

# Data protection rules fit for a digital and globalised age: Joint Statement by First Vice-President Timmermans, Vice-President Ansip, Commissioners Jourová and Gabriel ahead of the 2018 Data Protection Day

*"28 January marks European Data Protection Day.*

*Data is everywhere. When using your smartphone, data could be collected on your whereabouts, your tastes, your friends, your health... In Europe, data protection is a fundamental right, we need to protect it.*

*2018 is going to be a landmark year for data protection in Europe.*

*Modernised EU data protection rules will become a reality in May 2018. These rules respond to the challenges our digital world poses to our right to data protection.*

*With just over 100 days left before the deadline of 25 May, the Commission adopted last week a guidance to help national data protection authorities, national administrations and businesses to be prepared for the direct application of the new EU-wide data protection rules. The Commission will also launch a communication campaign in Member States to make sure that Europeans are fully aware of their rights.*

*Europeans will now benefit from new rights. The right to clear and understandable information will prevent companies from hiding behind complicated legal language to get our consent. Portability, the right to transfer your data from one service to another, is another new right which allows for switching services easily. Existing rights, such as the right to be forgotten, are now clarified.*

*Better data protection rules also mean better security online. Half of European internet users are worried about the misuse of their personal information. If your personal data held by a company is exposed due to a cyber-attack, the company will have to inform authorities and its users within 72 hours.*

*Another major novelty of the new rules is to guarantee that whenever personal data crosses borders, protection travels with it. If a company collects the data in Europe it will have to respect the European standards even if it analyses it abroad. This is key in a globalised connected world.*

*The European Union is proud to lead the way and set a high standard for data*

*protection worldwide. We are committed to promote our data protection values at international level. Our economies heavily depend on international data flows. We launched in 2016 the EU-U.S. Privacy Shield to facilitate exchanges with the U.S. We are now discussing with Japan to finalise the formal steps for allowing the free flow of personal data between the EU and Japan. These exchanges fully respect our data protection standards, while facilitating trade.*

*We are committed to making sure that security, trade and protection of personal data go hand in hand with modernisation and innovation, both at European and global level.”*

## **Background**

Every year on 28 January, the European Commission celebrates European Data Protection day.

The reform of data protection rules was agreed in April 2016 ([statement](#)). The new EU data protection rules will apply as of 25 May 2018 (please see [press release](#)).

In January 2017, the Commission proposed to align the rules for electronic communications ([ePrivacy](#)) with the new world-class standards of the EU's General Data Protection Regulation. In September 2017, the Commission proposed a [new set of rules to govern the free flow of non-personal data](#) in the EU. Together with the already existing rules for personal data, the new measures will enable the storage and processing of non-personal data across the Union to boost the competitiveness of European businesses and to modernise public services. Both proposals still need to be agreed by the European Parliament and Member States.

In preparation for the application of the General Data Protection Regulation on 25 May, the Commission published guidelines, designed to help citizens, businesses, organisations and public administrations to comply with and benefit from the new rules on data protection. In addition to the guidelines, the Commission also launched a new website, available in all EU languages, containing FAQ, practical examples and web-links for a clearer and more practical guidance towards the adoption of the new rules.

For more information, visit the [europa.eu/dataprotection](http://europa.eu/dataprotection).