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MEETING DOCUMENT

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Antici Group (Simplification)
Subject:	Environment Omnibus Package: follow-up to the WP meeting on 19 January 2026 – Commission presentation on the Inspire proposal

Delegations will find attached the presentation on the Inspire proposal that was made by the Commission at the meeting of the Antici Group (Simplification) working party.



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INSPIRE Proposal

Omnibus VIII: Environmental Omnibus
ST 16754/25

Meeting of the Antici Group (Simplification)
19 January 2026

DG Environment

Main questions raised



INSPIRE Article	Topic covered	Member States raising comments or questions
Article 4 (Annexes I–III)	Scope of INSPIRE data themes; clarity of coverage	France, Lithuania, Belgium
Article 5	Metadata requirements; integration with data.europa.eu	Denmark, France, Finland, Austria, Belgium, Sweden, France
Articles 7–8	Interoperability of spatial data sets	Austria, France, Sweden, Belgium
Article 11	Network services (discovery, download, view, etc.)	Spain, Romania, Austria, Belgium
Article 17	Data sharing between public authorities	Austria, France, Belgium
Article 18	National governance and coordination	Denmark, Czech Republic, Belgium, France, Sweden, Finland, Austria
Article 21	Monitoring and reporting	France, Sweden, Austria
Article 22a	Lisbonisation	France, Belgium, Austria
General / cross-cutting	Simplification, interaction with Open Data Directive, risk of weakening INSPIRE	Austria, Czech Republic, Sweden, Belgium, Denmark

Governance and institutional continuity

- **Issue raised**
Will INSPIRE governance be weakened or absorbed into horizontal digital governance?
- **Commission response**
In the proposal the governance model **remains unchanged**. The INSPIRE Committee, the Maintenance and Implementation Group (MIG/MIG-T), and the pool of national experts continue to operate in its current setting.

Interoperability and data harmonisation

- **Issue raised**

Does deleting Articles 7–8 and the interoperability regulation undermine interoperability, especially for complex spatial data?

- **Commission response**

The INSPIRE evaluation showed that mandatory, comprehensive harmonisation under Articles 7–8 involved **high costs for Member States**, delivered **limited practical benefits**, and was **not well aligned with evolving data and technology needs**. Interoperability is **use-case dependent** and will be ensured through **interoperability on demand**, building on international standards, voluntary good practices and horizontal EU frameworks, rather than rigid ex-ante specifications.

Network services

- **Issue raised**

Will removing Article 11 lead to the loss of existing network services such as WMS/WFS* and past investments, and weaken the “once-only” principle?

- **Commission response**

INSPIRE never prescribed specific OGC services such as WMS/WFS; they were promoted through **non-binding technical guidelines**. The proposal **does not prohibit** existing services. Member States may continue to operate and evolve them.

It is proposed to replace mandatory service obligations by **API-based access under the Open Data and HVD framework**, allowing flexibility, reuse of existing solutions, and technological neutrality. Investments are not lost; they can be **integrated into national open data ecosystems** .

* WMS: OGC Web Map Service WFS: OGC Web Feature Service OGC: Open Geospatial Consortium

Metadata and national catalogues

- **Issue raised**

Will the removal of discovery services and the INSPIRE Geoportal endanger metadata quality and national catalogues?

- **Commission response**

The proposal does not change the INSPIRE Metadata Regulation. Member States will remain responsible for metadata availability and quality, which in practice requires maintaining national geospatial catalogues.

A **phased migration** to *data.europa.eu* is planned, based on **stable GeoDCAT-AP mappings**, maintained harvesting, and coordinated validation, ensuring continuity and sustainability.

Data sharing between public authorities

- **Issue raised**

Does deleting Article 17 weaken mandatory data sharing between administrations?

- **Commission response**

No. Data sharing obligations will be further ensured through **horizontal legislation**, which goes beyond reuse and addresses access for public tasks. Article 17 largely duplicates those rules. Its proposed deletion will improve legal coherence without reducing obligations .

Monitoring and reporting

- **Issue raised**
How will implementation be monitored if Article 21 is deleted?
- **Commission response**
It is proposed to replace INSPIRE-specific reporting by **existing reporting under the Open Data and HVD framework**, which already covers dataset availability, formats, APIs, licensing and reuse. This would provide a **harmonised evidence base** while significantly reducing administrative burden.

Lisbonisation

- **Issue raised**

Why delegated acts (Art. 1(2)(b)), and could this expand the scope of the Directive?

- **Commission response**

The revision reflects the Interinstitutional Agreement on Better Law Making of 13 April 2016, which acknowledges the need for the alignment of all existing legislation to the legal framework introduced by the Lisbon Treaty, and in particular the need to give high priority to the prompt alignment of all basic acts which still refer to the regulatory procedure with scrutiny (PRAC). The PRAC procedure is replaced by a delegated act, no new empowerment is added.

The Commission considers that **delegated acts** are appropriate for amending certain non-essential elements by adapting the description of existing data themes in the Annexes.

Thank you

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