Independent Reporting Mechanism Greece: Progress Report 2012–2013

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Table of Contents

Open
Government
Partnership

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: GREECE

Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) Progress Report 2012–13

The Greek action plan was a learning experience around ambition, ownership and participatory process. While the government has recommitted to OGP aims, it must concretely implement its most relevant goals. To achieve sustainable results, Greece must work more effectively towards transparency with its stakeholders.

The Open Government Partnership (OGP) is a voluntary international initiative that aims to secure commitments from governments to their citizenry to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance. The Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) carries out a biannual review of the activities of each OGP participating country's activities.

Greece officially began participating in OGP in November 2011 when Giannis Ragousis, Minister for the Interior, Decentralization, and E-Governance, announced Greece's plan to join. This report covers the implementation period from that time until 30 December 2012.

At the centre of Greece's OGP initiative is the Administrative Reform and E-Government Ministry, but other key government ministries are involved, including the National Centre for Public Administration and Local Government; the Ministry of Competitiveness and Development; the Ministry of Environment, Energy, and Climate Change; the National Cadastre and Mapping Agency S.A.; and the Information Technology Development Service. Additionally, stakeholders from civil society organisations (CSOs), academia, and the business sector contribute significantly to OGP action plan aims.

OGP PROCESS

Countries participating in OGP follow a process for consultation during development of their OGP action plan and during implementation.

Key public administrators met in person to shape the initial OGP action plan. Due to the affairs of State at the time of discussions, no consultations took place. Currently, however, OGP action plan development allows for open online discussions, which act as an ongoing exchange platform for stakeholders. The September 2013 online discussion on the action plan restructure yielded 258 comments, covering all themes and commitments.

The government published its self-assessment on the consultation government portal, an important step that showed recommitment to OGP. While the government's self-assessment report does not directly confront challenges in the implementation of action plans commitments, it does describe developments on all current commitments. However, the government must address two significant shortcomings in its current OGP action plan: (1) commitments that do not fit OGP goals and (2) issues surrounding effective access to public information, existing transparency mechanisms, and concrete policy implementation for open data.

At a glance

Member since: 2011
Number of commitments: 11

Level of Completion
Completed: **1 of 11**
Substantial: **1 of 11**
Limited: **7 of 11**
Not started: 2 **of 11**

Timing
On schedule: **7 of 11**

Commitment Emphasis
Access to information: 5 **of 11**
Participation: **2 of 11**
Accountability: 4 **of 11**
Tech & innovation for transparency & accountability: **0 of 11**
Unclear **3 of 11**

Number of commitments with
Clear relevance to an OGP value: **8 of 11**
Moderate or transformative potential impact: 3 of 11
Substantial or complete implementation: 2 of 11
All three (✪): 1 of 11

COMMITMENT IMPLEMENTATION

As part of OGP, countries are required to make an action plan with two-year commitments. Table 1 summarises each commitment, its level of completion, its ambition, whether it falls within Greece's planned schedule, and the next steps for the commitment in future OGP action plans. Greece's plan covered a wide variety of sectors but had few ambitious commitments, as evidenced below.

Table 1: Assessment of Progress by Commitment

COMMITMENT SHORT NAME	POTENTIAL IMPACT				LEVEL OF COMPLETION				TIMING	NEXT STEPS
✪ COMMITMENT IS CLEARLY RELEVANT TO OGP VALUES AS WRITTEN, HAS SIGNIFICANT POTENTIAL IMPACT, AND IS SUBSTANTIALLY OR COMPLETELY IMPLEMENTED.	NONE	MINOR	MODERATE	TRANSFORMATIVE	NOT STARTED	LIMITED	SUBSTANTIAL	COMPLETE		
BOOST PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT										
1.1 Increase Number of Legislative Acts Going through Online Deliberation–Double the number (percentage) of legislative acts that will go through this process and increase public engagement and feedback.	█	█	█		█	█			Behind schedule	New commitment building on existing implementation
1.2 Capitalise on Citizen Comments and Suggestions–Develop an audit trail that documents how citizens' and organisations' comments are processed and how the criteria for evaluating the comments are applied.	█	█	█		█	█			On schedule	New commitment building on existing implementation
ENHANCE PUBLIC RESOURCE MANAGEMENT										
2.1 Operate Central E-Procurement Information System–Unify and centralise the procurement process for all ministries through a newly acquired e-procurement information system.	█	█			█	█			On schedule	New commitment building on existing implementation
2.2 Operate Central ERP Informatin System–Adopt a common chart of accounts and implement an ERP system across all ministries and governmental agencies.	█				█				Behind schedule	New commitment building on existing implementation
2.3 Operate Central HRMS Information System–Design and activate a centralised, unified Human Resources Management system (HRMS), both in terms of procedures, methods, and IT infrastructure. Efficiently apply human capital management policies in a transparent way, promoting authorities accountability and optimal use of expertise.	█				█	█			On schedule	New commitment building on existing implementation
OPEN-UP DATA										
3.1 Open Data Regarding Prices, as Collected by Prices Observatory–Export products' daily prices into a machine-readable, easily manipulated format.	█	█			█	█	█	█	On schedule	Maintenance and monitoring of completed implementation

COMMITMENT SHORT NAME	POTENTIAL IMPACT				LEVEL OF COMPLETION				TIMING	NEXT STEPS
	NONE	MINOR	MODERATE	TRANSFORMATIVE	NOT STARTED	LIMITED	SUBSTANTIAL	COMPLETE		
✪ COMMITMENT IS CLEARLY RELEVANT TO OGP VALUES AS WRITTEN, HAS SIGNIFICANT POTENTIAL IMPACT, AND IS SUBSTANTIALLY OR COMPLETELY IMPLEMENTED.										
OPEN-UP DATA (continued)										
3.2 Resolve Legal Issues Regarding State Geo-data–Clarify arising legal issues related to the use and redistribution of continuously gathering geo-information.	■	■			■	■			On schedule	New commitment building on existing implementation
✪ **3.3 Offer Additional Taxation Data**–Publish taxpayers who are in arrears on a quarterly basis, publish regional tax office key performance indicators on a monthly basis, and provide a web service detailing the registration information of professionals and companies.	■	■	■		■	■	■		On schedule	Further work on basic implementation
ENHANCE TRANSPARENCY										
4.1 Augment Functionality of the Transparency Program–Make database of administrative acts more searchable, capable of information customisation, and interoperable with other public administration IT systems.	■	■			■	■			Behind Schedule	New commitment building on existing implementation
4.2 Publicised Public Sector Procurement Information–Post all information pertaining to the procurement cycle of all public sector entities and organisations to a pre-specified site (agora.gov.gr).	■				■	■			On schedule	Abandon commitment
4.3 Enable Open, Transparent, and Safeguarded Document Circulation–Collaborate and inoperate existing electronic protocols with the National Printing House, the Transparency Program, "better-regulation" information systems, and the central electronic Ministerial Decree composition system.	■				■	■			Behind Schedule	New commitment building on existing implementation

Table 2: Table 2 summarizes the IRM assessment of progress of each commitment

NAME OF COMMITMENT	SUMMARY OF RESULTS
✪COMMITMENT IS CLEARLY RELEVANT TO OGP VALUES AS WRITTEN, HAS SIGNIFICANT POTENTIAL IMPACT, AND IS SUBSTANTIALLY OR COMPLETELY IMPLEMENTED.	
Boost Public Engagement	
1.1 Increase Number of Legislative Acts Going through Online Deliberation • OGP Value Relevance: Clear • Potential Impact: Moderate • Completion: Limited	This commitment aimed to double the number of legislative acts available on www.opengov.gr. While participating citizens and organisations have discussed many laws posted to the website since the goal's initiation, the goal of doubling legislative acts was not reached. Lack of clear initial legislation has significantly slowed progress. For more rapid achievement, the government should reconstruct the commitment's framework.
1.2 Capitalize on Citizen Comments and Suggestions • OGP Value Relevance: Clear • Potential Impact: Moderate • Completion: Limited	In 2012 and 2013, the National Centre for Public Administration organised open workshops to discuss with stakeholders governmental transparency, online deliberation, and electronic government. Responsible government administrators also instituted daily e-mail communication among key public servants in charge of online consultation processes in various ministries. While these efforts aim at the goal, their limited impact traces to fragmented governmental support.
Enhance Public Resource Management	
2.1 Operate Central E-procurement Information System • OGP Value Relevance: Unclear • Potential Impact: Minor • Completion: Limited	The National Electronic Public Procurement System (NEPPS) project now provides public access to the public procurement system; however, the access is limited: the search functionality is simple and the information is mostly unstructured, making further research difficult. The IRM researcher found that if NEPPS were more effectively structured, it could provide valuable information to the public sector. As the project currently exists, it provides no space for citizen participation and contribution.
2.2 Operate Central ERP Information System • OGP Value Relevance: Unclear • Potential Impact: None • Completion: Not Started	This commitment, a commitment to manage the central government's operational resources, has not been started. The IRM researcher found this goal, as currently worded, ambiguously tied to OGP values.
2.3 Operate Central HRMS Information System • OGP Value Relevance: Clear • Potential Impact: None • Completion: Limited	The Ministry for Administrative Reform and E-Government partially completed a human resources information management system; however, the goal is loosely connected with open government accountability practices, and few government actions promote use of existing statistics or involve stakeholders in statistical discussion and analysis.
Open-Up Data	
3.1. Open Data Regarding Prices, as Collected by Prices Observatory • OGP Value Relevance: Clear • Potential Impact: Minor • Completion: Complete	Consumer product information is now available to the public in the form of a government portal and searchable data sets. Currently more than 80 users access the consumer product information. As evidenced by their development of additional applications and services, companies and individual subscribers value access to this information.
3.2 Resolve Legal Issues Regarding State Geo-data • OGP Value Relevance: Clear • Potential Impact: Minor • Completion: Limited	The Greek government passed two amendments that complement pre-existing geospatial legislation. The new legislation allows public access to geospatial information free of charge and with limited licensing measures and abrogates existing agreements that prevent free sharing of geospatial data among public authorities. While these laws sound promising, they do little in actual implementation to resolve the fragmented legal environment surrounding free sharing of geospatial data and other unresolved issues, such as providing indexing resolutions and simplifying access and re-use procedures.

✪ 3.3 Offer Additional Taxation Data • OGP Value Relevance: Clear • Potential Impact: Moderate • Completion: Substantial	The General Secretariat of Public Revenue (GSPR) published a significant amount of overdue debt reports and regional tax office indicators. While the GSPR also implemented a website to provide professionals and businesses with taxation data, they shut it down after identifying technical and privacy limitations, such as unauthorised sharing of personal data with third parties. However, after numerous complaints about the website shutdown, the government launched a new service providing taxation information to the public. While information on the success of the new website is not available for this report, the previous website data shows the website received 480 million hits in twenty months and had hundreds of connected users.
Enhance Transparency	
4.1 Augment Functionality of the Program • OGP Value Relevance: Clear • Potential Impact: Minor • Completion: Limited	The responsible government agency improved the transparency program's usability, including adjustments to search functionality and information customisation through new tools, such as widgets, smart urls, and syndicated technologies. While these steps help the public access needed information, the improvement is limited. Additionally, the government completed a partial completion of electronic connections between the website and other public administration IT systems, mostly done through third party applications. These improvements, while minimal, add to the usability of the transparency portal, recognised as the cornerstone of Greece's transparency, and increase the public's access to information.
4.2 Publicise Public Sector Procurement Information • OGP Value Relevance: Clear • Potential Impact: None • Completion: Limited	This goal overlaps with commitment 2.1. Please see that commitment for activities associated with this commitment. The IRM researcher suggests abandonment.
4.3 Enable Open, Transparent, and Safeguarded Document Circulation • OGP Value Relevance: Unclear • Potential Impact: None • Completion: Not Started	The Ministry for Administrative Reform and E-Government has not established an electronic protocol connection among the National Printing House, the Transparency Program, the better-regulation information systems, and the central electronic Ministerial Decree composition system. Additionally, as currently worded, the connection of this goal to OGP values is ambiguous. The IRM researcher suggests commitment reformulation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

While the government implemented open government initiatives at all political levels in 2009 and 2010, it scaled back efforts while in a state of emergency, focusing on electronic government projects. Electronic development is still the government's main goal. As a result of this recent history and the IRM researcher's findings, there are a number of recommendations that will improve the design and implementation of the next action plan. These recommendations are crosscutting; commitment-specific recommendations are included with each commitment in Section IV. Recommendations include the following:

1. Enhance a long-term dialogue with stakeholders, including evaluation mechanisms, more organisation and accountability procedures for participation, and opportunities to produce new deliverables for public policies and services.
2. Move beyond improving accessibility and usability of information, software, and standards. Openness demands a continuous process of change that makes government structures more participatory and accountable and also negotiates with the nongovernmental sector to open up their data and procedures.
3. Connect open government initiatives to social, political, and economic challenges of our time, including labour relations, participatory law and policy drafting, and open selection procedures for public administration posts.
4. Open up data sets on health, social security, labour, and local municipalities to allow citizens to search, discuss, and contribute to policy proposals. The efficacy of similar commitments in the future depends on engaging with a more open justice system.

5. Take into account the opinions of stakeholders at all levels: judges, lawyers, doctors, citizens, patients, associations, but also from groups that are systematically excluded from certain policy areas, such as women and immigrants. Encourage informal voices, engage with citizen networks in and out of the public administration, and challenge dominant notions of gender, race, and culture in order to produce a more open government.

Stakeholder priorities

Additionally, stakeholders interviewed had a number of recommendations that are compatible with the researcher's viewpoint.

1. Simplify and enlarge the legislative scope of access to information and ensure effective deliberation on laws by introducing a code for public online consultation.
2. Strengthen the Transparency Program through stronger legislation and improved portal functions.
3. In the health care sector, implement open communication standards for interaction with patients and provide concrete open data on expenditures, monitoring, and policy-making.
4. Propose a robust, open-government framework for recruiting political appointees and public administrators.
5. Secure social entrepreneurship initiatives through open resource allocation and simplified legal processes.
6. Design concrete policies that empower a more inclusive gender approach.

Eligibility Requirements 2012: To participate in OGP, governments must demonstrate commitment to open government by meeting minimum criteria on key dimensions of open government. Third-party indicators are used to determine country progress on each of the dimensions. For more information, visit http://www.opengovpartnership.org/how-it-works/how-join/eligibility-criteria. Raw data has been recoded by OGP staff into a four-point scale listed in parentheses below.

Budget Transparency: Not Evaluated	Access to Information: Law Enacted	(4 of 4)
Asset Disclosure: Elected Officials to Public (3 of 4)	Civic Participation: 9.41 of 10	(4 of 4)

Athanasios Priftis is an independent researcher and an open government expert, involved in various international and national projects. He enjoys working with organisations using open and collaborative methodologies and questioning preconceived ideas.

The Open Government Partnership (OGP) aims to secure concrete commitments from governments to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance. OGP's Independent Reporting Mechanism assesses development and implementation of national action plans to foster dialogue among stakeholders and improve accountability.

Open Government Partnership

I. BACKGROUND

The Open Government Partnership (OGP) is a voluntary, multi-stakeholder international initiative that aims to secure concrete commitments from governments to their citizenry to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance. In pursuit of these goals, OGP provides an international forum for dialogue and sharing among governments, civil society organisations, and the private sector, all of which contribute to a common pursuit of open government. OGP stakeholders include participating governments as well as civil society and private sector entities that support the principles and mission of OGP.

Introduction

Greece officially began participating in OGP in November 2011 when Giannis Ragousis, minister for the Ministry of Interior, Decentralization and E-Government, declared the government's intent to join.

To participate in OGP, governments must exhibit a demonstrated commitment to open government by meeting a set of minimum performance criteria on key dimensions of open government that are particularly consequential for increasing government responsiveness, strengthening citizen engagement, and fighting corruption. Indicators produced by organisations other than OGP to determine the extent of country progress on each of the dimensions, with points awarded as described below. At the time of joining, Greece had a score of 3 out of a possible 4 in Asset Disclosure for Senior Officials,[1] a score of 9.41 out of a possible 10 on the Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index Civil Liberties subscore,[2] and an access to information law.[3] Because Greece is not part of the Open Budget Index review conducted by the International Budget Partnership, it did not receive a score in budget transparency.

All OGP participating governments must develop OGP country action plans that elaborate concrete commitments over an initial two-year period. Governments should begin their action plans by sharing existing efforts related to a set of five "grand challenges," including specific open government strategies and ongoing programmes. (See Section 4 for a list of grand challenge areas.) Action plans should then set out each government's OGP commitments, which stretch government practice beyond its current baseline with respect to the relevant grand challenge. These commitments may build on existing efforts, identify new steps to complete ongoing reforms, or initiate action in an entirely new area.

Along with the other cohort 2 OGP countries, Greece developed its national action plan from January through April 2012. The effective start date for the action plan submitted in April was officially 1 July 2012 for implementation through 30 June 2013. It published its self-assessment during October 2013. According to the OGP schedule, officials and civil society members are to revise the first plan or develop a new plan by April 2014.

Pursuant to OGP requirements, the Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) of OGP partnered with an experienced, independent local researcher to carry out an evaluation of the development and implementation of the country's first action plan. In Greece, the IRM partnered with Athanasios Priftis, an independent researcher with expertise in governance, who authored this progress report. It is the aim of the IRM to inform ongoing dialogue around development and implementation of future commitments in each OGP participating country.

Institutional Context

The deputy minister for the Ministry of Administration Reform and E-Government co-ordinates Greece's participation in OGP. Since 2011 the deputy minister has chaired the Information and Communications Committee, a committee whose members are general

secretaries of key ministries. These general secretaries co-ordinate the Groups for Management, Design, and Supervision of Projects (GMDSP), consisting of experts mainly from public administration. These experts initiate the government planning, monitoring, and co-ordinating of information technology, open government, and communications. GMDSP was introduced to deploy e-government actions through consulting, networking, and solutions proposal, but it did not have the mandate or resources necessary to carry out implementation.

Almost three years after their creation, the general secretaries and the GMDSP no longer exist. This change makes more sense when taking into consideration Greece's acute, ongoing institutional and financial crisis, discussed more below. Yet, the deputy minister for the Ministry of Administrative Reform and E-Government still leads the OGP initiative.[4] This ministry is currently trying to restructure these mechanisms with a more focused approach: meeting with key ministries involved with the OGP action plan to create a communication channel and co-operative environment. These meetings will address OGP agenda items, such as electronic signature deployment, public administration's procedures simplification, and open-data policies.

Discussions surrounding OGP, as well as past and future open-government goals, are framed around three major initiatives created in 2010:

- The Transparency Program (Cl@rity), which covers all public administration's decision[5]
- The open government portal, which has online law consultation and recruitment management for public administration[6]
- The legal framework for electronic government[7] and public-sector information access[8]

When referring to "open government" in Greece, it is crucial to consider the impact of (1) a prolonged recession and (2) over three years of austerity measures. These two influencing events resulted from the interplay of several factors: three different government schemes (one party government, technocrats government, coalition government), policy decisions from the representatives of the European Commission Task Force and the International Monetary Fund, heavy salary cuts, and layoff and mobility discussions in public administration.

Furthermore, it is important to note "the weakness of Greek civil society to organise and intervene in governance procedures" due to the "dominance of clientelism and patronage and the vertical, rather than horizontal, incorporation of the social spectrum to politics."[9] For the most part, these quotes refer to state-funded NGOs that were not always founded on open participation, innovation, and autonomy. This aspect of Greek civil society, often a product of personal strategies and clientelism, served as a vehicle to legitimise mainstream policies and resource allocation.

However, informal citizen networks can be powerful and should not be underestimated. The impact, and proliferation of, informal citizen networks can influence public administration and business spheres.[10] For example, when the minister in charge of the OGP initiative attempted to change the law around the transparency portal without real consultation, the public and NGOs used social media to effectuate a change by writing letters of complaint, an action that pushed back powerfully. After several weeks, this pressure created an urgency to protect pre-established terms for public administration transparency.

Methodological Note

The IRM partners work with independent national researchers and organisations, which are experienced in assessing open government, to author and disseminate reports for

each OGP participating government. Athanasios Priftis, an independent researcher, authored this report. He worked closely with the open governance and open data working groups of the Greek Free Open-Source Software Society (GFOSS);[11] radio bubble, a community web radio;[12] and the team of the Deputy Minister for Administrative Reform and E-Government responsible for the open government action plan in Greece. The researcher also reviewed several key documents prepared by the government and stakeholders: the Greek OGP action plan, the stakeholders' formal proposals during Greece's consultation phase for its self-assessment report, the self-assessment report published by the government in September 2013,[13] and various reviews from citizen networks on open government issues and, more specifically, on the Transparency Program and its related legal framework.

The report went through many review rounds. OGP staff and a panel of experts looked over the report. Government had the opportunity to comment, provide additional information, and identify factual errors. To gather the voices of multiple stakeholders, the IRM researcher co-organised two stakeholder forums, one in Athens and one in Thessaloniki—the two major cities of Greece, and conducted a series of public web-broadcasted events. The IRM researcher enriched the research methodology with input from additional stakeholders through weekly, public web-broadcasted events.

See the summaries of stakeholder meetings and public broadcasts, as well as a list of interviews with public entities, in the report's annex. Additional documents related to this report can be found at http://bit.ly/17g9PR3.

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11. Greek Free / Open Source Software Society (GFOSS), http://www.ellak.gr/greek-free-open-source-software-societygfoss/

12. Rachel Donadio, "Greeks Question Media, and New Voices Pipe Up," *The New York Times,* 29 October 2013, http://nyti.ms/1bC6TeS.; Rachel Donadio, "Greeks Question Media, and New Outlets Pipe Up," *The New York Times,* 30 October 2013, New York edition. (This is a version of this article that presents radiobubble.gr and other Greek alternative media.)

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II. PROCESS: DEVELOPMENT OF ACTION PLAN

In Greece, the Open Government Partnership (OGP) action plan consultation was internal to government, with several in-person meetings with key public administration officers. There was no civil society involvement until September 2013 when an online forum was created.

Countries participating in OGP follow a set process for consultation during development of their OGP action plan. According to the OGP Articles of Governance, countries must:

- Make the details of their public consultation process and time line available (online at minimum) prior to the consultation
- Consult widely with the national community, including civil society and the private sector; seek out a diverse range of views; and make a summary of the public consultation and all individual written comment submissions available online
- Undertake OGP awareness raising activities to enhance public participation in the consultation
- Consult the population with sufficient forewarning and through a variety of mechanisms—including online and through in-person meetings—to ensure the accessibility of opportunities for citizens to engage

A fifth requirement, during consultation, is set out in the OGP Articles of Governance. This requirement is dealt with in the section "III: Consultation during implementation":

- Countries are to identify a forum to enable regular multi-stakeholder consultation on OGP implementation—this can be an existing entity or a new one.

This is dealt with in the next section, but evidence for consultation both before and during implementation is included here and in Table 1 for ease of reference.

Table 1: Action Plan Consultation Process

Phase of Action Plan	OGP Process Requirement (Articles of Governance Section)	Did the government meet this requirement
During development	Time line and process: Prior availability	No
	Advance notice	No
	Awareness-raising activities	No
	Online consultations	No
	In-person consultations	Yes
	Summary of comments	No
During implementation	Regular forum	No

Advance Notice of Consultation

The government prepared and discussed the OGP action plan during the first trimester of 2012. Contextually, the action plan comes mostly as a side project of an already set agenda: the electronic government services and systems delivery.[1] It is a side product of the National Strategy for E-Government in the "Europe 2020" strategy, a process that had extended press coverage and involved a wide consultation procedure, such as online consultations and meetings with public entities and various stakeholders.

The OGP action plan proposed in April 2012 did not allow for open public consultation. According to public administration officers, the deputy minister's priority at the time of the drafting was to consult with stakeholders on more effective electronic systems and service delivery. However, thematic discussions that took place at the National Centre for Public Administration around these issues, and that were mostly focused on the e-government strategy, addressed an open government agenda and did not include public stakeholders.

Another related activity at that time was a call for ideas on improving government through new and more open electronic services. These proposals for public administration and civil society were introduced under the auspices of the Greek Web Laboratory for E-Governance, (http://labs.opengov.gr).[2] Overall, this process did not develop more ambitious open government priorities and actions than those that already existing from the National Strategy for E-Government.

Major transparency and online participation initiatives, including the transparency portal and the online law consultation mechanism, which pre-dates the OGP action plan, were included in the list of commitments. These initiatives have, at times, been an issue of public debate, creating a legacy of public administration activities on transparency and consultation.

Quality and Breadth of Consultation

Greece, while developing its second OGP action plan, has improved on including its civil society. During the first action plan, key public administration officers discussed the April 2012 OGP action plan in face-to-face meetings during three weeks in March and April 2012. They failed to consult civil society while developing this plan. However, while this plan development period did not include civil society, the September 2013 OGP plan development period did. An open online discussion started on September 2013. Although it came too late to address the initial formation of the action plan, it is incremental progress towards including civil society.

The existing OGP action plan in Greece is an ongoing platform of exchange among various stakeholders. The discussion that took place during September 2013 included 258 comments, which ranged the entire scope of the OGP action plan's themes and commitments (see Section IV: Review of Commitments and Section VI: Stakeholder Priorities and Moving Forward).

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1. Ministry for Administrative Reform and E-Government, *Greek Self-Assessment Report, 2013,* (Athens, 2013), http://www.opengov.gr/ogp/wp-content/plugins/download-monitor/download.php?id=17 (English), ογρέκθεσηαξιολόγησησπροόδουσχεδίουδράσησ, 2013, Αθήνα, Υπουργείοδιοικητικήσμεταρρύθμισησ Και Ηλεκτρονικήσδιακυβέρνησησ

Http://Www.Opengov.Gr/Ogp/Wp-Content/Plugins/Download-Monitor/Download.Php?Id=16 (Ελληνικά)

2. *Labs.OpenGov* Prime Minister's eGovernment Team 2009–2012, (Athens: 2009) http://labs.opengov.gr. This website is the first experimental attempt to engage corporate and non-corporate users into generating sophisticated and immediately applicable ideas. It acted as a forum to exchange ideas, bringing together experts from the technological community and institutions that manage information technology projects for the public sector and citizens.

III. PROCESS: CONSULTATION DURING IMPLEMENTATION

Due to Greece's ongoing state of emergency throughout the implementation period, no consultation on OGP took place during that time.

As part of their participation in Open Government Partnership (OGP), governments commit to identify a forum to enable regular multi-stakeholder consultation on OGP implementation—this can be an existing entity or a new one. This section summarizes that information.

Consultation Process

Open government issues were of low or limited priority on the political agenda. According to public administration and civil society stakeholders, this was due, mostly, to the government's focus on negotiations and to the adoption of austerity measures proposed by the EU, IMF, and Greek government, events that brought about successive changes in government. During this time, Greece, in a type of emergency state—a state that governments often use to bypass parliamentary procedures or limit public discussion on government changes, introduced and implemented austerity measures in order to receive international funding. In this state, Greece bypassed parliamentary procedures and limited public discussion while voting on laws that implemented austerity measures. With its focus intently on austerity measures, Greece had difficulty evaluating existing open government initiatives, such as government recruitment mechanisms.

Finally, e-government priorities are linked to European Union co-funding structures and goals. The government's agenda has the implementation of these systems and programs as highly important since they are connected with the IT sector development, job sustainability, and more effective government. In this sense, Greece sees open government more as a set of specific actions through effective electronic systems' delivery and less as governance.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMITMENTS

All OGP participating governments develop OGP country action plans that elaborate concrete commitments over an initial two-year period. Governments begin their OGP country action plans by sharing existing efforts related to their chosen grand challenge(s), including specific open government strategies and ongoing programmes. Action plans then set out governments' OGP commitments, which stretch government practice beyond its current baseline with respect to the relevant policy area. These commitments may build on existing efforts, identify new steps to complete ongoing reforms, or initiate action in an entirely new area.

OGP commitments are to be structured around a set of five "grand challenges" that governments face. OGP recognises that all countries are starting from different baselines. Countries are charged with selecting the grand challenges and related concrete commitments that most relate to their unique country contexts. No action plan, standard, or specific commitments are to be forced on any country.

The five OGP grand challenges are:

1. **Improving Public Services**—measures that address the full spectrum of citizen services including health, education, criminal justice, water, electricity, telecommunications, and any other relevant service areas by fostering public service improvement or private sector innovation.
2. **Increasing Public Integrity**—measures that address corruption and public ethics, access to information, campaign finance reform, and media and civil society freedom.
3. **More Effectively Managing Public Resources**—measures that address budgets, procurement, natural resources, and foreign assistance.
4. **Creating Safer Communities**—measures that address public safety, the security sector, disaster and crisis response, and environmental threats.
5. **Increasing Corporate Accountability**—measures that address corporate responsibility on issues such as the environment, anti-corruption, consumer protection, and community engagement.

While the nature of concrete commitments under any grand challenge area should be flexible and allow for each country's unique circumstances, OGP commitments should be relevant to OGP values laid out in the OGP Articles of Governance and Open Government Declaration signed by all OGP participating countries. The IRM uses the following guidance to evaluate relevance to core open government values:

*   **Access to information - T**hese commitments:
    o   pertain to government-held information;
    o   are not restricted to data but pertains to all information;
    o   may cover proactive or reactive releases of information;
    o   may pertain to strengthen the right to information; and
    o   must provide open access to information (it should not be privileged or internal only to government).
*   **Citizen Participation** — governments seek to mobilise citizens to engage in public debate, provide input, and make contributions that lead to more responsive, innovative and effective governance. Commitments around access to information:

- o open up decision making to all interested members of the public; such forums are usually "top-down" in that they are created by government (or actors empowered by government) to inform decision making;
- o often include elements of access to information to ensure meaningful input of interested members of the public into decisions;
- o often include the enhancing citizens' right to be heard, but do not necessarily include the right to be heeded.
- **Accountability —** there are rules, regulations, and mechanisms in place that call upon government actors to justify their actions, act upon criticisms or requirements made of them, and accept responsibility for failure to perform with respect to laws or commitments.
  - o As part of open government, such commitments have an "open" element, meaning that they are not purely internal systems of accountability without a public face.
- **Technology and Innovation** — Commitments for technology and innovation
  - o promote new technologies offer opportunities for information sharing, public participation, and collaboration.
  - o Should make more information public in ways that enable people to both understand what their governments do and to influence decisions;
  - o May commit to supporting the ability of governments and citizens to use tech for openness and accountability; and
  - o May support the use of technology by government employees and citizens alike.

Countries may focus their commitments at the national, local, and/or subnational level—wherever they believe their open government efforts are to have the greatest impact.

Recognising that achieving open government commitments often involves a multi-year process, governments should attach timeframes and benchmarks to their commitments that indicate what is to be accomplished each year, wherever possible.

This section details each of the commitments Greece included in its initial action plan.

A number of the commitments have a single milestone, while others have multiple milestones. In these latter cases, the milestones have been evaluated together on a single fact sheet in order to avoid repetition and make reading easier for OGP stakeholders.

While most indicators given on each commitment fact sheet are self-explanatory, a number of indicators for each commitment deserve further explanation.
- ● Relevance: The IRM researcher evaluated each commitment for its relevance to OGP Values and OGP Grand Challenges.
  - ○ OGP values: Some OGP commitments are unclear in their relationship to OGP values. In order to identify such cases, the IRM researcher made a judgment based on a close reading of the commitment text. This identifies commitments that can better articulate their relationship to fundamental issues of openness.
  - ○ Grand challenges: While some commitments may be relevant to more than one grand challenge, the reviewer only marked those that had been

identified by government (as almost all commitments address a grand challenge).

- Ambition:
    - *Potential impact:* OGP countries are expected to make ambitious commitments (with new or pre-existing activities) that stretch government practice beyond an existing baseline. To contribute to a broad definition of ambition, the IRM researcher judged how potentially transformative commitment might be in the policy area. This is based on researcher's findings and experience as a public policy expert.
    - *New or pre-existing:* The IRM researcher also recorded, in a non-judgmental fashion whether a commitment was based on an action that pre-dated the action plan.
- Timing:
    - *Projected completion:* The OGP Articles of Governance encourage countries to put forth commitments with clear deliverables with suggested annual milestones. In cases where this is information is not available, the IRM researcher makes a best judgment, based on the evidence of how far the commitment could possibly be at the end of the period assessed.

Target: Boost Public Engagement

Goal 1.1 Increase number of legislative acts going through online deliberation

Currently online deliberation is limited. Among the goals set for the year to come is doubling the number (percentage) of legislative acts that will go through this process, as well as increase of the public engagement and the feedback received.

Commitment Description		
A ns w er ab ili ty	**Lead institution**	The National Centre for Public Administration and Local Government (ΕΚΔΔΑ)
	Supporting institutions	Ministry for Administrative Reform and E-Government
	Point of contact specified?	No
Specificity and measurability		High (Commitment language provides clear, measurable, verifiable milestones for achievement of the goal.)
R el ev an ce	**OGP grand challenges**	Increasing public integrity

	OGP Values	**Acces s to Infor matio n**	**Civic Participation**	**Accounta bility**	**Tech & Innovatio n for Trans. & Acc.**	**None**
			✔			

Ambition		
New vs. pre-existing		**Potential impact**
pre-existing		Moderate (The commitment is a major step forward for the relevant policy area.)

Level of completion			
Start date: 07/2012	**End date:** 06 / 2013	**Actual completion**	Limited
		Projected completion	Substantial
Next steps	New commitment building on existing implementation		

19

What happened?

Greece launched its platform for online consultation on legislative acts (www.opengov.gr) in October 2009. While the OGP action plan goal to double the number (percentage) of legislative acts and increase public engagement was not fully reached, it should be considered a success that a good number of laws have been discussed online.[1]

The initial goal was to have all draft legislation made publicly available on an online consultation platform (government officials created a separate space for each ministry at www.opengov.gr) prior to its submission to parliament. Thus, citizens and organisations could post their comments article-by-article. Then, public entities responsible for each consultation would gather and assess the submitted articles. Citizens' comments would be clearly incorporated in the final legislation text.

However, this commitment lacked details. The initial platform launch did not include a code outlining the deliberators' roles and obligations, and it did not include an accountability mechanism, especially a description of how government should document draft laws, explain revisions, and analyse final texts. The legislation that introduced the platform was not detailed enough to allow for accomplishing this goal or for properly describing the incorporation of citizen participation.[2]

Did it matter?

Since late 2010, the government has shifted from a more open government agenda to what is described as "emergency governance." In this emergency state, a large number of laws has been passed in parliament without any previous parliamentary discussion. These laws include the country's obligations under the Second Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece,[3] changes in social security conditions, and laws regarding education.[4]

Stakeholders have often mentioned that the decline in open consultations is indicative of and has contributed to the weakening of democratic procedures. It has also been stated that the online consultation platform degraded because of its poor legislative framework.

Moving forward

The IRM researcher recommends that the Greek government develops a new commitment or set of commitments to better achieve this goal. Government should co-ordinate with civil society to secure a participative, effective online consulation at all levels (legal, operational, technical), including

- introducing a code of deliberation applicable to all public entities involved in drafting or documenting legislation;
- initiating a public audit mechanism, both on the quantity and the quality of the legislation proposed for consultation; and
- connecting every discussed legislation with sources of public information (e.g., the platform Transparency Program [Cl@rity]), documentation (e.g., feasibility studies, white papers), and civil society initiatives.

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1. Described also in the Ministry for Administrative Reform and E-Government, *Greek Self-Assessment Report, 2013,* (Athens, 2013), http://www.opengov.gr/ogp/wp-content/plugins/download-monitor/download.php?id=17 (English), ογρέκθεσηαξιολόγησησπροόδουσχεδίουδράσησ, 2013, Αθήνα, Υπουργείοδιοικητικήσμεταρρύθμισησ Και Ηλεκτρονικήσδιακυβέρνησησ

Http://Www.Opengov.Gr/Ogp/Wp-Content/Plugins/Download-Monitor/Download.Php?Id=16 (Ελληνικά)

2. A discussion on legislative governance, (Athens, 2013) by Efi Stefopoulou, a member of the team of the Ministry for Administrative Reform and E-Government, http://goo.gl/kP9iGh. The legislation for the online consultation is available in Greek at http://goo.gl/nsD46

3. European Economy, *The Second Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece,* Occasional Papers, 94, p. 192 (Brussels, March 2012). http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/op94_en.htm

4. Several examples of such laws can be found in the Hellenic Parliament portal (2013), http://www.hellenicparliament.gr/Nomothetiko-Ergo/Anazitisi-Nomothetikou-Ergou?law_id=b5a0bcad-54e7-406b-925e-0a38514daa25 (Greek)

Goal 1.2 Capitalize on citizen comments and suggestions

Currently there is no predefined process of handling all the comments and suggestions citizens/organizations make. The group organizing, or in overall control of, the reception should develop an audit trail through the process, to explain what criteria were applied when weighing up the evidence from the process, and therefore how the views of those involved in the participatory process has improved the result.

Commitment Description						
A ns w er ab ili ty	Lead institution	National Centre for Public Administration and Local Government				
	Supporting institutions	Ministry for Administrative Reform and E-Government				
	Point of contact specified?	No				
Specificity and measurability		Low (Commitment language describes activity that can be construed as measurable with some interpretation on the part of the reader.)				
Rele vanc e	OGP grand challenges	Increasing public integrity				
	OGP Values	Acces s to Infor matio n	Civic Participation	Accounta bility	Tech & Innovatio n for Trans. & Acc.	None
			✔	✔		

Ambition	
New vs. pre-existing	Potential impact
pre-existing	Moderate (The commitment is a major step forward in the relevant policy area, but it remains limited in scale and scope.)

Level of completion			
Start date:	End date:	Actual completion	Limited
07/2012	06/2013	Projected completion	Limited
Next steps	New commitment building on existing implementation		

What happened?

Few initiatives have introduced mechanisms to organise and use citizens' comments. During 2012 and 2013, the National Center for Public Administration organised open workshops[1] to involve various stakeholders[2] and to discuss issues of transparency, online deliberation,

and electronic government. Public servants in key ministries who are in charge of the online consultation process now have a day-to-day communication channel through e-mail.

This effort is fragmented, and few ministries are involved. The existing efforts do not (a) cater to developing audit trails while consulting online with citizens, (b) create citizen responses or explanation mechanisms, (c) introduce indicators on how online participation has improved, or (d) change the proposed legislation.

However, one example of an excellent methodological approach to online deliberation by Greece occurred in 2010 regarding tax reform. The Ministry of Finance identified specific, well-described areas of deliberation in which they clearly defined for the public the current problem and the available policy options. In response, stakeholders, from professional tax experts to ordinary citizens, posted 15,000 comments during the 15-day deliberation period.[3]

Did it matter?

Since the current online consultation platform has not evolved to a citizen participation space, both in terms of quality and quantity, civil society stakeholders have set this need as a priority.[4] As the example of the Greek Ministry of Finance showed us, a more organised and documented approach on the object of consultation could result in much more focused and qualitative citizen participation.

Civil society stakeholders often mention the need for stronger online consultation mechanisms precisely at a time when there is a growing number of laws being voted in under a so-called express parliamentary process.

Moving forward

The IRM researcher recommends a new commitment that builds on existing implementation. This should include the following improvements to the online consultation procedure and platform:

- Introduce a code of deliberation applicable to all public entities involved in drafting or documenting legislation.
- Initiate a public audit mechanism to evaluate both quantity and quality of the proposed legislation for public consultation.
- Connect discussed legislation with sources of public information (e.g., the platform transparency programme [Cl@rity]), documentation (e.g., feasibility studies, white papers), and civil society initiatives.
- Organise open workshops and hackathons with civil society stakeholders on specific open-government and open-data issues.
- Involve other public entities with a crucial role in online consultation, such as the Hellenic Parliament, to be part of the efforts described above.

Both goals should be reconsidered as a crosscutting commitment on public participation for the forthcoming OGP action plan, aiming at more substantial citizen participation and public authorities' accountability.

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1. Innovative labs (2013), National Centre for Public Administration and Local Government, description and results are available at http://www.ekdd.gr/ekdda/index.php/gr/2012-06-19-09-19–56 (in Greek). Innovative labs address a series of issues including transparency, (e.g., December

2012, results in Greek available at http://www.ekdd.gr/ekdda/images/ektheseis_politikis/ Policy_Paper_Diavgeia_2.pdf)

    2. A list of people in charge of the online consultation procedures for each ministry is available at http://www.opengov.gr/home/ministries-members (in Greek)

    3. Petros Stefaneas, "Internet Based Open Governance: The Case of Greece," An Impact Assessment, Oxford Internet Institute, (Poster session at The Internet, Politics & Policy Conference, Oxford, UK, September, 2010) http://bit.ly/17yXvLY

    4. Transparency International, Contribution to the online OGP action plan self-assessment procedure, Athens, 2013, http://bit.ly/17yXt6P

Target: Enhance Public Resources Management

Goal 2.1 Operate central e-procurement information system

The Greek government has acquired the necessary e-procurement information system, in order to unify and centrally manage the procurement process for all ministries. The software is currently being installed, while at the same time a business process re-engineering project is running. In one year the system will be operational covering part of project scope. In two years the system will be fully operational, covering all ministries.

Commitment Description		
Answerability	**Lead institution**	General Commerce Secretary
	Supporting institutions	Ministry of Development and Competitiveness
	Point of contact specified?	No
Specificity and measurability		Medium (Commitment language describes an activity that is objectively verifiable, but it does not contain specific milestones or deliverables.)
Relevance	**OGP grand challenges**	More effectively managing public resources

	OGP Values	**Access to Information**	**Civic Participation**	**Accountability**	**Tech & Innovation for Trans. & Acc.**	**None**
						✔

Ambition		
New vs. pre-existing	**Potential impact**	
pre-existing	Minor (the commitment is an incremental but positive step in the relevant policy area)	

Level of completion			
Start date:	**End date:**	**Actual completion**	Limited
07/2012	06/2014	**Projected completion**	Limited
Next steps	New commitment building on existing implementation		

What happened?
The IRM researcher found that the government made limited progress on this commitment. The project National Electronic Public Procurement System (NEPPS) is at a pilot stage for

public sector entities. There is also a simple search functionality for retrieving information from the public procurement system. This functionality allows the public to access limited, mostly unstructured, information. Currently, there is a public list of open calls for tenders available. There are no other sources of organised information (e.g., statistics of use, impact), open data sets, or data collection techniques (i.e. rss or api) available for further research.

Did it matter?

As currently phrased, this goal does not clearly state how it relates to OGP values. Although this system could be a valuable source of public information for business, policy, and research, its current structure provides no space for citizen participation. It only involves public administration procedures.

Moving forward

The IRM researcher recommends developing a new commitment that builds on existing implementation. For example, the government could create and connect open data sets of procurement information. Government officials should develop this new commitment under a national strategy for open government, one that fosters more entrepreneurship and evidence-based policy.[1]

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1. Greek Free / Open Source Software Society, Contribution to the online OGP action plan self-assessment procedure, Athens, 2013, http://bit.ly/1788YQg

Goal 2.2 Operate central ERP information system

The objective is the adoption of a common chart of accounts and the implementation of an ERP system across all ministries and governmental agencies. Currently funding has being secured, a standardized budgeting system is being compiled and the procurement process for the whole project has been initiated. During the following year, key issues will be decided regarding the necessary process re-engineering, as well as asset valuation methods, costing model and KPIs. In two years time, the system pilot will be operational.

Commitment Description		
A ns w er ab ili ty	**Lead institution**	Ministry for Administrative Reform and E-Government
	Supporting institutions	Ministry for Administrative Reform and E-Government
	Point of contact specified?	No
Specificity and measurability		Medium (Commitment language describes an activity that is objectively verifiable, but it does not contain specific milestones or deliverables.)
R el ev an ce	**OGP grand challenges**	More effectively managing public resources

	OGP Values	**Acces s to Infor matio n**	**Civic Participation**	**Accounta bility**	**Tech & Innovatio n for Trans. & Acc.**	**None**
						✔

Ambition	
New vs. pre-existing	**Potential impact**
pre-existing	None (The commitment maintains the status quo.)

Level of completion			
Start date:	**End date:**	**Actual completion**	Not started
06/2012	12/2015	**Projected completion**	Limited
Next steps		New commitment building on existing implementation	

What happened?
The implementation of this commitment has not started.

Did it matter?

As currently phrased, this commitment does not clearly state how it relates to OGP values. The ERP system could largely contribute to open government policies, since open financial data and public resources management are crucially important to OGP stakeholders. However, this goal, as currently structured, does not provide for accountability mechanisms, citizen participation space, or citizen participation procedures.

Moving forward

The IRM researcher recommends creating a new commitment based on existing implementation. For example, a new goal could connect existing open data sets currently housed within the Transparency Program. However, the government shapes the new commitment, it should be reconsidered under a national strategy for open government, one that simplifies intra-public administration procedures, leading to more open and effective public services.[1]

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1. Greek Free / Open Source Software Society, Contribution to the online OGP Action Plan self-assessment procedure, Athens, 2013, http://bit.ly/1788YQg

Goal 2.3 Operate central HRMS information system

Currently each public sector organization has its own system for managing corresponding human capital resources. A registry of all organizations and all civil servants has recently been compiled. The goal for the next year is the design and activation of a central, unified, Human Resources Management system (HRMS), both in terms of procedures, methods and IT infrastructure. Human capital management policies will be applied efficiently in a transparent way, promoting authorities accountability and optimal use of expertise.

Commitment Description							
Answerability	Lead institution	Ministry for Administrative Reform and E-Government					
	Supporting institutions	Ministry for Administrative Reform and E-Government					
	Point of contact specified?	No					
Specificity and measurability		Medium (Commitment language describes an activity that is objectively verifiable, but it does not contain specific milestones or deliverables.)					
Relevance	OGP grand challenges	More effectively managing public resources, Increasing public integrity					
	OGP Values	Access to Information	Civic Participation	Accountability	Tech & Innovation for Trans. & Acc.	None	
				✔			

Ambition	
New vs. pre-existing	Potential impact
pre-existing	None (The commitment maintains the status quo.)

Level of completion			
Start date:	End date:	**Actual completion**	Limited
06/2012	12/2015	**Projected completion**	Limited
Next steps	New commitment building on existing implementation		

What happened?

The government partially implemented this commitment. Government workers created a Census system (http://apografi.gov.gr) for civil servants, a system that partially manages the public-sector human resources information management system. This Census system details statistics for the public. These statistics include gender, demographic characteristics,

levels of educational achievement, the monthly evolution of employment in the Greek public sector, and a quantitative overview of public administration personnel.

Did it matter?

This goal as described in the OGP action plan loosely connects with possible open government accountability practices. While human resource management policies and statistics are crucial to public services, as well as to electronic and open government projects, the government has done little to promote the open re-use of existing statistics or to involve public servants, and other stakeholders, in government discussions and analyses.

Moving forward

The IRM researcher recommends building a new commitment based on existing implementation. The government could set a new goal connecting existing open data sets from the census of public administration (apografi.gov.gr). Government officials should consider this new commitment under a national strategy for open government, a strategy that will demonstrate public administration needs, public servants' capacities, and policy objectives.[1]

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1. Greek Free / Open Source Software Society, Contribution to the online OGP Action Plan self-assessment procedure, Athens, 2013, http://bit.ly/1788YQg

Target: Open-Up Data

Goal 3.1 Open data regarding prices, as collected by Prices Observatory

The Prices Observatory is a governmental organization which daily collects prices for all every day products. Although the information is collected, it is still difficult to search and study it. During the next year, the goal set is the exporting of all this information in a machine readable (and easily exploitable and processed) format.

Commitment Description						
A ns w er ab ili ty	**Lead institution**	Price Observatory				
	Supporting institutions	Ministry of Competitiveness and Development				
	Point of contact specified?	No				
Specificity and measurability		High (Commitment language provides clear, measurable, verifiable milestones for achievement of the goal.)				
R el ev an ce	**OGP grand challenges**	Increasing public integrity				
	OGP Values	**Acces s to Infor matio n**	**Civic Participation**	**Accounta bility**	**Tech & Innovatio n for Trans. & Acc.**	**None**
		✔				

Ambition	
New vs. pre-existing	**Potential impact**
pre-existing	Minor (The commitment is an incremental but positive step in the relevant policy area.)

Level of completion			
Start date:	**End date:**	**Actual completion**	Complete
06/2012	07/2013	**Projected completion**	Complete
Next steps	Maintenance and monitoring of completed implementation		

What happened?

The government completed this commitment. During OGP action plan implementation, government officials made available the consumer-products data. Individuals and entities

can access this information for free as a web service or as independent data sets. The information comes from the Price Observatory, which functions as an open web service,[1] housed in the Ministry of Development and Competitiveness, and it is also published on the government data portal (data.gov.gr).

Did it matter?

More than 80 individuals and companies have used this web service. As evidence of the value this commitment provides to the public, businesses and civil society have developed additional applications and services from the available data.[2] This is valuable in terms of open infrastructure for business models and as an information exchange practice with citizens.

Moving forward

The IRM researcher recommends that the government maintains and monitors this completed commitment. This goal sets a valuable example for more ambitious open-data strategies and commitments in the forthcoming OGP action plan, including the following:

- A services provision that helps companies simplify their procedures
- An audit and transparency framework for both public and private sectors
- An open-data policy for citizens and businesses

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1. The web service of the Price Observatory of the Ministry of Development and Competitiveness is available at http://services.e-prices.gr/index.php (Terms of use in Greek)

2. For a full list of third party users and services using the consumer data web service, please visit the http://services.e-prices.gr/

Goal 3.2 Resolve legal issues regarding state geo-data

A variety of geo-information has continuously been gathered and stored in a single point (site) of reference. This effort will continue until all relevant data is stored. However use and redistribution of this information is still difficult, due to lack of the necessary legal framework. It is of imperative importance to clarify the arising legal issues.

Commitment Description						
Answerability	**Lead institution**	Ministry of Environment, Energy, and Climate Change				
	Supporting institutions	National Cadastre and Mapping Agency S.A.				
	Point of contact specified?	No				
Specificity and measurability		Low (Commitment language describes an activity that is objectively verifiable, but it does not contain specific milestones or deliverables.)				
Relevance	**OGP grand challenges**	Increasing public integrity, More effectively managing public resources				
	OGP Values	**Access to Information**	**Civic Participation**	**Accountability**	**Tech & Innovation for Trans. & Acc.**	**None**
		✔				

Ambition	
New vs. pre-existing	**Potential impact**
pre-existing	Minor (The commitment is an incremental but positive step in the relevant policy area.)

Level of completion			
Start date: 06/2012	**End date:** 07/2013	**Actual completion**	Limited
		Projected completion	Limited
Next steps	New commitment building on existing implementation		

What happened?

The IRM researcher found the completion on this commitment to be limited. The Greek government passed two laws (L. 4161/2013 and L. 4178/2013) in 2013 that complement the already existing geo-data legislation.[1] These laws regulate certain issues of geo-data

ownership coming from the National Cadastre infrastructure and the restructure of existing public entities. More specifically, amendment L. 4178/2013 dictates that geospatial data can be made available to public sector bodies free of charge and without license restrictions, apart from reporting origin. The amendement also dictates that data can be made available to any third party for non-commercial use, free of charge and with appropriate open licenses. The same amendment abolishes the exclusive agreements that prohibit free sharing of geospatial data with other public authorities or restrict access to and further use of geospatial data.

In addition, there has been a transfer of functions of the now abolished public organisation G.A.C.M. (Greek Agency for Cadaster and Mapping) to the KTHMATOLOGIO A.E. (National Cadastre and Mapping Agency S.A.), a legal entity of private law whose mission is the study, development, and operation of the Hellenic Cadastre.

Did it matter?

The law amendments described above do little to clear the existing and fragmented legal environment on geo-data and geoservices.[2] There are still several unresolved issues, such as available indexing, simplified access, and re-use procedures related to the implementation of existing legislation, on the subject of geospatial information (L. 4178/2013, N. 4161/2013, L. 3882/2010).

The ministry in charge seems to have unclear immediate and medium-term objectives for the access to geospatial information. This hinders opening up existing geo-data. According to officials, this is due to opposite views on data re-use surrounding access to data, pricing policies, and available formats.

Moving forward

The IRM researcher recommends that the government rephrases this commitment based on existing implementation. Open geo-data is the cornerstone of open government. There is a growing number of government and social applications on problem solving, resource management, policy-making, and new business models based on the open access to such data and infrastructure.[3]

Next steps should include the following:

- Simplification, standardisation, and digitisation of licensing procedures for the direct sharing of data sets between public authorities following open standards and interoperability guidelines,[4] especially regarding geo-data
- Introduction of, or keeping up-to-date, open standards for the existing interoperability framework, particularly on statistical data and metadata exchange[5] through government and public sector entities.
- Indexing, organising, licensing, and scheduling to open up accountable data sets, with an emphasis on geo-data. These data sets should be derived from any public entity running information systems, available for commercial and non-commercial use, through open-web service techniques.
- Co-ordination between various public entities owning geo-data, such as Information Systems General Secretariat (e.g., geo-data at local level comprised of information on buildings holdings and rentals), municipalities (e.g., existing GIS and geo-data for municipal utilites), and national utility companies (e.g., water, electricity).

1. Prodromos Tsiavos, Kalliope Pediaditi, Costas Nedas, and Spyros Athanasiou, *Cultivating open geodata ecologies: Lessons from the Implementation of the Inspire Directive in Geographic Data and the Law: Defining New Challenges*, ed. Katleen Janssen (Joep Crompvoets, Leuven University Press, 2012)

2. Spyros Athanasiou, (member of the Institute for the Management of Information Systems, Department of Database and Business Intelligence), interview by e-mail on the OGP action plan, 2013

3. Dimitriadis Dimitris, Member of brainbox.gr. Thessaloniki, second stakeholder meeting, Presentation business models based on open map APIs, 2013

4. The Greek E-Government Interoperability Framework, Athens, 2009, http://www.e-gif.gov.gr/

5. European Statistics standards for reference and structural metadata and of the tools used for metadata collection and management (2013), https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/sdmx/index.php/Main_Page

Goal 3.3 Offer additional taxation data

Planned actions to the existing open taxation data initiative include the quarterly publication of taxpayers in arrears, the monthly publication of regional tax office key performance indicators, and a web service providing the registration details of professionals and companies.

Commitment Description							
A ns w er ab ili ty	**Lead institution**	Public Revenue General Secretariat					
	Supporting institutions	Information Systems' General Secretariat					
	Point of contact specified?	No					
Specificity and measurability		High (Commitment language provides clear, measurable, verifiable milestones for achievement of the goal.)					
R el ev an ce	**OGP grand challenges**	More effectively managing public resources					
	OGP Values	**Acces s to Infor matio n**	**Civic Participation**	**Accounta bility**	**Tech & Innovatio n for Trans. & Acc.**	**None**	
		✔		✔			

Ambition	
New vs. pre-existing	**Potential impact**
pre-existing	Moderate (The commitment is a major step forward in the relevant policy area, but it remains limited in scale or scope.)

Level of completion			
Start date: 06/2012	**End date:** 07/2013	**Actual completion**	Substantial
		Projected completion	Substantial
Next steps		Further work on basic implementation	

What happened?

The General Secretariat of Public Revenue (GSPR, www.publicrevenue.gr) published a significant portion of the reports on the indicators of regional tax offices and on overdue debts. As pointed out by government officials, this is part of an ongoing effort that covers

audits and revenue from large businesses and individuals with aggregated data from all regional tax offices.

The government implemented a web service to provide taxation data for businesses and professionals; however, it was shut down in April 2013 due to an unauthorised source providing personal data to third parties and other privacy and technical limitations.[1] After several business and civil society complaints, a new version of this service was described (October 2013) and is currently implemented, under the auspices of the Information Systems General Secretariat and the Greek Free Sofware Foundation.

Did it matter?
The area of taxation data involved reports on overdue debts, indicators of regional tax offices, and online data provider service for businesses and professionals. These goals are heavily connected with the country's objectives in the Second Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece.[2]

Although the reporting of regional tax offices key indicators is partly implemented, the existing platform and methodology could allow the creation and distribution of interconnected open data sets, which would enable third parties to offer value added services. The web service for businesses and professionals was reported to have hundreds of connected users and to serve a total of 480 million hits during its 20 months of functioning before it was shut down.[3]

Moving forward
There is a clear need to (1) provide companies with services that help them simplify administrative and other procedures (data provision for all legal entities) from various public agencies (taxation, commerce) and (2) push the agenda for open, real-time data coming from public and private corporations that involve public resources.

Furthermore, the government should introduce a transparency framework for individual auditors, audit firms, and authorised audit companies to publish transparency reports on companies, banking institutions, or other bodies that handle public resources. This also could involve lists of companies that open and standardise this kind of sharing and open control. The government should offer such companies incentives that lower the audit-transaction costs.[4]

Both general secretariats involved in this commitment could lead the way on opening existing data sets, such as the following:

- Geodata at local level comprised of information on buildings registry and rentals
- Transaction procedures and costs with local authorities
- Index of housing prices, detailed analysis on customs transactions
- Results from controls within the General Chemical State Laboratory of Greece, inputs, and
- Outputs on fuel transactions.

The web service providing taxation data to companies, a service that is currently shut down, should be redesigned and reopened according to the plan presented in the Greek OGP action plan self-assessment report. The service's deployment, when done hand-in-hand with civil society actors, could pave the way for future system deployments.

1. A more detailed analysis is available at Ministry for Administrative Reform and E-Government, *Greek Self-Assessment Report*, *2013,* (Athens, 2013), http://www.opengov.gr/ogp/wp-content/plugins/download-monitor/download.php?id=17 (English), ογρέκθεσηαξιολόγησησπροόδουσχεδίουδράσησ, 2013, Αθήνα, Υπουργείοδιοικητικήσμεταρρύθμισησ Και Ηλεκτρονικήσδιακυβέρνησησ Http://Www.Opengov.Gr/Ogp/Wp-Content/Plugins/Download-Monitor/Download.Php?Id=16 (Ελληνικά)

2. European Economy, *The Second Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece,* Occasional Papers, 94, p. 192 (Brussels, March 2012) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/op94_en.htm

3. The Web Service providing taxation data for companies and professionals, «Βασικά Στοιχεία για Μη Φυσικά Πρόσωπα και Φυσικά Πρόσωπα Επιτηδευματίες» Information System General Secretariat, (Athens, 2013), http://bit.ly/1bt6t97

4. Thomas Liolios, Head of Venus Growers, An Agricultural Cooperative Thessaloniki, (presentation on business change through open procedures, Second stakeholder meeting, 2013), http://www.venusgrowers.gr

Target: Enhance Transparency

Goal 4.1 Augment functionality of the Transparency Program

The Transparency Program constitutes a huge database of administrative acts—as such it requires the necessary functionality to capture, store and disseminate information efficiently. The program will evolve from a technological point of view in order to offer advanced services to citizens with the focus being on enhanced search functionality and information customization. The goal also includes setting the electronic connections (interoperability) to and from other public administration IT systems.

Commitment Description						
Answerability	**Lead institution**	Information Technology Development Service				
	Supporting institutions	Ministry for Administrative Reform and E-Government				
	Point of contact specified?	No				
Specificity and measurability		Medium (Commitment language describes an activity that is objectively verifiable, but it does not contain specific milestones or deliverables.)				
Relevance	**OGP grand challenges**	Increasing public integrity, More effectively managing public resources				
	OGP Values	**Access to Information**	**Civic Participation**	**Accountability**	**Tech & Innovation for Trans. & Acc.**	**None**
		✔		✔		

Ambition	
New vs. pre-existing	**Potential impact**
new	Minor (The commitment is an incremental but positive step in the relevant policy area.)

Level of completion			
Start date: 06/2012	**End date:** 07/2012	**Actual completion**	Limited
		Projected completion	Substantial
Next steps	New commitment building on existing implementation		

What happened?

Since October 2010, the Transparency Program (Cl@rity) hosts all government institution decisions on the Internet. It remains a major transparency initiative based on the fact that decisions of all public entities can't be implemented unless they are uploaded on the transparency portal. Each uploaded document is automatically assigned a transaction unique number (TUN).

There have been some basic improvements in the Transparency Program's search functionality and information customisation, including a set of available tools, such as widgets, smart urls, and syndicated technologies (rss).[1] Electronic connections (interoperability) to and from other public administration IT systems has partly been achieved, primarily through third party applications.[2]

Government officials have stated that various public administration entities have occassionally circumvented procedures for publishing decisions on time and with full description.

Did it matter?

The yearly statistics on transparency portal usage[3] show regular monthly activity and a vibrant community of users. The transparency portal is recognised by all civil society stakeholders as the cornerstone of transparency in Greece.

In October 2013 the Ministry for Administrative Reform and E-Government published four online consultation legislative amendments about the Transparency Program. The unclear scope and formulation sparked a public debate among active civil society participants. The new law passed in parliament in late October 2013 and enlarged the scope of the Transparency Program and introduced new functionalities, such as recognition of electronic documents, throughout all public administration procedures, based on their unique identifiers.

Moving forward

Next steps in this area should involve ambitious new initiatives, including the connection of data from the transparency portal with other local, national, and international data. This connection will help stakeholders control, research, and compare data, deriving trends on health, labour, education, and local administration.[4]

Civil society stakeholders commonly demand information about the complete life cycle of public expenditures, which would strengthen the related regulations for public administration and allow for more citizen participation on the transparency platform.

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1. Transparency Program (2013), a full list of available tools is available at http://diavgeia.gov.gr/tools

2. Third party applications, also, include:
- A meta search engine based on OCR technologies available at http://yperdiavgeia.gr/
- A pdf downloader available at http://deixto.blogspot.gr/2011/06/pdf.html
- A thematic visualisation of all public administration spending available at http://greekspending.com

3. Reporting on Transparency Platform is available at http://et.diavgeia.gov.gr/f/all/

4. M. Vafopoulos et al., Interconnecting and Visualizing Greek Public Expenditure following Linked Open Data Directives, Multimedia Technology Laboratory, School of Electrical, and Computer

Engineering, National Technical University of Athens, 2012, Publicspending.gr, http://www.w3.org/2012/06/pmod/pmod2012_submission_32.pdf

Goal 4.2 Publicise public sector procurement information

Information pertaining to the procurement cycle of all public sector entities and organization will be posted to a pre-specified site (agora.gov.gr). The information recording will start from the initial expression of necessity and will continue up to the moment of procurement completion and payment.

Commitment Description						
A ns w er ab ili ty	**Lead institution**	General Commerce Secretariat				
	Supporting institutions	Ministry of Competitiveness and Developement				
	Point of contact specified?	No				
Specificity and measurability		Medium (Commitment language describes an activity that is objectively verifiable, but it does not contain specific milestones or deliverables.)				
R el ev an ce	**OGP grand challenges**	More effectively managing public resources				
	OGP Values	**Acces s to Infor matio n**	**Civic Participation**	**Accounta bility**	**Tech & Innovatio n for Trans. & Acc.**	**None**
		✔				

Ambition	
New vs. pre-existing	**Potential impact**
pre-existing	None (The commitment maintains the status quo.)

Level of completion			
Start date: 07/2012	**End date:** 04/2014	**Actual completion**	Limited
		Projected completion	Limited
Next steps	None: Abandon commitment		

What happened?
The project for a national electronic procurement platform (www.eprocurement.gov.gr) is at a pilot stage for public sector entities, as described under goal 2.1. There is a search

functionality for public use, but no other information (i.e., statistic) or techniques (i.e., rss or api) are available.

Did it matter?
This is an overlapping goal with a previous commitment under the title "operation of a central eprocurement system" (goal 2.1).

Moving forward
This is an overlapping goal with a previous commitment under the title "operation of a central eprocurement system" (goal 2.1).

Goal 4.3 Enable open, transparent and safeguarded document circulation

Existing electronic protocols will collaborate and interoperate with the National Printing House, the Transparency Program, "better-regulation" information systems and the central electronic Ministerial Decree composition system.

Commitment Description						
A ns w er ab ili ty	**Lead institution**	Ministry for Administrative Reform and E-Government				
	Supporting institutions	Ministry for Administrative Reform and E-Government				
	Point of contact specified?	No				
Specificity and measurability		Low (Commitment language describes activity that can be construed as measurable with some interpretation on the part of the reader.)				
R el ev an ce	**OGP grand challenges**	Improving public services				
	OGP Values	**Acces s to Infor matio n**	**Civic Participation**	**Accounta bility**	**Tech & Innovatio n for Trans. &Acc**	**None**
						✔

Ambition	
New vs. pre-existing	**Potential impact**
pre-existing	None (The commitment maintains the status quo.)

Level of completion			
Start date: 07/2012	**End date:** 01/2014	**Actual completion**	Not started
		Projected completion	Substantial
Next steps	New commitment building on existing implementation		

What happened?

This commitment has not been implemented. However, one important step to open and transparent document circulation is applying an identification number to each document, valid both offline and online. While Greece has implemented the identification number

system, it can be more widely applied once the government implements a more complete interoperability among institutions.

This is what the new function of the Transparency Program could accomplished: It would simplify the circulation of documents. The physical handling of documents between citizens and public administration would be partially replaced by electronic documents publicly available on the Transparency Program website. This provision could enable the use of a unique identifying number from individuals and bodies, instead of presenting the authenticated copy of a decision, simplfying the circulation of documents in various citizens cases.[1]

Did it matter?
As worded, it is unclear how this commitment connects to OGP values. While the commitment's title acknowledges the importance of open and transparent document circulation, the actual commitment description limits its implementation to electronic protocol interconnection.

According to government officials, there are concrete examples of internal government simplification of document circulation due to the implementation of the unique, authenticated copy. In these cases, the transparency portal acts as a "document reference repository" to which public entities can refer for several different public administration decisions and transactions.

Moving forward
Although tools, mentioned in the Greek OGP Self-Assessment Report, such as electronic fee mechanisms and e-invoice capabilities for businesses and public bodies, could contribute to more effective access to information and accountability of public administration, there is no clear implementation strategy.

Thus, the government could reformulate this commitment to bring more accountability to public administration procedures. Some examples include the following:

- A workflow system for citizens to follow their open cases
- A better law and policy documentation based on existing public administration resources

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1. Ministry for Administrative Reform and E-Government, *Greek Self-Assessment Report, 2013,* (Athens, 2013), http://www.opengov.gr/ogp/wp-content/plugins/download-monitor/download.php?id=17 (English), ογρέκθεσηαξιολόγησησπροόδουσχεδίουδράσησ, 2013, Αθήνα, Υπουργείοδιοικητικήσμεταρρύθμισησ Και Ηλεκτρονικήσδιακυβέρνησησ Http://Www.Opengov.Gr/Ogp/Wp-Content/Plugins/Download-Monitor/Download.Php?Id=16 (Ελληνικά).

V. SELF-ASSESSMENT

The Greek government published its self-assessment report according to deadline on 1 October 2013. Greece's publication of the self-assessment report was an important first step towards reaffirming its commitment to OGP.

Stakeholders can find the self-assessment report on the consultation government portal[1] in a section dedicated to the country's issues and participation in the Open Government Partnership (OGP).[2] This, along with the appointment of a new national OGP representative, was an important first step towards again participating in OGP, since the discussion on OGP issues in Greece has been idle for the last couple of years.

The report, published both in Greek and English, gives an overview of Greece's open government efforts in the last two years. More specifically, it depicts the responsible ministry's efforts to organise a more coherent and ongoing consultation procedure with stakeholders. It also describes developments on all current commitments. It does not, however, directly confront challenges facing the current and new action plans.

These challenges are twofold: (1) the report does not deal with certain existing commitments that do not fit with OGP goals, and (2) the report maps the problems and shortcomings on various commitments' designs and implementation, but it refrains from addressing issues such as ensuring effective access to public information, strengthening existing transparency mechanisms, or framing a concrete implementation policy on open data. Thus, it is fair to say that challenges remain ahead.

Table 2: Self-Assessment Checklist

Was annual progress report published?	Yes
Was it done according to schedule?	Yes
Is the report available in the local language?	Yes
According to stakeholders, was this adequate?	Yes
Is the report available in English?	Yes
Did the government provide a two-week public comment period on draft self-assessment reports?	Yes
Were any public comments received?	Yes
Is the report deposited in the OGP portal?	Yes
Did the self-assessment report include review of the consultation	Yes

efforts?	
Did the report cover all of the commitments?	Yes
Did it assess completion according to schedule?	Yes
Did the report reaffirm responsibility for openness?	Yes
Does the report describe the relationship of the action plan with grand challenge areas?	Yes

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1. Ministry for Administrative Reform and E-Government, *Greek Self-Assessment Report, 2013,* (Athens, 2013), http://bit.ly/17g9PR3

2. http://bit.ly/IS09AO

VI: MOVING FORWARD

This section puts the Open Government Partnership (OGP) action plan into a broader context and highlights potential next steps, as reflected in the preceding sections, as well as stakeholder-identified priorities.

Country Context

The OGP action plan discussion and implementation is taking place amidst a sense of political and financial emergency. Since 2010, this state of emergency has affected various government decisions, especially the decisions regarding adoption of austerity measures. This has led to occasional bypassing of parliamentary procedures, which hinders government accountability and undermines the integrity of democratic procedures, and is framed as "express procedures." These practices repositioned the public focus and discussion from strengthening and deepening open-democratic procedures to urgent, non-ending negotiations. As a result, there is a clear need to install ambitious, inclusive processes of open communication and co-operation with stakeholders while drafting the new OGP action plan. Open government should be seen as a governance challenge and an opportunity to introduce open, long-term decision-making mechanisms.

In August 2013, the Greek government decided to renew its commitment to OGP values and procedures by appointing the deputy minister for Administrative Reform and E-Government as the minister responsible for OGP. Following this appointment, the government launched a more participative procedure of deliberation and drafting of the next OGP action plan. After a two-year standstill on open government initiatives, civil society considered the appointment a positive step, but there is still a need for the publication and implementation of a concrete action plan roadmap.

Open government initiatives were present at all political levels in 2009 and 2010, but soon thereafter, they were reduced to the implementation of electronic government projects, until 2013. The government still prioritizes implementing large e-government infrastructures by disseminating funding to public and private sector entities. The European Structural Funds provides the majority of this funding, under specific terms, procedures, and goals, with the various European Union structures. Most of these large e-government infrastructure projects need a three to four year period of implementation, and they do not always develop under an overall open government culture.

The initiatives taken in 2009 and 2010, albeit weak, set a standard for deliberation and service delivery in Greece. A national survey[1] on the use of electronic services showed that the Transparency Program is one of the most recognised and used public services in Greece by both businesses and individuals.

Informal groups of professionals and volunteers from civil society, public administration, and academia deployed the existing open government initiatives.[2] These initiatives followed precarious, solution-driven implementation methodologies. Major open government actions in Greece, including the transparency and Opengov platforms, have followed similar less-formal methodologies and have contributed to a culture of alternative application deployment in public administration.[3] Launching these initiatives through the government's formal procedures for large-scale information technologies procurement or implementation would be difficult since funding for these systems comes from national and European funding frameworks, which are long-term and complicated.

While one of Greece's constitutional articles outlines its citizens' right to access information and knowledge, interpretations, allowed by the current regulatory framework, of this frequently legislated article, can undermine its quality, possibilities, and scope. One example of this undermining is the lack of an online law deliberation code, which could mandate a yearly publication of the law or ensure the quality of its documentation and discussion. This undermining has led, though not solely, to very limited interaction with citizens, poor level of response to citizens' comments and proposals, and an overall inability to engage in an organised dialogue. The government needs to address this situation with concrete actions that allow for civil society participation in public administration procedures, informed decisions based on open data, and more active whistle-blower protection policies.[4]

The analysis above should be understood in context. The environment was one of severe and ongoing "double crisis": On one hand, political institutions were already in crisis long before the global financial crisis, seeming unable to adapt to the new challenges. On the other hand, the financial crisis and the ensuing austerity measures have resulted in a dramatic dry up of funding for public institutions at all levels. This double crisis has, in turn, reinforced the informal networks' providing of social services.

The researcher came across vibrant, growing informal civil-society networks, based on self-organisation, mobilisation, and entrepreneurship. They operate on principles of participation, transparency, and solidarity. However, their organisation methods and scope of action only occasionally interact with current open government initiatives. For example, the social movements of 2011 and 2012 included efforts aimed at main themes of more direct democracy and transparency: In education and health, we find informal networks that propose different paradigms for services (patients and doctors' voluntary groups, teachers' initiatives with parents). Also, small and medium companies advocate the need for more open data from government and propose information about their own governance. Such informal networks, directly or indirectly interacting with open government areas, include actors from all society levels.

Stakeholder Priorities
Some major areas of civil society priorities shape common ground for future OGP action plan commitments:

- Simplify and enlarge the scope of access to information legislation while introducing a code to ensure effective deliberation on laws in a public, online consultation space. Finalise legislation[5] that could govern whistle-blower protections in public administration and labour in general.
- Strengthen the transparency programme (legislation and portal) with more functionalities for citizen participation, reporting, metadata analysis, and public administration accountability. Cl@rity could also serve as an initial workflow system for citizen cases with public administration, ensuring access to the law by using the Transparency Program as an open access repository in the domain of justice.
- Open up data sets to allow for more citizen empowerment, better decision-making, and entrepreneurship. These data sets should come from both public and private sectors and could lead, for example, to open budget initiatives. Geo-data should also be opened up. A concrete set of actions that would allow this include electronic applications for the licensing of data sets, procedures for designating "data accountables" in public entities and the consequent opening of public data, and indexing existing data sets that could be open for commercial re-use.

- Use open communication standards in the health care sector with patients and provide open data on health care expenditures, monitoring, and policy-making.
- Propose a robust open-government framework for recruiting political appointees and public administrators.
- Secure social entrepreneurship initiatives through open resource allocation and simplified legal processes.
- Design concrete policies that empower a more inclusive gender approach. This includes implementing more in-depth participation mechanisms that acknowledge gender contribution to opening up government.
- Establish a concrete roadmap to propose and implement future OGP action plan commitments. This roadmap should include concrete milestones and deliverables and have reporting and self-evaluation mechanisms.

Recommendations

The major challenge that faces the OGP process in Greece is allowing for citizen participation in government decision-making processes. Enhancing a long-term dialogue with stakeholders should include mechanisms of evaluation, more organised and accountable procedures for participation, and opportunities to produce new deliverables for public policies and services.

Open government in Greece can't be understood merely as sharing information in a politically neutral regime; it serves only as a starting point that needs to be defined by active policies and actions. Accessibility and usability of information, software, and standards of government is an important pillar of open government, but it is not the substance of openness of official institutions and processes. This level of government openness demands a dual role from government and public administration: it must (1) continuously change in a way that reinforces its own participation and accountability, and (2) do this while negotiating with private sector entities in order for them to open their data and procedures.

In this sense, open government initiatives must connect with social, political, and economic challenges of our times: regulating labour relations is an issue that government could address through open negotiation and practice codes, involving all interested parties and strengthening labour transparency. Also, government should evaluate and deploy proposals for open selection procedures for public administration posts and participative law and policy drafting.

Both government and civil society actors need to acknowledge that citizens' connectivity is at an unprecedented level, potentially bringing many more protagonists closer to policy-making. To allow citizens to search, discuss, and contribute more to policy proposals, government could immediately create a measure to open up data sets on health, social security, labour, and local municipalities. For example, open budget initiatives at the local level could help local authorities understand better civic priorities and allocate resources more effectively. Moreover, an ambitious set of future commitments will have to engage with a more open justice system, a sector that is heavily criticised as being vertical and closed and producing almost no public input opportunities either in terms of statistics production or structure.

It is crucial for Greece to encourage informal voices, engage with citizen networks in and out of the public administration, and challenge dominant notions of gender, race, and

culture to increase open government. In various future areas for increasing open government mentioned in this report, one can look for opinions that are now not taken into account. These include the opinions of stakeholders at all levels: judges, lawyers, doctors, citizens, patients, and associations, but also groups that are systematically excluded from certain policy areas, such as women and immigrants.

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1. Infostrag research group, National telephone survey on the use of electronic services from individuals and business, National Polytechnics University, Athens, 2012. The link of the results of the survey conducted from Infostrag, a research group of the National Polytechnics University is available in Greek http://bit.ly/19qIdTR with the full data set available as open data.

2. *Labs.OpenGov,* Prime Minister's eGovernment Team 2009–2012, (Athens: 2009) http://labs.opengov.gr. This website is the first experimental attempt to engage corporate and non-corporate users into generating sophisticated and immediately applicable ideas. It acted as a forum to exchange ideas, bringing together experts from the technological community and institutions that manage information technology projects for the public sector and citizens.

3. Prime Minister's eGovernment Team, 2009–2012, Athens. Full documentation of initiatives and proposals available at http://egovict.blogspot.gr/2012/06/blog-post_21.html (Greek)

4. Maria Nini and Anna Damaskou, *Providing an Alternative to Silence: Towards Greater Protection and Support for Whistleblowers in the EU*. Country Report: Greece, (Greece, August 2012)

5. Transparency International, "Whistleblowing In Europe Legal Protections For Whistleblowers In The Eu," Berlin, 2013, http://bit.ly/Hta2EI (English)

ANNEX: METHODOLOGY

As a complement to the government self-assessment, an independent assessment report is written by well-respected governance researchers, preferably from each OGP participating country.

These experts use a common OGP independent report questionnaire and guidelines,[1] based on a combination of interviews with local OGP stakeholders as well as desk-based analysis. This report is shared with a small International Expert Panel (appointed by the OGP Steering Committee) for peer review to ensure that the highest standards of research and due diligence have been applied.

Analysis of progress on OGP action plans is a combination of interviews, desk research, and feedback from nongovernmental stakeholder meetings. The IRM report builds on the findings of the government's own self-assessment report and any other assessments of progress put out by civil society, the private sector, or international organisations.

Each local researcher carries out stakeholder meetings to ensure an accurate portrayal of events. Given budgetary and calendar constraints, the IRM cannot consult all interested or affected parties. Consequently, the IRM strives for methodological transparency, and therefore where possible, makes public the process of stakeholder engagement in research (detailed later in this section.) In those national contexts where anonymity of informants— governmental or nongovernmental—is required, the IRM reserves the ability to protect the anonymity of informants. Additionally, because of the necessary limitations of the method, the IRM strongly encourages commentary on public drafts of each national document.

Introduction

The initial research design included two stakeholder meetings, one in Athens and one in Thessaloniki, two places where different civil society entities are active. The need for an alternative research approach became apparent after the first stakeholder meeting took place under the auspices of the Ministry for the Interior, Decentralization, and E-Governance. This meeting included the most active public entities and NGOs on open government issues. It sparked an interesting discussion on past and future commitments in the action plan, but it was limited in time and depth.

To address the limitations above, the researcher enriched the methodology with public, web-broadcasted events that included various stakeholders. The goal of these ongoing events[2] was to combine offline stakeholder discussions and interviews with an open, public discussion on open governance and future proposals for action. The aim was to foster a discussion platform that will follow open government issues in Greece for the months to come. It will also try to instigate focused actions such as informal meetings and policy proposals.

Stakeholder Selection

The IRM researcher selected stakeholders for each event in different ways. Trying to include a wide range of stakeholders who actively engage in open government, the researcher invited individuals from civil society, academia, research, business, and government: The stakeholder meeting in Athens focused on the presence, recognition, and contribution of more active stakeholders. The meeting in Thessaloniki, however, focused on the involvement of a variety of citizen networks, more informal initiatives, and businesses and co-operatives based on open governance practices. Finally, selecting stakeholders for the public broadcasts was a mix of both approaches, and in the future, the methodological approach will include gender advocates, patient initiatives, refugees and immigration associations, and others, all of which are new thematic areas of open government.

Stakeholder Meeting One

The meeting took place on 25 September 2013 under the auspices of the deputy minister for Administrative Reform and E-Government. It included stakeholders who submitted written contributions evaluating the current action plan and who aided in the formation of new plan. The national OGP site (http://www.opengov.gr/ogp/) placed an open call to the public for contributions to the OGP action plan, and 15 personalised invitations were sent to public and civil society entities for input.[3] Eight of them answered and participated in the meeting. All written proposals were made available online on the ministry's OGP portal and stakeholders' websites. In the meeting, stakeholders did the following:

- Discussed the core OGP values (access to information status, existing and new transparency efforts, open data for a more participative government and entrepreneurship, technologies, and systems promoting more openness and participation)
- Commented on existing OGP commitments and proposed future priorities
- Mapped the possibilities and tools for an open, ongoing dialogue with civil society

Stakeholder Meeting Two

The meeting in Thessaloniki[4] focused on informal initiatives, citizen networks, as well as business and co-operatives. This enriched the discussion and the common understanding of open government. Subsequently, stakeholders did the following:

- Elaborated on open governance definition, principles, and expectations
- Reviewed the characteristics and utility of current open government initiatives in the OGP action plan
- Proposed areas of organised intervention from civil society, public administration, and government

Interviews

The IRM pursued several meetings with officials from public entities, including with the following entities:

- Ministry for Administrative Reform and E-Government (http://www.ydmed.gov.gr)
- Information Technology Development Service (http://www.yap.gov.gr)
- Information Systems General Secretariat (http://www.gsis.gr)
- Public Revenue General Secretariat (http://www.publicrevenue.gr/kpi)
- Ministry of Environment, Energy, and Climate Change (http://www.ypeka.gr)
- EU Task Force for Greece (http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/president/taskforce-greece/)

- National Centre for Public Administration and Local Government (http://www.ekdd.gr)
- General Commerce Secretary (http://www.gge.gr)
- Foundation for Economic and Industrial Research (http://www.iobe.gr)

About the Independent Reporting Mechanism

The IRM is a key means by which government, civil society, and the private sector can track government development and implementation of OGP action plans on a bi-annual basis. The design of research and quality control of such reports is carried out by the International Experts' Panel, comprised of experts in transparency, participation, accountability, and social science research methods.

The current membership of the International Experts' Panel is:

- Yamini Aiyar
- Debbie Budlender
- Jonathan Fox
- Rosemary McGee
- Gerardo Munck

A small staff based in Washington, DC shepherds reports through the IRM process in close co-ordination with the researcher. Questions and comments about this report can be directed to the staff at irm@opengovpartnership.org

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1. Full research guidance can be found at http://bit.ly/120SROu

2. Governing on Openness, (Public webcast), Athens, 2013, http://liveradio.radiobubble.gr/search/label/%23GonO

3. Stakeholder meeting Athens, September 2013, Civil society contributions available at http://www.opengov.gr/ogp/?p=9 (Greek). A short summary and the list of invited stakeholders are also available in English at http://opengov.ellak.gr/2013/10/31/stakeholders-meeting-athens-results/

4. Stakeholder meeting Thessaloniki, October 2013, Summary of the meeting, http://goo.gl/hExtUu (English and Greek)