

Press release: Data laws to be made fit for digital age

- Bill will introduce safeguards to prevent and detect fraud, protect the freedom of the press, allow scientific research and maintain the integrity of professional sports
- Specifically includes measures to allow action against terrorist financing, money laundering and child abuse
- Processing done for legitimate interests will be allowed if it achieves a balance with individuals' rights

The Data Protection Bill will make data protection laws fit for the digital age in which an ever increasing amount of data is being processed and empower people to take control of their data.

With individual data rights being strengthened, it is the Government's view that, as far as possible, existing lawful data processing should be allowed to continue.

So the Bill assures specific UK businesses and organisations the vital data processing they undertake for legal or public interest reasons can continue uninterrupted.

It will preserve existing tailored exemptions that have worked well in the Data Protection Act 1998, carrying them over to the new law.

The government successfully negotiated these exemptions from the EU's General Data Protection Regulation to create a proportionate data protection regime which is right for Britain.

Matt Hancock, Minister of State for Digital, said:

We are strengthening Britain's data rules to make them fit for the digital age in which we live and that means giving people more control over their own data.

There are circumstances where the processing of data is vital for our economy, our democracy and to protect us against illegality. Today, as we publish the Data Protection Bill, I am offering assurances to both the public and private sector that we are protecting this important work.

The Bill will include exemptions for data processing in the following areas:

- Processing of personal data by journalists for freedom of expression and to expose wrongdoing is to be safeguarded
- Scientific and historical research organisations such as museums and universities will be exempt from certain obligations which would impair

their core functions

- National bodies responsible for the fight against doping in sport will continue to be able to process data to catch drug cheats
- In the financial services sector, the pricing of risk or data processing done on suspicion of terrorist financing or money laundering will be protected
- Where it is justified, the Bill will allow the processing of sensitive and criminal conviction data without consent, including to allow employers to fulfil obligations of employment law

In its recent [statement of intent](#) Government committed to updating and strengthening data protection laws through the bill to provide everyone with the confidence that their data will be managed securely and safely. Research shows that more than 80 per cent of people feel that they do not have complete control over their data online.

Under the plans individuals will have more control over their data by having the right to be forgotten and ask for their personal data to be erased. This will also mean that people can ask social media channels to delete information they posted in their childhood. The reliance on default opt-out or pre-selected 'tick boxes', which are largely ignored, to give consent for organisations to collect personal data will also become a thing of the past.

Businesses will be supported to ensure they are able to manage and secure data properly. The data protection regulator, the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), will be given more power to defend consumer interests and issue higher fines, of up to £17 million or 4 per cent of global turnover, in cases of the most serious data breaches.

Data protection rules will also be made clearer for those who handle data but they will be made more accountable for the data they process with the priority on personal privacy rights. Those organisations carrying out high-risk data processing will be obliged to carry out impact assessments to understand the risks involved.

The Government has published a number of [factsheets](#) on the Data Protection Bill.

Notes for Editors

- Media enquiries from accredited journalists only: DCMS News and Communications team – 020 7211 2210.
- Public enquiries: DCMS enquiries team on 020 7211 6000 or enquiries@culture.gov.uk.