

EU implementation of the G8 Open Data Charter

Introduction

In June 2013, the EU endorsed the G8 Open Data Charter and, with other G8 members, committed to implementing a number of open data activities in the G8 members' Collective Action Plan.

Commitment 1 of the Collective Action Plan required each member to publish by October 2013 details of how they would implement the Open Data Charter according to their individual national frameworks.

Thanks to the many initiatives already adopted at EU level, including the revised Directive on the re-use of public sector information, the EU Open Data Portal and the new Commission rules on the re-use of its own documents, compliance with the G8 Open Data Charter and para. 47 of the June 2013 G8 communique is fully consistent with existing EU policy.

The following details the EU's on-going implementation of the G8 Open Data Charter.

Open data context

The European Union has for years been stressing the goal of opening up data as a resource for innovative products and services and as a means of addressing societal challenges and fostering government transparency. Indeed, better use of data, including government data, can help to power the economy, serving as a basis for a wide range of information products and services and improving the efficiency of the public sector and of different segments of industry. The European Union aims to be at the forefront of public administrations in terms of openness in relation to its own documents. Access to documents held by the three major institutions (Parliament, Council and Commission) is governed by Regulation (EC) no 1049/2001. This Regulation is currently under revision to bring all the EU institutions, bodies, offices and agencies within its scope, in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty of Lisbon.

In December 2011, the European Commission presented a comprehensive open data package, looking at the potential for further opening up data, in particular data produced by the public sector. The key element of this package is to reinforce the main legal instrument applicable across the 28 EU Member States, Directive 2003/98/EC on reuse of public sector information ('the PSI Directive'). The revised Directive entered into force in June this year.

As a rule, the European Commission has allowed reuse of its documents for commercial and non-commercial purposes at no charge since 2006. In 2011, it also engaged itself to work towards

providing documents in machine-readable format, where possible and appropriate, and to set up an Open Data Portal to promote the accessibility and reuse of this information. In December 2012, the European Union Open Data Portal was launched. It provides access to data held by the Commission and other EU institutions and bodies.

For research funded by its funding programmes, the EU requires scientific publications resulting from funding in selected areas to be made openly accessible after an embargo period. An electronic infrastructure, federating existing open access repositories in the Member States and offering additional services, has been created. In its future funding programme, Horizon 2020, this will apply to all areas. Furthermore, pilot actions will be implemented in order to make the data generated by research efforts accessible too.

Furthermore, the EU has adopted a comprehensive framework for access to and reuse of geospatial information including electronic infrastructures (the INSPIRE Directive), fostered the dissemination of cultural heritage (including *Europeana*, the European digital library for cultural objects) and of access to environmental information.

The challenges for making further progress towards the openness of information resources are mainly practical and technical:

- making data available in an open format;
- enabling semantic interoperability;
- ensuring quality, documentation and where appropriate reconciliation across different data sources;
- implementing software solutions allowing easy management, publication or visualisation of datasets;
- simplifying clearance of intellectual property rights.

In order to further promote openness with regard to its own data and to broaden the scope of application of the principles of the Open Data Charter, the EU is committed to:

1. **Identifying and making available core datasets held at EU level**
2. **Identifying and making available high-value datasets held at EU level**
3. **Publishing data on the EU Open Data Portal**
4. **Promoting the application of the principles of the G8 Open Data Charter in all 28 EU Member States through the revised PSI Directive and guidelines to Member States**
5. **Supporting activities, outreach, consultation and engagement**
6. **Sharing experiences of work in the area of open data.**

There are legitimate reasons why some open data cannot be released without taking some mandatory steps (e.g. anonymisation). When open data falls within the definition of personal data the fundamental right to the protection of personal data must be protected. That's why EU implementation of the G8 Open Data initiative is without prejudice to the protection of personal data in accordance with Regulation (EC) no 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data.

EU Commitment 1: publication of core datasets held at EU level

The EU commits to publishing the agreed core G8 datasets to the following standards by 2015.

The statistics produced and published by Eurostat, the European statistical office, are already published as structured data in a non-proprietary format and are available under an open licence.

The budget of the European Union is currently published in PDF format. Structured data in a non-proprietary format will be published by April 2014.

G8 Data category	Dataset	Current availability	Planned availability (accessibility and granularity)	To be completed by
Budget	Budget of the European Union	Published in PDF format under an open licence.	Available as structured data in non-proprietary format under an open licence	Q22014
Elections	European Parliament elections data	Published under an open licence	*	*
Statistics	Eurostat statistics	Available as structured data in non-proprietary format under open licence	Available as structured data in non-proprietary format under open licence	Already available

* Subject to confirmation by the European Parliament

EU Commitment 2: Publication of high value datasets held at EU level

The EU commits to publishing the following high value datasets listed in the G8 Collective Action Plan. Additionally, the EU is committed to publishing important multilingual resources.

G8 Data category	Dataset	Current availability	Planned availability (accessibility and granularity)	To be completed by
Government Accountability and Democracy	Published legislation and legislative proposals	Available as structured data in non-proprietary format under an open licence	Available as structured data in non-proprietary format under an open licence	Already available
Government Accountability and Democracy	Transparency register for organisations and self-employed individuals engaged in EU policy-making and policy implementation	Available as structured data in non-proprietary format under an open licence	Available as structured data in non-proprietary format under an open licence	Already available
Government Accountability and Democracy	Register of Commission expert groups and similar entities	Available as structured data in non-proprietary format under an open licence	Available as structured data in non-proprietary format under an open licence	Already available
Government Accountability and Democracy	Number of staff by grade (European Commission)	Published under open licence	Available as structured data in non-proprietary format under an open licence	Q4 2014

Finance and contracts	Beneficiaries of EU spending ¹	Available as structured data in proprietary format under an open licence	Available as structured data in proprietary format under an open licence	Already available
Finance and contracts	Detailed information on research projects funded by the EU	Available as structured data in non-proprietary format under an open licence (on demand)	Available as structured data in non-proprietary format under an open licence (bulk download via EU Open Data Portal)	End 2013
Finance and contracts	Tendering opportunities	Available as structured data in a non-proprietary format	Available as structured data in non-proprietary format under an open licence	Q1 2014
Global Development	Development aid spending of the EU by country	Available as structured data in non-proprietary format under an open licence	Available as structured data in non-proprietary format under an open licence	Already available
Energy and Environment	Pollutant release and transfer from industrial facilities	Available as structured data in non-proprietary format under an open licence	Available as structured data in non-proprietary format under an open licence	Already available
Energy and Environment	Ambient air quality	Available as structured data in non-proprietary format under an open licence	Available as structured data in non-proprietary format under an open licence	Already available

<i>Multilingualism</i>	Bodies of translated text by the EC translation service	Available as structured data in non-proprietary	Available as structured data in non-proprietary	Already available
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¹ Subject to the relevant provisions on publication of such data in EU legislation, as well as those on the protection of personal data in accordance with Regulation 45/2001

	('translation memories')	format under an open licence	format under an open licence	
<i>Multilingualism</i>	EUROVOC thesaurus (authoritative list of 6 800 concepts and their equivalents in all 24 EU official languages)	Available as structured data in non-proprietary format under an open licence	Available as structured data in non-proprietary format under an open licence	Already available

EU Commitment 3: Publishing data on the EU open data portal

The EU commits to making more data available on <http://open-data.europa.eu>.

Currently the EU Open Data Portal provides access to about 6 100 datasets. We are steadily increasing the number. Not all the datasets mentioned under commitments 1 and 2 are already accessible through the EU open data portal, but will become available through the portal in the course of the implementation process.

The portal aims not only to promote the opening up of datasets from as many domains as possible, but also to promote semantic interoperability. This entails great coordination efforts to make sure that, as far as possible, the same metadata and encoding rules are used by all data providers when referring to the same thing. EU institutions work together in the Interinstitutional Metadata Maintenance Committee (IMMC) set up for this specific purpose.

Datasets will be made available where possible and appropriate in machine readable formats using existing data standards. The DCAT Application Profile, commonly developed by the Publication Office and the ISA Programme, will be used as a metadata standard for describing the portal data catalogue and the published datasets.

In order to facilitate the search for open data published at all levels of government in the EU, i.e. at the level of EU institutions and by Member States at national, regional and local level, the EU is working towards setting up a pan-European open data portal, as part of a digital service infrastructure for open data, including an integrated multilingual search functionality.

EU Commitment 4: Promoting the application of the principles of the G8 Open Data Charter in all 28 EU Member States

The EU commits to promoting the application of the principles of the G8 Open Data Charter to all EU Member States within the context of a range of ongoing activities, in particular through:

- Ensuring the implementation of Directive 2013/37/EU of 26 June 2013 revising Directive 2003/98/EC on the re-use of public sector information which:
 - ensures that publicly accessible content can be reused in compliance with the Directive;
 - encourages free provision of public sector information (government data) for reuse and lowering the cost of reuse of government data by introducing a new maximum ceiling for reuse based on marginal costs;
 - expands the scope of application of the EU Directive to certain cultural institutions;
 - defines 'machine-readable format' and 'open format' and encouraging the use of those formats;
- Preparing guidelines to EU Member States, particularly on:
 - charging aspects;
 - licensing conditions and interoperability of such conditions in order to reduce the legal constraints and to ensure that differences in licensing conditions between member states do not create an additional barrier;
 - the publication by the EU Member States of certain datasets in line with the G8 principles on the publication of core and high value datasets;
- Implementing the new policy of free access to and re-use of data from national statistical institutes in the EU endorsed by the European Statistical System Committee in February 2013
- Working on the implementation of the European Legislation Identifier (ELI), enabling European and national legislation to be referenced in a harmonised and stable way and supporting the establishment of new services related to legal information.

EU Commitment 5: Supporting Activities, Outreach, Consultation and Engagement

The EU commits to implementing the Open Data Charter in engaging with civil society, developers and data users in the following ways:

- continuing with a culture of open public consultations on every policy initiative;
- continuing to fund research & innovation activities on data standards, linked data, and interoperability issues in the area of open data;
- encouraging research & innovation projects to use openly available data as a data basis for analysis;

- providing support through standard-setting and interoperability initiatives, such as the development of a DCAT application profile (DCAT-AP) for data catalogues around Europe; promoting its use either as a native metadata template for new data catalogues or as an export target specification for existing catalogues;
- aim at providing mappings of main existing data catalogue structures to the DCAT-AP and making available a querying interface to EU national data catalogues.
- continuing to fund a dedicated web platform and stakeholder outreach with up-to-date news and events to do with reuse of open data ([ePSI platform](#)); continuing to fund the collection of insights into legal aspects of reuse of open data and the holding of dedicated international conferences and seminars (for example through the [LAPSI](#) consortium);
- continuing to fund activities assisting developers with turning ideas for apps development based on Open Data, including apps developed in the context of 'Apps4' competitions, into sustainable business models (e.g. through the [Apps4EU project](#)).

EU Commitment 6: Sharing experiences of open data work

The EU commits to supporting open data innovators at home and abroad by:

- holding regular exchanges with experts from the 28 EU Member States in a dedicated expert group on reuse of public sector information and in a dedicated working group on interoperability of open data portals;
- encouraging the publication of open data by funding training and consultancy services for public administrations in Member States.

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EU G8 datasets – ‘core’		When exist	When digital	When machine-readable	When open format	When bulk	When free	When openly licensed	When regularly published	When meeting TBL 3 definition
Dataset	Level of detail/caveats (including web links)									
Budget of the European Union	Budget of the EU institutions, bodies, the Ombudsman and the EDPS	Now	Now	Now	Q12014	Q12014	Now	Now	Now	Q12014
European Parliament elections	Data per EU Member State on elections to European Parliament	Now	Now	*	*	*	Now	Now	Now	*
Eurostat statistics	Eurostat statistics	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now

* Subject to confirmation by the European Parliament

EU G8 datasets – ‘high value’		When exist	When digital	When machine-readable	When open format	When bulk	When free	When openly licensed	When regularly published	When met TBL 3 definition
Dataset	Level of detail/caveats (including web links)									
Government accountability and democracy	Published legislation and legislative proposals	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now
Government accountability and democracy	Joint European Parliament and Commission Transparency Register for organisations and self-employed individuals engaged in EU policy-making and policy implementation	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now
Government accountability and democracy	Register of Commission expert groups and similar entities	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now

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Government accountability and democracy	Staff by grade (European Commission)	Now	Now	Q4 2014	Q4 2014	Q4 2014	Now	Now	Now	Q4 2014
Finance and contracts	Beneficiaries of EU spending	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now
Finance and contracts	Detailed information on research projects funded by the EU	Now	Now	Now	Now	Q4 2013	Now	Now	Now	Now
Finance and contracts	Tendering opportunities	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now
Global development	Development aid spending of the EU	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now
Energy & Environment	Pollutant release and transfer from industrial facilities	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now
Energy & Environment	Ambient air quality	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now
Multilingualism	Bodies of translated text by the EC translation service 2004-2012	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now
Multilingualism	EUROVOC thesaurus providing definitions of 6800 concepts in all 24 EU official languages	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now	Now

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