

Experts say privately held data available in the European Union should be used better and more

Data can solve problems from traffic jams to disaster relief, but European countries are not yet using this data to its full potential, experts say in a report released today. More secure and regular data sharing across the EU could help public administrations use private sector data for the public good.



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Commissioner for Internal Market, Thierry **Breton** said:

We have an extraordinary opportunity to use the enormous amount of privately held data available, for the benefit of our society and future generations and lead the data revolution on the world stage. Business-to-government data sharing for the public interest can become a game-changer in this aspect. I thank the experts for the recommendations to help make this happen.

The rapporteur of the High-Level Expert Group on B2G Data Sharing, Alberto **Alemanno** said:

Our report suggests how the EU might become a global leader in fostering not only a framework for B2G data access, but also a sensible, inclusive and participatory data culture through a set of viable, practicable and scalable welfare-enhancing solutions.

In order to increase Business-to-Government (B2G) data sharing, the experts advise to make data sharing in the EU easier by taking policy, legal and investment measures in three main areas:

1. **Governance of B2G data sharing across the EU:** such as putting in place national governance structures, setting up a recognised function ('data stewards') in public and private organisations, and exploring the creation of a cross-EU regulatory framework.
2. **Transparency, citizen engagement and ethics:** such as making B2G data sharing more citizen-centric, developing ethical guidelines, and investing in training and education.
3. **Operational models, structures and technical tools:** such as creating incentives for companies to share data, carrying out studies on the benefits of B2G data sharing, and providing support to develop the technical infrastructure through the Horizon Europe and Digital Europe programmes.

They also revised the principles on private sector data sharing in B2G contexts and included new principles on accountability and on fair and ethical data use, which should guide B2G data sharing for the public interest. Examples of successful B2G data sharing partnerships in the EU include an open forest data system in Finland to help manage the ecosystem, mapping of EU fishing activities using ship tracking data, and genome sequencing data of breast cancer patients to identify new personalised treatments.

See all the good practices and pledges on B2G data sharing.

Background

More than 33 zettabytes of data were generated worldwide in 2018, a number that is set to grow to 175 zettabytes by 2025. This huge amount of data produced every day can reveal real-time information that is critical to understanding patterns of human behaviour and activities. Data in general, and privately held data in particular, has a high potential to serve the general public interest by informing decision-making, providing new scientific insights and resolving policy issues which can, for example, improve public service delivery.

The High-Level Expert Group on Business-to-Government Data Sharing was set up in autumn 2018 and includes members from a broad range of interests and sectors. The recommendations presented today in its final report feed into the European strategy for data and can be used as input for other possible future Commission initiatives on Business-to-Government data sharing.

More information

- [European data strategy](#)
- [Report: Towards a European strategy on business-to-government data sharing for the public interest](#)
- [Communication: A European strategy for data](#)
- [Q&A on B2G data sharing for the public interest](#)

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