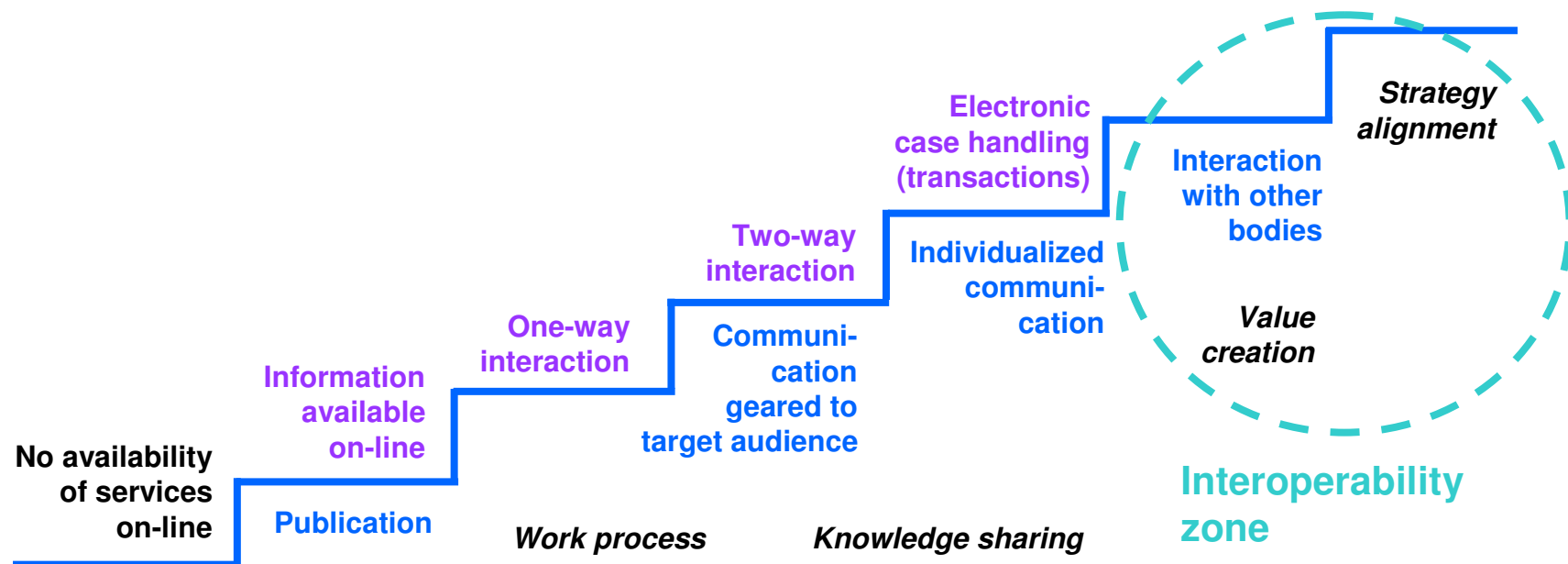


Organisational Barriers to Interoperability

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Organisational interoperability deals with modelling organisational processes, aligning information architectures with organisational goals, and helping these processes to co-operate. (M. Finetti)



Collaboration between different information owners and service providers to produce integrated electronic services to businesses and citizens, based on fully transparent interoperability between several service providers.

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Examples of organisational barriers:

- Leadership failures.
- Financial inhibitors.
- Digital divides and choices.
- Poor coordination.
- Workplace and organisational inflexibility.
- Lack of trust.

(R. Eynon & H. Margetts)

15 personal semi-structured interviews in with following main themes:

1. What do you understand by OI*, or how would you describe it?
2. What promotes OI in general?
3. What retards OI in general?
4. Do you have any examples of best practice within OI?
5. What kind of measures or what kind of initiatives would boost OI?

* *Organizational Interoperability*

1. Low competency

- Knowledge of own or others' business processes is low.
Modelling of business processes has not taken place.
- ICT suppliers' knowledge of the business processes in public organisations is poor.
- Digital illiteracy and resistance against new applications of ICTs reduce the ICT potential including interoperability.



2. Lack of “measurables”

- Instruments for measuring organisational interoperability performance are missing. This has negative impact on both planning, execution and evaluation of organisational interoperability.
- Economic indicators which describe the effects of successful interoperability are also missing.



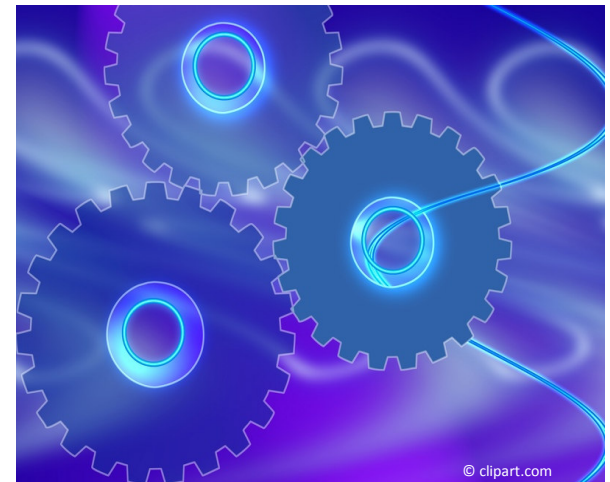
3. Economic restrictions

- Governmental departments and agencies operate according to a strict fiscal sector principle without interoperability considerations.
- The letters of allocation from the government to the sector departments do not instruct the departments or the governmental agencies to spend money on interoperability actions.
- Costs of initiatives for increased collaboration are placed in one department or agency, and the immediate benefits appear in another.

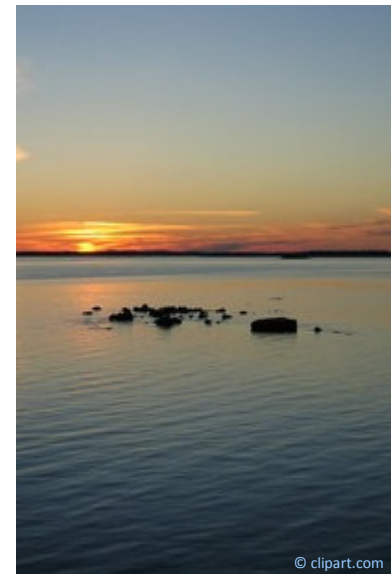


Too few large technology projects involving several influential organisations:

- They force organisational interoperability move forward.
- They enhance knowledge of other organisations and their business processes.
- They offer a practical arena for integration and interoperability efforts, and enhance organisational interoperability because of the project organisation as such.



- Myriad of small, uncoordinated projects, continuously being initiated without feasibility studies or anchorage points in overall strategies for cross-sector development.
- Scarce resources are used sub-optimally (should be fed into the financial portfolio of larger initiatives with interoperability ambitions).
- No catalogue/database with overview of current and past projects, for continuity and possible reuse of existing results.



6. Disharmony in legislation

- New laws or amendments to an Act bring about uncertainties with respect to the total body of laws and the total area of impact:
 - Are there unintended consequences of the new law or amendment to other areas of jurisdiction?
 - Does the new law, rule or regulation prevent collaboration, (e.g. provision of information from one public body to another)?
- Double reporting of information to public registers.
- One department has no authority to retrieve information from another department.
- The law prohibits merging information from different sources for security or privacy reasons.
- No use of information for other purposes than what the concession permits.



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7. Anaemic arenas

- Too few up-to-date collaborative arenas or meeting-places for decision makers.
- Vertical participation dilutes decision-making capability and implementation of (possible) decisions.



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8. Invisible best practice

Too few or well-hidden show-cases of best practice within:

- formal agreements on collaboration
- practical approaches to organisational interoperability
- tools for process modelling
- management of organisational alignment
- ICT-literacy



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- Negative attitudes and non-collaborative working practices.
- People who simply do not like or want to work together with other people.
- Leaders who do not promote collaboration or who are afraid of losing existing positions if collaborations should lead to more rational distribution and organisation of work.
- Authoritative leaders who simply do not ask anybody about anything.
- Trade unions that do not promote collaboration in fear of rationalisation and loss of jobs.



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- Unequal levels of competency in general and digital literacy in particular.
- Differences in strategic thinking and foresight, organisational cultures, phases in development processes and available technologies, and dissimilarities in available resources.
- Number of different actors:
 - In Norway: 430 municipalities.
 - Public enterprises under municipal or county ownership.
 - Large and rich municipalities vs. tiny and relatively poor ones.
 - The state vs. individual municipalities.



Interoperable work and business processes requires analyses and modelling. From a competency point of view, we suggest a **broader involvement in modelling exercises**. This can be approached by use of methods that suit non-experts.

Performance indicators. **Development of proper instruments** for planning, execution and evaluation of organisational interoperability, approached by modification and refinement of well-established tools and techniques such as Total Quality Management, Balanced Score Card or Key Performance Indicators.

Development of a knowledge base containing information about previous and current e-Government projects, as well as **best interoperability practices** within e-Government (e.g. formal agreements, practical achievements, examples of uses of tools and techniques etc.).

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