The OECD Council adopted on 15 July 2014 the Recommendation on Digital Government Strategies. The Recommendation provides a set of 12 principles structured around 3 pillars. The OECD Secretariat is developing a Digital Government Policy Toolkit to support OECD member countries and non-member adhering countries with the implementation of the Recommendation. This practice was submitted by the government of Japan to be considered as a good practice in the implementation of one or more of the principles contained in the Recommendation.

**Description of the practice:**

**Organisation:** Administrative Management Bureau, Japan Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC)

**Name of the practice:** Online Government Administration Information and Open Data Policy

**Principles implemented:** Principle 3 – Create a data-driven culture in the public sector

**Description:** In 2004, the government of Japan adopted a policy requiring ministries to make government administrative information available to citizens online consistently through their respective websites, including information about the organization, laws, proposed bills, budgets, procurement, statistics, white papers, policy evaluation, and press releases, among others. In 2015, the Japanese government renewed and empowered the policy framework to accommodate the development of ICTs since 2004, and promote its new "Open Data" policy. This involved rules for flexible use of website content, offering machine-readable data in a format that can be understood by computers (API), and mobile and smart-phone applications. It also aimed to accelerate better information-sharing with citizens through ministry websites with an emphasis on greater usability, transparency, tightened security, and two-way communication with citizens.

The policy called for tightening security for ministry websites based on government-wide unified security standards, as well as setting out appropriate Business Continuing Plans (BCPs) to cope with disasters and other emergencies. The policy recommended to adopt a common feel and design across ministry websites and a consistent domain-name policy to enhance trust and security in independently-developed and run by ministries.
Broader utilisation of administrative information in the private sector is expected as a result of the new policy.

Motives:

- Due to the sheer increase in the volume of information posted on government ministry websites, improvements to usability and search functions were necessary to help individuals and businesses find and access the administrative information they need.
- The use of mobile phones and smartphones as indispensable personal information tools for citizens' everyday life.
- E-Government measures like online applications for administrative procedures have become widely used by the population.
- In the age of "e-Government," government websites are important for citizens and companies in their various transactions with the government.
- Response to an external change with the development of ICTs and their penetration into civil society.

Objectives:

- Improve government website usability and security to meet the growth of ICTs.
- To prepare BCPs to better handle emergencies or disasters.
- To improve transparency of government administrative authorities and institutions.
- To improve website usability for citizens and business that access government administrative information.

Results

- Citizens can now view and access the same categories of administrative information (ie. organization outline, laws, budgets and white papers etc.) in a similar position across the various ministry websites.
- At the official main portal site of the Electronic Government of Japan ("e-Gov"), users can conduct cross-ministry searches of administrative information that is otherwise provided individually on the respective ministry websites.
Digital government toolkit

Development

Overall development time: 1 year

Design:

Policy makers in the Government of Japan.

Testing:

- The policy adopted was based on the recent developments of various e-government initiatives following the adoption of the original policy in 2004.
- No specific pilot run was performed for the new policy, but all initiatives relating to e-government and public participation contributed to testing the innovation.

Implementation:

Tools:

- Government ministry websites.
- The main portal site for the official Japanese Electronic Government ("e-Gov").
- Data catalogue site of the Government "DATA.GO.JP."

Resources:

- Staff time
- Budget

Diffusion and scaling:

Partnerships: Public Sector organisations

Coordination between Japan's Ministry of Information and Communications and other ministries in implementing the new policy was required for reassigning website domain names systematically, ensuring consistency across technical aspects and web design specifications, and meeting the goals of the open data directives together.
Lessons learned

Breaking the divisions that exist across various independent government websites is a challenge. Keeping track of the growing number of government websites developed and run by ministries is key to ensure consistency and security.

Conditions required:

- Leadership
- Supervision
- Human resources
- Budget

Additional information: