

Data Governance Framework Recommendation Report for Türkiye has been Released

18 Apr 2024

The "Data Governance Framework Recommendation Report for Türkiye," prepared by the United Nations Development Program, was published as part of the preparatory work for the "National Data Strategy" that will support Türkiye's data-driven digital transformation at the national level.

The United Nations Development Program's ("**UNDP**") Data Governance Framework Recommendation Report for Türkiye ("**Report**") was published on the official website of UNDP on 1 March 2024.

The National Data Strategy ("**Project**") was launched in April 2023 in collaboration with UNDP to establish a governance framework that will define data access, use, and sharing in Türkiye. This report is designed to provide strategic insights and a contextual understanding of the Project, offering useful guidance to interested parties.

The Report noted that Türkiye's importance in development is increasing and highlights the growing amount of data generated daily across various sectors as one of the key reasons for this.

It was also noted that the potential of open data is significant, but the legislation is not sufficient.

In the Annual Presidential Program for 2022, published by the Presidency of Strategy and Budget, the Presidential Digital Transformation Office ("**DTO**") was assigned the responsibility of establishing the Data Governance Working Group and supporting its initiatives.

In addition, the DTO has been assigned the tasks and responsibilities related to the measure "A national data strategy will be prepared to increase data-based competitiveness" in the Medium-Term Program (2024-2026). Furthermore, it is responsible for the preparation of the National Data Strategy and Action Plan in the 12th Development Plan (2024-2028), as well as policies 584 and 967 aimed at strengthening data governance in public institutions.

Numerous discussions took place between UNDP and DTO, and as a result of these discussions, the proposed data governance framework was shaped by five main pillars. These pillars are defined as follows:

1. Policies, legislation, and regulations;
2. Institutions, mechanisms, and processes;
3. People;
4. Technology and infrastructure;
5. Partnerships.

Within the scope of each pillar, various recommendations ("**Recommendation**") have been created. Important details regarding these headings are shared below.

Pillar 1 is stated as "**Policies, legislation, and regulations**". There are four Recommendations under this pillar. These are set out below.

1. Strengthening the legislative data regime.

During this process, various legal approaches to non-personal data adopted by other countries should be carefully examined. Consequently, framework legislation on data governance and a framework commitment document for data sharing governance could be prepared.

2. Development of a national data strategy.

This strategy should be supported by clear and enforceable guidelines and standards. Additionally, preparing practical action plans for the public sector could be beneficial.

3. Amending sector-specific regulations and policies.

The impact of this sector-specific legislation should be assessed through a multi-actor mechanism. Additionally, it was suggested to establish a risk assessment model for data sharing.

4. Efficient implementation of data protection regulations.

It was recommended to conduct a comprehensive legislative assessment.

Pillar 2 is defined as "**Institutions, mechanisms, and processes**". There are four Recommendations under this pillar. The relevant Recommendations are given below.

1. Strengthening leadership in the data ecosystem.

One of the most important steps in this regard would be defining and appointing the role of the Chief Data Officer.

2. Enhancing institutional mechanisms.

A structure and decision-making process need to be established to guide data access, sharing, and interoperability.

It was recommended to establish a central data management office as a dedicated body responsible for overseeing the strategic management of data.

It was also recommended to redesign data management units within ministries and agencies. Each ministry and government agency's data management unit should be headed by appointed Chief Data Officers, working in close cooperation with the central data management office.

Centres for data-related expertise, research, and collaboration could be established by integrating government agencies into the "Public Data Space" and creating relevant units within the government. Establishing "Data-labs" for high-priority use cases and an open data portal is another recommendation.

3.

Development of an effective communication mechanism.

This would foster a common vision and understanding of the data agenda.

4.

Setting up a monitoring and evaluation system.

This would enable continuous improvement and adaptation of national data strategies.

Pillar 3 is labeled as "**People**". There are four Recommendations under this pillar. These Recommendations are stated below.

1. Implementing capacity development programs.

Additional guidelines and reference documents should be prepared to inform individuals about data access and processing.

2. Revising human resources policies.

This entails the development of data-related skills and competencies in areas such as data standards, data management, and data analytics.

3. Strengthening the data culture.

This involves creating an environment where data-driven decision-making is encouraged and valued.

4. Developing data literacy.

This includes individuals' ability to understand, analyze, and interpret data effectively, and to handle data with respect for privacy and security

Pillar 4 is "**Technology and infrastructure**". There are seven Recommendations under this pillar. These Recommendations are listed below.

Use of open-source software and ecosystem solutions.

Well-established, well-supported Digital Public Goods and other open source solutions can be utilized to create Türkiye's data ecosystem.

Effective implementation of APIs.

This enables seamless integration and data exchange between different systems and platforms.

Use of open source data exchange layers.

Türkiye should also develop secure data storage strategies, considering data backup, emergency recovery, data retention periods, and current and future data standards.

Developing cloud infrastructure.

The strategy for developing cloud infrastructure should be implemented to meet the needs of public institutions.

Further use of analytical and data management tools.

These tools could include data integration platforms, data quality management systems, data visualization tools, and self-service applications.

Further improvement of data standardization.

This Recommendation includes standardizing data formats, schemas, and classifications to facilitate data integration, exchange, and analysis.

Clearly defining units of measurement and variables, as well as their attributes within the data architecture, can help ensure consistency and accurate data representation.

Strengthening metadata management and developing data catalogs.

It was stated DTO and TurkStat can provide guidance on a metadata management model for the data ecosystem.

The last pillar is "**Partnerships**". Within the scope of this pillar, there are three Recommendations. These Recommendations are as follows.

Enhancing data sharing arrangements.

Türkiye can build strong partnerships that encourage data-driven innovation, problem solving, and

collaboration at national and international level.

Improving collaboration among the stakeholders.

Public institutions can partner with NGOs, academia, and private organizations to access data and accelerate analysis, problem solving, and innovation.

Further integration with other data ecosystems.

To facilitate cross-border data flows and ensure alignment with global data governance norms, Türkiye should align its data governance coverage with international standards and coverage used by partner countries and international institutions.

All Recommendations have been assessed in detail in the Report. Additionally, examples and guidelines prepared by other countries, including but not limited to Germany, New Zealand, Singapore, Korea, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the USA, and other countries in the international arena have been examined.

The full text of the Report can be reached via [this link](#).

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