

Digital government: Progress towards digital competence and maturity

As societies and economies become increasingly digital, fostering the digital transformation of governments to meet the expectations of more demanding and empowered service users is essential. A government that is able to leverage digital tools and data is pivotal to enabling agile responses and fostering the resilience of the public sector to external shocks, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Digital Government Index (DGI) assesses and benchmarks the maturity of digital government policies and their implementation under a coherent and whole-of-government approach. It thereby aims to help appraise governments' ability to operate in an increasingly digital and global world. Scores range from 0 (the lowest) to 1 (the highest). It has six dimensions based on the OECD Digital Government Policy Framework (DGPF), each with an equal weight (0.16): *digital by design*, *data-driven public sector*, *government as a platform*, *open by default*, *user-driven* and *proactiveness*.

In 2019, the average DGI score across OECD countries was 0.5, with 15 out of 29 countries surpassing this threshold. Korea (0.74), the United Kingdom (0.74) and Colombia (0.73) were the best performers in this assessment. These countries stand out for their comprehensive digital government strategies and long-standing institutional arrangements, which translate into greater maturity in the implementation of digital government reforms. In contrast, Greece (0.35), Iceland (0.28) and Sweden (0.26) scored the lowest in this edition. These countries have much room for improvement in setting a whole-of-government strategic approach and policy frameworks for the use of digital technologies (*digital by design* and *government as a platform*) and data (*data-driven public sector*) to effectively equip their governments to become *user-driven* and *proactive* (Figure 10.1).

OECD countries attained their best average score (0.11 out of 0.16) in the *open by default* dimension, which describes the extent to which data, information and processes are open unless there is a compelling reason why they should not be. Korea (0.15) and the United Kingdom (0.14) maintain the same solid performance as they do in the other five dimensions. The Czech Republic (0.13), Slovenia (0.12) and Greece (0.12) perform particularly strong compared to their performance in other dimensions. Austria, Lithuania (0.09 each), Sweden (0.06) and Iceland (0.05) have the lowest scores.

The dimensions with the lowest OECD average scores were *data-driven public sector* and *proactiveness* (0.07 each). This reflects governments' issues with valuing data as a strategic public asset and anticipating user needs, avoiding cumbersome data and service delivery processes. The *data-driven public sector* dimension measures countries' data governance structures (e.g. data strategies), infrastructure and standards to capitalise on the value of data. The United Kingdom (0.12), Denmark and Korea (0.11 each) stand out for their performance. Chile, Finland and Germany

(0.04 each) have the lowest scores, indicating that they need to do more to capitalise on the value of data.

Proactiveness measures whether governments deliver data and services to the public without waiting for formal requests from users. Colombia (0.13), Latvia (0.11) – which otherwise has a below-average overall score of 0.47 – and France (0.11) score highest in this dimension, while the Czech Republic (0.03), the Netherlands (0.03), Greece (0.02) and Sweden (0.02) score lowest.

Methodology and definitions

Data for the DGI were collected through the OECD Survey on Digital Government 1.0, which was designed to monitor the implementation of the OECD Recommendation of the Council on Digital Government Strategies and assess countries' shift towards greater levels of digital maturity. In 2019, 29 OECD countries, and one OECD key partner country (Brazil) participated in the DGI. Survey respondents were senior officials in central and federal governments who were leading and/or implementing digital government reforms, and who gathered data from different parts of the public sector as relevant.

Digital government refers to the use of digital technology to create public value as an integrated part of governments' modernisation strategies. It requires a digital government ecosystem comprised of government actors, non-governmental organisations, businesses, citizens' associations and individuals, which supports the production of and access to data, services and content through interactions with the government. For the definition of e-government, see the glossary.

Further reading

OECD (2020), "Digital Government Index: 2019 results", OECD Public Governance Policy Papers, No. 3, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/4de9f5bb-en>.

OECD (2020), "The OECD Digital Government Policy Framework: Six dimensions of a digital government", OECD Public Governance Policy Papers, No. 02, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/f64fed2a-en>.

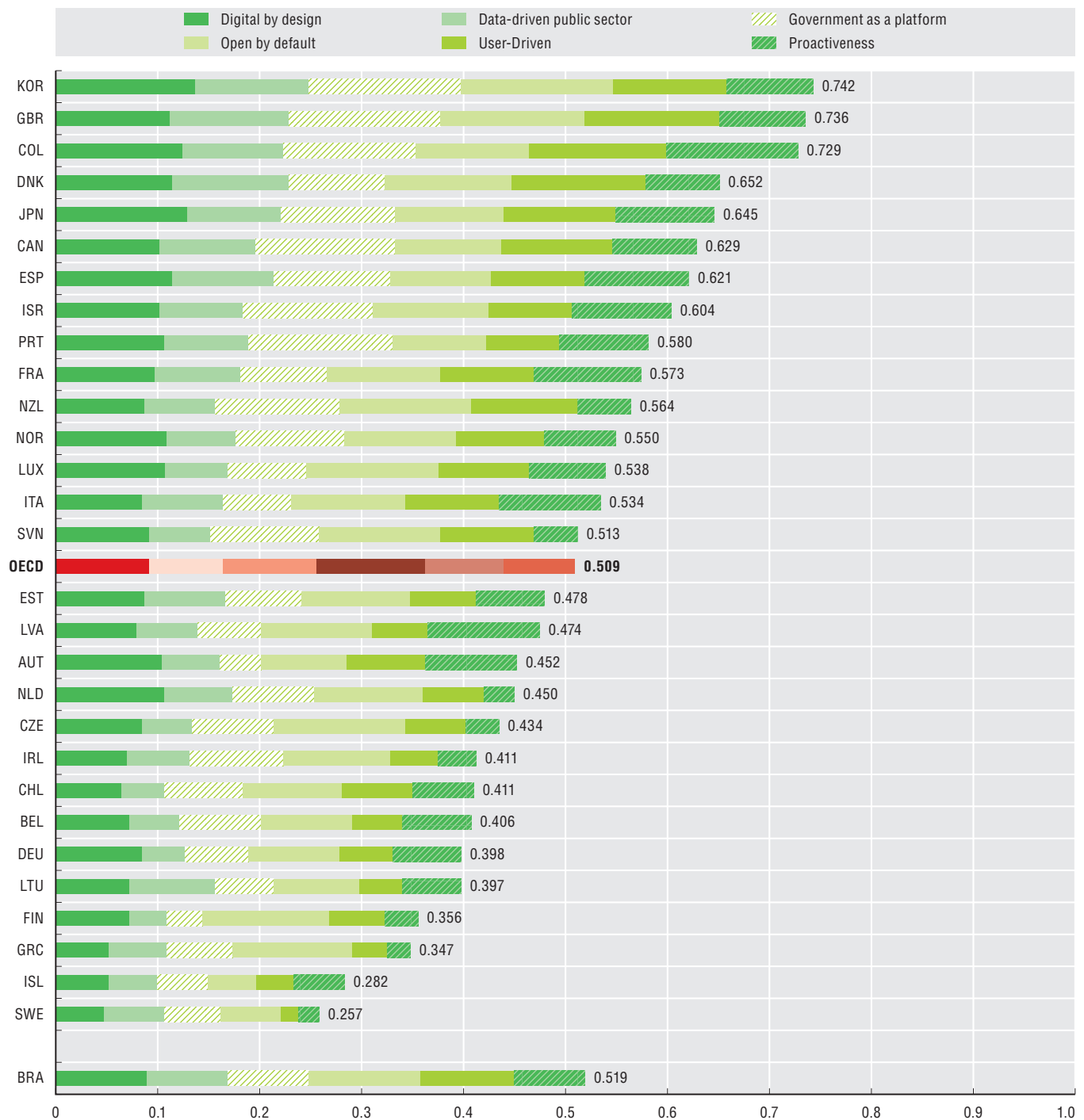
Ubaldi, B. and Okubo, T. (2020), "OECD Digital Government Index (DGI): Methodology and 2019 results", OECD Working Papers on Public Governance, No. 41, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/b00142a4-en>.

Figure notes

Data are not available for Australia, Hungary, Mexico, Poland, the Slovak Republic, Switzerland, Turkey and the United States.

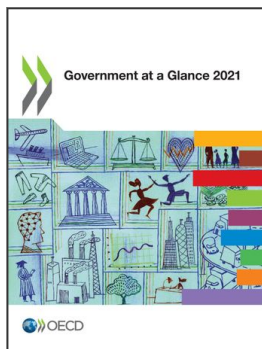
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10.1. OECD Digital Government Index, 2019



Source: OECD (2019), Survey on Digital Government 1.0.

StatLink <https://doi.org/10.1787/888934258743>



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