

***Principled Data Access:***  
**building Public-Private Data Partnership for**  
***Better Official Statistics***  
***G20 DGI-2 Workshop***

---

Giovanni Veronese

Banca d'Italia

March 24, 2021

[dataaccess@bancaditalia.it](mailto:dataaccess@bancaditalia.it)

# Outline

- The «data access issue»  
and the Principled Data Access initiative by the **Italian** G20 Presidency
- Challenges and enablers for better data access
- The principles for public-private data partnerships
- Path forward and links to the statistical work and DGI follow-up

## The data access issue (i)

- Before massive digitalization: input (raw information) relatively scarce, nearly monopolized by official agencies e.g. NSIs and central banks
- After massive digitalization: input overabundant, often collected by private companies, some of it heavily concentrated within Big Tech
- Today the private sector has a lead, in volume, scope and granularity of micro-level data collected on many aspects of economic and social life
- Statistical agencies and policy-makers yet to harness this wealth of data
- Covid-19 provided an eye-opener for missed opportunities and raised new challenges...

## The data access issue (ii)

- Covid-19: an eye-opener for missed opportunities and raised new challenges...
- Cacophony of signals on the state of our societies → uncertainty
- Tech companies entered big-time in the market for indicators

**Mission of statistical agencies:  
provide accurate, timely, and transparent statistics  
a necessary *compass* for policymaking and the public debate**

- The pandemic compels them to adapt their toolbox to evolving user needs and expectations, e.g.
  - a) to assess impact of non-pharmaceutical interventions (*lockdowns*)
  - b) to gauge rapid shifts in consumption patterns
  - c) to monitor transitions and labour market churn ...

# Challenges to more access to new-generation data sets

## A. **Trust** (lack of):

- *within the community*: citizens attentive to why/how their data is collected/processed/shared. Broadening data access must happen in such a way that citizen trust is preserved
- *between statistical agencies and data providers*: complexity of new-generation datasets entails information asymmetry, policymakers have questions, private data *may be* able to provide the answer, but only companies holding it know their effective potential

## B. **Usability**:

privately collected data seldom fit and proper for use on the part of official statisticians

## C. **Sustainability**:

new-generation data can be fully leveraged by statistical authorities only through long-term, systematic access and use → **partnerships**

# Enablers to more access to new-generation data sets

- A. **Private-public data partnerships guided by globally shared principles**
- Notion of “*partnership*” is legally neutral: encompasses different cooperation frameworks (contract-based, voluntary, mandated by law, ...)
  - highlights that a joint effort is needed to pursue the common good of improved statistical information
  - Which arrangements are legally acceptable and/or desirable should fall within the remit of individual jurisdictions
- B. **Definition of property rights over data**
- Intensely debated subject in economics and legal literature
  - but a clearly defined property framework – irrespective of exact balance between the interests of data subjects, data collectors, and authorities – is key to help implementation of data access
  - It anchors it to formal concepts of economic and social optimality

# Principles for public-private data partnerships (DPs)

## Principles for all parties in the DPs

- Purpose limitation
- Data minimization
- Proportionality
- Transparency
- Fair and ethical data use
- Risk mitigation and safeguards
- Accountability

### *for official statistical agencies*

- Application of professional standards
- Responsibility and accountability on process and output
- Responsibility on technical standard setting
- Safeguard of business interests
- “Collect only once”

### *for private-sector data collectors*

- Data and metadata availability
- Technical accessibility
- Cooperation on formats and standards
- Cooperation on methodology and quality
- International harmonization

## Path forward and link to Statistical Workstream → follow up DGI

- **propose** a first draft **non-paper laying out these principles**
- broad agreement reached **within EU constituency**
- build consensus around this initiative, with other countries and IFIs
- G20 Framework Working Group Workshop on «data access»: May 2021
- discuss within the **G20 Framework Working Group**, June 2021

*Note: G20 FWG is tasked with monitoring “the evolution of the global economic outlook” and “coordinating policies aimed at underpinning a strong, sustainable, balanced, and inclusive growth”*

- if enough traction within the G20 → propose this theme for mention in Finance Ministers/Central Banks Governors communiqué
- **Among the topics that the Italian Presidency suggested in a follow-up work to the Data Gaps Initiative is “Principled data access”**



The end, thanks!