"*Strengthening the Resilience of Public Administrations after the covid-19 pandemic with CAF2020*"

A multi-country OECD project funded by the European Commission (DG REFORM) and in collaboration with EIPA and KDZ

Natalia Nolan Flecha, Policy Analyst, OECD Public Governance Directorate

Project objectives

- The expected long-term effect of this Project is a **more resilient public administration** in European Member States by embedding drivers and enablers of resilience in quality control mechanisms.

- The project is designed to identify and explore **lessons learned in resilience during the covid pandemic** through:
  - Survey of CAF user organisations' experience and their perceived role of the CAF;
  - Cross-cutting case studies from organisations of different sectors, sizes, and levels of government;
  - Workshops and discussions with CAF experts, case study organisations and public management experts to extract lessons learned and the implications for the CAF.

Project outputs and activities

November 2021

Drafts finalised by July/August 2022

June & November 2022

Early 2023

Survey
- Recent and existing CAF users
- ID key themes and challenges
- Pandemic explored through the lens of the CAF

Case studies
- Innovations and adaptations identified
- Lessons learned (what could have been done better)
- Further reflection on role of the CAF

Deep-dive workshops
- Deeper discussions on specific CAF components and trends
- Pinpointing characteristics of resilience
- Critical look at the CAF from the PoV of Resilience

Synthesis report
- Summary of Lessons learned on Resilience
- Recommendations for CAF, organisations, national-level administrations, etc.
- Recommendations for CAF itself

Webinar Results presented at EUPAN DG Meeting

EUPAN DG Meeting in November

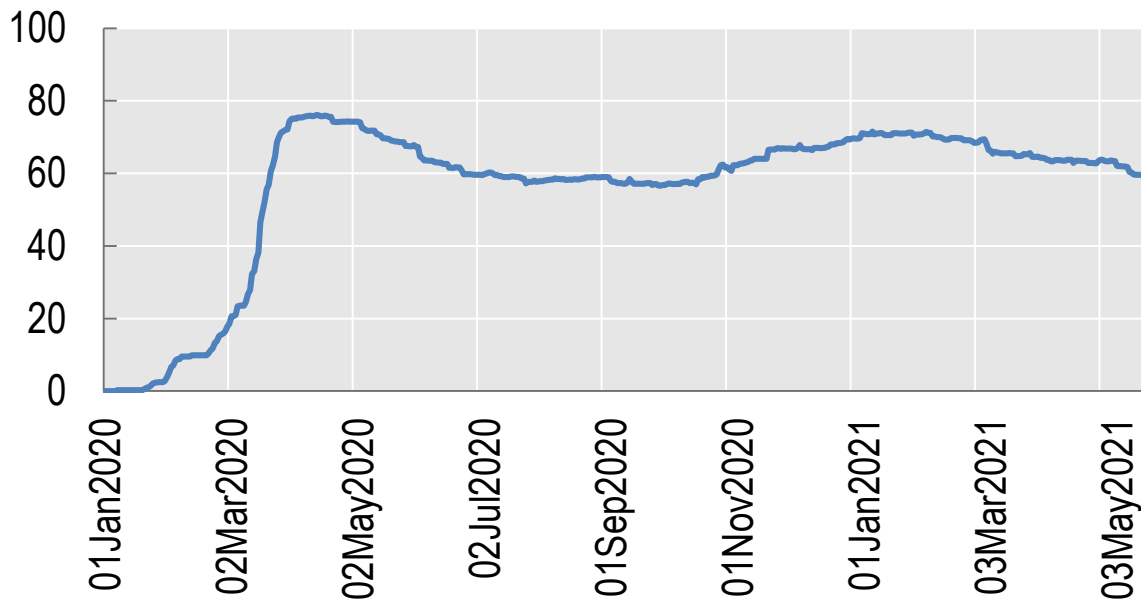# Strengthening the resilience of public services- what is resilience?

- Covid pandemic has demonstrated importance of public administrations' **capacities for resilience.**
  - Organisations must prepare, absorb the shock, recover and adapt
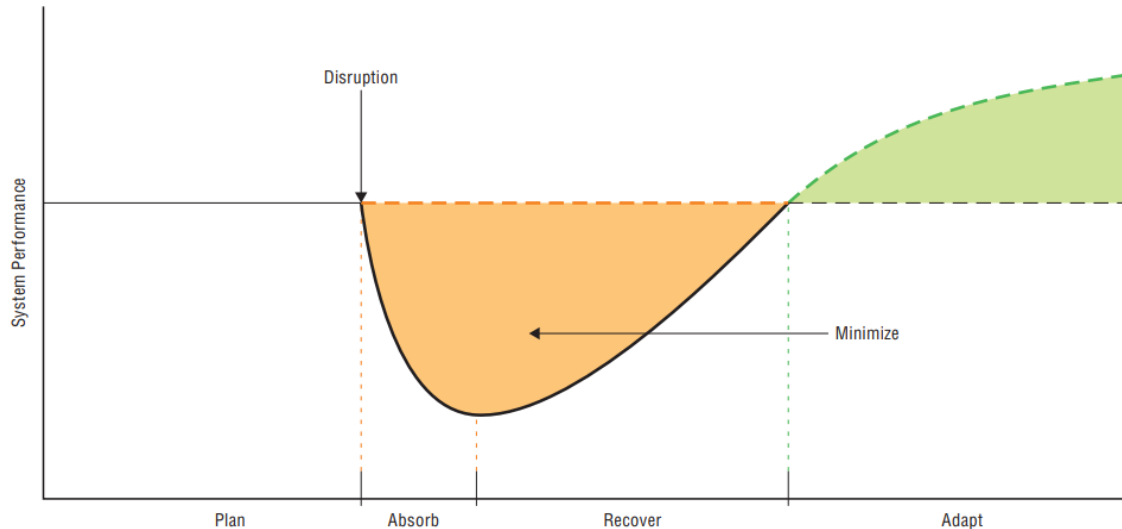
Public administrations saved lived and livelihoods

Average stringency of lockdown measures across OECD countries

Index represents population-weighted average of the COVID-19 Government Response Stringency Index for OECD countries: school closures, workplace closures, cancellations of public events, restrictions on gatherings, public transport closures, and restrictions on movement
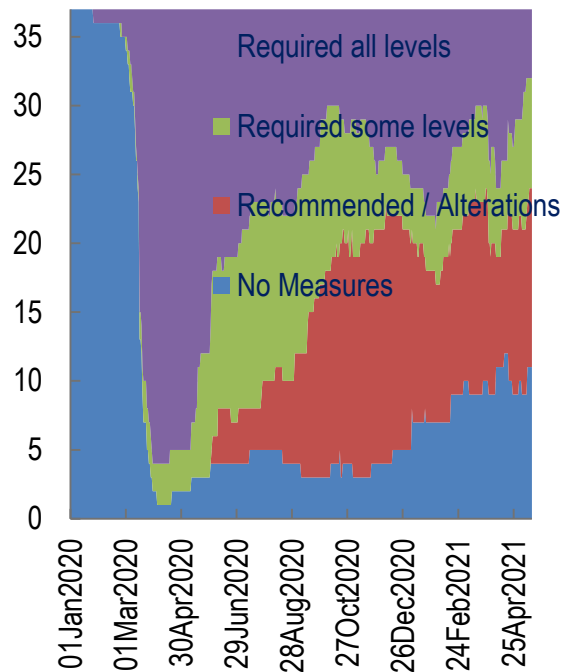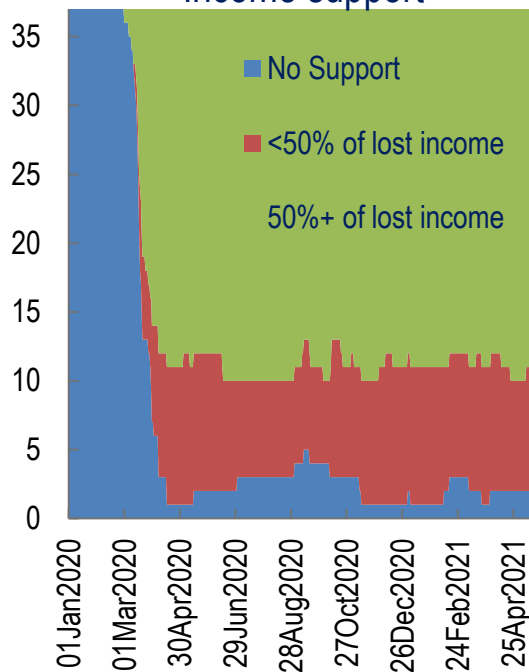
Public administrations saved lived and livelihoods

Number of OECD countries with each policy response in place, 1 January 2020 – 15 May 2021

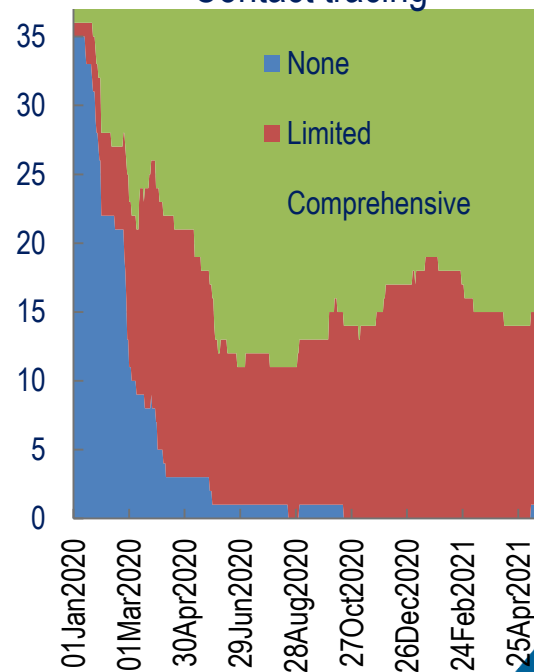**School closures**
- Required all levels
- Required some levels
- Recommended / Alterations
- No Measures

Income support
- No Support
- <50% of lost income
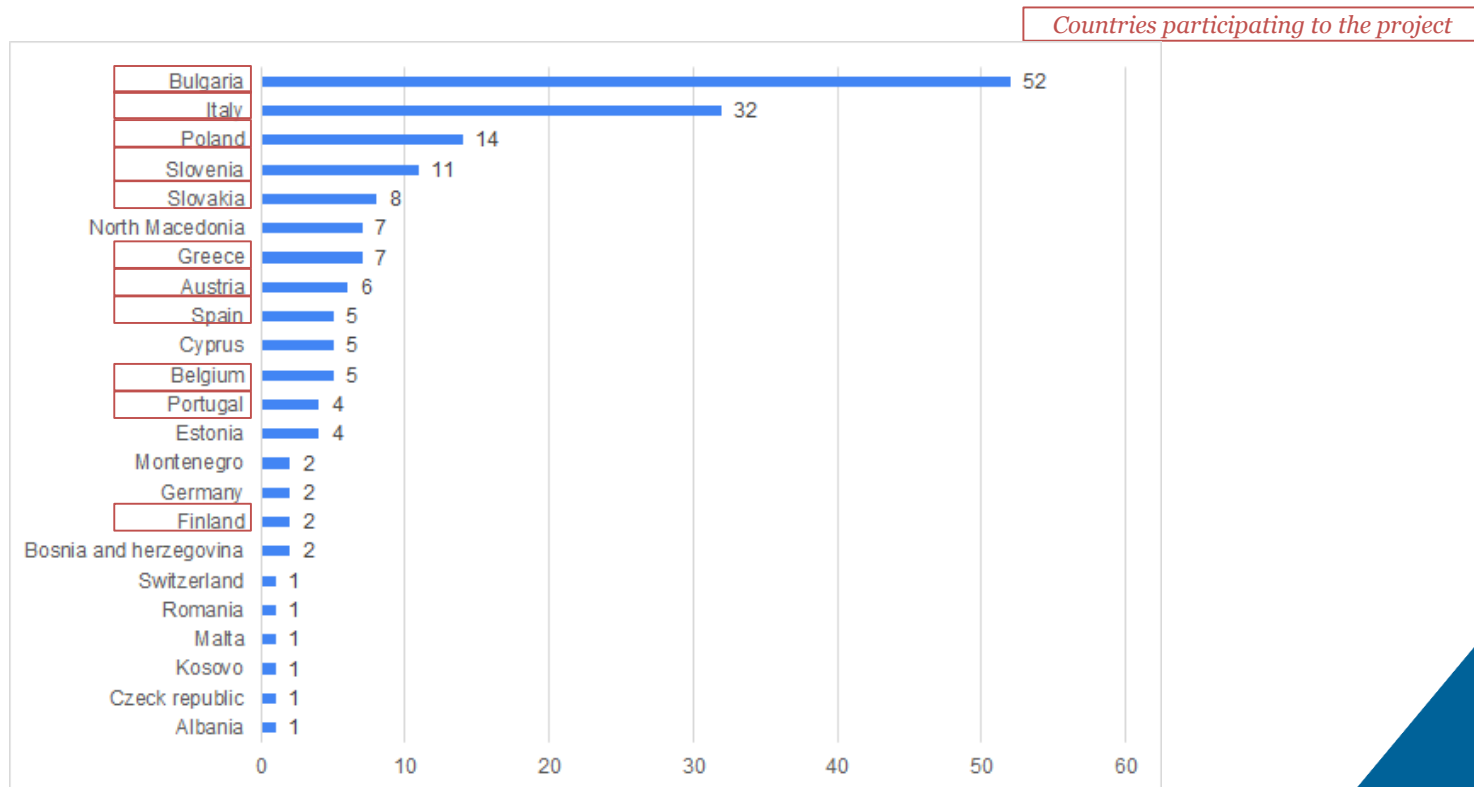- 50%+ of lost income

Contact tracing
- None
- Limited
- Comprehensive

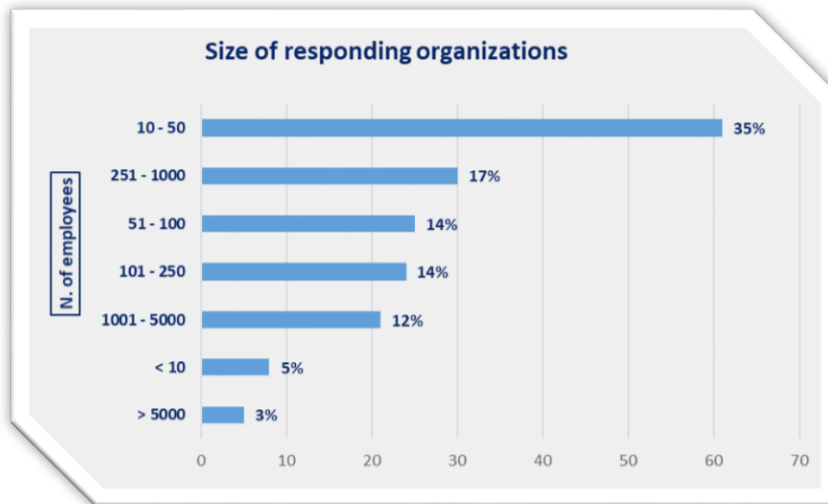# 1. Who are the respondents: overview by country
The survey recorded a relatively high response rate with
174 public organisations responding from 23 countries

- **23 countries have answered to the survey**

- **Bulgaria and Italy are very represented – thanks for the effort!**

- **Nevertheless, after further investigations, this overrepresentation does not seem to have a distorting impact on results on most questions.**

Countries participating to the project

Country	Responses
Bulgaria	52
Italy	32
Poland	14
Slovenia	11
Slovakia	8
North Macedonia	7
Greece	7
Austria	6
Spain	5
Cyprus	5
Belgium	5
Portugal	4
Estonia	4
Montenegro	2
Germany	2
Finland	2
Bosnia and herzegovina	2
Switzerland	1
Romania	1
Malta	1
Kosovo	1
Czeck republic	1
Albania	1

1. Who are the respondents: overview by size and level of government
The sample of responding organisations has a good balance of levels and size

Size of responding organizations

N. of employees

10 - 50	35%
251 - 1000	17%
51 - 100	14%
101 - 250	14%
1001 - 5000	12%
< 10	5%
> 5000	3%

Looking at size of responding organisations and the level of government, the results are overall balanced:
- The most represented organizations are small-sized organisations ones (1-50) – 40%
- Medium-sized (51-250) and large ones (above 250) are also well represented with close to a third each.
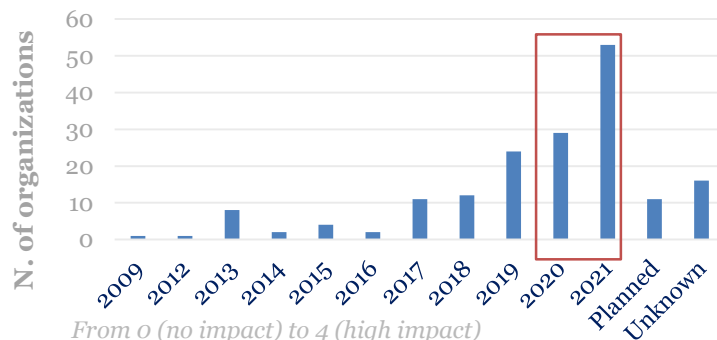
Level of government of responding organizations

Regional/State	Central/Federal	Local/Municipal
22%	37%	40%

The respondents show a relatively good balance between central and local levels of government.
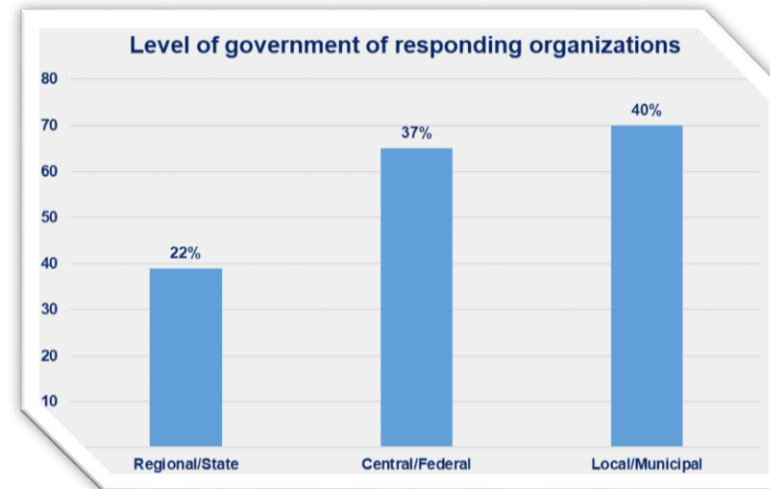
2. <u>The CAF model</u>: The CAF model has been used by multiple organisations during the crisis and has helped most

- CAF has been used during the crisis: more than half of the respondents used CAF model during the crisis

- Among the respondents who didn't use CAF, most mentioned that they had other priorities during the crisis.
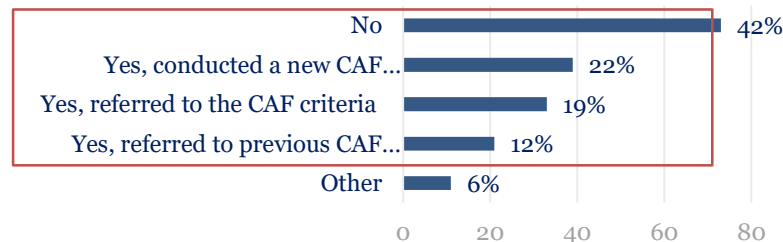
The CAF model has been widely used during the crisis

Last time CAF model was used

N. of organizations

From 0 (no impact) to 4 (high impact)

2009, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, Planned, Unknown

USE OF CAF DURING COVID-19 CRISIS
Share of responding organizations

No	42%
Yes, conducted a new CAF...	22%
Yes, referred to the CAF criteria	19%
Yes, referred to previous CAF...	12%
Other	6%

0   20   40   60   80

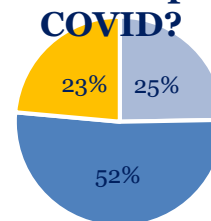## The CAF model has helped users during the crisis

- **77% of respondents confirmed that CAF helped during the crisis.**
- The criteria in which CAF model helped the most are **processes** and **people.**
- Previous use of CAF model and implementation plans have helped
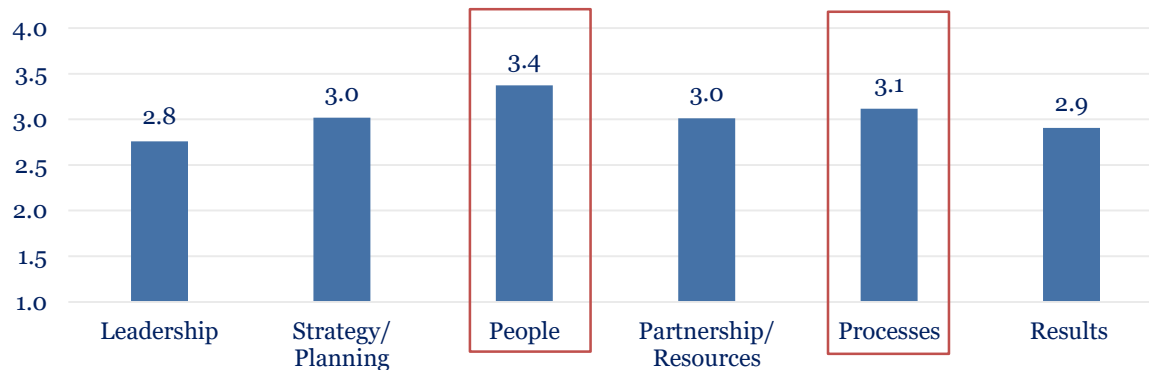
Did CAF model help during the COVID?

- Yes very useful — 25%
- Yes somewhat useful — 52%
- Not useful — 23%

3. Impact of the COVID-19 crisis
CAF users have been impacted on all dimensions, especially people

Most impacted categories within the organization:

From 1 (no impact) to 4 (significant impact)

- **Impact on all dimensions**
- **Most impact on people and processes**
- **Slightly less on leadership and results**
- **The impact has been rather homogeneous across levels of government**
- **The impact was higher for larger organisations**

Focus area: People

- **Most impacted category**
- **Highest rate of new adopted practices**
- **Area where CAF model helped the most**
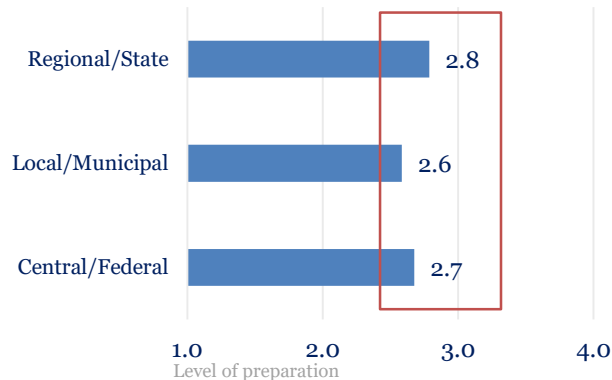- **Identified as a crucial strategic priority**

4. Preparedness for the crisis
Most organisations were moderately prepared across levels of governments with limited specific plans or protocols

- There is not one sector where organisations feel much better prepared than others

- The economic, trade and agriculture sectors were the least prepared , followed by education and transport (most likely linked to the level of restrictions applied to them)

- Larger organisations were slightly better prepared

Most organisations were moderately prepared, even more so at the local level

Around half of organisations had a crisis management plan or some relevant protocols in place

Average preparedness per level of organization

Level	Value
Regional/State	2.8
Local/Municipal	2.6
Central/Federal	2.7

1.0   2.0   3.0   4.0
Level of preparation

From 1 (no preparation) to 4 (well prepared)

Presence of previous strategy/plan/protocol

Share of responding organizations

Category	Share
UNKNOWN	10%
YES	25%
SOME RELEVANT PROTOCOLS OR PREPARATIONS IN PLACE	28%
NO	36%

0   50   100

Share
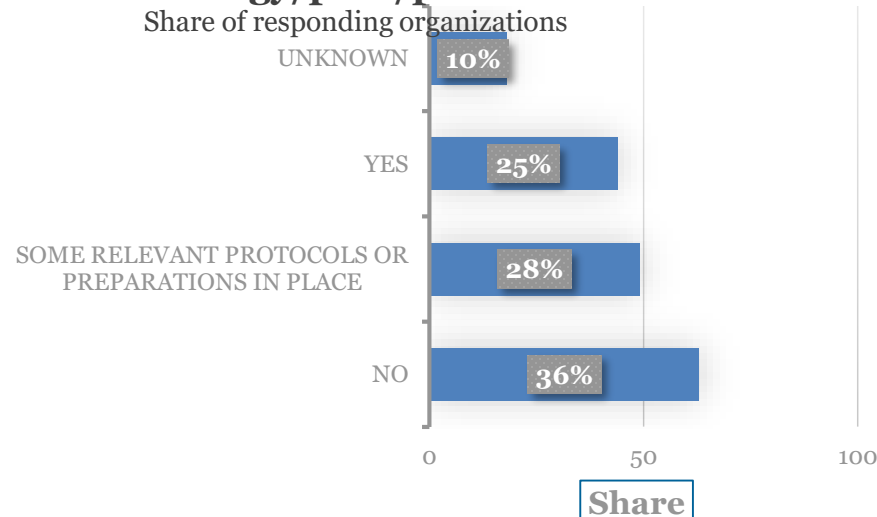
5. Adaptation to the crisis (2/2)
New, innovative practices have been adopted by CAF users, particularly on people and processes

- **A number of CAF users reported new innovative practices during the COVID-19 crisis, especially on digitalisation, remote working and simplified procedures**

NEW PRACTICES BY CRITERIA

Criteria	Share
Results (measurements)	8%
Processes	28%
Partnerships and resources	12%
People	32%
Strategy and planning	17%
Leadership	20%

Share of total respondents reporting new innovative practices
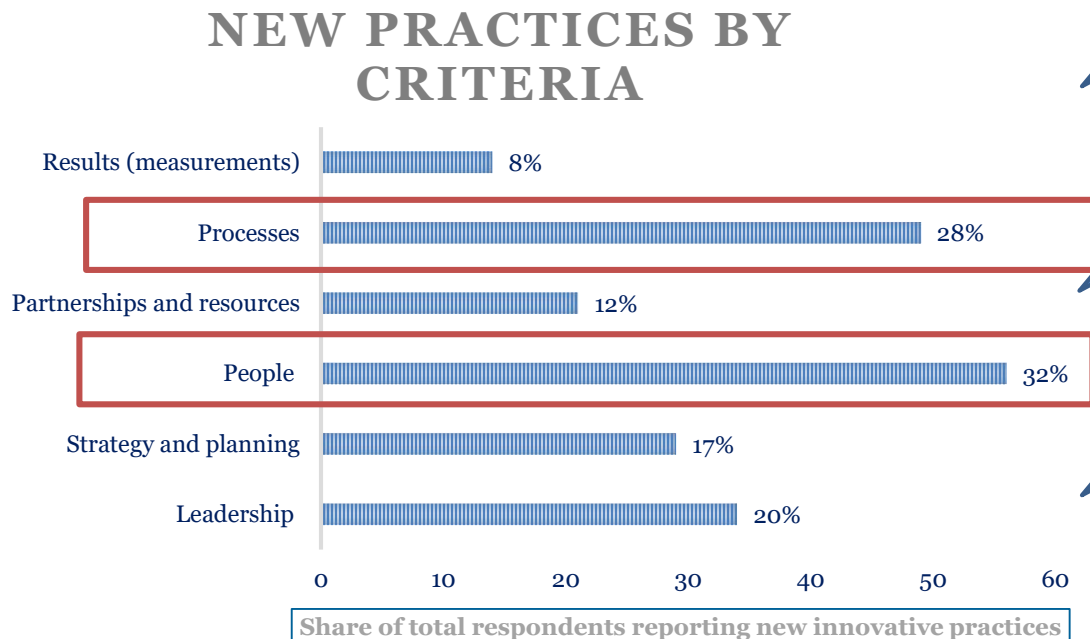
Digitalisation with new online tools and collaborative platforms

Teleworking requiring changes in people management, communications and digital tools

Processes were adapted to the situation though simplifications, emergency procedures and digitalisation

6. Non CAF users
Non CAF users reported to be slightly less prepared, were more impacted and were less able to adapt more on most dimensions, except leadership

AVERAGE PREPAREDNESS   ■ Non CAF user   ■ CAF user
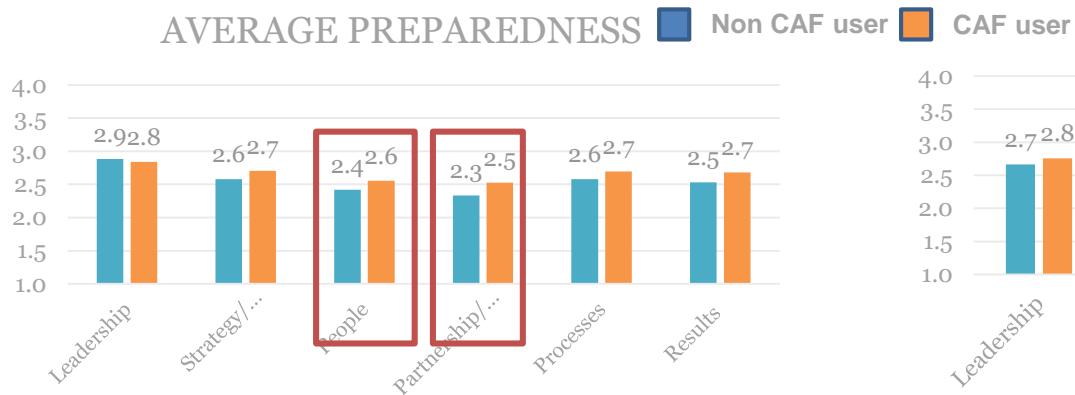
AVERAGE IMPACT

AVERAGE ADAPTATION

CAF users that ran the CAF model _during the crisis_ also adapted better across all criteria, except leadership, than CAF users that did not

Average Adaptation
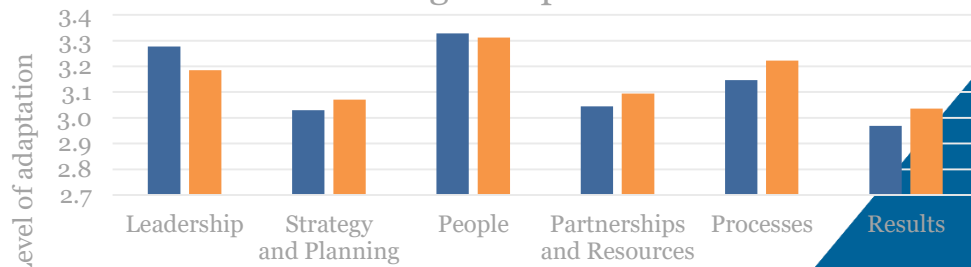
7. CAF evolution in response to the crisis and new priorities
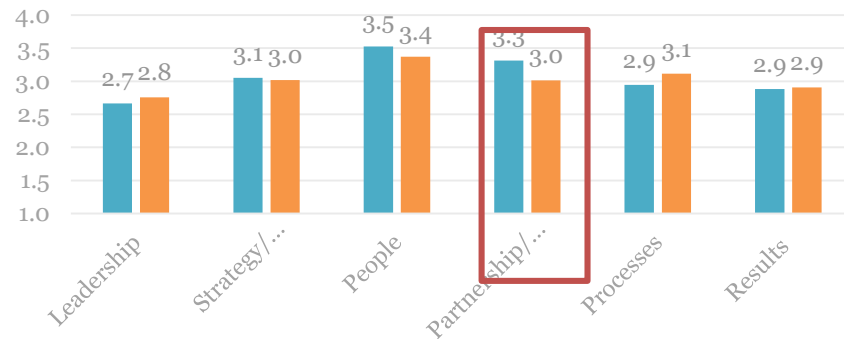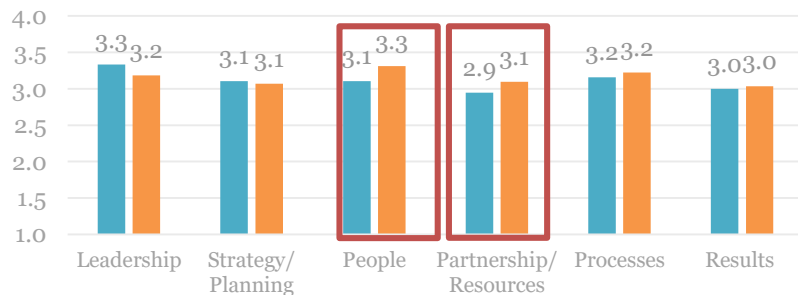## Several dimensions could deserve more importance in the CAF model according to users: innovation, digitalisation and resilience

• **Two thirds of respondents indicated that the CAF model could perhaps reflect more prominently innovation, digitalisation and resilience, which are also some of the long-term strategic priorities identified by organisations**

• **Financial sustainabiliy, sustainability and environment and SDGs were felt to be already well reflected in the model**

CAF SHOULD REFLECT THIS DIMENSION PROMINENTLY

Dimension	Value
ETHICS AND COMPLIANCE	51
SDGS	43
TRUST	54
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT	47
INNOVATION	70
FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY	33
DIGITALISATION	65
RESILIENCE	58
INCLUSIVENESS	35
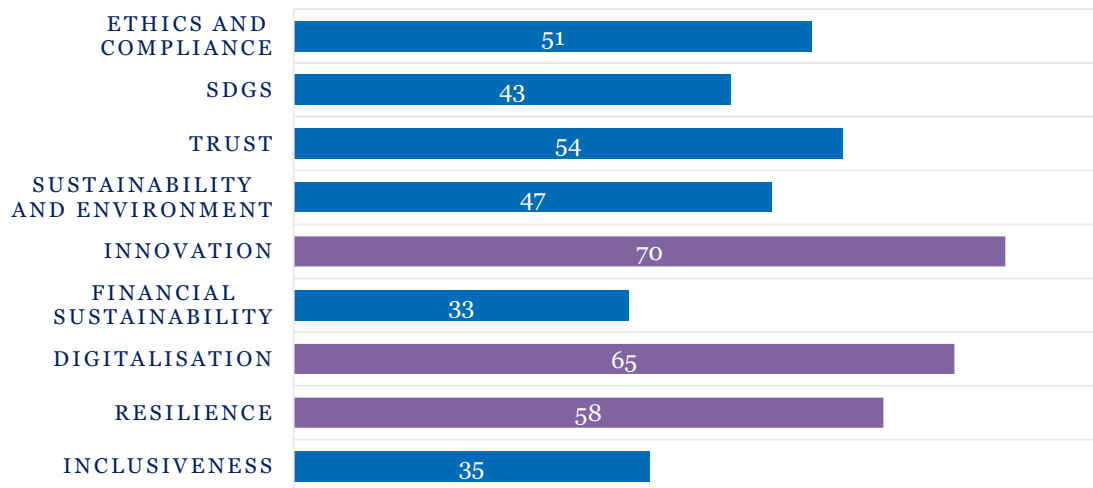
Overall summary of Survey Results of CAF Users

- The crisis **has impacted all criteria** evidenced in the CAF model, particularly on people and processes.
- Organisations at the **local level** report the lowest levels of preparedness and adaptation. Smaller organisations had to adapt more.
- CAF users reported being **moderately** prepared for the pandemic- how could they have been better prepared?
- CAF users fared **only slightly better** than non-CAF users (keep in mind, very small sample size)- why?
- Most CAF users reported the framework helpful for preparedness and resilience, **but nearly a quarter did not.**
- Long-term priorities for CAF users include **digitalisation, innovation, workforce management and resilience,** and have shifted compared to pre-crisis priorities.

11 CAF cases representing different countries, level of governments and sectors

Country	Organisation	CAF implementations
Austria	Women's Service of the City of Vienna	2011, 2013, 2018, 2022 (currently completing the fourth time)
Belgium	National Office of Employment of Belgium	2001, 2003, 2005, 2007 ➔ Changed to EFQM: 2009, 2014, 2016, 2019
Bulgaria	Sofia Regional Health Inspectorate	2016-2018
Croatia	Croatian Pension Insurance Institute	Started 2020
Greece	Municipality of Thessaloniki	2010
Italy	Italian Space Agency (Agenzia Spaziale Italiana)	2014, 2017, 2020
Poland	Lubuskie Voivodship Office (Lubuski Urząd Wojewódzki w Gorzowie Wielkopolskim)	2009, 2011, 2013, 2016, 2019
Portugal	The Vouzela and Campia School Grouping (AGEV)	2008, partially completed 2011, fully completed 2015, 2016 Effective CAF User, 2018 Effective CAF User, 2020-21
Slovak Republic	Ministry of Environment	2019, 2021 Effective CAF User
Slovenia	Agency of the Republic of Slovenia for Agricultural Markets and Rural Development	Started 2019
Spain	Madrid Salud	Since 2014 (2015 first CAF 500+ certification)

Characteristics of resilience
A preliminary view from the draft case studies

Strategic foresight and systems thinking; risk management
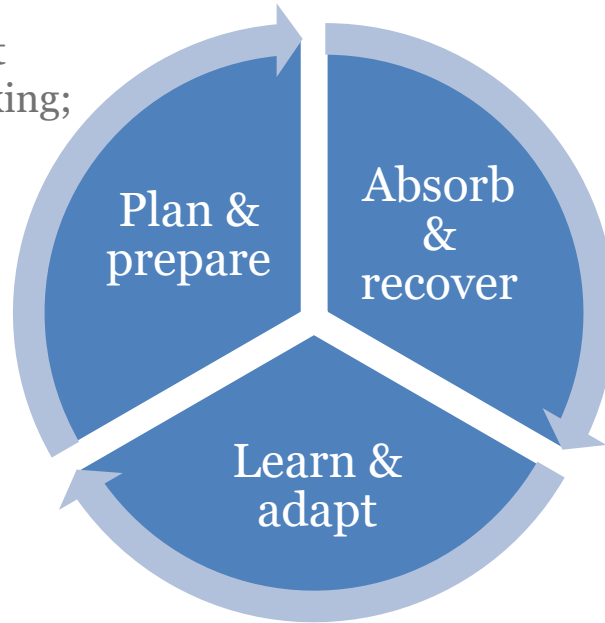
Back-up capacity; resourcefulness; streamlining processes; real-time inclusion and evidence evaluation; integrated systems and partnerships; communications; leadership; protecting wellbeing

Plan & prepare

Absorb & recover

Learn & adapt

How do these characteristics translate into the CAF methodology?

Reflective capacity; change management

Some observations from the case studies
(to be explored at tomorrow's deep dive workshop)

1 Strategy and planning

- **Crisis management protocols and plans** were insufficient / rarely used to address the effects of the pandemic.
- **Regulations and procedures (budget, procurement, HR)** had to be adapted fast.
- **High-level strategies** were revised in few cases.

2 Leadership

- **Management structures** have evolved to be more effective, frequent and inclusive.
- **Compassionate leadership.** Focus on employee wellbeing.
- **New management models and organizational structures** have been tested.
- Good communications essential in time of crisis.

3 Resources and partnerships

- **Partnerships were crucial to surviving the pandemic.**
- Some issues with lack of back-up resources, greater vulnerability with external contractors.
- Emergency procurement procedures, lack of inventories beforehand.

Some observations from the case studies
(to be explored at the next deep dive workshops)

4 People

- **Teleworking** practices had sometimes been established before the crisis and have been expanded during the crisis. Will they remain?

- HR management and **well being** have been important concerns during the crisis.

- **Surge capacity** often was not there.

5 Processes

- **Digitalisation** of internal processes and external services have been a constant solution to address user needs and will be maintained.

- Both internal and external digital solutions were used.

- Some attention has been devoted to digital skills and training.

6 Results

- Service needs CHANGED during the pandemic.
- Lack of real-time data to inform decision making.
- Learnings from the pandemic- are they being utilised?

Ongoing reflections for the final report

- Resilience vs. crisis management
- Does the type of crisis matter?
- How to maintain crisis adaptation practices into the longer term? How to build on the learnings from the pandemic?
- Does the CAF support innovation and flexibility in organisations? How could it do so better?
- How best to incorporate findings on resilience into the CAF framework AND methodology?
- Any other thoughts or feedback are welcome as we continue to analyse the cases.

THANK YOU.

NATALIA.NOLANFLECHA@OECD.ORG

BLOG LINK:

HTTPS://WWW.EIPA.EU/BLOG/BUILDING-A-RESILIENT-PUBLIC-SECTOR-WITH-

CAF-LESSONS-LEARNED-FROM-THE-COVID-19-CRISIS/

Co-funded by
the European Union

OCDE
DES POLITIQUES MEILLEURES
POUR UNE VIE MEILLEURE

ANNEX OF ADDITIONAL RESULTS

1 Leadership
Priorities and challenges for leaders have been related to people and service delivery

Main challenges for the leadership during the crises

Challenge	Percentage
Lack of adequate communication or coordination channels with external stakeholders and partners	3%
Lack of co-ordination internally within the organisation	5%
Lack of adequate data and information to make timely decisions	9%
Lack of preparedness for crisis management (e.g scenarios, protocol, skills)	18%
Applying instructions or guidelines from political authorities / Ministry / controlling agency	31%
Keeping staff motivated and engaged to innovate and work in new ways	49%
Need to find new ways to deliver existing services safely / design new services	54%
Ensuring the safety and the work conditions of the organisation's workforce during the pandemic	84%

Number of responses

0   50   100   150   200

2 Strategy and planning
Most organisations experienced a lack of preparedness and had to adapt fast, posing challenges for workforce and for delivery

- CAF users reveal to lack the necessary tools to face a situation of crisis and emergency, such as COVID-19

- Higher scores go to the difficulties to:
  - Workforce management
  - Lack of preparedness to develop new plans a
  - Interaction with users

- Reinforcing crisis management and protocols could help

Main challenges in achieving strategic priorities during the crisis

Challenge	Number of responses
Difficulties to organise workforce management	65
Difficulties to develop new strategies/plans because of uncertainties	65
Difficulties to capture the needs of users/to deliver services to users	62
Lack of relevance of existing strategic priorities	51
Insufficient financial resources/uncertainties on their evolutions	41
Insufficient preparation/or contingency planning	41

Number of responses 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70

The lack of technological infrastructure for employees has been an immediate challenge, but the use of digital tools has expanded fast and is expected to remain

- **Workforce practices and allocation had to be adapted fast, but case and constraints hamper reallocations**

- **Priorities on digital tools and infrastructure for remote work and HRM has become a top priority**

- **Emergency plans were developed in half of the organisations**

Main HRM Challenges

Challenge	Number of responses
Lack of technological infrastructure for remote work	77
Lack of staff to meet emerging demands in high priority areas	59
Applying health regulations to the specificities of your workplace	54
Limited communication/coordination among staff	53
Reduced employee engagement/lowered levels of employees wellbeing	40
Unavailability of learning/development opportunities	33
Putting in place mental health support	27
Designing return to office protocols	25
Lack of HR department capacity	23
Lack of relevant workforce data	8

HRM priorities and strategy adaptation to the crisis

N. of answers

Initiatives: Reallocation of staff, Emergency workforce plans, IT tools use for remote work, New workforce data to manage crisis, Online tools use for training, Simplified/accelerated hiring proced., Furlough/layoffs use, Negotiations with trade unions, Increased use of outsourcing

■ Implemented during the crisis
■ Expected to remain in place after the crisis

Public sector organisations have moved from an office-based working pattern to more remote… that will not necessarily stay

- **Most organisations worked office-based before the crisis**

- **They have largely moved to remote or equally remote/office-based during the crisis**

- **This working pattern will not stay in many organisations after the crisis, that are planning to go back to office-based**

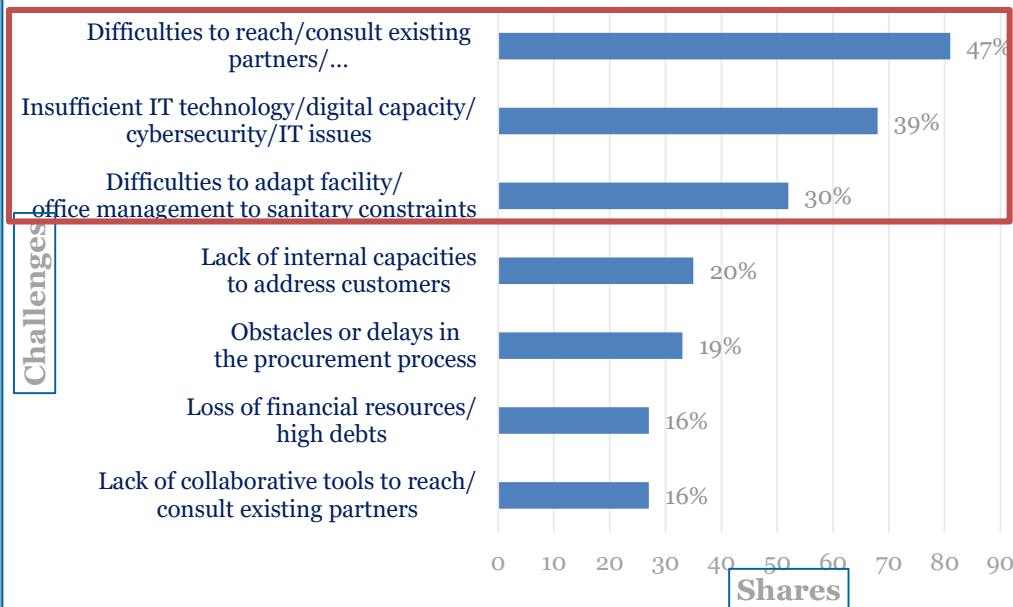- **A third are expected to keep an equal basis on the long term**

Predominant working pattern

Legend:
- Before the start of the pandemic
- At the peak of the pandemic
- Anticipated in two years Beginning of 2024)
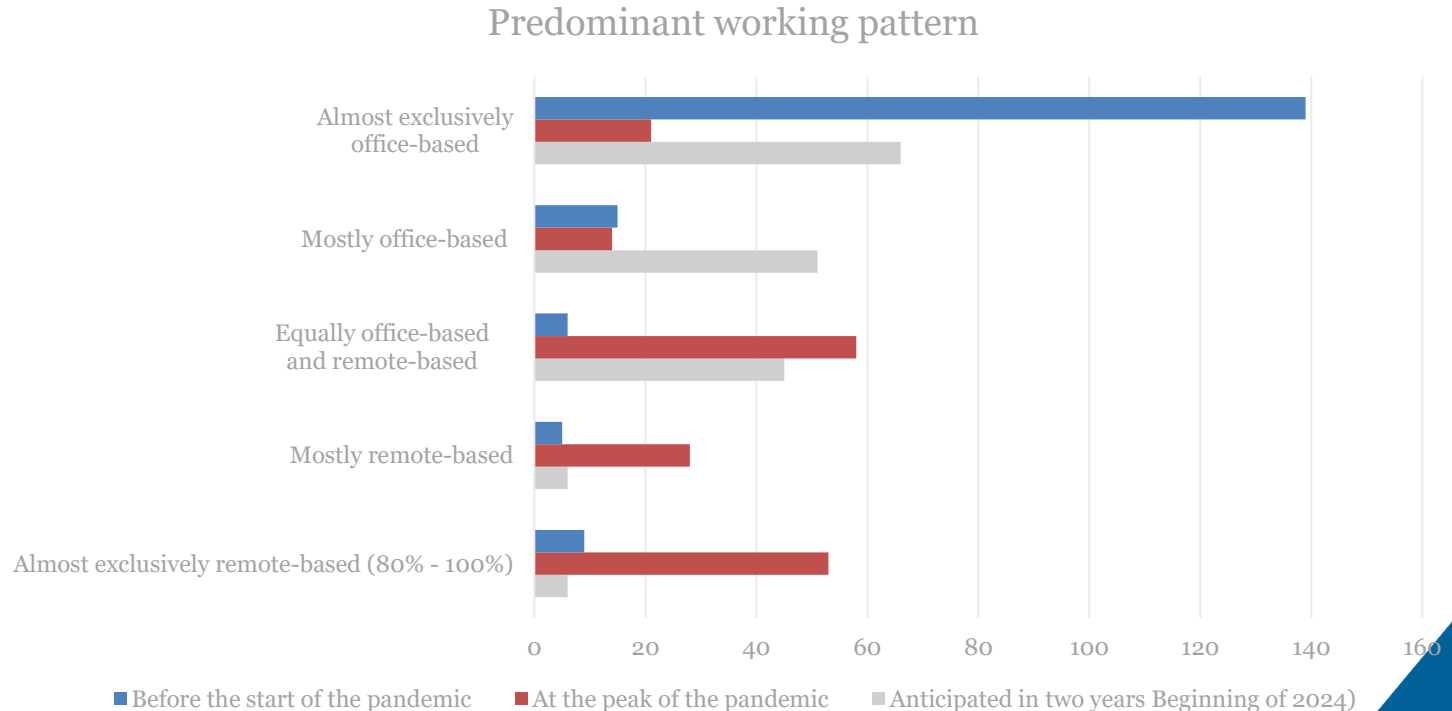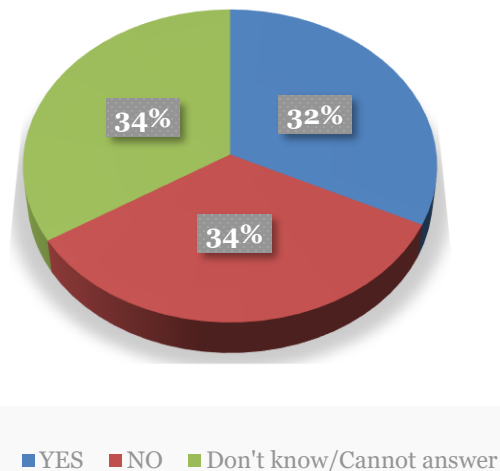
4. Partnerships and Resources
The health situation has limited the capacity to reach partners, partly due to the lack of digital tools

- **Difficulties to reach partners was a key constraint, and the lack of digital capacity was a key obstacle**

- **Not many organisations implemented new partnerships with suppliers, civil society or other types of external stakeholders, relying a lot on internal capabilities**

Main challenges on partnerships and resources during the crisis

Challenges	Shares
Difficulties to reach/consult existing partners/…	47%
Insufficient IT technology/digital capacity/ cybersecurity/IT issues	39%
Difficulties to adapt facility/ office management to sanitary constraints	30%
Lack of internal capacities to address customers	20%
Obstacles or delays in the procurement process	19%
Loss of financial resources/ high debts	16%
Lack of collaborative tools to reach/ consult existing partners	16%

New partnerships implemented during the crisis

YES 32% | NO 34% | Don't know/Cannot answer 34%

5 Processes
Digitalisation has been a key trend for internal processes and for service delivery, and should remain after the crisis

- The impact of the crisis was important on most internal processes, particularly those in need for digitalisation

- Service delivery models needed to turn digital to collaborate, communicate and deliver, and should stay digital after the crisis

Average impact on internal processes

- Communication
- IT
- HRM
- Facility management
- Financial
- Regulatory/Legal
- Procurement
- Other internal processes

(scale: 0.0, 0.5, 1.0, 1.5, 2.0, 2.5, 3.0, 3.5, 4.0)

Service delivery model adaptation

- Digital tool to work collaboratively
- Digital communication channels
- Digitalised service delivery with users/citizen
- Online consultation of key stakeholders
- Cybersecurity solutions
- Simplified administrative and legal procedures
- Use of Artificial Intelligence

(scale: 0, 20, 40, 60, 80, 100, 120, 140)

■ Used during the COVID-19 crisis ■ Expected to remain in the recovery period ■ Not used

OECD