



INSPIRE

Infrastructure for Spatial Information in Europe

IMPACT OF THE HVD ACT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INSPIRE DIRECTIVE - An explorative MIG workshop

Webinar, 3 March 2023

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Description	Summary and conclusions of the workshop.

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1 Objectives of the workshop

The workshop focused on an initial impact/risk assessment of the HVD for INSPIRE implementation, building of a common understanding HVD/INSPIRE in the MIG, defining a roadmap to address possible issues and discuss the governance (new subgroup/existing) of the alignment exercise. All this with the objective to maximise the reuse of the INSPIRE implementation for meeting HVD requirements.

2 Workshop organisation (120')

10h00	Towards a common understanding of the interplay between High Value Datasets and INSPIRE
20'	Welcome and presentation by the Commission on the context of the workshop, the outcome of the survey and the assessed impact. (ENV: 5' - JRC: 10' - EEA:5')
30'	Country perspective/ interventions <ul style="list-style-type: none">- NL (10')- ES (5')- SK (5')- CZ (5')- AT (5')
10'	Short break
30'	Country perspective/ interventions - Part 2 Pitches by <ul style="list-style-type: none">- DK (5')- PT (5')- ISO/TC 211 activities on EU Data Spaces / High-value datasets (Jari) (5')- EC/ESTAT (5')
11h30	First reflections on a common implementation strategy
15'	First suggestions for an initial implementation roadmap based on the outcome of the survey and the country perspectives
15'	Plenary discussion
12h15	First conclusions and next steps
12h30	End of meeting

3 Workshop proceedings

3.1 Introductory presentation by the Commission

To provide context, the Commission (JRC) briefly explained the importance of the INSPIRE directive for to the High Value Datasets (HVDs) Implementing Regulation under the Open Data Directive¹. Emphasis lies on the fact that both legal acts are aiming in the same direction and would facilitate and reinforce each other. Although the two acts are not overlapping entirely, they would also jointly contribute to the Green Deal Data Space (GDDS).

Furthermore, they provided the technical perspective on HVD, highlighting the importance of metadata requirements and open licencing. For the HVDs, they recommended the Creative Commons BY 4.0 or less restrictive licenses. They urged that any data should be made available in a common, machine-readable, and internationally recognised format and have a resolution/granularity of at least 1:5000. Additionally, both Application Programming Interfaces (API) and bulk download should be possible to allow for data accessibility.

¹ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2023/138/oj

After this introduction, the Commission briefly responded to a question regarding the ATOM feed format. Given that it is not considered an API because it does not provide enough flexibility regarding which parts of the data can be accessed but merely access to the full datasets, thereby preventing flexible user interaction. It was further clarified that bulk download is not a strict requirement for datasets under INSPIRE where one can choose between pre-defined dataset download services and/or direct access download services., but it is required under the HVD next to an API.

Thereafter, the European Environmental Agency (EEA) summarised their observations on opportunities and challenges of the HVD endeavour.

According to them, the opportunities lie mainly in the possibility of further supporting e-reporting and in the increased horizontal data exchange beyond what INSPIRE makes possible. Additionally, they saw large opportunities that the HVD regulation helps opening up in-situ data which is not yet covered under existing regulation. Finally, open data provisions have helped gaining access to environmental data in European neighbourhood countries..

As for the challenges, the digital divide amongst and within countries might hinder the interoperability and the upholding of high data standards of the created systems. Governance is another area where challenges might arise, both within countries and in the international community.

3.2 Country Interventions

3.2.1 Netherlands

An expert from the Netherlands highlighted the need to expand the INSPIRE community by connecting relevant stakeholders in the open data community to the HVD and INSPIRE projects. They also reported about their efforts of building a common understanding of HVD via knowledge sessions and fact sheets.

Several fact sheets for stakeholders were presented on aspects of APIs and historical data. They advocated for establishing a clear definition and clear standards for APIs, pointed to the difficult question of the scope of historical datasets, and advised the harmonisation of historic data at EU level.

Furthermore, they commented on the use of metadata. They urged that a common code for labelling HVDs should be used and that INSPIRE metadata (ISO 19155) should be re-used.

3.2.2 Spain

The Spanish expert addressed the requirements to report and took into consideration a mandatory use of HVDs on a national level. On the issue of licensing, they pointed out that, while most INSPIRE datasets are open data, not all comply with CC BY 4.0.

They further explained that the Spanish Open Data Portal and the national data management portal are working closely together with the open data and INSPIRE communities, but that metadata is being discussed to better integrate data across platforms. In this regard, they expressed a clear preference for the use of keywords across countries.

Finally, the Spanish expert stated that the collaboration with the local level still has a long way to go as they are more focused on open data than on the INSPIRE objectives.

3.2.3 Slovak Republic

Like the Spanish expert, the Slovak expert highlighted the importance of having open data and INSPIRE communities work together, both in terms of coordination and governance. For the challenge of international cooperation, they wished for a list of national representatives of HVD and open data communities to facilitate coordination.

They reported a remaining lack of clarity to them regarding how (meta)data from national open data platforms will be integrated on the EU level, whether and how INSPIRE metadata will be affected by HVD, and what the minimal requirements will be for API implementation and documentation.

Lastly, the expert requested enforcement help by the Commission regarding open data requirements given that certain providers have in the past refused to publish their data citing contradictory legislation.

3.2.4 Czech Republic

The Czech system provides its Czech open data portal as the central portal for all open data. However, this national portal is not suitable for geospatial data and hence is lacking relevant metadata elements. Therefore, there is a separate infrastructure, the Czech INSPIRE Geoportal, where all the metadata is provided for the same datasets. The situation is messy because the EU portal lists the same datasets several times on different portals. The expert asked that these interoperability issues should be addressed at the European level.

3.2.5 Austria

The national expert highlighted Austria's strong commitment to open data and the diversity of open data portals being created. However, he pointed at several concerns by the open data community, notably regarding strict metadata requirements and interoperability. Accordingly, these concerns mean that not all datasets are delivered to INSPIRE. The Austrian open data community strategically goes for lower metadata standards to decrease the barriers to entry and gather more datasets. Hence, the existing datasets often are not INSPIRE-compliant, which is an issue that should be addressed.

3.2.6 Denmark

The Danish expert made the point that data providers might want to become more flexible to adapt to the different needs of users. Alongside INSPIRE, they are considering other views on providing data that cater different user needs. She emphasized that the Danish community is very keen on HVD and appreciates the potential use cases. They, however, point to the big challenge of configuring everything correctly, including API regulations, historic data, and uploading frequency.

3.2.7 Portugal

Similar to Czech Republic, the Portuguese expert highlighted interoperability issues within the Portuguese data portal infrastructure and with the European systems. He suggested that European legislation following the only once principle should create clear requirements for the data providers.

3.2.8 ISO/TC 211

The expert called for standards that are easy to implement, modern, and that follow mainstream IT in order to maximise interoperability. He suggested specific standards that are deemed most promising.

3.3 EC/ESTAT

Following the country interventions, a representative from Eurostat presented some wider considerations. He laid out the challenges regarding appropriate infrastructure in the MS and the current discrepancy between the data quality and relevance on national vs. European platforms. Especially the data quality that reaches end users is what determines the success of a platform.

3.4 Survey Results

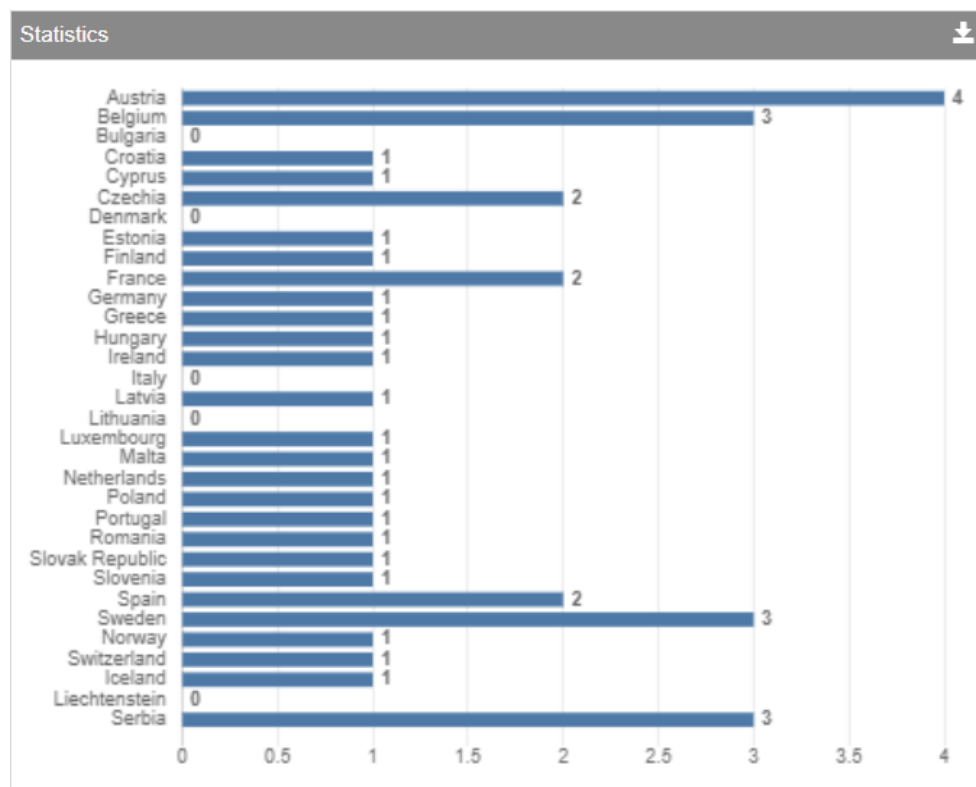
The Commission then presented the results of the survey that was sent out before the meeting to gather input on the implementation strategy.

The participation was as follows:

Countries	Experts
23 Member States	33
3 EFTA	3
1 Candidate	3

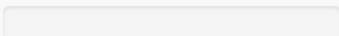
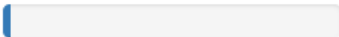
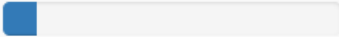
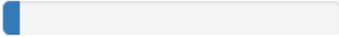
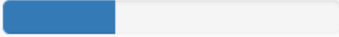
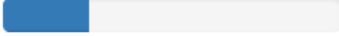
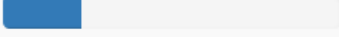
To what community do you belong?

	Answers	Ratio
INSPIRE MIG	30	76.92 %
Eionet	3	7.69 %
Both INSPIRE MIG and Eionet	6	15.38 %

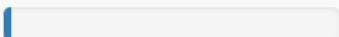
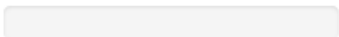
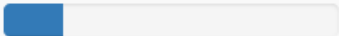
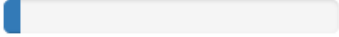
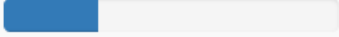
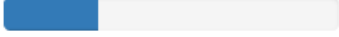
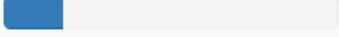


Regarding the experts' understanding of HVD and the open data directive, these were the results:

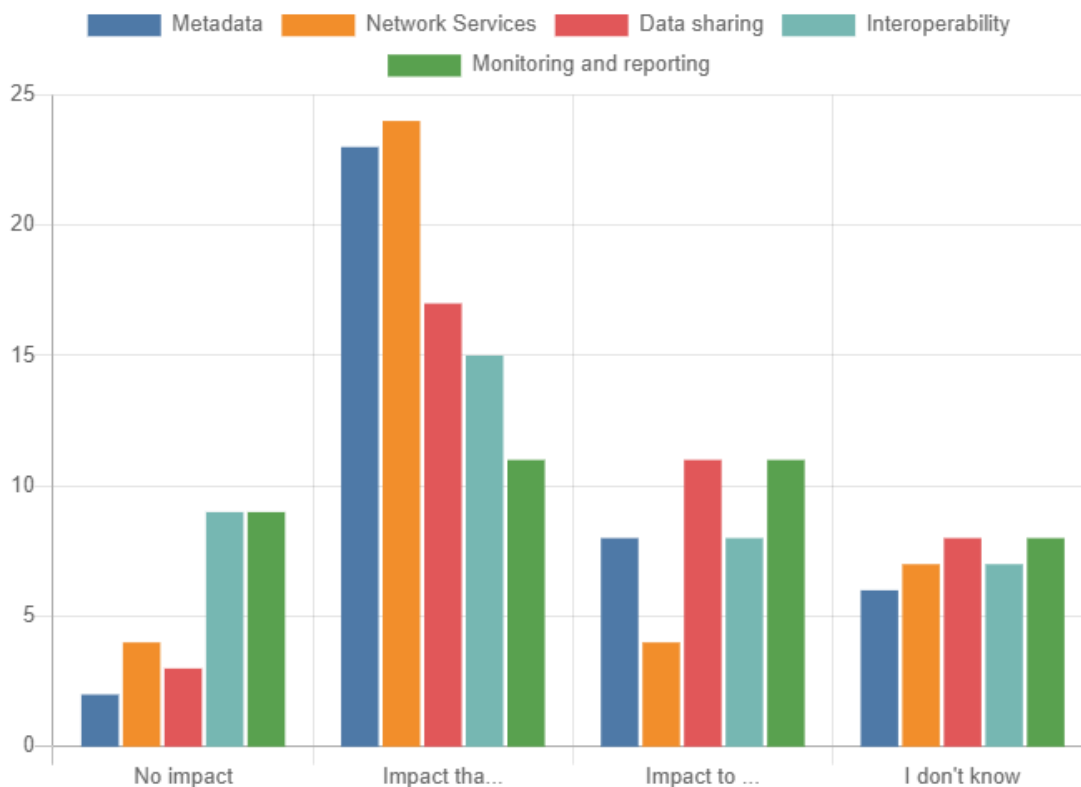
How is your understanding of the Open Data Directive?

		Answers	Ratio
0		0	0.00 %
1		1	2.56 %
2		4	10.26 %
3		2	5.13 %
4		13	33.33 %
5		10	25.64 %
No Answer		9	23.08 %

How is your understanding of the High-Value Dataset implementing act?

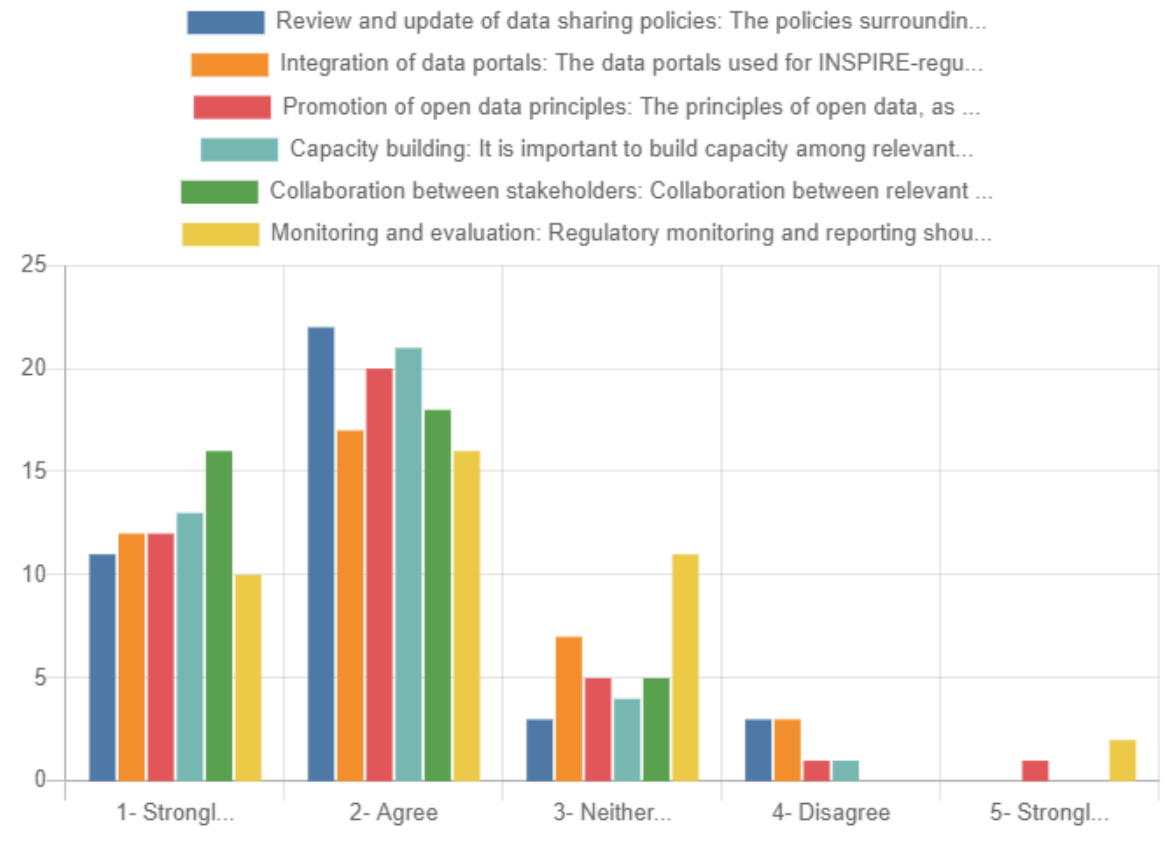
		Answers	Ratio
0		1	2.56 %
1		0	0.00 %
2		7	17.95 %
3		2	5.13 %
4		11	28.21 %
5		11	28.21 %
No Answer		7	17.95 %

Their expectations for the possible impact of the HVD implementing act were:



Participants also read several statements and stated their agreement levels:

- Review and update of data sharing policies: The policies surrounding data sharing and access in INSPIRE should be reviewed and updated to ensure they are consistent with the provisions of the High Value Datasets implementing act.
- Integration of data portals: The data portals used for INSPIRE-regulated data should be integrated with the data portals established by the High Value Datasets implementing act to improve the accessibility of data for users.
- Promotion of open data principles: The principles of open data, as established by the High Value Datasets implementing act, should be promoted and encouraged in the implementation of INSPIRE.
- Capacity building: It is important to build capacity among relevant stakeholders, including data providers and users, to ensure that they are aware of the provisions of the High Value Datasets implementing act and can effectively align their practices with these provisions.
- Collaboration between stakeholders: Collaboration between relevant stakeholders on government level, including data providers and data users, is crucial to ensure that the INSPIRE Directive and the High Value Datasets implementing act are aligned in a harmonised and effective manner.
- Monitoring and evaluation: Regulatory monitoring and reporting should be fully aligned and conducted to assess the effectiveness of the alignment between the INSPIRE




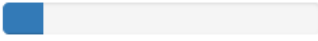
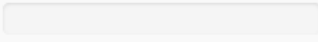
While there was a clear tendency and preference for these statements, the responses regarding the streamlining approach were divided:

What would be your preferred streamlining approach?

		Answers	Ratio
Aiming for one implementation for both Open Data and INSPIRE by further simplifying INSPIRE implementation.		21	53.85 %
Keep the INSPIRE implementation as is and fully reuse INSPIRE for implementing the requirements of the relevant HVD data categories.		18	46.15 %
No Answer		0	0.00 %


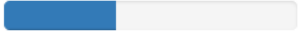
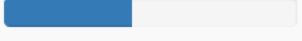
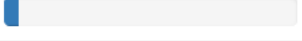
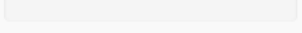
However, there was a larger consensus on wanting to share all INSPIRE data as open data, although some countries were not comfortable with this option:





Do you consider sharing all data in scope of INSPIRE as open data (no access limitations, no reuse limitations, no fees) where possible (e.g. with exceptions for data on protected species habitats ...)?

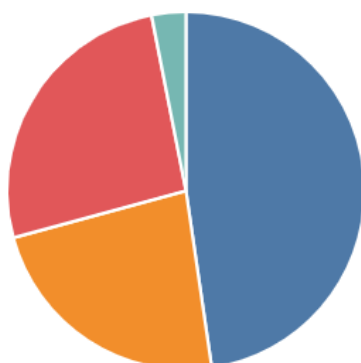
		Answers	Ratio
Yes		34	87.18 %
No		5	12.82 %
No Answer		0	0.00 %

Regarding the favoured support actions, the results were as follows:

Which actions would you support to align the INSPIRE implementation with Open Data (several options possible)?

		Answers	Ratio
Definition of good practices as implementation guidance		31	79.49 %
Changes to the current legal framework (in effect before 2025)		15	38.46 %
Use the GreenData4All initiative to align the legal framework (in effect after 2025)		17	43.59 %
No actions needed		2	5.13 %
No Answer		0	0.00 %

-  Definition of good practices as implementation guidance
-  Changes to the current legal framework (in effect ...
-  Use the GreenData4All initiative to align the lega...
-  No actions needed



Furthermore, these were the results of the three last questions:

Should we attach new HVD actions to existing MIWP actions and subgroups or should we define a new action that is dedicated to aligning INSPIRE and HVD implementation.

		Answers	Ratio
Keep MIWP actions 2.1 and 2.2, amend the current mandate and complete with additional tasks.		17	43.59 %
Abandon MIWP Actions 2.1 and 2.2, draft a new mandate that merges the actions with a focus on INSPIRE implementation in support of the HVD Act.		22	56.41 %
No Answer		0	0.00 %

For the moment we discuss between INSPIRE MIG and Eionet communities. Should we also bring in representatives from the open data community?

		Answers	Ratio
Yes		34	87.18 %
No		5	12.82 %
No Answer		0	0.00 %

Do you agree that the Commission leads and chairs the subgroup or should a Member State expert chair the subgroup?

		Answers	Ratio
European Commission chair		37	94.87 %
Member State chair		2	5.13 %
No Answer		0	0.00 %

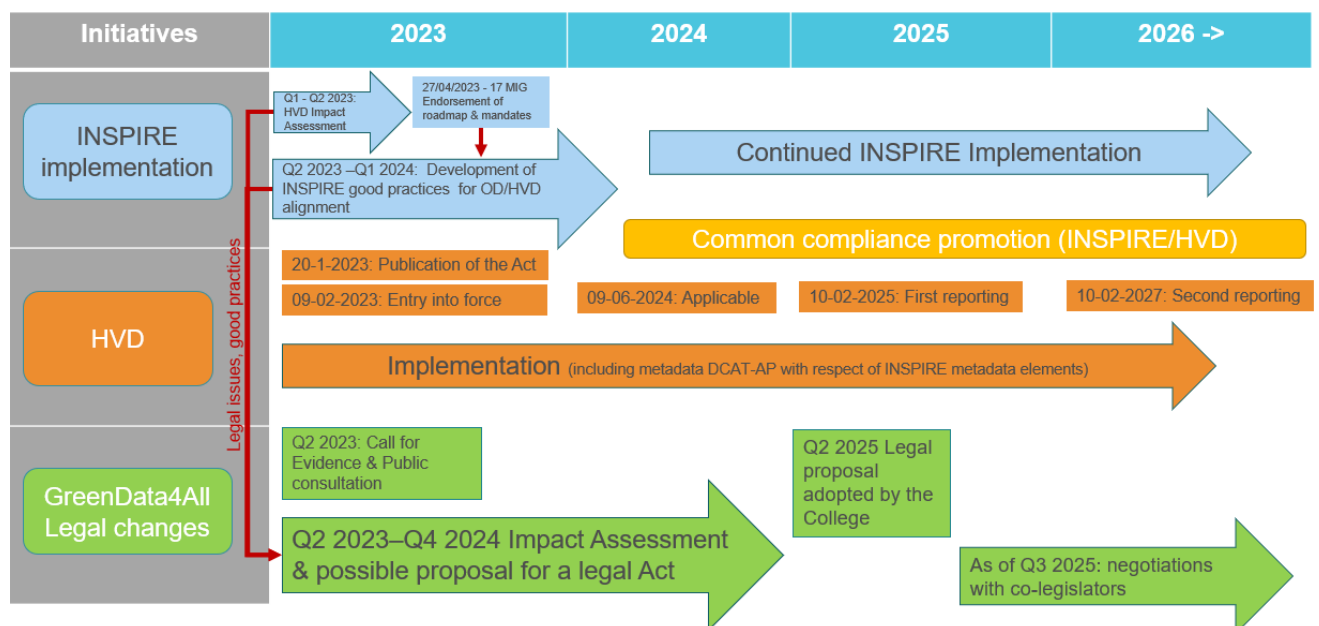
3.5 Survey conclusions

- The survey had a good representation of communities and countries.
- Participants have a good understanding of ODD/HVD.
- There is impact expected on all implementing regulations, expected to be addressable by guidance/good practices. For interoperability this should be complemented with legal actions.
- There is no clear preference for a specific streamlining approach.
- A majority to strong majority of the survey participants agrees/strongly agrees with the six statements showing an explicit need for strong alignment of data sharing frameworks.
- A strong majority considers sharing all INSPIRE data as open data.

- Good practices are the most favourite, followed by GreenData4All and amendments to the current legal framework for legal issues.
- A large majority is in favour for bringing in the Open Data community and prefers the Commission as chair.
- There is no clear preference on the amendment of the MIWP actions (amend or join actions 2.1 and 2.2)

4 Summary, Logistics, and Next Steps

The Commission gave a presentation on the (tentative) next steps of relevant initiatives.



It was noted that all the input through the survey and the pitches will flow into the HVD alignment exercise. Responding to a question, it was also clarified that any need to make changes to the legal framework will be addressed through the GreenData4All initiative.

The Commission then presented what they see to be generally desired based on their impressions of the survey results and the pitches. Specifically, these current “boundary conditions” were presented:

- Good practices as main instrument, GreenData4All for legal changes
- One implementation with maximal reuse of existing INSPIRE implementation
- Move access regimes towards open data
- Bring in the Open Data community
- Commission to chair action/subgroup
- No clear preference on the amendment of the MIWP actions (amend or join actions 2.1 and 2.2)

From the Commission’s side, there was a preference for joining actions 2.1 and 2.2. The Commission also opened the floor for any volunteers to chair the action if desired.

The Commission then suggested the following work items for discussion:

- Principal focus areas for good practices: **metadata (ISO / DCAT-AP), network services**
- The policies surrounding **data sharing and access** in INSPIRE should be reviewed and updated to ensure they are consistent with the provisions of the High Value Datasets implementing act. **(GreenData4All)**
- The **data portals** used for INSPIRE-regulated data **should be integrated** with the data portals established by the High Value Datasets implementing act to improve the accessibility of data for users. **(INSPIRE / Metadata good practice)**
- The **principles of open data**, as established by the High Value Datasets implementing act, should be promoted and encouraged in the implementation of INSPIRE. **(INSPIRE / GreenData4All)**
- It is important to **build capacity** among relevant stakeholders, including data providers and users, to ensure that they are aware of the provisions of the High Value Datasets implementing act and can effectively align their practices with these provisions. **(INSPIRE / Webinars - Helpdesk)**
- Collaboration between relevant stakeholders, including data providers, data users, and government agencies, is crucial to ensure that the INSPIRE Directive and the High Value Datasets implementing act are aligned in a harmonised and effective manner. **(INSPIRE – Involve Open Data community / GreenData4All)**
- **Regulatory monitoring and reporting should be fully aligned** and conducted to assess the effectiveness of the alignment between the INSPIRE Directive and HVD **(INSPIRE - Metadata good practice / GreenData4All)**

Finally, the Commission presented some concrete next steps:

- Draft and share mandate proposal (actions, objectives, timing, coordination...) for a joint working group for feedback (final mid-April)
- Propose mandate in the online 17th MIG for endorsement end of April 2023
- If ok, call for nominations (begin May 2023)
- Kick off (mid-May 2023) + invite Open Data observers to the subgroup(s)
- Development of good practices and documentation of needed legal changes to streamline implementations and as input for the GreenData4All impact assessment. (Q2 2023 –Q1 2024)

It was highlighted that input on these steps is very welcome. MS experts were invited to come forward with their opinions on the presented boundary conditions, work items and next steps.