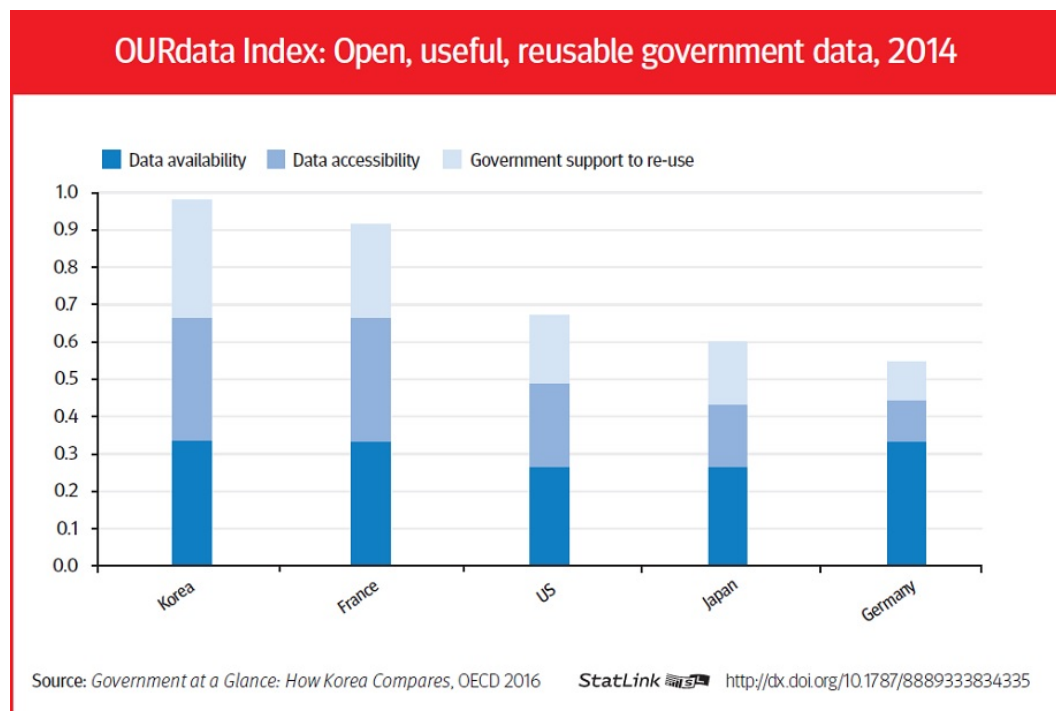


Korea's digital governance

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Given Korea's prowess in digital services, it should come as no surprise to see the country leading the field in e-governance. Its lead, notably in open data, owes much to government efforts and investments in digital infrastructure and systems since the 1990s. In 2014 more than 70% of all Koreans reported having used the internet at least once over the previous 12 months to interact with the public authorities, whether to obtain information on a government website, or to download or file a form, for instance. That's far more than the OECD average of 55%.

Digital services are smart too: for example, if a person applies for a birth certificate, the online system called Minwon 24 enables them automatically to apply to get child-support payments or to get vaccination information at the same time. The use of digital tools among public officials is also widespread. However, there is a wide gap between the use of e-government services by age group, with over 90% of younger people declaring use, but only 30% among the older generation, which is lower than, say, France or the UK, with 35%.

Where Korea particularly shines is in open data, as the government has increased the amount of data available on its central open data portal (<https://data.go.kr>).

Since 2013, all public sector agencies have had to register their datasets in the central open data portal by law, and now Koreans can access large quantities of government data on public expenditure and election results, as well as on crime, the environment, health care and education. Open data management guidelines have been developed to assure quality, timeliness and formats, while the government also sponsors promotional events, such as an IoT (Internet of Things) Week, and hackathons for programmers and start-ups. Its “Open Square D” Centre (OSD) opened in 2016 provides a facility for data entrepreneurs to exchange knowledge and to develop their skills.

There are challenges of course, such as constantly improving user-friendliness and stepping up engagement with civil society organisations and the media. Social media also provides new challenges for all governments, and while Korea’s 3.0 action plans provide some guidelines for the public sector, performance indicators still need to be enhanced.

For more information, contact Barbara Ubaldi at the OECD.

References

Government at a Glance: How Korea Compares <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264259003-en>