Data accessibility: Open, free and accessible formats

The re-use of government data by citizens, businesses, and other stakeholders is contingent upon the provision of data in formats and procedures that allow the data to be used by anyone, and for all possible purposes. Core features of accessible data include providing them free of charge, with unrestricted access, and in machine-readable formats. Governments can create frameworks with standards on data formats and publication procedures for greater data quality and accessibility. Moreover, feedback channels on central/federal open government data portals can foster the contribution of open data users.

The indicator on *Accessibility of government data* has three sub-indicators: *content of unrestricted access to data policy*, *stakeholder engagement for data quality and completeness,* and *implementation*, each scoring a maximum of 0.33 points. Since 2017, the OECD average increased from 0.62 in 2017 to 0.70 in 2019 (out of a minimum of 0.00 and maximum of 1.00 points), as a result of more advanced government data portals that collect feedback from users. Central/federal OGD portals across the OECD are becoming more user-driven and collaborative platforms, by allowing users to add data and visualisations, and through more advanced feedback mechanisms, hence the improvement in the sub-indicator *stakeholder engagement*.

Formal requirements for public bodies to provide data free of charge, with open access, and in re-usable formats are common in OECD countries. The OECD average for the sub-indicator *content of the data policy* increased from 0.25 in 2017 to 0.27 in 2019. Further, 10 out of 33 OECD countries score the highest possible value (0.33) in this indicator, including Chile, Italy and the Netherlands, whereas Sweden still lags considerably behind, scoring 0.06. Through the adoption of its Federal Open Data Act, Germany has made one of the most notable policy advancements to support data accessibility over the last couple of years, increasing its score from 0.19 to 0.33.

More countries are engaging with open data users and other stakeholders on their open data platforms for data quality and completeness. The OECD average for the sub-indicator on *stakeholder engagement* increased from 0.11 in 2017 to 0.14 in 2019. Austria and France both have highly advanced OGD portals that ensure contribution from users, and, as a result, are leaders in terms of data accessibility. The total score of data accessibility in Japan (0.67) and Mexico (0.68) are below the OECD average, mostly due to weaker levels of stakeholder engagement (0.13 and 0.07 respectively).

In practice, most OECD countries publish accessible and high-quality data on their central/federal open government data portals, including Latvia, which launched its portal in 2017. The OECD average for *implementation* increased from 0.27 in 2017 to 0.28 in 2019. Sweden is one of the better performing countries in terms of providing accessible government data on its open data portal (score 0.30), despite having few requirements for public sector organisations to

do so. Denmark (0.22) and Lithuania (0.21) score relatively low. A reason for Denmark's score is that users have to register in order to access and re-use data.

Methodology and definitions

Data accessibility measures the extent to which government data are provided in open and re-usable formats, with their associated metadata. The indicator covers primarily Principle 3 ("Accessible and usable") and Principle 4 ("Comparable and interoperable") of the International Open Data Charter. It consists of the three sub-indicators: *content of the free and open access to data policy*; *stakeholder engagement for data quality and completeness*; and *implementation*. The three sub-indicators have an equal weight and each ranges from 0 to 0.33. Hence, the indicator ranges from 0 (minimum) to 1 (maximum). When aggregating to the final OURData Index, the score of *data accessibility* is transformed to range from 0 to 0.33 and with this, it is assigned an equal weight to the other two indicators.

Data for the OURdata Index and the indicator *data accessibility* are collected from the OECD Open Government Data Survey. Survey respondents were predominantly senior government department officials in charge of digital or open government policies. Responses represent countries' own assessment of current practices and procedures regarding data availability. Data refer only to central/federal governments and exclude practices at the state/local level. The OURdata Index is a composite index based on the International Open Data Charter principles and methodology described in OECD work (Lafortune and Ubaldi, 2018).

For more information on the methodology and underlying data, see Annex E.
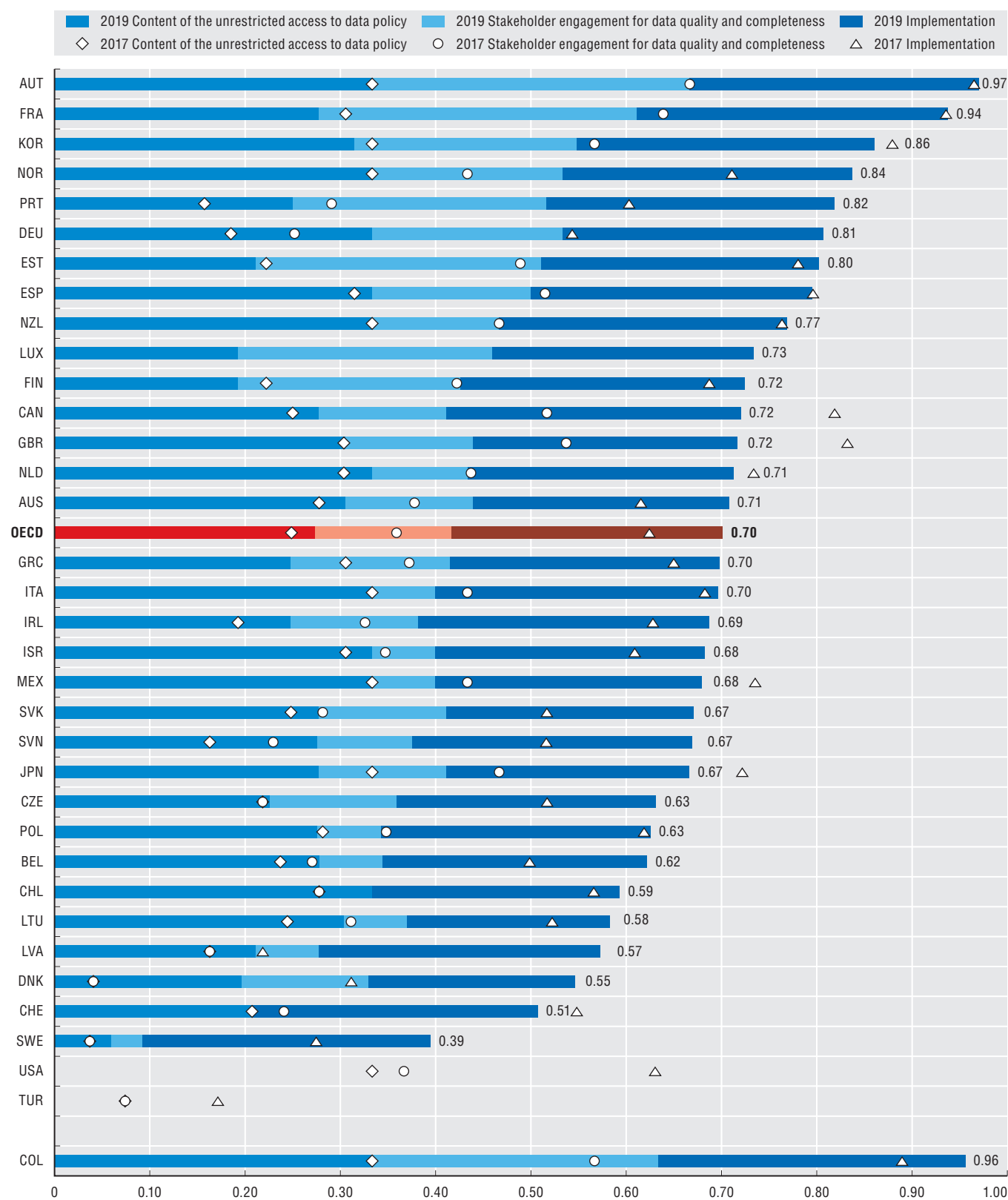
Further reading

Lafortune, G. and B. Ubaldi (2018), "OECD 2017 OURdata Index: Methodology and results", *OECD Working Papers on Public Governance*, No. 30, OECD Publishing, Paris, *http://doi.org/10.1787/2807d3c8-en*.

OECD (2018), *Open Government Data in Mexico: The Way Forward*, OECD Digital Government Studies, OECD Publishing, Paris, *https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264297944-en*.
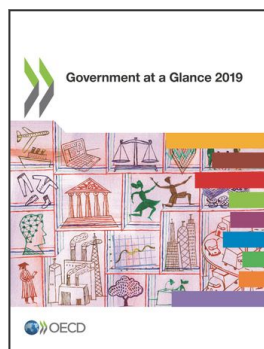
Figure notes

Data for 2017 are not available for Hungary, Iceland and Luxembourg. Data for 2019 are not available for Hungary, Iceland, Turkey and the United States. On data for Israel, see *http://doi.org/10.1787/888932315602*.

9.6. Data accessibility, 2017 and 2019

Legend:
- 2019 Content of the unrestricted access to data policy
- 2019 Stakeholder engagement for data quality and completeness
- 2019 Implementation
- 2017 Content of the unrestricted access to data policy
- 2017 Stakeholder engagement for data quality and completeness
- 2017 Implementation

Country	Value
AUT	0.97
FRA	0.94
KOR	0.86
NOR	0.84
PRT	0.82
DEU	0.81
EST	0.80
ESP	0.79
NZL	0.77
LUX	0.73
FIN	0.72
CAN	0.72
GBR	0.72
NLD	0.71
AUS	0.71
OECD	0.70
GRC	0.70
ITA	0.70
IRL	0.69
ISR	0.68
MEX	0.68
SVK	0.67
SVN	0.67
JPN	0.67
CZE	0.63
POL	0.63
BEL	0.62
CHL	0.59
LTU	0.58
LVA	0.57
DNK	0.55
CHE	0.51
SWE	0.39
USA	
TUR	
COL	0.96

Source: OECD (2016, 2018), *Open Government Data Survey*.

StatLink https://doi.org/10.1787/888934033099

From:
Government at a Glance 2019

Access the complete publication at:
https://doi.org/10.1787/8ccf5c38-en