

Getting Started

Initial Guidance to Data Providers
Publishers

Guide 2: Organisation and
Data Coverage

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Organisation and Data Coverage

This second guide in the series “Getting Started”, explores the organisations and types of data covered by UK Location. It is intended to help data providers understand whether their organisation falls within its scope and what types of data they should be looking to publish, both under legal obligations and voluntarily.

Which organisations does it cover?

UK Location covers all public authorities that create location information. The definition of ‘public authority’ is as per the Environmental Information Regulations 2004¹.

The legal obligation to publish only applies if the data comes under an INSPIRE data theme, but you are encouraged to go beyond this and publish any location information you believe will be of benefit for sharing and re-use.

In addition, private organisations are also encouraged to publish the location information they create, particularly if associated with a public benefit.

What data does it cover?

Location information in the context of UK Location is the data (held electronically) that identifies the geographic location of features on the earth. These may be natural features or manmade features such as rivers or buildings (respectively). INSPIRE uses the term spatial data and spatial objects, while ISO uses the term geographic data and geographic features. Generally, to avoid ambiguity, we will adopt INSPIRE terminology.

Location information is usually stored as coordinates and comes in three forms:

Vector data – points, lines and polygons, also known as spatial geometry data.

Raster data – digital satellite imagery, aerial photographs and elevation shading, or digital elevation models.

Text data – alphanumeric data that includes coordinate referencing (e.g. latitude, longitude, and height), also referred to as ‘geo-referenced’, or ‘geo-encoded’.

Raster mapping is also in scope of INSPIRE and should be also be published. The exception to this requirement would be in the case when identical data – in terms of content – is also available in vector format.

¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2004/3391/contents/made>

INSPIRE Data

Within the scope of coverage set out above, sits data that is required to be published under INSPIRE.

This is data that relates to an area where a Member State has and/or exercises jurisdictional rights; relates to one or more of the INSPIRE Themes listed in Annex I, II and III of the Directive and is subject to UK laws or regulations requiring their collection and dissemination (Article 4).

If you are a public authority and you have existing datasets that meet this criteria, then you are obliged to publish these under INSPIRE and must fully comply with the INSPIRE regulations.

The INSPIRE Data Themes

There are currently 34 INSPIRE data themes. You can find a full list of these and their definition at:

<http://inspire.jrc.ec.europa.eu/index.cfm/pageid/2/list/7>

In addition, the Data Specifications for Annex I have now been published. These can be found at:

<http://inspire.jrc.ec.europa.eu/index.cfm/pageid/2/list/1>

[The Regulation for Interoperability of Spatial Data sets and Services found on:](#)

<http://inspire.jrc.ec.europa.eu/index.cfm/pageid/3>

[also includes lists of features by theme which are mandated.](#)

How do I know if my data comes under an INSPIRE Theme?

The first step is to read the Interoperability of spatial data and services Regulation. If you publish data corresponding to the features in the Regulation², then your data is in mandatory scope of INSPIRE.

For some datasets the scope is more general e.g. "Protected Sites", where there is some further interpretation required. In such cases, you should discuss this within the data community for a given theme, e.g. those with an interest or involved in the management of Protected Sites.

For the adoption of the INSPIRE data specifications this community dialogue is critical, as most themes do not consist of just one dataset from one Data Provider, but are made up of a number of datasets, from a number of Data Providers, either as individual datasets, or part of a data series. It is important that agreement is reached on a common publishing approach to these datasets.

² Note that the features set out in the specification may not use the same terms that you use.

As many datasets will include spatial objects mandated by INSPIRE and some that are not – it is your decision on what you publish. You can also include spatial objects that are not covered by INSPIRE and it is recommended that you do this. A mechanism will be developed to formally support these additional spatial objects, so that they are consistently defined using the generic INSPIRE model.

Having developed an initial view, if you think that you have data that comes under an INSPIRE Theme, you should contact the [UK Location Programme](#), or if in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, your local contact point. If a local authority in England, please contact the Local Government Association (LGA): inspire@idea.gov.uk.

The UK Location Programme is charged with maintaining a list of the datasets against each of the INSPIRE Themes. This has to be supplied to the EU and made publicly available on an annual basis. It can also assist in the clarification of which datasets fall under a given theme and provides support to INSPIRE Data Providers through its [theme coordination Programme](#).

Remember that, if a dataset does not appear to come under an INSPIRE Theme, this does not stop you publishing it into UK Location, it just removes the obligation to do so.