Proposal for Open Forum session: **Data as new gold: how to avoid ‘goldrush’ and create value**

Chosen theme: ‘Governing data and protecting privacy’

Data policy is seen now as a must of policy making process across the globe: data privacy, cybersecurity, access, data economy – all this relate to data policy. Data policy contains various concepts of data management, such as data governance, quality, architecture and security. The crucial question is – **what we want to achieve and how to get there.** Please select the IGF 2022 theme that your session relates to.

**The EU is the first region to create a single digital (cross border) market** (started in 2014), with the data at the forefront of it. The main intention is to ensure data can flow within the EU and across sectors, for the benefit of all and new rules were put in place. After the success of the EU, other regions started deploying the principles of data policy, based on the EU experience too. **Data governance and privacy protection are very important elements of data policy** where consensus of public, private sectors and civil society should prevail to strike a right balance.

**Data policy can be seen as a part of general digital policy** which has now become one of the key areas shaping the future. At EU level, it is widely agreed that digitalisation is necessary to transform the economy and achieve climate neutrality. EU started with Digital Single Market initiatives back in 2014: this has been an interesting history of successes and mistakes which allows us to rely now on lessons learned and a track record. Successful work on abolishment of roaming charges when travelling within the EU, better access to online subscriptions, consumer protection rules, the end of unjustified geo-blocking, Action Plan to step up efforts to counter disinformation and so forth.

EU seeks that rules, in particular on data privacy and data protection, as well as competition law, are fully respected and that rules for access and use of data are fair, practical and clear. This a key to success in data policy.

The EU way to become an attractive, secure and dynamic data policy is by:

- setting clear and **fair rules on access and re-use of data**
- pooling **European data in key sectors**, with common and interoperable data spaces
- giving users rights, tools and skills to stay in **full control of their data** (ownership and privacy)
- to promote **human centric approach**.

In terms of data policy legislation, two important legislative initiatives – Data Act and Data Governance Act are really important (even on a global scale) to shape the future of the data policy.
With the **European Data Act** proposed in February 2022, the Commission aims to make **more data available for use**, and set up rules on who can use and access what data for which purposes across all economic sectors in the EU. The new rules are expected to create €270 billion of additional GDP for EU Member States by 2028 by addressing the legal, economic and technical issues that lead to data being underused.

With the Data Act the EU wants business and citizens to benefit from:

- cheaper prices for aftermarket services and reparation of their connected objects
- new opportunities to use services relying on access to this data
- better access to data collected or produced by a device

**European Data Governance Act (regulation)**, which is fully in line with EU values and principles, will bring significant benefits to EU citizens and companies. The aim is to boost data sharing across sectors and Member States. A key pillar of the **European strategy for data**, the Data Governance Act will increase trust in data sharing, strengthen mechanisms to increase data availability and overcome technical obstacles to the reuse of data.

The proposed Data Governance Act will also support the **set-up and development of common European data spaces in strategic domains**, involving both private and public players, in sectors such as health, environment, energy, agriculture, mobility, finance, manufacturing, public administration and skills. The main benefit is to **make more data available and facilitate data sharing across sectors and EU countries** in order to leverage the potential of data for the benefit of European citizens and businesses.

Some examples:

- Good data management and data sharing will enable industries to develop innovative products and services, and will make many sectors of the economy more efficient and sustainable. It is also essential for training AI systems.
- With more data available, the public sector can develop better policies, leading to more transparent governance and more efficient public services.
- Data-driven innovation will bring benefits for companies and individuals by making our lives and work more efficient.

It is important to mention, that **EU is aiming at twin transition – green and digital – and the data (quality, access, reliability, real-time, etc.) is crucial here.** By having the necessary information suppliers, consumers and users would be in a position to take better decisions such as providing and / or buying greener, more sustainable and higher quality or products and services, thereby contributing for example to the **Green Deal objectives**. At the same time, the policy should not follow the ‘goldrush’ patterns; strategic approach (long term strategy, progress indicators, monitoring systems) is a must for success in data policy.

Another specific feature of the EU digital policy is a human centric approach. The EU seeks to develop partnerships to promote a **human centric digital agenda around the globe**. Through the Digital Compass, the EU set the framework for own digital priorities to 2030, but also expressed a commitment to build strong international digital partnerships and promote a human-centred digital agenda around the world. This could be done though long-term partnership tools such as **Digital Global Gateway**. It would let promoting efficient data
governance on global scale. Of course, the biggest focus is on Africa’s continent to help achieve digital transformation goals by 2030.

Some figures: Global Gateway Africa-Europe Investment Package (EUR 150 billion by 2027).

Some important digital projects:
1. EU-AU data flagship;
2. African European Digital Innovation Bridge (AEDIB),
3. Secure EurAfrica Gateway Cable;
4. Secure digital connectivity between the Northern and Southern shores of the Mediterranean Sea (DG NEAR);
5. Secure Regional Fibre Optic Backbones across Sub-Saharan Africa; and
6. Satellite secure connectivity project.

EU-AU Data Flagship is very important project to set the data policy framework for African countries. It is a joint effort (EU, AU, Smart Africa, Germany) to boost African data economy targeting. The main objective of this flagship is to create an enabling environment (data infrastructure, innovation, data against pandemic and data professionals) for the data economy in Africa to unlock data innovation and data value creation at local level. At the same time, the project aims at protecting digital rights and national data sovereignty, promote human-centred and sustainable data infrastructure.

With the aforementioned package of measures, the EU aims at achieving ambitious goals and take the lead in global digital policy. Some data economy projections by 2025:

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<tr>
<th>2025: 530% increase of global data volume</th>
<th>2025: €829 billion value of data economy in the EU27</th>
<th>2025: 10.9 million data professionals in the EU27</th>
<th>2025: 65% Percentage of EU population with basic digital skills</th>
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<tr>
<td>From 33 zettabytes in 2018 to 175 zettabytes in 2025</td>
<td>From €301 billion (2.4% of EU GDP) in 2018</td>
<td>From 5.7 million in 2018</td>
<td>From 57% in 2018</td>
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