

National Data Strategy 2030 approved

27/12/2024

On December 26, the Public Sector Strategic Committee on Artificial Intelligence and Data approved the new National Data Strategy, with the aim of advancing a nationwide public policy based on the strategic and responsible use of data to drive development in the country.

The strategy was developed through a participatory process led and coordinated by Agesic, in cooperation with the Public Sector Strategic Committee on Artificial Intelligence and Data, in accordance with Article 74 of Law No. 20.212 of November 6, 2023.

It also gathered contributions from more than 120 people from different disciplines and fields, representatives of more than 35 public institutions, 8 civil society organizations, 12 private sector organizations, and 6 academic organizations, who contributed their perspectives. The document was further enriched by contributions from the dialogue and working roundtables held as part of the review process for the Artificial Intelligence Strategy.

Objectives of the National Data Strategy 2030

The strategy seeks to foster the availability and strategic use of data as an asset for evidence-based decision-making, innovation for the benefit of society as a whole, inclusive economic growth, and stronger pillars of democracy, harnessing data to increase transparency, accountability, citizen participation, and efficiency in the delivery of public services, while respecting personal data protection.

It also ensures the sustainability of the national policies developed in Uruguay and lays the foundations for strengthening them. It establishes guiding principles and three specific objectives:

- 1. Data governance:** ensure a comprehensive national framework for ethical and responsible data governance and management that respects people's rights and enables the availability, use, integration, openness, and utilization of data by different sectors in accordance with current national legislation, for the benefit of people and the country's development.
- 2. Capability and infrastructure:** develop the capabilities, infrastructure, and conditions necessary to generate value from data, promoting digital sovereignty, and foster the training of specialized talent that advances the development of the data-based economy, while developing people's ability to understand the impacts and potential of data in their everyday lives.
- 3. National development:** promote the strategic and responsible use of data to drive the development of all sectors of the national economy and inclusive economic growth, build a more equal society, improve the efficiency of public policies and services, and strengthen

transparency, accountability, and citizen participation in public administration.

National Data Strategy 2030

Author

Agesic

Creation date

26/12/2024

Publication type

Reference Framework

The National Data Strategy 2030 seeks to foster the availability and strategic use of data as an asset for evidence-based decision-making, innovation for the benefit of society as a whole, inclusive economic growth, and stronger pillars of democracy, harnessing data to increase transparency, accountability, citizen participation, and efficiency in the delivery of public services, while respecting personal data protection. It was developed through a participatory process led and coordinated by Agesic, in cooperation with the Public Sector Strategic Committee on Artificial Intelligence and Data, in accordance with Article 74 of Law No. 20.212 of November 6, 2023. It involved multiple actors from the public sector, the private sector, academia, civil society, and interested members of the public. The strategy contains 7 guiding principles, 3 thematic pillars, 12 lines of action, and 59 specific actions.

Minutes No. 1/2024

Strategic Committee on Artificial Intelligence

16/05/2024

Public Sector Strategic Committee on Artificial Intelligence and Data

Attendees

Representatives of	% meeting participation	Name
AGESIC	100%	Hebert Paguas, Virginia Pardo, Gabriel Herná Maneiro, Ninoschka Dante, Nancy Ibarra

Representatives of	% meeting participation	Name
MEC	100%	Alberto Majó
MEF	0%	Did not appoint a representative
MIEM	100%	Pascual Gattas
MTSS	100%	Marcelo Belén, Sebastián Sánchez
INE	100%	María Victoria Susena
INDHDP	100%	Marcos Israel
ANII	100%	Flavio Caiafa, Mauricio Rinaldi, Juan Maldini
URCDP	100%	Represented by Virginia Pardo, a member of

Agenda

The meeting was convened to address the following agenda

1. Establishment of the Public Sector Strategic Committee on Artificial Intelligence and Data, under the authority granted to Agesic in Art. 74 of Law 20.212, of November 2023.
2. Background and scope of action of the Committee.

Proceedings

Hebert Paguas, Executive Director of Agesic, welcomes participants and presents the context for the creation of the Public Sector Strategic Committee on Artificial Intelligence and Data, convened by Agesic.

In his introduction, he mentions the existing AI Strategy for Digital Government and notes that it is currently being reviewed through a participatory process that seeks to incorporate the views of different sectors (state institutions, the private sector and entrepreneurial sector, academia, subject matter specialists, and civil society organizations), with a view to a longer-term National Strategy.

He highlights the national challenges to consider regarding regulation and the importance of considering the various international guidelines and standards established by organizations such as UNESCO, OECD, UNDP, and CAF.

He mentions the report of recommendations to Parliament assigned to Agesic by Art. 74 of Law 20.212, which is being drafted. For this purpose, existing legislation has been reviewed and a series of meetings held, inviting the various agencies' legal departments to contribute their perspectives. In closing, he states that establishing the Public Sector Strategic Committee on AI and Data is part of a digital governance strategy seeking to create forums for collaboration and coordination around Artificial Intelligence, Data, Digital Citizenship, and Cybersecurity. Virginia Pardo presents the context and drafting process for the artificial intelligence and data strategies, and the importance of establishing the Public Sector Strategic Committee (Art. 74, Law 20.212).

Some of the points covered in her presentation:

- There is a strategic decision to work on the artificial intelligence and data strategies jointly.
- International principles and standards will be considered as a foundation.
- AI is a tool that, when used well, can contribute to the country's strategy and development.
- She presented the process of reviewing the artificial intelligence strategy and drafting the national data strategy, and each of its different stages, from June 2023 to the present.
- She mentioned Uruguay's adherence to UNESCO's Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence and the application of the RAM self-assessment methodology, whose final report will be available soon.
- She noted that CAF provides a tool to assess the institutional framework, which Uruguay used to carry out an initial assessment, along with a comparative review of developments in other countries.
- She mentions that 9 dialogue roundtables were held, with participation from different actors, sectors, and interest groups that contributed their views as input to this process. An initial document summarizing the contributions gathered at the dialogue roundtables will be shared within this Committee.
- Further workshops with agencies will be held soon, bringing together different sectors according to the thematic area to be addressed.
- In closing, she states that a survey of AI use cases in the public sector is being conducted as part of the activities of the Observatory on the Use of AI in the State.

Hebert Paguas added that Uruguay's personal data protection legislation is robust and imposes a strong constraint on data collection for AI use. In connection with drafting the report to Parliament, a scattered body of legislation is being reviewed as part of this work.

Flavio Caiafa mentions the importance of addressing data, noting that Uruguay collects a great deal of data, but does not share it for research. Virginia Pardo proposes that the Committee undertake a process to identify specific actions on the various topics, considering the strategy's framework and the feasibility of implementation.

She adds information about upcoming events in Uruguay, such as the 2nd Ministerial and High-Level Authorities Summit on AI and the EU – LAC High-Level Dialogue on Data Governance.

Regarding preparation of the report of recommendations to Parliament, she indicates that the draft document will be available on the participation platform until June 10 to receive contributions from invited stakeholders. Alberto Majó asks how the report will be submitted to Parliament, and Hebert Paguas responds that it will be presented to the General Assembly.

Hebert Paguas mentions that the difficulty in regulating technology is that it advances rapidly. He highlights that Uruguay is carrying out these processes by listening to all sectors and applying the various recommendations of international organizations.

Virginia Pardo mentions Art. 75 of Law 20.212, on promoting controlled environments (sandboxes), as part of the actions already provided for in legislation.

She refers to the Strategic Committee and states that it was understood that, at this stage, its scope should cover the public sector, without prejudice to consulting other actors. She outlines the proposed role of this Committee in supporting the remaining stages of the process and validating and approving the strategy. Its initial membership was proposed by Agesic.

Alejandro Majó notes that Uruguay will assume the pro tempore presidency of Mercosur in the second half of the year. He reports that there is an AI commission within the science and technology commission and considers the process Uruguay is undertaking timely.

Virginia Pardo mentions the temporary nature of this Committee and states that progress must be made toward creating institutional arrangements within the framework of the Strategy, which will most likely take the form of a permanent commission.

Ninoschka Dante adds that Uruguay needs to establish a governance model for Artificial Intelligence and Data.

Flavio Caiafa refers to the many fears legislators expressed during the Summit of the Future on this subject, on issues such as protecting personal data while using it and avoiding limits on technological development. Virginia Pardo indicates that the strategy is being considered with a time horizon of 4 or 5 years, providing a substantial framework. Marcos Israel stresses the importance of compiling the legislation. Regarding actions relating to data use and exploitation, he comments that, in addition to limitations, some state agencies are reluctant.

Maximiliano Maneiro notes that today generative AI takes precedence over “traditional AI.” He also refers to the specific nature of data as assets, which is to some extent “hidden” by this new technology.

Alberto Majó requests a brief summary of the report's content to help participants become familiar with the subject at the next meeting.

Agreements

- Next meeting: week of 10/06/2024, to discuss the strategies' objectives from the perspective of the Committee's representatives and identify actions to incorporate and sectors to consider.
- Regular Committee meetings: when scheduling them, avoid Thursday mornings if possible.
- Create a shared repository for the group's working documents.
- Agesic to share the following documents or access to them:

- Presentation used during the meeting
- Report from each roundtable
- Summary of the synthesis of the dialogue roundtables held
- Survey of legislation conducted as part of the review process and recent legislation
- UNESCO recommendations
- OECD recommendations
- Email addresses of the various Committee representatives
- Minutes of the meeting for validation

Next meeting: confirm and schedule during the week of 10/06/2024

Minutes No. 2/2024

Strategic Committee on Artificial Intelligence

13/06/2024

Public Sector Strategic Committee on Artificial Intelligence and Data

Attendees

Representatives of	Meeting participation percentage	Name
AGESIC	100%	Virginia Pardo, Gabriel Hernández, Ma Ninoschka Dante, Angie Lecot and Nancy Ib
MEC	100%	Alberto Majó
MEF	0%	Did not appoint a representative
MIEM	100%	Pascual Gattas
MTSS	100%	Marcelo Belén
INE	100%	María Victoria Susena
INDHDP	100%	Marcos Israel
ANII	100%	Flavio Caiafa
URCDP	100%	Gonzalo Sosa

Agenda

The meeting was convened to address the following agenda

1. Strategic Committee minutes and repository:

- ☐ Agreement on approval and publication criteria
- ☐ Review access to the shared repository

2. Report to Parliament

- ☐ Drafting process
- ☐ Brief presentation of the approach and proposals received

3. Toward a first draft of the AI Strategy

- ☐ Discussion and representatives' positions on the objectives
- ☐ Discussion of different lines of action to incorporate

4. Announcements by participants and next steps

Proceedings

The meeting was moderated by Ninoschka Dante.

At the outset, the agreements from the Strategic Committee's first meeting were reviewed to verify that they had been fulfilled.

1. Strategic Committee minutes and repository.

The following agreements were reached:

- The minutes will be emailed to the representatives of each agency on the Strategic Committee, who will have 10 days to review them and submit comments. After this period, the comments received will be incorporated and the minutes will be approved.
- A space will be created on Agesic's website to publish public versions of the approved minutes.
- Regarding the repository of documentation for the Strategic Committee's work, a space is available in Agesic's digital file repository.

2. Report to Parliament

Gonzalo Sosa presents a summary of the activities underway to comply with Article 74 of Law 20.212, regarding preparation of a report to Parliament with recommendations on legal regulation of artificial intelligence and data strategies. Deadline: June 28, 2024. The different thematic areas arising from the dialogue roundtables and review of international references were considered, and, using an initial background draft prepared by the Personal Data Regulatory and Control Unit (URCDP), other public sector agencies were invited to provide further input to Agesic's perspective for preparation of the report.

Subsequently, consultation was also opened to other actors from civil society, academia, and the private sector through the participation platform. He mentioned that not all contributions received will necessarily be reflected in the report, but they will be incorporated into the version submitted to Parliament.

He added that the report's direction follows the provisions of the article cited above: ethical AI development, protection of human rights, and promotion of technological innovation.

Regarding international precedents, Gonzalo Sosa mentions that the direction is potentially toward regulating artificial intelligence. Some points mentioned:

- Greater decentralization in the United States. Executive Order addressing the role of entities

- In Europe, the risk-based approach is more prominent, with “red lines” established in this regard
- There is considerable regulation in terms of principles, with a range of possibilities that take local particularities into account

To conclude this point, he states that certain issues will be raised in the report for further analysis.

Then, in response to a question about regulatory sandboxes provided for in Art. 75 of Law 20.212, Gonzalo Sosa indicates that the proposal is progressing toward signature and is under review by the Presidency's Legal Unit.

3. Toward a first draft of the AI Strategy

Ninoschka Dante refers to the document synthesizing contributions from the dialogue roundtables in the Artificial Intelligence Strategy review process, which was shared in the Strategic Committee's repository.

Around 500 proposals emerged in this process and were considered in the synthesis.

She proposes working on the Committee's vision of objectives and lines of action to incorporate into the Artificial Intelligence Strategy, considering conditions in Uruguay and also looking ahead. She mentions the document's structure and the thematic areas it covers.

She proposes a round of contributions on these areas, emphasizing that the overall perspective must be that of the Strategy.

Pascual Gattas refers to three points:

- He states that developing capabilities in education, in universities, in critical thinking, and among the general public regarding this tool must clearly be a main pillar, with much still to do.
- Data management as a basis for applying analytical tools and obtaining results from data standardized by area, such as health, enabling research in each area. He mentions that there is a great deal of information to process and work with for government decision-making, and that it is also necessary to determine what the private sector should and should not share. Sharing to achieve positive results, since each company is protective of its own information.
- Infrastructure: he states that it is important to develop infrastructure at the national level, both for government and for research, with laboratories to support startups.

María Victoria Susena agrees with the previous points and adds that, regarding data sharing, interoperability should begin with public agencies, since it is more difficult to achieve in the private sector. Challenge: consider governance of this process.

Virginia Pardo also mentions the importance of infrastructure, clearly defining the goal to achieve: improve it, rent it, build it—what should be achieved?—and how it then supports the actions to implement. Likewise, in training, the purpose must be clear: education, workforce retraining, etc.

Alberto Majó mentions that capability development must be linked to civic culture. He refers to citizens' responsible use and critical thinking, beyond the technical training to be provided. Uruguay's civic culture should be harnessed to provide training on these issues. He cites the example of the Super Computer Center in Barcelona, which made Spain a leader.

Flavio Caiafa returns to the three points raised by Pascual Gattas, stating that these are the areas that come up in meetings with companies and people working in AI. On training, he emphasizes that it must extend from school to university. He also notes an issue of civic responsibility and the need to explain that we have “digital drugs” at hand, which is critical and has no limits.

Regarding data, he mentions that the population is constantly asked for data. He adds that there are some signs of progress, citing the case of Salud.Uy, where the situation is much better than expected and, with little effort in relative terms, anonymized information from people's medical records could be made available to researchers. He proposes a pilot to evaluate this.

Regarding the Strategy, he states that the challenging goal is to maintain data protection aligned with the European framework while also avoiding limits on technological development. Balance: data management and protection.

Regarding infrastructure, he mentions that the cloud will be the provider; although we do not own the cloud, we use it. At some point, having infrastructure will become economically necessary. The concept of sovereign national infrastructure. He adds that, before that happens, it may be useful to have R&D&I infrastructure with modern servers.

Alberto Majó emphasizes that the national infrastructure strategy should include a research component, with a budget allocation. Be a country capable of using and adapting available knowledge. R&D&I would be a strategy for using the AI strategy.

Regarding R&D&I, Ninoschka Dante calls for work to create mechanisms in this area. More generally, she suggests considering how to turn problems into national objectives, then into specific objectives, and how the Strategy can build on these issues.

Flavio Caiafa proposes that R&D&I be a specific line in the strategy, with initial infrastructure. He mentions an opportunity for countries with renewable electricity mixes, since AI processing data centers consume a great deal of energy and there is interest in ensuring sustainable infrastructure. Industrial electricity consumption accounts for the largest share of national consumption. If

90% of electricity were renewable, that would be very good. It would be necessary to determine whether the benefit offsets the other lines of action in Uruguay.

Virginia Pardo states that we must safeguard all the rights and principles that need protection. Promote the message “we do things right here,” maintaining trust, security, capabilities, educated citizens, expert technicians, etc. Maintaining this policy is a major distinguishing feature in the region. It emerged at the dialogue roundtables as a national asset, as did the need to consider where to direct the budget to continue the work: space for research and infrastructure for pilots, for example.

Ninoschka Dante added that the dialogue roundtables with the private sector, creative industries, and entrepreneurs raised the issue of how Uruguayan entrepreneurs stand out and which standards they meet, with the idea of a “distinctive seal.” Different sectors can build on the Strategy's lines of action. She also mentioned the features the different strategies have in common in applying the methodology:

- institutional framework
- enabling components
- regulation – what the technical, ethical, and regulatory frameworks are
- innovation, investment in AI
- international cooperation
- which sectors are prioritized
- talent management, impact on employment

Marcos Israel stated that the Executive Branch (PE) has expanded in recent years and that an oversight body should not be placed there. Solutions have taken the form of Decentralized Services (SSDD) or autonomous bodies within the Legislative Branch (PL). He adds that Agesic should move out of the Presidency and have a status like the Communications Services Regulatory Unit (URSEC), which is independent: an oversight body not influenced by any branch of government. He considers this important for AI security and oversight. Then, regarding concerns about the data trust mentioned in the synthesis document, he says this deserves close scrutiny, as it is precisely where data is traded. There is legislation on trusts, but something more specific would be needed for this case.

Another concern is data itself. He gives the example of the Human Rights Institution and Ombudsman's Office (INDHDP), which requests data and finds it extremely difficult to obtain for various reasons. Without access to data, work is impossible. There is talk of AI, but if basic knowledge cannot be generated, the question of what to do with AI must be raised. Part of the strategy should be a change in the mindset regarding data management.

Regarding the data trust, he mentions companies that sell or rent their databases to companies developing AI. How this issue is handled needs to be examined.

Gonzalo Sosa states that the data trust has not been evaluated as a tool. There is a law with a set of solutions. It has not always been applied, and not everyone understands its application in the same way. There are existing provisions we are unaware of. Data communication is not prevented if the purposes are known and the law does not prohibit it. The law has specific mechanisms for regulating it.

Flavio Caiafa adds that one issue is data collected by the State and shared among state bodies. Every time a citizen interacts with the State, they are asked for data. Another issue is how to protect personal data when entering a website and agreeing to data sharing.

Ninoschka Dante mentions another area raised at the dialogue roundtables: education and employment, as well as the need for enabling instruments for SMEs, entrepreneurs, etc. Its feasibility should be assessed for inclusion in the Strategy as an objective or line of action.

Marcelo Belén adds that the National Employment Directorate (DINAE) has no actions in this area, since its focus is on solving employment access problems for particular sectors. He adds that the National Institute for Employment and Vocational Training (INEFOP), the body that leads training, has some initiatives.

Virginia Pardo mentions the need to understand AI's impact in the region and whether assessments exist, for example, of which jobs are expected to disappear or change. Perhaps the starting point should be an assessment of our current situation. She proposes addressing this issue in an expanded meeting with the Ministry of Labor and Social Security (MTSS).

Flavio Caiafa considers AI a continuation of digital transformation, so education should focus on all ages, from schoolchildren to adults, in addition to organizing the data.

Maximiliano Maneiro states that we are in an era in which there is also AI without data and businesses can be created “out of nothing,” simply by creating generative AI and displacing others.

Upcoming activities

- Finalize the report from the dialogue roundtable with the Creative Industries sector to add to the analysis
- Agesic to convene working subgroup meetings to finalize aspects of different lines of the AI Strategy:
 - Training and employment pillar with MTSS
 - Education pillar with academia
 - Infrastructure pillar
- Share the synthesis of contributions from the Data Strategy roundtables for analysis within the Strategic Committee

Next meeting: convene a Strategic Committee meeting once the working subgroup meetings have taken place.

End time: 15:50 h.