



# Information Governance Maturity Index Report

**2021**

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# Information Governance Maturity Index Report

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## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Information Governance Maturity Index<sup>1</sup> Report – 2021. The 2021 report presents the results of the IG Maturity Index *Survey* conducted in the last quarter of 2020. The survey aligns with ARMA International’s Information Governance Implementation Model (IGIM) and is designed to measure IG *maturity* across the seven key areas of the model. This report is the *second annual* assessment of IG maturity based on the IGIM. The survey and index are intended to create a definitive, data-driven benchmark for information governance (IG).



<sup>1</sup> Information Governance Maturity Index = “IG Maturity Index” or the “index.”

## OBJECTIVES

The IG Maturity Index was designed to be:

- A data-driven, point-in-time measure of the maturity of organizations' IG programs.
- A reference point for year-over-year comparison of IG program maturity and progress.
- An industry benchmark against which organizations can compare the state of their IG programs.
- An aid to effective IG program implementation and improvement by tying the index to the IGIM and IGIM-aligned resources.

## DESIGN & METHODOLOGY

The IG Maturity Index Survey was designed to be a simple and repeatable assessment of IG maturity. To that end, in addition to some basic demographic questions, the survey asked only eight questions assessing IG maturity.

This year's survey opened at ARMA InfoCon 2020 and remained open online through the end of 2020. The survey also targeted IG professionals through ARMA's contacts and the networks of the supporters of this research effort. Incomplete, duplicative, or otherwise suspect responses (e.g., bogus, dummy responses, *etc.*) were eliminated as were responses that failed a gating question.<sup>2</sup> The data from the remaining **425** responses are presented in this report.



<sup>2</sup> The gating question allowed respondents to indicate that they did not have sufficient knowledge to respond about the state of IG at their organizations.

## Relationship of the Index to the IGIM

The IG Maturity Index is aligned with the Information Governance Implementation Model (IGIM) and assesses IG program maturity *overall* and with respect to the key areas described in the model. The IGIM offers a *functional* approach to IG, exploring the elements that need to be developed in *seven* key areas necessary for *implementing* a successful IG program. These seven key areas — steering committee, authorities, supports, processes, capabilities, structures, and infrastructure —



are represented in the hive infographic to the right and are explained in more detail in the results section, below. By defining these seven areas and the elements that must be developed in each, the IGIM helps build a common understanding and unified implementation approach that bridges people, policy, *and more* across these seven critical areas. Aligning the IG Maturity Index to the IGIM allows IG professionals to identify the specific areas of their IG programs that are deficient and target resources for improvement in those areas.

## Maturity Scale

Respondents were asked to assess their organization’s IG program maturity *overall* and with respect to each of the seven key areas of the IGIM using a five-point maturity scale, with the ability to opt-out if they were unable to answer (i.e., “I don’t know/Can’t answer” option).

The scale was adapted from ARMA’s Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles® (Principles) Maturity Model to enable cross-comparison for organizations that have used the Principles Maturity Model to assess their

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program's maturity with respect to the Principles. The five general levels are described in the chart below. Level 3 (essential) represents having the basic requirements in place, still a reactive posture, but getting the job done. Levels 1 and 2 indicate different degrees of deficiency. Levels 4 and 5 indicate maturity levels beyond just the basics. For each of the seven areas of the IGIM, area-specific descriptions were provided for the five levels of maturity; they are included for review in the corresponding results section of this report. Finally, in the discussion in the results section, levels 1 and 2 are further grouped as "deficient," whereas level 3 and above are considered "established." Established, here, is meant to indicate that the essentials *or more* are in place.

Option	Description
Level 1 Non-existent / Sub-standard	The item in question is either not addressed, minimally addressed, or sporadically addressed. Essentially nothing is in place.
Level 2 In Development	The item in question is in the active, early stages of development, but there are still significant gaps that must be closed before all of the basics are in place.
Level 3 Essential	The <i>basic requirements</i> for the item in question are being met, but not much else. Issues may be being addressed reactively.
Level 4 Proactive	The basic requirements for an item in question are being met and often exceeded, industry best practices and standards are being incorporated, and there are mechanisms in place for continuous improvement. Most issues are being addressed proactively.
Level 5 Transformational	The item in question is being addressed at an advanced level. Industry best practices and standards are being met, are routinized, and are being integrated into the information environment. <i>Think: advanced, transformational, optimizing.</i>

# RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

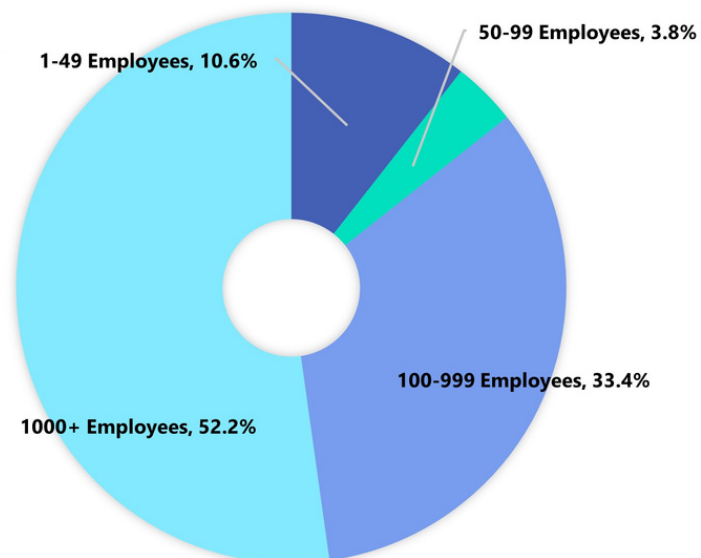
## HIGHLIGHTS

- A majority of respondents report that their organizations have the essentials in place or better with respect to each of the seven areas of the IGIM and for their overall IG programs.
- With respect to overall IG program maturity and all areas of the IGIM, with the exception of infrastructure, maturity levels are down, in some cases significantly, over last year.
- Regarding total respondents, the percentage reporting maturity at the established level ranges from a low of around fifty percent to a high of over three-quarters (**51.1%** for steering committee to **77.4%** for infrastructure).
- When considering total respondents, maturity levels from two of the seven IGIM areas were notably higher than the others. Authorities and infrastructure lead other areas with a maturity level of established at **70.6%** and **77.4%**, respectively. As already noted, the percentage of respondents reporting infrastructure as established was the only area up over last year (from **73.9%**).
- Generally, large organizations are more mature than small/mid-sized organizations across all maturity measures. However, large organizations do not appear to be outstripping small/mid-sized organizations by much.

## RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

### *Representation by Organization Size*

As was the case last year, respondents were divided roughly evenly between large organizations (1000+ employees) and small/mid-sized organizations (less than 999 employees), with **52.2%** and **47.8%**<sup>3</sup> from each, respectively. Small and medium-sized organizations were more granularly broken down as shown in the infographic.



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<sup>3</sup> Where specific responses are combined, as here, to group small/mid-sized organizations, the total responses for each answer are tallied and then divided by total respondents before rounding. For this reason, the numbers may be slightly different than if one simply added the already rounded values in the graphics.

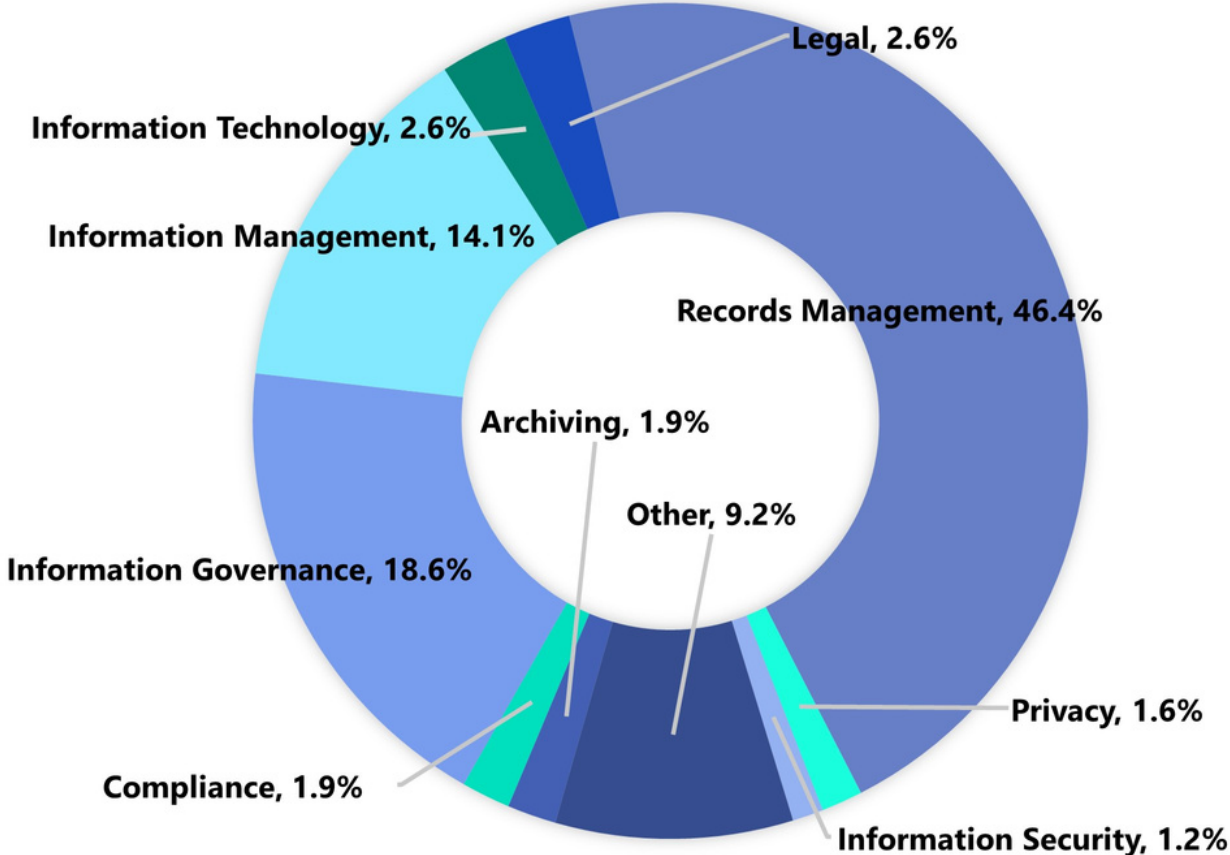


In addition to presenting total respondent data for each maturity measure, data are further broken out by organization size to allow comparison between large and small/mid-sized organizations on each parameter.

### *Representation by Role*

Respondents were asked to select the option that best describes their role at their organization. As expected, given ARMA International’s membership base, RIM and IG-specific roles had higher representation.

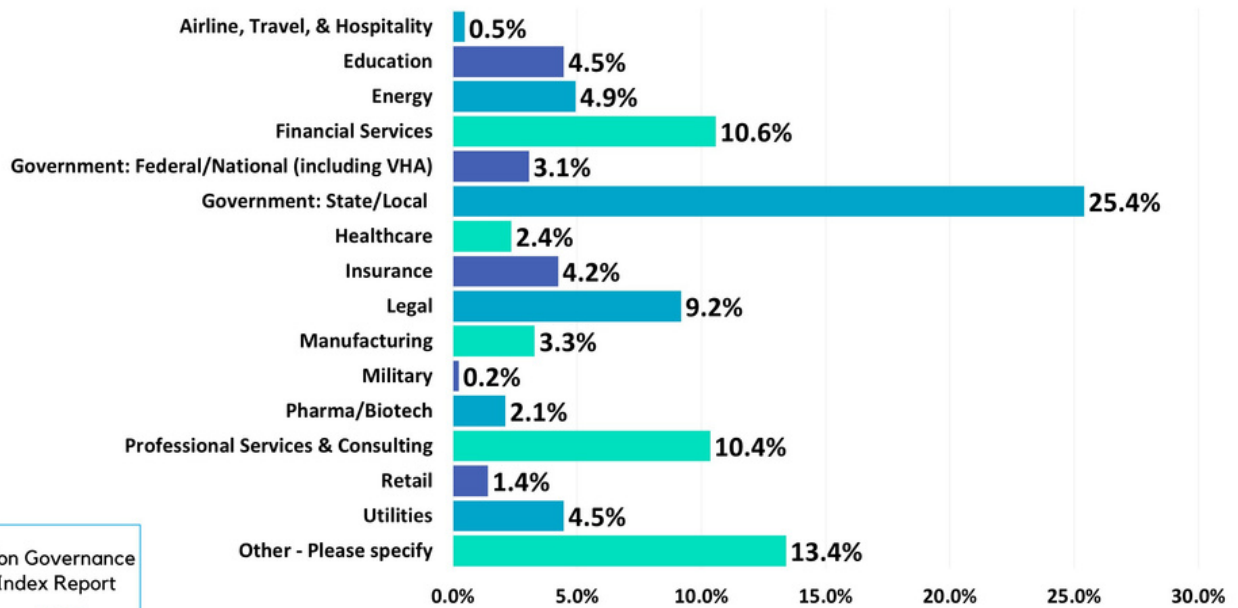
Records management professionals accounted for the largest segment of survey respondents (**46.4%**). IG-specific and information management professionals were represented at **18.6%** and **14.1%**. Combined, these core, IG roles represent a solid majority of survey respondents (**79.1%**).



## Representation by Industry

Respondents were asked to select the option that best described their industry. See results in the infographic, below. Government had the greatest representation, with state/local at over one-quarter (**25.4%**) of the respondents.

### Industries Represented



# MATURITY LEVELS

## STEERING COMMITTEE

The steering committee represents the *people* aspect of your organization's IG program. This is the organization's IG leadership team, and it should have broad representation from each of the interests enumerated in the infographic: IG leadership, information management, business units, technology, legal, risk/compliance, privacy, and security.

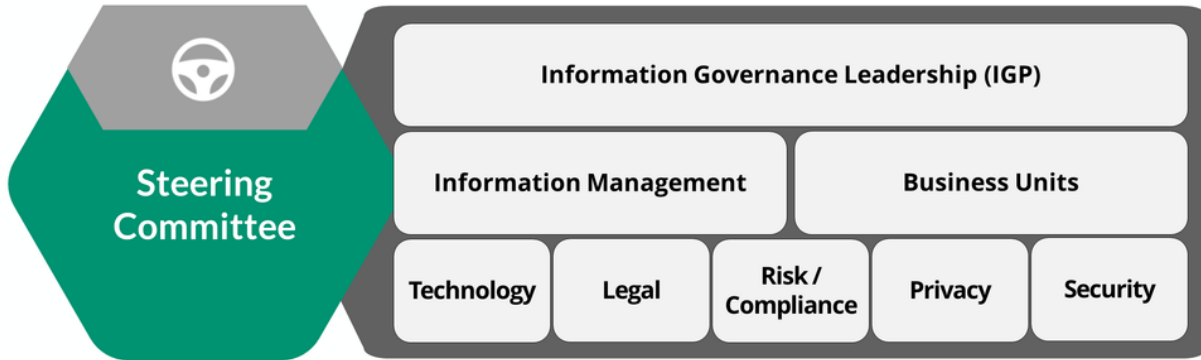
### Measuring Maturity

When evaluating your organization's program with respect to this area, consider these questions:

- Does your organization have a formal or informal group of individuals tasked with IG decision-making?
- Does the group have sufficient authority or influence to guide IG decisions?
- Does the group meet on a regular basis?
- Are all relevant information stakeholders represented and consulted during IG decisions?

These and other considerations were included in the descriptions of each maturity level for the steering committee area of the IGIM. Respondents were asked to select the maturity level that best describes their organization *on average* with respect to this area using the five-point scale and descriptions below.

Option	Description
I don't know / Can't answer	
Level 1 Non-existent / Sub-standard	No individual or group is identified and tasked with or has sufficient authority/influence to make IG-related decisions.
Level 2 In Development	Individuals are identified and tasked with making some IG-related decisions, but their authority and influence are limited in strength and scope. Key stakeholders are not always included during decision-making.
Level 3 Essential	Individuals and/or a group are identified and tasked with making IG decisions, and they have enough authority or influence to guide the organization's <i>basic</i> IG decisions. The IG governing body may be informal, with key stakeholders consulted as needed or reactively.
Level 4 Proactive	Individuals and/or a group are <i>formally</i> identified and tasked with making IG decisions and have sufficient authority and influence to begin to implement <i>industry best practices</i> and <i>standards</i> . Key stakeholders are part of the governing body that meets periodically to address IG-related issues.
Level 5 Transformational	There is executive-level IG leadership, and there is a formal IG governing body with all relevant stakeholders represented with authority for IG decisions. The governing body meets regularly to maintain the existing program, which meets legal, regulatory, and business needs and best practices and standards. The governing body is able to focus on <i>optimizing</i> the use of the information.

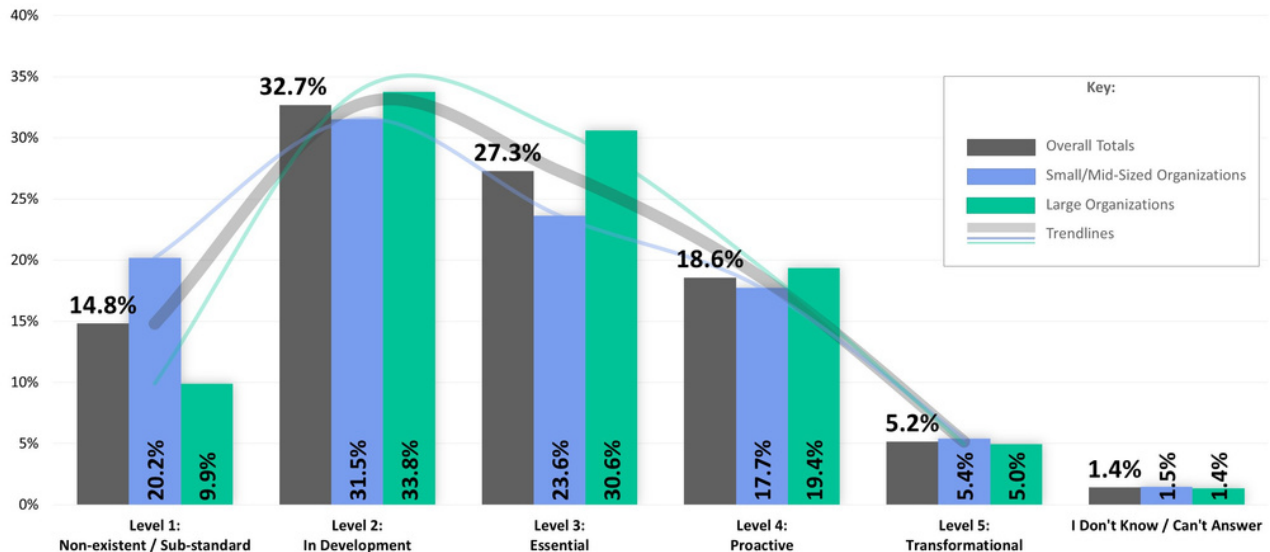


## Results and Analysis

Responses by maturity level are shown in the infographic below. Down substantially from last year, a narrow majority (**51.1%**) of respondents report their organization’s maturity level in this area as level 3 (essential) or higher. (Year-over-year comparison in each area of the IGIM and overall maturity is provided in the Appendix.) This means that a bit more than one-half of respondents say their organizations have *at least* the essentials in place *or better* when it comes to the people side of IG. While for some of these the IG body may be informal or responding reactively, at least individuals are identified, tasked, and given enough authority to be able to guide basic IG decisions. Only about one-quarter (**23.8%**) are doing better than just the essentials, with **18.6%** and **5.2%** of respondents reporting a maturity of level 4 (proactive) or 5 (transformational), respectively. When segmented by organization size, these results show that large organizations tend to be more mature than small/mid-sized organizations on this parameter.

Less than half (**47.5%**) of respondents report their organizations as deficient in this area, with **14.8%** and **32.7%** at level 1 (non-existent/sub-standard) and level 2 (in development), respectively.

## Steering Committee



## AUTHORITIES

Authorities are the elements that will serve as guiderails for your organization's IG efforts. Roughly, these are the rules that help guide IG decisions. These include authoritative frameworks, standards, regulations, privacy requirements, risk tolerance, and organizational culture. Understanding relevant authorities will help ensure that you are meeting your organization's obligations and objectives with your IG program.

### Measuring Maturity

When evaluating your organization's program with respect to this area, consider these questions:

- Are your organization's legal, regulatory compliance, and business needs clearly understood, documented, and followed?
- Have appropriate standards and best practices been identified? Are they understood?
- Are your organization's culture and risk tolerance understood well enough to incorporate them into decision-making?
- Are relevant authorities being periodically reviewed and kept current? How are changes to these being captured and incorporated into decision-making?

These and other considerations were included in the descriptions of each maturity level for the authorities area of the IGIM. Respondents were asked to select the maturity level that best describes their organization *on average* with respect to this area using the five-point scale and descriptions below.

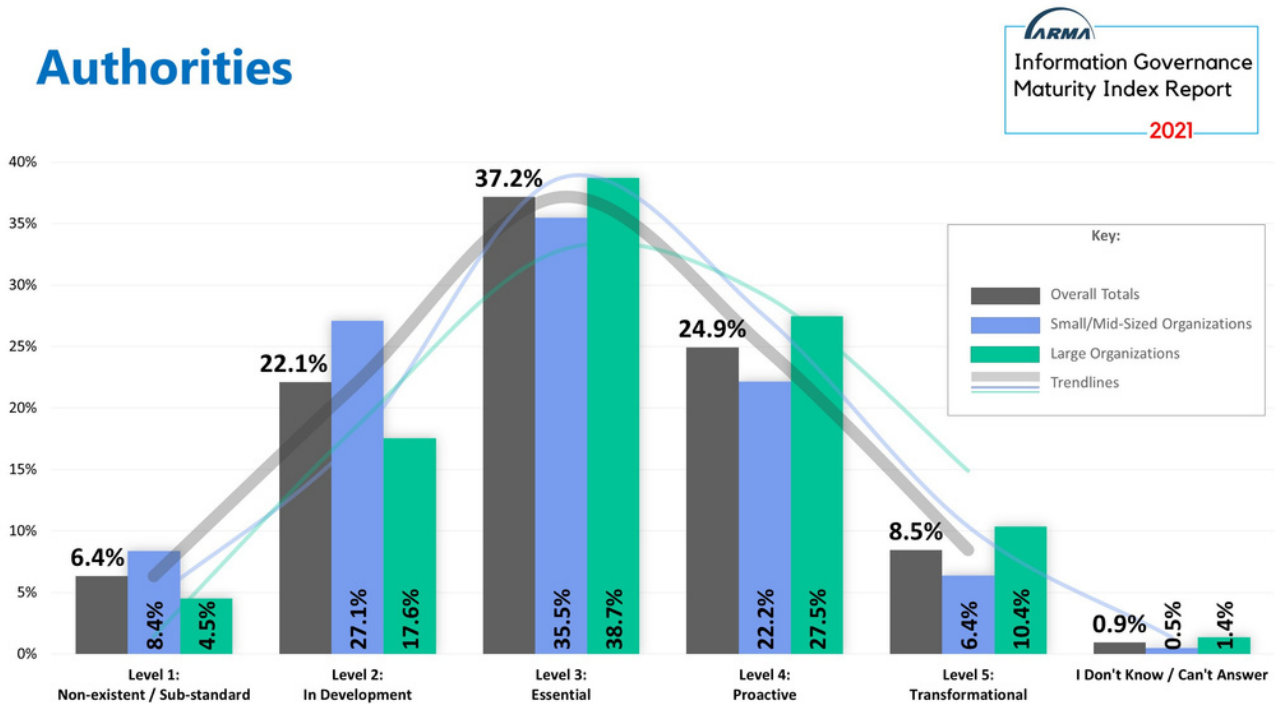
Option	Description
I don't know / Can't answer	
Level 1 Non-existent / Sub-standard	Basic legal, regulatory compliance, and business needs are not fully understood or met.
Level 2 In Development	Some legal, regulatory compliance, and business needs have been identified and some are being met, but there are significant gaps before minimum compliance is achieved.
Level 3 Essential	Minimum legal, regulatory compliance, and business needs are understood and met. There is sufficient understanding to generally avoid running afoul of organizational culture and risk tolerance. Changes to authorities are being addressed and incorporated as they are identified, sometimes reactively.
Level 4 Proactive	Basic legal, regulatory compliance, and business needs are understood, are being met, and are often exceeded. Best practices and standards are being identified and incorporated into decision-making, as are organizational culture and risk tolerance. A periodic review of authorities is in place to proactively identify and address changes.
Level 5 Transformational	Understanding and meeting legal, regulatory compliance, and business needs and best practices and standards is routine, as is incorporating them into decision-making processes. Processes are in place to regularly review relevant authorities and to regularly incorporate relevant changes into decision-making processes and information systems. Effective IG may influence and shape organizational culture and risk tolerance.



## Results and Analysis

Responses by maturity level are shown in the infographic below. Down slightly from last year, a clear majority (**70.6%**) of respondents report their organization’s maturity level in this area as level 3 (essential) or higher. This shows that approaching three-quarters of respondents think their organizations have *at least* the essentials in place *or better* when it comes to understanding and meeting the internal and external rules that guide IG decision-making. Some organizations may just be meeting minimum legal, regulatory compliance, and business needs and responding reactively to changes. About one-third (**33.4%**) are exceeding the essentials, with **24.9%** and **8.5%** of respondents reporting a maturity of level 4 (proactive) or 5 (transformational), respectively. When segmented by organization size, these results show that large organizations tend to be more mature than small/mid-sized organizations on this parameter. Comparatively, organizations tend to be somewhat more mature in this area than in some of the other areas of the IGIM.

A bit more than one-quarter (**28.5%**) of respondents report their organizations as deficient in this area, with **6.4%** and **22.1%** at level 1 (non-existent/sub-standard) and level 2 (in development), respectively.



## SUPPORTS

Supports are the elements that your organization has available that will help you establish your IG program. These include change management, project management, communications, organizational learning and training, and help desk/FAQs.

### *Measuring Maturity*

When evaluating your organization's program with respect to this area, consider these questions:

- Are all necessary support structures in place or are some missing?
- For existing supports, are they used, are they helpful, and do they apply a consistent, repeatable methodology?
- Are the supports proactively incorporated into IG projects/initiatives or created/added to projects *ad hoc*?
- Are lessons learned incorporated to improve support structures going forward?

These and other considerations were included in the descriptions of each maturity level for the supports area of the IGIM. Respondents were asked to select the maturity level that best describes their organization *on average* with respect to this area using the five-point scale and descriptions below.

Option	Description
I don't know / Can't answer	
Level 1 Non-existent / Sub-standard	Essentially no supports are in place to assist with IG efforts. Individuals are on their own.
Level 2 In Development	Isolated pockets of support exist or are in development. A specific support, like learning and training, may be in place, but other supports are not or are in early development.
Level 3 Essential	Supports are created <i>ad hoc</i> for specific IG projects or initiatives. As a result, they do not apply consistent and repeatable methodologies. Lessons learned are not applied to future projects. But work is getting done.
Level 4 Proactive	Change management, project management, communications, learning and training, and other supports are generally in place, used, helpful, and apply consistent/repeatable methodologies. Utilizing these supports is generally proactively incorporated into IG projects and initiatives. Lessons learned are being applied to improve support going forward.
Level 5 Transformational	Highly effective change management, project management, learning and training, and other supports are fully in place, used, helpful, and apply consistent/repeatable methodologies. Incorporating supports into IG projects and initiatives is routine. Lessons learned from previous efforts are being continuously incorporated within supports.



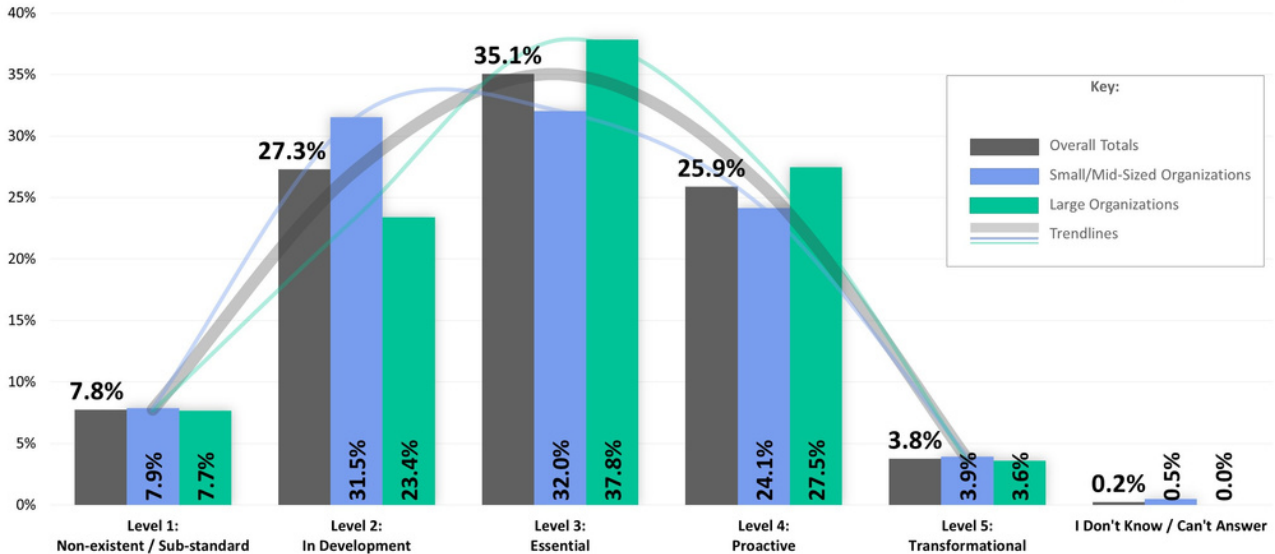


### Results and Analysis

Responses by maturity level are shown in the infographic below. Down slightly from last year, a clear majority (64.7%) of respondents report their organization’s maturity level in this area as level 3 (essential) or higher. This indicates that more than two-thirds of respondents say their organizations have *at least* the essentials in place *or better* when it comes to the underlying supports like change management, project management, communications, *etc.* Some of these organizations may be utilizing supports on an *ad hoc* basis but still getting work done. Less than one-third (29.6%) are exceeding the essentials, with 25.9% and 3.8% of respondents reporting a maturity of level 4 (proactive) or 5 (transformational), respectively. When segmented by organization size, these results show that large organizations tend to be more mature than small/mid-sized organizations on this parameter.

Over one-third (35.1%) of respondents report their organizations as deficient in this area, with 7.8% and 27.3% at level 1 (non-existent/sub-standard) and level 2 (in development), respectively.

### Supports



## PROCESSES

Processes ensure consistency in your organization's IG program. These include metrics, policies, procedures, rules, roles, benchmarking, and accountability. They help to implement your IG program through informed and consistent decision-making and help to measure and assess results.

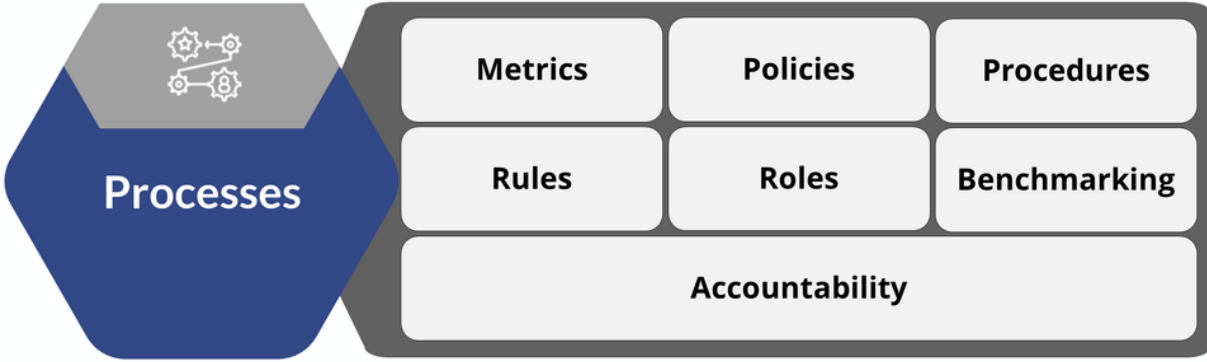
### *Measuring Maturity*

When evaluating your organization's program with respect to this area, consider these questions:

- Are policies, procedures, rules, and roles clearly defined and followed?
- Are people regularly trained and assessed on their understanding of the policies, procedures, rules, and roles?
- Are there accountability structures in place to ensure compliance?
- Are metrics and benchmarking being used to measure program progress and to inform decision-making?

These and other considerations were included in the descriptions of each maturity level for the processes area of the IGIM. Respondents were asked to select the maturity level that best describes their organization *on average* with respect to this area using the five-point scale and descriptions below.

Option	Description
I don't know / Can't answer	
Level 1 Non-existent / Sub-standard	Essential policies, procedures, rules, and roles/responsibilities are not defined or consistently followed.
Level 2 In Development	Some policies, procedures, rules, and roles/responsibilities are defined and followed. Many are not. Significant gaps remain to getting essential processes in place.
Level 3 Essential	The essential policies, procedures, rules, and roles/responsibilities are clearly defined and followed. There is some form of accountability in place to ensure compliance with critical processes. Other processes that are not essential to meeting basic requirements are less well defined or followed. Changes to processes are being addressed and incorporated as they are identified, sometimes reactively.
Level 4 Proactive	Essential and other policies, procedures, rules, and roles are clearly defined and followed, and clear accountability structures are in place to ensure compliance. Best practices and standards are being incorporated into processes, including collecting metrics and benchmarking assessments. A periodic review of the processes is in place to proactively identify and address changes.
Level 5 Transformational	Policies, procedures, rules, and roles/responsibilities are fully in place and meet industry best practices and standards. Steps are in place to regularly review processes to incorporate necessary changes. Full accountability processes are in place, and compliance monitoring technologies may be in place. Metrics and benchmarking results are being used to inform decision-making.

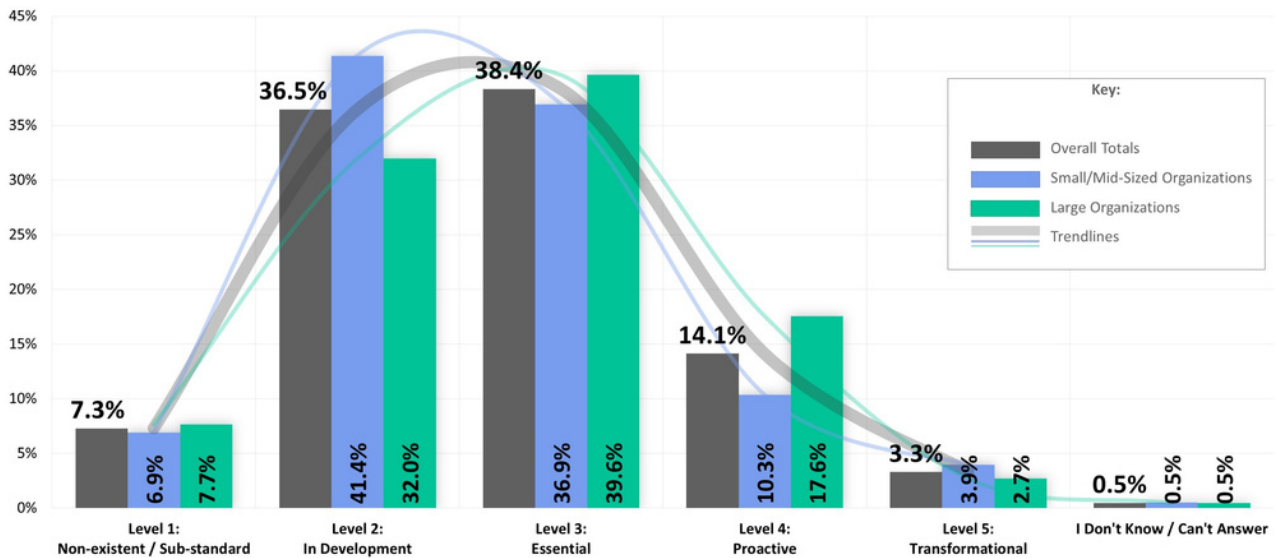


### Results and Analysis

Responses by maturity level are shown in the infographic below. Down substantially from last year, a majority (**55.8%**) of respondents report their organization’s maturity level in this area as level 3 (essential) or higher. This means that more than one-half of respondents say their organizations have *at least* the essentials in place *or better* when it comes to the various elements that help ensure consistency in an IG program such as policies, procedures, metrics, defined roles, *etc.* Some of these may only have the essential elements of the IGIM area, processes, clearly defined and followed. Only, **17.4%** are meeting more than just basic requirements, with **14.1%** and **3.3%** of respondents reporting a maturity of level 4 (proactive) or 5 (transformational), respectively. When segmented by organization size, these results show that large organizations tend to be more mature than small/mid-sized organizations on this parameter.

Over forty percent (**43.8%**) of respondents report their organizations as deficient in this area with **7.3%** and **36.5%** at level 1 (non-existent/sub-standard) and level 2 (in development), respectively.

### Processes



## CAPABILITIES

Capabilities reflect what is in place to guide information through the organization throughout the information lifecycle. These include information lifecycle, information access, search, protection, and privacy. As the model's visualization shows, the information lifecycle is surrounded by elements relating to access and security as both need to be addressed as your information moves through its lifecycle.

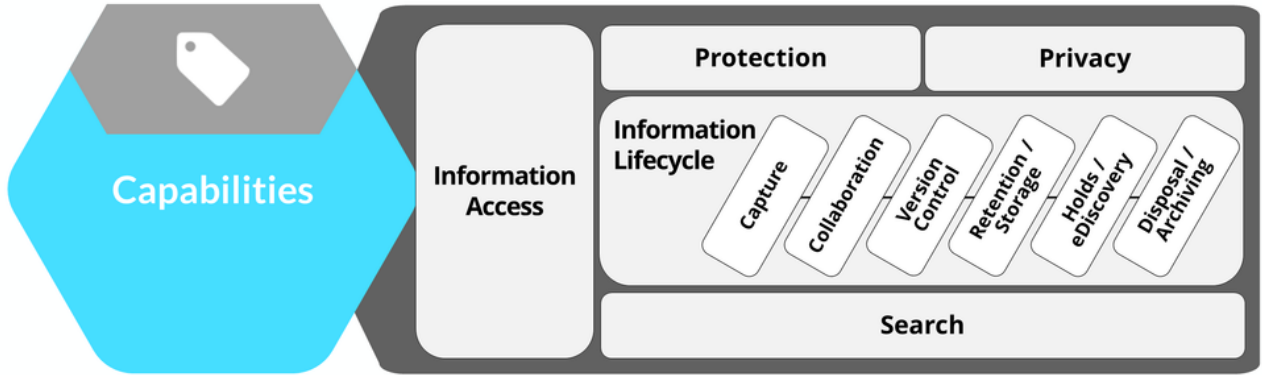
### Measuring Maturity

When evaluating your organization's program with respect to this area, consider these questions:

- Does the correct information get to the right hands when it is needed?
- Is information protected throughout the information lifecycle so that it does not fall into the wrong hands?
- Are internal and external threats to information addressed?
- Is a consistent lifecycle being applied to all of your organization's information regardless of format or location?

These and other considerations were included in the descriptions of each maturity level for the capabilities area of the IGIM. Respondents were asked to select the maturity level that best describes their organization *on average* with respect to this area using the five-point scale and descriptions below.

Option	Description
I don't know / Can't answer	
Level 1 Non-existent / Sub-standard	Essentially no formalized capabilities are in place, or they are very sub-standard.
Level 2 In Development	Some capabilities may be in place, but there are major gaps before all the basics are even addressed.
Level 3 Essential	Basic capabilities are in place but are generally applied manually or <i>ad hoc</i> (e.g., access and security controls may be managed system by system). Document collaboration tools are not in place and/or being fully used and documents are emailed or versioning is managed manually. Disposition of documents is addressed <i>ad hoc</i> .
Level 4 Proactive	Capabilities are in place and areas of automation and centralized information capabilities are common but are not comprehensive for all organization information (e.g., enterprise search may apply to some information systems). Identity and access may be centrally controlled. Capture may be automated for some systems but not others. The need for improvement is understood and steps are underway.
Level 5 Transformational	There is a high level of centralization and automation of information capabilities. A consistent lifecycle approach is being applied to information. Enterprise search is enabled and integrated with most/all enterprise systems. Access controls, information protection, and privacy rules are centralized. Security monitoring/threat detection are in place. Enterprise "discovery" tools are used to monitor sensitive information and to apply consistent lifecycle controls to all information.

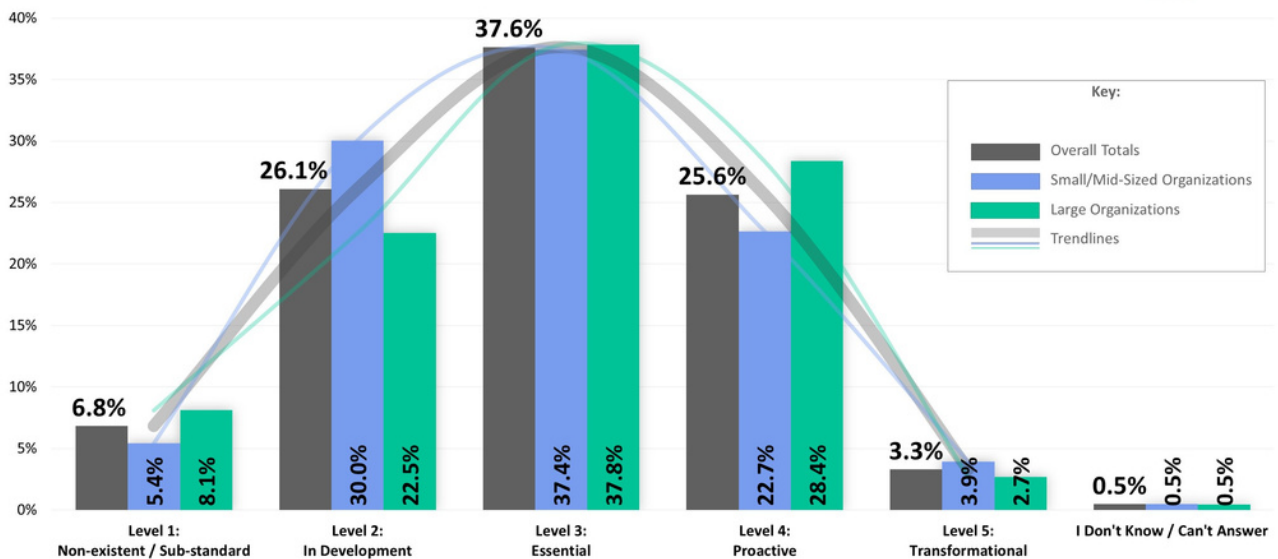


### Results and Analysis

Responses by maturity level are shown in the infographic below. Though down substantially from last year, still a clear majority (**66.6%**) of respondents report their organization’s maturity level in this area as level 3 (essential) or higher. This shows that around two-thirds of respondents think their organizations have *at least* the essentials in place *or better* with respect to the elements needed to guide information through its lifecycle to get the right information to the right place at the right time. Some organizations may only have basic capabilities in place or perform steps manually or *ad hoc*. More than one-quarter (**28.9%**) are exceeding the essentials, with **25.6%** and **3.3%** of respondents reporting a maturity of level 4 (proactive) or 5 (transformational), respectively. When segmented by organization size, these results show that large organizations tend to be more mature than small/mid-sized organizations on this parameter.

Nearly one-third (**32.9%**) of respondents report their organizations as deficient in this area with **6.8%** and **26.1%** at level 1 (non-existent/sub-standard) and level 2 (in development), respectively.

### Capabilities



## STRUCTURES

Structures are the building blocks of information organization, from the storage structures (information architecture, taxonomy, metadata) to the system structures (technology architecture), along with file formats and transmission (formats & protocols).

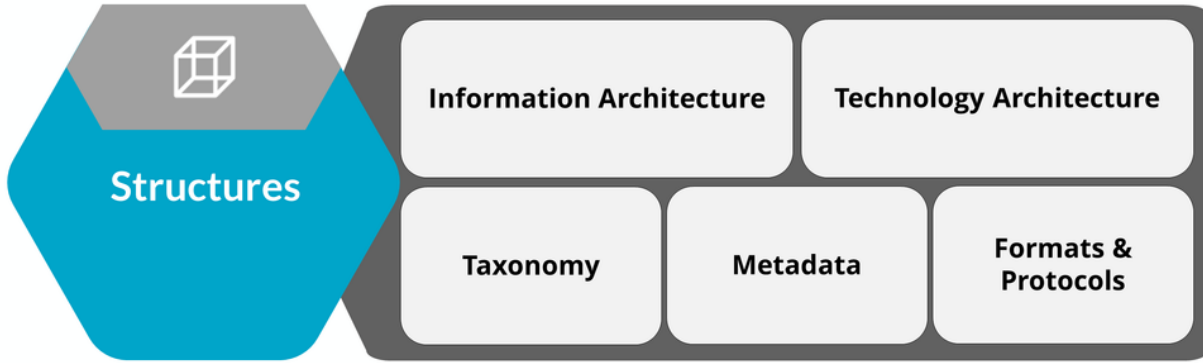
### Measuring Maturity

When evaluating your organization's program with respect to this area, consider these questions:

- Does your organization use an information taxonomy?
- Are your organization's taxonomy and metadata consistent across systems?
- Does your information architecture show how your organization's information is related?
- Is your organization's technology architecture mapped and rationalized?
- Are specific file formats supported as required (e.g., PDF/A for archiving or locked/uneditable finalized records)?
- Are policies and protocols in place for information transfer (e.g., use of IM, VPN, etc.)?

These and other considerations were included in the descriptions of each maturity level for the structures area of the IGIM. Respondents were asked to select the maturity level that best describes their organization *on average* with respect to this area using the five-point scale and descriptions below.

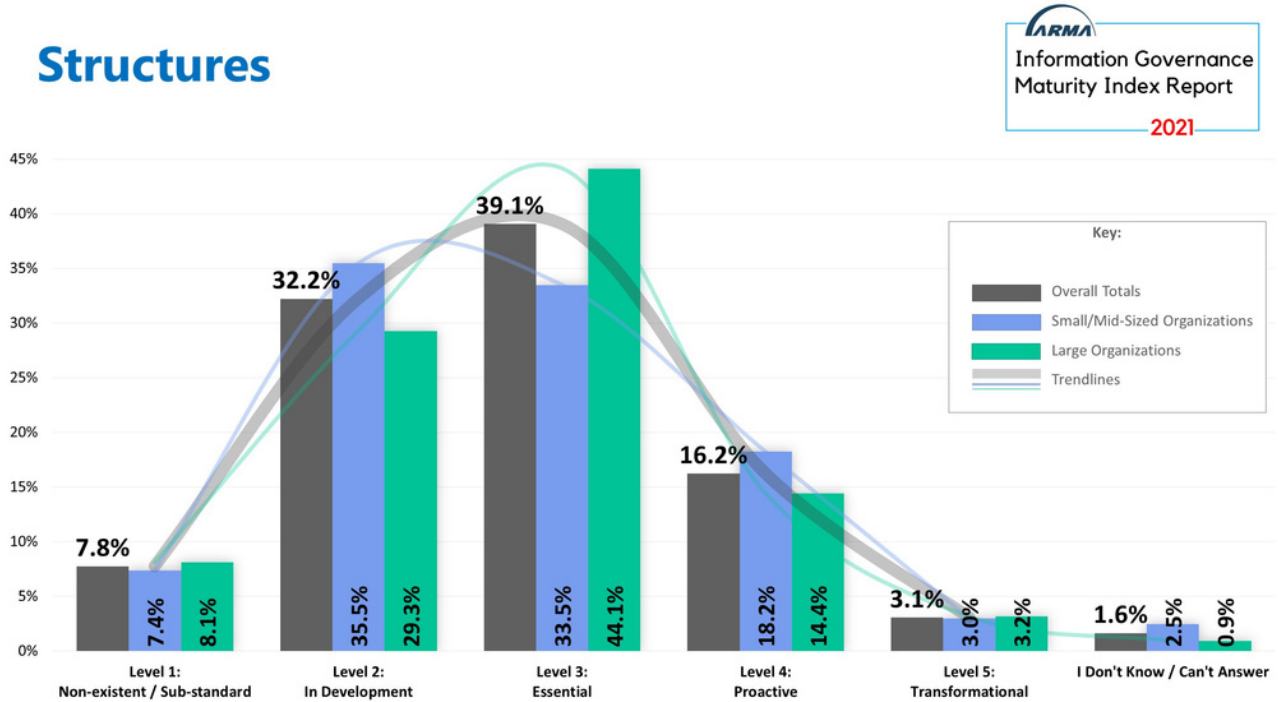
Option	Description
I don't know / Can't answer	
Level 1 Non-existent / Sub-standard	Essentially there is no formal use of metadata or taxonomy to manage information. Required formats and transfer protocols are absent. There is minimal, if any, consideration of information architecture or technology architecture.
Level 2 In Development	Only isolated pockets of use of metadata, taxonomy, and file format and protocols are in place. Gaps exist to meet basic requirements, and approaches are not consistent. There is no mapping of information architecture or technology architecture.
Level 3 Essential	Some metadata and taxonomy are being used for information management but are not consistent across systems and functional areas. There is a basic understanding of information architecture and technology architecture only – not fully mapped. Where required, basics are met for required formats and protocols for data transmission.
Level 4 Proactive	Metadata and taxonomy are in place for systems and functional areas, and efforts are underway to create consistent metadata and taxonomy across the organization. Mapping of information architecture and technology architecture is planned or in progress, as is an approach for improving it over time. Minimum requirements for file formats and protocols are being met and, in some cases, exceeded.
Level 5 Transformational	Consistent metadata and taxonomy are used across the organization. There is a clear understanding and mapping of the organization's information architecture and steps to improve the interrelationship of systems to optimize information use. Technology architecture is mapped, and efforts to improve are underway, including consolidating and integrating systems, decommissioning old systems, and deploying new ones. Best practices are used for file formats and protocols.



### Results and Analysis

Responses by maturity level are shown in the infographic below. Though down from last year, still a majority (**58.4%**) of respondents report their organization’s maturity level in this area as level 3 (essential) or higher. This means that over one-half of respondents think their organizations have *at least* the essentials in place *or better* with respect to the basic building blocks of information organization like storage structures (information architecture, taxonomy, metadata) and system structures (technology architecture). While, for some, only the basics are in place and understood, and there are some inconsistencies across the environment. Others are doing better. For structures, **19.3%** of organizations are exceeding the essentials, with **16.2%** and **3.1%** of respondents reporting a maturity of level 4 (proactive) or 5 (transformational), respectively. When segmented by organization size, these results show that large organizations tend to be more mature than small/mid-sized organizations on this parameter.

Forty percent (**40.0%**) of respondents report their organizations as deficient in this area with **7.8%** and **32.2%** at level 1 (non-existent/sub-standard) and level 2 (in development), respectively.



## INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure represents the technological abilities that underpin your organization's information systems – ensuring your organization's information systems do what you need them to do to meet your organization's objectives. These include applications and software, networks and connectivity, content services and APIs, hosting/cloud/servers, SLAs and licensing, and information security.

### Measuring Maturity

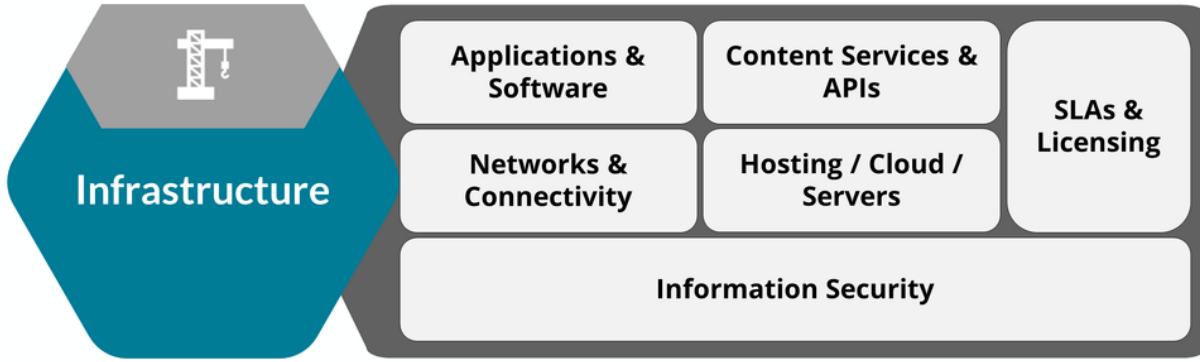
When evaluating your organization's program with respect to this area, consider these questions:

- Are the right applications and software in place to meet your organization's needs?
- Are the tools within your organization's technology environment integrated?
- Are your organization's networks and connectivity adequate?
- Are SLAs (internal and third party) and contracts tracked, managed, and enforced?
- Are security measures applied across all organization systems, networks, and other infrastructure?
- Is information security monitoring in place?

These and other considerations were included in the descriptions of each maturity level for the infrastructure area of the IGIM. Respondents were asked to select the maturity level that best describes their organization *on average* with respect to this area using the five-point scale and descriptions below.

Option	Description
I don't know / Can't answer	
Level 1 Non-existent / Sub-standard	While there is almost certainly some infrastructure in place, it is so poor that it cannot minimally support the organization.
Level 2 In Development	Some applications and software are in place, but there are gaps in meeting even basic requirements. Workarounds are how work gets done. There is minimal connectivity. The interconnectivity of systems is not considered. Networks function poorly. SLAs are not in place or enforced. Security across systems, networks, and other infrastructure is spotty at best.
Level 3 Essential	Applications and software in place support the organization's basic requirements. There are gaps in direct interconnectivity between systems. Networks and connectivity are sufficient, but performance is slow and certain connectivity options may not be available. SLAs may be slow. Licensing agreements may not be fully tracked or enforced. Minimum security across systems, networks, and other infrastructure is in place.
Level 4 Proactive	Applications and software in place meet and/or exceed basic requirements. Effective interconnectivity between systems is being established. Networks and connectivity are being improved to better performance and increase options/work flexibility for end-users. SLAs and licensing agreements meet user expectations and are enforced. Security and monitoring are in place across systems, networks, and other infrastructure.
Level 5 Transformational	Applications and software deployed are often best in class. Systems are fully integrated to optimize information use and flow. Networks and connectivity are optimized. Performance is monitored and exceeds expectations. Connectivity options are established to support a flexible and mobile workforce. SLAs and licensing agreements are monitored, enforced, and routinely exceed user expectations. Security and monitoring are in place across systems, networks, and other infrastructure. The latest technologies are being deployed to assess and secure against threats.



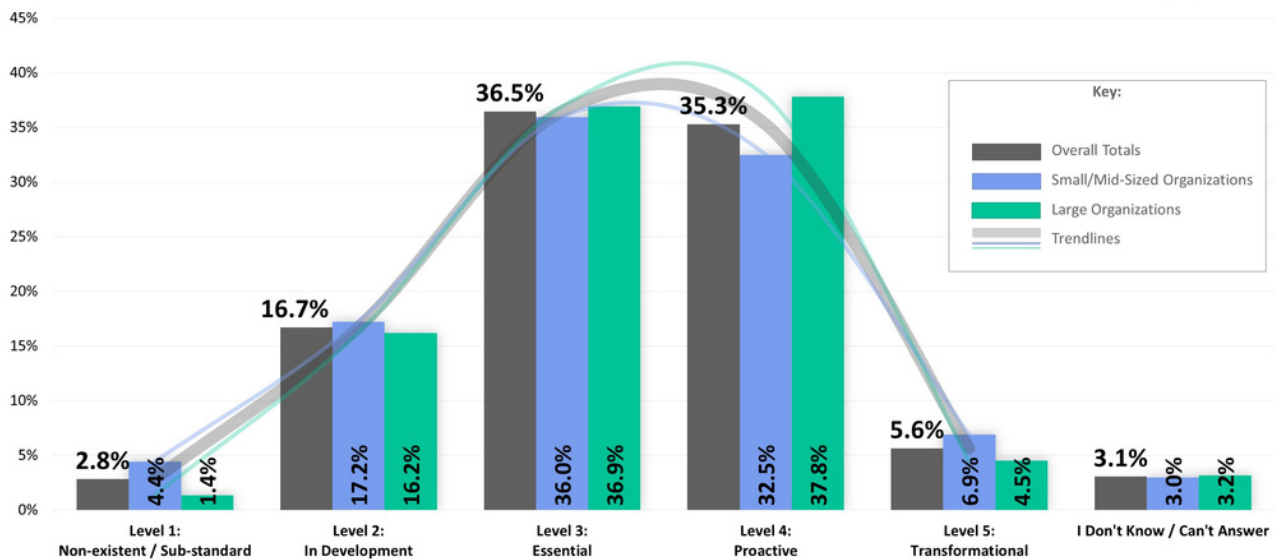


## Results and Analysis

Responses by maturity level are shown in the infographic below. Up from last year, a solid majority (**77.4%**) of respondents report their organization’s maturity level in this area as level 3 (essential) or higher. This means that over three-quarters of respondents say their organizations have *at least* the essentials in place *or better* when it comes to the information systems that help them achieve the organization’s objectives. Some may just meet their basic requirements with respect to their software and applications or networks and connectivity. Still others (**40.9%**) are exceeding the essentials, with **35.3%** and **5.6%** of respondents reporting a maturity of level 4 (proactive) or 5 (transformational), respectively. When segmented by organization size, these results show that large organizations tend to be more mature than small/mid-sized organizations on this parameter. Organizations tend to be more mature in this area than in the other areas of the IGIM, and infrastructure appears to be the most mature of the seven areas of the IGIM at this time. It is the only area that was ranked *more* mature over the previous year.

Less than twenty percent (**19.5%**) of respondents report their organizations as deficient in this area with **2.8%** and **16.7%** at level 1 (non-existent/sub-standard) and level 2 (in development), respectively.

## Infrastructure



## OVERALL IG PROGRAM MATURITY

With the vantage point of having just assessed their IG programs across the seven key areas of the IGIM, respondents were asked to assess their IG programs across the board. Using the same five-point scale, with general descriptions of each level, respondents were asked to select the maturity level that best describes their organization's *overall* IG program *on average*.

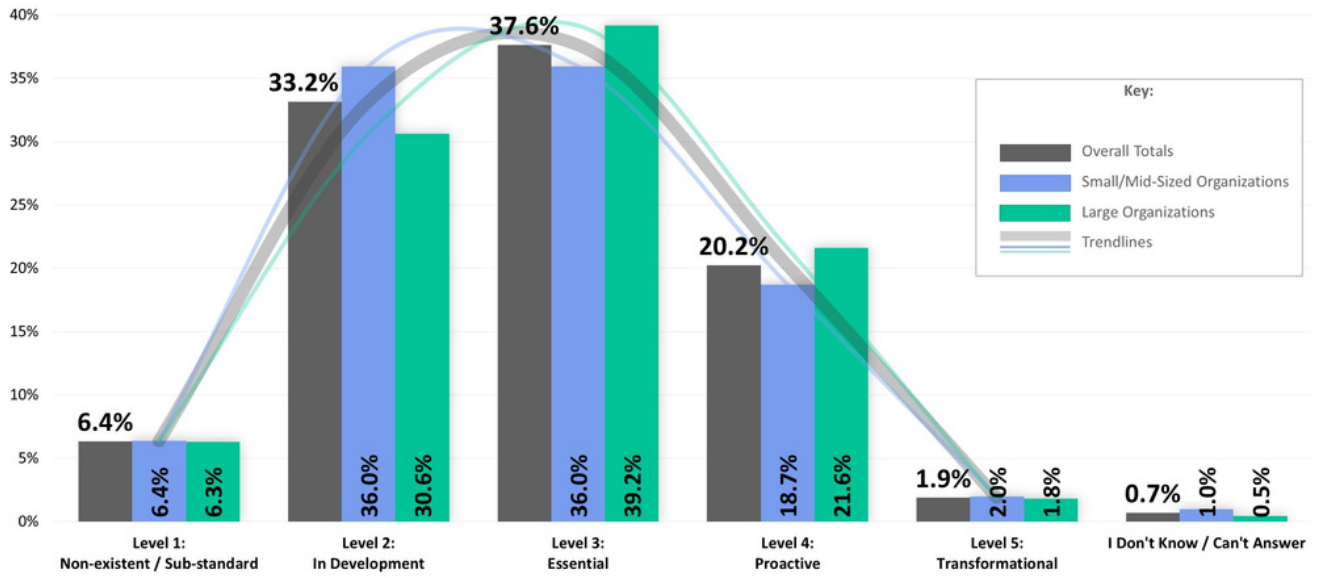
Option	Description
I don't know / Can't answer	
Level 1 Non-existent / Sub-standard	The item in question is either not addressed, minimally addressed, or sporadically addressed. Essentially nothing is in place.
Level 2 In Development	The item in question is in the active, early stages of development, but there are still significant gaps that must be closed before all of the basics are in place.
Level 3 Essential	The <i>basic requirements</i> for the item in question are being met, but not much else. Issues may be being addressed reactively.
Level 4 Proactive	The basic requirements for an item in question are being met and often exceeded, industry best practices and standards are being incorporated, and there are mechanisms in place for continuous improvement. Most issues are being addressed proactively.
Level 5 Transformational	The item in question is being addressed at an advanced level. Industry best practices and standards are being met, are routinized, and are being integrated into the information environment. <i>Think: advanced, transformational, optimizing.</i>

### Results and Analysis

Responses by maturity level are shown in the infographic. Overall IG program maturity, as was the case on six of the seven IGIM areas, was down over last year. Still, a majority of respondents (**59.8%**) report their organization's overall IG program maturity as level 3 (essential) or higher. Overall, about sixty percent of respondents think their organizations have *at least* the essentials in place *or better*. Some of these may only be meeting the basic requirements or addressing issues reactively. Others (**22.1%**) are doing better and exceeding the essentials, with **20.2%** and **1.9%** of respondents reporting a maturity of level 4 (proactive) or 5 (transformational), respectively. When segmented by organization size, these results show that large organizations tend to be more mature than small/mid-sized organizations on overall IG program maturity.

A little fewer than forty percent (**39.5%**) of respondents report their organizations as deficient overall with **6.4%** and **33.2%** at level 1 (non-existent/sub-standard) and level 2 (in development), respectively.

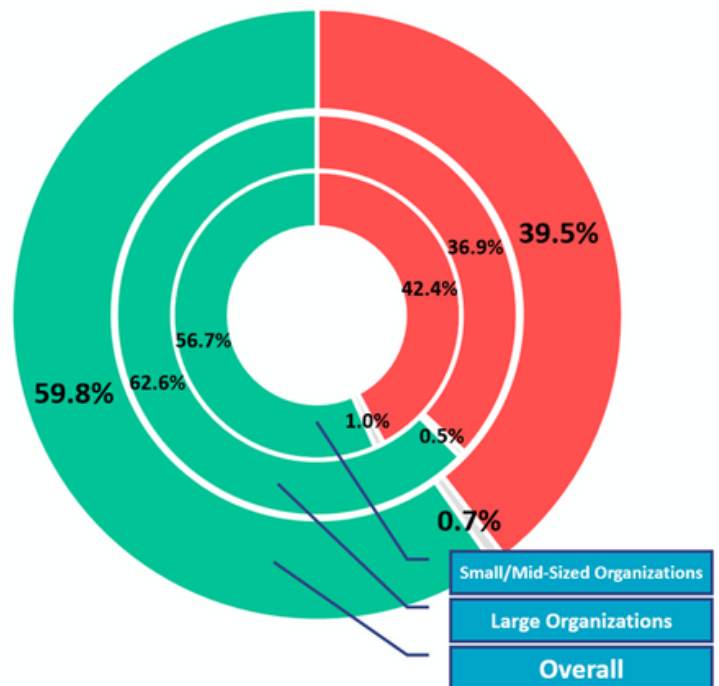
# Overall IG Program Maturity



## COMPARISON OF IG PROGRAM MATURITY OVERALL AND ACROSS THE SEVEN AREAS OF THE IGIM

In this section, IG program maturity *overall* and with respect to each of the seven areas of the IGIM are presented side-by-side to facilitate comparison across all eight maturity measures. Responses indicating a maturity level of 3 or above were aggregated and labeled “established” to represent organizations with *at least* the essentials in place *or better* for the area being measured. Responses indicating a maturity of level 1 or 2 were aggregated and labeled “deficient” to represent organizations that are still in development – but with significant gaps – *or worse*. Results for total responses as well as responses further segmented by organization size are presented in the infographic. These are shown as concentric circles to facilitate comparison of maturity levels across total responses and those further segmented into responses from large and small/mid-sized organizations.

### Overall IG Program Maturity



### Results and Analysis

For *total* respondents, a majority of organizations fall into the established category for each of the eight maturity measures. This means that a majority of respondents think their organizations have the *essentials* in place *or better*, with respect to each of the seven areas of the IGIM and for their IG programs overall. However, with respect to overall IG program maturity and all areas of the IGIM, with the exception of infrastructure, maturity levels are down, in some cases significantly, over last year. (See year-over-year comparisons in the Appendix.)

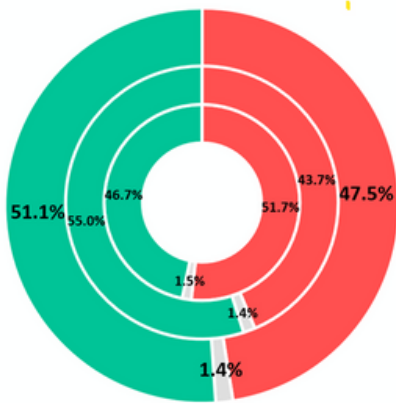
Regarding total respondents, the percentage reporting maturity at the established level ranges from a low of around fifty percent to a high of over three-quarters (**51.1%** for steering committee to **77.4%** for infrastructure). Maturity levels from two of the seven IGIM areas were notably higher than the others. Authorities and infrastructure lead other areas with a maturity level of established at **70.6%** and **77.4%**, respectively. As already noted, the percentage of respondents reporting infrastructure as established was the only area up over last year (from **73.9%**).

Steering committee, structures, and processes have the lowest percentages in the established segment at **51.1%**, **58.4%**, and **55.8%**, respectively. For total respondents, the percentage reporting maturity at the deficient level ranges from a low of less than twenty percent (**19.5%**) to a high of nearly one-half (**19.5%** for infrastructure to a high of **47.5%** for steering committee).

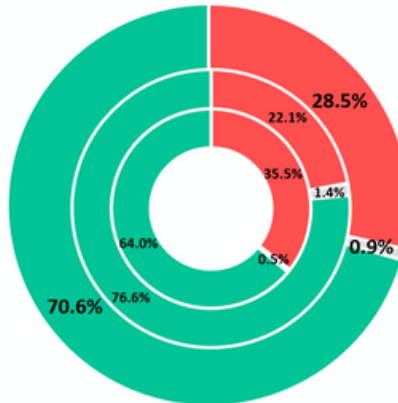
Trends are similar when the results are further segmented by organization size. Large organizations are more mature across all eight maturity measures than small and mid-sized organizations combined, but

are not outstripping them by much. For both segments, infrastructure leads other areas with a maturity level of established. Across all maturity measures considered in total or segmented by size, infrastructure for large organizations has the highest percentage at established (**79.3%**). Also across measures, steering committee for small/mid-sized organizations has the highest number of organizations in the deficient range, and it is the only segment with more than half of respondents reporting their organization in the deficient range (**51.2%**).

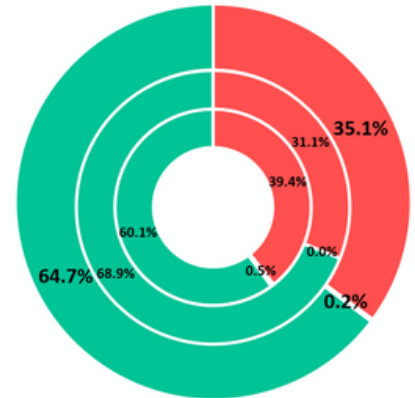
### Steering Committee



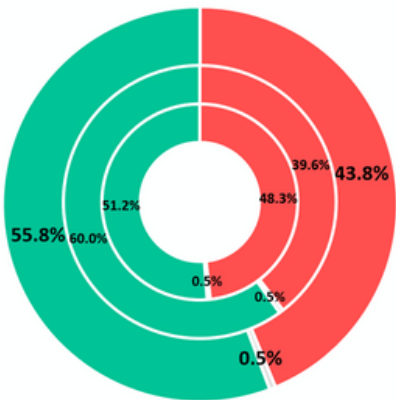
### Authorities



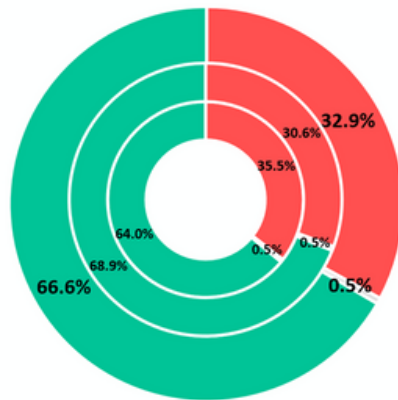
### Supports



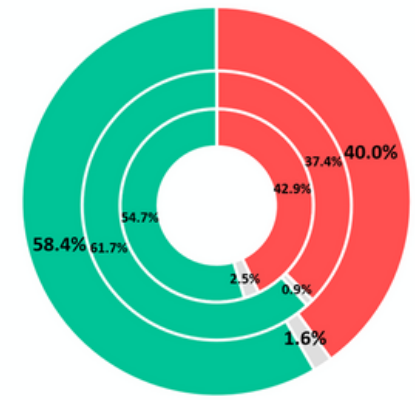
### Processes



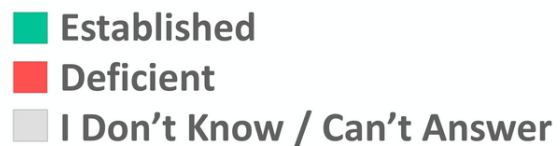
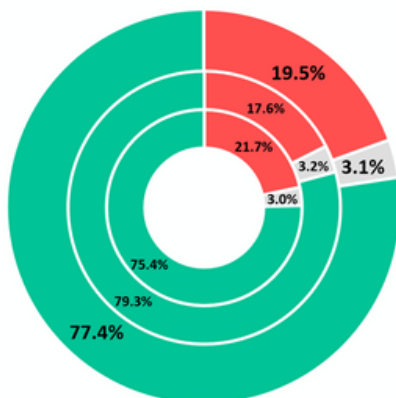
### Capabilities



### Structures



### Infrastructure



## CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

In this report, we have attempted to maintain a neutral tone in presenting the survey results. As was the case last year, most respondents report that their organizations have at least the essentials in place for all of the areas of the IGIM. However, maturity rankings are down as compared with the previous year across all areas with the exception of infrastructure. In some cases, they are down considerably.

We would have expected an upward trend in IG programs over time. However, the data for this year's report were collected toward the end of 2020, a year that was far from ordinary. As organizations scrambled to adapt to the challenges posed by the pandemic to support remote working conditions and address other challenges, it may be that people gained more insight or more accurate insights into the deficiencies of their IG programs. We cannot be sure. Next year's data may provide insights to support whether or not this year's downward trend was a correction or just anomalous as so much of our experience in 2020.

As noted last year, a sizable portion of respondents report that their IG programs are deficient overall and/or with respect to one or more of the seven areas of the IGIM. Organizations must do better.

### HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE DATA:

- A majority of respondents report that their organizations have the essentials in place or better with respect to each of the seven areas of the IGIM and for their overall IG programs.
- With respect to overall IG program maturity and all areas of the IGIM, with the exception of infrastructure, maturity levels are down, in some cases significantly, over last year.
- Regarding total respondents, the percentage reporting maturity at the established level ranges from a low of around fifty percent to a high of over three-quarters (**51.1%** for steering committee to **77.4%** for infrastructure).
- When considering total respondents, maturity levels from two of the seven IGIM areas were notably higher than the others. Authorities and infrastructure lead other areas with a maturity level of established at **70.6%** and **77.4%**, respectively. As already noted, the percentage of respondents reporting infrastructure as established was the only area up over last year (from **73.9%**).
- Generally, large organizations are more mature than small/mid-sized organizations across all maturity measures. However, large organizations do not appear to be outstripping small/mid-sized organizations by much.

### HOW TO USE THIS REPORT AND GRAPHICS

Among the key purposes of the survey were to generate the report and to build educational resources that are tied to the IGIM to help IG professionals implement and improve their programs.

If you have not taken the survey, consider doing so to find out where your organization stands with respect to the seven areas of the IGIM and overall. If you have taken the survey, thank you for helping to build this resource.

You can, of course, compare your organization to the results presented here as a benchmark. Are you ahead of the curve or falling behind others? This information can be used to help convince others of the importance of addressing deficiencies or making improvements in the various areas.

At least as important is understanding how your current IG program meets your organization's needs. IG and your IG program do not exist in a vacuum; they exist in the context of a specific organization — *your* organization. Your organization's specific requirements, priorities, and objectives comprise the benchmark against which success should be ultimately measured. For example, a maturity level of 3 or 4 might be enough in a given IGIM area in the context of your specific organization, whereas it might be a goal to push another area all the way to level 5 (transformational).

## GRAPHICS, CITATION, AND IGIM-TARGETED RESOURCES

Share the results of your assessment and the results in this report to make the case for addressing deficiencies or making improvements in the seven key areas of your IG program. Graphics from this report are available as standard graphics files and as slides for use by the IG community using an open-source license (Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0]). Please cite this report as: ARMA International. "Information Governance Maturity Index Report — 2021." April 2021.

In addition, forthcoming educational and training materials will target the seven areas of the IGIM and the elements within each. Once you have identified an area where your organization is deficient or just needs improvement, you will be able to find IGIM-aligned materials on ARMA's website to help you better implement your IG program.

This report, the IGIM, and supporting resources are available at ARMA International's website (<https://arma.org/igim>). The IGIM is available for free download and updates to the model will be released there.





## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



### ABOUT ARMA INTERNATIONAL

ARMA International is the community of records management, information management, and information governance professionals who harness the benefits and reduce the risks of information.

ARMA provides resources, education, certification, and unparalleled networking opportunities. We set the standards and best practices that you leverage to address your full information lifecycle. When it comes to managing an organization's most vital asset - information - ARMA has the comprehensive resources to secure your success. For more information, please visit [ARMA.org](http://ARMA.org).

### THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

ARMA International is grateful for the below partners who helped support this research effort.

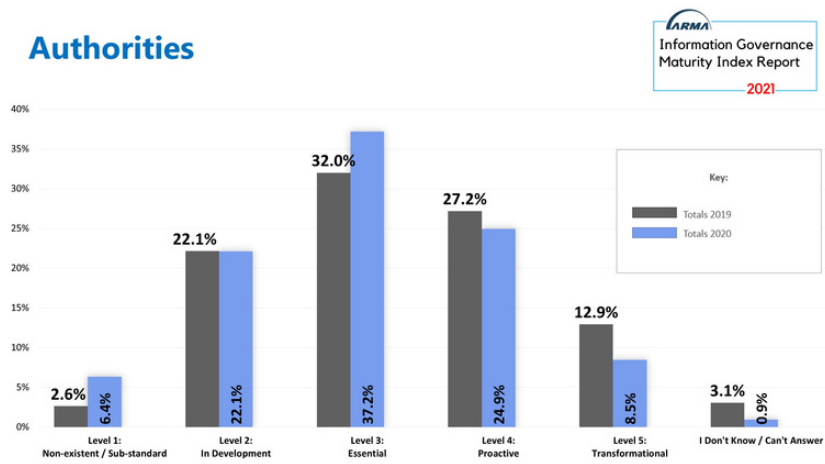
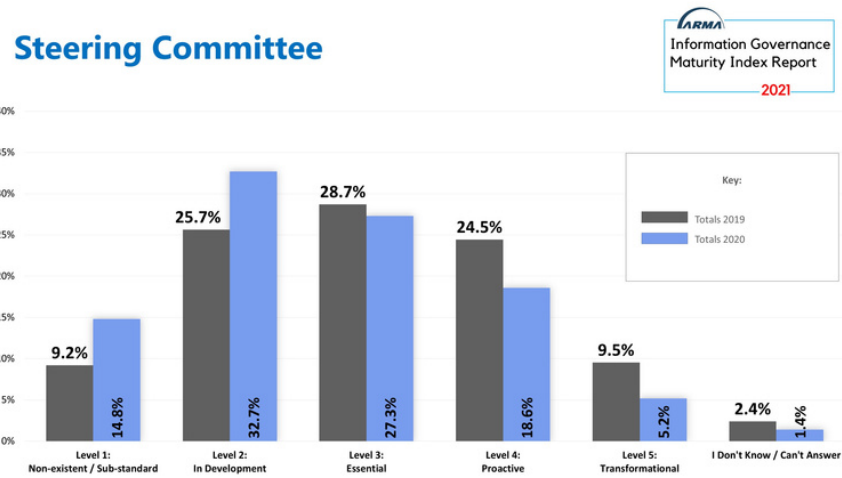




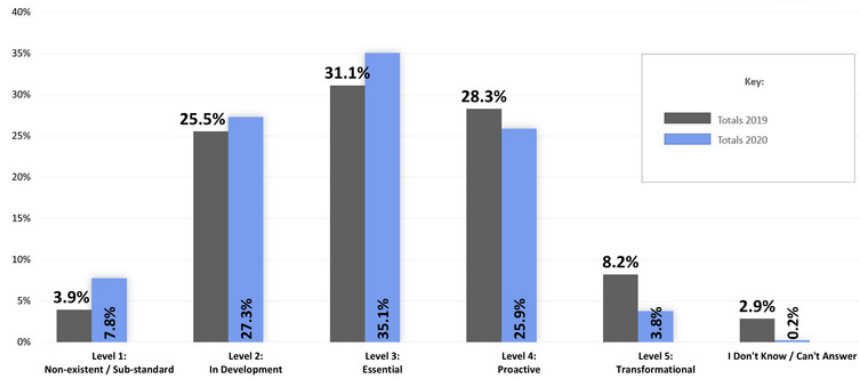
# APPENDIX: YEAR-OVER-YEAR COMPARISON

## APPENDIX: YEAR-OVER-YEAR COMPARISON

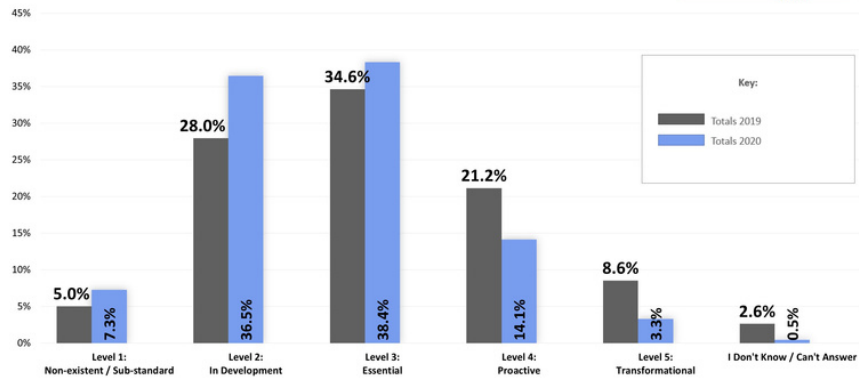
Below, for reference are year-over-year comparisons for total respondents across all eight maturity measures. They represent data from the 2020 and 2021 IG Maturity Index reports, collected in 2019 and 2020, respectively.



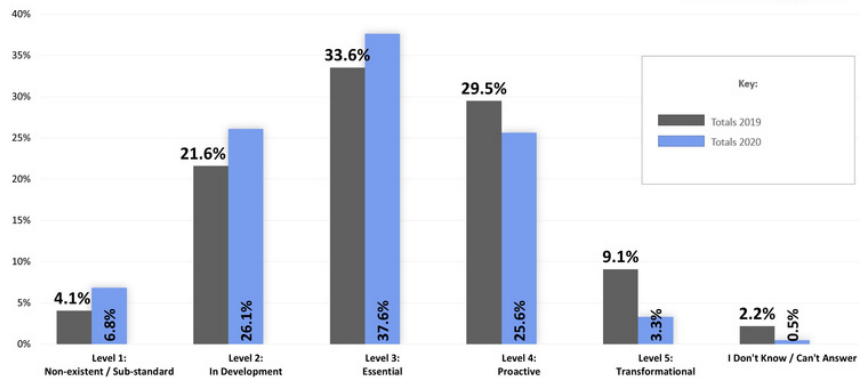
## Supports



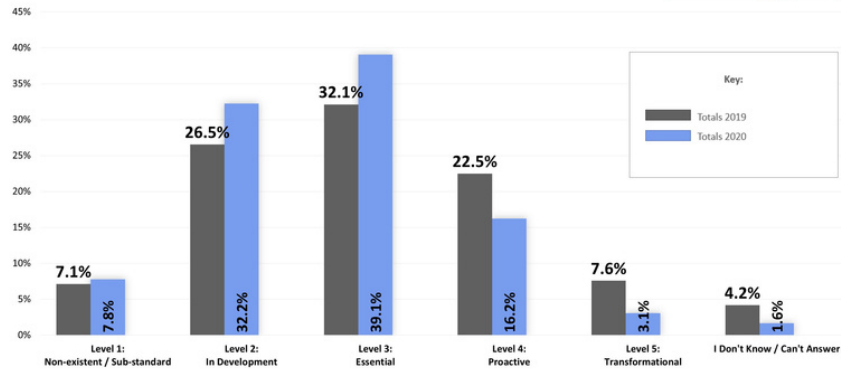
## Processes



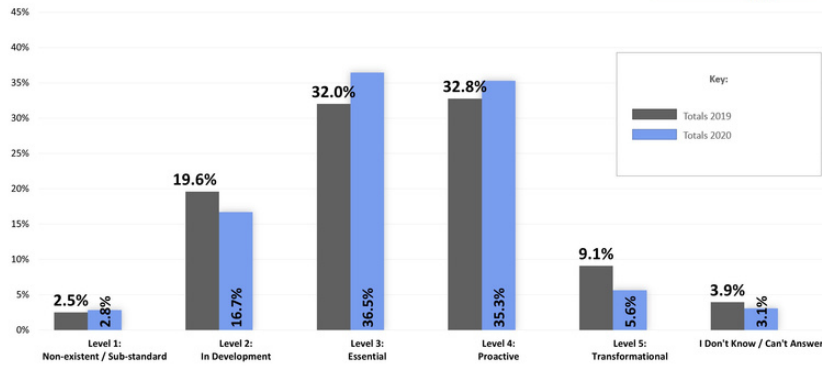
## Capabilities



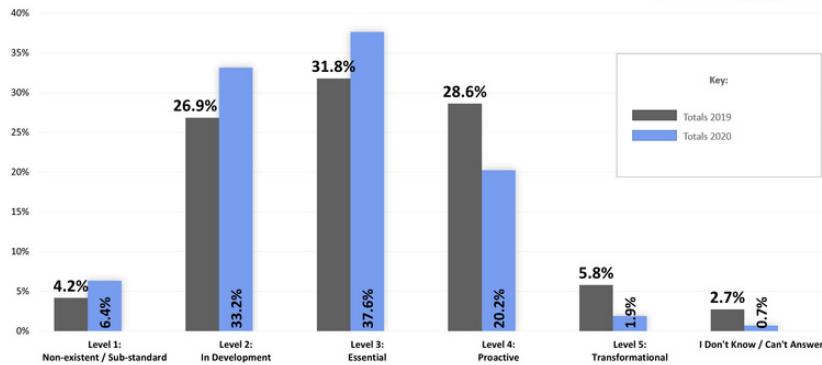
## Structures



## Infrastructure



## Overall IG Program Maturity



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