Acled API

User Guide

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Introduction

The following document highlights the basic steps for interacting with the Acled API. The API is RESTful in nature and is accessed via Basic HTTP(S) authentication.

API Access Detail

The full URL for accessing the API is http://api.acleddata.com/acled/{command}, where "command" represents the action to be executed. See below for details regarding possible usages of this command.

Sample API Calls and Responses

API calls may be made in any standard browser or using any programmatic language that is capable of making HTTP requests. The samples below demonstrate the URL to be called to make the request.

The following points should be noted:

- As this API only uses the GET request all data sent will be contained within standard Query String parameter formats and URLencoded.
- All responses from the API shall be formatted as JSON unless specifically requested in either XML, CSV or TXT format.
- TXT format returns a plain text csv string.
- A limit of 500 lines of data will be returned by default. Larger requests may be made, however.
- All fields will be returned by default. Reduced field lists can be requested.
- Data id returned in date order DESC (starting with the latest).

Response Format

By default the response is returned in JSON format but it's possible to return the response in XML, CSV and TXT format too. In order to return another format you simply add the relevant extension to the end of the command name so the query would look like the following:

Format	HTTP Request Format	MIME Type
JSON	https://api.acleddata.com/acled/{command}	application/json
XML	https://api.acleddata.com/acled/{command}.xml	text/xml
CSV	https://api.acleddata.com/acled/{command}.csv	text/csv
TXT	https://api.acleddata.com/acled/{command}.txt	text/plain

Commands

Read

In order to retrieve the data you must make a GET request to the following URL:

https://api.acleddata.com/acled/read

Returned Data

Attribute Name	Type	Description
data_id	int	A unique id for the row of data
gwno	int	A numeric code for each individual country
event_id_cnty	string	An individual identifier by number and country acronym
event_id_no_cnty	string	An individual numeric identifier
event_date	date	The date the event occurred in the format: yyyy-mm-dd
year	int	The year the event occurred.
time_precision	int	A numeric code indicating the level of certainty of the date coded for the event
event_type	string	The type of conflict event
actor1	string	The named actor involved in the event
ally_actor_1	string	The named actor allied with or identifying ACTOR1
inter1	int	A numeric code indicating the type of ACTOR1
actor2	string	The named actor involved in the event
ally_actor_2	string	The named actor allied with or identifying ACTOR2
inter2	int	A numeric code indicating the type of ACTOR2
interaction	int	A numeric code indicating the interaction between types of ACTOR1 and ACTOR2
country	string	The name of the country the event occurred in
admin1	string	The largest sub-national administrative region in which the event took place
admin2	string	The second largest sub-national administrative region in which the event took place
admin3	string	The third largest sub-national administrative region in which the event took place
location	string	The location in which the event took place

Attribute Name	Type	Description
latitude	decimal	The latitude of the location
longitude	decimal	The longitude of the location
geo_precision	int	A numeric code indicating the level of certainty of the location coded for the event
source	string	The source of the event report
notes	string	A short description of the event
fatalities	int	The number of reported fatalities which occurred during the event
timestamp	int / date	The unix timestamp or date (yyy-mm-dd) to collect data from

Query Filters

Each field can be searched to filter the returned data. By default each field will search by = or LIKE based on the table below. This can be changed by sending a new query string name value pair, where the name has '_where' appended to it. The following table shows the default query type that will be used by each field.

Query Name	Type	Query String
data_id	=	?data_id={number}
gwno	=	?gwno={number}
event_id_cnty	LIKE	?event_id_cnty={text}
event_id_no_cnty	LIKE	?event_id_no_cnty={text}
event_date	=	?event_date={yyyy-mm-dd}
year	=	?year={yyyy}
time_precision	=	?time_precision={number}
event_type	LIKE	?event_type={text}
actor1	LIKE	?actor1={text}
ally_actor_1	LIKE	?ally_actor_1={text}
inter1	=	?inter1={number}
actor2	LIKE	?actor2={text}
ally_actor_2	LIKE	?ally_actor_2={text}
inter2	=	?inter2={number}
interaction	=	?interaction={number}
country	LIKE	?country={text}
admin1	LIKE	?admin1={text}
admin2	LIKE	?admin2={text}
admin3	LIKE	?admin3={text}
location	LIKE	?location={text}
latitude	=	?latitude={number}
longitude	=	?longitude={number}
geo_precision	=	?geo_precision={number}
source	LIKE	?source={text}

Query Name	Type	Query String
notes	LIKE	?notes={text}
fatalities	=	?fatalities={number}
timestamp	>=	?timestamp={number/yyyy-mm-dd}

   &   All LIKE queries will will include a wildcard before and after the entered text.

   &   Multiple queries can be searched with name/value pairs separated by &. Each field will be searched using AND so all arguments must match for data to be returned.

   &   More complex queries can be searched to include the OR clause. See Complex Queries below.

To change the default query type you can add an additional name/value pair using the query name and appending '_where' to the query name. The query value could be LIKE or %3D for '='. Additional types of '<' and '>' may also be used, representing less than and greater than.

Example:
?event_id_cnty={text}&event_id_cnty_where=%3D

Limit Query & Pagination

By default there is a limit of 500 rows of data returned. You can use the limit query name to change the default number. Setting limit as 0 will return all relevant data. It is likely returning all data will cause a timeout error and we therefore recommend using the page query instead. Each page will return 500 rows of data.

Example:
?limit=100 will return 100 rows of data.

?page=1 will return the first 500 rows of data
?page=2 will return the next 500 rows of data

Limit Fields Returned

By default all fields will be returned for each line of data. You can use the field query name to change the field items returned. Multiple fields can be requested by separating each one with a pipe (|).

Example:

?field=gwno will return just the gwno field.

?field=gwno|fatalities will return the gwno and fatalities data for each row.

Complex Queries

By default all fields must match for the data to be returned. In some instances more complex queries may be required to use the OR clause. This is possible by separating the fields to join, by OR, with :OR: text. The main query item will be the first item in the join, followed by the other items split with :OR: . These can be used with other queries too,

Example:

?field={text}:OR:field2={text2}:OR:field3={text3} will return data where field = text OR field2 = text2 OR field3 = text3.

?field={text}:OR:field2={text2}&country={country} will return data where field = text OR field2 = text2 AND country = country.