Modernising Access to Social Protection: Strategies, Technologies and Data Advances in OECD Countries

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Few feel that they could access public benefits in time of need

Share of RTM 2022 respondents who agree or disagree with the statement: "I feel that I could easily receive public benefits if I needed them", by country, 2022

Source: OECD Risks that Matter Survey 2022 (http://oe.cd/rtm)
How do OECD governments identify vulnerable people? An overview of national frameworks

**Probabilistic estimates with de-identified data**

**Identification:**
- Traditional approach -- used in most countries
- Typically use survey data to identify vulnerable regions or groups (e.g. young people) in need of social services or benefits

**Expanding coverage:**
- Policy response casts a wide net
- Better communication around existing and new programmes, often targeting specific groups
- Investment in new programmes

**Pros:** Fewer data privacy issues, helps to identify people who are not in the social protection system, helps identify systematic disadvantage.

**Cons:** Potential beneficiaries still need to enrol!

**Linking personally-identified data across sources**

**Identification:**
- Social database/registry: Voluntary enrolment and/or automatic enrolment (by administering agencies)
- Linking admin data across agencies to identify non-take-up

**Expanding coverage:**
- Notify potential beneficiaries of eligibility for other benefits/services
- Simplify the application for other benefits (e.g. pre-filling)
- Automatic enrolment

**Pros:** Specifically identifies and facilitates the enrolment of people who are known to the government.

**Cons:** Misses people who live outside the social protection system. Still usually some burden to enroll.
The use of advanced technologies and data can improve the take-up and delivery of social programmes

- OECD countries are increasingly leveraging technology and data to improve social programme coverage and delivery
- Digitalised welfare systems are starting to change the nature of the bureaucratic encounter between the state and individuals
- More services are now available online, enabling welfare agencies to focus resources on people with needs that are not suited to automated systems
- Technologies like websites, portals and apps are commonly used
- Social policy ministries however are early in their digital transformation journeys relative to other parts of the public sector
- So far, deployment of more advanced technologies like AI is limited, and is primarily used to provide automated support(e.g., chatbots) and/or to automate back-office processes
- Significant risks come with the use of advanced technologies and data and countries are proceeding with caution
## Adopting a balanced risk management approach

Governments are seeking to strike the right balance between progressing digital transformations and managing associated risks and challenges.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risks</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Mitigations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protecting people’s privacy – the data collected and used for social protection can be highly sensitive</td>
<td>Enabling the wide range of foundations necessary for digital transformation</td>
<td>Legal, regulatory and accountability frameworks</td>
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<td>Data breaches are on the rise, which can harm the individual(s) involved and damage public trust and confidence</td>
<td>Achieving the significant cross-government and agency collaboration often required</td>
<td>Offering services through multiple channels</td>
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<td>Digitalisation can reinforce or create new sources of exclusion and disadvantage</td>
<td>Getting the data right</td>
<td>Involving service users in solution design</td>
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<td>Access to digital infrastructure and tools is uneven</td>
<td>Ensuring appropriate accountability frameworks are in place</td>
<td>Achieving incremental improvements through agile ways of working</td>
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<td>Developing a skilled workforce, equipped for ongoing digital transformation</td>
<td>Encouraging innovative cultures through leadership and champions</td>
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<td>Investing sufficiently in modern technology infrastructure</td>
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Thank you

Check out the full report: https://oe.cd/modern-sp-2024

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