

G8 OPEN DATA CHARTER: ANNEX

Introduction

1. We, the G8, have consulted with technical experts to identify some best practices (part one) and collective actions (part two) that we will use to meet the principles set out in the G8 Open Data Charter.
2. While working within our national political and legal frameworks, we agree to implement these practices as quickly as possible and aim to complete our activities by 2015 at the latest. This will be done in accordance with the timeframes in our national action plans.
3. The Annex constitutes a 'living' set of guidelines that may be subject to amendments after consideration of emerging technology solutions or practical experience gained during the course of implementation of the G8 Open Data Charter.

Part One - Best Practices

Principle 1: Open Data by Default

4. We recognise the importance of open data and we will establish an expectation that all government data be published openly by default.
5. **We will:**
 - **define our open data position in a public statement of intent**, such as an announcement, strategy or policy, so that our plans for progressing the open data agenda in our jurisdictions are clear;
 - **publish a national action plan** to provide more specific details on our plans to release data according to the principles in the G8 Open Data Charter; and
 - **publish data on a national portal** so that all government data that has been released can be found easily in one place. A portal may be a central website from which data can be downloaded, or a website which lists all open government data stored at a different location. Each portal will include a registry file that lists all the data and metadata used on the portal, as well as providing APIs for developers. Where it is yet not possible to publish all data on a portal, the location of data will be communicated clearly and not moved without notice.

Principle 2: Quality and Quantity

6. We commit to releasing data that are both high in quality as well as high in quantity. When releasing data, we aim to do so in a way that helps people to use and understand them. This will help to increase the interoperability of data from different policy areas, businesses or countries.

7. **We will:**

- **use robust and consistent metadata** (i.e. the fields or elements that describe the actual data);
- **publish and maintain an up-to-date mapping** of the core descriptive metadata fields across G8 members to enable easier use and comprehension by people from around the world. This will allow countries, in the G8 and beyond, who do not currently have a data portal to consider adopting the metadata fields included in this mapping;
- **ensure data are fully described**, as appropriate, to help users to fully understand the data. This may include:
 - Documentation that provides explanations about the data fields used;
 - Data dictionaries to link different data; and
 - A user's guide that describes the purpose of the collection, the target audience, the characteristics of the sample, and the method of data collection.
- **listen to feedback from data users** to improve the breadth, quality and accessibility of data we offer. This could be in the form of a public consultation on the national data strategy or policy, discussions with civil society, creation of a feedback mechanism on the data portal, or through other appropriate mechanisms.

Principle 3: Usable by All

8. We agree to release data in a way that helps all people find and re-use them.

9. **We will:**

- **make data available in convenient open formats** to ensure files can be easily retrieved, downloaded, indexed, and searched by all commonly used Web search applications. Open formats, for example non-proprietary CSV files, are ones where the specification for the format is available to anyone for free, thereby allowing the data contained in a file to be opened by different software programmes.

Principle 4: Releasing Data for Improved Governance

10. We recognise that data are a powerful tool to help drive government effectiveness, efficiency and responsiveness to citizen needs while fuelling further demand for open data.

11. **We will:**

- **develop links with civil society organisations and individuals** to allow the public to provide feedback on the most important data they would like released;
- **be open about our own data standards**, so that we take into account:

- Data that are released by other national and international organisations
- The standards emerging from other international transparency initiatives; and
- **document our own experiences of working with open data** by, for example, publishing technical information about our open data policies, practices, and portals so that the benefits of open data can be enjoyed in other countries.

Principle 5: Releasing Data for Innovation

12. We agree that our citizens can use our data to fuel innovation in our own countries and around the world. We recognise that free access to, and reuse of, open government data are an essential part of this.
13. **We will:**
 - **support the release of data using open licences** or other relevant instruments - while respecting intellectual property rights - so that no restrictions or charges are placed on the re-use of the information for non-commercial or commercial purposes, save for exceptional circumstances;
 - **ensure data are machine readable in bulk** by providing data that are well structured to allow automated processing and access with the minimum number of file downloads;
 - **release data using application programming interfaces (APIs)**, where appropriate, to ensure easy access to the most regularly updated and accessed data; and
 - **encourage innovative uses of our data** through the organisation of challenges, prizes or mentoring for data users in our individual jurisdictions.

Part Two - Collective Actions

Action 1: G8 National Action Plans

- We will publish individual action plans detailing how we will implement the Open Data Charter according to our national frameworks (October 2013)
- We will report progress on an annual basis (via the G8 Accountability Working Group) (2014 and 2015)

Action 2: Release of high value data

- We recognise the following as areas of high value, both for improving our democracies and encouraging innovative re-use of data.

Data Category (alphabetical order)	Example datasets
Companies	Company/business register
Crime and Justice	Crime statistics, safety
Earth observation	Meteorological/weather, agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting
Education	List of schools; performance of schools, digital skills
Energy and Environment	Pollution levels, energy consumption
Finance and contracts	Transaction spend, contracts let, call for tender, future tenders, local budget, national budget (planned and spent)
Geospatial	Topography, postcodes, national maps, local maps
Global Development	Aid, food security, extractives, land
Government Accountability and Democracy	Government contact points, election results, legislation and statutes, salaries (pay scales), hospitality/gifts
Health	Prescription data, performance data
Science and Research	Genome data, research and educational activity, experiment results
Statistics	National Statistics, Census, infrastructure, wealth, skills,
Social mobility and welfare	Housing, health insurance and unemployment benefits
Transport and Infrastructure	Public transport timetables, access points broadband penetration

- In accordance with the principles of “open by default” and “quality and quantity” we will work towards the progressive publication of these data.
- As a first step, we will collectively make key datasets on National Statistics, National Maps, National Elections and National Budgets available and

discoverable (from June 2013), and we will work towards improving their granularity and accessibility (by December 2013)

- We recognise that collective action by all G8 members has the potential to unlock barriers and foster innovative solutions to some of the challenges we are facing. We therefore agree on a mutual effort to increase the supply of open government data available on key functions of our States, such as democracy and environmentⁱ. We will work on identifying datasets in these areas by December 2013, with an aim to release them by December 2014.
- We will set out in our national action plans how and when we will release data under the remaining categories according to our national frameworks (October 2013)

Action 3: Metadata mapping

- We have contributed to and commit to maintaining the G8 metadata mapping exercise (June 2013)
- This mapping can be viewed on Github and comprises a [collective mapping 'index'](#) across G8 member's metadata, and a [detailed page](#) on each G8 member use of metadata within their national portal.

ⁱ Categories and datasets to be finalised by December 2013