



INSPIRE

Infrastructure for Spatial Information in Europe

Summary report of the 16th INSPIRE MIG expert group meeting, 24 November 2022, Brussels

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

The meeting was chaired by Johannes Schilling (Head of Unit 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 15th 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 25 EU Member States (MS), Norway, Iceland, the Commission Services (ENV, JRC, ESTAT, AGRI) and the European Environment Agency (EEA). The delegations from Austria and Lithuania had informed the Commission upfront they would not be able to participate.

3 List of points discussed

3.1 Update on Commission initiatives (Information)

Introduction

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

- GreenData4All status & timing
- INSPIRE Conference 2023
- INSPIRE Compliance promotion
- Redesign of the INSPIRE knowledge base
- EEA Reportnet 3.0 data flows

The expert group started with an update on the **GreenData4All** initiative, elaborating in detail the future roadmap:

- Q1 2023: Call for Evidence for the Impact Assessment
- Q2 2023 - Q3 2023: Public consultation
- Q2 2023 - Q4 2024: Impact Assessment & study

¹ <https://wikis.ec.europa.eu/display/InspireMIG/MIG+meetings>

The amendment of the Commission Regulation on the interoperability of data and services is under scrutiny by the co-legislators for a period of three months after which it can go forward for adoption. The scrutiny period ends on 7 February 2023. When adopted by College in February 2023, the act could be published in March 2023. The Commission kindly invited the MIG to review the translated version of the act in their national language. The language versions are published on the Comitology Register².

The Commission informed the MIG that they will organise an INSPIRE Conference in Brussels in September-October 2023. The MIG was invited to share any ideas on possible tracks or sessions as input for the Conference Programme Committee.

Positive news on the INSPIRE compliance promotion. 3 out of 4 open infringement cases on INSPIRE implementation have been closed. The remaining infringement case will be reassessed in Q1 2023.

Next the Commission (JRC), together with the contractor working on the revamping of the INSPIRE knowledge base, presented a prototype of the new INSPIRE knowledge base. The new website is fully integrated in the Europa pages.

The EEA presented the updated Reportnet 3.0 data flow e-reporting system. Reportnet 3 is the new e-Reporting platform for reporting environmental and climate data to the European Environment Agency (EEA). The new system is fully operational. Key challenges are on the handover of the development and maintenance towards a new contractor and increasing data flows from DG CLIMA and DG ENER regarding the CO2 emissions from new cars and vans.

Discussion

The MIG informed about the details of the impact assessment process, the consultation process and the opportunities for participation and possible contribution by the Member States.

The Commission explained the process and the main consultation activities for the upcoming impact assessment: public consultation on the Call for Evidence, Open Public Consultation in support of the impact assessment, targeted surveys, and events (e.g. INSPIRE Conference).

The MIG raised the concern whether existing URI's on the current INSPIRE knowledge base that are being used by countries in their national systems will be kept alive.

The Commission will make a best effort to maintain the persistence of URI's to the most important resources on the knowledge base, but at this time cannot commit to guaranteeing persistence of all URI's. The MIG was invited to reach out to the JRC colleagues on resources that should get a more prominent role on the new INSPIRE knowledge base.

² Comitology Register (europa.eu) - <https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/comitology-register/screen/documents/077188/1/consult?lang=en>

On Reportnet 3.0, the MIG asked if all new reporting dataflows on Reportnet 3.0 will be fully aligned with the INSPIRE Directive.

The EEA clarified that the reporting dataflows for all Directives that explicitly reference the INSPIRE Directive in their regulatory reporting obligations will implement the provisions of the INSPIRE Directive.

Conclusions and Actions

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

The MIG was invited to share any ideas on possible tracks or sessions as input for the Conference Programme Committee.

The MIG was invited to review the translated version of the act in their national language by 30 January 2023. Please, no editorial improvements, only major translation issues.

Feedback by mail to ENV-INSPIRE@ec.europa.eu, Joeri.Robbrecht@ec.europa.eu in CC.

3.2 Monitoring and reporting 2022 (Information and discussion)

Introduction

The Commission walked the MIG through the monitoring and reporting procedure in preparation of the upcoming monitoring and reporting cycle and gave an update of the state of implementation of the toolset. The new GeoNetwork-based backend will be used. The revamped geoportal will be released in December after solving some remaining tooting problems.

It was emphasized that, with the migration to the new GeoNetwork-based backend, 2022 is a transitional year for monitoring and reporting. The MIG was kindly reminded to test the new infrastructure and use the reference validator to validate self-declared indicator values.

Discussion

Several MIG experts raised that the testing environment for the new GeoNetwork-backend does not calculate all indicators and offers all functionality as the old system did.

The Commission explained that indeed not all indicators and functionality is available yet. The functionality will be reintroduced. These issues will be addressed in more detail in the meeting of the permanent technical subgroup of the MIG (MIG-T).

Conclusions and Actions

The MIG was invited to test the new monitoring infrastructure.

3.3 INSPIRE in the EU Digital landscape (Information and discussion)

3.3.1 A European Green Deal data space

Introduction

The Commission presented the policy background from which the European Green Deal data space materialized and how the digital and green transitions are intertwined with each other on the common need for data. The Green Deal data space is positioned on the crossing of both green and digital as an instrument to facilitate data availability and accessibility to boost the European data economy as part of the Single Market, green the industry and improve environmental policy development and implementation.

Moreover, the GreenData4All impact assessment will explore possible policy options that could revise the INSPIRE Directive and selected parts of the Public Access to Environmental Information Directive into interventions that would support the Green Deal Data space by minimally bringing in public data. The changed data landscape (Data Governance Act, Data Act, High Value Datasets Implementing Act under the Open Data Directive) was briefly pictured as a possible enabler for such a revised legislative framework.

The Commission presented the objectives considered for the impact assessment and the actions considered to explore in the impact assessment, after which the floor was opened for discussion.

Discussion

This topic led to a vivid discussion, in which several MIG experts raised relevant questions and shared their views on:

- The needed operability between the different European common data spaces.
- How the data owners are being consulted.
- If the data spaces will lead to simplification of INSPIRE.
- The need to anticipate future developments so that the new INSPIRE directive remains relevant.
- The need to evaluate the economic impact and the need to assess the economic value of the data.
- An operational interoperable infrastructure is a key point of success of the INSPIRE Directive. We should be careful not too loose this advantage and reuse working elements of the current implementation.
- What is the driver for closing the implementing gaps? Are we waiting to revise the INSPIRE Directive until HVD is available and then turn INSPIRE into an instrument to support the HVD?
- It is still difficult to find real tangible evidence for the usage of the INSPIRE infrastructure e.g., only very few pan-EU datasets are available for the INSPIRE themes, if any.
- Things are changing. HVD could show very helpful to close the gap of missing pan EU data. Don't let us wait to long for a revision of the INSPIRE Directive.
- The impact assessment objectives are valid, but will they still be valid in 3 years time when a new legal framework is proposed. May be the objectives should be even more forward looking, anticipating where we should go.

- Where is INSPIRE in the data space blueprint?
- Technology is not the most important part of a Spatial Data Infrastructure; the most important part is the data. Happy that first objective is closing the implementation gaps. The focus should be on data availability and access.

The Commission thanked the MIG experts for a very good and open discussion and has taken note of the shared views and concerns as input for the problem description and formulation of possible policy options. The Commission invited the MIG experts to share additional comments in writing.

Conclusions and Actions

The MIG was invited to share feedback in writing on the presented objectives and actions to be considered for the impact assessment.

3.3.2 *Implementing Act on High Value Datasets under the Open Data Directive*

Introduction

The Commission (DG CNECT) presented the Implementing Act on High Value Datasets under the Open Data Directive. The Act has not been adopted yet, but the adoption is envisaged before the end of the year. As a way of introduction an overview was given of existing and planned cross-sectoral legislation to enable the EU Data Strategy (Data Act, Data Governance Act, Digital Markets Act, Open Data Directive, High Value datasets Implementing Act). A concrete list of High Value Datasets have been selected under six categories of which INSPIRE contributes to 3 categories: Geospatial, Earth Observation and Environment, and Mobility.

The Implementing Regulation has two parts. The main Act lays down common rules on how datasets should be published (APIs, arrangements for reuse), the reporting obligations on Member States and the applicability of all the obligations is 16 months after entry into force. The Annex describes the list of High Value Datasets that should be made available.

Openness of High Value Datasets is supported by a 20M€ call under the Digital Europe Programme (DEP), “Public Sector Open Data³”. Unfortunately the call was already closed in May 2022.

Discussion

The MIG experts rooted for maximizing the reuse of the INSPIRE implementation for the implementation of the HVD. The Spatial data community is an advanced community and open data could benefit from good practices and implementation experiences.

The idea to move to a single marketplace for data is appealing. How can we secure that all the different initiatives will develop into a streamlined implementation and not parallel

³ <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/digital-2022-cloud-ai-02-open-ai>

infrastructures? It will be costly to develop this. What funding tools will be available to support the development of this single marketplace for data?

In some Member States Open Data prevails because it provides for the simplest implementation. Other Member States start from the National SDI to fill the Open Data catalogue. We can't have concurrent and diverging regulatory obligations under HVD and INSPIRE. In some Member States HVD implementation will be prioritised above INSPIRE. Doing both differently is a no go.

What is the foreseen reporting period, yearly or what? Will monitoring be done under the open data directive in automatic way like under the INSPIRE Directive or in another way?

With INSPIRE, countries can decide not to publish some data (derogations) what about the HVD and sensitive data? What is the policy on this?

The Commission explained that if there is a misalignment between the HVD Act and the INSPIRE Directive, then you should see this as adding another layer instead of a breaking thing. The HVD Act is a list that says which datasets should be available under friendly reuse conditions. What remains as a ground rule: it applies only to data that exists and is accessible. If there is a rule that you should collect data then you have to make it available. If some data cannot be made accessible (personal data, statistically confidential, commercial secret, national security ...) then it does not fall into the scope. These safeguards still apply. When the directive refers to a technical solution and you are using another technical solution, then this is still ok. On the technical level if something is agreed in your sector that does the job then this is also fine for the ODD/HVD. Regarding the quality of the data. For the list we choose the data that is typical of high quality. Re-users require high-quality. Funding is provided through the Digital Europe Programme (DEP). Unfortunately, the DEP is a one-off thing and there is no further follow-up or funding continuity foreseen for the moment.

If the activities under INSPIRE do not hinder the reuse layer then there is no issue. If the API solutions under INSPIRE satisfy the requirements of the HVD /Open Data then there is no problem. Same goes for formats and metadata. The list is flexible (open, widely used ...). Every sector is under constant evolution, and we are open for any development as long as the requirements are met (accessible, reusable). The list can be further amended. Member States are welcome to offer more data under friendly conditions than asked for. The use of the INSPIRE Metadata model for meteorological data is just an example. This can also be fulfilled by another technological solution if it complies with the rules.

Regarding the reporting, a first reporting cycle is envisaged after 2 years and with a 2 year frequency after that. The Commission will strive for as much automation as possible based on the available metadata. For the monitoring, the Commission still must explore possible approaches that will impose minimal burden.

The HVD Act will probably enter into force in January 2023. After 16 months (= by May 2024) all obligations will apply.

As a closing remark several experts expressed their concern about fully reshaping the INSPIRE Directive as a Green Deal Data Space instrument. Geospatial is not a sector, it is cross-sector. Who will take care of the cross-cutting aspects?

The Commission replied that under the European Strategy for Data several mechanisms are being introduced to address cross-cutting aspects between data spaces from different sectors and different data types. The Data Innovation Board (Data Governance Act), the Interoperable Europe initiative and the Support Centre for Data Spaces are key instruments for cross-cutting interoperability and data aspects. Good practices and lessons learned from INSPIRE implementation will be fed into the Data Space architecture as reusable building blocks. Furthermore, we should not prejudge the outcome of the impact assessment and possible policy options.

Conclusions and Actions

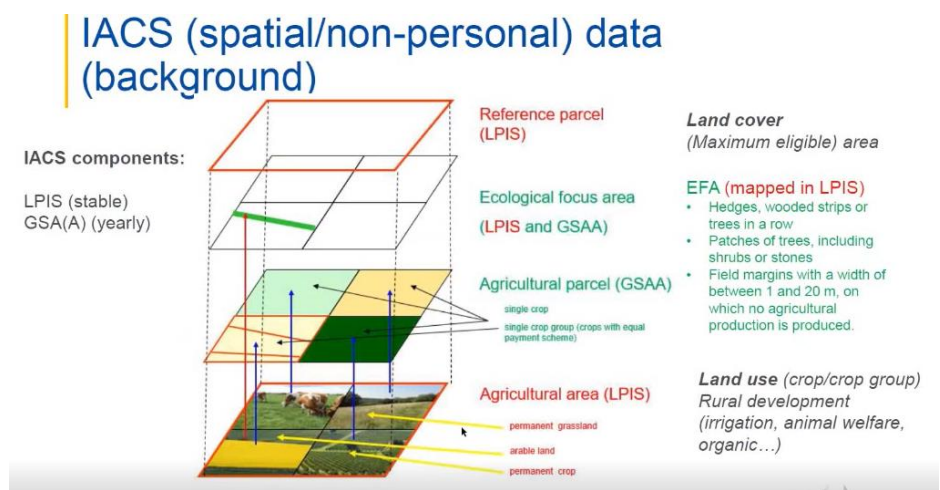
The MIG took note of the information shared by the Commission.

The Commission will organise a MIG workshop to continue the HVD discussion.

3.3.3 IACS data sharing (Friday)

Introduction

The Commission (DG AGRI) presented the process for **Integrated Administration and Control Systems (IACS) data sharing** and highlighted the main achievements. The ambition is to ensure efficient access and effective re-use of IACS data in collaboration with the Member States and by primarily using the INSPIRE Directive as an implementation framework. The article 67 of the new Common Agriculture Policy (CAP, EU Regulation 2021/2116) explicitly mandates IACS data keeping and sharing. IACS data has great value to measure environmental performance when agricultural practices are concerned (Farm to Fork, Biodiversity strategy, Soil strategy, Climate change ...) and is included in the HVD annex.



On the achievements, the Commission has developed three new pillars in the public accessible AGRI Food Portal, including a geoportal with an EU overview of available IACS data. In January 2023 Member States will be contacted again to update the information on the agri-food data portal. Furthermore the Commission presented achievements in the field of data discoverability (new INSPIRE Geoportal user interface for HVD), data interoperability (LULUCF, Crop classification and Landscape features) and re-use of data (soil health use cases on organic carbon, erosion, pollution and land degradation). 16 Member States are already share land parcel information and 11 Member States already share data from the farm declarations.

Discussion

One expert asked if the filtering conditions for High Value datasets used in the INSPIRE geoportal could be shared for national reuse.

The Commission promised to investigate how these filters can be shared.

Conclusions and Actions

The Commission will explore how the filtering conditions for High Value Datasets used in the INSPIRE Geoportal can be shared with the MIG.

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

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 since March 2022 (based on current Geoportal data), several MS have decreased access to data (BE, DK, FI, DE, EL, NL) and several Member States have a continuing low access (HR, CY, HU, RO, SI).

Discussion

One expert proposed to differentiate between national and regional datasets when presenting progress on making priority datasets available. Another expert expressed interest in having the progress statistics also directly visible on the geoportal and not just in presentations.

The EEA explained that for the moment the focus is on the overall country performance. If the MIG would agree differently, differences between national and regional efforts could be taken in consideration. The statistics are based on the INSPIRE geoportal data and the public has always access to the latest state of play.

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

The Commission presented the outcome of the mini-workshop in the last MIG meeting on action 2.2. In the workshop the following actions were prioritised: data scoping and prioritisation should be user and usage-driven; alignment with the Open Data Directive and High Value Datasets; practical examples of compliant metadata, data and services. It was suggested to revamp the work on the action 2.2 by also including work on maximizing the reuse of existing INSPIRE implementations to satisfy the regulatory requirements of the HVD implementing act on access regimes, services/API's, metadata and data access points/portals/catalogues.

Conclusions and Actions

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

3.5 Any other business

There was no other business.

The Chair thanked the MIG for a fruitful meeting and rich discussion and closed the meeting.

4 Conclusions/recommendations/opinions

- The meeting agenda and summary of the previous meeting were adopted.
- The Commission will organise a MIG workshop to continue the discussion on the impact of the Implementing Regulation on High Value Datasets under the Open Data Directive on the implementation of the INSPIRE Directive.

5 Next steps / actions

The MIG was invited:

- To test the new monitoring infrastructure.
- The MIG was invited to share any ideas on possible tracks or sessions as input for the Conference Programme Committee.
- The MIG was invited to review the translated version of the act in their national language by 30 January 2023. Please, no editorial improvements, only major translation issues.
- The MIG was invited to share feedback in writing on the presented objectives and actions to be considered for the impact assessment.

The Commission will:

- Keep the MIG informed on any progress made on the presented Commission initiatives.
- The Commission will organise a MIG workshop to continue the HVD discussion.
- The Commission will explore how the filtering conditions for High Value Datasets used in the INSPIRE Geoportal can be shared with the MIG.

6 Next meeting

The Commission thanked all MIG experts and Commission services for their participation in this first physical meeting of the MIG since the start of the COVID crisis.

No date was fixed at this point for the 17th 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).