



Αθήνα, 27 Φεβρουαρίου 2013

An assessment of the Open Data Day 2013

The **Institute for the Management of Information Systems (IMIS)** of “Athena” Research Center (“Athena” RC), and the **Greek Free/Open Source Software Society (GFOSS)**, organized for another year the Greek Open Data Day! Through this event, the open data community in Greece joined volunteers in **109** cities across the world, in celebration of the global **Open Data Day**.

The Greek Open Data Day followed the footsteps of yearly open data days and hackathons co-organized by IMIS and GFOSS since 2010. This year, more than 160 members of the open data community were present, marking a milestone for open data in Greece. The participation, interest and efforts of all volunteers were an unprecedented success!

Prof. Yannis Ioannidis, President of “Athena” RC, welcomed all participants and reaffirmed the dedication of Athena RC towards supporting open data, both through EU-leading research activities and volunteer work by Athena researchers. Among others, he highlighted the disruptive gains from *geodata.gov.gr*, the open data portal developed by IMIS and presented the ongoing work of “Athena” RC for open data infrastructures, in the context of OpenAIRE, CLARIN, GeoKnow, and multiple other research projects.

The **General Secretary of Information Systems, Haris Theoharis**, was also present during the event, highlighting the importance of open data for the transparency and monitoring of the tax administration. Further, he informed all participants to expect even more open financial data provided by the Greek public sector in the near future, and invited all volunteers to help the public administration through knowledge transfer and the development of value added services.

A number of short presentations then took place, where researchers and open data practitioners presented open data technologies, tools, and initiatives. Highlights include the announcement for the beta operation of **datahub.gr**, an open data portal developed by IMIS with the goal to support the public administration in open data publishing (*Spiros Athanasiou*). Further, the **GeoKnow** (*Giorgos Giannopoulos*) and **DIACHRON** (*Giorgos Papastefanatos*) EU research projects presented their planned work towards open geospatial data and provenance for the Data Web, and their contribution in EU’s data economy. Finally, **publispending.gr** (*Michalis Vafopoulos*) was presented, a web site analyzing and visualizing open public spending data, highlighting the benefits of open data for transparency.



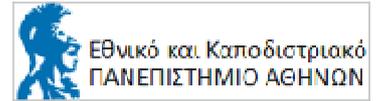
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In parallel, **five workshops** were organized in which more than **60 members** of the open data community were trained by researchers of IMIS in open data technologies. Again, the participation was remarkable and IMIS promised that more similar training events will take place in the near future. The workshops were: a) *open data publishing*, where civil servants were trained on how to publish open data through datahub.gr (Michalis Alexakis), b) *building linked open data*, where participants were trained on how to create LOD from published open data (*Giorgos Giannopoulos*), c) *statistical open data*, where participants were trained on how to use the Data Cube vocabulary and publish LOD from actual open data provided by the Greek Statistical Authority (*Giorgos Papastefanatos*), d) *anonymizing data*, where the emphasis was on placed on informing potential privacy risks from open data publishing and technical means to mitigate them (*Manolis Terrovitis*), and e) *publishing business registers as LOD*, where participants were trained step-by-step on how to publish available open data from business registers as LOD (*Theodore Dalamagas*).

The Greek Open Data Day ended with a **debate**, which had the following question: “**Open or Closed Data?**” The aim was to expose the intricacies and complexities involved when publishing open data and empower participants with an arsenal of arguments in order to knowledgably promote open data. Michalis Vafopoulos (of publicspending.gr) debated in favor of open data, while Spiros Athanasiou (of IMIS, geodata.gov.gr, datahub.gr) debated in favor of closed data, providing arguments based on his experience from actively publishing open data since 2010. Several important issues were raised, involving the true economical benefits of open data, potential dangers for privacy, application in research activities, transparent public services, etc. For the record, open data won, but everyone acknowledged that much work needs to be done on educating the public and private sector.

About the Institute for the Management of Information Systems

The Institute for the Management of Information Systems (IMIS) of the “Athena” Research Center, was established in 2007 with the aim to conduct theoretical and applied research in the areas of knowledge management and large scale information systems. Through several successful collaborations and competitive research projects, IMIS is currently leading research activities in the areas of knowledge management, linked data, semantic web, and geospatial data.

*IMIS supports open data as the enabler of the **data economy**, researching new methods, tools, and techniques for materializing the data economy and achieving competitive advantages, as well as sustainable economical benefits for Greece.*

IMIS contributes in the establishment of open data in Greece, through geodata.gov.gr (the first Greek open data portal), by organizing events to educate and mobilize citizens and businesses, by providing technical support to the public sector, and by cooperating with the Greek business in open data reuse.

Contact: [contact at imis.athena-innovation.gr](mailto:contact@imis.athena-innovation.gr)