# cynaxis

data commons initiative in Cyprus

We are Dimitris, Neofytos, and Chrystalleni

We can be reached at [hello@]cynaxis.org and on the Matrix network at matrix.to/#/#opendatacyprus:matrix.org

# cynaxis is

an umbrella project

unincorporated

a call to action

" cynaxis is an informal Cyprus-based initiative with a focus on improving civic access to publicly- and privately-held information. We hold that every person should have unencumbered and equal access to the information that shapes their life and their community. We act by amassing data and building civic applications, and by carrying out research in this area.

cynaxis has its roots in the parliament monitor openpatata. openpatata sprang in August 2014 of a desire to shed light on the business of the Cypriot parliamentâ€"what is very much inaccessible to the uninitiatedâ€"and preceded neavouli, a crowdsourced candidate database, and continuing inquiry into open data in Cyprus. "

- dabbled in open data and open government with *openpatata* in 2014

- *openpatata* was (by my own reckoning) the first parliament monitor in Cyprus, mirroring [openparliament.ca](openparliament.ca), [theyvoteforyou.org.au](theyvoteforyou.org.au), etc.

- an ambitious project -- tried to cover many different fronts incl. data harvesting and redistribution, info access

- far too many tasks for one person, did eventually give up on the website and resolved to building smaller individual components

- the harvester survives and parliament data are updated semi-regularly -- been meaning to set-up cron remotely for my scrapers but haven't got around to it yet (cf. morph.io)

- the *openpatata* dataset contains data on MPs and MP questions and bills, and supplementary cataloguing information

- data generally follow the Popolo standard (www.popoloproject.com) and are distributed as a data package (frictionlessdata.io) in the JSON format (fig. 1)

```python
import json
from datapackage import Package

pkg = Package('https://raw.githubusercontent.com/openpatata/'
              'openpatata-data/export/datapackage.json')
mps = json.loads(pkg.get_resource('mps').raw_read())

for mp in mps:
    print(mp['name']['el'])
```

*Figure 1: Printing all of the MPs' names in Greek using Python*

- data currently in use in *erotiseis* ([erotiseis.cynaxis.org](erotiseis.cynaxis.org))

- openpatata light with only the question data

- nifty little single-page app written in JavaScript

- affords searching by number, date, author and the actual content w/ timeline of results

- lots of different ways the results could be visualised

- think two-way interaction

Settlements in MP questions with query
{"by.mp_id": "myrianthous-ilias"}

Settlements that have received no mentions are coloured in yellow.
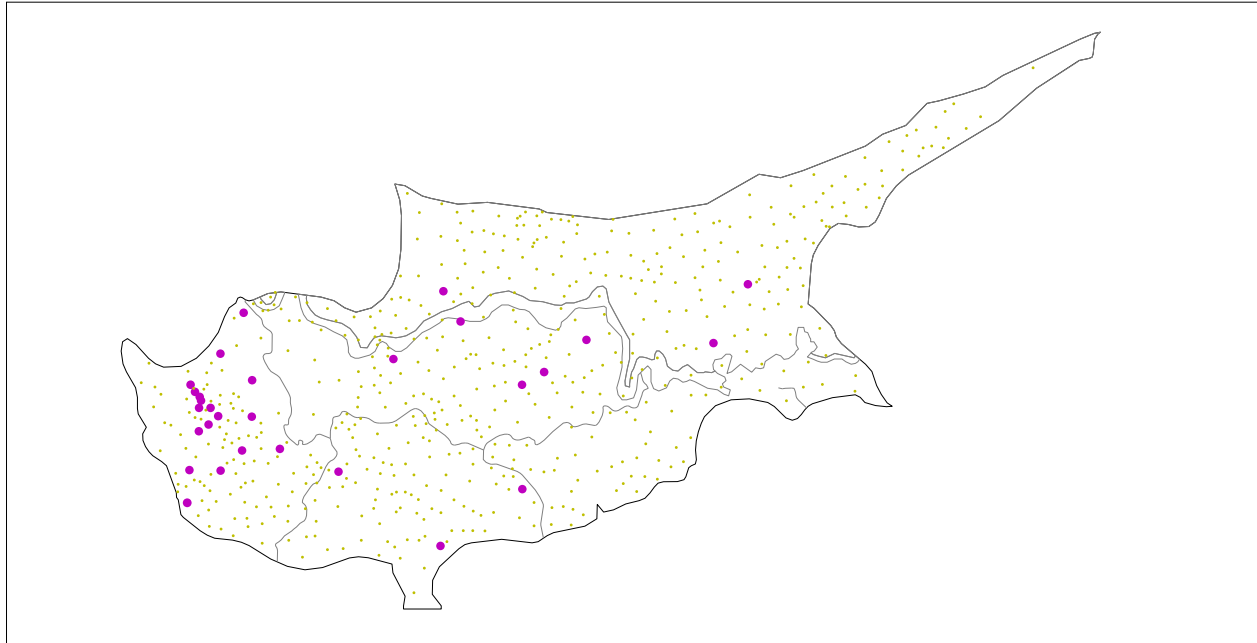Marker size represents the number of questions (max: 784; max shown: 17).

*Figure 2: Mapping settlements in MP questions*

- D and N met on ELLAKcy and teamed up on *neavouli* ([neavouli.eu](neavouli.eu)): data wiki for 2016 election candidates

- shared values: openness, transparency, civic engagement

- contributed data made available in variety of machine-readable formats

- fork of MySociety's YourNextRepresentative, a generic platform for crowdsourcing candidate data

- a moderate success

- we reached out to media sites/newspapers and parties and (small) party reps, candidates and public contributed data to *neavouli*

- peaked 367 views and 2k pages and 10k hits on election day

- established a working relationship with MySociety in the months leading up to the election and contributed improvements upstream

- *neavouli* is at the juncture of open data and crowdsourcing (first of its kind in Cyprus)

- however it did not reach critical mass

- was hoping to assemble team of data volunteers

- outreach: media were unresponsive

- bias imbalance: party reps presented candidates in all too positive a light/reproduced promo material

- how to mitigate?

- risk of introducing own personal/ingroup bias if we were to edit

- cf. provenance: sourcing should be extensive

- party info was inaccessible and incomplete

- parties did not invest in individual candidates

- incongruence between what we've been aiming at and the way political parties approach elections

# on open-data discourse in Cyprus

SomeoneHasToDoThis.net
Releasing information as power: augmenting Open Data discourse through art
https://mypads.framapad.org/mypads/?/mypads/group/observatory-7j10087bb/pad/view/open-data-abstract-leonardo-2lcnf78c

# what we aspire to

- more open data/government projects
  - FoI request platform

- more data analysis and visualisation

- continuous investigation and monitoring of relevant legislation

- open data art -- public installations

- keeping tabs on open data re-use
  - app0