OpenBudgets.eu

OpenBudgets.eu is an EU-funded project, aiming to support journalists, civil society organisations, NGOs, citizens and public administrations, by providing an overview of public budget and spending data as well as related tools and stories, thus serving advocacy and fiscal transparency objectives.

Openness and transparency can act as a disincentive to corruption. The current lack of open budget and open transaction data makes it very hard for citizens and other stakeholders to get an overview on public spending. The comparison of budgets between administrative regions and other government levels proves even more difficult.

The OpenBudgets.eu platform is designed for public administrations, citizens, NGOs, media organisations, public service companies, and stakeholders working with fiscal data. The key challenge is to provide a scalable platform that is easy-to-use, flexible, and attractive for all these different types of users.

Tool: Cooking Budgets

Budgets, in themselves, have little to say. Corruption and mismanagement happens most often outside budget data, in schemes and shadow dealings which cannot be unveiled by analyzing numbers. Investigators need in-depth knowledge of these practices to identify them when they see them and possibly automate their detection.
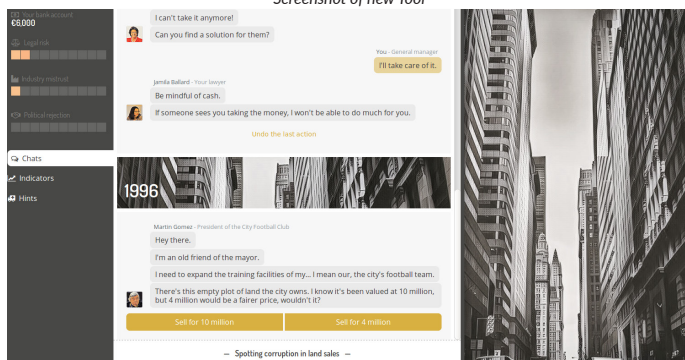
The collection of tutorials range from the easiest schemes committed by public officials, such as using a professional credit card for personal use, to the most complex ones, such as using a combination of asset buy-back and emphyteutic lease to finance a third-party organization stealthily.

Screenshot of Cooking Budgets

Screenshot of new Tool

Cooking Budgets is a collection of worst-practices by public officials to enrich themselves or otherwise mismanage public funds. Each practice is abstracted from real-world examples into a "recipe" which is easy to read and comprehend.

The tutorials are accompanied by another tool, to launch in March 2017, which will offer users an interactive exploration of the schemes by which public officials mismanage funds.

*Cooking Budgets is a tool that has been developed by J++ on behalf of the Horizon 2020 funded research project **OpenBudgets.eu**. Contact: Nicolas Kayser-Bril - nkb@jplusplus.org*