

# Power to the people: Big Data for government transparency

Team Blue

**Our team**

**Introduction**

**Looking for the  
State of the art**

**Generally  
speaking...**

**Suggestion**

**Questions?**

## Blue Team

*Team blue is here... to cure your blues!*



### Members:

- Niklas BEIERL from Passau
- Roxane DEBORD from Lyon
- Andrea ANFUSO from Milano

SEMINAR 1  
22-26.02.2021

PASSAU



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To what purposes is Big Data used by governments?

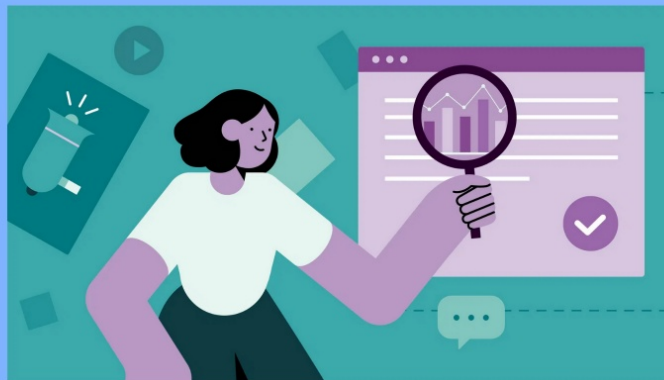


image credit : Facebook

Definitions

Importance

# Trust and transparency

## About Trust

- A citizen's approval and support of : political institutions (Government and Parliament), political decisions, political representatives
- Often considered as an important democratic value

## About Transparency

- "The quality of being done in an open way without secrets" - Cambridge Dictionary
- A transparent system provides its data in a way that it is accessible and easily understandable.
- **Transparency** enables **accountability** which leads to **trust**
- It is easier to trust if you can trust less

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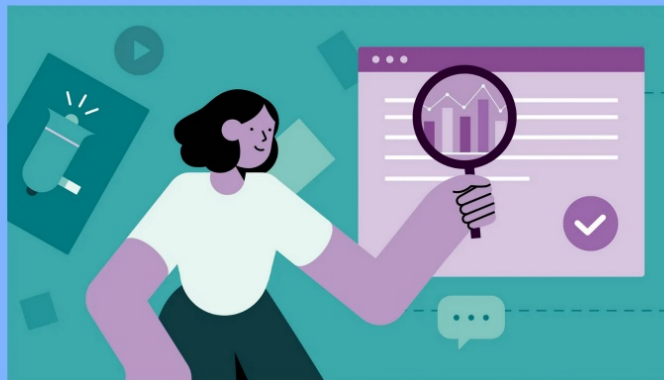


image credit : Facebook

Definitions

Importance

# Why is government transparency important?

- Political trust is a key value when it comes to Democracy
- Trust entices citizens into being more involved in the political sphere and willing to abide by the laws etc.
- Lack of transparency entails distrust among the people



image credits : AdobeStock



source : <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/feb/15/french-distrust-vaccines-politicians>



→ Transparency within public institutions would be beneficial on every end of the political ground



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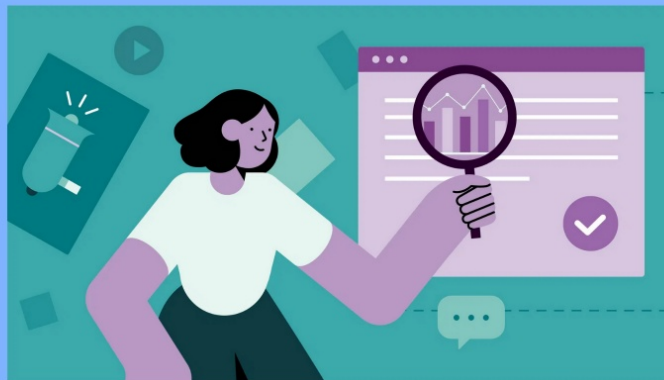


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Existing projects:

[votewatch.eu](http://votewatch.eu)

**Abgeordneten  
watch**

**Offener  
Haushalt**

# Votewatch.eu

- Report actions of each parliamentarian
- What happens in my country?
- Good news, but are we done with this?



Challenges ahead for women's rights: more than 25 years after the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

**Vote details**

vote: resolution (as a whole)

For **505** (73%)  
 Against **109** (16%)  
 Abstentions **76** (11%)  
 Required to pass **308**

Date of vote:	11.02.2021	Total members:	703
ID:	6525	Voters:	690
Final vote:	Yes	Didn't vote:	0
Group cohesion:	86%	Absent:	0

Policy area: Gender equality  
 Type of vote: Motion for resolution  
 Procedure: Non-Legislative  
 Majority formed by: [Logos of political groups]

See how Member States voted in Council  
 View text on the Parliament site

Share vote [Social media icons]

See other votes on the same dossier: 1

Group	For	Against	Abstentions	Total present	Total absent	Total non voters	Total members	Cohesion
S&D	143	0	0	143	1	1	145	100
The Left	37	0	1	38	1	0	39	96.05
NI	19	4	3	26	0	1	27	59.62

**DO YOU NEED TAILORED ANALYSIS OR TRAINING?**

Contact us to save your time. Write us at: [secretariat@votewatcheurope.eu](mailto:secretariat@votewatcheurope.eu)

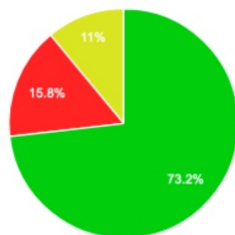
**Latest Reports**

- Special highlights from EU decision making: sustainable finance and Nord Stream 2 project
- Maastricht University joins our selective group of users of advanced EU political analytics!
- The right to disconnect: Winners and losers of the EP decisions
- VoteWatch report: How did Italian MEPs vote on taxation issues?
- Romanian elections – key take aways for the EU
- Uncover which MEPs can help you advance your agenda. Part 7: Health policy

# Challenges ahead for women's rights: more than 25 years after the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

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# Looking for.. The State of the Art

Existing projects:

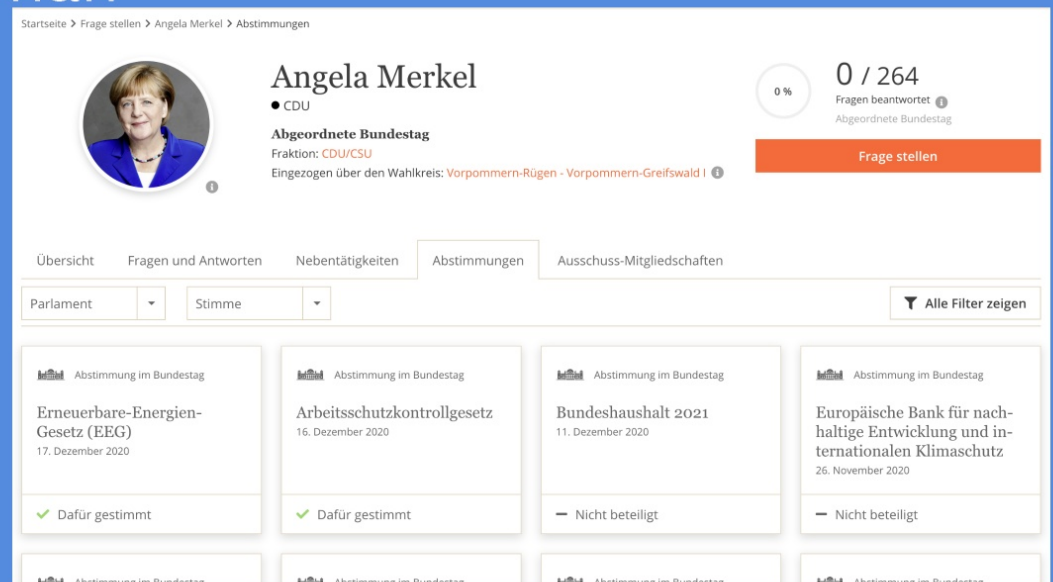
[votewatch.eu](http://votewatch.eu)

**Abgeordneten  
watch**

**Offener  
Haushalt**


# Abgeordneten watch

- A new form of communication
- Only available in German



The screenshot shows the profile page for Angela Merkel on the Abgeordneten watch website. The page is titled "Abgeordnete Bundestag" and lists her as a member of the CDU/CSU faction. It displays a navigation menu with options like "Übersicht", "Fragen und Antworten", "Nebentätigkeiten", "Abstimmungen", and "Ausschuss-Mitgliedschaften". Below the menu, there are filters for "Parlament" and "Stimme". The main content area shows a grid of voting records, including "Erneuerbare-Energien-Gesetz (EEG)", "Arbeitsschutzkontrollgesetz", "Bundshaushalt 2021", and "Europäische Bank für nachhaltige Entwicklung und internationalen Klimaschutz". Each record shows the date of the vote and the member's status (e.g., "Dafür gestimmt" or "Nicht beteiligt").

Startseite > Frage stellen > Angela Merkel > Abstimmungen

 **Angela Merkel**  
• CDU  
**Abgeordnete Bundestag**  
Fraktion: CDU/CSU  
Eingezogen über den Wahlkreis: Vorpommern-Rügen - Vorpommern-Greifswald I

0 / 264  
Fragen beantwortet  
Abgeordnete Bundestag

Frage stellen

Übersicht Fragen und Antworten Nebentätigkeiten **Abstimmungen** Ausschuss-Mitgliedschaften

Parlament Stimm

Alle Filter zeigen

Abstimmung im Bundestag	Abstimmung im Bundestag	Abstimmung im Bundestag	Abstimmung im Bundestag
<b>Erneuerbare-Energien-Gesetz (EEG)</b> 17. Dezember 2020 ✓ Dafür gestimmt	<b>Arbeitsschutzkontrollgesetz</b> 16. Dezember 2020 ✓ Dafür gestimmt	<b>Bundshaushalt 2021</b> 11. Dezember 2020 — Nicht beteiligt	<b>Europäische Bank für nachhaltige Entwicklung und internationalen Klimaschutz</b> 26. November 2020 — Nicht beteiligt



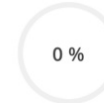
# Angela Merkel

● CDU

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0 / 264

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**Abstimmungen**

Ausschuss-Mitgliedschaften

Parlament



Stimme



Alle Filter zeigen

Abstimmung im Bundestag

## Erneuerbare-Energien-Gesetz (EEG)

17. Dezember 2020

✓ Dafür gestimmt

Abstimmung im Bundestag

## Arbeitsschutzkontrollgesetz

16. Dezember 2020

✓ Dafür gestimmt

Abstimmung im Bundestag

## Bundeshaushalt 2021

11. Dezember 2020

— Nicht beteiligt

Abstimmung im Bundestag

## Europäische Bank für nachhaltige Entwicklung und internationalen Klimaschutz

26. November 2020

— Nicht beteiligt

Abstimmung im Bundestag

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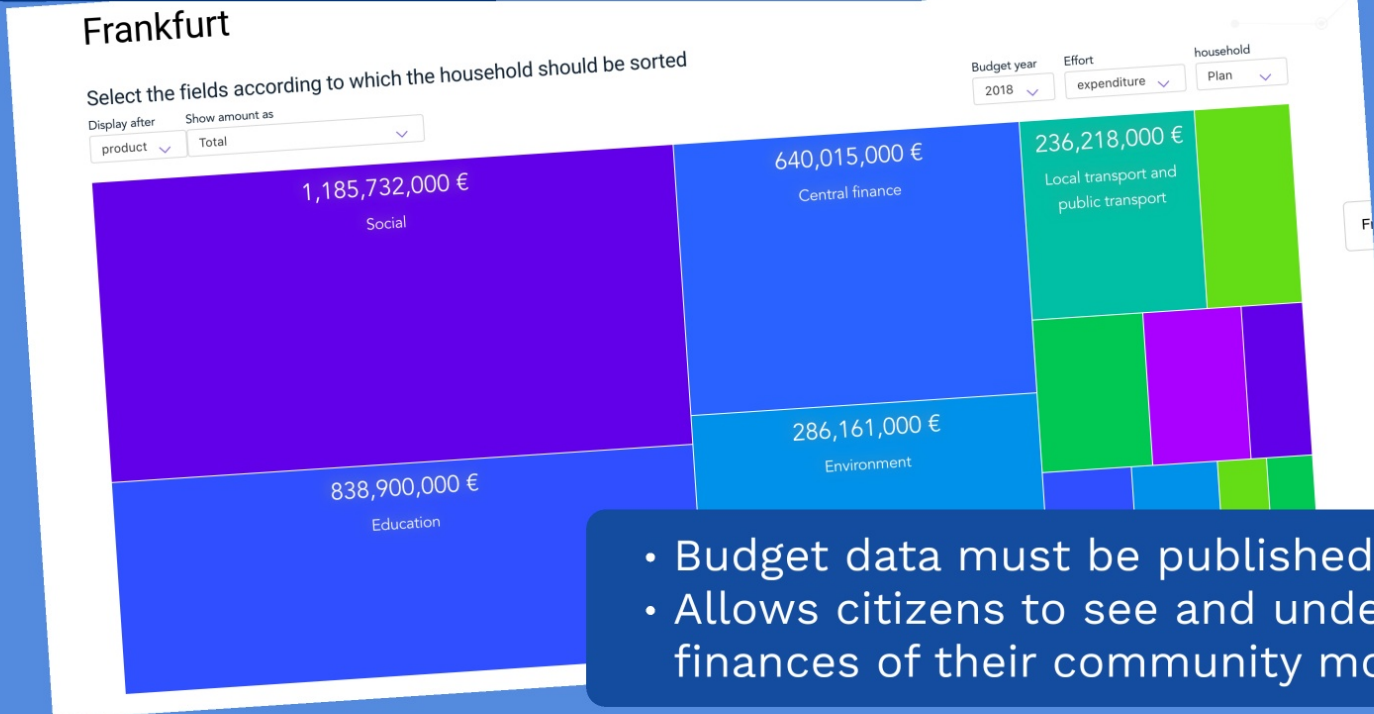
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**Abgeordneten  
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# Offener Haushalt



- Budget data must be published by law... but?
- Allows citizens to see and understand the finances of their community more easily

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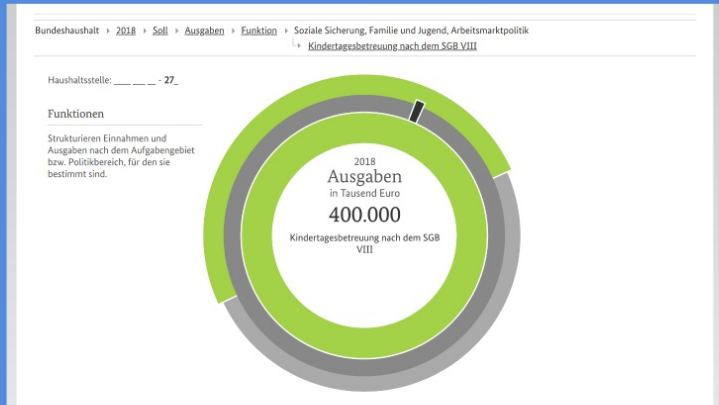
In order to effectively promote trust and accountability, public data needs to be...

... tangible

... safe to  
publish

... trustworthy

# Tangibility



Haushaltsstelle: \_\_\_\_ - 27\_

### Funktionen

Strukturieren Einnahmen und Ausgaben nach dem Aufgabengebiet bzw. Politikbereich, für den sie bestimmt sind.



# Nürnberg

Wählen Sie aus, nach welchen Feldern der Haushalt sortiert sein soll

Anzeige nach

Administrative Classification ▾

Direction

Aufwand ▾

Jahr

2018 ▾

Administrative Classification > Aufwend. für Sach- u. Dienstleistungen > Kommunale Kindergärten





---

3,00€	231.750,32€	217.646,9
gung/Belehrung	Aufwendungen für Betriebsstrom	Unterhalt Gebäudetechn (640)

<p>3,00€</p> <p>gung/Belehrung</p>	<p>231.750,32€</p> <p>Aufwendungen für Betriebsstrom</p> <p>... / 697* = 332,50€</p> <p><small>*Number of pre-schools in Nuremburg according to:  <a href="https://online-service.nuernberg.de/elternportal/de/einrichtungen">https://online-service.nuernberg.de/elternportal/de/einrichtungen</a></small></p>	<p>217.646,9</p> <p>Unterhalt Gebäudetechn</p> <p>(640)</p>
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# Tangibility in Big Data Terms

## Resolution (Volume)

- Relating with "national scale" is often hard
- Influence on national politics can feel / be out of reach

## Contextualization (Variety)

- Very contextual... (pun intended)
- In our example:
  - Compare expenditures to similarly sized city
  - Add the number pre-schools / children living in the city

## Timeliness (Velocity)

- More recent data has a natural tendency to be more relevant
- Historical data is often none the less important

## Interpretability (Visualization)

- "Electricity bill / pre-school" vs. "Pearson correlation coefficient between the Gini coefficient and GDP"
- A picture is worth a thousand words

In order to effectively promote trust and accountability, public data needs to be...

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# Trustworthiness

Avoiding conflicts of interest:

Certification or collection through independent Institutions / NGOs.

Collecting accurate data often only feasible if institutions cooperate  
(Freedom of Information Laws)

Increasing collection frequency / applying plausibility checks (Veracity)



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# Further considerations

Privacy concerns and regulations

Unintended usage

E.g.: "Benchmarking" public institutions

*"When a measure becomes a target, it ceases to be a good measure."* - Marilyn Strathern (a.k.a Goodhart's law)

Need for Access Controls?

It depends...



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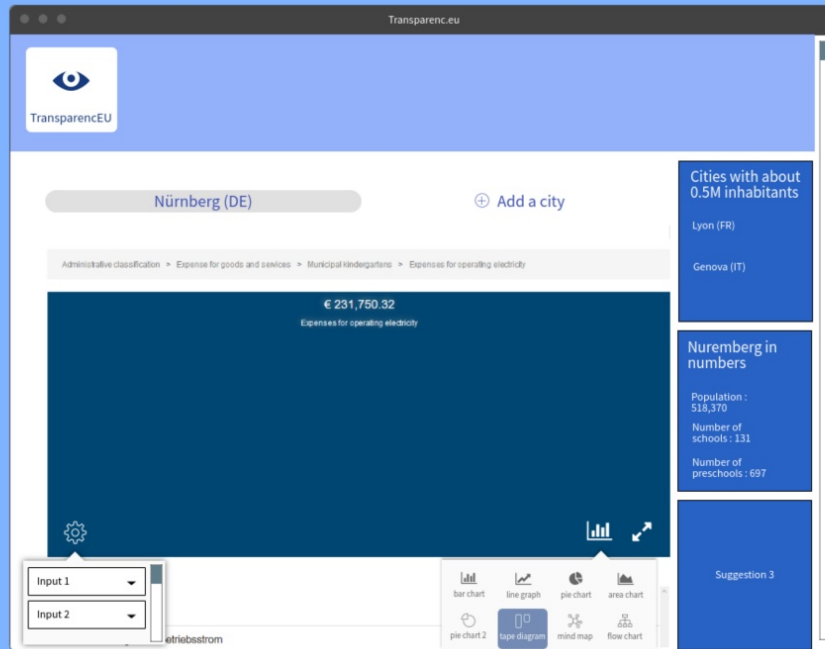
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## UI Mockup of our idea



The screenshot displays the TransparencEU website interface. At the top left is the logo with an eye icon and the text "TransparencEU". The main header shows "Nürnberg (DE)" and a button "Add a city". Below this is a breadcrumb trail: "Administrative classification > Expense for goods and services > Municipal kindergartens > Expenses for operating electricity". The central area features a large dark blue box with the value "€ 231,750.32" and the label "Expenses for operating electricity". To the right, there are three stacked blue panels: "Cities with about 0.5M inhabitants" (listing Lyon (FR) and Genova (IT)), "Nuremberg in numbers" (listing Population: 518,370, Number of schools: 131, and Number of preschools: 697), and "Suggestion 3". At the bottom, there is a settings gear icon, two input fields labeled "Input 1" and "Input 2", and a toolbar with icons for "bar chart", "line graph", "pie chart", "area chart", "pie chart 2", "tape diagram", "mind map", and "flow chart". The word "etriebsstrom" is partially visible at the bottom left.

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## Interested? Want to get involved?

- Join Projects / start your own!
- Lots of data is out there!
- Don't be afraid to ask!
- Know your rights! (Fight for them!)

Thank you!



Questions?



[okfn.org/network](https://okfn.org/network)

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