

OpenSpending Community Hangout

May 14th 2015 at 17:00 BST

Theme:

Agenda

- 2-3m: Introduction to OpenSpending
- 20m + 10m questions Talk by XXX on YYY
- 10m of lightning talks
- 10m OpenSpending plans
- 5m wrapup

Planning to participate

- Rufus Pollock
- Meg Foulkes
- Mark Brough?
- Anders Pedersen
- Anna Alberts

Thursday 15th of January 2015 17:00GMT

Ásta Helgadóttir
Friedrich Lindenberg

Discussions:

- Future of the hangouts
- Friedrich suggested sending someone from OKF central to the OFS event on tracing the money which will be 21st of January.
- Also suggested adding Friedrich's project on African data into the open spending project:
<http://fierce-plains-8701.herokuapp.com/library/index.html>

Wednesday June 25th 2014 - 19CET, 18BST, 13 EDT

Where: Join via Google Hangout [link will be circulated or freenode [IRC channel](#) #openspending

Joining

- Anders Pedersen
- Hiroichi Kawashima (tentative)

Notes

- [10 min] OpenSpending around the world
- [20 min] Discussion of the financial sustainability plan
- [20 min] Other points for agenda - else:
 - WordPress community site revamp

Wednesday April 23rd 2014 - 19CET, 18BST, 13 EDT

Where: Join via Google Hangout [link will be circulated or freenode [IRC channel](#) #openspending

Joined

- Marc Joffe
- J. Félix Ontañón
- Anders Pedersen
- ADD YOUR NAME HERE

Notes

- Marc share a few projects he'd been working on site for where the money goes for San Francisco: <http://codeforsanfrancisco.org/look-at-sf/SFBudgetGoogle.html>
- SpendingStories in Spanish:
 - Development environment set <http://107.170.73.145:8000/#/>
 - Going Live on Friday 25th Apr <http://historiasdegasto.org>
 - 64 stories loaded
 - Customization: spanish translation + geographic zones referred at spanish regions and provinces levels.

Agenda

- [10 min.] Introductions and updates: Do you have anything to share?
- [20min] Do you have something for the agenda?
- [30 min.] Content sprint for the OpenSpending community site
 - check that our [guides](#) are up to date
 - review the [Data to Load issue tracker](#) (do you have a dataset to add?)
 - other issues on the community Wordpress blog

Wednesday April 9th 2014 - 19CET, 18GMT, 13 EDT Where: Join via Google Hangout [link will be circulated or freenode [IRC channel](#) #openspending

- [15 min.] Introductions and updates: Do you have anything to share?
- [20 min] **OpenSpending and privacy:** How do we handle take down notices from individuals and businesses who would like to be removed from the OpenSpending database?
 - Take a look and comment on [this draft for a take down policy](#) for how to deal

with privacy and data sets containing personal information

- Adding transactional spending from the Dutch Court of Auditors
- Community updates: <http://clearspending.ru> and stopsecretcontracts.org
- Open data for better public administration
- Add your topic here

Add your name here:

- Anders Pedersen
- Tryggvi Björgvinsson
- Iqbal Safarov
- Tarek Amr
- Marco Voormolen
- Sarah Bird
- Add your name here

Community updates:

- Server updates: Some of you have noticed issues with the OpenSpending server. Most of the worst bumps in the road should soon be over, and we have certainly noticed quite a lot of activity with new datasets added during the past week. The new datasets include:
 - The Ukraine 2014 budget:
https://openspending.org/budget_ukraine_2014/views/dokhody-2014
 - The budget for the student association of the University of Ulm:
https://openspending.org/stuve_haushalt_2014-3/views/stuve-ulm%3A1-entwurf-haushaltsplan-2014
 - The region of Ile de France (budgets for 2012 to 2014):
<https://openspending.org/budget-primitif-idf-2012-2014/views/budget-primitif-2014-treemap>
 - Budget of Luxembourg(?):
https://openspending.org/pb14_recette_pour_ordre/views/treemap
- Marco launched a nice OpenSpending site for Rotterdam:
<http://begroting.middeninrotterdam.nl/begroting.html>

Wednesday March 5th 2014 - 19CET, 18GMT, 13 EDT

Where: Join via Google Hangout [link will be circulated or freenode [IRC channel](#) #openspending]

- [15 min.] Introductions and updates: Do you have anything to share?
 - Share what you did at [Open Data Day](#).
- [30 min] Community updates: <http://clearspending.ru> and stopsecretcontracts.org
- Add your topic here

Add your name here:

- Anders Pedersen
- Add your name here

February 19th 2014 - 19CET, 18GMT, 13 EDT

Where: Join via Google Hangout [link will be circulated or freenode [IRC channel](#) #openspending]

Agenda

- [15 min.] Introductions and updates: Do you have?
- [15 min.] **Open Data Day preparation special**, the global day focusing on open data, is coming up on February 22nd. Are you interested working on budget or spending data?
- [15 min] We will give a quick introduction on how to use OpenSpending
- Add your topic here

Add your name here:

- Anders Pedersen
- Albert Bowden <https://plus.google.com/+JAlbertBowden/> working on openspending openbudget for 17 hampton roads localities
- Dorotea Mar
Unconditional Basic Income (Models Research and Data)
- Friedrich Lindenberg - OpenInterests.eu / Grano
- Notes

Unconditional Basic Income (Models Research and Data

- What data is needed to analyse this?
 - Actually it's a good question, maybe to crowdsource the answer - but one answer is - do we know of some money that are not "used" at the moment and they could possibly be used to distribute them among all people (from Europe for example)

- what data that is already available could be used to creating possible financing models
 - what are possible modifications and versions of UBI
 - for example: could we easily/simple finance volunteer works
- any answers / brainstorming / ideas welcome Dorotea@accorda.org

Wednesday February 5th 2014 - 19CET, 18GMT, 13 EDT

Where: Join via Google Hangout [link will be circulated or freenode [IRC channel](#) #openspending

Agenda

- Introductions and updates: Do you have?
- [Open Data Day](#), the global day focusing on open data, is coming up on February 22nd. Are you interested working on budget or spending data? We will give a quick solid introduction on how to use OpenSpending.
- [Spending Stories](#) in Spanish: At our last call Felix and Diego spoke about the plans for a Spanish language SpendingStories site. We will have an update?
- FarmSubsidy
- Global Economic Map (Wikidata project)
- Unconditional Basic Income research and data

Add your name here:

- Anders Pedersen
- J. Félix Ontañón <felixonta@gmail.com> <https://plus.google.com/u/0/+JoséFélixOntañón>
- Julián Tierno Magro <julian.tierno@gmail.com> Google plus: <https://plus.google.com/u/0/102175099726117276261/posts>
- Stefan Wehrmeyer <stefanwehrmeyer@gmail.com>
- Javier Cantón <prosumidor.social@gmail.com> <https://plus.google.com/u/0/+JavierCantónProsumidor>
- Holger Drewes <holger.drewes@gmail.com>
- Crina Boros <crinaboros@gmail.com>
- Rufus Pollock
- Incho Cordero
- Steve Adcock

- Concha Catalan ccgbcn@gmail.com
- Kati Cakes
- Manish Dangol (dangol.manish@gmail.com)
-

Notes

Open Data Day

- To do: Short guide on how to add a city budget
- OpenKratio is running <http://okioconf.es> might offer some OpenSpending related activities.
- BudgIT plans to support University of Ilorin, Nigeria on their Open Data Hack Day and this will focus on budget and spending stories.

Spendingstories in Spanish:

- Progress status: 75%
- [Git fork](#) and [Transflex](#) translation completed in two weeks. Now in the process of reviewing the translated strings.
- Choosing Heroku for production deployment. We've some tech problems. We'll ask on openspending-dev mailing-list.
- Form set up for people to contribute with spending stories in spanish (10 stories so far): <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1gdND3IQqidwRfpI5ETbamtdMnazJWc4oM0HcjW8yeLE/viewform>
- Contact made with newspapers- they have shown interest: [ElDiario.es Andalucía](#) regional newspaper
- Aiming for February 21st for launch

Farm Subsidy

- US Recipient issues: Who gets them, how can Congress not require that data be released, can Sunlight do anything to lobby for more information.
- Could the US data be added? I'll volunteer to be a US data scraper if adding the US to this site would be considered useful (Steve Adcock). To Marc Joffe, I read that same US article. Perhaps we should communicate offline to come up with a plan for the US farm subsidy data.
- The database: <http://farmsubsidy.openspending.org/>
- Current raw CSV data: <http://data.farmsubsidy.org/>
- Member State Issues with links to data websites: <https://github.com/openspending/farmsubsidy-scrappers/issues?labels=memberstate&state=open>
- Content: EUR 55 bn. annual transactions for more than 20 mio. European farmers.
- Goal: To have a scraper of farm subsidy data

- Open Data Day may be great event to kick off a scraper in your country

General discussion

- Marc: S&P have downgraded Puerto Rico

ACTIONS

- [Stefan]: email OpenSpending mailing list re farm subsidy - done
- [Marc]: ping a post re Puerto Rico downgrade - done
- [Web team]: put up an open data day page on openspending
- [Rufus] Rufus suggests reading group about openspending topics

OpenSpending on Open Data Day

to put up online at community.openspending.org/open-data-day/

Help open up your local city finances by publishing them on [OpenSpending](#) and producing elegant visualizations that show where money goes.

OpenSpending makes it super-easy to turn an Excel (or even PDF) file of local city finances into something browsable and searchable. It also enables you make clear and beautiful visualizations of your local city's finances in seconds making them understandable to everyone.

[[INSERT example visualization]]

There are 3 simple steps.

1. Find the data - locate your local city or municipal data
2. Prepare the data - turn into a single clean spreadsheet in Excel, Libreoffice or Google Docs (and then export as CSV - just "save as")
3. Upload to OpenSpending and visualize

If you need more information there is a [detailed step-by-step guide](#).

January 22nd 2014 - 19CET, 18GMT, 13 EDT

Agenda

- [15 min] Introductions and quick updates: Share what you have been up to!
- [30min] SpendingStories project: How to...
 - Translate and fork it
 - How to add stories
-
- Add your topic here
 - New Community site
 - Idea: Forming “reading groups” on particular topics (e.g. tax avoidance and evasion)
 - [5m] Stream the Portuguese public procurements to OpenSpending
 - Update - Formed New Initiative: community of practice for mentoring local organisations in East and Southern Africa as watchdogs tracking funding flows of large agencies like the Global Fund (www.theglobalfund.org) - open data/spending challenges on the ground are real despite well meaning platforms/opportunities
 - Global Economic Map (Wikidata project)
 - Unconditional Basic Income research and data

Add your name here:

- Anders Pedersen
- Manish Dangol (irc Name: ManishDangol) Google plus:https://plus.google.com/u/0/+ManishDangolzero_cool/posts
- Victoria Vlad
- J. Félix Ontañón <felixonta@gmail.com>: (irc Name: fontanon). Google plus: <https://plus.google.com/u/0/100191609788880242597>
- Javier Cantón <prosumidor.social@gmail.com> G+: <https://plus.google.com/u/0/+JavierCant%C3%B3nProsumidor/posts>
- Incho Cordero <inchocordero@gmail.com>. Google plus: <https://google.com/+InchoCordero>
- Julián Tierno Magro <julian.tierno@gmail.com> Google plus: <https://plus.google.com/u/0/102175099726117276261/posts>
- Rufus Pollock
- Concha Catalan ccgbcn@gmail.com
- Dorotea Dorotea@accorda.org g+ <https://plus.google.com/u/0/115033575285018933693/posts>
- Jorge C. Leitão <jorgecarleitao@gmail.com>
- Alex Peek <alexpeek1@gmail.com>
- Angela Kageni angela.kageni@gmail.com
- Oluseun Onigbinde oluseun@yourbudgit.com

<https://plus.google.com/u/0/116058588246396670510/posts>

-

Notes:

Things to do for a Spanish language version of Spending Stories:

- Concha: Create a GoogleDoc for Spanish spending stories
- Felix: Create a list of questions not included in the current Readme

December 4 2013 - 19CET, 18GMT, 13 EDT

Add your name here

- Anders Pedersen
- Tarek Amr
- Amanda Atwood - Kubatana.net - Google Plus:
<https://plus.google.com/u/0/115198732670814492709/posts>
(Assuming I can log in - Connectivity isn't always good after hours)
- Photios Zygoulis <https://plus.google.com/u/0/+FOTISZYGOULIS/posts>
- Concha Catalan (opengov.cat)

November 20 2013 - 19CET, 18GMT, 13 EDT

Notes

- Launch of [Spending Stories](#)
 - Going live tomorrow Thursday November 21!
- News from the community
 - Anna Flagg has created a map for spending transparency projects
 - Marc Joffe would like to mention the PDF Liberation Hackathon sponsored by Sunlight (see: <http://pdfliberation.wordpress.com/>)
 - So far San Francisco and Washington DC have joined with events
 - Anders suggested to setup an event in Spain with OKF Spain and OpenKratio, as Spain is particularly known for providing budget data in PDF-format
 - Karen shared news from recent community budget monitoring initiatives in Amsterdam, the Netherlands
 - For example: www.budgetmonitoring.nl
- Discussions about priorities for the upcoming website sprint
 - we are open for feedback and priorities

- Link for Trello board:
<https://trello.com/b/7E5enK5J/openspending-news-and-website-team>

October 29th 2013 - 19CET, 18GMT, 13 EDT

Agenda

- Review of the app: [How much is it really?](#)
 - [Add comments here](#)
- News from the community
 - Ann Flagg has created a map for spending transparency projects
-

August 29th 2013

Agenda for News Editor introduction:

- Introduction of the team
- Ideas and interests of News Editors
 - Anna: Working with data, visualisations and analytics
 - Kati: Help others to work on spending data, would like to share. Retrieve spending data.
 - Maria: I'm so sorry! I currently work at Pearson Education, and I very limited experience in data journalism, but I am very interested in gaining additional experience in this sector. I would like to specifically study data and budget financing within the online education sector for not-for-profit institutions. Pearson just bought out my company, Embanet+Compass, so I would eventually like to run my own online program at an established university. I also currently work at Daily Source.org, a social justice website focusing on non-bias media, as the Assistant Managing Editor.
 -
- Introduce
 - Tasks in trello
 - IRC channel freenode #openspending
 - the app: how much is it really?
- Skillset micro workshop ideas
 - Visualising
 - Data Cleaning
 - Finding Stories in Data

- Financial Data Stories
- What else?
- Meeting or Hangout Frequency
 - start out with every other week
 - agree on a suitable day/time
 - otherwise the hangouts are ought to take place according to our projects

August 7th 2013

Present

- Conchita
- Rufus Pollock
- Mark Brough <mark.brough@publishwhatyoufund.org>
- Anders Pedersen
- Neil Ashton

Notes

- Introductions from Tamara and Conchita and more
- Tamara plans to use German opendata about culture to find stories
- Anders
 - Check out the getting started guide
 - Ping the mailing list to let folks know what you are doing
- Rufus
 - <http://openspending.org/gb-local-gla> ← greater london authority
 - <https://github.com/rgrp/dataset-gla> ← source data and the painful scripts to extract and clean the data!
- Neil
 - <http://blog.openspending.org/help/> : expanded docs (incl. guide)
 - todo:
 - community call to move over rest of old site content
 - move rest of help docs (API, cleaning, contribute)

Conchita feedback

[posting Conchitas question from the OS list]

I extracted the data for the Agriculture dept and I am sharing this file to ask for help to clean it and upload it to openspending

<https://docs.google.com/file/d/0Byd0lXXFqjameTdBaFA1VnhwaDg/edit?usp=sharing>

I did this by looking for keywords and codes so there will probably be mistakes but this is my first attempt so please be patient.

This is the translation of the interesting columns

Sheet 1

This groups together all types of organizations belonging to this Department (subject to different levels of interaction and different types of public or private law- trusts, consortiums, ltds, etc)

Column B

Ingresos / Despeses=

I= Income/ D=Expenditure

C

Servei/ Entitat= organization code

D

organization name

E

type of organization

Sheet 2 – DG and SG

Direccions Generals i Secretaries Generals

These group together the budget of Secretariats and Administrative Offices directly. Secretariats are usually at a higher hierarchical level. Each Department may have an unspecified number of each (and both)

S

concept

W

budgetary program

What was difficult?

Resources:

- Loading data into OpenSpending:

<https://docs.google.com/a/okfn.org/document/d/1YBXX6du4rOV6OutZncT7gyJeOA7zHml3cC1TtWJW65w/edit#heading=h.79vyyu8n203g>

June 19th 2013

- What about XBRL

June 12th 2013

<http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/fixedtime.html?msg=OpenSpending+Community+Hangout&iso=20130612T13&p1=263&ah=1>

Attendees:

- Add your name and email address here
-

Agenda:

- “How to crunch numbers from the European Investment Bank (EIB)?”. Introduction by Anne Rogenbuck from Bankwatch about how they analyse loan data from the EIB.
- Procurement data on OpenSpending.
 - French and Senegalese procurement data are just the latest to be added. Should this change anything for eg. the way data is categories in [the upload module](#)?
- Planning the [Global Spending Weekend July 20-21](#)
 -

Notes from community calls

Community Call May 15th 2013

Attendees:

- Julia Keseru, Sunlight
- Friedrich Lindenberg, OpenNews
- Jan, procurement hack participant

Agenda:

- * Follow up from EU Procurement Hack Day May 2 in Brussels
- * Status on parsing of the data - Ideas for data journalism stories based on the data - * Where to go

next with the data *

Julia Keseru on Sunlight procurement work:

Recent post about mapping procurement data around the world:

<http://sunlightfoundation.com/blog/2013/05/01/open-procuring-how-do-other-countries-perform/>

And our spreadsheet:

<https://docs.google.com/a/sunlightfoundation.com/spreadsheet/cc?key=0AhECmY-CLA1hdHQ4STNKcEpoSS1RaHZ4YWFnNUxGZ2c#gid=0> *

Notes from Brussels Procurement Hack: <http://lopad.org/opened>

<https://github.com/opened/opened>

Check out historical awarded contracts data from Australia:

<http://data.gov.au/dataset/historical-australian-government-contract-data/>

Contemporary data: <https://www.tenders.gov.au/?event=public.reports.listCNWeeklyExport>

Procurement management system in the making: <http://www.dobt.co/procure-io/>

Community Call February 13th 2013

This write up is based on the community call with:

Anders Pedersen, OpenSpending

Brigitte Alfter, Farm Subsidy

John Murray, Independent Data Analyst

When public agencies release transactional data strong attention needs to be devoted for data privacy in the data. Most countries will allow companies and even sole proprietorships to be disclosed to the public (note).

However information about citizens receiving payments should never appear in such data. As governments are not always aware of how to retract data, one should always take precautions when dealing with transactional spending data.

It is clear that CSOs and journalist can play a proactive role in assisting monitoring the release standards that governments apply. Data privacy should never be a justification for shutting off access to public spending. As more spending data becomes public, government agencies will have to implement release procedures, which prevents privacy breaches. For the financial transparency community the data privacy issue represents a challenge, as governments might be tempted to use this as reason for limiting public

disclosures.

Example: UK Council data

In January 2013 a freelance data specialist from the community used OpenSpending to identify a number of privacy breaches in an individual dataset presented in OpenSpending. This was due to inconsistent redaction of sensitive data by the local authority. Whilst the majority of these payments were to organisations (hence probably not highly sensitive), there were also a few unredacted payments to individuals. The person who uploaded the data immediately notified their local council, who in turn referred this to their audit committee. As a precaution data set in question, the UK Local Council £500 spending data was taken off the site immediately.

UK open spending data is some of the best in the world and has already allowed people to get understanding and insight into government spending at a level never before possible.

What to look for when you receive the data?

Look for text in all columns:

Sometimes suppliers could include privacy sensitive information in the description of the invoice such as name, case file or social security number. For this reason all columns in the dataset should be analysed

What column were identified in the recent privacy breaches?

Guides for proper disclosure procedures

Incidents of privacy breaches highlights the importance of proper procedures to ensure that data from public sector bodies is properly redacted before being published. The UK government produces a [guideline document for data publishers](#), which ensures that issues like this are prevented and hence very rare.

The Local Governments Association (UK) has published this [guide](#).

Overly restrictive disclosure procedures

The discussion on transactional data and privacy is however far from new. Often data privacy has been used as justification for avoiding public disclosure.

- Privacy for commercial farmers

In 2010 the European Court of Justice ruled that mandatory disclosure of names of [German recipients from EU farm subsidies](#) amounted to a breach of their privacy. The ECJ decision has not been overturned since and has led to a substantial decrease in access to overall EU spending, due to the large share that the Common Agricultural Programme (CAP) occupy within the total budget.

- Disclosure thresholds

As publishing of transactional data becomes a more established practise, several countries have introduced fairly high disclosure thresholds. The spread of such practises should be a serious concern, as large shares of public spending can be covered under such disclosure thresholds.

OpenSpending are currently aware of the following disclosure thresholds:

United States (federal and some states): USDollar 25,000

United Kingdom, Government: GBP 25,000

United Kingdom, Councils: GBP 500 (for spending data), GBP 50,000 (for contracts)

Sweden, DK: No established practise

Community Call January 30th 2013

Present

- * Anders Pedersen, OpenSpending
- * Ruth Carlitz, Consultant IBP
- * Lucy Chambers, OpenSpending / School of Data
- * Martin Keegan
- * Mar Cabra, Incubating chapter OKFN Spain
- * Elena Mondo, IBP
- * Chelsea LeMar, LSE Capstone
- * Caroline Kippler, LSE Capstone
- * Kaitlin Lee, Sunlight Foundation
- * Adrienne Lever, LSE Capstone

Agenda

What issues or indicators should be used to assess governments transparency on budgetary and spending information:

- How should the budget process be documented (ie. pre-budget statements, budget amendments and reviews)
 - How should updates and changes to budget data be documented or tracked? One requirement could be to ask governments to clearly specify for all the posted documents the "when" (writing something like "latest updated on" or "posted on", etc...)
 - How should budgetary breakdowns and classifications be outlined?
 - For how long should budget information be kept online (minimum amount of time)?
 - How should the budget information be displayed in order for interested parties to know where to find it (relatedly if it moves web addresses, links should be provided so users can easily navigate to the new address)?
 - What data formats to provide - ie. machine-readable format?
- *Add your agenda items

Discussed topics

Data portals:

Data portals can be extremely helpful for allowing CSOs and the general public to access government budget data. Additionally data portals can serve as a tool to enable better monitoring of governmental releases, compared to non-structured publishing of data across departments.

It was however also noted that a data portal cannot relieve the governments responsibility for providing accurate and accessible financial data. In Spain the launch of 17 regional and national data portals has conveyed an image of an increasingly transparent government. Yet Spanish CSOs still struggle with an

almost unchanged and minimal access to budget information in machine readable formats. In this case data portals has not led to changes in the actual data releases as regional and the national government keep insisting to publish data as scanned PDF documents. From the United States and Spain it was therefore stressed that a data portal can never relieve government from the obligation

Often the lack of accessibility of budget data also stem from low ICT capacities of the responsible ministries. A survey conducted by Martin Keegan proved that a substantial number of ministries of finance globally, lack a proper website.

Data formats:

Several members highlighted the need for receiving budget data as CSV format or in other machine readable formats. In order to be able to conduct analysis on budget data, the release format is of high importance as it decrease time wasted on data entry, scanning and cleaning dramatically.

The need for budgetary details and classifications:

It was discussed if budgets should be published as aggregates or as detailed breakdowns. Some highlighted the importance of detailed budgetary breakdowns due to the fact that classifications can often be complex and inconsistent. The publishing of budgetary details also such upon the issue of providing real oversight of how government classify their expenditures. Are expenditures labelled as education costs actually devoted to teacher salaries, or to investments in government property?

The discussion on how to survey national spending classifications, should be addressed in relation to the ongoing developments of the COFOG standards. (In the US each state has developed its own budget categories and thus no common taxonomy allow clear or easy comparisons).

Finally it was commonly agreed that meaningful aggregates provided by the government would also be useful, in the case where detailed budget information was also available.

Classification example: Confusing budget headers

For the European Union natural conservation (EUR 0.2bn per year) and Direct farm subsidy payments (EUR 40bn per year) are allocated under the same budget header: "[Preservation and Management of Natural Resources](#)". It is crucial that civil society organisations have the opportunity to call such budget titles into questions, but this is however only possible if detailed budget breakdowns of sub-programmes and accounts are actually available.

Reference: <http://openspending.org/blog/2013/01/22/How-to-decrypt-a-budget.html>.

Other topics:

Identifying public services responsible to publish information

At the call it was mentioned that accessing municipal and regional budget information can be a substantial challenge. This is in particular an issue in countries where a substantial share of the public spending total stems from non-federal spending. In Spain for instance both health and education spending is documented by the regional governments.

Decentralised public services can be difficult to identify, might have different release procedures and responsibilities. Additionally local spending backed by federal block grants can be caught between various documentation regimes and thus left unaccounted.

Would it be useful to inquire with the World Bank if they have documentation as to the share of GDP spent by national, regional and municipal entities?

Release flow:

This was not discussed to great length. However in the UK transactions or obligations are posted within 30 days. In the case that a budget is amended, both the revised and unrevised versions should be available in order to enable transparent tracking of revisions.

From the US it was mentioned that civil servants will often vary about publishing transaction or budget data before audit. It was suggested that governments should be clearly mandated to release financial data before the completion of audit.

Thresholds:

As governments commence on publishing transactional data with names of suppliers, contract numbers and accounts, the practise of minimum threshold has been introduced. From the US and the UK concerns were raised as introductions of thresholds seem arbitrary across countries.

Data quality - can minimum requirements can increase quality:

Often governments will publish financial data, which has been collected from across agencies. For this reason missing and inconsistent data is reported as a recurring issue.

(In Greece the government is currently amending financial reporting standards in order to ensure that officials can only submit forms, if they satisfy some minimum requirements.)