2019 UNGEGN Session
29 April – 3 May 2019, New York

Side Event

Workshop on Linked Data developments and provision

Tuesday, 30 April 2019, 08:15 am (CR-A, Conference bldg.)

Linked Open Data (LOD) is a set of design principles for sharing machine-readable interlinked data on the Web. It is one of the core concepts and pillars of the Semantic Web, also known as the Web of Data. The Semantic Web is all about making links between data understandable not only to humans but also to machines, and Linked Data provides the best practices for making those links.

Linking data has the power to greatly improve analysis and understanding of data, and this is increasingly recognised at national and international levels. This joining up of data has previously been done through methods such as data linkage but increasingly the diversity and complexity of big data sets compared to traditional surveys and census data requires new thinking to allow these datasets to be queried and exploited in a way that is not always possible with more traditional techniques.

Linked data offers one methodology for exploiting these datasets by adding semantic structure to large datasets and by consolidating distributed datasets into a single queryable resource. The need to structure data to query and join it also makes statistics a useful case study as statistical tables and their associated geographic and non-geographic classifications means that - at least in theory – they could be mapped against a semantic vocabulary with relative ease.

Countries like the UK, Netherlands, Poland, Finland and Norway already provide tabular and geometry data as Linked Data and yet others are under way to do it. In most cases the data provided is geospatial reference data.

One of the biggest challenges with linked data for National Statistical Institutes is the definition of objects within the existing databases. Problems arise when seemingly the same objects are linked. Discrepancies will arise. The semantic vocabulary is therefore very important. Also, the temporal dimension makes objects change and therefore, difficult to link.

Objectives
The workshop should provide an overview on the most relevant challenges and opportunities faced associated with Linked data. Issues related to geographical names data are specifically addressed.

Activity
Two or Three UN administration representatives will present challenges and opportunities as keynote/motivational speeches by providing respective Linked data developments and Linked data provision examples. Linked data is certainly a topic the High Level Committee on Management of the UN Chief Executives Board for Coordination (https://www.unsceb.org/content/hlcm) would like to continue promoting; in fact, one of the main questions HLCM has is regarding the use of currently available spatio-temporal vocabularies, including geographical names (http://sws.geonames.org/).

Based on these two or three keynote/motivational speeches an open discussion will take place and might lead to general statements about the challenges and opportunities with regard to provision of

geographical names data as Linked Data to be considered in the work plan and within the online discussion forum of the Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers.

Proposal

<u>Moderation</u>: Pier-Giorgio Zaccheddu, Convenor, Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy (Germany)

#	time	Topic	Speaker	Status
1	5'	Introduction	Pier-Giorgio Zaccheddu	confirmed
2	8'	Brief introduction of what linked data is, its potential in the context of disseminating data from national statistical systems	Darren Barnes, UK Office of National Statistics	confirmed
3	8'	Public Sector Linked Data developments and challenges in Scotland	Peter Winstanley, Digital Directorate, The Scottish Government	confirmed
4	8'	Example of the SDG Interface Ontology (SDGIO) developed by UN Environment	Dany Ghafary, Pier Buttigieg, UN Environment	confirmed
5	8'	Statistical and geographic classifications in the era of linked open data	Caterina Caracciolo, Statistics Division at FAO	confirmed
6	18'	Open discussion		./.
7	5'	Wrap-up of the outcome and findings	Pier-Giorgio Zaccheddu	confirmed