

**State of Israel**

**Open Government Partnership**

**National Open Government Plan 2015-2017**

**Midterm Report: Meeting the Action Plan Objectives**

**September 2016**



**Israel**

**National Action Plan 2015-2017**

**Government of Israel Submitted to the Open Government Partnership**

**Midterm Self-Assessment Report**

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## Preface

On 01 April 2012, the Government of Israel reached a resolution to join the Open Government initiative, based on the understanding that innovative information and communication technologies enable the traditional democratic relationship between the individual and the Government to deepen and improve significantly. “Open Government” constitutes a change in the viewpoint of the Government, to one that puts the citizen center stage and acknowledges the government’s key role of “serving the public.” The government of Israel recognizes the public’s right to be informed about government activities, participate in decision making and contribute to public works.

As part of the resolution regarding Israel’s joining the international Open Government Partnership (OGP) and appointing the “Israeli Forum on Open Government,” the Government of Israel undertook to foster an Open Government policy based on Open Government principles, as follows:

- *Transparency and active reporting* – the information held by the Government is a public resource, and therefore, it will strive to provide the public with maximum access to it, with the possibility to process and improve it, and it will also act to make personal Government services and personal Government information more accessible, and to increase public control over Government performance.
- *Public participation* – The Government of Israel will strive to formulate policy with regard to public participation in key planning and implementation processes in Government undertakings, with an aim to contribute to decision-making processes, improve implementation of Government policy and deepen public trust in Government systems.
- *Accountability* – The Government of Israel will strive to foster the principle of accountability (the responsibility of elected officials toward their constituents) as part of a viewpoint that aims at upholding the right of the public to critique Government performance and examine the performance of elected officials and government ministries.
- *Implementation of innovative technologies* – The Government of Israel will strive to implement innovative and interactive information technologies and act to develop technological tools, which enhance the Government’s service to the public, the flow of Government information and the discourse between Government and public.

The Government of Israel renewed its commitment to Open Government in Government Resolution No. 2097 of 10 October 2014, in which it appointed the Government ICT Authority to formulate a National Action Plan to foster Open Government in 2015-2017, in partnership with staff entities in the Open Government arena: the Government ICT E-Gov Unit, the Freedom of Information Government Unit at the Ministry of Justice, the Department of Governance and Social Affairs at the Prime Minister’s Office and the Unit for the Improvement of Government Public Services. The second Open Government Action Plan was approved in Government Resolution No. 2498 of 28 April 2015, and was submitted to the International Open Government Partnership on 21 May 2015.

## Open Government Action Plan for 2015-2017

### Introduction and Background

The Government of Israel's Action Plan for 2015-2017 includes nine commitments which foster the four principles of Open Government. This is the second Action Plan submitted by the Government of Israel since joining the international Open Government Partnership (OGP) in 2012.

The commitments included in the plan reflect the core government activity that is worthy of note in the sphere of Open Government: regulating the status and authority of the Freedom of Information Government Unit; implementing use of the central freedom of information website; increasing transparency about contracting between Government and private bodies; establishing a new gov.il website to make Government information and services accessible to the public; making databases accessible to the public; evaluating satisfaction with public services, and the quality of service offered through various channels; increasing transparency of information regarding legislation; developing a Government "toolbox" to be shared during Government endeavors; continually formulating and implementing processes of "Public Participation" in Government endeavors.

The plan includes 28 milestones for implementation from 01 July 2015 until 30 June 2017.

The Action Plan reflects the Government of Israel's commitment to act to foster the four principles of Open Government, as determined in Government Resolution No. 4515 of 01 April 2012. The commitments focus on three core challenges, which have been defined by the international Open Government Partnership:

1. Improving public services.
2. Increasing public integrity.
3. More effectively managing public resources.

The following is a summary table comprising the commitments included in the Action Plan for 2015-2017, with a classification of the principles and challenges pertaining to the commitments.

## Commitments of the Open Government Action Plan 2015-2017

Commitment	Core OGP Challenge			Principles of Open Government			
	Improving Services	Integrity	More effectively managing public resources	Transparency	Accountability	Public Participation	Harnessing Technology
Regulating the status and authority of the Freedom of Information Government Unit		✓		✓			
Implementing use of the central freedom of information website	✓	✓		✓			✓
Increasing transparency about contracting between Government and private bodies		✓	✓	✓	✓		
Establishing a new gov.il website to make Government information and services accessible to the public	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Making databases accessible to the public at the data.gov.il website	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Evaluating satisfaction with public services, and the quality of service offered through various channels	✓			✓	✓		
Increasing transparency of information regarding legislation		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Developing a Government “toolbox” to be shared during Government endeavors	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Continually formulating and implementing processes of “Public Participation” in Government endeavors	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

## Progress in Implementing the Action Plan 2015-2017

### Consultation regarding Implementation

In Government Resolution No. 4515, the Israeli Forum on Open Government was established as an advisory body to the Government on matters of Open Government. [In Resolution Number GSP/15 of 12 September 2012 of the Ministerial Committee for Government Service to the Public and Open Government](#), 36 representatives were appointed to the Forum from government ministries, from academia, from civil society organizations, along with prominent representatives from the private sector. In the abovementioned Government Resolution No. 4515, it was determined that the Forum shall monitor the advancement of the Government's Action Plan for the international Open Government Partnership, and give its recommendations to the Government regarding additional activities and objectives for fostering Open Government. The forum last convened in January 2016.

Individual discussions about the Action Plan were held by the Forum's sub-teams, with the participation of Forum representatives and other non-forum public representatives, and consultations are being held in areas relevant to the Plan, as detailed below:

### Making databases accessible

The Government ICT Authority is leading a sub-team on the subject on making databases accessible, made up of representatives of civil society organizations and representatives from the private sector. As part of the teamwork:

- Government databases of high public importance were mapped, based on their potential contribution to the economy, to entrepreneurship and to transparency.
- Discussions were held for identifying solutions to the core challenges involved in making Government databases accessible, including protection of privacy, national security and issues of the Government's intellectual property.

The recommendations formulated as part of the teamwork constituted the basis for the efforts of inter-ministerial team for making databases accessible, which was established by virtue of [Government Resolution No. 2097](#), and [Government Resolution No. 1933](#) of 30 August 2016, on the subject of "Improving the Transfer of Government Information and Making Government Databases Accessible to the Public" as described in the Summary Chapter. The meetings that representatives of the Government ICT Authority held with public representatives over the course of the year also contributed to establishing a list of priorities for making databases accessible in Government ministries. Owing to the many parties involved in drafting the report of the inter-ministerial team, which was established by Government decision, it was difficult to implement public sharing about the published report, prior to its publication. Before formulating the Authority's 2017 agenda for making databases accessible to the public, it has been cooperating with the Department of Governance and Social Affairs at the Prime Minister's Office, with an aim to develop significant

public participation processes for implementing the process of making databases accessible to the public.

In the coming months additional public participation processes have been planned for identifying public interest databases in various areas. Also, events have been planned for encouraging government ministries and civilian entrepreneurs to act toward making Government databases accessible and to develop innovative applications based on them.

## E-Government

As part of establishing the new gov.il website and with the purpose of designing digital governmental services adapted to the needs of the public, the Government ICT “E-Gov” Unit has held several public participation events through various channels, including:

**Internet surveys and focus groups:** More than 1,000 individuals have participated in surveys and focus groups dealing with the public’s evaluation of current governmental services, potential digitalization in various governmental sectors, choice of design for the fusion database, and more. People of different ages and with various occupations participated in these focus groups. The recommendations were implemented in the design of the new gov.il Governmental website.

**Round table discussions with the Arab sector:** round table discussions were conducted with the aim of examining how to increase consumption of online and offline governmental services among Arabic-speaking citizens. The round tables were held on a physical and virtual platform. Approximately 12,900 citizens were exposed to the round table discussions, and of them, about 329 participated actively in them.

As a result of the insights gained through the surveys, focus groups and round tables, the appearance of the new website was modified, and additional visual and content-related elements were added, thereby facilitating content comprehension.

## Transparency

A team dedicated to the issue of transparency has been working together with the Freedom of Information Government Unit and is overseeing its activity at the launching and implementation stages of the work plan. The team includes 12 representatives from academia, NPOs, and the central and local government. During the past year, the team was involved in two main issues:

1. Formulating the principles to promote legislation which will broaden the requirement to make initiated information more accessible, which is partially affirmed in the Freedom of Information Law. Overall, the principles were adopted by the Ministry of Justice, which is currently focusing its efforts on the text of an amendment to the legislation, based on the established principles.
2. Creating a standard for transparency in public committees. The team recommended a uniform standard for determining a paradigm based on which each committee would set the level of transparency adopted by it. The recommendations were submitted to the Minister of Justice and are awaiting her decision.

## Implementation of the Commitments

### Summary Table

Commitment	Timeline	Status	Responsibility
<a href="#"><u>Regulating the status and authority of the Freedom of Information Government Unit</u></a>	10/2017	Partially implemented – the minister of justice has made a basic decision with regard to adapting the authority of the Freedom of Information Government Unit to the challenges of enforcing freedom of information. <a href="#"><u>Government Resolution No. 2950</u></a> must be amended, and the authority of the Freedom of Information Government Unit must be extended to enforce the Freedom of Information Law, with the approval of additional regulators.	Freedom of Information Government Unit, Ministry of Justice
<a href="#"><u>Implementing use of the central freedom of information website</u></a>	06/2017	Significantly implemented – an ongoing practice was set up for uploading information to the Freedom of Information Government Unit website (submission of applications as per the Freedom of Information Law and uploading responses provided by ministries). A media campaign was run, which led to increased public awareness about use of the Unit's website. An upgrade of the site is being planned, as is the establishment of a shared system for dealing with applications.	Freedom of Information Government Unit, Ministry of Justice
<a href="#"><u>Increasing transparency about contracting between Government and private bodies</u></a>	Ongoing	Significantly implemented – a directive was published which obligated government offices using the Merkava system (expenditure management technological system) to publicize all expenditures once every quarter, starting from 2016. About 80% of the relevant units published reports about their contracting on the central freedom of information website. The Freedom of Information Government Unit is continuing to monitor implementation of <a href="#"><u>Government Resolution No. 1116</u></a> by government ministries, and is taking steps to improve implementation, and publicize contracting and other agreements.	Freedom of Information Government Unit, Ministry of Justice



<a href="#"><u>Establishing a new gov.il website to make Government information and services accessible to the public</u></a>	Objectives were achieved, timeline for completion of the process: 2018	Implemented – the new gov.il website went live, with the objective of bringing together all information and governmental services and making them accessible to the public. To date, four ministries have transferred to the new gov.il site, and about eight more are expected to do so by the end of the year. The E-Gov unit at the Government ICT Authority is taking steps to have other ministries join the site, and to add online services, which will improve the level of services, provided to citizens.	E-Gov, Government ICT Authority, Prime Minister's Office
<a href="#"><u>Making databases accessible to the public at the data.gov.il website</u></a>	Ongoing	Implemented - Government databases of high public interest were mapped and processes to make them accessible were initiated. The data.gov.il website was reestablished on an open platform (Ckan) and about 200 series of data were converted on it. From the beginning of 2016, 100 new databases were added to the site. A report of the inter-ministerial team for making databases accessible was published, which included recommendations about technical and legal policies for databases accessibility, and for setting related goals in government ministries. The recommendations in the report are soon to receive the validity of a Government resolution. The ICT Authority is striving to encourage database accessibility and is engaged in an ongoing discourse with governmental ministries as well as with the public, to identify valuable databases and make them accessible.	Government ICT Authority, Prime Minister's Office
<a href="#"><u>Evaluating satisfaction with public services, and the quality of service offered through various channels</u></a>	06/2017	Implemented – evaluation was conducted in 15 large entities, which provide public services, and the ministries routinely receive the results, while striving to improve their results. Continual, ongoing evaluations are conducted.	Unit for the Improvement of Government Public Services, Government ICT Authority, Prime Minister's Office

<a href="#"><u>Increasing transparency of information regarding legislation</u></a>	12/2017	Significantly implemented – the Knesset website was expanded such that all state laws and all their amendments legislated over the years would be available, along with the relevant documents for each amendment. Meetings were held with the public in order to characterize the information to be presented, and the manner to access it. A system for presenting legislative bills is in the final stages of development, and is planned to go live in October 2016. Work on characterizing and developing the system for presenting the full version is in its advanced stages, and efforts to establish it will continue over the coming year.	The Knesset
<a href="#"><u>Developing a Government “toolbox” to be shared during Government endeavors</u></a>	09/2016	Significantly implemented – four online tools for government endeavors have been developed by the E-Gov unit at the Government ICT Authority. A tender for planning and implementing processes for collaboration in the endeavors of government ministries is in its final stages, and the winning provider will soon be chosen, followed by instruction in government ministries for implementing public participation, as per the tender.	Department of Governance and Social Affairs, the Prime Minister’s Office
<a href="#"><u>Continually formulating and implementing processes of “Public Participation” in Government endeavors</u></a>		Significantly implemented – the draft of a guidebook to be shared during government endeavors is expected to be published during Q4 of 2016. Many ministries implemented collaborative processes in a range of subjects. The Department of Governance and Social Affairs at the Prime Minister’s Office led and guided a number of significant collaborative processes in the Government, in areas such as outsourcing of social services, regulating the activities of NPOs in schools and eradication of racism. The Department is engaged in an ongoing process to formulate suitable policy for implementing public participation in government, and regularly conducts training and instruction for the staff of the ministries and for the inter-ministerial and intersectoral forums in the sphere of public participation and intersectoral cooperation.	Department of Governance and Social Affairs, the Prime Minister’s Office

## Regulating the status and authority of the Freedom of Information Government Unit

Directing Unit		Freedom of Information Government Unit, Ministry of Justice		
Person responsible for the activity		Rivki Dvash		
Position and unit		Director of the Freedom of Information Unit, Ministry of Justice		
E-mail		<a href="mailto:rivkid@justice.gov.il">rivkid@justice.gov.il</a>		
Telephone		972-2-6546624		
Other partners	Government	E-Gov and the Counseling and Legislation Department in the Ministry of Justice		
	Civil society, private sector			
Main objective		Increasing implementation and enforcement of the Freedom of Information Law.		
Description of commitment		Adapting the authority of the Freedom of Information Government Unit to the enforcement challenges in the area of freedom of information.		
OGP challenge relating to the commitment		Increasing public integrity		
Relevant to fostering of		Transparency	Accountability	Public participation
		v		
Desired outcomes		Regulating the authority of the Freedom of Information Government Unit and adapting it to enforcement challenges in the area.		
Implementation status		Not yet begun	Partial	Significant
			v	
Description of outcomes		<p>The minister of justice has made a basic decision:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) It will be possible to express an independent position vis-à-vis the Government;</li> <li>2) Authorization granted for planned inspection of government ministries and auxiliary units;</li> <li>3) Authority to ask for documents from government ministries and auxiliary units in order to fulfill its functions;</li> <li>4) In principle, it is advisable to increase the Unit's authority over local authorities, state-owned enterprises and statutory corporations, but discussions have to be held with other entities in order to reach an agreement on this matter.</li> </ol> <p>The way to actualize the commitments is through an amendment to <a href="#">Government Resolution No. 2950</a>.</p> <p>At this time, the text proposed for the Government Resolution amendment has been approved in line with the minister's decision.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Minister of Justice was in contact with the Minister of the Interior in order to examine his stance with regard to extending the authority</p>		

	of the Unit over local authorities. Only after completing this step, will an expansion of authority to additional authorities be examined.
Conclusion date	01/10/2017
Subsequent steps	Amendment to Government Resolution No. 2950.  Response by the Minister of the Interior.  Receipt of consent from additional regulators responsible for the areas of activity of other authorities, over which the Ministry of Justice would like to extend the Unit's authority.

## Implementing use of the central freedom of information website

Directing Unit		Freedom of Information Government Unit, Ministry of Justice		
Person responsible for the activity		Rivki Dvash		
Position and unit		Director of the Freedom of Information Unit, Ministry of Justice		
E-mail		<a href="mailto:rivkid@justice.gov.il">rivkid@justice.gov.il</a>		
Telephone		972-2-6546624		
Other partners	Government	E-Gov		
	Civil society, private sector			
Main objective		Facilitating the public to locate information and submit applications in accordance with the Freedom of Information Law.		
Description of commitment		Increasing the information available on the central freedom of information website and increasing awareness of and use of the website.		
OGP challenge relating to the commitment		Improving public services, increasing public integrity.		
Relevant to fostering of		Transparency	Accountability	Public participation
		v		
Desired outcomes		Widespread use of the website by the public for finding information and submitting applications in accordance with the Freedom of Information Law.		
Implementation status		Not yet begun	Partial	Significant
				v
Description of outcomes		<p>Submission of applications:</p> <p>An online form for submitting applications for information enables applications to be submitted to about 720 public authorities (a 32% increase relative to the previous year). During the period of the report, about 1,700 applications were submitted through the online form (a 67.4% increase relative to the previous year).</p> <p>Database of responses:</p> <p>Over the period of the report, 620 new documents were uploaded to the central website (out of a total of 957 documents which are on the site, in other words 62% of all the documents). The documents are divided into: freedom of information application responses (52%), contracting documents (15%), and agreements (3%).</p> <p>Increasing public awareness about the website:</p> <p>In May 2016, the Freedom of Information Government Unit held a publicity campaign aimed at increasing public awareness about use of the central website. The campaign included commercials at leading radio stations: Galatz, Galgalatz, Reshet Bet and Radio AlShams (radio for the Arab sector). The Unit simultaneously held a social media Facebook campaign jointly with the Ministry of Justice and Ashdod Municipality – as part of which about 200 new responses were uploaded to the central website and an increase of about 300% was observed in the number of entries to the site.</p>		

	In all, we see a 46.3% increase in the number of website users relative to the previous corresponding period.
Conclusion date	June 2017
Subsequent steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establishing a shared system for handling freedom of information applications, which will include the option to upload responses to the website, as part of the process of working with the system.</li> <li>2. Replacing the website (which was launched in January 2014) by a more advanced one, with expanded capacities (such as receiving status updates regarding applications being processed, viewing documents submitted and received from the Authority, and submitting complaints to the Unit).</li> <li>3. Creating an online form for a supervisor report to replace the existing form.</li> </ol>
<b>Additional information</b>	
<p>Recruiting the supervisors and authorities to upload content to the website, with the understanding that publishing responses on the central freedom of information website is not only an requirement, but also the correct way to act.</p> <p>Dealing with technological failures in the system in view of the underlying infrastructure.</p> <p>Increasing the number of supervisors whose details appear on the central website.</p>	

## Increasing transparency about contracting between Government and private bodies

Directing Unit		Freedom of Information Government Unit, Ministry of Justice		
Person responsible for the activity		Rivki Dvash		
Position and unit		Director of the Freedom of Information Unit, Ministry of Justice		
E-mail		<a href="mailto:rivkid@justice.gov.il">rivkid@justice.gov.il</a>		
Telephone		972-2-6546624		
Other partners	Government	Accountant General, Ministry of Finance		
	Civil society, private sector			
Main objective		Increasing transparency.		
Description of commitment		Increasing the information accessible to the public in the field of contracting and state expenditures.		
OGP challenge relating to the commitment		Increasing public integrity, effective management of public resources.		
Relevant to fostering of		Transparency	Accountability	Public participation
		v	v	
Desired outcomes		Increasing transparency with regard to government use of public resources.		
Implementation status		Not yet begun	Partial	Significant
				v
Description of outcomes		<p>In the context of <a href="#">Government Resolution No. 1116</a>, during the report period (since July 2015) about 200 contracts and annexes for contracting were uploaded to the Freedom of Information Unit's website. These documents do not portray the extent of the activity in the area (which is considerably wide-ranging). Furthermore, only a few of the authorities upload content to the site. In fact, most of the documents were uploaded the one government ministry. Note that, subsequent to follow-up by the Knesset Transparency Committee regarding implementation of the resolution, government ministries starting showing some interest in taking steps to implement the resolution. However, it is too early to evaluate the overall contribution of this move.</p> <p>On 15/12/2015, the Freedom of Information Unit published a procedure obligating the government ministries that use the Merkava expenditure-management technological system to publicize all expenditures once every quarter, starting from 2016. Regarding 2015, a directive was issued to publish an annual report. The directive was drawn up in cooperation with the Accountant General Department at the Finance Ministry, which proactively adapted the Merkava system, thus enabling the issuance of a designated report. As of June 2016, there are approximately 70 units which have the technical infrastructure that supports issuance of this report. Of</p>		

	<p>these, about 80% of the authorities and accountancy units published their contracting reports for 2015 and up until Q1 of 2016 on the central freedom of information website. Henceforth, the authorities publish their contracting each quarter.</p> <p>Note that implementation of the law is closely monitored by the Unit, and the status of compliance with implementation of the directive can easily be checked (even by non-Hebrew speakers) at the link  <a href="http://www.justice.gov.il/Units/YechidatChofeshHameyda/PeilotHayehida/DohotHayhida/ReportsPro/Pages/hitkashrout2016.aspx">http://www.justice.gov.il/Units/YechidatChofeshHameyda/PeilotHayehida/DohotHayhida/ReportsPro/Pages/hitkashrout2016.aspx</a></p>
Conclusion date	This is an ongoing process, which does not have a definite end point.
Subsequent steps	Examining the issues involved in publication of contracts in view of the partial implementation. Continued monitoring of implementation of the Unit's contracting procedure.
Additional information	
<p>The main challenge is to rethink how implementation of the Government Resolution could be advanced in the best possible way, so that it is integrated into the Authority's routine affairs.</p> <p>Taking steps to encourage use by the public of the contracting data.</p>	



## Establishing a new gov.il website to make Government information and services accessible to the public

Directing Unit		Government ICT Authority (E-Gov Unit), Prime Minister's Office		
Person responsible for the activity		Ofir Ben Avi		
Position and unit		Director of the E-Government System, Government ICT, Prime Minister's Office		
E-mail		<a href="mailto:ofir@gov.il">ofir@gov.il</a>		
Telephone		972-2-6664600		
Other partners	Government	Digital Israel, government ministries and auxiliary units		
	Civil society, private sector	Civilian public		
Main objective		Making government information and services accessible at the integrated gov.il website.		
Description of commitment		Establishing an integrated website for government ministries, providing an integrated user experience, a uniform standard of service.		
OGP challenge relating to the commitment		Improving public services, effective management of public resources.		
Relevant to fostering of		Transparency	Accountability	Public participation
		v	v	v
Desired outcomes		Increasing use of and online engagement at government websites.		
Implementation status		Not yet begun	Partial	Significant
Description of outcomes		<p>This year, the Government ICT Authority launched an integrated government website, which included all government services and information relevant to citizens, on an innovative and accessible interface that is compatible with a variety of end devices. The integrated website was constructed using a "citizens at the center" approach, after analyzing civilian needs related to the manner of consuming information and services. At the website, governmental information may be perused, personal information may be viewed and government services may be consumed from anywhere at any time, while reducing the bureaucratic load in comparison with the former situation.</p> <p>The site is designed to serve the entire population, and consequently, in order to attain the best possible results, comprehensive studies were conducted of government websites worldwide. Furthermore, cooperation was initiated with the British Government, and use was made of the accrued professional know-how and of the open source British Government Gov.uk site. The most advanced global web technologies were likewise used. The task of writing was preceded by an examination of users, focus groups, Internet surveys, and round-table consultations, and these will continue to influence the layout of the new site in the</p>		

coming years, and will help to select the information sought by the public and make it accessible based on the public's browsing habits. At present, the website includes more than 400 end-to-end online services. Four government ministries are currently represented on the integrated website, after cancelling their old government website. By the end of the year, there will be about 12 government ministries on the integrated website.

Here are some numerical data:

As of 2015, 2.6 million end-to-end online transactions took place, with NIS 35 billion outlaid as payment service revenues in 4.7 million payment transactions using government payment services, 222 thousand transactions were conducted at the service desks, there was online issuance of 575 thousand title extracts (Nesach Tabu), 850 thousand vehicle and driving license renewals, 100 thousand applications for birth certificates, etc.

Using the online import and export system (tract), import and export processes were shortened from five weeks to 37 hours on average, with about 42 thousand users (importers, exporter and customs brokers) for the online system.



Currently, the website enables popular pages and the number of entries to be viewed in real-time, with the number of website visitors displayed in real time – this new website, even before any campaigning or marketing to the general public, was visited by 1.4 million citizens over 90 days until the beginning of August 2016. ([for further details](#))

The website has pages both in [Hebrew](#) and in [Arabic](#).

Conclusion date

2018

Subsequent steps	<p>Expanding the website layout with government ministries and including another 8 ministries in the website, in addition to the 4 that are already represented.</p> <p>Initial service including strong authentication using a biometric ID card will be launched by the end of 2016, service for change of residence.</p> <p>Later, in 2017, shared infrastructure will be established, and services requiring various levels of identification will be made available (these additional services have not yet been determined)</p>
<p><b>Additional information</b></p> <p>It is difficult to convince the ministries to join, since it represents a change of perception for the ministries – transitioning from a mindset of service provision based on the ministry’s organizational structure and the work processes within it to one which places “citizens at the center” and adapts the way in which services and work processes are presented, to the needs of the citizen.</p>	

## Making databases accessible to the public at the data.gov.il website

Directing Unit		Government ICT Authority (Staff), Prime Minister's Office		
Person responsible for the activity		Ilana Pinshaw		
Position and unit		Senior Manager of Special Projects		
E-mail		<a href="mailto:ilanap@cio.gov.il">ilanap@cio.gov.il</a>		
Telephone		972-2-6664897		
Other partners	Government	Government ministries and auxiliary units		
	Civil society, private sector	Developers, investigators and citizens who would like to make use of information for personal, research or other purposes for developing applications for the public wellbeing.		
Main objective		Increasing exposure of government databases for use by the public.		
Description of commitment		Mapping existing databases, improving the technological platform to make them accessible and encouraging the public to develop applications which make use of the databases.		
OGP challenge relating to the commitment		Improving public services, increasing public integrity, effective management of public resources.		
Relevant to fostering of		Transparency	Accountability	Public participation
		√	√	√
Desired outcomes		Use of government databases for individual research and development of innovative digital services.		
Implementation status		Not yet begun	Partial	Significant
Description of outcomes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The technological platform for making databases accessible – data.gov.il, was replaced, and the current platform being used is based on open code (ckan), which has been adopted by the most advanced countries in the realm. This platform enables easy access for development, based on the databases and the direct interface between user and the database through API.</li> <li>- The ICT Authority mapped databases which were of significant value to the public, in government ministries. The mapping was conducted after consulting with professional entities in government ministries and also in collaboration with entities from the business sector (such as Google, Madlan), academia and research (such as the Israel Democracy Institute, the staff of the Hebrew University and the Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya), civil societies (Hasadna public knowledge workshop, the Movement for Freedom of Information, the Civil Guard and more) and investment and development entities (Tsofen, Israel Internet Association) and others.</li> <li>- Of all the identified databases, 10 significant databases were chosen to be made accessible by the end of 2017, and of them, three</li> </ul>		

	<p>databases have been made accessible so far; two others are in the technical process of converting to data.gov.il.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More than 100 additional databases were made accessible in the past year, including a few from agencies whose databases had never been accessible previously.</li> <li>- For the first time, an open license for use was introduced, which allows developers free use of the information, while retaining the intellectual property rights to their developments when disseminating the information.</li> <li>- As part of the head of the Government ICT Authority's directives, information system departments were required to set an objective to make databases accessible in their annual work plans, which are submitted to the head of the Authority.</li> <li>- The recommendations of the inter-ministerial team for making databases accessible were published, which include technical and legal policies, and principles for implementation in government ministries and the Government ICT Authority (please see details <a href="#">below</a>).</li> </ul>
Conclusion date	Ongoing activity.
Subsequent steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Completing the process of making the 10 chosen significant databases accessible by the end of 2017. (To date, three of them have been made accessible)</li> <li>- Continuing to work with the ministries so as to improve the quality and scope of the published databases.</li> <li>- Planning competitions for developing additional applications aimed at promoting accessibility and encouraging the use of databases.</li> <li>- Holding events for public collaboration linked to the type and quality of information made accessible by the ministries.</li> </ul>
Additional information	
<p>During the mapping process conducted by the ICT Authority, and further to the field work vis-à-vis the ministries, a number of challenges arose which the Government ICT Authority and its partners are working to resolve, including: increasing motivation in government ministries to publish their databases and make them accessible; allocating the required resources to improve databases prior to making them accessible; creating a budgeting model for ministries charging for sale of information; publishing legal directives regarding protection of privacy of information and professional directives relating to the existing de-identification mechanisms; improving the technological infrastructure for making databases accessible. The Government resolution which is expected to be passed in the beginning of September (please see further details in the Summary chapter on pages 30-31) is designed to deal with the difficulties identified while implementing the commitment.</p> <p>The cooperation between entities whose core mandate is to protect privacy and those whose core mandate is to promote innovation and economic growth creates difficulties in balancing the two – to promote database accessibility while determining restrictions to access, aimed at minimizing any risk of breach of privacy and injury to a variety of other interests. The effort and the challenge involved in reaching the best balance between the two are reflected in the team's report.</p>	

Providing accessibility to significant databases, such as those chosen within the scope of inter-ministerial teamwork, requires that efforts be invested in obtaining consent from the parties responsible for the databases and from regulators responsible for protecting the databases. An improvement may be noted in the pace at which significant databases have been made accessible in recent months. Government Resolution 1933 of 30.08.2016 on the subject of “Improving the Transfer of Government Information and Making Government Databases Accessible to the Public” will facilitate all matters involved in obtaining the authority to provide accessibility to additional databases that are of value to the public. The Authority will strive to improve procedures vis-à-vis government ministries and the public, so accessibility is provided to the maximum number of significant databases that are of value to the public.

## Evaluating satisfaction with public services, and the quality of service offered through various channels

Directing Unit		Unit for the Improvement of Government Public Services, Government ICT Authority, Prime Minister's Office		
Person responsible for the activity		Tzofit Hai		
Position and unit		Director of the Unit for the Improvement of Government Public Services, Government ICT, Prime Minister's Office		
E-mail		<a href="mailto:tzofith@cio.gov.il">tzofith@cio.gov.il</a>		
Telephone		972-2-6293007		
Other partners	Government	Government ministries and assessed auxiliary units		
	Civil society, private sector	Academia – formulating the manner of evaluation, partnering in the steering committee		
Main objective		Improving service to the public through standardization, while defining reference points for providing excellent government service and using it as a management tool for focusing resources and for learning.		
Description of commitment		Evaluating the quality of service provided to the public in government ministries.		
OGP challenge relating to the commitment		Improving public services.		
Relevant to fostering of		Transparency	Accountability	Public participation
		v	v	
Desired outcomes		Publishing an annual evaluation report of the quality of public service in government ministries.		
Implementation status		Not yet begun	Partial	Significant
Description of outcomes		<p>In 2014, evaluations were done in 10 large government ministries which provide service to the public. In 2015, evaluation was expanded to 15 governmental units which provide wide scale public services through service bureaus (frontal service). The entities are informed about the evaluation results in an ongoing manner, which allows them to act immediately to improve service provision processes with a view to improving the evaluation results.</p> <p><a href="#">Publication of the Government ICT report for 2015</a> for the Knesset Science Committee, in a ceremony which made note of the excelling ministries. The report included two sections:</p> <p>a. <a href="#">Evaluation report of the quality of government service</a> to the public for 2014: The report reflects the results of a survey about satisfaction with</p>		

	<p>government services among 20,000 individuals from all sectors and the customer experience in different service channels. The report serves to improve standards for provision of government service to the public, and is a tool for the ongoing improvement of the quality of service provided by the evaluated entities.</p> <p>b. The E-Gov report measures the supply of government ministry online service during 2013-2014 and reviews the activity of government ministries and authorities with regard to making government information and services accessible and converting them to digital format.</p> <p>This publication led to intra-governmental and public discourse about the level of public service provided and to inter-ministerial competitions to improve service to customers and raise ranking compared to the rest of the evaluated ministries.</p> <p>The Unit for the Improvement of Services continually strives to improve the method of evaluation and to adapt it to the satisfaction of government service customers. The service quality test which is conducted through various channels – frontally, by phone or online – is a combination of testing by an expert and customer surveys. Use of the customer surveys is crucial in order to examine actual customer experience. To date, evaluation of the quality of frontal service was done using surveys completed by individuals who applied for services in the service bureaus. As part of the evaluation, satisfaction with the service among service recipients was examined. With the aim of reaching additional service recipient segments (such as those who apply by phone, or customers who receive information from the website without directly contacting the ministry) a pilot was launched to conduct surveys by phone in order to examine the effectiveness of the method and consider its implementation in 2017.</p>
Conclusion date	Ongoing activity.
Subsequent steps	<p>Evaluation of the level of service in the governmental entities is continuing.</p> <p>As mentioned above, it is crucial to evaluate the service recipient experience, in addition to testing by an expert. The telephone surveys, which represent a random sample of residents, enable evaluation of the satisfaction of customers receiving government information and service through various channels (subjects are asked whether they received government service and through which channel, and are asked about the service received). Furthermore, the telephone evaluation enables examination of the level of service of entities that do not offer frontal service.</p>
Additional information	
<p>At the start of the project, the Unit for the Improvement of Services consulted with representatives of academia in order to examine the manner of evaluation (including Prof. David Mizrahi of Beer Sheva University, Prof. Eran Vigoda of Haifa University and Prof. Baruch Mevorach of Tel Aviv University).</p> <p>After a year of implementing the evaluation, customer focus groups were held to examine the parameters affecting the service experience. The purpose of these focus groups was to validate the methodology of evaluating the quality of service from the customer's point of view, and consequently, slight changes were made to the questionnaires.</p>	



The evaluations conducted by the Unit for the Improvement of Government Public Services encourage the entities to go a step further and independently evaluate the quality of service they provide to citizens, and also to initiate a variety of processes to improve the quality of service provided to the public.

Furthermore, the inter-ministerial team for improving the transfer of information between ministries and auxiliary units published its recommendations (please see further details in the [Summary Chapter](#)).

## Increasing transparency of information regarding legislation

Directing Unit		The Knesset			
Person responsible for the activity		Gali Ben-Or			
Position and unit		Director of the National Legislation Database, Knesset Legal Department			
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Telephone		972-2-6408632			
Other partners	Government	Ministry of Justice			
	Civil society, private sector	Civil society organizations			
Main objective		Increasing the transparency of the legislative process and its documents.			
Description of commitment		Presenting all the laws of the State, and documents relevant to them on the Knesset website.			
OGP challenge relating to the commitment		Increasing public integrity.			
Relevant to fostering of	Transparency	Accountability	Public participation		
	v	v	v		
Desired outcomes		Making the documentation of the laws and relevant documents accessible and preparing a complete and updated version of the law for citizens.			
Implementation status		Not yet begun	Partial	Significant	Implemented
Milestone 1 – Presenting all laws and amendments					Implemented
Milestone 2 – Holding meetings with civil society organizations					Implemented
Milestone 3 – Presenting the bills undergoing legislative processes				In the final stages of development. Planned to go live in October 2016 (instead of March 2016).  Simultaneously, steps are being taken to identify content-related deficiencies (bill documents or committee or plenum minutes and data, such	

			as times of readings etc.) in order to rectify them.	
Milestone 4 – Characterizing and developing the system for preparing the full version		At an advanced stage of work		
Description of outcomes	<p>During the past year, detailed characterization has been completed for presentation on the Knesset website of the bills undergoing the legislative process. The project's progress was impeded because it was first necessary to unify the databases holding all the information about the bills, which had been stored in two separate databases (due to the fact that, in part, it involved historical information stored in old systems and, in part, was in new and active systems). It was converted to a unified database. It was also necessary to make improvements in the computer system managing the legislative process – information fields were added, processes and data were added which will enable transfer to information about the bills from the internal system to the Internet site. Until its proper completion, this subject entails a certain amount of delay in advancing the process of presenting the bills on the website. Tests were run to make sure that data were not damaged, and the process was continued only after ensuring that everything was in order.</p>			
Conclusion date	December 2017.			
Subsequent steps	The aim is to complete the development of Milestone 3 – presenting bills on the Knesset website, in the coming weeks, to go through the testing stage and to go live at the start of the Knesset's winter session.			
Additional information				
<p>Milestone 3 – presenting bills undergoing the legislative process – completion of development, completion of the testing stage, granting approval that all is in order and developed as required – and then going live.</p> <p>Milestone 4 – the system for preparing the full version – we are in the advanced stages of characterizing the system for preparing the full version of the laws and are starting development. We hope to progress to full development of the system in the coming weeks.</p>				

## Developing a Government “toolbox” to be shared during Government endeavors

Directing Unit		Department of Governance and Social Affairs, Prime Minister’s Office		
Person responsible for the activity		Tamar Peled Amir		
Position and unit		(Senior) Head of the Division of Intersectoral Cooperation, Department of Governance and Social Affairs, Prime Minister’s Office		
E-mail		<a href="mailto:tamarp@pmo.gov.il">tamarp@pmo.gov.il</a>		
Telephone		972-2-6706127		
Other partners	Government	E-Gov, Prime Minister’s Office, Procurement Administration, Ministry of Finance, government units constituting the potential community of operators for public participation processes		
	Civil society, private sector	Framework suppliers, who will select the framework of the government database of operators in the realm of public participation		
Main objective		<p>With a view to actualizing the vision of public participation, and improving the ministries’ ability to implement effective collaborative processes, the Government is planning to take steps to develop and improve concrete and technological tools and applications to carry out the collaborative processes in the ministries by various methods:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Continued development and operation of the technological tools and applications for implementing collaborative processes in the ministries through E-Gov.</li> <li>b. Setting up a government-wide database of operators, led by the Department of Governance and Social Affairs, working through the Procurement Administration, which will help government ministries to set up concrete and online processes for public participation through procurement of services and by making them accessible to the ministries.</li> </ol>		
Description of commitment		Developing online tools which will serve the government ministries in public participation processes.		
OGP challenge relating to the commitment		Improving public services increasing public integrity, effective management of public resources		
Relevant to fostering of		Transparency	Accountability	Public participation
		v	v	v
<b>Desired outcomes (1)</b>		Developing five online tools/applications.		
Implementation status		Not yet begun	Partial	Significant
				v
Description of outcomes Please include the activities which took place during the report period		Online work tools for governmental endeavors were developed by the E-Gov Unit. The tools were developed using the self-service method, so that they are accessible and simple to operate.		

(July 2015 – June 2016) and indicate whether the public made use of the commitment and whether it had an impact.	<p>The tools which were developed are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tool for creating surveys: surveys of all types – enable management of the process of gathering information, positions etc. in an accessible and easy manner.</li> <li>2. Knowledge community tool: platform enabling knowledge creation in conjunction with a group of people – intra- and/or extra governmental, which serves, for instance, to construct professional procedures, policies, work methods and so forth.</li> <li>3. Community tool in the form of an online forum/round table – platform enabling discussion to be held on a designated topic over varying timeframes.</li> <li>4. Blog.</li> </ol>			
<b>Desired outcomes (2)</b>	Establishing and operating a database of suppliers who will help in managing and implementing online and physical public participation processes by the ministries.			
Implementation status	Not yet begun	Partial	Significant	Implemented
			X	
Description of outcomes	<p>Tender for providers for planning and implementing processes for collaborating in government ministry endeavors: the tender, which was publicized in 2015 by the Procurement Administration in conjunction with the Department of Governance and Social Affairs, is in its final stages, and the winning providers will soon be chosen. It is anticipated that government ministries will be able to benefit from public collaboration services offered by the providers, starting from Q4 of 2016 and onward.</p>			
<b>Additional information</b>				
<p>Adapting the Government's online collaborative tools to the ministries' needs, inter alia in view of the anticipated increase in collaborative processes initiated as a result of providers acting in the field; as well as keeping existing tools updated, improving them if necessary, and developing new tools.</p> <p>Continued development of public collaboration in the endeavors of government ministries, expansion of the scope of collaborative processes being implemented, and the scope of ministries operating them, and inculcating a culture of sharing in their ongoing efforts: making the tender accessible to ministries, professional overseeing of the operation of collaborative processes, as well as directing and instructing the winning providers in the field, in order to establish a range of providers professionalized in government-run collaborative processes.</p>				

## Continually formulating and implementing processes of “Public Participation” in Government endeavors

Directing Unit		Department of Governance and Social Affairs, Prime Minister’s Office		
Person responsible for the activity		Tamar Peled Amir		
Position and unit		(Senior) Head of the Division of Intersectoral Cooperation, Department of Governance and Social Affairs, Prime Minister’s Office		
E-mail		<a href="mailto:tamarp@pmo.gov.il">tamarp@pmo.gov.il</a>		
Telephone		972-2-6706127		
Other partners	Government	Policy planning departments in government ministries, Ministry of Justice, Unit for the Improvement of Government Public Services, information system managers		
	Civil society, private sector	Suppliers from the public participation group, experts and consultants		
Main objective		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Formulating policy for public participation in government endeavors.</li> <li>b. Formulating the founding concept for operating processes for public participation in government endeavors.</li> <li>c. Implementing actions to inculcate a culture of public participation in the efforts of the ministries, by developing guiding tools, trainings and lectures.</li> </ul>		
Description of commitment		Formulating the key concept for processes for public participation in the Government, and directing specific processes.		
OGP challenge relating to the commitment		Improving public services increasing public integrity, effective management of public resources		
Relevant to fostering of		Transparency	Accountability	Public participation
		X	X	X
<b>Desired outcomes</b>		Implementing processes for public participation in government ministries and increasing the ability to collaborate		
Implementation status		Not yet begun	Partial	Significant
				X
Description of outcomes		<p>A draft of a guidebook to be shared with the public during government endeavors is expected to be published during Q4 of 2016.</p> <p>Many ministries have initiated processes for ministerial collaboration on issues such as crafting work plans, evaluating the condition of the ministry in preparation for the work program, improving regulation and easing the regulatory burden, developing user interfaces at governmental websites, improving service and more. This is in parallel with specific issues, which are on the ministries’ agendas.</p> <p>Besides this, intersectoral collaborative processes have been initiated as part of the round table at the Prime Minister’s Office (on the topic of</p>		

	<p>outsourcing social services) and in the ministries – in topic-centered contexts, such as: the Ministry of Education – round table on the topic of regulating the activities of NPOs in schools, and currently, the simultaneous operation of about 10 intersectoral collaborative processes on topics that are on the ministry's agenda.</p> <p>Besides this, during the last two years the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption have led a highly important process of public participation in the subject of integrating Ethiopian immigrants into Israeli society – a process which involved thousands of participants and included dozens of meetings along with online consultations. This processes resulted in policy documents which were put together into work plans and approved as Government resolutions.</p> <p>Currently, an inter-ministerial consultation process has been initiated, which also includes representatives from the public, led by the Ministry of Justice and overseen by the Prime Minister's Office, on the topic of eradication of racism.</p> <p>The Department is engaged in an ongoing process to formulate policy that is appropriate for implementing public participation in government, based on learning-by-doing and from what is actually being done in the field.</p> <p>The Department regularly conducts training and instruction for the staff of the ministries and for the inter-ministerial and intersectoral forums on the subject of public participation and intersectoral cooperation.</p> <p>The implementation of processes for collaborating in government endeavors can be seen expressed in consultation processes with the public, along with intersectoral collaboration, which are being included in more and more Government resolutions, as a stage in the decision making process.</p>
Conclusion date	31.12.2016.
Subsequent steps	<p>Publication of a guide for sharing – end of 2016.</p> <p>Initiation of a public participation process, including wide intersectoral collaboration on the subject of preparing the home front for emergency situations.</p> <p>A multi-participant public participation conference.</p> <p>Continuing to hold training and instruction meetings for the staff of the ministries in the areas of collaboration.</p> <p>Operating a Government and intersectoral public participation forum.</p> <p>Ongoing mentoring of the ministries in managing the collaboration providers, and in implementing the processes, while continuing to learn and update Government policy on collaboration, as a result of the learning.</p> <p>Pooling Government knowledge and information regarding public participation processes.</p>
Additional information	

The challenge of evaluating the results and value of the collaborative processes is a challenge for continued development – demonstrating the value to the decision maker responsible for implementing the processes is a crucial factor in gaining attention, and for recruiting participants to implement the collaborative processes and take part in them. Furthermore, evaluation is an important factor in testing the general cost-benefit ratio for the Government, as a result of directing the processes.



## Learning and Exchange of Knowledge

In 2015, Israel joined the D5 organization, in which five of the world's most digitally advanced countries participate: Israel, Britain, South Korea, Estonia and New Zealand. The D5 organization forms the basis for learning and for cooperation between the countries in matters related to digital government, to implementing technology for improving service to citizens, to promoting innovation and fostering the principles of Open Government.

The cooperation between the government of Britain and the Government of Israel in D5 included two visits in the British Government Digital Services (GDS) branch, knowledge sharing about processes for analyzing user experience, a citizen identification system, and an initiated alerts system. This cooperation contributed toward the development of the Israeli gov.il website and saved many work hours in developing the site (please see [“Establishing a new gov.il website to make Government information and services accessible to the public”](#)).

The data.gov.il site in its new configuration “sits” on an open platform – Ckan, which is also being used in the USA and England for their data.gov websites. The use of an open source platform enabled a considerable upgrade in providing database accessibility to the public, inter alia by way of a direct interface between the user and the database (API) (please see [“Making databases accessible to the public at the data.gov.il website”](#)).

The Government of Israel continues to learn from the experience of other governments about database accessibility, inter alia through dialogue with colleagues in Canada, USA and other countries. A perusal of the policy documents of a few countries contributed toward the formulation of the inter-ministerial team's policy recommendation for making databases accessible.

## Summary

### A. General Lessons and Challenges to Developing and Implementing the Program

#### **Public awareness of Open Government**

The issue of “Open Government” currently suffers from inadequate branding in the public, as in government ministries. Government endeavors in connection with Open Government values are not sufficiently reported to the public, and consequently there is a lack of public awareness and involvement in Open Government activities in Israel. This has the potential to harm public trust in Israeli Government institutions. Starting from 2017, one of the central goals is to increase public awareness about Open Government values and the Government’s endeavors to promote them, with the aim of generating public demand for Government initiatives in this area, and public supervision of the activities being carried out. In parallel, steps must be taken to create awareness within the Government about Open Government values, and establish standards and clear modes of operation, with the objective of prompting government ministries to initiate further action for their advancement.

In order to adopt and develop a novel and attractive image for the Israeli Government’s Open Government Action Plan, marketing must be initiated in conjunction with significant practical efforts. Along with implementing the Action Plan, the first “Open Government Day” in Israel has been planned for 21 September 2016, at which senior officials from government ministries will hold direct discussions with the public, provide information about Government activities, including challenges faced and successes achieved, and will share information about the Government’s prospective activity with the public, each in their respective field.

Furthermore, an interactive, up-to-date “Open Government website” is planned, which will centralize all endeavors of the Government, including all units, in this area. The purpose of the website is to increase awareness about Open Government and to make it easier for citizens to receive information about Government activity in this area. The website will provide access to information about progress in implementing the Action Plan submitted to the International Partnership, will publicize Open Government events and make it possible to implement public participation processes, on online platforms, for the purpose of setting and implementing public policy.

#### **Public involvement in implementing the plan**

During the year, a significant challenge has been set, to generate effective and meaningful public participation in all matters related to implementing the Action Plan submitted to the international Open Government Partnership. Public cooperation and consultation processes will be more effective when they are on the agenda of sub-teams managed by relevant government units in their areas of responsibility (please see [Consultation for Implementing the Action Plan 2015-2017](#)) rather than on the broad agenda of the “Israeli Forum on Open Government.”

The Government of Israel will strive to improve these processes in the future, inter alia based on the understanding that important outcomes were achieved as a result of the efforts of small teams, and that public cooperation and consultation are required for highly focused matters, with focused groups and sectors that are relevant to the matter under discussion, as opposed to the Forum with its permanent participants. Included in the Action Plan are a range of topics, which require expertise in different areas of knowledge, and a decision was made to formulate a list of areas that are of shared-public interest across governmental units, and to construct public consultation processes around them. This consultation will take place with the participation of experts

from several government ministries and civil society organizations, as well as interested parties from the general public, while using the innovative public consultation platforms, currently entering into Government use.

## B. The effects of the activity on society, and further initiatives to promote Open Government values which were not included in the Action Plan

1. Expanding the use of public participation processes: it is possible to note an increase in the use of public participation processes over the past two years, and their integration into the work tools for policy planning and decision-making processes in the Government. Over the coming year, the possibility of documenting public participation events and public consultation processes on the planned Open Government website, and of continuing to extend use of the online platforms for implementing these processes, will be examined.
2. Transparency of information concerning legislation: the Knesset has gained enthusiastic public feedback for its national legislation database project (please see [“Increasing transparency of information regarding legislation”](#)). Civil society organizations, as well as the Government and its units, academia and the general public are praising the project, looking forward to its expansion, and are using it intensively. The Knesset is taking steps to expand the project and publish secondary legislation in the national legislation database. This will be done with the close cooperation of the Ministry of Justice, which is responsible for publishing the Government bills, laws and secondary legislation. Cooperation such as this will enable ongoing updates about the publications and use in metadata (data about other data) and in legislative documents in unabridged format. The Knesset is striving to promote this cooperation, and is also acting to develop tools which will allow for automatic digital transfer of unabridged legislative documents and metadata between the Ministry of Justice and the Knesset, with the aim of presenting them in an effective manner to the general public.
3. Making databases accessible to the public: during the years 2014-2016, the Government led a series of initiatives to make databases accessible, in parallel with corresponding extra-governmental initiatives, so that the handling of government information of value to the public was placed on the public agenda.
  - a. In Government Resolution No. 2097 of 10 October 2014, an inter-ministerial team for making databases accessible was established, which recommended technical and legal policies for making Government databases accessible, and government databases of value to the public, which would be made accessible to the public by the end of 2016. At the end of July 2016, the [recommendations of the inter-ministerial team for making databases](#)

[accessible](#) were published. The team's recommendations were validated by virtue of [Government Resolution No. 1933 of 30 August 2016](#) on "Improving the Transfer of Government Information and Making Government Databases Accessible to the Public." The recommendations have a widespread and long-term impact on the scope of public accessibility to government databases and on their quality. Among the decisions:

- By 2022, the ministries must provide accessibility to all databases at their disposal, where there is no legal deterrent to publicizing them as per the law, or according to other relevant considerations.
  - Principles for making databases accessible were adopted, as were data access standards, the scope of accessible information and its format, legal policy, including an examination of privacy, safety, information security and other aspects.
  - The government ministries were charged with mapping all the information possessed by them by the end of 2017, and to integrate into their annual work plans, starting from 2017, activities to make databases accessible.
  - The Government ICT Authority's comprehensive responsibility was established apropos database accessibility and apropos conducting ongoing discourse with the public about public interests in publishing the information. Furthermore, it was determined that the Authority will serve as a guiding body for ministries, particularly for making Government databases accessible to the public.
  - A central budget was allocated for incentivizing government ministries to take steps to make databases accessible, and for incentivizing entrepreneurs and developers to take steps to develop applications based on government information.
- b. The Government ICT Authority in conjunction with the Ministry of Tourism has held competitions for developing applications based on government databases. This was aimed at encouraging entrepreneurs and developers in the hi-tech industry to make use of government databases and to encourage government ministries to act to make databases accessible and promote their use. More than 30 groups registered for the competition, and three winners were selected who developed applications for providing the general public with access to comprehensive information – both governmental and non-governmental – about tourism. Furthermore, the Government ICT Authority drew up a model for application development competitions, with the objective of continuing to hold competitions on various subjects.
- c. A special committee was established in the 20<sup>th</sup> Knesset for effecting accessibility to government information and the principles for its transparency to the public. The authority of the committee encompasses: implementing government information in the spirit of freedom of information; examining the types of information at the disposal of the public or available for its perusal; formulating principles for transparency and active reporting in governmental agencies.
- The Knesset Transparency Committee has discussed the issue of sale of government information to the public, with the aim of obligating government agencies which charge for government information to explain and justify any collection of payment for information. Furthermore, "Hasadna public knowledge workshop," a civil society organization dealing with developing services based on governmental information,

petitioned the Administrative Affairs Court with the purpose of obligating Survey of Israel (MAPI) to make the “Block Plan Index File” (map of land parcelization for planning – part of the national cadastral database) accessible free of charge.

- d. The endeavors of the Government and the business sector to increase productivity in the economy and promote information-based innovation (for instance, the efforts of the Ministry of Finance committee toward increasing productivity; the collaborative efforts of Google-Deloitte toward information-based innovation) have proved the potential of open information and its contribution to economic growth, and led the recruitment of the Ministry of Finance for promoting Government activity to make databases accessible.
- e. In Government Resolution No. 1074 of 31 January 2016, an inter-ministerial steering committee was established for condensing and improving the information in the field of national infrastructures, with the aim of establishing a national infrastructures database at the Survey of Israel. The resolution charged the committee, inter alia, to take steps to examine the manner in which existing information in the database is shared with the public and to define its security classification as unclassified.

These processes, and others, have contributed to the start of a conceptual change in government ministries with regard to making government databases accessible – recognizing the public’s right to make use of public information held by the Government, and the public’s ability to contribute to leading innovation and developing government services.

#### 4. Improvement of Service to the Citizen:

- a. By virtue of Government Resolution No. 2097 above, an inter-ministerial team was set up to improve transfer of information between the ministries and auxiliary units, which recommended, inter alia, that an “ask it only once” policy be set for receiving information from the public. This was based on the assumption that transfer of information between the government ministries would lead to improving public services and reducing the bureaucratic load. Additionally, the team recommended that:
  - Government agencies shall be obligated to share information required for improving public service and reducing the bureaucratic load, subject to any law, and while finding a balance between the obligation to share the information in order to provide optimum service to the citizen, and the obligation to protect privacy, based on the Privacy Protection Law, in a manner suited to the sensitivity level of the information and its benefit to the public.
  - The Government shall strive, as far as possible, to ensure that information or approval will be requested only once from an individual.
  - The information (metadata) about the government data in various governmental agencies shall be managed at a governmental level, in a manner that guarantees a flow of information between the governmental agencies.
  - The information shall be shared based on a central technological platform dedicated to sharing information, which will simplify information sharing processes, and streamline governmental endeavors, while protecting the privacy of the information.
  - The information sharing shall not involve ongoing payment collection.

The team's recommendations were validated by virtue of [Government Resolution No. 1933 of 30 October 2016](#) on "Improving the Transfer of Government Information and Making Government Databases Accessible to the Public" and it was further resolved that:

- Starting from 2021, for provision of service, government ministries shall not request from the public any approval regarding an individual, which was issued by another government ministry. Starting from 2022, this will apply to approval regarding corporations as well.
  - Starting from 2022, for provision of service, government ministries shall not request from the public any information about an individual that another government ministry already possesses. Starting from 2022, this will apply to information about corporations as well.
- b. In Government Resolution No. 1008 of 17 January 2016 on "Setting up an online communication channel for the public to contact the government as an alternative to facsimile," government ministries and auxiliary units were directed to allow the public to submit applications to them, along with attached files, via the Internet, including e-mail, in addition to the customary channel until now – facsimile.
  - c. In Government Resolution No. 151 of 28 June 2015, the Minister for Social Equality was charged, together with the Government ICT Authority and other entities, to construct programs for inter-ministerial digital processes toward providing online access to the government services offered by several government ministries.
  - d. The reports of the inter-ministerial work teams about making databases accessible and transferring information between government ministries extensively mention the balance required between protection of privacy and other interests on the one hand, and on the other, promotion of the principles of Open Government – transparency (and freedom of information) and improving public services. Promoting the latter poses many challenges, associated with privacy protection. The recommendations included in both reports reflect the effort investing in balancing the two.

### C. Summary: Impact of the Activity and Next Steps

The first Action Plan submitted to the international Open Government Partnership for the years 2012-2014 in principal set objectives related to establishing the infrastructure and governmental units for promoting Open Government activities: establishing the Government ICT Authority; establishing the Unit for Improvement of Government Public Service; developing technological infrastructure for providing public services; establishing the Freedom of Information Government Unit at the Ministry of Justice; establishing a system for evaluating the level of Government service; including the public in policy formulation processes, and more. The second Action Plan presented relevant parts of the work plans of staff units, which are at the forefront of the Open Government arena, which included the development of tools and policy for implementing the principles for which they were established.

In the last year, detailed policy was formulated in the areas the various units are involved in, and relevant government resolutions were made to implement them. Furthermore, tools and infrastructures were created, which will serve the Government in coming years in its endeavors in the Open Government arena: tools and knowledge which will allow the Government to implement



public participation in an independent and effective manner; a website centralizing the applications and their responses, based on the Freedom of Information Law; tools for evaluating and improving the quality of service to citizens; mapping of Government databases and technological infrastructure to make them accessible; a system to provide public access to legislation; the new gov.il website for accessing government services in one place, while promoting the “citizens at the center” concept, and more. Use of the tools established since 2016 will be expanded significantly in the coming years.

It therefore appears that the Government of Israel and the Israeli Knesset have made significant progress in implementing the principles of Open Government in the past year. The relevant staff units (Government ICT Authority which includes the E-Gov Unit and the Unit for the Improvement of Government Public Services, the Department of Governance and Social Affairs at the Prime Minister’s Office and the Freedom of Information Government Unit) have invested great effort to implement the Action Plan for 2015-2017, which was accompanied by the “Public Participation” procedure.

In the four years since the Government of Israel joined the international Open Government Partnership, the principles of transparency, freedom of information, improvement of services to citizens, public participation, open information and implementation of innovative technologies have been incorporated as an integral part of Government endeavors. We still have a long way to go, nonetheless the achievements of the past year mark the Government of Israel’s commitment to increase openness and collaboration in Government endeavors. Extensive work has been planned for the coming year to fully implement the commitments, and to formulate the Government of Israel’s third national plan for the international Partnership for the years 2017-2019.

### **Consultation on the self-assessment report:**

A draft of Israel’s self-assessment report was shared online for public review, comments, and input; and via email with the Israeli Forum for Open Government. In addition, comments on implementation of the plan were received throughout the year from Open Government Forum members and other members of the public.

Key priorities raised by members of the public include:

1. *Ensure that consultation opportunities are made publicly available, and not only to invited members of the Open Government Forum and the sub-committees, with advance notice as to times, locations and content. Results of the consultations should also be made available to participants and to the public.*

The Israeli Government recognizes that it must continue to take steps to increase public awareness of both the National Action Plan on Open Government, and of the opportunities to provide feedback and direction on the Plan and its implementation. One mechanism for this will be the Open Government website, currently in planning stages. Public consultation events, physical and online, with different stakeholders, will also be utilized in the development of the next action plan and will include ongoing opportunities for consultation.

Upcoming meetings and consultation opportunities related to Open Government planning and implementation, online and in-person, will be publicized on the Open Government website. Additionally, the leaders of the two sub-committees, for Open Data and for Transparency, have committed to publishing information on upcoming meetings, and the results of past meetings online, as was done by the Freedom of Information Unit in the past. Publishing the events online will also enable members of the public to request to participate in certain events. The government clarifies that in certain cases, participants are selected due to their knowledge and experience in a particular field, or are requested to commit to attending sequential meetings, in order to ensure the efficacy

and efficiency of meetings. The results of both those meetings that are open to the general public, and those to which public representatives are invited or selected, will be published online.

2. *Assess whether Open Government practices, in particular Freedom of Information and Open Data policies, can be extended to municipalities.*

Expanding government commitments to municipalities would require the development and passage of legislation, as Government Resolutions do not apply to municipalities. The recent government resolution no. 1933 dated 30.8.2016, as mentioned above, requires that government ministries and authorities open all their data to the public by the year 2022. The resolution also requires the government to consider the need for Open Data legislation with respect to municipalities, government companies and other public bodies and to submit recommendations. The Freedom of Information Unit at the Justice Ministry is also exploring this possibility, in consultation with other relevant authorities in the government.

3. *Progress has been made towards Open Data goals yet the data available on data.gov.il is still limited, and the public has to rely on technologies such as scraping to access some government data. Complaints were made as to the number and importance of databases chosen to open in the past year.*

The ICT Authority recognizes that significant investment is necessary to bring Israel to the international standard for open data. The passage of Government Resolution no. 1933 was part of the ICT strategy to promote open data as part of a vision that sees government data as a valuable resource that must be made available to the public. The government resolution furthers Israel towards this goal, requiring that ministries open all their data by the year 2022, and providing budgetary incentives to assist with implementation and particularly for ministries that prioritise high value databases.

In the past year, the ICT Authority has acted to increase the number of databases published on data.gov.il, and the number of databases on the site doubled in the past year. Data.gov.il includes some very significant datasets such as 12 map layers as data from the National Mapping Agency, including the planning divisions in Israel, locations of schools and more; the quarterly reports of pension funds and insurance companies; data on schools and preschools; real time train arrival updates; data on a national housing program; the 2017-2018 proposed national budget and many more.

The ICT Authority wishes to note that setting a numerical goal is not particularly meaningful, as datasets can vary significantly in terms of size, complexity and significance to the public.. The ICT Authority is working with all government ministries and authorities to set ambitious goals for the coming years, and is working to move already open data to the Open Data website data.gov.il in order to ensure that strategies such as scraping will not be necessary and the public will have full access to the data.

Goals for the coming year, included in the 2017 work plan of the ICT Authority, include further development of the data.gov.il website in order to improve the ministries' ability to upload data with ease; and fixing noted problems with tagging and file formats.

4. *The FOI central website was praised by users who commented that it has significantly improved the process of submitting FOI requests. A further request was made that all FOI request responses be conducted through the website, in order that there will be documentation of correspondence and of response times, and that the applicant be allowed to select whether the response to their request be made publicly available, rather than this be determined by the ministry.*

The FOI Unit together with the ICT Authority are currently working on the development of a new website and system for FOI requests, in consultation with the steering committee of the website, which includes representatives of civil society. This request will be considered in this process, though it should be noted that the FOI unit does not believe that the applicant necessarily "owns" the information, and if there is public information that the applicant is not interested in making publicly available – the decision should still be in the hands of the ministry.

1. Complaints were received that the data on legislative process that was recently published on the Knesset website has not been published in an open format, and as a result, users are forced to use technology such as "scraping" so as to draw the data into their websites. Recently, due to an upgrade



in firewall software, even this interim method was blocked, and as a result, websites utilizing data from the Knesset website have been unable to update their sites.

The addition of an API interface to the data that is published on the Knesset website has been included in the Knesset work plan for the coming year in order to enable users to establish stable interfaces with the databases. In the coming months, the Knesset intends to recreate the user interface, and to add data relating to legislative processes, proposed legislation and existing legislation, in order to increase transparency, and to make more, higher quality, data available to the public

An improvement that was made to the cyber-security of the Knesset website created some disruptions to services that draw data from the Knesset website automatically (scraping). These disruptions will be resolved in coordination with Knesset cyber-security personnel. In order to assist in the handling of these issues, a dedicated email address has been established [Dataknesset@Knesset.gov.il](mailto:Dataknesset@Knesset.gov.il) to which external users who encounter difficulties in fetching data can ask for assistance. A notice pertaining to these changes was published on the Knesset Facebook page and the relevant website page: <http://main.knesset.gov.il/Activity/Info/Pages/Databases.aspx>