OECD
Digital Government Index (DGI): 2019

Results and key messages

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BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER LIVES

How are countries progressing towards *digital government?*

This document presents results and key policy messages for the OECD Digital Government Index 2019 edition as well as indicators on countries' progress in becoming *digital by design, data-driven* and *user-driven* to thrive in the digital transformation of the public sector.

The OECD Digital Government Index (DGI) is a cornerstone of the OECD work on digital government and public sector data. Built on the OECD Recommendation on Digital Government Strategies, the DGI responds to the need for a measurement instrument that tracks the adoption of a strategic approach, policy levers, implementation and monitoring mechanisms for digital government policies across OECD member and partner countries.

The OECD Digital Government Policy Framework

Source: OECD (2020)

The OECD Recommendation on Digital Government Strategies

Openness and Engagement	Governance and Coordination	Capacities to Support Implementation
1. Openness, transparency and inclusiveness 2. Engagement and participation in a multi-actor context in policy making and service delivery 3. Creation of a data-driven culture 4. Protecting privacy and ensuring security	5. Leadership and political commitment 6. Coherent use of digital technology across policy areas 7. Effective organizational and governance frameworks to coordinate 8. Strengthen international cooperation with other governments	9. Development of clear business cases 10. Reinforced institutional capacities 11. Procurement of digital technologies 12. Legal and regulatory framework

Source: Based on the OECD Recommendation on Digital Government Strategies
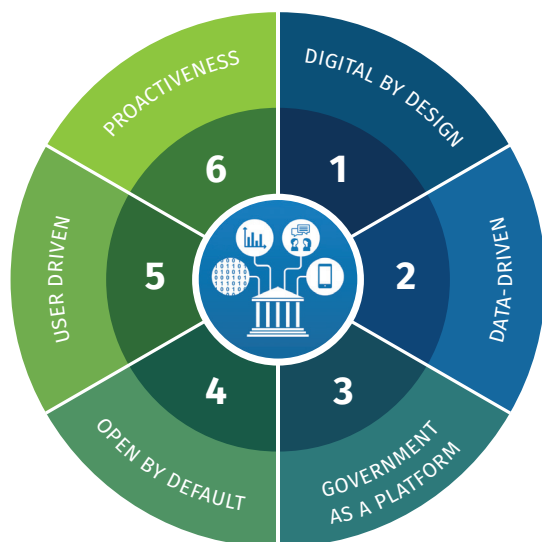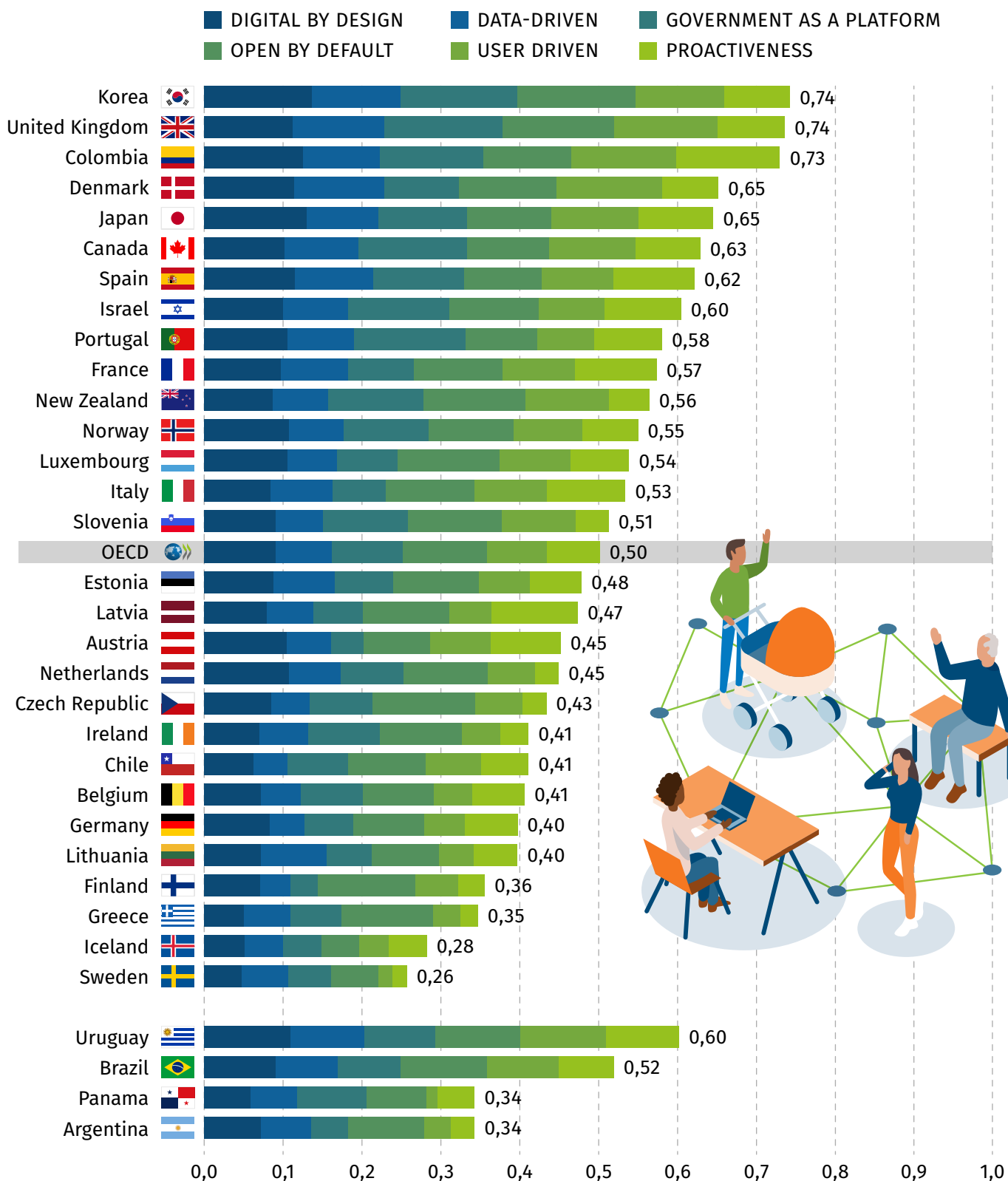
The **DGI** draws upon the long-standing work of the OECD advising governments to strategise with digital technologies and data for improved service design and delivery and increased trust in public institutions, as outlined in the **OECD Digital Government Policy Framework**. The Framework is a policy instrument to help governments identify key determinants for effective design and implementation of digital government strategies and sustain them in achieving higher levels of digital maturity of their public sectors. It grounds the qualitative and quantitative assessment of the Secretariat, and frames the methodology and survey for the Digital Government Index across the six dimensions that characterised a mature digital government.

Under the Framework, a mature digital government:

- is **digital by design** when govern and leverage digital technologies to rethink and re-engineer public processes, simplify procedures, and create new channels of communication and engagement with public stakeholders;
- is **data-driven** when values data as a strategic asset and establishes the governance, access, sharing and re-use mechanisms for improved decision-making and service delivery;
- **acts as platform** when deploys a wide range of platforms, standards and services to help teams focus on user needs in public service design and delivery;

- is **open by default** when makes government data and policy-making processes (including algorithms) available to the public, within the limits of existing legislation and in balance with national and public interest;
- is **user-driven** when accords a central role to people's needs and convenience in the shaping of processes, services and policies; and by adopting inclusive mechanisms that enable this to happen;
- is **proactive** when anticipates people's needs and respond to them rapidly, avoiding the need for cumbersome data and service delivery processes.

The OECD Digital Government Index 2019 Composite Results

Legend:
- DIGITAL BY DESIGN
- DATA-DRIVEN
- GOVERNMENT AS A PLATFORM
- OPEN BY DEFAULT
- USER DRIVEN
- PROACTIVENESS

Country	Score
Korea	0,74
United Kingdom	0,74
Colombia	0,73
Denmark	0,65
Japan	0,65
Canada	0,63
Spain	0,62
Israel	0,60
Portugal	0,58
France	0,57
New Zealand	0,56
Norway	0,55
Luxembourg	0,54
Italy	0,53
Slovenia	0,51
OECD	0,50
Estonia	0,48
Latvia	0,47
Austria	0,45
Netherlands	0,45
Czech Republic	0,43
Ireland	0,41
Chile	0,41
Belgium	0,41
Germany	0,40
Lithuania	0,40
Finland	0,36
Greece	0,35
Iceland	0,28
Sweden	0,26
Uruguay	0,60
Brazil	0,52
Panama	0,34
Argentina	0,34

Note: Data are not available for Australia, Hungary, Mexico, Poland, Slovakia, Switzerland, Turkey and the United States of America.

Source: OECD Survey on Digital Government 1.0

Key messages

The results of the OECD Digital Government Index 2019 are promising yet modest.
Only a few countries are progressing towards mature digital governments. While most countries have established institutional models that provide the necessary political and operational support for digital government reforms, limited efforts have been made to fully unlock the benefits of digital government and move beyond e-government. This is evidenced by average performance on the *user-driven* and *data-driven public sector* dimensions.

The digital transformation and the shift from e-government to digital government must be sustained and resistant to political change.
High-performing countries excel in all six dimensions, with consistent and comprehensive efforts to implement coherent digital government reforms. Their outstanding results derive from long-term institutional arrangements and sustainable strategies.

High-ranking countries excel predominantly in digital by design combined with strong results in the user-driven and data-driven dimensions.
Good performance in digital by design favours the establishment of coherent governance and policies as a basis for digital government. These countries present high levels of engagement with citizens, businesses and public servants across policy cycles, favouring the design and delivery of policies and services aligned with user needs and expectations. Low-ranking countries perform on average with similar scores across five of the six dimensions, with *open by default* receiving the highest scores.

Solid governance appears to be a key requirement for a mature digital government.
Organisations in charge of digital government must be embedded in the right institutional models to secure the necessary leadership, co-ordination, resources and legitimacy to transform high-level policies into coherent digitally enabled public services.

Clear and easily identifiable strategies have paved the way for consistent and coherent policy implementation in top performing countries.
Such strategies leverage consistent approaches across the public sector. For average and lower-performing countries, there is a significant gap between the development of strategies and the implementation of concrete actions to promote digital government reforms.

Countries present better scores in the open by default, digital by design and government as a platform dimensions.
This outcome reflects efforts to establish ecosystems for digital government through strategies, shared tools, standards and management mechanisms.

Key messages

Proactive involvement of users and stakeholders in digital government reforms is lacking in most countries.

Digital government efforts risk not being sufficiently transformative if they do not consistently take into the needs, expectations and preferences of users across the design, implementation, delivery and monitoring of digitally enabled public services.

Open by default is the top scoring dimension, reflecting the political momentum for open data within digital government reforms.

However, countries perform significantly lower in the development of *data-driven public sectors*. The development of open data policies isolated from broader data strategies might result in failure to fully unlock the strategic value of data assets across public sector organisations.

Dedicated public sector data policies and leadership roles remain largely absent across digital government initiatives.

The lack of a strategic vision as well as formal roles and responsibilities for coherent design and implementation of a data-driven public sector represent a challenge for moving from policies to concrete, sustainable and impactful actions.

Governments should embed open data efforts within broader data-driven public sector policies.

This is essential to ensure adequate and proactive governance as well as an ethical approach to opening up, sharing and re-using public data, both inside and outside government, to deliver public value and foster societal wellbeing.

Further efforts are needed to fill the digital talent gap for the success of digital government policies.

While countries have nominated data and digital skills as core components of their strategies, initiatives for attract, train and retrain towards the development of the necessary talent remain limited. The absence of digital savvy and skilled civil servants can hamper the correct and coherent implementation of digital government policies.

Poor adoption of formal mechanisms, guidelines, levers and shared platforms imply the absence of means or actions to accomplish objectives set in government strategies.

In line with the Recommendation on Digital Government Strategies, the DGI recognises the importance of having a strategy and shared tools to align common goals and efforts across the public sector.

Countries have emphasised the adoption of strategic approaches and digital government implementation, with less attention to policy levers and monitoring mechanisms for digital reforms.

Countries might be missing opportunities to leverage digital reforms across public sector organisations and learn from impactful and realistic digital government initiatives.

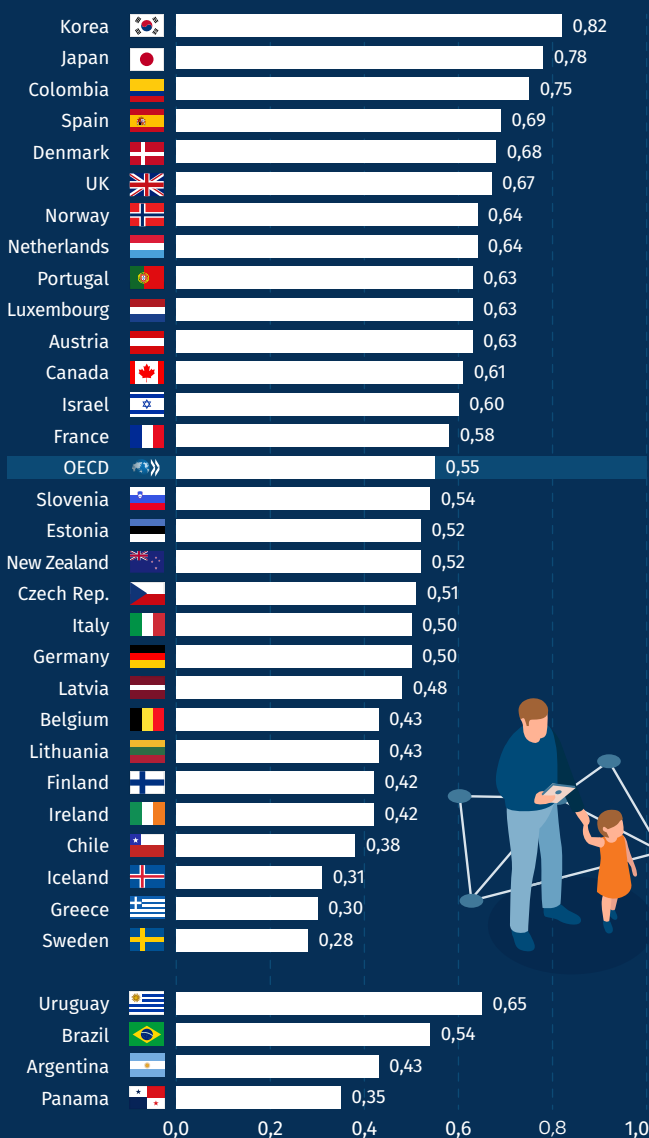**RESULTS AND POLICY MESSAGES FOR SELECTED DIMENSIONS**

Digital by Design

A government that is *digital by design* embeds digital as foundation to enable omni-channel service delivery and integrated operations in the public sector. It requires sound strategies and governance (leadership, institutional models and resources) for coherent, co-ordinated and sustainable implementation. Digital is considered not as a technical topic, but as a mandatory transformative element to be embedded throughout policy processes. Governments adopting a *digital by design* approach leverage digital technologies and data to rethink and re-engineer public processes, simplify procedures, and create new channels of communication and engagement with public stakeholders.

RESULTS IN DIGITAL BY DESIGN DIMENSION

Country	Score
Korea	0,82
Japan	0,78
Colombia	0,75
Spain	0,69
Denmark	0,68
UK	0,67
Norway	0,64
Netherlands	0,64
Portugal	0,63
Luxembourg	0,63
Austria	0,63
Canada	0,61
Israel	0,60
France	0,58
OECD	**0,55**
Slovenia	0,54
Estonia	0,52
New Zealand	0,52
Czech Rep.	0,51
Italy	0,50
Germany	0,50
Latvia	0,48
Belgium	0,43
Lithuania	0,43
Finland	0,42
Ireland	0,42
Chile	0,38
Iceland	0,31
Greece	0,30
Sweden	0,28
Uruguay	0,65
Brazil	0,54
Argentina	0,43
Panama	0,35

Note: Data are not available for Australia, Hungary, Mexico, Poland, Slovakia, Switzerland, Turkey and the United States of America.

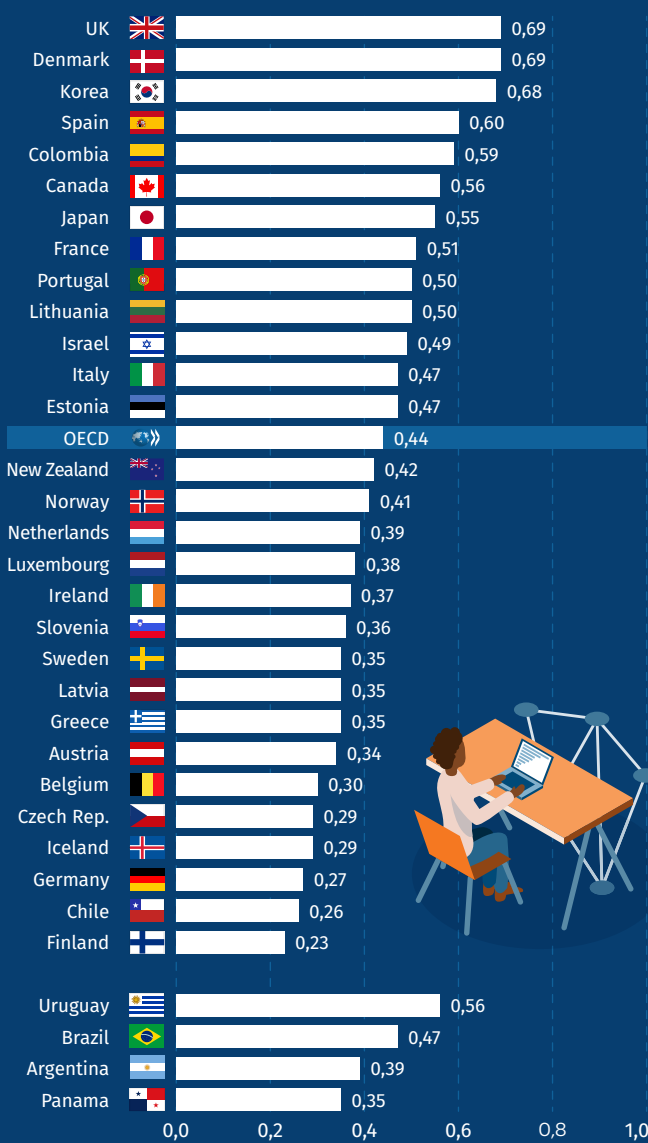*Source: OECD Survey on Digital Government 1.0*

KEY MESSAGES

• *Digital by design* is, on average, the second highest dimension on country performance. This suggests a relative level of maturity to integrate digital components into internal processes in the public sector to promote better service delivery and long-lasting transformation.

• Top-performing countries have developed sound strategies and established leadership and co-ordination structures empowered with strong decision-making responsibilities bringing cohesion to digital processes in public operations and service design and delivery.

• While all countries have a dedicated public sector organisation (e.g. agency, division or unit) with the authority and mandate to lead and co-ordinate digital government, they often have limited decision-making responsibilities. This risks to hamper the establishment of a sustainable, comprehensive and whole-of-government digital culture, and negatively affect the progress towards digital transformation.

• Similarly, co-ordination bodies for government ICT projects have limited levels of empowerment. While 70% of countries confirm the existence of Council of CIOs or related bodies, they act as consulting actors rather than decision-making mechanisms for digital government policies, limiting coherence and alignment across public sector organisations.

• Many countries have mechanisms for online identification, with 85% of countries possessing single identity systems. In 64% of countries, the system is equivalent to physical national IDs, with more rudimentary authentication available for 21%. Although digital identity is in place in a large proportion of countries, only 58% have half of the public services accessible through these systems.

Data-driven public sector

A public sector is *data-driven* when generates public value through the reuse of data in planning, delivering and monitoring public policies; when adopts rules and ethical principles for trustworthy and safe reuse; and when governs and manages data as a strategic asset for the creation of public value and the agile and responsive provision of public services. Data-driven governments break down policy siloes by promoting the cohesion of data-related policies. They provide the leadership to move data policies forward and build the necessary stewardship to promote co-ordination and accountability. A *data-driven public sector* embeds cross-sectoral data standards and replicable and scalable data infrastructures and tools that facilitate timely and secure access to and sharing of data.

RESULTS IN DATA-DRIVEN PUBLIC SECTOR DIMENSION

Country	Score
UK	0,69
Denmark	0,69
Korea	0,68
Spain	0,60
Colombia	0,59
Canada	0,56
Japan	0,55
France	0,51
Portugal	0,50
Lithuania	0,50
Israel	0,49
Italy	0,47
Estonia	0,47
OECD	0,44
New Zealand	0,42
Norway	0,41
Netherlands	0,39
Luxembourg	0,38
Ireland	0,37
Slovenia	0,36
Sweden	0,35
Latvia	0,35
Greece	0,35
Austria	0,34
Belgium	0,30
Czech Rep.	0,29
Iceland	0,29
Germany	0,27
Chile	0,26
Finland	0,23
Uruguay	0,56
Brazil	0,47
Argentina	0,39
Panama	0,35

Note: Data are not available for Australia, Hungary, Mexico, Poland, Slovakia, Switzerland, Turkey and the United States of America.

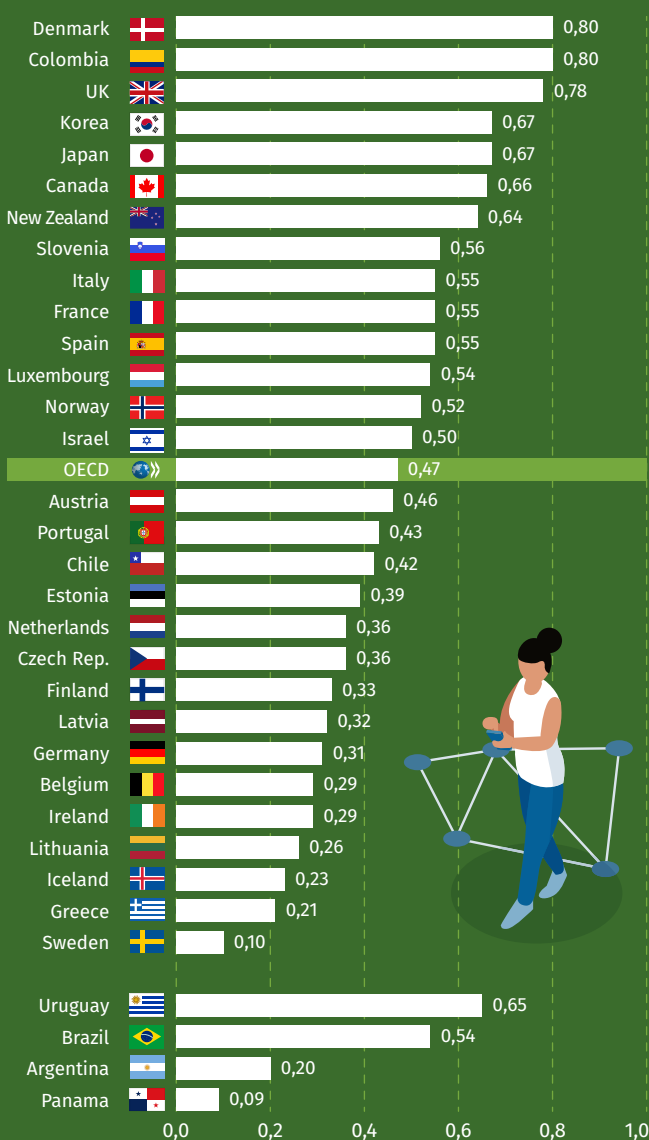*Source: OECD Survey on Digital Government 1.0*

KEY MESSAGES

- *Data-driven public sector* is the second lowest dimension. Governments are not yet making fully exploiting the potential of data as a foundation for digital government and should foster the creation of a skilled public sector that relies on data as a core component to effectively design and deliver projects.

- Progress towards a comprehensive and dedicated approach that treats data as a strategic asset is still limited. Only 12% of countries have a single dedicated data policy (or strategy), while 82% embed data as part of broader related policies (e.g. digital government or open data). The lack of a strategic vision, formal roles and responsibilities for coherent design and implementation of data-driven public sector projects is a challenge to concrete, sustainable and impactful actions.

- Consistent alignment and adherence to shared ethical values and principles for the management and use of data are essential to ensure fairness and inclusiveness of policies, decisions and services, to reinforce their legitimacy and public trust. Only 36% have dedicated initiatives to apply ethical principles to data-related projects.

- Cross-government practices and initiatives to manage data are fundamental for enabling a data-driven public sector. A gap is observed between availability of standards and concrete activities: 64% of countries have standards for data gathering and collection, while only 36% implemented initiatives. Likewise, 76% of countries have established data sharing and interoperability standards, but only 45% have initiatives for these purposes.

User-driven

A government becomes *user-driven* by according a central role to people's needs and convenience in the shaping of processes, services and policies; and by adopting inclusive mechanisms that enable this to happen. A user-driven approach allow citizens and businesses to define and communicate their own needs in terms of services content and access, informing and shaping governments' decisions on policies and public services according to their needs. Governments are user-driven when they establish new forms of partnerships (with the private and the third sectors), or crowdsource ideas from within their administration and society at large, as a means to achieve legitimacy and trust through higher responsiveness. This process foregrounds user research, and usability and human-centred design, in order to reflect people needs; and takes place in an open and collaborative manner to ensure that peoples' voices are heard during policy making and service design.

RESULTS IN USER-DRIVEN DIMENSION

Country	Value
Denmark	0,80
Colombia	0,80
UK	0,78
Korea	0,67
Japan	0,67
Canada	0,66
New Zealand	0,64
Slovenia	0,56
Italy	0,55
France	0,55
Spain	0,55
Luxembourg	0,54
Norway	0,52
Israel	0,50
OECD	0,47
Austria	0,46
Portugal	0,43
Chile	0,42
Estonia	0,39
Netherlands	0,36
Czech Rep.	0,36
Finland	0,33
Latvia	0,32
Germany	0,31
Belgium	0,29
Ireland	0,29
Lithuania	0,26
Iceland	0,23
Greece	0,21
Sweden	0,10
Uruguay	0,65
Brazil	0,54
Argentina	0,20
Panama	0,09

Note: Data are not available for Australia, Hungary, Mexico, Poland, Slovakia, Switzerland, Turkey and the United States of America.

Source: OECD Survey on Digital Government 1.0

KEY MESSAGES

• Top-performing countries share similar best practices for coherent engagement of key stakeholders in designing and developing policies and services, maintaining multiple channels, digital mechanisms and mandatory guidelines. They also actively involve users in testing and evaluating agile service design and implementation.

• Levels of engagement remain low when using digital technologies to promote inclusion and participation in policy making and service delivery processes – at 30% and 36%, respectively, for at least three or more different groups (including elderly, people with disabilities, citizens living abroad, ethnic groups or women).

• Results show limited levels of testing and evaluation with stakeholders in policy and service design. 49% of countries involve external providers and stakeholders in testing service delivery modes through institutional mechanisms.

• Countries can benefit from adopting an agile approach to interactions with the public, establishing an ongoing research culture to understand citizens' needs. 61% have a dedicated policy to test and evaluate digital projects and initiatives with the involvement of end users, but only 30% have associated mechanisms for implementation.

• Governments must enable citizens to communicate their expectations and provide feedback on the efficiency and responsiveness of services to their needs. Only 51% of countries are assessing user satisfaction through indica-tors, 49% have guidelines for measuring user satisfaction with digital services, and 12% have made them mandatory across levels of government.
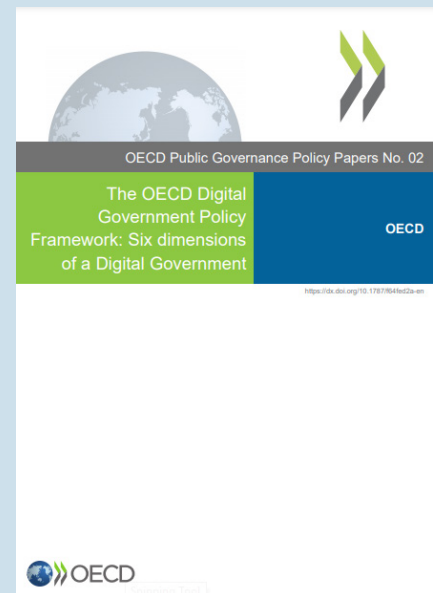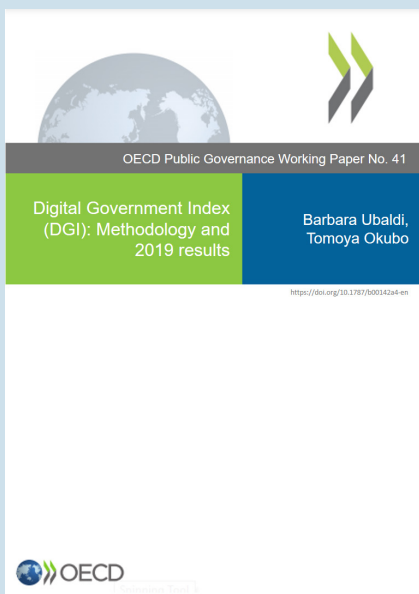
OECD Digital Government Index: 2019 results
https://oe.cd/dgi2019

2014 Recommendation of the Council on Digital Government
https://oe.cd/digitalgovrecommendation

OECD Digital Government Policy Framework
https://oe.cd/il/diggovframework

OECD Digital Government Index: Methodology and 2019 results
https://oe.cd/il/dgimethodology

OECD Open, Useful and Re-usable (OUR) Data Index: 2019 results
https://oe.cd/open-data-2019
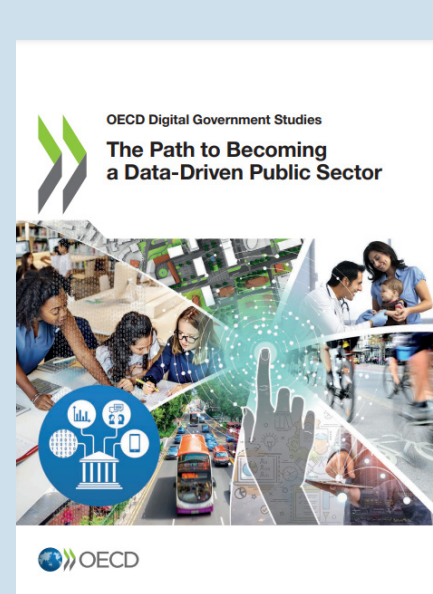
2019 The Path to Becoming a Data-Driven Public Sector report
https://oe.cd/il/ddps

For more information visit:
oecd.org/gov/digital-government