

Foreword

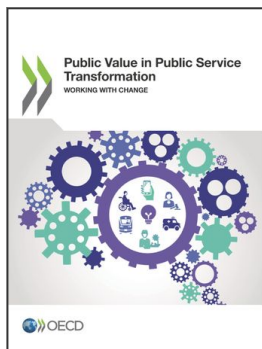
Societies and economies are at the cusp of large-scale transformative changes. The digital revolution alone is changing the way we work, learn and interact with each other. The full consequences of these changes are not yet evident, but they require governments to anticipate working differently in the future, and to plan for that now.

Historically, governments have been reactive – responding to hazards and transformations after they have materialised, rather than proactive – envisioning future scenarios and planning for them. This has resulted in governments applying known solutions rather than imagining alternative futures and preparing for them (for example by regulating new modes of production or the sharing economy).

Building on the 2017 OECD report, *Systems Approaches to Public Sector Challenges: Working with Change*, on how to apply systems thinking to complex horizontal policy issues (e.g. tackling child protection, domestic violence, sharing economy) the current report examines how governments can move from a tactical (connected to a method to achieve a goal) to a more holistic approach to system change.

Drawing on diverse case studies from across the world, the report illustrates how a strategic approach to system change implies three key elements: envisioning and acting on the future; putting public value at the core of the change process; and systematically engaging citizens in decision-making.

The empirical cases – drawn from actual experiences of select cities - show that a strategic approach to system change in the public sector is possible, but requires strong leadership commitment, enhanced system capabilities and innovative approaches to problem solving in the public sector.



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