



Conference of European Data Protection Authorities

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN DATA PROTECTION AUTHORITIES: “DATA PROTECTION – BETTER TOGETHER”

3-4 MAY 2018 TIRANA, ALBANIA

Last update on 25 April 2018

Working Group

Discussion Paper on the future of the Conference of European Data Protection Authorities¹

At the 2017 Spring Conference of Data Protection Authorities (the “Conference”), its members, agreed to the establishment of a Working Group (“WG”) to work on the future of this Conference. More specifically, the WG was asked to work on the strategic goals of the Conference. This WG is currently composed of representatives from the following bodies, members of the Conference: Albanian, German, Moldovan, Swiss, Dutch, Monaco, Cypriot Data Protection Authorities, the ICO, EDPS and the CNIL.

The WG prepared this discussion paper that will serve as a basis for the discussions to take place at the session on the “Future of the Conference” in May 2018 in Tirana, Albania.

Members value the Conference as a venue for in-depth discussion of data protection and privacy issues, as well as its purpose to promote cooperation and adopt resolutions. But these objectives are not yet fully productive.

During preparatory discussions, the WG highlighted that:

- 1) The openness of the Conference to both EU and non - EU DPAs should be maintained;
- 2) The Conference should serve as a platform of exchanges among EU and non EU countries
- 3) The Conference could be a forum to develop concrete and usable cooperation tools.

The following questions can lead our discussions:

1. What is the scope of the Conference? Should it be geographical (all European countries, members and non-members of the WP29), or based on “common principles” (thus opening to States that are not members of the Council of Europe but ratified Convention 108 and reducing the exclusive European character – currently the Rules and

¹ Previously known as the Spring Conference. The name change was adopted at the Spring Conference of 2017 in Limassol, Cyprus.

Procedures of the European Conference reserve the possibility of accreditation to Independent European public authorities)? Would it be maybe advisable to invite DPAs which are signatories to Convention 108 only to dedicated sessions on the convergence of data protection standards or should such DPAs be given a permanent accreditation status?

2. What is the added value of the annual meeting of the Conference for its members? Which should be the main focus of the annual meeting, differentiating it from other European data protection authorities' fora e.g. the WP29 or the Council of Europe? What should be the objective of the European Conference?

- The Conference should focus more on operational exchange of best practices, local initiatives, tools and experiences between European DPAs, *and/or*
- The Conference should be the platform to unify practices and adopt guidelines

3. What should be the outcomes of the European Conference? Adoption of resolutions? Promote the adoption of and elaboration of practical tools? (...)

4. What should be the format of the Conference? Should it remain as it is, a meeting organised around panels? Would it be more useful to organize the Conference based on standard and special thematic workshops? What should be the periodicity of the Conference?

- Option 1: Keep existing format with only plenary sessions
- Option 2: Introduce some workshops for at least half a day to allow for more debate and interaction

5. What should be the relationship with outside experts? Should we invite external participants (governmental organisations, civil society, and private companies?)

6. What should the position of the Case Handling Workshop be in view of the evolving status, scope and objectives of the European Conference?

7. Should the European Conference evaluate the feasibility of having a more permanent website to facilitate the communication among members and the organisation of the conferences? If yes, what should its content be and how can it satisfy a twofold interest (DPAs and public)? How could such a website be administered and funded?