

Resolution on enhanced cooperation

SPRING CONFERENCE OF THE EUROPEAN DATA PROTECTION AUTHORITIES 14-16 MAY 2024

Riga, Latvia

Preamble:

In an era defined by increasing flow of data across borders and the pervasive influence of digital technologies, the role of Data Protection Authorities (DPAs) to safeguard the fundamental right to data protection and privacy has never been more crucial. The rapid expansion of the digital economy and society has transcended geographical boundaries, leading to unprecedented levels of data processing across the globe. In this interconnected digital landscape, the importance of high data protection standards and of robust data protection mechanisms cannot be underestimated.

European Data Protection Authorities (EU and non-EU DPAs) recognise that the challenges posed by the globalized digital economy necessitate a cooperative approach among European DPAs to effectively address emerging issues and uphold data protection principles.

Recognizing the increasing transnational nature of data flows and the inherent complexities of regulating cross-border data processing, cooperation among European DPAs becomes increasingly important. Collaboration between all European DPAs is essential to foster regulatory coherence and collaborative enforcement action. By leveraging collective expertise and resources, European DPAs can enhance their capacity to effectively regulate and enforce data protection laws in the digital age.

European DPAs hereby wish to reaffirm their commitment to working together. By embracing the principles of solidarity, cooperation, and mutual support, European DPAs can better face the challenges of the digital age and uphold the fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals in an increasingly interconnected world.

Resolution:

In the Spring Conference of 2024, the European DPAs hereby resolve to:

- Recognize the role of cooperation among European (EU and non-EU) DPAs in promoting trust in cross-border data transfers, thereby facilitating data flows, and fostering a conducive environment for innovation and economic growth.
- Affirm the imperative of enhanced cooperation among all European DPAs to effectively address the challenges posed by the borderless nature of data processing in the digital age.
- Commit to fostering a culture of collaboration, information exchange, for example during the European Case Handling Workshop (ECHW), and mutual assistance among European DPAs to ensure the consistent application and enforcement of data protection laws across borders.
- Advocate for the development of common approaches such as best practices to address emerging issues among European DPAs.
- Recognize the importance of capacity building initiatives and the use of existing resources and expertise among European DPAs to enhance their ability to supervise and enforce data protection effectively.
- Advocate for the promotion of high global data protection standards, promoting the common values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, and best practices in data protection.
- Support the establishment of effective channels and ongoing work in other fora (e.g. Council of Europe, GPA, OECD) for the exchange of information and collaboration with international partners to address cross-border data protection challenges.

This resolution reflects the commitment of European DPAs, assembled in their Spring Conference of 2024, to collaborate closely in addressing the serious challenges and possible opportunities presented by the borderless nature of data processing, thereby upholding the fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals in the digital age.

To further this commitment, the European DPAs resolve to:

- Create and maintain a permanent webpage of the Spring Conference, which gathers all the information about each year's Conference thus, ensuring the centralization and permanent availability of the information about the forum.
- Reaffirm the importance of the ECHW, that will continue to serve as a platform for sharing insights and experiences related to case handling in the field of data protection. Create the separate section dedicated to the ECHW on the Spring Conference webpage.
- Simultaneously, European DPAs will constantly seek any form of cooperation between them and with other data protection authorities in order to ensure the protection of privacy and personal data protection of individuals. In this respect, they 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.
- DPAs will continue examining solutions to encourage cooperation, including, but not limited to, exchange of best practices.
- By the next Spring Conference in 2025, elaborate and present for adoption the action plan for the further collaboration activities of the European DPAs, including sharing best practices.

Sponsor: Data State Inspectorate of Latvia, UK Information Commissioner's Office (ICO); Georgia Personal Data Protection Service (PDPS); Swiss Federal Data Protection and Information Commissioner (FDPIC); Cyprus Commissioner for Personal Data Protection; Bulgarian Commission for Personal Data Protection; COUNCIL OF EUROPE (Committee of Convention 108); Data Protection Commission Ireland.

Co-sponsors: Croatian Personal Data Protection Agency (AZOP);