

Guide to Open Government  
chapter 1

# Open Government

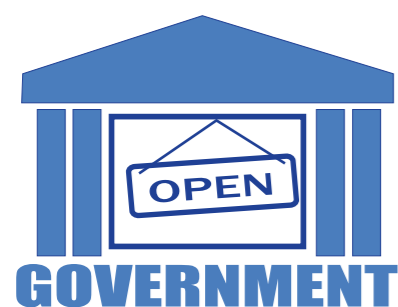
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Lifelong  
Learning  
Programme

chapter 1

# Open Government



## Guide to Open Government chapter 1 - Open Government

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# What is Open Government?

In the system of democracy people have a right to choose their governments but do they have a power to decide what is good for them?

The concept of Open Government supports the consolidation of democracies and development.

Defining what open government means is complicated by the variety of definitions, meanings and motivations that exist. ( August 5, 2013 by Justin Longo in GovLab Blog)

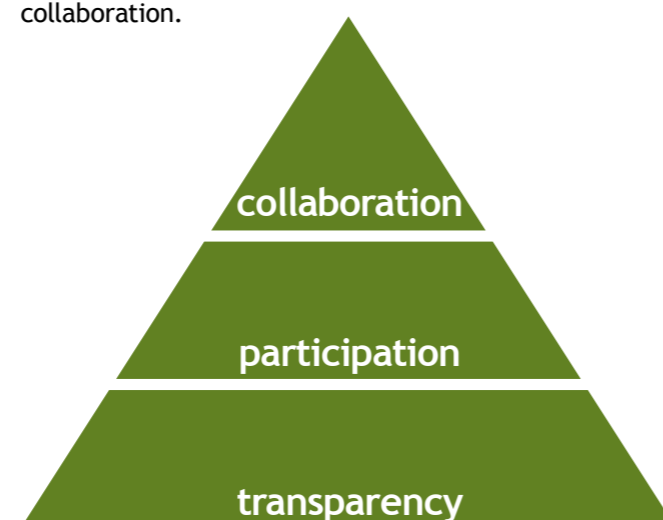
## Read here all definitions:

[thegovlab.org](http://thegovlab.org)

Open government (OG) is the governing doctrine which holds that citizens have the right to access the documents and proceedings of the government to allow for effective public oversight.

### Open Government how it works

There is a set of three key values of an open government definition: transparency, participation and collaboration.



Public Administration is committed to creating an unprecedented level of openness in Government. All public servants should work together to ensure the public trust and establish a system of transparency, public participation and collaboration.

Government should be transparent. Transparency promotes accountability and provides information for citizens about what their Government is doing.

Government should be participatory. Public engagement enhances the Government's effectiveness and improves the quality of its decisions. Knowledge is widely dispersed in society, and public officials benefit from having access to that dispersed knowledge

Government should be collaborative. Collaboration actively engages citizens in the work of their Government. Executive departments and agencies should use innovative tools, methods, and systems to cooperate among themselves, across all levels of Government, and with non-profit organizations, businesses, and individuals in the private sector.

Transparency often allows citizens of a democracy to control their government, reducing government corruption, bribery and other malfeasance.

More governments become sustainably more transparent, more accountable, and more responsive to their own citizens, with the ultimate goal of improving the quality of governance, as well as the quality of services that citizens receive. This will require a shift in norms and culture to ensure genuine dialogue and collaboration between governments and civil society.

If you consider government as a platform, and add to it the technologies of cloud computing, social media, and many others, enhancing the citizen experience has a bright future. The combination of technologies and collaboration with citizens is often referred to as Gov 2.0.

Open Government is a concept that connects citizens with their government, improves the way people and governments interact, and by an ongoing, open conversation between governments and citizens, gives people opportunities to take action based on what they learn through transparency.

## Summarizing

Open government is a two-way dialog between citizens and government.

Transparency + participation = accountability, effectiveness & efficiency.

The central role of the citizen, unlimited access to the public sector data and information and sharing them through a new digital technologies (Internet) are the hallmarks of Open Government.

To know more about this issue visit:

Open Government Partnership

opensource.com - What is Open Government

OGP London Summit Video 2013



# Open Data and Public Sector Information (PSI)

## What is Open data?

One of the best resources available to understand open data is the Open Data Handbook created by the Open Knowledge Foundation.

Here's how they define open data:

„Open data is data that can be freely used, re-used and redistributed by anyone - subject only, at most, to the requirement to attribute and share alike.

The full Open Definition gives precise details as to what this means. To summarize the most important:

- **Availability and Access:** the data must be available as a whole and at no more than a reasonable reproduction cost, preferably by downloading over the internet. The data must also be available in a convenient and modifiable form.
- **Re-use and Redistribution:** the data must be provided under terms that permit re-use and redistribution including the intermixing with other datasets.
- **Universal Participation:** everyone must be able to use, re-use and redistribute - there should be no discrimination against fields of endeavour or against persons or groups. For example, 'non-commercial' restrictions that would prevent 'commercial' use, or restrictions of use for certain purposes (e.g. only in education), are not allowed.

(Open Data Handbook Documentation, Release 1.0.0 by Open Knowledge Foundation, November 14, 2012).

To know more visit:

Open Knowledge Foundation - opendata on Vimeo

thegovlab.org - Media Library

Our experience with public administration and our government could be much better but have we the time, effort, knowledge and tools to change it?

The concept of „openness“ can be a response and be helpful for our democratic society.

The digital age we are living in modifies and broadens opportunities for any citizen to reach and access the information. „Any content, information or data that people are free to use, re-use and redistribute – without any legal, technological or social restriction“ (by Open Knowledge) is a key resource for social and commercial activities .

„In such a context, making information generated and collected by public sector entities available and re-usable is important for many reasons:

- because it provides citizens with a reliable knowledge regarding Government and public sector bodies activities.
- because it represents the initial material for public or private undertakings to come up with new added-value services and supply them to citizens. □

(LAPSI 2.0The European Thematic Network on Legal Aspects of Public Sector Information).

## What is Public Sector Information?

„Public Sector Information (PSI) can be defined as the wide range of information that public sector bodies collect, produce, reproduce and disseminate in many areas of activity while accomplishing their institutional tasks.

PSI may include (among others) social, economic, geographical, cadastral, weather, tourist, and business information.

(LAPSI 2.0The European Thematic Network on Legal Aspects of Public Sector Information).

To know more visit:

ePSI Platform(dynamic Public Sector Information (PSI) and Open Data re-use market across the EU)

# What is Open Data?

There are several data that can be re-used and redistributed, and have a potential for applications in sectors such as:



“Cultural: Data about cultural works and artefacts – for example titles and authors – and generally collected and held by galleries, libraries, archives and museums.



Science: Data that is produced as part of scientific research from astronomy to zoology.



Finance: Data such as government accounts (expenditure and revenue) and information on financial markets (stocks, shares, bonds etc).



Statistics: Data produced by statistical offices such as the census and key socioeconomic indicators.



Weather: The many types of information used to understand and predict the weather and climate.



Environment: Information related to the natural environment such presence and level of pollutants, the quality and rivers and seas.



Transport: Data such as timetables, routes, on-time statistics.” (by Open Knowledge)

To know more visit:

Open Knowledge Foundation

The Open Data Handbook

# Open Government Data Principles

Government data shall be considered open if it is made public in a way that complies with the principles below:

1

**Complete**  
All public data is made available. Public data is data that is not subject to valid privacy, security or privilege limitations.

2

**Primary**  
Data is as collected at the source, with the highest possible level of granularity, not in aggregate or modified forms.

3

**Timely**  
Data is made available as quickly as necessary to preserve the value of the data.

4

**Accessible**  
Data is available to the widest range of users for the widest range of purposes.

5

**Machine processable**  
Data is reasonably structured to allow automated processing.

6

**Non-discriminatory**  
Data is available to anyone, with no requirement of registration.

7

**Non-proprietary**  
Data is available in a format over which no entity has exclusive control.

8

**License-free**  
Data is not subject to any copyright, patent, trademark or trade secret regulation. Reasonable privacy, security and privilege restrictions may be allowed.

Compliance must be reviewable.

(The 8 Principles of Open Government Data were authored by a working group convened by Carl Malamud on December 8, 2007 in Sebastopol, California. The 8 Principles can be found at [opengovdata.org](http://opengovdata.org))

# Why Open Data?

Why should government data be open? There are three main reasons:

- „Transparency. In a well-functioning, democratic society citizens need to know what their government is doing. To do that, they must be able freely to access government data and information and to share that information with other citizens. Transparency isn't just about access, it is also about sharing and reuse – often, to understand material it needs to be analyzed and visualized and this requires that the material be open so that it can be freely used and reused.
- Releasing social and commercial value. In a digital age, data is a key resource for social and commercial activities. Everything from finding your local post office to building a search engine requires access to data, much of which is created or held by government. By opening up data, government can help drive the creation of innovative business and services that deliver social and commercial value.
- Participation and engagement - participatory governance or for business and organizations engaging with your users and audience. Much of the time citizens are only able to engage with their own governance sporadically – maybe just at an election every 4 or 5 years. By opening up data, citizens are enabled to be much more directly informed and involved in decision-making. This is more than transparency: it's about making a full “read/write” society, not just about knowing what is happening in the process of governance but being able to contribute to it.□  
( by Knowledge Foundation)

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## To know more visit:

What can governments learn from the open-data revolution? In this stirring talk, Beth Noveck, the former deputy CTO at the White House, shares a vision of practical openness -- connecting bureaucracies to citizens, sharing data, creating a truly participatory democracy. Imagine the “writable society”.  
[http://www.ted.com/talks/beth\\_noveck\\_demand\\_a\\_more\\_open\\_source\\_government.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/beth_noveck_demand_a_more_open_source_government.html)

# Summarizing Open Government and Open Data concepts

The central role of the citizen and unlimited access to the public sector data and information and sharing them through a new digital technologies (Internet) are the Open Government hallmarks.

Both Public Sector Information and Open Data are important for economic growth.

They contribute to better relations between public sector and citizens. They are extremely important in terms of efficiency and transparency of the public sector and could keep up citizen's participation in the process of governance.

By opening up data, citizens are allowed to be much more directly informed and involved in decision-making.

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## To know more visit:

What is(and what is not) Open Government  
<http://prezi.com/okqs-l6tyvtk/what-is-and-what-is-not-open-government/>

# Open government strategy across EU and process of governance

## The European Union and Open Government

European Union is concerned with issues related to the general field of Open Government. Still, there is a long way ahead. As stated in a petition to commit the EU institutions to close engagement with and eventual membership of the Open Government Partnership „The EU institutions are more distant than national governments from European voters. The structures and processes within the institutions are difficult for citizens to understand, and there is a widespread perception of a lack of transparency and accountability. EU institutions share or have responsibility for many of the powers exercised by national governments, and have gained further powers as a result of the EU’s response to the economic crisis. EU leaders have made many legal and rhetorical commitments towards open, participatory and accountable EU governance but implementation has often been incomplete or not communicated in a meaningful way to the general public. As noted by the outgoing European Ombudsman in 2013: “An institutional culture of transparency has yet to be achieved.”

### To know more visit:

<http://www.publishwhatyoufund.org/files/2014/07/OGP-EU-CSO-statement-july-2014.pdf>

For the moment, there are 20 EU Member States that have committed to the Open Government Partnership, and the EU, as such, is fulfilling the minimum requirements for joining the OGP: „for fiscal transparency, the EU publishes and explains its budget on a yearly basis; on access to information, Regulation 1049/2001 requires public access to documents; disclosures related to elected or senior public officials occurs through public declarations of interests of MEPs and Commissioners; and citizen engagement happens at the level of public consultations, the transparency register, and the new European Citizens Initiative.

Another important step the EU took towards implementing Open Government can be found in the launching of the Digital Agenda for Europe.

The Digital Agenda for Europe (DAE) was launched in May 2012 and aims to reboot Europe’s economy and help Europe’s citizens and businesses to get the most out of digital technologies. It is the first of seven flagships initiatives under Europe 2020, the EU’s strategy to deliver smart sustainable and inclusive growth.

The DAE contains 101 actions, grouped around seven priority areas. Some of these are closely linked to the field of Open Government: New public digital service infrastructures through Connecting Europe Facility loans, Propose EU cyber-security strategy and Directive and Accelerate cloud computing through public sector buying power.

Increasing information and knowledge exchange, enhanced connectivity, openness and transparency provide new opportunities for public administrations to become more efficient and effective, provide user-friendly services, while reducing costs and administrative burden.

The open government approach can facilitate this transformation. This paradigm is driven by opening up public data and services and facilitating collaboration for the design, production and delivery of public service. It is also about making government processes and decisions open, in order to foster citizen participation and engagement.

The availability of open data can facilitate the creation of new services, stimulate new markets, businesses and jobs, by adding value to the original data provided by government. The full use of big data in Europe’s 23 largest governments can reduce administrative costs by 15% to 20%. Open and modular public services can be re-used by different administrations, but also by businesses and citizens, in order to create and deliver

personalised, user-friendly and innovative services. The open government approach is expected to result in user-friendly, ubiquitous, personalised services; as they are designed, created and delivered in collaboration with others, combining information, data and services both from the public as well as the private sector. This approach shall also improve the quality of decision-making and promote greater trust in public institutions.

An open government will support ICT-enabled public sector innovation; improving the efficiency, effectiveness and quality of public services by introducing new processes, products, services and methods of delivery enabled by ICT.

### To know more visit:

<http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/digital-agenda-europe>

Monitoring of the decision-making process between institutions  
<http://ec.europa.eu/prelex/apcnet.cfm?CL=en>

# The importance of new media in process of governance

The Internet already transformed our life and process of governance with deep social and political implications. „The technology is making possible to reframe the function of government by strengthening civil society. There is a generation out that’s grown up on the internet and they knows that it is possible to make things together, you just have to architect the systems the right way.□(Coding a better government, TED2012, by Jennifer Pahlka)

They all take a part of the modern reality called an Open Culture.

Open culture, it starts with the mindset of the people. It takes the philosophy of open source and applies it to a culture of participation.

It is the citizen community that is working side-by-side with city officials to explore open government initiatives, deploy open source applications, and create policies that foster more openness. It is a partnership between citizens, elected officials, city staff, and businesses.

To know more visit:

„For the open source, open government, and open data communities”

The foundation for an open source city  
[www.theopensourcecity.com](http://www.theopensourcecity.com)

Video: Apps connect citizens to their governments  
[http://www.ted.com/talks/jennifer\\_pahlka\\_coding\\_a\\_better\\_government.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/jennifer_pahlka_coding_a_better_government.html)

Video: Cloud computing: new strategy to drive European business and government productivity  
<http://www.eubusiness.com/topics/research/cloud-computing>

# Recommendations

How to accelerate opening government process:



- 1 Open data - opening government data;
- 2 Hack the tools - creating a participation opportunities like creating apps that gives an access to the services or encourage active citizenship and participation in building a public services, policy and strategy;
- 3 Train civic innovators;
- 4 Experiment;
- 5 Create a maker culture;
- 6 “Venture capital” public funding;
- 7 Make law together;
- 8 Curate (quorate) opportunities.

To know more visit:

Toolkit: <http://esd-toolkit.eu/>

# References:

GovLab Blog by Justin Longo, August 5, 2013, [thegovlab.org](http://thegovlab.org);

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Open Government Partnership, [opengovpartnership.org](http://opengovpartnership.org)

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Open Data Handbook Documentation, Release 1.0.0 by  
Open Knowledge Foundation, November 14, 2012;

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Open Knowledge Foundation, [okfn.org](http://okfn.org);

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LAPSI 2.0 The European Thematic Network on Legal Aspects of Public Sector  
Information;

The 8 Principles of Open Government Data by a working  
group convened by Carl Malamud on December 8, 2007  
in Sebastopol, California, [opengovdata.org](http://opengovdata.org)

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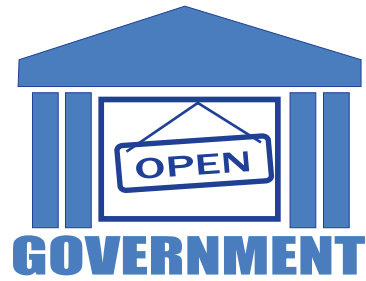
The European Union and the Open Government Partnership, an open  
statement signed at 1 July 2014, [opensocietyfoundations.org](http://opensocietyfoundations.org)

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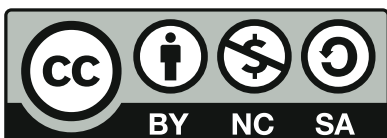
Coding a better government, February 2012, TED2012, Jennifer Pahlka.  
Sharing videos

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Video resources from YouTube and Vimeo, Prezi and  
other channel. For the references please play videos.



[www.opengoveu.eu](http://www.opengoveu.eu)  
f Opengoveu



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