Lead topic: Government Reform Unit	Sub-topic: Open Data	Contact: Evelyn O'Connor Ext: 5311

FAST FACTS

The Open Data Unit in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform leads policy development in relation to Ireland's Open Data initiative. The Open Data Initiative is a key part of the Public Service's reform activities. It is closely aligned with the Public Service Reform Programme, the ICT Strategy, and the Civil Service Renewal Plan. It is also a core element of Ireland's Open Government Partnership (OGP) National Action Plan and will fit well with the National Data Infrastructure Initiative.

An overview of progress since the launch of the initiative in 2014 is as follows:

- **Open Data Portal**
  In July 2014, Ireland's national Open Data Portal was launched which provides access to official data in open format. Since its launch, the number of datasets has increased from approx. 1,200 in late 2015 to currently over 4,800 from 97 publishers. Significant enhancement have been made to the portal since its launch such as the addition of a 'showcase' feature, a 'suggest a dataset' feature and visualisations amongst others.

- **Governance Arrangements**
  Two key governance structures have been established: A Public Bodies Working Group (PBWG) provides technical advice to support the Open Data Initiative. An Open Data Governance Board (ODGB) has been established to provide strategic leadership and governance in line with best international practice in the area of Open Data.

- **Open Data Licence**
  A consultation document on Open Data Licences was published in February 2015. The Creative Commons Attribution licence (CC-BY) was subsequently selected as Ireland's Open Data licence of choice.

- **Technical Framework**
  A Technical Framework was developed by the Public Bodies Working Group to ensure that the publication of datasets on the portal is done in a consistent, persistent and truly open way. The key components of the Technical Framework are licence, formats, metadata, standards and Unique Resource Identifiers (URIs).

- **Open Data Strategy**
  A Foundation Document to facilitate public input into the development of the Open Data Strategy was published in 2015. An Open Data Strategy for 2017-2022 is currently being finalized and is due to be published in July 2017. The Strategy has been developed under the leadership of the Open Data Governance Board;

- **Capacity Building**

Framework Agreements are currently being put in place to assist public bodies with regard to open data training and technical support.

- **Outreach and Engagement**
  The value of Open Data ultimately lies in the use made of the data, and the promotion of use cases (examples of use) will help provide and maintain the momentum of this Initiative. The Open Data Initiative involves significant engagement with citizens, business, researchers, and public bodies. Since the launch of the Open Data Initiative a number of outreach, dissemination and collaboration events including a call for funding under an Open Data Engagement Fund in 2016 have been arranged by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. The Open Data Strategy 2017-2022 aims to expand on this engagement via conferences, seminars, workshops, hackathons, competitions and promotion via traditional and social media.

- The Open Data Unit has also been building partnership working arrangements with public bodies, including the CSO and OSi to capitalise on their specific expertise to help drive progress with Open Data.

Q&A'S

What is the value of Open Data?
- Publication of official non-personal data in open format has the potential for significant economic, social and political impact in terms of the potential re-use in the development of new products and services, achieving efficiency gains through sharing of data inside and between public administration, and in fostering the participation of citizens in political and social life.

- Open Data provides a unique opportunity to use and re-use public data, to create the standard infrastructure necessary which fuels economic, governmental and societal activity across many different domains.