





# Procedure file

Basic information	
COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure) Directive	2004/0175(COD) Procedure completed
Infrastructure for spatial information in the European Community (INSPIRE) Amended by <a href="#">2018/0205(COD)</a>	
Subject 1.20.05 Public access to information and documents, administrative practice 2.80 Cooperation between administrations 3.70 Environmental policy	

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	<b>CODE</b> EP Delegation to Conciliation Committee		13/06/2006
		PPE-DE <a href="#">BREPOELS Frieda</a>	
	Former committee responsible		
	<b>ENVI</b> Environment, Public Health and Food Safety		20/09/2004
		PPE-DE <a href="#">BREPOELS Frieda</a>	
	<b>ENVI</b> Environment, Public Health and Food Safety		20/09/2004
		PPE-DE <a href="#">BREPOELS Frieda</a>	
	Former committee for opinion		
	<b>ITRE</b> Industry, Research and Energy	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	<b>LIBE</b> Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	<a href="#">Agriculture and Fisheries</a>	<a href="#">2777</a>	29/01/2007
	<a href="#">Economic and Financial Affairs ECOFIN</a>	<a href="#">2753</a>	10/10/2006
	<a href="#">Agriculture and Fisheries</a>	<a href="#">2703</a>	23/01/2006
	<a href="#">Environment</a>	<a href="#">2670</a>	24/06/2005
European Commission	Commission DG	Commissioner	
	<a href="#">Environment</a>	DIMAS Stavros	

Key events			
23/07/2004	Legislative proposal published	<a href="#">COM(2004)0516</a>	Summary
15/09/2004	Committee referral announced in Parliament, 1st reading		

21/04/2005	Vote in committee, 1st reading		
26/04/2005	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading	<a href="#">A6-0108/2005</a>	
06/06/2005	Debate in Parliament		
07/06/2005	Decision by Parliament, 1st reading	<a href="#">T6-0213/2005</a>	Summary
17/01/2006	Joint text approved by Conciliation Committee co-chairs	<a href="#">03685/2006</a>	
23/01/2006	Council position published	<a href="#">12064/2/2005</a>	Summary
16/02/2006	Committee referral announced in Parliament, 2nd reading		
21/03/2006	Vote in committee, 2nd reading		Summary
02/05/2006	Committee recommendation tabled for plenary, 2nd reading	<a href="#">A6-0081/2006</a>	
12/06/2006	Debate in Parliament		
13/06/2006	Decision by Parliament, 2nd reading	<a href="#">T6-0252/2006</a>	Summary
10/10/2006	Parliament's amendments rejected by Council		Summary
21/11/2006	Formal meeting of Conciliation Committee		
17/01/2007	Final decision by Conciliation Committee		
29/01/2007	Decision by Council, 3rd reading		
31/01/2007	Report tabled for plenary, 3rd reading	<a href="#">A6-0021/2007</a>	
12/02/2007	Debate in Parliament		
13/02/2007	Results of vote in Parliament		
13/02/2007	Decision by Parliament, 3rd reading	<a href="#">T6-0028/2007</a>	Summary
14/03/2007	Final act signed		
14/03/2007	End of procedure in Parliament		
25/04/2007	Final act published in Official Journal		

## Technical information

Procedure reference	2004/0175(COD)
Procedure type	COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure)
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Legislative instrument	Directive
	Amended by <a href="#">2018/0205(COD)</a>
Legal basis	EC Treaty (after Amsterdam) EC 175-p1
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CODE/6/38115

Documentation gateway					
Legislative proposal		<a href="#">COM(2004)0516</a>	23/07/2004	EC	Summary
Document attached to the procedure		<a href="#">SEC(2004)0980</a>	23/07/2004	EC	
Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report		<a href="#">CES0124/2005</a> <a href="#">OJ C 221 08.09.2005, p. 0033-0034</a>	09/02/2005	ESC	
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		<a href="#">A6-0108/2005</a>	26/04/2005	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		<a href="#">T6-0213/2005</a> <a href="#">OJ C 124 25.05.2006, p. 0019-0116 E</a>	07/06/2005	EP	Summary
Council statement on its position		<a href="#">15148/2005</a>	05/12/2005	CSL	
Joint text approved by Conciliation Committee co-chairs		<a href="#">03685/2006</a>	17/01/2006	CSL/EP	
Council position		<a href="#">12064/2/2005</a> <a href="#">OJ C 126 30.05.2006, p. 0016-0032 E</a>	23/01/2006	CSL	Summary
Committee draft report		<a href="#">PE368.032</a>	01/02/2006	EP	
Commission communication on Council's position		<a href="#">COM(2006)0051</a>	10/02/2006	EC	Summary
Committee recommendation tabled for plenary, 2nd reading		<a href="#">A6-0081/2006</a>	02/05/2006	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, 2nd reading		<a href="#">T6-0252/2006</a>	13/06/2006	EP	Summary
Commission opinion on Parliament's position at 2nd reading		<a href="#">COM(2006)0484</a>	13/09/2006	EC	Summary
Report tabled for plenary by Parliament delegation to Conciliation Committee, 3rd reading		<a href="#">A6-0021/2007</a>	31/01/2007	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, 3rd reading		<a href="#">T6-0028/2007</a>	13/02/2007	EP	Summary
Draft final act		<a href="#">03685/12/2006</a>	14/03/2007	CSL	
Follow-up document		C(2009)4199	05/06/2009	EC	
Follow-up document		C(2010)1892	29/03/2010	EC	
Follow-up document		<a href="#">COM(2016)0478</a>	20/07/2016	EC	Summary
Follow-up document		<a href="#">SWD(2016)0243</a>	20/07/2016	EC	
Follow-up document		<a href="#">SWD(2016)0273</a>	10/08/2016	EC	
Follow-up document		SWD(2022)0195	13/07/2022	EC	
Follow-up document		<a href="#">SWD(2022)0196</a>	13/07/2022	EC	

Additional information	
National parliaments	<a href="#">IPEX</a>
European Commission	<a href="#">EUR-Lex</a>

**Final act**

## Infrastructure for spatial information in the European Community (INSPIRE)

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**PURPOSE** : to create a legal framework for the establishment and operation of an Infrastructure for Spatial Information in Europe (INSPIRE), for the purpose of formulating, implementing, monitoring and evaluating Community policies at all levels and providing public information.

**PROPOSED ACT** : Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council.

**CONTENT** : with a view to improving mapping in Europe, the European Commission is launching the INSPIRE (INfrastructure for SPatial InfoRmation in the European Union) initiative. A database with consistent geographical information, INSPIRE will support environmental protection policies as well as infrastructure development, agriculture and maritime navigation. This proposal calls on EU Member States to put geographical information on a publicly accessible electronic network and to progressively harmonise it. At present, information on rivers, road networks and other geographical features is collected in an uncoordinated way and based on different methods and specifications, resulting in data gaps and lack of comparability.

The proposal states that community policy on the environment must aim at a high level of protection taking into account the diversity of situations in the various regions of the Community. In preparing its policy on the environment, the Community is required to take account of available scientific and technical data, environmental conditions in the various regions of the Community, the economic and social development of the Community as a whole and the balanced development of its regions. Many information themes related to spatial features are required for a broad range of environmental policies.

A key objective of INSPIRE is to make more and better spatial data available for Community policy-making and implementation of Community policies in the Member States at all levels.

INSPIRE focuses on environmental policy but is open for use by and future extension to other sectors such as agriculture, transport and energy.

The proposal focuses specifically on information needed in order to monitor and improve the state of the environment, including air, water, soil and the natural landscape.

INSPIRE will not set off an extensive programme of new spatial data collection in the Member States. Instead, it is designed to optimise the scope for exploiting the data that are already available, by requiring the documentation of existing spatial data, the implementation of services aimed at rendering the spatial data more accessible and interoperable and by dealing with obstacles to the use of the spatial data.

INSPIRE will pave the road for a progressive harmonisation of spatial data in the Member States.

The main beneficiaries of this proposal will therefore be those involved in the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies ? at the European, national and local level. These are public authorities, legislators and citizens and their organisations. However, other user groups are also expected to benefit, including the private sector, universities, researchers and the media. The proposal will support the formulation and implementation of a wide range of environmental and other policies.

## Infrastructure for spatial information in the European Community (INSPIRE)

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The European Parliament adopted the resolution drafted by Frederika BREPOELS (EPP-ED, BE) and made some amendments to the Commission's text, many of which are intended to clarify the definitions and the structure of the legislation. There are more precise definitions for many terms such as "spatial data services". Furthermore:

- a new recital states that the preclusion of restrictions of a financial nature at the point of use does not prevent public authorities that produce spatial data sets and services from receiving financial compensation from the public authorities that use these spatial data sets and services;
- in order to protect intellectual property rights held by public authorities in respect of spatial data, the data made available through the view services mentioned in the text may be in a form preventing their re-use for commercial purposes, and a click-licence may be included to restrict the use that can be made of the data;
- a new clause provides that the establishment of common licences shall not unnecessarily restrict possibilities for re-use of data and use of services and shall not be used to restrain competition;
- some additions are made to Annex III.

## Infrastructure for spatial information in the European Community (INSPIRE)

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The common position, adopted unanimously, incorporates the majority of the European Parliament's first reading, either verbatim, in part or in spirit. In particular, it includes modifications to the Commission's initial proposal regrouping Articles of the text, streamlining the definitions and clarifying the scope. However, the common position includes a number of changes other than those envisaged in the European Parliament's Opinion at first reading and in the Commission's initial proposal.

The following sections describe the changes of substance.

General provisions, definitions and scope : the common position does not follow Parliament on this issue. The aim and scope of the Directive correspond with the Commission's initial proposal and its legal basis. The text of the common position does not refer to "direct or indirect" impact on the environment, however, additional recital addresses this issue. The Council agrees with the substance of the EP amendment.

However, it accepted the Commission's view that it would not be legally sound to include obligations for Community institutions and bodies in a directive. The common position states that the Directive would apply without prejudice to Directive 2003/4/EC on public access to environmental information and 2003/98/EC on the re-use of public sector information. It introduces additional definitions of the terms "interoperability", "INSPIRE geo portal" and limits the scope of the definition of "public authority". It also clarifies the scope of spatial data sets covered by the Directive and limits the extent of the competence of the committee to adapt the data themes in the Annexes.

Metadata, Interoperability of spatial data sets and services : the components of the metadata are clarified in the common position as well as the implementation rules. The time schedule for creation of the metadata is consistent with the timetable proposed by the EP. It introduces additional conditions for the drafting of the implementing rules laying down technical arrangements for interoperability, particularly the cost-benefit consideration, integration of standards and activities at international level and reference to existing technical means. Cost-benefit and feasibility considerations are backed up which requires the Commission to undertake a cost-benefit analysis prior to developing the proposals for the implementing rules. The adoption of these rules shall not result in excessive costs to a Member State. The common position also clarifies the adaptation of newly collected and other spatial data sets and services and replaces "a common system of unique identifiers" by "solutions to ensure unambiguous identification of spatial objects, to which identifiers under existing national systems can be mapped in order to ensure interoperability between them" in order to avoid the imposition of a particular technical solution.

Network services : the extended list of grounds for limiting access is identical to that in Article 4(2) of Directive 2003/4/EC on public access to environmental information to ensure consistence in the implementation. An additional provides that public access to spatial data complies with Directive 95/46/EC on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data. The common position allows Member States to apply charges and/or licences for view services, where this is necessary to maintain the spatial data sets and services or to fulfil requirements of existing international spatial data infrastructures.

Data-sharing : the common position clarifies the scope of data-sharing obligations between the public authorities of one Member State, the public authorities of different Member States, the institutions and bodies of the Community and the bodies established by international agreements. It equally seeks to prevent practical obstacles at the point of use (for example, a public authority employee using the data on their computer) while allowing data providers to recover their costs from the public authorities of Member States and Community bodies, thus ensuring that the quality and currency of the data are maintained. Where charging occurs, it is at the public authority level, not at the point of use. Protection of intellectual property rights is ensured.

Coordination and complementary measures, final provisions : there is no explicit stress on the distribution of powers and responsibilities within the Member States in relation to their structures involved. The new wording of an Article and an additional recital of the common position rationalise the monitoring and reporting requirements of the Directive.

Annexes : spatial data themes "distribution of road accidents" and "telecommunications" are not included in the common position as they are not related to the purpose of INSPIRE.

## Infrastructure for spatial information in the European Community (INSPIRE)

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The Commission can accept in full, in part or in principle 46 of the 49 amendments proposed by the European Parliament at its first reading. Many of these amendments have now been incorporated, either verbatim or in substance in the common position.

The Commission cannot accept the common position with regard to a number of issues. The most important of these issues include the following: the Commission does not agree that intellectual property rights held by public authorities should be among the list of grounds for limiting public access to spatial data.

The Commission also does not agree that the possibility of limiting access should be extended to cover discovery services referred to in Article 18(1)(a) of the Commission proposal, since this would mean that the public would not even be able to learn of the existence of the data.

The Commission maintains that the view services referred to in Article 18(1)(b) of the Commission proposal should be made available free of charge, and cannot accept the Council position allowing public authorities to charge and license for these services under certain conditions.

The common position makes the obligation to avoid obstacles to data sharing, as well as the rules for ensuring harmonised conditions for Community institutions and bodies, subordinate to the right of public data providers to charge and license other authorities for their data. It is also vague about the obstacles to be avoided. It will therefore be ineffective in achieving one of the key aims of the proposal, and could even have the effect of increasing obstacles to the sharing of data.

Lastly, while the Commission agrees that the provisions relating to data sharing do not affect the existence or ownership of public authorities' intellectual property rights, it does not see the need for this to be stated in the text of the directive. If such a provision is to be included, it should be made equally clear that these rights must be exercised in accordance with the other provisions.

The common position potentially represents a significant milestone towards the adoption of a directive that will help to improve the knowledge base for environmental and other policies by improving the availability and interoperability of spatial data. Many of its provisions provide a good basis on which to make progress. However, certain aspects of the common position could have the effect of reducing rather than increasing the availability of spatial data, by consolidating the obstacles to data sharing between authorities and unduly limiting public access. Other provisions will make the directive difficult to implement and reduce its effectiveness in making data systems interoperable. For this reason, the Commission cannot accept the common position.

## Infrastructure for spatial information in the European Community (INSPIRE)

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The committee adopted the report by Frieda BREPOELS (EPP-ED, BE) amending the Council's common position under the 2nd reading of the codecision procedure. It reinstated, sometimes in modified form, a number of amendments adopted by Parliament at 1st reading which had not been taken up by the Council. It also reinstated some parts of the Commission's original proposal which had been changed in the common position. The main amendments were as follows:

- whereas the Council had proposed that intellectual property rights be included among the list of factors which could be used as reasons for

limiting public access to spatial data, the committee disagreed and deleted this provision, thereby reinstating the relevant Commission text as it originally stood;

- a number of other amendments also sought to overturn the Council's attempts to limit public access or impose charges on certain services. The committee also stipulated that, where charges are made, "the total income from supplying documents shall not exceed the cost of collection, production, reproduction and dissemination";

- lastly, MEPs pointed out that, bearing in mind the constitutional distribution of powers in some Member States (e.g. federal states), coordination structures should be set up to support the contact points in the Member States to ensure that the directive can be implemented effectively.

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## Infrastructure for spatial information in the European Community (INSPIRE)

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The European Parliament adopted a resolution drafted by Frieda BREPOELS and reinstated a number of amendments made at first reading. (Please see the summary of 21/03/2006.) (EPP-ED, BE) amending the Council's common position. In particular, Parliament deleted the Council's text on intellectual property rights, which allowed public authorities to restrict access to certain geographical and environmental information, and reverted to the Commission's initial proposal on this issue. It further stated that member states shall ensure that the targeted services are available to the public free of charge. Access to information must be guaranteed, not only to research institutions but also for consultation purposes. Where charges are made, the total income from supplying documents shall not exceed the cost of collection, production, reproduction and dissemination.

Finally, Parliament felt that it is crucially important that in federal states, bearing in mind the constitutional distribution of powers, coordination structures should be set up to ensure that the Directive can be implemented effectively.

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## Infrastructure for spatial information in the European Community (INSPIRE)

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The European Parliament adopted all of the 36 amendments that were tabled. Out of the 36 amendments adopted, the Commission can accept 30 amendments in full, 2 amendments in part and a further 3 amendments in principle. One of the adopted amendments is not acceptable to the Commission.

As regards the amendments accepted in full, several of the proposed amendments relate to concerns raised by the Commission in its Communication on the common position. In particular, it accepts those which:

- aim to avoid cumbersome procedures for adopting implementing rules on interoperability to be adopted by comitology, and to ensure that these rules will be uniformly applied in all Member States;

- restore the original intention of the Commission proposal in relation to public access to data.

which restore the original intention of the Commission proposal in relation to the sharing of data between public authorities;

- make corresponding changes to the recitals in relation to these key issues;

- wholly or partially restore the intention of the original proposal in relation to more minor aspects;

- provide clarifications in relation to coordination structures in the Member States;

- have the effect of accelerating the timetable for adoption of implementing rules for two spatial data themes, while another amendment slightly enlarges the scope of another data theme.

As far as the amendments accepted in part are concerned, the Commission accepts those which:

- aim to ensure that any charging and licensing practices by public data providers are made compatible with the overall obligation to share data, while limiting the level of charges that may be applied. This amendment addresses a concern of the Commission in relation to the common position since the sharing of data between public authorities is a key aim of the Directive. However, the limitation on the level of charges is wrongly worded since it refers to documents and will in any case not necessarily be appropriate in all circumstances;

- amend the corresponding recital and is acceptable in part for the same reasons.

The Commission accepts the following amendments which in principle:

- aim to restore the intention of the Commission proposal in relation to the timing of the creation of metadata, and is acceptable in principle, on the basis that the timing is in line with that of the original proposal;

- aim to restore the intention of the Commission proposal to give the public access to view data free of charge, and is therefore also acceptable in principle. There are nevertheless some types of data, such as meteorological data, where it may not be cost-effective or reasonable for data providers to make the data available for view free of charge because they are too voluminous and/or are of interest for only a very limited period of time. The precise wording of this paragraph will need to reflect such cases.

On the other hand, the Commission rejected the amendment concerning the participation of interested parties in preparatory discussions for the adoption of implementing rules, and is not acceptable since it deletes a useful clarification contained in the Council text.

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## Infrastructure for spatial information in the European Community (INSPIRE)

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The Council decided not to accept the European Parliament's second reading amendments to a proposal for a directive establishing an infrastructure for spatial information in the European Community ("INSPIRE"). It accordingly decided to convene the Parliament-Council conciliation committee with a view to negotiating a joint text.

## Infrastructure for spatial information in the European Community (INSPIRE)

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The European Parliament adopted a resolution approving the joint text agreed by the Conciliation Committee. (For details of the joint text, please refer to the summary dated 21/11/2006.)

## Infrastructure for spatial information in the European Community (INSPIRE)

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**PURPOSE:** to create a legal framework for the establishment and operation of an Infrastructure for Spatial Information in Europe (INSPIRE).

**LEGISLATIVE ACT:** Directive 2007/2/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing an Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community (INSPIRE).

**CONTENT:** the purpose of this Directive is to lay down general rules aimed at the establishment of the Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community (?Inspire?), for the purposes of Community environmental policies and policies or activities which may have an impact on the environment. Inspire will build upon infrastructures for spatial information established and operated by the Member States. It does not require collection of new spatial data, and does not affect existing intellectual property rights.

Data interoperability and data sharing are prime objectives.

The aim of INSPIRE is to strengthen the knowledge base for environmental policy and make it more accessible to citizens, stakeholders and decision-makers. The Directive will cover a wide range of spatial data ranging from basic mapping information, such as geographical names and administrative units, to key environmental information such as emissions, environmental quality and location of protected sites.

The Directive deals with the following key points :

- the creation of metadata ;
- technical developments promoting interoperability ;
- the use of data services ;
- principles on access to data and the related charges ; and
- national co-ordination.

The Directive sets out the obligations of Member States? public authorities in respect of the data they collect. Public authorities holding data covered by the directive will have to share their data with other public authorities (e.g. EU institutions). They must allow the public to view data for free and buy the data for download and use over the Internet, and must comply with technical implementing rules to improve consistency.

INSPIRE will provide metadata, thereby making it easier to search for the data and to assess its quality and potential use. Detailed technical rules will be developed for a wide range of spatial data themes in order to make it easier for different data sets to be combined.

A portal will be developed to provide a single entry point for users to access the data.

The European Environment Agency set up by Council Regulation (EEC) No 1210/90 will contribute actively to the implementation of this Directive.

The Directive deals with a number of related issues, such as safeguarding privacy, and where appropriate, enabling data owners to charge for their datasets or services. Data search services designed for the public will generally be free of charge, although the directive allows fees to be charged for access to data under certain circumstances.

**Reports:** no later than 15 May 2010 Member States must send to the Commission a report including summary descriptions of:

- how public sector providers and users of spatial data sets and services and intermediary bodies are coordinated, and of the relationship with the third parties and of the organisation of quality assurance;
- the contribution made by public authorities or third parties to the functioning and coordination of the infrastructure for spatial information;
- information on the use of the infrastructure for spatial information;
- data-sharing agreements between public authorities;
- the costs and benefits of implementing the Directive.

Every three years, and starting no later than 15 May 2013, Member States must send to the Commission a report providing updated information in relation to these items.

By 15 May 2014 and every six years thereafter the Commission must present to the European Parliament and to the Council a report on the implementation of the Directive based, inter alia, on Member States? reports as detailed above. Where necessary, the report shall be accompanied by proposals for Community action.

**ENTRY INTO FORCE:** 15 May 2007.

**TRANSPOSITION:** 15 May 2009.

# Infrastructure for spatial information in the European Community (INSPIRE)

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The Commission presents a report on the implementation of Directive 2007/2/EC of March 2007 establishing an Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community (INSPIRE). The Directive supports the application of knowledge-based policies and monitoring of activities that have an environmental impact. It sets out actions to remove obstacles to the sharing of spatial data between all levels of government within and across Member States.

Implementation: the Directive had to be transposed by 15 May 2009 but significant political, legal and administrative delays meant that most Member States missed the deadline, with only Denmark transposing it on time. The average delay in communicating national legislation was 12 months.

The Commission pursued Member States for failing to transpose the Directive in a fully compliant manner, and in 2016, is still addressing outstanding transposition issues in nine Member States.

With regard to implementing measures, although progress had been made by 2014, none of the deadlines on major milestones in the implementation roadmap have been met by all Member States, these being:

- creating coordination structures and data policies for sharing between public authorities;
- progress in identifying the required spatial data;
- documentation of spatial data (metadata);
- creation of internet services providing access to view and download spatial data;
- availability of spatial data in common data models.

Evaluation of the INSPIRE Directive: the evaluation criteria are effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence and EU added value.

The evaluation confirms that, overall, the Directive is an important instrument in meeting policy needs in an efficient manner. This importance is expected to increase with time, given the drive towards a digital economy as set out by the [Digital Single Market strategy](#), which includes important elements of the Directive.

However, the overall effectiveness of the Directive is undermined, since:

- progress in implementation has been made in only the few Member States where the necessary investments were made and implementation of the Directive was aligned with wider national action on open data policies and better eGovernment services;
- the differences between Member States in speed and quality of implementation are significant and result from accumulated delays in the process.

The significant remaining obstacles created by the data policies in many countries impede effective progress and perpetuate administrative burden because data cannot be easily shared between administrations.

The evaluation of coherence has uncovered areas needing attention, in particular the development of the data policies creating obstacles in the internal (digital) market, which is also of relevance to the free flow of data initiative.

Lastly, future EU added value can be significant. The potential improvements in EU and cross border spatial data management offered by the INSPIRE Directive remain significant, not just in the environmental field. Whether it is sharing data on air quality or flood risk management, environmental solutions often need cross-border collaboration. In particular the chance to exploit the potential of data received through the [Copernicus programme](#) is important.

Recommendations: based on the evaluation results, the Commission considers it vital that all Member States step up their efforts in implementing (e.g. on their coordination activities) and critically reviewing the effectiveness of their data policies. This applies in particular to those Member States lagging behind the most.

Member States are asked to:

- give priority to environmental spatial datasets, in particular those linked to monitoring and reporting, and those identified in relevant global processes;
- improve coordination between the national INSPIRE implementation and eGovernment, open data and other relevant processes at national level.

To complement national efforts, the Commission will:

- evaluate the shortcomings of the national data policies in more detail and explore synergies with the free flow of data initiative<sup>40</sup> under the Digital Single Market with the view to resolving these issues;
- review, and possibly revise, the INSPIRE rules, in particular on spatial data harmonisation, to take into account the implementing risks and complexities with a view to reducing them (simplifying requirements);
- assist Member States in applying and implementing the INSPIRE Directive, e.g. by the use of common tools, and promote priority setting working together with Member States;
- explore opportunities arising from the use of existing EU-level funding programmes to help capacity building and close the INSPIRE implementation gaps (e.g. through the Interoperability Solutions Administrations).

The Commission, together with Member States, will also promote the inclusion of INSPIRE services and data harmonisation in relevant EU initiatives (e.g. Copernicus, Horizon 2020), Commission departments, European agencies and international partners of the EU.