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CREATING A CORPORATE REFERENCE DATA MANAGEMENT POLICY FOR THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

ENDORSE.

THE EUROPEAN DATA CONFERENCE ON REFERENCE DATA AND SEMANTICS

European Commission in figures

European Commission

55 Directorates-General dealing with specific policy areas, Service Departments and Executive Agencies

Around 32.000 permanent and contract employees

Distributed over multiple sites



Publications Office of the EU

Commission service department and interinstitutional service provider



Problem statement

Find reference data

Responsibility

Reliability (up to date)

Different **maturity** levels

Duplication and overlaps

Interoperability issues

Objectives of the work to develop a policy

Agree **common principles** for management of reference data

Establish an **initial list** of reference data shared across the Commission

Set up **common governance** to ensure corporate good practices

Benefits

Coherent management approach

More **reuse**

No data duplication

Improved **quality**

Easier **discovery**

Increased **interoperability**

No double work

Multilingual publication

The content of the policy

Making existing reference data assets **accessible** and **reusable**

Establishing **corporate governance** for reference data

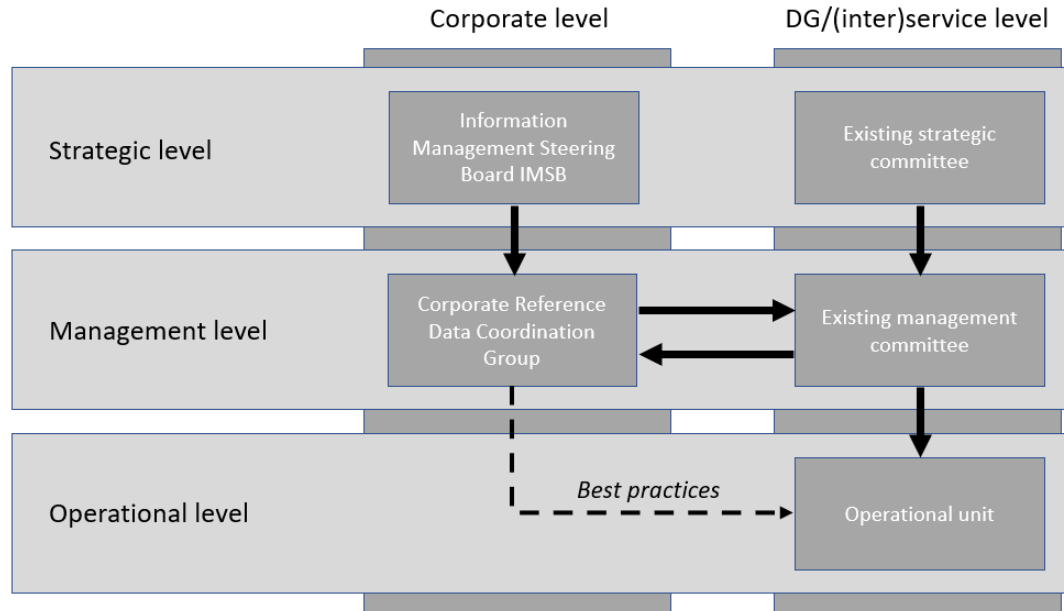
Encouraging the use of **corporate interoperable tools** for reference data management

Defining a **common management approach** for reference data

Stimulating the reuse of reference data across the Commission (**Comply-or-explain**)

<https://op.europa.eu/en/web/eu-vocabularies/corporate-reference-data-management>

Principles of governance: three levels



Corporate governance as a parallel process, connecting with existing governance structures

Best practices

Availability: corporate reference data assets (code lists, vocabularies) to be available 24/7, with sufficient performance and resilience

Communication and notification: users to be informed about changes and releases in timely fashion

Extensibility: enable local concepts to be added alongside corporate concepts as well as enrichments, like translations of labels

Feedback and request handling: allow users to comment and ask for changes

Persistent identifiers: all reference data assets and the concepts in them to have persistent and resolvable identifiers

Best practices

Metadata for description of assets: common profile based on the DCAT Application Profile for data portals in Europe

Release, versioning and archiving: release schedules, versioning approaches and archival policies to be defined and published

Reuse of internal reference data: comply-or-explain policy for the use of the agreed corporate reference data assets

Reuse of external reference data: reuse reference data defined by external, trustworthy sources (e.g. international standards)

Current list of corporate reference assets (generic)

| <i>Concept/topic</i> | <i>Asset</i> | <i>Note</i> |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Audience | Target audience * | Target audiences used for the general publications |
| Currency | Currency * | Currencies – including subunits |
| Data reuse licence | Licence * | European Commission Reuse Notice and standard licences |
| Economic activity | NACE | Statistical classification of economic activities in the European Community |
| EU activities | EuroVoc * | Multilingual, multidisciplinary thesaurus covering the activities of the EU, the European Parliament in particular. |
| EU programme | EU Programme * | Programmes financially supported by the EU |
| File format | File type * | Data format |
| Language | Language * | Human languages |
| Spatial data theme | INSPIRE theme | Spatial data themes in support of the INSPIRE Directive |
| Sustainable Development Goals | SDG | UN SDGS Sustainable Development Goals |

* Assets from the [EU Vocabularies](#)

Current list of corporate reference assets (domain-specific)

| Concept/topic | Asset | Note |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| Fish species | Species | List of Species for Fishery Statistics Purposes (FAO) |
| Fishing gear | Fishing gear type | International Standard Statistical Classification of Fishing Gear (FAO) |
| Fishing vessels | Fishing vessels | International Standard Statistical Classification of Fishery Vessels (FAO) |

Lessons learnt

Important to have support from top management (**sponsor**)

Right moment/**momentum** – link to EC Data Strategy

Coordination group with real **practitioners**

Co-chaired by **services complementing** each other

Essential to bring in **support** from external expert

Pragmatic: start small, gain experience → Snowball effect

Define process before extending

Creating **awareness** across the whole organisation is essential

Further work

Identify **additional** corporate reference data assets

Further develop **implementation** experience based on **best practices**

Analyse and select candidate **tools for corporate use** in the Commission

Raise awareness and promote the implementation of the policy among
Commission services

Evaluate the policy in terms of observed benefits

Q&A

Question:

How to convince people throughout an organisation (policy makers, data stewards, users) of the importance and benefits of a mature approach towards Reference Data Management?

Question:

How to cope with the tension between the ability to react quickly to changes in the environment (e.g. adding concepts) and the need for formal governance procedures?

Thank you!

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You can also contact us during the ENDORSE conference in the 1x1 Meetings

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