

## Progress Report on Open Data Initiative – for the period June to end August, 2020

### Highlights

- 10 Covid-19 datasets are now available on the Portal. There have been 20,685 views and 6,511 downloads of these from March to end August.
- There has been a 22.76% increase in portal visitors in the year to the end of July compared to the previous 12 months.
- €722,925 in funding has been allocated under the 2019 CEF Public Open Data call to the Hale & Hearty Knowledgebase Action and work on the project has commenced.
- 178 public servants availed of online Open Data Training in May, June and July. 3 more sets of online courses are planned for Autumn/Winter 2020.
- The Open Data Unit presented at an EU webinar on 2 June as one of the 3 top performing countries in relation to Open Data Maturity.
- An Open Covid-19 data Impact Series Webinar took place on 23 June.

### Governance

The last meeting of the Open Data Advisory Group took place on 9 September. Agenda items included discussion on a draft updated Open Data publication framework and the development of a new procurement framework for Open Data technical support as well as the forthcoming Implementing Act on High Value Datasets.

### Open Data portal

A dashboard showing stats for the portal is available [here](#). The number of datasets available on the portal now totals 10,130. 35 new datasets were added in June, 24 in July and 86 in August. There has been significant interest in the Covid 19 and other health related datasets since the start of the current crisis. 10 Covid-19 datasets are available on the portal and there have been 20,685 views and 6,511 downloads of these from end March to end August. While there has been a 22.76% increase in portal visitors in the year to the end of July compared to the previous 12 months, there has been a decline in the number of visitors to the portal in recent months. The number of visitors to the portal decreased from 21,715 in June to 18,034 in July and 16,715 in August, (the highest number to date was 27,510 in May).

Blog posts and news items continue to be regularly added to the portal.

The appointment of a researcher, funded by the SFI is postponed as the successful candidate is no longer available. At the time of interview a panel was created of qualified candidates and we are in discussions with SFI to see if the next candidate is still interested in taking up the position.

### Open Data Support

To date, 750 public servants from 120 organisations have availed of the open data training courses run by Urban Tide. Three 'Introduction to Open Data' online courses were procured by the Open Data Unit which took place over May, June and July. A total of 178 public servants from 57 organisations availed of these free courses. A further three on-line Introductory courses have been procured and these are scheduled to take place on 16 September, 4 November and 20 January.

Urban Tide will also be running online courses on Data Publication and Data Analytics & Visualisation over the course of the coming months and into 2021.

The contract with Urban Tide has been extended until June 2021. The Office of Government Procurement has agreed to put a new training framework in place w.e.f Summer 2021 and work on the drafting of the spec for this will commence shortly. It is intended to broaden the scope of the framework to include accredited training in data related courses such as data management, data governance, etc.

The Office of Government Procurement has separately agreed to replace the Open Data Technical Support Framework for Public Bodies that expired in July this year. A sub group of the Open Data Advisory Group has been established to progress this. It is intended to broaden the scope of the framework to include support that may be needed to assist public bodies in complying with the new Open Data Directive.

### Open Data Engagement Fund

The 2020/2021 Open Data Engagement Fund was launched on 9 July, the closing date for applications is 9 October. Projects funded under the 2019/2020 scheme have submitted progress reports setting out progress made to end March 2020 and final reports at the end of July, however a number of projects have been delayed due to the Covid 19 crisis.

Separately, three open data projects were successful in their funding applications under the Public Service Innovation Fund. These were the National Monuments Service & National Parks and Wildlife Service, the CSO/D/Education and the National Building Control Office. Details of the projects are available on the [portal](#).

### Reuse of Public Service (PSI) Directive

Following the adoption of the Open Data and PSI Directive in July work has begun on the first Implementing Act under the Directive. Any datasets included in an Implementing Act will have to be made available for free and in machine-readable format. Deloitte was procured by the European Commission to carry out an Impact Study on high value datasets and their initial recommendations were presented at a webinar on 28 July. The presentation outlined recommended options under headings of low, medium or high policy interventions in respect of each of the 6 categories of high value datasets. The presentation was circulated to public bodies and observations received on the presentation were returned to Deloitte, in particular these included our objection to the recommended use of Inspire standards for geospatial data and the use of CCO licence for some categories of data. A second and final workshop took place on 4 September.

Initial work on the drafting of the new Open Data Directive to transpose it by July 2021 has begun.

### National and International Engagement

The Summer edition of the Open Data newsletter issued in June 2020. It is available on the portal [here](#).

The 2020 EU Open Data Maturity Survey issued in June and the completed survey was returned in July. Validation of responses will take place in September with the final results due to be published in December 2020.

The Open Data Unit presented at an EU webinar on 2<sup>nd</sup> June for top performing countries (along with Cyprus and France) to share their insights and best practice in Open Data.

We have been asked to present at the SEMIC 2020 conference on Track 3, Optimizing open data portals and user interfaces, by the German Ministry for the Interior (Digital Policy Division). The conference takes place on October 15<sup>th</sup>.

The Unit has also been requested by the Argentinian Embassy to participate in an exchange of information on Open Data and Open Government with the Argentinian Government (Undersecretary for Innovation).

We have received a request to participate in a series of webinars on open data portals which is being run by Kings College, London.

The 2020 OECD Open Government Data Survey is due to be launched in September.

An Open Data Impact Series Event was held on 23<sup>rd</sup> June via a webinar. This was well attended and the panel included:

- Karl Friston - Neuroscientist at University College London, currently working on COVID-19 modelling
- Neil O'Hare - Group Chief Information Officer (Children's Health Ireland) and Professor of Health Informatics, UCD, and
- Jeanne Holm - Senior Tech Advisor at the City of Los Angeles and evangelist for Open Data

The 2020 annual Open Data Conference is provisionally scheduled to take place on 20 October via webinar.

Work has commenced on the 'Hale & Hearty Knowledge Base' project which is being funded by the EU. The project focuses on providing a comprehensive health & wellbeing knowledge base, which can be used for analysis, insights and action and also an app that can be used to track personal health and wellbeing indicators. This will involve the harmonisation and linking of data from many sources, including Local Authorities, the Central Statistics Office, and Healthcare Providers. The project started in July and the partners (Fingal Co Co, the Department of Health, Central Statistics Office, Derilinx and IDCC) have held workshops to define user profiles and formulate online questionnaires which will inform the broad direction of the Action and the design of the knowledge base.

Open Data Unit  
September 2020  
Ends/