



PRESS RELEASE

EDPS/2016/04

Brussels, 26 January 2016

The EDPS opens Reference Library

Today, the European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS) officially launched his institutions' [Reference Library](#). The virtual library provides information on a selection of subjects covered in the course of the EDPS' supervision of the [EU institutions and bodies](#).

Wojciech Wiewiórowski, Assistant Supervisor, said: "*The EDPS Reference Library is a **source of information** on data protection across a number of subjects and we offer it in an **easily accessible** format, in an **easy-to-read** style. With our 12 years of supervisory **experience** as the foundation, it is our intention to share our expertise with the EU institutions as part of our efforts to **support** them to integrate data protection principles into their everyday work. Our aim is also to make the library **relevant** to a wider audience and I am confident that anyone or any organisation interested in data protection might find it a **useful resource**.*"

The online library, which will be developed further and kept regularly updated, offers information on a **selection** of different subjects covered in the course of the EDPS' supervision work. A single document contains a summary to introduce each subject and includes links to relevant documents for further reading and more detailed information.

To help the EU institutions to fulfil their data protection obligations under the law, the EDPS regularly issues guidance papers - thematic guidelines, papers, Opinions, consultations and decisions.

While these are in principle aimed at the EU institutions, **anyone interested in data protection** might find them useful; the Data Protection Regulation applicable to the EU institutions ([Regulation \(EC\) No 45/2001](#)) is **similar** in many respects to the data protection [Directive \(EC\) 95/46](#), which is implemented into the national laws of EU Member States, as well as in Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

As outlined in the [EDPS Strategy 2015-2019](#), the EDPS considers it vital to make data protection **easier, clearer and less bureaucratic** if it is to underpin the digital world now and into the future. The Reference Library is one way to reach out and encourage **dialogue** on European as well as global issues and work towards a social consensus on data protection principles.

The development of this innovative new tool is also in line with the aims of the EDPS Strategy 2015-2019 to:

- develop a web-based repository for information on data protection as a resource;
- train EU bodies on how best to respect data protection rules in practice;
- support EU institutions in moving from a purely compliance-based approach to one that is accountability-based.

Background information

Privacy and data protection are fundamental rights in the EU. Data protection is a fundamental right, protected by European law and enshrined in Article 8 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

More specifically, the rules for data protection in the EU institutions - as well as the duties of the European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS) - are set out in [Regulation \(EC\) No 45/2001](#). The EDPS is a relatively new but increasingly influential independent supervisory authority with responsibility for monitoring the processing of personal data by the [EU institutions and bodies](#), advising on policies and legislation that affect privacy and cooperating with similar authorities to ensure consistent data protection.

Giovanni Buttarelli (EDPS) and **Wojciech Wiewiórowski** (Assistant EDPS) are members of the institution, appointed by a joint decision of the European Parliament and the Council. Assigned for a five year term, they took office on 4 December 2014.

EDPS Strategy 2015-2019: Unveiled on 2 March 2015, the 2015-2019 plan summarises the major data protection and privacy challenges over the coming years and the EDPS' three strategic objectives and 10 accompanying actions for meeting them. The objectives are (1) Data protection goes Digital (2) Forging Global Partnerships and (3) Opening a New Chapter for EU Data Protection.

Personal information or data: Any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural (living) person. Examples include names, dates of birth, photographs, video footage, email addresses and telephone numbers. Other details such as IP addresses and communications content - related to or provided by end-users of communications services - are also considered as personal data.

Privacy: the right of an individual to be left alone and in control of information about his or herself. The right to privacy or private life is enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 12), the European Convention of Human Rights (Article 8) and the [European Charter of Fundamental Rights](#) (Article 7). The Charter also contains an explicit right to the protection of personal data (Article 8).

Processing of personal data: According to Article 2(b) of Regulation (EC) No 45/2001, processing of personal data refers to "any operation or set of operations which is performed upon personal data, whether or not by automatic means, such as collection, recording, organisation, storage, adaptation or alteration, retrieval, consultation, use, disclosure by transmission, dissemination or otherwise making available, alignment or combination, blocking, erasure or destruction." See the [glossary](#) on the EDPS website.

The European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS) is an independent supervisory authority devoted to protecting personal data and privacy and promoting good practice in the EU institutions and bodies. He does so by:

- monitoring the EU administration's processing of personal data;
- advising on policies and legislation that affect privacy;
- cooperating with similar authorities to ensure consistent data protection.

The [EDPS Reference Library](#) is available on the EDPS website.

For more information: press@edps.europa.eu

EDPS - The European guardian of data protection
www.edps.europa.eu



Follow us on Twitter: [@EU_EDPS](https://twitter.com/EU_EDPS)