

Questions and answers on the priority data set list and use of metadata keywords

Question 1:

How to use the hierarchical INSPIRE code list for priority data set list?

Reply:

The code list INSPIRE priority data set is published in the INSPIRE Registry at: <http://inspire.ec.europa.eu/metadata-codelist/PriorityDataset>. It is created as a hierarchical code list where the codes indicate different levels of detail of information – from a general to a detailed description. The highest level provides information on legislation and more detailed thematic information is provided at the lower levels.

The metadata tagging of the priority spatial data sets should use the most appropriate code, preferably at the most detailed level of the code list hierarchy, when feasible. If this is not feasible, the best-fitted code with a more general description should be provided. Providing one code from the code list hierarchy will fulfil the purpose of tagging. It is also possible to apply several codes from diverse thematic domains.

Example: for a spatial data set of lakes that are provided in the scope of the Water Framework Directive reporting obligation, the following most detailed keyword is recommended to be used:

- Lakes (Water Framework Directive)
<http://inspire.ec.europa.eu/metadata-codelist/PriorityDataset/Lakes-dir-2000-60>

Question 2:

The priority data set list includes the spatial data sets related to the reporting data flow, which has not started yet.

Reply:

The Priority data set list includes the spatial data sets that are considered of high relevance for the development and evaluation of the environmental acquis. Once the reporting data flow will start, the relevant spatial data sets will have to be provided according to the reporting obligation specifications and the INSPIRE Directive provisions. The metadata, view and download services for spatial data sets which fall in the scope of the INSPIRE Directive should already be provided according to the INSPIRE Directive implementation roadmap. In accordance with Articles 6, 9 and 16 of the INSPIRE Directive, such data sets should have been made available "as is" since 2013 covering Annexes I to III. The implementation of the harmonised INSPIRE data models for the interoperability of spatial data sets and services corresponds with the deadlines in 2017 (Annex I spatial data themes) and 2020 (Annex II and III spatial data themes). This means that the relevant spatial data sets for the reporting obligation could be already anticipated, identified, and provided according to the INSPIRE Directive even before the reporting obligation data flow will start.

INSPIRE “Find your Scope” (<http://inspire-regadmin.jrc.ec.europa.eu/dataspecification/FindYourScope.action>) can help in identifying the relevant INSPIRE spatial data themes or spatial object types.

Question 3:

The reporting obligation will not require reporting data anymore or this will become optional. Why are the spatial data sets still included in the priority data set list?

Reply:

The spatial data sets included in the priority data set list are identified according to the current reporting obligations. When the reporting obligation changes, or becomes obsolete, the priority data set list will be updated to reflect those changes. The spatial data sets that were provided in the past and will become obsolete at certain point in time might still have a benefit for specific policy evaluations, e.g. trends, spatial-time based assessments.

Question 4:

The spatial data set that is included in the priority data set list does not exist, or is neither reported nor required by a reporting obligation.

Reply:

In a few reporting data flows, some commonly agreed and accepted spatial data sets are used by all reporting countries, which usually cover the wider geographical coverage of all reporting countries, e.g. European Union Member States or EEA Eionet member and cooperating countries¹ (for example: bio-geographical regions in Europe). Those agreed spatial data sets are available to all reporting countries and are not required to be reported again. However, where the same or similar spatial data sets, e.g. in a more precise resolution, exist at national (or sub-national) level that could be used in the preparation of the national reporting data, such spatial data sets are also included in the priority data set list (for example: national data sets of bio-geographical regions). The INSPIRE Directive (Article 4) does not require collection of new spatial data. If such spatial data sets do not exist in the reporting country, there is no need to provide the data set in the context of the priority data set list.

Furthermore, the INSPIRE Directive covers a wider scope beyond the requirements of the reporting obligations. That is why it is important to look into the spatial data sets that have a potential to be re-used in diverse reporting obligations and other policy evaluations. Therefore, spatial data sets that might not be directly reported or are only used for the preparation of reported data but fall within INSPIRE scope are also included in the priority data set list and shall be made available according to INSPIRE Directive.

Some of the reporting obligation specifications might only indirectly refer to spatial data by requesting information about location, places or addresses. The INSPIRE Directive Article 3(2) defines that spatial data means any data with a direct or indirect reference to a specific location or geographical area. This means that several reported data actually include spatial data that is going to be provided according to the INSPIRE Directive.

¹ <https://www.eea.europa.eu/about-us/countries-and-eionet>

Question 5:

The data set or a part of the data set is not public data.

Reply:

The reporting data flow may include sensitive or restricted data that are not available for public dissemination or use. This restriction may apply to a complete spatial data set or to a part of the content within the spatial data set (related to spatial objects and/or attributes). The INSPIRE Directive defines a way to describe the restriction on public use within the INSPIRE metadata element *Limitations on public access*. This metadata element shall provide information on the limitations and the reasons for them, when the Member States limit public access to spatial data sets and spatial data services under Article 13 of INSPIRE Directive.

Therefore, when such data sets exist, the metadata for spatial data sets and services should include the information about the restriction on public use.

The authorised access and secure data exchange can be implemented using different approaches, which falls under the remit of the data providers and ultimately the corresponding Member State. Particularly for the reporting data flows, existing technical solutions already providing a secure exchange or reporting of data could still be used.

Other European Commission programmes might help in setting secure environments. For example, the European Commission ISA² - *Interoperability solutions for public administrations, businesses and citizens* programme includes action *Enabling Digital Government through Geospatial and Location Intelligence (ELISE)* that further promotes the action *A Reusable INSPIRE Reference Platform (ARE3NA)*. The platform includes several studies on authentication, authorization and accounting (AAA) for data and services in the EU public administrations, and an access control test-bed which includes testing tools and standards in practice so that new barriers and burdens are avoided and existing ISA experience is reused.

https://ec.europa.eu/isa2/actions/elise_en

Question 6:

Spatial data sets with different geometries of the same spatial objects might be required.

Reply:

Each reporting obligation provides specific requirements how to report spatial data or re-use spatial data sets that have been already reported under other reporting obligations. In principle, if the spatial data sets have been already reported, they should not be reported again. However, if the reporting obligation specifications require adaptation of spatial data to their requirements, this might lead to providing different (slightly modified) geometries of the same spatial objects. This will need to be decided on a case-by-case basis at this stage.

Ultimately, and within the context of the overall EU process of streamlining monitoring and reporting², the priority data set exercise will contribute to improve the coherence between different reporting obligations.

² http://ec.europa.eu/environment/legal/reporting/fc_overview_en.htm