Making the INSPIRE Geoportal discoverable by search engines

INSPIRE Geoportal Team
Problem statement

• Resource available from the INSPIRE Geoportal are not yet discoverable by search engines since they are not associated with stable/persistent URLs

• The reason is that not all the harvested catalogue services include information (as stable identifiers) that would enable the unambiguous identification of a record over time

• Other SEO mechanisms (as embedding metadata in Web pages) can be implemented relatively easily, but stable URLs for the harvested resources may require the use of stable URLs / identifiers also on the data providers’ side
Questions for discussion

1. Should the records available from the INSPIRE Geoportal be discoverable from popular search engines? In such a case:
   a. How can we ensure that “authoritative” data are listed among the first search results?

2. Should the INSPIRE Geoportal use stable URLs for harvested records? In such a case:
   a. Should the INSPIRE Geoportal use stable URLs only for those records having themselves a stable URL / identifier, and use the current approach for the other ones?
   b. Should the INSPIRE Geoportal use stable URLs for all harvested records? Which techniques can be used for achieving this?
   c. Should other options be considered? E.g., should we start with priority datasets?
Summary of break-out session

- The decision on whether the INSPIRE Geoportal should take into account a number of issues, e.g.:
  - Consultation with all the relevant stakeholders is needed to agree on whether and how to proceed
  - If the URL pointing to the actual data is broken, there is not much value of making that dataset discoverable
  - It is probably better to focus on making the “data” discoverable
  - It is to be decided which should be the canonical URL – it should be the one of the INSPIRE Geoportal or of the source catalogue?
  - It is no assurance that “authoritative” data will be shown first
Summary of break-out session

• Possible reasons / benefits to make this happen:
  • It meets users’ requirements
  • The INSPIRE Geoportal can act as a proxy to the source data

• How to do this:
  • Support stable URLs in the INSPIRE Geoportal only for those data providers already doing that – i.e., the responsibility for supporting stable URLs should be on the provider side
  • An alternative – but not mutually exclusive option – is to start pilots based, e.g., on priority datasets