Draft Resolution on the Establishment of the Sub-Group under the Mandate of the Conference of European Data Protection Authorities

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN DATA PROTECTION AUTHORITIES

("SPRING CONFERENCE")

07 MAY 2026

Antalya, Türkiye

Sponsors: Data Protection Commissioner of the Council of Europe;
Secretariat to the Consultative Committee of the Convention 108 (T-PD), Council of Europe

Co-Sponsors: "AZOP" – Croatian Personal Data Protection Agency

***Preamble**:*

In today's digital environment of exponentially growing data-driven technologies and increasingly complex transborder flows of personal data, the imperative for the enhanced cooperation among data protection authorities (DPAs) has become more evident. The transformative nature of the modern-day data processing activities by means of the new and emerging technologies raises further challenges for the protection of human rights and freedoms, and in particular, the right to privacy and the protection of personal data.

For over 45 years, the Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data (CETS No 108), as a first-ever legally binding international treaty in the field, has been contributing to the development of privacy and data protection worldwide. Its Amending Protocol (CETS No 223) responds to the new challenges coming from digitalisation and provides a universal data protection baseline in the context of digital advancements. Both legal instruments recognise and establish a structured basis for international cooperation among the DPAs and significantly operationalises these cooperation mechanisms. They equip DPAs with legal mandate and practical tools to engage in effective cross-border cooperation, thereby ensuring that the protection of personal data remains robust in an interconnected digital environment.

Enhanced cooperation between the European and non-European DPAs is a structural necessity to ensure consistency in the application of data protection standards enshrined in the legal instruments of the Council of Europe. The evolving landscape of digital governance calls for a platform for integrated and proactive cooperation within the framework of the European Conference of Data Protection Authorities ("Spring Conference") with a view to delivering practical outputs, contributing to interoperability and addressing regulatory fragmentation across different jurisdictions. Building on an experience and knowledge-

sharing approach, such a platform will significantly contribute to forming effective and operational network to reflect on globalised privacy and data protection risks affecting human rights, democracy and the rule of law and on appropriate tools to react to such challenges.

As a pan-European forum bringing together DPAs from European States, both within and outside the EEA, the Spring Conference continues to address issues of common interest, emerging trends and innovative developments in the field of privacy and data protection. The European DPAs therefore wish to reaffirm their commitment to enhanced cooperation in order to further strengthen the objectives of the Conference, support the effective implementation of its Resolutions and Declarations, and promote practical responses to challenges arising from rapid digital developments, with due regard to human rights, democratic values and the rule of law.

Recognising that:

- The Conference of European Data Protection Authorities ("Spring Conference") is a unique forum for all European DPAs to foster cooperation and tackle issues of mutual concern, emerging trends and innovative developments in the realm of privacy and data protection;
- Rapid technological developments and digital transformation have amplified risks to privacy and personal data protection, thereby requiring coordinated reflection and action by DPAs and other competent authorities; Enhanced cooperation and collaboration create a form of collective governance and contribute to the harmonised interpretative guidance of international data protection frameworks;
- DPAs are empowered to cooperate directly with counterpart and competent authorities, which enables operational flexibility and case-specific collaboration;
- The establishment of the functional and operational network within the Spring Conference framework will enhance the cooperation opportunities to bridge the gap between international standards and their enforcement and address emerging challenges by discussing respective practical solutions.

Recalling that:

- The Conference of European Data Protection Authorities adopted "Resolution on the need for a prompt ratification of Convention 108+" at the 30th Conference in Cavtat, Croatia, 2022.
- The Conference of European Data Protection Authorities adopted the "Resolution on the Revision of the Rules and Procedures of the Conference" at the 31st Conference in Budapest, Hungary in 2023.
- The Conference of European Data Protection Authorities adopted the "Resolution on Enhanced Cooperation and Establishment of Working Groups for Data Protection Authorities" at the 32nd Conference in Riga, Latvia in 2024.

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- The Conference of European Data Protection Authorities adopted the "Resolution on the Action Plan for Further Collaboration Activities" at the 33rd Conference in Batumi, Georgia in 2025.

The Conference of European Data Protection Authorities, hereby, resolves:

1. To establish a Conference sub-group – "Pan-European Network", as a platform of the Members of the Conference for advocating the promotion of high European data protection standards, *inter alia*, those enshrined in the legal instruments of the Council of Europe, in particular, the European Convention on Human Rights and the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data (CETS No. 108), its Additional (CETS No. 181) and Amending Protocols (CETS No. 223). The primary objective of the sub-group is to create a functional and operational network of European DPAs to discuss and exchange best practices on data protection and privacy with an aim of promoting international cooperation and practical approaches to emerging challenges.

2. The sub-group will be mandated to:

   (a) Achieve enhanced cooperation among the European DPAs through identifying common principles across data protection frameworks and best practices on emerging issues in the field, *inter alia*, regarding the transborder flows of personal data and an appropriate level of protection.

   (b) Facilitate pan-European discourse through the joint actions, including events, knowledge-sharing initiatives, and develop guidance to address emerging challenges in the field with a particular emphasis on transborder flows of personal data and an appropriate level of protection.

   (c) Discuss the activities of its Members and important developments with respect to issues of common interest, *inter alia*, concerning the transborder flows of personal data and the appropriate level of protection.

   (d) Meet twice annually, in person or virtually, to reflect on further needs for strengthening the cooperation, address issues of common interest through the practical solutions, collaborative initiatives and decide on further actions.

   (e) Build capacity for case- and experience-sharing mechanisms and, where appropriate, engage with the relevant international organisations, academic experts and other stakeholders on specific thematic issues to develop cooperation approaches to the emerging challenges and risks in the field.

   (f) Report to the annual plenary of the Conference of European Data Protection Authorities and cooperate with other sub-groups, including the European Case Handling Workshop.

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(g) Cooperate with other international fora or platforms to facilitate sufficient follow-up and reflections on recent developments in the field, and to raise awareness towards its work, adopted Resolutions and Declarations by the Conference of European Data Protection Authorities.

3. Any Member of the Conference of European Data Protection Authorities may volunteer to participate in the sub-group and host its meetings. Members participating in the sub-group meetings shall endeavour to contribute actively to its work and outputs, subject to their available resources and institutional mandates.

4. In this respect, the Members of the sub-group will welcome the support proposed by the Council of Europe to create a functional and operational network of European DPAs, notably by making available additional means and tools and by proposing cooperation activities.

This resolution reaffirms the commitment of the Conference of European Data Protection Authorities, convened in its 34th edition in Antalya, Türkiye, to strengthen cooperation, sharing best practices and upholding common values with an objective of supporting an effective implementation of European standards of personal data protection and privacy across jurisdictions of the European DPAs.

Further to this commitment, the European DPAs resolve to:

- Disseminate the adopted Resolution among the Conference Members and Observers and publish it on the official Conference web page.
- Mandate the Steering Group of the Conference to take further actions to monitor the progress of the implementation of the adopted Resolution and extend its support to facilitate the establishment of the sub-group.

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