

10th Meeting of Central and Eastern European Data Protection Authorities

Kazimierz Dolny, June 3rd 2008

Declaration on the equal treatment of all national languages of European Union Member States

Having regard to the fact that many countries from Central and Eastern Europe have been Member States of the European Union for over four years;

Having regard to the fact that the countries of Central and Eastern Europe which are European Union Member States enjoy all the rights inherent in European Union membership and that the Data Protection Authorities of those countries should also be able to fully enjoy such rights;

Having regard to the fact that the level of personal data protection in the EU Member States from Central and Eastern Europe is comparable with the level in other EU countries, given the fact that in the new Member States data protection issues are still very alive and important for the society;

Having regard to the fact that the EU Member States from Central and Eastern Europe have unique experiences related to the implementation of data protection principles in the new legal orders, resulting from excellent cooperation between our countries, and to the importance of sharing this unique knowledge with other entities concerned;

Having regard to the fact that it is of great importance to us, as to Data Protection Commissioners from other EU countries, to participate in the works of EU institutions, and that such membership must be related to full exercise of our rights;

Having regard to the fact that individual requests have not brought desired results;

We, the undersigned Data Protection Commissioners,

jointly apply:

- to the Chairman of the Article 29 Working Party on the Protection of Individuals with regard to the Processing of Personal Data, and to the European Commission, for enabling us to fully exercise the rights inherent in us, as we notice with regret that this is still not the case with regard to our countries – a case in point being the failure to ensure interpretation during the plenary meetings of Article 29 Working Party into the languages of the EU Member States which acceded to the European Union in 2004 and 2007;
- for ensuring an opportunity for each EU Member State to express itself in its national language, which is currently not the case for EU Member States from Central and Eastern Europe. We would like to clearly underline that in the case of other authorities in whose works we participate, the problem has already been solved. For instance, during the meetings of Joint Supervisory Authorities, interpretation into national languages of all EU Member States is ensured;
- to the Chairman of the Article 29 Working Party, and to the European Commission, for the prompt adoption of necessary measures to improve the current situation;
- for ensuring interpretation into all national languages or, having regard to the financial constraints highlighted by the European Commission, for limiting the interpretations to those to and from English in order to avoid arbitrary selection of the languages of interpretation and to ensure the equal treatment of the national languages of all European Union Member States.