



Digital government toolkit



Digital Government Strategies: Good Practices



New Zealand: Development of a new Benchmark for Smart Societies (Smart Societies Benchmark)

The OECD Council adopted on 15 July 2014 the Recommendation on Digital Government Strategies. The Recommendation provides a set of 12 principles structured around 3 pillars. The OECD Secretariat is developing a Digital Government Policy Toolkit to support OECD member countries and non-member adhering countries with the implementation of the Recommendation. This practice was submitted by the government of New Zealand to be considered as a good practice in the implementation of one or more of the principles contained in the Recommendation.

Description of the practice:

Organisation:	Government Chief Technology Officer, Deputy Chief Executive, Service and System Transformation Branch, Department of Internal Affairs
Name of the practice:	Development of a new Benchmark for Smart Societies (Smart Societies Benchmark)
Principles implemented:	<u>Principle 8</u> – Strengthen international co-operation with other governments.
Description:	Smart Societies show nations how to work in new ways and support communities to adapt to the new digital world.

The Smart Societies Benchmark offers a set of benchmarks to measure progress of nations on the journey towards a 'smart society', its strengths as well as gaps and opportunities. The Benchmark helps nations identify policy priorities and an action plans (see "Additional Information" below).

In 2017 New Zealand's Department of Internal Affairs partnered with Fletcher School at Tuft's University Boston and Microsoft New Zealand to develop a new Smart Societies Benchmark.

The Benchmark offers a working definition of a Smart Society:

A smart society is one in which digital technology, thoughtfully deployed by governments, can improve on three broad outcomes: the wellbeing of people, the strength of the economy, and the effectiveness of institutions.



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The partnership defined a Smart Society as a society where governments proactively use and develop best available technologies and data to improve on three broad outcomes:

- the wellbeing of **people**
- the robustness of the **economy**
- the effectiveness of **institutions**.

The Benchmark has 12 measures across the three outcomes.

The outcomes and associated measures are:

- People:
 - environment
 - quality of life
 - inclusivity
 - talent development
- Economy
 - global connectedness
 - economic robustness
 - entrepreneurship
 - innovation
- Institutions
 - freedoms both online and offline
 - trust
 - safety and security
 - public services.

The outcome measures are supported by 242 indicators, which will allow us to compare nation's progress and identify exemplars for each outcome.

The work is part of New Zealand's commitment to the Digital 7, or 'D7' (previously the D5). The D7 is a forum of leading digital nations that helps each member country to become an even better digital government by:

- sharing best practice and learning from one another
- identifying how to improve digital services
- collaborating on common projects to support and champion our growing digital nations.

New Zealand was one of the founding members of the D5, alongside Estonia, Israel, South Korea and the United Kingdom. Canada and Uruguay joined the group in February 2018 at the Ministerial Summit in New Zealand, officially creating the D7. New Zealand is the immediate past Chair of the D7.

Results



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The project has produced a Benchmark (see “Additional Information” below) which any country can use to evaluate their digital progress and inform their priorities. While the analysis for the Benchmark is directed at nations, the Benchmark can be used by decision-makers in a wide range of contexts, including supranational, subnational, states, counties, and cities, to inform their priorities and actions.

Development

Design:

Fletcher School collected data on the D5 nations of New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Estonia, South Korea and Israel on 242 indicators, covering three outcomes: people, economy and institutions. Over 40 data sources were used, including public and proprietary databases.

Testing:

Most of the data are drawn from quantitative data sets. Where quantitative data were less available, Fletcher School identified proxies. Where no quantitative data were available, qualitative data was translated into numeric scores.

Diffusion and Scaling:

The resulting Benchmark has been shared widely in publications, public events, and nations’ public service networks, central and local governments. For example, the Benchmark was:

- launched on 5 October 2017 with an article in the Harvard Business Review
- discussed with D5 delegates at the OECD Digital Leaders meeting in Portugal on 21 September 2017
- shared with D5/D7 nations, published by the Fletcher School in October 2017
- presented internationally at conferences from October 2017 onwards, including in New Zealand at the Digital Nations Conference and the D7 Officials meeting.

We have encouraged other nations to use the benchmark as they progress towards their own Smart Societies.

The Department of Internal Affairs is developing New Zealand’s digital government strategy, which supports New Zealand’s own ‘Smart Society’. The Benchmark will support and inform the development of the Strategy.

Partnerships:

Private sector	Microsoft New Zealand.
Academics and Research Bodies	Fletcher School at Tuft’s University Boston.



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Public Sector Organisations	Digital 5 Governments (New Zealand, United Kingdom, Estonia, Israel, South Korea).
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Lessons learned

Cross-jurisdiction work to create a benchmark was difficult because each country is at a different stage on their digital journey. As a result, an approach was developed to measure and set an appropriate standard for the effectiveness of public services' digital regulatory regimes in different cultural contexts.

The Benchmark helps us identify our strengths and our distinctive challenges, and it helps us plan and target our response to achieve positive outcomes for our citizens.

Conditions required:

Strong sponsorship and leadership are important to maintain momentum and support progress. Developing a Benchmark can challenge assumptions countries hold about their digital maturity. The collaboration with Fletcher School worked well as there was senior level support for the development of the Benchmark

Formal Evaluation

No formal evaluation has taken place.

Additional information:

'Building Smart Societies – A blueprint for action: How the world's most digitally advanced governments offer a strategic choice framework on technology for policymakers', November 2017. See: <https://sites.tufts.edu/digitalplanet/smart-societies/>