
G20 DGI-2 Workshop

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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 $\rightarrow$ 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!