

Developments in data stewardship

First exchange of views: the draft report of the Task Force on data stewardship

Urmet Lee
Director General Statistics Estonia

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UNECE Task Force on Data Stewardship (established Feb 2021)

Objectives: to clarify the terms related to data stewardship and public data governance, and the tasks of NSOs that this may include in different settings. This could serve as a basis for developing guidance, in a later stage, on the role of NSOs in the new data ecosystem.

Planned outputs:

- a) Defining 'data stewardship' and the related terms;
- b) Developing a set of possible responsibilities of a data steward and considerations to be taken into account in shaping the NSO role in this area. This can serve as a basis for identifying a minimum core set of responsibilities and a maturity model of data stewardship;
- c) Developing a toolkit of good practices and tools for implementing the role of data steward;
- d) Clarifying what NSOs can and what they can not do in this respect, consistent with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics.

Where do we stand with the TF and where do we go?

- 14 members (NSOs, governments and int organisations): Canada, Estonia (Chair), Finland, Hungary, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, Netherlands, Poland, Switzerland, United Kingdom, Eurostat, OECD, UNECE
- TF has produced an early consultation version of the report for testing whether the thinking within the TF is in line with wider perception of the topic
- After this round of consultations, the TF will make amendments to the draft and start developing a maturity model. An official draft report will be sent out for formal consultation in spring 2023.
- The goal is to adopt this report next year at the CES 2023 which will exhaust the mandate of the TF.
- The possible follow-up to the TF is to develop recommendations and guidance to NSOs for helping to implement data stewardship concepts and use the corresponding tools.

Quick glance at the report

- It is a work in progress.
- It tries to provide information to the heads of NSOs and experts within NSOs but also to the stakeholders within the National Data Ecosystems.
- Report is divided into 6 chapters dealing with main topics like:
 - General NSO and Data Steward roles relationships
 - Definitions of the Data Steward and Data Governance and linking them to NSOs
 - Explanation of conceptual and practical relationships between DG and Data Stewardship using the NSO focus
 - Responsibilities and skills needed for Data Stewardship
 - Communication
- Report also contains a number of examples of implementing the Data Stewardship roles in different countries.

Key insights that emerged during the preparation of the report

1. Clarity starts with definitions.
2. It is about tailoring.
3. The data stewardship role needs to be cross checked with the principles that guide official statistics.
4. NSO's have natural advantages to take lead in data ecosystem shaping.
5. The road to the highest gains for official statistics goes through well coordinated and operational data governance.
6. Our commitment to improving the data literacy of societies and communication skills become crucial.

Main high-level issues: Big Elephant (and other “animals”) in the room

- 1. Big Elephant in the Room: even if we talk about the Data Stewardship in official statistics it is essentially a question about the future strategic outlook of every NSO: data or statistics centred approach?
- 2. Scope of the role of NSO within the National Data Ecosystems.
- 3. Issue of the capacity for performing DS tasks both internally within NSO and externally.

Thank you!

Urmet Lee

Director General Statistics Estonia

urmet.lee@stat.ee