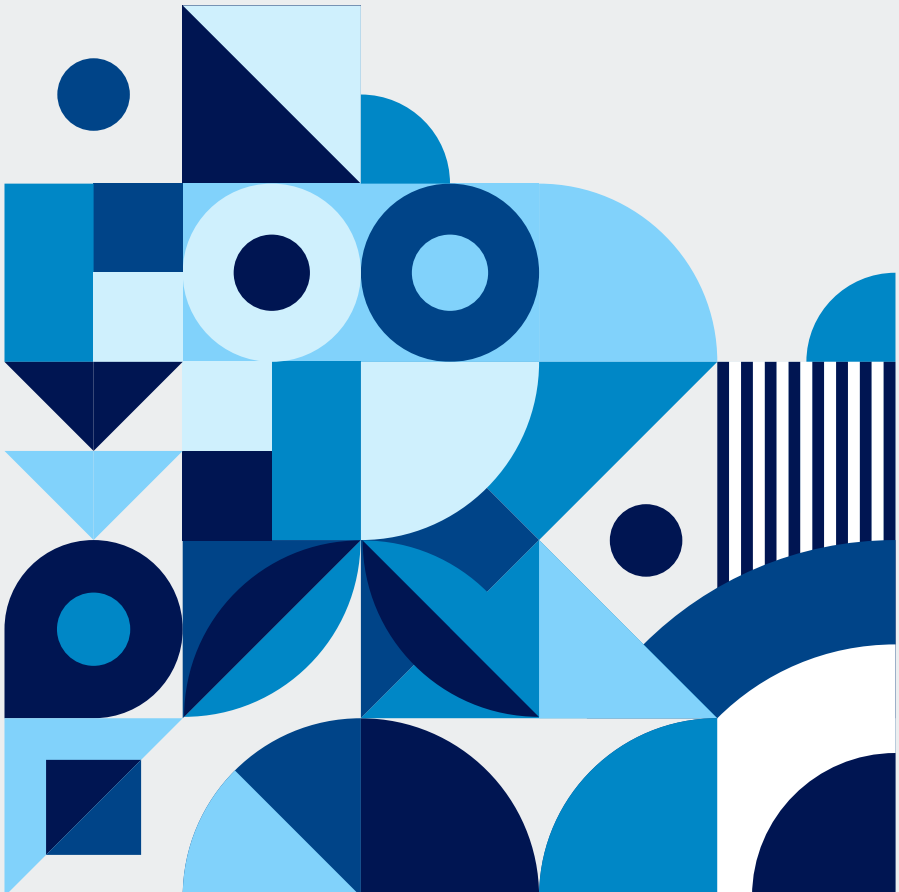
2020

ICA COUNTRY REPORT SUMMARY

CLASSIFICATION: RESTRICTED



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As I am writing this foreword of our annual ICA country reports I am finding myself in a vibrant by nature, yet currently quiet Gaborone, Botswana. There is a much-justified curfew to curve the spread of the pandemic. My office in Stockholm is closed, as are the doors of several of our members' Government offices from around the globe for the first time of our over 50-year history. But that does not mean we have been any less active in contributing to finding solutions. During the past year, we transformed, digitalised our processes and stayed connected even more so. We have seen and experienced an ICA that is more dedicated and engaged than ever as we work remotely with our members to tackle the unprecedented impacts of the COVID-19 global pandemic.

A look back to our 53rd annual conference in Bucharest, Romania in 2019, one will most likely picture a year from a much simpler era. We gathered, deliberated within the thematic of a "Seamless Government | anticipating citizens' needs" as though we had a foresight on what might be coming. We socialised in the old town. We could see each other without a mask. As you all know I, personally, miss that part!

So, what a way to wave off this past decade! The COVID-19 pandemic has already laid its negative effects towards government service provision and more so on societies that are less privileged; with less experienced digital leadership; substandard skills and competencies; weak digital infrastructure networks and manual processes. Binging the digital divide to a higher level. While other counties saw the opportunity to invest in enabling all necessary pillars towards digital transformation to be an active part of this new era — and connect to the rest of us.

This ICA annual report publication, reflects the ICA Member States' intense efforts to support National and Cross border services that are citizen driven. It is an effort to push the boundaries of how we think, deliver, invest and manage digital services as we are taking steps to be more responsive to our customers during quiet as well as turbulent times. As always, we are stronger together.

With hope to see you in Singapore,

Vasilis Koulolias

ICA Chair

Acknowledgements

The 2020 Country Report Summary was made possible through the information provided by every Member State of ICA and it is a summary of all the reports submitted as well as the presentations shared during the Country Report Day of the 54th ICA Conference themed "**Scaling Towards a Future-Ready Government: People-Tech-Governance.**"

Specifically, the Member States who contributed to this summary are: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Cyprus, Estonia, European Commission, Finland, Israel, Japan, Mozambique, OEDC, Portugal, Romania, Singapore, Sweden, Taiwan, The Netherlands and Uruguay.

A very special thanks goes to Singapore for generating this summary's content.

In particular to:

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Once again, everyone's extremely useful findings and reports made this Country Report Summary possible!

Executive Summary

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic that accelerated digital transformation, ICA member states have adopted a wide variety of digital tools and initiatives. These include, but are not limited to, the secure digital authentication of identities, implementing remote work best practices, building digital infrastructures, closing the digital divide, and implementing data frameworks to support Open Data initiatives.

Recognising that swift and easy access to trusted information is vital, members have adopted multi-channel approaches to maximise access to information. While the approaches taken differ, public-private partnerships were widely practiced and input was sought from the public, across government agencies, and multi-laterally. Public trust, user privacy and data security were key consideration factors behind the development of these digital responses.

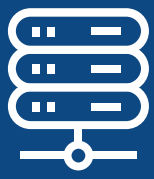
Table 1 below provides examples of members' digital responses.

Contact Tracing/ Exposure Notification Apps

Australia Canada Estonia Finland Israel	Japan Portugal Singapore The Netherlands Uruguay

Mobile Notification Services

Australia Belgium Canada Cyprus	Portugal Singapore Taiwan Uruguay



Central Information Portals

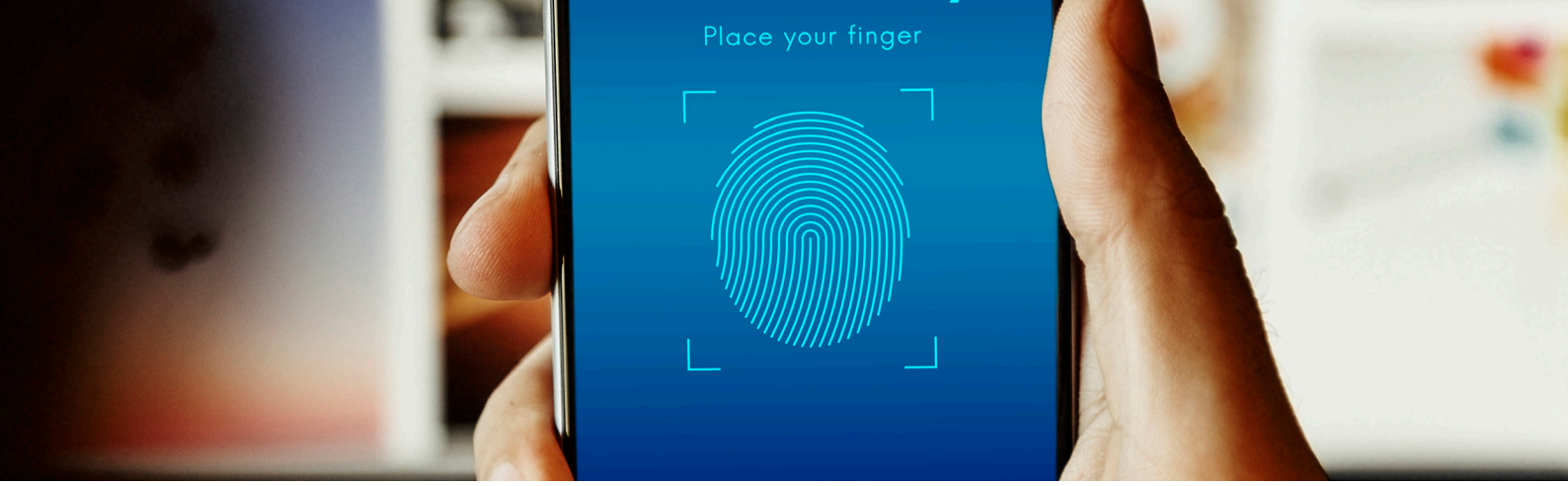
Australia Belgium Canada Cyprus Estonia European Commission Japan	Israel Portugal Singapore Sweden Taiwan The Netherlands Uruguay

Table 1 : COVID-19 digital responses implemented by members

Ensuring secure National Digital Identities and e-authentication

National Digital Identity (NDI) is understood to enable an integrated service delivery across the government. While work on National Digital Identities has been underway even before COVID-19, the pandemic and the subsequent lock-downs worldwide resulted in additional emphasis on the importance of safe, secure, and verified digital sign-ons and e-authentication.

Australia, Belgium, Cyprus, Estonia, Israel, Portugal, Sweden and Singapore are actively working on whole-of-government efforts to drive digital identity. This includes remote authentication of identities for access to public services (and private services to a varying degree, depending on country).



Sample Case studies on Digital Identity

Australia

Australia published the fourth edition of the Trusted Digital Identity Framework (TDIF) in April 2020. These guidelines provide a nationally consistent approach to accrediting, governing and operating digital identities. myGovID, which allows users to create digital identities that can be used to access 70 public services. As part of wider usage of digital identity, Australia also piloted Australia Post's Digital iD, the first commercial identity servicer provider in the country. Digital iD demonstrates the potential for broader whole-of-economy use within the Digital Identity system.

Estonia

Estonia offers citizens various means to obtain digital identities. In addition to national eID cards (held by almost 98% of people in Estonia), Estonians have access to mobile-ID, an ID-card based identity verification and digital signature solution for mobile phone owners. An alternative to mobile-ID also exists in the form of smart-ID, an Estonian private sector solution for secure authentication. All three solutions allow for authentication and digital signature of documents with the same legal value as handwritten signatures.

Singapore

Singapore allows users to access private sector services such as banking needs and B2B transactions using its National Digital Identity platform (SingPass). In response to COVID-19, Singapore also utilised SingPass to enable faster and verifiable check-ins via SafeEntry, the country's national digital check-in system to public venues, aiding in contact tracing efforts. To further drive co-creation, GovTech Singapore's NDI team recently released an API Library including SafeEntry and SingPass APIs for external partners and the developer community.

Sweden

Sweden's open NDI system operates through suppliers working with the public sector to provide e-identification services to citizens. From the private sector, Swedish citizens can obtain electronic ID cards or mobile/computer-based e-IDs like BankID (issued by Swedish banks) and the general-purpose Freja eID. Internationally, Sweden implemented the eIDAS (electronic notification across borders) and established communication with five other countries. Approximately 180 agencies and municipalities have also integrated cross-border authentication among their e-services, but they largely require a Swedish ID number.

Japan, Taiwan, The Netherlands, Romania and Uruguay have identified National Digital Identity as an upcoming priority as well.

Sample Case Studies on Upcoming Digital Identity initiatives

Japan

Japan intends to make the My Number system, its NDI programme, a key part of its drive towards a digital society. Planned implementations include:

- Improving the convenience of My Number Cards for personal identity authentication
- A means for individuals to link their My Number details with their bank accounts for quicker and simplified disbursement of benefits
- Usage of My Number for digitalised administrative procedures such as issuance of drivers' licences

Romania

Romania has identified the need for a national digital identity due to its involvement in the Nordics-Baltics countries of the region. The importance of a cross-border and inter-connected national digital identity that is recognised and trusted within the group is thus imperative to freedom of movement and ease of service accessibility for users.

The Netherlands

The Netherlands intends to undertake further work on digital identity, including developing a new digital identity policy with the aim of empowering citizens to voluntarily share limited sets of data with organisations.

Digitalisation of public services and consolidation of single digital gateways

Members adapted to the pandemic's impact on their citizens by strengthening e-access and e-delivery of public services. Measures ranged from digitising existing physical services to enabling online provision of economic support schemes. Over the course of the pandemic, members observed that more citizens were accessing public services online and expectations of quality digital services rose correspondingly. Services had to be functional, user-centric, easily accessible, secure, and stable.

Australia, **Canada**, **Finland**, **Japan**, **Portugal**, **OECD**, and the **European Commission** championed cross-sector collaboration, breaking down of silos, and moving away from legacy processes and systems. Consolidated single digital gateways ("one-stop shops") for public services were developed and applied. These include **Canada's** Open Government portal and **Portugal's** ePortugal portal that collate services onto a single platform, which citizens are eligible for.

Members such as **Australia**, **Estonia**, **Finland**, **Israel**, **Portugal**, **Romania**, **Singapore** and **The Netherlands** opted for a sectoral approach based on life events - identifying significant events citizens tend to undertake throughout their lives (e.g. setting up a business, starting a family, registering a birth or death, etc.). With citizens expecting continuous service improvements, it was necessary to offer them relevant, fuss-free and personalised services.

Sample Case Studies on Life Event Services

Finland

The AuroraAI programme uses artificial intelligence to allocate services in a timely manner in response to citizens' or companies' needs. Through a decentralised and open network created by AI and smart applications, AuroraAI supports life events and knowledge-based management by finding, allocating and proactively steering services.

Israel

The Citizen Personal Zone, a portal providing a single point of contact for all public services using the government identification system, was developed. It provides services tailored to individuals, sends messages about various processes or life events to citizens, and receives digital documentation sent by the government. Interfaces with cross-organisational infrastructures were also expanded, enhancing payment services, providing integration with process management and facilitating automatic completion of information fields.

Portugal

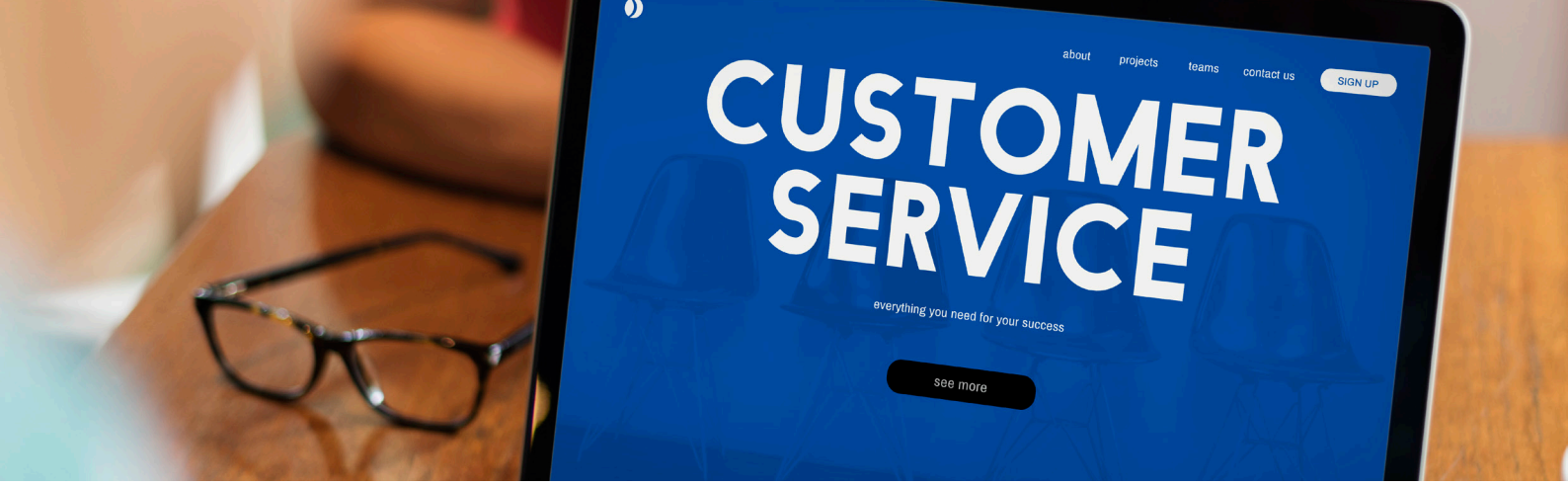
ePortugal, the country's national single digital gateway, centralises digital public services for both citizens and companies. Organised around key life and business events, ePortugal provides both informational and transactional services in line with the Portuguese government's citizen-driven approach. While a wide range of transactions can be performed through ePortugal, exceptions are also accounted for – users can be redirected to sectoral portals that provide services not on ePortugal or brought to the Citizen Map for georeferenced information and location details for services requiring users' physical presence.

Singapore

LifeSG provides a suite of services to support citizens' needs at key junctures by integrating and bundling services across government agencies. Initially launched in June 2018 to support families with young children, the app has progressively added new features to serve citizens in other aspects of their life journey. Citizens may use a personalised dashboard to find recommend content, access guides and discover government benefits available to them. The app unifies 40 APIs across 18 independent systems.

Facilitating digital best practices for public and private sectors

Members observed a need to break down silos and siloed networks in the public sector, emphasising the difficulties posed by lack of communication between departments, uneven levels of technology adoption across the government, and unequal levels of resources and knowledge held by individual ministries and agencies. Interoperability and interconnectivity across government systems were also hindered if certain departments did not modernise in favour of retaining legacy IT systems and ways of working. As Government representatives, members including **Australia**, **Canada**, **Estonia**, **Japan**, **Taiwan** and **Sweden** committed to digital-first, whole-of-government approaches towards future capability development - measures include cloud-by-default principles, common digital standards for government agencies and connected service ecosystems.



Sample Case Studies on Digital Standards & Best Practices

Canada

Canada published digital standards that shifted toward more agile, open, and user-focused government. Co-created with public and key stakeholder groups, these are living standards that are set to evolve. Some examples of the digital standards are:

- Designing with users – research with users to understand their needs and conduct ongoing testing to guide development.
- Building in accessibility from the start – services should meet or exceed accessibility standards.
- Being good data stewards – collect data from users only once and reuse wherever possible, while ensuring that data is collected and held securely.

Japan

Japan has targeted the 100% digitalisation of its administration, following three principles of digital first, once only and connected one-stop services. It also set out a cloud-by-default principle, where agencies should consider use of cloud services as the first option.

Sweden

Sweden established a secure and sustainable national digital infrastructure for information exchange, including a national framework for master-data with initial domains in business, housing, and private persons. The infrastructure will cover all aspects of the public sector, from the state level to the regional and local levels.

Taiwan

As part of its digital framework initiatives, Taiwan is planning to implement its new T-Road project that is based on Estonia's X-Road by 2021. It aims to integrate the data centres of its Ministry of Labour's data centre; the ministry would be in charge of aggregating and integrating data to aid in the open circulation of data across the government.

With COVID-19 disrupting established work practices across the public and private sectors, members recognised the need to facilitate and support teleworking. This push toward facilitating remote working practices was essential in helping the economy stay relatively on track during the pandemic. Members embarked on improving internet connectivity, rolling out tech tools and resources for collaborative work, and implementing reliable and secure ICT infrastructure. As teleworking became a necessity, adoption and perception barriers were ultimately overturned. In tandem with moving the public and private workforces to remote working arrangements, members also underscored the importance of providing the workforce with the training, resources, and expertise for a smooth transition.

During the pandemic, public-private partnerships played a huge part in members' digital responses. The development of contact tracing and/or exposure notification apps involved stakeholders from a range of government agencies and technology companies. As part of a wider trend, governments also progressively extended their services to businesses. **Finland** has highlighted the importance of helping businesses, third sector organisations, and citizens to boost their digital capabilities, while **Sweden** has engaged in discussions with industry to jointly implement advanced digital solutions.

Beyond this crisis, members highlighted the need to continue building on the progress made in implementing digital best practices and delivering on digitally forward agendas. To safeguard against future crises and transition towards an uncertain future the **OECD** has recommended that data-driven public sectors be resilient, adaptable and agile, while taking a coordinated and coherent approach towards digital transformation.

Building digital infrastructure and closing the digital divide

While COVID-19 resulted in wide-scale digitalisation, it also highlighted the difficulties faced by citizens with lesser knowledge of digital skills. Members championed the importance of digital literacy programmes, closing the digital divide, and building digital infrastructure in order to upgrade and uplift people, technology, and governance with the goal of scaling towards Future-Ready Governments.

Before governments progress toward closing the digital gap for citizens, adequate digital infrastructure is required. Members placed an emphasis on rolling out fast, affordable, and secure networks across their respective countries, making internet access more equitable for citizens regardless of geolocation. Accordingly, **Cyprus**, **Canada**, **Israel**, **Romania** and **Sweden** have targeted expanding digital infrastructure in their strategy plans, reorganising or creating new digital government bodies to facilitate strategic execution.

Members also pursued nation-wide digital strategies and policies that placed emphasis on digital inclusion as a core aspect. **Singapore**'s approach is guided by an understanding that technological alternatives must be provided for digitally excluded and under-served citizens. The country's TraceTogether national contact tracing programme also includes a token in addition to an app. **Israel** and **The Netherlands** have also opted to implement hybrid physical-digital models in order to cater to segments of the population who may have issues adopting fully online services. Examples include digital service kiosks and municipal service counters.

Gaps in digital skills had to be overcome within the workforce in the public sector. Members observed that for digital transformation in the public sector to be sustainable, it must be driven by governments equipped with the right digital talents and skill sets. The members focused on measures to re-train and up-skill government employees for success in digital and ICT career tracks.

Sample Case Studies on Digital Re-training & Up-skilling

Australia

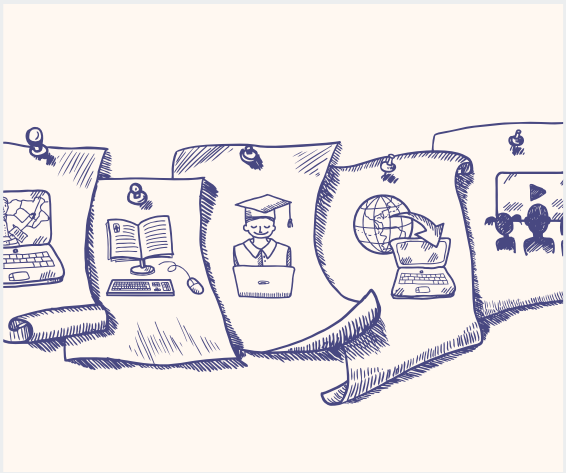
Australia launched a Digital Professional Stream to recruit new talent with the right skills, boost the capability of public servants and strengthen the public sector's digital expertise in line with international standards.

Canada

The Treasury Board of Canada (TBS) and Shared Services Canada (SSC), and Canadian Digital Service (CDS) ensured that public servants had the knowledge, tools, and equipment to work remotely, both effectively and securely. This included the procurement and provision of devices and equipment to address emergency requirements and support essential services, and rapid deployment of new cloud-based collaboration and communication systems government-wide.

The Netherlands

The "Strengthening HR ICT Civil Service" programme also focuses on aspects of digital re-training and up-skilling. The Government also separately runs a traineeship for new graduates that focuses on data, science and cybersecurity.



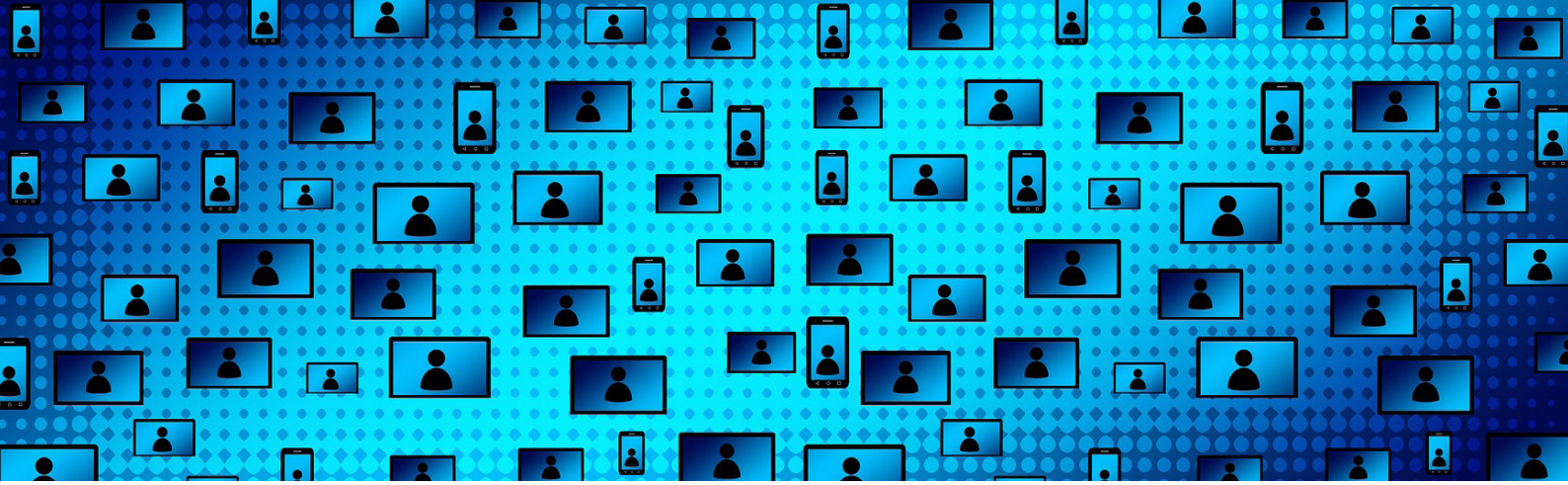
Regarding education, there were also major efforts to close the digital divide. As the pandemic made on-premises schooling unviable, member governments helped support and facilitate distance learning initiatives. They focused on ensuring stable, secure network infrastructure, creating platforms for dissemination and sharing of online schooling best practices and provisioning devices like laptops and mobile tablets to underprivileged households.

Building data frameworks that support Open Data initiatives

In the age of data sharing, the need for accurate information, considerations about secure access (who accesses data for what), and the ability for co-creation and sharing of experiences and insights were what members acknowledged as essential for digital transformation in governments. Building data frameworks that support these functions was a topic of interest among the members. Members' data frameworks ranged from across-the-board open data repositories to platforms for specific functions with data drawn from several sources. One point in common was the agreement from members that the data must be secure and safe (adhering to data protection guidelines and directives) in order to gain and retain public trust that the government took all precautions to safeguard personal information.

Many members have some form of data framework that shares data across the government, whether it existed before COVID-19 or was developed in response to the pandemic. Members like **Australia**, **Estonia**, and **Singapore** led the charge to collate shared data for digital identity, ease of verification for public service delivery, and open-source software. **Israel**, **Romania**, and **Sweden**, among others, developed open data frameworks that support other functions such as data from public and private sectors, personal health data, and information on citizens' education and professional pathways culled from various educational institutions' management systems. **Mozambique**, **Taiwan**, and **Uruguay** also used existing data frameworks in this time of global crisis to allow citizens to access uninterrupted service experiences and timely, accurate information from official sources. The members uniformly indicated that the work needed to build such frameworks is constant and the process is on-going.

On-going work on open data frameworks by other members include Japan, which has plans for the construction of data sharing infrastructure that cuts across various fields, collated from national and multiple local governments, and a registry that links social data with physical infrastructure for real-time analysis. The data is expected to be available openly so that evidence-based policies can be formed while public services are further improved. **Finland** is also working on a strategy to be published by the end of November 2020 that looks at the further opening of government data in accordance to European Union legislation.



Sample Case Studies on Open Data Frameworks

Romania

Romania's open data portal – data.gov.ro offers over 1,300 datasets automatically updated by 92 public administration institutions. The portal centralises open data published by the Romanian institutions according to the principles and standards in the field. In Romania's case, the data captured on the portal can be used freely, reused, and redistributed by anyone, freely, without restrictions such as copyright, patents or other control mechanisms being imposed. The requirements for such data are:

- Technical: Data published must be in file formats that can be processed automatically using computer programs (machine-readable), which are, as far as possible, available to anyone, free of charge (free and open source software).
- Legal: Data published must have a license attached to the data at the time of publication, by which the owner and publisher of the data establishes the conditions for re-use.

Singapore

The Government Data Architecture (GDA) enables data sharing and usage across the public sector in Singapore. GDA facilitates the efficient data sharing of clean and authoritative datasets across ministries and public agencies by designating and building Single Sources of Truth, Trusted Centres, and central platforms.

- Single Sources of Truth acquire, clean and maintain high-quality Core Data (data frequently used by multiple public agencies) within seven working days of a request.
- Trusted Centres fuse and distribute core datasets; enables the practice of good security habits and lessens the need for ministries and public agencies to collect respective datasets.
- Central platforms such as Vault, allow data users to request, download and analyse datasets securely as datasets are digitally watermarked and user activities are logged and monitored.

Uruguay

The Uruguay Government built a framework that drew the entire government's web resources and communication infrastructure onto a single platform. With gub.uy, the Uruguayan population was able to access consistent and homogenous public information across 200 different agencies' websites. This was especially useful during COVID-19, where the Presidency of the Republic, the National Emergency System (SINAE), and the Ministry of Public Health (MSP) created specific sites that provided timely and reliable information as well as announcements for the public.

References

Individual Reports

The detailed MSs Country Reports & Country Report Day presentations can be found in the ICA Country Report repository.

Attributes for visuals

Visuals used in this publication: https://pixabay.com https://www.freepik.com