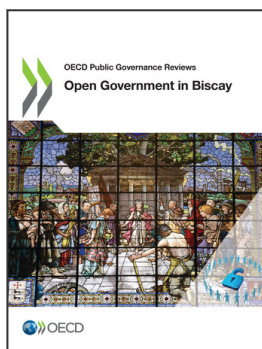


## *Foreword*

Local governments are at the forefront of open government reforms. Their smaller size allows for greater proximity to citizens, making it easier for them to meet demands for transparency, accountability and responsiveness. It also allows them to implement more targeted and innovative public policies and to promote the principles of open government.

The government of the Province of Biscay has been implementing initiatives linked to the principles of open government for several years. It also has a long tradition of stakeholder participation, especially in the co-production of social services. Building on this, the current government of Biscay, elected in 2015, identified transparency, participation and closeness to citizens as guiding principles of its programme. As part of its open government agenda, in 2017, Biscay published an Open Government Action Plan that consolidates and builds upon previous participation and transparency initiatives, and includes a roadmap for achieving specific commitments. Biscay has asked the OECD for a thorough assessment of its open government agenda.

The analysis in this Review is based on the ten provisions of the 2017 OECD Recommendation of the Council on Open Government. It provides an in-depth assessment of Biscay's institutional, legal and policy frameworks for implementing open government initiatives, with a particular focus on the creation of a sound monitoring and evaluation system. The findings indicate that Biscay has demonstrated high-level political commitment and leadership around open government, which will help anchor it within the public administration. The government has also carried out important initiatives in the areas of transparency and stakeholder participation. However, further efforts are needed to develop a holistic open government strategy and to institutionalise the open government agenda to ensure their successful and sustainable long-term implementation. To that end, the Review includes recommendations for the Province of Biscay on how to foster a public governance culture that empowers all stakeholders to play an active role throughout the entire policy cycle.



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