

Thoughts on Open Data

Written by Carlota Bustelos

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Last weeks I took part in several events which have allowed me to think about the "Open data" movement . Like all trending terms, first we need to define what are we talking about. According to [Wikipedia](#) Open data is a philosophy and a practice that seeks to make freely available to everyone certain types of data, without any restrictions from copyright, patents or other control mechanisms . In addition to this definition I would also like to add that it is a movement that different governments, large data accumulators, have embraced as part of their modernization or transparency programs. Each in its style, European countries committed to bring out the economic value of the data and the Latin American countries as a basis for transparency.



Eva Méndez

@evamen



Y a este punto... mi reflexión de siempre: [#OpenData](#) no implica transparencia en sí misma y la Transparencia no implica Open data [#fesabid15](#)

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15 RETWEETS 10 FAVORITOS

And up to this point... my thought from always: [#OpenData](#) does not imply transparency by itself and trasnaparency doesn't imply Open Data [#fesabid15](#)

In Spain, as in other European countries under the cover of the 2013 amendment to the [European Directive on the re-use of public sector information](#) , goverments have launched the publication of open data through the respective portals, whitout any minimum consensus on the process and the conditons under which the data are released or declared open.

In Spain specifically I see a huge contradiction in how actions are made in two environments as if they were parallel and unconnected. Both the data (that can be opened) and the records

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managed by public administrations are created by the administrative activity. Why is then our legislation insistent in applying to records very powerful mechanisms in order to guarantee their authenticity, that sometime complicate a little bit our life; while data can be published without any guarantee?

This we have addressed in two recent activities in which I have had occasion to participate:

- The [FESABID Conference](#) , which had as its theme Open Culture - Shared Knowledge, where I was a member of the Scientific Committee and took part in the Panel: "Transparency and Open Data"
- The annual meeting of [ISO TC46 / SC11](#) where a working group was formed to study the relationship between Open Data and records Management, proposing to develop a standard with tentative title "Guidance for trustworthy processes for open data"

Participation in both events has convinced me that we need to implement processes that allow us to guarantee the reliability and quality of data to the potential users of open data are, as well as helping them to find exactly what they want or need in this predictable avalanche of published data. This is something that information professionals have been doing for a long time with other types of information. Why not apply it also to open data?

When I uploaded this post I've noticed the number of months I didn't write one !! On one hand, the daily workload leaves me little room for reflection, but I also have the feeling that I didn't heard or been involved in fresh air things worth for sharing. I hope that does not happen again ... and the next posts won't take so much.