

United Nations Statistical Commission

Fifty-second session

1–3 and 5 March 2021

Item 3 (m) of the provisional agenda

Items for discussion and decision: data and metadata presentation and dissemination

Document E/CN.3/2021/17 – Report of the Secretary-General on data and metadata presentation and dissemination

Statement provided by:

Ireland

Statement:

Ireland welcomes the proposed approach, which will enhance the role of NSI's at the centre of data provision. This approach is particularly welcome in the context of the SDG's, and UNSD's role in publishing and standardising metadata on behalf of all UN agencies is extremely valuable.

The platform will give users better access to the breadth of official data in the UN system. At a global level UN Data will be the lens through which users see our global statistical community. UN Data needs to reflect who we are as a global statistical community, our core values of publishing without fear or favour and independence, objectivity, and of course being relevant. It also needs to reflect the concept of "Official Statistics being a public good" and supporting the principle of equality of access, while simultaneously showing that we are modern, innovative and ambitious.

The data sources being used to populate the platform are essential. Ireland urges that Official Sources, which are reliable, sustainable and resilient are used to populate the platform. We are aware that on occasions there may be a temptation to use unofficial sources to fill data gaps, but such sources are very often un-regulated, and lack transparency around methodology and metadata.

Users are now more informed than ever before, and cross-country comparisons are extremely important. UN Data can meet that need and be the trusted Third Party for the provision of coherent and comparable data at global level e.g. SDG's. We as national compilers want to be able to point users to a trusted, credible provider of data at the global level. To do this effectively we must think not only of the data but also the metadata.

Ireland hopes that the UN Platform establishes its vision and in doing so focus on the art of the possible. What issues the new UN Data Platform needs to address should be a key focus. A communications strategy to go with a dissemination channel needs to be put in place. Influence through the sharing of knowledge, expertise and pathfinding projects that showcase what can be done. Think beyond the standard or normal approach and consider highlighting, through Story Boards, how the data can provide real insight and shape decisions.

Finally, Ireland encourages the UN to step into the leadership role at global level through this portal and be a strong presence within the data space. At the global level the UN are well positioned to play that role for Official Statistics and the UN Portal can be of the lenses through which users can assess the relevance and value of Official Statistics.

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