



Fact Sheet

Study in View of the Further Development of DCAT-AP CH

Bern, May 2018

Current Standardization Activities around DCAT-AP

The Swiss Open Data Portal (opendata.swiss), which is operated by the Swiss Federal Archives, employs a data model that is derived from the European application profile of the Data Catalog Vocabulary (DCAT-AP). This metadata standard plays a key role in facilitating cross-platform search and exchange of catalog data between different data portals – both within Switzerland and when it comes to aggregating data in the European Open Data Portal¹.

During the implementation of the Swiss Open Data Portal a few years ago, a Swiss derivation of the European application profile DCAT-AP was developed. This Swiss application profile of DCAT (DCAT AP CH)² is currently undergoing the eCH standardization process and is scheduled to be officially recognized as a Swiss E-Government standard by summer 2018.

Since the launch of the Swiss Open Data Portal, there have been various innovations regarding the European application profile of the Data Catalog Vocabulary. This raises the question as to how the Swiss derivation of the metadata standard should be adapted in the coming years.

Of relevance are the following developments:

- In autumn 2015, version 1.1 of the European application profile DCAT-AP was published³.
- In different EU member states, various derivations of DCAT-AP, similar to the Swiss application profile, have emerged. Some of them contain extensions to the original standard, such as additional data fields or controlled vocabularies⁴.
- In 2016, specialized application profiles were published in the fields of geodata and statistical data (GeoDCAT-AP⁵, StatDCAT-AP⁶).
- In 2017, the OpenGLAM working group of the opendata.ch association began to systematically reference open data from Swiss heritage institutions in the Swiss Open Data Portal; in this context, several GLAM-specific requirements regarding the portal's functions have been expressed⁷.

Mandate to the Bern University of Applied Sciences

Against this backdrop, the Swiss Federal Archives have mandated the Bern University of Applied Sciences to carry out a study that provides an overview of the expectations and needs of Swiss stakeholders with regard to the further development of the metadata standard. In addition, the study is expected to identify trends at the international level regarding standardization activities around DCAT and to suggest possible directions for the further development of the Swiss derivation of the standard.

¹ <https://www.europeandataportal.eu/>

² [eCH-0200 DCAT-Anwendungsprofil für Datenportale in der Schweiz \(DCAT-AP CH\)](https://www.ech.ch/eCH-0200-DCAT-Anwendungsprofil-fuer-Datenportale-in-der-Schweiz-DCAT-AP-CH)

³ <https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/release/dcat-ap-v11>

⁴ See for example the German application profile: http://www.dcat-ap.de/def/dcatde/1_0/spec/specification.pdf

⁵ <https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/release/geodcat-ap/v101>

⁶ <https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/release/statdcat-ap-v100>

⁷ [Final Report of the Swiss Open Cultural Data Hackathon 2017](#) (section 3.1.1)



Specifically, the study shall tackle the following questions:

- What development trends have emerged over the past years regarding standardization activities around DCAT-AP?
- What elements of the new or revised application profiles (DCAT AP Version 1.1, GeoDCAT-AP 1.0, StatDCAT-AP 1.0) are of relevance when it comes to ensuring interoperability between the Swiss Open Data Portal and related data portals (e.g. geocat.ch, data portals of statistical services, European Open Data Portal)?
- Which enhancements to the metadata standard and/or its implementation on the Swiss Open Data Portal are required by portal users from various domains (geodata, statistical data, cultural data)?
- What are the experiences of portal operators in Switzerland regarding the use of the Swiss application profile of DCAT? – Are there any data fields that are used inconsistently by data suppliers? Is the standard applied in the same manner across different portals? Is there any need for improvement to the standard or its implementation?
- What synergies would result from closer cooperation with other countries? – To what extent could their standards (e.g. the German derivation of DCAT-AP) be directly adopted by the Swiss community? To what extent could Swiss players directly contribute to the further development of the European application profile and subject-specific application profiles? Would it be conceivable to rely on one of the existing standards and to renounce to the maintenance of a separate Swiss application profile in the future?
- What contribution can be made by means of standardization activities in terms of increasing the maturity level of the data referenced on open data portals according to Tim Berners-Lee's five-star open data model⁸?
- What role should the Swiss application profile of DCAT play? With what use case in mind should it be further developed?

Timeline and Methodological Approach

The study is carried out between May and November 2018. To provide answers to the research questions, recent standardization documents and their accompanying documentation are analyzed and expert interviews are conducted with representatives of various stakeholder groups, including:

- stewards of existing standards (e.g. DCAT-AP, DCAT-AP DE, GeoDCAT, StatDCAT);
- operators of data portals;
- representatives of portal users in various domains (e.g. geodata, statistical data, cultural data).

The results of the desk research and the expert interviews are summarized and discussed with the eCH Specialized Group "OGD", which will be asked to express its preferences regarding the further development of DCAT AP CH. The final report of the study will be made available to the public.

Team & Contact

The study is carried out by a team of researchers at the E-Government Institute of Bern University of Applied Sciences, comprising Stephan Haller, Angelina Dugga-Winterleitner, and Beat Estermann.

Juan Pablo Lovato, project lead OGD, is in charge of the mandate on behalf of the Swiss Federal Archives. Questions regarding the mandate should primarily be addressed to him.

Juan Pablo Lovato
Swiss Federal Archives
E-Mail: Juan-Pablo.Lovato@bar.admin.ch
Phone: +41 58 463 23 21

⁸ <http://5stardata.info/de/>