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# The Geneva Data Community



## The Geneva data community: Driving Global Progress: The role of shared data in achieving common goals

*Summary of the meeting of 6 November 2024*

### Objectives of the meeting

This meeting, co-hosted by the Swiss Federal Statistical Office (FSO) and Deloitte, provided an opportunity to learn more about the feasibility study of a global metadata platform, its visualisation, its scope and to exchange about the current data environment. Moreover, the meeting was also an opportunity to go deeper into the topic of data and have inputs from different actors about digitalisation.

### Driving Global Progress: The role of shared data in achieving common goals

*Building a Trusted Data Future: Highlights from our recent metadata platform discussion*

During the meeting, we explored an ambitious project to transform data access and trust in data. Led by our keynote speaker, Pádraig Dalton, former Director General of the Central Statistics Office of Ireland, we explored the potential for a global metadata platform – a **Trusted Data Observatory** – to help users navigate the data landscape with confidence and find metadata that will lead them to trusted sources among the wealth of data on offer. The discussion focused on challenges in the current data landscape, in which data is produced by a variety of organisations and the private sector in addition to national statistics institutes. This proliferation of data from different sources poses major challenges in terms of standardisation, regulation and data quality. Pádraig Dalton spoke about the increasing difficulty of distinguishing reliable data from misinformation. The Trusted Data Observatory would present a solution to this problem by serving as a 'metadata compass' bringing together key metadata to enable users to easily find, compare and access reliable data.

A robust global platform should involve stakeholders from governments, international organisations and the private sector. To enhance the credibility of the platform, it is suggested that it should be located in Geneva in order to take advantage of the city's status as the home of the UN organisations, a vast array of international organisations and of Switzerland's reputation as a globally connected, neutral country. This project is just the beginning of our efforts to improve data governance and combat disinformation. We are excited to join forces with International Geneva and to embark on this transformative journey to improve access to trusted (meta)data for all.

#### *Exploring digitalisation: key insights*

The second part of the meeting was devoted to other current data and digitalisation issues. A first presentation showed a data platform sharing use cases with various possibilities. The data platform connects businesses globally across any type or scale of data to productize AI, applications and more in the enterprise.

The discussion on digital sovereignty highlighted the importance of this aspect of digital governance at state level and discussed what distinguishes it from the narrower concept of data sovereignty. To identify the situations in which the concept of digital sovereignty applies, and to highlight the relevance of digital sovereignty in order to ensure the protection of critical state assets, a three-pronged test was presented on the basis of examples including attacks on e-voting infrastructure and cyber-attacks.

The participants then turned their attention to Geneva's potential as a hub for digital governance. An analysis by the Graduate Institute supported by comprehensive research and case studies examined the city's current governance structures, identifying key challenges such as insufficient private sector involvement and an over-reliance on large US tech companies. The study presented four scenarios for Geneva's future in digital governance. On the basis of these scenarios, six recommendations were proposed to strengthen Geneva's position as a major centre in the field of digital sovereignty. The recommendations included increasing technological literacy, investing in critical infrastructure and fostering collaboration between different stakeholders in the digital ecosystem.

#### **Recommendations and follow-up**

- I. FSO will pursue next steps of the **Trusted Data Observatory**. Entities interested to be involved should get in touch with FSO;
- II. By fostering partnerships and collaboration among entities, the data ecosystem can be strengthened. Therefore, the whole Geneva Data Community should remain connected and engage on the topic of data;
- III. **The next meeting of the Geneva Data Community, co-organized with Data For Change: the PARIS21 Foundation, will be on Thursday, 3 April 2024.** Further information will follow in due course.