

Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM): Italy Design Report 2019–2021

This report was prepared in collaboration with Federica Genna, Ecorys

Table of Contents

Executive Summary: Italy	2	
I. Introduction	5	
II. Open Government Context in Italy	6	
III. Leadership and Multistakeholder Process	12	
IV. Commitments	19	
1. Open data		20
2. Transparency		33
3. Register of beneficial owners		39
4. Support to participation		42
5. Regulation of stakeholders		48
6. Culture of open government		52
7. Corruption prevention		56
8. Simplification, performance and equal opportunities		60
9. Digital services		64
10. Digital citizenship and skills		72
V. General Recommendations	81	
VI. Methodology and Sources	85	
Annex I. Commitment Indicators	87	

Executive Summary: Italy

Italy's fourth action plan includes commitments on relevant national challenges like beneficial ownership transparency and lobbying regulation. It also builds on previous commitments on open data, and introduces measures to enhance civic participation and a culture of open government. Commitments would benefit from more targeted objectives and thus fewer milestones. The co-creation process can continue to improve through early and ongoing dialogue between government and civil society.

The Open Government Partnership (OGP) is a global partnership that brings together government reformers and civil society leaders to create action plans that make governments more inclusive, responsive, and accountable. The Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) monitors all action plans to ensure governments follow through on commitments. Italy joined OGP in 2011. Since, Italy has implemented three action plans. This report evaluates the design of Italy's fourth action plan.

General overview of action plan

High political turnover and distrust in public institutions remain a systemic issue in Italy. The action plan proposes some ambitious commitments relevant to the national context, including the establishment of a register of ultimate beneficial ownership and a lobbying register. Measures to enhance civic participation are a new area of focus, while thematic areas such as open data, a culture of open government, transparency, and digital services and skills are carried over from the previous action plan.

There were more opportunities for early civil society participation in co-creating the action plan than last time, although the level of participation did not change. However, the change in government midway through the process delayed the adoption of the plan. Co-creation could be strengthened through increased coordination between government and civil society and more regular meetings and interaction with Open Government Forum representatives.

For the most part, commitments reflect initiatives proposed by public agencies, but also respond to civil society priorities on lobbying transparency and beneficial ownership. Despite taking on board previous IRM recommendations, several commitments remain too broad due to a proliferation of milestones (anywhere between 5 and 41), which are small commitments in themselves, rather than steppingstones in the implementation of a high-level initiative. This also restricts the assessment of the overall impact of each commitment. This action plan contains no potentially transformative commitments (but it does have one potentially transformative cluster of milestones), fewer than the previous action plan did.

Table 1. At a glance

Participating since:	2011
Action plan under review:	Fourth
Report type:	Design
Number of commitments:	10

Action plan development

Is there a multistakeholder forum:	Yes
Level of public influence:	Involve
Acted contrary to OGP process:	No

Action plan design

Commitments relevant to OGP values:	10 (100%)
Transformative commitments:	0 (0%)
Potentially starred commitments:	0

The action plan also includes initiatives from a diverse range of bodies, from the local and regional level, along with other agencies and bodies such as the Italian Chamber of Commerce (Unioncamere). Both government and civil society have stated that the design of the actions in Commitment 1 on monitoring confiscated assets is a positive example of government and civil society collaboration.

Table 2. Noteworthy commitments

Commitment description	Moving forward	Status at the end of implementation cycle
Commitment 3 - Register of Beneficial Owners: Establish the legal framework and implement a beneficial ownership register	Consider making access to the register free of charge for all. Other improvements could include ensuring high data quality, and also clarifying how to make the best use of gender-disaggregated data.	Note: this will be assessed at the end of the action plan cycle.
Commitment 4 - Support for Participation: Create a national online participation portal for consultation and foster local level civic participation	Ensure that participatory instruments proposed are as inclusive as possible, taking action to ensure that participation is open to all segments of the population, including those for which the use of digital systems might constitute a barrier rather than an advantage.	Note: this will be assessed at the end of the action plan cycle.
Commitment 5 – Regulation of Stakeholders: Establish and pilot a common procedure regulating interactions between public officials and lobbyists.	Set targets on the number of ministries that are expected to adopt the new measures, and ensure a broad interpretation of lobbying.	Note: this will be assessed at the end of the action plan cycle.

Recommendations

IRM recommendations aim to inform the development of the next action plan and guide implementation of the current action plan. Please refer to Section V: General Recommendations for more details on each of the below recommendations.

Table 3. Five KEY IRM Recommendations

Strengthen the level of collaboration by increasing the Open Government Forum’s active participation in the process for selecting and drafting commitments
Co-create fewer, but more ambitious, targeted and coherent commitments
Establish a network of dedicated open data officers within public administrations
Ensure all public administrations implement the regulations for the national Register of Stakeholders
Develop and implement a monitoring system to ensure transparent allocation and use of funds related to COVID-19 response measures

ABOUT THE IRM

OGP's Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) assesses the development and implementation of national action plans to foster dialogue among stakeholders and improve accountability.



Federica Genna collaborated with the IRM to conduct desk research and interviews to inform the findings in this report. Federica Genna is a consultant for the Dutch research and consulting firm Ecorys. Her work focuses on program evaluations and, thematically, good governance, anti-corruption and international security more broadly.

I. Introduction

The Open Government Partnership is a global partnership that brings together government reformers and civil society leaders to create action plans that make governments more inclusive, responsive, and accountable. Action plan commitments may build on existing efforts, identify new steps to complete ongoing reforms, or initiate action in an entirely new area. OGP's Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) monitors all action plans to ensure governments complete commitments. Civil society and government leaders use these evaluations to reflect on their own progress and determine if actions have impacted people's lives.

Italy joined OGP in 2011. This report covers the development and design of Italy's fourth action plan for 2019–2021.

The Independent Reporting Mechanism of OGP has partnered with Federica Genna and Ecorys to conduct this evaluation. The IRM aims to inform ongoing dialogue around development and implementation of future commitments. For a full description of the IRM's methodology, please visit <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/about/independent-reporting-mechanism>.

II. Open Government Context in Italy

High political turnover and distrust in public institutions remain a systemic issue in Italy. OGP action plans have led to progress in implementing access to information legislation and open data. The current action plan addresses previous IRM recommendations such as on lobbying regulation and monitoring the implementation of the Freedom of Information Act. The action plan includes other key issues such as the establishment of a beneficial ownership register.

Background

Since joining the OGP in 2011, Italy has progressed on several fronts related to open government such as access to information, open data, and anti-corruption. Systemic issues remain and have been further exacerbated in recent years, however, such as public disillusionment with politics, low trust in government, and stagnating economic growth.¹ Political turnover remains frequent, often affecting timely completion of OGP processes.

Italy remains classified as a flawed democracy,² according to the 2018 edition of the Democracy Index. The country dropped to a score of 7.71 out of 10 from the 7.98 of the previous year. The worsening of the score is attributed to deep disillusionment with political institutions, including parliament and political parties.³ Mistrust in public institutions is widespread in Italy and has translated to increasingly reduced voter turnout in the past few years.⁴

Italy has been one of the hardest hit countries⁵ by the COVID-19 pandemic, with 33,072 deaths as of 28 May 2020.⁶ The governance characteristics of Italy, with overlapping legislative powers between state and regions, including in key areas such as health, emerged clearly during the pandemic.⁷ This translated into coordination challenges in the implementation of response measures, interinstitutional clashes between the central and regional governments, but also affected key areas such as transparency and open data when it came to the publication of data on COVID-19 infections.⁸ A motion in Parliament on gender balance,⁹ in response to the #datecivoce (“give us a voice”) movement, was received successfully by Prime Minister Conte, who as a result requested that a higher number of women be included in emergency task forces and committees.¹⁰

Transparency and access to information

Italy's first transparency law dates back to 1990.¹¹ The law was reformed several times¹² before the approval of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) in May 2016.¹³ The new law improved Italy's score in the Global Right to Information Rating from 57 points to 85 points out of 150.¹⁴ The law grants individuals the right to request information from public bodies without charge. If these bodies deny access, they must provide justification.¹⁵ Although praising it as major step forward, national CSOs have also highlighted critical limitations such as broad exemptions to the right of access and reluctance by public administrations to implement the law.¹⁶ The FOIA remains little used by citizens due to difficulties in identifying the public bodies that hold the information needed and the different typologies of access in existence.¹⁷

IRM recommendations from Italy's third action plan on FOIA implementation and practices^{18 19 20} were taken onboard by the Italian OGP team, and the 2019–2021 action plan includes measures aimed at developing a centralized FOIA request and outcome monitoring system.²¹

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, all FOIA requests that are considered to not be “urgent and unpostponable” were suspended until 31 May 2020.²² The government subsequently declared²³ that requests regarding information about the health emergency were excluded from the provisions, although it remained unclear whether such requests would be processed automatically.²⁴ CSOs requested that the right of access to information remain guaranteed, including through proactive transparency such as the timely publication of relevant information in open formats.²⁵

Italy's response to the pandemic also revealed shortcomings regarding the publication of data related to the emergency, highlighting discrepancies at the regional level.²⁶ CSOs published an open letter requesting that disaggregated data on the number of tests be published in an open and machine-readable format.²⁷

Open data

Italy has made considerable progress in the last two years to open up its data and make it more accessible. The Digital Economy and Social Index for 2019 (DESI)²⁸ assigns Italy a score of 80 percent, which is higher than an average score of the EU28 of 64percent.²⁹ Similarly, the Open Data Maturity report for 2018 defines Italy as a “trendsetter” in open data, also assigning it a data maturity score of 80percent.³⁰ However, the 2018 Leaders Edition of the Open Data Barometer – which focuses on countries whose governments have made concrete commitments to champion open data – assigns Italy only a score of 50 out of 100, rating its readiness and implementation on open data 61 out of 100, and its impact only 27.³¹ Some local CSOs have pointed out the difference between these conflicting assessments on open data, arguing that there are unexplained improvements in open data according to the DESI 2018 index³².

Italy's positive changes are the result of the implementation of national strategies in the field of digitalization, ICT, and open data.³³ Open data commitments in the third action plan saw mixed results in increasing the number of data sets and the quality of data available for citizens.^{34,35} The fourth action plan carries forward more open data commitments.

Challenges to full use of open data include poor awareness and understanding of the potential of open data, including at the decision-making level; insufficient data quality; lack of knowledge of what the demand is for open data; and limited reuse examples and discrepancies at the regional level.³⁶ The complex governance structure and degree of autonomy to regions on key issues,³⁷ including health and civil protection, contributes to the existence of a fragmented landscape.

Civil Liberties and Civic Space

Freedom of association, assembly, and expression are guaranteed in the constitution. Nevertheless, challenges remain. Reporters Without Borders' 2018 Press Freedom Index assigns Italy a score of 24.12 out of 100,³⁸ an improvement since the previous year's score of 26.26 (a lower score is better)³⁹ but still behind the scores of most large European countries. This index highlights cases of death threats against journalists, with several journalists still living under police protection due to threats from organized crime.⁴⁰ Persisting media freedom issues include defamation as a criminal offence, heavy concentration of media ownership, and political influence on public broadcasters.⁴¹

National statistical reports show that participation and public engagement is increasing. This is mostly outside of formal processes, via demonstrations and (online) petitions, and remains fragmented and tied to the local level.⁴² The third OGP action plan also aimed to increase civic participation in decision-making and public engagement through the development of specific guidelines for public consultations.⁴³ The fourth action plan includes commitments on increasing and improving citizen participation.⁴⁴

To try to contain the COVID-19 pandemic, the government adopted a series of decrees from February and March 2020, which progressively restricted constitutional liberties such as freedom of movement and freedom of assembly.^{45,46} The measures started to be gradually lifted as the rate of contagions began decreasing in early May 2020.⁴⁷

The prime minister issued the majority of the decrees as emergency decrees, and as such, without the need for prior approval by the president or Parliament. CSOs questioned the approach,⁴⁸ and others have requested that the Parliament return to its normal functions to ensure the protection of democratic rights.⁴⁹ Furthermore, civil society has also highlighted a lack of transparency regarding the ad hoc task forces and scientific committees created by the government: minutes of meetings were not made public, and there was a lack of clarity on who exactly formed part of such committees, as composition seemingly changed over time and was also not made public.⁵⁰

Accountability and anticorruption

Perception of corruption in Italy is widespread among citizens and businesses. The 2017 European Commission Special Eurobarometer on public attitudes toward corruption reported that 89 percent of respondents in Italy believe corruption to be widespread in the country.⁵¹ This perception is mirrored by 94 percent of businesses.⁵² Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index for 2019 assigns Italy a score of 53 out of 100.⁵³ Within the EU, only six other countries perform worse.⁵⁴

Public procurement in particular is a high-risk sector in Italy. The 2017 European Commission Flash Eurobarometer on businesses attitudes toward corruption reported that 80 percent of Italian businesses responding to the survey believe that corruption is widespread in public procurement at the national level against a 50 percent average across the EU28.⁵⁵ A 2018 Transparency International Italy report highlighted how public procurement was one of the three sectors with the highest number of corruption cases occurring between December 2017 and December 2018.⁵⁶

The anticorruption institutional and legislative framework has strengthened in recent years, including the creation of the ANAC in 2012⁵⁷ and Law 3/2019 on "Measures to fight crimes against the public administration, as well as on the matter of statute of limitations and transparency of political parties and movements."⁵⁸ Among other provisions, the law increased penalties for corruption crimes. Measures to prevent and fight corruption across the national territory are included in the country's biennial National Anti-Corruption plans, the latest being the National Anti Corruption Plan 2019–2021.⁵⁹

In 2017, Italy also adopted a whistleblower protection law.⁶⁰ ANAC's yearly monitoring reports on whistleblower alerts show a consistent increase in notifications since the adoption of the law.⁶¹ In 2018, ANAC set up an online platform for whistleblowing based on GlobalLeaks, a whistleblowing tool developed by the Hermes Centre for transparency and digital human rights.⁶² WhistleblowingPA,⁶³ a similar open source platform based on the same software and run by civil society organizations, runs in parallel to the ANAC one in which whistleblowers can report misconduct in public administration anonymously. ANAC's software was made available for reuse and published in open source in 2019.⁶⁴

The lack of specific lobbying regulations at national level is a weak spot in Italy's anti-corruption framework. Following up on an IRM recommendation, a key anti-corruption contribution of the fourth action plan is the inclusion of a commitment on the regulation of stakeholders (lobbyists).⁶⁵ A second weakness addressed by this action plan is transparency of beneficial owners of companies. Italy still has not fully transposed the EU fourth and fifth Anti-Money Laundering Directives, which require the establishment of a register of beneficial ownership that needs to be accessible to the public. Commitment 3 seeks to redress this gap by pledging to set up a public register.

In Italy, sectors deemed at high corruption risk due to the COVID-19 pandemic include those traditionally vulnerable to corruption, such as public procurement, but also areas more specifically tied to the emergency such as the management and distribution of protective equipment (PPE) and the abuse of access to personal clinical data.⁶⁶ CSOs have requested additional transparency regarding financial aid⁶⁷ that will support economic recovery.⁶⁸ Indeed, several have highlighted the concrete risk that the emergency situation in Italy will be exploited by organized crime groups.⁶⁹ The early transfer from prison to house arrest of 256⁷⁰ detainees related to mafia crimes and drug trafficking as a result of a policy to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in prisons prompted outcry from the opposition and the public.⁷¹ The Minister of Justice announced a decree withdrawing the decision a few days later⁷² but still was subjected to a no-confidence motion from the opposition for his handling of the situation.⁷³ The no-confidence motion was also prompted by accusations that in 2018 he had failed to appoint an anti-Mafia prosecutor as head of the prison service as a result of undue pressure by Mafia bosses.⁷⁴ Parliament rejected the motion.⁷⁵

Budget Transparency

Italy is fairly transparent in terms of budget. The Open Budget Survey for 2019 reports that Italy publishes all the key documents related to the preparation of budgets (except in-year reports, which are

indicated as either having been published late or not being publicly available),⁷⁶ assigning it a score of 71 out of 100. This is a slight decrease compared with the score of 73 assigned in the 2017 survey.⁷⁷ The report notes that Italy provides few opportunities for the public to engage in the budget process. This is the indicator on which the country scores worst, with only 11 points out of 100. Indeed, participatory budgeting is not a common practice in Italy, and most initiatives in this area are introduced only at municipal level.⁷⁸ Specific open budget commitments were made and completed at the municipal level in the third OGP action plan in Rome and Bologna.⁷⁹

¹ “Italian society in 2018” (Censis)

https://www.censis.it/sites/default/files/downloads/Sintesi_La_societ%C3%A0_italiana_al_2018.pdf

² Democracy Index 2018 https://275rzy1ul4252pt1hv2dqyuf-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Democracy_Index_2018.pdf

³ Democracy Index 2018, p. 15. Indeed, the partial score with the most significant drop is that of “political culture,” which went from 8.13 in 2017 to 6.88 in 2018. See also Democracy Index 2017, p. 22

<https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadFile?glid=34079>

⁴ Censis 2018, p. 10

⁵ Third globally in number of deaths after the United States and the United Kingdom and sixth in number of confirmed cases, after the United States, Brazil, Russia, the United Kingdom and Spain.

⁶ COVID-19 Dashboard (Center for Systems Science and Engineering, Johns Hopkins University), 28 May 2020

<https://gisanddata.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/bda7594740fd40299423467b48e9ecf6>

⁷ Giliberto Capano (2020) Policy design and state capacity in the COVID-19 emergency in Italy: If you are not prepared for the (un)expected, you can be only what you already are, Policy and Society,

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/14494035.2020.1783790?needAccess=true>

⁸ Idem.

⁹ The text of the motion is available at: <http://www.valeriefedeli.it/2020/05/04/piu-donne-nelle-task-force-il-testo-della-mozione/>

¹⁰ “A patch to remedy the absence of women in task forces (IlSole24Ore) <https://www.ilssole24ore.com/art/task-force-toppa-extremis-all-assenza-donne-ADbpdTO>

¹¹ Government Official Gazette, Law 7, n. 24/1990 www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/1990/08/18/090G0294/sg

¹² Notably with Legislative Decree n. 33/2013; See: Government Official Gazette, Legislative Decree n. 33/2013

www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2013/04/05/13G00076/sg

¹³ Government Official Gazette, Legislative Decree n. 97/2016 <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2016/06/08/16G00108/sg>

¹⁴ Right to Information Rating – Italy 2018 <https://www.rti-rating.org/country-data/>

¹⁵ Italy Mid-Term IRM report 2016 – 2018, p. 15 https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Italy_Mid-Term_Report_2016-2018_EN.pdf

¹⁶ Italy Mid-Term IRM report 2016 -2018, p. 15

¹⁷ Federica Notari, “Critical aspects of a first monitoring of the FOIA”, November 2018

<https://iris.luiss.it/retrieve/handle/11385/181868/68802/Le%20criticit%C3%A0%20di%20un%20primo%20monitoraggio%20del%20FOIA%20italiano.pdf>

¹⁸ Italy 3rd National Action Plan with Addendum 2016–2018, commitment 7, p. 30 https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Italy_NAP3_2016-2018_EN.pdf

¹⁹ Italy End of Term IRM report 2016 -2018, p. 23 https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Italy_End-of-Term_Report_2016-2018_EN.pdf

²⁰ Italy Mid-Term IRM report 2016-2018, p. 106

²¹ See commitment 2

²² Government Official Gazette, Law Decree 18/2020 <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2020/03/17/20G00034/sg>

²³ Communication by the Department of Public Function <http://www.funzionepubblica.gov.it/articolo/dipartimento/27-03-2020/comunicato>

²⁴ Covid-19 tracker (Global Right to Information Rating) <https://www.rti-rating.org/covid-19-tracker/>

²⁵ “Suspending the right of access to information. We request that this right be protected” (Transparency International Italia) <https://www.transparency.it/sospensione-del-diritto-daccesso-alle-informazioni-chiediamo-che-il-diritto-sia-tutelato/>; “FOIA is suspended but transparency cannot be quarantined” (Agenda Digitale) <https://www.agendadigitale.eu/cittadinanza-digitale/covid-19-il-foia-e-sospeso-ma-la-trasparenza-non-puo-andare-in-quarantena/>

²⁶ “Data and coronavirus. Each Region is going its own way. Help us map who shares data and what data is being shared” (Infodata, Il Sole24Ore) <https://www.infodata.ilssole24ore.com/2020/03/20/open-data-coronavirus-litalia-delle-regione/>

²⁷ “Presidents of the Regions, make your data on COVID-19 open” (Transparency International Italia, Ondata.it, Scienzainrete.it, Info.nodes, Hermes Center for Transparency and Digital Human Rights, The Good Lobby Italia, REACT, Cittadini Reattivi) <https://www.transparency.it/presidenti-delle-regioni-aprite-i-dati-sul-covid-19/>

²⁸ Digital Economy and Society Index for 2019 <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/scoreboard/italy>

²⁹ The assessment is based on a) the presence at national level of policies on open data and the extent of national/local level coordination, including through the provision of guidelines; b) the development of national portals and their level of sophistication; c) the impact of open data at country level on a political and socio-economic level; and d) the extent to which

national portals have a systematic and automated approach to harvesting data and the compliance to metadata standards DCAT – AP. See: Digital Public Services <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/desi>

³⁰ Open Data Maturity Report for 2018, Italy https://www.europeandataportal.eu/sites/default/files/country-factsheet_italy_2018.pdf

³¹ “Open Data Barometer Leaders Edition 2018” <https://opendatabarometer.org/doc/leadersEdition/ODB-leadersEdition-Report.pdf>

³² Matteo Brunati, “Looking into the abyss of open data”, 16 November 2018 <https://medium.com/civichackingit/guardiamo-nellabisso-del-trogolo-degli-open-data-ad5a3824260d>

³³ For example: the Italian Ultrabroadband strategy, <http://bandaultralarga.italia.it/piano-bul/strategia/>; the Strategy for digital growth 2014 – 2018 http://presidenza.governo.it/GovernoInforma/documenti/piano_crescita_digitale.pdf; the Triennial ICT Plans 2017-2019 <https://pianotriennale-ict.italia.it/> and 2019-2021 https://www.agid.gov.it/sites/default/files/repository_files/piano_triennale_per_linformatica_nella_publica_amministrazione_2019_-_2021_allegati20190327.pdf; the National Guidelines for the Enhancement of Public Information, 2017 <https://docs.italia.it/italia/daf/lg-patrimonio-pubblico/it/bozza/index.html>

³⁴ Italy Mid-Term IRM report 2016-2018, p. 34

³⁵ Italy End of Term IRM report 2016-2018, p.12

³⁶ Open Data Maturity Report 2018, Italy

³⁷ For a comprehensive overview see “Italy: division of powers” (European Committee of the Regions) <https://portal.cor.europa.eu/divisionpowers/Pages/Italy-Introduction.aspx>

³⁸ World Press Freedom Index 2018 (Reporters without Borders) <https://rsf.org/en/ranking/2018>.

³⁹ World Press Freedom Index 2017 <https://rsf.org/en/ranking/2017>. A smaller score corresponds to greater press freedom

⁴⁰ “RSF Index 2018: Journalists are murdered in Europe as well” (Reporters without Borders) <https://rsf.org/en/rsf-index-2018-journalists-are-murdered-europe-well>

⁴¹ Italy Mid-Term IRM report 2016 – 2018, p. 17

⁴² Demos 2018 <http://www.demos.it/a01557.php>

⁴³ Italy 3rd National Action Plan with Addendum 2016 – 2018, commitment 14, p. 52

⁴⁴ See commitment 4

⁴⁵ An overview of all government provisions in response to the COVID-19 emergency situation is available here: <http://www.governo.it/it/coronavirus-misure-del-governo>.

⁴⁶ Government Official Gazette, Prime Minister Decree of 8 March 2020 <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2020/03/08/20A01522/sg>

⁴⁷ Government Official Gazette, Prime Minister Decree of 26 April 2020 <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2020/04/27/20A02352/sg>

⁴⁸ Openpolis, “How Covid-19 changed the decision-making process” <https://www.openpolis.it/come-il-covid-ha-cambiato-il-processo-decisionale/>

⁴⁹ “We want the Parliament!” (Transparency International Italia, The Good Lobby, Action Aid, CILD, Cittadinanzattiva, Cittadini Reattivi, Diritto di Sapere, Ondata), 31 March 2020 <https://www.transparency.it/vogliamo-il-parlamento/>

⁵⁰ Openpolis, “How Covid-19 changed the decision-making process” <https://www.openpolis.it/come-il-covid-ha-cambiato-il-processo-decisionale/>

⁵¹ Special Eurobarometer 470 (European Commission) <http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/ResultDoc/download/DocumentKy/81007>.

⁵² Flash Eurobarometer 457 (European Commission) https://data.europa.eu/euodp/en/data/dataset/S2177_457_ENG

⁵³ Corruption Perception Index 2018 (Transparency International) <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2019>

⁵⁴ Slovakia, Croatia, Romania, Hungary, Greece and Bulgaria.

⁵⁵ Flash Eurobarometer 457, Businesses Attitudes towards corruption in the EU (European Commission) https://data.europa.eu/euodp/en/data/dataset/S2177_457_ENG

⁵⁶ “Mapping corruption” (Transparency International) https://www.transparency.it/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/mappiamo_la_corruzione_2018.pdf

⁵⁷ Government Official Gazette, Law 190/2012 <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2012/11/13/012G0213/sg>

⁵⁸ Government Official Gazette, Law 3/2019 <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2019/01/16/18G00170/sg>

⁵⁹ Italy, National Anti Corruption Plan 2019 (ANAC) https://www.anticorruzione.it/portal/rest/jcr/repository/collaboration/Digital%20Assets/anacdocs/Attivita/Atti/Delibere/2019/PN_A2019_Delibera_1064_13novembre_sito.pdf

⁶⁰ Government Official Gazette, Law 179/2017 <http://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2017/12/14/17G00193/sg>

⁶¹ “Third national report on whistleblowing – overview” (ANAC), June 2018 http://www.lavorosi.it/fileadmin/user_upload/anac-3_-report-annuale-whistleblowing.pdf

⁶² ALAC report 2018 (Transparency International) https://www.transparency.it/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Report_ALAC_2018_lpag.pdf The ANAC platform is available at: <https://servizi.anticorruzione.it/segnalazioni/#/>

⁶³ Available at: <https://www.whistleblowing.it/>

⁶⁴ Press release (ANAC), 15 January 2019 https://www.anticorruzione.it/portal/public/classic/Comunicazione/News/_news?id=516c7a2f0a7780424332e3f6bacfd3ff

⁶⁵ See commitment 5

⁶⁶ “What are the corruption risks for the healthcare sector during the Covid-19 pandemic?” (Transparency International Italia) <https://www.transparency.it/quali-rischi-di-corruzione-per-la-sanita-durante-lemergenza-covid-19/>

⁶⁷ Proposed measures range from an emergency package of EUR 25 billion to fiscal measures up to EUR 55 billion and liquidity measures up to EUR 400 billion. For an updated overview of the financial package please see:

<https://www.imf.org/en/Topics/imf-and-covid19/Policy-Responses-to-COVID-19#>

⁶⁸ “Against the healthcare crisis, more transparency and democracy [are needed]” (Transparency International Italia, Transparency International France, Transparency International España) <https://www.transparency.it/controla-crisi-sanitaria-piu-trasparenza-e-democrazia/>

⁶⁹ “Why the mafia are taking care of everyone business” (The Guardian) <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/25/why-mafia-taking-care-of-everyones-business-in-pandemic>; “How to stop the mafia that are profiting from the pandemic” (L’Espresso) <https://espresso.repubblica.it/attualita/cronaca/2020/04/07/news/coronavirus-mafie-documento-gabrielli-1.346744>

⁷⁰ Initial reports mentioned the number was much higher: 497. The exact figure was later confirmed by the Minister of Justice. See: “Bonafede faces confidence test” (ANSA) https://www.ansa.it/english/news/politics/2020/05/20/bonafede-faces-confidence-test_c0b20ed5-b20a-475b-acb2-b90e1004fc24.html

⁷¹ The policy foresaw the release of prisoners over 70 years of age from jails, placing them under house arrest. See also: “Italy: dozens of mafia bosses set for release due to coronavirus” (The Guardian) <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/22/italy-dozens-of-mafia-bosses-set-for-release-due-to-coronavirus>

⁷² “Bonafede case: green light to the decree on the return to jail of released mafia bosses” (La Repubblica) https://www.repubblica.it/politica/2020/05/09/news/bonafede_cdm_decreto-256181865/

⁷³ “Prisons, the League presents a no-confidence motion against Bonafede” (RAI news) <http://www.rainews.it/dl/rainews/articoli/carceri-bonafede-question-time-scarcerazione-matteo-boss-41-bis-526d9e9a-fd29-4552-9b44-d1332f362962.html>

⁷⁴ “Bonafede: I was not pressured in my decision of the nomination. It is critical: the reconstruction of events remains partial” (La Repubblica) https://www.repubblica.it/politica/2020/05/12/news/alfonso_bonafede_governo_justizia_dap-256376878/

⁷⁵ “Justice: the Senate rejects Bonafede no confidence motions” (La Repubblica) https://www.repubblica.it/politica/2020/05/20/news/giorno_sfiducia_bonafede-257126918/

⁷⁶ Other documents include: Pre-Budget Statement; Executive's Budget Proposal; Enacted Budget; Citizens Budget; Mid-Year Review; Year-End Report; Audit Report. See: Open Budget Survey 2019 (International Budget Partnership) https://www.internationalbudget.org/sites/default/files/2020-04/2019_Report_EN.pdf. The higher the score the more transparent the budget process is.

⁷⁷ Open Budget Survey 2017 (International Budget Partnership) <https://www.internationalbudget.org/wp-content/uploads/open-budget-survey-2017-report-english.pdf>.

⁷⁸ “Participatory budgeting: An innovative approach” (European Parliament), 2016 https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2016/573894/EPRS_BRI%282016%29573894_EN.pdf

⁷⁹ Italy 3rd National Action Plan with Addendum 2016 – 2018, commitments 16 and 17, pp. 58, 61

III. Leadership and Multistakeholder Process

The Department of Public Administration leads OGP and coordinates with the permanent multi-stakeholder Open Government Forum during the co-creation process. There were more opportunities for early civil society participation than last time, but the change in Government mid-way through the process delayed the finalization of the plan. Co-creation could be strengthened through increased coordination, and more regular meetings and interaction with Forum representatives.

3.1 Leadership

This subsection describes the OGP leadership and institutional context for OGP in Italy.

The Minister of Public Administration officially oversees Italy's OGP-related activities.¹ The minister is supported by an "OGP team," established within the Department for Public Administration (DFP). This team includes four representatives of the DFP (including the head of the department² and the director for International Relations and OGP point of contact), two external experts, and three representatives of Formez PA, the in-house Centre for Services, Assistance, Studies and Training for the Modernization of Public Administration.³ The OGP team coordinates the efforts of the administrations (ministries and other public agencies) involved in the design and implementation of the action plan; coordinates and oversees the work of the Open Government Forum (OGF, the permanent multistakeholder forum through which civil society participates to the OGP process in Italy⁴); drafts the relevant documents and reports; and informs the general public on the commitments made in the action plan and the state of implementation.⁵

Italy has witnessed significant political turnover in recent years, with three different cabinets taking office between December 2016 and September 2019.⁶ Changes at the political level during the design of the fourth action plan were deemed to have strongly affected the process by the majority of both governmental and nongovernmental stakeholders interviewed.⁷ One month after the kick-off meetings for the new action plan,⁸ the Gentiloni government (which was led by the center-left Democratic Party) was replaced by a coalition between the anti-establishment Five-star movement and far-right Lega government, with Giuseppe Conte as prime minister. Both governmental and nongovernmental stakeholders confirmed that the principles of open government appeared to be given less priority by the new government. The change in government led to a delay in the creation process of the fourth action plan, and Italy missed the August 2018 deadline for submission. Although the process had restarted, OGP Secretariat notified the national government in January 2019 that the country had acted contrary to OGP process⁹ and that a new action plan was expected by August 2019.¹⁰

The Executive's budget still has no dedicated funding for the DFP to operate OGP-related activities, which poses some challenges to an effective coordination of the action plan design.

3.2 Action plan co-creation process

The co-creation process of the fourth action plan followed the procedures already established with the third action plan. A detailed timeline of the process is available on the national OGP website.¹¹ The finalized action plan was published on the Italian open government website on 18 June 2019.¹²

During the development of the action plan, six meetings took place: three meetings of the DFP-led institutional working group and three meetings of the Open Government Forum.¹³ There was a significant time gap between the first two kick-off meetings (May 2018) and the second two (November 2018) due to changes in government that stalled the process. During this time, civil society organizations complained about the lack of information on whether and when the process would restart after several meetings were postponed.¹⁴ Minutes of the meetings and records of decisions made are not kept nor disseminated. Overall, representatives of CSOs remark that the potential of the Forum remains untapped because of a lack of systematic coordination and infrequent interaction.

Opportunities were available for civil society from the start of the process to propose and consider commitments, but the design process cannot yet be considered collaborative. After delays due to changes in government and upon request by the public administration, which had identified the key thematic areas to work on in this action plan, the OGF presented 50 proposals to the government.¹⁵ The proposals were collected and published by the OGP team in a Google docs folder.¹⁶ These proposals, together with others put forward by public administrations, were discussed by representatives of public administrations during a meeting of the institutional working group¹⁷. The OGF met in plenary a few weeks later and discussed the common proposals resulting from the work of the institutional working group in its three thematic groups: Transparency and Open Data, Participation and Accountability, and Digital Citizenship and Innovation. The meeting was attended by Minister Bongiorno.

Following the plenary meeting, the OGP team put together the first draft of the action plan, which was then made available online for public consultation¹⁸ from 15 March 2019 until 30 April 2019 (45 days, the same amount of time as for the previous action plan¹⁹). There was no further structured interaction with OGF. At the end of the consultation period, 281 comments made by 38 different users were registered.²⁰ The users included both representatives of the CSOs involved in the OGF along with broader members of the public. The comments are still available on the national OGP website.²¹ The level of participation during the public consultation phase decreased from the previous action plan, when 359 comments had been received by an unspecified number of users.²² Upon completion of the action plan, the OGP team prepares and publishes a Civil Society Consultation report with its response to the comments received during the consultation period and to those the members of the OGF received. For each of the 10 commitments, the report addresses the key comments received,²³ responding to users' requests for clarification. The report indicates that some comments have been taken into account and have helped further strengthen the text of the action plan, although no comprehensive overview is provided to indicate exactly how many of the comments received during public consultation have been taken on board.²⁴

Several non-governmental representatives highlighted the possibility to put forward concrete proposals at the early stages of the process²⁵ as a positive improvement on the third action plan. Previous action plan processes only offered the opportunity to comment on commitments the administration had proposed.²⁶ Nevertheless, non-governmental representatives felt that the interruptions due to changes in government and the lack of clear support by politicians for OGP values such as transparency negatively affected the overall process.

There could have been more frequent interactions and coordination between public administration and civil society organizations, as highlighted in previous IRM reports.²⁷ The working mechanisms of the OGF, its mandate, and its processes have not changed since the previous action plan. The CSOs that had withdrawn from the working table on open data and transparency at the end of the third action plan did not return,²⁸ although they did comment during the public consultation process,²⁹

Stakeholders confirmed that the OGP team made an effort to enhance the possibility of attending meetings online, which was one of the major complaints during the previous cycle. However, according to one stakeholder, only one meeting was organized in which participants could connect via Skype, and it was affected by technical issues.

Stakeholders also noted that the formulation of commitments, from being proposed by CSOs to the commitments' inclusion in the action plan, is not fully transparent. Indeed, some stakeholders expressed regret about the feedback process, reporting that they were not informed in a timely manner of the reasons behind the selection of certain proposals put forward by civil society and the exclusion of others. The Civil Society Consultation report published upon completion of the action plan indicates that the commitments that were ultimately selected include both those independently put forward by public administrations along with key commitments designed on the basis of the requests of civil society.³⁰ This was also confirmed by the OGP team. Overall, out of the 50 proposals the Forum put

forward, 16 were adopted, 17 were partially adopted, and 17 were rejected. A breakdown of the data for each commitment is also provided in the report.³¹

Although the report is a welcome overview, stakeholders indicated that it is published too late in the process and does not sufficiently describe the reasoning behind the decisions. The report cites “lack of interest by the relevant administrations, lack of funding, lack of feasibility of the commitment in a two-year timespan, commitment that goes beyond the competences of the administrations involved, etc.”³² as reasons for rejecting civil society proposals. These justifications seem to indicate that the process remains administration-centric. More iterative open dialogue with OGF members on the process for the selection and formulation of commitments would contribute to making the action plan’s design more collaborative.

Representatives of the OGP team confirmed that the level of collaboration on the creation of commitments is not consistent across the action plan and varies significantly depending on the administrations involved.³³ Overall, stakeholders agree that the process is still too top-down. Several of the initiatives included in the plan are part of government activities that are already underway or were being developed outside the OGP process. This is a by-product of one peculiarity of the design process, namely that the OGP team requests that administrations provide input based on the themes emerging from conversations with civil society and the institutional working group, and they are free to propose initiatives they believe fit the theme.³⁴ This leads to commitments that often include a broad range of preexisting government activities rather than enable the generation of new ideas for actions. It also means commitment milestones are often disjointed due to the proliferation of multiple, highly specific milestones from different institutions.³⁵

Finally, a core innovation during this co-creation process that did not exist in previous cycles was the role of “civil society referees.” Each commitment put forward in the action plan has been assigned a referee from the OGF who is tasked with monitoring its implementation. In most cases, referees were chosen on a voluntary basis. The referee assignment is indicated in the action plan under each commitment.

Representatives of the OGP team reported that the decision to establish referees was motivated by the need to facilitate and strengthen interaction with the Forum.³⁶ In general, stakeholders perceived this as a positive step toward increased accountability of the work of administrations and increased coordination of the work of the Forum.³⁷ However, some reported that institutionalized mechanisms to link referees and administrations would be welcome.³⁸ One stakeholder interviewed also remarked that the referee selection process could have benefited from additional transparency.

Table 4: Level of Public Influence

The IRM has adapted the International Association for Public Participation’s (IAP2) “Spectrum of Participation” to apply to OGP.³⁹ This spectrum shows the potential level of public influence on the contents of the action plan. In the spirit of OGP, most countries should aspire for “collaborate.”

Level of public influence		During development of action plan
Empower	The government handed decision-making power to members of the public.	
Collaborate	There was iterative dialogue AND the public helped set the agenda.	
Involve⁴⁰	The government gave feedback on how public input were considered.	✓
Consult	The public could give inputs.	
Inform	The government provided the public with information on the action plan.	
No Consultation	No consultation	

OGP Participation and Co-Creation Standards

In 2017, OGP adopted OGP Participation and Co-Creation Standards to support participation and co-creation by civil society at all stages of the OGP cycle. All OGP-participating countries are expected to meet these standards. The standards aim to raise ambition and quality of participation during development, implementation, and review of OGP action plans.

The following table provides an overview of Italy's performance implementing the Co-Creation and Participation Standards throughout the action plan development.

Key:

Green = Meets standard

Yellow = In progress (steps have been taken to meet this standard, but standard is not met)

Red = No evidence of action

Multistakeholder Forum	Status
1a. Forum established: The Open Government Forum (OGF) is the permanent multistakeholder forum institutionalizing civil society participation to the OGP process.	Green
1b. Regularity: The OGF met three times during the development of the action plan. However, stakeholders report that the forum does not meet with the regularity needed to ensure a collaborative design process.	Yellow
1c. Collaborative mandate development: The working principles of the OGF were developed by the OGP Team within the Department of Public Administration. Civil society was able to provide comments during the public consultation phase and the principles were published in Annex to the third action plan.	Green
1d. Mandate public: Information on the forum's remit, membership, and governance structure is available on the national OGP website ⁴¹ and published as an attachment to the third and fourth action plans ⁴² .	Green
2a. Multistakeholder: The OGF includes representatives of civil society organizations, academia and business associations. Government representatives are not included. The OGF does meet with government representatives during	Yellow

plenary meetings and is coordinated by the OGP Team, which is part of the Department of Public Administration.	
2b. Parity: There is no even balance of governmental and nongovernmental representatives in the Forum, as it only includes nongovernmental representatives.	Red
2c. Transparent selection: Participation to the OGF is open to all. Subscription is possible through a link available on the national OGP website. ⁴³	Green
2d. High-level government representation: The Minister of Public Administration attends plenary meetings. Stakeholders report that involvement from ministries or other administrations during working sessions would be beneficial.	Green
3a. Openness: The general public can comment on the commitments proposed in the action plan during the online public consultation period.	Green
3b. Remote participation: There was one opportunity for remote participation to a meeting, in response to stakeholders demands. Stakeholders report that technical difficulties hampered effectiveness of this solution.	Yellow
3c. Minutes: There are no records available of the decisions made and activities implemented during OGF meetings.	Red

Action Plan Development	
4a. Process transparency: Information on key aspects of the national OGP process is published on the website http://open.gov.it/ .	Green
4b. Documentation in advance: The OGF mandate states that the OGP team will notify participants of the convocation of a meeting at least 15 days before the date. The convocation should include a clear indication of the issues to be discussed. Civil society representatives however report that these indications are not always followed, in particular with regard to preparatory material.	Yellow
4c. Awareness-raising: The government conducts outreach and awareness-raising activities with relevant stakeholders to inform them of the OGP process. Information to the general public is also provided during the activities of the Open Government Week held annually.	Green
4d. Communication channels: Civil society representatives report a lack of consistent communication on progress of action plan implementation with the OGP team/government during the action plan creation process.	Yellow
4e. Reasoned response: The OGP team publishes its reasoning behind decisions and responds to major categories of public comment in a consultation report. However, the description of the reasons for rejecting specific proposals is sometimes vague. Civil society representatives believe that further interaction with the Forum specifically on the reasoning behind decisions on commitment would be beneficial.	Yellow
5a. Repository: The national OGP website is used as a repository. A Google Drive folder is used to collect and store commitment proposals from CSOs, although the folder is not directly accessible from the website. ⁴⁴ Minutes and executive decisions from meetings are not recorded.	Yellow

- ¹ During the design of the action plan the Ministers were Marianna Madia (until June 2018) and Giulia Bongiorno (from June 2018 until the end of the design process).
- ² Pia Marconi until July 2018, then Maria Barilá.
- ³ “Who we are”, Open Government Italia, <http://open.gov.it/chi-siamo-2/>
- ⁴ The Open Government Forum was officially set up as a mechanism for the permanent consultation of stakeholders in June 2016, within the context of the previous action plan. The Forum is structured around three thematic working groups: Transparency and open data, participation and accountability and digital citizenship and innovation. The Forum includes civil society organizations, academia and business organizations. It meets in plenary session every six months and working groups are expected to meet at least once every two months. Participation to the Forum is open and anyone can subscribe through an online form (<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdd9C6lryR79xTcwtL3kk6XJ533Cvj3PuBSOBD2LmKyM-pWA/viewform>). To date, 108 organizations participate to the Forum. More information on the operating mechanisms of the forum can be found at Annex B of the fourth Action Plan.
- ⁵ “Who we are”, Open Government Italia, <http://open.gov.it/chi-siamo-2/>
- ⁶ “Overview of Italian cabinets from 1943 until today” <http://www.governo.it/it/i-governi-dal-1943-ad-oggi/xviii-legislatura-dal-23-marzo-2018/governo-conte-ii/12715>
- ⁷ Multiple representatives of the DFP, The Good Lobby, Transparency International, Cittadini Reattivi, Università di Salerno and three other interviewed CSO representatives.
- ⁸ “From planning to implementation”, Timeline of the fourth action plan <http://open.gov.it/partecipa/timeline-01/>
- ⁹ By having a delay of more than four months in the submission of the action plan.
- ¹⁰ Italy – Notification of Late Action Plan (Cohort Shift), 23 January 2019 <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/italy-notification-of-late-action-plan-cohort-shift-january-2019/>
- ¹¹ “From planning to implementation”, Timeline of the fourth action plan <http://open.gov.it/partecipa/timeline-01/>
- ¹² “Publication of Italy’s fourth OGP action plan” <http://open.gov.it/2019/06/18/publicata-la-versione-definitiva-del-iv-piano-dazione-ogp/>
- ¹³ “From planning to implementation”, Timeline of the fourth action plan <http://open.gov.it/partecipa/timeline-01/>
- ¹⁴ Federico Anghelá (Huffington Post): “Minister Bongiorno fails transparency exam” https://www.huffingtonpost.it/federico-anghela/la-ministra-bongiorno-bocciata-in-trasparenza_a_23576943/
- ¹⁵ Civil Society Consultation Report, p. 4-11 The IRM researcher notes that there is a discrepancy in the report, as p.3 records 48 proposals. In the official OGP Italy website the recorded number of proposals is 50 and in the text of the action plan 49. See: <http://open.gov.it/> and <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Italy-Action-Plan-2019-2021-English.pdf>
- ¹⁶ Available at: https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/fole-ders/1criRWK-680L1IRPWPetJRPis7FYrjo_K
- ¹⁷ The working group includes representatives of central public administrations and regions and municipalities. See Civil Society Consultation Report, p. 3 <http://open.gov.it/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/4NAP-Report-Consultazione-sul-IV-Piano-di-azione.pdf>
- ¹⁸ Available at: <https://commenta.formez.it/ch/Quartopianoogp/>
- ¹⁹ Civil Society Consultation Report for the Third Action Plan, p. 7 http://open.gov.it/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/OGP-report_mIDEF.pdf
- ²⁰ Civil Society Consultation Report, p. 12.
- ²¹ Available at: http://open.gov.it/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Commenti_al_quarto_piano_OGP_2019.06.11_-3.pdf
- ²² Civil Society Consultation Report for the Third Action Plan, p. 7 http://open.gov.it/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/OGP-report_mIDEF.pdf
- ²³ The comments are not addressed individually, rather the OGP team offers a synthetic account of the responses provided by the individual administrations focusing on key comments. The OGP team clarifies in the report that further clarifications and answers to requests for details will be provided to interested parties during the course of the works of Open Government Forum or via email.
- ²⁴ Civil Society Consultation Report, p. 16 – 34.
- ²⁵ Daniela Vellutino (Università di Salerno), interview by IRM researcher, 8 May. Representatives of three CSOs, interview by IRM researcher, 7 May.
- ²⁶ Italy, Mid-Term IRM report 2016 – 2018, p. 24 <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/italy-mid-term-report-2016-2018-year-1/>
- ²⁷ Italy, Mid-Term IRM report 2016 – 2018, p. 25
- ²⁸ Spaghetti Open Data, Openpolis, Ondata, Open Genova and Open Knowledge Italy. See: <http://spaghettiopendata.org/archivio/Report-ForumOGP-OpenData.html> as well as Italy’s End of Term IRM Report 2016 -2018, p. 4.
- ²⁹ Matteo Brunati (Spaghetti Open Data) email exchange with IRM researcher, 10 May 2020
- ³⁰ Civil Society Consultation Report, p. 4
- ³¹ Civil Society Consultation Report, pp. 4-11
- ³² Civil Society Consultation Report, p. 4
- ³³ Representative of the DFP, interview by IRM researcher, 6 May
- ³⁴ Representative of the DFP, interview by IRM researcher, 6 May
- ³⁵ For further detail see the analysis of commitments 1, 4 and 9.
- ³⁶ Representative of the DFP, interview by IRM researcher, 6 May

³⁷ One stakeholder was not supportive of the measure, claiming that it contributes to disengaging and de-responsibilizing other Forum participants.

³⁸ Representatives of three CSOs, interview by IRM researcher, 7 May

³⁹ “IAP2’s Public Participation Spectrum” (IAP2, 2014),

http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/foundations_course/IAP2_P2_Spectrum_FINAL.pdf.

⁴⁰ OGP’s Articles of Governance also establish participation and co-creation requirements a country must meet in their action plan development and implementation to act according to OGP process. Italy **did not** act contrary to OGP process during the development of the 2019 – 2021 action plan.

⁴¹ Available at: <http://open.gov.it/open-government-forum/>.

⁴² Italy 3rd National Action Plan with Addendum 2016 – 2018, p. 149 and Italy 4th National Action Plan 2019 – 2021, p. 65

⁴³ Available at: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdd9C6lryR79xTcwtL3kk6XJ533Cvjd3PuBSOBD2LmKyM-pWA/viewform>

⁴⁴ Available at: https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1criRWK-680LIIRPWPetJRPis7FYrjo_K

IV. Commitments

All OGP-participating governments develop OGP action plans that include concrete commitments over a two-year period. Governments begin their OGP action plans by sharing existing efforts related to open government, including specific strategies and ongoing programs.

Commitments should be appropriate to each country's circumstances and challenges. OGP commitments should also be relevant to OGP values detailed in the *OGP Articles of Governance and Open Government Declaration* signed by all OGP-participating countries.¹ Indicators and methods used in the IRM research can be found in the IRM Procedures Manual.² A summary of key indicators the IRM assesses can be found in the Annex of this report.

General Overview of the Commitments

The action plan is developed around 10 commitments: 1) open data, 2) transparency, 3) register of beneficial owners, 4) support to participation, 5) regulation of stakeholders (lobbying), 6) culture of open government, 7) corruption prevention, 8) simplification, performance and equal opportunities, 9) digital services, and 10) digital citizenship and skills. Annex B includes a list of all digital services to be published from 2019 to 2021, including beyond those in the action plan. The plan addresses key areas such as lobbying regulation, beneficial ownership, and prevention of corruption. As a result of participation to the OGP Break the Roles campaign,³ the action plan includes cross-cutting activities on gender equality across several commitments.⁴ Across the commitments in the action plan are milestones from local governments, such as Rome and Milan. Measures to enhance civic participation are a new area of focus, while thematic areas such as open data, a culture of open government, transparency, and digital services and skills are carried over from the previous action plan.

For the most part the action plan reflects initiatives led by public administrations; however, it also responds to some priorities identified by the civil society (such as Commitments 3 on beneficial ownership and 5 on lobbying regulation). Three out of the five recommendations provided by the IRM in the previous cycle have also been addressed⁵ including the recommendation to reduce the size of the action plan and increase its ambition. However, despite there being 10 commitments, several of them (such as Commitments 1 and 9) contain a proliferation of over 30 milestones across multiple institutions, which are small commitments in themselves, rather than stepping-stones in the implementation of a high-level initiative. The broad variety of milestones with varying degrees of potential impact, focus, and ambition within a single commitment makes it hard to identify any commitments that may have overall transformative impact, unlike in the previous action plan.

¹ "Open Government Partnership: Articles of Governance" (OGP, 17 Jun. 2019), <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/articles-of-governance/>.

² "IRM Procedures Manual" (OGP), <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/irm-procedures-manual>.

³ "Break the Roles" (OGP), <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/campaigns/break-the-roles/>

⁴ Specifically, commitments 1, 3, 8, 10.

⁵ See Chapter V of this report for more detailed information.

I. Open data

Main Objective

“The initiative as a whole has multiple purposes involving both national and regional actors:

- Setting measures at national level that – starting from the current context and involving all necessary actors (including the so-called RTDs - Responsabili per la transizione digitale – Coordinators for Digital Transition from the administration side, domain experts and OGP Forum participants from the open data demand side together with businesses) – can lead to:
 - adopting a national license or, where useful and applicable, different licenses (i.e. for homogenous data categories), which can encourage an appropriate and effective data reuse, overcoming the current incompatibility problems resulting from the use of different licenses; a special focus will be on major reuse platforms so to facilitate the association of the most appropriate licenses based on the purpose and magnitude of reuse;
 - setting common standards for types of data released, involving specifically the relevant administrations in terms of field of expertise and domain, relying on what has already been done in this field (i.e. network ontologies and controlled vocabularies, notwithstanding already existing specific national and European frameworks, like for Geographical Information) and defining quality indicators for open data relying especially on existing ISO standards for data quality already mentioned in the national Guidelines for enhancing the stock of public information;
 - releasing, starting from the specific real and potential demand-driven commitments of administrations, a growing number of high-value open datasets, also from a gender point of view, as well as tools to support their exploitation, including data visualization solutions and documented API (Application Programming Interface – open software interfaces allowing for machine-to-machine interaction).
- At a regional level, developing joint open data initiatives as a key lever to increase transparency and accountability and foster data reuse, in particular:
 - enhancing the quality and quantity of released data in open format, through the definition of a shared ‘basket’ of 10 useful datasets, also building on existing initiatives;
 - enhancing the ability to manage data and the use of data included in the ‘basket’, defined through the availability of APIs;
 - promoting the use of open data for accountability and impact assessment processes in public policies as well as for decision-making”.

Milestones

Department of Public Function (PCM-DFP), Agency for Digital Italy (AgID)

Drafting a document describing the rationale to choose a standard license or, where useful and applicable, different licenses for homogeneous data categories, to be used as an input to update the Guidelines for enhancing the public information stock (art. 71 Legislative Decree 82/2005 CAD), keeping into account the need to grant everybody access to data and information. The following activities will be carried out:

I.1 establish a working group with administrations and stakeholders that are directly interested and/or invited to participate (including domain experts, members of the OGP Forum, businesses and other organizations dealing with open data) and create a discussion channel on *forum.italia*. This is meant to ensure maximum participation in the drafting process of the document.

I.2 Publish the document on licenses.

AgID

I.3 Establish a working group, including central and local administrations, to draft a document on the criteria to assess the quality of open data which will be used to monitor open datasets.

I.4 Draft a document describing the methods and tools to measure the quality of datasets, with reference to the relevant ISO standards.

I.5 Test the dataset quality assessment system on at least 2 administrations selected within the working group based on the expressions of interest received.

I.6 Make sure administrations are willing to work on publishing open datasets which meet the quality criteria set by the working group.

I.7 Publish open datasets.

AgID, Digital Team

I.8 Gather commitments to publishing open datasets that administrations wish to propose as high-value datasets.

I.9 Publish high-value open datasets.

Establishing a working group with administrations having an experience with domains (also in connection with the data they possess) and the suppliers of management applications, having to set, based on already existing virtuous practices especially at regional and/or municipal level, common open data standards, if these are not already defined at the EU or national level, for at least 2 categories. The following activities will be carried out:

I.10 Publish incremental releases of new versions of data models (agile approach) on *developers.italia*.

I.11 Publish the consolidated version of specifications in accordance with the process established by art. 17 of the Code for Digital Administration (CAD).

Italian National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT)

With reference to the website “Map of risks in Italian municipalities”:

I.12 on a yearly basis, update data on: population density, resident population at the end of the year, distribution of resident population by age (in quartiles) resident families, demographic exposure index, structural dependency index, coastline location, share of population over 80, total area of municipalities (in km²), percentage change of resident population (from 2011 and for each year), old age index.

I.13 Develop and release open analysis tools (georeferenced and territorial).

I.14 Improve interoperability of the platform (by releasing ontologies, open data and linked open data).

Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities (MIBAC)

I.15 Publish data from the National Library Service (SBN) as Linked Open Data (LOD) on the new platform of Libraries and Cultural Institutes which is currently being developed.

I.16 Develop advanced tools to visualize SBN data, including viewers, interactive charts and maps on the new platform of Libraries and Cultural Institutes which is currently being developed.

Department Casa Italia (PCM-DCI)

I.17 Publish open datasets from the National Archive of Buildings.

Department for programming and economic policy coordination (PCM – DIPE)

Data quality: start a process to consolidate common standards on the classification of public investment projects (common vocabularies) adopted by the System for the Single Project Code and the portal OpenCUP. Updating classifications is key to improve data quality of open data portals on development

policies (i.e. OpenCoesione, OpenCantieri, Registro Nazionale degli Aiuti, OpenBDAP). The main objectives include:

I.18 Releasing documents on the evolution of updates.

I.19 Publishing new classification tables.

Raising awareness on the issue of open data and promoting the use of open data.

I.20 Promoting the issue of open data through communication actions to encourage the organization of public meetings including hackathons and contests, to actively involve and engage stakeholders on the “demand” side, especially from universities and schools – both teachers and students – and encourage the production of innovative solutions or practical applications of data.

Department for cohesion policies (PCM – DPCoE – NUVAP)

I.21 Linked Open Data on public investments.

I.22 OpenCoesione EU corner: easy access and full reuse of open data available at EU level with comparative metadata. To be then published on www.opencoessione.gov.it.

I.23 Extra data on project funded under cohesion policies to enhance integrative stocks of open data and/or multimedia material, also showing gender policies to support equal opportunities and counter discrimination and violence. Publication of at least two territorial and thematic focuses on www.opencoessione.gov.it.

I.24 OpenDataEducation on Cohesion (ODE on Cohesion): Offering a training course on “A Scuola di OpenCoesione” (Learn about OpenCoesione) at the international level to be piloted initially in at least three Member States and in 5-7 schools.

PCM – DPCoE – NUVAP, National Agency for Forfeited and Confiscated Assets (ANBSC)

I.25 Developing an integrated monitoring system for an open data portal on confiscated property.

Monitoring investment dedicated to exploiting seized and confiscated property and producing statistics based on the following objectives:

I.26 Introduction of a tag for confiscated property in the CUP Index System.

I.27 Integration of the IGRUE Protocol with the identification data of confiscated property in the Single Monitoring System of cohesion policies.

I.28 Integration with data held by those who provide incentives to seized and confiscated companies.

I.29 Inclusion of statistics on confiscated property in the National Statistical System.

I.30 Publication of specific open data on projects and entities funded by cohesion policies to exploit confiscated property in www.opencoessione.gov.it.

Mapping, evaluating and collecting experiences on the reuse of confiscated property, with a special focus on practices to include disadvantaged people and foster gender equality policies. Organization of monitoring citizenship and territorial co-creation labs based on the following objectives:

I.31 setting up civic surveillance on the release of institutional datasets online and wikidata collection labs.

I.32 Drafting and publishing at least three descriptive reports on significant cases of reuse of confiscated property with details on the object of reuse with a special focus on services for disadvantaged people and women, including those who are the victims of mafia, and/or entirely run by women or led by women with mixed staff.

I.33 Launching at least two territorial co-creation labs.

Union of Chambers of Commerce (Unioncamere)

I.34 Publication of datasets from the Chamber System in the portal camcom.gov.it and measurement of accesses and downloads, with the purpose of increasing the amount of data made available to businesses, with a focus on specific themes (foreign markets, female entrepreneurship, green economy, tourism, etc.). The objective of Unioncamere is to involve the network of Chambers of Commerce and acquire original data and/or data provided by institutional partners and, above all, encourage businesses to use open data including through promotion activities on Unioncamere's channels as well as exchanges and debates (webinars and workshops).

Data are mainly provided in the .CSV format to simplify the acquisition of information by companies and have a visual representation of classification (type of dataset).

(*) open government section <http://www.camcom.gov.it/P42A0C0S198/Open-Government.htm>

Regions and Autonomous Provinces

In order to speed up a coordinated development of open data, the Regions, in cooperation with the national actions by AgID and the Digital Team, are committed to:

I.35 Defining a basket of datasets containing a list of useful data among the most significant competencies. Presenting 5/10 useful datasets.

I.36 Starting a participatory process to define standard tracks of datasets in the basket, with the purpose of improving the quality of datasets, encouraging the completeness of information, allowing the comparison of data from different institutions, facilitating the usability of data.

I.37 Setting indicators to evaluate the use of data in the basket by external entities, especially through API queries. Present data on use of 5/10 APIs regarding useful datasets.

I.38 Promoting the use of open data for decision-making through best practices (bot, data visualization, etc.).

City of Milan

I.39 Launching the linked open data service and significantly increasing the amount and domains of the information stock.

I.40 Reporting on the mandate policies through open data and visualizations.

I.41 Starting Open Data Labs, in cooperation with Milan universities, to disseminate the culture and use of data.

Editorial Note: Please note commitment text in this report has been abridged for brevity and readability. For the complete text of this commitment, including all milestones, please see Italy's action plan at <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Italy-Action-Plan-2019-2021-English.pdf>.

IRM Design Report Assessment	
Verifiable:	Yes
Relevant:	Access to Information, Civic participation
Potential impact:	Moderate

Commitment Analysis

The commitment broadly aims to adopt measures at the national and local level, which would help promote and make possible access and reuse of open data. These measures range from the adoption of standard licenses for data and common (quality) standards for the data released to releasing high-value open datasets. The commitment includes 12 sets of milestones under the responsibility of different administrations. Each set of milestones is highly specific to the individual implementing administration. Broadly, the commitment is relevant to the OGP value of access to information, although some specific milestones (1.1, 1.31, 1.33 and 1.41) are also relevant to civic participation, as they foresee a collaborative role for civil society.

This first broad commitment in the action plan seeks to redress key issues in the Italian open data landscape, such as poor awareness and understanding of the potential of open data, including at the decision-making level; insufficient (and varying across administration) data quality; and limited reuse examples.¹ This is done for the most part by suggesting activities that would ensure higher possibilities of reuse of data, working on quality more than on quantity.

The desire to increase the quality and feasibility of reuse of data behind this commitment is valuable. However, the inclusion of several sets of milestones with limited ambition and highly specific to the implementing administrations could reduce the commitment's potential, especially in light of the fact that several of these initiatives already existed prior to the design of the action plan. According to representatives from the DFP,² the inclusion of strategic-level commitments such as those by AgID and DFP are born out of a desire to centrally coordinate the work on open data in a way that would avoid fragmented actions such as those under the previous action plan. The IRM researcher commends and supports this effort, although in practice this is not immediately evident in the way the commitment is structured. Given the number of milestones, and the variation in ambition and specificity, the commitment could have either a significant overall impact or represent more incremental improvements across a number of domains. In light of these considerations, the overall potential impact of this commitment remains moderate.

It should be noted that key clusters of milestones stand out for their potential impact (1.1 – 1.2, 1.3 -1.7, 1.24, 1.25 -1.33), not only limited to their specific field but also in the Italian context more broadly.

Detailed assessment of clusters of milestones

PCM-DFP, AgID

These first two milestones foresee the drafting and publication of a document on licenses for reuse. The document would be prepared by a working group made up of administrations and interested stakeholders (experts, OGF members, businesses, etc.) and open to participation by the general public through the creation of a discussion channel of forum.italia, an online forum for discussing digital services. The final product would describe the rationale for choosing a standard license for open data published by all public administrations, or at least for standard licenses for homogenous data categories.

Licenses are a crucial aspect of open data. Open licenses remove legal restrictions from the use of data, leaving anyone free to access, use, and share the data. Several types of licenses are available,³ but the use of a standard license for all datasets' release facilitates the reuse of data.⁴ In Italy, national regulation does not impose the obligation to choose a specific license, and the choice is left to individual administrations.⁵ However, the Code for Digital Administration (CAD) provides that, where licenses do not exist, the underlying principle for the use of data should be that of "open by default."⁶ Italian Open Data Licenses, created in 2011 by Fornez PA, are the most frequently used licenses by public

administrations.⁷ However, in terms of numbers of datasets, the CC-BY license is the most common. This discrepancy creates issues when it comes to the reuse of large datasets coming from different sources.⁸

A representative of the DFP confirmed that the idea behind the inclusion of these milestones in this commitment was to increase the reusability of the data released by public administrations by providing standard licenses.⁹ The final aim is to include the document in the regular biennial update of the AgID guidelines for enhancing public information.¹⁰ The current version of the guidelines includes a section on the use of licenses, suggesting the adoption of license CC-BY 4.0.¹¹ However, as confirmed by both the representative of the DFP¹² and civil society, this guidance is not strictly followed by all administrations, thus contributing to a fragmented landscape. The guidelines are not binding, which even if updated, could limit take up the suggestion to use a standard license.

This set of milestones is clear and directly responds to existing issues. The approach to the creation of the document, through a working group made up of relevant experts, civil society, and public administration and with the possibility of discussing the approach on a dedicated space on forum.italia, is positive. The forum has 6.4k users and includes 15 distinct channels related to various digital themes, with on average 13 posts per month wherein users also interact with representatives of AgID. The vast majority of users have technical expertise on digital issues and open data, which makes the choice of this forum a sensible one as opposed to other public consultation platforms.

The need for standardizing licenses was also shared by Rosy Battaglia, representative of Cittadini Reattivi, the CSO monitoring this activity, who praised this specific commitment.¹³ If successful, the initiative could have a moderate impact on the approach to open data in Italy, although it would be dependent on public administrations following the guidelines.

AgID

Through the use of a working group (albeit this time, only internal to administrations), AgID pledges to draft a guiding document describing the criteria to assess the quality of open data (1.3) and the methods and tools for measurement (1.4). The assessment system would then be used to monitor open datasets and would be tested on at least two administrations selected on a voluntary basis (1.5). Once the testing phase is over, AgID commits to ensuring administrations are willing to work on publishing data compliant with the identified quality standards (1.6) and to publishing those datasets (1.7).

This cluster of milestones responds to the need to increase the quality of the data released. Reports show that one of the key issues in the Italian open data landscape is the discrepancy in the quality of data released by public administrations.¹⁴ This has also emerged as a central issue during the COVID-19 pandemic with regard to health data.¹⁵

Currently, the AgID guidelines for enhancing public information describe a set of measures and criteria to evaluate the quality of data, using as a reference point standards ISO/IEC 25012 and ISO/IEC 25024.¹⁶ The guidelines request that out of the 15 characteristics for data quality described in ISO/IEC 25012, at least four are respected: they include accuracy, coherence, completeness, and timeliness – and provide, based on ISO/IEC 25024, measures for assessing compliance. As already discussed, these guidelines are not binding and, in several instances, not respected. A government representative explained that the proposed initiative would not put forward new criteria for assessing quality but rather extend the guidance to use all 15 characteristics, rather than only four.¹⁷

The initiative AgID proposed attempts to solve the issue of the discrepancy of quality. However, it remains unclear in which way the new document would improve the current situation in regard to the quality of data. Furthermore, implementation and success of the initiative depend on the willingness of administrations to publish quality-compliant datasets, which makes this a soft target. The impact if implemented as written is therefore considered minor.

AgID, Digital Team

With these milestones, AgID and the Digital Team commit to collecting voluntary proposals from administrations to publish high-value datasets and subsequently publish them (1.8–1.9).

Although the text of the milestones does not specify what high-value datasets consist of, the Civil Society Consultation Report published by the OGP team¹⁸ states that the definition will depend on the EU Open Data Directive.¹⁹ The directive tasks the European Commission to adopt an implementing act that specifies these datasets in detail. In the directive, they are broadly defined as “documents the re-use of which is associated with important benefits for the society and economy,” such as those related to the areas of geospatial, earth observation and environment, meteorology, statistics, companies and company ownership, and mobility. This is expected for 2021.

Release of high-value datasets by administrations, especially if following specific standards in quality and unified licenses, has the potential to provide a transformative effect. A government representative²⁰ suggested that these datasets could include those listed as “databases of national interest” in art. 60 of the Code of Digital Administration (CAD): the national spatial data database; national registry of the resident population; national database of public contracts referred to in Article 62a; database of criminal records; register of companies; data on immigration and asylum; National Register of Assisted Persons (ANA); and the register of agricultural companies.²¹ Not all these databases are suitable for publication; however, publication of data on register of companies would represent a significant step forward in releasing key datasets. Nevertheless, according to the representative, there are no concrete plans for this, and the process entirely depends on the approach at EU level. Furthermore, the text of the milestones is vague and focuses only on voluntary proposals by administrations. The inclusion of specific targets in terms of number of administrations, for example, would have made the milestone more ambitious and concrete. The impact of these milestones as written is minor.

Milestones 1.10 and 1.11 further commit AgID and the Digital Team to the establishment of common open data standards for at least two categories of data. This would be done through an incremental release of new versions of data models on the website <https://developers.italia.it/> (1.10) and the publication of consolidated specifications. The establishment of common standards is an interesting proposal, but the text of the milestones is not clear. A government representative was also not able to clarify what the intended purpose of these initiatives would be. Overall, the expected outcome seems to refer only to incremental changes as part of an existing broader strategy. Impact is therefore assessed as minor.

ISTAT

This cluster of milestones commits ISTAT to updating a series of data on a yearly basis on the website “Map of risks in Italian municipalities” (1.12), develop and release open analysis tools for the website (1.13), and improve the interoperability of the platform by releasing ontologies, open data, and linked open data (LOD²²) (1.14).

The map provides an overview of natural disaster risks, the typology of buildings, and data on population for each municipality in Italy by integrating (already available) data from different authorities (ISTAT, INGV, ISPRA, MIBAC). The Map has existed since 2017,²³ and a new version was launched in January 2019, with data updated as of 30 June 2018. ISTAT’s commitment in the context of this action plan focuses on ensuring that the data will be updated annually and that functionalities to increase to possibility of data analysis will be added as part of the platform’s future development.

According to a representative of the DFP, ISTAT has been a pioneer in Italy for the release of open data, and the extension of this commitment to the newly created map follows the same direction.²⁴ Upon the release of the updated map, a representative of National Association of Italian Municipalities (ANCI) highlighted that the platform did not allow for the correlation of data on natural risks and on buildings, which would allow assessment of the vulnerability to such risks.²⁵ This would be a vital need considering Italy’s status as a high-risk country for natural disasters,²⁶ as the correlation of data could allow for more effective prevention and maintenance activities on buildings. If the commitments under 1.13 and 1.14 were to go in the direction of responding to this need, the potential impact of this cluster of milestones could be moderate.

MIBAC

This set of milestones involves the publication of data from the National Library Service (SBN) on the new platform of Libraries and Cultural Institutes. The data would be published in LOD format (I.15) and would be accompanied by the development of advanced visualization tools (I.16).

The platform of Libraries and Cultural Institutes is currently being developed and would give direct integrated access to the complete archives and digital resources held by participating institutions.²⁷ The SBN is only one of these institutions, and therefore the milestones appear reduced in their ambition, as the commitment to release open data in LOD format could have been extended to other entities as well. Currently, the only data at national level available in open format are those related to the Register of Italian Libraries.²⁸ However, several local administrations already publish data related the catalogue of local libraries.²⁹ The initiative to publish the SBN catalogue in LOD format has been ongoing since 2014, and inclusion in the action plan is of limited added value.³⁰ Potential impact of implementation is therefore coded as minor.

PCM-DCI

This milestone foresees the release of open datasets from the National Archive of Buildings. The National Archive of Buildings does not exist at the moment and requires regulation to establish it. Open data on buildings are aggregated and published on the government's dati.gov.it platform; 156 datasets are available, in several different formats.³¹ The milestone is vague, as it does not specify which type of data would be released (although it does clarify what would be published in a specific section of the archive³²), how it would incorporate information that is already available, and which license and/or formats would be used. Impact if implemented as written is therefore assessed as minor.

PCM-DIPE

This set of milestones focuses on improving the quality of data on public investment projects by consolidating common standards on the classification of such projects the System for the Single Project Code (SSPC) and OpenCUP adopted. Documents would be released documenting the evolution of updates (I.18) and new classification tables would be published (I.19). DIPE also commits to awareness raising on the use of open data through activities such as hackathons and contests to engage stakeholders on the demand side (I.20).

The OpenCUP portal³³ was launched in January 2016 and contains information on individual public works projects that are linked by their unique identification number (CUP). This allows citizens to track spending on specific projects. Any transaction (public works, contracting, service agreements) using public money must be assigned a CUP code.³⁴ The portal OpenCUP was further developed through Commitment 5 in the third OGP action plan.³⁵ At the end of the implementation cycle, the IRM had described the portal as representing an outstanding change in access to information on public investment projects.³⁶

The awareness-raising events described in milestone I.20 would focus in particular on positive experiences of reuse of OpenCUP data.³⁷ Activities to raise awareness on the existence of OpenCUP took place as part of the third action plan, when the government organized 10 events with 50 participants each, one workshop with 160 participants, and one with 600 participants.³⁸

Overall, the activities proposed seem to represent incremental steps in an already established and successful initiative. Furthermore, the text of milestone I.20 lacks specificity regarding the dissemination strategy and the target for attendance to events. In light of these considerations, potential impact is assessed as minor.

PCM-DPCoE – NUVAP

This set of milestones focuses on open data related to the use of EU social funds and cohesion policies. The lead administrations commit to publishing LOD on public investments (I.21), creating an EU corner on the OpenCoesione website to provide easy access and reuse of open data at the EU level with comparable metadata (I.22); provide additional data on projects funded under cohesion policies (I.23); and offering a training course in schools on OpenCoesione to be implemented at the EU level.

Data on public investments are currently published on OpenCUP but not in LOD format. It is not clear from the text of the milestone whether the data under consideration are those that are published on

this portal or whether they would focus on investments made through cohesion funds specifically. OpenCoesione³⁹ is a portal on the implementation of projects financed through Italian and EU cohesion funds. As part of Commitment 20 in the previous action plan, the government had released a series of additional datasets in open-data format⁴⁰ and implemented the “A scuola di OpenCoesione” project in more than 200 Italian secondary schools,¹³ involving students in educational activities on the use of open data. The IRM had assessed that the initiative was positive but had led only to a marginal change in practice.⁴¹

The proposed EU corner would not include new data but simply facilitate access to the European Commission’s open data platform on European Structural Investment Funds.⁴² The corner would include explanatory notes to facilitate the comparison between the two databases. Milestone 1.23 on the publication of extra data on projects funded under cohesion policies could be clearer regarding which data are considered here and in what way data on gender (policies) would be used. Currently, the datasets published on the website already include information on whether the target of projects is male or female. Finally, the promotion of the “A scuola di Open Coesione” course providing training and guidance on how to replicate the Italian experience is useful but would not contribute to increasing access to information in Italy. In light of these considerations, potential impact of this cluster of milestones in overall assessed as minor.

PCM – DPCoE – NUVAP, ANBSC

This is a key set of milestones in this commitment, as it could bring about substantial change in the practice of monitoring confiscated assets. Lead administrations commit first and foremost to developing an integrated monitoring system for an open data portal on confiscated assets (1.25).

From 2010 to 2018, the Italian judiciary seized or definitively confiscated from organized crime a total of 65,502 assets.⁴³ Italy is considered a leader globally in terms of good practices of social reuse of confiscated assets.⁴⁴ However, lengthy procedures and challenges in reassigning confiscated assets make monitoring the process particularly important. A representative from the CSO Libera. Associazioni, nomi e numeri contro le mafie⁴⁵ confirmed that many of the difficulties on confiscated assets are related to challenges in retrieving data and performing comprehensive mapping and monitoring. Currently, two main platforms exist that provide data on confiscated assets: OpenRegio,⁴⁶ which is managed by ANBSC and provides data in csv, xml, json, xls formats differentiated per region, province, and municipality, and Confiscatibene,⁴⁷ which is managed by three civil society associations and integrates the information published on the OpenRegio platform while also including information received by citizens or subjects managing the reuse of confiscated assets, with the aim of facilitating and promoting civic monitoring, focusing specifically on social reuse. However, several other local administrations publish data on confiscated assets that are not included in these two platforms.⁴⁸ In some cases, municipalities (which have an obligation to publish data on confiscated assets, per the Anti Mafia Code) either do not publish data or publish it in closed/noncompliant format, thus limiting reuse and comparability of data.⁴⁹

The proposed initiative would be part of the development of a monitoring system that would integrate all data available from both the authorities and civil society/civic monitoring, using as a starting point the existing systems, allowing comparability across datasets and consistently up-to-date information.⁵⁰ According to a representative of CSO onData, the data published on OpenRegio are not sufficient to monitor the complete path of a confiscated asset, from its confiscation to its return to the community, as these data offer information only up until when the confiscated asset is returned to a local authority (e.g., a municipality). There is currently no visibility on the national database on the process through which these assets are then returned to the community (e.g., to associations or representatives of the third sector).⁵¹ The initiative proposed would create a comprehensive monitoring system that would allow for such a thorough monitoring.⁵²

To enhance transparency on data on confiscated assets, the lead administrations involved commit to several measures that could contribute to a more comprehensive monitoring system. They include the following: introducing a tag for confiscated property in the CUP Index System (1.26); integrating a specific monitoring protocol (IGRUE) allowing for the identification of data on confiscated property in the Single Monitoring System of cohesion policies (1.27); including data collected by entities that provide subsidies or tax incentives to confiscated companies so they can reenter the legal working environment

(I.28); including statistics on reuse of confiscated assets in the ISTAT database (I.29); and publishing specific open data on instances of reuse of confiscated property through cohesion policy funds (I.30).

According to CSO representatives, the creation of a specific tag for confiscated property in the CUP system would facilitate retrieval on data on confiscated property whose reuse is financed by regional, national, or EU funds. Currently, users who seek to retrieve such data need to do a manual search by name, which leaves space for mistakes and inaccuracies.⁵³ Furthermore, integration in the Single Monitoring System of cohesion policies would ensure a certain degree of uniformity for data on confiscated assets, which is currently missing.

However, statistics on confiscated assets are already published by ANBSC, and it is not clear whether publication on the ISTAT database (I.29) would include the same data or new publications. ISTAT currently does not include data on reuse of confiscated assets.

The OpenCoesione portal also already publishes datasets on projects tied to confiscated assets,⁵⁴ and Milestone I.30 is not clear on what the specific additional data would entail. Therefore, the impact of these two milestones would be more limited.

Finally, Milestones I.31–I.33 propose mapping and evaluating experiences on the reuse of confiscated assets. These three milestones are under the leadership of the three CSOs behind Confiscatibene.⁵⁵ Milestone I.31 on the use of a “civic surveillance” approach involves, together with the University of Turin, performing civic monitoring on the number of municipalities that publish in the Transparent Administration section of their websites the list of confiscated assets and assessing whether they do so in compliance with the relevant regulations. Furthermore, the associations seek to perform the monitoring by setting up co-territorial labs through which citizens and administrations can work together to develop projects of social reuse. The Libera representative explained that this project is in line with the national strategy for the promotion of confiscated assets.⁵⁶

The commitments put forward in this cluster of milestones can have a moderate impact on access to information on and monitoring of confiscated assets if fully implemented. The cluster includes both top-down (public administration-led) and bottom-up (CSO-led) initiatives that would considerably reduce existing challenges and facilitate access to data on confiscated assets.⁵⁷ The design of this specific commitment has itself been described by both governmental and non-governmental stakeholders as a positive example of collaboration with civil society.⁵⁸

Unioncamere

This milestone foresees the publication in the open government section of the dedicated portal for the Union of Italian Chambers of Commerce⁵⁹ of a series of key datasets. The Union also commits to measuring accesses and downloads, something currently not done. Data will be provided in CVS format, and the aim is to increase the amount of data on key themes available for businesses. Publication of datasets in this section started during the 2019 Open Government Week, when Unioncamere published more than 60 datasets on tourism and international trade, in CVS or XLS format, from the Chambers of Commerce of Biella e Vercelli, Firenze, Padova, Reggio Calabria, Reggio Emilia, Rieti, and Treviso Belluno e Viterbo.⁶⁰ With this commitment, Unioncamere pledges to increase the number of data sets to include data on environment, market, culture and tourism, demography of companies, female entrepreneurship, youth entrepreneurship, foreign markets, start-up and innovative companies, and transparency of Italy’s Chambers of Commerce.⁶¹ Publication in CVS format will not represent a significant change to current practice; however, the increase in the number of datasets could have a moderate impact if extended to additional provinces. If limited to the current number of provinces, impact would be minor.

Regions and autonomous provinces

Under this cluster of milestones, regions and autonomous provinces commit to defining a basket of 5 to 10 useful datasets among the most significant competencies (I.35), starting a participatory process to define standard tracks of data sets (I.36), setting indicators to evaluate the use of these datasets by external users through APIs (I.37), and promoting the use of open data for decision-making through best practices (I.38).

A 2018 study by the Polytechnic University of Milan's eGovernment Observatory homed in on key challenges related to the publication of open data by local administrations. The study reported that out of 731 municipalities, only 37 percent publishes data in open format. Furthermore, the type of data also varies significantly across municipalities, which makes it difficult to effectively (re)use the data for assessments at national level. The data are also not usually collected systematically on the regional or national open data website.⁶²

The idea behind this cluster has potential. Concrete work toward harmonizing the quality of datasets and completeness of information would be useful with a view to reducing the fragmentation currently existing in the Italian open data landscape in these areas. However, the text of the milestones is too vague. It is not clear how many regions would take part in this initiative, whom participatory processes would include, and what is meant with the use of best practices to promote data for decision-making. Therefore, the potential impact is considered minor.

City of Milan

The final set of milestones under the open data commitment includes the launch of the linked open data (LOD) service (I.39), reporting on mandate policies through open data and visualizations (I.40), and launching Open Data Labs to promote the culture and use of data (I.41).

Milestone I.39 focuses on the release of LOD on public libraries, public administrative acts, schools, and retail prices on the municipality's data portal.⁶³ This would be the first instance of publication of LOD on this portal. Publication is part of a preexisting strategy to further develop the portal.⁶⁴ Milestone I.40 proposes to provide a new service that could potentially allow for the improvement of monitoring on implementation of municipal policies. However, the text of the milestone is vague. Finally, the creation of an Open Data Lab forms part of a wider initiative at the European level.⁶⁵ These labs represent a space for interaction and cooperation between municipal institutions and university and research outfits. The idea is to create a hub together with companies to promote specific initiatives that aim to promote open data culture and to retrieve, open, and integrate databases.⁶⁶ As these specific commitments predate the action plan, their inclusion seems to be of minimal added value. Impact is therefore coded as minor.

Next steps

Although the release of a series of datasets on key themes is of high importance, to address issues currently affecting the Italian open data landscape, a strategic approach to the issue is needed. Open data commitments in the next action plan could focus on one/two high-level strategic objectives that would help eliminate quality and standardization issues that prevent reuse. Including set targets for implementation in the text of the milestones would help ensure commitments are ambitious but at the same time specific enough to be measurable. The overarching commitments included by DFP and AgID in this plan represent a good starting point. This could be accompanied by equally strategic and ambitious initiatives to raise awareness on the potential of open data to gradually change the open data culture within administrations but also among the population. In addition to this, instances of facilitating "learning-by-doing" through more practical collaboration around the use of open data to address specific issues could also be useful. Finally, the high-level commitments could be accompanied by an Annex, listing datasets that individual administrations commit to releasing.

¹ Open Data Maturity Report, Italy

² Representatives of the DFP, interview by IRM researcher, 13 May 2020

³ For example, the Creative Commons Public Domain Dedication license (CC-0), the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license (CC-BY), the Open Data Commons Attribution License (ODC-BY), etc.

⁴ European data portal <https://www.europeandataportal.eu/elearning/en/module4/#/id/co-01>

⁵ Ernesto Belisario, "Licenses for the reuse of public data and open data", (Formez PA) November 2014 http://egov.formez.it/sites/all/files/open_data_-_licenze_per_il_riutilizzo_dei_dati_pubblici_e_open_data.pdf

- ⁶ Article 52 and 68, Digital Administration Code <https://docs.italia.it/italia/piano-triennale-ict/codice-amministrazione-digitale-docs/it/v2017-12-13/index.html>
- ⁷ Sergio Ruffini, "Digital skills for public administrations – terms, definitions and acronyms", p. 102 <https://books.google.it/books?id=2HbTDwAAQBAJ&pg=PA102&lpg=PA102&dq=licenze+utilizzate+amministrazioni+italiane&source=bl&ots=bbowg9Wtam&sig=ACfU3U38NBHLdelZpZyPrdijFOKcJSejaGO&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKewjd3eXX8-rpAhVzLzqOKHaDPCBoO6AEwAHoECAgQAO#v=onepage&q=licenze%20utilizzate%20amministrazioni%20italiane&f=false>
- ⁸ Andrea Ko, Enrico Francesconi "Electronic Government and the Information Systems Perspective", p. 294 <https://books.google.it/books?id=DxJcCgAAQBAJ&pg=PA294&lpg=PA294&dq=overview+of+data+licenses+in+italy&source=bl&ots=a0GsDjv9AP&sig=ACfU3U1csQ0TsdL9mazrROcMF22j17nKvg&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKewjz49HG7urpAhUN66QKHVznBNEQ6AEwAXoECAwQAO#v=onepage&q=overview%20of%20data%20licenses%20in%20italy&f=false>
- ⁹ Representative of the DFP, interview by IRM researcher, 13 May 2020
- ¹⁰ National Guidelines for the Enhancement of Public Information, 2017 <https://docs.italia.it/italia/daf/lg-patrimonio-pubblico/it/stabile/index.html>
- ¹¹ National Guidelines for the Enhancement of Public Information, 2017, p. 47 <https://docs.italia.it/italia/daf/lg-patrimonio-pubblico/it/stabile/index.html>
- ¹² Representative of the DFP, interview by IRM researcher, 13 May 2020; Rosy Battaglia (Cittadini Reattivi), interview by IRM researcher, 4 May 2020
- ¹³ Rosy Battaglia (Cittadini Reattivi), interview by IRM researcher, 4 May 2020
- ¹⁴ "Open Data are not taking off" (Osservatori.net) 26 September 2018 https://www.osservatori.net/it_it/osservatori/comunicati-stampa/open-data-in-italia-non-decollano
- ¹⁵ "Data and coronavirus. Each Region is going its own way. Help us map who shares data and what data is being shared" (Infodata, Il Sole24Ore) <https://www.infodata.ilssole24ore.com/2020/03/20/open-data-coronavirus-italia-delle-regione/>
- ¹⁶ National Guidelines for the Enhancement of Public Information, 2017, p. 27
- ¹⁷ Government representative, interview with IRM researcher, 12 June 2020
- ¹⁸ Civil Society Consultation report, p. 16
- ¹⁹ Directive (EU) 2019/1024 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2019.172.01.0056.01.ENG
- ²⁰ Government representative, interview with IRM researcher, 12 June 2020
- ²¹ CAD, art. 60 https://docs.italia.it/italia/piano-triennale-ict/codice-amministrazione-digitale-docs/it/v2018-09-28/_rst/capo5_sezione2_art60.html
- ²² Linked Open Data are data designed under specific principles which facilitate data integration and interconnection of different datasets.
- ²³ ISTAT, Presentation http://www.casaitalia.governo.it/media/1394/presentazione_istat_18022019.pdf
- ²⁴ Representative of the DFP, interview by IRM researcher, 13 May 2020
- ²⁵ "Map of Risks of Italian municipalities updated and integrated" (Rivistageomedia), quoting Alessandro Ghinelli, mayor of Arezzo and ANCI delegate for environmental politics, territory and civil protection <https://rivistageomedia.it/2019022016199/Gestione-del-territorio/la-mappa-dei-rischi-dei-comuni-italiani-aggiornata-ed-integrata-tra-le-varie-amministrazioni>
- ²⁶ ISTAT, Presentation at the Expert Forum for producers and users of climate-change related statistics, 29 September 2017 https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/stats/documents/ece/ces/ge.33/2017/mtg3/Session_5_6_14h15_Case_Study_Italy.pdf
- ²⁷ Central Institute for the Union Catalogue of Italian Libraries and Bibliographic Information, Press Release, 9 April 2019 <https://www.iccu.sbn.it/it/eventi-novita/novita/Portale-delle-biblioteche-e-degli-istituti-culturali-italiani/>
- ²⁸ "Open Data" (Register of National Libraries) <https://anagrafe.iccu.sbn.it/it/open-data/>
- ²⁹ See for example: <https://opendatahubs.eu/dataset/catalogo-sbn-servizio-bibliotecario-nazionale-regione-veneto>
- ³⁰ See: <http://www.w3c.it/events/2014/lod2014/slides/paper31-slides.pdf>
- ³¹ Available at: <https://www.dati.gov.it/view-dataset?Cerca=Fabbricati>
- ³² Civil Society Consultation Report, p.17
- ³³ OpenCup portal available at: <http://opencup.gov.it/>
- ³⁴ Italy IRM Mid-Term report 2016 – 2018, p. 39
- ³⁵ Italy 3rd National Action Plan with addendum 2016 – 2018, p. 23 https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Italy_NAP3_2016-2018_EN.pdf
- ³⁶ Italy IRM End of Term report 2016-2018, p. 16
- ³⁷ "Open Data" (Monitora) <http://open.gov.it/monitora/1-dati-aperti/>
- ³⁸ Italy IRM End of Term report 2016-2018, p. 17
- ³⁹ OpenCoesione portal available at <https://opencoesione.gov.it/it/>
- ⁴⁰ Such as: the funding program; dates of publication and expiration; object of the call; link to the source; total amount and status (to expiry, to counter, pre-information).
- ⁴¹ Italy IRM End of Term report 2016-2018, p. 45
- ⁴² Available at <https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/>
- ⁴³ ANSBC 2017 -2018 Report (ANSBC) https://www.benisequestraticonfiscati.it/dox/Relazioni/ANBSC_relazione_2017_2018.pdf
- ⁴⁴ "Social Reuse of Confiscated Assets at European Level" (University of Milan) <https://www.cross.unimi.it/wp-content/uploads/11-riuso-sociale-aziende-confiscate.pdf>
- ⁴⁵ Tatiana Giannone (Libera. Associazioni, nomi e numeri contro le mafie), interview by IRM researcher, 8 May 2020
- ⁴⁶ OpenRegio portal available at <https://openregio.ansbc.it/>

-
- ⁴⁷ Confiscatibene portal available at <https://www.confiscatibene.it/>
- ⁴⁸ “Public administration data in Confiscatibene’s catalogue. Let’s start with OpenCoesione” (Confiscatibene) <https://www.confiscatibene.it/blog/i-dati-della-pa-nel-catalogo-di-confiscatibene-iniziamo-da-opencoesione>
- ⁴⁹ “Opengov” (Confiscatibene) <https://www.confiscatibene.it/opengov>
- ⁵⁰ Tatiana Giannone (Libera. Associazioni, nomi e numeri contro le mafie), interview by IRM researcher, 8 May 2020
- ⁵¹ Gianluca de Martino (onData) email exchange with IRM researcher, 8 June 2020.
- ⁵² Idem.
- ⁵³ Tatiana Giannone (Libera. Associazioni, nomi e numeri contro le mafie), interview by IRM researcher, 8 May 2020; Representative of onData, email exchange with IRM researcher, 8 June 2020
- ⁵⁴ “Open data” (Opencoesione) https://opencoesione.gov.it/it/opendata/#!/approfondimenti_section
- ⁵⁵ See: <https://www.confiscatibene.it/>
- ⁵⁶ “National Strategy for the Enhancement of Confiscated Assets” (ANSBC, DIPE) <https://www.benisequestraticonfiscati.it/dox/news/48/204/strategia-nazionale-beni-confiscati-e-politiche-di-coesione.pdf>
- ⁵⁷ Tatiana Giannone (Libera. Associazioni, nomi e numeri contro le mafie), interview by IRM researcher, 8 May 2020
- ⁵⁸ Tatiana Giannone (Libera. Associazioni, nomi e numeri contro le mafie), interview by IRM researcher, 8 May 2020; Representative of the DFP, interview by IRM researcher, 13 May 2020
- ⁵⁹ Camcom.gov.it
- ⁶⁰ “Open government week 2019: Releasing data sets from the Chambers of Commerce” (Sicamera) https://sicamera.camcom.it/PDF/Settimana-dell-amministrazione-aperta--rilascio-di-dataset-del-sistema-camerale_484.htm
- ⁶¹ Including for example number of employees, disaggregated by gender; geographic locations of the Chambers; generic email addresses.
- ⁶² “Open Data are not taking off” (Osservatori.net), 26 September 2018 https://www.osservatori.net/it_it/osservatori/comunicati-stampa/open-data-in-italia-non-decollano
- ⁶³ See: <http://dati.comune.milano.it/>
- ⁶⁴ “Open Milan. The city in numbers and transparent budgeting” (City of Milan) <https://www.comune.milano.it/documents/20126/1548036/Presentazione+nuovo+portale+Open+Data.pdf/d443873c-cbcc-3500-c3d8-14e69117cac8?t=1560362560029>
- ⁶⁵ See: <https://opendatalab.eu/>
- ⁶⁶ “Open data: This is how we are creating a transparent culture on data,” (Agenda Digitale), 2 July 2018 <https://www.agendadigitale.eu/cittadinanza-digitale/open-data-cosi-a-milano-creiamo-una-cultura-trasparente-del-dato/>

2. Transparency

Main Objective

“This action is aimed at further encouraging the ability of administrations to become transparent vis-à-vis citizens by pursuing the following macro-objectives:

- drafting a proposal to simplify information obligations under Legislative Decree 33/2013 to improve accessibility, quality and timeliness of data and information made available by administration to citizens and businesses, reducing burdens for administrations themselves. This activity will include the identification and analysis of ways and conditions for complying with the publication obligation for specific information domains through the inclusion of data in already existing, being created or purposefully adapted centralized databases;
- developing and promoting evolved web services to facilitate the use of the FOIA and other forms of citizen access (i.e. access to environmental information) and, at the same time, support administrations in effectively managing civic access. Making key information on the nature of requests submitted and how they are processed available in a single point – i.e. those acquired through the Register of FOIA accesses – will help guide citizens in the search and acquisition of information on the activities carried out by public administration and, at the same time, will allow administrations to handle requests more quickly, efficiently and evenly;
- simplifying the way users can access information on key issues such as the environment and public spending”.

Milestones

PCM-DFP

2.1 Developing and promoting a guided procedure (wizard) to help identify the correct administration and type of access in line with the interest of applicants.

2.2 Developing a centralized FOIA request and outcome monitoring system with information supplied by administrations that will contribute to it and adopt the format or the register made available by the Department for Public Administration.

Establishing a working group including the coordinators from each administration involved and open to the participation of interested civil society representatives, to guide the following activities:

2.3 Identify a subgroup of high-value information obligations for citizens whose content is at least partly included in centralized databases and assess compliance with Legislative Decree 33/2013.

2.4 Draft a document proposing simplification measures on consultation for the Transparent Administration section, consistently with the databases identified, also envisaging regulatory measures.

CONSIDIP

Development of a web application which relies on interactive geographical maps and allows citizens, businesses and administrations to access data and indicators on purchases made in accordance with the Program to Rationalize Purchases managed by CONSIDIP on behalf of the Ministry of Economics and Finance.

The project involves two main release steps:

2.5 Phase I, development of two geographical maps with a focus on the performance of administrations (searchable by geographical areas, purchasing tool, product sectors).

2.6 Phase II, development of another geographical map with a focus on the performance of suppliers (searchable by geographical areas, purchasing tool, product sectors).

National Institute for Insurance against Accidents at Work (INAIL)

2.7 Development of an IT management system of different types of access requests (civic, generalized, document-based) from when the request is submitted to when the final outcome of the procedure is recorded. The system to automatically update the single Register of accesses on the institutional portal of an administration and the possibility to export data in the pdf table for citizens and as an excel file for authorized operators, will be released in all INAIL offices.

Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA)

Developing a web portal to meet the requests and expectations of users of the National System for Environmental Protection (SNPA) regarding accessibility of data, documents and information, in the spirit of an integrated system between ISPRA and regional and provincial ARPA/APPA.

The portal will allow to:

2.8 Read and implement regulations on transparency as laid down by Legislative Decree 33/2013 integrated by legislation on access Law 241/90, keeping in mind the specific features of the right to access information in the environmental sector already regulated by Legislative Decree 195/2005, that will lead to the publication of the necessary information to help users properly exercise the rights envisaged by relevant legislation.

2.9 Provide users with a single national collector of requests to access environmental documents and information addressed to the agencies of the SNPA – by developing a single online form to facilitate submission to public relations offices through specific links.

2.10 Develop a register of accesses for each single agency and later for the SNPA.

2.11 Ensure the same treatment and replies for requests coming from users by establishing operational modalities which ensure a standardized interpretation of the subject and its application and encourage the adoption of sectoral guidelines and, more specifically, common guidelines for the SNPA.

City of Milan

2.12 Updating and reviewing transparency and participation regulations in compliance with the pilot projects and innovations connected with digitalization processes.

2.13 Piloting the use of the Register developed by the Department for Public Administration.

2.14 Piloting an advanced solution to integrate the institutional portal to consult the Official Noticeboard as well as the institutional content with advanced search and relational analysis tools.

2.15 Launching the app Milan@Work in partnership with the Milan Polytechnic to visualize data on construction procedures and road works.

City of Rome

2.16 Implementing the single Regulation on Accesses approved by the City of Rome.

2.17 Piloting the use of the Register developed by the Department for Public Administration.

Editorial Note: Please note commitment text in this report has been abridged for brevity and readability. For the complete text of this commitment, including all milestones, please see Italy’s action plan at <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Italy-Action-Plan-2019-2021-English.pdf>.

IRM Design Report Assessment	
Verifiable:	Yes
Relevant:	Access to Information
Potential impact:	Moderate

Commitment Analysis

The commitment aims to improve transparency and facilitate access to information. This would be done by simplifying measures to manage information obligations by public administrations, developing and promoting web services to facilitate the use of the FOIA, and supporting administrations in managing civic access. Furthermore, the commitment seeks to make more information available on key issues such as public spending, labor, and the environment. The commitment is directly relevant to the OGP value of access to information. It is organized around six clusters of milestones under the responsibility of the DFP (2.1–2.4); CONSIP (2.5– 2.6); INAIL (2.7); ISPRA (2.8–2.11); City of Milan (2.12–2.15); and the City of Rome (2.16– 2.17).

Overall, the commitment is clear and relevant to OGP values. Several clusters of milestones (2.1–2.4; 2.12–2.15; 2.16–2.17) focus on increasing transparency on access to information requests and facilitating the FOIA system at national and local level. They respond to difficulties in the use of the system that have been highlighted both by governmental and non-governmental stakeholders.¹

Key clusters of milestones are those the DFP and ISPRA have implemented. In particular, the activities planned by the DFP represent a step forward toward simplifying the use of the FOIA both for administrations and users and institutionalizing monitoring. These activities also follow from recommendations put forward by the IRM during the previous cycle.² The overall potential impact of the commitment is moderate, especially considering that some of the activities proposed (2.5–2.6; 2.16– 2.17) form part of preexisting initiatives.

Detailed assessment of clusters of milestones

PCM – DFP

This set of milestones seeks to facilitate access to information by developing and promoting a guided procedure to help users identify the correct administration for FOIA requests (2.1), by developing a centralized FOIA request and outcome monitoring system (2.2), and by proposing simplification measures for the Transparent Administration section of public administrations’ websites (2.3–2.4).

Challenges have emerged regarding FOIA implementation and use: Public administrations find it challenging to comply with the new regulations and balance the protection of sensitive data and access to information; and the FOIA is little known by citizens and interested stakeholders. The Department of Public Administration (DFP) also notes³ that requesters struggle to correctly identify the public body that holds the data needed or which of the three methods of requesting access is most appropriate.^{4 5}

Currently, no guidance is available for requesters to identify more easily and successfully the correct administration and type of access. There is currently no centralized register that could automatically group together information on access requests available from all other public bodies using the same

typology/format of register.⁶ Monitoring is currently performed by the DFP through questionnaires filled in by the administrations and is dependent on compliance with completing them. The DFP explained that it plans to develop a standardized format for registering access requests that all administrations could adopt (on a voluntary basis).⁷ Interviewed civil society stakeholders highlight that it would be important to include CSOs in the monitoring process and in support to the DFP.⁸

Milestones 2.3–2.4 address the current complex obligations regarding what needs to be published in the Transparent Administration section of public administration websites. These can include more than two hundred documents⁹ ranging from annual reports and plans to performance evaluation documents to CVs and salaries of head of departments. Interviews with the DFP confirmed that the approach to identifying possible measures would be collaborative and include implementing administrations and civil society representatives. A proposal will be put forward based on the identification by this working group of a subset of information obligations of high value for citizens. This would help harmonize the information available and avoid unnecessary duplication.¹⁰ Civil society representatives note that the provision of additional support to public administrations is welcomed and needed; however, they stress that it is important to note that simplifying the system should not translate to reducing transparency obligations by administrations.¹¹

The potential impact of this cluster of milestones is moderate. It is responding to existing needs and challenges, and the setting up of a centralized monitoring system and the provision of guidance to administrations respond also to an IRM recommendation from the third action plan. The impact is not transformative, as the provisions only seek to improve consistency and efficiency of access to information and are voluntary in nature, and the milestones lack set targets for a significant number of administrations to adopt the provisions proposed.

CONSHIP

These two milestones see CONSIP (Italy's central purchasing body, which the Ministry of Finance owns) pledge to develop interactive geographical maps to allow users to access data and indicators on purchases made under the Program to Rationalize Purchases (PRP).

The PRP program is operated through www.acquistinretepa.it. The portal applies ICT technologies to public procurement processes with the aim to improve quality and reduce costs, simplify public procurement, and guarantee transparency and traceability of the procurement process.¹²

The proposed application includes the release of two maps focusing on the performance of administrations (2.5) and one on the performance of suppliers (2.6). The first two maps were already available in May 2019 (before the official approval of this action plan).¹³ The maps provide a useful data visualization tool and, according to CONSIP representatives, facilitate access to information by publishing data in a new, disaggregated manner¹⁴. Nevertheless, the DFP¹⁵ agreed that more could have been done in this sense, as the application for the most part groups together information already available. Civil society representatives agree, stressing that the initiative was already in the pipeline.¹⁶ The potential impact is coded as minor.

INAIL

Milestone 2.7 commits the National Institute for Insurance against Accidents at Work (INAIL) to developing a digital register of access to information requests that would report all requests received by local offices of the agency, tracking them from reception to outcome. The system would also automatically update the single register of accesses on the administration's central institutional portal. Citizens would be able to export data in pdf and authorized INAIL officials in xls format.

Currently, users can download in pdf format an overview of the registers of the three types of access: documental (yearly – 2019, 2018, 2016–2017), civic (2017–2019), and generalized civic access to information requests (2017–2019).¹⁷ There is currently no digital register that allows for an interactive search of all types of access requests across all INAIL local offices. Although the central digital register

would simplify users' access to information, the data would still only be available in pdf format for citizens. These changes therefore have a minor potential impact.

ISPRA

Since 2017, the Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA) has been coordinating a network that includes regional agencies (ARPA) and autonomous provinces agencies (APPA) under the framework of the National System for Environmental Protection (SNPA).

Under this specific commitment, ISPRA aims to simplify the current fragmented framework for access to information on environmental matters¹⁸ by creating a single point of access for all environment-related information in a way that is easily accessed by citizens. This includes the creation of an online form for requesting access to information, which would then feed into a single database collecting all requests (2.9); a single register of requests of access to information for each agency and later on the overall SNPA (2.10); and guidelines to standardize the treatment of access to information requests (2.11).

Currently, no single register collects all requests received by the agencies under the framework of the SNPA, nor does the SNPA have its own register for recording requests. Reports also indicate instances in which access to information requests were treated differently depending on whether they originate from CSOs or individual entities along with the receipt of vague and incomplete responses to the requests put forward.¹⁹

The initiative is ambitious, as it would require extensive coordination across several local entities. It represents a concrete commitment to reduce an existing gap between administrations and citizens regarding access to information on the environment and has the potential for moderate impact.

City of Milan

The City of Milan committed to improving transparency and access to information by piloting the standard register of access which the DFP proposes to develop (2.13), and committed to implementing an advanced search and analysis tools for consulting the Official Noticeboard (2.14). The commitment also includes launching an application to visualize data on construction and road works (2.15). Transparency and participation regulations are to be reviewed following the pilot projects (2.12).

The proposal to pilot the use of the DFP register could contribute to setting the foundations for its institutionalization in practice. Furthermore, the City of Milan currently does not have a database of requests and publishes only a pdf annual overview of simple civic access and generalized civic access requests.²⁰ Therefore, potential impact for implementation could be moderate.

Conversely, the Official Noticeboard portal publishes documents on acts and legal provisions from the municipality that need to be made available to all.²¹ Users can only perform a simplified search of these in the Noticeboard. There is no advanced search function (such as using key words, publishing entity, number/year, and date). Though useful, the implementation of an advanced search function will have minor potential impact, as it is only an incremental change.

City of Rome

Similar to the City of Milan, the City of Rome agreed to pilot the use of the standard register of access developed by the DFP (2.16). The municipality also committed to implementing the single regulation on accesses (2.16). Already in 2017 the city had launched the legislative procedure to implement a single regulation on accesses, but final approval was delayed until February 2019.²² The regulation outlines in a single document the principles underpinning FOIA requests and the differences between the three types of requests for access to documents, and it indicates how administrations should address such requests and who is the responsible entity. The City of Rome is one of the administrations registering the highest number of FOIA requests,²³ and the provisions set out in the regulation could increase transparency and efficiency in the management of such requests. Nevertheless, the inclusion of this milestone in the action plan is of limited added value, as implementation of the regulation is already foreseen by law. Impact is

therefore coded as minor. The proposal to pilot the use of the DFP register however is noteworthy, as it could contribute to setting the foundations for its institutionalization in practice.

Next steps

Upon full implementation of the commitments, the government could consider promoting the publication of data on access requests in fully reusable formats. Studies show that the quality of data published in registers of accesses varies significantly across administrations.²⁴ This could be a matter for further consideration in the future.

¹ For the governmental assessment see: http://eventipa.formez.it/sites/default/files/allegati_eventi/albano_20190312.pdf; for the CSO assessment see : Federico Anghelè (The Good Lobby), Camilla Cupelli (Riparte il Futuro) “FOIA assessment: what works and what doesn’t a year after its launch” <https://www.agendadigitale.eu/cittadinanza-digitale/foia-sta-andando-luci-ombre-un-anno-dallavvio/>.

² Italy IRM Mid Term Report 2016 -2018, p. 108

³ See: http://eventipa.formez.it/sites/default/files/allegati_eventi/albano_20190312.pdf

⁴ Federica Notari “Critical aspects of a first monitoring of the FOIA”, November 2018

<https://iris.luiss.it/retrieve/handle/11385/181868/68802/Le%20criticit%C3%A0%20di%20un%20primo%20monitoraggio%20del%20FOIA%20italiano.pdf>

⁵ Three type of requests can be made: documentary access (accesso documentale); simple civic access (accesso civico semplice); generalised civic access (accesso civico generalizzato), i.e., FOIA request.

⁶ The DFP has been monitoring the use of FOIA since January 2017. The last monitoring report is from March 2018. Monitoring was initially limited to Ministries and subsequently to the 102 regional capitals, but not extended to all administrations.

⁷ Representative of the DFP, interview by IRM researcher, 13 May

⁸ Representatives of two CSOs, interview by IRM researcher, 7 May

⁹ For a detailed overview see:

<https://www.anticorruzione.it/portal/rest/jcr/repository/collaboration/Digital%20Assets/anacdocs/Attivita/Atti/Delibere/2013/50/All.-I-obblighi-di-pubblicazioneI.pdf>

¹⁰ Representative of the DFP, interview by IRM researcher, 13 May

¹¹ Representatives of two CSOs, interview by IRM researcher, 7 May

¹² See: <https://www.consip.it/attivita/programma-di-razionalizzazione>

¹³ Civil Society Consultation Report, p. 19

¹⁴ CONSIP representatives, email exchange with the IRM, 8 October 2020. Specifically, CONSIP clarified that novelties included: for the first map, the disaggregation by purchasing tool of information on the distribution of the transaction value, both at regional and provincial level; performance indicators highlighting trends in transaction value; the average transaction value per inhabitant, by geographical area; for the second map, the disaggregation of data on transaction value, both by geographical area and by product category; for the third map, visualization of the supplier qualification at European and national (regional and provincial) level for Public Administration Electronic Market (MEPA) and DPS institutional calls.

¹⁵ Representative of the DFP, interview by the IRM researcher 13 May 2020

¹⁶ Representatives of two CSOs, interview by IRM researcher, 7 May

¹⁷ Available at: <https://www.inail.it/cs/internet/istituto/amministrazione-trasparente/altri-contenuti/registro-degli-accessi.html>

¹⁸ Such fragmentation is the result of co-existing and overlapping legislative requirements. Access to information requests on environment have been regulated in Italy since 2005 with Legislative Decree 195/2005. When the FOIA entered into force in 2016, Legislative Decree 195/2005 was not superseded but the two provisions began to co-exist, contributing to a fragmentation of the regulation.

¹⁹ “FOIA, unknown” (Regional Agency for the environmental protection of Tuscany) <http://www.arpat.toscana.it/notizie/notizie-brevi/2017/foia-questo-sconosciuto>

²⁰ “Register of Accesses”(Municipality of Milan) <https://www.comune.milano.it/comune/amministrazione-trasparente/altri-contenuti/registro-degli-accessi>

²¹ “Official Noticeboard” (Municipality of Milan) <https://www.comune.milano.it/comune/albo-pretorio>

²² “Approval of Regulation on the right of access to documents, data and information” (City of Rome) https://www.comune.roma.it/resources/cms/documents/Proposta_n62.pdf

²³ Openpolis, “FOIA- citizen’s requests to municipalities” <https://www.openpolis.it/foia-le-richieste-dei-cittadini-ai-comuni/>

²⁴ “Registers of access: How Ministries are behaving” (Openpolis) <https://www.openpolis.it/registro-degli-accessi-come-si-stanno-comportando-i-ministeri/>

3. Register of beneficial owners

Main Objective

“The main objectives to be achieved include:

- uploading the many data on beneficial owners in the section. Data are very complex due to the heterogeneity of requirements (companies already included in the Register of companies; legal persons already included in the Prefecture Registries, unrecorded trusts);
- preliminary stocking of data in the section; the regulation sets a deadline for the addressees of the legislation (firstly, limited liability companies and cooperatives) listed in the register of companies have to communicate the name of the beneficial owner using the special digital forms developed in accordance with art 20 of Legislative Decree 231 (see above). These data are uploaded in the relevant section of the register and are the starting point of the register itself at time t_0 . That is the beginning of the operational phase of the section of the register of companies that will be implemented following the modalities mentioned below:
- maintaining data already included in the section, updating them every time ownership changes;
- ensuring that the action is proportioned to the purpose (maximum transparency without imposing too many bureaucratic burdens on the obliged entities).

This action aims at providing transparency on beneficial owners to counter money laundering and prevent corruption. This action is implemented through:

- the adoption of technical standards and implementing regulations;
- establishing the register and constantly updating it.

During implementation, we will collect data on the presence of women among the beneficial owners in the Register.

It would be pretentious to believe that this action is part of a policy to support female entrepreneurship. However, it will be interesting to assess (when the uploading phase is over) a new gender indicator which can provide new evaluation tools for economic-policy making and for gender equality in the business sector.”

Milestones

Ministry of Economic Development (MISE), Ministry of Economics and Finance (MEF), Unioncamere

3.1 Transposition of the innovations introduced by the 5th AMLD.

3.2 Implementing regulation of the current art. 21 of Legislative Decree 231/2007.

3.3 Technical rules to upload info in the section.

3.4 Implementation of the first stocking phase of the section. Upload of the names of the owners of registered companies in the section on beneficial owners.

3.5 Measuring the presence of women among the beneficial owners included in the Register.

Editorial Note: Please note commitment text in this report has been abridged for brevity and readability. For the complete text of this commitment, including all milestones, please see Italy’s action plan at <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Italy-Action-Plan-2019-2021-English.pdf>.

IRM Design Report Assessment	
Verifiable:	Yes
Relevant:	Access to Information
Potential impact:	Moderate

Commitment Analysis

This commitment seeks to develop and implement a Register of Beneficial Ownership. Italian legislation considers beneficial owners to be, first and foremost, natural persons who own capital shares amounting to more than 25 percent; secondly, if such a person does not exist, the ultimate beneficial owner is considered to be the person who controls the majority of votes in shareholders’ meetings or the person who controls enough votes to have a dominating influence, based on contractual provisions. If neither condition exists, the CEO is assumed to be the owner.¹

This commitment aims to increase transparency on beneficial owners by establishing the register, populating it with the relevant data, and maintaining it. Data will be disaggregated by gender. The commitment is directly relevant to the OGP value of access to information.

The establishment of a register of beneficial ownership open to the public is one of the measures foreseen by the fifth EU anti-money laundering (AML) and counter-terrorism financing framework with which Member States are required to comply.² Italy had started taking steps aimed at establishing such a register within a specific section of the already existing Register of Companies,³ but this action has been delayed due to the lack of an implementing directive.⁴ To date, the beneficial ownership register still does not exist. The Register of Companies, within which the Register of Beneficial Ownership would be established, holds information on 6 million companies.⁵ It differentiates between data accessible to all and data accessible only to registered users, which includes, among others, certificates of registration, fiscal codes, balance sheets, and so on. Access to these types of data requires the payment of a small fee that is regulated by law.⁶ Non-registered users can only gain access to free basic information, such as the name of the company, the location of the legal headquarters, and its identification code.⁷

Implementation could produce a transformational impact in terms of increasing transparency and access to information and in terms of fighting corruption and money laundering more broadly. The Ministry of Finance’s 2018 National Risk Assessment on Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing reports that several weak points remain in the verification of data about ‘beneficial owners’, often due to the lack of availability of information or a lack of institutionalized procedures.⁸ Transparency International has stated that the commitment has the potential to be transformative if fully implemented. However, it stressed that for this to happen, access to the Register should be fully open to the public and free.⁹ MISE confirmed that the register will be available to the general public. Three types of entities will have access to the register: institutional authorities (judiciary, police, Financial Intelligence Unit); professional entities (banks, notaries, etc.); and citizens. While the register will be free of access for the first group, the remaining two will be expected to pay a fee of 8 euros (diritto di segreteria) for each time the register is accessed.

The commitment contains a milestone (3.5) on the inclusion of gender disaggregated data in the Register. The inclusion was made in line with Italy’s commitment to the OGP’s Break the Roles campaign. Interviews with MISE confirmed that no concrete plans exist yet on what to do with the data once collected.¹⁰

Next steps

To ensure comprehensive access to information in the register for all, the government could consider making access to the register free of charge for all. The creation of a monitoring and verification mechanism for the data published in the register could also be considered. Finally, some additional considerations or a strategy could be put in place by the government on how to make the best use of the gender disaggregated data collected.

¹ Italy 4th National Action Plan for Open Government, p. 14

² Directive (EU) 2015/849 (4th AML Directive) <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32015L0849>, which requested that Member States set up a central register of beneficial owners which should be accessible to “competent authorities and FIUs and is provided to obliged entities when the latter take customer due diligence measures”, as well as other persons “who are able to demonstrate a legitimate interest with respect to money laundering, terrorist financing, and the associated predicate offences, such as corruption, tax crimes and fraud. Subsequently replaced by Directive (EU) 2018/843 (5th AML Directive) <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32018L0843>, which requests that the register be made public and accessible to all.

³ Government Official Gazette, Legislative Decree 90/2017 <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2017/06/19/17G00104/sg>

⁴ Antonio Ioria, “Beneficial Owners in the Register of Companies moved to October 2022,” 5 November 2019 <https://www.ipsoa.it/documents/fisco/accertamento/quotidiano/2019/11/05/beneficiari-effettivi-registro-imprese-riparla-ottobre-2022>

⁵ Register of companies <http://www.registroimprese.it/l-anagrafe-nazionale-delle-imprese>

⁶ Government Official Gazette, Decree of the Minister of Economic Development of 12 July 2012

<https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2012/07/31/12A08314/sg>; Table A https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/do/atto/serie_generale/caricaPdf?cdimg=12A0831400100010110001&dgu=2012-07-31&art.dataPubblicazioneGazzetta=2012-07-31&art.codiceRedazionale=12A08314&art.num=1&art.tiposerie=SG

⁷ The so-called “Codice ATECO”.

⁸ “National Risk Assessment on Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing for 2018” (Ministry of Economy and Finance) http://www.dt.mef.gov.it/modules/documenti_it/prevenzione_reati_finanziari/prevenzione_reati_finanziari/Analisi_dei_rischi_di_riciclaggio_e_di_finanziamento_del_terrorismo_2018_-_Sintesi.pdf

⁹ Davide del Monte (Transparency International), interview by IRM researcher, 5 May 2020

¹⁰ Marco Maceroni (MISE), interview by IRM researcher, 5 May 2020

4. Support for participation

Main Objective

“Activities to support participation are aimed at promoting the use of quality public consultations among Italian public administrations.

A first step in this direction will be dedicated to citizens thanks to the establishment of a dedicated portal which will become the point of access to consultations organized by public administrations. Citizens wishing to participate in consultations will have a single place to visit and receive alerts. The portal will help support, through specific editorial staff, the dissemination of consultation initiatives and the compliance with consultation quality standards by public administrations. To this end, practical guidelines inspired by the best international practices will be produced.

Special attention will be given to administration by offering open-source consultation, setting up a dedicated help desk and providing specific training to public employees.

Another step at regional level will be developing the macro objective “participation”, meaning the transition from mere transparency to active citizen participation at local level. Citizens will be able to access data and information through dedicated digital platforms. This will concretely help promote the dissemination of information to form an opinion or a point of view that can be discussed, thus starting a virtuous circle of exchange and shared decision-making”.

Milestones

PCM-DFP, Department for Institutional Reforms (PCM-DRI)

4.1 Public consultation on the “Operational Handbook for Public Consultations” in public administration.

4.2 Launching the portal for public participation by: bringing together public consultations; networking with regional portals; publishing ODs; developing advanced services (registration, alert, etc.).

4.3 Disseminating the “Operational Handbook for Public Consultations” in public administration and testing/running in the guidelines for specific consultations.

4.4 Stabilization of the platform for public consultations in central public administrations providing hw, sw and know-how resources to support public administrations wishing to organize consultations in compliance with the operational guidelines.

Ministry of Health

4.5 Establishment of a platform on the website of the Ministry called “AGENDA 2030: Sustainability in Health: knowledge junction”, which gathers and makes available all initiatives carried out by different administrations in the field of “sustainable development and health”. This web space will contain all different kinds of material/initiatives regarding the interactions between sustainable development and health produced at national and local level as envisaged by the UN 2030 Agenda and the related Sustainable Development Goals.

Regions and Autonomous Provinces

In order to speed up the coordinated development of participation, Regions are committed to:

4.6 consulting and engaging by establishing a participation platform.

4.7 Developing proactive policies and issue calls to support participation processes. Promoting a regional law on this issue.

City of Milan

Developing a new modular open source participation platform to manage participation processes envisaged by legislations:

4.8 Mapping solutions and needs.

4.9 Study groups in cooperation with the University of Milan.

4.10 Selecting, customizing and making the platform available online.

4.11 Developing and launching the digital consultation platform, collecting comments and editing the PGT and the maps with design tools integrated in the geoportal and SPID authentication.

4.12 Reorganizing the registers of associations and active citizenship as a single digital tool to consult, learn about and register organizations.

City of Rome

4.13 Drafting a regulation to specify the new participation tools envisaged by the Statute.

4.14 Systematizing participation tools in accordance with the regulation, the new institutional portal and dedicated platforms.

4.15 Piloting e-voting using blockchain technology.

Editorial Note: Please note commitment text in this report has been abridged for brevity and readability. For the complete text of this commitment, including all milestones, please see Italy's action plan at <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Italy-Action-Plan-2019-2021-English.pdf>.

IRM Design Report Assessment	
Verifiable:	Yes
Relevant:	Civic Participation, Access to information
Potential impact:	Moderate

Commitment Analysis

This commitment aims to support public participation in policy making by promoting the use of quality public consultation activities across Italian public administrations. At the national level, this would be done through the establishment of a single portal for accessing all public consultations implemented by all levels of government, an open source public consultation platform made available to public administration at all levels of government, and the creation of an Operational Handbook for Public Consultations. At local level, the commitment proposes to establish public consultation platforms at the regional and municipal level and strengthen participation mechanisms. The commitment is directly relevant to the OGP value of civic participation and is structured along five different sets of milestones, led by, respectively: the PCM-DFP, PCM-DRI (4.1 – 4.4); the Ministry of Health (4.5); the Regions and Autonomous Provinces (4.6–4.7); the City of Milan (4.8–4.12); and the City of Rome (4.13–4.15).

The creation of an online portal to access all consultations of an Operational Handbook for Public Consultations and of an open source public consultation platform represent key innovations in the Italian public participation landscape. As confirmed by both civil society stakeholders and government representatives, these activities represent a step forward toward institutionalizing the practice of public

consultations by administrations. The public participation landscape in Italy is fragmented and often remains tied to the local dimension.¹ This commitment seeks to redress existing fragmentation.² The potential impact is moderate because it is not clear whether all administrations would be required to use the new tools or what measures would be taken to raise awareness of their existence to citizens.

Detailed assessment of clusters of milestones

PCM-DFP and PCM-DRI

The milestones under the competence of the PCM-DFP and PCM-DRI present concrete activities aimed at addressing the fragmented public participation landscape with the creation of a single portal for public participation (4.2). The milestones also include a public consultation on drafting and dissemination of an Operational Handbook for Public Consultations across administrations (4.1, 4.3).

Italy does not have a strong formal framework or set of standards for ensuring public participation in decision-making processes. There have been indications that participation has been increasing in recent years, albeit in the majority of cases, it remains outside of formal processes, it is fragmented, and it is tied specifically to the local dimension.³ The existence of a scattered landscape was confirmed by a representative of the DRI,⁴ one of the lead implementing agencies for this commitment. He reported that several independent entities often turn to online public consultations with positive results. There are rules and guidelines about running public consultations for regulatory impact analyses and impact assessments.⁵ However, there is no single point of access through which citizens can have an overview of all public consultations, which is considered to be a key issue by governmental and civil society stakeholders alike.⁶ Through the proposed creation of an online portal for public participation, the government would provide such a single access point.

The Ministry of Public Administration developed and published in 2017 guidelines on public consultations inspired by international best practices.⁷ The guidelines outline general principles to ensure that public consultations are as inclusive, transparent, and effective as possible so that they can lead to informed high-quality decisions. However, they do not provide clear indications for the practical implementation of consultations.⁸ A representative of the DFP⁹ confirmed that the proposed handbook represents a step forward compared with the guidelines published in 2017 because it will provide clear indications for the practical implementation of consultations. The handbook will be based on international best practices in this field,¹⁰ including with regard to the need for inclusive, accessible, and transparent processes. The indications provided in the handbook will not be mandatory, although the minister for Public Administration might decide to accompany it with an implementing directive.¹¹ However, the directive would also not be legally binding. The creation of the handbook was also praised as a positive initiative by CSO stakeholders.¹²

Milestone 4.4 would establish a platform for public consultations that can be adopted by administrations that seek to implement consultations in line with the handbook. While the text of the milestone is unclear, interviews with DFP and DRI representatives confirmed that the platform is different from the single-access portal. While the portal will list all ongoing consultations in Italy, administrations can use the open source platform for carrying out their consultations. The portal would therefore also include an overview of those consultations implemented outside the platform and through other digital systems. The portal and the platform will run parallel to each other.

The platform itself also represents a novelty for the Italian public participation landscape, specifically in its configuration as an open source software that can be freely implemented by all administrations. Currently, each administration applies its preferred software and tool for public consultations. According to the DFP representative, the existence of different platforms is inevitable in light of the complex structure of central and local administrations in Italy.¹³ However, the creation of this new platform, alongside technical resources and training on how to use it, and the handbook, could provide an alternative for public administrations that also harmonizes public consultation processes across all administrations.

This cluster of milestones will have a moderate impact. The proposed activities will provide new centralized opportunities for civic participation, filling identified gaps in these areas. However, the text of the milestones does not foresee the achievement of measurable targets, which limits its potential impact. Furthermore, a transformative change of the public consultation landscape in the country would also be dependent on the adoption of these new tools by a large number of public administrations and on the awareness of their existence by citizens. Additionally, attention should be paid to ensuring that sections of the population that face barriers to using these types of tools are actively contacted and their engagement facilitated by the government. The DFP is planning on requesting to set up a network of contact points for consultation within all public administrations and to promote a dissemination campaign to encourage the use of the new platform.¹⁴ This could help amplify potential impact. However, no concrete activities are foreseen in the commitment with regard to awareness raising among citizens, and the government has made no plans.¹⁵

Ministry of Health

Milestone 4.5 focuses on the establishment by the Ministry of Health of a platform on its website that would gather and make available all initiatives¹⁶ implemented by different administrations in the field of “sustainable development and health.” This would represent a novelty, as this information is currently not available through a single point of access. Rather, individual administrations can publish it on their websites at their discretion. However, the inclusion of this milestone under this specific commitment on participation is questionable, as it seems unrelated to the overall theme of the commitment and more closely tied to access to information. The DFP representative also clarified that although no civic participation element is foreseen on the platform itself, a public consultation process aiming to map existing initiatives in this field is foreseen as the initial stepping-stone for the creation of the platform.¹⁷

The creation of this platform would help facilitate access to information on existing activities on sustainable development and health, also in line with the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. However, the milestone lacks specificity in terms of its targets for the involvement of individual administrations and on how citizens will be informed of the platform’s existence. Furthermore, as written, the milestone appears disjointed from the aim of the overall commitment for increased civic participation. Interviewed CSO stakeholders also did not see a necessity for the inclusion of such a milestone in the overall commitment.¹⁸ In light of these considerations, the potential impact of this milestone is minor.

Regions and Autonomous Provinces

This set of milestones foresees the establishment of a participation platform (4.6) and the development of proactive policies and calls on supporting civic participation along with the promotion of a regional law on this issue (4.7). It is unclear whether the idea is to implement the same platform across all regions and provinces in the same way and what the concrete objective and expected results are, as the text of the cluster is vague.¹⁹ Potential impact is therefore assessed as minor.

City of Milan

Under this cluster of milestones, the City of Milan pledges to develop and launch an open source participation platform and a digital consultation platform for online contributions to the Government Territorial Plan of Milan (PGT). The former would be customized based on needs identified through an initial mapping of the existing participatory processes of the city (4.8–4.11). A 2016 municipal decree regulates public participation in Milan.²⁰ A dedicated section on the website’s the municipality provides a useful overview of civic participation-related initiatives undertaken by the city, although no single public consultation platform seems to exist.²¹ The platform *partecipaMI*,²² created in 2007, provides opportunities for civic engagement and participation. It is not clear whether and how the proposed platform would replace *partecipaMI* and/or how the two would differ.²³

The development and launch of a digital consultation platform specifically for the PGT (4.11) represents an innovation compared with what occurred in previous years. The PGT is a yearly urban planning document specific to the Region of Lombardy that sets out urban services, rules, and proposals for the upcoming year for each municipality of the region.²⁴ Although public consultations are traditionally

foreseen for the PGT, the introduction of a platform to provide comments online is new and aligns with the broader governmental intention of enhancing the use of digital services for public participation.

Finally, this cluster of milestones also foresees the reorganization of the registers of associations and active citizenship in a single digital tool for registration and access to information on existing local organizations (4.12). The register lists civil society associations active in the municipality of Milan and functions as a sort of civil registry of associations. It is not a lobbying register. Currently, it is provided in pdf format and was last updated in 2016.²⁵ Organizations that wish to register are required to do so through a separate online form.²⁶ The implementation of this specific milestone would therefore consolidate these two elements by creating a digital tool that would group them together.

Overall, the activities proposed by the City of Milan may have moderate potential impact, as they include concrete initiatives aimed at filling existing gaps with regard to the management of public participation activities for the city. However, particular attention should be paid to ensure that the participatory instruments proposed that are underpinned by digital approaches remain inclusive and do not privilege access to information for some segments of the population compared with others.

City of Rome

This cluster of milestones foresees the drafting of regulations for the new participation tools foreseen by the Statute of the City of Rome (4.13) and the systematization of these tools (4.14). The statute was developed in 2013 and lays down the principles for normative and administrative autonomy of the City of Rome.²⁷ In 2018, the statute was modified specifically with regard to provisions on public participation, introducing new tools such as participatory budgeting and e-petitions and outlining timelines and modalities for referenda. The statute strongly emphasizes the possibility of using digital resources for public participation.²⁸

The city also pledges to pilot e-voting through the use of blockchain technology. A government stakeholder confirmed that a proposal to introduce e-voting was already put forward in 2017 with the idea of testing it specifically with the referendum on public transport. However, the initiative was abandoned because the lack of political agreement on a solution that would be convincing from an IT security perspective.²⁹ The introduction of blockchain technology presented in this specific commitment seeks to redress this aspect by providing additional security guarantees.

As for other milestones in the action plan already discussed regarding the City of Rome, this set of specific commitments is part of a broader existing strategy for the city that goes beyond the OGP framework.³⁰ Furthermore, the text of the milestones lacks specificity regarding the modalities envisioned for concretely systematizing the use of the new participation tools. In light of these considerations, potential impact is assessed as minor.

Next steps

Overall, the commitment stops short of setting specific targets for a measured increase in civic participation through public consultations as a result of its implementation. This also makes its potential impact less measurable. Future steps in this field should go in this direction. Furthermore, the government should consider a parallel design and implementation of a concrete communication strategy to promote the use of the existing services both at citizen and administration level. Particular attention should be paid to ensuring that citizens and administrations understand the differences between the single access portal and the open source public consultation platform the DFP and the DRI developed so that they both can be used to the best of their potential. Finally, the IRM encourages reflection on the participatory instruments proposed and verification that they are as inclusive as possible, taking action to ensure that participation is open to all segments of the population, including those for which the use of digital systems might constitute a barrier rather than an advantage. The creation of the Handbook and the setting up of the platform and portal can also provide the government with the opportunity to expand its approach beyond consultation and begin reflecting on co-creation between citizens and government as the goal of participation.

-
- ¹ See: Italy Mid Term IRM Report 2016 – 2018 p. 64; Demos report 2018 <http://www.demos.it/a01557.php>;
- ² Representative of the DRI, interview by IRM researcher, 8 May 2020; Representative of the DFP, interview by IRM researcher, 11 May 2020; Ilaria Vitellio (MappiNa), interview by IRM researcher, 4 May 2020
- ³ See: Italy Mid Term IRM Report 2016 – 2018 p. 64; Demos report 2018 <http://www.demos.it/a01557.php>; The existence of a scattered landscape was also confirmed by a representative of the DRI, interview by IRM researcher, 8 May 2020.
- ⁴ Representative of the DRI, interview by IRM researcher, 8 May 2020.
- ⁵ Representative of the DRI, comment made during public comment period referring to Prime Minister Decree 169/2017 <http://presidenza.governo.it/DAGL/pdf/DPCM%2015%20settembre%202017%20n%20%20169.pdf>, 8 May 2020.
- ⁶ Representative of the DRI, interview by IRM researcher, 8 May 2020; Ilaria Vitellio (MappiNa) interview by IRM researcher; 4 May 2020
- ⁷ Government Official Gazette, Madia Directive n. 2/2017 <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2017/07/14/17A04797/sg>
- ⁸ Representative of the DFP, interview by IRM researcher, 11 May 2020
- ⁹ Representative of the DFP, interview by IRM researcher, 11 May 2020
- ¹⁰ Such as the OECD Handbook on Information, Consultation and Public Participation in Policy-Making, <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/9789264195578-en.pdf?expires=1598260790&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=5D06082204D743E9139518BECC647BD5>, and the European Commission principles for stakeholder consultation <https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/better-regulation-guidelines-stakeholder-consultation.pdf>.
- ¹¹ Representative of the DFP, interview by IRM researcher, 11 May 2020
- ¹² Ilaria Vitellio (MappiNa) interview by IRM researcher; 4 May 2020
- ¹³ Representative of the DFP, interview by IRM researcher, 11 May 2020
- ¹⁴ Ibid.
- ¹⁵ Ibid.
- ¹⁶ Ranging from best practices and lessons learned, to toolkits, guidelines, informative leaflets and concrete local/national initiatives.
- ¹⁷ Representative of the DFP, interview by IRM researcher, 11 May 2020
- ¹⁸ Ilaria Vitellio (MappiNa) interview by IRM researcher, 4 May 2020
- ¹⁹ Further information was sought by the IRM researcher but not obtained.
- ²⁰ “Regulation implementing civic participation rights on citizens' initiatives, referenda, questions, petitions, consultations and public hearings” (City of Milan) <https://www.comune.milano.it/documents/20126/1001244/Regolamento+Partecipazione+Popolare.pdf/dcd4c8ac-cf43-cf9d-c341-ddaf176fcc2a?t=1551260462455>
- ²¹ “Milan participates” (City of Milan) <https://www.comune.milano.it/aree-tematiche/partecipazione/milano-partecipa>
- ²² Available at: <https://www.partecipami.it/>
- ²³ Further information was sought by the IRM researcher but not obtained.
- ²⁴ “Government Territorial Plans (Region of Lombardy) <https://www.regione.lombardia.it/wps/portal/istituzionale/HP/DettaglioRedazionale/servizi-e-informazioni/Enti-e-Operatori/territorio/pianificazione-comunale-e-provinciale/piani-governo-territorio-pgt/piani-governo-territorio-pgt>
- ²⁵ “Register of associations and active citizenship forms” (City of Milan) <https://www.comune.milano.it/documents/20126/1459805/Registro+2016.pdf/8ceb20a8-29a5-1b2a-6a4e-ce9122b70302?t=1552676527799>
- ²⁶ Available at: https://formshd2.comune.milano.it/rwe2/module_preview.jsp?MODULE_TAG=ALBO_ASSOC
- ²⁷ “Statute of the City of Rome” (City of Rome) <https://www.comune.roma.it/web/it/statuto.page>
- ²⁸ “Statute of the City of Rome” (City of Rome), Art. 8, 8-bis, 10 and 11, https://www.comune.roma.it/web-resources/cms/documents/STATUTO_di_ROMA_CAPITALE_.pdf
- ²⁹ Representative of the Department of Participation, Communication and Equal Opportunities (City of Rome), interview by IRM researcher 7 May 2020
- ³⁰ Ibid.

5. Regulation of stakeholders

Main Objective

“This action aims at:

- establishing a working group of administrations involved (PCM-DFP, MISE, MATTM, MIPAAFT) and civil society (representatives of the Open Government Forum) to develop a possible shared “form” to advertise a Register of Stakeholders and a standard procedure to make sure Ministries join in. This would help meet the need for transparency expressed by civil society and would be in line with the solutions already adopted in specific commitments by the administrations involved;
- presenting the solution to decision-makers inside administrations for them to consider how it should be further developed”.

Milestones

MISE, PCM – DFP, Ministry of the Environment (MATTM), Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Tourism (MIPAAFT)

5.1 Establishing a joint working group of administrations and civil society to find a shared solution to regulate the relations between stakeholders and decision-makers in Ministries.

5.2 Identifying a shared procedure to make sure Ministries join the Transparency Register, including the enabling procedure, areas of specific interest for each administration, the code of conduct, guidelines on how the Register works and is managed and on how to publish the meetings in the agendas of decision-makers.

5.3 Presenting the solution to decision-makers in the administration.

5.4 Testing the solution.

City of Rome

5.5 Implementing a transparent management of the relations with stakeholders through regulations.

5.6 Creating a register associated with the adoption of Open Agendas by the members of political bodies.

5.7 Testing and implementing regular communication mechanisms with stakeholders and setting rules on relations to lay the foundations for national regulations.

Editorial Note: Please note commitment text in this report has been abridged for brevity and readability. For the complete text of this commitment, including all milestones, please see Italy’s action plan at <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Italy-Action-Plan-2019-2021-English.pdf>.

IRM Design Report Assessment	
Verifiable:	Yes
Relevant:	Access to information, Civic participation
Potential impact:	Moderate

Commitment Analysis

This commitment seeks to increase transparency by developing a shared solution for the establishment of a lobbying register (defined in the commitment as “Register of Stakeholders”), in cooperation with selected Ministries and with a standardized implementation procedure. The commitment is organized by milestones (5.1–5.4) under the responsibility of the key administrations involved (MISE, PCM–DFP, MATTM, MIPAAFT) and one milestone specific to the City of Rome (5.5 -5.7). By seeking to provide citizens with access to data on the relationship between administrations and interest groups, the commitment is relevant to the OGP value of access to information. The decision to develop the standard through a joint working group between administrations and civil society representatives also makes it relevant to civic participation.

The design of the commitment as a whole is presented by both representatives of public administration and CSOs as an example of successful collaboration.¹ The commitment builds on the foundations laid during the previous cycle and responds to one of the key recommendations the IRM put forward, which suggested the inclusion of national regulations for lobbying.²

Despite several attempts over the years, Italy lacks national lobbying regulations and a unified lobbying register. The creation of a solution for the regulation of stakeholders as proposed in this commitment would therefore represent a significant step forward in increasing transparency in Italy in this area. The commitment does not set fixed targets in terms of the number of Ministries expected to adopt the new solution that will be identified, and in that sense, its ambition falls short. Nevertheless, informal conversations between the lead administration and civil society confirm the intention to extend the provision to all public administrations. At the same time, there is awareness that adoption by all would also depend on the creation of legislation making implementation mandatory.³ In light of the lack of set targets, the overall potential impact of this commitment is moderate. If successful in extending the register to all public administrations, the impact of the initiative would be transformative.

Detailed assessment of clusters of milestones

MISE, PCM – DFP, MATTM, MIPAAFT

This cluster of milestones seeks to redress the lack of a harmonized framework on lobbying regulation by trying to create a unified solution for a register of stakeholders. The solution would be discussed in a joint working group between administrations and civil society (5.1–5.2), presented to decision-makers (5.3) and tested (5.4).

Estimating the extent of lobbying in Italy is difficult, as the only available data are those concerning revenues of the main lobbying organizations. Such data show that revenues have grown considerably in the last few years: In 2018, the 10 major lobbying organizations in the country collected revenues of up to 34 million euros, an increase of 15.5 percent compared with revenues of the previous year.⁴ However, these data provide a partial view, as they do not include lobbying activities conducted by companies, trade unions, CSOs, and so on.⁵ The establishment of lobbying regulation in Italy has been a difficult process. Since 1976, more than 50 bills aimed at regulating this relationship have been proposed with no success.⁶ To date, Italy does not have a national lobbying register. In 2017, the first official register of this kind was created for the Italian Parliament.⁷ However, regulation for the activities of stakeholders inside Parliament is regulated only for the Chamber of Deputies, not for the Senate. Across the national territory, the situation remains fragmented. Some regions and municipalities have taken positive steps forward and implemented regulation, but there is no systematic or standardized approach.⁸

Efforts to increase transparency of public administrations in this area had been already undertaken in the context of the third OGP action plan for Italy. Commitments 26, 27, and 28 of the previous action plan focused on disclosing government agendas and establishing lobbying registers within specific public administrations.⁹ As a result of commitments made under the framework of the third OGP action plan, the Ministry for Economic Development and the Ministry of Labor (at the time under the same Minister, Luigi di Maio) adopted a Transparency Registry and a Code of Conduct in September 2018.¹⁰ The

registers include the details of registered stakeholders and the agendas of general directors,¹¹ and the information is published proactively. Similarly, the municipalities of Milan and Rome started publishing online the agendas of meetings between stakeholders and public decision-makers for some of their departments.¹²

Civil society representatives confirmed that the idea with this commitment is to develop a standard that could prompt developments also from a legislative perspective at a national level.¹³ The existing Transparency Registry of the MISE would be used as the starting point for creating a benchmark that could be extended to as many public administrations as possible, including those that already have some levels of self-regulation. An interviewed civil society stakeholder confirmed that the MISE Registry is a good starting point, as it contains all information needed.¹⁴ Suggestions for improvement are more targeted toward improving participation and interaction, with the interviewee indicating that it could be beneficial to make draft laws and regulations available to registered stakeholders, consulting with them frequently and allowing them to send documents and position papers on selected topics.¹⁵

The cluster of milestones responds to identified needs from civil society for the establishment of a national solution for the regulation of lobbying and would fill a significant gap in this area. The pledge to develop this solution through a joint working group made up by both representatives of administrations and civil society is commendable. However, the lack of concrete details on the targets for administrations to adopt the transparency register beyond the testing phase reduces the ambition of the commitment. In light of these considerations, the potential impact of the commitment is moderate rather than transformative.

City of Rome

The set of milestones specific to the City of Rome foresees the implementation of regulations on the management of relations with stakeholders (5.5), the creation of a register associated with the adoption of Open Agendas (5.6), and the testing and implementation of regular communication mechanisms with stakeholders with a view to laying the foundations for national regulations (5.7).

Milestone 5.6 in particular carries forward part of commitment 27 of the third OGP action plan, which had remained unimplemented at the time.¹⁶ Under that commitment, the City of Rome had pledged to establish an Open Agenda of the department responsible for “Roma semplice” and to develop an associated register of stakeholders. At the end of the implementation cycle, only the first objective had been achieved.¹⁷

In 2017, the lobbying reality in the City of Rome came under scrutiny due to an investigation scandal over the presumed influence of lobbies regarding the building of the city’s new football stadium.¹⁸ The scandal had brought the then president of ANAC, Raffaele Cantone, to vocally demand lobbying regulation.¹⁹

A government stakeholder confirmed that the milestones are part of measures to increase transparency and access to information within a broader three-year strategy for the management of the city.²⁰ Overall, however, the potential impact of the milestones for the City of Rome are coded as minor. They are vague on the concrete modalities for the transparent management of relations and on what regular communication mechanisms with stakeholders would entail.

¹ Representative of the DFP, interview by IRM researcher, 6 May; Federico Anghelè (The Good Lobby), interview by IRM researcher, 6 May 2020

² Italy Mid Term IRM Report 2016 – 2018, p. 108

³ Federico Anghelè (The Good Lobby), interview by IRM researcher, 6 May 2020

⁴ Dagospia, “When politics is weak, lobbying does greatly” <https://www.dagospia.com/rubrica-4/business/quando-politica-rsquo-debole-business-lobby-va-gonfie-vele-223833.htm>

⁵ Federico Anghelè (The Good Lobby), email exchange with IRM researcher, 30 June 2020

⁶ “Eyes wide Open – Riparte il futuro’s campaign for regulating lobbying in Italy” (Riparte il Futuro) <http://www.riparteilfuturo.it/assets/articles/images/Report%20lobbying%20Riparte%20il%20futuro.pdf>

⁷ Register of Stakeholders for the Chamber of Deputies <https://www.camera.it/leg18/1306>

⁸ “Eyes wide Open” (Riparte il Futuro)

<http://www.riparteilfuturo.it/assets/articles/images/Report%20lobbying%20Riparte%20il%20futuro.pdf>

⁹ Italy 3rd National Action Plan with Addendum 2016–2018, pp. 88-93. For an overview of the content of these commitments and their assessment at the end of the implementation cycle please see the End of Term IRM report, p. 50

¹⁰ “Directive on the adoption of a Transparency Register for the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Economic Development” http://registrotrasparenza.mise.gov.it/images/direttiva_firmata.pdf. See also the IRM end of term assessment for commitment 26 of Italy 3rd National Action Plan 2016–2018, p. 43.

¹¹ Available at: <https://registrotrasparenza.lavoro.gov.it/>;

<http://registrotrasparenza.mise.gov.it/>

¹² Italy End of Term IRM Report 2016 – 2018, p. 49.

¹³ Federico Anghelè (The Good Lobby), interview by IRM researcher, 6 May 2020

¹⁴ Federico Anghelè (The Good Lobby), email exchange with IRM researcher, 30 June 2020

¹⁵ Federico Anghelè (The Good Lobby), email exchange with IRM researcher, 30 June 2020

¹⁶ Italy End of Term IRM Report 2016 – 2018, p. 49.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Valori, “Investigation on Rome’s stadium, the 5 star movement and lobbies” <https://valori.it/stadio-roma-valori-m5s-obbedienti-alle-lobby/>

¹⁹ Carte in regola, “Cantone: regulating lobbies to fight corruption” <https://www.carteinregola.it/index.php/cantone-la-lotta-alle-lobby-per-battere-la-corruzione/>

²⁰ Representative of the Department for Participation, Communication and Equal Opportunities (City of Rome), interview by IRM researcher, 7 May 2020. See: Plan for the executive management of the City of Rome 2019 – 2022 <https://www.comune.roma.it/web/it/informazione-di-servizio.page?contentId=IDS253766>

6. Culture of open government

Main Objective

“This action is aimed at broadly disseminating the values of open government and strengthening the visibility of the places where these values are already implemented by promoting:

- the organization of the Open Government Week;
- the Open Gov Champion Award;
- the restyling and enhancement of the website open.gov.it;
- the inclusion in the website open.gov.it of information and access to open government initiatives implemented by public administration (apps, websites and digital services);
- the organization of institutional communication campaigns to disseminate information on ongoing or already implemented open government initiatives;
- piloting PA communication strategies on social media for citizens and public administration itself;
- implementation of multiple initiatives to engage visitors in national museums through digital environments”.

Milestones

PCM – DFP

6.1 Organizing the Open Government Week in 2020 and 2021 focusing on advertising it and making it open to a wider audience. In parallel with the OGP Global Open Gov Week.

6.2 Assigning the Open Gov Champion Award in 2020 and 2021.

6.3 Restyling and enhancing the website open.gov.it

6.4 Pilot project to coach three administrations to develop social media communication strategies and fully use platforms. Objectives mainly concern the development of a social media strategy and the publication of operational indications and good practices on the use of social media.

6.5 The tools and methods developed as a result of this activity will be disseminated at a later dissemination stage addressed to a wide range of administrations (through webinars, workshops, networking). With this action to strengthen abilities in the use of social media, administrations will become aware of hate speech and, more generally, of the fight against online discrimination. Special attention will be given to gender violence to identify non-explicit behaviors and stereotypes, which can foster violence. We will provide early risk detection tools to properly address situations of discriminations.

MIBAC

6.6 Studying and developing new algorithms, digital models and infrastructure to: optimize and reduce wait time in the most visited museums; increase the number of visitors in the least visited museums; enhance archaeological, historical-artistic, archives and book heritage which is currently inaccessible.

PCM – DIE

6.7 Including open government experiences in the website open.gov.it (apps, websites and digital services).

6.8 Organizing institutional communication campaigns to disseminate past or current open government experiences.

Editorial Note: Please note commitment text in this report has been abridged for brevity and readability. For the complete text of this commitment, including milestones, please see Italy’s action plan at <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Italy-Action-Plan-2019-2021-English.pdf>.

IRM Design Report Assessment	
Verifiable:	Yes
Relevant:	Civic Participation, Access to information
Potential impact:	Minor

Commitment Analysis

This commitment proposes a series of initiatives aimed at promoting a culture of open government among citizens and administrations. The commitment is organized around three sets of milestones, respectively, under the responsibility of the DFP (6.1–6.5), MIBAC (6.6) and the DIE (6.7–6.8). The commitment is broadly relevant to the OGP values of civic participation and access to information. By proposing to make the OGP national website a dynamic space wherein civil society can comment on progress made by administrations in implementing the OGP action plan, milestone 6.3 is relevant to civic participation. Milestone 6.6, which seeks to provide digital access to currently inaccessible archives, and 6.7–6.8, which group together in a single access point information on administrations’ open government initiatives and propose to develop a dissemination campaign, are relevant to access to information.

Particularly interesting initiatives include the enhancement of the national OGP website, which should become a collaborative space with civil society and a single access point for the collection and promotion of initiatives related to open government implemented across the national territory.

The lack of specificity affects the assessment of the commitment’s potential impact, which remains minor. Non-governmental stakeholders reported that the commitment could have been more ambitious in terms of identifying areas for intervention in this field, focusing on how to better promote a culture of open government at the local level.¹

Detailed assessment of clusters of milestones

PCM – DFP

This set of milestones focuses on the one hand on the promotion of open government-related activities through the organization of Open Government Week 2020 and 2021, the assignment of the Open Government Champion Award, and the restyling of the open.gov.it website (6.1–6.3) and on the other hand through the implementation of a pilot project to coach three administrations on the development and use of social media communication strategies and platforms (6.4–6.5). Milestone 6.5 in particular specifies that specific attention will be paid to providing administrations with early risk detection tools in the fight against online discrimination.

As noted in the previous IRM report, Italy has experienced a culture of low transparency, corruption, and low levels of participation and accountability among public administrations in the past.² Several steps were taken in recent years to increase the openness of administrations vis-à-vis Italian citizens, including under the framework of OGP.³ Indeed, the organization of Open Government Week follows up from the positive results received by the same commitment (13 – Open Administration Week) in the third action plan. The initiative was deemed by CSOs to be highly valuable because it brought together 154 public administrations, academia, and citizen groups across the country for a weeklong event in an unprecedented synergy.⁴ Apart from institutionalizing the practice for the next two years, together with the assignment of the Open Gov Champion Award, this milestone does not represent a major advancement. The DFP representative explained that the idea was to enhance the potential of the event

by coordinating with administrations earlier on in the process than what is currently done.⁵ According to the representative, earlier coordination and planning would increase possibilities for public administrations to decide to make the most of the event for the presentation of key initiatives but also for monitoring instances. The representative also reported that the idea was to give additional space to events that CSOs hosted. In previous instances of Open Government Week, the majority of the events were overwhelmingly hosted by public administrations, with a ratio of 450 events organized by administrations and only 20–30 by CSOs. Another novelty foreseen for this year is the inclusion of a specific event on the “culture of Open Government,” to be organized by the DFP.

With regard to the restyling of the OGP national website (6.3), the DFP representative explained that the initiative aims to overcome the technical obsolescence of the website and transform it into a more cooperative space.⁶ The website is currently a static space, accessible and modifiable only by public administrations. The monitoring section in particular would be expanded to allow representatives of the Open Government Forum to comment on the assessment of the administrations and perform their own monitoring. The idea would be to also allow IRM researchers to access the section and add comments and recommendations and flag potential issues. Though they did not provide concrete suggestions on potential improvements for the website, representatives of the Open Government Forum highlighted the importance of working together with CSOs in the redesigning of the website as well.⁷ The DFP representative confirmed that CSOs will be involved in the process.

Milestones 6.4 and 6.5 foresee the launch of a pilot project to coach public administrations in the use of social media platforms and communication strategies. The pilot will target only three administrations, although it does not specify whether central or local. The idea would be to apply the lessons learned from the pilot project to all administrations, placing particular focus on improving administrations’ capacity to monitor and detect hate speech on social media and online discrimination more broadly.

The proposed initiative has potential: Current regulation on administrations’ communication strategies and methods is outdated and does not refer to the role of social media⁸; furthermore, there is no systematic training available for officials within public administrations on how to deal with social media platforms and how to best exploit them for communication purposes. Impact is limited however by the small number of administrations in the pilot project.

The potential impact of these clusters of milestones is minor. The commitment to reproduce the Open Government Week and Open Champion Award does not include significant improvements and or changes since the previous events. The ideas behind the restyling of the national OGP website respond to a need for greater interaction with CSOs on monitoring especially, also picking up on previous IRM recommendations,⁹ and are therefore positive. However, the restyling of the website would not significantly contribute to a change in the promotion of a culture of open government more broadly across the national territory. Furthermore, additional detail in milestone’s text would have been useful to ensure that impact is fully measurable.

MIBAC

The specific milestone under the competence of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities (MIBAC) seeks to develop new digital ways to reduce waiting times in famous museums, increase the number of visitors in the less famous ones, and provide access to archives that are currently inaccessible. In this last aspect, this milestone can also be seen as relevant for access to information, although the text remains vague regarding the specific archives under consideration.

Overall, although the initiatives proposed are interesting and respond to existing needs in this field, this commitment’s focus on museums and historical archives was questioned by civil society stakeholders, who flagged areas such as education or health as ones that would have deserved greater focus.¹⁰ This milestone is also part of a broader existing MIBAC strategy, which makes it unclear whether there is added value in appearing in the action plan. In light of these considerations, potential impact is assessed as minor.

PCM – DIE

Finally, these two milestones focus on including examples of open government initiatives implemented by administrations in the national OGP website (6.7) and organizing communication campaigns to disseminate them (6.8). The text of the commitment is vague, as it does not specify how these initiatives will concretely take place.

The DFP representative explained that this is also foreseen as part of the restyling work of the national OGP website with a view of transforming it into a more cooperative space. The idea is to create a section that would function as a repository of best practices on the local- and national-level open government initiatives. The repository would allow users to follow up on the developments of these initiatives, including those implemented under the framework of the Open Government Week, and obtain access to relevant tools, digital services, open data, and so forth.¹¹

The potential impact of these milestones, especially if considered together with the restyling of the national OGP website and the outcomes of Open Government Week, could be moderate. Interviewed governmental and CSO stakeholders confirmed that a key issue in Italy is the lack of awareness about the modalities of open government and the existence of open government initiatives.¹² The measures proposed could contribute to increasing access to information on this topic significantly, especially if paired with strong awareness-raising campaigns. However, as written, the ambition and intention of these milestones are unclear.

Next steps

Although several of these milestones give continuity to positive activities such as the Open Government Week and the Open Gov Champion Award, further efforts in this field could focus on more meaningful actions, such as the implementation of interactive forums for public engagement, in particular for specific target groups such as youth or the elderly. Additional focus could also be placed on how administrations concretely plan to engage citizens in the promotion of their open government activities. Without a concrete strategy in that direction, the risk is that initiatives remain an example of self-promotion, without really bridging the gap with citizens. This was also raised as a critical point by civil society stakeholders.¹³ Finally, increasing the specificity of the commitment, for example through the inclusion of set targets for implementation, could help increase its potential impact.

¹ Rita Palumbo (Segretario Generale Ferpi, Federazione Relazioni Pubbliche Italiana), interview by IRM researcher 14 May 2020

² Italy Mid Term IRM report 2016–2018, p. 64

³ See Italy's 3rd National Action Plan with Addendum 2016–2018, p. 50

⁴ Italy Mid Term IRM report 2016 – 2018, p.64

⁵ Representative of the DFP, interview by the IRM researcher 14 May 2020.

⁶ Idem.

⁷ Rita Palumbo (Segretario Generale Ferpi, Federazione Relazioni Pubbliche Italiana), interview by IRM researcher 14 May 2020

⁸ Government Official Gazette, Law 150/2000

https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/atto/serie_generale/caricaDettaglioAtto/originario?atto.dataPubblicazioneGazzetta=2000-06-13&atto.codiceRedazionale=000G0183&elenco30giorni=false

⁹ Italy Mid Term IRM report 2016–2018, p. 108

¹⁰ Rita Palumbo (Segretario Generale Ferpi, Federazione Relazioni Pubbliche Italiana), interview by IRM researcher 14 May 2020

¹¹ Representative of the DFP, interview by the IRM researcher 14 May 2020.

¹² Representative of the DFP, interview by the IRM researcher 14 May 2020; Rita Palumbo (Segretario Generale Ferpi, Federazione Relazioni Pubbliche Italiana), interview by IRM researcher 14 May 2020;

¹³ Rita Palumbo (Segretario Generale Ferpi, Federazione Relazioni Pubbliche Italiana), interview by IRM researcher 14 May 2020

7. Corruption prevention

Main Objective

“This action aims at preventing corruption by adapting open contracting standards and introducing tools like the Advanced Integrity Pacts. As far as data are concerned our primary objective is to standardize data and information on public contracts in compliance with the common international model under the Open Contracting Data Standards, in close cooperation with other PAs. A second objective is to open (non-sensitive) data included in the new IT Archives of Public Works, in cooperation with the Regions and Local Authorities for the transport infrastructure under their responsibility. Regarding Advanced Integrity Pacts, these are very innovative compared to ordinary Integrity Pacts:

- the role of the monitoring agency, co-signatory to the Pact; it oversees the Integrity Pact, monitors the stages of the tender procedure and acts as intermediary with civil society;
- the stages of the monitoring process which covers the entire procedure in the Integrity Pact, from needs analysis to service delivery/completion of works”.

Milestones

Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport (MIT) – DIPE – CONSID

7.1 Standardization of data and information on public contracts in line with the common international model as defined by Open Contracting Data Standard (OCDS).

7.2 Release of open (non-sensitive) data included in the new IT Archive of Public Works (AINOP), established at the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport (MIT) by Law 30/2018.

University of Messina

7.3 Joining Libellula a Civil Monitoring Lab on public spending and implementing an Advanced Integrity Pact.

Sicily Region

7.4 Testing the main tools of the Advanced Integrity Pact to expand this practice following and incremental approach. In particular:

- establishing a Regional Register of Civic Monitoring Bodies;
- making a proposal to identify one or more public contracts to be included in the civic monitoring process;
- civic monitoring of the contract/s selected.

City of Palermo

7.5 Applying the Advanced Integrity Pact to at least one tendering procedure.

Editorial Note: Please note commitment text in this report has been abridged for brevity and readability. For the complete text of this commitment, including all milestones, please see Italy’s action plan at <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Italy-Action-Plan-2019-2021-English.pdf>.

IRM Design Report Assessment	
Verifiable:	Yes
Relevant:	Access to Information, Civic participation
Potential impact:	Moderate

Commitment Analysis

This commitment seeks to help prevent corruption by adapting information on public contracts in compliance with international standards, publish non-sensitive data on public works in open format, and implement three Advanced Integrity Pacts in Sicily. By seeking to increase the availability of data on public contracts/public works, this commitment is directly relevant to the OGP value of access to information. The commitment is organized around four sets of milestones under the responsibility of the MIT – DIPE – CONSIP (7.1–7.2), the University of Messina (7.3), the Sicily Region (7.4) and the City of Palermo (7.5). The milestones involving the introduction of Advanced Integrity Pacts are also relevant to the value of civic participation, as they provide for the inclusion of a civil society organization as a monitor of the implementation of a public procurement contract by the authorities.

Italy has one of the highest perceived levels of corruption across the EU, including in regard to public procurement procedures,¹ and studies have shown public procurement to be the sector in Italy with the highest number of cases of corruption.² A report by the National Anti-Corruption Authority (ANAC) shows that between 2016 and 2019, 40 percent of the overall cases of corruption within public procurement were tied to public works.³ Efforts have been made in the past few years to increase transparency in this area, including through the creation of the Ministry of Infrastructure Public Contracts Service platform,⁴ which hosts information on calls for tender, contract notices, award notices, programs, and unfinished works. However, challenges related to the interpretation of the data published on the platform remain due to the lack of use of set standards for publication. The initiatives proposed in this commitment seek to redress this issue.

Overall, the potential impact of this commitment could be moderate. The application of a standardized model on the Public Contracts Service (SCP) platform could contribute to increasing the reusability of the data published. The inclusion of Advanced Integrity Pacts is a useful innovation that could set the basis for an established practice of civic monitoring on public works. However, as written, this aspect of the commitment remains fragmented. The text is unclear about how many contracts will be selected for participation in the pacts and whether the activities of the region, municipality, and university will be in any way coordinated to avoid overlapping (or about whether overlapping is intended).

Detailed assessment of clusters of milestones

MIT – DIPE – CONSIP

This cluster of milestones foresees the standardization of data and information on public contracts in compliance with international best practices standards (7.1) and the release of open (non-sensitive) data included in the forthcoming IT Archive of Public Works (AINOP – 7.2).

The Open Contracting Data Standard (OCDS) the administrations propose to adopt is considered a best practice at the international level. It is the only international open standard for the publication of information on all stages of public contracts.⁵ Italy had pledged to adopt this standard at the global anti-corruption summit hosted in 2016 by the government of the United Kingdom. Initial focus was expected to be on major infrastructural projects as a priority,⁶ but the standard has not been implemented yet.

While the commitment is unclear which data the activities will affect, a government representative clarified⁷ that the data under consideration are that published in the Public Contracts Service (SCP) platform⁸ and not OpenCantieri, a data aggregation and visualization tool that provides an overview of ongoing public works.⁹ The information published on SCP is currently available in open data (csv or xls format¹⁰) and is also integrated in the MIT's open data platform <http://dati.mit.gov.it/>. Only metadata are also available in JSON format, which is the one the Open Contracting Partnership promotes. The interviewed government representative working in the field stated that the publication of all data in OCDS would help eliminate existing issues related to the interpretation of the data available that resulted from the lack of a common standard.¹¹

In regard to milestone 7.2, the interviewed government representative working in the field explained that the creation of an IT Archives of Public Works (AINOP) forms part of the legislative measures established following the collapse of the Genoa Bridge in August 2018, which highlighted inefficiencies on the state of infrastructure in Italy.¹² The law¹³ provided for the publication of data on all public works¹⁴ in an open format, and in this sense, the milestone is part of an initiative predating the action plan.

Nevertheless, the publication of such data would represent an increase compared to what is currently available on OpenCantieri, as this platform does not include any information on maintenance and preservation of existing public works¹⁵. However, publication will be dependent on local authorities, and no sanctions are foreseen for lack of compliance. This could affect the potential impact of the initiative. Furthermore, the text of the milestone lacks detail on the granularity of the data which will be released and the format the data would be published in, and no measures are foreseen to also mitigate potential risks arising from the different quality of data held by different administrations.

Complete standardization of the data published on the SCP could provide opportunities for improved reusability of such data and therefore could have a moderate impact. However, it should be noted that civil society stakeholders expressed doubt as to the potential impact of these initiatives, considering them too limited in scope.¹⁶

University of Messina – Sicily Region – City of Palermo

These three clusters of milestones are formally separate, each dependent on the single implementing administration. However, they all commit to the implementation of an “Advanced Integrity Pact” in Sicily and as such are analyzed together. The correlation between the three initiatives was also confirmed by interviewed representatives of the Messina-based association Parliament Watch Italia (PWI), the CSO promoting these efforts. PWI also confirmed that the original idea to implement an Integrity Pact in Sicily, specifically in Messina, dates back to 2016, although it collapsed with a change in local administration two years later.¹⁷ The current proposals in the fourth action plan are the result of those earlier processes.

Sicily lags behind both the national and European economy in terms of economic development,¹⁸ being fraught by challenges such as high levels of unemployment, low levels and low quality of infrastructure, and low levels of competitiveness of local industries.¹⁹ A 2019 report by the Italian General Confederation of Enterprises, Professional Occupations and Self-employment (Confcommercio) comparing the quality of public services to public spending highlighted severe inefficiencies in the region.²⁰ Furthermore, the pervasiveness of organized crime in the territory²¹ makes monitoring of public procurement and public spending particularly necessary.

Integrity Pacts (IPs) are a public procurement monitoring tool that consist of trilateral agreements between the contracting authority for a public tender, the bidder, and an independent civil society organization that monitors the process and issues periodic reports on its findings. In Italy, IPs have been applied with positive results²² for public procurement procedures funded through EU structural funds²³ in Lombardy, Sardinia, Sicily, and Calabria. As explained by representatives of PWI,²⁴ the decision to create an enhanced version of IPs (i.e., “Advanced Ips”) stems from the understanding that more local ownership is needed in these projects. Usually in Italian Ips, the monitoring is performed by a national, large scale CSO (e.g., Transparency International Italy) rather than by a locally based association. Furthermore, the implementation of IPs has a cost, which in the case of the EU funds was covered by an EU Commission project. To ensure local ownership and solve the issue of the costs of activating an IP, Advanced IPs include innovative elements, such as the involvement of a local CSO as monitoring entity, mentored by a CSO of national scale (e.g., Transparency International Italy), and the inclusion of a small percentage for monitoring expenses within the overall framework of procurement costs.²⁵ These two elements are the main difference between “regular” IPs and the advanced version proposed here.

Each cluster of milestones foresees the implementation of one Advanced IP to a public contract selected by the implementing agency. In the case of the University of Messina (7.3), the monitoring entity will be PWI, through its pilot civic monitoring project Libellula.²⁶ The text of the milestones could provide additional detail as to how the selection would happen, both in terms of the proposed contract and the monitoring entity (for the remaining two clusters of milestones), to make the potential impact more measurable.

While stakeholders confirm that, in principle, the projects could be carried out outside the OGP framework, they believe that inclusion in the action plan provides added value. According to PWI, it contributes to ensuring monitoring of implementation and guaranteeing continuity of the process on an international level.²⁷ Both CSO representatives and government stakeholders²⁸ are positive about the interaction between civil society and public administrations and highlight the importance of implementing

the proposed initiatives. In light of these considerations and taking into account the novelty represented by Advanced IP, the emphasis on local ownership and the existing need these milestones seek to respond to, potential impact is assessed as moderate.

Next steps

One Open Government Forum stakeholder criticized the limited ambition of the commitment in applying IPs only in Sicily. In the future, the government could consider extending the practice more broadly across the national territory, especially in light of the promotion of the instrument in the National Anti Corruption Plan 2019–2021 as a participatory mechanism for monitoring the assignment and implementation of public contracts.²⁹

¹ Flash Eurobarometer 457, Businesses Attitudes towards corruption in the EU (European Commission) https://data.europa.eu/euodp/en/data/dataset/S2177_457_ENG

² “Mapping corruption” (Transparency International) https://www.transparency.it/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/mappiamo_la_corruzione_2018.pdf

³ “Corruption in Italy 2016 – 2019” (ANAC), p. 2

⁴ <https://www.serviziocontrattipubblici.it/SPlnApp/>

⁵ “Open Contracting Data Standard” (Open Contracting Partnership) <https://www.open-contracting.org/data-standard>

⁶ “Country specific commitments – Italy” (Anti-corruption summit 2016)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/522710/Italy.pdf

⁷ Government representative, interview by the IRM researcher, 30 April 2020.

⁸ Government representative, interview by the IRM researcher, 30 April 2020. Platform available at

<https://www.serviziocontrattipubblici.it/SPlnApp/>

⁹ OpenCantieri available at <http://opencantieri.mit.gov.it/>. The platform provides an overview of ongoing public works.

¹⁰ “Open data” (SCP) https://www.serviziocontrattipubblici.it/SPlnApp/it/open_data_page

¹¹ Government representative, interview by the IRM researcher, 30 April 2020.

¹² “Genoa bridge: investigation and reconstruction, all we need to know” (IISole24Ore) <https://www.ilsole24ore.com/art/ponte-genova-cosa-sappiamo-2-mesi-crollo-AEULkkMG>; “Transport and infrastructure, Italy lags behind” (Euler Hermes Italy Journal) <http://www.ehijournal.it/articoli/economiaitalia/trasporti-e-infrastrutture-italia-in-ritardo-405>

¹³ Government Official Gazette, Law Decree 109/2018 <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2018/09/28/18G00137/sg>

¹⁴ Bridges, viaducts and road overpasses; railway bridges, viaducts and overpasses; roads - National Roads Archive; national and regional railways - metros; airports; dams and aqueducts; railway tunnels and road tunnels; ports and port infrastructure; public buildings.

¹⁵ “Key interventions” <http://dati.mit.gov.it/catalog/dataset/interventi-strategici>; Includes duration, cost, status, location, owner.

¹⁶ CSO representative, interview by IRM researcher 14 May 2020.

¹⁷ Giuseppe d’Avella, Francesco Saija (PWI), Interview by IRM researcher, 26 May 2020

¹⁸ “Sicily, socio-economic profile” (European Commission) <https://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/regional-innovation-monitor/base-profile/sicily>

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ The report was published in October 2019 but is based on the latest data available (2016). “Local public spending, Confcommercio sounds the alarm: waste and inefficiencies for 70 billion euro (Il Corriere della Sera) https://www.corriere.it/economia/consumi/19_ottobre_08/spesa-pubblica-locale-l-allarme-confcommercio-sprechi-inefficienze-70-miliardi-3b23b478-e9f9-11e9-95ef-66e776be64e5.shtml

²¹ “Italy mafia networks are more complex and powerful, says minister” (The Guardian)

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/oct/30/italy-mafia-networks-are-more-complex-and-powerful-says-minister>; “Mafia and bricks: unfair competition in local markets and policy interventions” (Small business economics) <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11187-019-00250-w>

²² “Integrity Pacts: results from the pilot projects” (Transparency International Italy) <https://www.transparency.it/patti-di-integrita-primi-risultati-dei-progetti-pilota/>

²³ “Integrity Pacts” (Transparency International Italy) <https://www.transparency.it/patti-di-integrita/>

²⁴ Giuseppe d’Avella, Francesco Saija (PWI), Interview by IRM researcher, 26 May 2020

²⁵ Italy 4th National Action Plan 2019–2021, p. 24

²⁶ “Presenting Libellula: Civic monitoring lab on public spending” (University of Messina),

<https://www.unime.it/it/informa/eventi/presentazione-%E2%80%9C9Clibellula%E2%80%9D-laboratorio-di-monitoraggio-civico-della-spesa-pubblica>

²⁷ Giuseppe d’Avella, Francesco Saija (PWI), Interview by IRM researcher, 26 May 2020

²⁸ Representative of the municipality of Palermo, interview by IRM researcher, 26 May 2020

²⁹ Italy, National Anti-Corruption Plan 2019 (ANAC)

https://www.anticorruzione.it/portal/rest/jcr/repository/collaboration/Digital%20Assets/anacdocs/Attivita/Atti/Delibere/2019/PN/A2019_Delibera_1064_13novembre_sito.pdf

8. Simplification, performance and equal opportunities

Main Objective

“This action is aimed at encouraging planning and control processes for public administrations by pursuing the following objectives:

- adoption of simplified procedures for managing the performance cycles which vary depending on the type and size of administrations. Introduction of digital formats for simplifying performance cycle requirements;
- sharing common performance indicators to facilitate comparison in the fields of HR management, digitalization, procurement and transparency;
- drafting Guidelines to assist administrations in enhancing the participation of citizens in the performance cycle;
- outlining a model based on a top-down approach to assess digital transformation projects within PA making them measurable and comparable with the innovation initiatives implemented by similar administrations using business management techniques and methodologies; this model will take into account the recent changes in legislation which strengthened the principle of participation of external and internal users and, more generally, citizens in organizational performance assessment, requiring administrations to adopt systems which are able to measure the level of satisfaction and develop forms of wide participation
- drafting a directive for the compulsory employment of protected categories to simplify rules and related requirements;
- drafting a directive on equal opportunities and updating a directive on Guarantee Committees, in cooperation with the department for Equal Opportunities”.

Milestones

PCM – DFP

8.1 Digital formats for performance cycle documents through the implementation of a web-based project.

8.2 Periodical collection of updated data by public administrations in accordance with a methodological document to develop common performance indicators.

8.3 Drafting Guidelines to strengthen citizen participation in the performance cycle.

8.4 Drafting a Directive for the proper and homogeneous application of regulations on the mandatory employment of protected categories (disabled persons, victims of terrorism and organized crime, people injured or killed in the line of duty).

8.5 Monitoring the implementation of the Directive.

PCM – DFP, AgID

8.6 Developing a model to measure and compare digitalization projects by clusters of administrations.

PCM – DFP, PCM – Department for equal opportunities (DPO)

8.7 Drafting a Directive on equal opportunities and strengthening the Guarantee Committees (CUG) in public administrations.

8.8 Monitoring the implementation of the Directive.

Editorial Note: Please note commitment text in this report has been abridged for brevity and readability. For the complete text of this commitment, including all milestones, please see Italy’s action plan at <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Italy-Action-Plan-2019-2021-English.pdf>.

IRM Design Report Assessment	
Verifiable:	Yes
Relevant:	Civic Participation
Potential impact:	Minor

Commitment Analysis

The commitment aims to improve and simplify the performance cycle of public administrations. It also seeks to foster equal opportunities as a cross-cutting organizational performance dimension through the drafting of a directive on mandatory employment of protected categories and a directive on equal opportunities. The inclusion of a specific activity to strengthen citizen participation in the performance cycle through the creation of Guidelines (8.3) makes the commitment relevant to the OGP value of civic participation. However, as written, relevance to OGP values of the overall commitment is less clear, as it appears to be more focused on improving the internal functioning of administrations. The commitment is organized around three sets of milestones under the responsibility of the DFP (8.1–8.5), DFP together with AgID (8.6), and DFP together with the DPO (8.7–8.8).

This commitment forms part of a broader existing strategy to reform public administrations and their way of working to increase their efficiency and the quality of the services provided.¹ The publication of the directives on the protection of mandatory categories and equal opportunities was already in the pipeline when the action plan was designed, and thus their inclusion has minor added value. The remaining activities are also part of an existing strategy and therefore of limited impact. Interviewed stakeholders also reported that the commitment is too administration-centric and focused on internal processes.² A core element in the commitment – the only one visibly relevant to OGP values – is the creation of guidelines to strengthen citizen participation in the performance cycle, which is one of the weak spots of the existing mechanisms. However, too little detail is provided in the commitment on what the guidelines could do and on expected targets for dissemination and use. In light of these considerations, the overall potential impact of this commitment is minor.

Detailed assessment of clusters of milestones

PCM – DFP

This set of milestones aims to improve the performance cycle by developing and adopting digital formats for performance cycle documents (8.1), developing common performance indicators (8.2), and drafting guidelines to enhance citizen participation in the cycle (8.3). Milestones 8.4 and 8.5 also involve the publication of a directive for a proper implementation of regulations on mandatory employment of protected categories and its monitoring.

Performance evaluating cycles for public administrations were established for the first time in 2009, together with the creation of Independent Performance Evaluator Organisms (OIV).³ Today, the performance cycle is as follows: administrations set their goals, expected outcomes, and indicators and establish links with budget forecasts. Their activities are monitored during implementation and steered as needed. Organizational and individual performance is evaluated using both financial and non-financial reward systems on an annual basis. Administrations then need to report on results to the relevant political-administrative authorities and internal and external control mechanisms.⁴ At the end of the cycle, a system for the assessment and evaluation of performance for the following year is adopted, which is additionally based on OIVs' binding recommendations. The overall assessment and evaluation of public administrations' performance falls under the competences of the DFP since 2014.⁵

A government representative from the DPF explained that meeting performance obligations is currently very burdensome for administrations, causing the production of a high number of documents, which hinders management and decision-making. The digital formats proposed in this commitment are seen as

a tool to simplify this process.⁶ The inclusion of digital formats would also help improve monitoring activity through the creation of a system of notifications in case of delay in submission of a document.⁷ This would be a useful addition, considering the high number of delays usually recorded: In 2018, 43 percent of administrations did not comply with any of the foreseen deadlines for submitting performance-related documents.⁸ Furthermore, the establishment of a set of common indicators, which do not currently exist, is seen as a way to promote interaction across administrations on key themes such as human resources, procurement, and digitalization, which, according to the DFP representative, is currently limited.⁹

The creation of guidelines to strengthen citizen participation to the cycle is a core component of this cluster of milestones and the overall commitment. Legislative decree 74/2017¹⁰ foresees the inclusion of citizens (ultimate users) as evaluators of the performance of public administrations either through customer satisfaction surveys or by reporting directly to the OIVs. However, the DFP interviewee confirms that citizens do not currently participate in the performance cycle. This is reportedly in part because of citizens' limited awareness of this possibility.¹¹ The guidelines seek to show the benefits of a participative and inclusive approach throughout the entire life cycle of administrations. While the text of the milestone is vague in this regard, the government representative confirmed that the guidelines would be based on international public management best practices and describe the participative evaluation process in all its parts in order to better guide public administrations.¹² The guidelines would then be tested by a selected sample of administrations.¹³

With regard to milestones 8.4–8.5, mandatory employment of protected categories has been regulated in Italy since the late 1990s.¹⁴ As a result, public administrations are required to employ one representative of a protected category if the administration has between 15 and 35 employees, two if it has between 36 and 50 employees, and 7 percent if it has more than 50 employees.

Since the 1990s, several new laws and regulations both at the international and national level have been adopted.¹⁵ These overlapped and coexisted without being grouped together under a harmonized framework. The new directive proposed under these milestones seeks to create such a framework by providing additional clarification and guidelines for the employment of protected categories within public administration. The directive would not make changes to the share of representatives of protected categories that public administrations are to employ.

Potential impact of this cluster of milestones is coded as minor. The directive on mandatory employment of protected categories is an initiative that predates the action plan, and its inclusion is of limited added value. The other initiatives proposed, excluding that on the guidelines to enhance citizen participation, appear to be internally oriented and as such less relevant to OGP values. The proposed guidelines could be a useful step forward in increasing civic participation to the life cycle of administrations, but the lack of specificity in the text and the lack of detail on a strategy to promote their implementation limit impact. Additionally, the fact that an open consultation process is not foreseen for the development of the guidelines contributes to limiting the impact and relevance to OGP values of this particular cluster of milestones.

PCM – DFP, AgID

This milestone involves the development of a model to compare digitalization projects by clusters of implementing administrations. This milestone refers specifically to comparisons of the different technological approaches undertaken by administrations to comply with the provisions of Legislative Decree 74/2017 to ensure participative evaluation of the performance of public administrations. This is not immediately clear from the commitment text but was later clarified in the Civil Society Consultation Report the OGP team published.¹⁶ The interviewed government representative further clarified that the comparison would be based on the common indicators developed as part of milestone 8.2.¹⁷ This represents a novelty, as digitalization processes have not been compared previously. However, the text of the milestone also does not adequately reflect what the expected result of the implementation of this activity is, in other words, what would be done with the results of the comparisons. Due to such lack of specificity, the potential impact of this milestone is seen as minor.

PCM – DFP, PCM – DPO

This cluster of milestones foresees the drafting of a directive on equal opportunities and the strengthening of Guarantee Committees in public administration (8.7). Activities also include monitoring the implementation of the directive (8.8).

Equal opportunities in Italy are broadly regulated by the code on equal opportunities.¹⁸ In the last decade, a key role in this framework has been played by “Guarantee Committees for equal opportunities, the enhancing the well-being of workers and against discrimination” (CUG). Established in 2010, CUGs are committees within public administrations tasked with proposing, advising, and evaluating issues related to equal opportunity and welfare in the workplace – this with a view to ultimately enhancing the efficiency of public work.¹⁹

The proposed directive would update criteria for the composition of CUGs, modalities for nominating members, and the tasks of the Committees to strengthen their role. As for the directive in milestone 8.4, this is an initiative that predates the action plan; therefore, inclusion is of limited added value. Potential impact is therefore coded as minor.

Next steps

Although the commitment is largely introspective and focused on improving processes internal to the administration, the proposed guidelines for the administration cycle to strengthen citizen participation are a commendable effort and in line with OGP values. However, the IRM suggests stronger participatory focus in this regard so that government ensures that public consultation processes are put in place in the future when such key documents are designed. This would align also with the efforts to strengthen citizen participation promoted under Commitment 4.

¹ Government Official Gazette, Law 124/2015, <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2015/08/13/15G00138/sg>; and more recently Law 56/2019 <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2019/06/22/19G00064/sg>

² Representatives of two CSOs, interview by IRM researcher, 7 May 2020

³ Government Official Gazette, Legislative Decree 150/2009

https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/atto/serie_generale/caricaDettaglioAtto/originario?atto.dataPubblicazioneGazzetta=2009-10-31&atto.codiceRedazionale=009G0164

⁴ “The performance cycle of administrations” (Association for the Development of Labour) <http://www.lavorosi.it/rapporti-di-lavoro/poteri-datoriali/la-valutazione-delle-performance-nelle-pubbliche-amministrazioni/>

⁵ Government Official Gazette, Law Decree 90/2014 <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2014/06/24/14G00103/sg>

⁶ Aurelio Lupo (DFP), interview by the IRM researcher, 1 May 2020

⁷ Civil Society Consultation Report, p. 30

⁸ In an effort to increase transparency towards citizens, the department publishes on the web portal performance.gov periodic reports assessing the compliance of public administrations with obligations to publish performance plans and reports. See: Annual Monitoring Report on the submission of performance cycle documents, January 2019

<https://performance.gov.it/system/files/Monitoraggio/Monitoraggio%20annuale%20%28gennaio%202019%29.pdf>

⁹ Aurelio Lupo (DFP), interview by the IRM researcher, 1 May 2020

¹⁰ Government Official Gazette, Legislative decree 74/2017 <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2017/06/07/17G00088/sg>

¹¹ Aurelio Lupo (DFP), interview by the IRM researcher, 1 May 2020

¹² Stakeholder mapping; selection of the activities target of the evaluation and relevant involvement mechanisms; selection of citizens and/or users; definition of the scope of organizational performance to evaluate the selected activities; motivations of the evaluation; evaluation; use of results for the evaluation of organizational performance.

¹³ Monitora <http://open.gov.it/monitora/8-semplificazione-performance-e-pari-opportunita/>

¹⁴ Government Official Gazette, Law 68/1999 <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/1999/03/23/099G0123/sg>

¹⁵ For example, Law 18/2009 <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/gunewsletter/dettaglio.jsp?service=1&datagu=2009-03-14&task=dettaglio&numgu=61&redaz=009G0027&tmstp=1237200828355>; Presidential Decree of 12 October 2017

<https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2017/12/12/17A08310/SG>; Law 183/2010

<https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2010/11/09/10G0209/sg>; art. 57, comma 2, Legislative Decree 165/2001

<https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2001/05/09/001G0219/sg>.

¹⁶ Civil Society Consultation Report, p. 30

¹⁷ Aurelio Lupo (DFP), email exchange with IRM researcher, 30 June 2020

¹⁸ Government Official Gazette, Legislative Decree 198/2006 <https://www.normattiva.it/uri-res/N2Ls?urn:nir:stato:decreto.legislativo:2006-04-11:198>

¹⁹ “Guarantee Committees” (Department for Equal Opportunities) <http://www.pariopportunita.gov.it/materiale/c-u-g-comitati-unicidi-garanzia/>

9. Digital services

Main Objective

“This action focuses on three main activities:

- dissemination of digital services, including through the Coordinators for digital transition, to promote the diffusion of initiatives, processes and platforms enabling and simplifying the relationship between citizens and businesses and central and local public administration;
- actions, including through initiatives and solutions based on emerging technologies, which produce a real benefit to citizens (i.e. trusted chain, transparency when interacting with citizens, etc.);
- promoting public digital services by implementing awareness-raising initiatives in PA, including in cooperation with the Department of Information, to promote digital services and knowledge among citizens and businesses”.

Milestones

AgID

National campaign to promote digital services addressed to the general public with the purpose of disseminating knowledge on digital rights and the opportunities offered by digital technology in the public sector:

9.1 Outlining a plan and a strategy to promote digital services.

9.2 Planning the national communication campaign.

9.3 Organizing the national campaign to promote digital services.

9.4 Mentoring Regions and Metropolitan Cities for the campaign on digital services. Using the communication kit for the activities included in the Territorial Agreements signed between AgID and the Regions and local authorities.

9.5 AgID will assist administrations with support tools and kits for at least three campaigns on digital services.

AgID, General Directorate for Students, Development and Internationalization of Higher Education – Ministry of Education, University and Research (DGSINFS – MIUR)

9.6 CIMEA, through the service «*diplome*», is developing a portfolio for each person having education qualifications for people to be able to upload their qualifications using blockchain technology, leading to a decentralized, transparent, certified and unalterable education qualification management system. This will make it easier for students, graduates or professionals to enrol in a foreign university and access the labour market in another country. One of the first case studies will focus on the qualifications held by refugees. At the end of the project higher and further education institutions will have the possibility to use this technology.

The Agency of Customs and Monopolies

The Agency of Customs and Monopolies, very active in the use of new technologies to simplify procedures for enterprises, used the potential of blockchain to develop a blockchain prototype – which is not operational yet – applied to the tracking of alcoholic products. As to the development of digital services, the Agency will expand the range of services supplied in compliance with the “once only” and “full digital” principles. In particular:

9.7 develop new blockchain applications to track products and goods and increase the participation of citizens and businesses in state-of-the-art IoT systems.

9.8 Enhance reuse capabilities of data held by other administrations to simplify procedures for companies.

9.9 Digitalize payment operations using a “payment portal” connected with the platform PagoPa.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Italy (MAECI)

We intend to enhance the functionalities of the consular services portal “FAST IT”, which offers services and information to Italian citizens without having to physically visit the consular offices.

9.10 Spreading the use of Digitalized Consular Services among citizens living abroad through the diplomatic-consular network.

9.11 Delivering new services including the possibility to inform about the relocation from a foreign country to another, through the portal.

Department for EU policies (PCM – DPE)

9.12 A pilot project to optimize the translation of institutional websites into several languages based on international and technical standards. The project implies identifying technical and drafting solutions to integrate the machine translation tool “eTranslation” (supplied by the European Commission) in the Content Management System (CMS) of websites. The pilot site will be that of the Department for European Policies.

9.13 Creating at least one section using the new system. Prototype for the pilot project.

9.14 Developing a model with procedures and solutions and make it available to other administrations.

Department for family policies (PCM – DPF)

Regarding policies and services for work-life balance and support to elderly people, open government measures can ensure a better service delivery.

9.15 Georeferencing childcare services.

9.16 Georeferencing municipal and local good practices on policies and services for families.

9.17 Establishing a national active ageing network of institutional stakeholders and civil society.

9.18 Digital innovations to facilitate access to subsidies for new-borns and childcare.

Unioncamere

COACHING PA: Chambers of Commerce will coach newly established companies (for the first month after their registration) and introduce digital knowledge and tools:

9.19 Simplify bureaucracy (available tools and obligations to meet).

9.20 Be digital (digital services provided by the Chambers of Commerce, national charter of services, digital signature, SPID (digital identity), PEC (certified electronic mail), *cassetto digitale* (digital drawer), digital procedures, e-invoices, digital books).

9.21 Be in the market as key players (read and use databases from the Chambers’ system, become familiar with foreign markets, learn about trends in national and local economy).

Puglia region

As a result of the Framework Agreement with AgID, the Puglia region was designated as a Local Aggregator for Digitalization (SATD). This role is needed since digital innovation necessarily requires

cultural support in addition to economic, operational and technological support to be given to regional offices and local authorities throughout the region.

This commitment aims at:

- supporting local authorities in adopting the public system of digital identity (SPID) to access digital services on web portals;
- encouraging the use of SPID among citizens to access local and national digital public services.

Objectives mainly include:

9.22 Increasing the number of SPID users among citizens in Puglia, covering 15 percent.

9.23 Increasing the number of services delivered through SPID, covering 15 percent.

9.24 Increasing the number of services delivered through SPID, covering 50 percent.

9.25 Services delivered through SPID, covering 100 percent.

Adopting an evolutionary approach for the regional system of public digital services on the web by creating a catalogue of services which can be dynamically searched through apps and accessed through a single gateway with a single document management system to support administrative procedures and accessible with SPID from a computer, a tablet or smartphone. In relation to digital services, at the end of the project:

9.26 percent digital services delivered = 15 percent of authorization procedures.

9.27 percent digital services in the catalogue = 20 percent of total services.

9.28 percent digital services delivered = 80 percent of authorization procedures.

9.29 percent digital services in the catalogue = 100 percent of total services.

City of Rome

Making the relationship between citizens and businesses and the City of Rome easier and more efficient as a result of the implementation of the Triennial ICT Plan for the City of Rome. In particular, regarding enabling platforms:

9.30 Implement the developments of national platforms such as ANPR, PagoPA, SPID, for a greater integration of digital services.

9.31 Develop or reengineer the City of Rome's application solutions to deliver common services to various subsystems, i.e. resource management systems (ERP), electronic document management system (GED), preferring the FLOSS approach.

Regarding tools and system to generate digital services:

9.32 Develop applications or implement evolutions to services to citizens (like the Unified System to Send Notifications) and to businesses (like the SUAP), making them compliant with the accessibility and usability standards set for the City of Rome's institutional portal, and finally set up the Citizen's Digital House as part of a multi-channel interaction strategy.

Editorial Note: Please note commitment text in this report has been abridged for brevity and readability. For the complete text of this commitment, including all milestones, please see Italy's action plan at <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Italy-Action-Plan-2019-2021-English.pdf>.

IRM Design Report Assessment	
Verifiable:	Yes
Relevant:	Access to Information
Potential impact:	Minor

Commitment Analysis

This commitment seeks to promote the dissemination of digital services across both citizens and public administrations. Milestones 9.15–9.18 are clearly relevant to the OGP value of access to information. Relevance is less evident for the remaining milestones, which seem to be more focused on improving public services through the use of ICT (i.e., e-government). The commitment is also further integrated by Annex A to the action plan, which lists the digital services expected to be made available between 2019 and 2021. The Annex includes services outside the scope of Commitment 9.

European assessment reports such as the eGovernment benchmark show that Italy performs well in terms of availability of digital services, with a level of digitization of services at 67 percent, in line with the EU average of 68 percent. However, the country significantly underperforms with regard to the penetration of such services, i.e., the “the extent to which the online channel is used for government services”: 28 percent, compared with an EU average of 58 percent.¹ According to the DESI Index for 2019, there is a low level of online interaction between public authorities and the public.² The percentage of individuals using the internet to interact with public authorities, obtaining information on public authorities, and downloading and sending online forms to authorities is well below EU average (37 percent versus 64 percent).³ Furthermore, according to the Italian Court of Auditors, adoption of several core services such as the so-called enabling platforms (i.e., digital identification systems for citizens and businesses) is limited in local public administrations due to the challenges that adapting their ICT systems to include these services would entail.⁴

Therefore, efforts to promote the adoption of digital services by public administrations and raise awareness among citizens about their existence are needed. Italy’s latest Triennial ICT Plan (2019–2021) includes measures aimed at addressing these challenges,⁵ several of which are also reflected in this commitment.

An interviewee from AgID confirmed that the vast majority of the activities described in the commitment are part of existing initiatives undertaken by public administrations under different frameworks,⁶ which partly limits the added value of including them in the OGP action plan. Furthermore, the commitment is largely a conglomerate of small initiatives implemented by individual administrations which, on the one hand, predates the existence of the action plan, and on the other, is restricted in scope. This affects the overall ambition of the commitment and reduces potential impact. In addition, the commitment is primarily focused on improving public services through digitalization and e-government actions, with open government principles being clearly visible only in the DPF cluster of milestones. Finally, the majority of the milestones lacks specificity and does not include set targets for implementation, thus also affecting measurability. Therefore, the overall potential impact of this commitment is assessed as minor.

Detailed assessment of clusters of milestones

AgID

This cluster of milestones focuses on the development of a national awareness-raising campaign on digital services and the current digital opportunities provided by public administrations (9.1–9.3). In particular, AgID commits to mentoring regions and metropolitan cities on the promotion of digital services by using a communication kit for activities included in the Territorial Agreements that AgID signs with regions and local authorities (9.4).

Communication kits provide a standardized set of graphic tools aimed at simplifying public administrations’ promotional strategies. They are available to download for free on AgID’s website.⁷ Supporting selected regions and cities in implementing communication strategies through the use of the kit would help harmonize information campaigns on digital services that administrations provide across the territory. This, in turn, could help increase awareness of and access to such services, which is currently low. The text of this milestone is vague, as it does not specify how many regions and/or cities would be selected and based on which criteria. This limits its ambition and potential impact. The same applies to AgID’s commitment to assist administrations with support tools and kits for at least three

campaigns (9.5). It is unclear whether this will apply to all administrations or to those who contact to AgID on a voluntary basis. In light of these considerations, potential impact is assessed as minor.

AgID, DGSINFS – MIUR

Milestone 9.6 involves the development of a blockchain-based service for the recognition of education qualifications. The activity is carried out as part of an existing initiative that the MIUR, AgID, and the Information Center on Mobility and Academic Equivalences (CIMEA) have undertaken.

The *diplome* service proposed by CIMEA allows for the creation of a digital wallet in which individuals can upload their academic qualifications through blockchain technology. The idea is that the use of a digital wallet would facilitate individuals in enrolling into foreign universities and/or entering foreign labor markets,⁸ in line with EU and national provisions.⁹

The Italian system for recognizing the equivalence of foreign degrees has been criticized for being overly bureaucratic and complicated.¹⁰ Therefore, the creation of a system to simplify the process, as proposed here, would be welcome. The milestone states that the system will be tested in a pilot case study involving refugees and could later be used by higher education institutions. In this sense, its ambition remains limited. As this is an initiative that predates the action plan, the MIUR could have committed under the framework of the OGP to promoting and spreading the use of this technology across educational institutions on the national territory, including targets for adoption, to make the commitment more ambitious. In light of these considerations, impact is assessed as minor.

The Agency of Customs and Monopolies

This set of milestones foresees the implementation of digital services by the agency, including in particular the development of blockchain applications to track goods (9.7), the enhancement of capabilities to reuse data held by other administrations and that could simplify payment obligations for companies (9.8) and the digitalization of payment operations through the establishment of a portal connected to PagoPA (9.9).

These commitments form part of broader existing agency strategies linked to AgID's Triennial ICT Plan. Since 2018, a pilot project of the agency has used blockchain to track alcoholic products in the broader context of the fight against counterfeit products.¹¹ The idea would be to extend this activity to other goods; however, the text of the milestone is vague and does not provide details on possible targets. The strategy on the establishment of a portal for the digital payment of excise duties through PagoPA was put forward in 2018.¹² PagoPA¹³ is an initiative that allows citizens and businesses to electronically pay public administrations. The agency has been implementing customs duty payments through PagoPA since 2018.¹⁴ The aim with this strategy is to integrate the two platforms and to create a single access portal for all payments, which is currently lacking. This would represent a useful innovation, but overall, the impact is considered minor, as it forms part of an ongoing strategy and is an incremental step ahead.

MAECI

This cluster of milestones involves the improvement of the functionalities of the portal for consular services FAST IT. This includes both raising awareness on the use of digitalized consular services among citizens living abroad (9.10) and delivering new services, including the possibility of notifying transfer to a different country through the portal (9.11).

The FAST IT¹⁵ portal was launched to increase access to digital consular services for Italian citizens living abroad and to simplify administrative procedures. Currently, 5.8 million Italians live abroad.¹⁶ The portal covers the entire network of 200 Italian embassies abroad. In 2018, it was visited by 580,000 users, and requests to be placed into the Register of Italian Citizens Residing Abroad (AIRE) made through the portal amounted to 70 percent of total requests registered in 2018.¹⁷ Currently the portal allows users to notify the embassy about a move to a different address within the same district but not to a different district. This would change with the implementation of this specific commitment.

The milestones text is vague in regard to what awareness-raising activities would consist of and what other new services will be added to the portal. A representative from AgID also confirmed that this is part of an existing initiative predating the action plan.¹⁸ Inclusion in the action plan is of limited added value. In light of these considerations, potential impact is coded as minor.

PCM – DPE

This set of milestones proposes the implementation of a pilot project to improve the translation of institutional websites in several languages. The technology, based on an integration of the European Commission’s eTranslation tool, would be tested in a section of the website of the DPE (9.12–9.13) and subsequently made available to other administrations (9.14).

In 2017, the European Commission launched the eTranslation tool, an online machine learning-powered translation service intended for use by public administrations, SMEs, university language faculties, or Connecting Europe Facility projects. The tool covers all official EU languages, Icelandic and Norwegian, and is available for free until at least the end of 2020.¹⁹ Currently, several institutional websites are either available only in Italian, or when it is available in English, the information is either reduced or outdated compared with the Italian version of the website.²⁰ Translation in other languages is not available. Initiatives to improve access to information to non-Italian speakers are therefore positive. However, the cluster of milestones could have been more ambitious in terms of setting targets for the adoption of the system. Without set targets for adoption, its potential impact remains minor.

DPF

The DPF proposes initiatives to improve work-life balance and to provide support to (new) parents and the elderly. This includes the setting up of georeferencing services that would inform users on the location of child-care services (9.15) and on good practices in regard to policies and services for families (9.16), the establishment of an “active aging” network of stakeholders and civil society (9.17), and innovations to facilitate access to subsidies for newborns and childcare.

A 2018 study highlighted how the coverage rate of early child-care services in Italy is heterogeneous across regions (28.2 percent in the North and 11.5 percent in the South), and overall below the European target (22.5 percent vs. 33 percent). National programs to increase the number of such services were only partially successful, and their impact remained varied across the country.²¹

The setting up of georeferencing services (9.15–9.16) would be a useful novelty increasing access to information already existing (such as, for example, the mapping of good practices on family policies²²) but still does not address issues related to low coverage rate of child-care services. Milestone 9.17 forms part of a broader triennial strategy of the DPF that seeks to create a national coordinating network in terms of active aging policies.²³ A kick-off meeting was held in April 2019 (before the publication of the action plan).

The milestones lack specificity on the targeted areas and the detailed functionalities of the initiatives proposed. It is not clear whether the services will be rolled out nationally, regionally, or at the municipal level and whether there would be a testing phase first. As such, their impact is coded as minor.

Unioncamere

Unioncamere pledged to implement a coaching program for newly established companies raising digital awareness and introducing tools to simplify bureaucracy (9.19), digitalize the company overall (9.20), and promote the company’s stance as a key player in the market by making best use of existing digital services (9.21).

The proposal to coach newly established companies is useful and represents a new initiative building on Unioncamere’s successful track record on digital skills training courses.²⁴ It is a proposal put forward by civil society and as such responds to identified needs.²⁵ This cluster of milestones has the potential to have a moderate impact. For a transformative effect, the training program would have to potentially be extended to all existing companies whose digital transition progress lags behind, irrespective of whether they are newly established or not.

Puglia region

This cluster of milestones seeks to support local authorities in Puglia in the adoption of the public system of digital identity (SPID) (9.22–9.25) and the development of a catalogue of regional digital services that can be accessed via SPID (9.26–9.29). The milestones put forward specific targets to be

achieved in terms of number of users and services delivered through SPID and made available in the catalogue.²⁶

The SPID system is an electronic identification system that allows citizens to access public administration services digitally. The DESI Index for 2019 reports that the service, which was launched in 2014 with the aim of covering the entire national territory, covers only 21 percent of Italian municipalities and 3.4 million subscribers²⁷ (Italy's population is more than 60 million²⁸). Action in the promotion of SPID is needed. The interviewed AgID representative reports that at the time of designing the action plan, Puglia was one of the southern regions better placed to implement this and that a strong political will backed the initiative.²⁹ The interviewee was not able to provide information on the baseline for SPID use in Puglia. The interviewee explained that SPID services are provided by nine distinct providers and that aggregate information on territories is only provided upon request with the collection of a survey among the different providers. This is a point at which further improvements could be made in the future.

Overall, judging the severity of the issue across national territory, the milestone remains too limited in its ambition, as activities to promote the adoption of SPID could have been rolled out more broadly beyond Puglia. For this reason, together with the lack of knowledge on baseline use of SPID in Puglia, the potential impact is minor.

City of Rome

Finally, this cluster of milestones seeks to improve the efficiency of the relationship between citizens/businesses and the City of Rome by implementing initiatives included in the Triennial ICT Plan for the City of Rome (2018–2020).³⁰ This includes implementation of several enabling platforms such as SPID, ANPR, and PagoPA (9.30); modifying the City's approach to delivering common services to subsystems by adopting the Free and Libre Open Source Software (FLOSS) approach (9.31); and ensuring that services to citizens are compliant with the accessibility and usability standards of the municipality's institutional portal (9.32). Under this last milestone, the city also commits to setting up the Citizen's Digital House, a project originally foreseen to be completed between 2017 and 2019. The House is an online platform that will allow authenticated and personalized access to all the digital services the municipality offers. The platform would inform users on the opening of administrative procedures involving them, ongoing portfolios, and participative activities users are involved in.³¹ Citizens were involved in the design of the House through an open consultation process in 2018,³² but the process has been stalled since then. Overall, all initiatives presented under this cluster of milestones form part of an existing ongoing strategy the City implemented, and their inclusion in the action plan is of limited added value. Impact is therefore coded as minor.

Next steps

To avoid redundancy, activities in the field of digital services could focus on one or two macro-commitments of a strategic nature. It is important that these commitments are created with OGP values in mind. As mentioned above, the current commitment does not clearly reflect OGP values in its entirety, focusing rather on e-government services. Digital services specifically focused on providing public accountability mechanisms in key areas could be considered a starting point for new strategic macro-objectives. The Annex of digital services to be published in conjunction with the action plan cycle is a useful overview and should be sufficient to present existing strategies to promote digital services.

¹ eGovernment benchmark 2019 (European Commission) <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/egovernment-benchmark-2019-trust-government-increasingly-important-people>

² DESI Index 2019, Italy

³ Digital governance factsheet 2019 (European Commission) https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/inline-files/Digital_Government_Factsheets_Italy_2019_0.pdf

⁴ "Report on public ICT" (Court of Auditors), p. 34 <https://www.corteconti.it/Download?id=01f0cca3-8fae-4325-9dab-063f8a74b205>

⁵ Triennial ICT Plan 2019 – 2021, Chapter 9 <https://pianotriennale-ict.italia.it/assets/pdf/2019-2021/Piano-Triennale-ICT-2019-2021-09-servizi-digitali.pdf>

⁶ Daniela Intravaia (AgID), interview by IRM researcher, 6 May 2020

⁷ Available at: <https://comunica.italia.it/kit>

⁸ "White paper: Diplome" (Cimea) http://www.cimea.it/files/fileusers/5877_DIPLOME-WhitePaper-I.5.pdf

- ⁹ “Highlighted projects: blockchain” (Cimea) <http://www.cimea.it/it/progetti-in-evidenza/diplome-blockchain4people/contesto-di-riferimento.aspx>
- ¹⁰ AIRInforma, “Bologna, but not too much: the bureaucratic labyrinth for the recognition of foreign degrees in Italy,” <https://informa.airicerca.org/it/2019/06/17/bologna-ma-non-troppo-riconoscimento-titoli-esteri/>. The required documents to confirm the equivalence of a foreign PhD degree, for example, include: a copy of the student’s ID; his or her birth certificate if the student is not a citizen of the EU; a certificate of equivalence for the bachelor and master’s degree, if they were also obtained abroad; the PhD degree certificate itself, with sworn translation in Italian, apostille, and a declaration of value issued by the Italian embassy of the country where the student has obtained his or her title; the PhD thesis; CV and letter of reference. See: MIUR, Equivalence of PhD title https://www.miur.gov.it/documents/20182/0/Equipollenza_Dottorato_ricerca_dpr382.pdf/f5ff98ae-ddff-4166-a822-83ef1b57c7f0
- ¹¹ “Focus on App Dogane” (Sogei) <https://www.sogei.it/it/sogei-homepage/soluzioni/piattaforme-applicative-nazionali/interoperabilita.html>
- ¹² “Digitalizing Excise Duties” (Agency of Customs and Monopolies) <https://www.adm.gov.it/portale/documents/20182/3941393/Tavole+Tecnico+Digitalizzazione+Accise+20181220.pdf/e72db413-7ba8-453b-9879-8a64e9444794?version=1.1>
- ¹³ Available at: <https://www.pagopa.gov.it/>
- ¹⁴ “Payment of customs duties through PagoPA” <https://www.cnsd.it/11893/pagamenti-dei-diritti-doganali-mediante-pagopa>
- ¹⁵ Available at: <https://serviziconsolari.esteri.it/ScoFE/index.sco>
- ¹⁶ “Fast IT portal covers entire consular network” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) https://www.esteri.it/mae/it/sala_stampa/archivionotizie/retediplomatica/2019/02/fast-it-il-portale-attivo-su-tutta-la-rete-consolare.html
- ¹⁷ Ibid.
- ¹⁸ Daniela Intravaia (AgID), interview by IRM researcher, 6 May 2020
- ¹⁹ Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/cefdigital/wiki/display/CEFDIGITAL/Media+library+-+Infographics?preview=/82773424/84413846/eTranslation_English.pdf
- ²⁰ See for example the websites of the Ministry of Economic Development <https://www.mise.gov.it/index.php/it/>; Ministry of Interior <https://www.interno.gov.it/it/>; Ministry of Education <https://miur.gov.it/en/web/guest/home>; Register of companies <http://www.registroidimpresa.it/home>
- ²¹ “One Billion Euro Program for Early Childcare Services in Italy” (IZA Institute for Labour Economics), July 2018 <http://ftp.iza.org/dp11689.pdf>
- ²² “Good territorial practices on family policies” (Department for family policies) <http://famiglia.governo.it/it/politiche-e-attivita/monitoraggi-e-rapporti/buone-pratiche-territoriali/>
- ²³ “Participatory multi-level national coordination project on active ageing policies” (Department for family policies) <http://famiglia.governo.it/it/politiche-e-attivita/invecchiamento-attivo/progetto-di-coordinamento-nazionale/>
- ²⁴ “Enhancing digital skills for labour: Unioncamere’s project as a best practice” (Unioncamere) <http://www.unioncamere.gov.it/P42A3807C189S123/potenziamento-delle-competenze-digitali-per-il-lavoro--il-progetto-di-unioncamere-tra-le-best-practices-della-digital-skills-and-jobs-coalition.htm>
- ²⁵ See: Ecosistema camerale (2) https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1criRWK-680L1IRPWPetJRPis7FYrjo_K
- ²⁶ The commitment is tied to Puglia’s role as Local Aggregator for Digitalization within the context of its Framework Agreement with AgID. The “Framework Agreement for growth and digital citizenship towards Europe 2020” signed in February 2018 between the Conference of Regions and AgID seeks to strengthen cooperation between the agency and regions and provinces, with a view to a more effective application of the Triennial ICT plan at local level. AgID then signs individual agreements with each Region setting specific objectives. See: “Agreement signed between AgID and Regions and Provinces” <https://www.agid.gov.it/it/agenzia/stampa-e-comunicazione/notizie/2018/02/15/verso-obiettivi-europa-2020-firmato-accordo-agid-regioni-province-autonome>
- ²⁷ DESI 2019, Italy
- ²⁸ Eurostat http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/product?code=demo_gind&language=en&mode=view
- ²⁹ Daniela Intravaia (AgID) interview by IRM researcher, 6 May 2020
- ³⁰ “Triennial ICT Plan for the City of Rome” (City of Rome) <https://www.comune.roma.it/servizi2/deliberazioniAttiWeb/showPdfDoc?fun=deliberazioniAttiAllegato&par1=R0NE&par2=Mjk3NQ==&par3=MQ==>
- ³¹ “The Citizen’ Digital House” (City of Rome) https://www.comune.roma.it/resources/cms/documents/PON_Casa_digitale_del_cittadino.pdf
- ³² “Digital Citizen’s Home, until November 9 online the questionnaire to design it” (City of Rome) <https://www.comune.roma.it/web/it/notizia.page?contentId=NWS188612>

10. Digital citizenship and skills

Main Objective

“The objective of this action is to implement the following activities in the field of digital citizenship:

- drafting a Handbook for citizens describing the main digital rights laid down in the Code of Digital Administration which regulates and simplify the relationship between citizens and businesses and PAs; -
- developing a “Youth Portal” to engage young people aged 14 to 35 and include them in the economic fabric of the country;
- developing a three-year work-linked training project on digital citizenship education;
- at regional level, increasing the number of free access points to ultra-broad band internet network, increasing the quantity and range of available digital skills, increasing the number of places where you can co-design and co-evaluate public services.

Regarding digital skills, the objective is to implement the following activities:

- organizing initiatives to support the dissemination of digital skills for citizens, also using a gender perspective;
- producing directly managed digital services and content in public libraries;
- launching a web-based platform to self-assess skills and abilities public employees are required to have to work in an increasingly more digital public administration;
- developing technical regulations laying down the general requirements for digital innovation managers and helpful to prepare harmonization activities”.

Milestones

AgID

10.1 Drafting the Guide and make it an easy and practical tool for citizens and businesses to be informed and updated on their digital rights and forms of protection when administrations do not allow them to do so.

10.2 Promotion and dissemination activities in the field of digital rights for administrations and citizens, including through forms of cooperation with local administrations (health offices, schools).

PCM – DFP

10.3 Publication of the website presenting all the goals and functions of the platform to self-assess public employees’ digital skills (digital complementary skills) and suggestions for customized training courses.

10.4 Starting the pilot implementation phase of the platform in at least three administrations.

10.5 Opening the platform to all administrations and public employees.

10.6 Start publishing aggregated data and statistics on the skills and training for public employees in an open format.

National Social Security Institute (INPS)

10.7 Start a pilot implementation phase run by PCM-DFP to self-assess digital skills in public administration (Digital complementary skills) in a preliminary sample of employees.

10.8 Expanding the pilot phase to include a second and larger sample of employees.

10.9 Developing a training plan based on the outcome of the self-assessment exercise done with the platform.

“Future digital citizens in action” – Three-year project for learning-and-working schemes (Law 107/2015 - La Buona Scuola) on digital citizenship education: from the awareness of welfare rights and safeguards granted by INPS to the commitment to making people capable of using online services. Beneficiaries: students in the 3rd, 4th and 5th year, with the active involvement of 5th year students in literacy activities for people over 65 years in cooperation with local authorities and civil society and third sector organizations. Planning will take place after the publication of the MIUR’s Decree establishing the guidelines regarding ‘measures for cross-cutting skills and guidance’ as envisaged by the Budget Law 145/2018, single article, par. 785. The activities will include:

10.10 Planning and delivering, in compliance with MIUR’s Directive 170/2016, a trainers’ training course, for teachers, selecting and publishing online educational material and support tools to handle:

- introductory classes for 3rd year students;
- activities under the working-learning scheme for 4th and 5th year students.

MIBAC

MIBAC – “Factory of ideas”, production of directly managed digital content and services in public libraries.

10.11 The project was developed to adequately exploit the innovation potential of the new BIBLIOMEDIATECA in Potenza. Creative learning activities will be implemented, including:

- robotics workshop;
- coding courses;
- educational robotics courses;
- educational workshops for all schools, robotics competitions;
- team building activities for adults, workshops for manipulating materials and making objects.

The project also includes the management and direct administration of digitalization services as well as the creation of both analogue and digital products and content.

Department for Youth and National Community Service (PCM – DGSCN)

Design and implement a “Youth Portal” to promote the involvement of young people between 14 and 35 years as well as their greater and easier inclusion in the social and economic fabric of the country. The project includes two phases whose development runs parallel but follows a different schedule and modalities.

Phase 1

Developing a web platform to allow young people to apply online – using SPID – for universal Community Service. Currently, applications can only be hand-delivered or sent by registered mail to the hundreds of agencies across the country. The platform is going to make it easier for young people to use this opportunity and will help optimize a complex procedure by improving effectiveness and efficiency for public administrations and agencies. The main objectives include:

10.12 Developing a prototype to be tested internally.

10.13 (Pilot) implementation of the platform.

10.14 Monitoring and assessing the functioning of the platform.

10.15 Reviewing the tool based on the feedback received and criticalities observed.

Phase 2

Designing and implementing a Youth Portal (which is also going to include the product under point 1), i.e. a web platform acting as a single point for youth to access dedicated opportunities. In particular the portal will provide information, facilitate networking among youth, help connect with institutions and exchange experiences. The main implementation phases include:

10.16 Feasibility study.

10.17 Developing the system infrastructure and defining the content, as well as building a network of relations with other administrations offering opportunities for the youth.

10.18 Developing a prototype to be tested internally.

10.19 (Pilot) implementation of the platform.

10.20 Monitoring and assessing the functioning of the platform.

10.21 Reviewing the tool based on the feedback received and criticalities observed.

Unioncamere

10.22 Developing a technical standard to define the general requirements for the certification of digital skills for businesses and public administration, with a special focus on the skills needed by “Digital Innovation Managers” (e-leadership skills).

10.23 Dissemination activities.

Regions and Autonomous Provinces

In order to accelerate the coordinated development of Digital Citizenship, Regions commit to:

10.24 defining and implementing projects to allow citizens to access the web in an easy and cost-free way (public WiFi networks).

10.25 Defining and implementing projects to disseminate digital skills among the population (digital literacy, digital culture, etc.).

10.26 Defining and implementing projects to create spaces and opportunities for citizens and public administration to discuss, co-design and co-assess public services (innovation labs, open labs, telecentres, etc.).

City of Rome

Initiatives to support the dissemination of digital skills for citizenship including the establishment of more “*Punti Roma Facile*” (Easy Rome Points) and activities of the “*Scuola Diffusa per la Partecipazione e la Cittadinanza Digitale*” (Diffused School for Digital Citizenship and Participation), including gender mainstreaming actions too.

10.27 Drafting a regulation on the assistance to be provided to *Punti Roma Facile* and the *Scuola Diffusa*.

10.28 Starting training activities of the *Scuola Diffusa* in cooperation with public and private entities, including specific actions on gender objectives, gathering information and data about the participation of women in the initiatives proposed and taking into account the problems of foreign women.

10.29 Expanding the current network of *Punti Roma Facile* with the inclusion of other public administrations and private entities.

In respect to the platform to self-assess public employees’ digital skills:

10.30 piloting the digital skills self-assessment platform developed by PCM-DFP on a sample/area of employees.

10.31 Relevant training initiatives also on the basis of previous assessments.

10.32 Integrating the use of the platform in the internal training and assessment cycle.

Editorial Note: Please note commitment text in this report has been abridged for brevity and readability. For the complete text of this commitment, including all milestones, please see Italy’s action plan at <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Italy-Action-Plan-2019-2021-English.pdf>.

IRM Design Report Assessment	
Verifiable:	Yes
Relevant:	Access to information, Civic Participation
Potential impact:	Moderate

* The IRM notes the potentially transformative impact of milestones 10.12 – 10.21

Commitment Analysis

This commitment seeks to help increase pervasiveness of digital skills and awareness of digital citizenship rights through various activities. This is a complex commitment, structured around eight clusters of milestones under the responsibility of AgID (10.1–10.2), DFP (10.3–10.6), INPS (10.7–10.10), MIBAC (10.11), DGSCN (10.12–10.21), Unioncamere (10.22–10.23); Regions and Autonomous Provinces (10.24–10.26); City of Rome (10.27–10.32). Milestones 10.1–10.2 make the commitment relevant to the OGP value of access to information, as they propose to promote and disseminate information on digital rights for administrations and citizens, including through the creation of a Handbook of Digital Rights. Milestones 10.12–10.21 are directly relevant to both access to information and civic participation, as they propose initiatives that will increase opportunities for civic participation while at the same time facilitating access to information on selected themes.

Italy lags behind EU and OECD peers in terms of digital skills. In 2017, in the OECD area, the country ranked last in regard to the percentage of individuals who carried out training to improve their digital skills.¹ The DESI Index for 2019 shows that the basic and advanced digital skill levels of Italians are below the EU average.² The level of digital skills across employees of public administrations is also limited, in particular with regard to so-called e-leadership skills.³ Together with the lack of digital skills, there is also limited awareness of digital rights among Italian citizens. Therefore, the activities proposed in this commitment respond to existing needs.

The commitment is complex, and the inclusion of several sets of milestones is relevant only for the implementing agency, contributing to furthering the impression that the commitment lacks coherence. Nevertheless, clusters of milestones like those under the leadership of the DFP and the DGSCN are clearly relevant and ambitious. If fully implemented, they could contribute to a moderate change in practice in regard to the level of digital skills in public administrations on the one hand and youth digital citizenship on the other. For this reason, the commitment’s overall potential impact is moderate.

Detailed assessment of clusters of milestones

AgID

This set of milestones involves AgID drafting a handbook on digital rights (10.1) and promoting and disseminating information on digital rights for administrations and citizens (10.2).

Italy was the first European country to produce a crowdsourced “Declaration of Internet Rights.” It did so in July 2015 in a bid to increase awareness of digital rights and inspire legislative actions.⁴ The nonbinding declaration includes provisions such as the right to internet access; the right to use online public services; the right to know and learn through the web; and the right to web neutrality, personal data protection, information self-determination, anonymity, oblivion, security, and inviolability of personal IT spaces and systems.⁵ These rights were further incorporated in 2017 in the Digital

Administration Code (CAD).⁶ In spite of this, awareness of digital rights in the country remains low. The third action plan launched activities to increase awareness on the Declaration and the rights included in it (Commitment 31). However, at the end of the implementation cycle, the IRM had assessed that these activities had not contributed to a change in practice.⁷

The creation of a handbook on digital rights could respond to the need to increase awareness on this topic. The idea forms part of AgID's goals as described in the Triennial ICT Plan 2019–2021.⁸ The handbook would include an overview of the main digital rights laid out in the Digital Administration Code (CAD), with the aim of raising awareness on how to use efficiently and accessibly ICT technologies in interactions with public administrations. The handbook is also expected to include an overview of key enabling platforms such as PagoPA, SPID, the digital ID, and so on along with information on specific protection mechanisms. A comprehensive overview of such platform is currently provided as well in the Triennial ICT Plan.⁹ For the most part, the Handbook would consolidate in one single document the information already available in the documents mentioned above.

The potential impact is minor because the text of the milestones regarding promotion and dissemination is vague. The commitment states activities will include cooperation with health offices and schools, but for impact to go further, the handbook needs to be accompanied by a strong promotion and dissemination strategy, one of the critical limiting factors thus far for awareness of digital rights.

PCM-DFP

This cluster of milestones concerns the setting up of a website outlining the functionalities of the new platform to self-assess public employees' digital skills and that would suggest customized training courses (10.3). The platform itself would be piloted with three administrations (10.4) and then extended to all others (10.5). As a result, aggregated data and statistics on the skills and training for public employees would be published in open format.

These activities are in line with the “Digital Skills for Public Administrations” project launched by DFP in 2018¹⁰ to strengthen digital skills across public employees (digital complementary skills¹¹), which are lacking.¹² Initial output of the project was a Syllabus¹³ defining digital skills that all public administration employees should have. Building on this, the platform described here would provide users with a self-assessment, testing digital complementary skills according to five macro categories. Questions would be differentiated depending on the level of skills (basic, intermediate, proficient). Ultimately, the idea is to provide specific training courses based on the gaps identified through the self-assessment.¹⁴ Representatives of the DFP explained that the Syllabus started being used as a starting point to assess digital competencies of prospective public employees; however, no other systems are in place to assess such skills for current employees. According to the DFP representatives, the activities proposed under these milestones represent an absolute novelty. They explained that although several public administrations have promoted digital trainings in the last few years, including targeting managers and public officials, there has never been a systematic program targeting all administrations and their employees, which is what is being proposed here.¹⁵ Furthermore, digital skills training is usually either limited to IT competencies or based on frameworks (such as the EU's DigComp 2.0), which target citizens and as such do not effectively address the specificities of the training needs of officials in public administrations.¹⁶ The self-assessment platform proposed here, however, together with the Syllabus, would address this.

The milestone text is clear, and the commitment responds directly to the identified need of improving digital skills across public administrations. The milestone is ambitious in setting implementation across all administrations as a goal, and the effort to commit to publishing resulting statistics in open format is commendable. If fully implemented, it could contribute to redesigning the composition of the public administration workforce and increasing the level of digital skills among public employees. In light of these considerations, potential impact is assessed as moderate. For a transformative effect, the government, for example, could consider including the self-assessment (and the reaching of a set level) as a mandatory aspect of the individual performance review cycle.

INPS

INPS is one of the administrations that will test the self-assessment platform the DFP promoted (10.7) with the aim of extending it to a larger sample of employees (10.8) and subsequently developing a specific training plan (10.9). INPS has a solid track-record of supporting public administration officials' training courses. The service has been running the "Valore PA" program for five years, whereby it financially sponsors participation in university training courses for selected public administration employees.¹⁷ In 2019, the program started sponsoring several courses to improve digital skills for public officials.¹⁸

INPS also commits to implementing a three-year pilot project in cooperation with MIUR under the working-learning scheme the Good School Reform established.¹⁹ The program consists of alternating attendance at school with a period of practical learning within a selected firm or association. INPS would target students in the last three years of high school and raise awareness about the welfare rights INPS grants and promote digital citizenship services. Within this project, milestone 10.10 commits to the creation and implementation of a "train the trainer" course for teachers in the target classes. The course would focus on supporting teachers in the selection of preparatory educational material for the students participating to the scheme and, as such, remains rather limited in scope. The implementation of the activity seems to be dependent on the publication of a decree by MIUR establishing "guidelines on measures for cross-cutting skills and guidance." Little detail is provided as to how schools will be selected and on the course itself, presumably because of the dependence of planning on the publication of the decree. Due to the lack of specificity of the text, potential impact is coded as minor.

MIBAC

The project "Factory of Ideas" proposed in this milestone involves the implementation of creative learning activities on topics such as robotics and coding along with the direct management of digitalization services and the creation of content as part of the new Media Library in Potenza.

The Media Library was intended to represent the integrated cultural hub of Potenza; however, the project has stalled for unclear reasons.²⁰ The potential impact is assessed as minor in light of the low feasibility of this specific commitment, the reduced scope, and little clarity on the intended results due to a lack of specificity of the text.

DGSCN

This cluster of milestones includes the design and implementation of a "Youth Portal" for young adults ages 14–35 to promote their inclusion in the Italian socioeconomic landscape. The project would take place in two phases. The first phase (10.12–10.13) would include the development of a prototype for a web platform that would allow youth to apply online for community service. The prototype would be tested, piloted, monitored, and reviewed based on user feedback. The second phase (10.16–10.21) foresees the development and implementation of the portal, including the services set up in phase I, which should be used as a single point of access for several opportunities. The portal would host information on opportunities for youth and facilitate networking among young people along with interaction with public authorities. The development and implementation process would follow the same steps as those in phase I.

Applications for community service can currently be submitted only by hand delivery or via regular postal mail. The creation of a platform to submit applications electronically would represent a significant step forward in facilitating access to this opportunity. Furthermore, a study the DGSCN commissioned in 2018 analyzed several elements of the interaction between youth and youth-oriented national policies and found a need for a platform that would facilitate coordination and provide better access to information on these topics.²¹ The creation of the Youth Portal would directly respond to this need. Currently, information on opportunities for youth is generally delegated to the municipal level;²² only some local administrations have a dedicated online youth portal,²³ and there is no single access point at the national level. The milestones also foresee an opportunity for processing feedback to further improve the platform.

This is a clear, ambitious, and relevant set of milestones whose output could fill an identified need. It is relevant both to access to information and civic participation. If combined with a strong promotional campaign raising awareness among youth of the existence of this portal, potential impact could be transformative.

Unioncamere

With a view to enhancing the pervasiveness of digital skills among businesses and public administrations, Unioncamere commits to developing technical standards and requirements for certifying digital skills for businesses and public administrations, focusing on e-leadership skills needed by “Digital Innovation Managers” (10.22). This specific commitment is in line with the DFP broader project to increase digital skills amongst public administrations’ employees.

A decree issued in May 2019 by the Ministry of Economic Development²⁴ tasks Unioncamere with identifying “Digital Innovation Managers,” in other words, competent professionals who should be assigned to micro, small, and medium enterprises to facilitate digital transition processes. As part of this task, Unioncamere receives from the Ministry vouchers of up to euro 40,000 for individual enterprise and up to 80,000 for network of enterprises to support such digital transitions. Unioncamere is also responsible for verifying that the individuals it wants to be recognized as Digital Innovation Managers have the required qualifications.²⁵ As this is a completely new figure, there are currently no reference frameworks nor standards for assessing such qualifications. The initiative proposed in this milestone is therefore to be understood within this context and as forming part of this existing initiative.

The lack of e-leadership skills has been highlighted as one of the central reasons slowing down the digital transition of companies in Italy,²⁶ and as such, the measures proposed are welcome and could have a moderate impact. However, it should be noted that this forms part of an existing initiative, and there is a lack of specificity in the text of the milestones in regard to the target for adoption of this system. Unioncamere does commit to disseminating activities (10.23), although it is not clear how and who the target would be.

Regions and autonomous provinces

This cluster of milestones outlines a series of activities that regions and autonomous provinces would implement to accelerate the coordinated development of digital citizenship. This includes defining and implementing public Wi-fi networks (10.24), projects to disseminate digital skills among the population (10.25), and projects to create spaces and opportunities bringing together citizens and PAs to co-design and assess public services (10.26).

The text of the milestones is vague, and there is no clarity on whether targets are set for specific regions and on whether implementation of said projects would be harmonized in any way or not. The milestone on implementing public Wi-Fi networks is relevant to increasing access to the internet as part of digital rights. Currently, 3,048 municipalities (out of 7,904) have access to free WiFi, with 338.991 users.²⁷ It is not clear whether this is linked in any way to the 2017 Wi-Fi Italia project, an initiative launched in 2017 with the aim of allowing users to connect easily to Wi-Fi networks across the country and through which such access results have been achieved,²⁸ or if this is a new commitment. Overall, because of the milestone’s lack of clarity on intended outputs, the potential impact of these milestones is minor.

City of Rome

Finally, this cluster of milestones foresees the implementation of a series of initiatives to support the dissemination of digital skills for citizenship in the City of Rome. This would be done by drafting regulation on the assistance to be provided to the Punti Roma Facile and Scuola Diffusa (10.27), launching training activities under the Scuola Diffusa framework, with a specific focus on gender objectives (10.28), and expanding the network of Punti Roma Facile (10.29). Furthermore, the City pledges to run a trial of the DFP self-assessment platform and integrate its use in the internal training and assessment cycle (10.30–10.32).

Punti Roma Facile (PRoF) offers free city council services to help citizens learn how to use laptops, browse the internet, and access vital online services.²⁹ A representative of the City of Rome explained that these spaces were established in 2016³⁰ and their activities were not regulated in detail at the time; however, the publication of regulation on the organization and functioning of the Points was foreseen by the establishing decree. As such, the commitment under milestone 10.27 simply implements existing provisions.³¹ At the time of writing of the action plan, the network of Points included 26 active points and 4 in activation phase within social centers for the elderly. Between January and May 2019, there were 6,744 accesses to the points with requests for support.³² The representative of the City explained that the aim was to extend the network by creating points with social centers for the elderly to help fill the intergenerational digital divide gap. However, a fixed target was not foreseen.³³ Expansion in terms of the administrations and private entities involved would depend to responses on a call for proposals.

Scuola Diffusa is an initiative directly deriving from the Punti Roma Facile experience set up between 2017 and 2018. The aim is to set up specific courses of digital literacy and seminars to promote digital culture. The representative of the City explained that a detailed overview of the possible training activities would be based on the regulation described at 10.27. The inclusion of a gender aspect is new and welcome, as unemployed (immigrant) women are identified as an at-risk category for exclusion in access to digital services.³⁴

The milestones related to the Punti Roma Facile and Scuola Diffusa form part of a broader and preexisting strategy implemented by the City of Rome, and their inclusion in the action plan provides little added value. The pledge to test and trial the DFP new self-assessment platform, however, presents a novelty compared with the current context and could contribute to a more significant change. Impact is therefore assessed as moderate, in line with the DFP commitment.

¹ "OECD Skills Strategy Diagnostic Report" (OECD), 2017 <https://www.oecd.org/skills/nationalskillsstrategies/Diagnostic-report-Italy.pdf>

² DESI Index 2019, Italy

³ "Report on public ICT" (Court of Auditors), p. 34 <https://www.corteconti.it/Download?id=01f0cca3-8fae-4325-9dab-063f8a74b205>

⁴ Freedom of the net, Italy 2016 (Freedomhouse) <https://freedomhouse.org/country/italy/freedom-net/2016#C>

⁵ IRM Mid Term Report 2016-2018 p. 96

⁶ The Code provides an overview of the existing provisions on digitalization of public administration and its relationship with citizens and businesses. Available at: <https://www.agid.gov.it/it/agenzia/strategia-quadro-normativo/codice-amministrazione-digitale>

⁷ Italy End of Term IRM report 2016 – 2018, p. 53

⁸ "Triennial ICT Plan 2019-2021" (AgID), <https://pianotriennale-ict.italia.it/assets/pdf/2019-2021/Piano-Triennale-ICT-2019-2021.pdf> p. 180

⁹ "Triennial ICT Plan 2017" (AgID), enabling platforms <https://pianotriennale-ict.italia.it/piattaforme/>

¹⁰ "Operative National Programme 2014–2018" <http://www.funzionepubblica.gov.it/capacita-amministrativa/pon-governance-e-capacita-istituzionale-2014-2020>

¹¹ As defined by the OECD, "Initiatives implemented to encourage a digital mindset in the public workforce in order to increase awareness regarding the opportunities, benefits and challenges of the digital transformation of the public sector." See: OECD, Glossary of Terms [https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/9789264307131-9-en.pdf?expires=1593588985&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=24BB4B00A7848B80839E69BDD8FE728C#:~:text=Digital%20complementary%20skills%3A%20Initiatives%20implemented,sector%20\(OECD%2C%20forthcoming\)](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/9789264307131-9-en.pdf?expires=1593588985&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=24BB4B00A7848B80839E69BDD8FE728C#:~:text=Digital%20complementary%20skills%3A%20Initiatives%20implemented,sector%20(OECD%2C%20forthcoming)).

¹² Representative of the DFP, interview by IRM researcher, 13 May; See also: "Municipalities: digital training is necessary. Here is the data" <https://www.agendadigitale.eu/cittadinanza-digitale/comuni-poche-competenze-digitali-ma-tanta-voglia-di-formazione-il-quadro/>

¹³ Available at: <https://www.competenzedigitali.gov.it/syllabus.html>

¹⁴ Representative of the DFP interview by IRM researcher, 13 May

¹⁵ Representative of the DFP, email exchange with IRM researcher, 1 July

¹⁶ Idem.

¹⁷ INPS, Valore PA <https://www.inps.it/nuovoportaleinps/default.aspx?itemdir=50047>

¹⁸ INPS Valore PA, Programme of selected courses for 2019 <https://www.unica.it/unica/protected/200607/0/def/ref/GNC137447/>

¹⁹ Gazzetta Ufficiale, Law "La Buona Scuola" 107/2015 <http://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2015/07/15/15G00122/sg>.

²⁰ "Media Library in Potenza still closed" (Le Cronache Lucane) <http://www.lecronachelucane.it/2020/02/27/bibliomediateca-potenza-m5s-ancora-chiusa/>

²¹ Civil Society Consultation report, p. 34

-
- ²² “Country sheet on youth policy in Italy” (Youth Partnership, European Union and Council of Europe) <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/42128013/47262196/Countrysheet+italy+2015.pdf/e642a03c-e7f2-49da-9bc1-bf281b5f869d>
- ²³ See for example: https://portalegiovani.comune.fi.it/pogio/info_publish/scuola.php; <https://portalegiovani.comune.re.it/>
- ²⁴ Government Official Gazette, Decree of 7 May 2019 <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2019/07/01/19A04242/sg>
- ²⁵ Unioncamere, email exchange with IRM researcher, 10 June 2020
- ²⁶ “Unioncamere: certifying managers 4.0” (FASI) <https://www.fasi.biz/it/notizie/novita/20043-unioncamere-certificazione-delle-competenze-per-i-manager-4-0.html#>
- ²⁷ “Wifi Italia Project” <https://www.wifi.italia.it/it/il-progetto.html>
- ²⁸ Ibid.
- ²⁹ “Easy Rome Points” (City of Rome) <https://www.comune.roma.it/web/it/partecipa-punti-roma-facile.page>
- ³⁰ Founding Resolution No 7 of 3 August 2016 https://www.comune.roma.it/web-resources/cms/documents/Deliberazione_Giunta_Capitolina_n._143_del_19_luglio_2019.pdf
- ³¹ Representatives of the Department of Participation, Communication and Equal Opportunities of the City of Rome, email exchange with IRM researcher, 25 May 2020
- ³² Representatives of the Department of Participation, Communication and Equal Opportunities of the City of Rome, email exchange with IRM researcher, 17 July 2020
- ³³ Ibid.
- ³⁴ Ibid.

V. General Recommendations

This section aims to inform the development of the next action plan and guide implementation of the current action plan. It is divided into two sections: 1) IRM key recommendations to improve OGP process and action plans in the country and, 2) an assessment of how the government responded to previous IRM key recommendations.

5.1 IRM Five Key Recommendations

Recommendations for the next action plan's development process	
1	Strengthen the level of collaboration by increasing the Forum's active participation in the process for selecting and drafting commitments
2	Co-create fewer, but more ambitious, targeted, and coherent commitments

The fourth action plan represented the second year of work of the Open Government Forum (OGF) as the country's official permanent multistakeholder forum. Challenges remain to achieving full collaboration; however, progress was made as stakeholders confirmed that during this cycle, they were able to present concrete proposals to administrations rather than simply comment on initiatives. Representatives of CSOs remark that the potential of the Forum remains untapped because of a lack of coordination and infrequent interaction.¹ This applies to the creation of the role of referees too. Civil society stakeholders also regret that the process that commitments undergo, from being proposed by CSOs to their inclusion in the action plan, is not fully transparent.²

Furthermore, the peculiarity of the development process is also that the OGP team invites public administrations to propose commitments on a voluntary basis that is based on themes identified together with the Forum. The broad call for proposals often translates to the inclusions of activities that predate the action plan or, in some cases, that are disjointed from the overall theme proposed. In addition, the lack of set targets for implementation in the majority of commitments reduces their measurability and limits their ambition and potential impact.

In light of these considerations, the IRM makes the following recommendations for the next action plan's development process:

I Strengthen collaboration by increasing the Forum's active participation in the process for the selection and drafting of commitments

The OGP team could strengthen collaboration with civil society during the design of the action plan through the following measures:

- Increase the regularity and opportunities for dialogue between public administrations and civil society throughout the design of the plan. While civil society is able to make proposals early on, the co-creation process would benefit from regular meetings between government and civil society to collaboratively discuss proposals and decide on final commitments. Commitments would benefit from being co-drafted as well between government and civil society (for example, in smaller working groups). The process would also benefit from engagement with the wider public, for example, at the start of the process to understand citizen priorities for open government and during the official public consultation period on the final report.
- Increase transparency in the design process. Ensure that meetings are scheduled in a timely manner and that an agenda is provided in advance. Make the agenda, minutes, and decisions of meetings public. Ensure that changes to commitments are traceable and transparent.
- Enable the OGF to evaluate the design process of the action plan to complement the Civil Society Consultation Report the OGP team prepared. The two evaluations could then be

discussed at a joint meeting to identify challenges and possible lessons learned for future action plans.

2 Co-create fewer, but more ambitious, targeted and coherent commitments

The current action plan contains far too many commitment milestones, which are disjointed, vary in specificity, and often have only minor impact. Many of these milestones are from initiatives that already exist and in which the inclusion to the OGP action plan provides no added value. The next action plan would benefit from a more targeted and reduced number of milestones to ensure that commitments are coherent, specific, and ambitious. The following actions could help develop such an action plan:

- Identify strategic themes that should be included in the action plan jointly between government and the Open Government Forum. Together, work out the existing challenges and identify specific sectors/administrations that would benefit the most from an increased open government approach. Jointly draft a commitment text.
- Assess all proposals to ensure that these are measurable, specific, and ambitious enough and subsequently assign priority to them for inclusion or not in the plan. The final commitments would benefit from only including milestones that are tangible steps toward achieving their objectives rather than preexisting activities or with only vague relation to the topic area. Also ensure that commitments are relevant to OGP values.
- Consider listing additional milestones in Annexes. The model used for Annex A in the current action plan could be used as a starting point.

The current action plan includes milestones within commitments that have limited or no relation to OGP values. In fact, they sometimes reflect e-government or digital innovations instead, such as some of the e-services in Commitments 9 and 10. Although these may be valuable and meaningful actions, their effective implementation does not automatically lead to more open government. Instead, the recommendations below seek to address current challenges and topical issues in Italy that would enhance open government.

With this in mind, the IRM makes the following recommendations on the design of the plan:

Recommendations for the next action plan's design	
1	Establish a network of dedicated open data officers within public administrations
2	Ensure all public administrations implement the regulations for the national Register of Stakeholders
3	Develop and implement a monitoring system to ensure transparent allocation and use of funds related to COVID-19 response measures

1 Establish a network of dedicated open data officers within public administrations

Key issues emerging with regard to the open data landscape in Italy include the discrepancy in quality of open data released by administrations across the national territory, together with the lack of compliance in release by local administrations. Government stakeholders also highlighted that there is no proper assessment of citizen demand, which translates to limited reuse of data.³ The open data commitment in this action plan seeks to redress these issues by proposing initiatives such as the setting of shared rules for licenses and standards and encouraging the publication of quality open data sets. Building on this work, the Italian government could establish a network of open data officers across all public administrations who would monitor the release of open data sets by public administrations and compliance with the set quality standards and ensure that the data sets released correspond to citizen demand. Each administration could appoint a supervisor dedicated to monitoring the release of datasets. The supervisor's role would be similar to that of designated FOIA officers monitoring the compliance of administrations with transparency obligations. Lessons learned can be drawn from these entities and how they work. A starting point would be monitoring the publication of high-value data sets – as identified by EU regulation and through the work of milestones 1.8– 1.9 in this action plan – and assessing their quality against a checklist of defined criteria.

2 Ensure all public administrations implement the regulations for the national Register of Stakeholders

Commitment V under this action plan represents a step forward toward increasing transparency in Italy in the area of lobbying, in which several attempts have been made without success to establish regulations and a national register. The proposal for creating and testing of a unified solution for the national register of stakeholders could fill this gap; however, the lack of concrete details on the targets for administrations to adopt the transparency register beyond the testing phase could limit the impact of this initiative. Therefore, to build on the work undertaken during this action plan, the next plan could consider measures to ensure that all public administrations adopt the national register, including through the creation of guidelines for implementation. A commitment in this area could benefit from lessons learned from the experience in Italy and in particular from other countries that have successful lobbying registers and can serve as best practice examples. Particular support and guidance could be provided to regions and municipalities to ensure harmonized implementation across the national territory. Monitoring of adoption and use of the register would benefit from civil society involvement.

3 Develop and implement a transparent monitoring system for public procurement, particularly for funds related to the Covid-19 response.

Civil society stakeholders have highlighted how responses to the COVID-19 pandemic may bear corruption risks.⁴ In particular, such risks have been highlighted in regard to public procurement, already traditionally a high-risk sector in Italy, and in regard to the financial aid that will be provided to businesses to support economic recovery. To ensure a transparent allocation and use of funds, and to prevent infiltration and exploitation by organized crime, the next action plan could consider the development and implementation of a digital and transparent monitoring system for such funds. The system could track the entire cycle of allocation of funds, releasing related data in open format on a dedicated portal. Lessons learned for the design and implementation of the monitoring system could be drawn from existing successful initiatives such as OpenCoesione.

5.2 Response to Previous IRM Key Recommendations

Governments are required to respond to IRM key recommendations. This section provides an overview of how stakeholders addressed IRM recommendations and how the recommendations were incorporated into the next action plan process or content.

Previous IRM Report Key Recommendations

Recommendation		Did it inform the OGP Process?
1	Include fewer, more ambitious commitments when developing the next action plan Ensure commitments do not overlap with one another and have clear, measurable activities and well-defined, expected outcomes.	✓ ⁵
2	Strengthen the participatory process of the Open Government Forum Involve OGF in the Monitora system by publishing OGF assessments on completion	X
3	Localize the OGP process and focus on broader avenues of engagement Increase efforts to open government by ensuring that many municipalities (ANCI) are involved in efforts to carry out commitments	X
4	Improve FOIA implementation and practices	✓

	Monitor and track FOI requests, processing times, and response rates in each government institution to ensure compliance.	
5	National regulations for lobbying Develop a national public registry of lobbyists and publish open agendas of executives and elected officials.	✓ ⁶

The government incorporated three out of five recommendations in the action plan. The current action plan includes 10 commitments, making it more focused than the previous one, which had 40. However, in the majority of cases, activities do not have well-defined, expected outcomes. Furthermore, commitments such as 1 and 9 are broad and include a vast abundance of milestones, thus affecting their ambition and potential impact.

The participatory process of the Forum was not strengthened. Indeed, several stakeholders reported that a lack of coordination and frequent interaction remain. The Forum is still not requested to publish monitoring assessments on completion of commitments. A representative of the DFP reported that a dedicated space for the inclusion of monitoring assessment was envisioned for the restyling of the OGP website proposed under Commitment 6. This is however not included in writing in the commitment's text.

Recommendation 3 was also not implemented. A representative of the DFP confirmed that this recommendation was not taken up because the plan remains oriented on a national level. Only the municipalities of Rome and Milan are included in some commitments. The lack of inclusion of ANCI is also dependent on the fact that administrations are only included in the plan on a voluntary basis. As such, there needs to be a certain level of interest from ANCI officials to commit. Linking the action plan more closely to the budget cycle could help address the lack of interest.

Recommendation 4 is fully addressed by milestones 2.1–2.4 in the commitment on transparency, which propose the creation of a centralized FOIA request and outcome monitoring system.

Finally, recommendation 5 is addressed by Commitment 5 on the regulation of stakeholders. As the commitment only proposes the presentation of a solution that decision-makers can consider adopting, rather than the establishment of a national register, the recommendation is only partially implemented.

¹ Federico Anghel  (The Good Lobby), interview by IRM researcher, 6 May 2020; Davide del Monte (Transparency International), interview by IRM researcher, 5 May 2020; Rosy Battaglia (Cittadini Reattivi), interview by IRM researcher, 4 May 2020; representatives from three CSOs, interview by IRM researcher, 7 May 2020.

² Representatives from three CSOs, interview by IRM researcher, 7 May 2020.

³ Government representative, interview with IRM researcher, 12 June 2020

⁴ Davide del Monte (Transparency International), interview by IRM researcher, 5 May 2020.

⁵ Partially completed – some commitments remain too broad, and activities do not include clear expected outcomes.

⁶ Partially completed – the proposed commitment does not have a national ambition set in writing.

VI. Methodology and Sources

IRM reports are written in collaboration with researchers for each OGP-participating country. All IRM reports undergo a process of quality control to ensure that the highest standards of research and due diligence have been applied.

Analysis of progress on OGP action plans is a combination of interviews, desk research, observation, and feedback from nongovernmental stakeholders. The IRM report builds on the evidence available in Italy's OGP website¹, findings in the government's own self-assessment reports, and any other assessments of process and progress put out by civil society, the private sector, or international organizations.

Each IRM researcher conducts stakeholder interviews to ensure an accurate portrayal of events. Given budgetary and calendar constraints, the IRM cannot consult all interested parties or visit implementation sites. Some contexts require anonymity of interviewees and the IRM reserves the right to remove personal identifying information of these participants. Due to the necessary limitations of the method, the IRM strongly encourages commentary during the pre-publication review period of each report.

Each report undergoes a quality-control process that includes an internal review by IRM staff and the IRM's International Experts Panel (IEP). Each report also undergoes an external review where governments and civil society are invited to provide comments on the content of the draft IRM report.

This review process, including the procedure for incorporating comments received, is outlined in greater detail in Section III of the Procedures Manual.²

Interviews and stakeholder input

The IRM researcher conducted interviews with a representative of the indicated responsible administration for each commitment in the action plan. Furthermore, the IRM researcher also conducted interviews with referees from civil society for each commitment. As shown in the table below, in total, 30 stakeholders were interviewed (14 civil society representatives and 16 government representatives). Where more than one individual was indicated as responsible for overseeing the implementation of a commitment the researcher conducted a joint interview.

Name	Affiliation	Date
N/A	Department of Public Function – DFP	6 May 2020 11 May 2020
N/A	Department of Public Function – DFP	6 May 2020 14 May 2020
N/A	Department of Public Function – DFP	13 May 2020
N/A	Department of Public Function – DFP	13 May 2020 1 July (email exchange)
Daniela Intravaia	Agency for Digital Italy - AgID	5 May 2020
N/A	Agency for Digital Italy - AgID	5 May 2020
Aurelio Lupo	Department of Public Function – DFP	1 May 2020 30 June 2020 (email exchange)
N/A	Department for Institutional Reforms - DRI	8 May 2020
N/A	Department of Participation, Communication and Equal Opportunities – City of Rome	7 May 2020
N/A	Department of Participation, Communication and Equal Opportunities – City of Rome	7 May 2020 25 May (email exchange) 17 July (email exchange)
Marco Maceroni	Ministry of Economic Development - MISE	5 May 2020
N/A	Municipality of Palermo	26 May 2020
N/A	Municipality of Palermo	26 May 2020
N/A	Municipality of Palermo	26 May 2020
Davide del Monte	Transparency International Italy	5 May 2020
Ilaria Vitellio	MappiNa	4 May 2020

Daniela Vellutino	Università di Salerno	8 May 2020
Federico Anghelè	The Good Lobby	6 May 2020 30 June 2020 (email exchange)
Rita Palumbo	Federazione Relazioni Pubbliche Italiana - FERPI	12 May 2020
N/A	Federazione Relazioni Pubbliche Italiana - FERPI	12 May 2020
Rosy Battaglia	Cittadini reattivi	4 May 2020
Tatiana Giannone	Libera. Associazioni, nomi e numeri contro le mafie	8 May 2020
Francesco Saija	Parliament Watch Italia (PWVI)	26 May 2020
Giuseppe d'Avella	Parliament Watch Italia (PWVI)	26 May 2020
Gianluca De Martino	onData	8 May 2020 (email exchange)

There were two interviewees from the government and three from civil society organisations which would like to remain completely anonymous. The interviews took place, respectively on 30 April, 12 June 2020, and 7 May and 14 May.

Interviews took place via web-based platforms (Skype, Zoom, Microsoft Teams) and via telephone. The IRM researcher asked a set of questions to all stakeholders aimed at understanding the baseline of the commitment, its aim, feasibility and expected impact. Questions were tailored to the context of each specific commitment. Stakeholders were also requested to provide information on the creation process of the action plan and the functioning of the Open Government Forum. When needed, the IRM researcher conducted a second interview to fill information gaps or requested clarifications via email. Challenges were encountered in getting in contact with representatives of some local administrations.

The information collected through interviews and stakeholder input was triangulated with that collected through desk research. Key documents reviewed were the current and previous action plans, previous IRM mid-term and end of term reports, the civil society consultation report for the current action plan and the government's end of term self-assessment report for the previous one.

About the Independent Reporting Mechanism

The Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) is a key means by which all stakeholders can track OGP progress in participating countries and entities. The International Experts Panel (IEP) oversees the quality control of each report. The IEP is comprised of experts in transparency, participation, accountability, and social science research methods.

Current membership of the International Experts Panel is

- César Cruz-Rubio
- Mary Francoli
- Brendan Halloran
- Jeff Lovitt
- Juanita Olaya

A small staff based in Washington, DC, shepherds reports through the IRM process in close coordination with the researchers. Questions and comments about this report can be directed to the staff at irm@opengovpartnership.org.

¹ OGP Italy Monitora 4th action plan: <http://open.gov.it/monitora-quarto-nap/>

² IRM Procedures Manual, V.3: <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/irm-procedures-manual>.

Annex I. Commitment Indicators

All OGP-participating governments develop OGP action plans that include concrete commitments over a two-year period. Governments begin their OGP action plans by sharing existing efforts related to open government, including specific strategies and ongoing programs.

Commitments should be appropriate to each country's circumstances and challenges. OGP commitments should also be relevant to OGP values laid out in the OGP Articles of Governance and Open Government Declaration signed by all OGP-participating countries.¹ The indicators and method used in the IRM research can be found in the IRM Procedures Manual.² A summary of key indicators the IRM assesses is below:

- **Verifiability:**
 - Not specific enough to verify: Do the written objectives and proposed actions lack sufficient clarity and specificity for their completion to be objectively verified through a subsequent assessment?
 - Specific enough to verify: Are the written objectives and proposed actions sufficiently clear and specific to allow for their completion to be objectively verified through a subsequent assessment?
- **Relevance:** This variable evaluates the commitment's relevance to OGP values. Based on a close reading of the commitment text as stated in the action plan, the guiding questions to determine relevance are:
 - Access to Information: Will the government disclose more information or improve the quality of the information disclosed to the public?
 - Civic Participation: Will the government create or improve opportunities or capabilities for the public to inform or influence decisions or policies?
 - Public Accountability: Will the government create or improve public-facing opportunities to hold officials answerable for their actions?
- **Potential impact:** This variable assesses the potential impact of the commitment, if completed as written. The IRM researcher uses the text from the action plan to:
 - Identify the social, economic, political, or environmental problem;
 - Establish the status quo at the outset of the action plan; and
 - Assess the degree to which the commitment, if implemented, would impact performance and tackle the problem.
- **Completion:** This variable assesses the commitment's implementation and progress. This variable is assessed at the end of the action plan cycle, in the country's IRM Implementation Report.
- **Did It Open Government?:** This variable attempts to move beyond measuring outputs and deliverables to looking at how the government practice, in areas relevant to OGP values, has changed as a result of the commitment's implementation. This variable is assessed at the end of the action plan cycle, in the country's IRM Implementation Report.

What makes a results-oriented commitment?

A results-oriented commitment has more potential to be ambitious and be implemented. It clearly describes the:

1. **Problem:** What is the economic, social, political, or environmental problem rather than describing an administrative issue or tool? (E.g., "Misallocation of welfare funds" is more helpful than "lacking a website.")
2. **Status quo:** What is the status quo of the policy issue at the beginning of an action plan? (E.g., "26 percent of judicial corruption complaints are not processed currently.")

3. **Change:** Rather than stating intermediary outputs, what is the targeted behavior change that is expected from the commitment’s implementation? (E.g., “Doubling response rates to information requests” is a stronger goal than “publishing a protocol for response.”)

Starred commitments

One measure, the “starred commitment” (★), deserves further explanation due to its interest to readers and usefulness for encouraging a race to the top among OGP-participating countries/entities. Starred commitments are considered exemplary OGP commitments. To receive a star, a commitment must meet several criteria.

- Potential star: the commitment’s design should be **verifiable**, **relevant** to OGP values, and have **transformative** potential impact.
- The government must make significant progress on this commitment during the action plan implementation period, receiving an assessment of **substantial** or **complete** implementation.

These variables are assessed at the end of the action plan cycle in the country’s IRM Implementation Report.

¹ “Open Government Partnership: Articles of Governance” (OGP, 17 Jun. 2019), <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/articles-of-governance/>.

² “IRM Procedures Manual” (OGP), <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/irm-procedures-manual>.