



**REPORT ON RESULTS OF APPLYING THE TRANSPARENCY AND ACCESS
TO INFORMATION NETWORK INDICATORS MODEL:
GENERAL DIAGNOSIS AND PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVEMENTS**

**COMPLUTENSE INSTITUTE OF ADMINISTRATION SCIENCES RESEARCH
TEAM**

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1. PRESENTATION

This document discusses the results of the analysis of applying the indicators model in member States of the Transparency and Access to Information Network [*Red de Transparencia y Acceso a la Información*] (the “RTA” in Spanish), a project that arose after execution of a memorandum of intent between the RTA and the board of the *Instituto Complutense de Ciencias de la Administración* [Complutense Institute of Administration Sciences] (the “ICCA” in Spanish), which was later formalized in a research and knowledge transfer agreement between the *Universidad Complutense de Madrid* and the RTA.

The project, along with the respective technical work, was undertaken by the ICCA from March, 2021 to the beginning of July, 2022, with the delivery of this final report, as well as the individual report for each participating country and the relative databases with the questionnaires.

In order to ensure that the results of applying the instrument and the interpretation of same would be consistent, the data that is the foundation for the report was validated and/or agreed upon with each partner or country participating in the study. Specifically, in the end, 14 countries participated in the project, alphabetically as follows: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Spain and Uruguay.

The report is organized as follows: the table below exhibits the complete metrics model, considering the dimensions, variables, indicators or questions, as well as their respective values. A comparative analysis of results is done in the third section of the document, establishing a general ranking based on averaging the three dimensions, and an analysis of results by dimension (resources, processes and results), which provides insight on each country’s situation and allows us to compare it to the others. Lastly, we present the main conclusions and a series of recommendations to improve public transparency policies in the cases analyzed.

2. METHODOLOGY: RTA INDICATOR MODELS

The RTA Indicator Model is comprised of three dimensions: Dimension 1, Resources; Dimension 2, Processes; and Dimension 3, Results. As can be seen in Table 1, these analytical dimensions are further structured on different variables and questions that contribute to measuring the degree of the public policy’s development in each country.

Specifically, the model is comprised of a total of 64 indicators/questions that pertain to the dimensions as follows: 17 to the Resources Dimension, 27 to the Processes Dimension and 20 to the Results Dimension. The number of indicators/questions comprising each dimension, differentiated by variables, is indicated in Table 1, as well as is the estimated percentage value of each variable based on obtaining a 100% maximum compliance in that dimension.

Table 1.
Analytical Framework: RTA Indicators Model

Dimension	Variable	Questions/indicators & % compliance
Resources Dimension	V.1.1. Recognition of the Right	10 (58.8%)
	V.1.2. Guaranty of the Right	7 (41.2%)
Processes Dimension	V.2.1. Guarantor Function (body)	25 (92.6%)
	V.2.2. Reporting Party	2 (7.4%)
Results Dimension	V.3.1. Institutional Performance	4 (20%)
	V.3.2. User Satisfaction	7 (35%)
	V.3.3. Citizens	6 (30%)
	V.3.4. Officialdom	3 (15%)

Source: Prepared by this study based on the RTA Indicators Model.

The **Resources Dimension** assesses if the countries have created an *institutional system (regulatory framework and specific institutions) to recognize and guaranty active transparency (active publicity) and passive transparency (rights to access to public information)*. This dimension is measured by applying two variables: Recognition of the Right (V.1.1.) and Guaranty of the Right (V.1.2.) On the one hand, the **Recognition of the Right** variable allows for measurement of three issues: if the right to public information or the right to access is recognized in the constitutional and legal system; the level of extension of the law to the individuals the law affects or the scope of the extension of reporting parties; and the formal structures that are created (liaison units) in different organic entities (mainly of reporting parties), for the proper development of the law and the public transparency policy. On the other hand, the **Guaranty of the Right** variable makes it possible to verify two questions: the level of institutionalization of the transparency policy, if protocols and *ad hoc* bodies have been created with specific competencies to control, supervise and guaranty transparency; and if initiatives associated with the development of transparency (archive and open data policies) have been promoted.

The **Processes Dimension** assesses *the institutional capacity to guaranty active and passive transparency*. Specifically, how transparency control and follow-up processes are executed (active and passive), and which programs and activities are promoted to implement the public transparency policy (e.g., training programs, communication programs, etc.). This dimension is measured by applying two variables: Guarantor Function (Body) (V2.1); and Reporting Party (V2.2). The **Guarantor Function (Body)** measures by whom and how the transparency control and follow-up processes are developed (active and passive), as well as what specific measures and actions (communication, training, etc.) have been promoted to implement the public policy. And the **Reporting Party** variable makes it possible to confirm the budget allocated to the guarantor body and the percentage of liaisons in the reporting parties.

The **Results Dimension** assesses *institutional performance (compliance with the transparency oversight function) and the degree of effectiveness of the transparency policy in different target groups (users, citizens and officialdom)*. This dimension is measured by applying four variables: Institutional Performance (V3,1); User Satisfaction (V3,2); Citizens (V3,3); an Officialdom (V3.4). The first variable, **Institutional Performance**, makes it possible to confirm if the transparency oversight function is

effectively developed. The **User Satisfaction** variable measures user's perception of specific actions in implementing active transparency (transparency websites) and passive transparency, as well as their opinion on some attributes related to the quality of information provided by public institutions (usefulness) and the request for access to public information process (attention received, clarity of language, etc.). The third variable, **Citizens**, measures several matters: the degree of citizens' knowledge and usability of the right to access public information; the level of citizen consultation of information published on the Transparency website (active transparency); the level of requests made for specific information from public institutions (passive transparency); and the degree of satisfaction with the usefulness of the active and passive transparency. Finally, the **Officialdom** variable measures the degree of public employees' knowledge of the regulation that guarantees the right to access to public information, and their level of satisfaction with the usefulness of active and passive transparency.

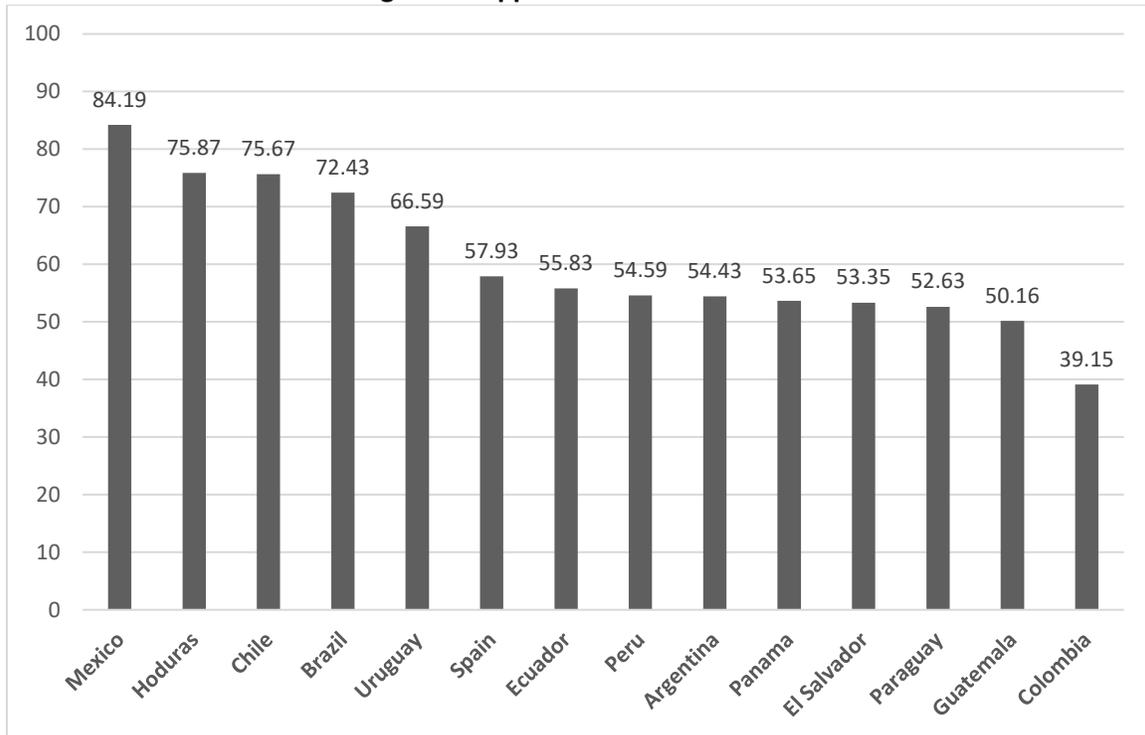
Lastly, to collect information from the primary sources (countries), the study designed an electronic questionnaire that collected all the indicators (and questions) in the RTA model. In order to conduct this survey, an electronic platform was created and enabled on the Universidad Complutense de Madrid's virtual space. In the assessment of questionnaire responses, answers were in the most part based on a binary-type scale (yes=1; no=0), although some non-binary scales were also employed (0– 0.25 – 0.50 – 1 points) to measure some aspects pertaining to the Processes Dimension and the Results Dimension.

3. GENERAL DIAGNOSIS OF RESULTS: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Graph 1 exhibits the general results achieved by the 14 countries participating in the study by applying the transparency indicators model. Results ranking, based on the average of the three analytical dimensions (resources, processes and results), made it possible to confirm that the level of compliance varies between a maximum of 84.19% and a minimum of 39.15%. Specifically, Mexico achieved the best results and Colombia the worst, having failed to apply even 50% of the indicators assessing transparency under the RTA model.

In addition to the foregoing cases, the comparative analysis of countries made it possible to determine that the majority (with the exception of Colombia) more or less comply with the indicators established by the RTA, although the results indicate two trends. On the one hand, the largest group of countries (Spain, Ecuador, Peru, Argentina, Panama, El Salvador, Paraguay and Guatemala) have applied from 50-60% of the transparency model parameters. On the other, there is a minority of countries achieving a level of compliance above 60%, but under 80%: Uruguay (66.59%), Brazil (72.43%), Chile (75.67%) and Honduras (75.87%).

Graph 1.
General Ranking of the Application of the RTA Indicators Model

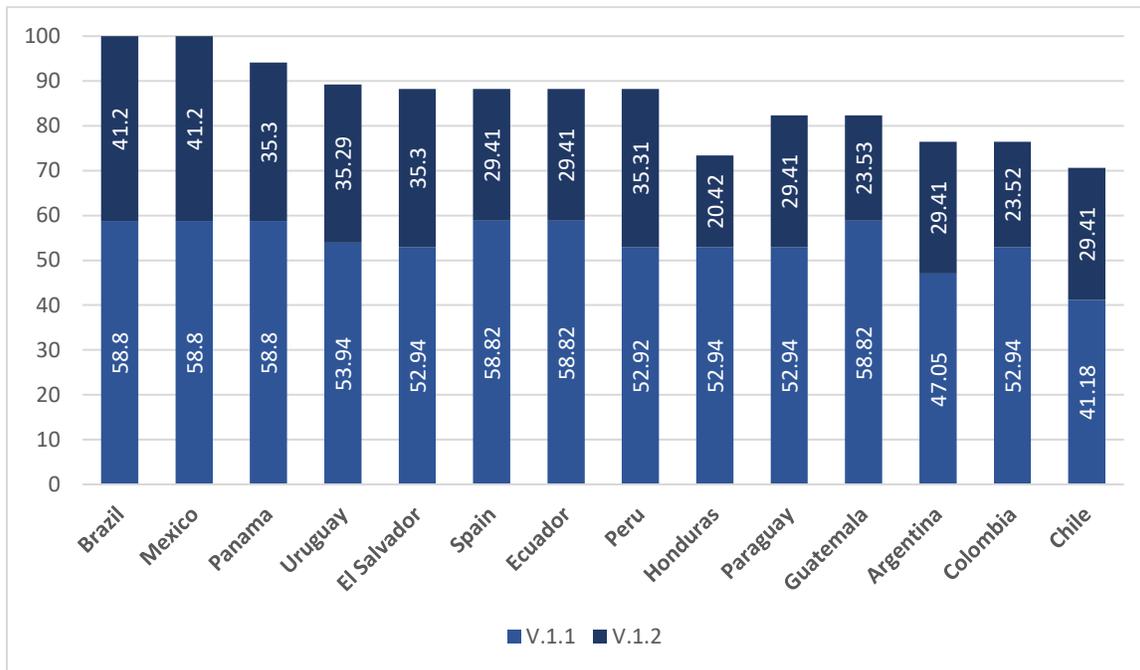


Source: ICCA

3.1 GENERAL DIAGNOSIS OF THE RESOURCES DIMENSION

The analysis of results obtained in the Resources Dimension confirms that the greatest level of compliance was obtained in this dimension, given that, as can be seen in Graph 2, the scale of application of the Indicators Model varies between 100% and 70.59%. Specifically, two cases (Mexico and Brazil) have achieved the maximum level of compliance and Chile is the country with the lowest degree of application of the RTA Indicators Model. In any case, the general diagnosis of the Resources Dimension is very positive, which demonstrates that the countries analyzed in the study have, to a lesser or greater degree, an institutional system (regulatory framework and specific institutions) in place to guarantee active and passive transparency.

Graph 2.
Ranking of Resources Dimension Results



Source: ICCA

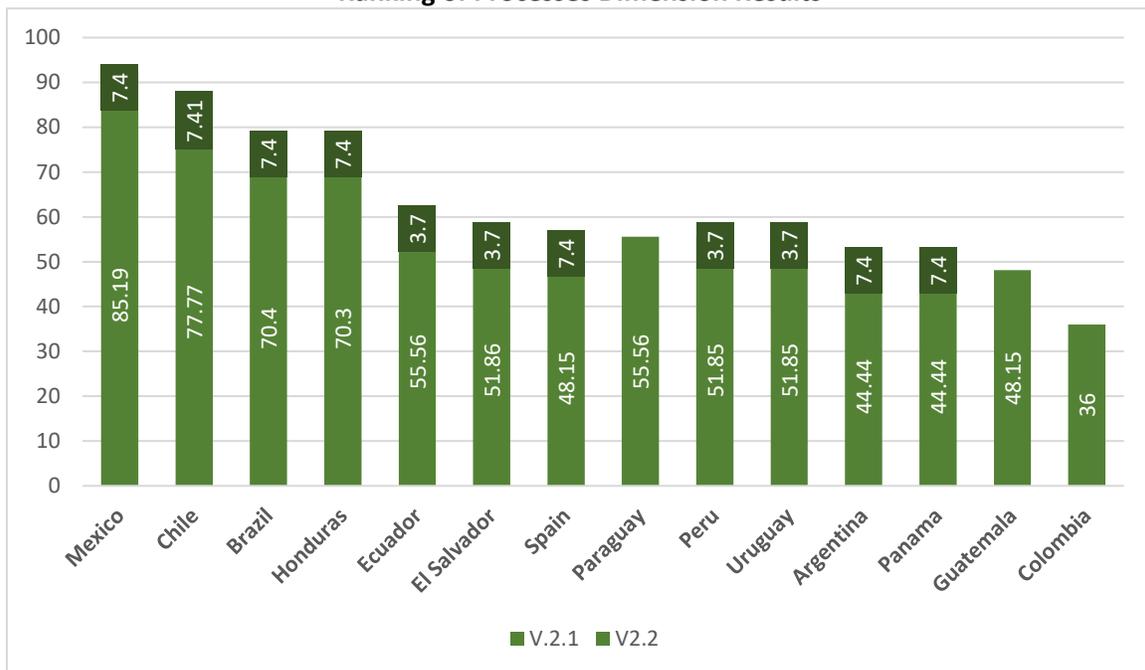
As can be seen in Graph 2, the analysis—broken down by variables—confirms that the greatest compliance is achieved in **Variable 1.1 (Recognition of the Right)**, given that 6 of the 14 participating countries obtained the maximum score (58.2%): Brazil, Ecuador, Spain, Guatemala, Mexico and Panama. Furthermore, almost all countries scored above 50% compliance, with the exception of Argentina (47.05%) and Chile (41.18%), although they also achieved good results in Variable 1.1. Therefore, the majority of cases analyzed have a regulation recognizing the right to access to information, although the main difference between countries lies in the extension of reporting parties, given that some of the countries do not include certain parties in civil society that receive public financing.

On the other hand, with respect to **Variable 1.2 (Guaranty of the Right)**, only Brazil and Mexico comply with the 7 indicators to obtain the maximum level of compliance (41.2%). Thus, these two cases have the formal protocols and *ad hoc* bodies with specific competencies to control, supervise and guaranty transparency, in addition to having archive and open data policies associated with the development of transparency. Moreover, El Salvador, Panama, Peru and Uruguay also had optimum results, having applied 6 of the 7 indicators in Variable 1.2. And Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Spain, Honduras and Paraguay have applied most of the indicators (5 of 7), Colombia and Guatemala, having only applied 3 of the 7 indicators, being the cases presenting the worst results.

3.2 GENERAL DIAGNOSIS OF THE PROCESSES DIMENSION

Analysis of the Processes Dimension made it possible to confirm that countries participating in the study have applied the 27 indicators comprising this dimension. Therefore, the compliance scale ranges from a maximum of 92.5% to a minimum of 36%, Mexico ranking first and Colombia last (see Graph 3). Furthermore, the majority of countries (except Colombia with 36% compliance and Guatemala with 48.15%) have applied more than 50% of the transparency measures comprising this dimension in the RTA Indicators Model. It is important to note that along with Mexico, there are three countries that show a high capacity to guaranty active and passive transparency: Chile (85.18%), Brazil (77.8%) and Honduras (77.77%).

Graph 3.
Ranking of Processes Dimension Results



Source: ICCA

The Processes Dimension analysis was made by applying two variables. Regarding **Variable 2.1. (Guarantor Body Function)**, the results in Graph 3 confirm that no country has achieved a maximum compliance in this variable (25 indicators representing a maximum of 92.6%) and that the results vary between a maximum of 85.19% (Mexico has fulfilled 23 of the 25 indicators) and a minimum of 36% (Colombia). Moreover, Chile with 77.77% compliance, followed by Brazil with 70.4% and Honduras with 70.3% have also shown good results. The rest of the cases suggest a wide margin for improvement in aspects related to the specific measures and actions the must be promoted (communication, training, etc.) to implement the public transparency policy in the interests of achieving greater efficacy and efficiency.

Variable 2.2 (Reporting Parties) is comprised of two indicators that represent a maximum of 7.4% of the total compliance, producing the following results: On the one hand, 7 of the 14 countries in the study comply with both indicators: Mexico, Chile, Brazil, Honduras, Spain, Argentina and Panama. On the other, there are 3 countries that have not applied any indicators: Paraguay, Guatemala and Colombia. Moreover, it should be noted that Peru, El Salvador and Ecuador have established above 75% of reporting parties' liaisons, but have reduced the budget of the guarantor body or do not have a specific budget allocation for same.

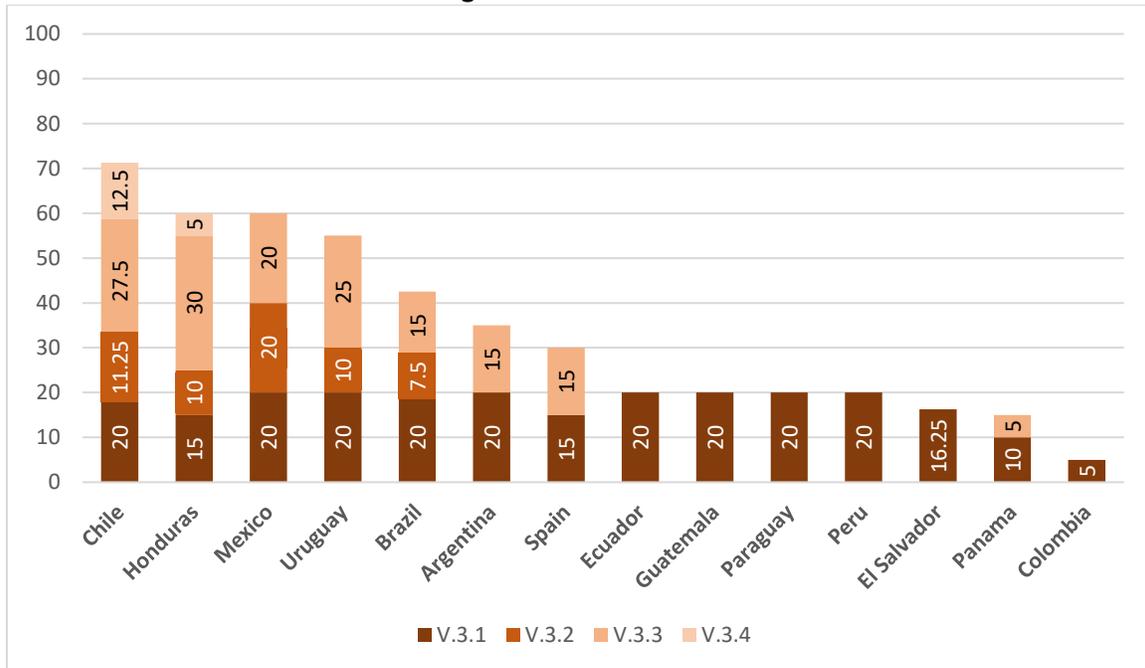
3.3 GENERAL DIAGNOSIS OF THE RESULTS DIMENSION

The Results Dimension shows the lowest degree of compliance compared to the other two dimensions that were analyzed (Resources and Processes), more than anything due to the lack of a systematic and periodic methodology (in most of the countries participating in the study) that helps measure some of the aspects related to the public transparency policy that are part of the RTA Indicators Model and that make it possible to verify the degree of effectiveness of the public transparency policy in the different target groups (users, citizens and officialdom).

As can be seen in Graph 4, the compliance scale ranges from a maximum value of 71.25% to a minimum of 5%, with Chile leading this ranking and Colombia showing the worst results. Moreover, most of the countries—11 of the 14 participants—are at below 50% compliance levels for the Results Dimension.

The Results Dimension is comprised of four variables, with the level of compliance broken down as follows: **Variable 3.1 (Institutional Performance)**, is comprised of 4 indicators, with a maximum value of 20% of the total Results Dimension percentage (100%). These indicators have been fully applied by 9 of the 14 participating countries (see Graph 4). Furthermore, three countries have a compliance score of 15% or higher: El Salvador (16.25%), Honduras (15%) and Spain (15%). However, this very positive trend in the application of Variable 3.1 is disrupted in the cases of Panama, with a compliance level of 10%, and Colombia with 5%, which indicates that these guarantor bodies, to a lesser or greater degree, must improve their transparency oversight functions.

Graph 4.
Ranking in the Results Dimension



Source: ICCA

Variable 3.2 (User Satisfaction) is measured through 7 indicators with a maximum compliance value of 35% of the total variable value. As was mentioned at the beginning of this section, most of the countries that participated in the study have not designed and implemented surveys or other techniques to measure and recognize the level of satisfaction amongst users with certain aspects of active and passive transparency. Specifically, only 5 of the 14 countries that were assessed produced results in this variable: Mexico (20%), Chile (11.25%), Uruguay (10%), Honduras (10%) and Brazil (7.5%). However, only Mexico achieved a higher than average compliance (20%) (calculated based on the total percentage of 35% represented by this variable) and the other four countries had lower results, ranging from a maximum of 11.25% (Chile) to a minimum of 7.5% (Brazil).

Methodological deficiencies also impacted the results of another two variables comprising this dimension. On the one hand, **Variable 3.3 (Citizens)**, comprised of 6 indicators/questions, the maximum compliance level of which is 30% of the total, was measurable in 8 of the 14 participating countries because of the foregoing reasons. In those cases producing measurement results, the results have been quite positive in 5 countries, which range in compliance levels from a maximum of 30% to a minimum of 15%, with Honduras presenting the best results (30%), followed by Chile (27.5%) Uruguay (25%), Mexico (20%) and Brazil, Argentina and Spain all with 15% compliance. Contrary to the foregoing cases, Panama only scored 5% on compliance because it has only applied one of the six variable indicators. On the other hand, **Variable 3.4 (Officialdom)**, as articulated in 3 indicators/questions with a total dimension value of

15%, is only partially applied by two countries: Chile, with 12.5% of the total 15%; and Honduras with 5% compliance.

Ultimately, in broad terms, it is clear to see that the participating countries have not implemented measures that contribute to providing objective knowledge (evidenced-based) on the perception of given target groups (users, citizens and officialdom) on the public transparency policy.

4. PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVING THE PUBLIC TRANSPARENCY POLICY IN COUNTRIES PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY

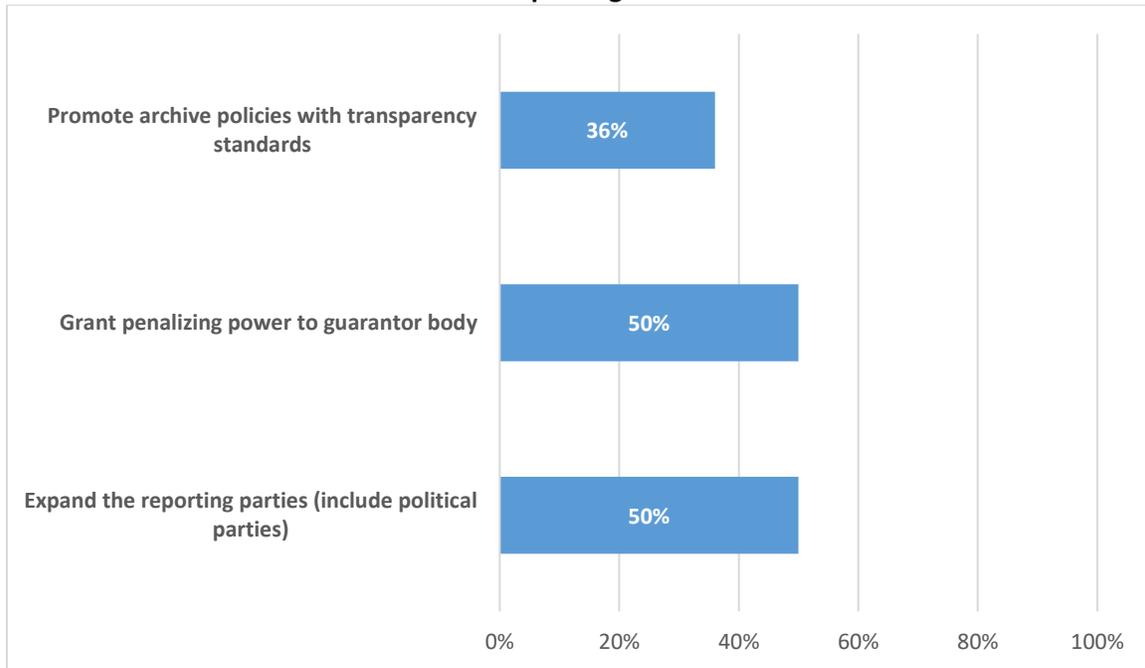
The comparative analysis of applying the RTA Indicators Model in the 14 countries assessed has made it possible to identify areas for improvement in the public transparency policy and, thus, to elaborate a series of recommendations that are discussed below, differentiated by dimension:

4.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING THE RESOURCES DIMENSION

The Resources Dimension achieved the best results in the analysis of the application of the RTA Indicators Model, so there are less proposals for improvement here.

Graph 5 identifies three areas for improvement in the region's public transparency policies. On the one hand, 50% of the assessed cases (Chile, Brazil, Uruguay, Honduras, El Salvador, Peru and Panama) have a regulatory framework that does not include political parties as reporting parties with respect to active publicity, a situation it would be advisable to correct (despite the difficulties entailed in making this regulatory change), considering not only that they, in most cases, receive public financing, but also the important role these public stakeholders play in representative democracies. Secondly, the study also found that 50% of the countries (Uruguay, Honduras, El Salvador, Argentina, Spain, Peru and Guatemala) have an assigned horizontal accountability body that acts as a transparency guarantor body, but lacks penalizing power, which obviously hinders proper performance of its duties, amongst others, but which fulfills the legal requirements in terms of active and passive transparency, above all in those contexts with a weak culture of transparency. A third proposal for improvement is associated with the institutionalization of a public archive policy with transparency standards, given that 36% of the cases (Chile, Argentina, Spain, Panama and Guatemala) have neither created nor implemented one.

Graph 5.
Recommendations for Improving the Resources Dimension



Source: ICCA

4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING THE PROCESSES DIMENSION

Analyses of the application of the RTA Indicators Model have contributed to identifying five areas for improvement in the Processes Dimension.

In the first place, if we consider that the public transparency policy must be aligned with the substantive values of democracy (freedom and equality), it is important to bear in mind that public institutions must guarantee the principle of equal opportunity in access to public information and, to do so, they must be aware of the barriers to access in order to correct them and assure there is no discrimination toward the public. In this respect, the study has revealed that in 93% of the assessed cases, barriers to access to public information are not measured in accordance with a gender focus or the principle of universal access (designed for everyone).

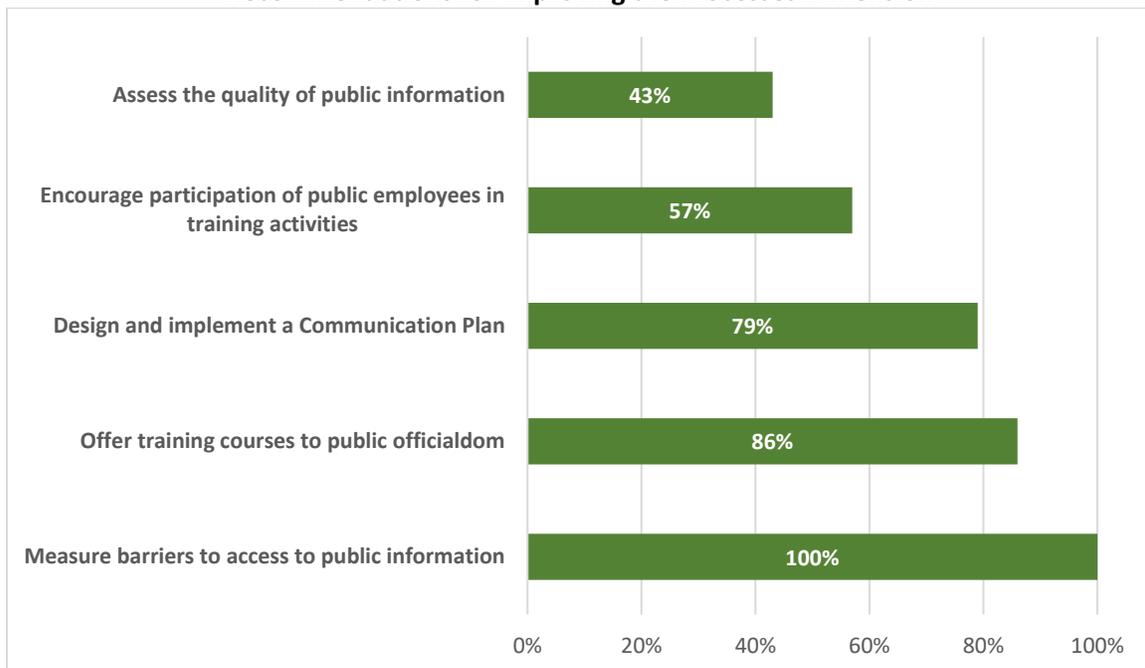
In the second place, most of the countries have educational activities focused on promoting a culture of transparency amongst officialdom. However, 86% of the time, there is no educational plan for target groups; in other words, that take into account activities based on the specific needs of each group of public employees, whose skill requirements are different because of the job they hold in the organization. Therefore, it would be advisable to offer training courses for public officialdom and also to measure the percentage of officialdom that has been trained.

Thirdly, Communication is essential to positioning the right to access to public information so that citizens can use it and, thus, move toward a model of a better informed society that can participate in public affairs reasonably and with sufficient basis in fact. The study found that 79% of the countries do not have a Communication Plan in this respect, which, additionally, includes specific sensitization activities disseminated through mass media to achieve a greater impact on society.

In the fourth place, in regard to questions of public employee training, the study has clearly shown that the average participation of public employees in training activities is very low, around 57%. Therefore, it would be advisable to encourage this participation, for example, through recognition of these courses for promotions in public service careers or by including this achievement to have access to certain public service jobs.

Lastly, although most of the countries studied often assess the quality of public information, there is still some 43% of countries that do not. Therefore, it is appropriate to note the importance of identifying a series of quality assessment attributes including, amongst others, that the information is complete, updated, structured, reusable, clear and comprehensible.

**Graph 6.
Recommendations for Improving the Processes Dimension**



Source: ICCA

4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING THE RESULTS DIMENSION

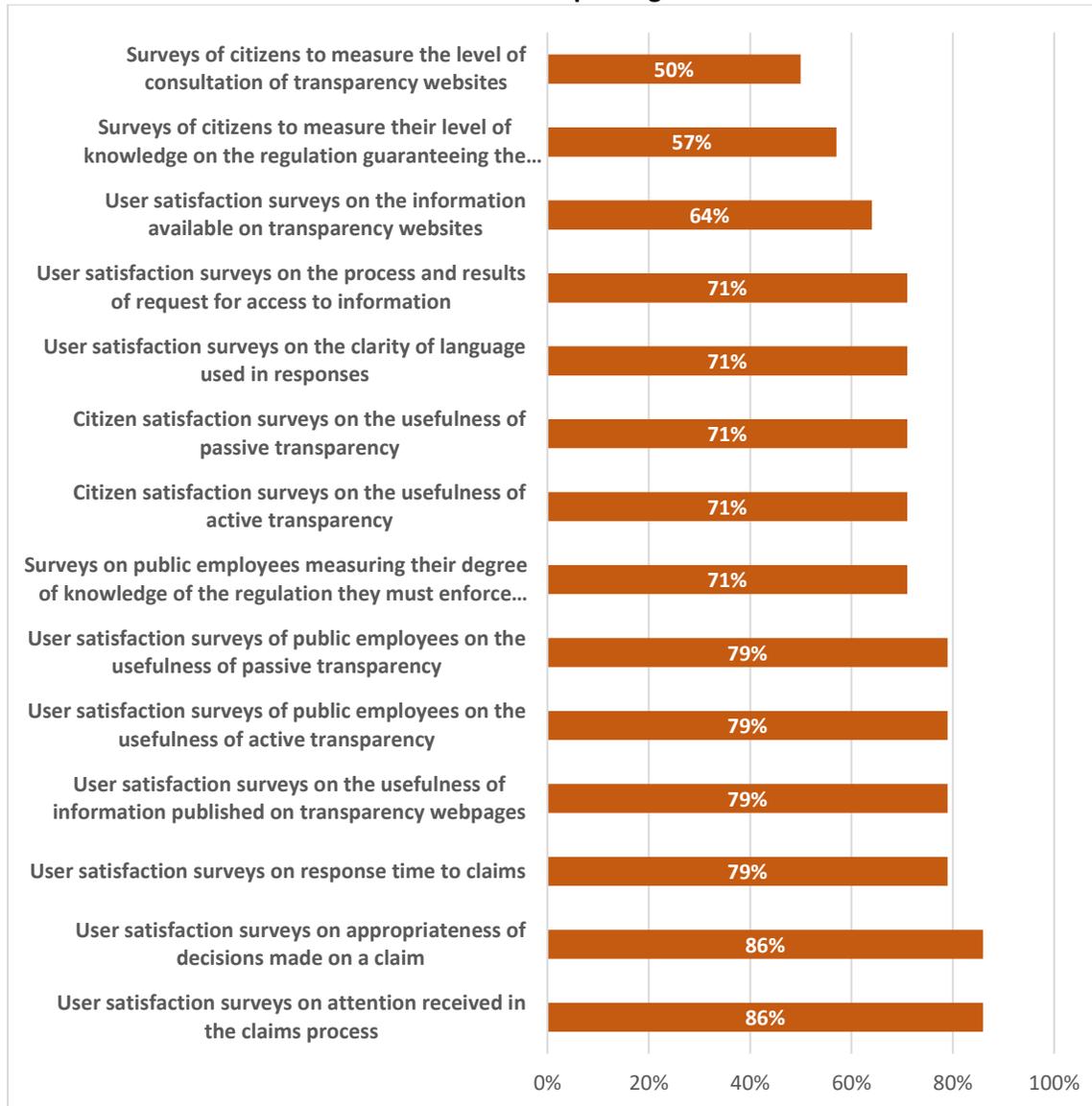
The Results Dimension shows the greatest deficits in application of the RTA Indicators Model, since most of the countries do not have periodic methodologies (surveys) to measure and assess some of these variables (users, citizens and officialdom satisfaction).

Specifically, most of the countries have neither designed nor implemented surveys focused on learning the level of user satisfaction with certain aspects related to the exercise of the right to access (see Graph 7): 86% of the cases with the attention received in the claim process; 86% with the appropriateness of the decision made on their claim; 79% with response time, that is notification of the final decision on their claim; 71% on clarity of language used when responding to their claim; 71% on the process and results of requests for access to public information. Moreover, in regard to user satisfaction to transparency websites, 79% of the countries need to measure the usefulness of published information and 64% of the information available on their web site.

Furthermore, deficiencies in measuring citizens' satisfaction with the usefulness of active and passive transparency were noted, given that in 71% of the cases it is not assessed at all. Moreover, citizens' degree of knowledge of the regulation should also be assessed (in compliance with RTA Indicators), since 57% of the countries do not measure this indicator. And the level of consultation of the transparency websites should also be assessed, since half the countries (50%) do not measure it, because they are not aware if citizens are truly exercising societal control over public actions.

Lastly, as can be seen in Graph 7, most of the countries (more than 70%) have not designed or implemented surveys focused on public officialdom to learn their opinion of the usefulness of active and passive transparency and this groups' degree of knowledge of the regulation they must enforce and guarantee.

**Graph 7.
Recommendations for Improving the Results Dimension**



Source: ICCA

And for the record and the appropriate effects hereof, as the study director, I hereby sign this technical and simplified results report in Madrid on July 4, 2022.

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