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DIGITALEUROPE key recommendations to support business data sharing in Europe



To innovate and develop new digital solutions benefiting our society, companies increasingly need access to large volumes of data. This is particularly true for artificial intelligence, as many AI applications are dependent on the availability of data to train and develop algorithms, machine and deep learning models.

To increase data generation, data cooperation and exchanges across both public and private sectors, DIGITALEUROPE recommends the following:

- ▶ **Preserve contractual freedom.** Contractual arrangements should be preferred and encouraged to share industry data, as they do not undermine the capacity of companies to enjoy mutually beneficial data partnerships.
- ▶ **Develop schemes allowing companies to closely cooperate and exchange data** without falling under antitrust legislation, for example through a block exemption on data sharing and pooling.
- ▶ **Make public sector data more easily available** by developing a Common European public data space, compiling datasets from scattered existing initiatives¹.
 - Datasets must be accessible in easily and machine-readable formats, with documentation explaining how to use the data and information about its origin (e.g. how it was collected).
 - Access to interoperable APIs and real-time data should be provided when available.
- ▶ **Raise awareness among businesses on the benefits of data sharing and provide practical advice**, for instance by further developing the concept of Support Centres for Data Sharing as one-stop shops.
 - Clear, simple and user-friendly guidance tools would provide more certainty to businesses concluding data sharing contracts, particularly SMEs.
 - Non-binding models and templates could be developed to facilitate data exchanges, notably by leveraging existing industry-driven initiatives.

¹ An EU Common public data space should expand the existing European Data and EU Open Data portals.

- ▶ **Create delimited regulatory sandboxes** for companies to freely test new data management and processing tools without legal uncertainty risks.
- ▶ **Encourage the definition and use of interoperable data formats through standardisation**, to ensure that sharing is not obstructed by lack of compatibility.
 - Interoperability should be sought cross and within sectors.
- ▶ **Support the development of data platforms and marketplaces** allowing private and public sectors alike to sell, trade and access quality datasets.
 - Security of data and data exchanges should be of the utmost importance to ensure that the industry could safely take part in any data spaces initiatives.
 - Data spaces should protect intellectual property, confidential information and personal data, security and legitimate commercial interests.
 - Public sector data made available on such marketplaces should comply with relevant legislation, notably on charging costs to access datasets².
 - Marketplaces may be integrated into Common European data spaces, together with the proposed Common European public data space.
- ▶ **Invest in activities improving overall data quality, usability and security.**

Data curation and annotation is crucial as only accurate and reliable data provides added value through data sharing.

 - Upcoming EU funding programmes such as Horizon Europe or Digital Europe should support data usability through curation and annotation, as well as data accessibility through machine-readable formats, secure interoperable APIs, and overall data analysis and insight-gathering.
 - Further research on technologies like privacy-preserving machine learning and confidential computing is needed to ensure data privacy and security.
 - Innovation regarding data management, data trusts and privacy-related schemes is also essential.
 - EU digital skills instruments and strategies should have a stronger focus on data science and data literacy. Addressing data skills shortages through targeted education, including medium and advanced training, will ensure that individuals can manage and use data effectively.

² Cf. Directive 2019/1024 on Open data and the re-use of public sector information
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2019/1024/oj>

DIGITALEUROPE looks forward to working with the European Parliament, Commission and Member States to discuss and implement the above proposals to further develop data exchanges between companies.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:



Julien Chasserieu

Policy Manager

julien.chasserieu@digitaleurope.org / +32 492 27 13 32

About DIGITALEUROPE

DIGITALEUROPE represents the digital technology industry in Europe. Our members include some of the world's largest IT, telecoms and consumer electronics companies and national associations from every part of Europe. DIGITALEUROPE wants European businesses and citizens to benefit fully from digital technologies and for Europe to grow, attract and sustain the world's best digital technology companies. DIGITALEUROPE ensures industry participation in the development and implementation of EU policies.

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