



# Rethinking digital transformation and innovation for enhanced government responsiveness in MENA

*16 October, 2023*

*OECD Conference Center – CC18*

*Paris, France*



**MENA - OECD**  
Governance Programme

**M=PI**



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BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER LIVES

## Overview and objectives of the MENA-OECD Working Group meeting

The purpose of the event is to host a discussion of the **MENA-OECD Working Group II on Open and Innovative Government** and continue building on its previous discussions, concentrating on the synergies that governments can identify in being more **open, digital and innovative** and how this approach can contribute to promoting greater **citizen and stakeholder participation** in the region. Throughout the policy-making cycle, governments have opportunities to engage with citizens to co-source ideas and co-create solutions to collective challenges. At the same time, the availability and advancement of digital technologies have improved existing practices and initiatives and encouraged innovative and cross-border approaches. Furthermore, the meeting will enable a reflection on the future of the MENA-OECD Working Group II and its objectives moving forward, with the vision to leverage collective expertise and drive strategic initiatives through the platform provided by the Group.

The meeting will draw on the dialogue of the MENA-OECD Governance Programme and the OECD Public Governance Committee and builds on the [Recommendation of the OECD Council on Digital Government Strategies](#) as well as the [Recommendation of the OECD Council on Open Government](#).

## Monday, 16 October 2023

14:00 - 14:20	<b>Opening Remarks</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Dr Eng. Tariq Al Hawi</b>, Director of Digital Adoption and Enablement, Telecommunication Regulatory Authority and Chair of the MENA-OECD Working Group II on Open and Innovative Government, United Arab Emirates</li><li>• <b>H.E. Amb. Luca Sabbatucci</b>, Permanent Representative of Italy to the OECD and Co-Chair of the MENA-OECD Governance Programme</li><li>• <b>Mr. Pedro Ferreira Cabrita</b>, Coordinator of the Strategic Coordination Commission, National Mint Press and Co-Chair of the MENA-OECD Working Group II on Open and Innovative Government, Portugal</li></ul>
14:20 - 15:45	<b>Towards more responsive governments in MENA: leveraging technology for inclusive participation</b>
	<p>This session is a technical reflection on the areas of work of open and digital government. Through examples from the MENA region, it aims to discuss the evolution, opportunities, and challenges of the use of civic tech/gov tech for government responsiveness in MENA, as well as how to ensure its sustainability and institutionalisation.</p> <p>Indeed, the use of technology and data to facilitate and enhance citizen participation, government transparency, and public service design and delivery has proven to be essential for governments around the world including throughout the MENA region. Public sector collaboration plays an important role to bring start-ups, innovators and intrapreneurs to complement existing public sector abilities for agile, user-centric, responsive, and cost-effective public processes and services. Also referred to as 'govtech' and 'civic tech,' this contributes to efforts to innovate and enhance citizen participation in government decision-making. While technology can be a cost-effective and innovative way to engage citizens and foster more responsive policies and services, challenges related to inclusiveness, due in part to digital divides, are also growing in importance.</p> <p><b>Moderator</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Mr. Alessandro Bozzini</b> and <b>Ms. Seong Ju Park</b>, Policy Analysts, Open and Innovative Division, OECD</li></ul> <p><b>Speakers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Dr. Ghada Labib</b>, Deputy Minister for Institutional Development, Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, Egypt</li><li>• <b>Mr. Ali AlKhawaldeh</b>, Secretary-General of the Ministry for Political and Parliamentary Affairs, Jordan</li><li>• <b>Ms. Arūnė Matelytė</b>, Manager of GovTech Lab Lithuania</li></ul> <p><b>Roundtable discussion</b></p>
15:45 - 16:00	<b>Coffee break</b>

<b>16:00 - 17:15</b>	<b>Unlocking government innovation through innovation labs</b>
	<p>This session wants to provide a technical discussion on a priority related to public sector innovation, namely discussing the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead of Governments for the creation of innovation labs in the MENA region.</p> <p>Indeed, in response to the growing complexity of social and political challenges and the need to answer citizens' needs and expectations, governments worldwide have increasingly turned to Public Sector Innovation (PSI) Labs as a means to overcome the limitations of traditional approaches and foster innovation in policy design. PSI labs help governments to address complex policy challenges and promote citizen-centricity through the use of experimental and collaborative approaches. In this context, they constitute safe spaces to actively engage citizens and stakeholders, explore and test alternative approaches and solutions in a controlled environment, and deliver value to society through innovative policies and services.</p> <p><b>Moderator</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Dr. Bruno Monteiro</b>, Policy Analyst, Observatory for Public Sector Innovation, OECD</li> </ul> <p><b>Speakers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mr. Hatim Mouradi</b>, Head of the Innovation and Modernization Division, Ministry of Digital Transition and Administration Reform, Morocco</li> <li>• <b>Mr. Orlando Rojas</b>, Executive Director, <i>Laboratorio de Gobierno</i> (Government Lab), Chile</li> </ul> <p><b>Roundtable discussion</b></p>
<b>17:15 - 17:30</b>	<b>Closing Remarks: Next steps for the Working Group II</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Dr. Eng. Tariq Al Hawi</b>, Director of Digital Adoption and Enablement, Telecommunication Regulatory Authority and Chair of the MENA-OECD Working Group II on Open and Innovative Government, United Arab Emirates</li> <li>• <b>Mr. Carlos Santiso</b>, Head of Open and Innovative Government Division, OECD</li> </ul>

## **MENA-OECD Working Group II on Open and Innovative Government**

The OECD has undertaken a range of capacity-building exercises at the national, regional, and local levels and has consolidated three regional networks in the Middle East and North Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Southeast Asia. These networks offer countries from each respective region a platform to exchange ideas, experiences, and knowledge on building stronger public institutions with a focus on open government, public sector innovation, and digital government.

The MENA-OECD Working Group II on Open and Innovative Government was launched in 2005 and is currently chaired by United Arab Emirates and co-chaired by Korea, Italy and Portugal. The Working Group has established a community of policy practitioners in the MENA region to promote open and digital government, open data, and public sector innovation, and the ways in which they can contribute and add value to the economic, social, and governance goals in the region.

### **The MENA-OECD Governance Programme**

The [MENA-OECD Governance Programme](#) is a strategic partnership between governments in the MENA region and OECD members to share knowledge and expertise, with a view of disseminating standards and principles of good governance that support the ongoing process of reform in the MENA region. The Programme strengthens collaboration with the most relevant multilateral initiatives currently underway in the region. In particular, the Programme supports the implementation of the G7 Deauville Partnership and assists governments in meeting the eligibility criteria to become a member of the Open Government Partnership. Through these initiatives, the Programme acts as a leading advocate of managing ongoing public governance reforms in the MENA region. The Programme provides a sustainable structure for regional policy dialogue as well as for country specific projects. These projects correspond to the commitment of those in the MENA region to implement public sector reforms in view of unlocking social and economic development and of meeting citizens' growing expectations in terms of quality services, inclusive policymaking and transparency.

# CONTACT

## OECD Open and Innovative Government Division

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