

## Interview Royal Meteorological Institute

For more information about this interview, please contact Mr. Maxim Chantillon (KU Leuven Public Governance Institute – [maxim.chantillon@kuleuven.be](mailto:maxim.chantillon@kuleuven.be))

### Feedback on the presentation of the project

They had doubts about the concrete impact of FLEXPUB for the KMI. They also argue that we have to check if there will be a demand for the strategy we offer.

We answered that the impact of INSPIRE will be interesting to understand as they rely on location-based data for some of their services. Furthermore, the wildfire fighting application uses data from the KMI. Finally, the NGI have also launched a number of projects (offering of TomTom Data to other administrations) that could be interesting for the KMI.

They also suggest to take contact with the crisis centrum of the Internal Affairs. In case of nuclear incidents, one of their previsionists is sent to the Internal Affairs. KMI have very specific demands from their customers (temperature of Uccle at a certain place, day) but lack of standardization for the offering of their services. They push to offer standardized services but this is not what the (public or private) customers want as they expect more tailored-fit services.

### **General questions**

- Relation with **FEDICT** : there is a push in the IT department to have a common mailing but there is still a lack of common hardware or software purchase due to the different IT culture between organizations (ex: Linux vs Microsoft). Furthermore, there is also a lack of commonalities between the three meteorological institutes.
- Relation with **Smals**: for them, it is not interesting “governmental” consultancy. There is no possibilities for public organizations to afford these services as they are too expensive.

### Open Data

There was a strong resentment about Open Data and the licences that ought to implement the PSI Directive. Indeed, according to the PSI Directive, the public administrations have to open their public data, but this doesn't have to be done for free and they can compel re-users to sign a licence before allowing access to the data. However, as of now, each public administration has its own licence, which is problematic, as some might be incompatible, and time-consuming for the re-users. Therefore, there is a discussion about creating a standard licence for all of the Federal administrations. The government wants to impose this via a Royal Decree and it seems like the government's choice is the Creative Commons licence. There is strong resistance from the administrations towards the use of this CC licence as it is not adapted to the sharing of public sector information, because the administrations fear that they will not be able to withdraw liability issues correctly with such a licence. The ideal situation would be to draft a new specific standard licence for the federal administrations, which is not simply a copy of the Creative Commons. Moreover, it was discussed that the best solution might be for this licence to have minimal requirements, and that each Federal administration could then add its own (reasonable number of) specific requirements (e.g., for the KMI, the date and time of the weather data), that would have to be approved by a specific committee (to ensure that there is still some kind of interoperability).

Open Data for them is to make data available in a structured manner (this is not the same as “Free Data”). However, they don't have any compensation for the data they should Open from the Political Level (although that should constitute not a large amount of money to compensate these institutes in need.) There should be an envelope for “Free Data” at the federal level. On the principle, they agree with the Free Data principle (because if we invest one euro in Research, 10 euro of savings. If the data is free, more people will be able to work with the data and improve society).

As they understand the PSI, there is an obligation to make available data but it is not necessary to make services (with an extra expertise) available for re-use. However, the “raw” data is already a value adding service as it is a product gathered by the KMI. They are quite reluctant to the fact that if data

from three public services are combined by one private company, this private company will then sell this product and make money out of it, and we had the feeling that they saw this as unfair. However, Interviewer 3 answers that it is consistent with the PSI because the citizens have already paid for the services of the institutes via the taxes.

The common ground is that there is a need to mention the source and to not invalidate the data from the institutes. Hence, the importance of the licenses (they don't want to be re-used with a bad goal, there is a need to mention the data of download) and not to just take the Creative Commons licenses. The Open Data platform was developed due to a push from the NGI. An internal team saw that a French Météo gave this as open data and did not want to get obsolete by not following the trend.

There are some disadvantages with their Open Data platform:

- There is no return to ask how the data is used and no insights about the re-users. This is however necessary to gain Return-on-investment on their Open Data strategy (necessary to have feedback on the data in order to improve their service delivery)
- There were supposed to launch the platform with FEDICT but lost contact.
- The concurrent of the KMI also got interested in the data (ex: Météo Belgique ASBL). They have these specific demands that want to check that all institutes are in Open Data strategy.
- Link with data.gov.be: They realized that FEDICT wanted to open their federal portal to other administrations. The copy-pasted services from the KMI, without informing them, but it gives the impression that everything from the KMI will be free.

### **Involvement of stakeholders**

The KMI has 3 type of users: big public (website, mobile app), internal support and external customers (business, governmental, data). To gather the requirements of these three sub-groups they apply different methods :

- Internal support : user committee gathers every two months (composed of enthusiasts public servants) that does not communicate a lot to them but more to the sysadmin team
- Customers : demands come from Alex and Marc (external communication), the analysis of the requirements are done by the communication team. The software team are more technical consultants that ask more question.
- Big Public : BELSPO, one year ago, has made a survey about the websites of the federal scientific institutes. There were a lot of reactions regarding the KMI website, which helped to improve it. Furthermore, Marc has supervised a thesis on "which policy to gather younger people to their services". The company that has developed the website (Kunstmaan) is currently taking these findings into account

### **Agile**

They don't really apply a defined AGILE method. Because in their development team, they do small things and small projects. Good practices but not really applicable in their case (not a long period, no need for coordination). They tried to work with a SCRUM board but it was too time-consuming.

### **Co-production**

They have two ongoing projects where they make the citizens co-produce the e-services with them:

- Project WOW (United Kingdom, The Netherlands and New Zealand): Project WOW is Network of observation where if you buy stations, you can participate to the project WOW and upload your data in the cloud of the WOW. Then, they implement a visualization of the data collected by this. There is a will from the KMI in order to have more up to date data, larger data information from citizens (that would have the feeling to contribute). There would be then a work of validation to check the quality of data.
- Due to the success of the mobile app, they have the idea that the users could share their experience by using the mobile app (rain, snow,...). Furthermore, they would also send a notification to the users to gain more insights on specific areas. Nowadays, 150 people

(volunteers) in Belgium look at the level of water and encodes the value on the phone. The data is then sent (in CSV) to the KMI. The main goal of this project is to have a quick validation of the data.

### **Data Storage**

A large majority of their data is in Oracle database that can easily be re-used for other services (ex: avoid that data is on a computer that is only accessible for one person). They are centralized but only needs to add metadata to be compliant with INSPIRE. This is consistent with the building block philosophy of the EU. They cannot say that INSPIRE has made their life easier or faster. They can't say to users that they have an INSPIRE compliant system but it seems that the users don't really care about this.