

Top reasons to use DCAT-AP

- ✓ **More efficient and less costly exchanges** of dataset descriptions thanks to harmonised, machine-readable and reusable descriptions of data catalogues and datasets
- ✓ **Easily searchable and accessible** open data through the provision of cross-data catalogues and crosslingual search for datasets
- ✓ **Actively maintained** in an open process by a community of implementers supported by the ISA² Programme

Want to know more?

DCAT-AP webpage

joinup.ec.europa.eu/community/semic/og_page/dcat-ap

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DCAT-AP
FOR
DATA PORTALS
IN EUROPE

GeoDCAT-AP
FOR
GEOSPATIAL
DATASETS

StatDCAT-AP
FOR
STATISTICAL
DATASETS



An action supported by ISA²

The DCAT-AP is a joint initiative of two Directorates-General of the European Commission, namely DG Connect and DG Informatics, and the Publications Office of the EU.

This action is supported by the European Commission's ISA² programme. ISA² is a EUR 131 million programme supporting the modernisation of public administrations in Europe through the development of eGovernment solutions. More than 20 solutions are already available, with more to come soon. All solutions are open source and available free of charge to any interested public administration in Europe.

More on the programme

ec.europa.eu/isa2

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DCAT Application Profile for Data Portals in Europe (DCAT-AP)

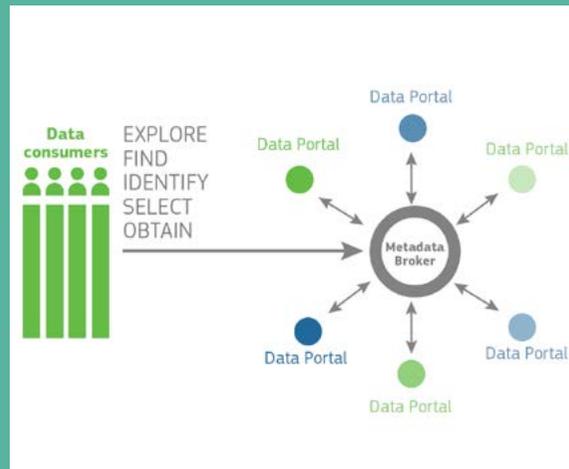
ISA² programme
Interoperability Solutions
for European Public Administrations,
Businesses and Citizens

DCAT-AP enables the exchange of dataset descriptions between portals, thus increasing the access to and reusability of datasets.

Business need

Due to the increasing number of data portals and the magnitude of available datasets, data users find it **difficult to find and access the right data**, even if this is available as open data. It is especially difficult if datasets are provided by another EU country. Language barriers often apply and the categorisation of data on the portal or its structure are unfamiliar.

Data providers have to comply with the description format used by data portals. As this format can be different from one portal to another, it hinders the interoperable exchange of data descriptions and makes it more difficult for data providers to publish their data.



Solution

The **DCAT Application Profile** for data portals (DCAT-AP) provides a common specification for describing public sector datasets in Europe to enable the exchange of descriptions of datasets (metadata) among data portals.

The DCAT-AP makes the following possible:

- **Data catalogues** can describe their dataset collections using a standardised description, while keeping their own system for documenting and storing them.
- **Content aggregators**, such as the European Data Portal, can easily aggregate such descriptions into a single point of access.
- **Data consumers** can more easily search and find datasets by using the same parameters on different portals thanks to a harmonised vocabulary.

The current version of DCAT-AP has been implemented by 12 countries in Europe, including Germany and Italy. Many more data portals at the European, regional and local level are compliant with the DCAT Application Profile.

Extensions

The **GeoDCAT-AP** is an extension of the DCAT-AP for describing geospatial datasets, dataset series, and services. It provides an RDF syntax binding for the metadata elements defined in the core profile of ISO 19115:2003 and those defined in the framework of the INSPIRE Directive. Furthermore, the extension is fully compatible with DCAT-AP, allowing general data portals to better describe geospatial data and services and improve their discoverability.

The **StatDCAT-AP** is an extension of the DCAT-AP for describing datasets within the statistical domain published on open data portals. It provides a description of statistical datasets with specific fields such as dimensions, attributes, number of data series and unit of measurement. Moreover, it improves the discoverability of statistical datasets on data portals by allowing users to search on StatDCAT-AP specific fields.

Users on DCAT-AP

- **European Data Portal:** *"The European Data Portal makes data available and reusable across Europe. This is done by harvesting metadata from the Member States' data portals and making them available and searchable through the European Data Portal. Unfortunately, the format and structure of metadata differ from portal to portal. This problem can be addressed by making use of a single, harmonised model, the DCAT-AP specification, which has been developed by the European Commission."*

Daniele Rizzi, DG Connect

- **German Data Portal:** *"The German Data Portal GovData.de had developed its own metadata standard prior to the establishment of DCAT-AP. Faced with necessary improvements to the standard after several years of operation, GOVData's steering committee voted for the implementation of a specification fully-compliant with DCAT-AP in order to enhance interoperability with other national and pan-European open data portals. We also felt that adopting DCAT-AP meant that we could profit from the lessons learned in other implementations and that working jointly with other European partners would make maintaining and improving the standard so much easier."*

Dietmar Gattwinkel, Free State of Saxony and
Christian Horn, GovData Business Office

- **European Union Open Data Portal:** *"The use of an international standard for metadata publishing is crucial for interoperability of data portals and harmonisation of data coming from different sources. DCAT-AP is not overcomplicated, allows sufficient flexibility but at the same time covers the most essential metadata requirements. It also corresponds to the modern technological challenges and is an indispensable element for moving towards trustful linked open data."*

Agnieszka Zajac, Publications Office of the EU

More testimonials on the DCAT-AP webpage (see infobox on the next page).