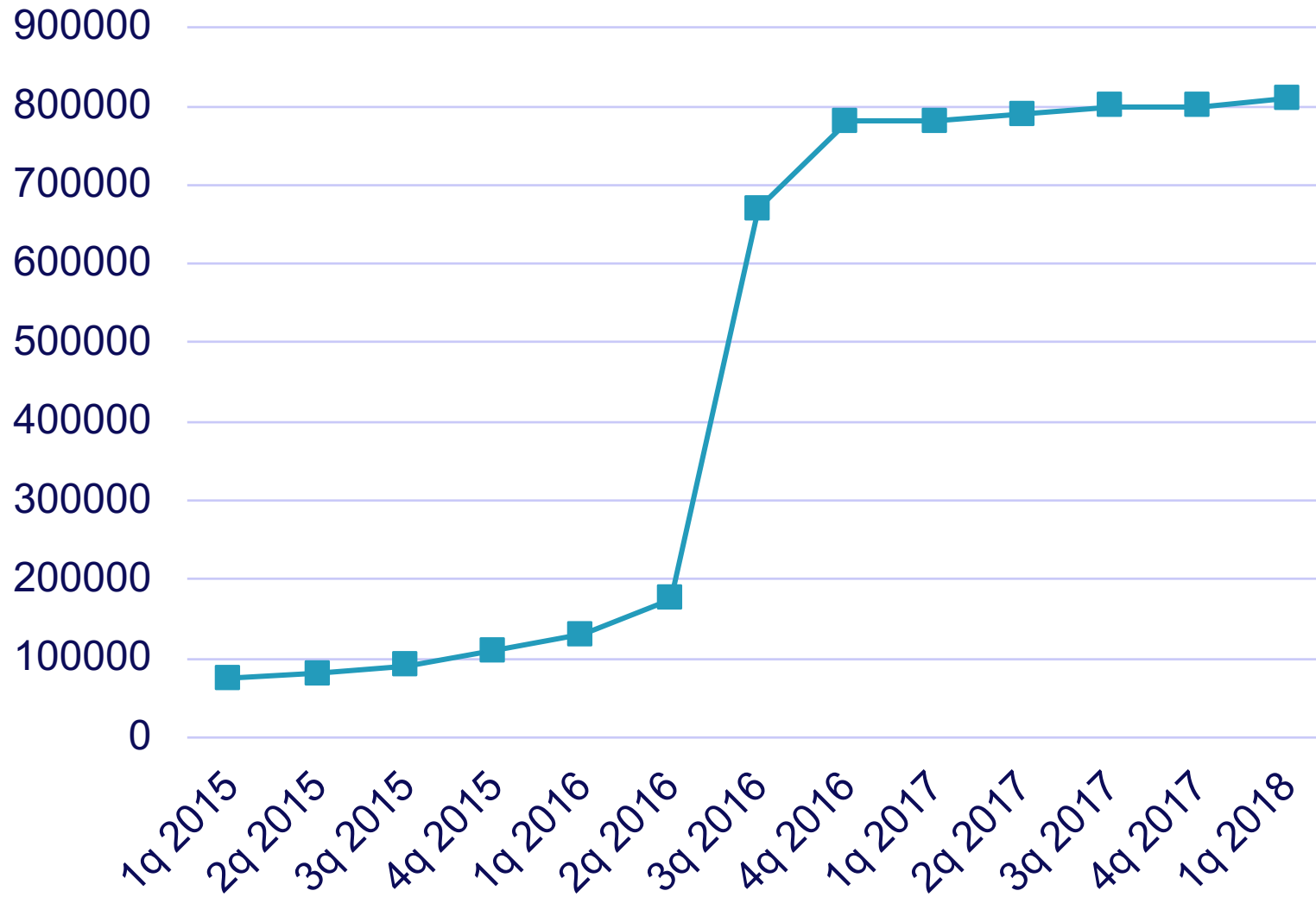
Proactive services are still the exception

Source: Capgemini

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Why?

The key factors

1. Data protection and public interest

2. Data quality

3. Digital-ready policies

4. Interoperability

5. Governance

How to deliver the vision?

"A braver Union. Closer to its people in times of need. Bolder in responding to historic challenges and daily concerns of Europeans. And to walk at their side when they deal with the big trials of life"

Ursula von der Leyen, State of the European Union 2022

Eight recommendations

1. Make proactive digital services the new flagship of the EU digital compass, delivering on the human-centric promise of the Berlin declaration

2. Make key social benefits for vulnerable groups automatic by default by 2030

3. Ensure that European, national and local legislation is not only digital-ready but also "proactive-ready"

4. Clarify that GDPR allows for proactive public services

5. Provide concrete support to data quality improvement

6. Strengthen the European Interoperability Framework and eIDAS revision, in particular with regard to persistent unique identifiers

7. Launch data-driven pilots on solving societal challenges

8. Measure proactivity in European benchmarking

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