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Outcomes of the in-depth reviews carried out by the Bureau
of the Conference of European Statisticians

In-depth review of governance statistics

Note by Mexico, Turkey and OECD

Summary

The document is a shortened version of the document that provided basis for the in-depth review of governance statistics that the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians carried out in October 2016.

The document summarizes international activities related to governance statistics, and identifies issues and challenges. The conclusions and recommendations from the review are presented in section V. The outcome of the review is provided as document ECE/CES/2017/9/Add.1.

The full version of the document is available at: www.unece.org/stats/ces/reviews.html.

I. Executive summary

1.   The notion of 'governance' is broad and complex, applied in a variety of contexts, and encompassing both technical and substantive aspects. The term is now embedded in the political lexicon of most countries, and figures prominently in national and international statistical agendas. This interest by the statistical community, partly prompted by the inclusion of a 'governance' goal in the UN 2030 Agenda, led to the creation of a UN Praia City Group on Governance Statistics in March 2015. This in-depth review on governance statistics, undertaken under the aegis of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES), takes stock of the statistical measures available in the region and identifies challenges to further progress.

2.   This review[1] adopts a narrow definition of governance, focusing on public institutions (i.e. excluding corporations and other private institutions) operating at the national level (i.e. excluding international or local institutions). As a first step towards reaching consensus on a conceptual framework that could be operationalised by official statistics, it suggests grouping the various aspects typically associated with the concept of governance under three broad domains: i) the high-level principles governing the operations of these institutions; ii) the processes through which decisions in these institutions are made; and iii) the valued outcomes that these institutions deliver to people. These domains include more specific dimensions and more detailed aspects within them. These domains link to specific government functions, and are best assessed by specific actors and measurement instruments. Principles are typically measured based on expert assessments provided by researchers; processes are best measured through administrative data and assessments provided by civil servants; finally, in the case of valued outcomes, individuals are the main unit of analysis, implying that household surveys conducted by national statistical offices (NSOs) and other data producers play the key role. In many cases, however, statistics from a diverse range of sources will need to be brought together to inform on the multidimensionality of governance.

3.   Governance statistics in the CES region, while still rare, are collected through all these sources. The review highlights the special role played by administrative data, gathered by public agencies in the process of delivering and assessing various government functions. It describes (based on replies from NSOs to a dedicated questionnaire) the range of statistical information that is already available, noting the heterogeneity and limited comparability of this country-level information, as well as the lack of a common nomenclature across countries to describe the critical items at hand. More comparable data on governance are typically compiled by international organisations based on qualitative assessments — provided by either government officials or research networks. Household surveys, conducted by either non-official statistical producers or (less often) by NSOs, also play an important role in internationally comparative information.

4.   Three conclusions emerge from this review. First, while several statistics relating to various aspects of governance are already available in the region, they differ in terms of the underlying concepts, the labels used to describe them, the range of institutions covered, and the detailed aspects (functions) considered. Therefore, developing a common conceptual framework is a prerequisite for gathering more robust and useful statistics in this field. Second, efforts should be devoted to assessing the quality of the statistics that already exist,

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[1] The review was prepared by Salim Gürbüz, Devrim Yağan, Oktay Özgüç İrken, Evrim Sultan, Aslıhan Kabadayı, Mert Gökcü, Yusuf Sümer, Fisun Şener, Merve Aytekin, from the Turkish Statistical Institute; Adrian Franco and Oscar Jaimes, INEGI, Mexico; and Santiago Gonzalez, Lara Fleischer and Marco Mira d'Ercole, OECD.

as a preliminary step towards providing general advice and developing guidelines for statistical producers and users of governance statistics. The model currently used by OECD with respect to measuring 'trust' (based on the assessment of various aspects of 'validity' of available measures) should be extended to other aspects of governance. Third, while politically sensitive, NSOs should consider governance statistics as part of their routine production, subject to the same quality standards and requirements that apply to other social, economic and environmental statistics.

II. Introduction

5.   In the past, the concept of 'governance' has been used in many contexts by diverse disciplines, encompassing different philosophies, actors, institutions, and sectors. In this process, no single definition of governance that is accepted across all disciplines has emerged. Since the 1990s the term has been increasingly associated with policies aimed at creating institutional frameworks conducive to economic growth and development (Rothstein, 2015), i.e. 'good governance'. While the notion is both new and contested (Plattner, 2013), researchers and international organizations have used it to refer to a plethora of different and partly overlapping concepts, such as political system, democracy, rule of law, respect for human rights, freedoms, absence of discrimination, transparent administrative procedures, participation by ordinary citizens and civil society organisations, regulatory quality, effectiveness of public policies, or anti-corruption.

6.   Much of the modern uses of term 'governance' were driven by concerns about the experiences of countries transitioning from authoritarian regimes to democracies, and of developing countries with weak institutional capacities. Governance indicators have been used by investors, donors and financial institutions to evaluate the stability and transparency of governments as well as the ease to conduct business affairs in different countries (Arndt and Oman, 2006).

7.   However, today's demand for robust governance indicators is not limited to developing and emerging countries, or to the concerns of foreign investors with respect to their entrepreneurial operations. Such demand is today as present in 'old democracies' as in new ones and it relates to an increasing dissatisfaction by ordinary people with how democracy works. Whether policy decisions are responsive to the needs and rights of citizens and whether growing economic inequalities are limiting the equality of people in front of the law and in the political system are essential questions in this regard. Further, how political and government institutions function matters for people's political voice and agency, and is therefore a vital element of people's overall well-being (Stiglitz et al, 2009).[2]

8.   There are many international indicator sets focusing on public governance. Some of them are quite comprehensive – such as the World Bank's "World Governance Indicators" (WGI) or Bertelsmann's "Sustainable Governance Indicators" (SGI) — while others focus on selected aspects of governance — such as the "Rule of Law Index" (RoL) produced by the World Justice Project or Transparency International's "Corruption Index" — or on a limited set of government services – such as the World Bank's "Doing Business"

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[2] In this vein, the OECD identifies "civic engagement and governance" as one of the 11 dimensions of people's well-being (OECD, 2013), and relies on indicators of voter turnout, participation in political activities, stakeholders' engagement in the process of developing government regulations to benchmark countries' performance. Measures of people's trust in others, in national governments and in public institutions are also used by the OECD to monitor 'social capital', one of the key resources for sustaining future well-being (OECD 2015).

indicators. Some of these sets collate information from many different sources while others build on data exclusively or primarily collected by the sponsoring organisation.

9.   However, governance statistics lack a solid foundation within the official statistical system. No international standards or guidelines exist that could guide data collections in this field. Lack of common agreement about what exactly should be measured is surely the main problem: without theoretical and analytical clarity on what the concept of governance is, and about its constituent elements, its operationalization risks becoming a futile exercise. Very little systematic research on the validity of various measures exists, i.e. whether the concept measured by statisticians maps onto identifiable constructs for household survey respondents, whether different measures of the same concept provide consistent information, and whether these measures align with common understanding of their causes and consequences.

10.   There are indications, however, that the long neglect of governance by official statistics is coming to an end. Following a public consultation on its "Measures of Australia's Progress", the Australian Bureau of Statistics identified 'governance' as a separate pillar of its work, on par with economic, social and environmental statistics. Other statistical offices, such as INEGI in Mexico, have undertaken important investments to enhance their ability to measure the functioning of the judicial system, and of people's access to various public services and institutions. At the international level, a UN City Group on Governance Statistics (Praia Group) was established by the UN Statistical Commission in March 2015, with the goal to develop a Handbook on Governance Statistics for NSOs by March 2018. The adoption by the UN General Assembly of a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals in September 2015 — one of them about "Promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels" — has heightened pressure on NSOs to identify indicators suitable for "global reporting".

11.   In this context of growing international interest the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) agreed, at its meeting in October 2015, to launch an in-depth review on governance statistics. This review, which was prepared by the Turkish Statistical Institute, INEGI (Mexico) and OECD, aims, inter alia, to contribute to the Praia Group's work by reviewing the information on governance statistics that is currently available in countries participating to the CES. The review is organised as follows. A short executive summary of the full review is provided in Section I. Following this introduction (Section II), Section III outlines the scope and definition of the statistical area. Section IV describes the evidence on statistical activities gathered, grouped under two broad headings, namely country-level data, mainly sourced from administrative information; and comparative indicators based on either expert assessments or on non-official household surveys. In addition to desk top research, evidence on governance-related statistical activities is based on a questionnaire sent to NSOs participating in the CES on 11 May 2016.[3] Section V provides recommendations for further statistical work in this area.

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[3] Overall, 29 NSOs answered to this questionnaire; country-responses are available at the wiki provided by UNECE for distributing documents for the CES Bureau meetings.

III. Scope and definition of the statistical area covered

A. Governance as multidimensional concept

12.   There is not a single definition of the term 'governance'. Since the 1990s the term has been increasingly associated with 'good governance', i.e. policies aimed at creating institutional frameworks conducive to growth and development (Rothstein, 2015), and to the diffusion of new management models. But this definition, by itself, does not pass the test of clearly identifying what falls within, and what is outside, the boundaries of governance statistics.

13.   Lack of common agreement about the definition and ingredients of governance entails several challenges for the measurement agenda. Lack of agreement about what exactly should be measured is the main problem: without theoretical and analytical clarity, the operationalization of the concept of governance risks becoming a futile exercise. The next sub-section provides a first attempt to deconstruct the broad concept of governance into its basic domains, distinguishing between various units of analysis

B. Deconstructing the concept of governance

14.   The only option for operationalising complex concepts such as governance is to "deconstruct" it. This implies two basic decisions: first, excluding entities whose measurement is more problematic; and, secondly, using a scheme to describe what falls within the boundary of the concept being analysed.

15.   With respect to the first criterion, the choice made in this section is to restrict the reach of this review to public institutions serving the common good of a community of people. This implies neglecting private institutions, even when they have important bearings on the welfare of large communities. As most of public institutions have their roots in national states, this section further restricts attention to national institutions, i.e. excluding international or supranational ones. Even so, the field of enquiry remains vast, as national public institutions are executed at different geographical levels (i.e. federal, state and sub-national level) and relate to separate branches of government.

16.   With respect to the second criterion, public institutions have been considered, at the most abstract level, as guarantors of the rights and well-being of the people being governed by these institutions. This perspective follows a long tradition that recognizes that a "key task of governments is to secure people the most central entitlements" (Nussbaum 2011). These entitlements are shaped, for instance, by the quality of decision-making processes and include, among others, the existence and transparency of the electoral process, wide access to information, the maintenance of civil and political rights, the existence of limits (as expressed by the law) to the decisions made by public institutions or to the process of selecting, monitoring and replacing governments. While citizens' rights and institutional constraints are specific to a given country and period, all public institutions (whether operating in established democracies or in authoritarian regimes) owe their legitimacy to the presumption that they are acting to secure the constitutional entitlements of those being governed.

17.   At a more detailed level, public institutions are expected to make and implement decisions conducive to economic development and societal well-being in an effective and competent way. However, a governance machinery working properly and effectively cannot be an objective *per se*. Public institutions should deliver outcomes that are valued (i.e. recognised as important) by people, and these outcomes should improve people's lives.

Rotberg, for example, argues that good governance is best measured by looking at government results, interpreted as service delivery outputs and outcomes (2010).

18.	In the light of many various theoretical perspectives, the three domains used in this review to classify the various aspects of governance (i.e. the second criterion mentioned above) are (Figure 1):

- the high level principles governing the functioning of various public institutions, which are critical for establishing the legitimacy of the decision taken;

- the processes through which decisions are taken and implemented, which are important for the capacity of public institutions to undertake a given function; and

- the outcomes delivered by these institutions that are valued as important by members of a given community.

19.	The three domains shown in Figure 1 are not fully independent of each other: typically, 'principles' frame 'processes', which in turn influence 'outcomes'. But each of them captures facets of governance that are conceptually different, and whose measurement requires specific tools (OECD, 2017).

Figure 1
Conceptual domains of governance
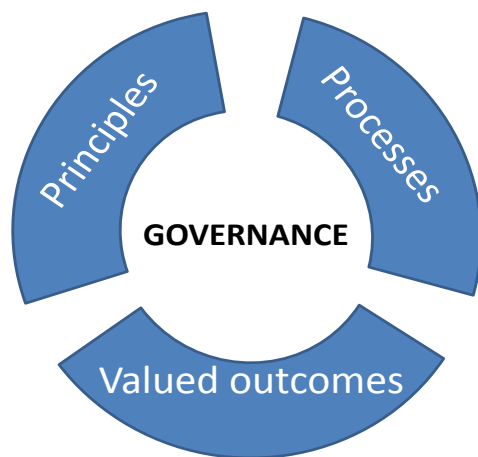
Source: OECD (2017)

20.	Table 1 further details this conceptual framework. In the last column, the table presents more detailed dimensions within the three main domains, drawing upon some of the labels typically used in the governance literature. While the list of dimensions is not exhaustive, it illustrates most of the items discussed in this report.

Table 1
Deconstructing the concept of governance

Domain	Question	Functions	Unit of analysis	Dimensions
Principles	What is expected from public institutions?	Guarantee that public institutions respond to shared societal values such as safeguarding freedom, maintaining peace and security	Public institutions and agencies	• Rule of law • Existence of democracy
Processes	How do public institutions perform their role?	Making and implementing decisions that are needed for the appropriate regulation of economic and social life	Public institutions and agencies	• Quality of democracy • Administrative procedures • State capacity • Bureaucratic autonomy • Regulatory quality • Effectiveness • Accountability • Non-discrimination
Valued Outcomes	Why it is important?	Deliver services that improve the lives of people	People and citizens	• Political efficacy • Civic engagement • Trust in institutions • Satisfaction with services delivered

IV. Statistical activities on governance in the UNECE and OECD countries

A. Overview of measurement approaches

21.   Each of the three domains identified in Section III calls for a different measurement approach, tailored to the underlying phenomena being captured and the most appropriate source of information. In general, although with some exceptions:

- Principles governing the functioning of various public institutions reflect the political and philosophical ideals of each society. Even within a concept broadly embraced such as democracy, several institutional set-ups may produce good outcomes, with notions on 'ideal' democracy varying across countries and periods. Most discussions about quality of democracy and other political regimes are fairly academic, as evidenced by collaborative projects such as 'Varieties of Democracy', Polity2, the World Justice Project, etc. All of these projects focus on the state and the quality of public institutions of each country, and assess countries' performance based on the views of experts. Conversely, neither public servants nor statistical offices are generally well placed to rate political institutions as they could be faced with conflicting interests when assessing the system they are serving in. While the subject matter itself is inevitably subjective, academics and research institutions tend to be better placed to pass judgement on the principles to which public institutions adhere as well as how these principles are operationalised in practice.

- Processes can be measured through indicators of how public institutions function. In most cases, this assessment will require technical knowledge about the rules and operations of various parts of the governance machinery. In order to measure this

domain of governance, civil servants are typically best placed to provide the required information based on administrative sources. Some comparative information in this area is currently collected by international organizations, as in the case of the OECD "Government at a Glance" series.

- Finally, in the case of valued outcomes, citizens are the preferred unit of observation, as they alone can judge how governance affects their lives and shapes their destinies. NSOs and other (non-official) producers of household-level based statistics are best placed to measure valued outcomes in ways that that could be compared across countries, periods and demographic groups.

B. Country-level data

22.   Most of the governance statistics currently produced in countries are based on administrative data. For this reason, this section first describes the features of administrative data that make them, potentially, best suited for this task. The section then presents information on governance statistics produced in individual countries, based on the replies provided by NSOs to a questionnaire prepared to support this review.

1. Administrative records

23.   NSOs produce statistics aiming to achieve the highest possible quality: this implies meeting criteria of timeliness, relevance, accuracy, comparability, coherence, accessibility and clarity, based upon cost-efficient methods of data-collection and processing that minimize the burden on participants (UNECE, 2007). To accomplish this goal, NSOs rely on three sources: censuses, surveys of households and businesses, and administrative records (INEGI, 2012). While censuses and surveys are explicitly designed to meet statistical needs on a particular topic, administrative records are not primarily conceived to meet a statistical goal, but as part of the procedures that government agencies, within their jurisdiction and powers, routinely follow as part of their operations.

24.   Decisions about the use of administrative records for governance statistics are especially complex due to the diversity of definitions of governance proposed by the literature. Even so, administrative records have a special role to play measuring governance, as the observance and enforcement of governmental procedures, as well as the fact that these administrative records often reflect the direct contact between citizens and government agencies, allows producing statistics and indicators about several key aspects of governance, such as the number and quality of the services delivered and the processes followed by these agencies. Table 2 lists the types of administrative data that could be used to assess a number of dimensions of governance: a broad conclusion is that administrative data are especially useful for measuring aspects of governance falling under the domain of processes.

Table 2
Types of administrative data that could be used to measure governance

Domains of governance	Dimensions of governance	Types of administrative data that could be used
Principles	• Rule of law • Existence of democracy	Records in: courts and tribunals; electoral offices; human rights councils; police and prosecutors offices; transparency units; specialized state attorneys; regulatory commissions
Processes	• Quality of democracy • Administrative procedures • State capacity • Bureaucratic autonomy • Regulatory quality • Effectiveness • Accountability • Non-discrimination	Permits, licences and government authorizations; expenditure budget, public finance accounts; audits, government procurement; results-based budgeting; human, financial and infrastructure military resources; telecommunications information; Human Resource Management agencies; records from regulatory agencies; -records from Ministry of Finance and line Ministries; records from criminal and administrative courts and tribunals
Valued outcomes	• Political efficacy • Civic engagement • Trust in institutions • Satisfaction with services delivered	Questionnaires completed by users of various public services (other than surveys); records of electoral offices; records of courts and tribunals on human rights infringements

25.   In theory, administrative records have several advantages, relative to censuses and surveys, when it comes to measuring governance:

• When administrative processes are thorough, administrative data will also be consistent and high quality. The administrative agency responsible for the registers, or at least of its key variables, can – in partnership with the national statistical office – set up the mechanisms needed so that the statistical requirements match with the main purpose of the administrative record;

• Complementarity between administrative records and surveys. A register-based statistical system may compensate the unwillingness of respondents to participate in surveys. In addition, administrative records can be used when designing a survey, to reach some sub-groups of the population or, to generate ex post stratification weights;

• Synergies between institutions. Administrative records refer to particular events or processes. But the requirements of a register-based statistical system go well beyond collecting and handling data from each register one by one. Institutional partnerships between various agencies are needed when treating registers from different agencies as part of a unified system; creating these partnerships may require modifying all stages of statistical production (data collection, data processing, quality control, dissemination) used by each agency (UNECE, 2007). Technological improvements can diminish production costs and increase the timeliness of information.

26.   Despite the importance of register-based data on governance, there are also important challenges to be faced when considering using this information.

- Generalized distrust towards authority. In some cases, citizens will be reluctant to provide reliable information to the administrative agency; in these situations, data from administrative records will need to be reviewed carefully.

- Difficulty of aligning administrative definitions across levels of government and ensuring international comparability. For example, administrative registers may refer to *de jure* requirements, rather than *de facto* conditions, or its temporal references may be inaccurate (UNECE, 2007). Efforts and resources are needed to harmonise governance concepts and statistics at the sub-national, national, and international level.

- Combining information from objective and self-reported data. While some surveys may ask about people's perceptions, administrative records typically capture objective facts or events. This implies that it is important to avoid confounding information about institutions with indicators related to the effects of these institutions (Bersch and Botero, 2014). Therefore, clearness in concepts and indicators is essential to avoid introducing biases.

27.   To summarize, administrative records can provide quality information on governance if conditions are met to guarantee a feasible process through time. If an administrative system is already in place, data gathering is low cost. Nevertheless, costs will be high if such a system does not exist yet. In this case, data from surveys or censuses of administrative units can provide a better alternative. In the case of Mexico, INEGI collects census data on government units at the national and sub-national level, which allow producing statistics about the management and performance of public institutions as an alternative to the current lack of a register-based statistical system.

2.   Governance statistics collected by countries

28.   Looking beyond the potential of administrative data, it is important to understand what types of official statistics on governance are currently produced in CES countries. For this purpose, the Turkish Statistical Institute (TurkStat) – in cooperation with the OECD and INEGI — prepared a detailed questionnaire to NSOs, asking them to report on statistical activities undertaken either by the statistical office or by other public or non-public agencies. This questionnaire includes one general section, asking questions on the availability of statistics in the three broad governance domains described in Section III (i.e. principles, processes and valued outcomes), and ten sections covering specific governance dimensions (rule of law; quality of democracy; administrative procedures; state capacities; bureaucratic autonomy; government effectiveness; voice and accountability; regulatory quality; corruption and transparency; trust that decisions are taken in the public interest).[4] While these 10 dimensions do not fully match those used in other sections of this review, the information collected serves the purpose of providing a broad overview of the types of official statistics on governance that are typically available in the region. Overall, 29 NSOs answered the questionnaire.[5]

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[4] The questionnaire also included a section on 'maintaining individuals' freedoms and enhancing their well-being'. Answers to this section are not described here, as the information collected solely referred to the availability of statistics on people's subjective well-being.

[5] Armenia, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Denmark, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Mexico, Mongolia, Norway, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and Ukraine. The analysis of country-responses provided in this section is limited to the 27 countries that answered within the mid-August cut-off date used for this review; as a result, answers provided by Georgia and the Philippines are not considered here.

29.   The general questionnaire included an open-ended question on whether NSOs compile statistics on governance, leaving it to NSOs to describe these aspects in their own words; and three questions on whether they compile statistics in the three broad domains used in this review, i.e. "how public institutions respond to shared societal values such as safeguarding freedoms, maintaining peace and security"; "how public institutions make and implement decisions that are needed for the appropriate regulation of economic and social life"; and on "the services and functions delivered by public institutions aimed at improving people's lives". For each item, the questionnaire also asked about the main data sources to compile these statistics.

30.   Overall, 16 NSOs indicated that they collect statistics on various aspects of governance. The range of aspects covered is very broad and diverse, ranging from elections and electoral participation (Norway, Sweden) to social participation (Hungary), functioning of public administration, administrative procedures, police-related, justice and criminal courts data (Canada), compliance costs and administrative burden of legislative proposals (Canada), delivery of public services and users' satisfaction with them (Mexico), infrastructural capacity (Norway), and experiences and perceptions of corruption and trust (Mexico) (Table A.1). In terms of the three broad domains of this review:

- Only Mexico and Germany indicated that they compile statistics on how public institutions respond to shared societal values.

- Six countries — Australia, Armenia, Chile, Germany, Luxembourg and Mexico — indicated collecting statistics on how public institutions perform their role.

- Finally, four countries — Armenia, Chile, Germany and Mexico — answered that they compile statistics on public services and functions aimed at improving people's lives.

31.   While this information provides a high-level perspective on the key aspects of governance that NSOs report as being covered by the statistics available in their countries, this assessment differs in some respect, from the one emerging from the more detailed questionnaires described in the next section, suggesting that NSOs differ in the way the interpret the meaning of various governance concepts. In terms of data-sources for these statistics, 11 NSOs mentioned household surveys as source, 8 referred to business surveys, and 10 to administrative records. Finally, 10 NSOs indicated that they compile statistics on various aspects of governance based on data collected from other public agencies, mainly Ministries, while only the Mexican NSO answered that it undertakes a specific government census.

32.   For each of the 10 sections of the questionnaire on specific aspects of governance, the questionnaire asked for information on: i) the availability of statistics; ii) the agency responsible for their compilation and disseminations (NSOs, other government agencies, ministries, non-public bodies); and iii) the data sources underlying these statistics (surveys of households or businesses, administrative data, expert assessments, censuses of public administrations, or some combination of these sources).

Rule of law

33.   For the purpose of the questionnaire, rule of law was defined as the authority and importance of law in society. According to this notion, the law should govern and no one, including the government, should be above it. Rule of law is implemented through codified procedures guaranteeing access, equality, predictability, reliability and accountability.

34.   Most NSOs who answered the questionnaire indicated collecting some statistics on this aspect. This applied in particular to information on "public security" (13 countries), "civil/criminal justice" (12), "open government" (6), "military justice" (2), and "constraints

on government powers" (2). Only 4 NSOs answered that they collect no data about the rule of Law. Responsibility for collecting these data tends to be shared between NSOs and other government agencies (OGAs), with administrative records used as the main data source. Only a few countries (e.g. Mexico) indicated that they also collect rule of law data though household and business surveys, expert assessments and censuses.

Quality of democracy

35.   For the purpose of this questionnaire, quality of democracy was defined as covering all provisions about people's rights to physical integrity, freedom of thought, conscience and religion, freedom (and density) of associations, impartiality of the judiciary system, and other features of the parliamentary and judicial systems. The quality of democracy questionnaire asked about availability of statistics in seven areas: ''right to physical integrity'', ''freedom of thought, conscience and religion'', ''freedom of association'', ''density of association'', ''violation of human rights'', ''constitutional provisions for impartial courts'' and ''effective independence of the judiciary''.

36.   Overall, based on the answers received, availability of statistics is highest for ''violation of human rights'' (7 countries) and lowest for ''constitutional provisions for impartial courts'' (with only one NSO reporting collecting statistics). Sweden was the only country indicating collecting statistics in all the areas of quality of democracy. Responsibility for compiling these statistics is equally shared between NSO (in half of the countries) and other government agencies (in the other half). Most countries rely on household surveys as data-source for compiling statistics on quality of democracy, although Brazil reported using a combination of sources.

Administrative procedures

37.   For the purposes of this questionnaire, administrative procedures were defined as the rules and procedures for managing an organisation, aiming to establish efficiency, consistency, responsibility and accountability. The questionnaire asked about availability of statistics in three areas: building and safety; public expenditure management; and e-government.

- Building and safety: 19 countries reported compiling statistics on the "number of building permits issued", in most cases based on administrative records collected by either NSOs (14) or other government agencies (9). Four countries reported compiling statistics on "number of trade permits issued" (based on administrative records), while six countries indicated having statistics on the "number of building permits issued (all types)", mainly gathered by NSOs (5, as compared to 3 other government organisations) and typically sources from administrative records.

- Public expenditure management: 7 countries reported compiling statistics on "budget process clearly defined", with information collected by 2 NSOs and 3 other government agencies, and mainly sourced from administrative records. Statistics on "effective monitoring and implementation of the budget mechanisms" were reported to be collected in 6 countries (with responsibility equally shared between NSOs and OGAs), and sourced from administrative data. Statistics on "robust budget principles with regard to constitution related laws" were reported as being collected in 6 countries (with responsibility shared between NSOs and OGAs), and mainly sourced from administrative records.

- E-government: 12 countries reported compiling statistics on the number of "individuals interacting with public agencies via internet", with responsibility for data collection mainly resting with NSOs (12) based on data drawn from household surveys (9). Statistics on "enterprises interacting with public agencies via internet"

are compiled in 10 countries, mainly by NSOs (9) and sourced from either households (9) or business surveys (5). Nine countries reported compiling statistics on "public expenditure on ICT", in most cases under the responsibility of the NSOs (9), with data sourced from a combination of administrative records (6) and business surveys (4).

State capacities

38.   State capacity is one of the key characteristics of political systems. For the purposes of the questionnaire, state capacity was defined as the ability of government to administer its territory effectively. The questionnaire on state capacity included separate sections on three aspects: military capacity; infrastructural capacity; and bureaucratic and administrative capacity.

- Military capacity: the questionnaire asked about the availability of statistics on defence budgets, military manpower, military infrastructure, combat research institutions, and defence industry. Availability of statistics in this area is highest for defence budgets (14 countries), followed by military manpower (10). Most of these statistics are compiled by other government agencies other than NSOs and sourced from administrative records;

- Infrastructural capacity: the questionnaire asked about availability of statistics on numbers of fixed-telephone lines, mobile cellular subscriptions, broadband subscriptions, internet users, consumption of electric power consumption, intellectual property rights (patent, trademark, copyright), transport statistics (air, land, sea, railway), and withdrawals of freshwater (from agriculture, industry, domestic use, etc.). Availability of statistics is highest in the case of number of internet users (22), fixed-telephone lines (20), broadband subscriptions (20), mobile cellular subscriptions (19), with responsibility for compiling these statistics mainly resting with NSOs in the case on internet users, or shared between NSOs and other government agencies in the case of fixed-telephone and broadband subscriptions. Transport statistics are less widely available, and mainly compiled by NSOs;

- Bureaucratic and administrative capacity: the questionnaire asked about availability of statistics on the capacity to raise taxes, to steer the economy and society, to build legitimacy and to enforce decisions through coercive means. In all these cases, availability of statistics is low; with only 3 countries reporting compiling statistics on coercive capacity, mostly collected by other government agencies based on administrative records.

Bureaucratic autonomy

39.   Bureaucratic autonomy is a key aspect of state capacity, i.e. of whether governments are able to provide basic services that markets would under-provide, to regulate private activities that entail externalities or information asymmetries, and to engage in social regulation and redistribution (Fukuyama, 2014). The questionnaire asked for information about the availability of statistics pertaining to the structural, financial and legal autonomy of various government agencies.

40.   The questionnaire focused on some key requirements of an autonomous bureaucracy, i.e. the presence of qualified staff, stability of careers, funding for research, organisational identity, degree of politicisation, the existence of an independent leadership and of adequate financial resources. Overall, only 8 countries reported compiling statistics on bureaucratic autonomy, in most cases pertaining to the presence of qualified staff (6) and of funding for research (4).

Government effectiveness

41.   For the purposes of this questionnaire, government effectiveness was defined as the extent to which the goals of government have been met; these goals could relate to the quality of services delivered, the competence of the civil service, and other aspects. The literature on government effectiveness has highlighted the importance of three aspects of government effectiveness, namely users' satisfaction with services delivered, the extent to which agencies are organised in effective ways, and whether agencies responsible for public service delivery are independent from political interference.

- Users' satisfaction with services: statistics are more common in the case of health services (16 countries), followed by public security (15), and the judiciary system (14). Only 4 countries reported collecting statistics on satisfaction with lighting services and garbage collection. In most countries, NSOs are responsible for collecting these types of data, which are typically sourced from household surveys; only a few countries rely on surveys of business or experts assessments, and no country on administrative records and censuses;

- Extent to which agencies are organised in effective ways: 8 countries reported collecting data on the effectiveness of the judiciary system, 7 countries reported collecting statistics on the efficacy of public security system and local government, while only 2 countries reported collecting statistics on the media and labour unions. Responsibility for the collection of most of these statistics typically rests with other government or non-government agencies, and sourced from household surveys or experts assessments;

- On whether agencies responsible for public service delivery are independent from political interference, 7 countries reported collecting statistics in this field, with Sweden collecting data on a broader range of aspects (6).

Voice and accountability

42.   Voice refers to the capacity of people to express their views and to the variety of channels (formal and informal) through which they do it: these can include complaints, organised protests, lobbying, participation in decision making, service delivery or policy implementation (Goetz and Gaventa 2001). Accountability refers to the obligation of an organisation to be accountable for its activities, accept responsibility for them, disclose the results in a transparent manner, being responsible for money or other entrusted property. Voice and accountability are separate but related concepts. The questionnaire on voice and accountability included three parts on political rights (electoral process, pluralism, political participation[6]), civil liberties (freedom of expression and belief, associational and organisational rights, rule of law) and accountability (open budgets).

- Political rights: availability of statistics is highest for electoral process and pluralism, with 8 countries collecting statistics about free and fair national elections, and 7 on universal suffrage and financial support to political parties: most of these statistics are compiled by other government agencies based on administrative records. Statistics on political participation are also collected by most countries: 15 countries reported compiling statistics about voter turnout for national elections, 14 in the case voter turnout at local elections, and 12 for statistics on the number of women in parliament: in most cases, responsibility for collecting these statistics falls

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[6] Measurement of political participation is discussed by the CES "In-Depth Review of the Statistics on Political Participation and Other Community Activities Including Volunteer Work" prepared by INEGI in 2013 [ECE/CES/BUR/2013/FEB/2].

on other government agencies at the national or regional level, with minimal involvement of NSOs; most of these statistics are sourced from administrative records;

- Civil liberties: 5 countries reported compiling statistics on citizens' basic security, mainly undertaken by other government agencies. These statistics are predominantly based upon "other sources", with no detail on the method used;

- Accountability: 5 countries reported compiling statistics about availability to the public of key budget documents; in most cases, responsibility for collecting this information belongs to other government agencies, although the NSO plays a significant role in Armenia.

Regulatory quality

43.   Regulations are essential to the proper function of economies and societies. In designing these regulations to ensure quality, governments should consider their impacts, costs and effects. The questionnaire on regulatory quality had two parts: regulatory quality assessments (i.e. whether statistics are compiled to assess the quality of new regulations) and regulatory efficiency (i.e. effects on business practices and market competition).

- Only 7 countries reported compiling statistics for assessing the quality of regulations. Among these, only Sweden collects data on both costs and impacts of new regulations. Two countries reported compiling data on the administrative burden of a regulation; 6 have been using "regulatory impact assessments" and 4 have relied on "consultations with stakeholders" to assess quality of regulation. Statistics on regulatory quality are mainly compiled under the responsibility of other governmental institutions rather than NSOs;

- Compiling statistics on regulatory efficiency seems to be more common: 9 countries compile data on the impact of regulation on starting a new business, the degree of state control of business operations, taxation and barriers to competitions: indicators of how cumbersome is the administrative process for 'starting a business' (number of procedures, time requires, costs and required minimum capital) are the most common. Statistics on regulatory efficiency are mainly collected by other governmental institutions

Corruption and transparency

44.   Although there is no universal definition of corruption, most definitions emphasise the misuse of public office for private gain. All forms of government are susceptible to corruption, whose manifestation range from uses of influence and patronage to bribery and other crimes. The questionnaire asked about availability of statistics on people's and firms' perceptions of corruption, perceptions about the transparency of government actions, on experts' or civil servants' assessment of how widespread corruption is, the number of investigations about corruption by criminal police and the number of corruption cases in courts

45.   Among the 27 countries that answered the questionnaire, 9 countries reported collecting statistics on people's perceptions of corruption through household surveys. Among these, 7 reported collecting statistics about firms' perceptions of corruption through business surveys, 7 reported collecting data about the number of ongoing corruption investigations by the police, 9 about the number of corruption cases in courts, 6 about perceptions of transparency of government actions (4 through household surveys and 2 through business surveys), 2 about evaluations of civil servants and other experts about corruption in public institutions and agencies, while 1 (Sweden) mentioned research among groups of civil servants on the extent to which they are exposed to attempts at corrupting

their decision-making (bribery/improper offers/friendship corruption). Overall, 8 countries answered that they do not collect any type of statistics on corruption. While statistics on perceptions of corruption and evaluations of transparency rely on surveys of households and businesses other government agencies rely heavily on administrative data on the number of corruption cases in law courts or open corruption investigations by the criminal police.

Trust that decisions are taken in the public interest

46.   For the purposes of this questionnaire, trust in public institutions was defined as having a positive view about the actions of organisation, based on either personal experience or perception. While trust is a fully subjective phenomenon, in the context of governance statistics it represents the confidence of citizens and businesses that government decisions are taken in the public interest, and that governments do what is right and are perceived to be fair. The questionnaire asked about availability of statistics on trust in 17 different types of public institutions.

47.   Statistics on trust in various institutions are quite common, especially in case of trust in the justice system (13 countries), government (12), parliament (12), public security system (11), political parties (10) and social security/ social protection systems (8). Conversely, only few countries collect statistics on trust in labour unions (4), in the honesty of elections (2), or in the inclusiveness of government policies (1). Only 3 countries reported not collecting any data on trust. In most countries, collection of statistics on trust is undertaken by public opinion companies, rather than by NSOs or other government agencies, although in some countries NSOs and other government agencies are also responsible. Statistics on trust are predominantly drawn from surveys of households and, in fewer cases, from surveys of businesses or experts assessments.

Overall assessment

48.   According to the answers provided by NSOs, several countries collect data on various aspects of governance, which can provide a basis for harmonization efforts by the statistical community. However, NSOs in many occasions use different terms when referring to the same topic, or use the same term with a variety of different meanings, implying that they differ in terms of their understanding of what belongs to governance, as well as how it is, or should be, measured. There are also differences in answers between the more open-ended questions to the general questionnaire (where NSOs were asked to indicate the broad governance aspects covered by national statistics) and the more detailed questions on specific aspects of governance (e.g. a NSO may have replied that no statistics are available on voice and accountability in the general questionnaire, but then indicate that statistics on political participation are available). Reaching a consensus on the conceptual boundaries of the concept at hand, identifying a limited number of aspects of governance where credible measures are more easily defined, and identifying the best source (e.g. administrative records, household surveys) for each of these should be a priority for future statistical work.

A.   Internationally comparable data

49.   While official statistics on governance available in various countries refer to concepts defined in different ways in each country, comparable statistics on governance are produced outside the official statistical system. These data are typically compiled by international organizations and research networks, based on responses provided by experts to comprehensive questionnaires prepared by various agencies or on household surveys undertaken by research projects or private companies.

1. International organizations

50.   There are many international indicator sets focusing on public governance, many of them compiled by intergovernmental organisations. Some examples are:

- The European Commission collects governance statistics through a range of vehicles: For example, both the Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) and the (non-official) Eurobarometer surveys include question on aspects such as trust in public institutions and satisfaction with services. Similar questions, plus additional topics like corruption, are featured in the European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS), conducted by Eurofound, and in the European Quality of Government Index (EQI) project, funded by the EU Commission for Regional Development (REGIO).

- The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) gathers comparative knowledge on electoral institutions and processes. One of the organisation's most widely used statistics is that on voter turnout, which IDEA computes based on data from NSOs and electoral management bodies.

- The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has been issuing its publication *Governance at a Glance* bi-annually since 2009. This flagship publication compares country's public institutional performance drawing on a dashboard of detailed indicators pertaining to government inputs (e.g. public employment), activities (e.g. budgeting), outputs (e.g. access to education) and outcomes (e.g. income inequality). This information is gathered through questionnaires addressed to country-representatives in Centre of Government offices.

- The World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) present a comprehensive cross-country data set that consists of composite indicators for six broad dimensions of governance: voice and accountability, political stability and the absence of violence, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, rule of law, corruption and transparency. These indicators are based on hundreds of variables obtained from 31 different data sources ranging from household surveys to data provided by non-governmental organizations, commercial providers of statistics, and public sector organizations. The Word Bank also compiles a separate data set on regulatory quality through its "Doing Business" indicators.

51.   However, most of these projects do not follow a well-defined measurement framework. Also, while some of them are quite comprehensive, others focus on specific governance aspects; similarly, while some of the data sets collate information from many different sources, others build on data submitted by government officials, or compiled of household survey data. Several of these sets rank countries according to their performance based on a single composite score but most rely on scoreboards.

52.   Most of the activities undertaken by international agencies in the field of governance statistics are about collecting existing data or generating indicators of governance performance. Conversely, developing methodological guidance in this field is the goal pursued by the UN City Group on Governance Statistics, established by the UN Statistical Commission in 2015. The main deliverable from this group is the production of a Handbook of Governance Statistics aimed at NSOs, covering concepts, measurement methodology and the dissemination of statistics in this field. The Praia Group held two meetings so far, and aims to complete its work by 2018.

2. Expert assessments

53. Expert assessments of various aspects of governance are undertaken in the CES region by research networks, think-tanks, and international organisations. Experts are typically professionals working in this area (e.g. lawyers, researchers, academics, etc.) or high-level civil servants with a good knowledge of and reputation on the issues at stake.

54. Several reasons exist for relying on experts as source of information on governance. First, for certain aspects of governance, experts are best placed to provide the information required (e.g. detailed information about budgeting or procurement that may not be available from other sources) and to make informed judgements (e.g. on whether elections are fair). Second, indicators based on expert assessment can be more easily used for cross-country comparisons than the data independently collected by various administrative agencies, as they are based on a common reporting template. Third, indicators developed through expert assessment are typically less costly to collect, especially when compared to data collected through household surveys (Kauffman 2007). Conversely, drawbacks of this approach are that little information may be available about the criteria used for selecting experts, the standards guiding their assessment (leading to results that can change depending on the expert being interviewed), and differences between the views of experts and those of ordinary people on the same phenomena. More generally, questions remain open about the capacity of expert assessments to describe the concept under study, and the extent to which these measures are consistent with those generated by other experts and through other sources (e.g. household surveys or administrative data).

55. Expert assessment indicators are typically based on two types of respondents: i) academics and researchers; and ii) government officials. Each of these groups of respondents will provide different perspectives on the issues at hand. In general, indicators based on expert-assessments are produced by international government organizations (IGO), think-tanks and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Because experts are well placed to assess detailed aspects of governance, summary information across these aspects is often presented through composite indicators, with single scores used to rank countries on a specific aspect, or to shed light on the relative performance of a given country in the broad area of governance, democracy or political systems.

- At the most aggregated level assessments by academics or researchers typically refer to governance 'principles' (e.g. adherence to democratic principles, existence of open elections) and, more rarely, to government 'processes' (e.g. presence of corruption, openness and transparency of government operations); in some cases, however, experts may also provide information about the 'valued outcomes' that various agencies deliver to citizens (e.g. people's access to the justice system, or whether it performs its functions effectively). Measures based on the assessment of academics and researchers could also reflect the specific agenda of the sponsoring organisation, implying that scrutiny is needed to understand the motivations of data producers.

- Conversely, government officials are typically best placed to provide informed answers about detailed aspects of the functioning of government institutions (i.e. 'processes'). Answers from designated government officials may also have a claim to represent the 'official' position of the government on the phenomenon of interest. Public officials can report on the processes followed by public agencies but they may also experience conflicts of interests when evaluating the performance of government on a given area Biases can also occur as government officials may interpret differently the same question, calling for additional methodological checks. Finally, even when indicators based on assessments by government officials are presented as composites, these tend to be narrowly defined and used to describe specific aspects of how government works in a specific area.

56.   Key comparative features of the expert assessments considered in this section are provided in Table 3. While differing in terms of a variety of features, the projects reviewed are quite representatives of the type of assessments available in this field. Most initiatives rely on the assessments of professionals and researchers, and are undertaken by academic research organisations, private foundations and non-government organisations. Information on each of them is provided below.

57.   While all measures based on expert assessment may be considered as non-statistical indicators, they provide critical information on several aspects of government performance, and are used extensively in discussions on the subject. One general problem with indicators based on expert-assessment is that the different aspects and dimensions that are understood as lacking a common definition of governance: as a result, indicators with similar labels (e.g. rule of law, democracy, corruption) may refer to slightly different concepts. Indicators based on expert assessment are also developed using different methodologies, which is reflected in the diversity of sources used, the number and criteria used to select experts, the topics that experts are asked to assess, the type of aggregation and validation mechanisms used, as well as the country coverage of the resulting measures. Most commonly, measures based on expert assessment are presented as composite indicators comprising several sub-components that can be analysed independently. In most cases, experts are required to combine expertise on the subject matter with detailed knowledge of the country assessed. In all projects reviewed in this section the institution responsible for publishing the indicators assess the information provided by experts with a critical eye, and is responsible for adjusting and validating the resulting measures.

58.   The most salient difference among the projects reviewed in this section is that between assessments carried out by government officials or by researchers/practitioners. In general, indicators based on assessment by academic experts tend to refer to principles (e.g. democracy, the rule of law), while those based on government officials tend to refer more to processes (e.g. efficiency). Differently from surveys, measures based on assessment by academic experts' relate to abstract concepts that require a large amount of contextual information. Questionnaires sent to academic experts on a specific topic tend to be long and include questions that are highly theoretical or based on hypothetical scenarios. In other contexts, experts may complement their assessment with media reports, interviews with local contacts and other actors (e.g. NGOs). In the case of government experts, the information requested tends to be specific and can relate to the day-to-day working of a government institution (e.g. the centre of government) or the functioning of a government process (e.g. budgeting, procurement, integrity). These government officials are often asked to provide specific examples or evidence on how government works.

59.   Dedicated work is necessary to assess the validity of measures based on expert assessment, e.g. whether expert-based indicators for the same phenomenon sourced from different projects lead to similar conclusions: conclusions in this respect will generally depend on the specific aspect of governance and on the projects considered.

Table 3
Characteristics of the experts assessments considered in this review

Name of the indicators/data base	Organisation responsible	Country coverage	Frequency	Inception	Number of experts	Background of experts	Dimensions of governance covered		
							Principles	**Processes**	**Valued outcomes**
Varieties of democracy	V-Dem institute /Kellog Institute (Indiana)/ University of Gothenburg	206 (sovereign/semi sovereign political units)	Yearly (data goes back to 1900)	2014	5 external experts per country; network of 2000 country experts	Academics	Quality of Democracy (for seven types of democracy); rule of law	Civil society participation; Public sector corruption	Freedom of association; Freedom of expression; - Equal distribution of resources; Private freedoms; Alternative sources of information
Sustainable Governance Indicators	Bertelsmann Foundation	41 (OECD and EU countries)	2009, 2011, 2014 and 2015	2009	2 external experts per country	Academics	Quality of Democracy; Good governance; Rule of law	Electoral process; Openness; Corruption prevention; Executive capacity (e.g. inter-ministerial coordination, societal consultation); - Executive accountability	Civil rights; Political liberties
Rule of law index	World Justice Project	102 countries	Yearly	2009	On average 25 external experts per country	Academics, practitioners (lawyers)	Constraints on government powers	Absence of corruption; -Open Government; Regulatory enforcement	Access to Civil justice; - Quality Criminal justice; Fundamental rights; Order and security
Civil liberty and Political rights indices	Freedom House	202 sovereign and semi sovereign political units	Yearly	1972	1 external expert per country	Country analysts	Quality of Democracy		Political rights; Civil liberties
Corruption Perception Index	Transparency International	168 countries	Yearly	1995 (changes methodology limit omparability)	Aggregation of several external sources based on expert assessment	Academics/practitioners/country analysts		Public sector corruption (misuse of public resources)	
Government at a Glance	OECD	34 countries plus 5-8 key partners	Bi-annually	2009	10-15 experts per country (1 expert per area)	Civil servants		Public Procurement; Budgeting; Regulatory Governance; Open Government; Digital Government; Public Sector Integrity; Human Resource Management Practices	

3. Non-official household surveys

60. Beyond expert assessments, household surveys represent another source of comparable data to assess a country's quality of governance and the ways it affects people's lives and well-being. By asking citizens about their experiences, expectations and opinions on various aspects of government performance, household surveys provide information on governance from the perspective of the very people on behalf of whom public institutions are working.

61. While only few household surveys conducted by NSOs include questions on governance, there is significant experience in this field through non-official household surveys, some of which started to collect relevant information since the early 1980s. Several limitations affect the quality of data from non-official surveys, including small sample size, low response rates, inadequate sampling frames, and minimal resources for survey development and cognitive testing (OECD 2013b). Despite these limits, non-official household surveys provide comparative experience and evidence on the type of questions that could be included in larger-scale official surveys.

62. Eight non-official household surveys that include questions related to governance, and cover the majority of CES countries.[7] Some of these surveys include in-depth *ad hoc* modules dedicated to governance (e.g. Eurobarometer has featured special Barometers on corruption and discrimination in the past). However, for the purposes of this review, only the core/repeated survey modules are considered, as these allow for monitoring of changes over time.

63. Table 4 provides additional information on how each aspect is assessed and measured in non-official household surveys. In terms of coverage of various governance aspects, two features stand out:

- First, although to different extent, all three governance domains are covered by non-official surveys. Hence, *a priori*, household surveys are a tool that could be used to measure all governance dimensions, either as a primary sources of information (for those aspects where only people can provide relevant information) or alongside other measurement instruments;

- Second, survey questions have been used more extensively for some dimensions than for others. The non-official surveys reviewed in this section only rarely probe respondents on principles (e.g. democratic preferences), while questions are more common in the case of processes and, in particular, of valued outcomes. Thus, household surveys could be particularly useful when considering how public institutions perform their role, and which valuable outcomes are achieved.

64. As in the case of expert assessments, further work on the validity of the various survey measures of governance is needed to confirm their suitability to measure the concepts they aim to assess.

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[7] The featured non-official surveys include surveys undertaken by academic networks (e.g. ISSP, WVS, ESS) surveys initiated by commercial provides (e.g. GWP), as well as surveys conducted by public institutions (e.g. Eurobarometer) or in response to a specific mandate from a public agency (e.g. the European Quality of Life Survey and the European Quality of Governance Survey).

Table 4
Dimensions and aspects of governance addressed by non-official household surveys

Domain	Question	Dimension	Description
Principles	What is expected from public institutions?	Democratic preferences	Attitudes towards democracy and authoritarianism
Processes	How do public institutions perform their role?	Non-discrimination	Perception of fair and equal treatment by public officials and politicians
		Absence of corruption	Perception of corruption (in government and specific service sectors) Personal experience with corruption
		Quality of democracy	Satisfaction with democracy Respect for human rights Freedom of the press Free and fair elections Privacy and government surveillance
Valued outcomes	Why it is important?	Civic engagement	Membership in political parties and labour unions Participation in political action (e.g. signing petitions, contacting officials, demonstrating)
		Political efficacy	Believes in personal agency in the political sphere
		Trust in institutions	Trust in a range of specific public institutions (e.g. parliament, government, courts, police, media) Approval of current leadership
		Satisfaction with services	Satisfaction with public services in a range of sectors (e.g. health, education, transport, police force)

V. Conclusions and recommendations

65.   This review has highlighted that a variety of governance statistics are already collected by many data producers in the countries represented in CES. These statistics range from aggregate democracy indicators compiled by experts or academics, to surveys of public officials conducted by international organisations, to administrative data collected by various public agencies as part of their daily functioning, to data from household surveys conducted by commercial providers and research institutes. Within the official statistical system, several NSOs compile statistics on multiple aspects of governance through censuses, surveys, or based on the processing and standardisation of administrative records.

66.   This review has also identified several challenges that the statistical community needs to address before governance data are collected in reliable and standardized ways that are fit-for-purpose in terms of informing policy and the population at large:

- First, a conceptual framework for governance statistics is still lacking. No universal definition of 'governance' currently exists, implying that various agencies and researchers interpret it in their own way, referring to (partially overlapping) items such as effectiveness, impartiality, accountability, democratic quality, non-discrimination, state capacity, etc. Reaching agreement on the conceptual scope of governance statistics, identifying its main domains and dimensions, defining boundaries separating what is included and what is excluded from the remit of governance statistics should be a priority task for the statistical community. While this review has relied on the distinction between the three domains of principles, processes, and valued outcomes to describe and classify governance statistics, a broader framework will need to be discussed by the statistical community in order to reach the necessary consensus. The Praia Group on Governance Statistics should play the key role in that process.

- Second, once concepts are clear, a statistical framework will need to be developed. A statistical framework brings together a conceptual framework relating to the variable of interest, the measurement instruments required for quantifying it, and the statistical infrastructure needed to ensure that data are collected in a way consistent with quality standards. Building such a statistical framework will require aligning different aspects of governance with the measurement tools best apt at quantifying them. While administrative data have a special role to play in measuring governance, special efforts are needed to create systems apt to providing statistics meeting standard quality requirements of timeliness, frequency, and comparability. Other measurement instruments such as households and business surveys, as well as measures drawn from expert assessments by public officials and researchers, also play an essential role in meeting demands for broader and more comparable statistics in the governance field.

- Third, as conceptual and statistical frameworks are created, a critical task is that of identifying good-quality measures that could be used to populate these frameworks. This is a complex and labour-intensive endeavour, which requires assessing the validity of the measures that already exist. Establishing the validity of a statistical measure is especially complex when it comes to broad concepts such as governance, as it requires reviewing the information that is already available to assess the different facets of their validity.[8] OECD is currently engaged in such exercise with respect to the narrower concept of "trust", which encompasses both people's trust in others and their confidence in various public institutions. Similar analysis will be required for other aspects (such as corruption, access to justice and other basic services, or rule of law) in order to identify a narrow set of measures that could be considered as falling within the remit of official statistics.

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[8] While many of the aspects of governance can only be measured through subjective self-reports, and cannot be compared with objective measures of the same concept, the literature on the validity of subjective measures suggests three types of validity that a good measure should satisfy (OECD 2013b): i) face validity (i.e. do respondents and/or data users understand what they are asked to report, given what they are told about the objectives of the assessment?); ii) convergent validity (i.e. does the measure correlate well with the other measures of the concept?); and iii) construct validity (i.e. does the measure perform in the way suggested by theory and common sense?)