Foreword

This seventh edition of Government at a Glance *arrives more than a year into a global health emergency that has turned into an economic and social crisis. Governments have been central to the response to and management of the COVID-19 pandemic. They have implemented measures -- often unprecedented and impressive in scale and speed -- to support people and businesses and mitigate the impact of the crisis. This publication provides internationally comparable evidence on the public sector's performance prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, as well as a special focus on changes made to government processes to respond to the pandemic. It finds great variation in countries' preparedness for the crisis, as well as in their capacity to adjust public governance processes to address change. This report begins the work of drawing lessons for governments to build resilience and improve the management of future crises.*

Government at a Glance, *published every two years, is a flagship of OECD work on public governance. It presents the most up-to-date internationally comparable data on how public administrations function and perform in OECD countries, accession countries, and other major economies. These data can be used to benchmark governments' performance, track national and international developments over time, and monitor governments' progress in public sector reform.*

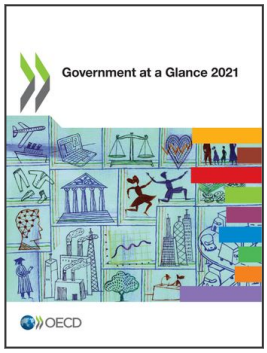
The 2021 edition includes indicators on public finances and public employment, the latter with a special focus on the representation of different gender and age groups in public administrations and the political sphere. Data on government processes include budgeting practices, strategic human resources management, regulatory policy, public procurement, digital government, and responsibilities of centres of government including on public communication. New process indicators for this edition cover public sector integrity, infrastructure governance, and open government. Indicators of government results include trust in public institutions, political efficacy, inequality reduction, and measures of access to, responsiveness, quality of, and citizen satisfaction with education, health and justice sectors.

Government at a Glance 2021 *is the work of the OECD Directorate for Public Governance, under the overall leadership of Elsa Pilichowski, Director. The publication was prepared by the OECD Governance Indicators and Performance Evaluation Division, under the direction of Monica Brezzi, Head of the Division and coordinated by Santiago González.* Government at a Glance 2021 *was drafted by Barbara Baredes, Conor Das-Doyle, Santiago González, Alessandro Lupi and Mariana Prats. Guillaume Guinard provided research assistance. Major contributions were received from Moritz Ader, Miriam Allam, Daniel Gerson, Pietro Gagliardi, Pinar Guven, Meeta Tarani, François Villeneuve (Chapter 3: Public Employment); Carlotta Alfonsi, Karine Badr, Emilie Cazenave, Sara Fyson, Johannes Klein, Craig Matasick, Paulina Lopez Ramos, Marion Tolboom (Chapter 4: Institutions); Andrew Blazey, Scott Cameron, Flavia Gianini, Anne Keller, Axel Mathot, Sherie Nicol, Andrew Park (Chapter 5: Budgeting practices and procedures); Daniel Gerson, François Villeneuve (Chapter 6: Human resources management); Christiane Arndt-Bascle, Paul Davidson, Alexis Durand, Franz Karg, Marie-Gabrielle de Liedekerke, Renny Reyes, Estera Szakadatova, Anna Pietikainen, Vincent Van Langen (Chapter 7: Regulatory government); Erika Bozzay, Matthieu Cahen, Costanza Caputi, Kenza Kachani, Paulo Magina, Masayuki Omote, Gabriela Villa Aguayo (Chapter 8: Public Procurement);*

Alessandro Bellantoni, Emma Cantera, David Goessmann, Carla Musi, Benedict Stefani, Marie Whelan (Chapter 9: Open government); Felipe González-Zapata, Mariane Piccinin Barbieri, Barbara Ubaldi (Chapter 10: Digital government); Mona Ahmed, Mathieu Cahen, Tenzin Dekyi, Jack Radisch, Ana María Ruiz, Lorena Cruz Serrano, Adrien Valentin (Chapter 11: Governance of infrastructure); Jesper Johnson, Pauline Bertrand (Chapter 12: Public sector integrity); Gamze Igrioglu and Benjamin Welby (Chapter 14: Serving citizens). Chapter 1 received contributions from many of the above on the specific subject matters noted, and also from Richard Alcorn, Charles Baubion, Julio Bacio-Terracino, Janos Bertok, Frederic Boehm, Gillian Dorner, Paul Gallagher, Donal Mulligan, Jacob Arturo Rivera Perez, Ivan Stola, Tatyana Teplova, Joao Vasconcelos and Gregor Virant. Government at a Glance was prepared for publication by Meral Gedik, Sally Hinchcliffe, and Dacil Kurweg. It benefitted from editorial assistance from Andrea Uhrhammer. Valuable comments to Chapter 14 were received from Gaetan Lafortune and Chris James of the OECD Directorate for Employment, Labour and Social Affairs; Corinne Heckman, Daniel Sanchez Serra, Etienne Albiser, Eric Charbonnier and Miyako Ikeda of the OECD Directorate of Education and Skills; Carlotta Balestra, Michael Förster and Maxime Ladaique from the OECD Centre for Well-Being, Inclusion, Sustainability and Equal Opportunity.

The members of the OECD Public Governance Committee and the Government at a Glance Steering Group (list in Annex H) provided substantial comments to the drafts of the publication. Many of the indicators included in Government at a Glance *reflect the measurement of OECD principles and recommendations developed with the Public Governance Committee (PGC), the Committee of Regulatory Policy (RPC) and the Committee of Senior Budget Officials (SBO). These indicators are collected through OECD surveys to government officials developed in co-operation with the PGC, the RPC, the SBO, the Public Employment and Management Working Party, the Working Party of Senior Public Integrity Officers, the Working Party of Senior Digital Government Officials (E-Leaders), the Senior Infrastructure and Public Private Partnerships (PPP) Officials network, the High Level Risk Forum, the Working Party on Open Government, and the Working Party of Leading Practitioners on Public Procurement.*

This report was approved by the Public Governance Committee via written procedure on 4 June 2021 and prepared for publication by the OECD Secretariat.



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