

# The Open Government Partnership

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*Second Open Government  
National Action Plan  
Israel 2015-2017*



## **Introduction**

On April 1, 2012, the Government of Israel voted to join the Open Government Partnership (OGP), understanding that innovations in information and communication technologies allow for a significant deepening and improvement of the traditional democratic relationship between the individual and the government. The goal of open government policy is to empower the individual, society and the government in Israel, based on the four principles of open government:

1. Transparency
2. Public participation
3. Accountability
4. Technology and Innovation

As a condition for the Government of Israel joining the OGP, it took upon itself the task of acting in accordance with the Partnership's Guidance Note, while focusing on two central challenges:

1. To improve government services to the public by utilizing innovative information technologies and making government information and services more accessible.
2. To increase the government's transparency with the goal of improving the government's performance and strengthening the public's trust in the government.

The values of open government are the infrastructure for the innovative democracies developing around the world, and they allow freedom of expression to be realized through processes of public participation and direct contact between the voters and elected officials and governmental systems. In addition to increasing the public's trust in the government, implementing the principles of open government has the potential to assist the government to integrate well-informed decision-making processes after closely studying citizens' expectations and their contribution to the processes. These processes also help improve government services to the public.

The Government of Israel's activities in implementing open government policy integrate a broad economic view that takes into account the information economy currently developing around the world. In the State of Israel, which is referred to as the "Startup Nation", open information and its accessibility to the public at large for use in innovative

developments have great economic value. The Government of Israel has an important role both in making governmental information more accessible and in creating regulations that allow for initiating the release of information and the efficient use of said information.

OGP activities in Israel are currently conducted by various bodies in the executive branch – policy and implementation bodies, technological bodies and legal bodies. The integrated action plan is based on Government Resolutions, ministerial targets and the work plans of various units.

The Government of Israel is committed to open government principles and considers this international partnership an important framework for advancing these values. In addition, last December Israel joined the D5 Forum (the Forum of Digitally Advanced Countries), which is working to advance open government principles as part of digital government policy.

## Open Government Efforts to Date

Over the past several years, the Government of Israel has worked to focus its efforts on integrating information and communication technologies in government work in order to improve public service. Last year, the Government of Israel passed two significant Resolutions to this end:

In Resolution No. 1046 of December 15, 2013, the Government resolved: *"To work towards formulating a national policy for using information and communication technologies and its implementation (hereafter: Digital Israel national initiative). The main objectives of this project are: promoting innovation and providing quality and efficient modern public services fit for the 21st century, including remotely provided services in such fields as education, health and welfare; integrating information and communication technologies in small- and mid-sized businesses and encouraging E-commerce; sharing information and government know-how, and using online means to improve and streamline the services provided to citizens and reduce bureaucracy."*

In addition, Government Resolution No. 2097 of October 10, 2014, called for the transfer of the Government ICT Authority from the Ministry of Finance to the Prime Minister's Office and to expand its mission and fields of activity: *"The Government ICT Authority will serve as a center for professional knowledge and consultation in the field of national IT, will act to streamline the IT system and will advance technological innovation in government offices and units, and will provide advanced technologies to improve government services to the public, reduce the bureaucratic burden and advance open government policies."*

As part of this Resolution, a substantial acceleration plan was announced in the field of E-Government and in the implementation of innovative digital projects, including the establishment of a user-friendly unified government website, the promotion of advanced digital services and the formulation of a government policy to open government databases to the public.

Alongside the efforts described above, the Government of Israel continues its ongoing efforts to advance open government policies in Israel. There are currently three main government bodies working to advance this matter, and the Knesset is also advancing Open Government policies in the

Parliament. Their goals are included in this second Open Government Action Plan:

1. The Government ICT Authority in the Prime Minister's Office, including the E-Government Unit and the Unit for the Improvement of Government Public Services.
2. The Governance and Social Affairs Department in the Prime Minister's Office, which promotes activities to include the public and supervises the implementation of work plans in government offices.
3. The Freedom of Information Unit in the Ministry of Justice, which is charged with determining guidelines for initiating the distribution of information and increasing the implementation of freedom of information about the government.
4. The National Legislative Database project in the Knesset, with the goal of making reliable information about primary and secondary legislation accessible.

The first action plan submitted to the International OGP for 2012-2013 included commitments related to the activities of these bodies (excluding the Knesset). The governmental self-assessment report submitted to the International OGP in October 2013 examined how well the Government of Israel met the goals in its action plan, and included a description of the level of implementation of the various commitments.

Among the central commitments included in the earlier action plan: establishing the Government ICT Authority; establishing a unit for government public services; developing technological infrastructures to provide government services to the public; establishing the Freedom of Information Unit in the Ministry of Justice; and involving the public in processes of formulating policy. The findings raised in the report submitted to the OGP in October 2013 with regard to the level of Israel's fulfillment of its various commitments were used to draw conclusions when writing this action plan. It should be noted that many goals in the previous action plan were related to establishing infrastructure and governmental units to assist in advancing open government activities. In the current action plan some of the work plans of the established units will be presented, demonstrating an increase in the fulfillment and implementation of open government policies.

The action plan submitted here includes central processes in the field of open government that are planned for the near future: increasing activity

related to making government databases accessible while formulating government policy to open databases up to the public; establishing a unified website for government offices to make governmental information more accessible to the public; developing online tools and applications to include the public in the government's work; accompanying and encouraging the establishment of round tables and additional processes between the government and the public to include the public; assessing the quality of services provided by governmental bodies that provide services to the public; regularizing the status and authorities of the Governmental Freedom of Information Unit; expanding information published about State contracts at its own initiative; and expanding the Knesset website to include all the State's laws and any relevant documentation.

## **The Process of Writing the Action Plan**

When the Government of Israel joined the International Open Government Partnership, an Israeli forum for open government was established to serve as an advisory body to the government. The forum allows for open discussion between representatives from the government, academia, civil society organizations and others. The forum representatives were appointed in the Government Resolution in which Israel joined the international OGP. The forum's task is to supervise the implementation of the Action Plan and to recommend to the Government other means of advancing open government policies. At first, the forum was headed by the Minister Charged with Improving Government Services to the Public, and later on, after a new Government was sworn in, the Minister of Communications was charged with leading the forum. Once the current Action Plan was drafted, it was sent to the members of the forum who gathered to have the plan presented to them and to submit their remarks

## Commitments

Regularizing the Status and Authorities of the Governmental Freedom of Information Unit			
Lead implementing agency		Governmental Freedom of Information Unit, Ministry of Justice	
Name of responsible person from implementing agency		Rivki Dabash	
Title, Department		Head of the Governmental Freedom of Information Unit, Ministry of Justice	
Email		<a href="mailto:rivikid@justice.gov.il">rivikid@justice.gov.il</a>	
Phone		972-2654-6624	
Other actors involved	Government	E-Government unit and the Ministry of Justice Counseling and Legislation Department	
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals		
Status quo or problem/issue to be addressed		<p>Currently the authorities of the Governmental Freedom of Information Unit are outlined in a Government Resolution rather than by law. Its authority is limited solely to government offices and only to those subjects covered by the Freedom of Information Law.</p> <p>It was determined in the Government Resolution that two years from the establishment of the Governmental Unit, the Ministry of Justice would be required to examine the unit's methods of operation.</p>	
Main Objective		To increase the implementation and enforcement of the Freedom of Information Law	
Brief Description of Commitment		To adapt the Governmental Freedom of Information Unit's authorities to the enforcement challenges related to freedom of information	
OGP challenge addressed by the commitment		To realize the natural right of citizens to information and increase transparency	
Relevance		Transparency	Accountability
		X	Public Participation

Ambition	To regularize the authorities of the Governmental Freedom of Information Unit and adapt them to the enforcement challenges in this area		
Milestones to fulfill the commitment	New or preexisting commitment	Start Date	End Date
To have the Ministry of Justice determine a fundamental position on this subject	New	June 1, 2015	March 31, 2016
To implement the steps needed to regularize the status of the Governmental Freedom of Information Unit in accordance with the Government's position	New	April 1, 2016	October 1, 2017

Increasing Use of a Central Website for Freedom of Information			
Lead implementing agency		Governmental Freedom of Information Unit, Ministry of Justice	
Name of responsible person from implementing agency		Rivki Dabash	
Title, Department		Head of the Governmental Freedom of Information Unit, Ministry of Justice	
Email		<a href="mailto:rivikid@justice.gov.il">rivikid@justice.gov.il</a>	
Phone		972-2654-6624	
Other actors involved	Government	E-Government unit	
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals		
Status quo or problem/issue to be addressed		<p>The main Freedom of Information website went online in January 2014 (<a href="http://foi.gov.il">foi.gov.il</a>), and allows people to contact many authorities on one website. In addition to contact information of authorities and department heads, the website serves as the main platform on which information already provided by the authorities, as well as information about agreements and contracts with private parties on matters as outlined in Government Resolution No. 1116 of December 29, 2103, is consolidated.</p> <p>Now that the website is online, the challenge is to increase awareness of its existence and to encourage its use both by the public and by the public authorities.</p>	
Main Objective		To make it easier for the public to find information and submit requests in accordance with the Freedom of Information Law	
Brief Description of Commitment		To expand the information on the central freedom of information website and increase awareness and use of the site	
OGP challenge addressed by the commitment		To increase involvement of citizens in government and realize the citizens' right to information	
Relevance		Transparency	Accountability Public Participation

	X		
<b>Ambition</b>	Broad use by the public of the website to locate information and submit requests in accordance with the Freedom of Information Law		
<b>Milestones to fulfill the commitment</b>	<b>New or preexisting commitment</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>End Date</b>
To create a continuous practice of uploading information (answers, agreements and permits) to the website	New	January 1, 2015	January 1, 2016
To expand the information base on the website and improve access	New	March 1, 2015	September 1, 2015

Increasing Transparency Regarding Contracts Between the State and Private Bodies			
Lead implementing agency		Governmental Freedom of Information Unit, Ministry of Justice	
Name of responsible person from implementing agency		Rivki Dabash	
Title, Department		Head of the Governmental Freedom of Information Unit, Ministry of Justice	
Email		<a href="mailto:rivikid@justice.gov.il">rivikid@justice.gov.il</a>	
Phone		972-2654-6624	
Other actors involved	Government	The Accountant General, Ministry of Finance	
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals		
Status quo or problem/issue to be addressed		<p>On June 1, 2014, a Government Resolution took effect obligating government offices to publish contracts and permits made regarding the use of public resources or the provision of services to the public on the main freedom of information website . The Governmental Freedom of Information Unit must confirm that the Government Resolution is optimally implemented.</p> <p>In addition, the Unit works in conjunction with the Accountant General's division in the Ministry of Finance to improve the quality of information made accessible to the public in the area of State expenditures.</p>	
Main Objective		To increase transparency	
Brief Description of Commitment		To expand the information accessible to the public in the area of contracts and State expenditures	
OGP challenge addressed by the commitment		Transparency of the Government in subjects related to privatization and the use of public resources	
Relevance		Transparency	Accountability
		X	X
Ambition		To increase transparency regarding government use of public resources	

Milestones to fulfill the commitment	New or preexisting commitment	Start Date	End Date
To supervise the implementation of the Government Resolution	New	June 1, 2014	June 1, 2015
To help implement changes in the reporting system for State expenditures (Merkavah)	New	January 1, 2015	June 1, 2015
To set standards for reporting State expenditures on an ongoing basis	New	February 1, 2015	June 1, 2015

Establishing a Unified Website for Government Offices			
Lead implementing agency		E-Government unit, Government ICT Authority, Prime Minister's Office	
Name of responsible person from implementing agency		Keren Katzir Shteibel	
Title, Department		Director of Marketing and Public Relations, E-Government unit, Government ICT Authority, Prime Minister's Office	
Email		<a href="mailto:keren@gov.il">keren@gov.il</a>	
Phone		972-2-666-4811	
Other actors involved	Government	Digital Israel Bureau, Government offices and auxiliary units	
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	The public	
Status quo or problem/issue to be addressed		Currently in Israel there are many government websites. Various countries around the world have worked to unify government websites, a step that will improve the accessibility of information and services to citizens in an optimal manner, while at the same time leading to considerable savings.	
Main Objective		To make government information and services more accessible through a unified government website	
Brief Description of Commitment		To establish a unified website for government offices, provide a complete user experience and standardized service	
OGP challenge addressed by the commitment		Transparency, accountability	
Relevance		Transparency	Accountability
		X	X
Ambition		To increase the use and conducting of online actions on government websites	
Milestones to fulfill the commitment		New or preexisting commitment	Start Date
			End Date
To formulate a plan to establish the website		New	January 1, 2105
			June 30, 2015

and get the public to participate			
To upload a preliminary version of the unified website	New	June 30, 2015	June 30, 2016

Data.gov				
Lead implementing agency		E-Government unit, Government ICT Authority, Prime Minister's Office		
Name of responsible person from implementing agency		Maya Adulamy		
Title, Department		Special Projects Manager, Government ICT Authority, Prime Minister's Office		
Email		<a href="mailto:Maya.adulamy@cio.gov.il">Maya.adulamy@cio.gov.il</a>		
Phone		972-2-629-3005		
Other actors involved	Government	Government offices and auxiliary units		
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	Developers, citizens interested in making use of information for personal reasons or to develop applications for the public's benefit		
Status quo or problem/issue to be addressed		The goal of the project is to improve public service and encourage the creative use by the public, academia and the Government of government databases. To date, more than 240 databases have been published as a result of the joint activity of more than 30 government offices. Based on these databases, dozens of applications for the public's benefit have been developed.		
Main Objective		To increase exposure of government databases for public use		
Brief Description of Commitment		To map existing databases, improve the technological platform to make them more accessible and encourage the public to use the databases		
OGP challenge addressed by the commitment		To increase the measure of transparency and public participation by advancing the exposure of the databases through technological tools that allow public services to be developed based on government databases		
Relevance		Transparency	Accountability	Public Participation
		X	X	X
Ambition		To use government databases to create innovative digital services		
Milestones to fulfill the commitment		New or preexisting commitment	Start Date	End Date

To encourage offices to publish new government databases	Preexisting	2011	None
To improve the quality of published databases	New	2014	None
To conduct a dialogue with the public of developers and set requirements for the databases	New	2014	None
To map main databases in government offices	New	January 1, 2015	June 1, 2015

To Measure the Public's Satisfaction with Government Services and the Quality of Service in the Various Channels			
Lead implementing agency		Unit for the Improvement of Government Public Services, Government ICT Authority, Prime Minister's Office	
Name of responsible person from implementing agency		Tzofit Hay	
Title, Department		Director of the Unit for the Improvement of Government Public Services, Government ICT Authority, Prime Minister's Office	
Email		<a href="mailto:tzofith@cio.gov.il">tzofith@cio.gov.il</a>	
Phone		972-2-629-3007	
Other actors involved	Government	Government offices and auxiliary units to be assessed	
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	Academia – to formulate the method of measurement, partnership in the steering committee	
Status quo or problem/issue to be addressed		The Government has yet to conduct a broad examination of the quality of services provided to the public. Only a small portion of the bodies examined themselves with regard to this aspect and each in a different manner.	
Main Objective		To improve service to the public by creating standardization, while defining reference points to provide excellent government services and using them as an administrative tool to focus resources and for learning	
Brief Description of Commitment		To measure the quality of services provided to the public by government offices	
OGP challenge addressed by the commitment		Accountability and transparency	
Relevance		Transparency	Accountability
		X	X
Ambition		To publish an annual report measuring the quality of public service in government offices	
Milestones to fulfill the commitment		New or preexisting commitment	Start Date
To measure ten large bodies that provide		Preexisting	January 1, 2014
			December 31, 2014

service to the public			
To publish the annual report for 2014	Preexisting		May 31, 2015
To expand the assessment to all bodies that provide extensive face-to-face services (excluding hospitals)	Preexisting	January 1, 2015	December 31, 2015
To examine the methods used by various countries to expand the assessment to additional bodies and to increase the assessment of existing ones beginning in 2017	New	May 1, 2015	December 31, 2015

Increasing Transparency of Information Regarding Legislation				
Lead implementing agency		Israeli Knesset		
Name of responsible person from implementing agency		Gali Ben-Or		
Title, Department		Director of the National Legislative Database Project, Legal Department, Knesset		
Email		<a href="mailto:galib@knesset.gov.il">galib@knesset.gov.il</a>		
Phone		972-2640-8632		
Other actors involved	Government	Ministry of Justice		
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	Civil society organizations		
Status quo or problem/issue to be addressed		The Knesset resolved to act to increase transparency of information regarding legislation and the relevant documents – drafts of proposed legislation and protocols of the plenary and the committees, as well as to prepare an up-to-date draft of the laws of the State of Israel		
Main Objective		To increase transparency of the process and documents related to legislation		
Brief Description of Commitment		To consolidate all the State laws and relevant documents on the Knesset website		
OGP challenge addressed by the commitment		Increasing transparency		
Relevance		Transparency	Accountability	Public Participation
		X	X	X
Ambition		To make full and current drafts of laws accessible to citizens		
Milestones to fulfill the commitment		New or preexisting commitment	Start Date	End Date
To expand the Knesset website so that it includes all the State laws and relevant documents (earlier versions of the law,		New	July 1, 2013	July 31, 2015

relevant amendments, plenary protocols)			
To hold meetings with civil society organizations to hear requests and ideas to expand the information presented and how it is made accessible to the public	New	November 1, 2014	July 31, 2015
To expand the Knesset website and present proposed legislation in the legislative process	New	March 1, 2015	March 30, 2016
To develop an integrated system for presenting the totality of all legislation	New	June 1, 2015	June 30, 2017

Developing a Governmental 'Tool Box' for Public Participation in the Government's Work		
Lead implementing agency		Governance and Social Affairs Department, Prime Minister's Office
Name of responsible person from implementing agency		Tamar Peled Amir
Title, Department		Senior Division Head, Tri-sectoral Cooperation and Social Affairs, Governance and Social Affairs Department, Prime Minister's
Email		<a href="mailto:tamarp@pmo.gov.il">tamarp@pmo.gov.il</a>
Phone		972-2-670-6127
Other actors involved	Government	E-Government unit, Prime Minister's Office; Director of Procurement, Ministry of Finance; Government units that comprise the group of potential operators for public participation processes
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	Suppliers to be approved by designated tender as part of the pool of governmental operators in the area of public participation
Status quo or problem/issue to be addressed		To date the Government has provided a range of platforms and tools for public participation, including cooperation with organizations, whether online (the Gov Share platform, based on web 2.0 technology) and in other ways, such as establishing tri-sectoral round tables. More investment is planned in order to expand the 'tool box' for public participation in government offices' activities.
Main Objective		<p>In order to realize the vision of public participation and improve the offices' ability to administer effective participation processes, the Government plans to develop and improve tools and practical and technological applications to integrate participation processes in offices in various forms:</p> <p>A. To continue developing and operating tools and technological applications to integrate participation processes in offices by E-Government.</p>

	B. To establish a pool of operators across the Government, led by the Governance and Social Affairs Department, through the Procurement Administration, which will assist government offices conduct practical and online processes for public participation by purchasing services and making them accessible to the offices.		
Brief Description of Commitment	To develop online tools to serve government offices in public participation processes		
OGP challenge addressed by the commitment	To increase the effectiveness of public resources, public integrity and shared accountability and to improve service		
Relevance	Transparency	Accountability	Public Participation
	X	X	X
Ambition	To increase the ability and effectiveness of public participation processes in the Government's work		
Milestones to fulfill the commitment	New or preexisting commitment	Start Date	End Date
To develop five tools/online applications	Preexisting	April 1, 2012	December 31, 2016
To establish and operate a pool of suppliers that will assist in administering and implementing online and physical public participation processes by the offices	Preexisting	May 1, 2015	June 30, 2016

Continued Integration of Public Participation in Government Work			
Lead implementing agency		Governance and Social Affairs Department, Prime Minister's Office	
Name of responsible person from implementing agency		Tamar Peled Amir	
Title, Department		Senior Division Head, Tri-sectoral Cooperation and Social Affairs, Governance and Social Affairs Department, Prime Minister's Office	
Email		<a href="mailto:tamarp@pmo.gov.il">tamarp@pmo.gov.il</a>	
Phone		972-2-670-6127	
Other actors involved	Government	Policy planning departments in government offices, Ministry of Justice, Unit for the Improvement of Government Public Services, information systems administrators	
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	Suppliers in the pool of public participation, experts and consultants	
Status quo or problem/issue to be addressed		There are currently processes for public participation in the Government of Israel and the efforts and capabilities to advance additional participation processes should be increased.	
Main Objective		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. To formulate a policy for public participation in Government work.</li> <li>B. To formulate an institutionalized outlook for implementing public participation processes in Government work.</li> <li>C. To conduct activities to integrate the culture of public participation in the work of offices by developing tools for guidance, training and lectures.</li> </ul>	
Brief Description of Commitment		To formulate a central outlook for public participation processes in the government and advance specific processes	
OGP challenge addressed by the commitment		To increase the effectiveness of public resources, public integrity and shared accountability and to improve service	
Relevance		Transparency	Accountability
		X	X
			Public Participation
			X

Ambition	To integrate public participation processes in Government offices and increase the capability for participation		
Milestones to fulfill the commitment	New or preexisting commitment	Start Date	End Date
To publish a guide for public participation in government work	Preexisting (periodic updates following publication)	April 1, 2015	June 30, 2016
To formulate a central outlook for public participation processes in government work	Preexisting	April 1, 2014	June 30, 2016
To hold meetings to integrate public participation in the government	Preexisting	April 1, 2014	June 30, 2016
To accompany or lead the four significant processes for participation in the government	Preexisting	April 1, 2014	June 30, 2016
To accompany and encourage the establishment of round tables	Preexisting	April 1, 2014	June 30, 2016