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João Ricardo Vasconcelos is a digital government policy analyst at the Reform of the Public Sector Division, Public Governance Directorate of the OECD. His work focuses on the analysis of digital government development, supporting the governments of the OECD member and partner countries to take full benefit of the ongoing digital transformation of the public sector. João Vasconcelos is the lead coordinator of several cross-cutting activities in the Digital Government team, namely the OECD Working Party of Senior Digital Government Officials (E-Leaders), the E-Leaders Thematic Groups and numerous OECD Digital Government Reviews (e.g. Brazil, Chile, Morocco, African Portuguese Speaking Countries and Timor Leste).

Before joining the OECD, João Vasconcelos led the Innovation and International Relations Unit of AMA - Agency for the Administrative Modernization, Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Portugal, coordinating projects such as the EGOV Innovation Hub, the Common Knowledge Network or Dados.gov. He was the Portuguese representative in several high level international committees and groups of the OECD, the European Commission and the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries.

João Vasconcelos also served as project manager and project officer at the Knowledge Society Agency (UMIC), Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Portugal, being responsible for several projects in the areas of digital skills, digital inclusion and ICT in higher education.

Enabling the Digital Transformation of the Public Sector

The world is going digital and governments are not exempt from the transformation underway. Emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, data analytics and the Internet of Things open new opportunities but also disclose several new challenges for citizens, businesses and governments. To properly drive the disruptiveness of the digital age, governments are challenged to embrace a continuous evolution paradigm. Policy makers around the world face today the double challenge of designing policies that can respond to increasingly demanding expectations and needs from citizens in terms of public sector efficiency, quality, transparency, inclusiveness and sustainability, while dealing with a rapid and disruptive penetration of digital technologies in all sectors of society, economy and governments. Digital by design approaches are critical for improved citizen and data-driven policies, capable of taking the full benefit of digital technologies for stronger economic and social development.

Based on the OECD Recommendation on Digital Government Strategies, the presentation will elaborate on the necessary governance frameworks, capacities and building blocks that can enable a coherent and sustainable digital transformation of the public sector.