

PSI Alliance to collect, analyse and publish requests for PSI after Directive Implementation

The PSI Alliance, a European wide association of private sector companies that are dedicated to increasing the re-use of public information, will collect and publish requests for public sector information.

Starting from summer 2015 the new PSI directive 2013/37/EC is effective in the European Union as the period for transposition ended on July the 18th. Many networks, initiatives and implementation programs support the public sector bodies and the re-users to benefit from the new possibilities to reuse public sector information.

The directive gives citizens and enterprises the right to re-use accessible data for commercial and non-commercial purposes. This new approach extends also to data that were not released for re-use by the public sector bodies yet.

To obtain the data for re-use, the potential re-users have to file a request to the data holding public sector bodies and to start an administrative process. According to the new directive the relevant public sector bodies have to react within 8 weeks.

One essential part of European PSI activities is the proactive release of datasets by the public sector bodies and the publication on Open Data Platforms. Data Portals have been created in every member state and connected on a European level. Obviously these data portals contain the data the public sector bodies released voluntarily.

While the voluntarily released data are promoted in various forms by the public administrations, the re-user requests for release of PSI are kept in a shadowy existence so far. These requests are not collected in a structured way and no publication exists. This is unfortunate, as a documentation of those requests could serve the public administrations and the potential re-users in various ways:

- By analysing the requests for public sector information the EU member states could gather first -hand information regarding the re-users needs. The analyses of the real requests for PSI could provide much more accuracy than the public consultation in 2013 to create the guidelines on datasets.
- If a dataset is exempted from the PSI regime (for example due to privacy reasons) and the public sector body rejects the request for re-use increased transparency helps to avoid new requests for the same dataset. That increases the efficiency of the public sector body.
- According to Article 13. 2 the member states have to report regularly on the availability of public sector information for re-use and the conditions under which it is made available and the redress practices. A database containing the requests for public sector information helps them to fulfil this duty.
- The European Commission shall carry out a review of the application of the PSI Directive before 18 July 2018. Data on re-users requests are an essential for this review as the efficiency of the administrations in the member states are documented.

- The knowledge about datasets that are released in various EU member states helps entrepreneurs to create new products and services on a cross border basis.

The PSI Alliance, a European wide association of private sector companies and associations who are committed to working with PSI holders intends to change that situation. In a first step the Alliance will install a database accessible for every potential re-user. The re-users are invited to document their requests on a voluntarily basis. The main elements of that documentation will be:

- Date of the request
- Date of first answer
- Data applied for
- Data holding public sector body
- Decision
- Data of decision
- Licences
- Charges

It will be the re-users decision if their request will be made public directly on the portal. The data about the requests will be sent to

- The administrations in the Member States responsible for the implementation of the PSI directive
- The European Commission
- OGD platforms

Open Government Data Portals, NGOs and public sector bodies are invited to join that initiative and then share the link to the collecting website. By collecting the requests for Open Government Data increased transparency will be gained and the targets of the PSI directive will be fostered.