



Final Learning Exercise - Summary Report

Catalonia (Spain), Action Plan 2021-2023

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Section 1. Local Context

In 2020, the Generalitat de Catalunya joined the Open Government Partnership network through the 2021-2023 Action Plan, which was articulated with five specific and transformative commitments of the main branches of Open Government to be developed by the Catalan public administrations. The candidacy presented by the Generalitat was approved by the Open Government Network and by the Barcelona Open Data Initiative on behalf of a group of civil society organizations.

1.1. Initial considerations

The lessons learned from the process of implementation and evaluation of the commitments will be particularly fruitful in relation to the elaboration of future plans and also in the adoption of key and strategic lessons to improve inter-unit cooperation.

In this line, it is noteworthy to highlight that the lessons learned can be extrapolated to the Open Government strategy promoted by the Generalitat de Catalunya in its entirety, although it is pertinent to ground it in the specific disciplines in which the commitments have been developed, which are respectively: citizen participation (ESCAT0001), good governance (ESCAT0002) and open data (ESCAT0003, ESCAT0004 and ESCAT0005). It should be mentioned that during the period in which the Action Plan has been established, there has been more than one change of government, which has implied organizational restructuring and changes in the designation of positions initially foreseen



with defined roles in the governance bodies of the Action Plan itself, whether in the Driving Group or the Open Government Agora. These effects have made monitoring difficult and have shown that the existence of political stability is a considerably positive element in the deployment of an ambitious plan such as the one established by the Generalitat de Catalunya in its adhesion to the OGP Local.

Section 2. The Co-Creation and Action Plan Process

2.1 Review of the co-creation process

The elaboration of the commitments on open government was carried out in a co-created way by the Motor Group, a governance body for monitoring and integrity of the project, and the so-called OGP Agora, both composed of members of civil society and the competent public administrations involved. This first proposal of the Action Plan was made available to the public through a participatory process of citizen consultation to collect proposals and comments on the axes of debate presented, along with the willingness to disseminate the process. For more information on the results of the citizen consultation, the following [link](#) provides access to the report of the process carried out between May and June 2021.

Thus, the final elaboration of the commitments of the Action Plan took the following route: the constitution of the Motor Group (members of the Open Government Network and civil society), which convenes the Open Government Agora of Catalonia, a mixed body understood as the meeting space between the promoting units within the public administration and entities or associations of civil society to present the OGP and determine the axes in general terms, which would culminate in a first proposal to be made available to the citizens. After obtaining citizen input through a participatory process of citizen consultation, the different contributions would be made available to be structured through working groups for each of the identified axes, composed of members of the Agora, experienced in the subject and/or discipline of open government designated by each of the commitments. In this line, the last step was the approval of the OGP Action Plan. Finally, the open government disciplines that articulated the commitments would be mainly good governance, citizen participation, and open data.

After this extensive co-creation process, the commitments presented to the OGP Action Plan 2021-2023 of the Generalitat de Catalunya were:

- I. ESCAT0001. Design a participation model for policies and projects with territorial impact.
- II. ESCAT0002. Integrity plans for local authorities in Catalonia: instruments for the fight against corruption and the promotion of good governance and public ethics in the local sphere.
- III. ESCAT0003. Standardise datasets linked to the SDGs, making open and quality



data available in open data format for the whole territory, facilitating reuse and enhancing impact.

- IV. ESCAT0004. Generate up-to-date, comparable, accessible, and open data in open data format to enable a comprehensive analysis of women's socio-economic inequality and the feminisation of poverty, ensuring accessibility and use.
- V. ESCAT0005. Extend the OpenCohesion School project to subjects linked to social challenges and in new educational centres in the territory, favouring the critical analysis of young people and their impact on public policies.

Each of these commitments had a structure that included both the introduction, the contacts and the description of the commitment. In other words, the articulation of the commitments had, respectively, a formal/operational and a strategic structure. For more concrete information, it is recommended to visit the [link on the Open Government website](#) where the Action Plan 2021- 2023 or [the presentation and Steering Seminar](#) is presented. In reference to the operational part, it shows the title, the deadlines, the implementing institution and non-governmental actor, as well as the other actors involved in the implementation process. For the strategic part, therefore, the relative dimensions of identification of the problem to be solved, the status quo to be overcome, the actions planned with the mapped actors, the contribution of the commitment in solving the identified problem, the relationship with the openness of the government in achieving the presented objectives, the values inherent to the action, the resources required to undertake the action, specific milestones, the inclusion of the gender perspective and any other additional information were presented.

2.2 Recommendations from the co-creation process

Recommendations regarding the co-creation process for other OGP partners and as learning for future editions in our territory could be summarised in the dimensions: strengthening the governance and monitoring model of the project, and secondly, elaborating a specific reference framework for the determination/elaboration of commitments.

As will be presented throughout the report, the weakness that has conditioned the course and impact of the project can be attributed to the political instability to which Catalonia has been subjected over the last few electoral cycles. This has implied a series of modifications that have altered the teams and units consolidated in the governance model, thus affecting the systematization of the work and the establishment of correctly delimited roles and responsibilities. In this line, therefore, we consider that the process of co-creation must take place with a set of established bases in order to guarantee the

The integrity of the project, either through the creation of new figures responsible for



coordination and regular follow-up with the units or by assigning key responsibilities to people with less risk of being susceptible to governmental changes such as tenured civil servants or units with a track record and specific competencies and identified scope of action/capacities.

In addition to the above, a clear definition of the governance model is closely linked to the methodology used for the definition of the commitments, since the constitution of the units and the meeting space between the public administration and civil society must duly agree on the lines of action on which there is greater capacity to have an impact or, if not, which of those present on the political agenda of those present are assumable in the period stipulated in the Action Plan. In this way, it is undeniably key to put into consideration and even list the resources of all kinds that will have to be used to achieve the commitments, assuming the adversities that may occur throughout the implementation process. This should be one of the benchmarks for the elaboration of future plans, as every decision and/or step forward generates a path dependency that is inextricable from the evolution of events.

Therefore, it is considered essential to opt for an innovative, robust, and guaranteed governance model that facilitates the constitution of an action plan where the objectives are clear and achievable while allocating the proportional and adequate amount of resources within reasonable and sensible timeframes, all while ensuring the viability of the parties involved in the process.

Section 3. Action Plan Commitments

3.1 Review of the implementation of commitments

In this section, the evaluation of each of the commitments promoted by the competent implementing units will be presented in a synthesized manner. In this line, the following [link](#) is published on the OGP website with the evaluation of each of the commitments in the IRM structure.

3.1.1. Design a participation model for policies and projects with territorial impact ([link](#)).

This commitment falls within the scope of citizen participation and aimed at developing a model for citizen participation in urban and territorial projects, taking into account the relevant specificities.

The commitment has been worked on with the Department of Territory, Housing and Ecological Transition, with whom a participatory process has been promoted with internal and external actors to carry out a strategic reflection through which a diagnosis and prioritisation of the actions to be promoted could be obtained.



It is important to highlight that the participants in the process considered that the exercise has allowed improvement in the relationship network between the people involved in the matter and, consequently, in the relationship between citizens and the Administration, thus highlighting the relevance of the need to contrast and work jointly between professionals in citizen participation and those responsible for urban planning projects.

Currently, the Subdirectorate General for Citizen Participation continues to work with the Department of Territory, Housing and Ecological Transition to consolidate the model promoted and will soon begin to implement the measures arising from the reflection process.

3.1.2. Integrity plans for local authorities in Catalonia: instruments for the fight against corruption and the promotion of good governance and public ethics in the local sphere [\(link\)](#).

This commitment has been led by the Good Governance Area and has been articulated with different public sector entities involved in the matter. The evaluation has determined a substantial achievement, which is a positive step forward for both the administration and the public.

The main element to highlight is that the unit promoting the commitment has been the Good Governance group of the Open Government Network of Catalonia. The priority in the development of the commitment in the period between 2023 and 2024 has been the implementation of internal alert systems (i.e. an anonymous whistleblowing channel). In this area, fundamental results have been produced from the regulatory model, the free technological resource, the procedural model for processing, the model of assistance from the supra- municipal administrations, accompanied by awareness-raising and training.

In addition, a training course on good governance principles and ethics has been developed for elected officials and managers of local administrations, and a guide on integrity for local elected officials has been published. In general, portfolios on good governance and technical structures have been institutionalised in local administrations, which is evident after the incorporation of good governance as a ministerial competence.

At the same time, the government's openness is evident in the implementation of internal alert systems that allow people who have a professional relationship with a public administration or an entity dependent on it to formulate anonymous reporting and a system of enhanced protections against retaliation if identified.

In terms of lessons learned from implementation, it can be seen that effective efforts are being made to restore public confidence through excellence, good management, institutional quality and good practices. At the same time, the allocation of resources for



transparency and integrity policies has been addressed and can be seen in the implementation of various integrity-related measures and mechanisms, including training and awareness-raising for elected officials. Thus, the implementation of reporting channels and anti-fraud plans based on the management of networks with a multi-level and multi-sectoral perspective has helped to deepen an integrity policy based on prevention and the promotion of good practices.

3.2.3 Standardise datasets linked to the SDGs, making open and quality data available in open data format for the whole territory, facilitating reuse and enhancing impact ([link](#)).

Open Data was in charge of the deployment of this commitment, which has been achieved in a remarkable way in that the portal of the Generalitat de Catalunya has a [viewer](#) where the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) labels can be viewed for each of the more than one thousand datasets published.

Access to this viewer allows for a redefinition of the way information is accessed and analysed through the promotion of both transparency and reuse of data, thereby greatly amplifying the presence of the SDGs on the open data portal and displaying it in a comprehensible and visual way. In this way, it has been a qualitative leap in terms of improving the process of data openness, as well as being promoted as a tool for digital transformation by making these types of information usable for addressing important global challenges.

The viewer has a visualisation of the dataset count for each of the 17 SDGs, the number of datasets per Department and SDG, as well as downloads per SDG. Still, around 23% of the datasets fall under SDG 16, which is about promoting Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, 20% of the datasets are labelled under SDG 13 linked to Climate Action, while 16% are for the SDG of Zero Hunger and, in addition, both SDG 9 and 11 make up 15% of the total, which are about addressing the issues of: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure and Sustainable Cities and Communities, respectively.

The main contribution to government openness is the association of the SDGs with datasets, which facilitates the analysis and cross-referencing of data by citizens. In this line, the initiative promotes and facilitates access to data from various sectors, from research, non-governmental organisations, companies, etc. for the analysis of issues of interest, promoting social innovation. It should be noted that, as remarkable data of this action, the increase in the number of visits and the volume of downloads can be observed.

3.1.4. Generate up-to-date, comparable, accessible and open data in open data format to enable a comprehensive analysis of women's socio-economic inequality and the feminisation of poverty, ensuring accessibility and use ([link](#)).



This second commitment within the scope of Open Data consisted of the objective of obtaining an intersectional gender perspective in the datasets of the portal. After months of work, a series of key learnings have been extracted on the roadmap to follow in opening up datasets to obtain a holistic perspective to address socio-economic inequalities and the feminisation of poverty.

Currently, about 800 out of the total number of datasets published to the portal (given the nature of the information they contain) cannot provide gender information, while those that can provide gender information have been able to provide relevant gender information, which is of particular interest for the purpose of the commitment. The balance of the action estimates a total of approximately 220 sets with gender information on the portal. In order to categorise this data and visualise it properly, a gender information filter has been incorporated into the open data portal, which facilitates and promotes the reuse of this data.

Thus, the commitment is considered partially implemented in that gender information contributes to a general and/or statistical picture of gender inequality, and may be able to infer (although not specifically) socio-economic inequality and poverty, something that stems from the original limitations in official statistics and data collection. Nevertheless, the filter has become a useful reference tool to set the agenda for the coming years in the publication of open data with an intersectional gender perspective.

3.1.5. Extend the OpenCohesion School project to subjects linked to social challenges and in new educational centres in the territory, favouring the critical analysis of young people and their impact on public policies ([link](#)).

Commitment number 5 also falls within the scope of Open Data and aimed to promote awareness and use of open data among young people by modifying the OpenCohesion School programme. The programme, which has been implemented in several schools across Catalonia, offers young people the opportunity to use data analytics to study a number of specific subjects.

In the evaluation process, the commitment has been categorised as substantial progress, given that the fourth edition of the project has been successfully completed. The obstacles identified in the implementation serve as learning for future editions and the elaboration of action plans, among which are the difficulty of attracting schools and building school loyalty, and on the other hand, a lack of resources and dedication to invest in the training of schools and the promotion of their participation. Along these lines, it has been possible to redirect some of these challenges within the timeframe of the action plan through a considerable deployment of resources to attract as many schools as possible.



Furthermore, in reference to the impact on the openness of government, the idea of citizen oversight of public finances (public audit) has been conveyed. It has also contributed to the development of new skills by students based on digital, statistical and citizenship education skills; using new technologies and journalistic techniques (surveys, interviews, contact with the local administration, etc.). In this sense, a critical spirit has been transmitted to young people in the evaluation of the actions of public institutions, paving the way towards a more participatory and democratic culture. The main lessons could be summarised in the positive impact that the programme has had on the young participants due to their high level of involvement, which has made it easier to learn about the impact of ERDF funds on improvements in their municipalities.

In addition, the creation of new channels of communication with the educational centres, in this case via e-mail (opencohesionschool.transformaciodigital@gencat.cat), is also noteworthy. Furthermore, the Generalitat de Catalunya has embarked on an international collaboration with Italy, the leader of the project within the European Union. For further information, please consult the following [link](#).

3.2. Recommendations for commitments

In terms of conclusions, it is noteworthy to highlight that generalised milestones have been achieved in the opening up of government and that concrete actions have been promoted to bring the administration closer to citizens. In the deployment of all the commitments, the values of the Open Government Partnership have been taken into account, from the promotion of transparency, inclusiveness and diversity, through institutional, ethical and social responsibility, to accountability, including the stimulation of proactivity from the responsible promoting units. In future editions of the OGP Action Plan Catalonia, we will take up all of these reference advances and invite you to continue with the legacy of this first base of the 2021-2023 Action Plan.

The ESCAT0001 commitment to citizen participation has managed to establish synergies outside and within the public administration unit itself and has achieved successful interdepartmental collaboration with the Department of Territory, Housing and Ecological Transition. The challenge would be to maintain and strengthen the networks in order to obtain a relatively autonomous dynamic and functioning where the impact can be optimised. Another element to highlight is the promotion and dissemination of these successes to be taken as a reference by other administrations or entities. In any case, it is true that the ambition to obtain a high degree of interdepartmental participation and collaboration is based on the need to encourage a transversal cultural change within the Government of Catalonia that breaks with the lack of a participatory culture and, therefore, incorporates a diversity of actors outside and within the administration on the basis of proactivity.



In terms of the ESCAT0002 commitment to good governance, remarkable progress has been made in the advancement of mechanisms and instruments for the promotion of public ethics in the local sphere. This commitment has shown the benefits of promoting decentralisation in the management of competences and cooperation between multiple units and entities to achieve a common goal, which consists of encouraging good practices. In this way, resourcing has proved to be successful and has also highlighted the need to adequately foresee the scope of the commitments, both in terms of the volume of means required to achieve the objective in question, and in intangible terms of interdepartmental cooperation and, above all, between different administrative layers.

Finally, the ESCAT0003, ESCAT0004 and ESCAT0005 open data commitments have shown different types of learning. With regard to 0003, the SDG filter has made it possible to visualise the data interactively by means of the viewer set up with Power BI, in the same way that it has facilitated the reuse and cross-referencing of data sets. The Open Data Area promotes the monitoring and updating of the viewer and attends to the demands of the portal's users, which is positive as it shows a capacity for innovative adaptability.

Regarding commitment 0004, the weakness of a lack of data collection and management sets with reliable metadata for the objectives stipulated in the Action Plan could be detected, as official statistics currently do not collect useful data for the identification of the feminisation of poverty through an intersectional analysis. However, this has shown the opportunity to elaborate future plans with closer coordination of the units involved, especially in the phase of determining expected actions with plausible targets. Coordinated working sessions were held between 2022 and 2023 between the Open Data Area and the Catalan Women's Institute with experts from civil society, entities and organisations in co-creation with members of the public administration, where it was possible to accumulate proposals that could serve as a starting point in future editions. Along these lines, the adoption of the OGP Action Plan 2021-23 has encouraged the adoption of gender dataset filtering, which is particularly useful for data re-users such as science journalists or gender studies oriented organisations/associations.

Recently, the 0005 commitment has led to significant learning in terms of collaboration with educational centres in the digital transformation of the administration and society. In any case, the impacts generated have been a success due to the holding of different editions and the rapprochement between the promoting units and the new generations. In this line, it would be necessary to promote investment in digital infrastructures that facilitate the maintenance of projects of this nature, something that shows a potential need for the elaboration of specific commitments to consider their insertion within some budgeted actions related to the competent/implementing units in order to guarantee the financial and material sustainability of the project's objectives, linking the final recipients with the strategic lines of the unit.



3.3. Final considerations

Currently, the Government of Catalonia is planning to create a new OGP Action Plan led by the new Government of Catalonia. It is expected that in 2025 a new updated Motor Group and Agora will be constituted and a series of commitments will be presented with a more concrete and specific character by the promoting units, aligned with the strategic policies of the new government. This new proposal will be made available to citizens through a new process in the form of citizen consultation in the same way as was done in the first instance in 2021. After a methodological consolidation promoted by the Subdirector General for Citizen Participation, obtained with the promotion of innovative and pioneering participatory processes such as the Citizen Climate Assembly of Catalonia, key elements tested, co-created and worked on with multiple partners in the European Horizon-CLIMAS project will be put into practice, such as citizen-engagement, capacity-building and consensus-building in the citizen consultation process.

In this line, the creation of this new Action Plan contemplates considering and incorporating within its agenda dimensions such as leading and/or outstanding practices developed by OGP partners at the international level encompassed within the so-called Open Government Challenge to create synergies and collaborations, in addition to maximising and optimising learning in the field of open government.