



European Public Sector Information Platform

Topic Report No. 2013 / 12

A year of Open Data in the EMEA region

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Keywords:

Open Data, EMEA region, State of the Art, Europe, Middle East Asia, Africa, Open Data Barometer, EPSI Platform, European Commission, Web Foundation, World Bank, Open Knowledge Foundation, Open Government Partnership, Global Open Data Initiative.

Abstract:

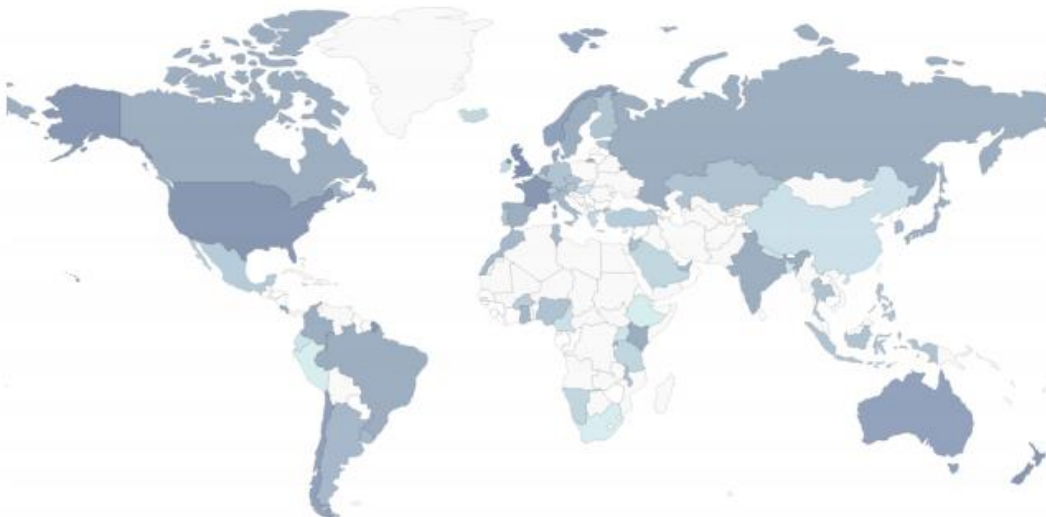
In this report we will explore the latest improvements on the Open Data arena in Europe and the surrounding EMEA region (Europe, Middle East Asia and Africa) during the year that is ending. The report will build on the findings from the recently released Open Data Barometer study (Davies, 2013) – a project conducted by the World Wide Web Foundation and the Open Data Institute to uncover the true prevalence and impact of open data initiatives around the world analysing global trends via an in-depth methodology – as well as the continuous observatory mechanism provided by the ePSI Platform (epsiplatform.eu) to identify and monitor the main sources of Open Data and PSI related news and innovations at the European level. In addition, the report also explores the main new global alliances and projects that will have a relevant impact on open data policies and practices at the European countries and the rest of the EMEA region throughout the New Year.

1 Introduction

The Open Data movement started to gain traction worldwide some years ago and since then we have seen dozens of new government initiatives flourishing all over the world every year, frequently building on the top of previous transparency and reuse of public sector information efforts. 2013 was not an exception and has been a year full of news and changes in the Open Data area.

Nevertheless, after several years of efforts we can still consider Open Data a *new concept*. Although it is an idea that has been gaining increasing political relevance, its potential and implications for governance are only starting to be articulated and real impact evidence is just starting to arise.

Before going deeper into the details and the differences between the EMEA regions we should look first at some of the main global conclusions from the 2013 open data snapshot report provided by the Open Data Barometer on how different countries and regions face different challenges in pursuing OGD:



Heatmap of Open Data Barometer scores on well-resourced OGD initiatives (darker colours are better, white not evaluated)

Source: The Open Data Barometer 2013 Global Report - World Wide Web Foundation and Open Data Institute

<http://theodi.github.io/open-data-barometer-viz/>

- While OGD policies have already reached a majority of the countries, the availability of truly open data remains low, with **less than 7%** of the dataset surveyed in the Barometer published both, in bulk **machine-readable** forms and under **open licenses**.
- Leading countries with a good political backing for OGD are currently focusing their

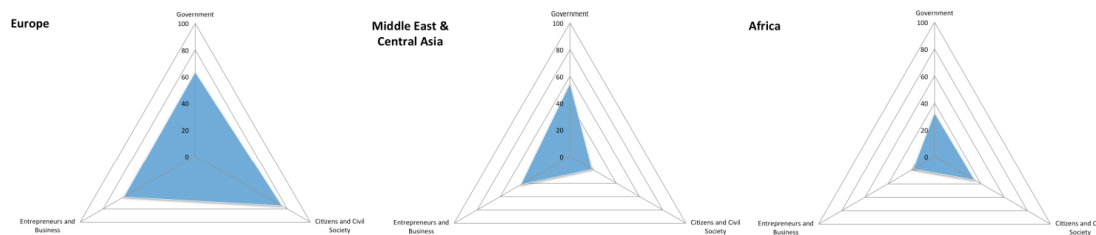
investments on **data infrastructures, capacity building** and communities' **engagement**.

- Intermediate countries have some of the main components of an OGD initiative already in place but, at the same time, they usually **fail on providing a good range of valuable datasets** and also present some **weakness in different key open data policy foundations**, such as right to information or data protection.
- Those in the lower part of the ranking have not usually started their Open Data initiatives yet, and may also lack the basics to do so at the moment.

Various studies and reports conducted on behalf of the European Commission (EC, 2013) also showcase how businesses and citizens still face several difficulties in finding and re-using public sector information. This is the main underlying reason for the frenetic rhythm of continuous improvements and updates we are still facing. In the following sections we will be exploring the current reality of latest open data policies, improvements and implementations at the EMEA countries.

2 Open Data in the EMEA region

As we can see in the following figures with a regional breakdown of the different components analysed by the Open Data Barometer study, the **differences between the EMEA regions are prominent**, ranging from the low values in Africa to the intermediate scores for Middle East and Central Asia or the significantly higher values in Europe for the different variables evaluated (*Government, Citizens and Civil Society and Entrepreneurs and Business* respectively).



Regional breakdown of the ODB readiness components for the EMEA region.

Source: The Open Data Barometer 2013 Global Report - World Wide Web Foundation and Open Data Institute.

The purpose of this section of the report is to showcase and highlight the most important advances regarding open data policies. Therefore, the aim will be for us to focus on the Government component solely, where significant differences are still visible.

2.1 The evolution of Open Data in European countries

If we have a look again at the data from the Open Data Barometer for Europe, one can easily conclude that open data initiatives tend to be widespread available in the region.

	READINESS	IMPLEMENTATION	IMPACT	OVERALL
Europe	68.97	50.12	35.34	51.50
United Kingdom	100.00	100.00	79.91	100.00
Sweden	95.20	83.14	71.95	85.75
Norway	91.88	70.98	46.15	71.86
Denmark	83.54	70.20	55.73	71.78
Germany	74.50	63.14	53.81	65.01
France	79.39	64.31	39.07	63.92
Netherlands	85.92	67.06	21.42	63.66
Iceland	62.99	52.94	26.45	51.01
Estonia	72.38	49.41	24.00	49.45
Finland	91.19	41.18	40.87	49.44
Spain	67.48	49.41	21.13	48.19
Austria	68.56	39.22	48.62	46.03
Italy	50.39	42.75	45.69	45.30
Russia	54.43	40.39	48.86	44.79
Switzerland	65.11	41.57	26.80	43.24
Czech Republic	61.83	40.00	35.36	43.18
Portugal	60.38	38.04	19.25	38.63
Ireland	61.81	32.55	23.92	35.76
Belgium	72.01	28.63	25.64	34.80
Greece	43.95	27.84	12.30	27.59
Turkey	41.92	31.37	0.00	27.58
Hungary	32.42	28.63	10.51	26.09

Open Data Barometer rankings for Europe on a 0-100 scale (higher values are better)

Source: The Open Data Barometer 2013 Global Report - World Wide Web Foundation and Open Data Institute.

Accordingly with the Barometer findings, these initiatives in general were born on the basis of previous strong political freedoms and thus tend to be quickly reaching a mature stage, although still greater governmental commitment will be desired in order to increase advocacy, cooperation and training, maximizing potential benefits of data openness.

Some other specific highlighted news and improvements from the ePSI Platform for different European countries (in alphabetical order) are as follows:

2.1.1 AUSTRIA

The driving main principles and guidelines behind Open Data in Austria were defined in the Framework for Open Government Data Platform White Paper in 2012. In 2013 Austrian citizens have been invited to an open discussion process to help determine Austria's ICT Strategy 2014-2018, which includes the next steps, resources and roles towards new open data goals (<http://www.iktstrategie.at/de/chapter-list/19194>)

An important milestone for the country was also the recently launched **Budget Transparency portal** by the Centre for Public Administration Research, where the spending data of all municipalities in Austria can be found (<http://www.offenerhaushalt.at/>)

2.1.2 BELGIUM

The Flemish government announced that **open data will become the norm** after the publication of their open data action plan (<http://www.bestuurszaken.be/vlaamse-overheid-kiest-voor-open-data>). This action plan will settle the regulatory framework for open data disclosure and data re-use in Belgium, providing strategic orientations on the use of open formats and open licenses, as well as the publication of primary data.

2.1.3 CZECH REPUBLIC

The Czech Statistical Office continues its efforts to make data widely available publishing the **results of the last National Census in as open data** along with some guidelines on its usage. These results are being presented in machine-readable formats, offering an excellent source for data journalists, scientists and scholars among others.

A new Service also helps Czech Citizens request Public Sector Information, although it focuses only on data that falls under the Freedom of Information Act (<http://www.infoprovsechny.cz/>)

2.1.4 DENMARK

After the launch of the Danish base register Open Data Programme in 2012, the first visible results addressing the significance of such initiative came at the beginning of the year with **free access to all geographic basic data** (<http://download.kortforsyningen.dk/>) as well as **general**

data from the central business and company register (<http://www.cvr.dk/Site/Forms/CMS/DisplayPage.aspx?pageid=123>). Nevertheless, while no payment is now necessary, data is not entirely open yet, as registration remains required.

2.1.5 FINLAND

The national Open Government Partnership action plan from Finland, published in early 2013 (<http://www.opengovpartnership.org/country/finland/action-plan>), includes several commitments for **improvements in the release of open data**; increasing **machine-readability** and providing clear **terms for re-use**. A **national open data catalogue** has been under development and its launch is expected for early 2014 (<http://communities.ossoil.com/2660/future-open-data-catalogues-in-finland/>).

Moreover, with the beginning of the year the **Finnish postcodes were also made accessible for free** and are now directly available on-line for re-use (<http://www.itella.fi/palvelutjatuotteet/postinumeropalvelut/>). A really important milestone, given that this is high-value data not frequently being open. The availability of this data allows easy combination with other datasets to enable localized features in applications and services. Lastly, the Helsinki Region Infoshare project (HRI) (<http://www.hri.fi/en/>) - a regional Open Data initiative where cities make their data accessible to all - has also been honoured with the **European Prize for Innovation in Public Administration 2013** by the European Commission.

2.1.6 FRANCE

2013 has been a really busy year for the open data scene in France. Apart from the multiple initiatives and activities at local and regional levels – as well as several specific open data debates and actions on topics such as privacy, health, housing, research, culture, budgeting, etc. – the National Government has also strengthened its commitments through several relevant new actions:

- Formation of a **new Open Data and Open Government advisory board** with a network of experts to inform and advise *Etalab* and other Government departments on the opening and sharing of data.
- Publication of the **G8 Open Data Charter action plan** after President endorsement. (http://www.gouvernement.fr/sites/default/files/fichiers_joints/plan_dactions_-_version_anglaise.pdf)
- Coordination assignment by *Etalab* to **transpose the new European PSI Directive**.
- Publication of the '*Vademecum on openness and sharing of public information*', a guide

to promote the involvement of French ministries in the open data process. (<http://www.modernisation.gouv.fr/laction-publique-se-transforme/en-ouvrant-les-donnees-publiques/lopen-data-son-vade-mecum>)

- A new **Open Data France association** was born to support **all** French communities actively engaged in a process of opening public data. (<http://opendatafrance.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Opendatafrance.pdf>)
- A report was issued by the Government to evaluate the current business models and existing charging policies for 27 categories of data subject to payment. The report also discusses the reasons for the extinction of business models based on raw data sales (http://www.gouvernement.fr/sites/default/files/fichiers_joints/2013_08_26_-_rapport_annexes.pdf)

2.1.7 GERMANY

The country started the year with the release of the **beta National Data Portal govdata.de** in February, also aggregating metadata from the increasing local and regional initiatives in the country. The launch was first criticized (<http://not-your-govdata.de/>) due to the low expectations on real data reuse potential. The Government is addressing this initial criticism by promoting more involvement from data users (<https://www.govdata.de/neues/-/blogs/govdata-unter-der-lupe-erste-evaluation-gestartet>)

Besides, another important milestone was the Open Government Data position paper by the DDGI, the agency for geographic information (<http://www.ddgi.de/positionspapiere/ogd>)

2.1.8 GREECE

Following previous initiatives – such as the geodata and national laws and regulations – the **National Open Data Portal data.gov.gr** was first announced early in the year and finally came to life in public beta stage at the end of the summer to centralise data access; enable re-use through the usage of open licenses; and engage with citizens needs thanks to several participation options.

2.1.9 ICELAND

A **small-scale initiative has been tested since the beginning of 2013** with the objective of opening up the government's financial information (<http://opingogn.wordpress.com/>). The results are still modest and preliminary, as shown at gogn.island.is

2.1.10 IRELAND

Close to the end of the year, and short after joining the Open Government Partnership, the Irish Government has announced a major new Open Data Initiative to accelerate open data adoption in the country (<http://per.gov.ie/2013/10/31/minister-for-public-expenditure-and-reform-announcing-major-open-data-initiative-at-open-government-partnership-summit-in-london/>). The announcement includes specific measures to:

- Sign up to the **G8 Open Data Charter**;
- Establish an **Open Data Board** – to design and manage open data in the country;
- Set up an **Open Data Implementation Group** – to encourage public sector data to become more widely available and accessible;
- Build an online **Open Data Platform** – to act as the primary source for public sector datasets.

2.1.11 ITALY

Apart from quite a lot of activity at the local and regional level throughout the year, the **first Italian G8 Open Data Action Plan** was drafted in October 2013. The plan not only describes the current state-of-the-art in the country, but also introduces new commitments in the field (http://www.funzionepubblica.gov.it/media/1104831/piano_azione_g8_open_data.pdf)

The action plan was also followed by an update in the national catalogue dati.gov.it, as well as by some new detailed guidelines such as a new reference *Vademecum* (http://www.digitpa.gov.it/sites/default/files/allegati_tec/LG_Val_PSI_v1.0.pdf)

It is also worth mentioning a notable initiative towards open data publishing by the Italian Senate Data Portal dati.senato.it, as well as the Italian National Institute for Social Security and Pensions heavy improvements (<http://www.inps.it/portale/default.aspx?imenu=103>)

2.1.12 NETHERLANDS

Apart from the multiple initiatives exploring the benefits of Open Data in the context of **Smart Cities**, the Open Data Next initiative from the Dutch National Open Data Platform (<https://data.overheid.nl/opendataNEXT>) has been focusing all 2013 long on:

- Providing **support** for data access, responding to data requests and **European harmonization**.
- Developing a **Knowledge Network** of open data and an **Open Data Lab**.
- Providing **guides** and **success stories** as inspiration for new use cases.

- Exploring the potential of open data in helping with **social issues**.

2.1.13 NORWAY

Their new Open Government Partnership country commitments (http://www.regjeringen.no/upload/FAD/Kampanje/OPG/OGP_nynorskhandlingsplan_konsultasjonutkast.pdf) with regards to open data include:

- A requirement to all **state enterprises** to make their data publicly available in electronic user-friendly formats intended to be used by others.
- An economic study of **alternative ways to facilitate the publication of spatial data** was compared with the current situation where – from October 2013 – the Mapping Authority is giving open and free access for everyone to a number of key mapping datasets.

2.1.14 PORTUGAL

The Directorate-General of Health has released the first version of the Health Dashboard, an innovative tool to monitor the health status of the Portuguese population that also provides open data access (<http://www.dgs.pt/dashboard/>).

2.1.15 ROMANIA

As part of the National Open Government Partnership Plan (<http://ogp.gov.ro/guvernare-deschisa/date-deschise/>) a series of working groups and visits to the different public institutions were performed with the aim of creating a public inventory of open datasets available for publication. The Government also finally opened a **data portal date.gov.ro in an early beta version** late in the year to gain user feedback.

2.1.16 RUSSIAN FEDERATION

In June 2013 President Putin signed the amendments to two laws that became known by the experts' community as *'the open data laws'*. This finally laid the normative foundation for the release of public sector information in the country (<http://xn--80ahccvactsc1ibf.xn--80abeamcuufxbhgound0h9cl.xn--p1ai/news/303/>)

Also, according to the country's speech at the International Economic Forum in Saint-Petersburg in June 2013, the next steps for Russia will be setting up the **national open data portal** and implementing its own G8 open data action plan.

2.1.17 SPAIN

One of the European countries where local and regional initiatives have continued proliferating throughout the year, it has also reached other interesting milestones:

- The source code of Spanish national data portal datos.gob.es was released as **open source software** to serve anyone who wants their own space dedicated to Open Data (https://forja.cenatic.es/scm/?group_id=218)
- The Spanish government also launched a **technical interoperability standard** on PSI reuse, which specifies guidelines for public bodies that use open data and marks an important milestone for re-use of data from public administrations in the country (<http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2013/03/04/pdfs/BOE-A-2013-2380.pdf>)
- By following the DCAT standard for data catalogue metadata and its own technical interoperability standard, the National Catalogue datos.gob.es has started to **harvest information from other public bodies**. This leads to further recognition from the European Commission as one of the most Innovative solutions in Public Administration (http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-503_en.htm)
- As part of the objectives of the new Digital Agenda, the Spanish Government have launched a **public-private partnership forum** on PSI re-use to promote innovation and generate business based on public data (<http://datos.gob.es/datos/?q=node/3876>)

2.1.18 SWEDEN

The **beta launch of the Swedish national data portal** opnadata.se was announced early in the year. Although not all content is available under open licenses, this is as a first step towards a more complete programme that will run until 2015 focusing on the involvement of new data re-users.

2.1.19 SWITZERLAND

2013 has been a turning point for the country since several federal institutions are releasing data thanks to the *OGD@Confederation* project (<http://www.bar.admin.ch/themen/01648/>). Finally, in September a **first National Catalogue** opendata.admin.ch was released after parliamentary approval.

2.1.20 UNITED KINGDOM

The country continues to be a central point for open data in Europe and the whole world providing daily interesting news, events and announcements. To name a few relevant ones:

- Clear open data commitments has been set up again in the **new 2013 Open Government Partnership National Action Plan** (<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/open-government-partnership-uk-national-action-plan-2013>), as well as the **new G8 Open Data Charter plans**.
- An **Innovation Lab** to explore potential benefits of a voluntary programme aiming to give consumers increasing access to their personal data in reusable format ‘*mi data*’ has been launched (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/businesses-get-creative-with-consumer-data-at-the-midata-innovation-lab-launch>)
- A new National Information Infrastructure that will contain government data which is likely to have broader and more significant economic and social impact once made available (<http://data.gov.uk/blog/bringing-national-information-infrastructure-life>)
- The Office for National Statistics, the Ordnance Survey and the Land Registry launched **new linked open data sites** – along with access points for statistical, mapping and property – to let users access, discover, view and use their data (<http://data.gov.uk/blog/launch-statisticsdatagovuk-linked-data-site> - <http://landregistry.data.gov.uk/> - <http://beta.data.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/>)
- The police.uk website, a world reference with regards to crime data, has been revamped with a fresher look and new functions to make it easier for the public to find the data they are looking for.

2.2 The Middle East Asia region

Open data developments have been following a different pace in this region during the year. According to the findings from the Open Data Barometer, Yemen was the only country in the region sample with no evidence of any open data activity. Other countries such as Bahrain *data.gov.bh*, Kazakhstan *data.gov.kz* and Israel *data.gov.il* have modest dedicated open data portals. A third group including the United Arab Emirates, Jordan and Qatar have created limited specific sections on previously existing government websites.

	READINESS	IMPLEMENTATION	IMPACT	OVERALL
Middle East & C. Asia	38.05	18.48	5.77	18.81
Israel	61.82	45.88	25.36	45.58
Kazakhstan	34.96	32.16	2.84	27.61
United Arab Emirates	53.88	21.57	12.30	24.59
Bahrain	42.94	18.04	0.00	18.18
Qatar	39.01	11.76	0.00	13.09
Jordan	30.95	8.63	0.00	9.63
Saudi Arabia	40.82	1.57	5.69	7.09
Yemen	0.00	8.24	0.00	4.69

Open Data Barometer rankings for Middle East and Central Asia on a 0-100 scale (higher values are better)

Source: The Open Data Barometer 2013 Global Report - World Wide Web Foundation and Open Data Institute.

Open data is also present in several national e-government action plans in the region, and also as a major component of Jordan’s Open Government Partnership action plan. Nevertheless, in most of the cases at this region **once initiatives begin they usually tend to keep in standby mode without any substantial advance for long periods of time.**

2.3 Africa

The Barometer shows how thanks partly to the support of different international donors and a strong civil society engagement; several countries in the continent have been quickly following the path of African open data pioneers during last year. However, **data availability remains limited** and is frequently focused on statistical data and budgeting, and not always in a way that may enable reuse. In addition, adequate **technical infrastructures remain as a pending challenge** in several cases. Other non-technical channels – such as radio centres or even a simple noticeboard – are usual solutions to fill the gap for an effective data and information access.

	READINESS	IMPLEMENTATION	IMPACT	OVERALL
Africa	25.90	14.73	5.72	14.29
Kenya	49.70	45.88	21.55	43.06
Morocco	36.46	27.84	16.59	27.24
Mauritius	35.71	30.59	0.00	26.08
Rwanda	36.71	27.84	0.00	24.27
Ghana	39.51	23.53	0.00	21.60
Tunisia	63.52	10.98	26.46	21.02
South Africa	35.39	18.43	10.31	19.20
Botswana	12.16	21.57	0.00	16.08
Uganda	23.99	13.33	23.07	16.15
Tanzania	20.43	17.65	0.00	14.51
Malawi	28.24	11.76	16.52	14.47
Ethiopia	15.45	10.59	0.00	8.70
Burkina Faso	17.63	8.24	0.00	7.35
Benin	11.60	9.41	0.00	7.28
Namibia	11.57	9.02	0.00	7.00
Senegal	28.57	4.71	0.00	6.46
Cameroon	7.11	6.67	5.56	5.65
Zimbabwe	15.20	5.88	0.00	5.30
Zambia	11.84	5.10	0.00	4.23
Nigeria	36.90	0.00	0.00	4.35
Mali	6.15	0.39	0.00	0.00

Open Data Barometer rankings for Africa on a 0-100 scale (higher values are better)

Source: The Open Data Barometer 2013 Global Report - World Wide Web Foundation and Open Data Institute.

First open data pioneers in the area were Morocco *data.gov.ma* and Tunisia *opendata.tn*, but after some initial period of activity have apparently paused their operations, even with the resignation of the Minister in charge in the case of the later. Other countries, such as Ghana *data.gov.gh* and Kenya *opendata.go.ke*, have been following closely with reference initiatives for the Continent, but also no significant improvements were made there throughout the past year. This is mainly due to different **problems related with data availability and quality**, as well as the **lack of a stable framework in place for continuity** beyond initial launch. Other cases have lately been focusing on the development of stronger national statistical systems or spatial data, such as Ethiopia, Namibia, South Africa or Malawi. However, they have not **necessarily**

followed the Open Data principles.

Finally in some countries, such as Mauritius, the Government has strategies where the need for opening up government data is clearly stipulated; or more informal claims in other cases such as in Nigeria, Senegal or Burkina Faso. However, in every case **open data initiatives that back up these considerations are not yet in place.**

It is possible that the **most promising countries** for a near future new open data initiative in the region could be **Rwanda** and **Uganda**, where the movement for open data has just started. Furthermore, their governments have also already committed during 2013 to develop more sophisticated platforms and policies with the support of a vibrant increasing community.

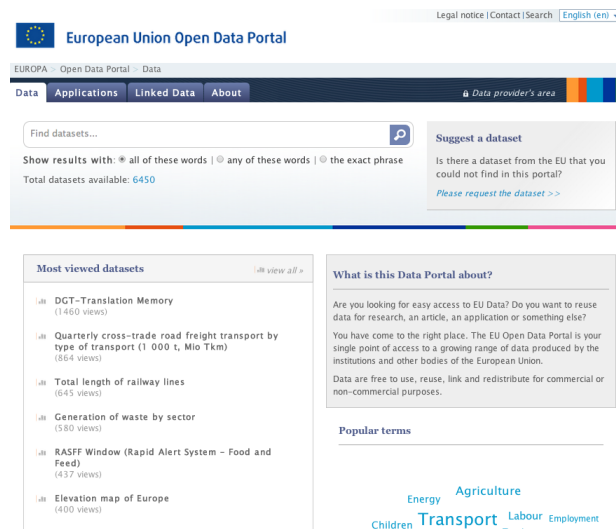
In addition, there are other **external non-governmental initiatives**, such as Africa Open Data *africaopendata.org*, that was created and funded, by the Africa Media Initiative, the World Bank Institute and Google as part of the Ujuzi Initiative *alpha.ujuzi.org*. Another example is the Open Data for Africa Platform *opendataforafrica.org* by the African Development Bank Group.

3 Global projects

The year was also full of a range of different global projects covering several open data dimensions, ranging from strategic to financial or from social to technical aspects. As a global movement, all these reference projects are expected to be affecting future EMEA countries and open data policies to a large extent.

3.1 The European Commission steps forward

Continuing with previous efforts on Open Data and PSI re-use from the European Commission (Iglesias, 2012), the year started with the launch in *beta* version of the European Union Open Data Portal *open-data.europa.eu*. The portal is the new single point of access to a growing range of data from EU institutions as well as other bodies and agencies, easing the search and reuse of data to citizens and industry for commercial or non-commercial purposes.



The European Union Open Data Portal *open-data.europa.eu*.

This open data catalogue is part of the Commission’s three-fold ‘*Open Data Strategy for Europe*’ (EC, 2013) **opening its data assets** to the public to promote innovative use and unleash their economic potential leading by example. At the same time, it also aims to help foster the transparency and accountability of the EU bodies.

The other two parts of the overall strategy are focused on establishing a **level playing field for open data across the EU**, and backing the different activities by funding **research** into improved data-handling technologies. Among current measurements towards these objectives

we could currently highlight the following ones:

3.1.1 DCAT Application profile and the Open Data Support programme

The **DCAT Application profile for data portals in Europe** (JoinUP, 2013) is a joint initiative of two Directorates-General of the European Commission - DG CONNECT and DG DIGIT - and the EU Publications Office in the context of the Interoperability for European Public Administrations (ISA) programme (ec.europa.eu/isa/). DCAT-AP is a specification based on the W3C Data Catalogue Vocabulary specification (W3C, 2013) to describe public sector datasets in order to meet the specific application needs of data portals in Europe. Its basic use case is to **enable the exchange of dataset descriptions among data portals** as well as cross-data portal search for data sets. The objective is to make public sector data more searchable across borders and sectors.



JoinUp programmes of the ISA European Initiative.

The DCAT-AP is also being used in the context of the Open Data Support service (joinup.ec.europa.eu/community/ods/). This *pan-European* initiative by the European Commission has the purpose of improving the visibility and **facilitating the access to datasets within and across borders**. To achieve its objective, Open Data Support has been providing three different types of services for datasets publishers:

- **Data and metadata preparation, transformation and publication services** that will enable metadata sharing of their datasets on the *pan-European* common infrastructure delivered by the project;
- **Training services in the area of (linked) open data**, aiming to build both theoretical and technical capacity to EU public administrations; and
- **IT advisory and consultancy services** in the areas of (linked) open data technologies, data and metadata licensing, as well as business aspects.

Another relevant related work from the ISA programme during the year was the ‘*Study on business models for Linked Open Government Data*’ (Archer et al, 2013). This study try to

address the value for businesses, citizens, and public administrations; the cost structures behind its provision; the revenue streams linked to the consumption of such services; and enablers and barriers with regard to the value creation.

3.1.2 Revision of the Public Sector Information Directive

The update of the European PSI directive (EU, 2013) was formally adopted by the European Parliament on the 13th of June 2013. When fully implemented by the member states in the following 24 months since its entry into force, the new rules would:

- Create a new **genuine right to re-use** all non-personal public information for commercial and non-commercial purposes, not present in the original 2003 Directive;
- Significantly **expand the reach of the Directive** in the cultural area to include libraries, museums and archives for the first time;
- Establish that public sector bodies can **charge at the most the marginal cost** for reproduction, provision and dissemination of the information. Although, in exceptional cases, full cost recovery (plus a reasonable return on investment) will remain possible;
- Oblige public sector bodies to provide **more transparency about charging rules** and conditions;
- **Improve the complaints mechanisms** to ensure its independence;
- Promote the adoption of **standard automatable licenses** for all agencies within the same Member State.
- Encourage the availability of both - data and metadata - in **open standards and machine-readable formats**; and
- Introduce new rules on digitalisation agreements, which will support **public and private partnerships** whilst also protecting the interests of the general public.

After final endorsement, and in the light of easing the adoption of the new Directive, the Commission is starting to develop a series of guidelines on the most relevant elements being addressed. These are elements such as recommended **standard licenses, datasets** to be released or improved as a matter of priority and **charging arrangements** for the reuse of documents.

As a first step in this direction, the Commission has conducted an online consultation (EC, 2013) on the guidelines for best practices and recommendation on the aforementioned issues for the re-use of public sector information. This consultation lasted 12 weeks and was followed by a

public hearing held on November in Luxembourg.

Preliminary conclusions from the results of the survey confirm the existence of a very rich landscape of PSI re-use in Europe with visible differences in interests and opinions that characterise the main groups of respondents. Still, a **common expectation of an open and transparent system is shared**. A full report of the results of the consultation and next steps is also available (DG CONNECT, 2013).

3.1.3 The Horizon 2020 R&I Programme and other Open Data related services

The just launched first call for projects under the new Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation programme of the European Union (ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/) represents the **consolidation and continuation of prior commitments to funding research and innovation activities related to Open Data and PSI-reuse**. This includes **specific challenges for Open Data and Big Data** related actions to build innovative data products and services, among others (Horizon 2020, 2013). With the end of the year a pilot project on Open Research Data in Horizon 2020 has also been approved involving key areas of the Programme.



The Horizon 2020 Framework Programme for Research and Innovation ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/

In addition, the European Commission continues requiring different services to support its Open Data policies. Last time it was with the purpose of **measuring the progress as regards the size and the trends of the European data economy** through a better understanding of the market development, as well as the economic, societal and environmental impacts of the value extraction from data. The European Commission made a call for tenders (SMART, 2013) where the specific objectives are threefold:

- Providing **facts and figures** on the size and trends of the European data market.
- Providing **stories** about various aspects of the European data market; including quantitative facts and figures not yet covered by the indicators listed in the previous

specific objective.

- Further **development of the community** of relevant stakeholders in the EU in order to be able to effectively address the two previous specific objectives.

All these services are estimated to be starting in January 2014 and will provide a valuable tool to present detailed information on both, the European Union data market as a whole as well as detailed breakdowns by individual Member States or economic sectors.

3.2 The Open Data Research Network

The Open Data Research network (ODRN, 2013) is a collaborative project, coordinated by the Web Foundation and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), that exists in order to:

- **Connect researchers** focussed on open data from across the world;
- Bring together **information** and **news** related to research into the implementation and impacts of open data initiatives;
- Host focussed **research projects** into open data;

The network is open to all researchers interested in open data, and has a particular focus on research into the global South. One of the reference research projects in 2013 was the first edition of the Open Data Barometer that serves as main inspiration and information source for this report. Between 2013 and 2015 the Open Data Research network is also hosting the ‘*Emerging Impacts of Open Data in Developing Countries (ODDC)*’ project (WF, 2013): a multi-country **research** and **capacity building** programme.



The ODRN and reference projects.

The overall intention of this research project is to establish practical knowledge about effective strategies for employing open data to achieve four specific goals:

1. Explore how open data improves governance, supports citizens’ rights, and promotes

- inclusive development;
2. Support **knowledge sharing**, **policy learning** and **evaluation** based on the research findings;
 3. Develop and test **common methods** for assessing the context, strengths and weaknesses of open data initiatives over time;
 4. Identify global standards, platforms and infrastructures to open data **impact** upon its usage;

3.3 The Open Data Partnership for Development

The World Bank has joined forces with the Open Data Institute and the Open Knowledge Foundation in a 3-year project (WB, 2013) designed to help policy makers and citizens in developing countries understand and exploit the benefits of open data.

Accordingly to the official announce, the partnership is still at an early stage and the founding organisations are looking for other partners to join them on the project, whose main objectives are:

1. Support developing countries to **plan**, **execute** and **run** national open data initiatives;
2. Increase re-use of open data in developing countries through creating **data standards**, **guidelines**, regional **networks** and data **demand**; and
3. Grow the base of credible evidence on the impact of open data for development.

The project will include scoping the state of open data; assessing the readiness of countries to open up and use their data; training government officials, other policy makers, and civil society; undertaking research and producing guidelines on the best use of open data and producing case studies of impact.

3.4 The new W3C Data Activity

On a more technical side – merging and expanding upon previous work accomplished at the Semantic Web and eGovernment activities – a new Data Activity (W3C, 2013) was recently born. This was possible under the auspicious of the World Wide Web Consortium, lead by an expert on the matter, Phil Archer.

“Open data isn’t an ephemeral fashion, it’s shift in the way things are done, made possible by the World Wide Web” – Phil Archer, W3C Data Activity lead.

The overall vision of this new Data Activity is to **make data sharing by people and organizations as simple as possible**, using the Web as an exchange medium for data in the same way as it already is for documents publishing. Two new working groups will be kicking off the activity:

- CSV on the Web (<http://www.w3.org/2013/csvw/>), which focuses on creating metadata for tabular data; and
- Data on the Web Best Practices (<http://www.w3.org/2013/dwbp/>), which is in charge of fostering a self-sustaining ecosystem for data publishers and consumers.

Linked Data is likely to play a relevant role as part of this shift, but such ambitious objectives require a point of convergence not only on technology or the interoperability of data but also on **communities building**.

4 Global alliances

Apart from all the aforementioned individual country efforts and the global projects, throughout the year that is currently ending several global alliances came to life. These were sometimes exclusive from the Government perspective, others were from the civil society side and some even emerged from combined efforts. Here we will showcase a representation of the most relevant ones in all cases.

4.1 The G8 Government envision

The Group of eight (G8) leaders signed the Open Data Charter (Cabinet Office, 2013) at their last summit on the 18th of June 2013. As stated in the reference document, the Open Data Charter sets out 5 strategic principles that all G8 members will act on:

- Open Data by **Default**.
- **Quality** and **Quantity**.
- **Usable** by All.
- Releasing Data for **Improved Governance**.
- Releasing Data for **Innovation**.

As seen, the principles include an expectation that **all government data will be published openly by default**, as well as to **increase the quality, quantity and re-use of the data** that is being released. A total of 14 high-value topic areas have also been identified by the country members – from education to transport, health, crime or justice – from which they will be releasing data for the next two years.

The chapter requires signatories to release action plans for implementation by the end of this past October, but not all members have yet prepared theirs and the final publication may be delayed.



Source: G8 UK Presidency Photostream.

At the same time, the country participants also recognise that **the benefits of open data could and should be enjoyed by citizens of all nations**, so the charter itself – and its companion technical annex – is also being offered for wider consideration by any other country, multinational organisation or initiative that may be willing to adopt similar measurements to unlock the full potential of open data, as the European Commission has already done (EU, 2013).

4.2 The Global Open Data Initiative: A perspective from Civil Society Organisations

The Global Open Data Initiative *globalopendatainitiative.org* is a coalition of civil society organisations (Fundar, the Open Institute, the Open Knowledge Foundation, the Sunlight Foundation and the World Wide Web Foundation) working together in the area of open government data and open government. Their basic goal consists of serving as a guiding voice internationally on open data issues from the civil society perspective and **connecting the currently isolated groups** on every national context.



Global Open Data Initiative members. Source: Global Open Data Initiative.

More specifically, and accordingly to their own declaration of intentions (GODI, 2013), the group aims to:

- Provide a leading vision on how governments approach open data with **recommendations** and **resources** that will help guide open data initiatives and civil society evaluators;
- Increase **awareness** of open data, promoting better practices and broader **dialogue** and **networking**.
- Support the development of the global open data **community**, especially in civil society, to transform them into active users and providers of open data in ways that can help meet their goals.

Their current main short-term priority activities are:

1. A public consultation with members of the CSO community around the world about what they believe is important in this area through a draft Declaration (GODI, 2013) for a **citizen’s call to action** that is open to public comments.
2. The subsequent development of a set of **principles** to guide open government data inclusive policies that strength the engagement between governments and civil society.

4.3 The Open Government Partnership: Government and Civil Society working together

Finally, the Open Government Partnership has identified several thematic working groups to contribute peer exchange and learning where governments and civil society can work together. One of these initial groups will be focusing on open data and is being jointly coordinated by a pair of government and civil society anchors - the Government of Canada and the Web Foundation on behalf of the Global Open Data Initiative respectively. Its mission is *“To hold the promise of using open data to transform the way government and societies **work together** to analyse and solve challenges; helping OGP governments implement their commitments and develop more ambitious and innovative action plans related to open data”*.



Source: Cabinet Office Photostream.

Accordingly to the invitation to participation (Walker et al., 2013), this new OGP Open Data Working Group aims to:

- Serve as a **guiding voice** on open data issues to help OGP governments implement their action plans and develop ambitious new commitments.
- Increase **awareness** of open government data issues across the OGP.

- Amplify and broaden the **evidence** base for open data reforms.
- Gather and strengthen existing **resources**.
- Engage with the broader global open data **community**.

The working group first convened on the side of the OGP Summit in London last October. Topics that were discussed during the meeting included:

1. **Open Data measurement** – the need to better understand the impacts of open data.
2. **Capacity building** – what's yet to be achieved and where the gaps are.
3. **Data standards** – how to cross-link between information silos to achieve greater impact.
4. **Developing and implementing stronger open data commitments** – is there a need for a common set of principles?

There was also a formal launch in a public event as part of the OGP summit general agenda, which included several high-level participants from governments and civil society. The group is currently working on a more specific concept note that will drive the group work plan in the future on the basis of the feedback and input from its first meeting.

3 Conclusions

2013 has been without doubt another exciting year for Open Data all around the world, and especially in Europe with lots of activity in the agenda of almost every single country. It is also fascinating to see how much room for improvement on policies and practices we still face; as well as the fresh horizons opened by means of new incorporations, either in the form of countries or groups and alliances.

The biggest challenge for the forthcoming year will be to achieve a desirable level of **coordination and collaboration** among the multiple new actors that are continuously arising in the benefit and progress of Open Data, avoiding counter-productive competitions where everybody may be fighting for their own space in the topic.

Meanwhile, we will be looking forward to see what exciting news Open Data will bring to us in 2014, and especially the results produced in comparison to 2013 after a year full of exciting initiatives, projects and actors. We hope to see a forthcoming year plenty of Open Data.

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He has extensive hands-on experience acquired by the setup of close to forty local, regional and national Open Data projects and initiatives all around the world in both, public and private areas. Carlos also counts with more than ten years of additional experience planning and developing research, consultancy, education and outreach projects devoted to make a better use of the Web on fields such as Open Government, Open Data, Web Accessibility, Mobile Web, Device Independence, W3C Standards and the Semantic Web.

He is also an active participant of several global communities related to Open Government, Open Data and the Web, where he enjoys exploring new ways of using the Internet to improve our life and breaking new grounds to make progress through an Open Web everywhere and for everyone. Some of these are: the [World Wide Web Consortium](#), the [Web Foundation](#), the [Open Knowledge Foundation](#), the [World Bank](#) community of expert consultants, the [OGP Open Data working group](#), the [ISA programme](#) for European interoperability solutions, the [WESO research group](#), the [Trueblo](#) entrepreneurship school or the [OpenKratio](#) CSO.

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