

## Foreword

**G**overnments have entered an era of multiple crises, characterised by numerous, consecutive shocks that have threatened economic resilience, security and wellbeing worldwide. The sources of these crises range from political instability and geopolitical tensions, to economic downturns, energy crises and public health emergencies, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. They are also confronted with structural challenges such as aging populations and managing the twin green and digital transitions, which will require deep structural changes to economies and societies.

While many governments are taking advantage of the opportunities provided by rapid modernisation, in particular digitalisation, they also face a number of worrying trends, including the rise of political polarisation, the growing prevalence of dis-mis information and increasing disenchantment with traditional democratic processes. This is leading governments to increasingly focus on strengthening democratic resilience and reinforcing trust in public institutions, which is only slightly higher on average than it was following the global financial crisis.

At this critical juncture, OECD member and accession countries met at the November 2022 meeting of the OECD Public Governance Committee at Ministerial Level on “Building Trust and Reinforcing Democracy” and launched the OECD’s Reinforcing Democracy Initiative (RDI). Through the RDI, countries committed to a broad set of actions to respond to some of the key governance challenges to democracy and public trust, including combatting dis/mis information; strengthening representation, participation and openness in public life; gearing up government to deliver on climate; transforming public governance for digital democracy; and embracing the global responsibilities of governments and building resilience to foreign influence.

Evidence will be key to monitoring progress on these commitments. This eighth edition of *Government at a Glance* contributes to this evidence-base, featuring internationally comparative data on a range of public governance, tools and practices to help identify both strengths and weaknesses in democratic governance. The Focus Chapter “Build, reinforce, protect: Democratic resilience in an age of multiple crises” underscores three main ways that governments can work towards this goal, and was presented as a background paper to the 2023 Ministerial Council Meeting (MCM).

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