Good morning

I am pleased to welcome you here to opendata.ch's 13th forum. These forums are important for gathering and exchanging information and experiences on the state of open data and its use:

How open is data today – data from public authorities, from academia, from legal entities and private individuals?

With the Federal Act on the Use of Electronic Means for the Fulfilment of Official Duties (short and in German: EMBAG), a major but certainly not the last step in a long development – e.g. ten years of ongoing lobbying – has been realised. The referendum deadline is in early July. Afterwards that law will define the frame for publishing and re-using data produced by public authorities.

Even within that new and in principle open-data-friendly framework, however, it will remain our task, somewhat repetitively, to call for a rapid, exhaustive and binding opening of such data as well as to support the development of a broad open-data-culture according to the results of a survey published early this year by the Open-Government-Data-Office and opendata.ch.

Nevertheless, many initiatives and practical work in various public administrations show that things are in motion. Fortunately, the efforts to open up access to data widely are combined with efforts to offer it as linked data, the 5-star format of open data.

What actually happens with this data, how it is used and what effects are achieved with it, however, often remains unclear. In principle, open data is about increasing efficiency, more effectiveness, but - and in my opinion first and foremost – it's about more democracy.

If data and information are made openly available for re-use without old or new silo structures, those affected and all interested parties can participate in policy-making and problem-solving processes. Co-design of this kind results in proposed solutions that can convince through the quality of the arguments - beyond the structural silos of formal political participation.

So not only is there still a lot to do, it is also worthwhile, especially in view of the numerous acute problems, to stand up for open data, because we need creative ideas for upcoming developments and viable solutions for the challenges we face, regardless of who develops and formulates them.

I'm pleased that today, on this beautiful summer day, we will devote ourselves entirely to these issues. We can only learn. I'm sure that at the end of the day we will have received a wide range of – I hope: new ideas.