



The Geneva Data Community



The Geneva Data Community: Digital sovereignty and responsible innovation: strengthening the Geneva ecosystem in an interconnected world

**An Initiative from the Swiss Federal Statistical Office
hosted by Giga at the Giga Connectivity Centre**

**Thursday, 16 April 2026, 15:00 – 18:30
Venue: Campus Biotech, Chem. des Mines 9,
1202 Genève**

1. Setting the scene

In 2024, Switzerland commissioned a feasibility study. This study proposes the development of the *Trusted Data Observatory* (TDO), an international platform focused on standardized, open, and machine-readable metadata to facilitate the discovery of trusted data sources. Unlike a data platform, the TDO will not contain any data itself but will serve as a tool for discovering data held by other institutions. Initially, the TDO will focus on the data of National Statistical Offices (NSOs) and International Organizations (IOs) with dedicated statistical divisions. Over time, the platform could expand to include other trusted data sources.

The TDO aims to address key challenges such as the lack of standardized metadata, varying quality of metadata, and the risk of creating a metadata “swamp.” It also needs to establish appropriate governance, a sustainable business model, and incentives for data providers to contribute. Moreover, it seeks to build an active user base that will benefit from easy access to reliable data, especially given the growing reliance on AI-powered search engines to source information. The potential value of the TDO is substantial, particularly in combating the negative effects of fake news and alternative facts on society. By supporting improved search results and helping AI search engines prioritize trusted data, the TDO can enhance decision-making processes for various user groups, including researchers, policymakers, NGOs, the media, and the public. Additionally, it will foster harmonization in metadata standards and help address the issue of “metadata silos,” where inconsistencies across platforms hinder data comparability and discovery.

2. Summary of the exchange on 30 October 2025

The meeting 30 October 2025, organised by Switzerland (the Swiss Federal Statistical Office (FSO)) and hosted by WHO, aimed to discuss initiatives to strengthen the availability and use of trusted data in an era increasingly shaped by artificial intelligence. The first part focused on the launch and progress of the *Trusted Data Observatory* (TDO) project, which seeks to make reliable datasets from institutions such as national statistical offices and international organisations easier to find and use by connecting them through standardized metadata, shifting the focus from data itself to metadata to improve discoverability and interoperability. Participants reviewed the project's phased and stressed the need for collaboration across public institutions, private actors, and technology companies to ensure transparency and prioritization of trustworthy sources. The second part of the meeting examined the WHO's renewed strategy on digitalized and trusted health data, including the creation of a new department focused on data analytics, digital technologies, and AI to support health systems and universal health coverage. Overall, discussions highlighted the importance of partnerships, international cooperation, data literacy, and sustainable governance models to ensure that reliable data can effectively inform public policy, particularly in public health and sustainable development.

3. What's going to happen?

As technological transformation accelerates and geopolitical dynamics grow more complex, the multi-lateral system is entering a period of profound change. Digital infrastructures, artificial intelligence, and global data flows are reshaping not only economies and societies, but also the very foundations of international data governance. In this context, **trust in data** is emerging as a critical pillar of digital sovereignty and responsible innovation. The ability to generate, share, and use trusted data across borders will determine how effectively states, international organizations, and private actors can address global challenges in an increasingly interconnected world.

This open event will convene actors from International Geneva and the private sector to explore how the multilateral ecosystem can adapt and remain effective in a rapid technological change. The discussion will examine how emerging technologies are transforming governance frameworks and requiring new models of collaboration. A particular focus will be placed on the role of trusted data infrastructures as enablers of cooperation and innovation. The **Trusted Data Observatory** provides an illustrative example of how Geneva-based initiatives are working to operationalize trust in data through shared standards.

Recent discussions at the UN Statistical Commission have also highlighted the growing urgency of making official statistics "**AI-ready**" as users increasingly access public data through artificial intelligence systems rather than directly from institutional sources. This shift raises new challenges related to visibility, correct interpretation, and the risk of inaccurate or outdated information being amplified by AI tools. Strengthening machine-readable metadata, data governance frameworks, and collaboration between statistical institutions and technology platforms is therefore becoming essential to ensure that trusted public data remains discoverable, interpretable, and reliably used in AI-driven environments.

The event will also situate Geneva's efforts within the broader momentum surrounding artificial intelligence governance, including Switzerland's leadership in convening the upcoming **AI Summit**. By linking local initiatives with global policy discussions, the event will highlight Geneva's unique role as a hub where technology, diplomacy, and governance intersect. The discussion will explore how strengthening the Geneva ecosystem can contribute to shaping a more resilient and trusted global digital order.

Geneva Data Community Meeting – Agenda

14:30 – 15:00	Arrival
Geneva Data Community closed meeting	
15:00 – 15:10	Introduction by the Swiss Federal Statistical Office (FSO) and Giga
15:10 – 15:45	How to progress the Trusted Data Observatory (TDO) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update from UN Statistical Commission – AI Readiness • Recap: where are we now? Key findings from the stakeholder survey
15:45 – 16:00	Q&A
16:00 – 16:25	Presentation by Giga
16:25 – 16:30	Closing
16:30 – 17:00	<i>Tea Break, Networking with refreshments</i>
Digital sovereignty and responsible innovation: strengthening the Geneva ecosystem in an interconnected world	
17:00-17:10	Welcoming remarks by Thomas Gürber , Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the United Nations and other Organizations in Geneva
17:10-17:20	Keynote by Geneva Science and Diplomacy Anticipator (GESDA) – Laurent Mentek and Martin Müller
17:20 – 18:00	Panel discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pádraig Dalton, Project lead “Trusted Data Observatory” • Irene Kaggwa, Giga Programme Manager, International Telecommunication Union Manager at ITU • Samira Gazzane, Policy Lead, Future-Ready Economies, Centre for AI Excellence, World Economic Forum • Ines Knäpper, Women in AI Switzerland
18:00 – 18:20	Q&A Session
18:20 – 18:25	Wrap up by Christian Laux , Senior Advisor at Laux Lawyers AG
18:25 – 18:30	Closing remarks by FSO and Giga
18:30 – 19:30	<i>Apéro - Networking</i>