

# Open Data Guidelines for United Arab Emirates Government Entities

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This document was developed as part of the Web Technical Guidelines Document for UAE Government Entities

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## 1. PURPOSE OF THE DOCUMENT

This document aims to present a number of guidelines federal entities should follow when adopting Open Data policies on their websites.

## 2. SCOPE AND CONTEXT

The scope of this document is limited to UAE federal government entities (ministries, authorities, programs, etc.). Given that this document is open for further and continuous development, its scope might be expanded to include other organizations in accordance with the UAE eGovernment policies in this regard.

## 3. INTRODUCTION

Adopting an Open Data policy is one of the most important practices that reflect government agencies' desire for continuous development through making data and information seamlessly available to the users. Besides increasing government transparency, Open Data helps government entities by involving the users in the decision making process.

Adopting Open Data at the federal level in the UAE is in line with the UAE Strategy (2011-2013) which emphasizes that government entities should take into account users' requirements and expectations when providing their services.

## 4. WHAT IS OPEN DATA?

Open Data is data that anyone can use, reuse, distribute or share with others without restrictions.

The user might be asked to only mention the document source or to abide by copyleft licenses.

## 5. FEATURES OF OPEN DATA

When adopting an Open Data policy on their websites and portals, federal government entities are expected to adhere to the following criteria at a minimum:

- Published data should cover the federal entity's activities and services that are useful to the customer/user.
  - Data should be accessible with no restrictions (e.g. registration).
  - Data should be in a downloadable format and easy to copy from.
  - File formats should be easily accessible by most users. Easy to use formats include MS Word and Excel.
  - Users should be given the option to voice their opinions in the published data **Error!**
- Reference source not found..**
- Data should be easy to read online.
  - File type, size and time required to download should be available to the user.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For further details, please refer to the "E-Participation Guide for Federal Entities in the UAE" published by the Emirates eGovernment

- Special programs or software needed to run or open the file should be mentioned and plugins should be provided by the website.
- Government entities should provide all possible platforms that enable the users to discuss and interact about the published data. Other links to blogs, discussion forums, Facebook pages, etc. should be available in the open data page.
- Open Data page should include a link to the policy used which authorizes the users to utilize and distribute the data.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The guidelines in this document are the minimum requirements federal entities wishing to adopt the Open Data policy should follow. Adhering to these requirements reflect the entities' seriousness in making this policy a success and increasing transparency between government entities and the public.