Openness of Government

Sustainable Governance Indicators 2024

Indicator   # Open Government

Question   ## To what extent does the government publish data and information that empowers citizens to hold the government accountable?

30 OECD and EU countries are sorted according to their performance on a scale from 10 (best) to 1 (lowest). This scale is tied to four qualitative evaluation levels.

10-9 = The government publishes data and information in a manner that empowers citizens to hold the government accountable.

8-6 = Most of the time, the government publishes data and information in a manner that empowers citizens to hold the government accountable.

5-3 = The government rarely publishes data and information in a manner that strengthens citizens to hold the government accountable.

2-1 = The government does not publish data and information in a manner that strengthens citizens' capacity to hold the government accountable.

Finland

Score 9   According to the Statistics Act (280/2004), four official statistical authorities operate in Finland. Statistics Finland, the Natural Resources Institute Finland, the National Institute for Health and Welfare, and Finnish Customs are each mandated to collect data. Additionally, several other authorities produce official statistical materials. Official Statistics of Finland publishes nearly 300 statistical datasets covering 26 different topics. The basic data of the Official Statistics of Finland is publicly available on the internet, free of charge.

It is fair to say the government is proactive in publishing data and information that enable citizens to hold it accountable.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, a Situation Room was established consisting of leading economists from Helsinki GSE and the VATT Institute for Economic Research, as well as representatives from several public agencies. The Situation Room combines up-to-date register data from various sources. The model has been developed and granted extra funding. This signals that the government is taking the lead in developing comprehensive data governance frameworks and building data management capacities across the public sector to foster an environment that encourages data reuse.

The government enables its open government data portals to function as interactive feedback and communication tools rather than mere repositories of data. Quality standards and standardization efforts effectively ensure the production of high-quality government information and data.

The government in Finland proactively provides information and data that adequately meet the increasing demands of citizens in terms of information diversity and level of detail. For example, the Sotkanet database includes more than 3,600 indicators available across different regions and administrative levels. Also, the social security institution offers timely register data on benefit use. Both data services are user-friendly.

Finland has established an incomes register, which is updated by the tax authority. This means all income data is available in real time. However, the data is not publicly available.

The government's information and data can be considered user-friendly for both humans and machines, including factors such as data formats, ease of access, and the provision of documentation and user guides.

France

Score 9

France has made remarkable progress in the area of open government under the past two governments. According to a study commissioned by the European Commission in 2018, France comes third in terms of "open data maturity" and "quality," after Ireland and Spain.

This is largely related to the success of the official data platform data.gouv.fr. According to government information, it currently contains 35,000 datasets shared by over 2,200 organizations. These are contributed by local actors, national administrations and universities, as well as private actors.

Following a report by the national Court of Auditors, the government pledged in March 2022 that all access to public data should be made free within a year. Moreover, the National Assembly, which has made available most of its transcripts of plenary sessions, will make more data available, merging its own infrastructure with data.gouv.fr. Different ministries have similarly pledged to make new datasets available in the near future.

Finally, data reuse has increased dramatically. The platform data.gouv.fr recorded more than 8 million visits in 2022 for close to 40,000 recorded data reuses.

Overall, progress in this area is very important, and France appears to be a trendsetter in this particular area (OECD 2023).

Citation:
European Commission. 2018. "Impact Assessment Support Study for the Revision of the Public Sector Information Directive." https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/impact-assessment-support-study-revision-public-sector-information-directive
OECD. 2023. "Open, Useful and Re-Usable Data Index." https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/a37f51c3-en.pdf?expires=1706724363&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=7144D57CB27EF22312A488590DECECD2

Slovenia

Score 9

The Ministry of Public Administration established the national open data portal OPSI (Odprti podatki Slovenije) in 2016. The portal provides a single national online point for the publication of open data for the entire public sector. OPSI was created based on the EU Directive on the reuse of public sector data. In the Open Data Maturity Report 2023, the European Commission ranks Slovenia 14th.

According to the OECD's OURdata Index on Open Government Data, Slovenia remains among the top 10 OECD countries that consistently ensure adequate access to open data. Slovenia has presented a comprehensive approach to open data initiatives and scores well in all areas, from its open data strategy and legal requirements to the publication of high-quality data and engagement with stakeholders inside and outside government to promote the reuse of data.

Citation:
European Union. 2023. "European Data." https://data.europa.eu/en/publications/open-data-maturity/2023#country-overview

OECD. 2023. "2023 OECD Open, Useful and Re-usable data (OURdata) Index." https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/a37f51c3-en.pdf?expires=1707217374&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=E9682C78E1010504A5009B9EF9F15A30

Republika Slovenija. 2024. "Odprti podatki Slovenije." https://podatki.gov.si

Switzerland

Score 9

The government and its institutions – in particular the Federal Statistical Office – pursue a highly user-friendly policy of internet-based access to information. Any citizen interested in public policy and having access to the internet will find a large body of qualitative and quantitative data available. The Freedom of Information Act (Bundesgesetz über das Öffentlichkeitsprinzip der Verwaltung, BGÖ/LTrans) ensures full access to public documents apart from classified information (see section D3).

The official information bulletin is the most important source of information for citizens making decisions in direct-democratic votes. Overall, government information policy can be considered comprehensive, and enables citizens to fully inform themselves about most aspects of the political system and its policymaking.

However, as made clear by the 2019 case in which the Supreme Court overturned the outcome of a popular vote, this information policy is not flawless, and is subject to close scrutiny in the context of the country's direct democracy. The mistakes made by the Federal Council in delivering erroneous information regarding a vote on the taxation of couples compelled the court to annul the referendum (Jacquemoud 2019).

Citation:

Jacquemoud, C. 2019. "L'annulation du scrutin fédéral sur l'initiative 'Pour le couple et la famille – Non à la pénalisation du mariage.'" www.lawinside.ch/763/

Swiss Confederation, Federal Act on Freedom of Information in the Administration (Freedom of Information Act, FoIA) of 17 December 2004 (Status as of 1 November 2023): https://www.fedlex.admin.ch/eli/cc/2006/355/en

United Kingdom

Score 9

The United Kingdom, once cautious about open government, has become strongly committed to it since publishing an open government white paper in 1993. As a founding member of the Open Government Partnership since 2011, the UK has become a major global advocate for citizens' free access to government data. Parliament, the government, and the civil service publish all but certain sensitive documents in a timely manner on their websites. A dedicated data portal (data.gov.uk) serves as the entry point for a wide range of documents and datasets published by the UK government and other public bodies.

The UK government has a long history of publishing official statistics, governed by the Statistics and Registration Service Act since 2007. This act created the UK Statistics Authority – a non-ministerial department – with the Office for National Statistics (ONS) as an executive agency within the department. The act also established the Office for Statistics Regulation, which sets the Code of Practice for Official Statistics and oversees the accreditation of "National Statistics." This role includes writing occasional letters to UK and devolved governments regarding their communication of data.

The UK government publishes a vast array of transparency data, such as senior public servants' salaries, workforce data, special adviser pay, and details of ministerial and senior officials' meetings. Over 9,000 items categorized as "transparency data" and more than 10,000 FOI requests are available on the government website (gov.uk). Committee and working group meetings are streamed via various online platforms, including YouTube and Facebook Live.

In the latest (2022) Open Data Barometer, the United Kingdom, alongside Canada, ranked first out of 30 governments, despite a slight decline in its score since the first edition. In contrast, the OECD's 2019 OURdata index saw the UK lose its "open data champion" status, an outcome explained by the OECD as mainly due to "reduced efforts toward user engagement across the whole policy process, and change of policy priorities from open data to analytical capacity within the public sector."

A biannual Open Government Action Plan sets goals and standards for open government in the UK, negotiated in cooperation with the UK Open Government Network (OGN), a coalition of active citizens and civil society organizations. The

latest plan for 2024–2025 was published in December 2023 and reaffirms the UK's commitment, emphasizing that "preserving and nurturing the dynamic between citizens and the state is vital."

Citation:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-national-action-plan-for-open-government-2024-2025/uk-national-action-plan-for-open-government-2024-2025

United States

Score 9

The U.S. federal government has various mechanisms to share data and other information with the public, which citizens can use to hold the government accountable (Joyce 2011).

The federal government makes a vast amount of data available online, accessible to the public (Birchall 2015). Data.gov is a major platform where a wide array of government datasets can be found (Krishnamurthy and Awazu 2016). USAspending.gov offers extensive information about federal spending, including grants, loans, contracts, and other government transactions. This information helps citizens track federal spending and understand where their tax dollars go. Regulations.gov is a portal where citizens can find and comment on proposed federal regulations. Performance.gov provides information about the goals, strategic plans, and progress of various government agencies, enabling citizens to hold these agencies accountable for their performance (Bryer 2013).

Most federal agencies have substantial data available for public sharing. The Bureau of Labor Statistics, for example, is one of the world's foremost repositories of historical and current employment information, as well as other data related to workers, such as union density.

Inspector general reports are another way citizens can be informed about the workings of federal agencies. Inspectors general conduct audits, investigations, and other evaluations regarding the behavior of government officials (Brass 2012).

Citation:

Philip Joyce. 2011. "The Obama Administration and PBB: Building on the Legacy of Federal Performance-Informed Budgeting?" Public Administration Review.

Clinton Brass. 2012. "CRS Report for Congress Prepared for Members and Committees of Congress Changes to the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA): Overview of the New Framework of Products and Processes." Congressional Research Service.

Thomas Bryer. 2013. "Public Participation in Regulatory Decision-Making." Public Performance and Management Review.

Rashmi Krishnamurthy and Yukika Awazu. 2016. "Liberating Data for Public Value: The Case of Data.gov." International Journal of Information Management.

Claire Birchall. 2015. "Data.gov-in-a-box: Delimiting Transparency." European Journal of Social Theory.

Denmark

Score 8

The Agency for Digital Government (Digitaliseringsstyrelsen) is responsible for ensuring that data standards are met, data storage is secure and IT systems are protected from cyberattacks. Numerous open data portals are available to Danes. Most notably, Statistics Denmark has an API and a data portal through which citizens and companies can retrieve data. The Danish parliament has also developed an API through which minutes from meetings can be accessed.

In line with the long tradition of open and transparent governance, the Danish government makes data available in a user-friendly manner. Currently, the largest obstacle to data access is that some citizens lack the IT skills to access the data.

Furthermore, Danish government agencies consistently measure their user-friendliness and publish these data.

Germany

Score 8

As a member of the Open Government Partnership (OGP), Germany is committed to open government and is required to submit a National Action Plan (NAP) every two years. These NAPs are developed in collaboration with civil society and are expected to contain 5 to 15 independent commitments regarding open government (Federal Chancellery, 2021). In August 2023, Germany adopted its fourth NAP and a new national data strategy designed to improve data utilization to promote innovation, transformation, and competitiveness in the economy, public sector, scientific industry, and society. This initiative aims to enable a more responsible and innovative use of data, thereby fostering societal progress (Die Bundesregierung, 2023).

In 2017, Germany adopted the Federal Open Data Act, which obligates federal authorities to publish data in machine-readable and open formats (OECD, 2020). Additionally, the Second Open Data Act and the Data Use Act were adopted in 2021. Based on the Data Use Act, uniform and non-discriminatory terms of use for public sector data are to be created (Federal Ministry for Digital and Transport, 2022). Further, as of 2024, the Second Open Data Act expanded the group of authorities obligated to the Open Data principle by including the federal administration. In line with this, as of 2024, research data collected by the federal administration or on its behalf must be published as open data (Bundesministerium des Inneren und für Heimat, 2023). Lastly, by the end of 2024, the government wishes to adopt a Transparency Act (Transparenzgesetz), which is supposed to simplify cooperation within the government and improve participation opportunities for citizens.

The national metadata portal GovData was created to facilitate access to information across different regions and administrative levels. Its purpose is to provide an

overview of data from federal, state, and municipal administrations, along with links to access the original data (Bundesministerium des Inneren und für Heimat, 2023). While the portal allows users to provide feedback by mail, it does not offer an interactive feedback function.

Additional portals include two by the Federal Statistical Office: one on open data for the sustainable development indicators and the Dashboard Deutschland (German Dashboard). These portals also feature communication tools but lack interactive feedback functions. However, they do offer guidelines on how to use the available data.

Overall, the World Justice Index ranks Germany's open government with a score of 0.79 out of 1.0. Germany is ranked 13th globally and 11th regionally. The index further indicates that both Germany's publicized laws and government data, as well as its complaint mechanisms, are good (World Justice Project, 2023).

According to the German Council of Economic Experts, "both in terms of availability and access to research data, Germany continues to lag behind other countries" (Sachverständigenrat, 2023a). In its yearly report for 2023 – 2024, the council acknowledges that some improvement initiatives have been introduced but still heavily criticizes the lack of data availability and timely provision of data (Sachverständigenrat, 2023b). While the OECD Open Useful and Re-usable Data report from 2019 scored Germany's data accessibility at 0.27 out of 0.33 – one of the highest scores compared to other OECD countries – it also found the availability of data (0.17) and the government's support to reuse data (0.07) to be lacking (OECD, 2020).

Data published by governments is generally barrier-free. In 2022, the government adopted key points of the Federal Accessibility Initiative, whereby information on laws and administration, for instance, is to be translated more systematically into sign language and plain language and is supposed to have subtitles more frequently (Bundeskanzleramt, 2023). Still, while the Federal Open Data Act theoretically requires this, there is no data available to make an informed comment on how accessible the data is to machines based on data formats in practice.

Citation:

Bundeskanzleramt. 2023. "Vierter Nationaler Aktionsplan 2023–2025 im Rahmen der Teilnahme an der Open Government Partnership (OGP)." https://www.open-government-deutschland.de/resource/blob/1567548/2216312/7847417a225b1837793b9525e673030e/vierter-nap-data.pdf?download=1

Bundesministerium des Inneren und für Heimat. 2023. "Open Data." https://www.bmi.bund.de/DE/themen/moderne-verwaltung/open-government/open-data/open-data-node.html

Die Bundesregierung. 2023. "Fortschritt durch Datennutzung Strategie für mehr und bessere Daten für neue, effektive und zukunftsweisende Datennutzung." https://www.bmwk.de/Redaktion/DE/Publikationen/Digitale-Welt/fortschritt-durch-datennutzung.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=10

Federal Chancellery. 2021. "Third National Action Plan (NAP) 2021–2023 in the Framework of Germany's Participation in the Open Government Partnership (OGP), Summary Version." https://www.open-government-deutschland.de/resource/blob/1687030/1954570/799e145dc406326630493762ec65e37f/summary-en-3rd-national-action-plan-data.pdf?download=1

Federal Ministry for Digital and Transport. 2022. "Open Data."

https://bmdv.bund.de/SharedDocs/EN/Articles/DG/open-data.html

OECD. 2020. "OECD Open, Useful and Re-usable Data (OURdata) Index: 2019." https://www.oecd.org/governance/digital-government/ourdata-index-policy-paper-2020.pdf#page=44&zoom=100,84,121

Sachverständigenrat. 2023a. "Pressemitteilung, Deutschland muss in die Zukunft investieren, um seine Wachstumsschwäche zu überwinden." https://www.sachverstaendigenrat-wirtschaft.de/jahresgutachten-2023-pressemitteilung.html

Sachverständigenrat. 2023. "Wachstumsschwäche überwinden – in Zukunft investieren, Jahresgutachten 2023/24." https://www.sachverstaendigenrat-wirtschaft.de/fileadmin/dateiablage/gutachten/jg202324/JG202324_Kurzfassung.pdf

World Justice Project. 2023. "Germany, Open Government." https://worldjusticeproject.org/rule-of-law-index/country/2023/Germany/Open%20Government

Lithuania

Score 8

The government usually publishes data and information in a manner that empowers citizens to hold the government accountable. The conservative-liberal coalition government formed in late 2020 included several provisions in its program relating to open data policy, aiming to improve transparency and citizens' access to data. It pledged "to make open data an essential element of the government's decision-making and communication processes" and "to ensure that open data is provided to the population and businesses in an orderly and timely manner" so as to allow it to be swiftly and effectively used by the public and researchers in response to new challenges, in turn enabling them to participate actively in the policymaking process (Seimas 2020).

In 2022, the Law on Official Statistics and State Data Governance was adopted, allowing for the reform of the Department of Statistics into the State Data Agency. This reform aimed to enhance data pooling and provide for its more effective and timely use. According to the annual report of the government on its activities in 2022, data from 43 registers and information systems have been integrated into the state data pool.

OECD data shows that Lithuania's performance has improved due to government initiatives. In 2019, Lithuania was last in the OECD in terms of data availability and government support for reuse, and fifth-worst in terms of data accessibility (OECD 2019). Its overall score was the worst in the OECD. According to the most recent report published in 2023, Lithuania is now among the 10 best performers – a group of OECD countries characterized by "very high performance," with a comprehensive approach to open data initiatives. Lithuania scored particularly high with regard to data availability (fifth place), and 10th in the accessibility of high-value datasets, but somewhat worse in overall data accessibility (12th) and government support for data reuse.

The extent of proactive data provision is somewhat limited, making it challenging to determine its user-friendliness. Frequent complaints from citizens and business representatives in the media indicate that they feel poorly informed about new policy

initiatives. However, it is difficult to ascertain whether this lack of information stems from insufficient availability and user-friendliness of government-provided data or from a lack of interest on the part of citizens and businesses.

Citation:
The Seimas. 2020. "Resolution on The Program of the Eighteenth Government of Lithuania." 2020. No. XIV-72.
The Government Annual Report for 2022, 17 May 2023 (in Lithuanian), https://epilietis.lrv.lt/lt/naujienos/seimui-teikiama-vyriausybes-2022-metu-veiklos-ataskaita
OECD. 2019. "Open, Useful and Re-usable data (OURdata) Index: 2019." https://www.oecd.org/countries/lithuania/open-useful-and-re-usable-data-ourdata-index-2019-45f6de2d-en.htm
OECD. 2023. "2023 OECD Open, Useful and Re-usable data (OURdata) Index: Results and Key Findings." OECD Public Governance Policy Papers No. 43. https://doi.org/10.1787/a37f51c3-en

New Zealand

Score 8

New Zealand's government has a relatively strong commitment to transparency and regularly publishes data and information to empower citizens to hold the government accountable. Several initiatives contribute to this effort: open data portals maintained by various government departments, publication of reports and other information on official websites, and the Official Information Act (OIA), which enables citizens to request official information held by government agencies. Proactive release of materials via departmental websites has also increased, although sometimes with considerable redaction and without notification.

In the latest Open Government Index published by the World Justice Project, New Zealand is tied for second place out of 102 countries, trailing only Sweden (World Justice Project n.d.). However, New Zealand scores lower in the Open Data Barometer, released by the World Wide Web Foundation, where it shares seventh place. This ranking highlights that data availability is not consistent across government sectors and is particularly weak in the area of government spending (World Wide Web Foundation 2017).

New Zealand's position is also lower in the OECD OURdata Index on Open Government Data, where it is ranked 12th out of 32 countries. Nevertheless, New Zealand's score for ensuring public sector data availability and accessibility is still higher than the OECD average. Additionally, new processes are in place to ensure data sovereignty, increasing social license for data collection and supporting Indigenous data sovereignty. For Māori, data is seen as a taonga (sacred), something that cannot be shared without consultation and essential protections of knowledge for past, present and future generations.

The Labour-led coalition affirmed its commitment to the Open Government Partnership – a global initiative to improve government transparency – and sought to make data more accessible through its Fourth National Action Plan. However, a recent independent review notes that only three of the eight commitments made in the document "envision promising reforms" (Open Government Partnership 2023).

There has also been new policy work within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade to support more openness and communication around the development of bi, multi and plurilateral trade agreement processes.

Citation:
OECD. 2019. "OECD Open, Useful and Re-usable data (OURdata) Index." https://www.oecd.org/gov/digital-government/policy-paper-ourdata-index-2019.htm

Open Government Partnership. 2023. "New Zealand Action Plan Review 2022-2024." https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/new-zealand-action-plan-review-2022-2024/

World Justice Project. n.d. "Open Government Around the World." https://worldjusticeproject.org/open-government-around-world

World Wide Web Foundation. 2017. "Open Data Barometer: New Zealand." https://opendatabarometer.org/country-detail/?_year=2017&indicator=ODB&detail=NZL

Norway

Score 8

The government in Norway has developed clear plans over several years to publish data and make it user-friendly and accessible. This initiative is managed at the political level by the Ministry of Digitalisation and Public Governance, and at the agency level by the Norwegian Digitalisation Agency in cooperation with other public organizations that extensively use data. These include the Norwegian Tax Administration, the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration and Statistics Norway, which are the main actors facilitating data sharing as they collect most of the data about citizens and businesses.

Sharing and reusing data is a core principle of digitalization in the Norwegian government. The rationale behind this principle is that by sharing public data, society can benefit from all the information managed by the public sector, leading to increased knowledge, innovation, efficiency, transparency, and value creation. The government views it as a prerequisite for optimizing and automating work processes and developing efficient public services. To a large extent, users only need to provide information to the public sector once. The general strategy in the public sector is that sharing data leads to better data quality, as more people can detect and provide feedback on potential errors. Moreover, all data is generally provided in standardized and readable formats.

The Norwegian government offers a service called eInnsyn, allowing anyone to search for any document in the public sector and receive them by email. This includes everything from meeting minutes in ministries to project documents in specific agencies.

Citation:
https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumenter/retningslinjer-ved-tilgjengeliggjoring-av-offentlige-data/id2536870/
https://www.digdir.no/digital-samhandling/prinsipp-4-del-og-gjenbruk-data/1061

Spain

Score 8   The Spanish government frequently publishes data and information to enable citizen accountability. The centralized online platform, transparencia.gob.es, lists all ongoing legislative initiatives and consultations, facilitating citizen participation. This platform provides access to the yearly regulatory planning agenda for primary laws and subordinate regulations. It also annually publishes statistics on citizen utilization of the platform and hosts content related to transparency and good governance in public administration.

In December 2022, the president of the government presented the annual report "Cumpliendo" (Fulfilling), enhancing the accountability of the executive's work. Since 2019, Spain has ranked 8th among OECD countries in open, useful, and reusable government data.

In October 2020, the government approved the Fourth Open Government Plan (2020–2024). According to the Transparency and Accountability Working Group, which monitors the plan's implementation, only 2% of the planned initiatives had not been started by November 2023. The monitoring report is published in a user-friendly format on the open government data portal, where citizens can also provide feedback and comments.

Under the Open Government Plan, the government has adopted measures to foster data-driven management, particularly in the field of justice, and promoted data reuse by amending Law 37/2007 on the reuse of public sector information in 2023. Since 2011, the State Technical Committee for the Administration of e-Justice has promoted the interoperability of systems and applications used by the Administration of Justice.

In line with these efforts and as part of the RRP, the Council of Ministers approved measures in December 2023 for the digital and procedural transformation of the Justice Administration. These measures include creating the Justice Folder, which allows individuals to consult their case files and request appointments. An Electronic Judicial File is also being promoted to include all documents forming part of a judicial procedure.

Citation:
Transparency and Accountability Working Group. 2023. "https://transparencia.gob.es/transparencia/transparencia_Home/index/Gobierno-"

OECD. 2019. "Government at a Glance."

Sweden

Score 8

In 2019, Sweden scored significantly below the OECD average on open government data – a composite indicator assessing governments' efforts to implement open data in three areas: Openness, Usefulness, and Re-usability of government data (OURdata) (OECD, n.d.).

Public documents are generally available to the public unless they are classified. Government websites and all levels of governance, including public agencies, increasingly make information available in various languages. Several websites also provide data that can be reused and reconfigured according to the users' individual needs. For example, the Riksdag's "open data" service offers APIs (application programming interfaces) and current and historical data on documents, professional information on members of parliament, votes, debates, and more (Riksdagen, 2023).

DIGG, the Agency for Digital Government, suggests increasing governmental support through funding for easy-to-implement digital solutions to enhance the availability and usability of data on government websites (DIGG, 2023).

Citation:
DIGG. 2022. "Tekniska förutsättningar för öppna data. Rapport 2022-0428." https://www.digg.se/download/18.79c61f7c17db5871992f0bf/1647952780115/Tekniska%20förutsättningar%20för%20öppna%20data%202022-0428%20Myndigheten%20för%20digital%20förvaltning.pdf

OECD. n.d. "Open Government Data." https://www.oecd.org/gov/digital-government/open-government-data.htm

Riksdagen. 2023. "Riksdagens öppna data." https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-och-lagar/riksdagens-oppna-data/

Australia

Score 7

There is a large body of published data and information about government activities across various sectors. The government generally leads in developing and publishing these data sources. The plethora of data has led some governments, including Victoria's, to create centralized platforms that provide a one-stop shop for data across different government functional areas (Data Vic 2023). Policymakers use this data to inform policy design and refinement processes, researchers to understand deep patterns in policymaking, and the media to ground their stories. It is also available for scrutiny by interested citizens.

Despite the generally high level of information provision, there are areas with critical weaknesses. For example, Australia follows strict rules about cabinet confidentiality, limiting information availability about important cabinet deliberations. Additionally, there are significant gaps in political finance transparency at the federal level. Political donations data is only released for relatively large donations, meaning the

source of small- and medium-sized donations is usually unknown. Furthermore, this information is only available several months after the donation has been made, limiting its usefulness for citizens in making informed voting decisions and assessments of parties and candidates (Haines 2023).

Citation:
Data Vic. 2023. "Discover and Access Victorian Government Open Data." https://www.data.vic.gov.au

Haines, H. 2023. "Real Time Disclosure of Political Donations Bill 2023." https://www.helenhaines.org/media/real-time-disclosure-of-political-donations-bill-2023/

Canada

Score 7

The default in Canada is that most documents are not available to the public unless requested through freedom of information legislation – which is notably weak – or released by the government for other reasons. The Access to Information Act was intended to augment these releases and allows citizens to request specific government records. However, it is riddled with exceptions and opt-outs, and departments frequently take years to release heavily redacted documents. Information related to government contracts, including the names of suppliers and the value of contracts, is also expected to be made public under a relatively new federal Accountability Act, but reporting is uneven and not standardized.

The Canadian government has recently increased its efforts through various "Open Government" initiatives to provide more data and information to citizens. The Open Government Portal (open.canada.ca), for example, serves as a central hub for accessing a wide range of government data, information, and publications. The portal includes datasets, reports, and other resources that empower citizens to scrutinize government actions.

Government websites, including those at the federal, provincial, and municipal levels, offer a wealth of information on policies, services, and initiatives. These online platforms are key resources for citizens seeking information to hold the government accountable. Additionally, some government departments and agencies use performance dashboards to visualize and communicate key metrics related to their activities. These dashboards offer accessible and user-friendly ways for citizens to track government performance (Treasury Board of Canada).

The government regularly releases open datasets covering diverse topics, including demographics, health, the environment, and public finances. These datasets are made available to the public in machine-readable formats, facilitating analysis, research, and innovation. Some agencies have also developed interactive tools and applications that allow citizens to explore and analyze data.

This complements the extensive national system of accounting and reporting managed by Statistics Canada, which is built around the decennial census. The

government also publishes detailed information about its budgets, expenditures, and financial plans, and government departments and agencies are required to report on their performance and achievements.

The government also engages in public consultations on various policy issues, allowing citizens to provide input and feedback. Information about these consultations, including discussion papers and reports, is often made publicly available to ensure transparency in the decision-making process.

While these initiatives contribute to a more transparent and accountable government, challenges exist, including concerns about data quality, accessibility, and the need for ongoing improvements in transparency practices (Clarke 2019).

Citation:
Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat. "Open Government." http://open.canada.ca/en

Clarke, Amanda. 2019. Opening the Government of Canada: The Federal Bureaucracy in the Digital Age. Vancouver and Toronto: UBC Press.

Czechia

Score 7

The OECD OURdata Index on Open Government Data for the Czech Republic is slightly above the OECD average (2019). However, closer examination reveals gaps in government support for data reuse and some uncertainty regarding data protection rules. The Digital and Information Agency (DIA), established in April 2023, coordinates and supports the digitalization of the public sector. DIA is working to develop relevant standards in collaboration with data holders and will provide expert support.

There are several data catalogues in Czechia, including: (1) The National Open Data Catalogue, which features an interface with navigation via search, publisher, and tags; (2) the Czech Statistical Office (CZSO) Catalogue, which allows users to navigate data products based on type, date of release, theme, spatial and temporal granularity, and other criteria. The CZSO provides rapid information on economic developments, allowing comparisons with data from other countries. As an independent source from the government, its data are widely used across public media, along with reports and forecasts from the central bank and government ministries; and (3) the Czech Social Science Data Archive, which offers a research data catalogue.

Citation:
https://www.oecd.org/gov/digital-government/open-government-data.htm
https://www.dia.gov.cz/

Estonia

Score 7

In line with the overall e-government approach, all public institutions maintain extensive web resources for public use. Attempts to harmonize the website architecture of ministries and agencies have only partially succeeded. Consequently, the user friendliness of web resources varies across institutions. While the available information is generally extensive and up to date, it is often too detailed and sophisticated for use by ordinary citizens. Retrospective data, including statistics and legal norms, are not always available, and URLs frequently do not work. Additionally, there is growing concern that government officials increasingly classify documents for official use only, often without sound reason.

The Open, Useful and Reusable Data Index (OUR; OECD 2020), which benchmarks the design and implementation of open data policies at the central level and emphasizes the sustained political and policy relevance of this area for OECD members, indicates that there are indeed areas of open government where there is room for improvement. Estonia ranked 27th out of 32 countries based on data availability, accessibility and government support for data reuse.

The open data portal is the official platform in Estonia on which users can add their organizations and metadata. While the government has increased stakeholder engagement in order to provide information on the open data policy – mainly through the central platform's GitHub account – few high-value datasets are available through the portal as compared to similar services in other OECD countries. The country receives better scores for data accessibility than for data availability, but the main challenge for the Estonian government is to enhance support for the reuse of open data. Estonia remains one of the lowest-performing OECD countries with regard to organizing data promotion events and partnerships, increasing open data literacy within the government, and monitoring the impact of open data.

Recently, Estonia's Digital Agenda 2030 (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communication, 2023) was developed to outline the progress toward meeting digital targets set in Estonia 2035. One of the key areas in the Digital Agenda is the advancement of digital government, meaning the use of digital solutions in the public sector. This special agenda is essential because no other development plans encompass the overall development of digital government. The public sector is intended to lead and set the direction for the development of the Estonian digital society. This agenda aims to take significant steps forward in the development of digital government services, and in ensuring the sustainability of the established solutions. However, the approach is relatively optimistic about digital advancements, giving limited attention to issues such as regional disparities or user friendliness, or strategies to address these concerns.

Citation:

Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communication. 2023. https://www.mkm.ee/media/6970/download

OECD. 2020. "Useful and Re-usable Data (OURdata) Index: 2019." OECD Policy Papers on Public Governance. https://www.oecd.org/gov/digital-government/policy-paper-ourdata-index-2019.htm

Greece

Score 7

The Greek government has developed a comprehensive data strategy as part of its broader "Digital Transformation Bible 2020–2025." This strategy includes two key axes: one focused on developing data repositories to improve decision-making and administrative services, and the other on promoting open access, reuse, and maximization of public sector data. The strategy aims to "enhance participation, transparency, and public scrutiny, and promote entrepreneurship" (Ministry of Digital Governance 2024). The "Bible" is being implemented through various ongoing projects.

Compared to the previous decade, Greece has made significant progress in the availability, openness, and user-friendliness of public data. For example, the Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT) provides comparable data on Greece's economic and social indicators. Additionally, detailed data on public employment in Greece is available through a dedicated website of the Ministry of Interior, which provides prompt updates. For instance, in early January 2024, detailed aggregate data for all categories of public service personnel for November 2023 was made available.

The government has actively encouraged data reuse, developed portals to facilitate interactive feedback and communication, and ensured the production of high-quality government information. As a result, Greece ranks among the OECD's top ten countries for the openness, usefulness, and reusability of government data (OECD 2019).

Citation:
Greek Government. 2024. "Open Data." https://digitalstrategy.gov.gr/en/sector/open_data

Ministry of Digital Governance. 2021. "Digital Transformation Bible 2020-2025." https://digitalstrategy.gov.gr/en/vivlos_pdf?page=78

Ministry of Interior. 2024. "Statistical Data on Public Sector Personnel."

OECD. 2019. "Open Government Data." https://www.oecd.org/gov/digital-government/open-government-data.htm

The website of the Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT) is https://www.statistics.gr/en/home/

Ireland

Score 7

Ireland can be understood as a regulatory state, with a significant expansion of regulatory bodies across economic, social, and environmental sectors, as well as oversight of government. Some of this expansion is associated with EU directives. However, Ireland faces significant weaknesses in capacity, effectiveness and accountability, although some regulatory bodies, including the Comptroller and

Auditor General (C&AG) and the Central Bank of Ireland as an independent financial regulator, are considered robust (Scott 2021). Murphy (2021) notes that the past decade has seen a focus on open government, transparency and avoiding secrecy, with a range of legislation and policies building on earlier acts such as the Ethics in Public Office Act (1995) and the Freedom of Information Act (1997), as well as the Standards in Public Office Act (2001). While the Ombudsman's office is independent of government (appointed by the president after nomination by parliament), it lacks the power to sanction despite extended powers in 2012. Media scrutiny and parliamentary inquiry also play roles in ensuring transparency. Newer open government initiatives include whistleblowing and lobbying regulation, though enforcement issues persist.

Ireland ranks 13th among the EU-27 for government transparency and scores highly for open data maturity (97.2% on open data policy, 86.7% on impact, 97% on the portal and 87.5% on quality). This ranking has remained consistent over the past few years, with no significant changes or pressures for changes in access to government data and publication of assets/income declarations. The roles, remits and data of the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General (OCAG) and the Ombudsman institutions have remained the same. Recent changes in the accountability architecture include the Policing, Security and Community Safety Bill 2023, which restructures the Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission (GSOC) into a new Office of the Police Ombudsman. Additionally, the responsibility for ethical legislation-related functions has been transferred to the Minister for Public Expenditure, National Development Plan Delivery and Reform (DPENDR). In March 2023, the minister launched a forum and an online portal for public consultation on the Open Government National Action Plan 2023-2025. The Office of the Chief Information Officer within the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) plays a key role, along with the Information and Governance Standards Section (IGSS) of the central statistics office and the recently developed Civil Service Research Network, chaired by the Department of Further and Higher Education, Innovation, Science and Research.

Citation:
European Commission. 2023. European Public Administration Country Brief 2023 Ireland.
European Commission. 2022. "eGovernment Benchmark 2022, 2021-2022 data." https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/a7d80ca2-3895-11ed-9c68-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-291321135
European Commission. 2022. "European Data Portal, 2022." https://data.europa.eu/en/publications/open-data-maturity/2022
Government of Ireland. 2018. "Public Service Data Strategy 2019-2023." https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/1d6bc7-public-service-data-strategy-2019-2023
Murphy, G. 2021. "Open Government." In Policy Analysis in Ireland, eds. J. Hogan and M. P. Murphy, 668-682. Bristol: Policy Press.
Scott, C. 2021. "The Politics of Regulation in Ireland." In The Oxford Handbook of Irish Politics, eds. D. M. Farrell and N. Hardiman, 647-667. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Israel

Score 7   In recent years, the Israeli government has developed the platform GOV.IL, which includes quantitative data from various governmental departments and subjects. The data can be downloaded in various formats to facilitate use. This platform does not include administrative data, such as rules, regulations or cabinet decisions. These types of data can be found on each department's website. For instance, the Prime Minister's Office publishes cabinet decisions, the Ministry of Justice publishes all laws and rules introduced, and each ministry publishes its respective regulations.

When the government publishes a draft law or regulation, it allows the public to comment on the legislation or rule. All public comments are transparent. In most cases, there is sufficient time for the public to comment. However, over the past year, there have been several instances in which the public was given only a few days to comment. In most cases, the data is of high quality.

The type of data provided differs between ministries. The PMO refuses to publish summaries of cabinet meetings and often releases cabinet decisions with significant delays. The Ministry of Finance, on the other hand, publishes very detailed budgetary data, and information on various contracts between the ministries and third parties to address the demands of various groups.
The comparability of the data also varies. On the data.gov.il website, data is comparable across regions, groups and time periods. For other types of data, comparability is mostly absent. This website reflects the efforts of the specialist National Digital Agency, which is dedicated to enhancing the transparent digitalization of the government.

Government decisions are often not connected to the decisions they modify. This is also the case for data from the Ministry of Justice and most other ministry regulations. The only exception is the Ministry of Education, where data on previous regulations concerning the same issue are provided for each regulation.
Data is not provided in a timely manner across all departments, although new regulations and laws are published promptly. However, cabinet decisions are typically delayed by several weeks and statistical data on some issues are published only after several years.
The statistical data is user-friendly, while budgetary data can be downloaded as CSV or Excel files. However, the rules, regulations and decisions are not user-friendly, and are available only in PDF or HTML formats.

Citation:
Government Databases Website, https://info.data.gov.il/home

Israel National Digital Agency, https://www.gov.il/en/departments/national-digital-agency/govil-landing-page

Japan

Score 7

A lot of government data in Japan is disclosed in a timely manner. Japan performed well in the OECD's 2019 Open, Useful and Re-usable Data (OURdata) Index, particularly in terms of data availability. Data accessibility was evaluated as average among OECD states, as many datasets are still provided in non-machine-readable or proprietary formats.

While not all data is comparable across different regions and administrative levels, the government has been working on unified standards. In June 2021, the National Strategy Office of IT under the Cabinet Secretariat specified 19 data types in six fields (i.e., person, enterprise, land, facility, law and others) to establish mechanisms for base registries by 2025 and complete the dataset by 2030. Since September 2021, the digitalization of open data has been managed by the Digital Agency. So far, however, the agency has focused mainly on the digitalization of public services. The agency has also been developing the details of the Data Free Flows with Trust concept, proposed by Japan during the G20 summit in Osaka in 2019. The aim of this initiative is to create international standards, guidelines and technologies for the cross-border flow of personal and non-personal data.

Japan systematically stores previous versions of government websites through WebArchive. The National Diet Library is a useful resource for the public and scholars, and even allows public users (with limitations) to commission research by NDL staff. The minutes of all advisory council meetings and all accompanying materials have been made public since 2001 and can be searched online.

Citation:
Digital Agency. 2023. "Overview of DFFT." https://www.digital.go.jp/en/dfft-overview-en

National Strategy Office of IT. 2021. "National Data Strategy." https://www.digital.go.jp/assets/contents/node/basic_page/field_ref_resources/0f321c23-517f-439e-9076-5804f0a24b59/20210901_en_05.pdf

OECD. 2020. "Open, Useful and Re-usable data (OURdata) Index: 2019." https://www.oecd.org/governance/digital-government/ourdata-index-policy-paper-2020.pdf

Latvia

Score 7

In 2022, the Cabinet of Ministers adopted Latvia's Fifth National Open Government Action Plan for 2022 – 2025. The plan acknowledges that public authorities need to be more open, which has led to low data sharing and cooperation in tackling social issues. Latvian public administration still invests little effort in using data from other institutions. Thus, much remains to be done for public administration to become a unified data source rather than an independent data operator.

The open data portal data.gov.lv is intended to be a single access point for data. However, state institutions publish data on their own initiative, and the volume of data varies. A wide range of data is also available through the Electronic Procurement System (EIS), the Latvian State Land Service publication VZD and e-services portal kadastrs.lv, the Register of Enterprises website, Latvija.lv, and the TAP portal. While the data platforms are regularly updated, they are not synchronized.

During an audit of public administration reform in 2022, the State Audit Office concluded that the unavailability of quality data has been a critical issue for at least ten years and needs to be sufficiently addressed (Valsts kontrole, 2022).

The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development (MoEPRD) has served as the Single Information Point in Latvia since September 2023. The ministry mediates between those seeking to reuse data and the relevant authorities. Upon receiving a request for data reuse or information, the Single Information Point directs it to the appropriate authority. In turn, these authorities are responsible for aiding re-users by providing necessary information and outlining conditions for the secure reuse of data (Vides aizsardzības un reģionālās attīstības ministrija, 2023).

The evaluation of public sector data sets in Latvia shows varied results. Data sets published on the open data portal performed best, while those not published or only partially published showed poorer results. This evaluation indicates a need for more consistent and comprehensive data publication across government entities to better meet citizen demands for information diversity, comparability, and detail.

Data is generally provided in a timely manner; however, some data lags by months or even a year. While there has been good progress in the transparency of public sector information, some agencies and bodies still rely partly on revenues from data sales. For example, public access to high-value commercial data about enterprises is a fee-based service. The practice of charging for access to data creates a financial barrier that can significantly impact demand. This issue highlights the ongoing tension between the objectives of open data access and the economic models of certain public authorities.

Citation:
Ministru kabinets. 2022. Latvijas piektais nacionālās atvērtās pārvaldības rīcības plāns 2022.-2025. gadam. https://www.mk.gov.lv/lv/media/12754/download?attachment
Latvijas Atvērto datu portāls. "In Latvian." https://data.gov.lv/lv
Valsts kontrole. 2022. "Valsts pārvalde – 'qua vadis'? Valsts pārvaldes reformā plānotais un sasniegtais." https://www.lrvk.gov.lv/lv/getrevisionfile/29503-2AUhLznqlrVyEDa94OM3Y7F7vBQTOBB1.pdf
Vides aizsardzības un reģionālās attīstības ministrija. 2023. "Atvērtie dati." https://www.varam.gov.lv/lv/atvertie-dati
Delna. 2023. "Publiskā sektora datu kopu pieejamība Latvijā." https://delna.lv/lv/2023/07/14/publiska-sektora-datu-kopu-pieejamiba-latvija/

Austria

Score 6

Until recently, Austrian governments have been notably reluctant to publish data and information that empower citizens to hold the government accountable. There has been an established tradition of "secrecy," and some observers felt that even the latest legislative agendas of the government, particularly its launch of a Freedom of Information Act, will not change much (see above).

As early as 2012, the government launched a major data site, "data.gv.at," with metadata of the decentralized data catalogues. By mid-2023, there were more than 44,000 data sets from nearly 2,400 organizations, marking a significant contribution to increasing the transparency of public institutions. Unfortunately, there is no information available to the public about aspects such as school quality or hospital quality.

Recent governments have also made efforts to facilitate the provision of scientific micro-data. In 2020, the AUSSDA (Austrian Social Science Data Archive) was awarded the CoreTrustSeal, certifying it as a "trustworthy data repository." Established in 2016, AUSSDA is a data infrastructure for the social science community in Austria. It offers a variety of research support services, primarily data archiving and assistance with data reuse. More recently, the Austrian Micro Data Center (AMDC) was established as part of the wider infrastructure of Statistik Austria. The AMDC provides accredited research institutes and universities with more sensitive register data from the public sector.

Citation:
https://www.digitalaustria.gv.at/WissensWert/E-Gov-A-Z/Digitale-Webservices/data.gv.at.html

https://www.bmbwf.gv.at/Themen/HS-Uni/Hochschulgovernance/Leitthemen/Digitalisierung/Open-Science/Open-Science-Policy-Austria.html

https://www.derstandard.at/story/3000000176190/oe

https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000138979110/regierung-auf-der-datenbremse-und-taeglich-gruesst-das-murmeltier

Belgium

Score 6

According to the OECD's OURdata index, Belgium's data publication practices are below the OECD average, with data accessibility being a significant issue. This assessment aligns with the experience of academics, who often face difficulties in obtaining access to detailed microdata for Belgium. Data availability is also problematic compared to other countries. Solutions to this lack of availability often come from ad hoc initiatives by academics.

Aggregated data, however, are generally available through platforms like Open Data by Statistics Belgium (Statbel) and the different statistical institutions of the three

regions (VSA, IWEPS, and IBSA/BISA). These platforms provide a wealth of information on various topics, making it possible for citizens to access and use government data. There have been efforts to increase the digitalization of public services, which can be tracked by a website launched by the federal government (digitaldashboard.belgium.be). Although helpful, it hardly allows citizens to hold the government accountable.

One challenge is that one can get lost looking for a particular type of data as different structures and websites are involved. For example, health-related data is available from Sciensano, National Accounting-related data from the National Bank of Belgium, and various other data from Statbel. Although a platform was developed to consolidate these data sources (data.gov), it has usability issues and limitations.

Regarding individual accountability, the complexity of the Belgian system and the overlap of responsibilities make it very difficult to map information into a voting decision. For instance, Brussels performs poorly on labor market outcomes, but it is also the region with the highest rate of non-native speakers and the city where workers must master Dutch, French, and English. Other regions can perhaps rightly blame Brussels for its low performance, while Brussels politicians can easily defend that they work hard and effectively at improving the situation.

Citation:
https://www.oecd.org/gov/digital-government/open-government-data.htm
https://data.gov.be/
Open Data | Statbel (fgov.be)
https://ibsa.brussels/
https://www.iweps.be/
https://www.vlaanderen.be/statistiek-vlaanderen
https://digitaldashboard.belgium.be/en

Netherlands

Score 6   In a comprehensive analysis and evaluation of 25 years of Dutch government (digital) information policies, a mixed image arises. On one hand, since 2000 there has been active policymaking on the issue. But as in so many cases of Dutch government policy, promises have been comprehensive, but realization has been partial at best. For example, knowledge institutes dealing with economic and financial data production regularly publish their data, increasingly in machine-readable formats. But this is usable only by organizations and persons with sufficient professional interests and digital skills. Ordinary citizens still are only moderately well served by the media.

Citizens have a government-approved digital identity (DigID). All Dutch citizens can apply for a DigID. This allows them to carry out a number of government-related functions digitally. Also, residents have a reasonably guaranteed right to privacy. Citizens can use the internet without their data being out in the open. In the

Netherlands, the GDPR places restrictions on the sharing of personal data; compared to other continents, privacy is relatively well regulated in Europe. At the same time, large companies like Google and Meta can still retrieve a lot of personal information and recombine it endlessly. This is exacerbated by the fact that the Dutch government itself in some cases obliges its civil servants to work with Google or Meta tools in order to harmonize their communication and interoperability. This is a real dilemma. Furthermore, generating comparable data across different regions and administrative levels is a significant challenge due to administrative fragmentation. The government struggles to adhere to a common agreement. This leads to 12 ministries, 12 provinces, and 342 municipalities each developing their own information systems, with each one independently reinventing the wheel.

Regarding timely information provision, the new Open Government Act contains new obligations regarding proactive public access. Much official information is publicly accessible through the Rijksoverheid.nl and Overheid.nl websites. At the same time, much background information is still not made public. The press has little trust in the operation of the Open Government Act. A survey published by the Advisory Committee on Openness and Information Management (ACOI) reports that the complaints seem little different from those under the old law: slow processing, opposition, information left out. "We see a gap of mutual distrust," says one ACOI member. "Governments think journalists are just asking around without knowing what they are doing, journalists say their rights are being violated." Sometimes government chooses to pay the legally enforceable monetary penalties rather than disclose the requested information (on time). According to some civil servants' insider stories, there exists a culture of withholding information.

Without doubt this is true for lobbying. The Dutch lobby landscape is not transparent. There is still no lobby register. The House of Representatives has urged that public agendas be properly kept up to date and that a lobby register be established. The minister of the interior has promised to make the public agendas of ministers more transparent. The Open State Foundation examined ministers' agenda appointments between 1 October 2022 and 1 October 2023. Although more appointments are being recorded, the majority of public agendas still lack transparency. Only 12% of all appointments list both an appointment subject and an interlocutor.

In terms of user friendliness of information provision, there is still much to be desired. Individual control of personal data has been promised for years, but little has come of it. Through Mijn-Overheid.nl, users can see what information is being shared with which organizations. This— overview mainly raises questions – why with municipality X and not with province Y? Making individual choices about information sharing is not possible. One-time provision of data with multiple uses is still an unrealized goal. Citizens and companies thus have to repeat their data input unnecessarily, There is still little understanding of citizens' informational needs. This is especially true for people in their role as "citizens," as voters and co-producers of

policy. Digital inclusion is patchy. Successive cabinets have invested in digital inclusion. Through the Alliance for Digital Inclusion, hundreds of thousands of "refurbished" laptops have been made available to children from disadvantaged backgrounds. But for some segments of society – the elderly, the illiterate – physical service points and telephone accessibility are essential.

Citation:

Maatschappelijke coalitie Over Informatie Gesproken. 2023. Over schone dromen en verbroken beloften. 25 jaar ICT, overheid en samenleving. ECP | Platform voor InformatieSamenleving, November.

Open State Foundation. 2023. "Onderzoek Open State wijst uit: agenda's van ministers zijn minder transparant geworden."

Wieringa, NRC. 2023. "Amper vertrouwen pers in werking Wet open overheid." October 26.

NOS Nieuws. 2023. "Nieuwe wet leidt nog niet tot snellere openbaarmaking van documenten." March 9.

Nieuwuur. 2022. "Ministeries betaalden Volkskrant bijna ton voor te laat delen informatie." 18 July.

NRC, Kouwenhoven, Kuiper. 2022. "Oud-privacyfunctionaris: bij de overheid heerst een cultuur van achterhouden." NRC June 15.

Portugal

Score 6

The provision of government data is pivotal for empowering citizens to hold their government accountable. Such data must encompass inputs, outputs, and outcomes; it should be disseminated regularly and promptly. To be effectively accessible, it needs to be user-friendly for both humans and machines, ideally in an open-source format.

When assessed by the OECD in 2020 with data from 2019, Portugal ranked below the OECD average on the "Open, Useful, and Re-usable Data Index: 2019" (OECD, 2020). This period falls before our current analysis. However, there have been strides forward in the interim. Portugal's accession to the Open Government Partnership (OGP) is one such step, designating the Agency for Administrative Modernization (AMA, Agência para a Modernização Administrativa) as the lead agency to execute OGP's directives. As part of this commitment, the AMA has developed the II Action Plan for Open Administration (2021). Additionally, the government has launched a portal for the distribution of public data ("Open platform for Portuguese public data"), though its user-friendliness leaves room for improvement.

In a sector-specific context, certain data sets, such as the Ministry of Finance's monthly budget execution reports, are regularly updated and readily accessible. Furthermore, there is a comprehensive portal that facilitates access to most public contracts in the public sector, enabling targeted searches for particular contracting entities.

Nevertheless, the situation is not universally satisfactory. In several sectors, the data is neither exhaustive nor updated with the necessary regularity. Finding specific

information can be cumbersome due to its dispersion across a myriad of entities, including various agencies, ministries, QUANGOs, and other public bodies.

The Portuguese government has provided IT infrastructure that theoretically allows citizens to access data, but the practical utility of this data for enabling governmental accountability is, in some instances, debatable.

Citation:
OECD. 2020. "Open, Useful and Re-usable data (OURdata) Index: 2019." OECD Policy Papers on Public Governance No. 1. https://www.oecd.org/gov/digital-government/policy-paper-ourdata-index-2019.htm

AMA. 2021. "II Plano de Ação de Admnistração Aberta." https://ogp.eportugal.gov.pt/documents/48760/321053/Documenta%C3%A7%C3%A3o+de+apoio.pdf/9001443e-d80f-b6cf-a5eb-76f691d0bf2a
https://www.oecd.org/gov/digital-government/open-government-data.htm

https://dados.gov.pt/en/

Direção-Geral do Orçamento (DGO). " www.dgo.gov.pt"

Direção-Geral do Orçamento. 2023. "Síntese da Execução Orçamental Mensal (SEO), Novembro de 2023." https://www.dgo.gov.pt/execucaoorcamental/Paginas/Sintese-da-Execucao-Orcamental-Mensal.aspx?Ano=2023&Mes=Novembro
https://www.base.gov.pt/Base4/pt/

Italy

Score 5

The government lacks a systematic and comprehensive policy for making information easily accessible to citizens in a way that enables them to hold the government accountable. While the Presidency of the Council of Ministers and various ministries maintain websites that publish information about government activities, this information often consists of sequences of events, such as ministerial meetings and press conferences, rather than data-rich documentation. Consequently, there is no comprehensive data governance framework, and the data portals are not designed as interactive feedback and communication tools.

Italy is a member of the Open Government Partnership, which implements two-year action plans aimed at increasing government openness at all institutional levels. However, at the central level, only a few ministries provide reliable data on certain policy dimensions. For example, comprehensive data on health policy is available on the Ministry of Health and Agenas websites (a national advisory and monitoring body). Good statistics are also available on education, higher education, and public employment. The National Institute of Statistics provides the most relevant data on socioeconomic and political dimensions.

Despite these efforts, there is no systematic strategy, and there is a clear lack of integration between institutional data sets. Integrating databases requires a certain quality of the data, but the databases managed by public authorities over the years do not always meet the desired quality standards. Reasons for this include a lack of control over the data and inadequate application tools, leading to a situation that now

requires significant time and resources to recover and enhance the data to the required quality level.

Overall, Italy's open government strategy remains weak. Even the biennial action plans – formal tools for implementing government openness – are designed in a way that, according to independent evaluators like the Independent Report Mechanism of the Open Government Partnership, can only produce modest results even if fully implemented (see the evaluation of the 2021–2023 action plan cited in the references).

Citation:
Independent Reporting Mechanism Action Plan Review: Italy 2021 - 2023. https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Italy_Action-Plan-Review_2021-2023_EN_for-public-comment.pdf

Poland

Score 4

Between 2022 and 2023, access to data expanded significantly under the Open Data Program for 2021 – 2027, launched on February 18, 2021. This program aimed to enhance data accessibility through the data.gov.pl portal, improve data interoperability and quality, increase data utilization and exchange, stimulate cultural and scientific data reuse, and boost collaboration with national and international data stakeholders. It also focused on improving public administration skills and raising societal awareness. The law on open data and the reuse of public sector information took effect on March 8, 2022.

The 2022 Implementation Report for the program emphasized that its primary goal was to increase the availability of open data, including valuable information that could foster new services and products. The report aimed to establish an optimal regulatory framework for effectively utilizing public sector information in Poland. The data portal (dane.gov.pl) is the main tool, updated regularly according to semiannual plans. As of December 31, 2023, the portal featured 375 publishers, a total of 35,604 resources and 590 APIs. Publishers were categorized into three types: local government (128), private entities (82) and public government (165). The user-friendly portal offers filters for data formats, publishers, locations, openness scores, visualization types and time ranges. It provides access to national and regional data with minimal delays in publication.

In response to international events, a new subcategory titled "Ukraine" was added to display information on Polish policies toward Ukrainian citizens (Otwarte dane 2023).

In the EU's 2023 Open Data Maturity Report, Poland advanced to second place with a score of 97.9%, up from third place in 2022. It ranked just behind France (98.2%) and ahead of Estonia (96.2%). This high ranking reflects a successful combination of strategic, legal and technical elements, as well as effective collaboration between

central and local governments, allowing municipalities to implement independent openness policies (European Data 2023).

Citation:
European Data. 2023. "Open Data in Europe 2023." https://data.europa.eu/en/publications/open-data-maturity/2023#country-overview
Otwarte dane. 2023. "Sprawozdanie z realizacji Programu otwierania danych na lata 2021-2027 za rok 2022." https://dane.gov.pl/pl/knowledgebase/useful-materials/program-otwierania-danych-na-lata-2021-2027
Rada Ministrów. 2021. Uchwała nr 28 Rady Ministrów z dnia 18 lutego 2021 r. w sprawie Programu otwierania danych na lata 2021-2027. https://dane.gov.pl/pl/knowledgebase/useful-materials/program-otwierania-danych-na-lata-2021-2027

https://rsf.org/en/country/poland
https://worldjusticeproject.org/rule-of-law-index/country/2023/Poland/Regulatory%20Enforcement/

Slovakia

Score 4

The Slovak government is an EU outlier in developing comprehensive data governance frameworks, building data management capacities across the public sector, and enabling its open government data portals to function as interactive feedback and communication tools rather than mere data repositories. According to the European Data Portal, Slovakia ranked as one of the least-performing EU countries for the indicator "Maturity of open data" (59.37% of the maximum score in 2022). The Government at a Glance 2019 report (OECD, 2019) ranked Slovakia as one of the worst-performing EU countries regarding the openness, usefulness, and reusability of government data. In some critical areas, like the size and scope of public service employment, publicly available data do not exist (Nemec, 2022).

The government does not proactively provide information and data that adequately meet the increasing demands of citizens in terms of information diversity and level of detail. It does not ensure the availability of comparable data across different regions and administrative levels. Some databases, such as the public procurement registry, can be considered user-friendly for humans and machines, including data formats, ease of access, and the provision of documentation or user guides.

Citation:
OECD. 2019. Government at Glance. Paris: OECD.

Nemec, J. 2022. Public Administration and Governance: Slovakia. Brussels: European Union. https://data.europa.eu/en

Hungary

Score 3

The Hungarian government cannot be characterized as an open government. Quite the contrary is true. Hungary joined the Open Government Initiative during the second Orbán government in 2013, but withdrew in 2016 when the first reports were conducted, accusing the organization of distorting facts. Since then, governance

openness has been reduced or eliminated. Access to relevant information is complicated, even for members of parliament, scientists and ordinary citizens. This may be rooted in Fidesz's general mistrust of openness due to paranoia and the insecurity in the public administration about releasing information without explicit consent from top-ranking officials. However, the government must react to criticism from the general public and international organizations to a certain extent. In December 2016, the Orbán government approved a White Paper on National Data Policy that called for strengthening efforts to make public sector information available as open data. The datasets available at the central open data portal, www.kozadat.hu, are very basic (referring to homepages of institutions), limited in reach and difficult to use. Much of the information that would be of public interest – for example, the asset declarations of parliamentarians and government members – are published in non-searchable, non-machine-readable formats like scanned PDFs, making it very difficult to analyze them. In the 2020 – 2021 Open Data Inventory Report (Open Data Inventory 2020/21), Hungary ranks 39th with an overall score of 65, and eighth out of 10 in the "Eastern Europe" category. That means the country fulfills several ODIN coverage/openness criteria, but many essential gaps remain. The list of problems includes the issues of gender statistics, resource use and reproductive health.

The Hungarian government has provided selective information about the COVID-19 pandemic, with vital data on case numbers by region and municipality published inconsistently and unreliably. As the state of emergency continues, secrecy remains high, and there are few signs of change. Open government is alien to Prime Minister Orbán's illiberal regime. Some NGOs and media organizations such as anti-corruption watchdogs Transparency International Hungary, K-Monitor and atlatszo.hu attempt to fill these gaps by launching court cases to access information and maintaining their own databases. However, their work is hindered by administrative obstacles, and their public impact is limited.

Citation:
Open   Data   Inventory   2020/21,
https://odin.opendatawatch.com/ReportCreator/ExportCountryReportUpdated/HUN/2020