

Foreword

Effective public communication is both a policy tool and an important part of open government. In Lebanon, considerable reform efforts have been under way in recent years to further the principles of transparency, integrity, accountability and stakeholder participation. This includes landmark legislation on anti-corruption and access to information enacted between 2017 and 2020.

Nonetheless, two-way communication by institutions with citizens remains underutilised as a means to increase openness and improve policy. This OECD Review aims to support Lebanon in designing reforms and introducing good practices that can maximise the potential of such communication. The report and its recommendations were requested by the Lebanese government, whose civil service remains committed to ambitious governance reforms despite a turbulent period for the country.

Indeed, policy interventions that can make Lebanese institutions more open and responsive to citizens have become urgent. Since October 2019, citizens have taken to the streets across the country to demand better governance and economic opportunities. Their calls for change have grown louder in the aftermath of a tragic blast at the Port of Beirut in August 2020 that exposed the real consequences of public mismanagement.

Following an acute economic crisis, aggravated by the hardship of the COVID-19 pandemic, Lebanon's government will face crucial decisions for the recovery and future of the country. More strategic communication would help bring stakeholders into these decisions, thereby improving their outcomes and leading to better policies as well as increased public trust.

This OECD Review analyses the governance structures and procedures for public communication across the public administration, along with the use of core competencies for this function and how they support transparency and stakeholder participation in public life. The recommendations in this report highlight important opportunities to shift towards a more strategic approach to communication that can better serve policy goals and help respond to citizens' needs and expectations.

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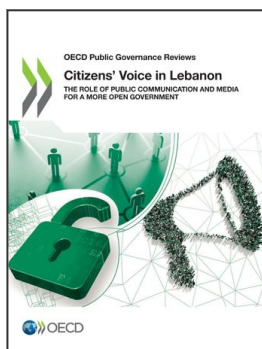
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