

The WiBe Framework (Germany)

Overview of an European Measurement Approach to eGovernment Efficiency Assessment and User Satisfaction

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WiBe Framework

This report is part of work done for the eGovMoNet network,
see <http://www.epractice.eu/community/egovmonet>

1. Context

The WiBe framework for economic efficiency assessments is provided by the German Ministry of the Interior (**WiBe 4.1** Recommendations on Economic Efficiency Assessments in the German Federal Administration, in Particular with Regard to the Use of Information Technology). It has initially been developed by P. Röthig from WiBe-TEAM, undergoing consistent further development and refinement since its first publishing in 1992 (*see www.wibe.eu for details and a downloadable pdf version*).

The framework is concerned with ICT project proposals (not yet in use products) and depends mainly on expert opinion and calculation during the planning cycles of a project. There is no mandatory questionnaire to directly obtain answers from eGov users, but this could be added without conceptual modifications.

WiBe framework covers implemented solutions and supports strategic decisions on ICT project proposals: it is mainly applied ex ante (project proposals and portfolio considerations) and its results will be updated during project realization and later ex post (evaluation).

WiBe is in use with all administrations at federal, state and municipal level in Germany, it is the only generally recommended measurement framework concerning economic efficiency of eGovernance, some thousands institutions are using it more or less frequently.

2. General properties and measurement methodology

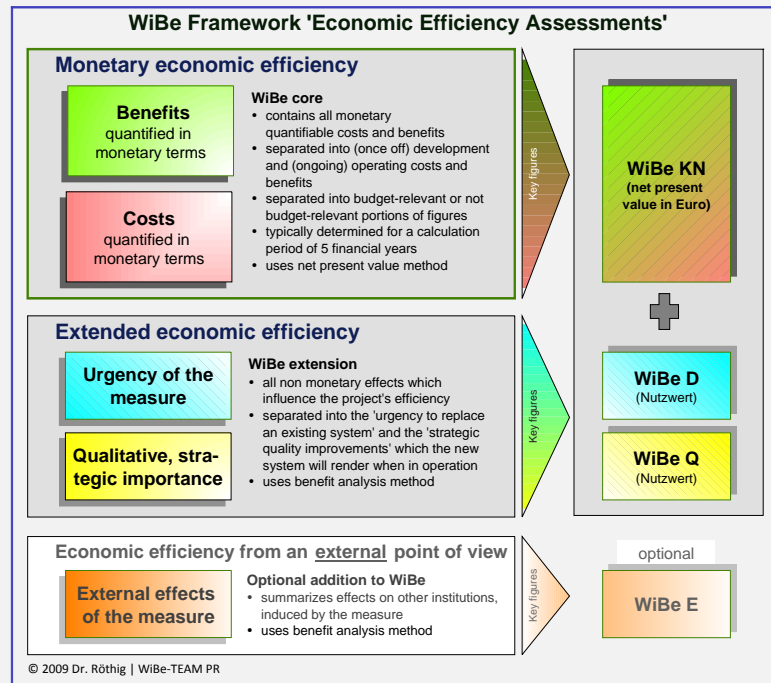
The WiBe framework is concerned with measuring ICT projects and products in use. It covers quantitative data (monetary economic efficiency) and qualitative data like qualitative, strategic importance and external effects. Monetary economic efficiency of an eGov project proposal is expressed by its net present value, qualitative data are transformed into different benefit analysis key figures.

Economic impacts of an eGov or ICT project can be measured very carefully and comprehensively, user satisfaction is not measured at the same level of sophistication. WiBe is independent of size of eGovernment applications. Net present value serves as some sort of scale factor.

Results are easily understood and can be communicated quite easily. Nevertheless, using the method needs some financial expertise and accounting background (for correctly assessing monetary figures). Acceptance is generally very good.



Measurement results generally enable (should enable) CEO or CIO to make clear decisions to start, modify or end an ICT project (proposal).



3. Intended use of measurement results

The WiBe framework is intended to support strategic decisions such as selection of projects to invest in.

The method focuses on implementing improved organizational procedures for intra- or extra-organizational use. These changes may be the result of policy changes and may result in policy changes, too.

4. Deployment properties

WiBe is standard in public administrations (organizations at federal, state and municipal levels). The framework does not require 3rd party organizations to carry out the measurement, although expertise and neutrality are essential. Some initial training is recommended (concept, data gathering, reporting and use of software).

Measurement is usually carried out via dialogue between project experts using a dedicated software tool. Measurement subject are projects, project proposals and services in operation. Measurement uses a standardized catalogue of criteria (depending on the nature of the project) for evaluating impacts.

Managers ('decision makers') get founded, methodical calculation and documentation of pending costs and anticipated benefits of an eGovernment or ICT project to make 'better deci-



sions', politicians get founded, methodical calculation on political relevant issues/projects and project managers can use this comprehensive framework to argue in favour of modifications of the product requirement specifications if necessary.

WiBe 4.1 framework has considerably supported eGovernment projects in Germany since 2004 and induced policy changes in this field. Business process improvements and software changes have been another impact of the method even before 2004.

5. Maintenance of measurement method

Today WiBe 4.1 is the current version of the WiBe framework, it is regularly updated, maintenance is organized within the German Ministry of Interior CIO department.

6. Other important properties

The WiBe framework can easily be tailored to different types of projects and eGovernment proposals. The underlying assumptions (*measurement of eGovernment has to do with monetary figures, with time urgency and with internal and external qualitative effects*) are valid for almost all kind of decision problems.

Gathering data and figures on impact allows a variety of different methods to be used.

7. Development trends

The WiBe framework is a comprehensive tool for measuring economic efficiency of ICT project proposals including eGovernment services. Further development could include the separation of different external user groups and refining the measurement metrics for user satisfaction. A constant monitoring of projects and services in operation would create some sort of eGovernment efficiency dashboard for decision makers.

8. Main challenges and opportunities

The concept concentrates on the micro level of eGovernment services and measures the economic and qualitative impacts mainly of projects: detailed information gathering is needed which in itself might become time consuming and sometimes costly. Therefore, on a meta level, efficiency of efficiency assessment must be ensured. Having achieved this, the WiBe framework is a pragmatic approach to eGovernment projects with a high level of acceptance.