

Overview

The sheer volume and scope of the data managed by the Ministry ("Bercy") is something to behold: accounting balances of local authorities, property sales information, combined nomenclature for goods, budget bills, general public accounting system, local taxes, dock dues, customs, tax and economic statistics, business records, official geographic code, French classification of activities... The list goes on!

Data is at the heart of the government transformation. From operational cost savings to digital innovations, data can work wonders in many areas, if properly harnessed. It can help politicians and administrators to make decisions, managers to lead projects, government staff to work more efficiently, and the general public to exercise their right to monitor public policymaking.

The way we look at data has changed. Once just a basic component of our computer systems, it has become a strategic asset for the work we do. Lawmakers have keyed into this shift, incorporating data considerations into nearly all new and proposed legislation.

To define a common data use framework for the Ministry, **the 2020–2021 roadmap includes 25 concrete actions** in three closely related areas.

1. Human capital

Knowledge, methodology, technical skills and legal expertise are all key to understanding how disciplines will evolve in response to data and digital innovations, and to finding and developing new applications for them, such as detecting fraud, identifying potentially distressed companies, or improving recruitment and procurement practices.

Starting in January 2020, Bercy will be offering **information sessions, technical workshops, new training courses on data processing, and leadership and management mentoring programmes**. The objective is to create a robust **data culture** at Bercy and bring **disciplines, training and career development into alignment**.

2. Data architecture

Before we can explore the possibilities of data, some kind of framework is needed: a clear structure, accurate and shared definitions across disciplines, an understanding of our data assets, particularly clear procedures, etc. Without that, there is a risk of duplicated content, needless complexity, high costs, incompatible systems and maintenance issues.

That means establishing a **data governance** framework in line with our transformation goals, **indexing our data** (which requires knowledge of best practices and master data), **standardising the concepts and definitions** used for data management, and ensuring data use **complies with security and compliance rules**, such as standards for using cloud solutions based on data sensitivity. This is complex work, and we will use the next two years to gradually put a framework in place allowing us to **govern, understand, share and open up** the Ministry's data.

3. Data use

And the data itself is just the tip of the iceberg: looking at **how data is used can reveal hidden value**. Databases are valuable not just for what they contain, but the multiple ways they can be used. Some of the concrete actions we will be undertaking over the next two years: setting up an **internal data lake** for business information to better coordinate between departments, bringing together a **community of data scientists** to identify the best use cases for data and AI, **harnessing databases** to simplify internal processes, encouraging civic-tech-like initiatives or creating new digital services (for key public procurement data, building or HR records, etc.).

These 25 actions will be **reviewed by the Ministry's community of data officers** on a quarterly basis to monitor progress, identify any issues and evaluate the tangible impacts on the government transformation at Bercy.