



## PRESS STATEMENT

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### **A modern internet governance model should be universal and respectful of fundamental freedoms**

The efforts of the European Union (EU) to build an integrated model of internet governance and data protection should be **complemented** by an effective reform of the EU's own legal framework and the **swift adoption** of the **General Data Protection Regulation**, said the European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS) following the publication of his [Opinion](#) on the *Commission Communication on Internet Policy and Governance – Europe's role in shaping the future of Internet Governance*.

Given the increasingly dominant role of the internet in our everyday lives and its importance in driving economic growth, it is **essential** that the EU's efforts to build a model of internet governance that **respects** the individual's rights to **privacy** and **data protection** are not made in isolation. The EDPS supports a **broad representation** of groups and organisations from **civil society and industry** – with particular attention being paid to **balance** the representation of internet giants.

This multistakeholder approach should include **data protection authorities** as they can play a vital role in ensuring that the future internet governance model does take due account of individuals' rights to privacy and data protection. This responsibility should be **reflected** in their **legal mandates** and the **resources** provided to them.

Data protection is essential to restoring users' confidence in the internet so the protection of fundamental rights on the internet **cannot** be left to **self-regulation** alone. This means that the structures and processes of governance as well as administrative procedures must have a **built-in mechanism** for their protection. Furthermore, the EDPS reminds [ICANN](#) that the data protection issues of the **Whois** system, which the [Article 29 Working Party](#) has repeatedly criticised, must be **addressed** as a matter of **urgency**.

The European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS) is an independent supervisory authority devoted to protecting personal data and privacy and promoting good practice in the EU institutions and bodies. He does so by:

- monitoring the EU administration's processing of personal data;
- advising on policies and legislation that affect privacy;
- cooperating with similar authorities to ensure consistent data protection.

**EDPS - The European guardian of data protection**

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