

## Open government and transparency: building a conceptual framework

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**Abstract:** The idea of open government has spread across Latin American countries causing confusion and ambiguous interpretations. The concepts of “open government” and “transparency” have been used as synonyms and have created false expectations, but mostly they have been used to implement public policies and government strategies to accomplish the goal of creating a more open government. The purpose of this research is to provide some theoretical elements to clear this confusion. In order to achieve such goal, related papers of academic journals over the past six years have been reviewed and classified on three main paths of knowledge. From this point a concept of open government is proposed and discussed. The aim of this paper is to contribute with a theoretical framework that supports research on open government, transparency and accountability.

**Key words:** open government, transparency, theory, concepts, e-government.

**Resumen:** La confusión del término anglosajón open government así como del término transparency han traído consigo ambigüedades y creado falsas expectativas. Además de utilizar ambos conceptos como sinónimos, se han implementado políticas públicas para hacerlos realidad en distintos países latinoamericanos sin tener una dirección precisa o un objetivo claro. Esta investigación busca aportar elementos teóricos que ayuden a delimitar los principales caminos teóricos que se han seguido y proponer un concepto que distinga tanto la transparencia como el gobierno abierto. Para lograrlo se han revisado las principales revistas académicas y artículos de los últimos seis años y se han agrupado en tres corrientes de pensamiento para proponer un concepto sobre gobierno abierto. El objetivo es contribuir a la construcción de una teoría general más sólida, que ayude a entender mejor el gobierno abierto, la transparencia y la rendición de cuentas.

**Palabras clave:** transparencia, gobierno abierto, teoría, conceptos, e-gobierno.

## **Introduction**

Open government has existed since XVI century when it was established in Sweden and governmental data were made public as a constitutional right; this way, people gained access this information (Tauberer, 2012). Parks (1957) wrote an article for *The George Washington Law Review*, entitled: “The Open Government principle: applying the right to know under the constitution”, in which he opens his argumentation by pointing out that both the democratic and republican parties had promised to foster freedom of information in the U.S. government, which had not been fulfilled nevertheless. This request is a reaction to the fact that military information would be hidden in WWII and set the starting point to define what an open government is.

In the 1970's, the open government phrase was linked to governmental secrecy, and the right to know about public decisions in the United Kingdom (Ivester, 1977; Relyea, 1977). Following this conceptual debate, Bennett (1985) published in England an article discussing on the degree of discretion kept by British government to consult and determine the degree of openness in public document consultation. Ten years had to pass, and after the Berlin Wall in 1989 the topic was debated once again in academic forums (Chandler, 1998). At this time in history, the need to use information technologies is beginning to be included to foster the idea of a transparent government that promoted accountability and data openness (Butler *et al.*, 2004; Porte *et al.*, 2005; Welch and Wong, 2001).

However, the idea of open government was not fully clear. On the contrary, the incorporation of technology has made it more complex to develop such idea and allow a better comprehension of the phenomena. The present research is inscribed in this framework; it seeks to contribute with a theoretical conceptualization of the phenomenon. In order to solve that need for theory, a review was carried out in the scientific literature on the topic to reach the state of the art that enables producing a concept of open government. In this search we only selected international journals that included development, discussion and theoretical debate on open government from the first publication (Parks, 1957) up to 2014.

Non-peer-reviewed journals were deliberately omitted so that the theoretical construction was more valid. For its better understanding, the present article is divided into four large section. The first is an introduction that defines the problem study. The second describes the theoretical framework from which the conceptualization of open government is generated; it is divided into three large theoretical trends: 1) freedom of information; 2) information as a tool; 3) open

data. The third section presents the solution that would be a conceptual proposal to understand open government. The fourth exposes the theoretical limitations and future challenges that open government might face in the theoretical sphere.

### **Theoretical framework**

As a result of an extensive theoretical revision described in the introduction more than 50 references were found in international journals, related to theoretical aspects —conceptualization, theoretical models, theory construction— of open government. As a way to systematize these contents, it was considered to group them into three large theoretical directions: 1) liberty of information; 2) governmental information as a tool; and, 3) open data (see figure 1).<sup>1</sup> Below each of them is explained as well as the set of theoretical referents they comprise.

#### *First direction: freedom of information*

Open government is the product of a historical debate on the citizens' right to access governmental information. The central point that produces this debate is democracy; since that freedom of information is part of the freedoms granted by democracy. This way, Richardson (1973) states that freedom of information is a basic component of the democratic process; according to this idea called “right to know”, it becomes the opposite to governmental secrecy. In the struggle to find out what can be known and what a right is, is where the right to information and the multiple regulatory laws —acts, decrees, etc. —, which seek to regulate it, focus (Drachler, 1976).

One of the representative authors of this trend is Bennett (1985); he analyzes the British government campaign to reduce secrecy in its archives and proposes a law on freedom of information that helps to open governmental records and facilitates the citizens' access.

It is after Morris' *et al.* (1981) researches that the systematic study of freedom of information and the debate between governmental secrecy and information access begins. Other contributions to such freedom come from Perritt (1996), who carried out a review of public policies and the new practices that sought to open governmental information; however, he performed his study with a descriptive shallow approach. Conversely, Chandler (1998) focuses on the study of Central Computer and Telecommunications Agency (CCTA), as on the case study of four government sites of the local British government, indicating that there would be much more information to release so that there would really be an open government.

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<sup>1</sup> This figure can be found at the end of the article

Other European academicians carried out similar researches, taking case studies in local or federal governments (Andersen, 2002; Bayne, 1984; Bouwman and Nouwens, 1999). However, in 2000 the boom of computing and the use of information and communications technologies start to create a new dynamic in this effort of informational freedom. Roberts (2000) describes three obstacles to release the information produced in the Canadian case.

The first is that budgetary cuts on the ‘nonessential’ have caused delays in delivering information and meeting the laws regarding its access; secondly, many governmental functions which are delegated to private contractors and nongovernmental organizations do not fulfil the guidelines for access information; and in the third place, finally the fact that some governments charge for information, which should be free, becomes a barrier for the citizens to have unrestricted access to it. Years later, Zuiderwijk and Janssen (2014) carry out a study with Dutch functionaries to categorize 17 barriers that prevent governmental information from being released.

Other cases that have reinforced the idea of freedom of information as a right, for instance, argue that changes in laws in this respect have modified the capability of citizens to access broader information because these changes have restructured bureaucracy. Conversely, for Susman (2001), one of the four advantages of electronic government is that attaining a greater interchange of data with citizens would force the government to be more careful because they might become watchdogs and thus reduce corruption.

Following this idea, once again Roberts (2005) argues in a comparison between freedom of information between Canada and the United Kingdom that bureaucracy its changes routines and organization to “minimize the potential” of the law on information access, therefore freedom of information should be considered a governmental organization rather than a right.

A fact that was fundamental to foster this idea of freedom of information, and this way, share information between the various dependencies, is the terrorist attack on the original World Trade Center in New York in September 11th in 2001. Hence, Uhl (2003) argued that the interrelation existing between the right of freedom of information or the right to know about the infrastructure and the U.S. homeland security. In this country the study of freedom of information has walked a long way from WWII (Parks, 1957) an later on, with the experience of the freedom of information act (Relyea, 1977) up to its advances after the memorandum sent by President Obama to foster open government (Relyea, 2009).

The tendency to open government is global. A research on four Scandinavian countries reveals important differences on information access in which the anonymity of the source is preserved, as well as the journalists' rights and the privileged access to public records compared with occidental countries (Bertil, 1983) and in India (Kaushik, 2012).

Another interesting case because of the political and ideological implications posed is freedom of information in China (Zhang and Zheng, 2009; Zheng, 2009), both internet control (Zheng, 2009) and its information openness policy that is limited and controlled by the State (Xiao, 2010). A research by Xiao (2012) focuses on how governmental information flows in China, its maturity and the environment in which governmental information is contextualized.

The case of Japan is paradigmatic from the struggle to the right to information and the journalistic sources, according to reports by Beer (1971), who shows the governmental restrictions for accessing information in this country. Years later, this was verified by Okudaira (1983), describing the existing debate to create laws that support the idea of an open government in a Constitution. Okudaira details this process in other publication some time later, and compares American and European constitution with the Japanese one (Okudaira, 1990).

Other authors have studied the topic of freedom of information, from the standpoint of: its impact (Birkinshaw, 2010); governance of information and data access (Shepherd *et al.*, 2010); economic impact (McClellan, 2010); and, the measurement or evaluation of governmental openness (Hazell and Worthy, 2010). Michener (2011) reviewed 85 acts on freedom of information in various countries. Richter and Wilson (2013) have analyzed different approximations to governance of information in local governments from the vision of citizens, which suggests, as they deem, there is still a lot to be developed as for open government in England. Finally, Richter and Wilson (2013) have studied whether transparency—or open government—leads to accomplish greater levels of confidence in the government; these authors state that there are changes in the confidence levels, mainly in the citizens with scarce knowledge of the government and low confidence level.

In the face of this set of ideas related to freedom of information it can be argued that such theoretical tendency became the direct antecedent to what nowadays is called open government and which is linked to transparency. Freedom of information is the cornerstone to understand the roots that orient the idea of a more open and transparent government for the citizens, for such freedom has been transforming over time, as shown by the aforementioned authors, to turn a solid body of ideas that represent that democratic freedom into a concept such as open government.

*Second direction: governmental information as a tool*

The second theoretical trend considers governmental information a tool that facilitates decision making. It starts from the idea of data freedom. The citizens' demand for information, the government-citizens confidence relationship and the relation between government-information openness are activities that explain the implementation of transparency that governmental data can produce, as well as the way in which governmental information is organized or linked (West, Noveck, and Sirianni, 2009).

A fundamental text to understand this new age of governmental information openness is the book *Open Government: collaboration, transparency and Participation in Practice* by Lathrop and Ruma (2010), which gathers a number of authors that approach the topic of open government from this practical perspective; however, in this section we present a recount of the main authors and most recent researches on the topic in this direction.

A first study on the use of open government and the information needs is in charge of Chandler (1998), who is the first to suggest the idea that information shall be adapted for the citizens' needs. As a result of a research in four websites of states in the United Kingdom, Chandler (1998) also suggests that such quality of information shall reach federal and supranational websites, as it is the case of the European Unit.

Some academicians have followed this trend of thought, as it is the case of Barata and Cain (2003), who have proposed a schema to manage governmental records in the American national archives to open fast and effectively. Piotrowski, Zhang, Lin and Yu (2009) interviewed intermediate-level functionaries to compare the way in which laws are implemented in open government in Chinese public administration with other countries.

Following this idea, a research by the Center for Technology in Government (CTG), of the University at Albany in the United States, describes a series of strategies to promote open government that are assessed by a panel of public officers. Among the findings there were several challenges such as: the information adjusts to different needs of the users; they exemplify this with the case of property registers which are different from the sort of registers required in other research areas (Dawes, 2010; Helbig *et al.*, 2010).

Alanazi and Chatfield's research (2012) analyzes how government-own data are shared in Middle East Countries, discusses the levels of maturity in which government openness has advanced in these countries on the basis of the eight principles of 2007 Open Data Working Group.

Another perspective of this trend of thought is to detect the information needs both of citizens and public functionaries, and to open it to make it useful for such parties. One research in Egypt found that government functionaries agree to use social media to share information; however, they need training to understand what they publish and underscore the need for reflection about the context in which citizens live at the moment in order to present information and foster any initiative of transparent government (Klischewski, 2012).

On the other side, the analysis of information in China was most interesting because its social and technological modernization has created governability crisis, which is intended to be solved by means of information openness. Researcher Chuansheng (2007) discusses the problems this country experiences—political credibility, legal barriers and digital divide—to boost transparency and accountability in governmental information. Xiao (2010) describes the model of information openness in China.

On the other side, Curtin and Meijer (2006) propose the following to make this idea of open information possible: 1) transparency increases legitimacy; 2) transparency produces legitimacy; and, 3) it generates social legitimacy. In this study the authors reach the conclusion that even if governmental openness is an important supply for democratizing processes, there is no conclusive evidence that directly relates it to legitimacy. Other recent researches share the same idea, in the sense that there is no direct reason to think of legitimacy and data openness (Grimmelikhuijsen, 2010; Grimmelikhuijsen, 2009; Grimmelikhuijsen and Meijer, 2014).

Data linkage has been studied as one of the uses of information by Wood (2011) from the benefits-costs that each dependency has to give the date it generates, as well as the flexibility to produce, scale, organize and store them. An instance of this is the research carried out in the Brazilian government in which data are linked and the degree of transparent government implementation is measured in order to accomplish openness and accountability (Matheus *et al.*, 2012).

Another element of this trend of thought in which government can be understood as an information tool is to consider it a source that generates public value (Harrison *et al.*, 2011). And a last component of such trend is the one referring to trying to model the impact of open government and social context. An effort in this direction is the one undertaken by Scholl and Luna-Reyes (2011), who starting from the use of system dynamics succeeded in proposing a model that combined the use of governmental information and the citizens' participation and collaboration.

Other models try to explain the implantation of public policies in government. This way, Lee and Kwak (2011) proposed an evolutionary model which by means of various stages intends to explain the implementation of a transparent government. A similar model, but based on open data—which will be dealt with in the coming section—is the one proposed by Solar *et al.* (2012), in which they present 33 critical variables to analyze weaknesses and strengths of opening governmental information.

This trend of thought understands that open government is a tool that boosts cooperation, debate and the joint construction of ideas, civil participation and the collaboration between citizens and the incumbent governor (Scholl and Luna-Reyes, 2011). By encouraging democratic processes and accountability, Heckmann (2011: 1) states that it is “the most promising instrument to rethink and reinforce the concept of citizenship in a democratic society”.

### *Third direction*

The third theoretical trend which has developed fast during the last ten years, and whose confluence has impacted on open government, is the one that refers to data openness as an indispensable component to attain government openness. Even if data are the basic expression of information openness—as they are implicitly a component of information—, but nonetheless it is fundamental to state that data are disclosed and, as a result, governmental information. What is more, data in their simplest format can be thoroughly edited, systematized and analyzed by the citizens to obtain a broader vision on public issues.

Even these open data can foster coproduction, collaboration and participation of the citizens in public processes as they provide public functionaries with new information supply that show a different approach, alternatives or proposals to those of the governmental vision, thus becoming consumers of governmental information (Puron-Cid *et al.*, 2012).

This direction had been proposed from the standpoint of freedom of information (first direction) by Relyea (1977), when he proposes the idea of data vigilance as a way to open them. However, as of 2010, the boost to open government creates an upturn in researching governmental open data, which produced at least three large directions: the first indeed that data are useful for accountability; the second is to present methods, mechanisms or techniques to help data openness and the way that public dependences can be organized to meet this goal. The third direction is data openness from the civil standpoint as a way to encourage participation in government.



As for the first direction (useful data for accountability), researches by CTG on “The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act” demanded an immediate and real-time publication of the funds granted to this program and whose scrutiny would be directly over internet (Helbig *et al.*, 2010). The case of New York City town council that transformed its internal information system to be public and public oriented has become an example to follow (Newsom and Dickey, 2013).

Two contributions to understand the second direction of open data and government refer to the cases of how to organize flexible information for the public sector (Hornnes *et al.*, 2010) and the use of open data on the Spanish census (Fernández *et al.*, 2011). Conversely, the contribution by Kalampokis *et al.* (2011), who propose the development of guides, manuals or regulations that help compare the implementation and data openness efforts in Europe, becomes relevant as it is one of the scant contributions that seek to structurally organize this field.

On the other side, research by Peled (2011) found problems in the implementation of data openness programs and collaboration in the United States; among such problems, one finds integration of data into processes, namely: inclusion, confusion and dissemination. His research concludes proposing a federal information market that incentivizes information interchange between dependences. Another complementary research is the one that refers to the monitoring of governmental data (Krabina, 2012) and one more is that one that seeks to find the governmental intention in data publication (Sayogo and Pardo, 2012).

Anneke Zuiderwijk, Keith Jeffery and Marijn Janssen (2012) have focused on researching the obstacles to develop public policies linked to governmental data openness, as well as the application of metadata as a way to encourage a greater detail in the use of open data. Finally, these studies are some of the first to undertake research on open data in the judiciary.

Regarding data openness, international efforts have been significant, as it is the case of the Persian Gulf countries (Elbadawi, 2012) or the European to share fiscal data and homologate them (Alvarez *et al.*, 2012). The Norwegian disaster program to inform the pilots and organize governmental information in the case of a national accident (Myrseth, 2012). The case of Japan creates social opinions and concerns for ideal argumentation (SOCIA) and carried out a content search by means of data mining in a semi-structured manner to understand the citizens' concerns (Shiramatsu *et al.*, 2012).

Other countries have developed different strategies to implement open data such as: Kenya (Mutuku and Colaco, 2012), Colombia (Prieto, 2012), Brazil (Matheus *et al.*, 2012) Italy, which links it to interoperability (Lodi, Maccioni and Tortorelli, 2012).

As for the third direction, it is the way citizens use open data to solve their own information needs. This way, research are directly linked to the use of social media and open data. For example, SOMUS project proposes a number of tools to open governmental data and use them (Näkki *et al.*, 2011); or else, the use of crowdsourcing to encourage civil participation.

Separately, Linders (2011) proposes a group of categories to measure data coproduction of the citizen and government jointly. Recently, a former San Francisco mayor published some citizens' experiences on the use of open data, which have allowed improving governmental services, encourage participation and collaboration in favor of better interaction between both parties (Newsom and Dickey, 2013).

Following this idea, the development of mobile apps that can be downloaded to smartphones has been one of the most attractive ways for citizens to download data and use them freely (Sandoval-Almazán *et al.*, 2012). Numerous traffic, education, health, tax apps have been developed by the very citizens using governmental data and offering free access to various information catalogues or concrete data which are useful for quotidian decision making (Harsh and Ichalkaranje, 2015; Milam and Avery, 2012; Sandoval-Almazán and Rojas-Romero, 2014).

The three theoretical trends we have called directions have explained the different variants academicians, public officers and public servants have followed to understand open government and are summarized in figure 1.<sup>2</sup> In them it is intended to describe the different paths to understand what now is called open government. In the following section, we describe a conceptual proposal for open government that even if does not necessarily integrates all the previous perspectives, aims at contributing to the debate and define another direction that helps understand this field of study.

### **Open government: a conceptual proposal**

As a result of this framework of ideas on open government, various theoretical contributions, I propose the following concept: open government must be understood as technological institutional platform that turns governmental data into open data in order to allow their use, protection and collaboration by the citizens in processes of public decision making, accountability and improvement of public services.

In this conceptual proposal, open government can be understood as a technological platform. The use of platforms in government is not new (Bharosa *et al.*, 2013; Charalabidis and Loukis, 2012; Hof, 2002), it is the joint use of information

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<sup>2</sup> This figure can be found at the end of the article

technologies interconnected by means of only one language or platform and it allows utilizing the full potential of interaction and interconnection that platforms enable.

Not only the use of internet in websites, but social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter (Dijck, 2013) and the use of mobile technology to disseminate and interact with information (Lorenzi *et al.*, 2014).

Being from its inception open government a “platform”, in it can be placed a set of programs, theoretical and practical tools that facilitate freedom of governmental information. However, this might not be achieved if there is no necessary legal and budgetary support, this is why the “institutionalization” of the platform that supplies the necessary resources and the convenient political boost to be undertaken and extending the time scope of action —beyond governmental administrations— to accomplish governmental openness.

This way, both concepts, the platform and institutionalization, are the result of the historical background of the theoretical trend of freedom of information, in which one of the components —to be carried out— has always been political will and absence of an organization or platform that would make open government possible.

Other component that includes this conceptualization is that the direct result of this platform is “to turn governmental data into open data”. This idea starts from the supposition that governmental data are in formats and in bureaucratic languages hard for the citizens to understand. The purpose of having a platform with technology that helps homologation and transformation of data to make them accessible and easy their dissemination and usefulness is a must that responds to the theoretical trend of open data.

Once data are “free” and can be shared, reused and easily findable, the citizens might be able to use them; this way the data become data useful for decision making, comparison and, obviously accountability of public servants and public administration processes, which comes from the second theoretical trend that presents governmental data as a tool to make decisions easy.

Another advantage offered by governmental data once opened is to allow their protection, both by the government on those it considers delicate for national security and public making decision and by the citizens so that those are not corrupted or contaminated by ideological or political tendencies that prevent their correct use and comparison; and even that data can be altered in views of dodging accountability or make the impunity of functionaries or political leaders easy.

By “disclosing” data and make them transparent they turn into public good; while they are kept in governmental archives they are private property of the

incumbent government, or the public functionaries that administrate them. Because of this, in order to accomplish transparent government in every way it is necessary to foster civil collaboration in data management, which is a component of democracy and civil participation in a more informed context.

### **Limitations and challenges of the open government concept**

This theoretical proposal presents at least three limitations that shall be considered when building the concept and that we have not left aside in the discussion, but which at least right now not all of them can be conceptually solved.

The first limitation is that an open government could not be without technology. Most of the researches, cases of implementation, practical examples studied in the revision of the literature —previously seen— mention the use of technology of information and communications technologies presented on the internet as tools implicit in the construction of that field of knowledge.

Although Parks (1957) would have made their information request valid without the need for technology, not because of this the government it would have been fulfilled and solved by the authority. The problem of public administration before the 1990's was its organizational incapacity to solve possible information requests because of the transaction costs it implied (time, personnel, search in archives, etc.) (Dawes, Pardo and DiCaterino, 1999)

Another angle of the problem is freedom of information; if the government was not capable of offering information, at least it should have allowed free access to it. Disclosing information and opening data were the later mandates that were not fully met, but until technological advance and computer use and technology networks would enable organization, classification, storage and access of governmental data (Kubicek, 2008).

The second limitation is that transparent government is not as simple as it looks at first sight. The possibility of reorganizing data by means of new and better processes, opening governmental data repositories for citizens in an accessible, organized and neutral manner without affecting the privacy of information or exposing sensitive data that can harm the function of the State becomes a titanic task.

As commented by Meijer (2012), who indicates that governmental transparency cannot be left only in the hands of technicians and technology, as it should be administrated by a complex decision process to open governmental information. The proposed concept does not comprehend this limitation of complexity in the implementation, it rather proposes an ideal direction to be taken.

The third limitation of the concept is that open governments are emerging around the world with diverse levels of maturity and implementation degrees. It is not an ideological or political trend of some years, but it obeys the necessity of citizens and governors to open data and share information. This way, an extraordinary task that open government has is to secure all the citizens' access to information. This means to reduce the digital divide among citizenry; which requires changes both in the market and infrastructure of telecommunications and data (Armenta *et al.*, 2012; Bauerlein, 2011; Hossain, 2007).

Studies in other countries expose the different limitations, approaches and processes to set up open government; this implies that it would not have the same effect in Asian as in African countries or in European countries compared with the United States or Latin America. This disparity in the contexts, the way to interpret the concept and historic inheritances can be determining to understand the impact of open government on each region of the world, social or economic context. The presented concept aims at establishing an analysis category that helps interpret these limitations and establish a theoretical starting point on how to study open government.

Several are the challenges which this conceptual approach leads us to, however one of the most important is accomplishing clarity between transparency and open government; both concepts have blurred, mixed up, and even they have become synonyms in governmental discourse.

The first distinction we have to make is to speak of transparency and openness. From the conceptual standpoint here exposed, the first thing is to accomplish openness of both data and processes. This way, the broadest concept must be the governmental openness that allows noticing the various forms of transparency, accountability and data openness.

Some authors such as Ivester (1977), Parks (1957) and Relyea (1977) support this idea, arguing in favor when government openness is the first stage. Later on, the most recent promoter of open government, American president Barack Obama present his idea of governmental openness firstly, and later transparency: "the open government initiative would establish a system of transparency, public participation, and collaboration" (McDermott, 2010). In which it is established that transparency is a system together with public participation and collaboration. This is to say, transparency become a medium to reach an ultimate goal: attain open government.

For Lathrop and Ruma (2010) consider that it is more important to generate transparency in the first place to accomplish open government; conversely, those who think open government is the first stage that has to develop are O'Reilly (2010) and Obama (2009).

Another approach to understand this relation between transparency and open government would be to see transparency as an action. Transparency is the effect of openness; when we refer to “open the government”, we are talking of make transparent governmental data, archives and information that has been reserved. Openness is the direction, transparency the road.

Linders and Wilson (2011) make this very contribution to the content of the open government initiative in the United States and place the discussion in the sense that transparency can become a key tool to open government. Finally, a parallel idea that contemplates the notion of transparency is that of being protectors of the information or keepers of it (stewardship).

Dawes (2010) argues that both “protection” and usefulness of information shall be the basis to orient transparency of data. Following her argumentation, the quality of data and the challenges of transparency measurement are determining to point out the performance of governmental openness. The challenge of distancing from the idea of transparency and provide it with its location and fair dimension is an important task for the scholars of open government in the short term.

Other minor challenges, not least important however, are: the measurement of open governments and their efficiency; the regulation of open government regarding ways of operation and expected results, among some others. Indubitably, we will continue perfecting our perception of open government, transparency and accountability over time. These concepts cannot be immutable, but at least they can help understand better the public efforts in this respect.

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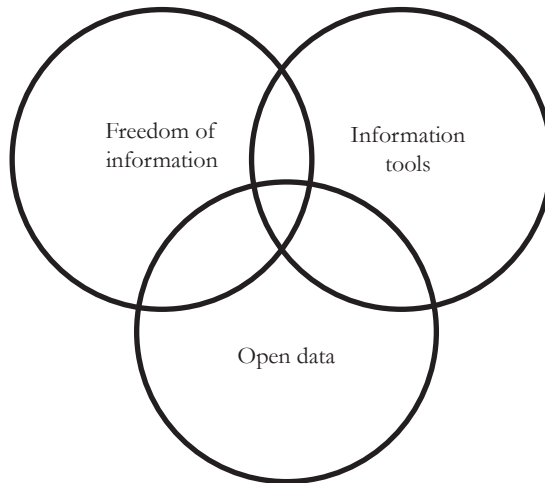
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## Annex

Figure 1  
Theoretical directions of transparent government



Source: own elaboration.

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