

On the occasion of the European Day of Personal Data Protection, which we celebrate on January 28, 2006, the Personal Data Protection Agency, in cooperation with the Croatian Chamber of Commerce, organized an international online conference entitled "Digital Transformation and Data Protection in the Global Pandemic". brought together many foreign and domestic experts in the field of data protection, including the European Data Protection Supervisor Wojciech Wiewiórowski.

Conference videos: video of the conference [https://youtu.be/i\\_rmxFxA](https://youtu.be/i_rmxFxA)

Introductory address by Ms. Dubravka Šuica, Vice President of the European Commission for Democracy and Demography  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eNOd5aZN\\_RU&t=2s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eNOd5aZN_RU&t=2s)

Introductory address by Mr. Karl Ressler, Member of the Croatian Parliament in the European Parliament  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ow8dlq\\_ynWk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ow8dlq_ynWk)

From the media

[https://zimo.dnevnik.hr/clanak/ono-sto-ne-biste-podijelili-sa-strancem-na-ulici-nemojte-ni-na-internetu-vrijedi-li-uvijek-to-pravilo  
— 638194.html](https://zimo.dnevnik.hr/clanak/ono-sto-ne-biste-podijelili-sa-strancem-na-ulici-nemojte-ni-na-internetu-vrijedi-li-uvijek-to-pravilo---638194.html)

European Data Protection Supervisor Wojciech Wiewiórowski commented on the changes it made in 2020 in the field of data protection. "We do not directly control the market or companies, but we have two important roles in harmonizing access to data. The first is that we are the main advisory body in all legislative processes of the Union, and the second is to monitor the use of personal data in the administrative processes of the EU. The pandemic has brought privacy to the forefront, which is a good thing because it is an issue on which the future of the Union largely depends. She showed us that we need to come up with quality pan-European solutions that will make it easier for companies to do business in the single market, but also for everyday life for our citizens. The challenges before us are the regulation of big tech companies, which must be stricter, and the adoption of acts such as the Digital Services Act and the Digital Markets Act. The point is to protect people, not just data, so regulations must allow for the exchange of data at a civilized level that, in addition to privacy, respects creativity and innovation, "said Wiewiórowski.

In his introductory address, the director of the Personal Data Protection Agency Zdravko Vukić pointed out that the Agency continuously conducts campaigns and education to make citizens aware of their fundamental human right - the right to personal data protection, and the organization of its obligations in personal data protection. "We are in a challenging time in which digital services greatly facilitate our work, learning, shopping, information, but also poses numerous challenges, both

security and broad social, but also ethical. That is why it is more important than ever to protect your personal data at all levels, and especially to know the purpose for which it is used. ", Said director Vukić and emphasized:" Remember, our personal data is our property. The key to the development of the digital economy is trust, and the General Regulation on the Protection of Personal Data plays a key role in regulating personal data management. Quality implementation of the General Regulation on Data Protection also brings certain costs, but investments in the implementation of the General Regulation on Data Protection and Information Security are investments that pay off many times over. In order to make it easier for entrepreneurs to do business in these times of crisis, AZOP, in cooperation with the Croatian Chamber of Commerce, provides support to small and medium-sized enterprises within the ARC-Awareness Raising Campaign for SMEs, co-financed by the EU's Rights, Equality and Citizenship Program.

Petar Mišević, Advisor to the President of the Croatian Chamber of Commerce and Head of the Department for Quality and Information Security Education, expressed satisfaction that the Croatian Chamber of Commerce was a partner in organizing this conference and pointed out that the Croatian Chamber of Commerce and AZOP

Due to the current epidemiological situation, all those interested in the topic could watch the conference online, and Karlo Ressler, Member of the European Parliament, adapted to the current situation. "In the coronavirus pandemic, our lives and ways of working have become even more online, with survival dependent solely on the possibilities of rapid digital transformation and adaptation."

Velimir Žunac, State Secretary at the Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds, said that he was glad that the focus of the conference was on SMEs because they were most affected by the pandemic. "Over the past year, we have invested a lot to make it easier for them to overcome this crisis. We brought financial instruments through which we gave several billion kuna for their recovery. At the beginning of this year, a new financial perspective of the EU was launched, in which we have huge funds at our disposal to strengthen the economy. It is important that we direct a significant part of these funds to SMEs and ensure as many quality digital transformation projects as possible ", pointed out Žunac.

The envoy of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Croatia, Minister of Justice and Administration Ivan Malenica, said:

"Technological progress and globalization have completely changed the way we collect and use personal data. In the last twenty years, the flow of data has drastically accelerated, the cross-border flow of data has increased, as well as the exchange of personal data, and such data have become the driver of the new economy. The coronavirus pandemic has shown such

trends in its entirety. Our business and private world has moved to the virtual. In such circumstances, electronic services and public electronic services have proven to be the backbone of economic development and a prerequisite for the realization of fundamental civil rights and obligations. "Said Minister Malenica and stressed that the Ministry is well aware of the importance of digital transformation.

<https://mpu.gov.hr/vijesti/ministar-malenica-sudjelovao-na-konferenciji-povodom-europskog-dana-zastite-podataka/24728>

Also, the vice-president of the European Commission for Democracy and Demography Dubravka Šuica addressed via video link, emphasizing that in this time of pandemic it is especially important to focus on citizens and their rights and democracy and said that digital transformation must comply with personal data protection rules. "The protection of personal data is guaranteed by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, and the GDPR is a key part of European legislation. The European Commission should promote the coherent implementation of the GDPR and integrate its rules and principles into European policies and legislative initiatives. "

State Secretary of the Central State Office for the Development of the Digital Society Bernard Gršić emphasized the importance of responsible behavior of citizens. "Due to the pandemic, we have many more users of the e-citizens system and all other digital services, which requires greater caution in the protection of personal data. We currently have 85 active services and more than 1.2 million users, and those numbers are constantly growing ", said Gršić.

The focus of this year's conference is micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, which during the COVID-19 pandemic became the most endangered part of the economic system in Croatia and in the European Union, so Peter Kimpian from the Council of Europe , Paul de Hert, Vrije Universiteit Brussels - Tilburg University, Annika Linck, European Digital SME Alliance, Bojana Bellamy, Center for Information Policy Leadership, Attila Péterfalvi, Director of the Hungarian Supervisory Authority for Data Protection and Access to Information.

The first part of the conference was followed by an interesting panel discussion entitled "After Covid-19: current situation and future development" moderated by doc. dr. sc. Tihomir Katulić from the Faculty of Law in Zagreb, and in a panel discussion on the latest topics in the field of data protection discussed prominent experts in the field of data protection and information security: Wojciech Wiewiórowski, European Data Protection Supervisor, Igor Vulje, Deputy Director of the Personal Data Protection Agency, MB Donnelly, Assistant Irish Data Protection Commissioner, Juraj Sajfert (Vrije University Bruxelles), Patricio Marcos Petrić (Infobip), Igor Barlek (GDPR CROATIA), Kristina Posavec, Deputy Secretary of State, Central State

Office for Digital Society Development, Gordan Brdar, security and privacy expert, head of the Croatian IAPP KnowledgeNet

Chapter and Dženet Garibović (PwC).