

**A message from Giovanni Buttarelli  
European Data Protection Supervisor**

**Big Data, Big Data Protection**

We live in an exciting time, an age of technology. The internet is like electricity, available at the click of a button. Advances in technology are great, they bring us untold benefits. But these benefits should not be at the expense of our fundamental rights.

It is totally routine now to collect enormous amounts of our personal information. It passes across borders for purposes that are not always clear nor for our benefit. These developments also present huge challenges for businesses and us, the regulators.

Yes, these are worrying trends. But they are also an opportunity. We have the opportunity to modernise the rules on data protection across Europe and make them relevant for the rest of the world. Big data needs equally big data protection solutions.

**Let's start with why<sup>1</sup>**

My name is Giovanni Buttarelli. I am the new European Data Protection Supervisor. Data protection is at the top of the EU agenda and the international agenda too and my aim is to help identify innovative solutions quickly.

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<sup>1</sup> Simon Sinek [www.startwithwhy.com/](http://www.startwithwhy.com/)

Why do I want to do this? Because data protection is not about rules, or computers or laws. It is first and foremost about people. It is about us and protecting our privacy. For that, we need to start protecting our personal information in a more creative way for the world today and tomorrow.

How can we do this? We live in a digital world so we need future-oriented solutions to our digital problems. We don't need to reinvent data protection principles, but we do need to "go digital".

We need to be clever; we need to think outside of the box. I would like to make data protection easier, clearer, less bureaucratic and less technical than it often appears. We are working on principles which will fit into the digital world now and in the future.

### **The EU institutions must lead by example**

I believe that Europe and in particular, the EU Institutions and bodies could take the lead.

I will use my powers to provide the EU institutions with practical and dynamic solutions. We will help you to build privacy into the very fabric of your proposals for laws. And we will encourage you to develop a more accountable and modern data protection culture within the EU institutions.

### **The EDPS as a reliable partner**

The EDPS is an independent supervisory authority, but we are not an isolated institution.

Firstly, the EDPS will continue to be a reliable and reasonable regulator. I will use my powers of persuasion so far as possible to encourage data protection.

Second, we will continue to assist the EU legislator to modernise and reform the current legal framework for data protection in the EU. We need to make it robust enough to cope with the growing challenges of new technologies and trans-border data flows.

The reform will not slow down innovation but we will make sure that our rights are safeguarded. It will help to re-build the trust that has been eroded by, for instance, massive surveillance.

I will also reinforce cooperation with fellow independent data protection authorities. Working together we can develop a single European voice on strategic data protection issues such as surveillance, big data or international data flows.

### **Every cloud has a silver lining...**

At the top of our priorities, we will also support the better implementation of principles recently established by European Courts on the processing of personal data on a large scale. We will also follow transatlantic dialogue more closely.

### **The EDPS - a centre for data protection**

The EDPS is a relatively small EU institution compared to today's challenges for data protection. However, the EDPS is composed of a group of talented and highly qualified people and I am honoured to be leading them.

Like David, we can defeat Goliath with a dynamic, inclusive, pragmatic and flexible strategy. Over the next five years, it will be my mission to make the EDPS a centre for EU data protection, a centre of gravity if you will.

By working together, we will ensure that we anticipate the challenges of the world that our children will inherit.