

Europe

First Annual Review of the EU-US Privacy Shield

On 18 October 2017, the European Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality presented the European Commission's report on the first annual review of the EU-US Privacy Shield. The report reflects the Commission's findings on the implementation and enforcement of the EU-US Privacy Shield framework in its first year of operation.

On the whole, the report outlines that in its first year of operation, the Privacy Shield ensured adequate protection and safeguards for personal data transferred from the EU to the US. Nonetheless, the Commission highlighted that there was still room for improvement and issued key recommendations to US authorities.

The Commission's recommendations include a call on the US administration to confirm its political commitment to appoint a Privacy Shield Ombudsperson. Further, they recommend that the US Department of Commerce (DOC) conduct searches for false claims of participation in the Privacy Shield and that companies should not be allowed to make public representations about their Privacy Shield certification before the DOC has finalised the certification and included the company on the Privacy Shield list.

UK

ICO Survey Indicates Most UK Citizens Do Not Trust Organisations With Personal Data

ICO's research has found that only 20% of the UK public has trust and confidence in companies and organisations holding their personal information. The survey was conducted by ComRes on behalf of the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and is designed as benchmark measurement for the ICO's Information Rights Strategic Plan 2017-2021. One of the ICO's main strategic goals over the next four years is to increase the UK public's trust and confidence in how data is used and made available.

The ICO's Deputy Commissioner, Steve Wood, will shortly be reminding organisations to be transparent with personal data following the survey. The Deputy Commissioner said, "As personal information becomes the currency by which society does business, organisations need to start making people's data protection rights a priority. Putting data protection at the centre of digital businesses strategies is the key to improving trust and digital growth."

ICO Warns Workers After Charity Employee is Prosecuted for Data Protection Offences

Individuals working with personal information must closely follow data protection and privacy laws after a charity worker was prosecuted for making copies of sensitive data.

In June 2016 and February 2017, the individual, who has since been prosecuted, sent spreadsheets containing the information of 183 vulnerable clients to his personal email address without the knowledge of the data controller.

The individual admitted to unlawfully obtaining personal data in breach of Section 55 of the Data Protection Act 1998. He was given a conditional discharge for two years and ordered to pay prosecution costs of £1,845.25, as well as a victim surcharge of £15.

ICO Launches Its Advice Line to Help Small Charities and Businesses Prepare for the GDPR

On 1 November 2017, the ICO will launch a dedicated telephone service aimed at helping small businesses prepare for the upcoming changes to data protection law under the GDPR.

There are already resources on the ICO website (ico.org.uk) to help organisations employing fewer than 250 people prepare for the GDPR. The new phone line will offer additional, personal advice to small organisations that still have questions.

Individuals from small organisations should dial the ICO helpline on 0303 123 1113 and select option 4 to be diverted to staff who can offer support. As well as advice on preparing for the GDPR, callers can ask questions about current data protection rules and other legislation regulated by the ICO, including electronic marketing and Freedom of Information.

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