Online Volunteers join forces with UN DESA to collaborate on UN E-Government Survey across 193 UN Member States

Ninety-six **UN Online Volunteers** mobilized through the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme from across the globe engaged for the second time to collaborate with the **United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)** to process research surveys carried out across UN Member States for the **UN E-Government Survey**.

The survey done every two years assesses the use of information technology to provide public services to citizens. UN DESA’s Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM) has published the UN E-Government Survey—a flagship publication—since 2003. Global teams of UN Online Volunteers have been collaborating in this venture since 2013.

The 2016 Survey engaged UN Online Volunteers from 59 countries, speaking more than 66 languages. During the four-month long intense collaboration, they contributed to the data collection of 386 research surveys and the analysis of national-level government portals.

E-government uses information technology to provide public services to
citizens. In this context, this Survey is mandated by the UN General Assembly through resolutions 58/231 and 59/55.

The substantive support from the global team of online volunteers was innovative and took advantage of latest technologies making the assessment process effective, efficient, user-friendly and transparent. “Not only did online volunteers provide an excellent service to the UN, but also gained significant knowledge and experience, making it a win-win situation,” says Vincenzo Aquaro, who coordinated the online volunteers’ collaboration with UN DESA’s DPADM, which prepares the survey.

The 2016 E-Government Survey 2016 focused on “E-Government as an Enabler of Sustainable Development”, highlighting the potential of e-government to promote the 2030 sustainable development agenda. The Survey assessed the e-government development status of the 193 Member States of the United Nations, and served as a tool for decision makers to identify areas of strength and challenges in e-government and inform relevant policies and strategies of how best to move ahead.

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Throughout the assessment journey, UN Online Volunteers familiarized themselves with concepts, terminology, the online survey platform, national portals and the online e-government survey platform—the task had a positive learning impact on the volunteers themselves, including efficient teamwork. Anush Kocharyan, UN Online Volunteer from Armenia says, “Coordinators were always available to answer questions and clarify ambiguous situations. A platform for communication among the online volunteers was created as well, which ensured effective communication and knowledge sharing among the whole team. Volunteers asked and answered each other’s questions.”
The project demonstrated the ability of online volunteering to scale and diversify policies and strategies in e-government. It also underpinned the role of volunteerism as a valuable solution to sustainable development. UN Online Volunteers are skilled and passionate individuals joining forces with UN partner organizations to work towards sustainable development goals—it’s an unbeatable proposition.

**UN Online Volunteers** will continue to contribute to data research for the 2018 United Nations E-Government Survey.

*Online Volunteering allows organizations and volunteers to team up to address sustainable development challenges – anywhere in the world, from any device. Online volunteering is simple, universal – and most of all, its effective.*

- UNV Online Volunteering service • UN DESA

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