



Access to information: What works in MENA & OECD countries

Special session of the MENA-OECD
Working Group on civil service and integrity

20 march 2019, 16.30-18.00

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MENA - OECD
Governance Programme



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Overview and objectives of the special session “Access to information: What works in OECD and MENA countries”

Access to information is the right of the people to know. Reinforcing transparency and allowing people to seek and receive public information is an indispensable tool for fighting corruption. It enables citizens and civil society to acquire the necessary information to carry out their role as watchdogs over the proper functioning of public institutions and to participate more effectively in public life. Moreover, knowing that citizens have the possibility to examine and retrace public decisions helps to foster a culture of transparency and accountability. Finally, giving citizens the opportunity to know about and better understand the reasons behind public decisions is key to renewing citizens' relationship with public officials and gain trust in public institutions.

New technologies offer opportunities to facilitate the right to access information and can be a tool to fight against corruption. With their global reach, new technologies help citizens to spot potential irregularities in public action and disseminate information on abuse in the public sector. Digital tools also offer opportunities to re-use and connect data gained through the right to access information to create new services for citizens in an easy-accessible and user-friendly way.

With the participation of representatives from government, independent institutions and NGOs from MENA and OECD member countries, this session will discuss access to information laws and the role they play to enhance transparency and integrity.

The session will feature the launch of the regional report “Institutions guaranteeing access to information in OECD member countries and in the MENA Region countries”, and draw on the MENA-OECD Governance Programme and the dialogue of the OECD Public Governance Committee and its sub-bodies on the role of open government. It builds on the recommendations of the OECD Council on [Public Integrity](#) and on [Open Government](#).

Agenda

16:30 – 16:45 High-level opening and launching of the MENA-OECD Report on Institutions guaranteeing Access to Information

- **Mr. Marcos Bonturi**, Director of the Public Governance Directorate, OECD
- **Mr. Kamel Morjane**, Minister of Civil Service, Modernization of the Administration and Public Policies, Tunisia
- **Mr. Rupert Schlegelmilch**, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the EU to the OECD and Co-Chair of the MENA-OECD Governance Programme

16:45 – 18:00 Access to information and integrity of civil service in OECD and MENA countries : Open discussion

Moderator: Mr. Phil Mason, United Kingdom

This session aims to share good practices and lessons learned from OECD and MENA countries to discuss policies, programmes and digital tools that help to strengthen access to information and reinforce accountability of public action.

Participants are invited to share their experiences and insights with regard to the following questions:

- *How can governmental and non-governmental stakeholders contribute to the effective implementation of access to information legal frameworks to reinforce accountability and support strengthening integrity in the public sector?*
- *How can digital tools be used to facilitate access to information, reinforce accountability and support the fight and prevention of corruption?*

18:00 The way forward

The concluding remarks will highlight the key take-aways and provide strategic directions for the work stream on civil service and integrity of the MENA-OECD Governance Programme and its Steering Committee.

- **Mr. Ahmed Laamoumri**, Secretary General of the Ministry of administrative reform and civil service, Morocco, Co-chair of the working group on civil service and integrity
- **Mr. Julián Antonio Prior Cabanillas**, General Direction of Public Governance, Territorial Policy and Public Service Ministry, Spain, Co-chair of the working group on civil service and integrity
- **Ms. Miriam Allam**, Head of the MENA-OECD Governance Programme, OECD

The OECD

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is an international body that promotes policies to improve the economic and social well-being of people around the world. It is made up of 36 member countries, a secretariat in Paris, and a committee, drawn from experts from government and other fields, for each work area covered by the Organisation.

The OECD provides a forum in which governments can work together to share experiences and seek solutions to common problems. We collaborate with governments to understand what drives economic, social and environmental change. We measure productivity and global flows of trade and investment.

www.oecd.org

The MENA-OECD Governance Programme

The MENA-OECD Governance Programme is a strategic partnership between MENA and OECD countries to share knowledge and expertise, with a view of disseminating standards and principles of good governance that support the ongoing process of reform in the MENA region.

The Programme strengthens collaboration with the most relevant multilateral initiatives currently underway in the region. In particular, the Programme supports the implementation of the G7 Deauville Partnership and assists governments in meeting the eligibility criteria to become a member of the Open Government Partnership. Through these initiatives, the Programme acts as a leading advocate of managing ongoing public governance reforms in the MENA region.

The Programme provides a sustainable structure for regional policy dialogue as well as for country specific projects. These projects correspond to the commitment of MENA governments to implement public sector reforms in view of unlocking social and economic development and of meeting citizens' growing expectations in terms of quality services, inclusive policymaking and transparency.

<http://www.oecd.org/mena/governance/>



The MENA-OECD Working Group on civil service and integrity (WGI)

The Working Group on Civil Service and Integrity of the MENA-OECD Governance Programme brings together policy practitioners from MENA and OECD countries to engage in promoting integrity and preventing corruption. It is the leading network to promote a regional dialogue to exchange best practices in the area of civil service reform for integrity, innovative anti-corruption policies and institutions. The Working Group cooperates with ACINET (Arab Anti-Corruption and Integrity Network).

Building on more than ten years of experience and aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, the MENA-OECD Governance Programme received a new mandate for 2016-2020 to leverage the power of the regional networks and provide implementation assistance in crucial areas of integrity and fighting corruption.

<http://www.oecd.org/mena/governance/mena-oecd-working-group-on-civil-service-and-integrity.htm>

OECD Project on Open Government and Access to Information

The Project supports OGP member countries and those wishing to become members to elaborate and implement open government policies. The OECD provides countries with open government analyses and contributes to the collection of data in order to formulate evidence-based recommendations. Open Government Reviews as well as regional working groups contribute to the elaboration of detailed frameworks for the reform of the public sector inspired from open government principles.

In the framework of a regional project, the OECD supports Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia in the implementation of their access to information laws and the strengthening of a culture of transparency within the public sector.

<http://www.oecd.org/mena/governance/open-government/>



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