

**COMP Article 1**  
**07.10.2013**

**CHAPTER I**  
**GENERAL PROVISIONS**

**Article 1**  
**Subject matter and objectives**

1. This Regulation lays down rules relating to the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and rules relating to the free movement of personal data.
2. This Regulation protects the fundamental rights and freedoms of natural persons, and in particular their right to the protection of personal data.
3. The free movement of personal data within the Union shall neither be restricted nor prohibited for reasons connected with the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data.

**Recitals**

(1) The protection of natural persons in relation to the processing of personal data is a fundamental right. Article 8(1) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and Article 16(1) of the Treaty lay down that everyone has the right to the protection of personal data concerning him or her.

(2) The processing of personal data is designed to serve man; the principles and rules on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of their personal data should, whatever the nationality or residence of natural persons, respect their fundamental rights and freedoms, notably their right to the protection of personal data. It should contribute to the accomplishment of an area of freedom, security and justice and of an economic union, to economic and social progress, the strengthening and the convergence of the economies within the internal market, and the well-being of individuals.

(3) Directive 95/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 1995 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data<sup>1</sup> seeks to harmonise the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms of natural persons in respect of processing activities and to guarantee the free flow of personal data between Member States.

(4) The economic and social integration resulting from the functioning of the internal market has led to a substantial increase in cross-border flows. The exchange of data

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<sup>1</sup>OJ L 281, 23.11.1995, p. 31.

between economic and social, public and private actors across the Union increased. National authorities in the Member States are being called upon by Union law to cooperate and exchange personal data so as to be able to perform their duties or carry out tasks on behalf of an authority in another Member State.

(5) Rapid technological developments and globalisation have brought new challenges for the protection of personal data. The scale of data sharing and collecting has increased spectacularly. Technology allows both private companies and public authorities to make use of personal data on an unprecedented scale in order to pursue their activities. Individuals increasingly make personal information available publicly and globally. Technology has transformed both the economy and social life, and requires to further facilitate the free flow of data within the Union and the transfer to third countries and international organisations, while ensuring an high level of the protection of personal data.

(6) These developments require building a strong and more coherent data protection framework in the Union, backed by strong enforcement, given the importance to create the trust that will allow the digital economy to develop across the internal market. Individuals should have control of their own personal data and legal and practical certainty for individuals, economic operators and public authorities should be reinforced.

(7) The objectives and principles of Directive 95/46/EC remain sound, but it has not prevented fragmentation in the way data protection is implemented across the Union, legal uncertainty and a widespread public perception that there are significant risks for the protection of individuals associated notably with online activity. Differences in the level of protection of the rights and freedoms of individuals, notably to the right to the protection of personal data, with regard to the processing of personal data afforded in the Member States may prevent the free flow of personal data throughout the Union. These differences may therefore constitute an obstacle to the pursuit of economic activities at the level of the Union, distort competition and impede authorities in the discharge of their responsibilities under Union law. This difference in levels of protection is due to the existence of differences in the implementation and application of Directive 95/46/EC.

(8) In order to ensure consistent and high level of protection of individuals and to remove the obstacles to flows of personal data, the level of protection of the rights and freedoms of individuals with regard to the processing of such data should be equivalent in all Member States. Consistent and homogenous application of the rules for the protection of the fundamental rights and freedoms of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data should be ensured throughout the Union.

(9) Effective protection of personal data throughout the Union requires strengthening and detailing the rights of data subjects and the obligations of those who process and determine the processing of personal data, but also equivalent powers for monitoring and ensuring compliance with the rules for the protection of personal data and equivalent sanctions for offenders in the Member States.

(10) Article 16(2) of the Treaty mandates the European Parliament and the Council to lay down the rules relating to the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and the rules relating to the free movement of personal data.

In order to ensure a consistent level of protection for individuals throughout the Union and to prevent divergences hampering the free movement of data within the internal market, a Regulation is necessary to provide legal certainty and transparency for economic operators, including micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, and to provide individuals in all Member States with the same level of legally enforceable rights and obligations and responsibilities for controllers and processors, to ensure consistent monitoring of the processing of personal data, and equivalent sanctions in all Member States as well as effective co-operation by the supervisory authorities of different Member States. To take account of the specific situation of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, this Regulation includes a number of derogations. In addition, the Union institutions and bodies, Member States and their supervisory authorities are encouraged to take account of the specific needs of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in the application of this Regulation. The notion of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises should draw upon Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC of 6 May 2003 concerning the definition of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises.

(11) The protection afforded by this Regulation concerns natural persons, whatever their nationality or place of residence, in relation to the processing of personal data. With regard to the processing of data which concern legal persons and in particular undertakings established as legal persons, including the name and the form of the legal person and the contact details of the legal person, the protection of this Regulation should not be claimed by any person. This should also apply where the name of the legal person contains the names of one or more natural persons.

(12) The protection of individuals should be technologically neutral and not depend on the techniques used; otherwise this would create a serious risk of circumvention. The protection of individuals should apply to processing of personal data by automated means as well as to manual processing, if the data are contained or are intended to be contained in a filing system. Files or sets of files as well as their cover pages, which are not structured according to specific criteria, should not fall within the scope of this Regulation.