

Making globalization work for all requires effective public governance

This fifth anniversary edition of *Government at a Glance* comes at a time of great political, economic and social uncertainty. Ten years after the global financial crisis, the economic recovery is not robust enough to yield a durable improvement in potential output or to reduce persistent inequalities. Rapid technological change, disruptive innovation and shorter economic cycles are hallmarks of today's world. They create new opportunities, but also make people's lives more unpredictable and insecure. There is also a widespread perception among the population that the benefits of global economic liberalisation have been largely reaped by a few. Bridging divides among the winners from globalisation and those left vulnerable, and navigating successfully in uncertain times requires open, fair and effective public governance.

The importance of strengthening public institutions and governance is underlined by the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and especially by Goal 16 on Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions. However, the share of citizens in OECD countries who report having confidence in their national government remains low (42%), and is still below pre-crisis levels. Re-connecting governments and citizens calls for further action and this study can help governments answer that call.

Government at a Glance 2017 shows important efforts by government to engage more with citizens, businesses and civil society. Governments are moving towards open government to improve their policies and services and to prevent policy capture. In 2017, close to 50% of OECD countries adopted a national open government policy. However, results from the new *OECD OURdata Index* show that, although countries have made strides in releasing open government data using open and re-usable formats, more can be done to pro-actively stimulate their re-use among citizens and businesses. The use of new technologies and insights from new approaches, such as those grounded in behavioural sciences, can help support the co-design and co-production of services with citizens and improve the effectiveness of public policies.

This publication also brings new evidence on critical issues for public governance, for example the representation of women in public life. On average, only 29% of parliamentarians in OECD countries are women and only 28% of government ministers are women. Similarly, while 58% of the public sector workforce are women, they hold only 32% of senior positions. The fight for more gender equality has to start inside public institutions.

This is just an example of the many key areas reflected in the set of indicators presented in this 5th edition. Others include public finance and employment, budgeting practices and procedures and risk governance and communication. They enable more

evidence-based decision making and allow governments to compare their practices and performance and identify how they could be improved. By extending the scope and increasing the timeliness of our governance indicators and analysis, and presenting them in a variety of electronic formats, *Government at a Glance 2017* will be a critical resource for policy makers, citizens, and researchers in their pursuit of better governance and more inclusive policies for better lives.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Angel Gurría', with a horizontal line extending to the left.

Angel Gurría



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