

# Hukumati

## The New Digital Social Contract in Palestine



Courtesy of  
the Ministry of Telecom  
and Information Technology

The Palestinian Government Electronic Services Portal, *Hukumati* (Arabic for “My Government”), is the culmination of almost three years of a national effort to reengineer and digitize government services. The platform [www.palestine.ps](http://www.palestine.ps) enables Palestinian citizens to connect with the internet, regardless of their physical location or the day of the week, to access government services at

any time and is the result of a joint government effort, organized by a governance bylaw. The key players in this task are the Ministry of Telecom and IT as technical operator, the Ministry of Finance as business operator, and the Council of Ministers as the party responsible for overall quality assurance. In addition, the Palestinian Monetary Authority oversees financial regulatory issues, the Ministry of Interior manages user authentication, and a number of government entities play the role of service provider.

After a long wait, and as a result of global and regional trends in digital transformation that include the fourth industrial revolution, the road for the digitization of government services in Palestine was paved by the national policy agenda. It includes a plan that outlines sectoral strategies and cluster development, targeting specifically the technology and administration clusters. This development was further catalyzed and accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic that drove service provision, education, and economic activity into cyberspace.

The portal consists of a single sign-on, a unified web portal, a unified mobile app, a payment gateway, and a service delivery mechanism. Data exchange is managed through the Exchange Data Layer (UXP), and data interoperability is governed by the Zinnar framework.\* A supportive infrastructure that includes power, connectivity, data storage, compute (processing power), security, and disaster recovery ensures high-level availability, stability, and security. There are currently 17 services available through the portal (some paid, others free), with several payment options including credit/debit card and cash payment through



points of sale (electronic payment companies). Other payment options are planned, including e-wallets and direct bank transfer. Documents can be collected at the offices of service providers or at a selected post office, with home and work delivery under planning (using the Palestinian postcode addressing system). Current services include the renewal of driver licenses, non-conviction certificates, birth certificates, and medical

risks such as infections and protects the health of citizens. Citizen-centric, inclusive, and quality-assured services constitute a major step forward to meet citizens' expectations and assure high integrity.

*Hukumati*, available as web and mobile applications, is a pure Palestinian effort and a success story of public- and private-sector partnerships. The technical infrastructure, design,



From the soft launch of Hukumati.

insurance. More services are being reengineered and will be added to the catalog.

The provision of electronic services is a major shift in service delivery. It saves time, effort, and money by eliminating the need to travel to service windows during workdays and business hours to process application forms. It also guards against other

coding, testing, risk mitigation, call center, and support are organic and were made possible thanks to the tireless efforts of several teams from the involved government agencies and the private-sector providers.

After internal testing and an internal soft launch that took place a few months ago, the platform will be released to citizens (G2C) inside

Palestine as an initial phase. Palestinians in the diaspora will be able to access *Hukumati* services at a later stage. In addition, government-to-business services (G2B) are planned for the benefit of the private sector, and a certification authority (CA) will be established to take care of the management of user accounts. It is expected that data and analytics available from service transactions as well as customer feedback will be used to fine-tune and improve service delivery to keep the digital social contract, ensure citizen satisfaction, build trust, and move forward in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

A key question about electronic service delivery (and other aspects of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence) is the future of work and what happens to current employees who perform “routine” tasks. While this issue is debated globally, savings by government and citizens (time, effort, and cost) can be invested in upskilling and re-skilling or in social benefits as a last resort. There is nothing to fear if plans are put into action and the process is managed in a collaborative, responsible, and ethical way. It is also expected that a certain amount of hesitation (or resistance) will mark the first few weeks or months after the official launch, and this is natural to a considerable extent. A media campaign to explain the benefits and guide users through the process of registration and service request, in addition to some incentives, should iron out obstacles and scale up the intake more effectively.

The Ministry of Telecom and IT seizes this opportunity and media platform to thank all individuals and entities

**Ease of access to government services and information is at the center of good governance. *Hukumati* uses a citizen-centric approach through a unified digital public-services platform and payment gateway to deliver convenience and user experience. Replacing recurring paperwork with seamless data exchange paves the road to customer satisfaction and civic engagement.**



that made *Hukumati* a dream come true. This includes employees, the Ministerial Technical Committee, the portal operators and service providers, the implementing consortium, and all funders and partners. There will be no better reward to their efforts than seeing *Hukumati* operational and appreciated by all stakeholders.

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\* The Palestinian Interoperability Framework–Zinnar, available at <http://zinnar.pna.ps/InteroperabilityPortal/>.