Context

Public communication\(^1\) is a key function of government, yet its role in strengthening open government\(^2\) principles, improving policymaking and building trust is underexplored in many countries around the world. OECD analysis indeed shows that less than 10% of centres of government (CoG)\(^3\) list promoting transparency or encouraging participation as one of the key objectives of their communication strategy, and less than 2% of commitments contained in Open Government Partnership Action Plans relate to public communication or media ecosystems. Insufficient awareness of the benefits of open government reforms among public officials – an issue that effective internal communication could help address - is also ranked as a key challenge by more than 60% of OECD countries\(^4\).

In parallel, changes to the media ecosystem are drastically affecting how the public consumes, communicates and shares information, and are disrupting who and what sources of information the public trusts. Responses to related challenges, including disinformation or hate speech, often transcend boundaries, and form a common concern across the globe. Moreover, the 2018 Edelman Trust Barometer found that media organisations are trusted by less than 50% of the population in 22 of 28 countries studied, and that nearly 7 in 10 people worry about false information.\(^5\)

Against this backdrop, the OECD is developing an **International Report on Public Communication** in collaboration with Germany, Korea and the UK’s Government Communication Service International (GCSI) that aims at:

- Bridging the evidence gap on the contribution of public communication for democracy, security and inclusive growth.
- Reinforcing the awareness and use of communication as a lever for improved policymaking and service design and delivery, as well as increased public trust, transparency, accountability and stakeholder participation.
- Strengthening country resilience to disinformation by supporting strategic communications and media ecosystems that mitigate these challenges and that take advantage of the technological trends.
- Disseminating good practices, success stories and lessons learned across the OECD membership and beyond.

The Report will be based on an analytical framework, desk research, as well as surveys administered to OECD member and non-member countries. This includes a first survey targeting public officials in charge of communication in CoG and those in charge of the open government agenda, and a second survey aimed at public officials in charge of communication within ministries of health.

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\(^1\) Public communication is understood as any communication activity or initiative led by public institutions for the public interest. It is different from institutional communication, which focuses on promoting the image and mandate of an organization with key stakeholders, and political communication, which is linked to political debate or elections.

\(^2\) Open government is defined as “a culture of governance that promotes the principles of transparency, integrity, accountability and stakeholder participation in support of democracy and inclusive growth” ([OECD Recommendation of the Council on Open Government](https://www.oecd.org/gov/open-government/), 2017)

\(^3\) Centre of government is defined as the support structure serving the highest level of the executive branch of government (presidents, prime ministers and their equivalents).

\(^4\) OECD (2016), Open Government: The Global Context and the Way Forward

Workshop objectives and participants

The regional workshops will provide a platform for discussions on the status quo of public communication in LAC countries. It will bring together a community of practitioners to exchange related good practices and lessons learned and to support the identification of avenues to strengthen the use of public communication as an instrument of policymaking and trust building and as a lever of the open government agenda. It will also enable the analysis of common trends and challenges in this field in LAC.

The event will also enable the organizers to present the framework of the upcoming OECD Global Report on Public Communication and to discuss the components of the surveys that will form the basis of this publication. Participants will include representatives from centres of government in the region that are responsible for whole-of-government public communication. Peers from OECD member and partner countries will be invited to share their experiences and good practices.

Thursday 28 November 2019

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<tr>
<td>09.00 – 9.30</td>
<td>Welcome Coffee</td>
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<td>09.30 – 10.15</td>
<td>Opening Remarks</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Ms. Liliam Barrera, Chief of the Advisory Office on Transparency, City of Cali</td>
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<td>• Ms. Nancy Marín Espinoza, Minister of Communications, Costa Rica</td>
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<td>• Mr. Harris MacLeod, Deputy Director - Trade &amp; Prosperity, Government Communications Service International (GCSI), Prime Minister’s Office and Cabinet Office, United Kingdom</td>
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<td>• Mr. Alessandro Bellantoni, Deputy head of the public governance reviews and partnerships division and head of the Open Government Unit, OECD</td>
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<td>10.15 – 12.00</td>
<td>Session 1: Public communication as a lever of government activity</td>
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<td>Moderator: Ms. Karine Badr, Policy Analyst, Open Government Unit, OECD</td>
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<td>• Mr. Harris MacLeod, Deputy Director - Trade &amp; Prosperity, Government Communications Service International (GCSI), Prime Minister’s Office and Cabinet Office, United Kingdom</td>
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<td>• Tour de table of LAC countries</td>
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<td>• Questions and Answers</td>
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<td>This session will present the OECD framework on public communication and open government. It will also explore how OECD and partner countries are using public communication strategies and initiatives to change behaviors, improve policymaking and inform service design and delivery. It will also reflect on lessons learned in addressing key related challenges, before opening up to a discussion with LAC countries on these topics.</td>
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<td>12.00 – 13.30</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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13.30 – 15.00  Session 2: How can public communication support open government principles?

Moderator: Dr. Luciana Manfredi, Professor, Marketing and International Business Department, Icesi University, Colombia (TBC)
- Ms. Paulina López Ramos, Policy Analyst, Open Government Unit, OECD
- Ms. Natalia Domagala, Data Policy, Strategy & Ethics Cyber Security and Data Directorate, United Kingdom
- Tour de table of LAC countries
- Questions and answers

This session will elaborate upon the relationship between public communications and transparency & accountability and their role in promoting open government for better policy-making and service design and delivery. It will detail the importance of and connections between these concepts for increasing levels of citizen trust in government; ensuring access to government data, information, and decision-making processes; holding public officials accountable; and engaging stakeholders in each stage of the policy cycle for more legitimate and responsive public institutions. The session will also serve as an opportunity to present the UK’s Open Government manual.

15.00-15.30  Coffee break

15.30-17.00  Session 3 : Breakout groups on the OECD Public Communication Survey

- Group 1: Ms. Caroline Ehrman, Strategic Communications Manager, GCS International, Prime Minister’s Office & Cabinet Office Communications and Ms. Karine Badr, Policy Analyst, OECD
- Group 2: Ms. Paulina Lopez Ramos and Ms. Emma Cantera, Policy Analysts, OECD

This session will introduce the surveys for the International Report on Public Communication. Participants will divide in two groups to discuss the components of the CoG surveys. Participants will also have the opportunity to identify a key challenge and discuss means to overcome it.

17.00 – 17.30  Closing remarks and group picture

THE OECD OPEN GOVERNMENT UNIT

The OECD Open Government unit supports countries in their efforts to build more transparent, accountable and participatory governments that can restore citizens’ trust and promote inclusive growth. Through data collection, capacity building and the promotion of regional peer dialogue, the OECD provides in-depth analyses of open government strategies and initiatives, coupled with policy advice and actionable recommendations. The unit’s work is based on the OECD Recommendation of the Council on Open Government, the first international legal instrument on the topic, which defines the main tenets of the governance of open government strategies and initiatives and paving the way forward for this agenda across OECD members and partners.
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