

Measuring Thailand's open and connected government maturity

This policy brief presents the results of the measurement exercise implemented by the OECD to assess the state of digital government and open government maturity in Thailand. It draws upon the administration of the OECD surveys on Digital Government, Open Government Data, and Access to Information in the context of Phase 2 of the OECD Thailand Country Programme.

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Towards a culture of open government in Thailand

Introduction

1. Transparency is a core element of a functioning democracy and a key principle of an open government. Open government is defined by the OECD as a “culture of governance that promotes the principles of transparency, integrity, accountability, and stakeholder participation” (OECD, 2017^[1]). The OECD Recommendation of the Council on Open Government outlines the need for governments to “proactively make available clear, complete, timely, reliable and relevant public sector data and information that is free of cost, available in an open and non-proprietary machine-readable format, easy to find, understand, use and reuse, and disseminated through a multi-channel approach, to be prioritised in consultation with stakeholders”.

2. Access to information is a cornerstone of transparency, which the OECD defines as “stakeholder access to, and use of, public information and data concerning the entire public decision-making process, including policies, initiatives, salaries, meeting agendas and minutes, budget allocations and spending” (OECD, 2022^[2]). In today’s complex information environment, delivering timely, trustworthy, and relevant information and data from the public sector to citizens and other stakeholders is increasingly important. Moreover, the right to access to information is a fundamental civic freedom that underpins all other freedoms (e.g. expression, assembly, association), as noted by the 2022 OECD “Protection and Promotion of Civic Space: Strengthening Alignment with International Standards and Guidance” report (OECD, 2022^[2]).

3. The right to access to information enables citizens to seek, obtain, share, and use information (UNESCO, n.d.^[3]). Importantly, public information does not only refer to statistics and data but also to any public documents – in any format – that may be of interest to citizens and stakeholders. This includes but is not limited to meeting agendas, minutes, salaries, draft legislation, budget allocations, policy documents, annual reports and more. While access to information and open data are related concepts, they are not identical; open data specifically advocates for government datasets to be freely available and easily reusable without restrictions (OECD, 2023^[4]; OECD 2023^[5]).

4. Furthermore, access to information is also essential for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In Thailand, the SDGs are fully integrated within the 20-Year National Strategy Framework (2017-2036), reflecting the country’s commitment to sustainable development (Government of Thailand, n.d.^[4]). Further reinforcing this commitment, the UN Country Team in Thailand signed the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2022-2026 with the Government of Thailand in January 2022. Sustainable Development Goal 16, which focuses on “Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions,” explicitly underscores the importance of transparency and citizen participation in building inclusive institutions at all levels (United Nations, n.d.^[6]). Key targets under SDG 16 include ensuring responsive, inclusive, participatory, and representative decision-making (Target 16.7), as well as guaranteeing public access to information and protecting and promoting fundamental freedoms in accordance with national laws and international agreements (Target 16.10) (United Nations, n.d.^[6]).

5. This policy brief builds on the assessment outlined in the 2022 OECD report “Open and Connected Government Review of Thailand”, which examined the country’s institutional and policy frameworks for access to information and citizen participation (OECD, 2022^[6]). The sections that follow draw on data collected through the **2020 OECD Survey on Open Government**, as well as **two dedicated surveys** undertaken by Thai public bodies on access to information – one focusing on the legal, policy, and institutional frameworks, and another on policies and practices on proactive and reactive disclosure. The

analysis also reflects insights from a **technical workshop** on mainstreaming access to information (ATI) across the public administration, which benefitted from peer learning and good practices shared by representatives from the **Philippines** and **Australia**.

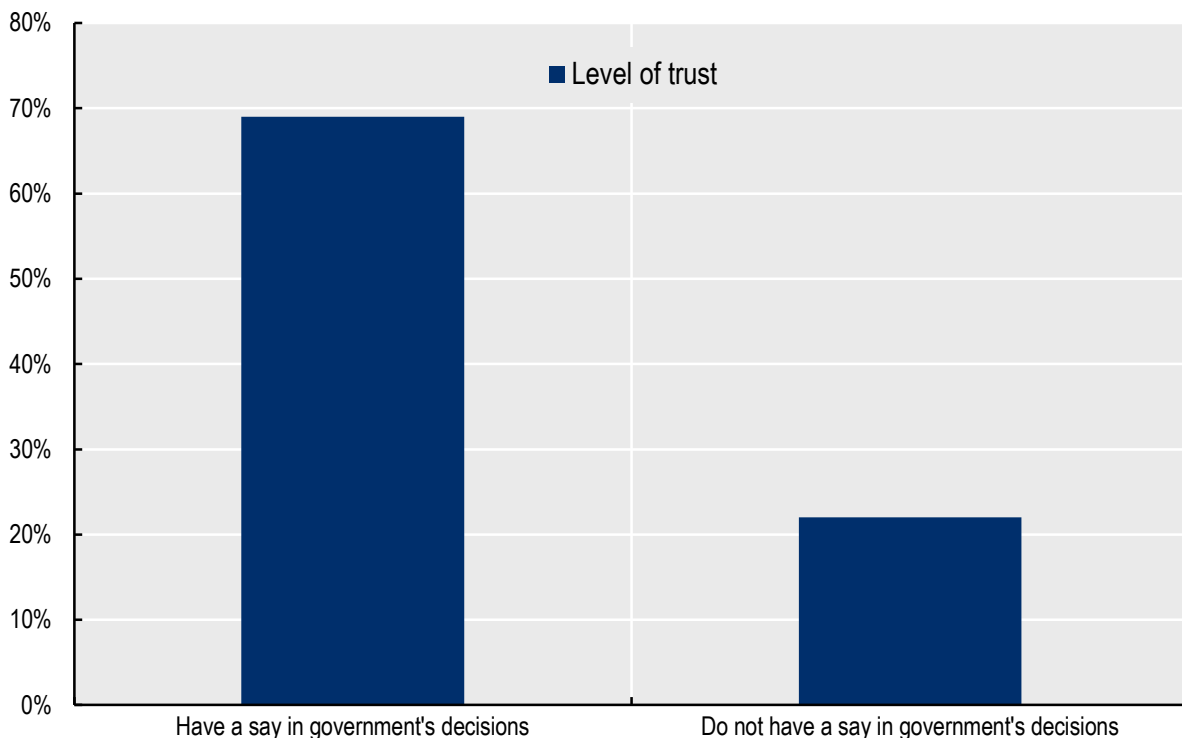
6. Taken together, these sources provide a robust evidence base for assessing Thailand's progress in implementing its constitutional commitment to transparency and access to information and for identifying opportunities to further strengthen the effectiveness, coherence, and sustainability of existing policies and practices across the public administration.

Open government can build trust

7. Sharing information, communicating with citizens, and actively consulting and collaborating with the public are essential for rebuilding trust between governments and citizens – especially in a context where trust remains worryingly low across many countries (OECD, 2024^[7]). The OECD “Survey on Drivers of Trust in Public Institutions – 2024 Results” show that 44% of people report low or no trust in their national governments, compared to only 39% who express high or moderately high trust (OECD, 2024^[7]). The OECD Trust Survey also finds that one of the key drivers of trust is the feeling of having a voice. When citizens believe they have a meaningful say in decision-making, trust in government rises significantly, with 69% of such individuals reporting higher trust compared to just 22% among those who do not feel heard (see Figure 1.1) (OECD, 2024^[7]).

Figure 1.1. Open government can foster trust

Perceptions of having a say can build public trust



Source : (OECD, 2024^[7])

8. Transparency, however, extends far beyond fostering trust; it serves several crucial functions within a public administration. By professionalising processes, transparency improves internal information management and flow, which supports broader efforts toward modernisation and inclusive economic growth (OECD, 2022^[2]). It also enables more effective collaboration and cross-learning between public bodies, helping governments to respond with agility to emerging challenges. Importantly, transparency strengthens the legitimacy of decision-making by enabling governments to build wider public buy-in for national plans and programmes.

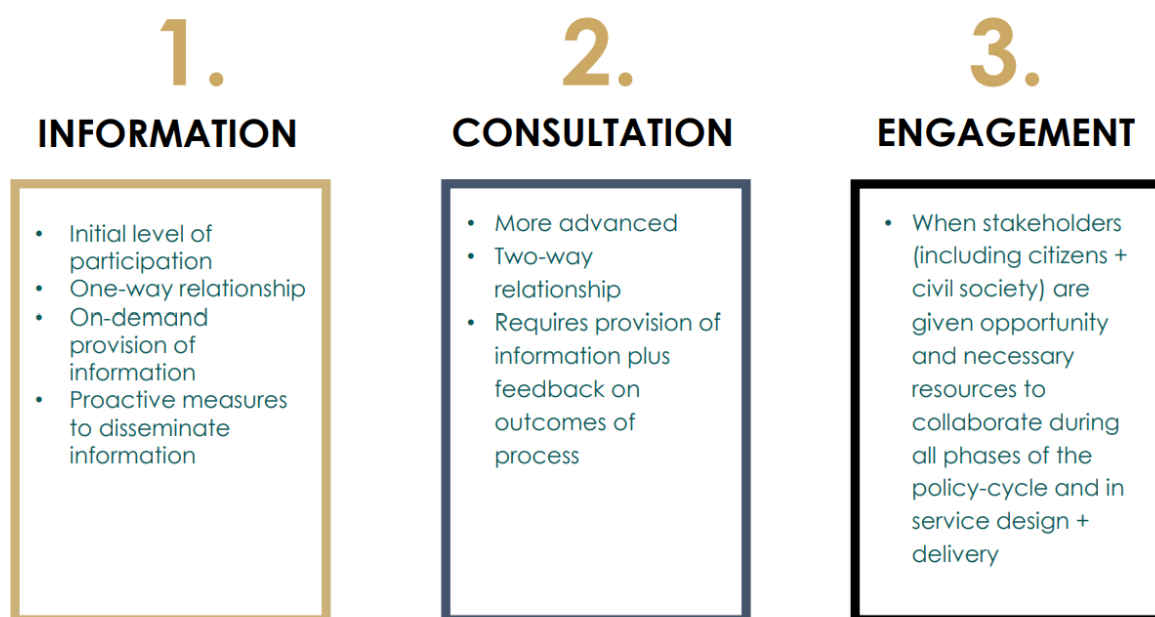
9. Additionally, transparency plays a critical role in countering mis- and disinformation that can distort public understanding of government activities and decisions, which can risk undermining reform efforts. As highlighted in the 2024 OECD report “Facts not Fakes: Tackling Disinformation, Strengthening Information Integrity”, ensuring the accessibility, accuracy, and timeliness of public information is central to strengthening the integrity of the information environment (OECD, 2024^[8]). In this context, proactive disclosure can help pre-empt the spread of false or misleading content, reinforce trust between citizens and institutions, and support more informed and evidence-based public debate (OECD, 2024^[8]).

10. These combined benefits not only reinforce confidence in public institutions but also encourage national reform agendas, foster international cooperation, and attract greater foreign direct investment (FDI). Ultimately, transparency is a foundational pillar of democratic governance that enables governments to remain responsive to the people they serve, thereby contributing to a more resilient and robust public sector.

The OECD approach to transparency and access to information

11. Information is the initial step of the OECD ladder on citizen and stakeholder participation (see Figure 1.2) (OECD, 2017^[1]). Citizen and stakeholder participation can be understood as a progressive spectrum, ranging from informing and listening to the public to collaborating with and empowering them. Moreover, as citizens increasingly demand greater influence in the choices that affect their daily lives, public bodies are expanding opportunities to integrate their unique knowledge and lived experiences into decision-making. This shift is driving a dynamic transformation in the landscape of citizen and stakeholder participation (OECD, 2020^[9]; OECD, 2022^[10]).

Figure 1.2. The OECD ladder of citizen and stakeholder participation



Note: (OECD, 2022^[9])

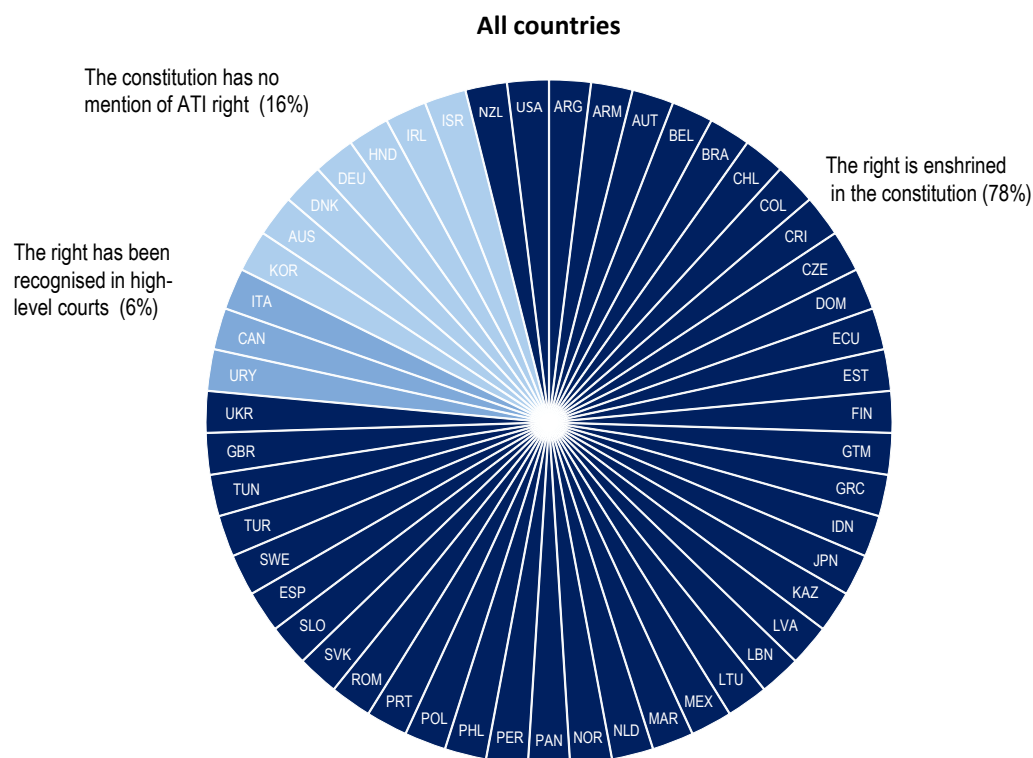
12. At the foundational level, governments engage with citizens by sharing information and data, which is typically regulated under access to information and open data laws. Moving beyond this, governments listen to citizens by gathering insights through various channels, which helps them understand public needs, concerns, and demands. Consulting takes this further, as governments actively seek feedback from citizens on policies and services and seek to take their views on board to shape them going forward. Collaboration represents a deeper partnership, whereby governments work meaningfully with citizens to jointly set priorities and co-create solutions that the government commits to responding to and potentially implementing. Finally, at the highest level, governments empower citizens by granting them direct decision-making power in specific areas, with one such example being participatory budgeting.

Legal, policy and institutional frameworks for ATI in Thailand

Thailand enshrines the right to access to information at the highest level

13. As in many OECD countries, Thailand has **enshrined the right to access public information** in its constitution. Section 41 states that “A person and a community shall have right to: (1) **be informed and have access to public data or information** in the possession of a State agency as provided by law.” In 70% of respondent OECD Members and 78% of all respondents to the 2020 OECD Survey on Open Government, ATI is recognised as a constitutional right. Doing so acknowledges access to information at the highest level and has the potential to ensure longevity throughout changing political cycles as the right is constitutionally protected (OECD, 2022^[2]). Such a status also grants legitimacy to the development of other legal and institutional frameworks on access to information at all levels and branches of government.

Figure 1.3. Countries with the right to access information enshrined in their constitutions

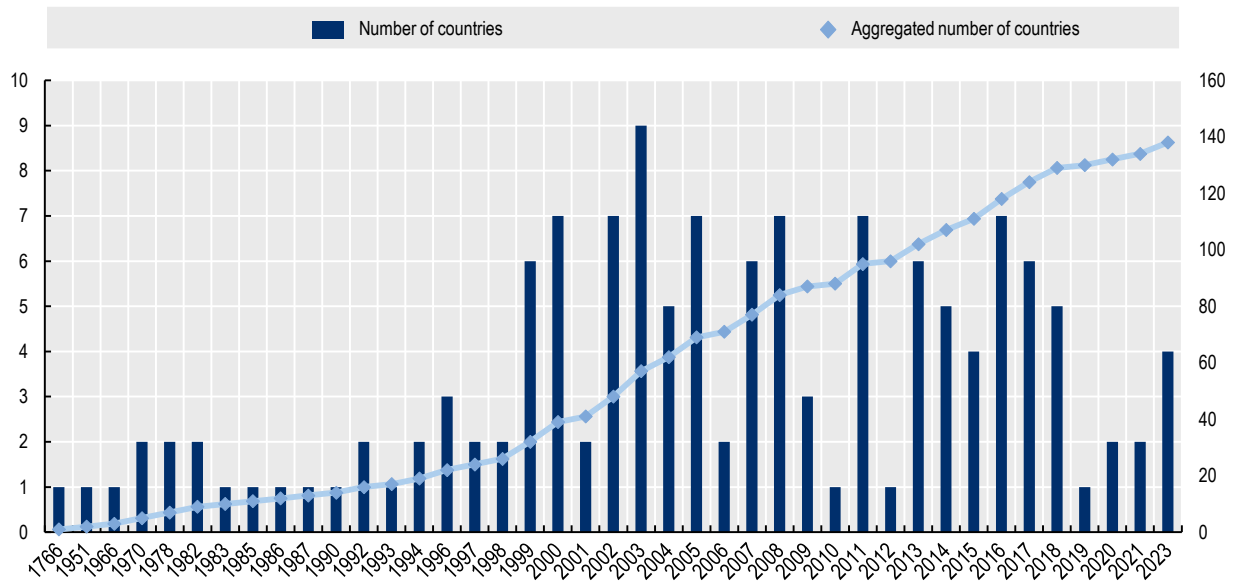


Source: 2020 Survey on Open Government

Thailand has introduced an access to information law

14. Thailand adopted the **Official Information Act** in 1997. The Act is the first central law that guarantees the right to know for public information held by the government of Thailand. According to UNESCO, 138 countries have adopted ATI laws as of 2023 (UNESCO, 2023^[10]). The introduction of such laws has greatly increased in the past 25 years, with more than 75% adopted since 2000 (see Figure 1.4). The most recent laws and amendments have often strengthened proactive disclosure of information and have defined a clear mandate, responsibilities and powers for bodies in charge of the implementation and oversight of access to information. The most common element of all these laws is that they guide public officials on both proactive and reactive disclosure.

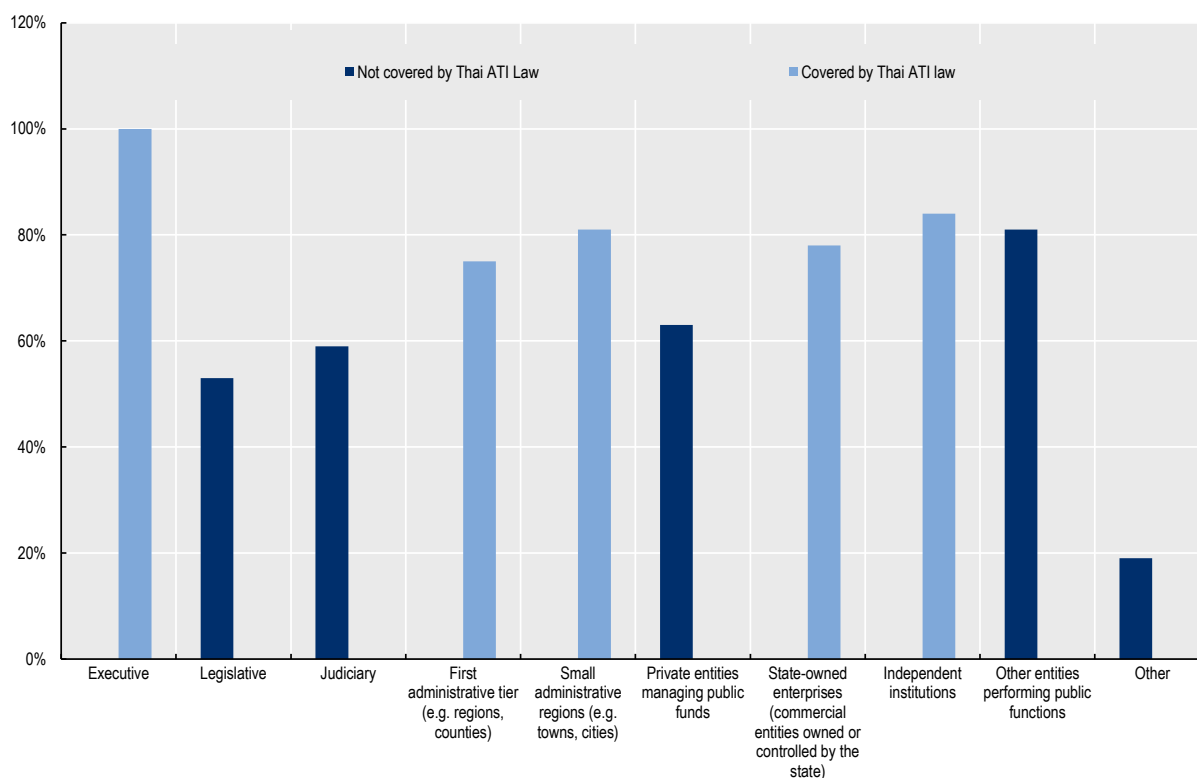
Figure 1.4. Countries with access information laws



Source: (UNESCO, 2023^[10])

15. Laws on access to information generally define the branches and levels of government – as well as the categories of public bodies – that fall within their scope and are therefore obliged to disclose information (OECD, 2025^[11]). A broad scope of application enhances the effective realisation of the right to access information by ensuring that the public can obtain data from a wide range of public bodies. At the central level, this may include information on national priorities, programmes, and policies, while public bodies at the subnational level typically hold information on public services that directly affect citizens' daily lives, such as waste management or public transport. Moreover, clearly identifying the types of entities covered – for example, private organisations managing public funds or performing public functions – is also essential (OECD, 2025^[11]).

Figure 1.5. Scope of the law in Thailand and OECD countries



Source: Survey on access to information for Thailand Country Programme (2024)

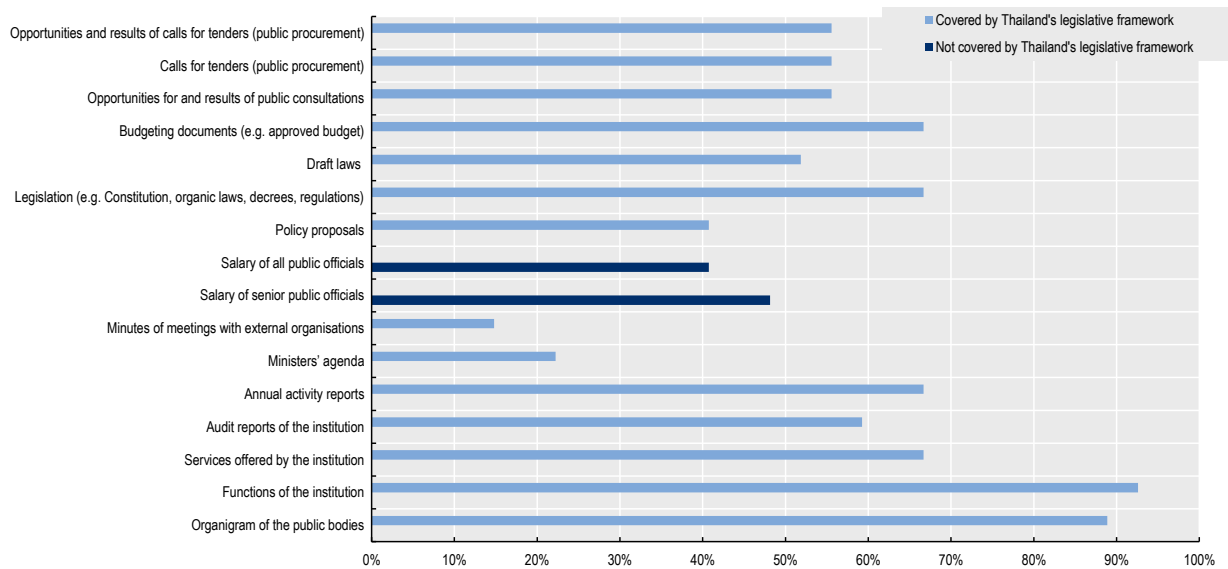
16. The scope of Thailand's law on access to information is broad and in congruence with most OECD countries (Figure 1.5). Laws in 100% of respondent OECD Members apply to the executive branch, as it does in Thailand. Additionally, like Thailand, most laws in respondent OECD Members apply not only to the national or federal level, but also to first administrative tiers (e.g., regions or counties) and small administrative regions (e.g. towns or cities). State-owned enterprises and independent institutions are also covered by the law in Thailand as in a majority of respondent OECD Members.

17. In the long-term, to continue strengthening the right to access to information, Thailand could consider expanding the scope of application of the law to include the legislative and judicial branches of government. Similarly, Thailand could consider amending the law to include institutions such as private entities managing public funds and other entities performing public functions.

Public bodies are obliged to proactively disclose information

18. Proactive disclosure refers to the act of regularly releasing information without the need for a request by citizens or stakeholders. As a result, proactive disclosure enables immediate access to public information and avoids the need for any administrative procedures – benefitting citizens and public bodies alike. A law on access to information will typically establish minimum standards that are applicable to all public bodies, including what categories of information to publish and where to publish information so that citizens can easily find the desired information.

Figure 1.6. Proactive disclosure by law in Thailand and OECD countries



Source: Survey on access to information for Thailand Country Programme (2024)

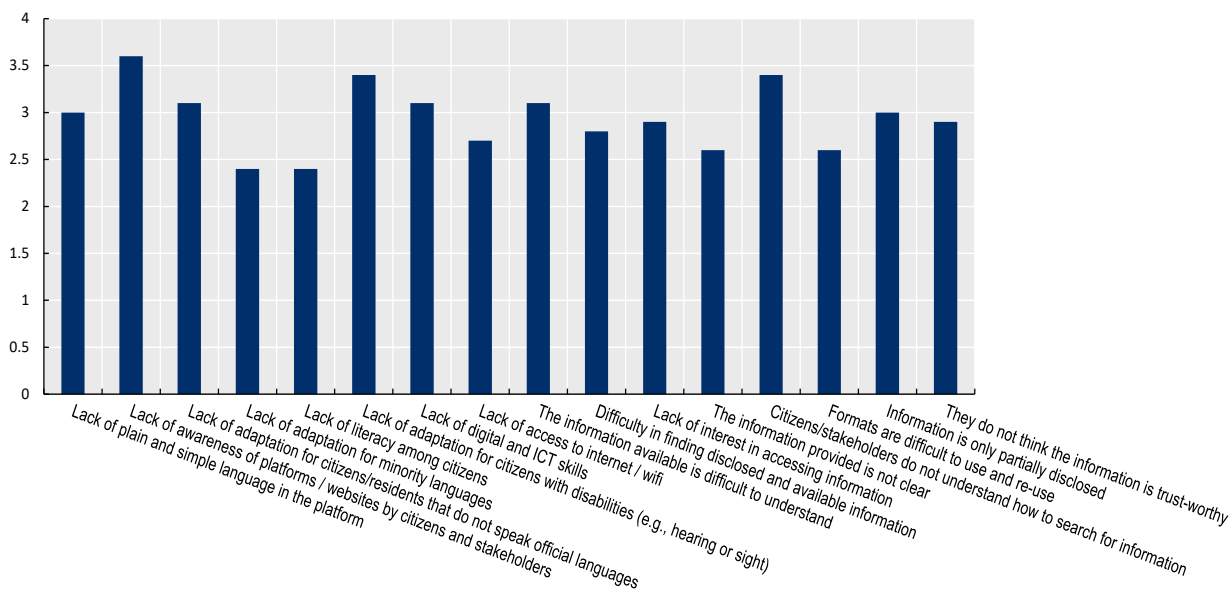
19. Public bodies in Thailand are required by law to share 14 of 16 categories of commonly disclosed information (see Figure 1.6). This approach is aligned with that of many respondent OECD Members, where the most commonly disclosed items stated in the law or other legal framework are those related to the institution itself: its functions (93% of responding OECD countries), the organigram (89% of responding OECD countries) and the services offered (67% of responding OECD countries). Other relevant documents required to be published regularly include legislation, budgeting documents, annual activity reports and audit reports. In a good practice, public bodies in Thailand are required to publish minutes of meetings with external organisations as well as ministers' agendas – both of which have the two lowest rates of disclosure among respondent OECD Members. Looking ahead, Thailand could consider disclosing the salary ranges for different categories of public officials.

Improving awareness and accessibility of platforms and portals for access to information

20. Proactively disclosed information is typically made available through the websites of individual ministries or bodies, and in some cases, also via a centralised platform or portal. Official gazettes serve as an important channel for publishing legislative materials – such as constitutions, organic laws, decrees, and regulations – as well as budget-related documents (OECD, 2022^[2]). Some countries also use social media (e.g., Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram) to share information with the public. Taking a multi-channel approach to sharing information also allows public bodies to reach a wider audience and enables citizens to more easily find the information they are seeking. Ensuring that websites and portals are as accessible as possible and minimise barriers for at-risk groups (e.g. people with disabilities, people without access to internet, people without digital skills etc.) to locate information is essential.

21. According to surveyed public officials in Thailand, some of the main challenges that citizens and stakeholders face in accessing available information are a lack of awareness of websites; a lack of adaptation for citizens with disabilities; and a low understanding of how to search for information (Figure 1.7)

Figure 1.7. Perceptions of challenges that citizens and stakeholders face in accessing available information



Source: Survey on access to information for Thailand Country Programme (2024)

22. With this in mind, Thailand could also consider taking a multi-channel approach to disseminating information to ensure that those with limited digital skills or access to technology have the same opportunity to access and use public information. Thailand could also consider prioritising plain and simple language and share information in languages other than the official one, as done in countries such as New Zealand (Box 1.1).

Box 1.1. Use of plain and simple language in New Zealand

The Ministry of Social Development (MSD) in New Zealand has developed plain-language checklists and quick reference guides for public officials to help ensure government information and communication are clear, accessible, and easy to understand. These resources instruct officials to use simple words, avoid jargon, and provide sufficient context so readers can grasp the intent and meaning of documents.

This approach also supports accessibility by making materials easier to convert into alternate formats such as Easy Read, audio, braille, or New Zealand Sign Language, thereby including people with disabilities and low-literacy audiences. Similarly, the Parliamentary Counsel Office (PCO) promotes the use of a Plain Language Standard and a corresponding checklist to embed these principles into the drafting of legislation and official publications.

Source: (Government of New Zealand, 2024^[11]; Government of New Zealand, n.d.^[12]; Government of New Zealand, n.d.^[13])

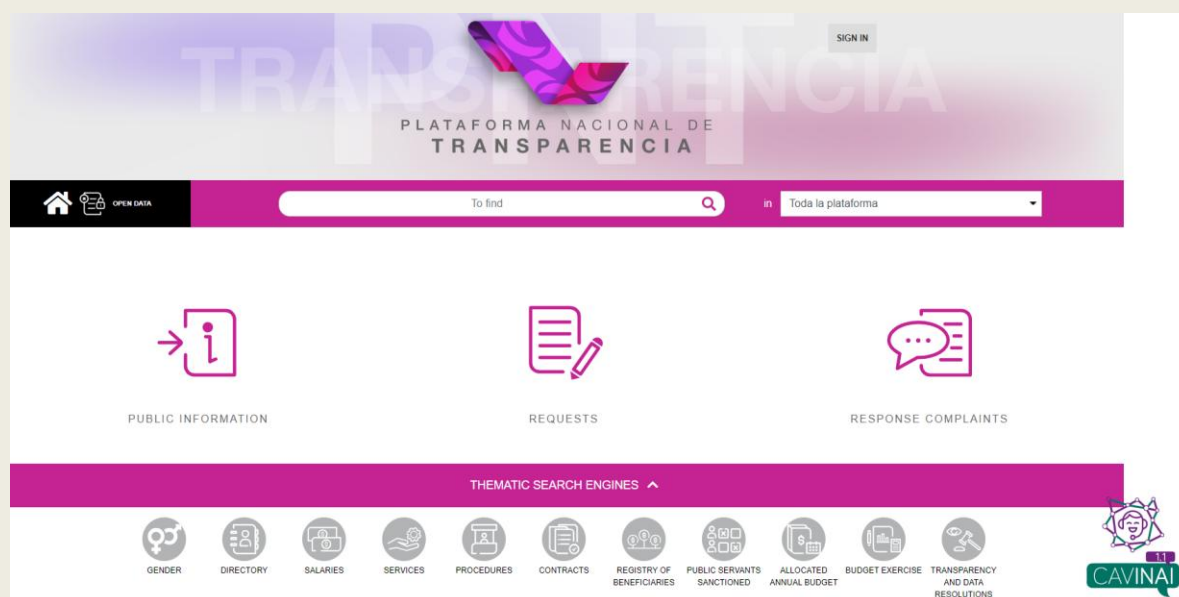
23. In several country contexts, governments have developed centralised online platforms or portals to strengthen transparency and improve access to public information. These platforms can serve multiple functions — from enabling citizens and stakeholders to easily locate proactively disclosed information, to allowing them to submit, track, and appeal information requests in one digital space. In many cases, they also integrate or interlink with national open data portals, thereby supporting data reuse. Centralised platforms not only simplify access to information but also enhance coordination, consistency, and accountability across the public administration. Some examples include **Mexico** and **Austria** (Box 1.2).

Box 1.2. Platforms and portals for transparency

Mexico

The National Transparency Platform (<https://www.plataformadetransparencia.org.mx/>) is a tool that helps promote the right of access to public information and transparency in Mexico. The platform portal allows anyone to search and obtain proactively disclosed information or make a request if it is not yet available. It was launched in 2016 by the National Institute for Transparency, Access to Information and Personal Data Protection (INAI) which is charged with monitoring, oversight, and enforcement of the right of access to information in Mexico. The portal allows users to search by thematic area e.g. gender, budget, public procurement, public services and more. The portal also has an appeal mechanism as users can submit a complaint if requests were not handled or if they are dissatisfied with the response.

Figure 1.8. National Transparency Platform in Mexico



Source: (Government of Mexico, n.d.[12])

Austria

Austria has a centralised open data portal with over 54974 datasets available to citizens and stakeholders. The Portal has easy-to-use buttons to redirect users to each policy area or topic e.g. education, culture and sport; agriculture, fisheries, forestry, and food; environment; and economy and finance; among others. The portal also highlights selected datasets when relevant or topical, for example, the annual budget.

Figure 1.9. Open Data Portal in Austria

54974 Datasets
750 Applications
1392 Organizations

de en

Flächennutzung in Wien mit der neuen Grätzfarben-Webkarte entdecken

Data > Applications > Info > News >

Search Search term Advanced search

Topics

Population and society Education, culture and sport Energy Health International issues Justice, legal system and public safety Agriculture, fisheries, forestry and food

Source: (Government of Austria, n.d.[13])

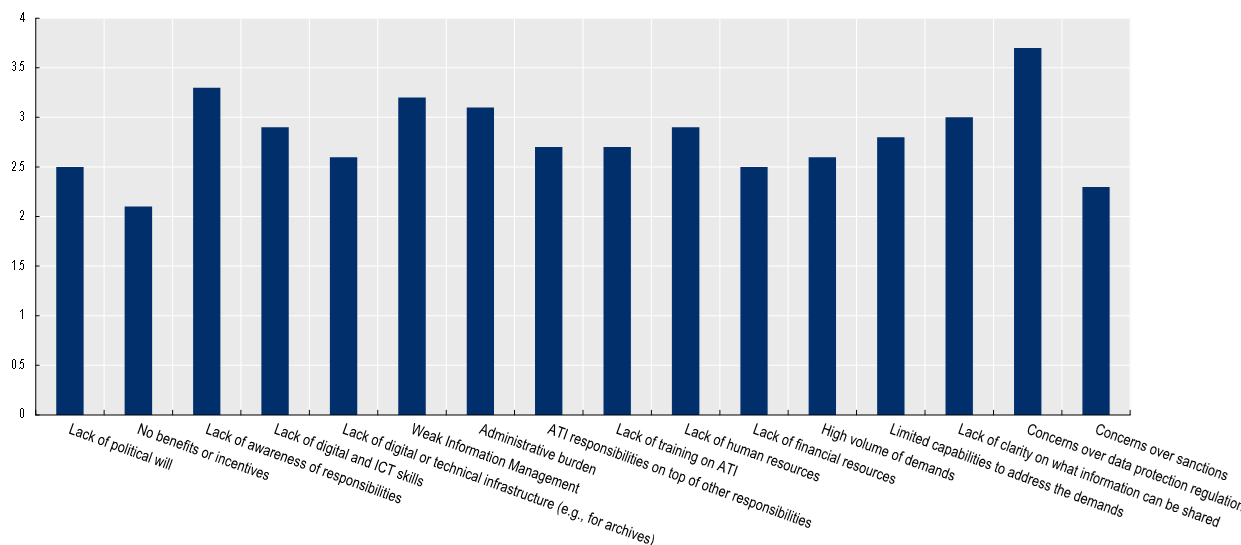
24. Thailand has already made efforts to improve the availability of public information online, including through digital government reforms in 2011, which aimed to encourage proactive online disclosure. Thailand could build on these initiatives and consider establishing a centralised platform or portal that could include an index of available information as well as a system for submitting and tracking a request to a public body.

Capacity building is needed on responsibilities around access to information

25. Building the skills and capability of public officials is essential to ensuring the effective implementation of access to information responsibilities. Clear guidelines can help standardise practices across institutions, promoting consistency and reducing discretion – and confusion – in how access to information laws are applied. Training programmes are equally important, equipping officials with the knowledge, skills, and awareness needed to meet their obligations and provide timely, accurate information to the public. When applied systematically, proactive disclosure not only enhances transparency but also delivers tangible benefits for public institutions by reducing administrative burdens and improving internal information flows. To fully realise these benefits, public bodies need sufficient human and financial resources, as well as sound information management and recordkeeping systems that ensure the availability, accuracy, and retrievability of public information.

26. Public officials in Thailand have identified several challenges in providing access to information: concerns over data protection regulations, limited awareness of their responsibilities, and weak information management practices (Figure 1.10). Additional difficulties, including shortages of human resources, limited digital skills, and uncertainty about what information can be shared, point to a broader need for greater investment in skills development, training, and organisational capability. Strengthening these areas would help ensure that officials are well equipped to balance transparency with privacy considerations and to fulfil their access to information obligations effectively and consistently.

Figure 1.10. Perceptions of challenges that public officials face in providing access to information



Source: Survey on access to information for Thailand Country Programme (2024)

27. Thailand could consider a range of measures to address these challenges in a systematic and sustainable manner. Introducing mandatory and regularly delivered training programmes would help public officials strengthen their understanding of statutory responsibilities related to access to information, including the digital competencies required to manage and share information effectively (Box 1.3).

Box 1.3. Guidance and training for public officials in Canada

The Directive on Proactive Publication under the Access to Information Act was introduced in 2023 and guides public bodies on how to consistently provide citizens with complete, accurate and timely government information. The Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat also has a webpage to facilitate access to information where it assists citizens, stakeholders, and public officials in making and processing requests for information. The page offers policy tools, reports, and resources, including a manual and best practices for handling requests.

Source: (Government of Canada, n.d.[14])

28. Such training could also support officials in balancing data protection requirements with obligations to provide access to information, ideally through joint training initiatives between the Office of the Official Information Commission (OIC) and the Personal Data Protection Committee (PDPC) (Box 1.4). The development of comprehensive and practical guidelines could further enhance clarity regarding which types of information may be disclosed and under what conditions.

Box 1.4. Balancing access to information and data protection in Australia

The **Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC)** plays a dual role as both the national privacy regulator and the overseer of freedom of information (FOI). It balances these two potentially conflicting responsibilities protecting personal data and facilitating access to government-held information. The OAIC facilitates access to information by encouraging agencies to proactively publish information through the Information Publication Scheme and respond to FOI requests as well as simultaneously enforces privacy protections by investigating breaches, issuing civil penalties, and guiding organizations on compliance with privacy laws.

By centralising the safeguarding of these two interconnected rights into one institution, Australia can recognise and exploit connections between both policy areas and train public officials on how to fulfil their obligations under the relevant legal and policy frameworks in these areas. This approach can also help to avoid instances in which over-compliance with personal data protection regulations restricts governments' ability to appropriately respond to information requests.

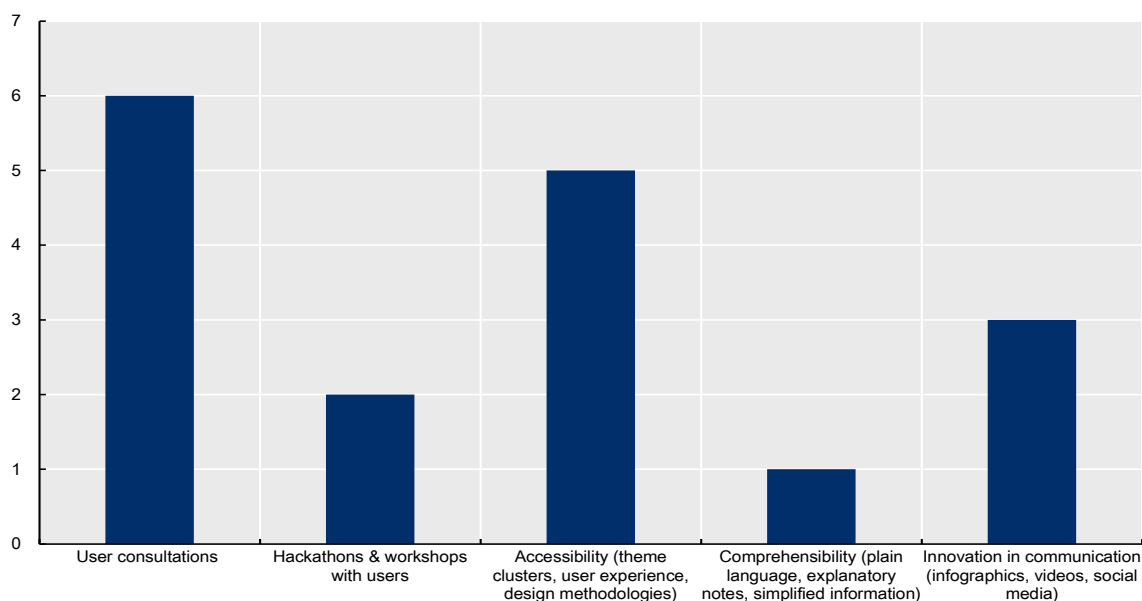
Source: (Government of Australia, n.d.^[11]; OECD, 2022^[12])

29. Strengthening these measures would contribute to more consistent implementation of access to information frameworks across institutions, enabling officials to uphold transparency while safeguarding privacy. In parallel, enhanced coordination between records management authorities and public institutions could provide consistent guidance on the proper destruction of records, management of electronic information, archiving procedures, and performance monitoring, with the broader objective of harmonising and standardising these practices across the public administration.

Understanding what information is most useful to citizens and stakeholders

30. Governments can make use of a variety of tools to determine what information to proactively disclose and how to do so, ensuring that information seekers are able to easily locate, and understand, information that is of value to them. User consultations, hackathons, and workshops can help public officials what kinds of information are of particular interest to those that most frequently search for or request public information, such as citizens, civil society organisations, the private sector, and media and journalists. For example, consultations in **Mexico** showed that users were confused about precisely which topics corresponded to which government bodies, so public officials developed a thematic "citizen's portal" as a complement to the city's existing transparency portal (Government of Mexico, n.d.^[17]; Darbshire, 2010^[17]). Many public bodies in Thailand already engage with citizens and stakeholders to better understand their needs and expectations regarding proactively disclosed information. Public officials also make targeted efforts to improve the accessibility of such information (Figure 1.11)

Figure 1.11. Initiatives for improving accessibility and usability in Thailand



Source: Survey on access to information for Thailand Country Programme (2024)

31. Thailand could consider building on these existing examples of good practice by institutionalising systematic consultations with stakeholders to identify which types of information are most valuable and to assess the effectiveness of accessibility measures across public bodies (Box 1.5). Additional approaches could include structured sessions with specific stakeholder groups through hackathons, workshops, or other participatory processes to gather feedback on the usability of public information. Thailand could also consider adapting certain kinds of important information (e.g. on the budget) to specific audiences, as is done in **Egypt** (Box 1.5).

Box 1.5. Citizen's and Child's Budgets in Egypt

Each year, the Ministry of Finance (MoF) in Egypt – in cooperation with the World Bank, UNICEF, UN Women and CSOs – issues a citizen's and a child's budget, which are simplified versions of the official enacted budget that are user-friendly, written in plain language, and adapted to the target audience. The booklet aims to present essential public finance data in a clear and accessible format, enabling members of the general public – particularly those without technical expertise – to better understand budgetary information relevant to their interests. Its aim is to be understood by as large of the segment of the population as possible.

The citizen's budget is issued annually after the approval of the general budget by the House of Representatives and the President. The MoF has improved the presentation of the citizen's budget year-on-year, for example, by adding a summary version and a more detailed version, as well as a semi-annual report which provided an assessment of spending six months into the year. The publication of the citizen's budget, along with a mid-year budget review and a pre-Budget statement, has improved Egypt's ranking in the Open Budget Survey over recent years.

The Ministry also issues regular "transparency briefs" on different topics in simple and accessible language (Figure 2.2).

Figure 1.12. Transparency briefs from the Egyptian Ministry of Finance



Source : (UNICEF, 2024^[11]; OECD, 2024^[11])

Public bodies can improve reactive disclosure in response to a request

32. No matter how much information is proactively disclosed, the right of citizens and stakeholders to submit requests remains essential. It is therefore crucial to ensure that the process for requesting information is as simple, transparent, and straightforward as possible, so that citizens and stakeholders are genuinely able to benefit from greater transparency on an equal basis (OECD, 2022^[2]).

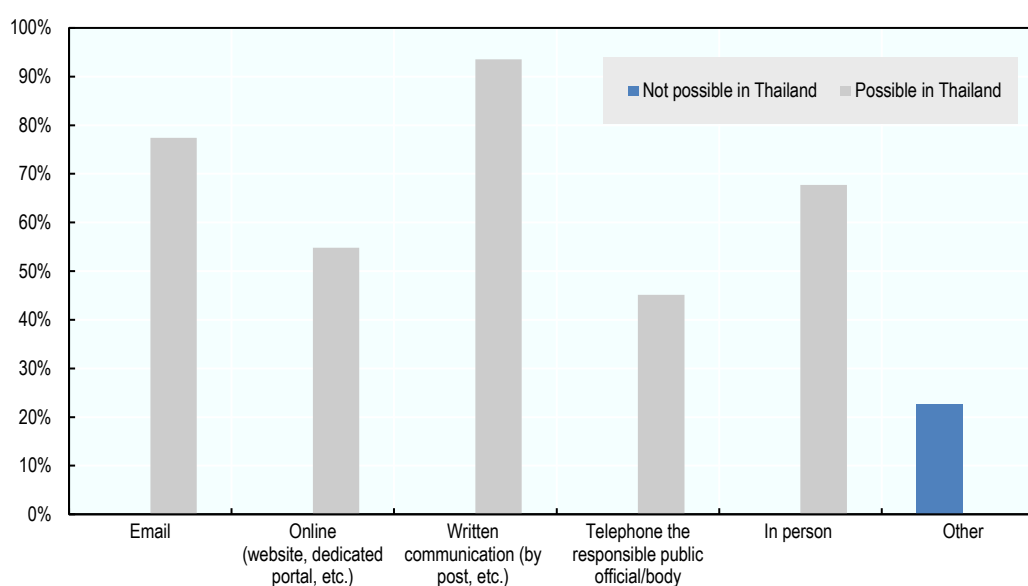
Any person or stakeholder should be able to request information

33. It is considered good practice that the right to request information is not limited solely to citizens but extends to any person or stakeholder with an interest in government-held information. Under the Official Information Act, any person may submit a request for official information held by a public body, and the requester is not required to have, or indicate, a specific “interest” in the information.

Requests for information can be made through several channels

34. To ensure inclusivity, it is important that multiple channels are available for submitting requests. Public bodies in Thailand receive requests for information via multiple methods. The means by which citizens can make a request for information in Thailand aligns with practices in respondent OECD Members (Figure 1.13). In most respondent OECD Members, requests can be made by post (94%) and in person (68%). Many other respondent OECD Members also allow requests by email (77%) or online – on each ministry’s website or a dedicated portal (55%). Allowing multiple forms of requesting information – particularly by written communication, phone, or in-person – makes this process more accessible for a wide range of users, especially for those without digital skills.

Figure 1.13. How citizens can make a request in Thailand and OECD countries



Source: Survey on access to information for Thailand Country Programme (2024)

Proactively disclosing frequently requested information

Public bodies can enhance efficiency by identifying information that is frequently requested and making it proactively available. By systematically tracking patterns in requests, public bodies can anticipate the types of information that citizens and stakeholders are most likely to seek and release these records proactively, reducing the need for repeated reactive requests, as is done in the **United States**.

Box 1.6. Approach to frequently requested information in the United States

The United States Department of Justice's Office of Information Policy has developed an implementation checklist to sensitise agency employees on institutional procedures for enhancing the proactive disclosure of non-exempt information, in line with the US Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), as follows:

"Identifying frequently requested records:

- Systematically review each request when it is first received to determine whether your agency has received other requests that will involve the same or similar records.
- Even in the absence of multiple requests, consider whether the responsive records concern a popular topic that is likely to become the subject of subsequent requests in the future.
- During the course of processing requests, flag records that are common to multiple requests."

Source: (Government of the United States, 2022_[15])

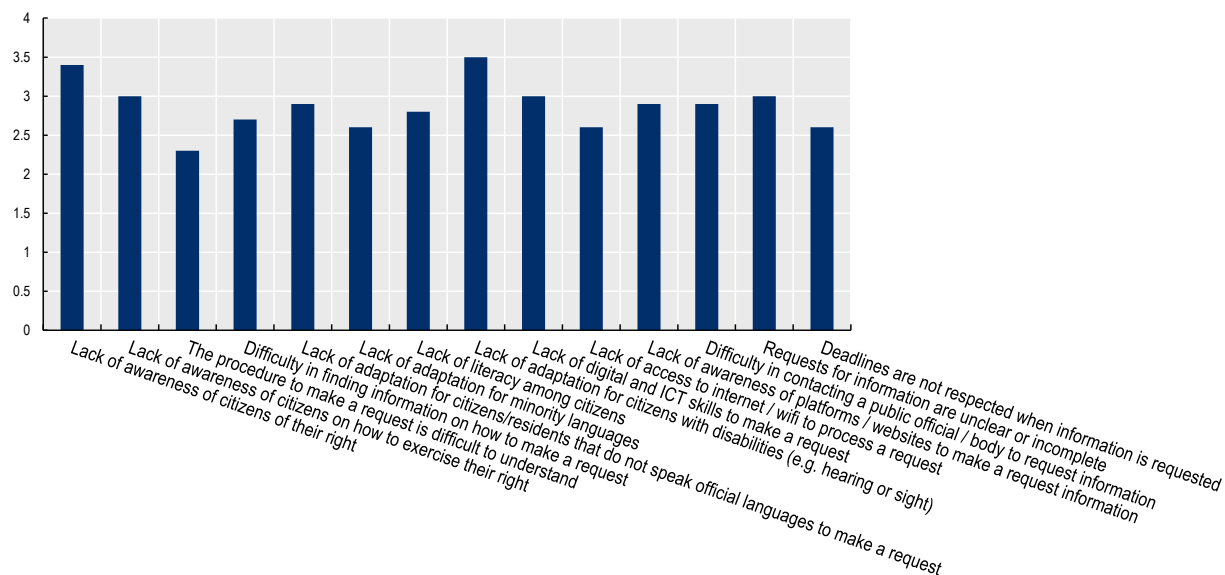
Bridging the digital divide to ensure accessibility

35. Citizens and stakeholders encounter a range of structural and procedural barriers that limit their ability to effectively exercise their right to access public information. These challenges often begin with a lack of public awareness regarding the right to make a request for information. Moreover, processes for requesting can be perceived as overly complex, unclear, or inconsistent across the public administration. Accessibility remains a concern: many systems are not adequately designed for persons with disabilities, and digital interfaces often fail to accommodate citizens with limited information and communication technology (ICT) skills or access. These barriers are both technical and systemic, highlighting the need for inclusive design, simplified procedures, and targeted outreach to ensure that access to information is equitable and effective for all segments of the population.

36. Costs can also prove to be a barrier for some requesters. Ideally, making requests should be free of charge, while public bodies can charge fees for additional costs incurred by the administration e.g. in reproducing or mailing the information. This amount should be calculated on a cost-recovery basis. In Thailand, there is no cost to make a request for information.

37. According to surveyed public officials in Thailand, challenges primarily relate to insufficient accessibility measures as well as gaps in awareness and guidance. Citizens may lack knowledge of their rights or of how to exercise them, while instructions and request procedures are often unclear or incomplete. Addressing these challenges requires a combination of capacity-building, user-centred design, and outreach initiatives to improve both awareness and accessibility of access to information systems (Figure 1.14).

Figure 1.14. Perceptions of challenges that citizens and stakeholders face in requesting information



Source: Survey on access to information for Thailand Country Programme (2024)

38. Ensuring that all citizens can effectively exercise their right to access public information requires measures to enhance inclusiveness. This includes adapting information and requesting procedures to meet the needs of persons with disabilities, Indigenous populations, and communities with linguistic minorities, with Colombia providing a notable example (Box 1.7).

Box 1.7. Increasing inclusiveness in accessing information in Colombia

The Procuraduría general de la Nación has developed a series of tools to guide public officials in providing access to public information to people with disabilities, members of Indigenous communities and other minorities in the country. They have also created specific booklets for these members of society to ensure that they are aware of their rights to access to information and how to use them. The guide for public officials was created with the following points in mind, among others:

- Use simple language and avoid legal technicalities.
- Understand that it must be understood by people without knowledge of the matter.
- Keep it short.
- Only include theoretical and technical aspects when strictly necessary.

Access to public information for people with hearing disabilities

An explanatory video in sign language was developed for citizens with disabilities or hearing impairments in order to present the Transparency and Access to Information Law.

Access to public information for people with visual disabilities

The entire law was transformed into braille and macrotypes for citizens with disabilities or visual impairments.

Access to public information for populations that speak languages other than Spanish

Colombia has an Indigenous population of 2 million people. The law has been translated into six indigenous languages: Arhuaco, Chamí, Katío, Koreguaje, Nasa and Wayuu.

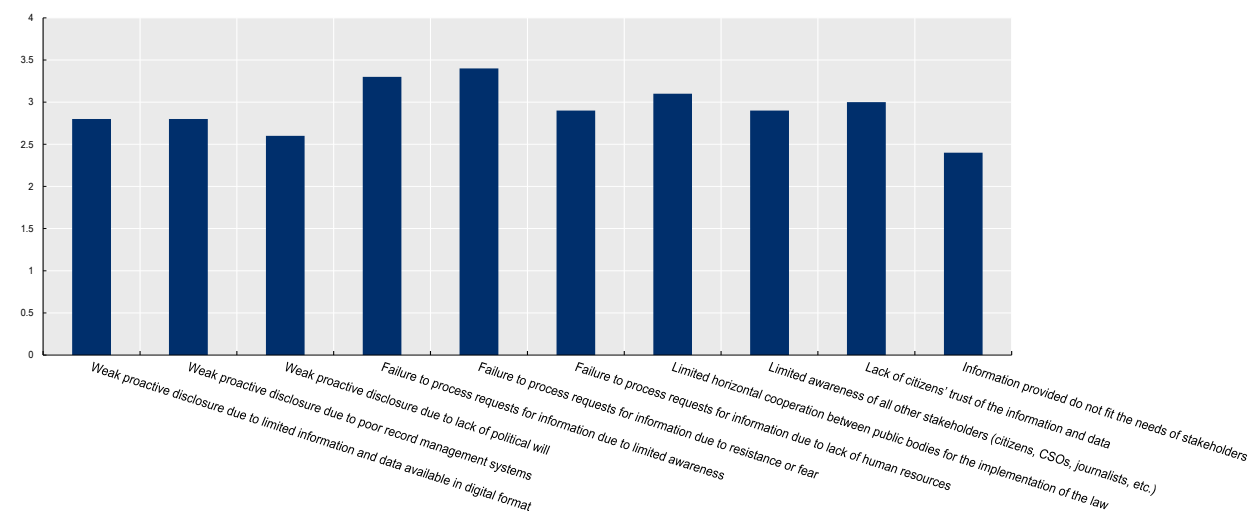
Source: (OECD, 2022^[2])

Exceptions and appeals for denied or unanswered requests

39. While there are legitimate and necessary grounds for denying access to certain types of information, such as those related to national security, personal data protection, or ongoing investigations, these exemptions should be applied narrowly. In cases where requests are denied or left unanswered without a valid legal basis, citizens should have access to redress mechanisms to ensure their right to information is upheld.

40. Among surveyed public officials in Thailand, one of the main challenges in implementing the access to information law relates to the failure to process information requests, often stemming from internal resistance or uncertainty among officials about what information can be disclosed. This hesitation may reflect a broader culture of risk aversion and a limited understanding of the scope and intent of access to obligations around access to information. In some cases, officials may err on the side of non-disclosure out of concern for breaching data protection, confidentiality, or administrative rules, even when information could lawfully be released. Such uncertainty is compounded by limited horizontal cooperation among agencies, which can delay responses or result in conflicting interpretations of what constitutes disclosable information (Figure 1.15). These factors can lead to requests being denied, partially answered, or left unresolved altogether.

Figure 1.15. Perceptions of challenges public bodies face in implementing the law



Source: Survey on access to information for Thailand Country Programme (2024)

41. To prevent these outcomes, it is important that exceptions to disclosure are applied narrowly, clearly justified, and communicated in plain language to requesters. Thailand could consider strengthening internal coordination and providing clearer guidance on how to interpret and apply exceptions can help ensure greater consistency across the public administration.

42. To protect the right to information, there could be accessible redress mechanisms for individuals whose requests are denied or unanswered (OECD, 2022^[2]). Such mechanisms can take the form of internal, external, and judicial appeal. Internal appeal involves a procedure within the public body where the request was made; an external appeal would involve the oversight body (e.g. Office of the Official Information Commission), and where necessary, a judicial appeal would involve the courts (OECD, 2022^[2]). Ensuring that these channels are well-defined, timely, and easy to use in Thailand would help provide meaningful recourse for citizens and enhance learning by identifying recurring obstacles around requesting procedures.

Institutional arrangements for access to information in Thailand

Oversight body for access to information

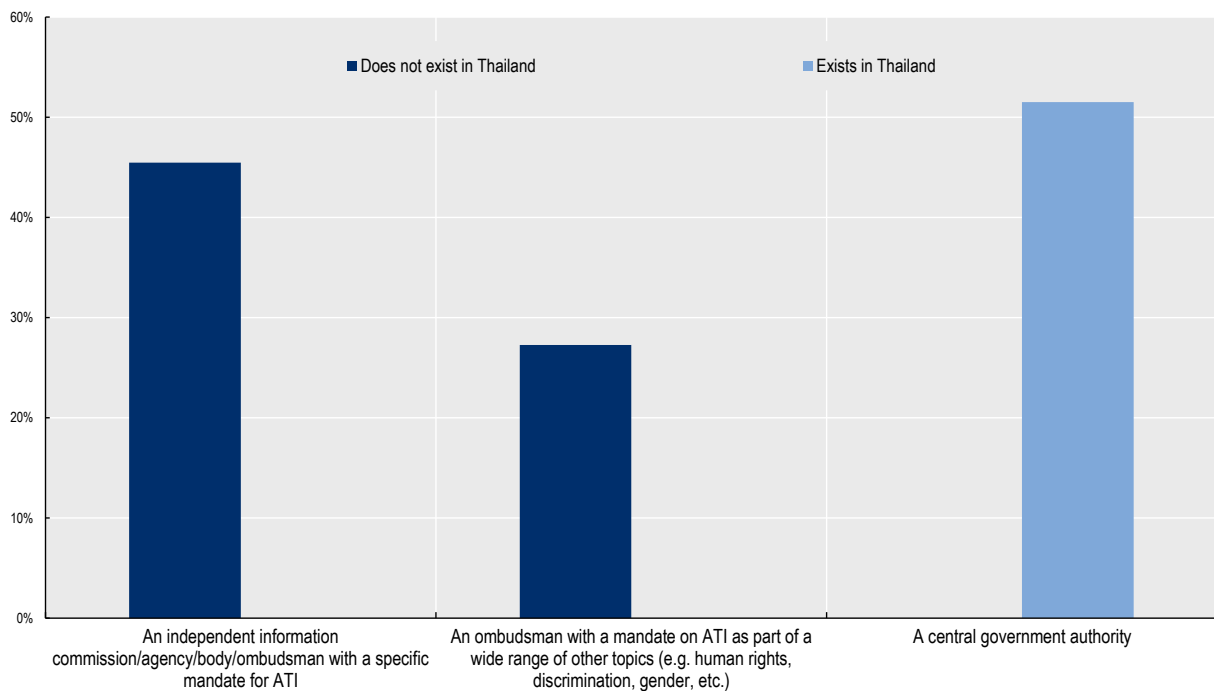
43. A co-ordination and oversight body for the access to information law, with a clearly defined mandate, sustained resources, an adequate level of independence and capacity for enforcement, is essential for the implementation of the law. These bodies typically carry out functions such as enforcing compliance, monitoring performance, and promoting awareness of legislation. Oversight may be provided by a dedicated and independent information commission or agency, or alternatively, by institutions with broader mandates – such as an ombudsman that also address issues related to human rights, anti-discrimination, or gender equality. In some cases, the responsibility for oversight of access to information is assigned to a central government body that operates within the executive branch. Certain systems also involve multiple public bodies sharing oversight responsibilities. Additionally, some countries have arrangements that do not fall within these categories, either lacking a designated body in the legal framework or assigning the role to an entity with a unique structure or mandate.

44. Most countries have a dedicated ATI oversight body such as an information commission/agency/body or ombudsman with a specific mandate for ATI (45% of respondent OECD Members, 47% of all respondents), an ombudsman with a wider mandate (27% of respondent OECD Members, 25% of all respondents) or a central government authority (52% of respondent OECD Members, 45% of all respondents) (OECD, 2022^[2]).

45. In Thailand, the Office of the Official Information Commission – a division under the Office of the Permanent Secretary’s the Prime Minister’s Office – is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the 1997 Official information Act (Figure 1.16) (Government of Thailand, 1997^[16]). Its core responsibilities include coordinating with public bodies to ensure compliance with obligations, advising citizens and stakeholders on how to exercise their right to access official information, and supporting both the Official Information Board (OIB) and the Information Disclosure Tribunals (IDTs).

46. The Official Information Board (OIB), established under the Official Information Act, sets policy, issues rules and interpretations, and oversees how public authorities implement the law. The OIB also provides guidance on transparency obligations under the Act. The Information Disclosure Tribunals (IDTs) serve as appeal bodies when a requester is dissatisfied with how a request was handled. IDTs can hear complaints and can issue binding decisions on whether information should be disclosed

Figure 1.16. Oversight body for access to information in Thailand and OECD countries



Source: Survey on access to information for Thailand Country Programme (2024)

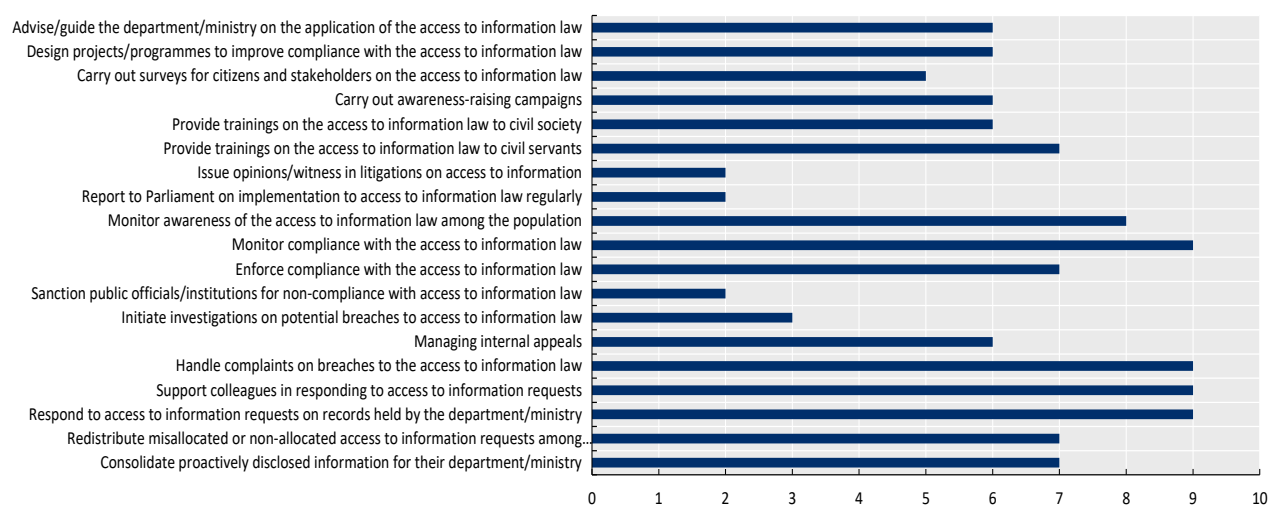
Offices and officers for access to information

47. Access to information laws generally require the establishment of an information office or officer responsible for ensuring the implementation of the legal framework within each public body. This office or officer is commonly mandated to oversee the procedures and processes for proactive and reactive disclosure. The scope and responsibilities of access to information laws differ across countries but

generally fall into three categories: enforcement, monitoring, and promotion. Fifty percent of respondent OECD Members (61% of all respondents) provide for the establishment of an ATI office or officer in their laws (OECD, 2022^[2]).

48. Thailand has also established dedicated offices or officers within each public body to support the implementation of access to information obligations (Figure 1.17). Their responsibilities typically include reallocating misdirected requests, consolidating proactively disclosed information, and reporting on implementation progress to the oversight body. These offices or officers also play an important role in assisting other public officials in fulfilling their legal obligations and, when necessary, handling complaints. In addition to their compliance functions, they contribute to the promotion of transparency by advising officials on the application of the law and leading training and awareness-raising initiatives targeting both public officials and members of the public.

Figure 1.17. What is the role of an ATI office or officer in Thailand?



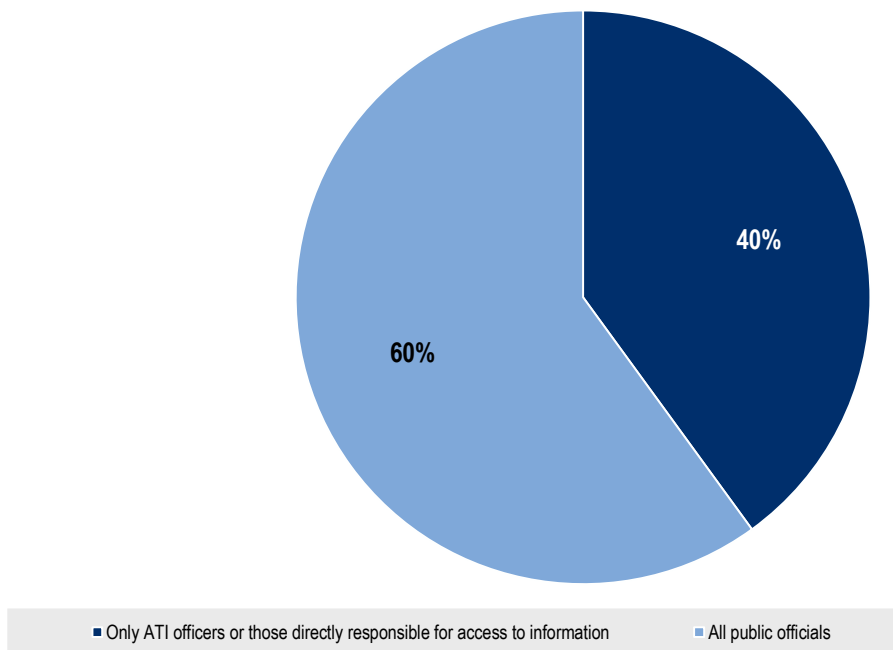
Source: Survey on access to information for Thailand Country Programme (2024)

49. In contrast, roles that only a few surveyed public officials carry out include those most closely related to enforcement, for example, sanctioning public officials for non-compliance, initiating investigations on potential breaches of the law, and issuing opinions in litigations on access to information (Figure 1.17).

50. Thailand could consider mainstreaming and institutionalising the role of access to information officers across all public bodies, as evidence suggests that while many officers are already undertaking these functions, practices remain uneven. Formalising these roles would help ensure that every ministry and department benefits from dedicated expertise on the application of the access to information law. These officers could be tasked designing and undertaking initiatives to strengthen implementation, leading awareness-raising campaigns, and providing training for both public officials and civil society representatives.

51. The majority of surveyed public bodies in Thailand, laudably, train all public officials on access to information – not only those who are directly responsible for it (Figure 1.18). Training all public officials promotes collaboration among different departments, as officials recognise the interconnectedness of their roles in ensuring access to information. Additionally, comprehensive training fosters a culture of transparency across all levels of government, ensuring that officials understand its intrinsic and instrumental value.

Figure 1.18. Who receives training on access to information in Thailand?



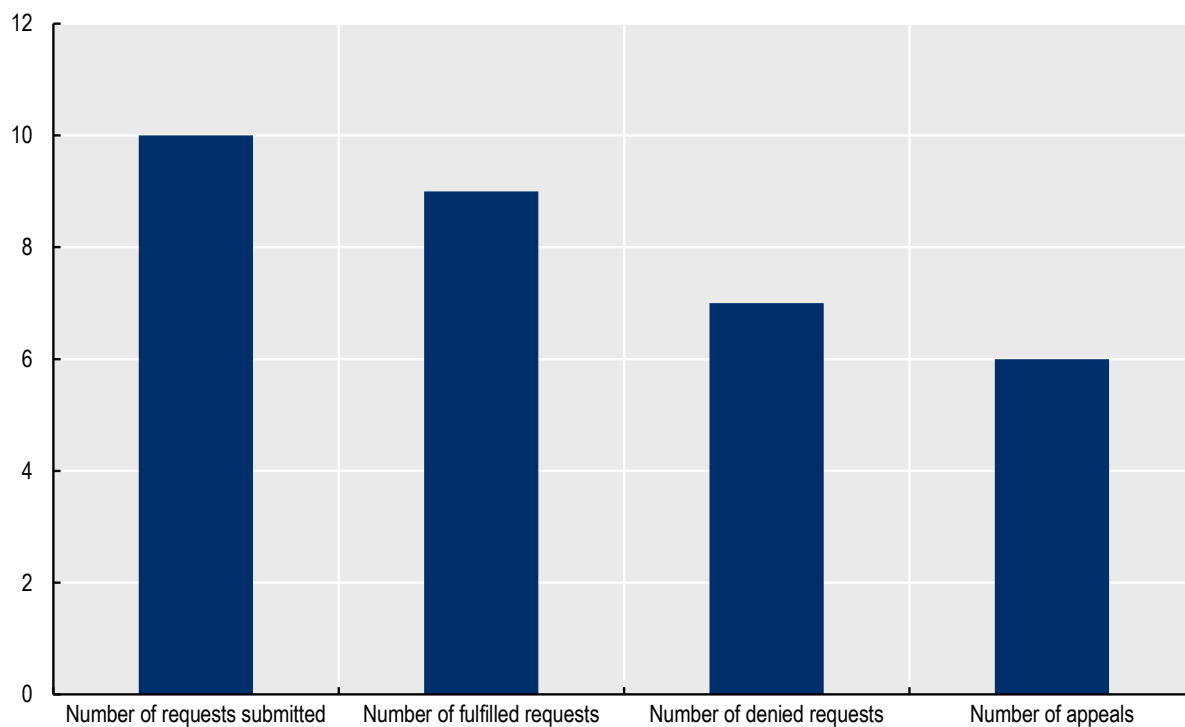
Source: Survey on access to information for Thailand Country Programme (2024)

Collecting data to monitor and evaluate access to information

52. The absence of robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms remains a key challenge in the implementation of access to information frameworks across many contexts. At the national level, responsibility for monitoring and evaluating access to information varies—ranging from parliaments and independent oversight bodies (such as information commissions and ombudsman institutions) to administrative departments and supreme audit institutions. Strong data collection and analysis are essential to identify trends, bottlenecks, and areas for improvement. In particular, systematic data on the number and types of requests received, average response times, and reasons for refusals or denials can help governments better assess performance and design targeted policy responses.

53. In Thailand, many public bodies already collect basic statistics on the number of access to information requests submitted and fulfilled, while fewer record data on the number of denials or appeals (Figure 1.19).

Figure 1.19. Data collection on access to information in Thailand



Source: Survey on access to information for Thailand Country Programme (2024)

54. Public bodies in Thailand could consider adopting a more comprehensive approach to data collection – covering both proactive and reactive disclosure indicators – to obtain a more complete picture of overall performance, as is done in Brazil (Box 1.8).

Box 1.8. Tracking and monitoring requests

Brazil

To ease the process of requesting information, Brazil created Fala.br (<https://falabr.cgu.gov.br/web/home>), an innovative platform that combines that centralises obligations on access to information. It allows citizens to request information and make complaints or claims against any federal body, express satisfaction or dissatisfaction with a service or programme, and provide suggestions for improving or simplifying public services. Importantly, users can also follow the progress of their request and file an internal appeal if needed. In addition, Fala allows the government to provide up-to-date statistics on requests and whether they are granted or denied (Figure 1.20)

Figure 1.20. Brazil's tracking of access to information requests



Source: (Government of Brazil, n.d.[17])

Overall, by centralising requests into a single system, the Fala platform has significantly simplified the process for citizens, stakeholders and federal government institutions when making or processing a request.

Source: (Government of Brazil, n.d.[18])

55. Lastly, in addition to strengthening monitoring and evaluation, Thailand could also explore incentive-based approaches to encourage continuous improvement in the implementation of access to information. Rewarding public bodies that demonstrate strong compliance or measurable progress over time can help foster a culture of transparency. Thailand already has a promising example in the form of the “Outstanding Official Information Centres” award, which recognises excellence in compliance with proactive disclosure obligations. Linking access to information performance with broader institutional incentives – such as funding for innovative initiatives, or performance bonuses – can also motivate public officials to embrace their obligations, with one such example coming from the **Philippines** (Box 1.9).

Box 1.9. Encouraging compliance on access to information in the Philippines

Due to the efforts of the Department of Budget and Management and the Presidential Communications Office, adherence to Freedom of Information (FOI) Programme requirements have been incorporated as eligibility criteria for the grant of the Performance-Based Bonus set by the Inter-Agency Task Force. To meet these requirements, public bodies must display the signed FOI Manual, FOI reports, FOI logo, and a one-page FOI Manual on their websites. This strategy links transparency performance to institutional incentives, promoting consistent implementation and ongoing improvement in access to information policies and practices.

Source: (Government of the Philippines, n.d.^[19])

56. Such approaches demonstrate how integrating transparency goals into broader public sector performance frameworks can help sustain long-term commitment to improving policies and practices around access to information.

Advancing Digital Government maturity in Thailand

Introduction

57. This section presents the results for Thailand derived from the administration of the OECD Digital Government survey and the OECD Open Government Data survey from September 2024 to February 2025 in Southeast Asia in the context of the project *Open and Connected Government* part of the OECD Thailand's Country Programme – Phase 2. The evidence and practices included in this section refer to the data collected through the surveys as of December 2023. These data also informed the development of the OECD Digital Government Index and the OECD Open, Useful, and Re-usable data (OURdata) Index for Southeast Asia, which include the results for 8 countries in the region including Thailand.

58. The section starts with a brief analysis of the results for Thailand in the OECD Digital Government Index and the OECD OURdata Index for Southeast Asia. It then follows the structure and pillars of the 2014 OECD Recommendation on Digital Government Strategies (OECD, 2014^[20]) to benchmark Thailand against OECD standards and assess the state of digital government maturity in the Country.

OECD Digital Government Index and OECD OURdata Index for Southeast Asia: Results for Thailand

The results of the OECD Digital Government Index for SEA show Thailand's progress on digital government when compared with regional peers but also surface notable gaps in specific areas.

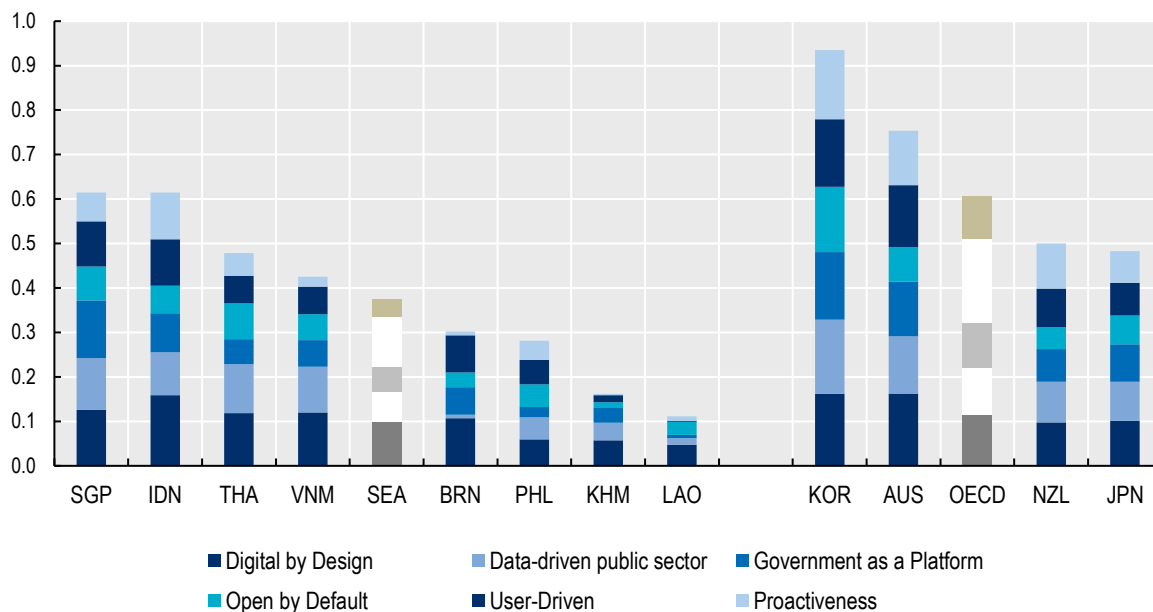
59. Thailand's composite scores in the OECD Digital Government Index for Southeast Asia (0.479) are above the regional average for Southeast Asia (0.373) (see Figure 1.21). Together with Singapore and Indonesia, Thailand is among the top three countries leading digital government maturity in the region.

60. Thailand's results across the six dimensions of the OECD Digital Government Index also show progress at a more granular level (see Figure 1.22). Thailand's composite scores are equal and/or above the SEA average in all six dimensions. Notably, Thailand's scores are slightly above the 2023 OECD average in two dimensions: Digital by design (0.71 vs. 0.68) and Data-driven public sector (0.66 vs. 0.63).

61. The abovementioned results indicate progress on digital government maturity in the country supported by a solid yet complex institutional governance including leading actors such as the Digital Government Development Agency (DGA). At the same time, Thailand's digital government initiatives and projects are grounded on whole-of-government policy instruments such as the Digital Government Development Plan (2023–2027) and a solid legal and regulatory framework which have ensured policy continuity and sustainability across political administrations.

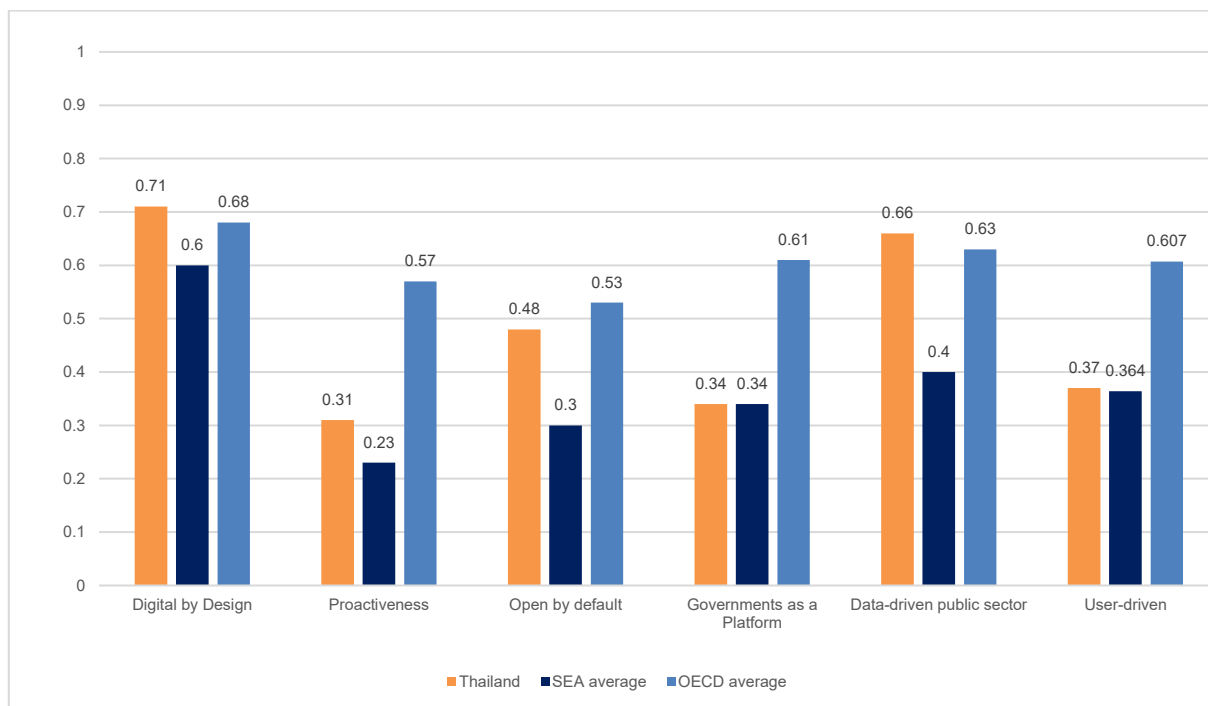
62. Despite these achievements, Thailand's composite score (0.479) remains below the 2023 OECD average (0.605). Thailand's scores are below the OECD average in four dimensions of the DGI, namely Proactiveness, Open by Default, Government as a Platform, and User-driven. These gaps derive from implementation challenges including limited engagement with service users, and the limited enforcement powers of leading institutions, among others.

Figure 21.21 Digital Government Index scores by country, 2023 (SEA) and 2022 (OECD)



Note: Results only reflect those policies and initiatives in place as of December 2023.
 Source: (OECD/ADB, 2025^[21])

Figure 1.22 Digital Government Index SEA: Thailand's results per dimension



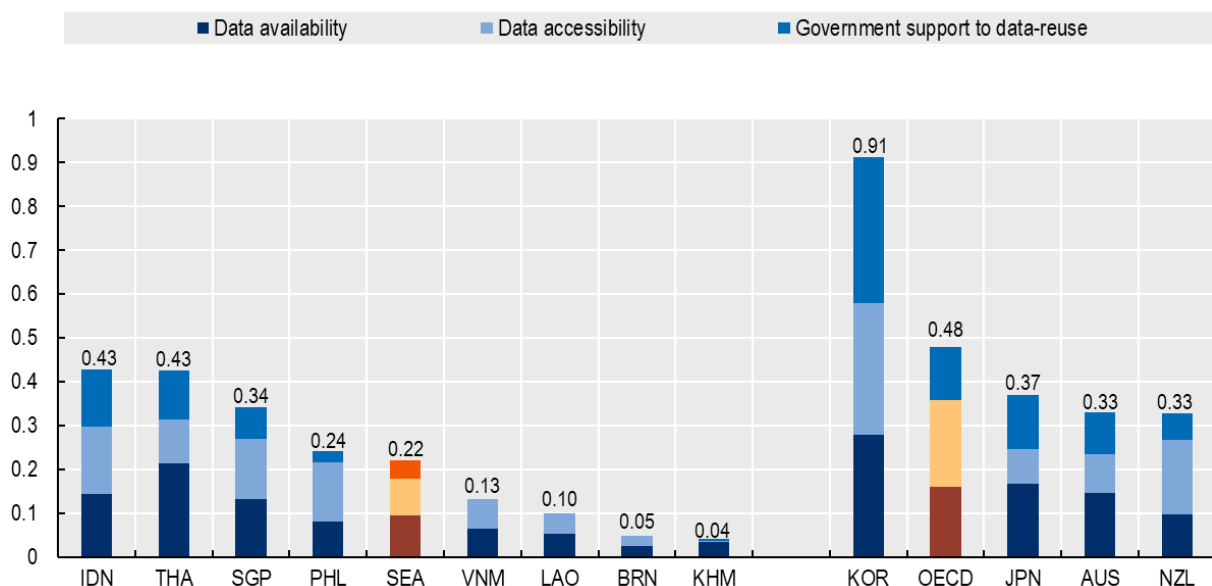
Note: Results only reflect those policies and initiatives in place as of December 2023.
 Source: Based on data from the OECD Survey on Digital Government Southeast Asia

Thailand has made great progress in terms of building solid policy foundations for open government data and making open data available for public access and re-use in a central open data portal. Yet, challenges remain in terms of engaging with data users to derive value from these initiatives.

63. Thailand's composite scores in the OECD OURdata Index for Southeast Asia (0.43) also reveal Thailand's regional leadership in terms of open government data. Thailand's composite score in the OURdata Index for SEA (0.43) is among the top three countries with the highest scores in the region, together with Indonesia (0.43) and Singapore (0.34), placing it above the regional average of 0.22 (see Figure 1.23). Despite, results per pillar of the OURdata Index show disparities in terms of policy implementation, which are reflected in Thailand's composite score being below the 2023 OECD average of 0.48.

64. Thailand's results for Pillar 1 on data availability (0.64) are above both the SEA and OECD average (0.28 and 0.48) (see Figure 1.24). Yet, while Thailand's results in Pillar 2 on data accessibility (0.30) and Pillar 3 on government support for data re-use (0.34) are above the SEA average (0.25 and 0.13 respectively), Thailand's scores remain well below the OECD average in both Pillars, particularly in Pillar 2 (0.25 for Thailand vs 0.59 in avg. for OECD). These results show a strong focus on regulatory foundations and data publication (as measured in Pillar 2) but highlight gaps in terms of user engagement for data quality and re-use, and limited policy implementation in relation to the adherence to government standards on open data when compared with OECD countries.

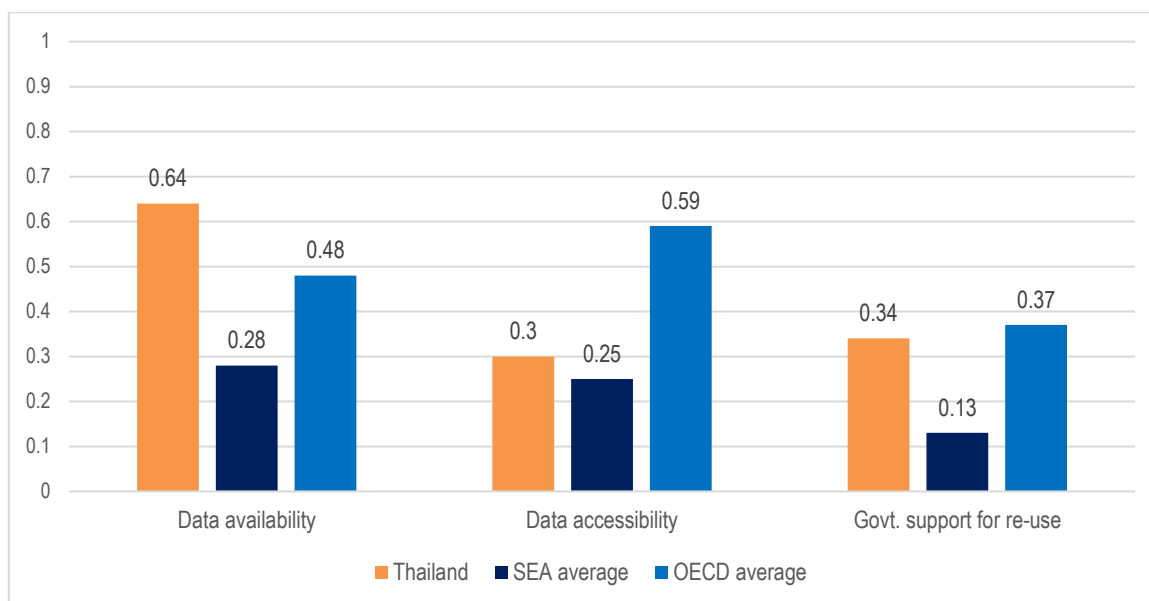
Figure 1.23 OURdata Index, 2023 (SEA), 2022 (OECD)



Note: Results only reflect those policies and initiatives in place as of December 2023.

Source: (OECD/ADB, 2025^[21])

Figure 1.24 OECD OURdata Index SEA: Thailand's results per pillar



Note: Results only reflect those policies and initiatives in place as of December 2023.

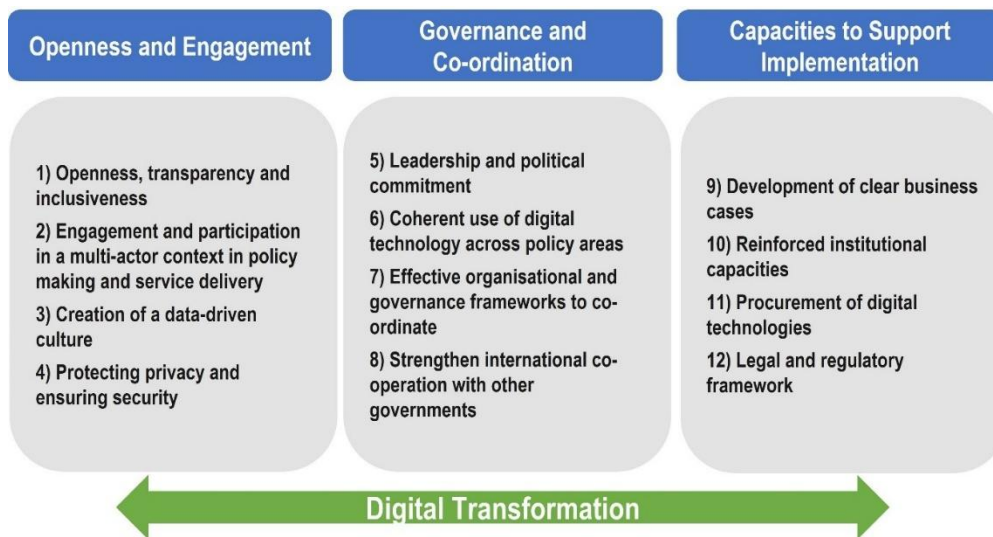
Source: Based on data from the OECD survey on Open Government Data – Southeast Asia

Thailand's implementation of the OECD Recommendation on Digital Government Strategies

65. This sub-section explores further the state of digital government in Thailand in line with the provisions of the OECD Recommendation on Digital Government Strategies. For this purpose, it structures the analysis around the three pillars of the Recommendation (see Figure 1.25) and presents evidence on achievements and challenges to date based on the data and information collected through the OECD surveys on Digital Government and on Open Government Data.

66. In following the pillars and provisions of the recommendation this sub-section seeks to provide a policy assessment and evidence of relevant practices in Thailand to highlight achievements and identify areas of opportunity in moving forward.

Figure 1.25 OECD Recommendation on Digital Government Strategies



Source: (OECD, 2014^[20])

Pillar 1: Openness and engagement

II. RECOMMENDS that governments develop and implement digital government strategies which:

- 1. Ensure greater transparency, openness and inclusiveness of government processes and operations*
- 2. Encourage engagement and participation of public, private and civil society stakeholders in policy making and public service design and delivery*
- 3. Create a data-driven culture in the public sector*
- 4. Reflect a risk management approach to addressing digital security and privacy issues and include the adoption of effective and appropriate security measures, so as to increase confidence on government services.*

Designing and delivering inclusive public services

67. This sub-section delves into Principles 1 and 2 of the Recommendation included in Pillar 1.

68. Placing public service users —citizens, businesses, and civil servants — at the core of public service design is a core principle of digital government, and a key component of the OECD Digital Government Policy Framework (DGPF) (OECD, 2020^[22]). In this regard, the DGPF emphasizes the importance of designing accessible, inclusive, and human-centred services by engaging with citizens and businesses from the outset.

69. Thailand has made significant strides toward more user-centred digital services. Thailand's Digital Government Development Plan (2023–2027)¹ promotes citizen engagement through various strategies

¹ For more information see: <https://www.dga.or.th/policy-standard/policy-regulation/dga-019/dga-027/dg-plan-2566-2570/>

and initiatives, thus including goals such as promoting public participation and public sector transparency, and engaging society in designing and delivering inclusive services.

70. In addition, relevant initiatives implemented by the Thai government to design and deliver inclusive digital government policies and public services include:

- Public Hearing on the Draft Digital Government Development Plan (2023–2027) conducted on February 24, 2022, via an online platform. This engagement exercise allowed citizens, businesses, civil society organizations, and government agencies to share opinions and suggestions for shaping the national digital government strategy.
- Digital Government Summit 2022 (DG Summit 2022): Held on May 28-29, 2022, under the theme "Digital Government in Metaverse." The Summit was organised by DGA in collaboration with more than 25 government and private sector organizations.
- Public consultations to develop guidelines on digital processes within government. These included consultations on electronic payment methods, website standards, and draft guidelines for government digital processes.

71. In parallel, the DGA has administered public surveys to assess user satisfaction with public services and has developed guidelines² to collect data on service user satisfaction to identify areas for improvement. However, further evidence from the OECD Digital Government Index for Southeast Asia (OECD, 2024_[23]) shows that Thailand still faces some challenges to scaling integrated, interoperable, and inclusive service experiences across its public administration. These challenges include:

- **Lack of Whole-of-Government Service Standards:** Thailand does not have common guidelines or service standards for service design and delivery, which limits the ability to ensure consistency and inclusivity across public services.
- **Limited Engagement with Specific Population Groups:** There are no initiatives to include specific segments of the population, such as indigenous communities, elderly, illiterate people, low-income groups, migrants, people in remote areas, people with disabilities, women, or young people, in the design of public services.
- **Absence of Omni-Channel Strategy:** Thailand lacks a strategy for managing a coherent and integrated relationship between digital and non-digital service delivery channels, which is essential for providing inclusive and seamless public services that promote integration within government.
- **Limited User Testing and Feedback Mechanisms:** Currently, few agencies systematically use citizen's input and feedback to prototype, design, iterate or redesign their services thus opening a window of opportunity to improve user feedback mechanisms by public service owners. Public sector institutions are not required to test digital government services with user involvement, and there are no formal mechanisms to involve citizens or businesses in co-designing services. these initiatives are still limited in scale and lack integration into formal service design processes.

A data-driven culture in the public sector

72. This sub-section assesses the state of a data-driven public sector in Thailand in line with Principle 3 of the OECD Recommendation on Digital Government Strategies.

73. A modern public administration supported by digital government strategies and initiatives that deliver value to society is grounded on the strategic and trustworthy use of data by the public sector. The

² For more information see: <https://www.dga.or.th/documentsharing/>

OECD Digital Government Policy Framework emphasizes the need for governments to be data-driven in ensuring that data governance mechanisms are in place to allow for innovation, interoperability, and trust.

74. Thailand has laid foundational policy instruments in this area. Key achievements include the availability of instruments such as the Thailand Digital Government Development Plan (2023-2027) and the National Policy and Plan on Digital Development for Economy and Society (2018-2037). These policy instruments set goals on data governance, integration, open data, and the use of big data for service design and policy making. Thailand has also developed a Public Data Governance Framework³ which aligns with international standards from OECD countries including the UK's Government Data Quality Framework and New Zealand's Data Stewardship Framework. Other policy mechanisms include:

- **Ethical Data Management:** Thailand's Public Data Governance Framework includes guidelines and standards for ethical data governance, including frameworks for data quality, open data disclosure, and privacy compliance.
- **Integrity and Transparency Assessment (ITA):** Evaluates public sector organizations on integrity and transparency, including open data publication to fight corruption in the country⁴.
- **Compliance with Personal Data Protection Act:** Guidelines for privacy and data security compliance.
- **Technical instruments on open data:** Standards for publishing open data in digital formats to enhance transparency through the central open data portal, <https://data.go.th>, standards for managing data catalogues, guidelines for data management and data anonymisation, and assessments for data quality.
- **Specialized training programmes**, such as the "Data Governance Framework for Digital Executives" and "e-Government Executive Programme" implemented by the DGA⁵.

75. Thailand has also implemented specific projects to enhance the application and use of data within the public sector. These include:

- **The Government Data Exchange (GDx) Platform:** Facilitates efficient data sharing and integration among public sector organizations, reducing redundancy and accelerating service delivery. GDx facilitates the connection of personal data to verify citizens' identity (e.g. to access welfare services), and links and uses citizens' data such as addresses, birth, death and marriage registers and health data to support service delivery.
- **A data catalogue for the public sector**⁶, including APIs to support data integration through GDx, guidelines⁷ and standards⁸ for its use, and indicators on data catalogue development at the institutional level.
- **Weather Forecasting System Development Project (Phase 2):** Utilizes high-performance computing and data assimilation systems for accurate weather predictions.

³ For more information see: https://standard.dga.or.th/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Final_DGF-Review-v0.17_NoTrack-Change.pdf

⁴ For more information see: <https://itas.nacc.go.th/>

⁵ For more information see: <https://tdga.dga.or.th/>

⁶ See: <https://gdx.dga.or.th/DataCatalog/Dictionary>

⁷ For more information see: https://gdhelppage.gdcatalog.go.th/data/05/files/Final_GD-Catalog-Guideline-v1.0.pdf

⁸ See: <https://standard.dga.or.th/standard/dg-std/5725/>

- **New e-Budgeting System:** Developed by Thailand's Budget Bureau, the system integrates data and processes across the budgeting cycle to enhance public financial management. The system links data from agencies such as the National Economic and Social Development Council (eMENSCR), the e-LAAS systems of Thailand's Local Administration Department and the direct salary and wage payment system of the Comptroller General's Department.

76. The evidence above shows that Thailand's government is working to become increasingly data-driven, but challenges remain in terms of adoption across ministries, the availability of data legacy systems blocking whole-of-government data integration, and the limited use of the GDX platform. For instance, whereas the GDX stands as a valuable technical platform to spur data interoperability and sharing in the public sector, the lack of an underlying unified framework for the development of digital data registers hinders data integration across agencies, which is critical for efficient service delivery. This fragmentation creates barriers to achieving the full potential of Thailand's digital government initiatives. Therefore, posing a risk for sound data governance, the application of the *once-only* principle, and integrated service delivery.

77. Also, there's also little or no evidence on the state of digital data registers in the Country besides those personal data registers (address, health, birth) already linked to the GDX central data catalogue, and data catalogues are barely developed at the institutional level.

78. Last, while the Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA) provides a foundation for safeguarding personal data, it can also block in practice data sharing across government leading to siloed and duplicated databases. There's also no evidence on the availability of data classification or taxonomy tools that could help public officials to make decisions on data access and sharing in line with available personal and privacy protection regulation.

Addressing digital government risks and threats

79. This sub-section assesses Thailand's efforts to manage digital security and privacy risks when developing and implementing digital government initiatives, in line with Principle 4 of the OECD Recommendation on Digital Government Strategies.

80. Trust in the use of technology and data by governments is at the core of a human-centred digital government. In Thailand, as in most countries around the globe, the COVID-19 pandemic propelled the design and delivery of public services through digital means and normalised digital interactions with government. However, the exponential use of digital tools for government-user interaction increased exposure to digital risks and cybersecurity threats therefore highlighting the need to manage these proactively.

81. Thailand's cybersecurity efforts are grounded on the 2019 Cybersecurity Act B.E. 2562, and by earlier legal instruments including the 2001 Electronic Transactions Act B.2544, the 2006 Criteria and Methods in Conducting Electronic Transactions for the Government Sector of B.E. 2549, and the 2007 Computer Crime Act B.E. 2550 (2007) and its 2017 amendment. The Ministry of Digital Economy and Society (MDES) and the National Cyber Security Agency (NCSA) have also issued secondary guidelines on cybersecurity to support policy execution at the institutional level. These efforts are supported by the activities and recommendations of the National Cybersecurity Committee, the cybercrime prosecution role of the Cyber Crime Investigation Bureau, and the emergency management tasks of the Thailand Computer Emergency Response Team withing the NCSA.

82. In terms of policy implementation, relevant initiatives include:

- **Cybersecurity Readiness Assessments run by the National Cyber Security Agency (NCSA)** to ensure compliance with the Cybersecurity Act B.E. 2562 (2019). These assessments focus on the preparedness of critical infrastructure and state agencies to handle cyber threats.

- **Personal Data Protection Assessments by the Personal Data Protection Committee Office (PDPC)** to evaluate the compliance of government agencies and private entities with the Personal Data Protection Act B.E. 2562 (2019). These assessments examine whether digital services adhere to privacy and data protection regulations.
- **The Digital Innovation Scholarships implemented by the Office of the Civil Service Commission (OCSC), including scholarships in Data Science and Cybersecurity.** This model seeks to bring talent to the public sector by engaging graduates with relevant bachelor's degrees to work on digital transformation projects in government agencies, specifically in Data Science and Cybersecurity.

83. Despite, concerns about data privacy and cybersecurity persist. At the same time, while Thailand has implemented programmes to increase digital literacy across society to improve access to digital public services, there's little or no evidence of specific programmes being implemented to increase awareness of digital threats across society.

Pillar 2: Governance and co-ordination

III. RECOMMENDS that, in developing their digital government strategies, governments should:

5. *Secure leadership and political commitment to the digital government strategy*

6. *Ensure coherent use of digital technologies across policy areas and levels of government*

7. *Establish effective organisational and governance frameworks to co-ordinate the implementation of the digital strategy within and across levels of government*

8. *Strengthen international co-operation with other governments*

Leadership and political commitment

84. This sub-section assesses the efforts implemented by the Thai government in line with Principle 5 of the Recommendation (OECD, 2014^[24]).

85. In Thailand, the availability of high-level leadership in digital government reflects an ambition which supported by a solid institutional governance for digital government. Its digital government ecosystem features several core institutions with distinct yet overlapping mandates. The most prominent actors include the Digital Government Development Agency (DGA) the Ministry of Digital Economy and Society (MDES), and the National Board of Digital Economy and Society Office (BDE).

86. Thailand established the DGA in 2018, under the Office of the Prime Minister. The DGA's position within the executive branch gives it access to political backing which is critical to help it execute its mandate. The DGA supports and develops the National Digital Government Development Plan (NDGS), grounded on the provisions of the Digital Government Administration and Service Act B.E. 2562 (2019), in line with the guidance and under the supervision of the Digital Government Development Committee. In this context the DGA has both policy and operational roles in terms of the definition and implementation of the digital government policy in Thailand.

87. Another relevant player is the Ministry of Digital Economy and Society (MDES), which was created in 2016 following the dissolution of the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology. The MDES plays a crucial role in shaping high-level digital policy and acts as a political driver for transformation across sectors. MDES provides political leadership and overall strategic direction for digital transformation across

society. It is responsible for major policy initiatives, including Thailand's Digital Economy Plan and the regulation of digital infrastructure and cybersecurity.

88. Last is the National Board of Digital Economy and Society Office (BDE) under the MDES. The BDE is tasked with monitoring and evaluation, as well as coordinating implementation of the digital economy strategy, particularly regarding infrastructure and connectivity.

89. Yet, some challenges persist. The OECD Open and Connected Government Review of Thailand noted that Thailand's digital governance framework is complex and dispersed, lacking a single point of authority with sufficient legal and financial power to mandate cross-government digital government policy implementation and enforcing standards that drive coherence.

90. Also, DGA's capacity to influence line ministries and enforce policy implementation remains limited. For example, while the DGA can recommend standards and offer training, it cannot legally compel adoption of shared platforms or digital ID systems. This leads to uneven implementation and siloed initiatives across ministries—limiting the strategic alignment that digital transformation requires.

91. While these institutions have contributed to Thailand's digital progress, institutional fragmentation and unclear division of responsibilities can undermine coherence. This context makes critical to further clarify the division of responsibilities while promoting coordination and empowering actors such as DGA to enforce their role.

Whole-of-government coordination and coherence

92. This sub-section assesses the efforts implemented by the Thai government in line with Principles 6 and 7 of the Recommendation (OECD, 2014^[24]).

93. In Thailand, the complex institutional framework for digital government emphasizes the need to establish coordination mechanisms to support policy implementation. For this purpose, the Thai government has established different coordination bodies to steer digital government policies and initiatives. These include:

- The National Digital Economy and Society Committee chaired by the Prime Minister, Ex-officio ministers; the Ministers of Transport, Digital Economy and Society, Commerce, Interior, Minister of Science and Technology, Education, Public Health, and Industry; the Secretary-General of the National Economic and Social Development Board; and the Governor of the Bank of Thailand.
- The Digital Government Development Committee (DGDC), as a national committee, which oversees the implementation of digital government policies and strategies, ensuring alignment with national objectives. It coordinates efforts across ministries and agencies to drive digital transformation.
- The subcommittee of Government Chief Information Officers (GCIO), under the DGDC, established to help drive the country's digital government agenda at the ministry, department and provincial levels.

94. Also, the Thai government has developed and implemented specific initiatives and tools to promote digital integration across the public sector, streamline services and improve coordination among agencies. These tools include the Government Data Exchange Center (GDX), the Open Government Data Platform (data.go.th), the Biz Portal, and the Citizen Portal.

95. Despite notable progress, Thailand still struggles with fragmented service delivery. Many ministries and local government units maintain their own platforms, applications, and data systems, often developed independently and without shared standards. This results in a patchwork of digital services that are often built on legacy platforms which in result can be confusing for users and burdensome to navigate.

96. For example, while CITIZENinfo integrates several central services, users are often redirected to external portals to complete transactions, where authentication methods, UI design, and language availability vary widely. Moreover, the lack of full interoperability between back-end systems means that users must repeatedly input personal data across platforms despite the availability of the GDX—a major barrier towards a seamless citizen-government interaction.

International co-operation

97. This sub-section assesses the efforts implemented by the Thai government in line with Principle 8 of the Recommendation (OECD, 2014_[24]).

98. Thailand's digital government strategy is also shaped by regional dynamics and international cooperation. The country is a key player in ASEAN's digital transformation efforts and hosts regional forums on digital economy and government. Thailand actively collaborates with ASEAN member states on digital transformation initiatives, such as the ASEAN Single Window (ASW) for paperless trade and e-customs integration, which facilitates cross-border trade and enhances regional economic connectivity. It has also implemented PromptPay cross-border payments, enabling seamless financial transactions with neighbouring countries, fostering regional economic integration.

99. In addition, specific initiatives in place seek to pursue digital collaboration and innovation at the regional and international level:

- **Open Data:** Thailand's Open Government Data Platform (data.go.th) promotes transparency and aligns with global open data principles, enabling international collaboration on data-driven innovation.
- **Digital Identity and Interoperability:** Thailand has developed a Digital ID Framework that aligns with international best practices, facilitating potential future collaboration on cross-border digital identity systems. Yet, Thailand's digital identity solutions cannot be used to access services in other countries, and foreign digital identity solutions are not accepted for accessing Thai public services.
- **Regulatory Sandboxes for Innovation:** The National Board of Digital Economy and Society Office (BDE) facilitates regulatory sandboxes for testing GovTech and FinTech solutions, creating opportunities for international startups and innovators to collaborate with Thailand.
- **Adoption of Global Cybersecurity Standards:** Through the Cybersecurity Act B.E. 2562 (2019), Thailand has strengthened its cybersecurity framework, aligning with international standards to protect critical information infrastructure and foster trust in cross-border digital interactions.

100. Last, Thailand's accession process to the OECD has stressed Thailand's willingness to match OECD standards through international collaboration, policy transfer and adaptation, and policy benchmarking.

Pillar 3: Capacity to support implementation

IV. RECOMMENDS that, in implementing the digital government strategies, governments should:

9. *Develop clear business cases to sustain the funding and focused implementation of digital technologies projects*

10. *Reinforce institutional capacities to manage and monitor projects' implementation*

11. *Procure digital technologies based on assessment of existing assets*

12. *Ensure that general and sector-specific legal and regulatory frameworks allow digital opportunities to be seized*

Digital investments

101. This sub-section assesses the efforts implemented by Thailand in line with Principles 9 and 11 of the Recommendation.

102. Thailand's has invested efforts to improve the management of digital investments across the public sector:

- The Digital Economy and Society Development Fund (DEF⁹) was created to finance key policy areas, including the promotion of digital government, Digital Agriculture, Digital Talent Development, and Digital Innovation Promotion. This funding is intended to support various projects under these frameworks.
- The MDES monitors the procurement of projects involving digital components above the 100 million Baht threshold⁹. This monitoring task takes place in two phases: A first phase 30 days after contract signing and a second phase once the fiscal year is closed. The monitoring of those projects under the Digital Government Development Plan involves tracking project progress by quarter from 2023 to 2027.
- All agencies are required to report operational results every quarter via the eMENSCR system¹⁰. The eMENSCR system tracks the progress of digital government projects, ensuring accountability and alignment with strategic goals.

103. Last, in 2023 the DGA conducted a Social Return on Investment (SROI) Analysis, showing exponential returns per each Baht invested on digital government (1 Baht generated 13.51 Baht in economic and social value according to DGA's assessment).

104. Despite these efforts, results from the OECD Digital Government survey for Southeast Asia show that key challenges persist thus blocking the coherent management of digital investments in the public sector:

- There is no standardized approval system or project management model for digital/ICT projects, which can lead to inefficiencies and inconsistencies.
- There are no standardized guidelines at the central/federal level to assist public sector institutions in conducting ICT procurement. This absence can lead to inconsistencies and inefficiencies in procurement processes.
- There are no comprehensive guidelines to assist public sector institutions in conducting digital/ICT procurement, which could hinder effective investment.
- Thailand primarily relies on centralized purchasing and e-auctions. Mechanisms like joint procurement, framework agreements, and innovation partnerships are underutilized, limiting opportunities for cost savings and innovation.
- ICT procurement processes and thresholds are strongly focused on computer systems (e.g. Government Computer System Procurement Projects or Information and Communication Technology System Procurement) and not on digital services, and the scalability of procured digital solutions (e.g. AI procurement).
- Despite initiatives such as the National Innovation Agency (NIA)'s programme to collaborate with GovTech startups to address public sector challenges, there is still insufficient engagement with

⁹ For more information see: <https://100m.mdes.go.th/>)

¹⁰ See: <https://emenscr.nesdc.go.th/>

private sector innovators and startups (Govtech), which could provide more tailored and innovative digital solutions tailored to public sector needs.

- Government agencies may also lack the expertise and capacity to evaluate and procure complex ICT solutions, which can result in suboptimal decision-making and investments.

Public sector capacity

105. This sub-section assesses the efforts implemented by Thailand in line with Principle 10 of the Recommendation.

106. Developing and retaining a digital workforce is one of the most urgent challenges countries face to ensure public sector meets the needs of fast-paced digital progress in society. Thailand has implemented efforts to develop and retain digital skills and talent in the public sector, focusing on equipping civil servants with the necessary competencies to drive digital transformation.

107. Thailand's Digital Government Development Plan 2023-2027 highlights the importance of digital skills training to ensure effective implementation of digital government initiatives. Among the most relevant initiatives are the Digital Skills Training Courses for Personnel, which provide formal training on topics such as big data, data analysis, and service delivery excellence.

108. Additionally, the Government Personnel Development Guidelines for 2023-2027¹¹, developed by the Office of the Civil Service Commission (OCSC), emphasize fostering a digital mindset and enhancing digital skills across various levels of public officials, including operational staff, managerial positions, and executive roles. Key areas of focus include digital literacy, governance, leadership, technology application, service innovation, data utilization, and cybersecurity. These efforts aim to create a work environment conducive to digital transformation and strengthen the capabilities of public officials to support the country's digital government maturity.

109. The OCSC has also introduced proactive recruitment strategies, such as the Digital Innovation Scholarships, which focus on fields like data science and cybersecurity to attract and retain digital talent. The OCSC also offers e-Learning platforms and organizes training courses to enhance digital competencies¹². Last, the OCSC mandates that government agencies develop Human Resource Development (HRD) plans that include strategies for digital skills, ensuring all levels are adequately covered.

110. Altogether, the above-mentioned initiatives collectively aim to build a robust digital workforce capable of driving Thailand's transition to a modern, efficient, and inclusive digital government.

111. Despite, Thailand still faces several gaps and challenges in its efforts to develop digital talent and skills in the public sector.

- One significant challenge is the lack of a comprehensive assessment of digital skills needs across government agencies. Without a clear understanding of the specific skill gaps, it becomes difficult to tailor training programs and initiatives effectively.
- Additionally, while there are proactive recruitment strategies, such as scholarships for digital innovation, there is limited focus on establishing clear career paths to retain digital talent in the long term. This can hinder the ability to maintain a motivated and skilled workforce.
- Another challenge is the absence of mobility and skills transfer mechanisms within the public sector. These mechanisms are crucial for fostering collaboration and ensuring that digital expertise

¹¹ For more information see: <https://www.ocsc.go.th/civil-servant-development/civil-servant-development-plan/>

¹² For more information see: [OCSC Learning Portal](#)

is shared across different government agencies. Furthermore, informal support systems, such as communities of practice or retrospective meetings, are not widely implemented, which limits opportunities for knowledge sharing and peer learning.

112. In the public sector, evidence suggests that digital training is often limited to short-term workshops and e-learning courses without sustained follow-up or practical application. There's also no evidence on uptake levels by public officials and practical implementation of skills learnt, outside the Bangkok metropolitan area. Also, there's no evidence on how digital skills training programmes fit into career progression frameworks which in return could help to retain digital talent.

113. Addressing these gaps will be essential for Thailand to build a sustainable digital workforce capable of driving its digital government transformation.

Legal and regulatory framework

114. This sub-section assesses the efforts implemented by Thailand in line with Principle 12 of the Recommendation.

115. Thailand has made significant strides in establishing a robust legal and regulatory framework to support its digital government transformation. The **Digital Government Administration and Service Act B.E. 2562 (2019)** serves as a cornerstone, providing a comprehensive framework for digital governance, interoperability, and service delivery standards. This act ensures that government agencies adopt consistent digital processes and integrate their operations to improve efficiency and accessibility. Complementing this, the **Personal Data Protection Act B.E. 2562 (2019) (PDPA)** safeguards citizens' privacy and data protection, ensuring that digital services comply with international standards for personal data security. These laws collectively enable Thailand to modernize its public administration while fostering trust in digital services.

116. Another notable achievement is the enactment of the **Cybersecurity Act B.E. 2562 (2019)**, which strengthens the country's ability to protect critical information infrastructures and respond to cyber threats. This act mandates the establishment of mechanisms like the **Thailand Computer Emergency Response Team (ThaiCERT)** to monitor and mitigate cybersecurity risks.

117. The **Act on Carrying Out of Public Service via Electronic Means B.E. 2565 (2022)** ensures that government agencies provide digital services, making public administration more accessible and efficient. These legal advancements, along with supporting regulations like the **Royal Decree on Supervision of Digital Identification Systems (2022)** and the **Digital ID Framework**, demonstrate Thailand's commitment to creating a secure, transparent, and citizen-centric digital government ecosystem.

118. Other relevant legislation and regulations include:

- **The Electronic Transactions Act B.E. 2544 (2001) and Amendments:** Governs electronic transactions, including digital signatures and public sector electronic processes.
- **Official Information Act B.E. 2540 (1997):** Promotes transparency and public access to government information.
- **Emergency Decree on Electronic Meetings B.E. 2563 (2020):** Facilitates electronic meetings for government agencies.
- **Digital Development for Economy and Society Act B.E. 2560 (2017):** Promotes digital development for economic and social advancement.
- **Licensing Facilitation Act B.E. 2558 (2015):** Simplifies licensing processes to improve administrative efficiency.

- **Royal Decree Governing Criteria and Methods in Conducting Electronic Transactions for the Government Sector B.E. 2549 (2006):** Sets standards for electronic transactions in the public sector.
- **Royal Decree on Establishment of Big Data Institute (Public Organization) B.E. 2566 (2023):** Establishes a Big Data Institute to support data-driven public sector operations.
- **Emergency Decree on Digital Asset Businesses B.E. 2561 (2018):** Regulates digital businesses, including blockchain and cryptocurrency.
- **Ministerial Regulation Prescribing Supplies and Methods for Procurement of Supplies that the Government Wishes to Promote or Support (No. 4) B.E. 2566 (2023):** Encourages innovation and experimentation in public sector procurement.

119. Other soft instruments include the **Announcement of the Digital Government Development Committee on Government Data Governance** (providing guidelines for data classification and sharing across government agencies), the **Announcement of the National Cybersecurity Committee (2021)** (defines criteria for critical information infrastructure agencies and their cybersecurity responsibilities), the DGA's **Guidelines for Digital Government Processes**, and the **Guidelines on government cybersecurity**.

120. Yet, while these legislations and regulations collectively aim to enhance Thailand's digital transformation by promoting transparency, efficiency, cybersecurity, data protection, and interoperability, the Country still faces several challenges, particularly in ensuring comprehensive implementation and alignment across all sectors.

121. While laws like the Digital Government Administration and Service Act B.E. 2562 (2019) and the Personal Data Protection Act B.E. 2562 (2019) provide a strong foundation, the practical enforcement of these regulations remains uneven. Many government agencies struggle with the technical capacity and resources needed to comply fully with interoperability and data protection standards.

122. Another challenge lies in addressing emerging technologies and cross-border digital services. While Thailand has made progress with soft instruments like the **Digital Thailand AI Ethics Principles and Guidelines**, there is no dedicated legal framework for artificial intelligence (AI) or blockchain applications in the public sector. This gap limits the ability to leverage advanced technologies for policymaking and service delivery. Furthermore, the absence of mutual recognition of digital identities across borders restricts Thailand's ability to participate in global digital ecosystems. Addressing these challenges requires not only updating existing laws but also fostering collaboration between public and private sectors to ensure that Thailand's legal and regulatory frameworks remain adaptive to technological advancements and international standards.

123. Last, the DGA plays a central operational role in digital transformation, but its legal authority and enforcement power is rather limited. It lacks the formal power to enforce compliance by ministries or compel adoption of shared platforms like the national digital ID (NDID) or the GDX. This results in varied implementation quality across agencies and a proliferation of siloed initiatives.

124. Some promising reforms are emerging, such as the use of digital sandboxes and pilot initiatives coordinated by DGA. These offer limited but useful opportunities for creating a digital mindset in the public sector where experimentation is possible before full-scale implementation. Still, without formal incentives and stronger policy levers, these cultural change initiatives remain the exception rather than the rule.

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