

[00:00:01 The CSPS logo appears on screen.]

[00:00:07 Taki Sarantakis appears in a video chat panel.]

Taki Sarantakis, Canada School of Public Service: Good morning. Welcome to the 2022 Data Conference of the Government of Canada. My name is Taki Sarantakis, I am the president of the Canada School of Public Service. This is the sixth annual data conference of the government of Canada. It began with a hundred participants, and now here today you are one of 6,000 people participating in this conference. To me, I think what that speaks to is the fact of a greater awareness, of how important data is to our community, to the government of Canada, and to the practice of public administration. And so, the fact that you are here today, to me, is a testament of your professionalism and your commitment to serving your country in a better way. We have over 55 speakers during the course of this conference that you're going to hear from, none of whom is more important to me than my good friend, Anil Arora, who is the Chief Statistician of Canada. And Statistics Canada this year, we have the great honour of co-hosting this conference with them. Anil over to you, my friend.

[00:01:23 Anil appears in a video chat panel.]

Anil Arora, Statistics Canada: Thank you for that very generous introduction. I want to start off by thanking Taki and the Canadian School of Public Service for co-hosting the conference with us and acknowledging the hard work of all the departments and agencies who've really come together to develop this impressive program. You know, we've come a long way in the short time since the data conference's modest beginnings, back in 2017. These five years have seen us mobilize quickly as a community. We've launched the Data Strategy Roadmap for the Federal Public Service, created departmental specific data strategies, which have included naming chief data officers in so many departments.

And these CEOs have now formed their own council to share knowledge and expertise on the management of data. We established the Canadian Statistics Advisory Council, the Data Science Network, and the Government of Canada Data Community, the Enterprise Data Community of Practice, and Director General's Data Leads. These collaborations are driving forward our collective agenda. In the meantime, we've grappled with a global pandemic, a climate crisis, and calls for change for social movements. These events have only accelerated the need for more data to help Canadians see clearly and respond effectively to everything happening around us.

Our society, our economy and our environment are interconnected. Although we already know this, it's becoming clearer every day. We need to have a public service that leverages digital and data as tools to preserve the country's unity and ensure progress is being made on all fronts. Our efforts in this regard may already be bearing fruit, but we still have a long way to go. For instance, data sharing has increased dramatically during the pandemic. This has resulted in leaps forward in research, translating into many lives saved. Nevertheless, faked or poor quality shared data can lead to social tension and divisions. Nowadays, less care is taken to ensure that shared

data is of good quality. I've often said that data is a team sport. I would now add that when official statistics are misinterpreted or dismissed, it becomes a contact sport.

Make no mistakes, there is an urgency to our work as a data community. It's now imperative that our public service be digitally driven, and data fortified if we are to maintain the trust of all Canadians. We need to keep good data moving securely through all government and all of society, helped along by charters and laws, standards and data science in order to enable the evidence-based decisions that keep Canada prospering. And we need to do more to encourage the responsible use of data, to shine a light on ongoing important issues: on sustainability, on diversity, on wellbeing. Data allow us to better understand our interactions, which can serve our immediate needs as a society, but also turn into a competitive advantage, globally, if we use data to push these conversations and innovation forward.

This is my call to action to you this year, as you know, I always leave a few thoughts for you to ponder. I challenge you to see the momentum in data, to see how you can transform information into insights, and insights into distinct advantages. I also urge you to approach our work as a data community as transformational, there's momentum in that too. We are helping to drive government to stay ahead of changes and technology in society so that government can drive progress for all Canadians. And finally, I encourage you to keep up your community spirit. We have all worked on different projects over the past five years, but we keep coming back together to share what we've learned. And that allows us all to start on our new projects from a point closer to the finish line. With that in mind, I'd like to draw your attention to a challenge being launched in just a few weeks.

We at Statistics Canada are teaming up with Natural Resources Canada on the Public Service Data Challenge, where we will bring federal employees together to pitch their ideas on how government can make better use of data. How that can improve policy making, empower the green agenda, drive organizational efficiency, and help us better serve Canadians. This challenge is being hosted by the Global Government Forum and is based on last year's extremely successful United Kingdom Civil Servant Data Challenge. If you take part, you'll get the opportunity to collaborate in interdisciplinary cross-departmental teams. You'll identify and propose data driven solutions. You'll bring your skills and experience to the table, where you'll be encouraged to innovate and take intelligent risks. I know that many of you here today use data to serve the public interest. Regardless of your role, your field or your employer, we want to hear what you have to say. Thank you very much, and I wish you all a constructive and inspiring conference.

[00:07:38 The video chat fades to CSPS logo and “canada.ca/school-ecole”.]

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