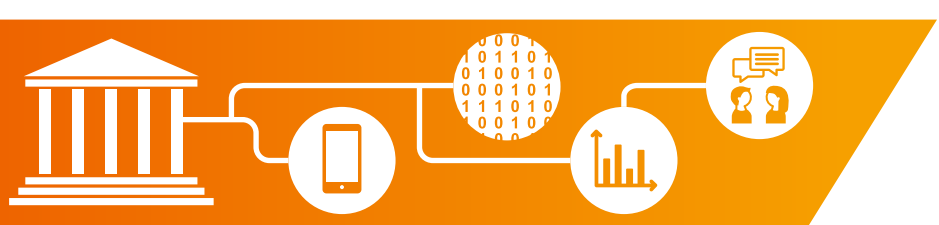# OECD Open Government Data Report

Executive Summary

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Apps to check the weather, the best route to a destination or to compare real estate values, all rely on the availability of open data. These examples prove how the release of government data as open data can improve the everyday lives of citizens. We all use, and often depend on, these apps to organise our days and make personal decisions. Similarly, businesses are finding new ways to innovate thanks to government data released as open data. These opportunities help demonstrate the benefits of open government data, and contribute to citizens' trust in government to modernise in order to meet the needs of digitally transformed economies.

As a result, governments that have succeeded in advancing their open data policies cannot fail to secure their long term resilience. As open data policies mature, so does awareness of the need to establish adequate governance frameworks to deliver sustainable results. Such frameworks include institutional arrangements, policy levers, and funding models facilitating co-ordination across government.

No real impact can be achieved if a silo-based approach prevails, because mashing, linking and reusing data are necessary to enable open data to deliver results. Given the horizontal nature of open data policies, their effective design and implementation requires approaches that enable the connection of actors and decisions within and outside the public sector.

Countries' experiences, and data from the OECD OURData Index, show that despite differences of administrative cultures, the governments achieving better results are those that allocate the responsibility to co-ordinate open data policies close to the centre of government. They are followed by those that assign it to a line ministry with responsibilities linked to the digital agenda and/or public sector modernisation mandates. This facilitates shared accountability and can facilitate stronger linkages with related policy areas such as public sector innovation, open government and public sector integrity.

A decade ago open government data policy and practice efforts were geared towards increasing access to public sector information. Now, as the global maturity of open data has grown, so has the awareness of the need to foster a culture of value creation and problem-solving approaches. These can help target efforts to release valuable data for re-use, and prioritise improved government rather than aiming simply to provide more data. The concept of "publish with purpose" is what best represents this new emerging discussion.

Nevertheless, the importance to foster data openness by default remains. While data quality, such as completeness and machine-readability, improve the accessibility and reusability of open government data, openness by default is a broader concept that exceeds the technical realm.

As governments are increasingly recognising data re-use as a requirement for value creation, there is a growing understanding that quality government data draws upon improved data governance and management of the data value chain. Creating value from open government data (OGD) means increasing data quantity and improving the capacity to identify high-value data to increase re-use. It also requires understanding the process barriers so government data can contribute to the public service value chain. Accompanying data availability, accessibility and quality with integrated data and IT infrastructure models can support digital and data-driven transformation and reforms of the public sector and support the successful adoption of emerging technologies that depend on the availability of quality data.

 Governments have a key role in data publication, but the focus is shifting from a data-supply and publishing perspective towards the use of open data as a collaborative tool. For example, in the earlier stages of

open data policies, the establishment of portals was driven by the demand for increased access to public sector information. This required significant efforts in the back end to locate, clean and open up data-sets to make public access easier. Data cleansing initiatives were prioritised rather than focusing on setting data governance frameworks and policy instruments (e.g. publication guides and standards) to support advances.

This approach is gradually changing and open data portals are evolving based on the growing understanding of the value of data as a core enabler of the digital transformation of societies, business activities and the public sectors.

Improving access to government data provides opportunities for government and non-government innovators to create new ways to tackle problems. This implies engaging and unleashing the power of non-institutional stakeholders such as the private sector, journalists, academia, the non-profit sector, and the public in general, throughout the open data policy process. Open data can thus become the "platform" that fuels the development of useful applications and solutions. Leveraging this has implications and might be a long and complex process, which also presents risks. It entails a significant shift in governments' operations requiring the perception of their role to shift from data owners and solution providers, to data stewards. Central open government data portals are slowly but increasingly being understood as vehicles to enable the use of Data as a Platform (DaaP) but also, and more importantly, as enablers of governments as platforms.

Moving to a collaborative, problem-solving approach has proven challenging for some countries. While some have used data as a platform to favour public value co-creation, in others multi-stakeholder engagement is low or absent, particularly where transparency-driven models for open government data policies prevail.

The strategic sharing of OGD, combined with digital technologies, can support good governance and improve public trust. Examples include enabling better public service delivery, improving citizen engagement, enhancing government openness, and providing a data-driven basis for stronger government accountability and public sector integrity.

In order to justify and secure investments in open data, governments are strengthening their capacity to argument and demonstrate the value of open data to produce economic benefits for the public sector and the economy at large, for example by facilitating new business opportunities. Yet, international discussions have focused on the need to improve assessment of the progress and impacts of open data policies. From a government perspective, it remains critical to support investment to open up government data counting on a sound business case, to provide clear value propositions and present the potential benefits of facilitating open data use, and on ex-post assessments tools to show the realisation of such benefits.

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