

Open Data Charter: 20 Principles

Principles

The principles in this charter were discussed and co-created by the 13 centre cities, the Flemish Community Commission in Brussels, and IMEC. It is based on a number of international examples and the existing Flemish transposition of the Public Sector Information Directive of 2007 and the revision of 2015. The charter was approved at the end of 2017 by the Smart Flanders steering group and will be approved by all involved cities by the end of Summer 2018. More information can be found on <https://smart.flanders.be>.

1. Open by default: data that is captured by, in or about the city is provided as open data for reuse, as the norm.
2. Comply or explain: when data is not open, a reasoned explanation should be given as to why it is not.
3. Only once: data is only collected once and should be published as close to the source as possible (decentralized).
4. Data is made accessible in the context of transparency and with the goal of stimulating both non-commercial and commercial re-use.
5. Dialogue with all parties collecting data is encouraged and actively set up, on the initiative of the contact point for open data indicated within the city.
6. Data management and a data documentation policy (via metadata) form a starting point for a good internal data hygiene.
7. To protect domain expertise, the aim is to allocate metadata "as close as possible" to the original source
8. In order to achieve good metadata and data hygiene, training and knowledge sharing about open data is actively promoted.
9. Data is maximally structured and published according to open and machine-readable formats and standards.
10. When creating new data sources, the focus is on Linked Open Data, especially for authentic sources and datasets that are shared frequently (also between governments).
11. The quality of the data that is made publicly accessible is equal to the quality that is sufficient for the internal use of the data (within the services of the city).
12. The web is used as a primary publication platform and a decentralized publication of data is strived for.

13. The ambition is to keep the delay between a real-time measurement and the representation in the data as short as possible and to also publish relevant historical data.
14. In order to automate data sharing, maximal alignment is sought with internal and external initiatives and cooperation across administrative layers is actively pursued.
15. A maximum effort is made to automatically transfer data (by standard formats for metadata) to the Flemish Open Data Portal and additionally to the Federal, European and other open data portals.
16. A limited set of licenses is strived for, under which data are published in open, internationally usable and machine-readable ways.
17. The dialogue with possible re-users of data is actively engaged.
18. The parties that publish data strive for sustainability and commit themselves to maintaining open data, at least for the duration that the data needs to be available for internal use.
19. In procurement and renegotiation of existing concessions and agreements, attention is paid to regulations concerning open data and efforts are made to create awareness within the responsible departments of the city.
20. The parties signing this charter commit to disseminating the principles, contained within this charter, in their own organization (and beyond).

These principles can apply to three different types of data:

1. Data collected by the city, falling under the [Decreet Hergebruik van Overheidsinformatie](#) (2007/2015) and according to the definition of 'bestuursdocument' used there.
2. Data collected by assignment from the city, for which ownership, use and sharing rights are agreed upon in contracts, concessions and so on.
3. Data collected by third parties outside of the city's control and for which collaboration needs to be established

The initial translation of this charter was done by Thibault D'haese (Ghent University) and updated and expanded by Nils Walravens (imec-SMIT).