

The Compass of Transparency

Submitted by the Department for Public Administration

Department for Public Administration

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Size of organisation

100-500, people involved: 1-5

Type of sector

Public administration, modernisation,
institutional affairs, reform

Key words of project

Transparency, Open Government,
eGovernment, citizen engagement,
interinstitutional cooperation, ICT, social
media



The compass of transparency (www.magellanopa.it/bussola) is an automated online instrument that gives citizens the possibility to monitor in real time the implementation of all data and information requirements imposed by Italian law on the websites of more than 20,000 Italian public administrations (PAs). It aims to support government, through the direct involvement of citizens, in the continuous quality improvement of online and digital services. It is a system of rules, processes and technologies that combines the three basic principles of Open Government: transparency of public administrations; citizen participation; and collaboration.

The compass yields returns in terms of increased efficiency, reduction of corruption and lower costs across the whole Italian public sector. The social collaboration of citizens is extremely important, as a different kind of verification system would be very slow and expensive given the high number of PAs. Therefore, the socially-friendly control can be seen as a new collaborative relationship between citizens and administrations, becoming a highly efficient tool.

The heart of the system is a validation mechanism, composed of software sensors and mathematical algorithms, with the ability to analyse PA websites in

both real time and at certain intervals. The analysis is performed by comparing the found data and information with contents defined and standardised by the laws of transparency and guidelines on websites. The data is then collected in a data warehouse which, through dedicated interfaces, is able to provide different types of users with results on the transparency compliance of all institutional websites.

The most important functionalities of the compass, all of them being publicly accessible and multilingual, are the following:

- checking the site;
- comparing the sites of the different PAs;
- ranking between public administrations thanks to a set of ranking features for transparency;
- giving your opinion in a completely anonymous way via logging in to the compass through social networks;
- graphic dashboard giving an overview of the transparency process at national and regional level.

Transferability of the 'Compass of Transparency' to other administrative systems is fully assured by its simple methodology, terms of rules, processes and technologies.