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Open data

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In the EU, the public sector is one of the most data-intensive sectors. Thus it holds vast amounts of data, known as public sector information (PSI). 'Open' public data are PSI that can be readily and widely accessible and re-used, sometimes under non-restrictive conditions.



[2]

Public sector information, sometimes also referred to as government data, refers to all the information that public bodies produce, collect or pay for. Examples are geographical information, statistics, weather data, data from publicly funded research projects and digitised books from libraries. The European Commission's policies focus on generating value for the economy and society

through the re-use of this type of data.

The EU open data market is a key building block of the overall EU data economy. According to the study supporting the [impact assessment](#) [3] carried out to provide input to the review of the PSI Directive, the total direct economic value of PSI is expected to increase from a baseline of €52 billion in 2018 for the EU28, to €194 billion in 2030.

Open data policy is linked with [open research data policy](#) [4] since both address publicly funded data or their data results from public funding. Therefore, in principle, the data should be openly accessible and re-useable.

Allowing public sector data to be re-used for other purposes, including commercial ones, can:

- stimulate economic growth and spur innovation: public data has significant potential for re-use in new products and services;
- help address societal challenges with the development of innovative solutions such as in healthcare or in transport;
- enhance evidence-based policymaking and increase efficiency in public administrations;
- become a critical asset for the development of new technologies, such as [artificial intelligence](#) [5] (AI), which require the processing of vast amounts of high-quality data;
- foster the participation of citizens in political and social life and increase the transparency of government.

In 2003, the European Commission set up a [legal framework](#) [6] to allow the re-use of public sector information through [Directive 2003/98/EC](#) [7] (the 'PSI Directive'). This Directive is built around two pillars of the internal market: transparency and fair competition. It focuses on the economic aspects of the re-use of information. It was last revised in 2013 by [Directive 2013/37/EU](#) [8], to include museums, libraries and archives within its scope. See the consolidated text of the [revised PSI Directive](#) [9].

As part of its [Digital Single Market strategy](#) [10], the European Commission performed a review of the PSI Directive, on the basis of a [public online consultation](#) [11], fulfilling the periodic review obligation foreseen in the Directive.

Building on the [results of this consultation](#) [12], together with an extensive evaluation of the Directive and an [impact assessment](#) [13], the European Commission proposed on 25 April 2018 [a revision of the PSI Directive](#) [14], as part of a package of measures aiming to facilitate the [creation of a common data space](#) [15] in the EU.

In addition to the PSI Directive, a number of [non-legislative measures](#) [16] support the opening up of public sector information, such as the [Public Sector Information expert group \(PSI Group\)](#) [17].

Since 2015, the European Commission funds the [European Data Portal](#) [18] through the [Connecting Europe Facility](#) [19]. This is a pan-European repository of public sector information open for re-use in the EU. This portal also offers a training centre on how to re-use open data and a database of success stories from European and international re-users.

The Commission leads by example, with a [solid legal framework for the re-use of its own data](#) [20] and a [Communication on open data](#) [21] (COM (2011) 882), complemented by an [EU Open Data Portal](#) [22] where re-users can find datasets from the Commission, as well as from the other EU institutions and agencies.

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Team responsible

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[11]

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[22] <http://open-data.europa.eu/>

[23] <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/content/data-policy-and-innovation-unit-g1>