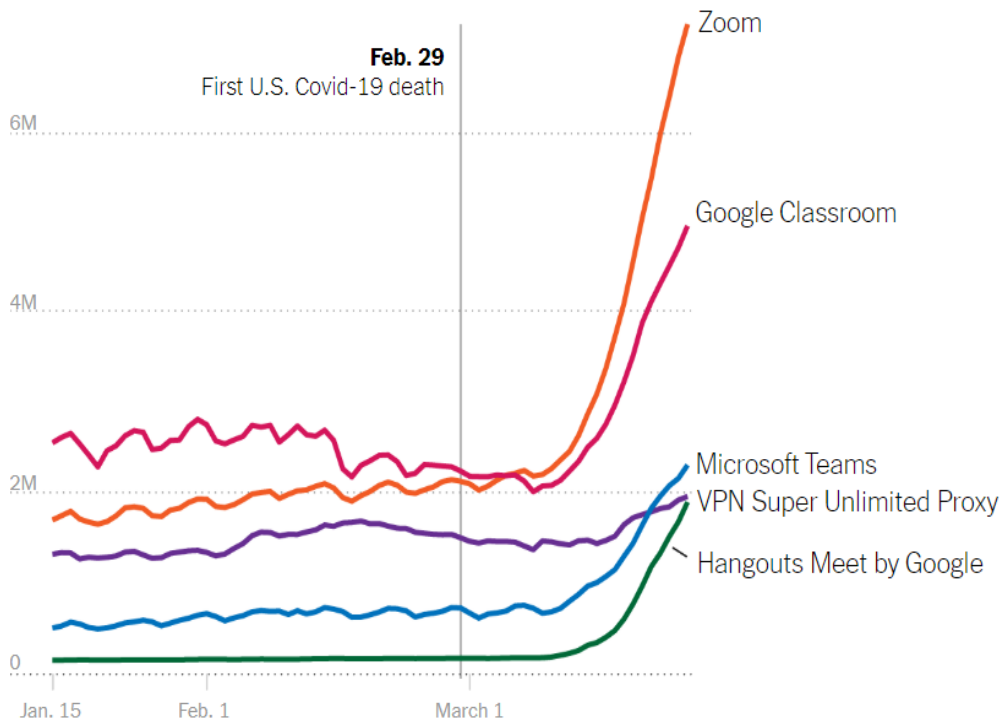# THE DIGITAL ECONOMY IN THE CONTEXT OF THE COVID-19 CRISIS

**Lorrayne Porciuncula**
Digital Economy Policy Division
*8 June 2020*

OECD
BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER LIVES

# A snapshot

Daily app sessions for popular remote work apps



| Operator | Data surge |
|---|---|
| NHK (Japan) | 35-40% |
| BT (UK) | 35-60% daytime |
| Telecom Italia | 35% mobile<br>63% fixed |
| Verizon (US) | 52% in VPN traffic |
| AT&T (US) | Voice minutes:<br>- 33% mobile<br>- 75% Wi-Fi<br>- 64% fixed |
| Facebook | 100% in voice calls<br>50% in text messaging |

Source:
https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/04/07/technology/
coronavirus-internet-use.html?smid=em-share

# COVID-19 brings both opportunities and challenges

- **A catalyst for structural change**
  - "Gone digital": growing demand for teleworking, e-health, streaming, e-commerce, telecommunication services, platforms, AI, etc.
- **Highlighted the importance of resiliency and managing risks**
  - Science and technology, research and development and data
  - Infrastructures for the digital economy: communication networks
  - Digital security, privacy, desinformation

# Going Digital Integrated Policy Framework
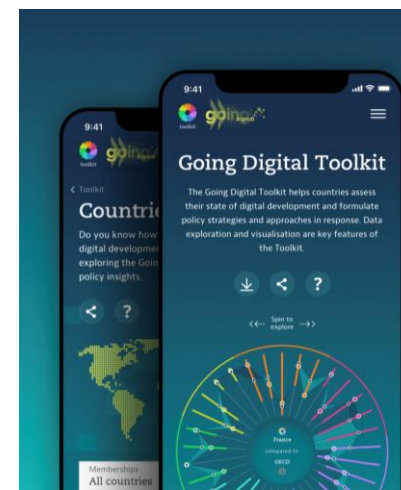
# Digital Security

- **COVID-19 brief :**

  – [Dealing with digital security risk during COVID-19 crisis](#)

- **Key messages:**

  – Digital security risk is increasing as malicious actors take advantage of the coronavirus (COVID-19) epidemic.

  – Individuals and businesses should exercise caution when they receive coronavirus-related communications, and use appropriate digital security "hygiene" measures

  – It is essential that governments raise awareness, monitor the threat landscape and publish easily accessible guidelines for digital security hygiene,



### OECD Recommendation on digital security

– Recommendation on Digital Security Risk Management for Economic and Social Prosperity (2015) (https://oe.cd/dsrm)

– Recommendation on the Digital Security of Critical Activities (2019) (https://oe.cd/dsca2019)

– Guidelines on Cryptography Policy (1997) (https://oe.cd/crypto)
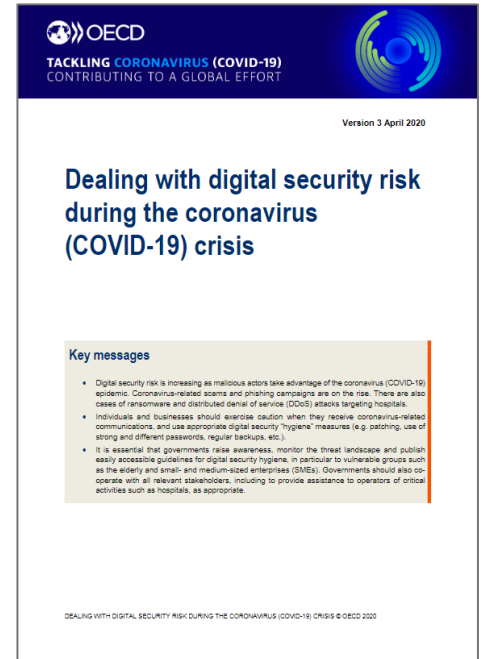
# Privacy and data governance

- **Two COVID-19 briefs and related workshop:**
  - [Ensuring data privacy as we battle COVID-19](#)
  - [Tracking and tracing COVID-19: Protecting privacy and data while using apps and biometrics](#)

- **Key messages:**
  - Policy makers, in consultation with privacy enforcement authorities, must assess the possible trade-offs in data utilisation during this crisis (reconciling the risks and benefits)
  - Fully transparent and accountable privacy-preserving solutions should be embedded by design
  - Data should be retained only for so long as is necessary to serve the specific purpose for which it was collected.

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### OECD Recommendation on privacy

- [OECD Privacy Guidelines](#) (2013) (review of the implementation ongoing)
- [OECD Recommendation on Health Data Governance](#) (2016)
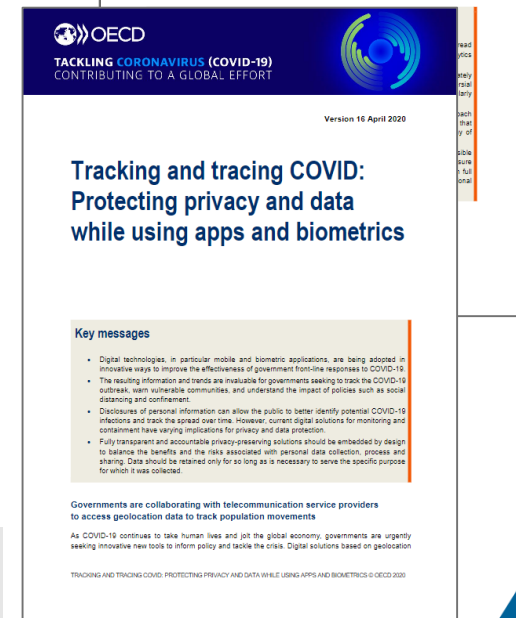
# Consumer Protection

- **COVID-19 brief:**

  - [Protecting online consumers during the COVID-19 crisis](#)

- **Key messages:**

  - Many consumers are now vulnerable and there are increasing reports of unfair, misleading and fraudulent commercial practices online.

  - Governments should avoid rolling back consumer protection and product safety measures, while considering ways to reduce the administrative burdens on business.

  - Increased international and cross-sector co-operation among government agencies, businesses, and civil society. Information sharing has become more valuable than ever, particularly for agencies with limited resources.
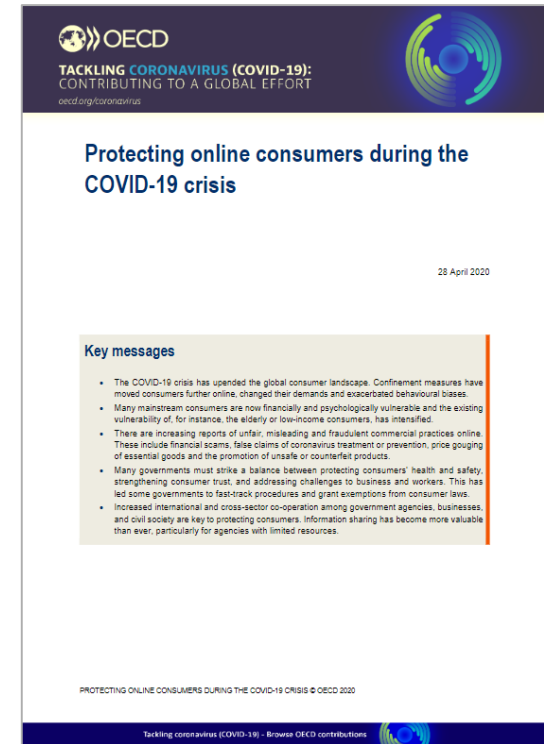


**OECD Recommendation on consumer protection**
- [Guidelines for consumer protection on e-commerce](#) (2016)

# **Artificial intelligence**

- **COVID-19 brief:**

    – [Using artificial intelligence to help combat COVID-19](#)

- **Key messages:**

    – Encourage the sharing of datasets and to help AI researchers build effective tools for the medical community

    – Ensure that AI systems are trustworthy and aligned with the OECD AI Principles: they should respect human rights and privacy; be transparent, explainable, robust, secure and safe; and actors involved in their development and use should remain accountable.



**OECD Recommendation on AI**
– [Principles on Trustworthy AI](#) (2019)

**More on OECD AI**
– OECD AI Policy Observatory ([OECD.AI](#))
– OECD Network of Experts on AI (ONE AI).

OECD.org  Going Digital Toolkit

# OECD.AI
## Policy Observatory

AI Principles ⌄   Policy areas ⌄   Trends & data ⌄   Countries & initiatives ⌄   About ⌄

Home  >  AI-powered COVID-19 watch
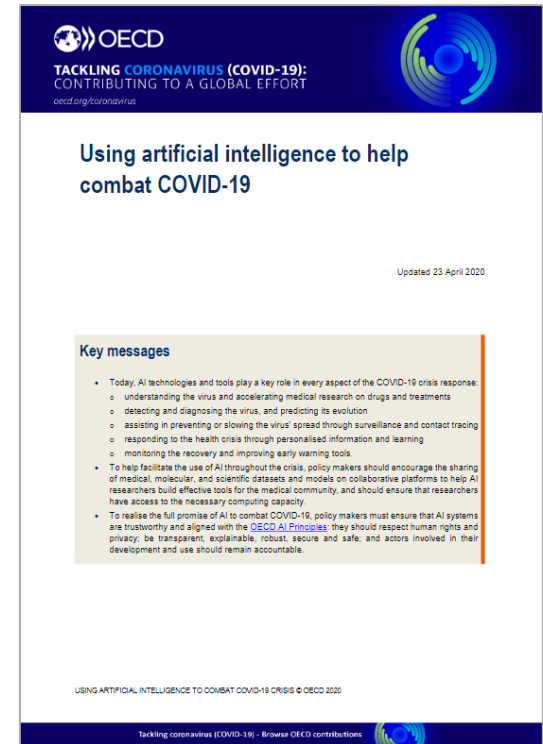
# AI-powered COVID-19 watch

Stay safe, stay informed: follow the latest COVID-19 developments in your country in real time with this AI-powered tool (click on your country's name to zoom in).

## WHO Data

WHO, updated 2020/04/09

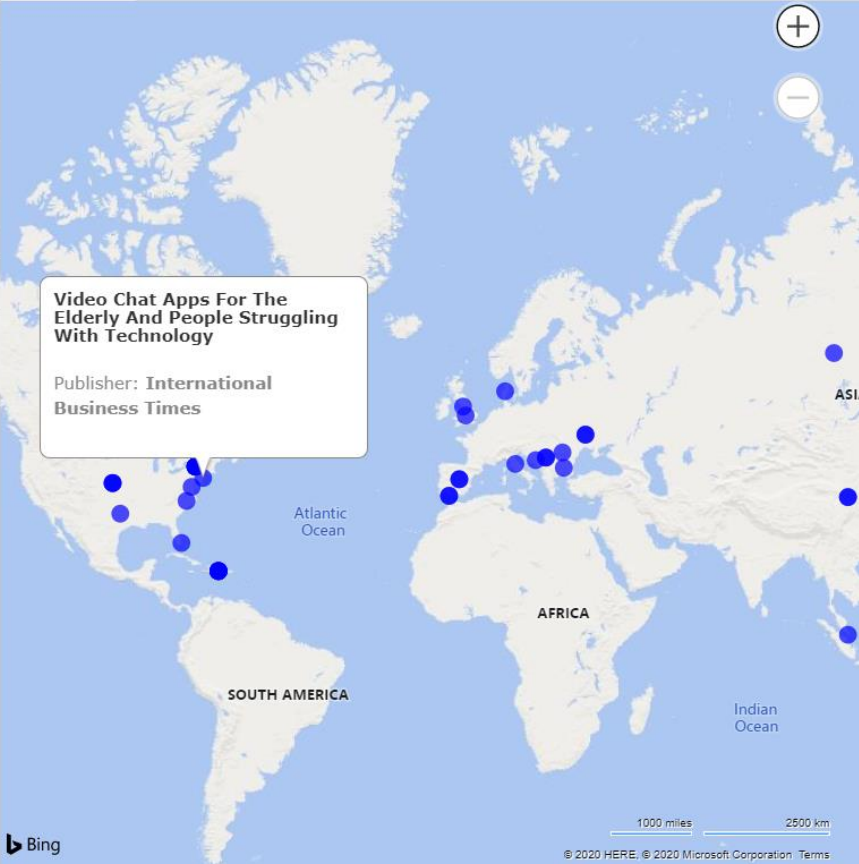Search or select one or more countries from the list to view and compare COVID-19 news or data

| Total cases | Total deaths |
|---|---|
| 1,436,198 | 85,522 |

Search: [                    ]

| Country | Cases (New) ▼ | Deaths (New) |
|---|---|---|
| All Countries | 1,436,198 (82,837) | 85,522 (6,287) |
| EU (27) | 596,387 (25,345) | 52,308 (2,732) |
| United States | 395,030 (31,709) | 12,740 (1,895) |
| Spain | 146,690 (6,180) | 14,555 (757) |
| Italy | 139,422 (3,836) | 17,669 (540) |
| Germany | 108,202 (4,974) | 2,107 (246) |
| China | 83,249 (92) | 3,344 (2) |
| France | 81,095 (3,869) | 10,853 (540) |
| Iran | 64,586 (1,997) | 3,993 (121) |
| United Kingdom | 60,737 (5,491) | 7,097 (938) |
| Turkey | 38,226 (4,117) | 812 (87) |
| Belgium | 23,403 (1,209) | 2,240 (205) |
| Switzerland | 22,710 (546) | 705 (64) |
| Netherlands | 20,549 (969) | 2,248 (147) |
| Canada | 18,433 (1,384) | 401 (56) |

Live news   Evolution   Trajectories   Progression   Worldometer data   Social distancing

Video Chat Apps For The Elderly And People Struggling With Technology

Publisher: International Business Times

ASIA

Atlantic Ocean

AFRICA

SOUTH AMERICA

Indian Ocean

Bing

1000 miles   2500 km

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Fri Apr 10 2020, 12:31

**Watchdog Calls India's Citizenship Law 'Discriminatory'**

Human Rights Watch says new law, nationwide verification process threaten citizenship rights of millions of Muslims. Human Rights Watch has termed India's new citizenship law as discriminatory in a new report. The Citizenship Amendment Act along with a planned nationwide verification process to identify illegal immigrants is a threat to millions of Indian Muslims, said the report released on Thursday. The

**Watchdog Calls India's Citizenship Law...**
Fri Apr 10 2020, 12:31

International Business Times
**Video Chat Apps For The Elderly And People...**
Fri Apr 10 2020, 12:31

SocialNews.XYZ
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Fri Apr 10 2020, 12:31

SocialNews.XYZ
**Alcohol de-addiction centres get crisis calls fro...**
Fri Apr 10 2020, 12:31

ElTambor | La Gomera

OECD.AI Policy Observatory    UNESCO  IRC AI    eventregistry    Institut "Jožef Stefan" Ljubljana, Slovenija
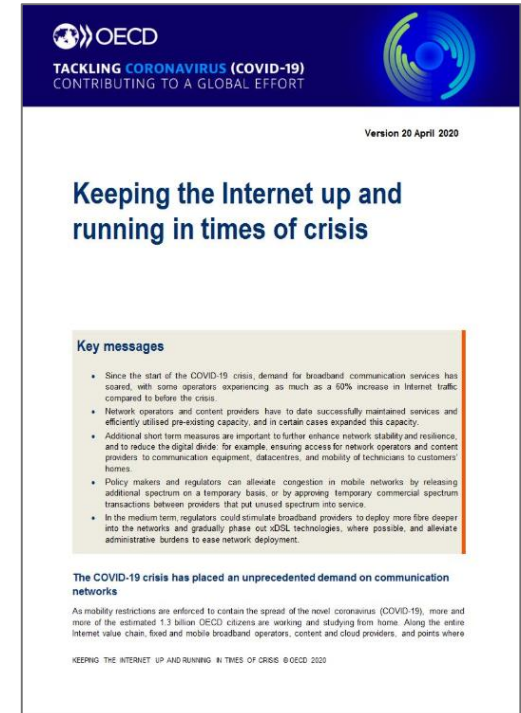
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# Connectivity

- **COVID-19 brief:**

  – [Keeping the Internet up and running in times of crisis](#)

- **Key messages:**

  – Demand for broadband communication services has soared (as much as a 60% increase in Internet traffic)

  – Operators and content providers have to date successfully maintained services, but additional short term measures are important to avoid congestion and enhance network stability and resilience.

  – In the medium term, regulators and policy makers should prioritise fostering affordable high-speed broadband services

  **OECD Recommendation on broadband**
  – [Recommendation of the Council on Broadband Development](#) (2004) (ongoing review)

  **More on OECD & broadband**
  – Thematic reports and a [broadband data portal](#).



**OECD**
TACKLING CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)
CONTRIBUTING TO A GLOBAL EFFORT

Version 20 April 2020

**Keeping the Internet up and running in times of crisis**

Key messages

- Since the start of the COVID-19 crisis, demand for broadband communication services has soared, with some operators experiencing as much as a 60% increase in Internet traffic compared to before the crisis.
- Network operators and content providers have to date successfully maintained services and efficiently utilised pre-existing capacity, and in certain cases expanded this capacity.
- Additional short term measures are important to further enhance network stability and resilience, and to reduce the digital divide, for example, ensuring access for network operators and content providers to communication equipment, datacentres, and mobility of technicians to customers' homes.
- Policy makers and regulators can alleviate congestion in mobile networks by releasing additional spectrum on a temporary basis, or by approving temporary commercial spectrum transactions between providers that put unused spectrum into service.
- In the medium term, regulators could stimulate broadband providers to deploy more fibre deeper into the networks and gradually phase out xDSL technologies, where possible, and alleviate administrative burdens to ease network deployment.

The COVID-19 crisis has placed an unprecedented demand on communication networks

As mobility restrictions are enforced to contain the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), more and more of the estimated 1.3 billion OECD citizens are working and studying from home. Along the entire Internet value chain, fixed and mobile broadband operators, content and cloud providers, and points where

KEEPING THE INTERNET UP AND RUNNING IN TIMES OF CRISIS © OECD 2020

# Connectivity – opportunities and challenges on a sharper relief

- **Some countries have harnessed opportunities:** Korea for example – OECD leader in terms of fibre connections in the OECD (81.7% broadband subscriptions were fibre connections) – has made connectivity an integral part of the Korean recovery plan in order to "convert the crisis into opportunity" and harnessing 5G, IoT and AI to emerge as a digital powerhouse.

- **But disparities between rural and urban areas remain:**

Percentage of households in total and rural areas in the EU with minimum 30 Mbps of fixed broadband coverage, 2018
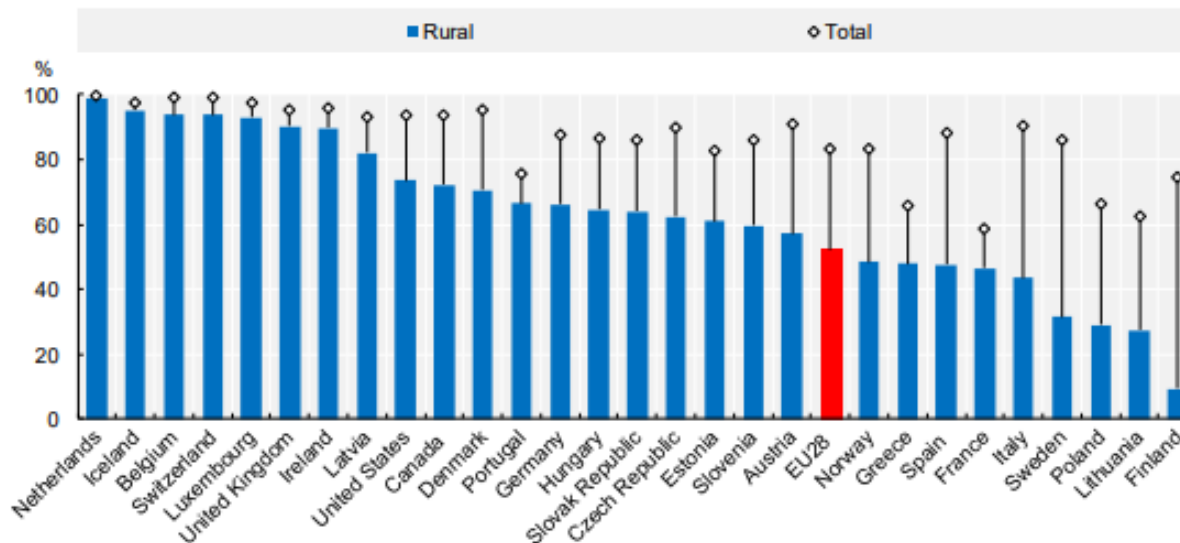
# Global co-operation to fight COVID-19

We can do more for people and companies if countries co-ordinate on mutually reinforcing measures. A globally co-ordinated policy response is absolutely crucial.

OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría

**TACKLING CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)**
CONTRIBUTING TO A GLOBAL EFFORT

OECD

"WE NEED A LEVEL OF AMBITION SIMILAR TO THAT OF THE MARSHALL PLAN – WHICH CREATED THE OECD – AND A VISION AKIN TO THAT OF THE NEW DEAL, BUT NOW AT THE GLOBAL LEVEL."

ÁNGEL GURRÍA
OECD SECRETARY-GENERAL

OECD

## OECD COVID-19 Platform

The OECD launched a **dedicated platform** with data, country policy tracker and policy recommendations related to COVID-19: http://oecd.org/coronavirus
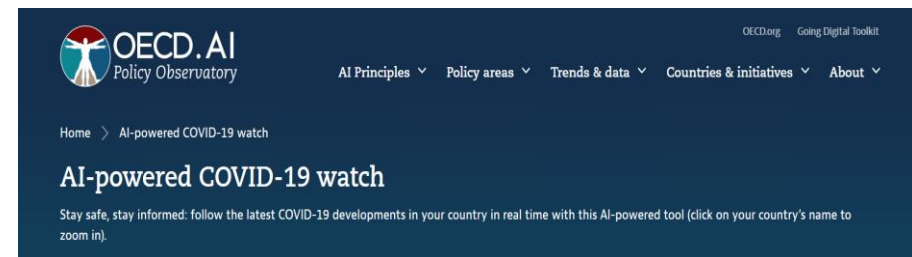
# OECD COVID-19 Information Hubs

**OECD Covid Hub**

www.oecd.org/coronavirus

**STI Policy Compass**

https://stip.oecd.org/Covid.html

**AI Policy Observatory**

https://oecd.ai/https://oecd.ai/

THANK YOU