



# Monthly Report:

## Overview of the United Nations E-Government Survey 2022

January 2023

Developed by the Research Committee



## 1. Introduction

The United Nations recently released the [2022 E-Government Survey](#), a study used to assess E-Government development in countries worldwide.

### What is the UN E-Government Survey?

- ❖ *The UN E-Government Survey was first published in 2001. Each report is prepared over a 2-year period. The methodology focuses on 19 key metrics, 13 of which deal with strategic, legal and institutional frameworks.*
- ❖ *The Survey measures e-government performance of UN Countries relative to one another. It takes an in-depth look at global, regional and local level trends, including a focus on thematic areas such as e-participation, data governance and capacities for digital transformation.*
- ❖ *“The UN E-Government Survey has become an indispensable “ranking, mapping and measuring” tool for countries to learn from each other, identify areas of strength and challenges in e-government and shape their policies and strategies in this area.”<sup>1</sup>*

1. [“E-Government Survey 2020”, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs](#)



### Why is this report important?

The 2022 UN e-Government Survey merits a highlight for the following reasons:

- The Survey is extremely topical (published on September 28, 2022).
- There is growing shift toward digital government worldwide.
- Governments worldwide are increasingly offering online services, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### What is covered in this executive report?

- Key takeaways from 2022
- Global trends
- Canada’s comparative e-Government performance and its meaning
- Canada’s performance in comparative perspective
- Local E-Government Development
- Leaving no one behind in the hybrid digital society
- The Future of Digital Government: Trends, Insights, and Conclusions
- The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on digital government
- E-Government during the COVID-19 pandemic: The way forward

## 2. Key takeaways from 2022

**Digital government has transformed the way public institutions function and the relationship between governments and citizens, but the benefits have not been evenly distributed. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for digital solutions to ensure the continuation of public services and the importance of digital resilience, e-participation, and open government data.**



**Proactive efforts are needed to acknowledge and address barriers to digital inclusion and to design inclusive e-government services that reach vulnerable populations.** Governments should adopt "inclusion by design," "inclusion by default," or "inclusion first" strategies to ensure that digital government services are accessible and usable by everyone, regardless of their age, ability, or socio-economic status.



**It is recommended that "leaving no one behind" be the guiding principle for policy development and implementation in e-government and the public sector.** This principle emphasizes the need to include all stakeholders and ensure that no one is excluded from the benefits of digitalization.



**Trends in digital government show a shift from a technocratic to a data-centric, policy-oriented approach.** Governments are using data and technology to inform policy decisions and measure the impact of e-government initiatives. This shift towards a more data-driven approach is expected to continue as governments seek to better understand the needs and preferences of their citizens and deliver more personalized public services.



### 3. Key takeaways from 2022

**Digital government has transformed the way public institutions function and the relationship between governments and citizens, but the benefits have not been evenly distributed. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for digital solutions to ensure the continuation of public services and the importance of digital resilience, e-participation, and open government data.**



**Digital technology has transformed the way people live and interact**, including in the public sector where there is now a blurred line between government and e-government. E-government involves using digital technologies to deliver public services, exchange information, and interact with citizens and businesses.



**Digital government has changed public institutions and the relationship between governments and citizens.** It has improved efficiency and made it easier for citizens to access information and participate in the democratic process, but the benefits have not been evenly distributed. The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed divides in e-government between and within countries.



**The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of digital resilience, e-participation, and open government data.** It has also revealed challenges with digital inclusion as many vulnerable populations have been left behind due to a lack of access to digital technologies or digital literacy.

### 4. Global trends

Recent trends in e-government development are based on values reflected in the E-Government Development Index (EGDI), an index with three components: the Online Services Index (OSI), the Telecommunications Infrastructure Index (TII) and the Human Capacity Index (HCI). The composite value of each index is normalized to fall within the range of 0 to 1, and the EGDI is derived from the average of the three component indices.



Digital technology is increasingly blurring the lines between the physical, digital and biological spheres and is rapidly changing the way people live, work and communicate. The public sector is a case in point; in terms of policies, institutions, strategies and tools, there is no longer a clear distinction or separation between government and e-government.



Digital government has reached a critical point. It is no longer a stand-alone or auxiliary tool, nor does it represent a panacea for government deficiencies or inefficiencies; it should be seen as an integral and thoroughly integrated aspect of the physical functioning of public institutions and services delivery.



With the acceleration of e-government development and the social and economic recovery efforts being undertaken in the post-COVID period, this is an opportune time to activate the priorities highlighted by the Secretary-General in the “Roadmap for digital cooperation” and Our Common Agenda, strengthening inclusion, equity and engagement through the provision of anticipatory/predictive and people-centred services and through enhanced digital cooperation with the private sector and diverse stakeholder groups.



A growing number of countries have strengthened their institutional and legal frameworks for e-government development. Most countries have a national electronic or digital government strategy, as well as legislation on cybersecurity, personal data protection, national data policy, open government data, and e-participation.



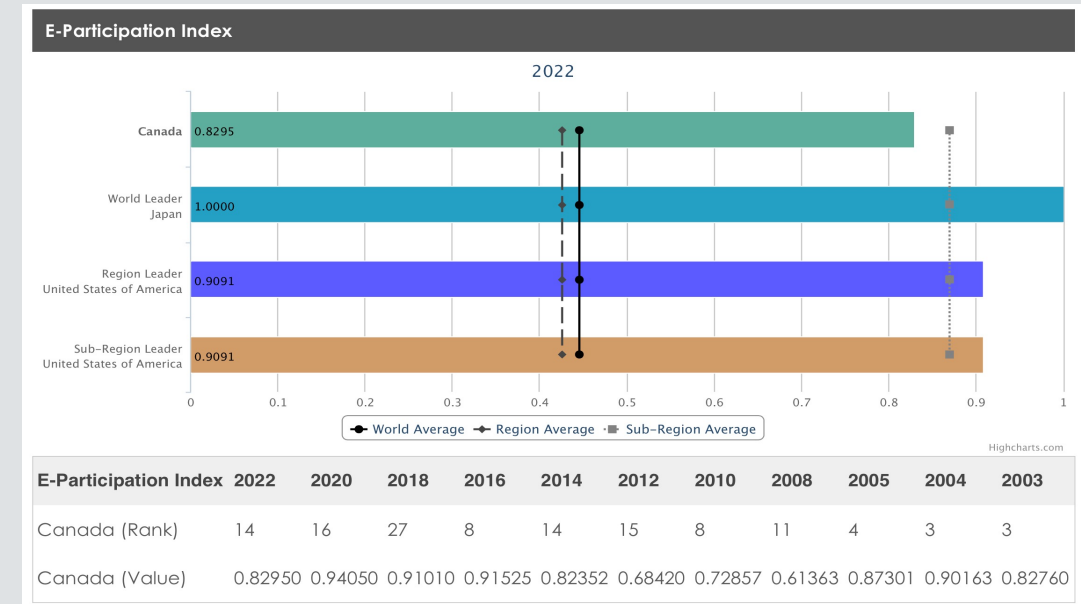
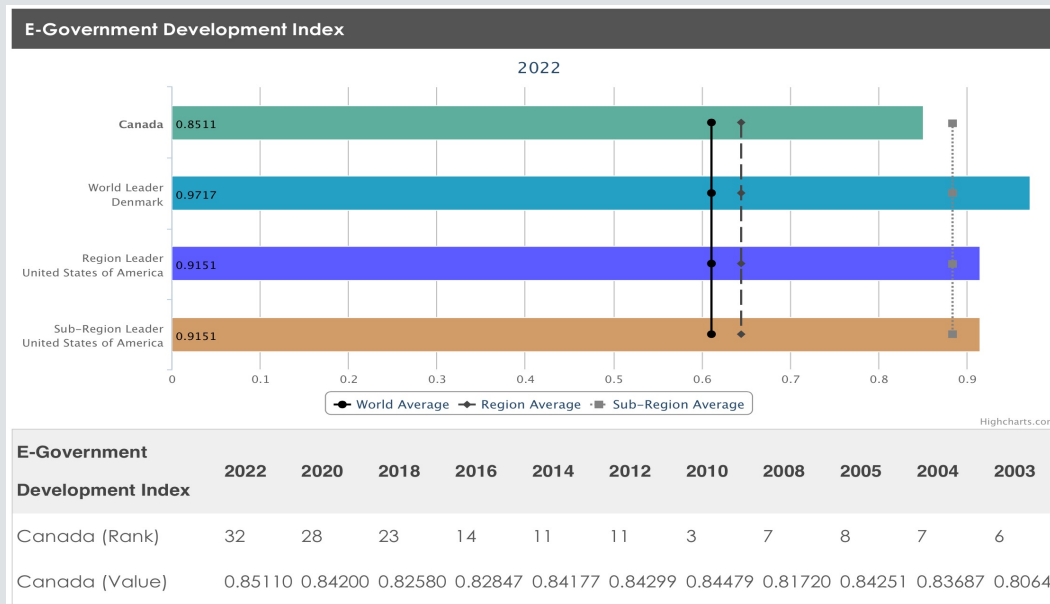
Individuals and businesses are increasingly able to interact with public institutions through online platforms, obtain information on legislation relating to freedom of information, and access public content and data.

## 5. Canada's comparative e-Government performance and its meaning

- Canada ranks 32<sup>nd</sup> for its EGD<sup>I</sup>\* (down from 28<sup>th</sup> in 2018), and 14<sup>th</sup> for its EPI\* (up from 16<sup>th</sup> in 2020).
- Canada's e-government performance ranks above the world average for both EGD<sup>I</sup> and EPI rankings.
- Canada ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> highest in the Americas, behind the United States.

\*Note: The UN's E-Government Survey ranks 32 UN Member States in terms of digital government, based on the following indicators:

- The **E-Government Development Index (EGDI)**: “used to measure the readiness and capacity of national institutions to use ICTs to deliver public services”.
- The **E-Participation Index (EPI)**: measured based on (i) “e-information- availability of online information; (ii) e-consultation – online public consultations; and (iii) e-decision-making – directly involving citizens in decision processes”.<sup>1</sup>



### 6. Canada's performance in comparative perspective

The E-Government Development Index (EGDI) measures the readiness and capacity of a country's national institutions to use information and communication technologies (ICTs) to deliver public services. A higher EGDI ranking indicates a stronger e-government development. **Canada's EGDI rank of 32nd out of more than 70 countries indicates that it is performing above average in this regard and has decreased from its rank of 28th in 2020.**

The E-Participation Index (EPI) measures a country's progress in terms of online public consultations and involving citizens in decision-making processes. A higher EPI ranking indicates a higher level of e-participation. **Canada's EPI rank of 14th out of more than 70 countries indicates that it is performing above the world average in this regard, and it has increased from its rank of 16th in 2020.**

Overall, Canada's e-government performance is above average, but there is still room for improvement in terms of involving citizens in decision-making processes and online public consultations. These are important factors for ensuring that the government is accountable to its citizens and that decisions are made in a transparent and inclusive manner. **A higher ranking on the E-Government Development Index (EGDI) indicates that Canada's national institutions are making progress in their use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to deliver public services.**

This can lead to a number of benefits for Canada's public service, contributing to the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the government:



**Improved efficiency:** By using ICTs to deliver services, the government can streamline processes and reduce the time and resources required to provide services to citizens.



**Greater accessibility:** ICTs can make it easier for citizens to access government services, particularly for those who may have difficulty physically traveling to government offices.



**Enhanced transparency:** The use of ICTs can help to increase transparency in government operations and decision-making processes.



**Increased accountability:** By using ICTs to deliver services, the government can better track and measure the effectiveness of its programs and services, which can help to increase accountability.



**Improved citizen satisfaction:** By using ICTs to deliver services, the government can provide a more convenient and efficient experience for citizens, which can lead to increased customer satisfaction.



## 7. Local E-Government Development

Cities play a central role in public life, and how they perform has a daily and direct impact on people. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) recognize the transformative power of urbanization for development and the vital role local leaders play in driving global change from the bottom up.

Local governments make policy and are catalysts for change. Most of the SDGs have targets that are directly or indirectly related to the daily operations of local and regional governments.

### Key observations include:

Opportunities to forge a strong connection between the SDGs and local communities exist primarily at the city or municipal level

- People interact more closely with local governments than with national authorities since the former deliver the vast majority of public services, making the provision of online services at the local level essential.
- Facilitating interaction and engagement with and within local communities remains one of the main responsibilities of municipal authorities.

A growing number of people are living in cities

- Urban populations are projected to increase in all regions, reaching 5.1 billion—or 60 per cent of the world population—by 2030.
- With urban expansion, more people will be accessing public services locally, so it is imperative that strong e-government structures exist.

Urban residents are twice as likely as those living in rural areas to use the Internet

- The digital divide is apparent within cities and regions in each country, with wide internal disparities in Internet availability and use.

Most effective ways to improve e-government

### Governments must:

- Regularly assess and evaluate government portals;
- Be able to accommodate larger numbers of users;
- Address problems associated with technology integration and content provision in local government websites;
- Continue to work on strengthening e-government services in order to better serve their residents;
- Monitor relevant indicators relate to important factors such as accessibility, functionality, reliability, ease of navigation, visual appeal, and alignment with technology standards.

Capacities that support effective local digital government transformation are required at the **societal, institutional, organizational** and **individual** levels.



### 8. Leaving no one behind in the hybrid digital society

Millions of connected individuals can leapfrog traditional barriers to enjoy the services and benefits of a digital government and economy, with faster communication, streamlined transactions and a multitude of services at their fingertips.

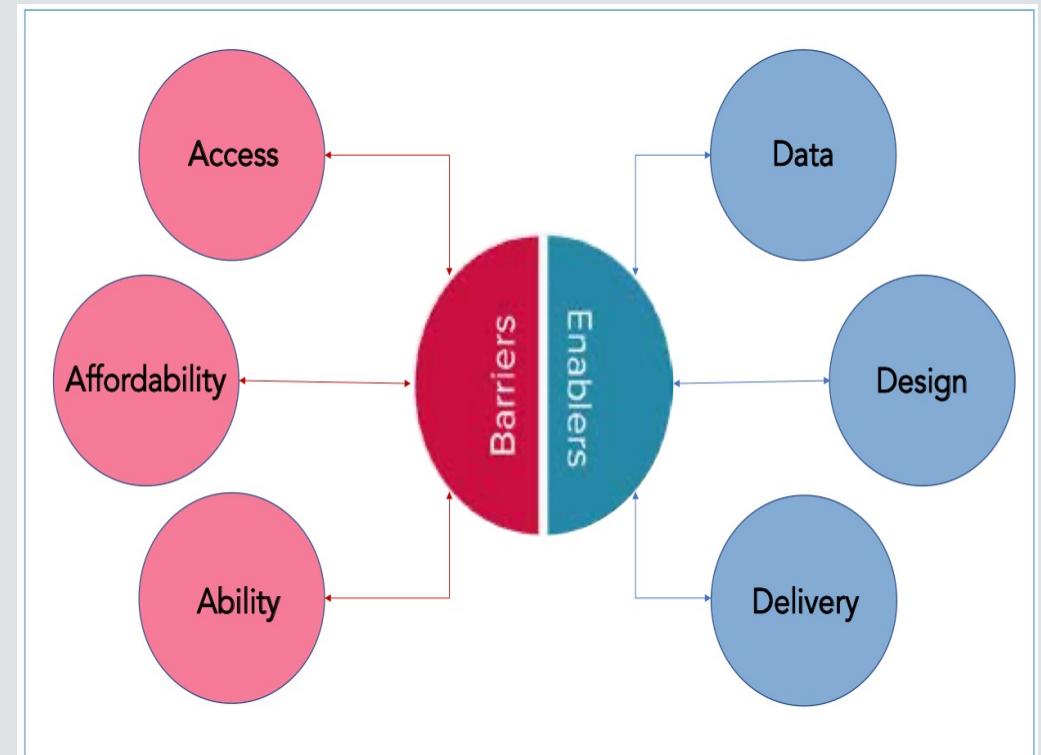
Digital technology is playing an increasingly critical role in the way the world lives, learns, works, and participates in the economy and society — which means that vulnerable populations without digital access are effectively placed at an even greater disadvantage and are being left even further behind.

To achieve equitable participation in the digital society and bridge the widening digital divide, governments must make meaningful digital opportunities available for all — beyond basic connectivity, in particular the poorest members of society, women and girls, older people, persons with disabilities, youth, migrants, refugees, and other marginalized groups.

The new face of inequality is digital — a fundamentally important, additional facet in connection to underlying existing socio-economic inequalities. The digital divide is now characterized by a higher degree of complexity; it is no longer just about connectivity but is also a measure of the extent to which one can benefit from online information and digital services.

In the hybrid digital society that exists today, the lack of access to digital services among those who are living in poverty or vulnerable situations—referred to in this chapter as the digital poor—may be either intentional (the result of exclusionary policies and laws) or unintentional (the result of societal power dynamics or one-size-fits-all policies).

**An integrated framework for e-government: strengthening data, design and delivery (enablers) to address barriers relating to access, affordability and ability**



### 9. The Future of Digital Government: Trends, Insights, and Conclusions

The report provides several recommendations for Governments committed to supporting sustainable development and the advancement of society.

#### Security aspects

- Governments need to be prepared to deal with issues that may arise in connection with unreliable data, existing data gaps, data security, personal privacy and ethics, and data fraud and crime. Technology is not free from risk and addressing privacy concerns and cybersecurity must be a priority in digital government development and administration.

#### Public service aspects

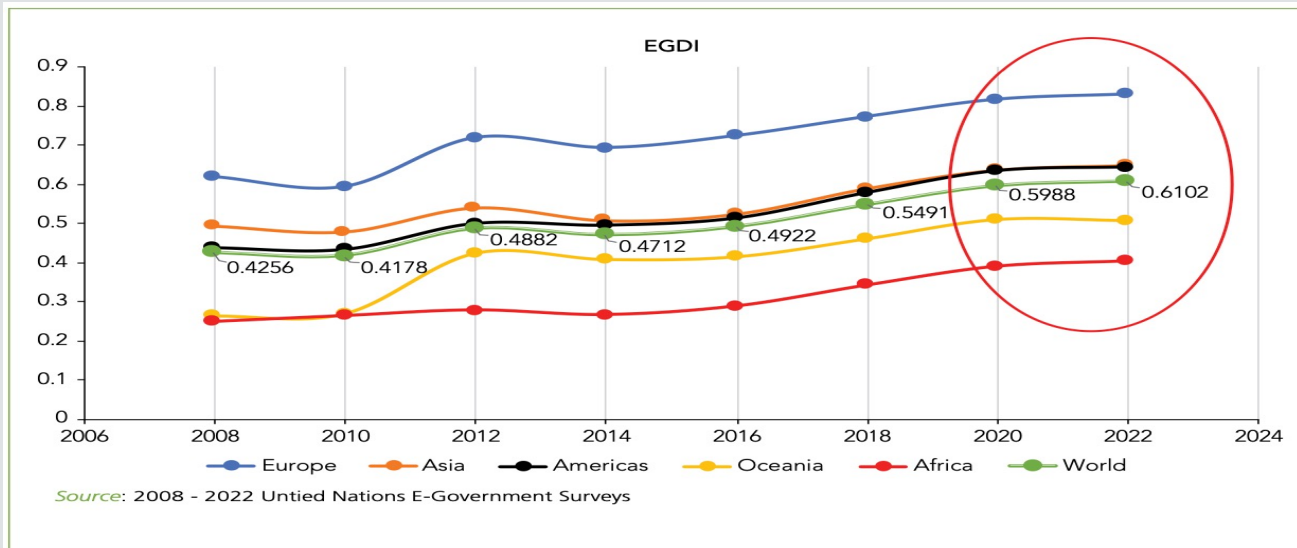
- Examples from digitally advanced societies show that the most innovative countries and cities actively seek to eliminate points of friction between Governments and the people they serve.

#### Capacity aspects

- Advancements in technology, complex systems analysis, AI and big data have allowed Governments to strengthen their anticipatory capabilities, helping them identify potential challenges and opportunities and shape future development scenarios.

**The UN E-Government Survey tracks progress and offers rigorous, data-driven country and regional analyses by assessing findings reflected in the E-Government Development Index (EGDI).**

While the upward trend is encouraging, overall e-government development has not gained significant momentum over the past two years, with the global average EGDI value rising only slightly from 0.5988 in 2020 to 0.6102 in 2022.



The numbers of countries in the very high and high EGDI groups have risen, while the totals for the middle and low EGDI groups have declined. Between 2020 and 2022, the number of countries in the very high and high EGDI groups increased from 57 to 60 and from 69 to 73, respectively, while the middle and low EGDI groups saw respective declines from 59 to 53 and from 8 to 7.

More than two thirds of the world's countries are now in the high or very high EGDI group, reflecting sustained e-government development.



### 10. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on digital government

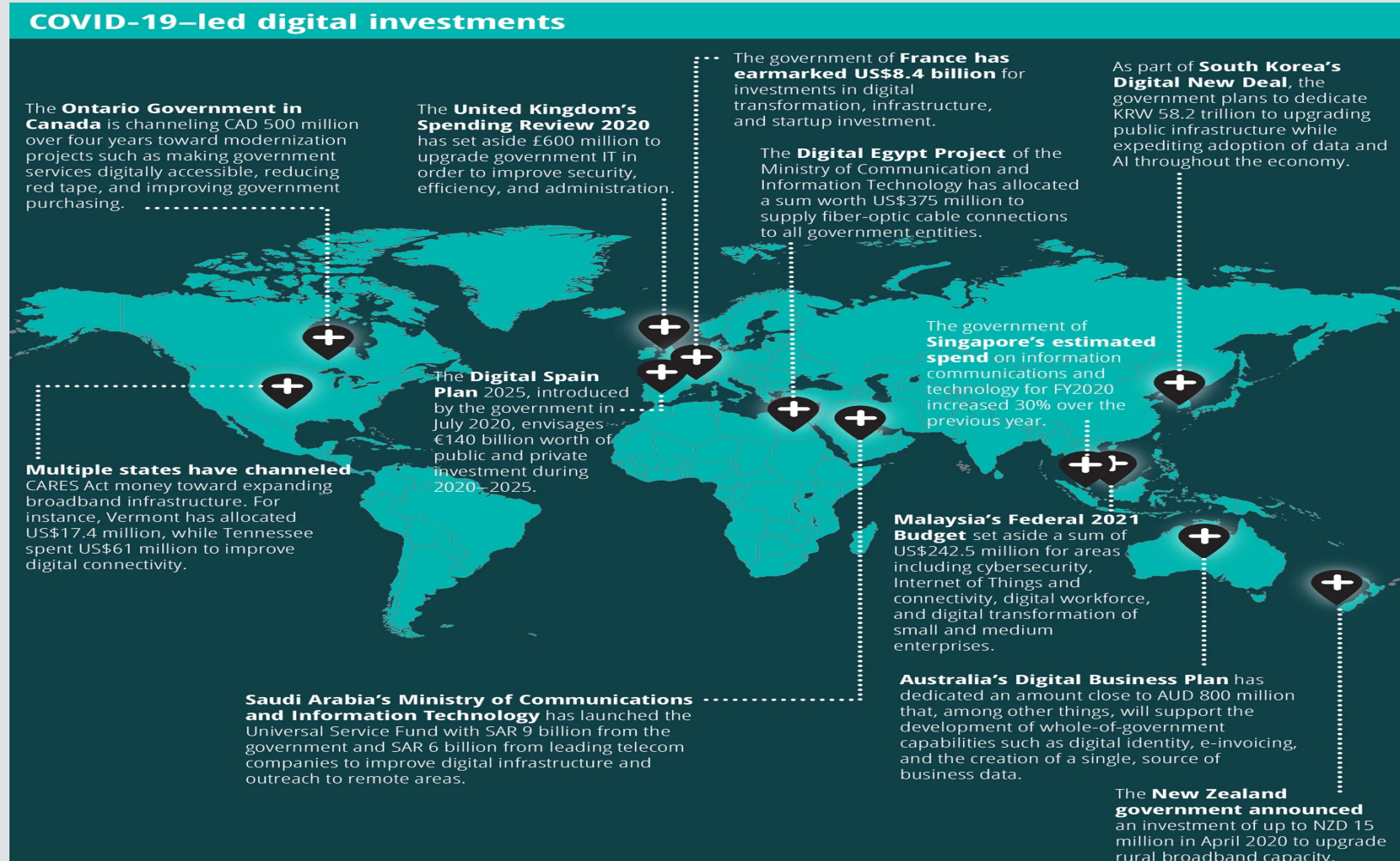
The emergence of COVID-19 revealed just how unprepared most Governments were to deal with an extended global crisis.

However, over the past two years the pandemic has driven efforts to achieve a real digital government transformation in support of building a sustainable and digitally resilient society.

COVID-19 has given Governments the chance to demonstrate that they can play a central role in addressing society-wide challenges.

As noted in the previous edition of the report, “the COVID-19 pandemic has forced Governments and societies to turn towards digital technologies to respond to the crisis in the short term, resolve socioeconomic repercussions in the midterm, and reinvent existing policies and tools in the long term”.

The goal has been to streamline inter-agency communication and support the open exchange of information between the Government and the people in order to address challenges driven by the pandemic.



**Source:** Deloitte. This graph represents a sample of the pandemic-driven e-government initiatives at the national level. Available at <https://www2.deloitte.com/xe/en/insights/industry/public-sector/government-trends/2021/digital-government-transformation-trends-covid-19.html>.

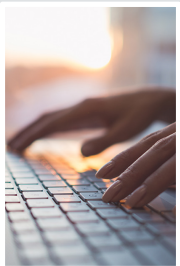
### 11. E-Government during the COVID-19 pandemic: The way forward



**There has been a steady upward trend in the implementation of digital government for public services delivery.** Yet, it is not clear whether all United Nations Member States have given sufficient attention to institutionalizing digital transformation and establishing the infrastructure needed for seamless government.



**Government effectiveness, accountability and trustworthiness are they key issues.** They derive not only from strong public leadership, but also from a solid institutional framework built upon and guided by ethical principles, the rule of law, innovative policies, engagement with stakeholders, operational optimization, and the ability to address evolving security and privacy risks.



**Governments worldwide need to have a long-term national digital transformation plan to achieve their objectives.** They need to be supported by an inclusive and complex framework to ensure that governments can meet the needs of all members of society—and leave no one behind.



#### For further reading

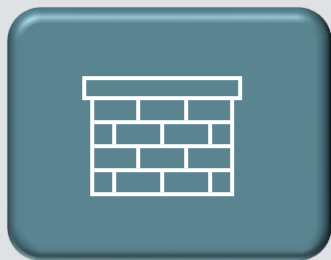
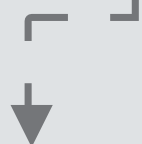
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- Siriwardhana, Yushan, Chamitha De Alwis, Gürkan Gür, Mika Ylianttila, and Madhusanka Liyanage. "The fight against the COVID-19 pandemic with 5G technologies." *IEEE Engineering Management Review* 48, no. 3 (2020): 72-84.
- Rozhkova, Darya, Nadezhda Rozhkova, and Uliana Blinova. "Development of the e-Government in the Context of the 2020 Pandemics." In *International Conference on Advances in Digital Science*, pp. 465-476. Springer, Cham, 2021.





## Daily Newsletter: Trends This Month

### January 2023



#### OECD adopts declaration on trusted government access to private sector data

A notable [development](#) for the fraught issue of cross-border data flows from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) : After two years of closed-door discussions, the intergovernmental organization has adopted a declaration on government access to data held by private sector entities.



#### How local government can lay the digital, groundwork for growth

Laying the [digital groundwork](#) by connecting communities is a key responsibility of local authorities, and the right foundations can attract investment and drive inclusive growth.



#### Government chief picks digital skills as biggest challenge of 2023

The need for additional technical expertise – at both senior levels and across the wider workforce – is a [long-standing issue](#) across government.

Post-pandemic, many departments are increasingly seeking to attract candidates from a science, technology, engineering and maths background.

## Other noteworthy articles:

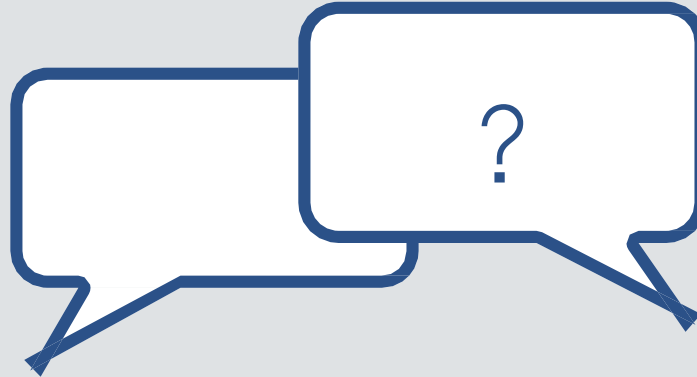
1) Hodzic, Sabina, Dejan Ravselj, and Dubravka Jurlina Alibegovic. "E-Government Effectiveness and Efficiency in EU-28 and COVID-19." *Cent. Eur. Pub. Admin. Rev.* 19 (2021): 159.

2) Cheng, Jianxin, Haoming Luo, Wenyi Lin, and Guopeng Hu. "Pros and Cons of Artificial Intelligence—Lessons From E-Government Services in the COVID-19 Pandemic." In *2021 2nd International Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Education (ICAIE)*, pp. 167-173. IEEE, 2021.

3) Kossasy, Siti Osa, Yenni Jufri, Fenny Ayu Monia, and Siti Mutia Kosassy. "Public Services in the Covid-19 Pandemic Situation." In *Proceeding The First International Conference on Government Education Management and Tourism*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 495-499. 2021.

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