



Minister of Digital Development,
Innovation and Aerospace Industry of
the Republic of Kazakhstan



ITU Regional Forum on Digital Government

Astana, Kazakhstan, 28-29 March 2024

In partnership with the Ministry of Digital Development, Innovations, and Aerospace Industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Joint Stock Company "National Information Technologies", the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) held a Regional Forum on Digital Government from March 28 to March 29 in Astana, Kazakhstan.



The event was attended by more than 70 representatives from sectoral ministries and agencies, regulatory authorities, telecommunications operators, equipment manufacturers, and software developers, as well as scientific and project institutes and other interested organizations. Additionally, experts from GovStack and members of the Generation Connect CIS youth group participated. Representatives from Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, as well as from the World Food Programme (WFP), shared their experiences in the development of digital government services.

The forum's agenda included an introductory session on GovStack, five thematic sessions, presentations by IT companies, countries' experiences in developing digital government services, and the use of digital infrastructure in the context of social security. Overall, the program offered a detailed analysis of the building blocks of the GovStack project, and services based on them in areas such as data governance, consent, proactive services and citizen portal, digital id and digital wallet, architecture, interoperability, and information mediator.

At the opening, the First Vice-Minister of the Ministry of Digital Development, Innovations, and Aerospace Industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kanysh Amanbayevich Tuleushin, delivered a welcoming speech. He emphasized the importance of cooperation in the digital transformation of state governance and digital

services, providing an overview of the key elements of Kazakhstan's digital ecosystem. He showcased the country's significant achievements in digital transformation and the utilization of modern technologies, including Industry 4.0, support for startups, increasing innovation exports, and Kazakhstan's international cooperation.

Following that, on behalf of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Cosmas Luckyson Zavazava, the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau, spoke, highlighting the priority of building a digital government ecosystem. He noted that every individual should be at the center of the digital transformation process. It is crucial to provide access to digital services to everyone, including citizens from remote areas and rural localities.

At the **GovStack introductory session**, participants engaged in an interactive training that pinpointed priority collaboration areas for the digitalization of public services. They established a hierarchy of priorities: 1. Ensuring functional compatibility of digital infrastructure; 2. Collaborative development and execution of projects; 3. Facilitating knowledge exchange and capacity enhancement; 4. Standardizing technical specifications; and 5. Aligning and coordinating policies. The most significant challenges identified by the countries in creating and implementing digital government services include a lack of governmental interest, fragmented systems, bureaucratic hurdles, the absence of an integrated infrastructure, no unified vision of e-government, and issues with financial and human resources, as well as gaining public consent and avoiding duplication of e-platforms. Key building blocks of the Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) recognized as priorities were digital identity and consent management. Additionally, digital documents, user-centric design, interoperability, information mediation, digital wallets, and the standardization of digital services were emphasized as crucial components. The role of startups within the GovStack initiative was also acknowledged as important.

The first session on March 28 focused on analyzing the building blocks and related services in the field of data management. Participants were introduced to the digital infrastructure of Kazakhstan, explored the country's experience in building a data management system, and learned about the operations of services like Smart Data Ukimet and the Digital Family Card. It is noteworthy to mention the case study on welfare analysis based on the Digital Family Card, which uses the Alkire-Foster method to measure multidimensional poverty and quickly provides social support services to those in need. Additionally, the experience with the No-code platform for creating e-government portals and websites for government bodies was positively received.

The second session on March 28 delved into the building blocks and services related to proactive services and citizen portals. The forum participants were introduced to the service portal of Uzbekistan (MyGov.uz) and the service portal of Kazakhstan. Uzbekistan presented an overview of MyID - Face Authentication and a review of the integration platform as a gateway for data exchange, showcasing the experience of government data processing center programs. A review of the work by the National Information Technologies JSC, as the operator of Kazakhstan's e-government, was also presented, highlighting the optimization of the time to receive government services; the streamlining of processes for providing government services to citizens; the elimination of the human factor, and the enhancement of citizens' loyalty towards government bodies.

The third session on March 28 focused on analyzing the building blocks and related services in the fields of digital identity and digital wallet. Participants reviewed the GovStack specifications. During this session, there was a presentation and discussion on Kazakhstan's eGov Mobile application and Azerbaijan's myGov platform. The overview of digital identification underscored that the foundation for service provision starts with reliable user identification, crucial for payment processes, including digital services. The aim for this building block is to simplify the identification process through unified standards, ensuring reliable verification and convenience for users across different countries. This process includes streamlining labor and social procedures, as seen in Kazakhstan through E-Gov, where employment contracts can be signed via

notification, and material payments for childbirth are made in a simplified manner. Azerbaijan's experience focused on information exchange with the private sector and informed consent management. It was noted that citizens could control the entire data control process, ensuring a citizen-centric digital government.

Additionally, at the end of the first day, presentations by IT companies took place, where they shared their innovations and experiences in collaborating with the public sector. The importance of partnering with startups to build an innovative, human-centered state was emphasized.

The second day of the Forum (March 29) began with a review of the experiences of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in developing digital government services. A representative from Kyrgyzstan discussed the local experience of digital transformation in the city of Bishkek, focusing on the concept of Bishkek as a smart sustainable city by 2033, the "My City" mobile application, the "Smart Stop" project, and the "Dispatcher" information system. During the discussions, the idea of creating a unified document exchange gateway for the CIS countries was proposed and justified. Given the significant level of economic interaction within the CIS, there is a need for a platform to facilitate document exchange, aiming to speed up and optimize the process of inter-country collaboration.

Additionally, the experience of developing digital government services in Tajikistan was presented, showcasing the advancement in digitizing the financial sector and human resource management, including systems for ensuring transparency and efficiency in financial oversight, and an information system for document management. Following the report, the countries discussed the potential for scaling the smart stop system and the relevance of forming a document exchange platform for the CIS.

The fourth session on March 29 was dedicated to a detailed analysis of the building blocks and related services in the areas of architecture, compatibility, and information intermediation. The session included a review of the key principles for building the architecture of a digital state, described as proactive and "invisible." It was highlighted that 80% of resources should be concentrated on maintaining the system, with the remaining 20% allocated for the development of new services. Additionally, the importance of adopting new approaches to technology implementation was emphasized, changing real business processes with technology to improve people's lives. The digital governance infrastructure encompasses policies, management, legal frameworks, and a national base. The review identified four main components essential for organizing digital infrastructure: 1. Access; 2. Digital data; 3. Interoperability; 4. Digital identity.

During **the fifth session** on March 29, there was an exploration of the building blocks and related services in consent management. The leader of the GovStack working group presented a detailed analysis of the consent architecture. Within this framework, authorization is understood as the process of granting specific rights or access levels to a user within a system based on predetermined policies. Consent is defined as the explicit agreement given by an individual for the processing of personal information or for taking actions, based on a full understanding and awareness of the implications. Consent is central to providing digital services, making it a core component of the GovStack building block ecosystem. Experts from Azerbaijan then showcased examples of consent management. For instance, Azerbaijan has developed the Digital Bridge system for data exchange between government institutions, applying experiences from the Estonian product (X-Road - e-Estonia).

At the end of the event, a **session** was organized on the use of digital infrastructure in the context of social security, featuring representatives from the World Food Programme (WFP) who showcased examples of using digital services for social security. Using Kyrgyzstan as a case study, a review was conducted of a system monitoring climate change for the social protection of the population. It was noted that information systems provide comprehensive monitoring across Kyrgyzstan, and climate risk information systems allow for targeted assistance to citizens. The WFP's SHAPES application was demonstrated, enabling users on the ground to model the outcomes of various scenarios based on household-level information and business intelligence. This experience serves as an example of using innovative state systems to address global challenges.

Furthermore, during the discussions, the Director of the ITU Regional Office for the CIS endorsed the importance of inter-country collaboration within the GovStack project and proposed cooperation on the main ITU directions (gender equality, artificial intelligence for good, child online protection, smart cities, and other areas). She also invited the countries to participate in ITU's global events this year.

The Forum materials, including the agenda, presentations, and photos, are published on the [event's webpage](#).

Conclusion

The discussion demonstrated significant interest from participants in the themes explored during the Forum.

As a result of the discussions over the two days of presentations and the experience shared by countries in developing digital government services, as well as the GovStack training seminars, several opinions and requests were expressed by forum participants. These insights could be valuable for further implementation of the GovStack platform's goals and the development of human-centered digital states in the CIS region. Additionally, priorities for collaboration between the ITU Regional Office and the countries of the region on digital government were identified.

Based on the reports of the Forum participants and considering the discussions held over two days, ways to exchange best practices and priority themes were discussed, leading to the proposal of the following directions for future work:

1. The idea of creating a unified document exchange gateway for the CIS countries was proposed by the Director of the Digital Technology Center of the Bishkek City Hall. The existing intense economic relations between the CIS countries necessitate the creation of a specialized platform to facilitate document exchange and simplify interaction. As a first step in this direction, it was suggested to define joint fields for the CIS document exchange gateway. This direction will involve work on mutual recognition of digital documents, verification of electronic signatures, document management in terms of shared use, and remote document signing. The idea was positively received by participants and GovStack experts. Additionally, the creation of a standard for evaluating smart cities was proposed to the ITU Regional Office.

2. Representatives from Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan expressed their interest in participating in upcoming GovStack webinars and events. Participants showed interest in jointly organizing regional forums and workshops on best practices, conducting practical tests of country solutions (to assess their applicability and implementation within the building block approach), proposed physical visits to offices/governments/organizations to exchange experience in building digital government, and discussed the possibility of holding forums on specific GovStack building block themes. Kazakhstan expressed its interest in supporting the CIS region countries in these directions.

3. Participants emphasized the importance of regular meetings, the organization of website content, creation of courses, and conducting webinars on specific building blocks of digital services, especially proactive services. Country experts agreed on the importance of effectively promoting digital services among countries at all levels and involving other stakeholders (academic community, private sector, startups, regulators, youth), highlighting the necessity of inviting large well-known companies, experts, and countries with a higher level of digital transformation. The next step is to conduct webinars on the relevant GovStack building blocks to strengthen the capacity of the countries.

4. An ITU expert proposed a unified approach to legal regulation based on [digital human rights](#) as a response to the legal challenges of digital transformation identified by GovStack experts. A modern digital state should be human-centric. Legal regulation of the digital environment, related to human rights, will ensure that technologies serve the benefit of citizens, increase trust from citizens towards digital service systems, and

minimize abuses (for example, excessive data collection and violation of human rights). This will enhance citizen engagement in the development of states and increase trust in the system. Additionally, the creation of a toolkit for sustainable digital transformation of a human-oriented state was proposed (to assess the innovative state by stakeholders and levels of digital state development), which will accelerate the process of engaging personnel for the digital transformation of states. The conduct of a webinar on digital human rights for the digital state was supported. Furthermore, the consideration of the digital state as a factor in solving global problems, taking into account the context of Web 3.0 development, generative artificial intelligence, and the need to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals was proposed.

At the conclusion of the event, Forum participants expressed their gratitude to the Ministry of Digital Development, Innovations, and Aerospace Industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Joint Stock Company "National Information Technologies," and the ITU for the excellent preparation, organization, and execution of the Regional Forum on Digital Government.

The ITU Regional Office for the CIS region expresses gratitude to all moderators, speakers, and participants of the Forum.