

Factsheet United Kingdom

Main interoperability activities

The United Kingdom has not provided any information on the existence of a National Interoperability Framework (NIF) nor any plans to develop (if not existent) a NIF in the future. An extensive process definition, still a draft document, on open standards for data has been provided. This process is described under 'other initiatives on interoperability'.

Other initiatives on interoperability

Open Standards for Data - Process Definition (draft): To ensure that appropriate data is transparent and shared rather than duplicated, the Government will implement engagement processes for open data standards activity and crowd sourcing priority areas for data standards.

The aim of the Open Standards for Data Process is to provide a lightweight "wrapper" for prioritisation, resource allocation, and quality assurance in order to establish a core minimum set of data standards with broad applicability across the public sector. The process aims to bring together policy priorities with existing public sector data standards groups, whilst also broadening engagement to leverage the abilities of a wider "crowd" from the data standards community.

The process is designed to be modular and scalable, and thus able to cope with both rapid adoption of "obvious" existing standards but also to support complex long-term developments where necessary. It is end-to-end, as it is essential that it has the ability to see standards through to implementation across the public sector. Finally it is driven by the issuing of "challenges" which are used to give focus and momentum to the engagement activity.

The participants in the process are:

- **Open Standards Board:** A senior level board with the mandate to approve standards and drive adoption.
- **Standards Development Groups:** Bodies with the ability to undertake standards development work.
- **Engagement Channels:** an online "front door / shop window" (based on data.gov.uk) that provides for wider "crowdsourcing" engagement.
- **A Data Standards Panel:** the Panel provides the essential coordination between the above three participants.

The steps in the process are:

- **Challenge:** The Data Standards Panel, guided by the Board, can issue challenges against which standards proposals are invited.
- **Need:** Anyone is invited to make a proposal for the development and/or adoption of standards, either as a reaction to a challenge, or as a unsolicited idea.
- **Filter:** Considering each proposal and recommending to either accept and prioritize for greater definition, reject or redirect, or combine with other proposals.
- **Define:** For each proposal that is accepted via the filtering step then the Data Standards Panel, working with stakeholders, will work to bring greater definition and to formalise the proposal, including context, vision, policy alignment, benefits and value for money assessment, and implementation considerations.
- **Build:** For propositions where standards do not exist, a build phase will create the standard.
- **Trial:** A lead department or similar pilot group will trial a prototype of the standard.

- **Adopt:** A decision is made (via recommendation to the Open Standards Board) to adopt a standard for the UK public sector, for a given purpose and scenario. Adopted standards are placed in a catalogue.
- **Promote:** Adopted standards will be communicated and promoted via a catalogue, communities of practice may be established, and there may be additional one-off launch activities.
- **Review:** Adopted standards are reviewed so that the board is alerted when rollout of a standard is lagging, so that benefits are monitored, and so that action can be taken when the need for a standard is no longer relevant or has changed, or when a standard has been updated, and may need to be re-adopted at the next version.
- **Retire:** Standards which are no longer needed are retired.

The Open Standards for Data Process described in this paper could be reused for other types of non-Data Open Standards – for example Technical Standards. However some modifications would be needed. The main areas requiring modifications are highlighted in annex.

NIF responsables for United Kingdom

Kevin Doherty (Kevin.Doherty@cabinet-office.gsi.gov.uk)

Paul Davidson (paul.davidson@sedgemoor.gov.uk)