INSPIRE

Infrastructure for Spatial Information in Europe

Summary report of the 15th INSPIRE MIG expert group meeting, 31 March 2022, online meeting

Title	Summary report of the 15th INSPIRE MIG expert group meeting
Creator	DG ENV
Date created	06-05-2022
Subject	Summary report of the 15th MIG meeting
Publisher	EC and EEA INSPIRE Team
Type	Text
Description	Summary, conclusions and actions of the 15th MIG expert group meeting.
Contributor	EC INSPIRE TEAM
Format	MS Word (doc)
Identifier	Summary Report 15th MIG meeting
Language	En
Status	Draft

1 Approval of the agenda and of the minutes of previous meeting

The meeting was chaired by Joeri Robbrecht (ENV.01 Strategy, Digitalisation, Better Regulation & Economic analysis).

The Commission presented the meeting agenda (*DOC1*) and the summary of the previous meeting (*DOC2*). The MIG had no comments on the meeting agenda and the minutes of the 14th meeting of the MIG.

All meeting documents and presentations have been made available on the *collaboration platform of the INSPIRE Maintenance and Implementation expert Group (MIG)*[1].

Conclusions and Actions

The meeting agenda and summary of the previous meeting were adopted.

2 Nature of the meeting

The meeting was a non-public meeting and was attended by nominated experts of 27 EU Member States (MS), Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein, the Commission Services (ENV, JRC, ESTAT, AGRI) and the European Environment Agency (EEA).

3 List of points discussed

3.1 Update on Commission initiatives (Information and discussion)

Introduction

The Commission informed the MIG about the following ongoing Commission initiatives:

- "GreenData4All" initiative encompassing the evaluation and possible revision of the INSPIRE Directive,
- INSPIRE 2022 conference.

The Commission presented the status and the major findings of the evaluation of the INSPIRE Directive. The evaluation report (evaluation Staff Working Document) is expected to be published end of Q2 2022. In Q3 2022, the Commission intends to launch the impact assessment for the revision of the INSPIRE Directive and the active dissemination parts of the Public Access to Environmental Information Directive.

On the amendment of the Commission Regulation on the interoperability of data and services, the INSPIRE Committee gave a positive opinion in a written procedure. The amending act is under translation in all EU languages. After translation, the amending act will undergo scrutiny by the co-legislators for a period of three months after which it can go forward for adoption.

---

[1] *https://wikis.ec.europa.eu/display/InspireMIG/MIG+meetings*

The Commission informed the MIG that in 2022 there will be no traditional INSPIRE Conference. The uncertainty regarding the sanitary condition makes organising such an event impossible for the moment. The idea of having a three day INSPIRE conference in Dubrovnik was abandoned. Depending on the progress of the GreenDAta4All initiative, the Commission might organise or support more limited events in support of the impact assessment for the revision of the INSPIRE Directive.

Discussion

One expert informed about the consultation process and the opportunities for participation and possible contribution by the Member States in both evaluation and revision activities under the GreenData4All initiative.

The Commission explained the process and consultation strategy followed for the development of the evaluation Staff Working Document and briefly presented the main mandatory consultation activities (public consultation on the Call for Evidence, Open Public Consultation in support of the impact assessment, targeted surveys and events) for the upcoming impact assessment. Any changes to the legal framework will not happen before end of 2025. Until then we continue implementation under the current legal framework, including alignment with digital initiatives.

Conclusions and Actions

The Commission will keep the MIG informed on any progress made on the presented initiatives.

3.2   Monitoring 2021 (Information and discussion)

Introduction

The Commission presented the main results of the reporting exercise for reference year 2021.

Overall, there was a slight improvement of results compared to the 2020 Monitoring and Reporting round and a significant improvement compared to the 2019 baseline. There is still a big difference in performance across countries. Concerns were raised about the reliability of self-declared indicators on the conformity of datasets and services.

Reoccurring issues and good practices were identified during the process and presented as guidance for future monitoring and reporting cycles.

The Commission also presented the new Monitoring and Reporting dashboard that rather than displaying raw numbers that are not always comparable across countries, uses a star system and trends to express the evolution of the implementation maturity in a country.

Discussion

One expert asked for an extension of the reporting deadline and inquired if the Commission will also provide statistics for priority data sets. Furthermore, it was also raised that communication with the helpdesk on the outcome of the automated monitoring could be improved.

The Commission shared that in general good monitoring results are the outcome of a continuous effort during the year and advised the MIG experts to not postpone monitoring until the end of the year. Regular harvesting and verification of metadata quality during the year prevents unnecessary pressure on both national reporters and the EC INSPIRE Team.

A statistic with an appreciation of the availability of priority data sets will be made available as part of the indicator of spatial data and services (DSi1.3).

The Commission announced that the deadline for reporting (updating the country fiche) is extended to Friday 8 April 2022 end of day.

Regarding the current situation in the helpdesk and the communication, the Commission explained that the small team dedicated to the development of the infrastructure components and support to the Member States has been absorbed by work on revamping the backend and had to prioritise in processing of reported issues. To compensate, the EC INSPIRE Team is always available to discuss major and continuing issues in a dedicated bilateral.

Conclusions and Actions

The Commission agreed to extend the deadline for reporting to Friday 8 April 2022 end of day.

3.3   Good implementation practices (Information and discussion)
Introduction

Note: Good practices cannot amend, change or interpret legislation in any form. They can only refer to technical implementations that satisfy the existing legal requirements using the flexibility of the legal framework. To guarantee legal compliance every good practice shall be scrutinized on its legal conformity.

A Polish expert from the Head Office of Geodesy and Cartography (GUGiK) presented two good practices for endorsement by the MIG:

- Making spatial data downloadable via WMS services
  - A good practice to make spatial data downloadable via view services as a supplement to standard download services.
  - Examples for making downloadable data available through WMS services for e.g., Orthoimagery, digital elevation model, LIDAR data … are online available. These examples already cover 15 INSPIRE themes.
  - Users downloaded over 922 TB of spatial data using these services.
- Building one access point to dispersed data sources
  - A good practice to create a proxy that aggregates different local services.
  - URLs of examples of aggregated WMS were shared that provide an aggregation of data from respective 380 counties and 1546 communes.

- o The examples provided cover 10 INSPIRE themes.
- o Till the end of 2021, on specific service (KIEG, aggregating cadastral parcel and building data from 380 counties) processed 7.3 billion requests.

The MIG congratulated the expert, welcomed, and unanimously endorsed the good practice proposals.

Conclusions and Actions

Subject to an assessment of its compliance with the INSPIRE legal framework, the MIG has endorsed the good practices "Building one access point to dispersed data sources" and "Making spatial data downloadable via WMS services". The Good Practice library on the INSPIRE Knowledge Base will be updated accordingly.

3.4   Maintenance and Implementation Work Programme 2021-2024 (I/D)

The colleagues from EEA, JRC and ENV have provided us with a full update on the ongoing actions under the current Work Programme.

"Status report on Action 2.1. - Need driven data prioritisation (EEA) Workshop: Action 2.2 - Roadmap for priority-driven implementation An interactive sessions and open discussion on expectations, needs and ambitions • National priorities, experiences and approaches • Compliance • Indicator framework • Master guidance"

3.4.1   Action 2.1 - Need-driven data prioritisation
Introduction

The European Environment Agency (EEA) updated the MIG on the progress of the action on need-driven data prioritisation.

Activities in the subgroup were temporally set on hold in anticipation of a possible publication of the Open Data Directive implementing act on High Value Data sets that might have a meaningful impact on the activities of the subgroup and will bring the concepts of priority data sets for environmental reporting, core data sets and agricultural IACS data together under a common umbrella.

Regarding the progress of making priority data sets available (based on Geoportal data from 20 March 2022), there is meaningful progress made on the accessibility of the data (specifically from BE, BG, IT, FI, DE, PL, IE). On the other hand, there are also countries that provide little to no access.

Discussion

The MIG asked the Commission to clearly mention date stamps when presenting statistics on data availability and accessibility.

One expert raised possible implementation issues with certain data sets listed in the list of priority data. More specifically, it concerned the data managed in the EU registry for emissions (Large Combustion Plants(LCP), Industrial Emissions Directive (IED), EPRTR).

The Commission and the European Environmental Agency explained that the statistics provided for the purposes of communication in the MIG only display trends between most recent data collections to give countries an idea of their progress. In future all statistics will be time stamped. They also explained that the EU Registry and the streamlining of reporting under LCP, IED, EPRTR are a result of the fitness check on environmental reporting that took INSPIRE as a common process to harmonize data models and exchange data.

The subgroup on the action 2.1 will report to the MIG on any further streamlining exercises.

Conclusions and Actions

The MIG took note of the information shared by the Commission.

3.4.2   Action 2.2 - Roadmap for priority-driven implementation
Introduction

Certain aspects of the implementation of the INSPIRE Directive (e.g., harmonization of all data in its scope, technical over-specification) are still considered as cumbersome or even disproportionate. The broad spatial data scope of the Directive and the high-level definition of the data scope through its 34 themes has resulted in a diversified and non-comparable offering across Member States. The overall implementation would benefit from clear common data priorities that would allow developing a common set of high value spatial data serving shared information needs. Furthermore, implementers are seeking more clarity on the compliance of their solutions both with the technical guidelines as the legal framework and would welcome more visibility of the added value and benefits of the Directive and the tangible results at EU level (e.g., existing pan-European coverages). The envisaged common landing zone should address these issues whilst being realised in compliance with the existing legal provisions documented in the INSPIRE Directive and its implementing regulations. Under Action 2.1 a commonly agreed usage-driven prioritisation of the data scope will be pursued. This action will build on this clear data prioritisation to develop specific actions to remediate the main concerns under the current legal framework or inform the impact assessment for the revision of the INSPIRE Directive.

A MIG mini workshop was organized to have an exchange of views with all countries on the possible priority issues to be addressed for the further implementation of the INSPIRE Directive that have been identified by the subgroup of action 2.2.
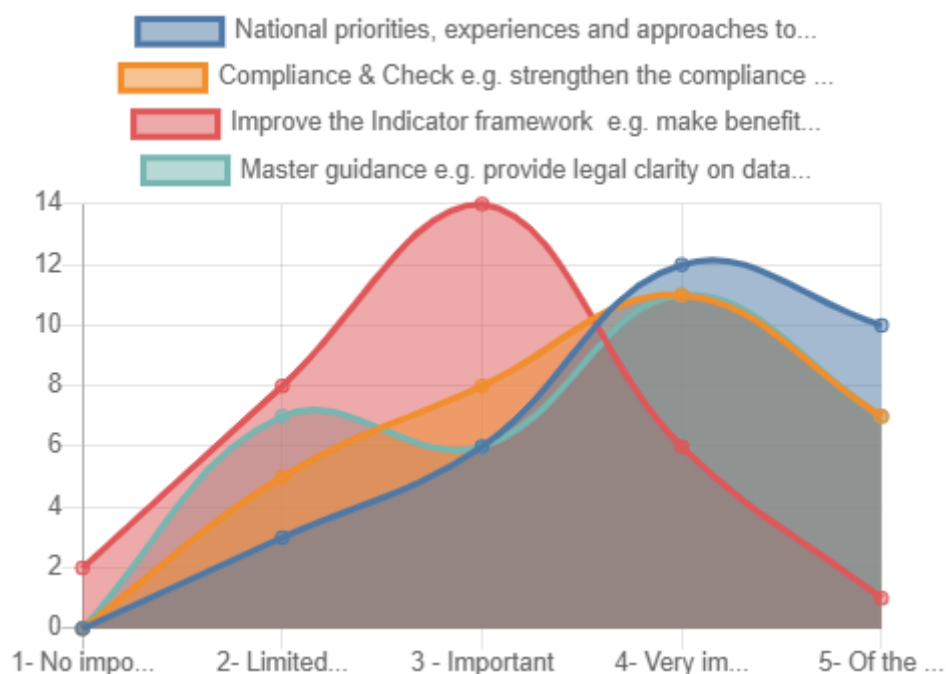
The Interactive workshop used the "Mural" tool to get a view from all countries on possible priorities and had the ambition to develop a consensus on how to work towards a more streamlined and feasible implementation of the INSPIRE Directive. The objective was to gather input for concrete actions towards a common landing zone and as input for the INSPIRE impact assessment.

Five top priority issues were identified:

- **National priorities**, experiences, and approaches to make INSPIRE implementation more user-driven and better fit for common needs.

- **Compliance & Check** e.g. strengthen the compliance promotion effort and quality check on a common agreed set of priority data to be harmonised

- **Improve the Indicator framework** e.g., make benefits/use of INSPIRE more visible and integrate in politically more important indicator frameworks (e.g., DESI).

- **Master guidance** e.g., provide legal clarity on data priorities and the flexibility in the legal framework regarding data harmonisation priorities

- **Flexible data specifications**

These priorities were very much in line with the outcome of the preparatory survey:

The following actions were prioritised by the MIG:

- Data prioritisation should be user- and usage-driven

- Alignment with Open Data Directive and more specifically High Value Data sets

- Practical examples of compliant metadata, data and services

- Once only – provide data only once and reuse (e.g. datasharing obligations, regulatory reporting)

- Legal clarity

- European Knowledge Centre on spatial data + Geospatial code of practice for quality assurance

- INSPIRE should be a subset of the national infrastructure instead off a parallel one

- The INSPIRE data structure must be similar to other EU initiatives so that INSPIRE data can be re-used without any modifications

Conclusions and Actions

The input gathered from the MIG will contribute to validating and complementing the already

identified issues to steer the subgroup activities and inform the impact assessment for the revision of the INSPIRE Directive.

3.5 News from the standardisation bodies (Information)

Introduction

The Commission shared an information document (*DOC6*) and presented new developments and activities relevant to INSPIRE maintenance and implementation from the following standardisation bodies: "ISO/TC 211", "Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC)" and "World Wide Web Consortium (W3C)". The MIG members were invited to distribute this information among their networks and share any feedback or questions on the presented topics with the EC INSPIRE team.

Discussion

Conclusions and Actions

The MIG took note of the information shared by the Commission on new developments and activities by relevant standardisation bodies.

MIG experts were invited to share this information in their networks and discuss possible coordinated actions related to the presented standardisation activities.

3.6 INSPIRE in the EU Digital landscape (Information)

Introduction

The Commission provide an overview of ongoing digital data initiatives to create a common understanding of mutual dependencies and importance for the future development of the INSPIRE Directive.

Conclusions and Actions

The MIG took note of the information shared by the Commission.

3.7 Any other business

There was not any other business.

4 Conclusions/recommendations/opinions

- The meeting agenda and summary of the previous meeting were adopted.
- The Commission will keep the MIG informed on any progress made on the presented Commission initiatives.
- The Commission agreed to extend the deadline for reporting to Friday 8 April 2022 end of day.
- Subject to an assessment of its compliance with the INSPIRE legal framework, the MIG has endorsed the good practices "Building one access point to dispersed data sources"

and "Making spatial data downloadable via WMS services". The Good Practice library on the INSPIRE Knowledge Base will be updated accordingly.

- The input gathered from the MIG in the mini workshop on a "Roadmap for priority-driven implementation" will be taken into account to steer the action 2.2 subgroup activities and to inform the impact assessment for the revision of the INSPIRE Directive.

5 Next steps / actions

The MIG was invited:

- To share the news from the standardisation bodies in their networks and discuss possible coordinated actions related to the presented standardisation activities.

The Commission will:

- Keep the MIG informed on any progress made on the presented Commission initiatives.
- Consider the input gathered from the MIG in the mini workshop on a "Roadmap for priority-driven implementation" to inform the impact assessment for the possible revision of the INSPIRE Directive.

6 Next meeting

The Commission thanked all MIG experts and Commission services for their participation in this online meeting.

No date was fixed at this point for the 16th Meeting of the INSPIRE Maintenance and Implementation expert Group. The Commission will propose a tentative date shortly after the meeting. It is however the intention to schedule the next meeting as an online meeting, back-to-back with the meeting of the permanent technical MIG subgroup (MIG-T), taking into account the sanitary situation at that moment.