

LOCAL OPEN GOVERNMENT: KEY ISSUES IN MADRID, SPAIN

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze key issues of open government in Madrid. This city is one of the members of the Open Government Partnership selected for the local government pilot program. A qualitative approach and bibliometric analysis methods were used in this study. The data used were obtained from the Google Scholar database through Publish or Perish with four keywords: Madrid information access, Madrid transparency, Madrid participation, and Madrid collaboration. Data selection used Mendelay, while the bibliometric map was obtained using VOSviewer. This study found that there was an increasing trend in the publication of Madrid open government articles. There were 78 relevant articles and 72 topics in the last 58 years. The main topics of focus include participation, collaboration, politics, democracy, transparency, governance, and network. Meanwhile, the latest and potential topics include digital participation, innovation, development, public-private collaboration, public space, inclusion, and capability. Since its leading role in the Open Government Partnership, Madrid has set fourteen commitments, four of which are their current focus: improvement of the Decide Madrid platform, improvement of the transparency portal and increase of open data visualizations, broaden the spectrum of participation, and community actions for a healthy city strategy.

Keywords: key issues; Madrid; open government.

Introduction

Open government has become an important strategy for administrative reform, prompting many countries around the world to design and implement initiatives related to access to information, transparency, participation, and collaboration (Afandi, Erdayani, & Afandi, 2024b; De Blasio & Selva, 2019; Gil-Garcia, Gasco-Hernandez, & Pardo, 2020). Many governments have expanded the concept of open government, for example the Obama administration announced the Open Government Directive in 2009 and took a leading role in establishing the Open Government Partnership (OGP), a multinational effort to promote open government worldwide (Afandi, 2024; Moon, 2020; Schmidhuber & Hilgers, 2021).

The Open Government Partnership is based on the idea that open government is more accessible, more responsive, and more

accountable to citizens, and that improving the relationship between citizens and government has long-term and exponential benefits for all (Afandi, Afandi, & Erdayani, 2023; Ruijter & Meijer, 2020; Tai, 2021). The Partnership focuses on the policy areas of anti-corruption and integrity, beneficial ownership, open contracting, civic space, freedom of assembly, freedom of association, freedom of expression, digital governance, environment and climate, extractive industries, fiscal openness, inclusion, people with disabilities, youth, justice, land and spatial planning, open parliaments, public service delivery, education, health, water and sanitation, and right to information (Gao, Janssen, & Zhang, 2021; Ingrams, 2020; Ruijter, D tienne, Baker, Groff, & Meijer, 2020).

OGP is a broad partnership that includes members at both the national and local levels. Being part of a local OGP provides benefits to

encourage open reforms that have become part of the vision and mission of every local government to achieve levels of accountability, responsiveness, inclusiveness, and transparency (Ingrams, Piotrowski, & Berliner, 2020; Zulfa & Afandi, 2023). Through membership in this global community, every local government can obtain new information on the implementation of open government, as well as being able to share views, experiences, and resources to achieve the principles of open government (Afandi, Erdayani, & Afandi, 2023; Wirtz, Weyerer, & Sch, 2019).

The Open Government Partnership has launched the Local Government Pilot Program, recognizing that much open government innovation and reform is happening at the local level where governments can engage more directly with citizens and deliver many important public services (Afandi, Erdayani, & Afandi, 2024a). The local governments involved in the program are Austin, Basque Country, Buenos Aires, South Cotabato, Elgeyo Marakwet, Jalisco, Kaduna State, La Libertad, Sao Paulo, Scotland, Sekondi-Takoradi, Seoul, Tbilisi, Paris, and Madrid.

Madrid has established fourteen commitments to support open government, including improvement of the Decide Madrid platform, improvement of the transparency portal and increase of open data visualizations, broadening the spectrum of participation, community actions for a healthy city strategy, creation of an anonymous complaints mailbox, Madrid in data, control panel of government commitments, transparency in waste management and creation of a waste information platform, creation of a city observatory, creation of a mandatory lobby registry, developing a new transparency portal for Madrid City Council, development of participatory budgeting, citizen participation policy extension, and developing efficient collaborative legislative mechanisms. This research aims to analyze the main issues of local open government in Madrid.

Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with a bibliometric analysis method.

Bibliometric analysis is a method for analyzing scientific literature in a particular field of knowledge or topic (Donthu, Kumar, Mukherjee, Pandey, & Lim, 2021; Moral-Muñoz, Herrera-Viedma, Santisteban-Espejo, & Cobo, 2020). This method is used to identify trends/highlight critical insights generated from scientific literature (Gaviria-Marin, Merigó, & Baier-Fuentes, 2019; Kulsum et al., 2022). The data used were obtained from the Google Scholar database through Publish or Perish with four keywords: Madrid information access, Madrid transparency, Madrid participation, and Madrid collaboration. These keywords are based on the main principles of open government. The data obtained were then stored in RIS format, selected using Mendeley, including completing author keywords, and analyzed using VOSviewer to obtain a bibliometric map.

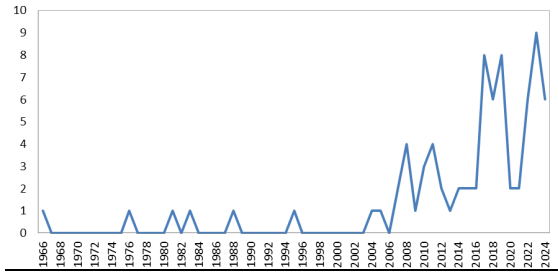
However, it is recognized that the use of VOSviewer has the potential for bias in the form of different databases producing different findings; the database includes publications in a particular language, potentially ignoring important research published in other languages; the choice of algorithms and parameters can affect the structure of the visualized network; and the way users interpret the visualization can be subjective.

Result And Discussion

Seventy-eight relevant articles were found in the last fifty-eight years (see Figure 1). The first article was published in 1966 and the most recent article in 2024. No articles were found in 1967-1975, 1977-1980, 1982, 1984-1987, 1989-1994, 1996-2003, and 2006. One article was published in 1966, 1976, 1981, 1983, 1988, 1995, 2004, 2005, 2009, and 2013. Two articles were published in 2007, 2012, 2014-2016, and 2020-2021. Three articles in 2010; four articles in 2008 and 2011; six articles in 2018, 2022, and 2024 (July); eight articles in 2017 and 2019; and nine articles in 2023. Although fluctuating, there was an increase in 2021-2023, and in 2024 there is also potential for an increase.

This trend shows that the Madrid Open Government study is quite popular.

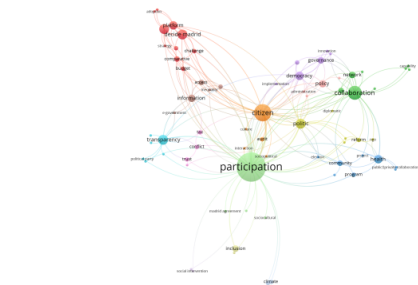
Graph 1. Publication trends



Source: Processed by the Author, 2024

Network visualization (see Figure 1) displays the relationships between topics (Irfan, Septiadi, Rivandra, & Rakhmawati, 2023). No duplicate topics are displayed in this visualization. Identical topics that appear in many articles are counted as a single topic (Gaviria-Marín et al., 2019). This visualization represents topics with circles. The size of the circle is determined by its respective weight. The more frequently a topic appears, the larger the resulting circle size will be. The lines between topics represent links, while the location of each topic indicates the closeness of the relationship (Ham, Koo, & Lee, 2019; Lnenicka & Saxena, 2021).

Figure 1. Network visualization



Source: Processed by the Author, 2024

There are 72 topics (see Table 1) and 544 total link strengths in the Madrid open government study. Participation (101 total link strengths); citizen (51 total link strengths); collaboration (27 total link strengths); politics (24 total link strengths); democracy (21 total link strengths); platform (18 total link strengths); e-participation (16 total link strengths); transparency (16 total link strengths); decide madrid (15 total link strengths); policy (15 total link strengths);

health (12 total link strengths); governance (11 total link strengths); information (10 total link strengths); community (9 total link strengths); and network (9 total link strengths) are the list of topics that dominate. These topics are the main focus of the Madrid open government study.

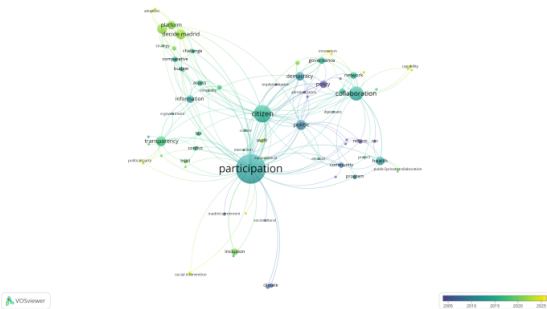
Table 1. Topic clusters

Clusters	Topics
1	e-participation, decide madrid, comparative, challenge, budget, deliberation, adoption, digital participation, platform, dan strategy
2	collaboration, network, education, capability, sustainability, transition, co-creative, dan implication
3	community, election, program, project, parliament, public-private collaboration, service, dan health
4	reform, politic, distribution, nation building, NGO, dan diplomatic
5	public space, governance, democracy, innovation, multi-actor, dan implementation
6	transparency, representative, political party, website, public procurement, and standard
7	sociopolitical, citizen, audit, culture, dan interaction
8	access, information, communication, inequality, dan e-government
9	development, conflict, tax, dan trust
10	policy, administration, good government, dan public opinion
11	participation, Madrid Agreement, perception, dan sociocultural
12	demonstration dan climate
13	inclusion dan environment
14	social intervention dan youth

Source: Processed by the Author, 2024

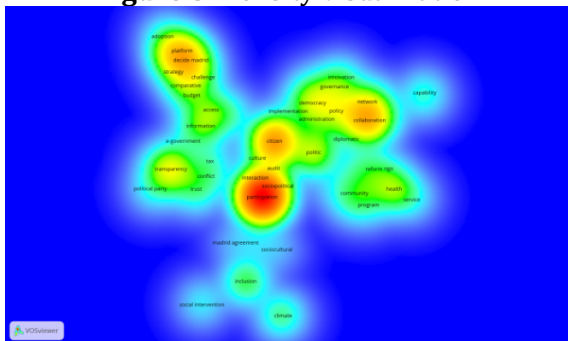
The overlay visualization (see Figure 2) is identical to the network visualization, except for the colors. In this visualization, the colors range from blue (lowest score) to yellow (highest score). Current topics of interest in the Madrid open government study include: perception, digital participation, co-creative, transition, sustainability, innovation, development, audit, sociopolitical, service, public-private collaboration, public space, strategy, and deliberation. These topics allow for potential future studies.

Figure 2. Overlay visualization



Source: Processed by the Author, 2024

Figure 3. Density visualization



Source: Processed by the Author, 2024

Based on the visualization above (see Figure 3), topics that are outside the main clusters that allow for potential studies include: capability, Madrid Agreement, sociocultural, social intervention, inclusion, and climate. Currently Madrid is focusing on four main commitments of their open government, including: *First*, improvement of the Decide Madrid platform. The Decide Madrid website is a tool to facilitate and encourage direct and individual participation of citizens in city affairs. Citizens can submit proposals, create discussion threads, evaluate, comment on, and support proposals, and take

part in participatory processes. Madrid sees the need to bring the website closer and make it more attractive, giving more direct attention to citizens at any time and from anywhere. Dealing with the large amount of information and contributions that Decide Madrid contains, which are not always responded to promptly and systematically, which makes citizens frustrated.

Decide Madrid is a consolidated and recognized platform that is undergoing a continuous process of improvement. Continuous innovation is carried out so that the platform remains active, is truly useful, and can adapt to the new needs and demands of citizens. Madrid's ambition is to improve the Decide Madrid platform by encouraging citizen involvement in decision-making on city issues from the perspective of bringing citizen participation closer to the whole, developing new functions that facilitate and improve the usability of the portal. Innovate through the application of artificial intelligence technologies that allow the classification and processing of citizen-generated content and ensure an adequate response to the various contributions received. Collaborate with different parties in the development of new ideas to meet social needs through social innovation methodologies. Build alliances with public administrations and universities and encourage the exchange of experiences and good practices in the field of citizen participation.

This commitment has the potential to meet public needs through developing functions that improve the usability of the portal and support a closer relationship with users directly. Starting a new social innovation space to support and enrich collaboration with public administrations, universities, and other social agents, as well as the private sector, as a laboratory of ideas and a meeting point for experts. In the long term, this commitment has the potential to improve the quality of participation in public management, allowing citizens to participate in public decision-making with the aim of achieving better results and a higher quality of democracy. Raising awareness among citizens and civil

servants of the values of open government, which favors the collaborative design of public policies and innovation.

Second, improvement of the transparency portal and increase of open data visualizations. Among the city websites, the transparency portal and the open data portal stand out for their importance. The volume of information managed and the rapid technical evolution of the IT tools used make it necessary to improve the transparency portal in accordance with new technical and regulatory requirements and user requests. This commitment aims to facilitate the consultation and understanding of information for everyone, regardless of their level of technical knowledge in terms of information management and analysis. The incorporation of new public information is foreseen, as is an increase in the number of visualizations of open data sets so that information can be consulted in a much simpler way.

The number of datasets used to generate the information published on city websites continues to increase, but their consultation is still limited to computer formats that are incomprehensible or difficult to understand for most average users without specific knowledge of data management. Madrid has the ambition to introduce improvements to the transparency portal that will allow the inclusion of new public information as well as to increase the number of visualizations of the open datasets offered. These visualizations offer the possibility of consulting the information in a much simpler way that does not require technical knowledge in the field, so that the information value and usability of the portal are closer to anyone interested in the functioning of the city administration.

This commitment has the potential to increase the automation of the publication of information and data subject to publication. Presenting information in a much simpler and more accessible way so that each user can improve their browsing and consultation experience. The inclusion of new technical solutions that allow to comply with the

technical and regulatory requirements for the publication of information on the city portal. In the long term, this commitment allows access to public information in an easy, fast and understandable way for citizens, an essential requirement for administrative transparency to be realized. It is this unlimited knowledge that allows citizens to have data that allows them to form their own opinion about the functioning of the administration and the actions of those responsible. On the basis of these computer tools, transparency serves as a buffer against inappropriate attitudes or behaviors of public officials and prevents the phenomenon of corruption.

Third, broaden the spectrum of participation. Decide Madrid must reach those who are usually far away: the youngest and the elderly. Currently, children, young people and the elderly participate through the different channels of the Madrid City Council. This includes various participation bodies such as the Sectoral Council for Youth, the Sectoral Council for the Elderly, the Commission for Participation for Children and Adolescents of the City of Madrid, and the Commission for Participation for Children and Adolescents (COPIAS), as well as an important network of youth associations, associations dedicated to children, adolescents and the elderly. On the other hand, participation must be inclusive, giving a voice to everyone, especially those who do not have the means to make themselves heard, and ensuring that no one is left behind, especially the most vulnerable groups.

Expand the spectrum of participation, developing specific programs aimed at sectors of society with less participation, such as the elderly, children, young people, and other vulnerable groups, improving the usability of the Decide Madrid portal, making it more accessible, user-friendly, and adapted to the language, needs, and interests of these groups, as well as reducing, where necessary, the digital divide and through different types of activities that contribute to facilitating their participation. This commitment has the potential to meet the needs detected through the implementation of participation, training,

and informative programs, as well as the development of new technological tools aimed at children and young people. Implementation of participation programs aimed at the elderly and vulnerable groups, bringing participation channels closer to the most remote sectors.

In the long term, this commitment improves the quality of participation in public management, allowing citizens to participate in public decision-making with the aim of achieving a better quality of democracy. It broadens the target audience that participates in improving public policies and ensures the participation of children, young people, and parents in matters of interest to them. It raises awareness of the values of open government, which favor the collaborative design of public policies. It prepares children and young people for adult life, contributing to the formation of a more active, supportive, and committed citizenship with democratic values and public affairs. It facilitates the participation of parents by accompanying and training them in online participation tools. By involving parents in participatory processes, it makes the most of their collective intelligence, the result of their experience and knowledge.

Fourth, community actions for a healthy city strategy. In Madrid, as in many other cities around the world, COVID has affected people's well-being and health not only in physical aspects but also in cognitive, emotional, and behavioral aspects. The "Madrid Healthy City" strategy is guided by the principles and methodologies of public health prevention and promotion, with the ultimate goal of enhancing the capacity of individuals and communities to increase their control over the determinants of health and, consequently, to improve their health. The commitment focuses on three issues: death and grief due to the pandemic, suicide prevention, and childhood obesity.

The pandemic has caused unexpected deaths; in the city of Madrid, the crude mortality rate has increased year on year compared to the previous year. Faced with this situation, it is important to accompany the people of Madrid by offering them tools to help them cope with grief and reduce the risk of

grief becoming pathological. Suicide is the main cause of unnatural death in Spain. According to data from the Directorate General of Statistics of the Madrid City Council, there has been a progressive increase in the number of suicides recorded since 2013. Mental health has also been affected by the health crisis, increasing the risk of suicide. The WHO has indicated that the increase in obesity in the world population will make this disease a global epidemic during the 21st century. Madrid is also affected.

Madrid's ambition is to promote a model of a caring community, facilitating mourning and helping to overcome the process of loss, with information, awareness-raising activities, and community involvement in promoting attitudes of empathy and accompaniment in the disease process, making the community the main driver of change, compassion as a transversal axis, and the creation of a community care network. Address suicide prevention strategies, focusing on risk and protective factors, and creating a comprehensive care network, promoting training, information, and awareness-raising activities. Develop pilot programs in educational centers that contribute to improving the quality of life of children in the City of Madrid through the acquisition of healthy habits related to nutrition and physical activity.

Madrid is committed to promoting the formation of caring communities and strengthening the capacity of neighborhoods for collective care for people. Strengthening the capacity for coping in the educational context. Creating a network of alliances and cohesive coordination protocols with public and private entities for suicide prevention. Strengthening the detection and prevention capacities of teaching professionals, families, and community facilitators. Participation of the educational community in the prevention of childhood obesity. Developing pilot experiences in educational centers that combine active and participatory methodologies, involving the entire educational center as a whole, with guidance

activities on healthy eating, physical activity, and prevention of sedentary lifestyles.

In the long term, this commitment facilitates citizen participation in improving public health. Establishing partnerships with different entities in the district. Establishing a network of social support and a safe and risk-free environment. Creating collaboration protocols with social agents, the educational community, municipal services, and public and private entities. Carrying out interventions that promote the participation of students, their families, the educational community, and health and sports professionals, carrying out activities aimed at improving the health of the entire school population. The development of a health asset map is built with the participation of the community on a day-to-day basis when citizens mark the spaces in their environment that are sources of well-being in their daily lives.

Table 2. Madrid's commitments

No	Commitments	Goals
1	Improvement of the Decide Madrid platform	Facilitate and encourage direct and individual participation of citizens in city affairs
2	Improvement of the transparency portal and increase of open data visualisations	Facilitate consultation and understanding of information for everyone, regardless of their level of technical knowledge in information management and analysis
3	Broaden the spectrum of participation	Develop special programs aimed at under-participating sectors of society, such as the elderly, children and youth, and other vulnerable groups

4	Community actions for a healthy city strategy	Increasing the capacity of individuals and communities to increase their control over the determinants of health
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Source: Processed by the Author, 2024

Conclusion

Seventy-eight Madrid open government articles were found in the last fifty-eight years. The first article was published in 1966, while the latest in 2024. There was an increasing trend in publications in the period 2021-2023 and a potential increase in 2024, which shows that this study is quite popular. There are 72 topics and 14 clusters in the Madrid open government study. The main focus topics include participation, citizen, collaboration, politics, democracy, e-participation, transparency, decide Madrid, policy, health, governance, information, community, and network. Meanwhile, the latest and potential topics include perception, digital participation, co-creative, transition, sustainability, innovation, development, audit, sociopolitical, service, public-private collaboration, public space, strategy, deliberation, capability, the Madrid Agreement, sociocultural, social intervention, inclusion, and climate.

Madrid is currently focusing on four main commitments for open government, including: 1) Improvement of the Decide Madrid platform, aimed at facilitating and encouraging direct and individual participation of citizens in city affairs. 2) Improvement of the transparency portal and increase of open data visualisations, aimed at facilitating consultation and understanding of information for everyone, regardless of their level of technical knowledge in terms of information management and analysis. 3) Broaden the spectrum of participation, aimed at developing specific programs aimed at less

participating sectors of society such as the elderly, children and young people, and other vulnerable groups. 4) Community actions for a healthy city strategy, aimed at increasing the capacity of individuals and communities to increase their control over the determinants of health.

The findings of this study serve as recommendations for academics to be used as a basis for studying open government in Madrid. This circle will provide real contributions for the Madrid government to achieve their open government commitments. The implementation of open government by Madrid can be a lesson for all local governments in Spain, including hundreds of local governments that are members of the

Open Government Partnership. Madrid's open government practices are very relevant to be implemented in local governments that have characteristics that are not much different from it.

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