

Madrid, 14th March 2013

**Ms. Neelie Kroes**  
European Commission  
B-1049 Brussels

Dear Ms. Kroes,

The Open Data Spain Community Group wants to express through this letter its full support to all initiatives that the European Commission promotes and carries out in the opening and reuse of public sector information, both in his Member States and in the Commission itself. More specifically we strongly support the action with regards to the pan-European Open Data portal. We encourage its leaders to persevere in the initiated path by providing suitable strategic and financial resources for the aforementioned re-use initiatives, which will allow their sustainability over time and to fulfill the expected targets.

Public Open Data initiatives are currently facing a growing momentum in Spain. As for now we count up 20 public open data initiatives: 8 local, 11 regional, and one national ([datos.gob.es](http://datos.gob.es)) that publish the meta-information from the datasets previously registered in their data catalogues by the source organisms. Depending on the region and scope of the open data initiative, the released meta-information is expressed in one or several spanish official languages.

The Spanish national normative framework (Royal Decree 1495/2011, of 24th October 2011, whereby the Law 37/2007) settles for the national public sector that every public body must publish the details of their datasets in his own systems of information (portals or local catalogues) as well as in the national data catalogue.

Moreover the Technical Norm of Interoperability of Reuse of Public Sector Information, is a technical standard that enforces all the public institutions in Spain (at local, regional and national level). Thus public bodies are involved in a homogeneous process when they seek for opening data. Good practices and international recommendations on the subject of licenses, identification of the information and use of common meta-information, are also outlined to boost the reuse of public data by means of standard formats. By doing so, full interoperability is encouraged between publishing organisms and PSI consumers.

Both national and regional governments in Spain have foreseen the need for a federation of their data catalogues. It's aim lies in the aggregation of public datasets by cities and regions with the objective of easing the exchange of datasets between different public administrations.

This initiative for data-catalogue federation tries to design and implement a solution for content federation within an upper-level catalogue, which allows the aggregation and automatic publication of the meta-information regarding the datasets published by the source public bodies.

Two main aspects can be solved by the data-catalogue federation:

- 1 to prevent any member of the team in charge of maintaining the catalog in all organisms had to perform a repetitive task, by cataloguing datasets both in own systems and portals and then in associated local and / or regional open data catalogs and also nationally. Besides this, by automatically synchronizing between different catalogs, errors or delays in metadata replication are also minimized;
- 2 to overcome language barriers by aggregating datasets from official websites in multiple languages, providing a multilingual access point to data which will improve the accessibility and usability of fragmented data and language resources available at the local, regional and national level.

*Red.es*, a public entity of the Ministry of Industry, Energy and Tourism of Spain, has already started the development of a metadata aggregator software module for the Spanish national data catalogue. This module will lead the effective federation with other data catalogues, by collecting the metadata provided by source public bodies through their own systems, and then making them accessible through the national open data portal.

This ongoing work started by the most important open data initiative in Spain, will surely mark a peak for boosting data catalogue federation at local and regional levels in this country. Similarly, the national open data catalogue has been aware of the pan-European open data portal initiative, seeing it as a strategic reference. Therefore the Spanish initiative is evolving from a technical point of view, improving data catalogue federation to add the outcomes to the pan-European open data portal. That is why we strongly support its goals and philosophy to make the reuse of public sector information a reality across Europe, regardless of the origin of the data, its member states, and their languages.

Finally we consider that Public Sector Information is a key-enabler for the next information society and economy. Initiatives such as the pan-European Open Data portal can lead the development of a new data realm in which new opportunities will emerge to take advantage of this collective effort and create a real knowledge society.

Yours sincerely,



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