



FOD Beleid & Ondersteuning

SPF Stratégie & Appui

Data sharing, portal and projects

Bart HANSSENS – 25/03/2026



Data.gov.be portal

Do we still need portals ?



Most people use Google,
ChatGPT is gaining traction...



... but the journey
is more important
than the destination

An opportunity for administrations

- Share data expertise across administrations
- Align data management / awareness across administrations
 - Collecting / publishing data is not the end, but the start of a journey
- Opening data may reveal hidden uncertainties
 - Who manages the data ? When is it updated ? How is it collected ?

Improve metadata at the source

- Can be shared with other portals / sites / search engines
- Helps to improve quality / awareness within the organization
- Better metadata makes it easier to process automatically
 - Even with AI: harmonized structure = better answers / less energy

Complex political and data landscape



Large autonomy for Regions (and to some extent: cities)

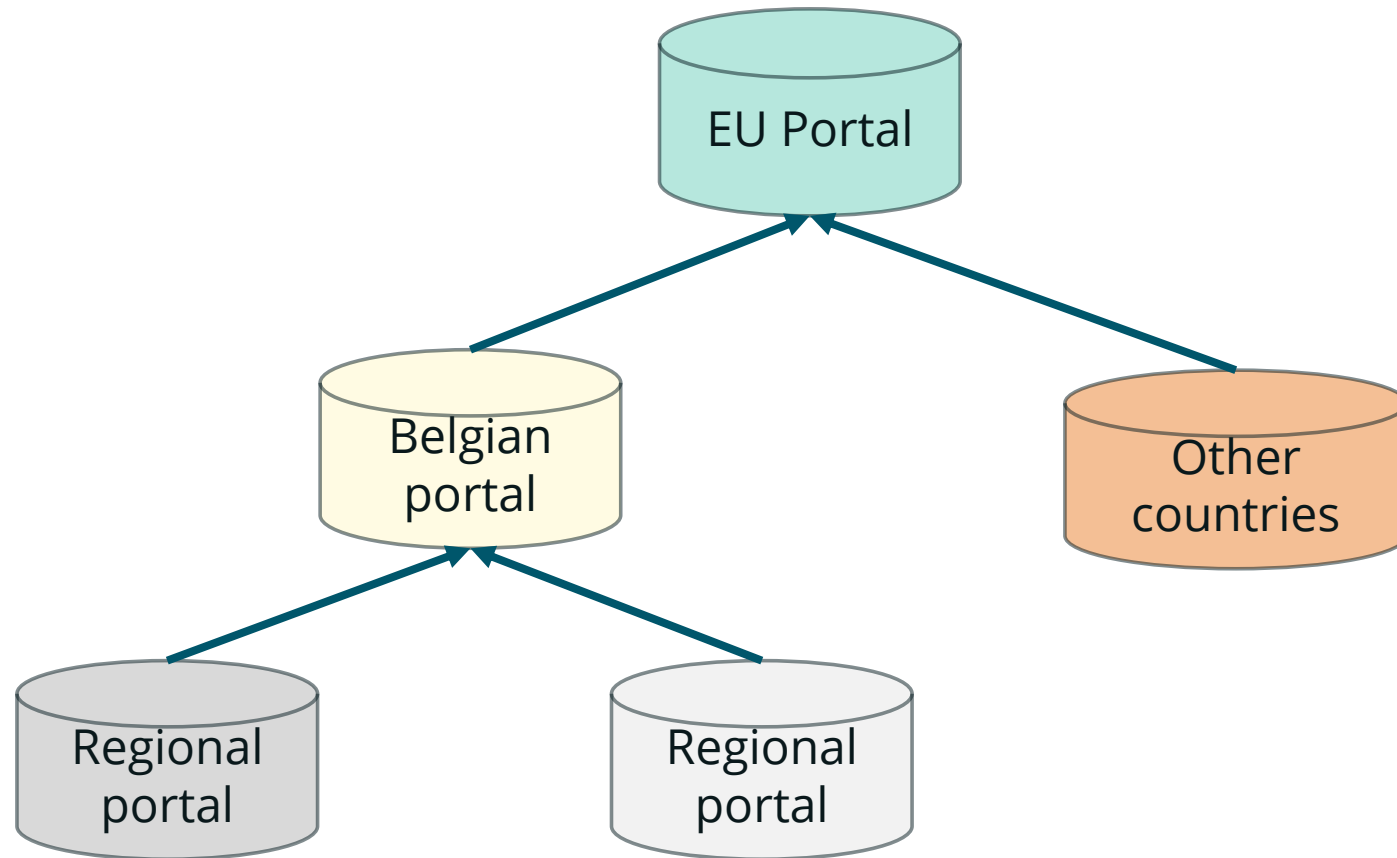


Thematic portals with established standards and user base

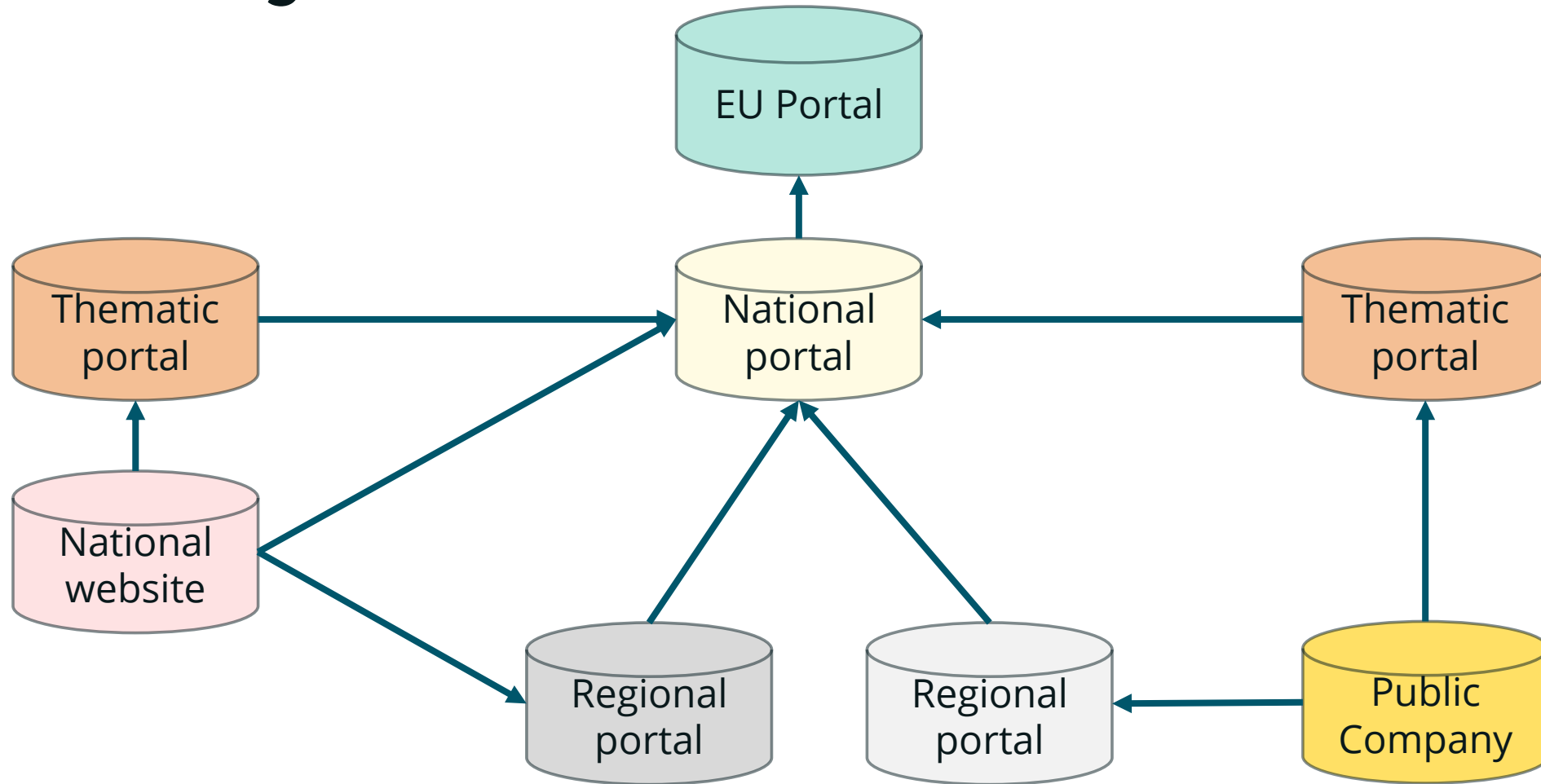


One big data portal won't work (in Belgium)

In theory ...



In reality ...



Constraints

- Decentralized approach (don't copy files, only metadata)
 - Don't disturb / replace existing communication channels
 - Respect expertise of other public administrations
- Limited budget
- Drupal WCMS front-end for organizational reasons
 - IT staff has a lot of experience with managing Drupal-websites

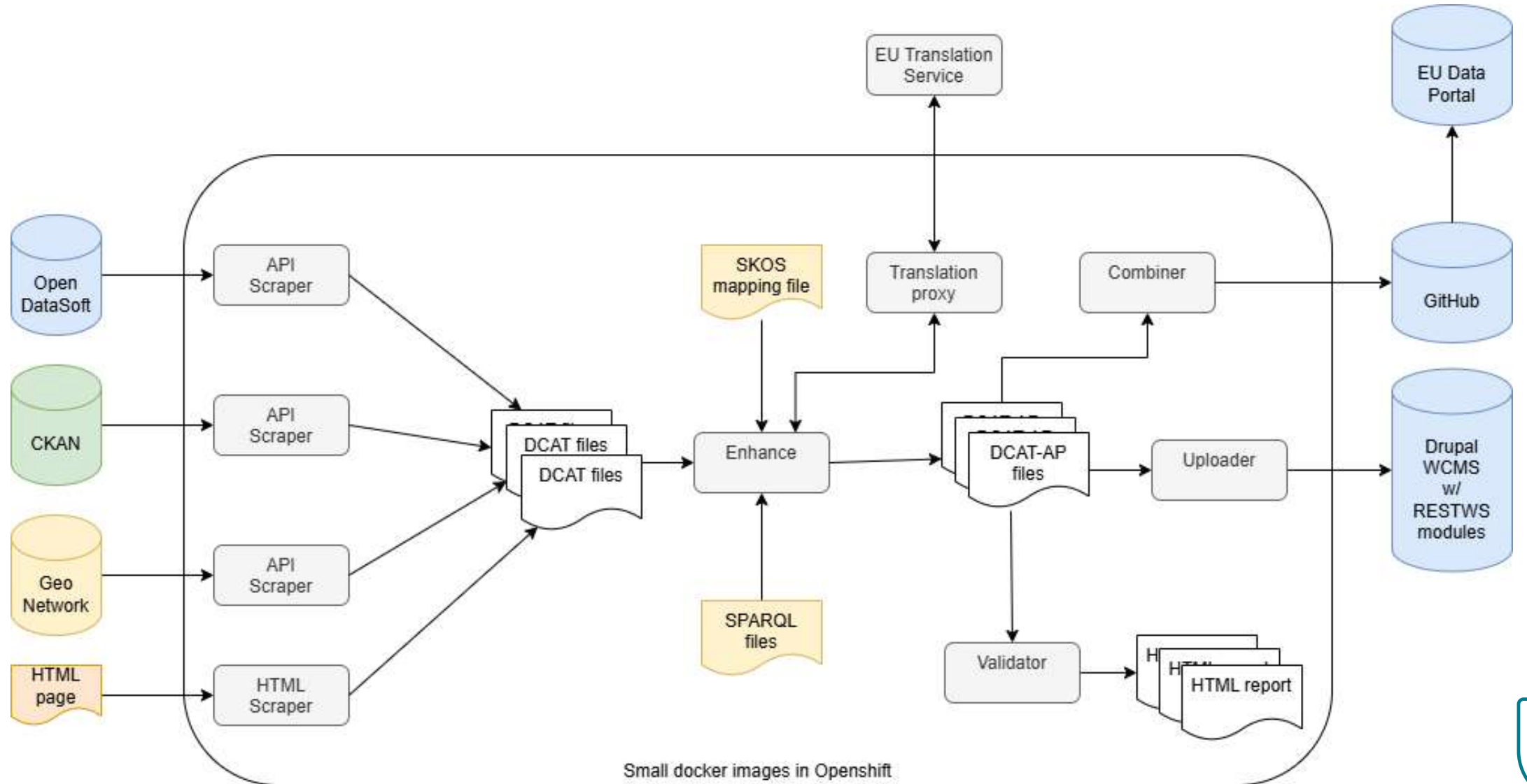
Approach (since 2015)

- Convert all types of metadata to common standard
- Clear separation of front-end and back-end
 - Can evolve independently
- Keep it simple (less components = less maintenance)
- Use existing open-source components and standards

Automated metadata exchange

- Export of harmonized metadata published weekly on github
 - Mainly for the EU portal, but can be used freely by anyone
- (EU) machine translation for descriptions in 4 languages
 - https://translation.ec.europa.eu/tools-and-resources/ai-translation-and-language-tools_en

Flow



DCAT-AP metadata specifications

Additional profiles

- Special properties for Geo, Health, Mobility...

DCAT-AP

- Agreed upon identifiers for publishers, categories, formats
- Defining which properties are mandatory / recommended

W3C DCAT

- classes for Dataset, Dataservice, Distribution, Series
- Properties for download link, documentation...

Basic metadata

- Properties for title, description, format, publication date

Other semantic standards



Mapping different thesauri: SKOS



Scripts for corrections: SPARQL



Validation rules: SHACL

Links to additional documentation

- <https://data.gov.be/en/news>
- <https://data.gov.be/en/documentation/specifications>
- <https://data.gov.be/en/documentation/software>
- <https://github.com/Fedict/dcattools>
- <https://github.com/Fedict/dcat>



Challenges

Legal challenges

- A lot of different licenses / conditions of use
 - Difficult for users combining several sources
- → Promote international Creative Commons licenses
 - CC-Zero or CC-BY
 - Well-known licenses in open data communities

Organizational challenges

- Costs for own administration, benefit often for others
 - ROI difficult to measure, open data can be used freely by definition
- Different administrations may have different priorities
 - E.g. data not available or published in another way
 - → Informal meetings to discuss use cases, challenges
 - → Formal agreements for implementing specific projects

Technical challenges

- Different identifiers for same organization, format, ...
 - → Provide mappings
- Many platforms don't support DCAT(-AP) directly
 - → Write custom scripts
 - → Help platforms to implement DCAT



Data projects

Data Literacy: Statistics



Podcasts explaining how and why of statistics

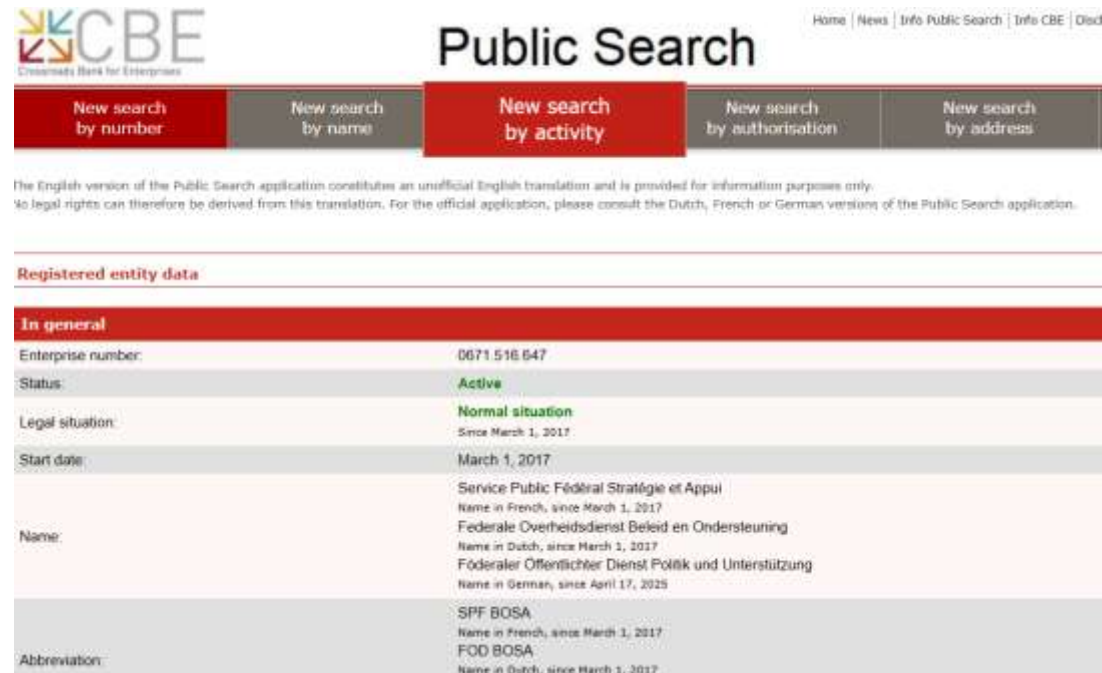


Annual national (and EU) competition for schools



“Junior” website <https://www.statbeljunior.be/en>

Crossroad Bank Enterprises



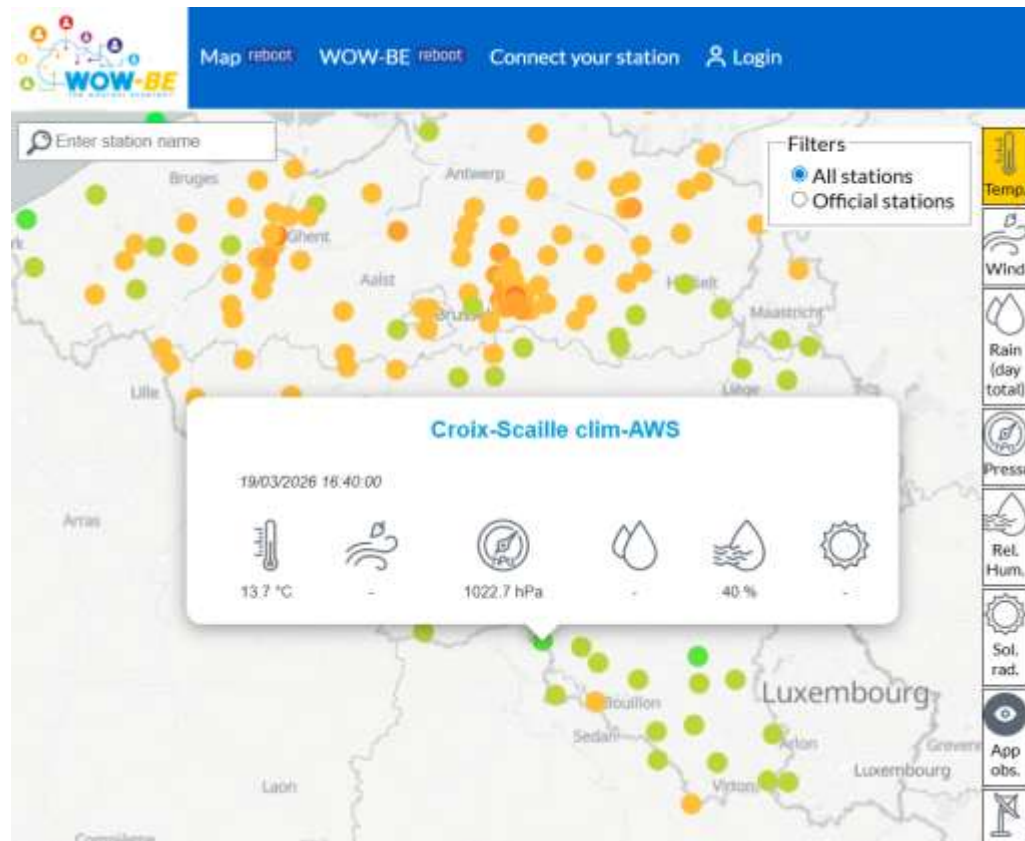
The screenshot shows the 'Public Search' interface of the Crossroad Bank for Enterprises (CBE). The header includes the CBE logo and navigation links: Home | News | Info Public Search | Info CBE | Digid. Below the header are five search buttons: 'New search by number', 'New search by name', 'New search by activity' (highlighted in red), 'New search by authorisation', and 'New search by address'. A disclaimer states: 'The English version of the Public Search application constitutes an unofficial English translation and is provided for information purposes only. No legal rights can therefore be derived from this translation. For the official application, please consult the Dutch, French or German versions of the Public Search application.'

Registered entity data

In general	
Enterprise number:	0671 516 647
Status:	Active
Legal situation:	Normal situation Since March 1, 2017
Start date:	March 1, 2017
Name:	Service Public Fédéral Stratégie et Appui Name in French, since March 1, 2017 Federale Overheidsdienst Beleid en Ondersteuning Name in Dutch, since March 1, 2017 Föderaler Öffentlicher Dienst Politik und Unterstützung Name in German, since April 17, 2025
Abbreviation:	SPF BOSA Name in French, since March 1, 2017 FOD BOSA Name in Dutch, since March 1, 2017

- Partially open data
- Daily updates via CSV files
- Webservice
- <https://economie.fgov.be/en/themes/enterprises/crossroads-bank-enterprises>

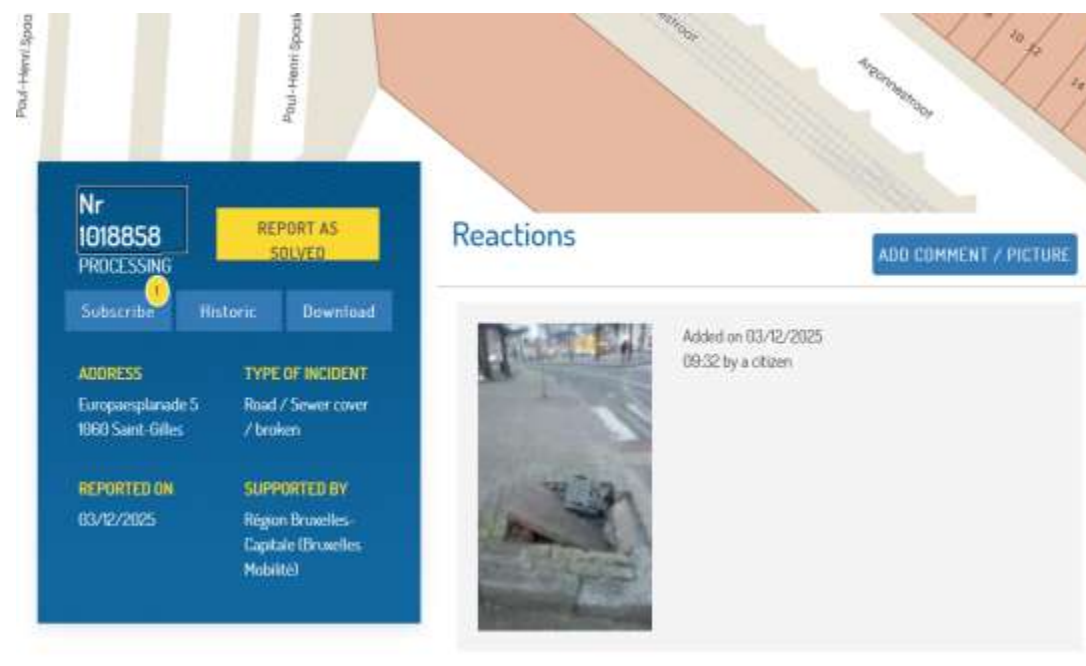
Citizen Science: weather data



- Supported by official Weather Office KMI-IRM
- Both educational and scientific value
- <https://wow.meteo.be/en/>

Fix My Street (Brussels)

- Report broken streetlights, damaged sidewalks, litter...
- Open communication to reduce duplicate reports
- <https://fixmystreet.brussels/>



Regional (agriculture) data platforms

- Farmers, administrations, buyers, data companies
- Data sharing platform
- <https://www.wallesmart.be>
- <https://www.djustconnect.be>



EU Data Spaces

- Data sharing for companies and public administrations
 - Not necessarily open, often with contracts / specific conditions
- Organized per topic / sector (mobility, health ...)
- See also <https://dssc.eu>



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Thank you

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<https://data.gov.be>