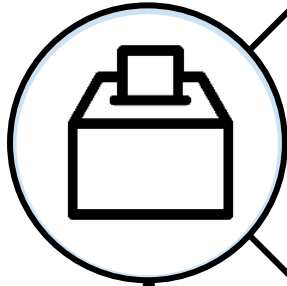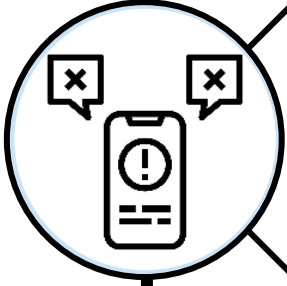# The threat posed by disinformation demands action

- Disinformation **casts doubt on facts, polarizes public debate, and undermines trust** in democratic processes and institutions.

- Government action is needed; **yet democratic governments must remain at a distance.**

- Focus on **information integrity –** No action should lead to greater control of information or harm fundamental human rights.

- Work is rooted in the OECD Reinforcing Democracy Initiative; informed by flagship report *Facts not Fakes: Tackling Disinformation, Strengthening Information Integrity*

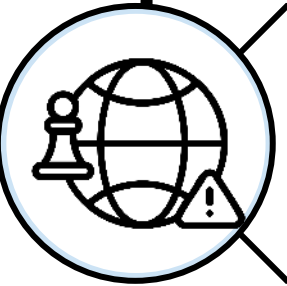**Facts not Fakes**
TACKLING DISINFORMATION, STRENGTHENING
INFORMATION INTEGRITY

OECD

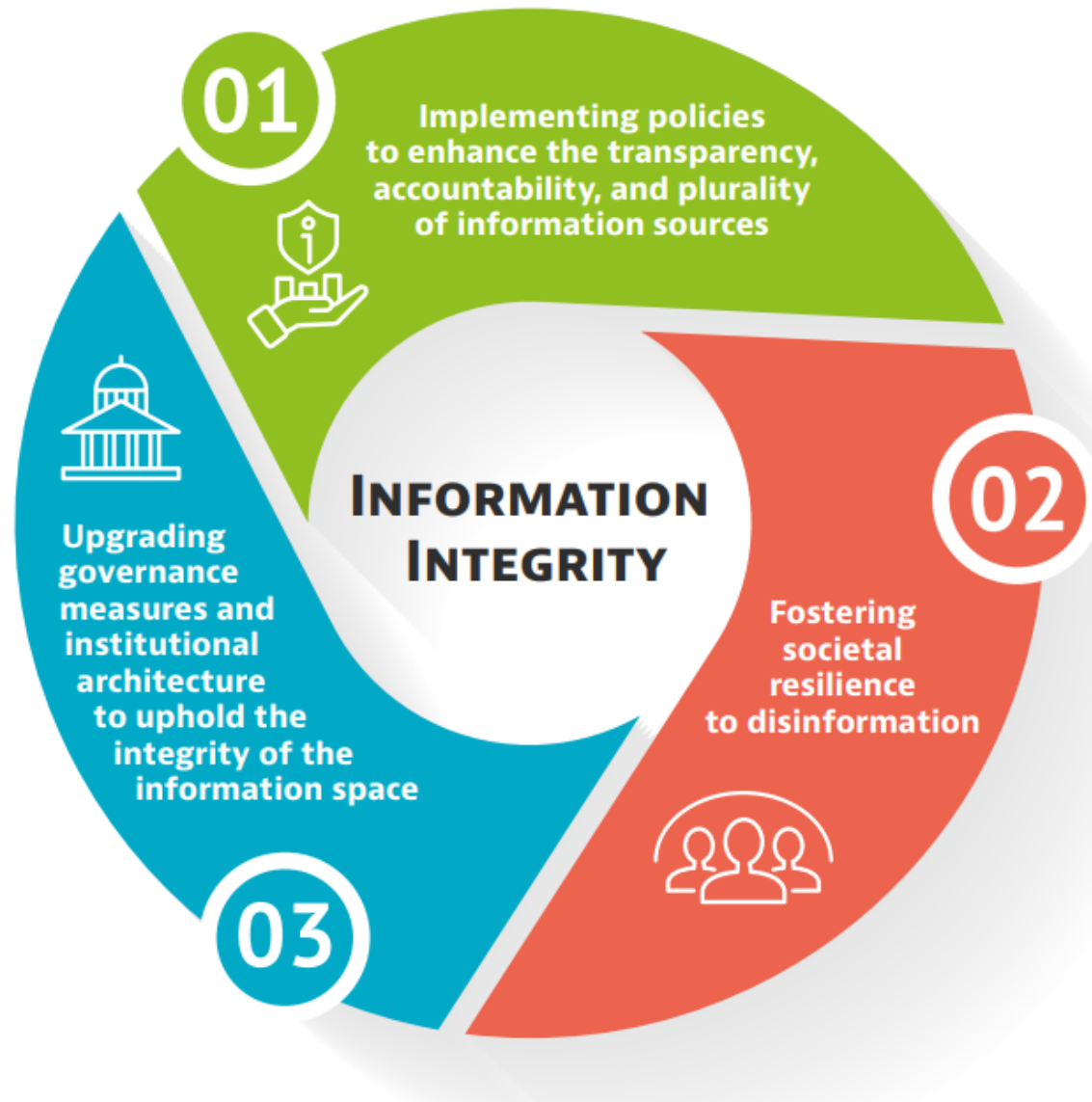# Why the urgency?

Electoral cycles

Exponential use of generative Artificial Intelligence

Manipulation of information and foreign interference

An analytical framework to strengthen information integrity

01 Implementing policies to enhance the transparency, accountability, and plurality of information sources

INFORMATION INTEGRITY

02 Fostering societal resilience to disinformation

03 Upgrading governance measures and institutional architecture to uphold the integrity of the information space
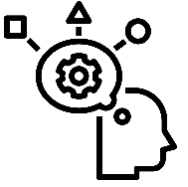
Enhancing the transparency, accountability, and plurality of information sources

1. **Improve transparency and accountability of online platforms** – going beyond self-regulation – so that market-power and commercial interests do not take priority over information integrity.

2. **Support a diverse, plural, and independent media sector**, with an emphasis on local journalism - so that it maintains its role as a watchdog for the public interest and in holding state and non-state actors to account, with solid information integrity standards.

Fostering societal resilience

1. **Empower individuals to cultivate critical thinking** and to **identify and counter** the spread of false and misleading information.

2. **Raise public awareness** through **proactive public communication.**

3. **Mobilise all sectors of society**.

Upgrading institutions to uphold information integrity

National strategies for countering disinformation remain the exception rather than the rule

Only 9 out of 24 surveyed countries have developed a national strategic document providing direction on how to tackle disinformation and reinforce information integrity.

Countries that participated in the report survey are Australia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Italy, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Türkiye and the United States. Responses were provided by government authorities from April to September 2023.
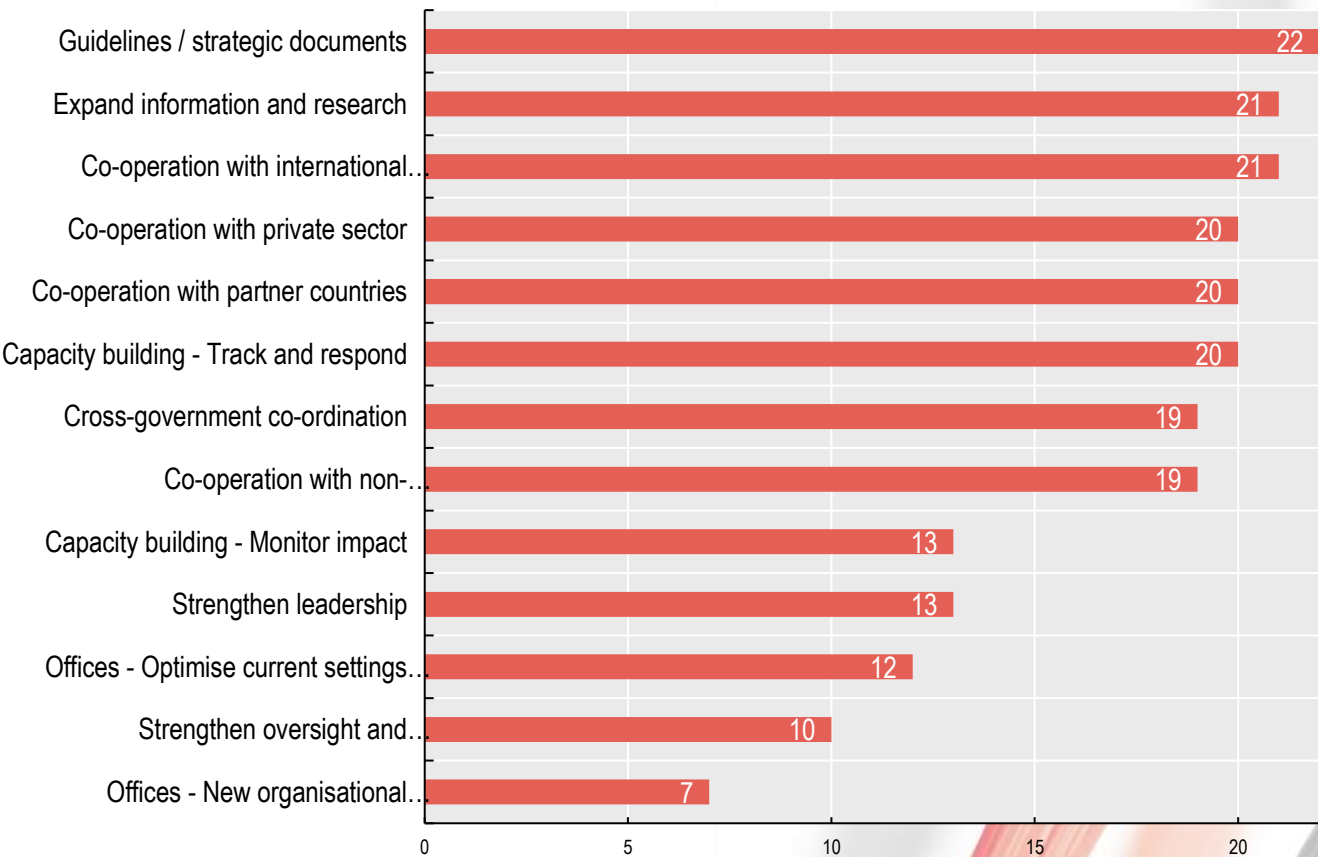
As part of the survey, respondents were asked: "*Is there a national strategic framework or guidance document in force in which the government identifies and describes the main information threats, potential impacts, and response options?*"

Upgrading institutions to uphold information integrity

> ➤ **92% of countries surveyed** identify this as a priority area to improve over the next 1-2 years.

Areas for future improvements to strengthen information integrity

Area	Number of countries
Guidelines / strategic documents	22
Expand information and research	21
Co-operation with international...	21
Co-operation with private sector	20
Co-operation with partner countries	20
Capacity building - Track and respond	20
Cross-government co-ordination	19
Co-operation with non-...	19
Capacity building - Monitor impact	13
Strengthen leadership	13
Offices - Optimise current settings...	12
Strengthen oversight and...	10
Offices - New organisational...	7

Number of countries

As part of the survey, respondents were asked: *"To better understand your priorities moving forward, please indicate the areas your government will seek to improve over the coming 1-2 years"*, one of the suggested priorities was: Develop, update, or increase relevance of guidelines and/or strategic documents.
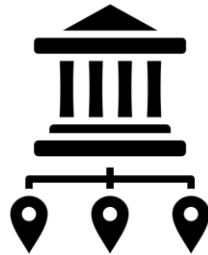
Upgrading institutions to uphold information integrity

➤ **Only 50% of the countries surveyed have at least one cross-government coordination mechanism.**
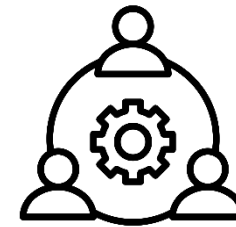
Examples:

Cross-government coordination unit

- France's VIGINUM
- Lithuania's National Crisis Management Centre
- United States' Global Engagement Centre

Task force

- Australia's Electoral Integrity Assurance Taskforce
- Canada's Security and Intelligence Threats to Elections (SITE) Task Force

As part of the survey, respondents were asked: *"Does a cross-government mechanism (cell, office, unit, etc.) exist to co-ordinate government efforts to identify and/or respond to disinformation?"*

Thank you

Discover more about our work:
oe.cd/facts-not-fakes