Finnish Open Data community domain building leaps forward

Submitted on 20 Aug 2013 by Jarkko Moilanen

The Finnish Open Data community has recently taken some major steps forward. Earlier this year - April - it established the avoindata.net Q&A service, in which all citizens can ask open data, open government and open access related questions in Finnish.

During the spring of 2013, the Q&A service gained more popularity and several organisations such as the city of Jyväskylä, the Open Knowledge Foundation Finland, the city of Tampere, Apps4Finland, ITS Factory and the National Land survey of Finland embraced it as a supportive part of their open data activities. Details and statistics about the Q&A service can be found on the dashboard.

Question and answer service RESTful API

During this summer the avoindata.net Q&A service has been extended with a RESTful web API, an application programming interface accessible via standard HTTP methods by a variety of HTTP clients, including browsers and mobile devices.

At the moment the API contains 16 working methods to read data from the web service. More methods are under development, which will include submitting a new question to the service via API. The Finnish Open Data community has participated in the API building by providing usage sample code snippets (PHP, Python, R, Javascript) in Github and assisted in defining needed methods. In addition, one community member created a R-language based framework around the API. Needless to mention that this API is also open source driven and took around 3 weeks to build.

Community Open Data Catalog

Recently, Finnish CKAN enthusiasts gathered together in a skype meeting and decided to launch an Open Knowledge Foundation Finland driven project in which the Finnish Open Data community data catalogue will be moved under the avoindata.net domain. The project is orchestrated via Github and welcomes all interested to participate and contribute towards more Open Source.

A new server for the catalogue has been sponsored by a company from Tampere (http://opentieto.fi). During the same process CKAN will also be updated to the latest version.

 http://data.avoindata.net will be used as the address for the future community open data catalogue in order to gather more community services and activities under one domain.

Avoindata.net - Access point to the Finnish community

While governmental open data resources are still mostly in planning phase, the Finnish open data community is advancing in multiple fronts. The avoindata.net is going to be the place and access

point for Finnish Open Data community activities. The aim is to get community catalogues up and running at data.avoindata.net in September 2013. Q&A API development will continue and those interested can find more information (in Finnish) about the API at http://avoindata.net/dashboard/api/v1/