

Seoul Declaration

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Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

The Seoul Declaration for the Future of the Internet Economy has been published

Seoul: 19 June 2008

The Organisation for Economic Co-

operation and Development (OECD) has published the **Seoul Declaration** upon the conclusion of the OECD Ministerial meeting on the **Future of the Internet Economy** that took place in Seoul, Korea on 17 and 18 June 2008.

The 10-page declaration states that:

b) Foster creativity in the development, use and application of the Internet, through policies that:

* Make public sector information and content, including scientific data, and works of cultural heritage more widely accessible in digital format.

In the accompanying document titled-

Summary of the Chair on page 7:

They agreed that the contributions that the Internet and related ICTs make to boosting research and innovation are very important. They noted the OECD policy guidance on digital content and the OECD Council Recommendation on public sector information which aim to improve the access to and use of public information for the benefit of all.

In the accompanying document titled-

SHAPING POLICIES FOR THE FUTURE OF THE INTERNET ECONOMY (39 pages) on page 18:

Cross-

disciplinary, mutually reinforcing policies and initiatives are necessary to boost performance and enhance the Internet's role as an enabler of innovation. Four areas require particular policy attention:

i) strengthening the use of the Internet by government, business and research communities;

ii) ensuring open and collaborative mechanisms, including for developing open standards and interoperability for the Internet of the future;

iii) supporting development and use of digital content and public-

sector information; and

iv) encouraging the use of the increasingly participative web across a wide range of economic and social activities.

On page 20:

Public organisations are a major source of information, an increasing amount of which is digitised or produced in digital form and can be re-

used in innovative ways for significant economic and social benefits as outlined in the report on Digital Broadband and Content: Public Sector Information and Content.

The OECD Recommendation of the Council for Enhanced Access and More Effective Use of Public Sector Information (Annex F) shows that while commercial and non-commercial access to, and re-

use of, public sector information and content is generally becoming more open, obstacles sometimes impede efficient and effective use, such as restrictive or unclear rules governing access and conditions of re-

use; unclear and inconsistent pricing of information if re-

use is chargeable; complex and lengthy licensing procedures; inefficient distribution to final users; and barriers to development of international markets. The role of public sector organisations as collectors, producer

and disseminators of public-

sector information is not always clear, particularly in competitive market areas.

Specific policy recommendations include:

- Maximising the availability of public sector information for use and re-

- use based upon the presumption of openness as the default rule.

- Encouraging broad non-

- discriminatory competitive access and conditions for re-

- use of public sector information by eliminating exclusive arrangements, and removing unnecessary restrictions on the ways in which it can be accessed, used, re-

- used, combined or shared.

- Improving access to information and content in electronic form and over the Internet.

- Finding new ways to digitise existing public sector information and content, to develop

- born-

- digital public sector information products and data, and to implement cultural digitisation projects where market mechanisms do not foster effective digitisation.

- When public sector information is not provided free of charge, pricing it transparently and consistently within and, as far as possible, across public sector organisations so as to facilitate access and re-

- use and ensure competition.

- When public sector information is not provided free of charge, costs charged should not exceed marginal costs of maintenance and distribution. Any higher pricing should be based

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don't clearly expressed policy grounds. Exercising copyright in ways that facilitate re-use, and where copyright holders are in agreement, developing simple mechanisms to encourage wider access and use, and encouraging institutions and government agencies that fund works from outside sources to find ways to make these works widely accessible to the public.<p>Annex F in the accompanying document titled? **Shaping Policies for the future of the Internet Economy Annexes** contains the Recommendation of the Council for Enhanced Access and More Effective Use of Public Sector information.</p>

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