

**Changes to Legislation:** as of 9 April 2026, this Act is up to date with all changes known to be in force.



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*Number 25 of 1988*

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**DATA PROTECTION ACT 1988**

**REVISED**

**Updated to 10 November 2025**

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This Revised Act is an administrative consolidation of the *Data Protection Act 1988*. It is prepared by the Law Reform Commission in accordance with its function under the *Law Reform Commission Act 1975 (3/1975)* to keep the law under review and to undertake revision and consolidation of statute law.

All Acts up to and including the *Electricity (Supply) (Amendment) Act 2025 (12/2025)*, enacted 20 November 2025, and all statutory instruments up to and including the *Data Protection Act 1988 (Section 2B) Regulations 2025 (S.I. No. 537 of 2025)*, made 10 November 2025, were considered in the preparation of this Revised Act.

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**DATA PROTECTION ACT 1988**  
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ON THE 28TH DAY OF JANUARY, 1981

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Number 25 of 1988

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**DATA PROTECTION ACT 1988**

**REVISED**

**Updated to 10 November 2025**

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AN ACT TO GIVE EFFECT TO THE CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF INDIVIDUALS WITH REGARD TO AUTOMATIC PROCESSING OF PERSONAL DATA DONE AT STRASBOURG ON THE 28TH DAY OF JANUARY, 1981, AND FOR THAT PURPOSE TO REGULATE IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITS PROVISIONS THE COLLECTION, PROCESSING, KEEPING, USE AND DISCLOSURE OF CERTAIN INFORMATION RELATING TO INDIVIDUALS THAT IS PROCESSED AUTOMATICALLY. [13th July, 1988]

BE IT ENACTED BY THE OIREACHTAS AS FOLLOWS:

*Preliminary*

Interpretation  
and application  
of Act.

**1.—(1)** In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires—

F1["the Act of 2003" means the Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003]

"appropriate authority" has the meaning assigned to it by the Civil Service Regulation Acts, 1956 and 1958;

F1["automated data" means information that—

(a) is being processed by means of equipment operating automatically in response to instructions given for that purpose, or

(b) is recorded with the intention that it should be processed by means of such equipment;]

"back-up data" means data kept only for the purpose of replacing other data in the event of their being lost, destroyed or damaged;

F1["blocking", in relation to data, means so marking the data that it is not possible to process it for purposes in relation to which it is marked;]

"civil servant" has the meaning assigned to it by the Civil Service Regulation Acts, 1956 and 1958;

"the Commissioner" has the meaning assigned to it by *section 9* of this Act;

"company" has the meaning assigned to it by the *Companies Act, 1963*

"the Convention" means the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data done at Strasbourg on the 28th day of January, 1981, the text of which is set out in the *First Schedule* to this Act;

"the Court" means the Circuit Court

F2["data" means automated data and manual data;]

"data controller" means a person who, either alone or with others, controls the contents and use of personal data;

"data equipment" means equipment for processing data;

"data material" means any document or other material used in connection with, or produced by, data equipment;

"data processor" means a person who processes personal data on behalf of a data controller but does not include an employee of a data controller who processes such data in the course of his employment;

"data subject" means an individual who is the subject of personal data;

F1["the Directive" means 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>;]

F3[...]

"disclosure", in relation to personal data, includes the disclosure of information extracted from such data and the transfer of such data but does not include a disclosure made directly or indirectly by a data controller or a data processor to an employee or agent of his for the purpose of enabling the employee or agent to carry out his duties; and, where the identification of a data subject depends partly on the data and partly on other information in the possession of the data controller, the data shall not be regarded as disclosed unless the other information is also disclosed;

F1["the EEA Agreement" means the Agreement on the European Economic Area signed at Oporto on 2 May 1992 as adjusted by the Protocol signed at Brussels on 17 March 1993;]

F1["enactment" means a statute or a statutory instrument (within the meaning of the Interpretation Act 1937);]

"enforcement notice" means a notice under *section 10* of this Act;

F1["the European Economic Area" has the meaning assigned to it by the EEA Agreement;]

F3[...]

"information notice" means a notice under *section 12* of this Act;

F4["local authority" means a local authority for the purposes of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended by the Local Government Reform Act 2014);]

F1["manual data" means information that is recorded as part of a relevant filing system or with the intention that it should form part of a relevant filing system;]

"the Minister" means the Minister for Justice;

F2["personal data" means data relating to a living individual who is or can be identified either from the data or from the data in conjunction with other information that is in, or is likely to come into, the possession of the data controller;]

"prescribed", in the case of fees, means prescribed by regulations made by the Minister with the consent of the Minister for Finance and, in any other case, means prescribed by regulations made by the Commissioner with the consent of the Minister;

F2["processing" of or in relation to information or data, means performing any operation or set of operations on the information or data, whether or not by automatic means, including—

<sup>(1)</sup> O.J. No. L 281/38 of 23.11.95, p.31.

- (a) obtaining, recording or keeping the information or data,
- (b) collecting, organising, storing, altering or adapting the information or data,
- (c) retrieving, consulting or using the information or data,
- (d) disclosing the information or data by transmitting, disseminating or otherwise making it available, or
- (e) aligning, combining, blocking, erasing or destroying the information or data;]

“prohibition notice” means a notice under *section 11* of this Act;

F3[...]

F5["relevant filing system" means any set of information relating to individuals to the extent that, although the information is not processed by means of equipment operating automatically in response to instructions given for that purpose, the set is structured, either by reference to individuals or by reference to criteria relating to individuals, in such a way that specific information relating to a particular individual is readily accessible;]

F1["sensitive personal data" means personal data as to—

- (a) the racial or ethnic origin, the political opinions or the religious or philosophical beliefs of the data subject,
- (b) whether the data subject is a member of a trade union,
- (c) the physical or mental health or condition or sexual life of the data subject,
- (d) the commission or alleged commission of any offence by the data subject, or
- (e) any proceedings for an offence committed or alleged to have been committed by the data subject, the disposal of such proceedings or the sentence of any court in such proceedings;]

and any cognate words shall be construed accordingly.

(2) For the purposes of this Act, data are inaccurate if they are incorrect or misleading as to any matter of fact.

(3) (a) An appropriate authority, being a data controller or a data processor, may, as respects all or part of the personal data kept by the authority, designate a civil servant in relation to whom it is the appropriate authority to be a data controller or a data processor and, while the designation is in force—

- (i) the civil servant so designated shall be deemed, for the purposes of this Act, to be a data controller or, as the case may be, a data processor, and
- (ii) this Act shall not apply to the authority,

as respects the data concerned.

(b) Without prejudice to *paragraph (a)* of this subsection, the Minister for Defence may, as respects all or part of the personal data kept by him in relation to the Defence Forces, designate an officer of the Permanent Defence Force who holds a commissioned rank therein to be a data controller or a data processor and, while the designation is in force—

- (i) the officer so designated shall be deemed, for the purposes of this Act, to be a data controller or, as the case may be, a data processor, and
- (ii) this Act shall not apply to the Minister for Defence,

as respects the data concerned.

(c) For the purposes of this Act, as respects any personal data—

- (i) where a designation by the relevant appropriate authority under *paragraph (a)* of this subsection is not in force, a civil servant in relation to whom that authority is the appropriate authority shall be deemed to be its employee and, where such a designation is in force, such a civil servant (other than the civil servant the subject of the designation) shall be deemed to be an employee of the last mentioned civil servant,
- (ii) where a designation under *paragraph (b)* of this subsection is not in force, a member of the Defence Forces shall be deemed to be an employee of the Minister for Defence and, where such a designation is in force, such a member (other than the officer the subject of the designation) shall be deemed to be an employee of that officer, and
- (iii) a member of the Garda Síochána (other than the Commissioner of the Garda Síochána) shall be deemed to be an employee of the said Commissioner.

F1[(3A) A word or expression that is used in this Act and also in the Directive has, unless the context otherwise requires, the same meaning in this Act as it has in the Directive.

(3B) (a) Subject to any regulations under *section 15(2)* of this Act, this Act applies to data controllers in respect of the processing of personal data only if—

- (i) the data controller is established in the State and the data are processed in the context of that establishment, or
- (ii) the data controller is established neither in the State nor in any other state that is a contracting party to the EEA Agreement but makes use of equipment in the State for processing the data otherwise than for the purpose of transit through the territory of the State.

(b) For the purposes of *paragraph (a)* of this subsection, each of the following shall be treated as established in the State:

- (i) an individual who is normally resident in the State,
- (ii) a body incorporated under the law of the State,
- (iii) a partnership or other unincorporated association formed under the law of the State, and
- (iv) a person who does not fall within *subparagraphs (i), (ii) or (iii)* of this paragraph, but maintains in the State—
  - (I) an office, branch or agency through which he or she carries on any activity, or
  - (II) a regular practice,

and the reference to establishment in any other state that is a contracting party to the EEA Agreement shall be construed accordingly.

(c) A data controller to whom *paragraph (a)(ii)* of this subsection applies must, without prejudice to any legal proceedings that could be commenced against the data controller, designate a representative established in the State.

(3C) *Section 2* and *sections 2A* and *2B* (which sections were inserted by the Act of 2003) of this Act shall not apply to—

- (a) data kept solely for the purpose of historical research, or

(b other data consisting of archives or departmental records (within the meaning in each case of the National Archives Act 1986),

and the keeping of which complies with such requirements (if any) as may be prescribed for the purpose of safeguarding the fundamental rights and freedoms of data subjects.]

(4) This Act does not apply to—

(a) personal data that in the opinion of the Minister or the Minister for Defence are, or at any time were, kept for the purpose of safeguarding the security of the State,

(b) personal data consisting of information that the person keeping the data is required by law to make available to the public, or

(c) personal data kept by an individual and concerned only with the management of his personal, family or household affairs or kept by an individual only for recreational purposes.

F1[(5) F3[...]]

*Protection of Privacy of Individuals with regard to Personal Data*

Collection, processing, keeping, use and disclosure of personal data.

2.—F6[(1) A data controller shall, as respects personal data kept by him or her, comply with the following provisions:

(a) the data or, as the case may be, the information constituting the data shall have been obtained, and the data shall be processed, fairly,

(b) the data shall be accurate and complete and, where necessary, kept up to date,

(c) the data—

(i) shall have been obtained only for one or more specified, explicit and legitimate purposes,

(ii) shall not be further processed in a manner incompatible with that purpose or those purposes,

(iii) shall be adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose or purposes for which they were collected or are further processed, and

(iv) shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose or those purposes,

(d) appropriate security measures shall be taken against unauthorised access to, or unauthorised alteration, disclosure or destruction of, the data, in particular where the processing involves the transmission of data over a network, and against all other unlawful forms of processing.]

(2) A data processor shall, as respects personal data processed by him, comply with paragraph (d) of subsection (1) of this section.

(3) Paragraph (a) of the said subsection (1) does not apply to information intended for inclusion in data, or to data, kept for a purpose mentioned in section 5 (1) (a) of this Act, in any case in which the application of that paragraph to the data would be likely to prejudice any of the matters mentioned in the said section 5 (1) (a).

(4) Paragraph (b) of the said subsection (1) does not apply to backup data.

(5) F7[(a) *Subparagraphs (ii) and (iv) of paragraph (c) of the said subsection (1) do not apply to personal data kept for statistical or research or other scientific purposes, and the keeping of which complies with such requirements (if any) as may be prescribed for the purpose of safeguarding the fundamental rights and freedoms of data subjects, and,*

(b) the data or, as the case may be, the information constituting such data shall not be regarded for the purposes of *paragraph (a) of the said subsection as having been obtained unfairly by reason only that its use for any such purpose was not disclosed when it was obtained,*

if the data are not used in such a way that damage or distress is, or is likely to be, caused to any data subject.

(6) F8[...]

F9[(7) F10[...]

(8) F10[...]]

F11[Processing of personal data.

**2A.**—(1) Personal data shall not be processed by a data controller unless *section 2 of this Act (as amended by the Act of 2003) is complied with by the data controller and at least one of the following conditions is met:*

(a) the data subject has given his or her consent to the processing or, if the data subject, by reason of his or her physical or mental incapacity or age, is or is likely to be unable to appreciate the nature and effect of such consent, it is given by a parent or guardian or a grandparent, uncle, aunt, brother or sister of the data subject and the giving of such consent is not prohibited by law,

(b) the processing is necessary—

(i) for the performance of a contract to which the data subject is a party,

(ii) in order to take steps at the request of the data subject prior to entering into a contract,

(iii) for compliance with a legal obligation to which the data controller is subject other than an obligation imposed by contract, or

(iv) to prevent—

(I) injury or other damage to the health of the data subject, or

(II) serious loss of or damage to property of the data subject,

or otherwise to protect his or her vital interests where the seeking of the consent of the data subject or another person referred to in *paragraph (a) of this subsection is likely to result in those interests being damaged,*

(c) the processing is necessary—

(i) for the administration of justice,

(ii) for the performance of a function conferred on a person by or under an enactment,

(iii) for the performance of a function of the Government or a Minister of the Government, or

(iv) for the performance of any other function of a public nature performed in the public interest by a person,

(d) the processing is necessary for the purposes of the legitimate interests pursued by the data controller or by a third party or parties to whom the data are disclosed, except where the processing is unwarranted in any particular case by reason of prejudice to the fundamental rights and freedoms or legitimate interests of the data subject.

(2) The Minister may, after consultation with the Commissioner, by regulations specify particular circumstances in which *subsection (1)(d)* of this section is, or is not, to be taken as satisfied.]

F12[Processing of sensitive personal data.

**2B.**—(1) Sensitive personal data shall not be processed by a data controller unless:

(a) *sections 2 and 2A* (as amended and inserted, respectively, by the Act of 2003) are complied with, and

(b) in addition, at least one of the following conditions is met:

(i) the consent referred to in paragraph (a) of *subsection (1) of section 2A* (as inserted by the *Act of 2003*) of this Act is explicitly given,

(ii) the processing is necessary for the purpose of exercising or performing any right or obligation which is conferred or imposed by law on the data controller in connection with employment,

(iii) the processing is necessary to prevent injury or other damage to the health of the data subject or another person or serious loss in respect of, or damage to, property or otherwise to protect the vital interests of the data subject or of another person in a case where—

(I) consent to the processing cannot be given by or on behalf of the data subject in accordance with *section 2A(1)(a)* (inserted by the Act of 2003) of this Act, or

(II) the data controller cannot reasonably be expected to obtain such consent,

or the processing is necessary to prevent injury to, or damage to the health of, another person, or serious loss in respect of, or damage to, the property of another person, in a case where such consent has been unreasonably withheld,

(iv) the processing—

(I) is carried out in the course of its legitimate activities by any body corporate, or any unincorporated body of persons, that—

(A) is not established, and whose activities are not carried on, for profit, and

(B) exists for political, philosophical, religious or trade union purposes,

(II) is carried out with appropriate safeguards for the fundamental rights and freedoms of data subjects,

(III) relates only to individuals who either are members of the body or have regular contact with it in connection with its purposes, and

(IV) does not involve disclosure of the data to a third party without the consent of the data subject,

(v) the information contained in the data has been made public as a result of steps deliberately taken by the data subject,

(vi) the processing is necessary—

- (I) for the administration of justice,
  - (II) for the performance of a function conferred on a person by or under an enactment, or
  - (III) for the performance of a function of the Government or a Minister of the Government,
- (vii) the processing—
- (I) is required for the purpose of obtaining legal advice or for the purposes of, or in connection with, legal proceedings or prospective legal proceedings, or
  - (II) is otherwise necessary for the purposes of establishing, exercising or defending legal rights,
- (viii) the processing is necessary for medical purposes and is undertaken by—
- (I) a health professional, or
  - (II) a person who in the circumstances owes a duty of confidentiality to the data subject that is equivalent to that which would exist if that person were a health professional,
- (ix) the processing is necessary in order to obtain information for use, subject to and in accordance with [the Statistics Act 1993](#), only for statistical, compilation and analysis purposes,
- (x) the processing is carried out by political parties, or candidates for election to, or holders of, elective political office, in the course of electoral activities for the purpose of compiling data on people's political opinions and complies with such requirements (if any) as may be prescribed for the purpose of safeguarding the fundamental rights and freedoms of data subjects,
- (xi) the processing is authorised by regulations that are made by the Minister and are made for reasons of substantial public interest,
- (xii) the processing is necessary-for the purpose of the assessment, collection or payment of any tax, duty, levy or other moneys owed or payable to the State and the data has been provided by the data subject solely for that purpose,
- (xiii) the processing is necessary for the purposes of determining entitlement to or control of, or any other purpose connected with the administration of any benefit, pension, assistance, allowance, supplement or payment under [the Social Welfare \(Consolidation\) Act 1993](#), or any nonstatutory scheme administered by the Minister for Social, Community and Family Affairs.
- (2) The Minister may by regulations made after consultation with the Commissioner—
- (a) exclude the application of *subsection (1)(b)(ii)* of this section in such cases as may be specified, or
  - (b) provide that, in such cases as may be specified, the condition in the said *subsection (1)(b)(ii)* is not to be regarded as satisfied unless such further conditions as may be specified are also satisfied.
- (3) The Minister may by regulations make such provision as he considers appropriate for the protection of data subjects in relation to the processing of personal data as to—
- (a) the commission or alleged commission of any offence by data subjects,

- (b) any proceedings for an offence committed or alleged to have been committed by data subjects, the disposal of such proceedings or the sentence of any court in such proceedings,
- (c) any act or omission or alleged act or omission of data subjects giving rise to administrative sanctions,
- (d) any civil proceedings in a court or other tribunal to which data subjects are parties or any judgment, order or decision of such a tribunal in any such proceedings,

and processing of personal data shall be in compliance with any regulations under this subsection.

(4) In this section—

"health professional" includes a registered medical practitioner, within the meaning of the Medical Practitioners Act 1978, a registered dentist, within the meaning of **the Dentists Act 1985** or a member of any other class of health worker or social worker standing specified by regulations made by the Minister after consultation with the Minister for Health and Children and any other Minister of the Government who, having regard to his or her functions, ought, in the opinion of the Minister, to be consulted;

"medical purposes" includes the purposes of preventive medicine, medical diagnosis, medical research, the provision of care and treatment and the management of healthcare services.]

F13[Security measures for personal data.

**2C.—**(1) In determining appropriate security measures for the purposes of *section 2(1)(d)* of this Act, in particular (but without prejudice to the generality of that provision), where the processing involves the transmission of data over a network, a data controller—

- (a) may have regard to the state of technological development and the cost of implementing the measures, and
- (b) shall ensure that the measures provide a level of security appropriate to—
  - (i) the harm that might result from unauthorised or unlawful processing, accidental or unlawful destruction or accidental loss of, or damage to, the data concerned, and
  - (ii) the nature of the data concerned.

(2) A data controller or data processor shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that—

- (a) persons employed by him or her, and
- (b) other persons at the place of work concerned,

are aware of and comply with the relevant security measures aforesaid.

(3) Where processing of personal data is carried out by a data processor on behalf of a data controller, the data controller shall—

- (a) ensure that the processing is carried out in pursuance of a contract in writing or in another equivalent form between the data controller and the data processor and that the contract provides that the data processor carries out the processing only on and subject to the instructions of the data controller and that the data processor complies with obligations equivalent to those imposed on the data controller by *section 2(1)(d)* of this Act,

- (b) ensure that the data processor provides sufficient guarantees in respect of the technical security measures, and organisational measures, governing the processing, and
- (c) take reasonable steps to ensure compliance with those measures.]

F14[Fair processing of personal data.

**2D.**—(1) Personal data shall not be treated, for the purposes of *section 2(1)(a)* of this Act, as processed fairly unless—

- (a) in the case of data obtained from the data subject, the data controller ensures, so far as practicable, that the data subject has, is provided with, or has made readily available to him or her, at least the information specified in *subsection (2)* of this section,
- (b) in any other case, the data controller ensures, so far as practicable, that the data subject has, is provided with, or has made readily available to him or her, at least the information specified in *subsection (3)* of this section—
  - (i) not later than the time when the data controller first processes the data, or
  - (ii) if disclosure of the data to a third party is envisaged, not later than the time of such disclosure.

(2) The information referred to in *subsection (1)(a)* of this section is:

- (a) the identity of the data controller,
- (b) if he or she has nominated a representative for the purposes of this Act, the identity of the representative,
- (c) the purpose or purposes for which the data are intended to be processed, and
- (d) any other information which is necessary, having regard to the specific circumstances in which the data are or are to be processed, to enable processing in respect of the data to be fair to the data subject such as information as to the recipients or categories of recipients of the data, as to whether replies to questions asked for the purpose of the collection of the data are obligatory, as to the possible consequences of failure to give such replies and as to the existence of the right of access to and the right to rectify the data concerning him or her.

(3) The information referred to in *subsection (1)(b)* of this section is:

- (a) the information specified in *subsection (2)* of this section,
- (b) the categories of data concerned, and
- (c) the name of the original data controller.

(4) The said *subsection (1)(b)* does not apply—

- (a) where, in particular for processing for statistical purposes or for the purposes of historical or scientific research, the provision of the information specified therein proves impossible or would involve a disproportionate effort, or
- (b) in any case where the processing of the information contained or to be contained in the data by the data controller is necessary for compliance with a legal obligation to which the data controller is subject other than an obligation imposed by contract,

if such conditions as may be specified in regulations made by the Minister after consultation with the Commissioner are complied with.]

Right to establish existence of personal data.

3.—An individual who believes that a person keeps personal data shall, if he so requests the person in writing—

(a) be informed by the person whether he keeps any such data, and

(b) if he does, be given by the person a description of the data and the purposes for which they are kept,

as soon as may be and in any event not more than 21 days after the request has been given or sent to him.

Right of access.

4.—(1) F15[(a) Subject to the provisions of this Act, an individual shall, if he or she so requests a data controller by notice in writing—

(i) be informed by the data controller whether the data processed by or on behalf of the data controller include personal data relating to the individual,

(ii) if it does, be supplied by the data controller with a description of—

(I) the categories of data being processed by or on behalf of the data controller,

(II) the personal data constituting the data of which that individual is the data subject,

(III) the purpose or purposes of the processing, and

(IV) the recipients or categories of recipients to whom the data are or may be disclosed,

(iii) have communicated to him or her in intelligible form—

(I) the information constituting any personal data of which that individual is the data subject, and

(II) any information known or available to the data controller as to the source of those data unless the communication of that information is contrary to the public interest,

and

(iv) where the processing by automatic means of the data of which the individual is the data subject has constituted or is likely to constitute the sole basis for any decision significantly affecting him or her, be informed free of charge by the data controller of the logic involved in the processing,

as soon as may be and in any event not more than 40 days after compliance by the individual with the provisions of this section and, where any of the information is expressed in terms that are not intelligible to the average person without explanation, the information shall be accompanied by an explanation of those terms.

(b) A request under *paragraph (a)* of this subsection that does not relate to all of its subparagraphs shall, in the absence of any indication to the contrary, be treated as relating to all of them.]

(c) (i) A fee may be payable to the data controller concerned in respect of such a request as aforesaid and the amount thereof shall not exceed such amount as may be prescribed or an amount that in the opinion of the Commissioner is reasonable, having regard to the estimated cost to the data controller of compliance with the request, whichever is the lesser.

(ii) A fee paid by an individual to a data controller under *subparagraph (i)* of this paragraph shall be returned to him if his request is not complied with or the data controller rectifies or supplements, or erases part of, the data concerned (and thereby materially modifies the data) or erases all of the data on the application of the individual or in accordance with an enforcement notice or an order of a court.

(2) F16[...]

(3) An individual making a request under this section shall supply the data controller concerned with such information as he may reasonably require in order to satisfy himself of the identity of the individual and to locate any relevant personal data or information.

(4) F16[...]

F17[(4A) (a) Where personal data relating to a data subject consist of an expression of opinion about the data subject by another person, the data may be disclosed to the data subject without obtaining the consent of that person to the disclosure.

(b) *Paragraph (a)* of this subsection does not apply—

(i) to personal data held by or on behalf of the person in charge of an institution referred to in *section 5(1)(c)* of this Act and consisting of an expression of opinion by another person about the data subject if the data subject is being or was detained in such an institution, or

(ii) if the expression of opinion referred to in that paragraph was given in confidence or on the understanding that it would be treated as confidential.]

(5) Information supplied pursuant to a request under *subsection (1)* of this section may take account of any amendment of the personal data concerned made since the receipt of the request by the data controller (being an amendment that would have been made irrespective of the receipt of the request) but not of any other amendment.

(6) F16[...]

(7) A notification of a refusal of a request made by an individual under and in compliance with the preceding provisions of this section shall be in writing and shall include a statement of the reasons for the refusal and an indication that the individual may complain to the Commissioner about the refusal.

(8) (a) If and whenever the Minister considers it desirable in the interests of data subjects F18[ or in the public interest] to do so and by regulations so declares, the application of this section to personal data—

(i) relating to physical or mental health, or

(ii) kept for, or obtained in the course of, carrying out social work by a Minister of the Government, a local authority, a health board or a specified voluntary organisation or other body,

may be modified by the regulations in such manner, in such circumstances, subject to such safeguards and to such extent as may be specified therein.

(b) Regulations under *paragraph (a)* of this subsection shall be made only after consultation with the Minister for Health and any other Minister of the Government who, having regard to his functions, ought, in the opinion of the Minister, to be consulted and may make different provision in relation to data of different descriptions.

F19[(9) The obligations imposed by *subsection (1)(a)(iii)* (inserted by the Act of 2003) of this section shall be complied with by supplying the data subject with a copy of the information concerned in permanent form unless—

- (a) the supply of such a copy is not possible or would involve disproportionate effort, or
- (b) the data subject agrees otherwise.

(10) Where a data controller has previously complied with a request under *subsection (1)* of this section, the data controller is not obliged to comply with a subsequent identical or similar request under that subsection by the same individual unless, in the opinion of the data controller, a reasonable interval has elapsed between compliance with the previous request and the making of the current request.

(11) In determining for the purposes of *subsection (10)* of this section whether the reasonable interval specified in that subsection has elapsed, regard shall be had to the nature of the data, the purpose for which the data are processed and the frequency with which the data are altered.

(12) *Subsection (1)(a)(iv)* of this section is not to be regarded as requiring the provision of information as to the logic involved in the taking of a decision if and to the extent only that such provision would adversely affect trade secrets or intellectual property (in particular any copyright protecting computer software).

F19[(13) F16[...]]

Restriction of  
right of access.

5.—(1) *Section 4* of this Act does not apply to personal data—

- (a) kept for the purpose of preventing, detecting or investigating offences, apprehending or prosecuting offenders or assessing or collecting any tax, duty or other moneys owed or payable to the State, a local authority or a health board, in any case in which the application of that section to the data would be likely to prejudice any of the matters aforesaid,
- (b) to which, by virtue of *paragraph (a)* of this subsection, the said *section 4* does not apply and which are kept for the purpose of discharging a function conferred by or under any enactment and consisting of information obtained for such a purpose from a person who had it in his possession for any of the purposes mentioned in *paragraph (a)* of this subsection,
- (c) in any case in which the application of that section would be likely to prejudice the security of, or the maintenance of good order and discipline in—
  - (i) a prison,
  - F20[(ii) a place of detention provided under section 2 of the Prisons Act 1970, or
  - (iii) a military prison or detention barrack within the meaning of the Defence Act 1954,]
  - (iv) F21[...]
- (d) F22[...]
- (e) in respect of which the application of that section would be contrary to the interests of protecting the international relations of the State,
- (f) consisting of an estimate of, or kept for the purpose of estimating, the amount of the liability of the data controller concerned on foot of a claim for the payment of a sum of money, whether in respect of damages or compensation, in any case in which the application of the section would be likely to prejudice the interests of the data controller in relation to the claim,

(g) in respect of which a claim of privilege could be maintained in proceedings in a court in relation to communications between a client and his professional legal advisers or between those advisers,

F23[(gg) kept by the Commissioner or the Information Commissioner for the purposes of his or her functions,]

(h) kept only for the purpose of preparing statistics or carrying out research if the data are not used or disclosed (other than to a person to whom a disclosure of such data may be made in the circumstances specified in *section 8* of this Act) for any other purpose and the resulting statistics or the results of the research are not made available in a form that identifies any of the data subjects, or

(i) that are back-up data.

(2) Regulations under *subsections (1) (d)* and *(3) (b)* of this section shall be made only after consultation with any other Minister of the Government who, having regard to his functions, ought, in the opinion of the Minister, to be consulted.

(3) (a) Subject to *paragraph (b)* of this subsection, *section 4* of this Act, as modified by any other provisions thereof, shall apply notwithstanding any provision of or made under any enactment or rule of law that is in force immediately before the passing of this Act and prohibits or restricts the disclosure, or authorises the withholding, of information.

(b) If and whenever the Minister is of opinion that a prohibition, restriction or authorisation referred to in *paragraph (a)* of this subsection in relation to any information ought to prevail in the interests of the data subjects concerned or any other individuals and by regulations so declares, then, while the regulations are in force, the said *paragraph (a)* shall not apply as respects the provision or rule of law concerned and accordingly *section 4* of this Act, as modified as aforesaid, shall not apply in relation to that information.

Right of  
rectification or  
erasure.

6.—(1) An individual shall, if he so requests in writing a data controller who keeps personal data relating to him, be entitled to have rectified or, where appropriate, F24[blocked or] erased any such data in relation to which there has been a contravention by the data controller of *section 2 (1)* of this Act; and the data controller shall comply with the request as soon as may be and in any event not more than 40 days after it has been given or sent to him:

Provided that the data controller shall, as respects data that are inaccurate or not kept up to date, be deemed—

(a) to have complied with the request if he supplements the data with a statement (to the terms of which the individual has assented) relating to the matters dealt with by the data, and

(b) if he supplements the data as aforesaid, not to be in contravention of *paragraph (b)* of the said *section 2 (1)*.

F25[(2) Where a data controller complies, or is deemed to have complied, with a request under *subsection (1)* of this section, he or she shall, as soon as may be and in any event not more than 40 days after the request has been given or sent to him or her, notify—

(a) the individual making the request, and

(b) if such compliance materially modifies the data concerned, any person to whom the data were disclosed during the period of 12 months immediately before the giving or sending of the request unless such notification proves impossible or involves a disproportionate effort,]

F26[Right of data subject to object to processing likely to cause damage or distress.

**6A.**—(1) Subject to *subsection (3)* and unless otherwise provided by any enactment, an individual is entitled at any time, by notice in writing served on a data controller, to request him or her to cease within a reasonable time, or not to begin, processing or processing for a specified purpose or in a specified manner any personal data in respect of which he or she is the data subject if the processing falls within *subsection (2)* of this section on the ground that, for specified reasons—

(a) the processing of those data or their processing for that purpose or in that manner is causing or likely to cause substantial damage or distress to him or her or to another person, and

(b) the damage or distress is or would be unwarranted.

(2) This subsection applies to processing that is necessary—

(a) for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the data controller or in a third party to whom the data are or are to be disclosed, or

(b) for the purposes of the legitimate interests pursued by the data controller to whom the data are or are to be disclosed, unless those interests are overridden by the interests of the data subject in relation to fundamental rights and freedoms and, in particular, his or her right to privacy with respect to the processing of personal data.

(3) *Subsection (1)* does not apply—

(a) in a case where the data subject has given his or her explicit consent to the processing,

(b) if the processing is necessary—

(i) for the performance of a contract to which the data subject is a party,

(ii) in order to take steps at the request of the data subject prior to his or her entering into a contract,

(iii) for compliance with any legal obligation to which the data controller or data subject is subject other than one imposed by contract, or

(iv) to protect the vital interests of the data subject,

(c) to processing carried out by political parties or candidates for election to, or holders of elective political office, in the course of electoral activities, or

(d) in such other cases, if any, as may be specified in regulations made by the Minister after consultation with the Commissioner.

(4) Where a notice under *subsection (1)* of this section is served on a data controller, he or she shall, as soon as practicable and in any event not later than 20 days after the receipt of the notice, serve a notice on the individual concerned—

(a) stating that he or she has complied or intends to comply with the request concerned, or

(b) stating that he or she is of opinion that the request is unjustified to any extent and the reasons for the opinion and the extent (if any) to which he or she has complied or intends to comply with it.

(5) If the Commissioner is satisfied, on the application to him or her in that behalf of an individual who has served a notice under *subsection (1)* of this section that appears to the Commissioner to be justified, or to be justified to any extent, that the data controller concerned has failed to comply with the notice or to comply with it to that extent and that not less than 40 days have elapsed since the receipt of the notice by him or her, the Commissioner may, by an enforcement notice served on the

data controller, order him or her to take such steps for complying with the request, or for complying with it to that extent, as the Commissioner thinks fit and specifies in the enforcement notice, and that notice shall specify the reasons for the Commissioner being satisfied as aforesaid.]

F27[Rights in relation to automated decision taking.

**6B.**—(1) Subject to *subsection (2)* of this section, a decision which produces legal effects concerning a data subject or otherwise significantly affects a data subject may not be based solely on processing by automatic means of personal data in respect of which he or she is the data subject and which is intended to evaluate certain personal matters relating to him or her such as, for example (but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing), his or her performance at work, creditworthiness, reliability or conduct.

(2) *Subsection (1)* of this section does not apply—

(a) in a case in which a decision referred to in that subsection—

(i) is made in the course of steps taken—

(I) for the purpose of considering whether to enter into a contract with the data subject,

(II) with a view to entering into such a contract, or

(III) in the course of performing such a contract,

or

(ii) is authorised or required by any enactment and the data subject has been informed of the proposal to make the decision, and

(iii) either—

(I) the effect of the decision is to grant a request of the data subject, or

(II) adequate steps have been taken to safeguard the legitimate interests of the data subject by, for example (but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing), the making of arrangements to enable him or her to make representations to the data controller in relation to the proposal,

or

(b) if the data subject consents to the processing referred to in *subsection (1)*.]

Duty of care owed by data controllers and data processors.

**7.**—For the purposes of the law of torts and to the extent that that law does not so provide, a person, being a data controller or a data processor, shall, so far as regards the collection by him of personal data or information intended for inclusion in such data or his dealing with such data, owe a duty of care to the data subject concerned:

Provided that, for the purposes only of this section, a data controller shall be deemed to have complied with the provisions of *section 2 (1) (b)* of this Act if and so long as the personal data concerned accurately record data or other information received or obtained by him from the data subject or a third party and include (and, if the data are disclosed, the disclosure is accompanied by)—

(a) an indication that the information constituting the data was received or obtained as aforesaid,

(b) if appropriate, an indication that the data subject has informed the data controller that he regards the information as inaccurate or not kept up to date, and

(c) any statement with which, pursuant to this Act, the data are supplemented.

Disclosure of personal data in certain cases.

**8.**—Any restrictions in this Act on the F28[processing] of personal data do not apply if the F28[processing] is—

- (a) in the opinion of a member of the Garda Síochána not below the rank of chief superintendent or an officer of the Permanent Defence Force who holds an army rank not below that of colonel and is designated by the Minister for Defence under this paragraph, required for the purpose of safeguarding the security of the State,
- (b) required for the purpose of preventing, detecting or investigating offences, apprehending or prosecuting offenders or assessing or collecting any tax, duty or other moneys owed or payable to the State, a local authority or a health board, in any case in which the application of those restrictions would be likely to prejudice any of the matters aforesaid,
- (c) required in the interests of protecting the international relations of the State,
- (d) required urgently to prevent injury or other damage to the health of a person or serious loss of or damage to property,
- (e) required by or under any enactment or by a rule of law or order of a court,
- (f) required for the purposes of obtaining legal advice or for the purposes of, or in the course of, legal proceedings in which the person making the F28[processing] is a party or a witness,
- (g) F29[...]
- (h) made at the request or with the consent of the data subject or a person acting on his behalf.

*The Data Protection Commissioner*

The Commissioner.

**9.**—F30[...]

Enforcement of data protection.

**10.**—(1) (a) The Commissioner may investigate, or cause to be investigated, whether any of the provisions of this Act have been, are being or are likely to be contravened F33[...] in relation to an individual either where the individual complains to him of a contravention of any of those provisions or he is otherwise of opinion that there may be such a contravention.

(b) Where a complaint is made to the Commissioner under *paragraph (a)* of this subsection, the Commissioner shall—

(i) investigate the complaint or cause it to be investigated, unless he is of opinion that it is frivolous or vexatious, and

F34[(ii) if he or she is unable to arrange, within a reasonable time, for the amicable resolution by the parties concerned of the matter the subject of the complaint, notify in writing the individual who made the complaint of his or her decision in relation to it and that the individual may, if aggrieved by the decision, appeal against it to the Court under section 26 of this Act within 21 days from the receipt by him or her of the notification.]

F35[(1A) The Commissioner may carry out or cause to be carried out such investigations as he or she considers appropriate in order to ensure compliance with the provisions of this Act and to identify any contravention thereof.]

(2) If the Commissioner is of opinion that a person F36[...] has contravened or is contravening a provision of this Act (other than a provision the contravention of which is an offence), the Commissioner may, by notice in writing (referred to in this Act as an enforcement notice) served on the person, require him to take such steps as are specified in the notice within such time as may be so specified to comply with the provision concerned.

(3) Without prejudice to the generality of *subsection (2)* of this section, if the Commissioner is of opinion that a data controller has contravened *section 2 (1)* of this Act, the relevant enforcement notice may require him—

F34[(a) to block, rectify, erase or destroy any of the data concerned, or]

(b) to supplement the data with such statement relating to the matters dealt with by them as the Commissioner may approve of; and as respects data that are inaccurate or not kept up to date, if he supplements them as aforesaid, he shall be deemed not to be in contravention of *paragraph (b)* of the said *section 2 (1)*.

(4) An enforcement notice shall—

(a) specify any provision of this Act that, in the opinion of the Commissioner, has been or is being contravened and the reasons for his having formed that opinion, and

(b) subject to *subsection (6)* of this section, state that the person concerned may appeal to the Court under *section 26* of this Act against the requirement specified in the notice within 21 days from the service of the notice on him.

(5) Subject to *subsection (6)* of this section, the time specified in an enforcement notice for compliance with a requirement specified therein shall not be expressed to expire before the end of the period of 21 days specified in *subsection (4) (b)* of this section and, if an appeal is brought against the requirement, the requirement need not be complied with and *subsection (9)* of this section shall not apply in relation thereto, pending the determination or withdrawal of the appeal.

(6) If the Commissioner—

(a) by reason of special circumstances, is of opinion that a requirement specified in an enforcement notice should be complied with urgently, and

(b) includes a statement to that effect in the notice,

*subsections (4) (b)* and *(5)* of this section shall not apply in relation to the notice, but the notice shall contain a statement of the effect of the provisions of *section 26* (other than *subsection (3)*) of this Act and shall not require compliance with the requirement before the end of the period of 7 days beginning on the date on which the notice is served.

(7) On compliance by a data controller with a requirement under *subsection (3)* of this section, he shall, as soon as may be and in any event not more than 40 days after such compliance, notify—

(a) the data subject concerned, and

F34[(b) if such compliance materially modifies the data concerned, any person to whom the data were disclosed during the period beginning 12 months before the date of the service of the enforcement notice concerned and ending immediately before such compliance unless such notification proves impossible or involves a disproportionate effort,

of the blocking, rectification, erasure, destruction or statement concerned.]

(8) The Commissioner may cancel an enforcement notice and, if he does so, shall notify in writing the person on whom it was served accordingly.

(9) A person who, without reasonable excuse, fails or refuses to comply with a requirement specified in an enforcement notice shall be guilty of an offence.

Prohibition on transfer of personal data outside State.

F37[11.—(1) The transfer of personal data to a country or territory outside the European Economic Area may not take place unless that country or territory ensures an adequate level of protection for the privacy and the fundamental rights and freedoms of data subjects in relation to the processing of personal data having regard to all the circumstances surrounding the transfer and, in particular, but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, to—

- (a) the nature of the data,
- (b) the purposes for which and the period during which the data are intended to be processed,
- (c) the country or territory of origin of the information contained in the data,
- (d) the country or territory of final destination of that information,
- (e) the law in force in the country or territory referred to in *paragraph (d)*,
- (f) any relevant codes of conduct or other rules which are enforceable in that country or territory,
- (g) any security measures taken in respect of the data in that country or territory, and
- (h) the international obligations of that country or territory.

(2) (a) Where in any proceedings under this Act a question arises—

- (i) whether the adequate level of protection specified in *subsection (1)* of this section is ensured by a country or territory outside the European Economic Area to which personal data are to be transferred, and
- (ii) a Community finding has been made in relation to transfers of the kind in question,

the question shall be determined in accordance with that finding.

(b) In *paragraph (a)* of this subsection "Community finding" means a finding of the European Commission made for the purposes of paragraph (4) or (6) of Article 25 of the Directive under the procedure provided for in Article 31(2) of the Directive in relation to whether the adequate level of protection specified in *subsection (1)* of this section is ensured by a country or territory outside the European Economic Area.

(3) F38[...]

(4) (a) This section shall not apply to a transfer of data if—

- (i) the transfer of the data or the information constituting the data is required or authorised by or under—
  - (I) any enactment, or
  - (II) any convention or other instrument imposing an international obligation on the State,
- (ii) the data subject has given his or her consent to the transfer,
- (iii) the transfer is necessary—

- (I) for the performance of a contract between the data subject and the data controller, or
  - (II) for the taking of steps at the request of the data subject with a view to his or her entering into a contract with the data controller,
  - (iv) the transfer is necessary—
    - (I) for the conclusion of a contract between the data controller and a person other than the data subject that—
      - (A) is entered into at the request of the data subject, and
      - (B) is in the interests of the data subject, or
    - (II) for the performance of such a contract,
  - (v) the transfer is necessary for reasons of substantial public interest,
  - (vi) the transfer is necessary for the purpose of obtaining legal advice or for the purpose of or in connection with legal proceedings or prospective legal proceedings or is otherwise necessary for the purposes of establishing or defending legal rights,
  - (vii) the transfer is necessary in order to prevent injury or other damage to the health of the data subject or serious loss of or damage to property of the data subject or otherwise to protect his or her vital interests, and informing the data subject of, or seeking his or her consent to, the transfer is likely to damage his or her vital interests,
  - (viii) the transfer is of part only of the personal data on a register established by or under an enactment, being—
    - (I) a register intended for consultation by the public, or
    - (II) a register intended for consultation by persons having a legitimate interest in its subject matter,and, in the case of a register referred to in *clause (II)* of this subparagraph, the transfer is made, at the request of, or to, a person referred to in that clause and any conditions to which such consultation is subject are complied with by any person to whom the data are or are to be transferred, or
  - (ix) the transfer has been authorised by the Commissioner where the data controller adduces adequate safeguards with respect to the privacy and fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals and for the exercise by individuals of their relevant rights under this Act or the transfer is made on terms of a kind approved by the Commissioner as ensuring such safeguards.
- (b) F38[...]
- (c) The Commissioner shall comply with any decision of the European Commission under the procedure laid down in Article 31.2 of the Directive made for the purposes of paragraph 3 or 4 of Article 26 of the Directive.
- (5) The Minister may, after consultation with the Commissioner, by regulations specify—
- (a) the circumstances in which a transfer of data is to be taken for the purposes of *subsection (4)(a)(v)* of this section to be necessary for reasons of substantial public interest, and

(b) the circumstances in which such a transfer which is not required by or under an enactment is not to be so taken.

(6) Where, in relation to a transfer of data to a country or territory outside the European Economic Area, a data controller adduces the safeguards for the data subject concerned referred to in *subsection (4)(a)(ix)* of this section by means of a contract embodying the contractual clauses referred to in paragraph 2 or 4 of Article 26 of the Directive, the data subject shall have the same right—

(a) to enforce a clause of the contract conferring rights on him or her or relating to such rights, and

(b) to compensation or damages for breach of such a clause,

that he or she would have if he or she were a party to the contract.

(7) The Commissioner may, subject to the provisions of this section, prohibit the transfer of personal data from the State to a place outside the State unless such transfer is required or authorised by or under any enactment or required by any convention or other instrument imposing an international obligation on the State.

(8) In determining whether to prohibit a transfer of personal data under this section, the Commissioner shall also consider whether the transfer would be likely to cause damage or distress to any person and have regard to the desirability of facilitating international transfers of data.

(9) A prohibition under *subsection (7)* of this section shall be effected by the service of a notice (referred to in this Act as a prohibition notice) on the person proposing to transfer the data concerned.

(10) A prohibition notice shall—

(a) prohibit the transfer concerned either absolutely or until the person aforesaid has taken such steps as are specified in the notice for protecting the interests of the data subjects concerned,

(b) specify the time when it is to take effect,

(c) specify the grounds for the prohibition, and

(d) subject to *subsection (12)* of this section, state that the person concerned may appeal to the Court under section 26 of this Act against the prohibition specified in the notice within 21 days from the service of the notice on him or her.

(11) Subject to *subsection (12)* of this section, the time specified in a prohibition notice for compliance with the prohibition specified therein shall not be expressed to expire before the end of the period of 21 days specified in *subsection (10)(d)* of this section and, if an appeal is brought against the prohibition, the prohibition need not be complied with and *subsection (15)* of this section shall not apply in relation thereto, pending the determination or withdrawal of the appeal.

(12) If the Commissioner—

(a) by reason of special circumstances, is of opinion that a prohibition specified in a prohibition notice should be complied with urgently, and

(b) includes a statement to that effect in the notice,

*subsections (10)(d)* and *(11)* of this section shall not apply in relation to the notice but the notice shall contain a statement of the effect of the provisions of *section 26* (other than *subsection (3)*) of this Act and shall not require compliance with the prohibition before the end of the period of 7 days beginning on the date on which the notice is served.

(13) The Commissioner may cancel a prohibition notice and, if he or she does so, shall notify in writing the person on whom it was served accordingly.

(14) (a) This section applies, with any necessary modifications, to a transfer of information from the State to a place outside the State for conversion into personal data as it applies to a transfer of personal data from the State to such a place.

(b) In *paragraph (a)* of this subsection "information" means information (not being data) relating to a living individual who can be identified from it.

(15) A person who, without reasonable excuse, fails or refuses to comply with a prohibition specified in a prohibition notice shall be guilty of an offence.]

Power to require information.

**12.—**(1) The Commissioner may, by notice in writing (referred to in this Act as an information notice) served on a person, require the person to furnish to him in writing within such time as may be specified in the notice such information in relation to matters specified in the notice as is necessary or expedient for the performance by the Commissioner of his functions.

(2) Subject to *subsection (3)* of this section—

(a) an information notice shall state that the person concerned may appeal to the Court under *section 26* of this Act against the requirement specified in the notice within 21 days from the service of the notice on him, and

(b) the time specified in the notice for compliance with a requirement specified therein shall not be expressed to expire before the end of the period of 21 days specified in *paragraph (a)* of this subsection and, if an appeal is brought against the requirement, the requirement need not be complied with and *subsection (5)* of this section shall not apply in relation thereto, pending the determination or withdrawal of the appeal.

(3) If the Commissioner—

(a) by reason of special circumstances, is of opinion that a requirement specified in an information notice should be complied with urgently, and

(b) includes a statement to that effect in the notice,

*subsection (2)* of this section shall not apply in relation to the notice, but the notice shall contain a statement of the effect of the provisions of *section 26* (other than *subsection (3)*) of this Act and shall not require compliance with the requirement before the end of the period of 7 days beginning on the date on which the notice is served.

(4) (a) No enactment or rule of law prohibiting or restricting the disclosure of information shall preclude a person from furnishing to the Commissioner any information that is necessary or expedient for the performance by the Commissioner of his functions.

(b) *Paragraph (a)* of this subsection does not apply to information that in the opinion of the Minister or the Minister for Defence is, or at any time was, kept for the purpose of safeguarding the security of the State or information that is privileged from disclosure in proceedings in any court.

(5) A person who, without reasonable excuse, fails or refuses to comply with a requirement specified in an information notice or who in purported compliance with such a requirement furnishes information to the Commissioner that the person knows to be false or misleading in a material respect shall be guilty of an offence.

F39[Prior checking of processing by Commissioner.

**12A.**—(1) This section applies to any processing that is of a prescribed description, being processing that appears to the Commissioner to be particularly likely—

- (a) to cause substantial damage or substantial distress to data subjects, or
- (b) otherwise significantly to prejudice the rights and freedoms of data subjects.

(2) The Commissioner, on receiving—

- (a) an application under *section 17* of this Act by a person to whom *section 16* of this Act applies for registration in the register and any prescribed information and any other information that he or she may require, or

- (b) a request from a data controller in that behalf,

shall consider and determine—

- (i) whether any of the processing to which the application or request relates is processing to which this section applies,

- (ii) if it does, whether the processing to which this section applies is likely to comply with the provisions of this Act.

(3) Subject to *subsection (4)* of this section, the Commissioner shall, within the period of 90 days from the day on which he or she receives an application or a request referred to in *subsection (2)* of this section, serve a notice on the data controller concerned stating the extent to which, in the opinion of the Commissioner, the proposed processing is likely or unlikely to comply with the provisions of this Act.

(4) Before the end of the period referred to in *subsection (3)*, the Commissioner may, by reason of special circumstances, extend that period once only, by notice in writing served on the data controller concerned, by such further period not exceeding 90 days as the Commissioner may specify in the notice.

(5) If, for the purposes of his or her functions under this section, the Commissioner serves an information notice on the data controller concerned before the end of the period referred to in *subsection (3)* of this section or that period as extended under *subsection (4)* of this section—

- (a) the period from the date of service of the notice to the date of compliance with the requirement in the notice, or

- (b) if the requirement is set aside under *section 26* of this Act, the period from the date of such service to the date of such setting aside,

shall be added to the period referred to in the said *subsection (3)* or that period as so extended as aforesaid.

(6) Processing to which this section applies shall not be carried on unless—

- (a) the data controller has—

- (i) previously made an application under *section 17* of this Act and furnished the information specified in that section to the Commissioner, or

- (ii) made a request under *subsection (2)* of this section,

and

- (b) the data controller has complied with any information notice served on him or her in relation to the matter, and

- (c)(i) the period of 90 days from the date of the receipt of the application or request referred to in *subsection (3)* of this section (or that period as extended under subsections (4) and (5) of this section or either of them)

has elapsed without the receipt by the data controller of a notice under the said *subsection (3)*, or

(ii) the data controller has received a notice under the said *subsection (3)* stating that the particular processing proposed to be carried on is likely to comply with the provisions of this Act, or

(iii) the data controller—

(I) has received a notice under the said *subsection (3)* stating that, if the requirements specified by the Commissioner (which he or she is hereby authorised to specify) and appended to the notice are complied with by the data controller, the processing proposed to be carried on is likely to comply with the provisions of this Act, and

(II) has complied with those requirements.

(7) A person who contravenes *subsection (6)* of this section shall be guilty of an offence.

(8) An appeal against a notice under *subsection (3)* of this section or a requirement appended to the notice may be made to and heard and determined by the Court under section 26 of this Act and that section shall apply as if such a notice and such a requirement were specified in *subsection (1)* of the said *section 26*.

(9) The Minister, after consultation with the Commissioner, may by regulations amend *subsections (3), (4) and (6)* of this section by substituting for the number of days for the time being specified therein a different number specified in the regulations.

(10) A data controller shall pay to the Commissioner such fee (if any) as may be prescribed in respect of the consideration by the Commissioner, in relation to proposed processing by the data controller, of the matters referred to in *paragraphs (i) and (ii)* of *subsection (2)* of this section and different fees may be prescribed in relation to different categories of processing.

(11) In this section a reference to a data controller includes a reference to a data processor.]

Codes of practice. **13.**—F40[...]

Annual report. **14.**—F43[...]

Mutual assistance between parties to Convention. **15.**—(1) The Commissioner is hereby designated for the purposes of Chapter IV (which relates to mutual assistance) of the Convention.

(2) The Minister may make any regulations that he considers necessary or expedient for the purpose of enabling the said Chapter IV to have full effect.

#### *Registration*

The register. **16.**—F46[...]

Applications for registration. **17.**—F48[...]

Duration and continuance of registration. **18.**—F51[...]

Effect of registration. 19.—F53[...]

Regulations for registration. 20.—F54[...]

*Miscellaneous*

Unauthorised disclosure by data processor. 21.—(1) Personal data processed by a data processor shall not be disclosed by him, or by an employee or agent of his, without the prior authority of the data controller on behalf of whom the data are processed.

(2) A person who knowingly contravenes *subsection (1)* of this section shall be guilty of an offence.

Disclosure of personal data obtained without authority. 22.—(1) A person who—  
 (a) obtains access to personal data, or obtains any information constituting such data, without the prior authority of the data controller or data processor by whom the data are kept, and

(b) discloses the data or information to another person,

shall be guilty of an offence.

(2) *Subsection (1)* of this section does not apply to a person who is an employee or agent of the data controller or data processor concerned.

F55[Journalism, literature and art. 22A.—F56[...]]

Provisions in relation to certain non-residents and to data kept or processed outside State. 23.—F57[...]

Powers of authorised officers. 24.—F58[(1) In this section "authorised officer" has the same meaning that it has in section 2(1) of the Data Protection Act 2018.]

(2) An authorised officer may, for the purpose of obtaining any information that is necessary or expedient for the performance by the Commissioner of his functions, on production of the officer's authorisation, if so required—

(a) at all reasonable times enter premises that he reasonably believes to be occupied by a data controller or a data processor, inspect the premises and any data therein (other than data consisting of information specified in *section 12 (4) (b)* of this Act) and inspect, examine, operate and test any data equipment therein,

(b) require any person on the premises, being a data controller, a data processor or an employee of either of them, to disclose to the officer any such data and produce to him any data material (other than data material consisting of information so specified) that is in that person's power or control and to give to him such information as he may reasonably require in regard to such data and material,

(c) either on the premises or elsewhere, inspect and copy or extract information from such data, or inspect and copy or take extracts from such material, and

(d) require any person mentioned in *paragraph (b)* of this subsection to give to the officer such information as he may reasonably require in regard to the procedures employed for complying with the provisions of this Act, the sources from which such data are obtained, the purposes for which they are kept, the persons to whom they are disclosed and the data equipment in the premises.

(3) F59[...]

(4) F59[...]

(5) F59[...]

(6) A person who obstructs or impedes an authorised officer in the exercise of a power, or, without reasonable excuse, does not comply with a requirement, under this section or who in purported compliance with such a requirement gives information to an authorised officer that he knows to be false or misleading in a material respect shall be guilty of an offence.

Service of notices.

**25.**—Any notice authorised by this Act to be served on a person by the Commissioner may be served—

(a) if the person is an individual—

(i) by delivering it to him or

(ii) by sending it to him by post addressed to him at his usual or last-known place of residence or business, or

(iii) by leaving it for him at that place,

(b) if the person is a body corporate or an unincorporated body of persons, by sending it to the body by post to, or addressing it to and leaving it at, in the case of a company, its registered office (within the meaning of the [Companies Act, 1963](#)) and, in any other case, its principal place of business.

Appeals to Circuit Court.

**26.**—(1) An appeal may be made to and heard and determined by the Court against—

(a) a requirement specified in an enforcement notice or an information notice,

(b) a prohibition specified in a prohibition F60[notice, and]

(c) F61[...]

(d) a decision of the Commissioner in relation to a complaint under [section 10 \(1\)](#) of this Act,

and such an appeal shall be brought within 21 days from the service on the person concerned of the relevant notice or, as the case may be, the receipt by such person of the notification of the relevant refusal or decision.

(2) The jurisdiction conferred on the Court by this Act shall be exercised by the judge for the time being assigned to the circuit where the appellant ordinarily resides or carries on any profession, business or occupation or, at the option of the appellant, by a judge of the Court for the time being assigned to the Dublin circuit.

(3) (a) Subject to *paragraph (b)* of this subsection, a decision of the Court under this section shall be final.

(b) An appeal may be brought to the High Court on a point of law against such a decision; and references in this Act to the determination of an appeal shall be construed as including references to the determination of any such appeal to the High Court and of any appeal from the decision of that Court.

(4) Where—

- (a) a person appeals to the Court pursuant to F62[*paragraph (a) or (b) of subsection (1) of this section*],
- (b) the appeal is brought within the period specified in the notice or notification mentioned in *paragraph (c)* of this subsection, and
- (c) the Commissioner has included a statement in the relevant notice or notification to the effect that by reason of special circumstances he is of opinion that the requirement or prohibition specified in the notice should be complied with, or the refusal specified in the notification should take effect, urgently,

then, notwithstanding any provision of this Act, if the Court, on application to it in that behalf, so determines, non-compliance by the person F62[*with a requirement or prohibition specified in the notice*] during the period ending with the determination or withdrawal of the appeal or during such other period as may be determined as aforesaid shall not constitute an offence.

Evidence in proceedings.

**27.—**(1) In any proceedings—

- (a) a certificate signed by the Minister or the Minister for Defence and stating that in his opinion personal data are, or at any time were, kept for the purpose of safeguarding the security of the State shall be evidence of that opinion,
- (b) a certificate—
  - (i) signed by a member of the Garda Síochána not below the rank of chief superintendent or an officer of the Permanent Defence Force who holds an army rank not below that of colonel and is designated by the Minister for Defence under *section 8 (a)* of this Act, and
  - (ii) stating that in the opinion of the member or, as the case may be, the officer a disclosure of personal data is required for the purpose aforesaid, shall be evidence of that opinion, and
- (c) a document purporting to be a certificate under *paragraph (a) or (b)* of this subsection and to be signed by a person specified in the said *paragraph (a) or (b)*, as appropriate, shall be deemed to be such a certificate and to be so signed unless the contrary is proved.

(2) Information supplied by a person in compliance with a request under *section 3* or *4 (1)* of this Act, a requirement under this Act or a direction of a court in proceedings under this Act shall not be admissible in evidence against him or his spouse in proceedings for an offence under this Act.

Hearing of proceedings.

**28.—**The whole or any part of any proceedings under this Act may, at the discretion of the court, be heard otherwise than in public.

Offences by directors, etc., of bodies corporate.

**29.—**(1) Where an offence under this Act has been committed by a body corporate and is proved to have been committed with the consent or connivance of or to be attributable to any neglect on the part of a person, being a director, manager, secretary or other officer of that body corporate, or a person who was purporting to act in any such capacity, that person, as well as the body corporate, shall be guilty of that offence and be liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly.

(2) Where the affairs of a body corporate are managed by its members, *subsection (1)* of this section shall apply in relation to the acts and defaults of a member in connection with his functions of management as if he were a director or manager of the body corporate.

Prosecution of summary offences by Commissioner.

**30.**—(1) Summary proceedings for an offence under this Act may be brought and prosecuted by the Commissioner.

(2) Notwithstanding section 10 (4) of the Petty Sessions (Ireland) Act, 1851, summary proceedings for an offence under this Act may be instituted within one year from the date of the offence.

Penalties.

**31.**—(1) A person guilty of an offence under this Act shall be liable—

(a) on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding F63[€3,000], or

(b) on conviction on indictment, to a fine not exceeding F63[€100,000].

(2) Where a person is convicted of an offence under this Act, the court may order any data material which appears to the court to be connected with the commission of the offence to be forfeited or destroyed and any relevant data to be erased.

(3) The court shall not make an order under *subsection (2)* of this section in relation to data material or data where it considers that some person other than the person convicted of the offence concerned may be the owner of, or otherwise interested in, the data unless such steps as are reasonably practicable have been taken for notifying that person and giving him an opportunity to show cause why the order should not be made.

(4) Section 13 of the Criminal Procedure Act, 1967, shall apply in relation to an offence under this Act that is not being prosecuted summarily as if, in lieu of the penalties provided for in *subsection (3) (a)* of that section, there were specified therein the fine provided for in *subsection (1) (a)* of this section and the reference in *subsection (2) (a)* of the said section 13 to the penalties provided for by *subsection (3)* shall be construed and have effect accordingly.

Laying of regulations before Houses of Oireachtas.

**32.**—Every regulation made under this Act (other than *section 2*) shall be laid before each House of the Oireachtas as soon as may be after it is made and, if a resolution annulling the regulation is passed by either such House within the next 21 days on which that House has sat after the regulation is laid before it, the regulation shall be annulled accordingly, but without prejudice to the validity of anything previously done thereunder.

Fees.

**33.**—F64[...]

Expenses of Minister.

**34.**—The expenses incurred by the Minister in the administration of this Act shall, to such extent as may be sanctioned by the Minister for Finance, be paid out of moneys provided by the Oireachtas.

Short title and commencement.

**35.**—(1) This Act may be cited as the Data Protection Act, 1988.

(2) This Act shall come into operation on such day or days as, by order or orders made by the Minister under this section, may be fixed therefor either generally or with reference to any particular purpose or provision and different days may be so fixed for different purposes and different provisions.

## Section 1 (1).

## FIRST SCHEDULE

CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF INDIVIDUALS WITH REGARD TO AUTOMATIC PROCESSING OF PERSONAL DATA DONE AT STRASBOURG ON THE 28TH DAY OF JANUARY, 1981

## PREAMBLE

The member States of the Council of Europe, signatory hereto,

Considering that the aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve greater unity between its members, based in particular on respect for the rule of law, as well as human rights and fundamental freedoms;

Considering that it is desirable to extend the safeguards for everyone's rights and fundamental freedoms, and in particular the right to the respect for privacy, taking account of the increasing flow across frontiers of personal data undergoing automatic processing;

Reaffirming at the same time their commitment to freedom of information regardless of frontiers;

Recognising that it is necessary to reconcile the fundamental values of the respect for privacy and the free flow of information between peoples,

Have agreed as follows:

## CHAPTER I—GENERAL PROVISIONS

## Article 1

*Object and purpose*

The purpose of this convention is to secure in the territory of each Party for every individual, whatever his nationality or residence, respect for his rights and fundamental freedoms, and in particular his right to privacy, with regard to automatic processing of personal data relating to him ("data protection").

## Article 2

*Definitions*

For the purposes of this convention:

*a.* "personal data" means any information relating to an identified or identifiable individual ("data subject");

*b.* "automated data file" means any set of data undergoing automatic processing;

*c.* "automatic processing" includes the following operations if carried out in whole or in part by automated means: storage of data, carrying out of logical and/or arithmetical operations on those data, their alteration, erasure, retrieval or dissemination;

*d.* "controller of the file" means the natural or legal person, public authority, agency or any other body who is competent according to the national law to decide what should be the purpose of the automated data file, which categories of personal data should be stored and which operations should be applied to them.

## Article 3

*Scope*

1. The Parties undertake to apply this convention to automated personal data files and automatic processing of personal data in the public and private sectors.

2. Any State may, at the time of signature or when depositing its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, or at any later time, give notice by a declaration addressed to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe:

*a.* that it will not apply this convention to certain categories of automated personal data files, a list of which will be deposited. In this list it shall not include, however, categories of automated data files subject under its domestic law to data protection provisions. Consequently, it shall amend this list by a new declaration whenever additional categories of automated personal data files are subjected to data protection provisions under its domestic law;

*b.* that it will also apply this convention to information relating to groups of persons, associations, foundations, companies, corporations and any other bodies consisting directly or indirectly of individuals, whether or not such bodies possess legal personality;

*c.* that it will also apply this convention to personal data files which are not processed automatically.

3. Any State which has extended the scope of this convention by any of the declarations provided for in sub-paragraph 2.*b* or *c* above may give notice in the said declaration that such extensions shall apply only to certain categories of personal data files, a list of which will be deposited.

4. Any Party which has excluded certain categories of automated personal data files by a declaration provided for in sub-paragraph 2.*a* above may not claim the application of this convention to such categories by a Party which has not excluded them.

5. Likewise, a Party which has not made one or other of the extensions provided for in sub-paragraphs 2.*b* or *c* above may not claim the application of this convention on these points with respect to a Party which has made such extensions.

6. The declarations provided for in paragraph 2 above shall take effect from the moment of the entry into force of the convention with regard to the State which has made them if they have been made at the time of signature or deposit of its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, or three months after their receipt by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe if they have been made at any later time. These declarations may be withdrawn, in whole or in part, by a notification addressed to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe. Such withdrawals shall take effect three months after the date of receipt of such notification.

## CHAPTER II—BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR DATA PROTECTION

## Article 4

*Duties of the Parties*

1. Each Party shall take the necessary measures in its domestic law to give effect to the basic principles for data protection set out in this chapter.

2. These measures shall be taken at the latest at the time of entry into force of this convention in respect of that Party.

## Article 5

*Quality of data*

Personal data undergoing automatic processing shall be:

- a. obtained and processed fairly and lawfully;
- b. stored for specified and legitimate purposes and not used in a way incompatible with those purposes;
- c. adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purposes for which they are stored;
- d. accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date;
- e. preserved in a form which permits identification of the data subjects for no longer than is required for the purpose for which those data are stored.

#### Article 6

##### *Special categories of data*

Personal data revealing racial origin, political opinions or religious or other beliefs, as well as personal data concerning health or sexual life, may not be processed automatically unless domestic law provides appropriate safeguards. The same shall apply to personal data relating to criminal convictions.

#### Article 7

##### *Data security*

Appropriate security measures shall be taken for the protection of personal data stored in automated data files against accidental or unauthorised destruction or accidental loss as well as against unauthorised access, alteration or dissemination.

#### Article 8

##### *Additional safeguards for the data subject*

Any person shall be enabled:

- a. to establish the existence of an automated personal data file, its main purposes, as well as the identity and habitual residence or principal place of business of the controller of the file;
- b. to obtain at reasonable intervals and without excessive delay or expense confirmation of whether personal data relating to him are stored in the automated data file as well as communication to him of such data in an intelligible form;
- c. to obtain, as the case may be, rectification or erasure of such data if these have been processed contrary to the provisions of domestic law giving effect to the basic principles set out in Articles 5 and 6 of this convention;
- d. to have a remedy if a request for confirmation or, as the case may be, communication, rectification or erasure as referred to in paragraphs b and c of this article is not complied with.

#### Article 9

##### *Exceptions and restrictions*

1. No exception to the provisions of Articles 5, 6 and 8 of this convention shall be allowed except within the limits defined in this article.
2. Derogation from the provisions of Articles 5, 6 and 8 of this convention shall be allowed when such derogation is provided for by the law of the Party and constitutes a necessary measure in a democratic society in the interests of:

*a.* protecting State security, public safety, the monetary interests of the State or the suppression of criminal offences;

*b.* protecting the data subject or the rights and freedoms of others.

3. Restrictions on the exercise of the rights specified in Article 8, paragraphs *b*, *c* and *d*, may be provided by law with respect to automated personal data files used for statistics or for scientific research purposes when there is obviously no risk of an infringement of the privacy of the data subjects.

#### Article 10

##### *Sanctions and remedies*

Each Party undertakes to establish appropriate sanctions and remedies for violations of provisions of domestic law giving effect to the basic principles for data protection set out in this chapter.

#### Article 11

##### *Extended protection*

None of the provisions of this chapter shall be interpreted as limiting or otherwise affecting the possibility for a Party to grant data subjects a wider measure of protection than that stipulated in this convention.

### CHAPTER III—TRANSBORDER DATA FLOWS

#### Article 12

##### *Transborder flows of personal data and domestic law*

1. The following provisions shall apply to the transfer across national borders, by whatever medium, of personal data undergoing automatic processing or collected with a view to their being automatically processed.

2. A Party shall not, for the sole purpose of the protection of privacy, prohibit or subject to special authorisation transborder flows of personal data going to the territory of another Party.

3. Nevertheless, each Party shall be entitled to derogate from the provisions of paragraph 2:

*a.* insofar as its legislation includes specific regulations for certain categories of personal data or of automated personal data files, because of the nature of those data or those files, except where the regulations of the other Party provide an equivalent protection;

*b.* when the transfer is made from its territory to the territory of a non-Contracting State through the intermediary of the territory of another Party, in order to avoid such transfers resulting in circumvention of the legislation of the Party referred to at the beginning of this paragraph.

### CHAPTER IV—MUTUAL ASSISTANCE

#### Article 13

##### *Co-operation between Parties*

1. The Parties agree to render each other mutual assistance in order to implement this convention.

2. For that purpose:

*a.* each Party shall designate one or more authorities, the name and address of each of which it shall communicate to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe;

*b.* each Party which has designated more than one authority shall specify in its communication referred to in the previous sub-paragraph the competence of each authority.

3. An authority designated by a Party shall at the request of an authority designated by another Party:

*a.* furnish information on its law and administrative practice in the field of data protection;

*b.* take, in conformity with its domestic law and for the sole purpose of protection of privacy, all appropriate measures for furnishing factual information relating to specific automatic processing carried out in its territory, with the exception however of the personal data being processed.

#### Article 14

##### *Assistance to data subjects resident abroad*

1. Each Party shall assist any person resident abroad to exercise the rights conferred by its domestic law giving effect to the principles set out in Article 8 of this convention.

2. When such a person resides in the territory of another Party he shall be given the option of submitting his request through the intermediary of the authority designated by that Party.

3. The request for assistance shall contain all the necessary particulars, relating *inter alia* to:

*a.* the name, address and any other relevant particulars identifying the person making the request;

*b.* the automated personal data file to which the request pertains, or its controller;

*c.* the purpose of the request.

#### Article 15

##### *Safeguards concerning assistance rendered by designated authorities*

1. An authority designated by a Party which has received information from an authority designated by another Party either accompanying a request for assistance or in reply to its own request for assistance shall not use that information for purposes other than those specified in the request for assistance.

2. Each Party shall see to it that the persons belonging to or acting on behalf of the designated authority shall be bound by appropriate obligations of secrecy or confidentiality with regard to that information.

3. In no case may a designated authority be allowed to make under Article 14, paragraph 2, a request for assistance on behalf of a data subject resident abroad, of its own accord and without the express consent of the person concerned.

#### Article 16

*Refusal of requests for assistance*

A designated authority to which a request for assistance is addressed under Articles 13 or 14 of this convention may not refuse to comply with it unless:

- a.* the request is not compatible with the powers in the field of data protection of the authorities responsible for replying;
- b.* the request does not comply with the provisions of this convention;
- c.* compliance with the request would be incompatible with the sovereignty, security or public policy (*ordre public*) of the Party by which it was designated, or with the rights and fundamental freedoms of persons under the jurisdiction of that Party.

Article 17

*Costs and procedures of assistance*

1. Mutual assistance which the Parties render each other under Article 13 and assistance they render to data subjects abroad under Article 14 shall not give rise to the payment of any costs or fees other than those incurred for experts and interpreters. The latter costs or fees shall be borne by the Party which has designated the authority making the request for assistance.
2. The data subject may not be charged costs or fees in connection with the steps taken on his behalf in the territory of another Party other than those lawfully payable by residents of that Party.
3. Other details concerning the assistance relating in particular to the forms and procedures and the languages to be used, shall be established directly between the Parties concerned.

CHAPTER V—CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Article 18

*Composition of the committee*

1. A Consultative Committee shall be set up after the entry into force of this convention.
2. Each Party shall appoint a representative to the committee and a deputy representative. Any member State of the Council of Europe which is not a Party to the convention shall have the right to be represented on the committee by an observer.
3. The Consultative Committee may, by unanimous decision, invite any non-member State of the Council of Europe which is not a Party to the convention to be represented by an observer at a given meeting.

Article 19

*Functions of the committee*

The Consultative Committee:

- a.* may make proposals with a view to facilitating or improving the application of the convention;
- b.* may make proposals for amendment of this convention in accordance with Article 21;

c. shall formulate its opinion on any proposal for amendment of this convention which is referred to it in accordance with Article 21, paragraph 3;

d. may, at the request of a Party, express an opinion on any question concerning the application of this convention.

#### Article 20

##### *Procedure*

1. The Consultative Committee shall be convened by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe. Its first meeting shall be held within twelve months of the entry into force of this convention. It shall subsequently meet at least once every two years and in any case when one-third of the representatives of the Parties request its convocation.

2. A majority of representatives of the Parties shall constitute a quorum for a meeting of the Consultative Committee.

3. After each of its meetings, the Consultative Committee shall submit to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe a report on its work and on the functioning of the convention.

4. Subject to the provisions of this convention, the Consultative Committee shall draw up its own Rules of Procedure.

### CHAPTER VI—AMENDMENTS

#### Article 21

##### *Amendments*

1. Amendments to this convention may be proposed by a Party, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe or the Consultative Committee.

2. Any proposal for amendment shall be communicated by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe to the member States of the Council of Europe and to every non-member State which has acceded to or has been invited to accede to this convention in accordance with the provisions of Article 23.

3. Moreover, any amendment proposed by a Party or the Committee of Ministers shall be communicated to the Consultative Committee, which shall submit to the Committee of Ministers its opinion on that proposed amendment.

4. The Committee of Ministers shall consider the proposed amendment and any opinion submitted by the Consultative Committee and may approve the amendment.

5. The text of any amendment approved by the Committee of Ministers in accordance with paragraph 4 of this article shall be forwarded to the Parties for acceptance.

6. Any amendment approved in accordance with paragraph 4 of this article shall come into force on the thirtieth day after all Parties have informed the Secretary General of their acceptance thereof.

### CHAPTER VII—FINAL CLAUSES

#### Article 22

##### *Entry into force*

1. This convention shall be open for signature by the member States of the Council of Europe. It is subject to ratification, acceptance or approval. Instruments of ratification, acceptance or approval shall be deposited with the Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

2. This convention shall enter into force on the first day of the month following the expiration of a period of three months after the date on which five member States of the Council of Europe have expressed their consent to be bound by the convention in accordance with the provisions of the preceding paragraph.

3. In respect of any member State which subsequently expresses its consent to be bound by it, the convention shall enter into force on the first day of the month following the expiration of a period of three months after the date of the deposit of the instrument of ratification, acceptance or approval.

#### Article 23

##### *Accession by non-member States*

1. After the entry into force of this convention, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe may invite any State not a member of the Council of Europe to accede to this convention by a decision taken by the majority provided for in Article 20.d of the Statute of the Council of Europe and by the unanimous vote of the representatives of the Contracting States entitled to sit on the committee.

2. In respect of any acceding State, the convention shall enter into force on the first day of the month following the expiration of a period of three months after the date of deposit of the instrument of accession with the Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

#### Article 24

##### *Territorial clause*

1. Any State may at the time of signature or when depositing its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, specify the territory or territories to which this convention shall apply.

2. Any State may at any later date, by a declaration addressed to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, extend the application of this convention to any other territory specified in the declaration. In respect of such territory the convention shall enter into force on the first day of the month following the expiration of a period of three months after the date of receipt of such declaration by the Secretary General.

3. Any declaration made under the two preceding paragraphs may, in respect of any territory specified in such declaration be withdrawn by a notification addressed to the Secretary General. The withdrawal shall become effective on the first day of the month following the expiration of a period of six months after the date of receipt of such notification by the Secretary General.

#### Article 25

##### *Reservations*

No reservation may be made in respect of the provisions of this convention.

#### Article 26

##### *Denunciation*

1. Any Party may at any time denounce this convention by means of a notification addressed to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

2. Such denunciation shall become effective on the first day of the month following the expiration of a period of six months after the date of receipt of the notification by the Secretary General.

Article 27

*Notifications*

The Secretary General of the Council of Europe shall notify the member States of the Council and any State which has acceded to this convention of:

- a. any signature;
- b. the deposit of any instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession;
- c. any date of entry into force of this convention in accordance with Articles 22, 23 and 24;
- d. any other act, notification or communication relating to this convention.

In witness whereof the undersigned, being duly authorised thereto, have signed this Convention.

Done at Strasbourg, the 28th day of January 1981, in English and in French, both texts being equally authoritative, in a single copy which shall remain deposited in the archives of the Council of Europe. The Secretary General of the Council of Europe shall transmit certified copies to each member State of the Council of Europe and to any State invited to accede to this Convention.

*Section 9.*

SECOND SCHEDULE

THE DATA PROTECTION COMMISSIONER

F65[...]

*Section 16 (1) (a).*

THIRD SCHEDULE

PUBLIC AUTHORITIES AND OTHER BODIES AND PERSONS

F69[...]



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*Number 25 of 1988*

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**DATA PROTECTION ACT 1988**  
**REVISED**  
**Updated to 10 November 2025**

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**About this Revised Act**

This Revised Act presents the text of the Act as it has been amended since enactment, and preserves the format in which it was passed.

**Related legislation**

***Data Protection Acts 1988 to 2018***: this Act is one of a group of Acts included in this collective citation (*Data Protection Act 2018* (s. 1(2))). The Acts in the group are:

- *Data Protection Act 1988* (25/1988)
- *Data Protection Act 2003* (6/2003)
- *Data Protection Act 2018* (7/2018)

**Annotations**

This Revised Act is not annotated and only shows textual amendments. An annotated version of this revision is also available which shows textual and non-textual amendments and their sources. It also shows editorial notes including statutory instruments made pursuant to the Act and previous affecting provisions.

**Material not updated in this revision**

Where other legislation is amended by this Act, those amendments may have been superseded by other amendments in other legislation, or the amended legislation may have been repealed or revoked. This information is not represented in this revision but will be reflected in a revision of the amended legislation if one is available. A list of legislative changes to any Act, and to statutory instruments from 1972, may be found linked from the page of the Act or statutory instrument at [www.irishstatutebook.ie](http://www.irishstatutebook.ie).