

Data

Data is an essential building block of modern societies, and we are constantly producing more of it: citizens create data while browsing the internet, booking travel, or buying clothes online, and public bodies generate data from weather tracking and traffic monitoring.

In the digital age, we are able to process these vast quantities of data faster than we ever imagined and put it to an almost endless variety of uses. Used correctly, data can bring benefits to citizens such as personalised medicines, cheaper public services, safer and cleaner public transport, and much more.

Data is a driver of innovation for industries and SMEs to develop new products and services. Data also contributes to the European Green Deal: it helps to protect our planet by optimising our energy efficiency and reducing our carbon footprint. By collecting information on the environment, data can help us fight climate emergencies, such as floods and wildfires. And, by monitoring the energy consumption of buildings and cars, data can help us reduce our carbon production.

To leverage this potential, data needs to be shared in a trusted way respecting EU rules and values. For example, in the area of data protection, and respect of intellectual property and trade secrets. Hence, our initiative involves crafting a framework with explicit guidelines — a European single market for data - that balances openness with sovereignty. This initiative is poised to serve as a catalyst for innovation and creation of new jobs.

Data Union Strategy: Unlocking data for AI

The [Data Union Strategy \(https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/data-union\)](https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/data-union) is the Commission's plan to unlock data for AI, boosting competitiveness across Europe. It addresses the challenges of data scarcity, regulatory complexity and global competition by:

- Scaling up access to data
- Streamlining data rules
- Protecting EU data sovereignty

European Data Strategy: A blueprint for an EU data model

In 2020, a transformative era for data commenced with the introduction of the [European data strategy \(https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/strategy-data\)](https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/strategy-data) in February. This strategy delineated initiatives aimed at fully realizing the potential of data. It includes measures to ensure the protection of data, ensuring secure and dependable storage. Furthermore, the strategy establishes distinct objectives and regulations to transparently and reliably leverage data for the benefit of citizens, businesses, researchers, and public

administrations.

Key elements of the European data strategy include:

- allowing data to [flow freely within the EU](https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/non-personal-data) (<https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/non-personal-data>) and across sectors;
- overcoming barriers to sharing, through technical infrastructure, legal rules and ethical guidelines;
- fostering the development of collections of sector-specific data;
- ensuring EU autonomy in supplying [European cloud services](https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/cloud-computing) (<https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/cloud-computing>).

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