



*Since the beginning of 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic has affected in an unprecedented manner the life of all of us and continues affecting all organisations of the EU. It has raised many novel and complex issues which impact on the respect for privacy and the protection of personal data. Such issues touch upon managing the pandemic itself, which involves processing special categories of data concerning health in the context of activities such as temperature checks or contact tracing. The pandemic has also led to the development, or further strengthening, of teleworking and online working methods, which requires the selection or implementation of software for secure tele- and video-conferencing under exceptional time pressure.*

*The pandemic has shown the need for data controllers and senior management of EU organisations to consult DPOs at the earliest possible time and actively involve them in considering the issues at hand, which often require an urgent response. DPOs of EU organisations play a major role in assessing the compliance of considered processing with data protection principles, especially proportionality and necessity. The additional efforts required from DPOs in terms of resources and time investment in working on all these complex new issues should however not be underestimated.*

*The pandemic has also shown the need for the EDPS to strongly support and provide guidance to the DPOs when taking positions on these sensitive issues. In this context, the timely and specific guidance of the EDPS becomes of crucial importance for a coordinated and efficient management of the pandemic by organisations of the EU.*

*We as DPOs believe that efficiently managing the pandemic and complying with the data protection requirements, ensuring the respect for private life and the protection of personal data, is the only correct answer in these challenging times. We look forward to continuing working together with data controllers, senior management and the EDPS to find both efficient and compliant solutions to the novel issues raised by the pandemic.*

This statement was issued on 7 December 2020 by the DPOs of the JHA agencies : Diana Alonso Blas, DPO Eurojust (chair), Daniel Drewer, DP Function, Europol; Encarna Gimenez, eu-LISA DPO; Alexandru

George Grigore, EASO DPO; Olli Kalha, DPO CEPOL; Nayra Perez, DPO Frontex; Robert Jan Uhl, DPO FRA; Ieva Vasiliune, DPO EIGE; Ignacio Vázquez Moliní, EMCDDA DPO.

After its presentation at the meeting of the EU DPOs on 10 December 2020, the statement has been endorsed by the following DPOs of EU institutions, agencies, offices and bodies:

- Mafalda Aguiar, EUROFOUND;
- Maria Francisca Brunet Company, REA;
- Bo Balduyck, ECHA;
- Athena Bourka, ENISA;
- Jesus Bustamante, CEDEFOP;
- Stefano Donadello, EFCA;
- Nicolas Durand, EACEA;
- Gloria Folguera Ventura, EUIPO and CPVO;
- Martin Garnier, CdT;
- Roberta Maggio, ERC;
- Stefano Marino, EMA;
- Radostina Nedeva-Magerlein, EMSA;
- Reyes Otero Zapata, Council of the EU;
- Francesca Pavesi, Ombudsman;
- Claus Reunis, EFSA;
- Clarisse Ribeiro, EDA;
- Elke Riviere, EASME;
- Secondo Sabbioni, European Parliament;
- Emese Savoia-Keleti, EEAS;
- Michaela Seifert, EU-OSHA;
- Johan Van Damme, ECA.