International Open Data Conference 2018 Report

Buenos Aires, Argentina

September 21-22, 2018

Introduction

The end of 2018 marked 10 years since the open data movement started to gain global traction, and the open data community has grown significantly. Working to simply make data publicly available is no longer the sole focus of every conversation, program, or initiative related to open data. The movement is shifting to building open data initiatives that target real world problems or embed open data into existing sectoral or interest-based communities of practice.

An increasingly sophisticated network of projects, initiatives, and community collaborations have begun to make data truly useful in addressing a myriad of issues facing citizens and their governments around the world.

Introduction

The 5th IODC brought together the ever-expanding global open data community under the theme "The Future is Open". The event showcased successes and took a hard look at new and persistent challenges in order to develop more effective data strategies in the years to come.

The IODC hosted a series of action-oriented events and workshops designed to update and explore more deeply the community roadmap that was established at the last IODC in Madrid in 2016.

IODC18 Objectives

- Identify and explore new opportunities and challenges that are shaping the open data agenda.

- Highlight innovative and practical open data solutions capable of driving social and economic impact in areas such as health, education, transport, etc.

- Consolidate an international partnerships to drive the development of global common resources for the international open data community.

Major Achievements

Building on experiences and feedback from previous editions of IODC, the conference has improved to be more inclusive, reflective and action-oriented.

1st IODC in the Global South

After previous editions took place in North America and Europe, the conference moved to South America, making it the first IODC edition in the Global South. This is part of the IODC commitment to make it relevant to the development agenda and with different perspectives in each edition.

Future focus

This IODC edition focused on the "What's next?" question. Sessions were chosen based on what they can bring to the discussion of the future of open data. The discussions were facilitated not only to show success but also to learn from mistakes and bring people together to collaborate in innovative ways.

Major Achievements

Inclusive design

The IODC organising committee believes that good conference planning takes into account many cultures and creates safe spaces for knowledge sharing and relationship building.

For this we took the following steps:

- Similar to previous editions, the programme was co-created - including pre-events and sessions
- Transparent design process was published on the IODC blog.
- Strict measures were taken to ensure that there is a geographical diversity across all the sessions.
- Allowing various types of sessions, not only panels, to encourage different types of learnings style.
- The Code of Conduct was improved and enforced during all of our pre-events and the main conference itself.

Major Achievements

Gender-balance

This edition has put more effort on gender balance sessions, making sure that women are seen and heard as much as men.

- Both the organising committee and the programme committee had equal representation.
- Women were prioritised for travel grants to the conference and child travel was provided when needed.

- In numbers:
- 50%-50% Split between men and women in attendance and speakers.
- 4 Sessions about data and gender issues
- 1 Pre-event dedicated to gender.
- Progress from the first IODC edition in 2014, where we have 39% female speakers and IODC16 where we had 41%.

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Outputs

1500 Attendees

221 Speakers

72 Countries

72 Sessions

Attendees profile - Countries
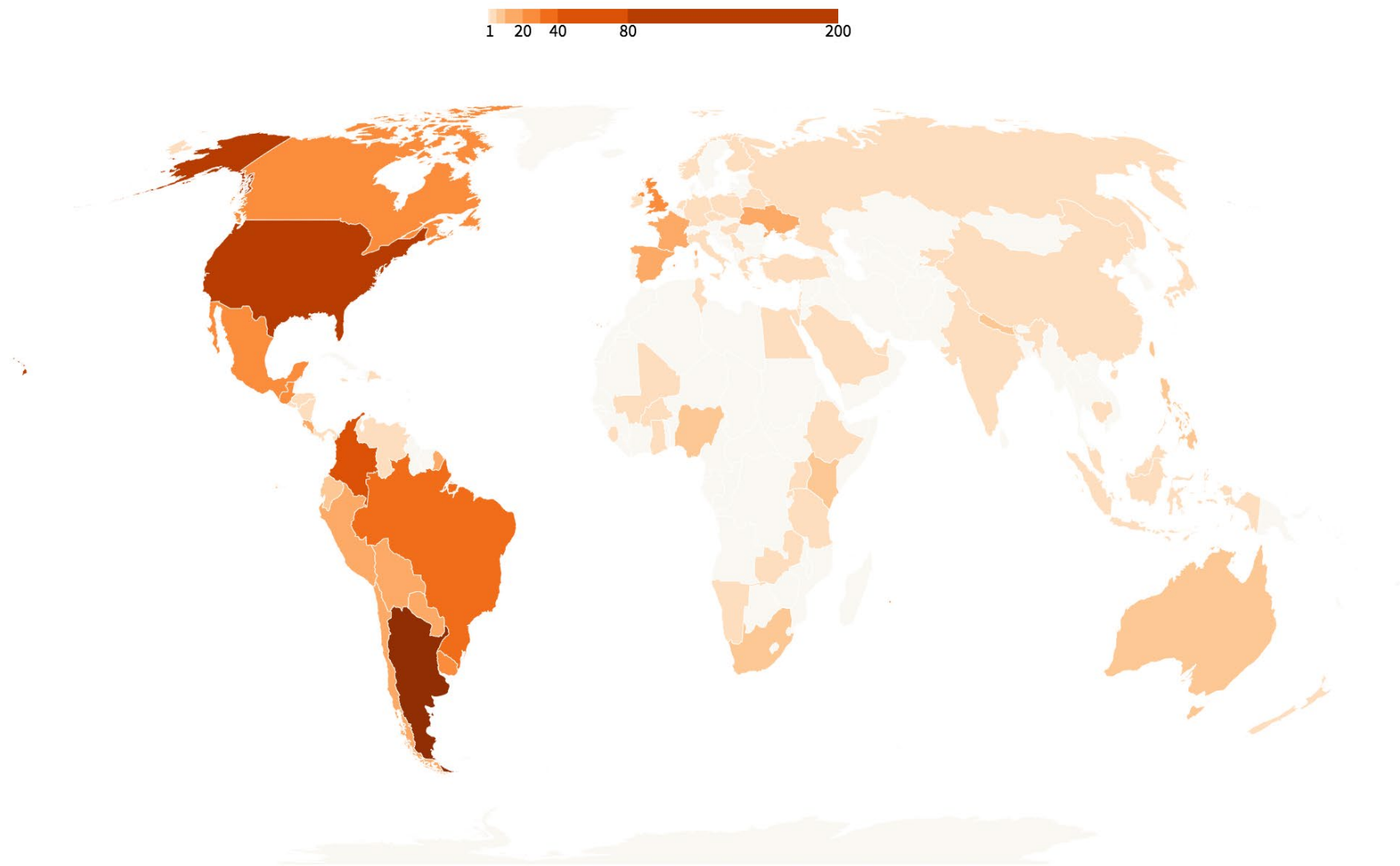
Attendees profile - Sector

ATTENDEES BY SECTORS

- Private Sector 9%
- Academic 12%
- Government 39%
- Unaffiliated 6%
- Media 2%
- Multilateral Organization 4%
- Civil Society 28%
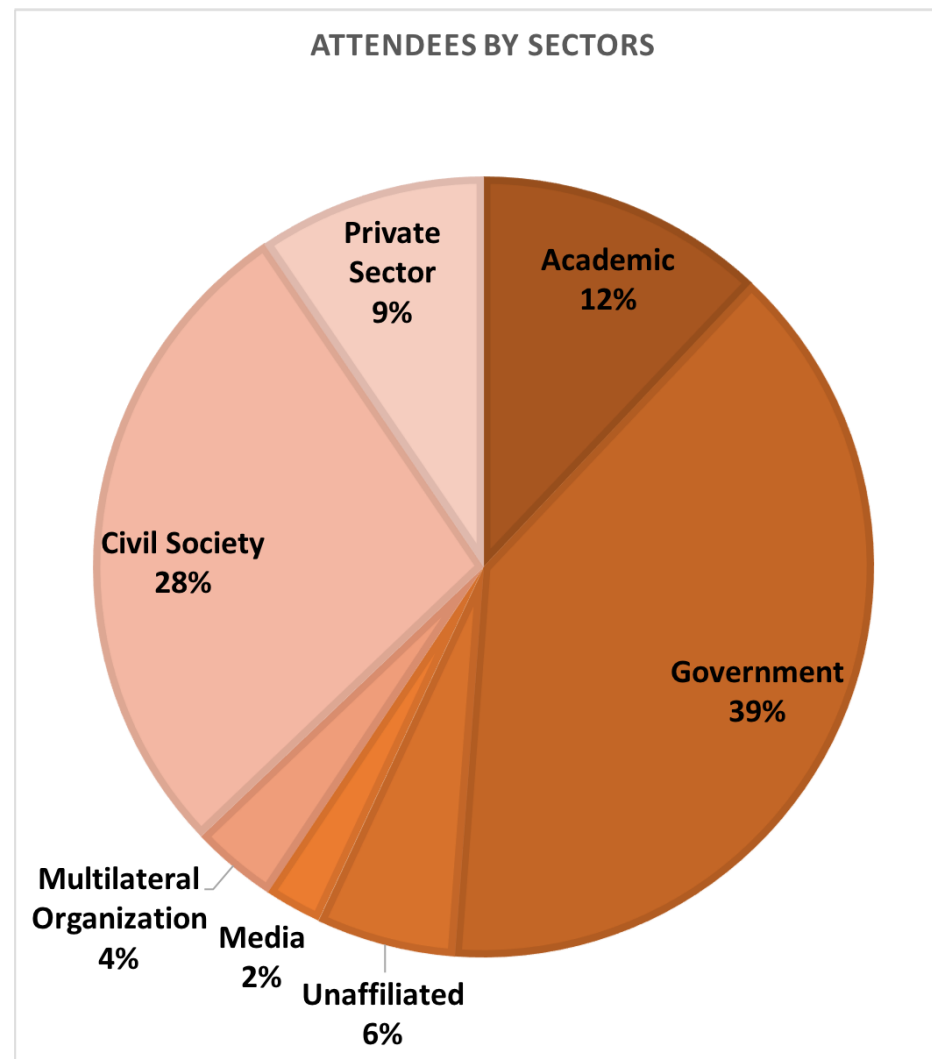
Pre-events

IODC18 had a record numbers of pre-events hosted as part of the "Open Data Week" - more than 20 events over 3 days. Events ran in English and Spanish and were curated by the community, allowing for a different types of networking and sharing. Some of the highlights:

AbreLatam

The 5th edition of the biggest open data conference in Latin America

Flickr, Youtube, Report

Open Cities

Hands on conference to discuss open data for resilient cities

Report, Blog

Research Symposium

The biggest open data academic discussion and sharing ideas

Report, Blog

Pre-events

- Data Rights Forum - [Report](#)

- La Nación Data Journalism - [Blog](#)

- National Reporting for SDG - [Report](#)

- OAS data camp

- OD4D network meeting - [Blog](#)

- Open Contracting - [Blog](#)

- Open Data Charter - [Summary blog](#)

- Open Data Leaders summit

- Open Heroines Gender do-a-thon - [Summary Report](#)

- Primer año de la Ley de Acceso a la Información Pública en Argentina

- Standards Day - [Summary Report](#)

- State of the Map

Programme

Similar to previous editions, IODC18 had tracks to guide participants through the conference.

- Spotlight Sessions - High level panels on key topics for the open data community.
- The Big Picture - Panels and debates that allow for the exploration of emerging trends and issues, ongoing challenges, and cross-cutting themes facing the broader open data community.
- Action Track - Sessions and workshops that allow for the exchange of information, interactive discussions, brainstorming sessions, case studies, roundtables, etc.
- Impact Track - Short, dynamic "Ignite" sessions showcasing concrete examples of open data in action within core open data thematic sectors.
- Regional Updates - Workshops that were organised and facilitated by the OD4D hub members, where local dialogues took place to increase regional collaboration.
- Condatos - Taking advantage of the location of the conference, it hosted the 5th ConDatos edition where government, civil society and academia from Latin America discussed high priority topics for Latin America in Spanish.

What we talked about

- Open data under threat? Taking note of political events from around the world, we discussed the political threats to open data and how to mitigate them.

- Greater data movements - How to connect the communities of open data, privacy, and ethics.

- National Statistics offices and their role of open data in the Sustainable Development Goals

- Reviewing the State of Open Data and future challenges and opportunities across sectors and geographies

- Building capacity from data literacy and future leader in open data

- The private sector and how to incorporate innovation in open data in all sectors.

What we talked about - pol.is

This IODC edition we had an online interactive discussion with participants

How it worked?

Step 1
Participants accessed the conversation on web or mobile.

Step 2
They were presented with statements on which they could vote to agree, disagree, or pass.

Step 3
If they felt their perspective wasn't already represented, they could add their own statement in the 'Share your perspective' space

Statement

I think that open data has reached a new level of maturity in the past two years
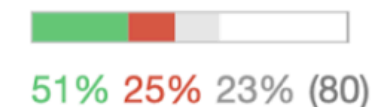
I think that the high-level governments commitments to open data are increasing
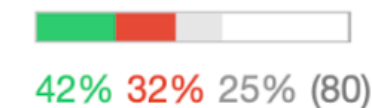
The 5-star open data scale is helpful for measuring progress
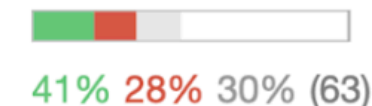
Open Data should be together with Open Source, always. Code is power.
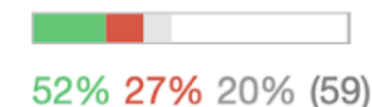
Open government is a necessary condition for open data
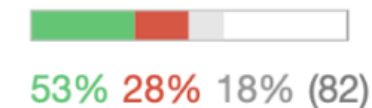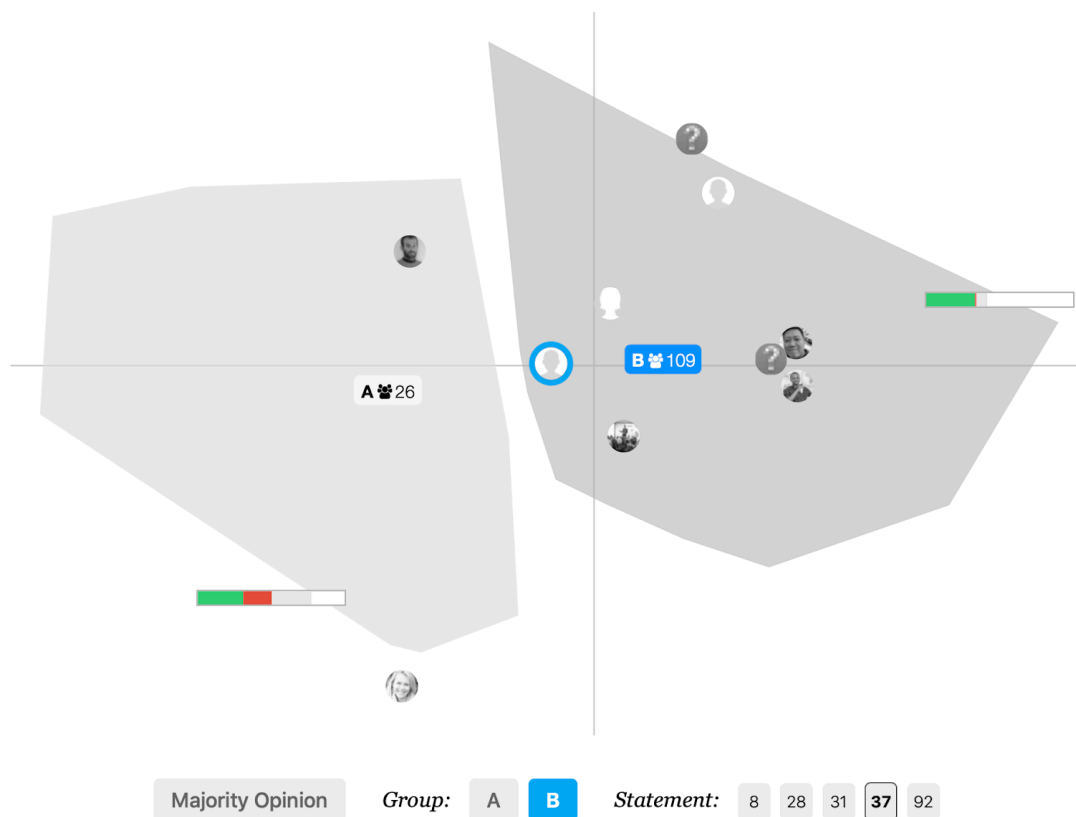
Overall

51% 25% 23% (80)

42% 32% 25% (80)

41% 28% 30% (63)

52% 27% 20% (59)

53% 28% 18% (82)

What we talked about - pol.is

Participants fell into two opinion groups that can

be broadly described as "Skeptics" (Group A) and

"Optimists" (Group B) with respect to the track

record and maturity of the open data

movement. Optimists outnumbered Skeptics by

109 to 26

See full report in the Appendix.

"From no data,

to oceans of data,

You were not prepared but,

You are already in the water

Now you must learn to swim."

(Anonymous, IODC18, Imagining Open Data Futures session)

What did we learn?

- We need to connect communities by cross-sectoral exchange of ideas and multi-stakeholder dynamics. These connections should be created between regions, social issues, and different topic related to data such as privacy and AI. We need to create ongoing dialogue and learnings between IODC editions to break silos and create network.

- We need more South to South exchange on open data that would help all parties, specifically in tackling the Sustainable Development Goals.

- Open data can't be a stand alone data topic. It already engages with other data themes such as AI and ethics, but we need to bring all together to create the foundations for the data rights movement.

- We need to create leadership in open data that would lead to economic growth and collaborations that will help bring open data to full maturity. We need more resources to do this successfully.

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What did we learn?

- While commitments to publish and use open data are on the rise in some countries, there are in decline in others. Some countries who used to champion open data, mainly from the Global North, are stagnating in open data publishing on the national level. Open government data is not under threat yet, but open data is still volatile to high-level leadership changes.

- We still don't understand the role of open data in power dynamics and how it can affect different groups. Topics like open washing and data ownership were discussed during the conference, but we still have a lot more to understand about these issues.

- While diversity and inclusion topics are on the rise, we can do a better job at attracting groups that are not only tech or good governance oriented. We need to bring in more groups who work on social problems, and see how to apply open data to it.

What did we learn in different regions?

Common challenges:

- More women and diversity is needed within practitioners of open data, in specific in countries with many languages and cultures (Sub Saharan Africa, North America, Asia)
- How to deal with identity and open data (Central Asia)
- Open data and cities (Central Asia, South and East Asia)
- Good progress development of standards (North America)
- Demand-driven approach (North America)
- Geo-political challenges – low levels of trust in government institutions make meaningful progress on open data all the more urgent (North America and Oceania)
- Concept of open is not part of traditional culture in the region (Asia, MENA)

What did we learn in different regions?

Common Opportunities:

- Open data and cities is on the rise, allow for new uses and examples of open data (Central Asia, South and East Asia)
- Good progress on the development of standards (North America)
- Inclusion – More meaningful open government efforts are needed to advance inclusion, particularly of women and traditionally marginalised groups
- Deepening the use of open data, from easy wins to long-term processes

What people thought about IODC18?

81% of the participants were very satisfied with the conference

72% now understand better the impact of open data

72% of the participants agreed that they learned from others during this IODC18

72% said that they can now better coordinate for the future work of open data

See full results in the Appendix

To the future we go!

IODC 2020 will take place in Kenya. Our goals for Kenya are:

- Connecting communities - Continue the discussion and the exchange around the role of open data in the bigger data movement, especially in regard data ethics and privacy, and understanding how it all comes together.

- Keep bringing new faces and ideas from different sectors but specifically local governments, the private sector and academia.

- Accelerate capacity building within government and civil society, not only to learn how to be data intuitive, but also to support and create local leaders that can champion open data and show its value.

- Focus in specific sectors where open data can bring more value.

To the future we go!

- Incorporate a gender lens in open data gender equity in the work of open data organisations.

- Lead by example and be open about our work, and incorporate feedback from different communities.

- Focus on building an innovative data economy and sustainable development with open data

- Keep exchanging learnings between regions by implementing the new OD4D learning strategy and State of Open Data report.

- Continue with a conference structure that allows different kinds of sessions formats.

- Make the conference even more inclusive - include prayer rooms, nursing rooms, grants for marginalised communities and safe spaces.

Organisers

Communications
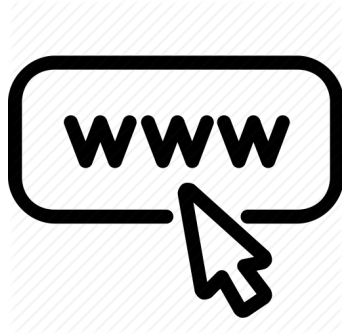
www   opendatacon.org

M   medium.com/@opendatacon

You Tube   International Open Data Conference

@opendatacon
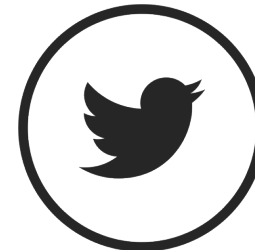
f   https://www.facebook.com/opendatacon

Programme committee

- Lucia Abelenda - Avina
- Shaida Badiee - Open Data Watch
- Abhinav Bahl - Open Government Partnership (OGP)
- Paulina Bustos - Civica Digital
- Ania Calderon - Open Data Charter
- Michael Canares - Open Data Lab Jakarta
- Natalia Carfi - Open Data Charter
- Katie Clancy - IDRC - OD4D
- Tim Davies - Open Data Services
- David Eaves - Harvard-Kennedy School
- Felipe Estefan - Omidyar Network
- Silvana Fumega - ILDA
- Joel Gurin - Center for Open Data Enterprise
- Gabriela Hadid - Omidyar Network
- Craig Hammer - World Bank
- Jeanne Holm - City of Los Angeles
- Alex Howard - Freelance Journalist
- Gonzalo Iglesias - Government of Argentina
- Michael Jarvis - Transparency and Accountability Initiative
- Danny Lammerhirt - Open Knowledge International
- Jean-Noé Landry - OpenNorth
- André Laperriere - GODAN

- Mark Levene - Government of Canada
- Yohanna Loucheur - Global Affairs Canada
- Emma Martinho-Truswell - Oxford Insights
- Maurice McNaughton - Caribbean Open institute
- Mike Mora - OAS
- Christina Morales - Government of Spain
- Arturo Muente-Kunigami - Inter-American Development Bank
- Nnenna Nwakanma - Web Foundation
- Georg Neumann - Open Contracting
- Beth Noveck - GovLab
- Muchiri Nyaggah - Africa Open Data Network (AODN)
- Anders Pedersen - Natural Resource Governance Institute
- Chimeng Peng - Government of Taiwan
- Fernando Perini - IDRC - OD4D
- Stephanie Carroll Rainie - University of Arizona
- Katelyn Rogers - Open Knowledge International
- Mor Rubinstein - Open Heroines / 360Giving
- Ana Sofia Ruiz Schmidt - Open Contracting - Hivos
- Lejla Sadiku - UNDP
- Nancy Salem - Access to Knowledge for Development
- Teresa Scassa - University of Ottawa
- Fabrizio Scrollini - ILDA

Programme committee

- Jenna Slotin - United Nations Foundation
- Fiona Smith - Open Data Institute
- Salvador Luis Soriano - Government of Spain
- Abdoul Malick Tapsoba - Government of Burkina Faso
- Philip Thigo - Government of Kenya
- Yeama Thompson - Open Data Government, Sierra Leone
- Katherine Townsend - Africa Open Data Conference
- Barbara Ubaldi - OECD
- Kate Vang - One
- Stefaan Verhulst - GovLab
- Stephen Walker - OD4D
- John Wonderlich - Sunlight Foundation
- Khairil Yusof - Sinar Project Malaysia
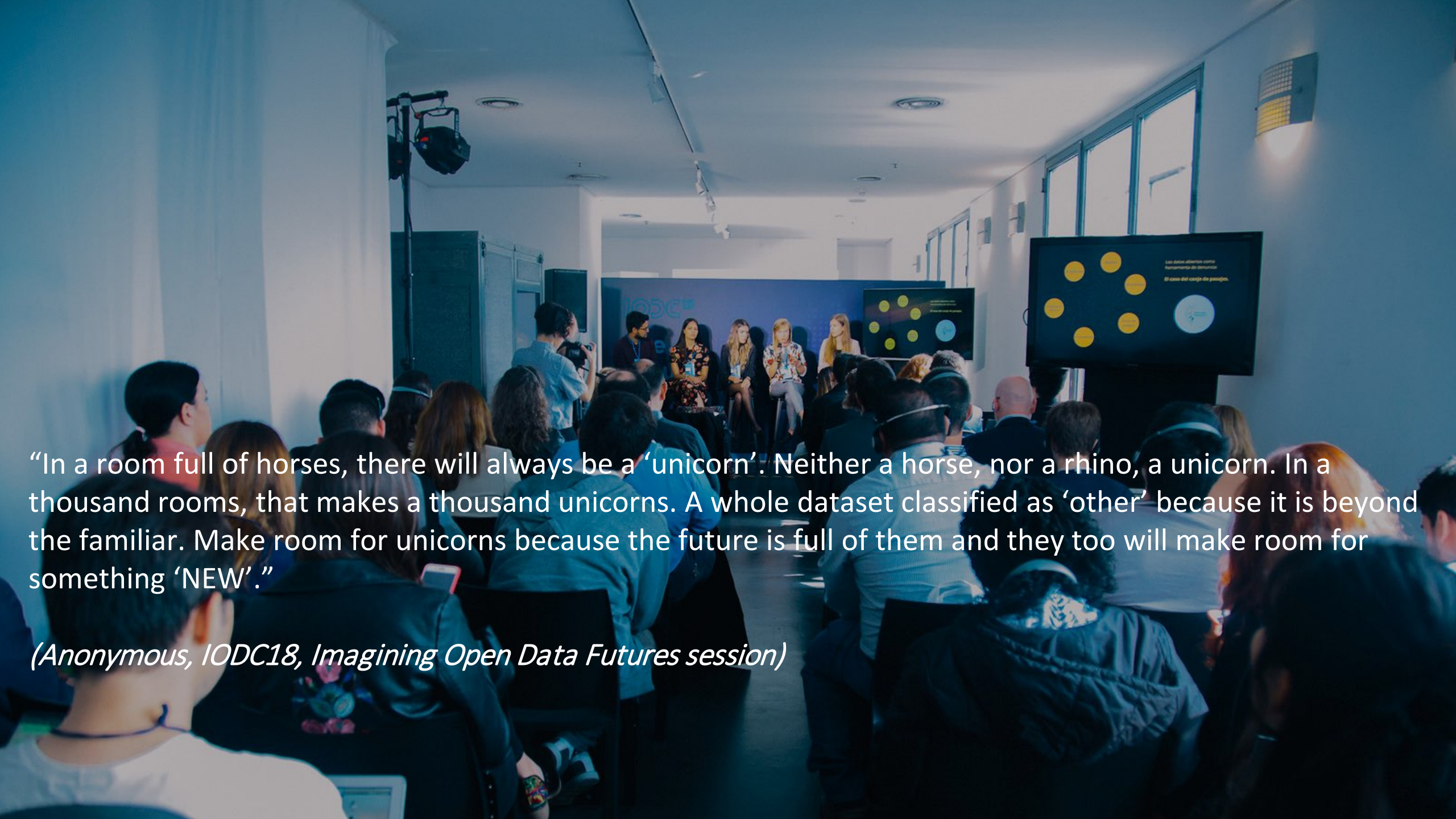
"In a room full of horses, there will always be a 'unicorn'. Neither a horse, nor a rhino, a unicorn. In a thousand rooms, that makes a thousand unicorns. A whole dataset classified as 'other' because it is beyond the familiar. Make room for unicorns because the future is full of them and they too will make room for something 'NEW'."

(Anonymous, IODC18, Imagining Open Data Futures session)

Appendix

Pol.is

What is Pol.is?

Polis is an open source algorithm-assisted conversation tool.

Polis identifies areas of consensus and divisiveness in a conversation.

Polis is currently used to inform decision making in governments, universities and industry.

How does Polis analyse the voting data?

As votes accumulate, Pol.is uses machine learning methods to uncover patterns in real-time—mapping out the entire conversation by visualising correlations between opinions and participants, clustering participants into opinion groups, and surfacing areas of consensus and divisiveness.

Pol.is

Results from IODC2018:

Participants: 169

Votes cast: 5518

Statements submitted: 115

Pol.is

Who participated?

The 169 participants are a relatively small and non-

random portion of the total IODC, which exceeded

1500. Nonetheless, the group roughly mirrored the

overall demographics of the event.

I am a woman

34% 42% 22% (106)

I live in Asia

6% 63% 30% (106)
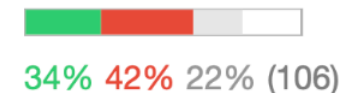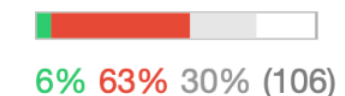
I live in North America

16% 55% 27% (106)
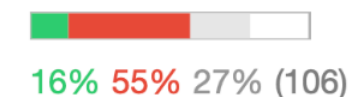
I live in Latin America and the Caribbean

29% 46% 23% (107)

I live in Europe

23% 45% 30% (107)
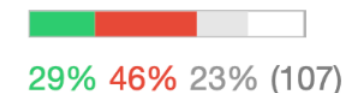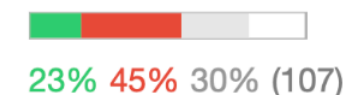
I work in civil society / advocacy

41% 29% 29% (103)

I work in academia

13% 56% 30% (106)
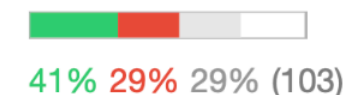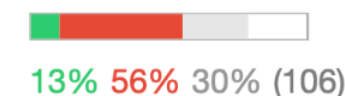
I work for government (any level)

21% 55% 23% (103)

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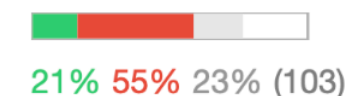
Skeptics (Group A) and Optimists (Group B) disagreed mostly on statements about the ambitions, scope, measurement,

maturity
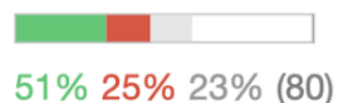
Statement	Overall	Group A	Group B
I think that open data has reached a new level of maturity in the past two years	51% 25% 23% (80)	13% 56% 30% (23)	66% 12% 21% (57)
I think that the high-level governments commitments to open data are increasing	42% 32% 25% (80)	8% 60% 30% (23)	56% 21% 22% (57)
The 5-star open data scale is helpful for measuring progress	41% 28% 30% (63)	15% 68% 15% (19)	52% 11% 36% (44)
Open Data should be together with Open Source, always. Code is power.	52% 27% 20% (59)	18% 68% 12% (16)	65% 11% 23% (43)
Open government is a necessary condition for open data	53% 28% 18% (82)	25% 62% 12% (24)	65% 13% 20% (58)
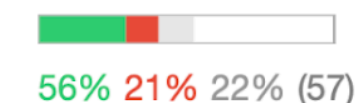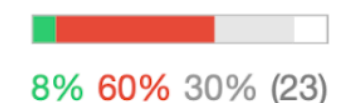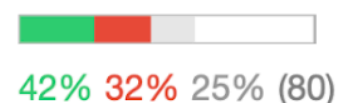
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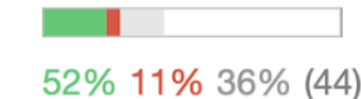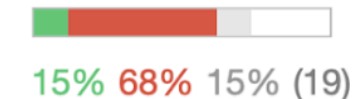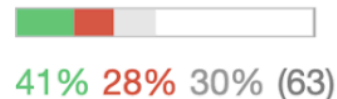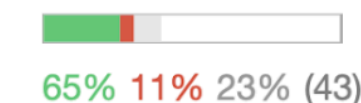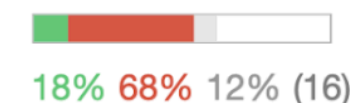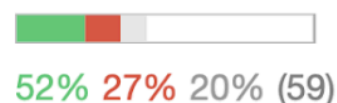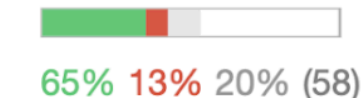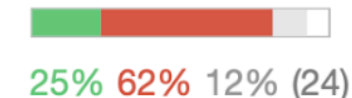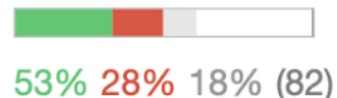
In contrast, they generally agreed on the need for better coordination and institutionalisation of open data practices by govern

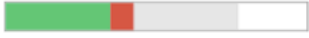| Statement	Overall	Group A	Group B
A significant amount of government data is not available to the public yet, and is rarely in an open format. we need more work	89% 6% 4% (49)	86% 6% 6% (15)	91% 5% 2% (34)
National Statistical Offices need to be an integral part of the open data initiatives	88% 4% 6% (72)	78% 13% 8% (23)	93% 0% 6% (49)
Open data initiatives need to be part of a broader frame that ties many (government) data-related topics together.	87% 3% 9% (66)	76% 4% 19% (21)	93% 2% 4% (45)
We need a stronger institutionalization of open data policies	85% 2% 11% (68)	73% 8% 17% (23)	91% 0% 8% (45)
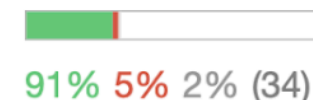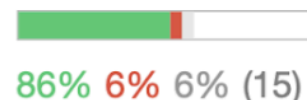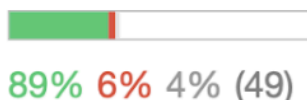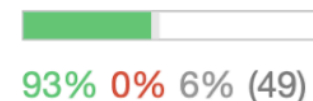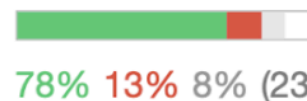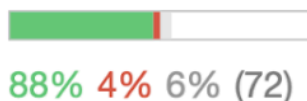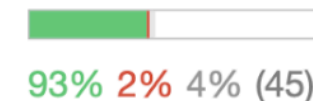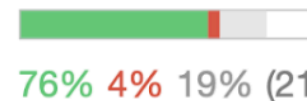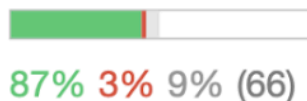
Pol.is
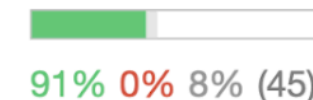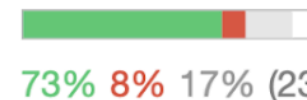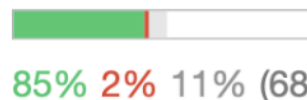
And about high-level strategies, priorities, and challenges for the community.

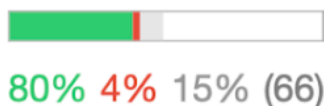| Statement	Overall	Group A	Group B
How open data is published is as important as its content. Machine readable datasets facilitates open data adoption and increase its re-use.	85% 4% 9% (62)	68% 10% 21% (19)	93% 2% 4% (43)
We don't really know who uses open data	61% 19% 18% (71)	57% 14% 28% (21)	64% 22% 14% (50)
We need to expand the current peer-support networks to be more inclusive of different regions, topics, and languages	81% 1% 17% (64)	75% 5% 20% (20)	84% 0% 15% (44)
We need a common framework to systematize learning from more mature open data communities present at IODC	74% 7% 18% (70)	45% 10% 45% (20)	86% 6% 8% (50)

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And al... ...number of new priorities landscape
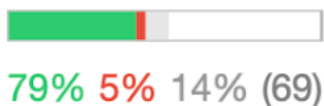
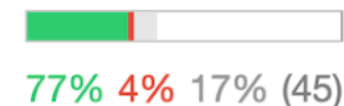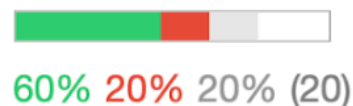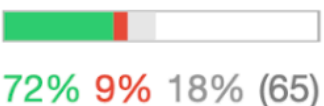| Statement	Overall	Group A	Group B
Los datos abiertos electorales son fundamentales para mejorar la confianza en la democracia por parte de la ciudadanía	80% 4% 15% (66)	68% 4% 27% (22)	86% 4% 9% (44)
We need to map the technical competencies and relevant skills required to advance the production and use of open data.	79% 5% 14% (69)	57% 14% 28% (21)	89% 2% 8% (48)
We need to prioritize the adoption of a common standard and methodology for organization identifiers.	72% 9% 18% (65)	60% 20% 20% (20)	77% 4% 17% (45)
Need use cases at municipal level of students and their teachers using open Data to apply critical thinking to solve real problems.	77% 5% 17% (35)	46% 7% 46% (13)	95% 4% 0% (22)
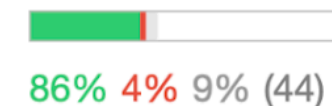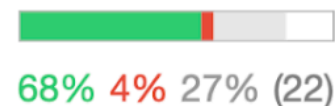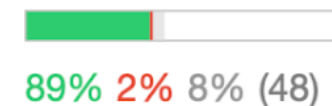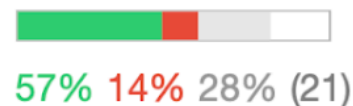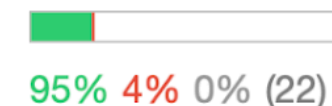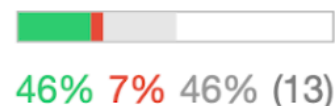
Survey Results

- We had 101 replies out of 1500 participants, which are 6% of all attendees.

  - 81% participants were very satisfied with the conference

    - 45.5% Very Satisfied

    - 35.64% satisfied

Appendix

Survey results

- What did you do at IODC18?

  - 72% of you agreed that they learned from others this IODC18

  - 72% now understand better the impact of open data

  - 72% said that they can now better coordinate for the future work of open data

  - 73% think we should keep IODC without a registration fee

Appendix
Survey results

- What you think is the most valuable of IODC18:

  - 33% - Networking

  - 31.5% - The diversity of sessions and speakers

  - 28% - Learning, discussing and sharing

- What did not work at the conference:

  - The food

  - The overlap of sessions

  - Panel format