

First Czech Open Data Handbook published

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The Czech government does not have an Open Data strategy, although this is something that could help cities and local municipalities to open up their data for public and economic benefits.

Considering this, the Otakar Motejl Fund (a Czech transparency initiative run by the Open Society Fund) decided to come up with a Czech version of the Open Data Handbook, entitled "[How to open up data](#)".

The book was written by [Jakub Mráček](#), former Open Data advocate at Otakar Motejl Fund, together with the help of [Jan Boček](#), an open data journalist, and geodata expert [Jachym Čepický](#). The result of their work is a 104-page book available in hardcopy and electrical format.

The inspiration for this handbook was the international version of [The Open Data Handbook](#). The Czech version brings the potential benefits of this handbook to their own local environment, with its own best practices and recommendations based on the experience from their advocacy activities, workshops, conferences and meetings with civil servants, state officials, IT managers and mayors.

The handbook is aimed at newcomers to open data - civil servants, activists, journalists, researchers, politicians and developers. The majority of information provided in the handbook focuses on data held by the public sector - mainly cities and local municipalities. However, the author's intentions are to broaden this to state institutions.

Claiming that there is a lack of governmental documents which give advice on opening up data would not be true. There are some state documents which aim to guide people through the process of opening up some data. For instance, the documents '*Open Data Publication Methodology of the Czech Public Administration*' and '*Open data Cataloguing Strategy of the Czech Public Administration*' (read more about the Open data and PSI in the Czech Republic in this [report](#)) are too general and do not cover many aspects and parts of publication of data (i.e. preparation period of publishing data, advocacy activities, usage of data, evaluation, sustainability of datasets etc). These documents are a little outdated and particularly neglect the important target groups of cities and local municipalities.

The Czech handbook, in this content, basically follows the international version. Nonetheless, from the first look it clearly contrasts with its international counterpart. It discusses the why, what and how of open data – why to go open, what open is, and the how to ‘open’ data.

“Since the beginning of our open data activities, we wanted the Czech version of the Open data handbook to be built on the Czech experience and thus very concrete, precise and helpful. In order to be really useful, we needed to collect broad samples of experiences from opening up of very few Czech institutions and through them set up collection of advices and recommendation. Furthermore, we knew that we should use some examples from international handbook as well,” said Jakub Mráček, the main editor of the handbook. Hence, Otakar Motejl Fund decided to boost the project and financially support it. The entire process of the creation of Czech version started in February 2014.

At the beginning, the book explains the basic concepts of open data, especially in relation to government. It covers how open data creates values and can have a positive impact in many different areas. It discusses the why, what and how of open data – why to go open, what open is, and the how to ‘open’ data. It has a rich glossary containing list of Czech open data authorities, reports and

bibliography and list of sources.

Jakub Mráček further explains “We are really glad that we have been inspired by internationally successful projects. We have implemented some of the good online tools which are internationally recognised and can be use on the local level (for instance, The [Open Data Certificate](#) from the [Open Data Institute](#)). This online tool aids to evaluate the level of quality of published data and gives perfect feedback to its publisher”.

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Otakar Motejl Fund aims at an effective public administration, supported by an active civil society. The Fund promotes open data to transform government into a transparent service and to provide the citizens with a fair access to information. Otakar Motejl Fund has been administered by the Open Society Fund Prague and has received contributions from individual and corporate donors.