



**GPA**

Global Privacy Assembly

# Member Welcome Kit

[globalprivacyassembly.org](https://globalprivacyassembly.org)



# Content

<b>CHAPTER I: WELCOME TO THE GLOBAL PRIVACY ASSEMBLY (GPA)</b>	<b>2</b>
Section 1: A brief history of the GPA	2
Section 2: GPA Strategic Direction, Vision & Mission	3
<b>CHAPTER II: GPA STRUCTURE</b>	<b>4</b>
Section 3: GPA Executive Committee	4
Section 4: GPA Member Authorities	5
Section 5: GPA Observers	5
<b>CHAPTER III: GPA WORK IN PRACTICE</b>	<b>6</b>
Section 6: GPA Working Groups and brief summary of their activity	6
Section 7: International Enforcement Cooperation: Tools for your cooperation in practice with other GPA members	6
Section 8: GPA Rules & Procedures	8
Section 9: GPA Resolutions	8
Section 10: GPA Key dates	8
<b>CHAPTER III: MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR MEMBERSHIP</b>	<b>9</b>
Section 11: Benefits and opportunities	9
Section 12: GPA Resource repository	9
Section 13: Useful contacts	10

# Welcome to the Global Privacy Assembly

We would like to extend a warm welcome to all new member authorities of the Global Privacy Assembly (GPA). This Welcome Kit is aimed at providing capacity building advice and institutional guidance on privacy and data protection regulatory matters, as well as representing a handbook on the GPA structure, functioning and useful contacts.

The Welcome Kit was an initiative of the 40th conference in 2018, as the Assembly grows significantly across many global regions, and it is intended for distribution spontaneously to all new members by email.

We hope you enjoy reading through the Welcome Kit. If you have any queries or require any further information, please contact the Secretariat at [secretariat@globalprivacyassembly.org](mailto:secretariat@globalprivacyassembly.org)

## A brief history of the GPA

The Global Privacy Assembly (GPA), originally named as the International Conference of Data Protection and Privacy Commissioners (ICDPPC), is the premier global forum for data protection and privacy authorities. The GPA first met in 1979, and has continued to provide leadership at an international level in data protection and privacy for more than four decades.

The GPA has grown substantially and now connects the efforts of more than 130 privacy and data protection authorities from across the globe.

Global data protection policy issues generate a number of work projects which continue throughout the year in the GPA, culminating in resolutions to be adopted for the following year and statements addressed to governments and policymakers presented at the highly successful annual conference.



[Read more about GPA's history](#)

The purposes of the GPA are:

- a. To promote and enhance internationally personal data protection and privacy rights.
- b. To improve data protection and privacy by providing a forum that encourages dialogue, cooperation and information sharing.
- c. To draft and adopt joint resolutions and declarations on subjects that warrant the common interest or concern of the accredited members, and promote their implementation.
- d. To be a meeting point between accredited members and other international fora or organisations that share common objectives.
- e. To encourage and facilitate cooperation and the exchange of information among accredited members, in particular regarding enforcement actions.
- f. To promote the development of international standards in the field of protection of personal data.

# GPA Strategic Direction, Vision & Mission

## VISION

“An environment in which privacy and data protection authorities around the world are able effectively to act to fulfil their mandates, both individually and in concert, through diffusion of knowledge and supportive connections.”

This vision is part of the [GPA Strategic Plan](#) that also includes a mission statement, strategic priorities and an action plan, which was adopted in 2019 at the 41st ICDPPC in Tirana, Albania.

## MISSION

The Assembly seeks:

- To be an outstanding global forum for privacy and data protection authorities.
- To disseminate knowledge, and provide practical assistance, to help authorities more effectively to perform their mandates.
- To provide leadership at international level in data protection and privacy.
- To connect and support efforts at domestic and regional level, and in other international forums, to enable authorities better to protect and promote privacy and data protection.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2019 – 2021

### 1. Advancing Global Privacy in a Digital Age

- Work towards a global regulatory environment with clear and consistently high standards of data protection.

### 2. Maximising the Assembly's voice and influence

- Enhance the Assembly's role and voice in wider digital policy.
- Strengthen relationships with other international bodies and networks advancing data protection and privacy issues, including through observer arrangements.

### 3. Capacity Building for the Assembly and its Members

- Support Members' shared learning from experiences, strategies and best practice from around the world, including cooperation tools.

# GPA Structure

## GPA Executive Committee

The GPA is led by a seven-member governance body, the Executive Committee, which consists of the elected Chair of the Assembly, four other elected members, the member state hosting the current conference and the member state that hosted the previous year's conference. These members, representing national authorities, will be elected by the Closed Session of the Assembly for two-year terms.

To the extent possible and to encourage diversity in the cultural, geographic and legal background of the Executive Committee, at least one member – and no more than two members – will be elected from each of the following four regions: Africa/Middle East, the Americas, Asia/Oceania and Europe.

The Chair of the Assembly has a crucial role in that he/she can provide a steer for the Executive Committee and the wider membership of the Assembly in order

to develop a coherent approach and bold international agenda in the age of borderless data flows.

This Executive Committee provides leadership for the Assembly and ensures the attainment of the Assembly goals.

The Executive Committee meets at least twice annually, in person or by video/teleconference, with three members required to constitute a quorum.

The GPA Secretariat is provided by the current Chair of the Assembly, Elizabeth Denham CBE, UK Information Commissioner, with a permanent website which acts as a central archive of the Assembly's documentation. The current Secretariat is based in the International Engagement department at the UK Information Commissioner's Office.



[View the current Executive Committee](#)

## Functions of the Executive Committee

a. To implement the decisions of the Assembly.

aa. To provide leadership to the Assembly in attaining its strategic goals.

b. To ensure the application of the resolutions of the Closed Session.

c. To seek proposals from member authorities by a specified deadline to host or co-host the annual conference; to evaluate such proposals; and to recommend a hosting or co-hosting

authority to the members of the Assembly with sufficient time to allow the selected hosting or co-hosting authority to execute orderly preparations.

i. If no member objects within a period designated by the Executive Committee, the recommendation will become the decision of the Assembly.

ii. If any member objects, the Executive Committee will as soon as practicable arrange for a membership electronic vote on the recommendation.

- d. To assist the Hosting Authority in organising the next annual conference.
- e. To draft press releases, statements and any other media resources.
- f. To appoint, for renewable two-year terms, representatives of the Assembly to attend and report back from those fora and/or international organisations in which the Assembly has observer status or to which the Assembly may be invited to attend. Insofar as possible, the delegates shall be representing different cultural, geographic and legal backgrounds.
- g. Recommend the accreditation of new Members or Observers.
- h. Consider requests to review the status of Member or Observers.
- i. To maintain a permanent Assembly website as a repository for Assembly documentation.
- j. To keep Members informed of the work of the Executive Committee.
- k. To ensure that processes are in place to support the operation of the Global Cross Border Enforcement Cooperation Arrangement.

## List of Member Authorities

The GPA is an entity in its own right representing the collective accredited members. Supervisory authorities that meet the criteria as set out under article 5.1 in the Assembly's [Rules and Procedures](#) can apply to be members.

The current membership consists of approximately 130 data protection and privacy commissioners who come together to share knowledge and skills, providing leadership and disseminating learning, with more joining each year.

[View the full list of member authorities.](#)

## List of Observers

Specific entities and organisations can take part in the Assembly with an Observer status. This may be granted for a particular annual meeting or for a period of time covering more than one annual meeting as set out under article 5.3 of the Assembly's [Rules and Procedures](#).

[View the full list of Observer authorities.](#)

# GPA Work in Practice

## Working Groups and their activities

The GPA membership is organised into Working Groups that concentrate on the more significant Assembly initiatives identified by the membership, deriving their mandate and direction from the Closed Session, typically leading from the Assembly Resolutions.

Observers can be invited to participate in Working Groups on an ad hoc basis. Participation is voluntary. Working Groups are chaired by one or more member authority, and can come from the same or different regions. Working Group Chairs encourage participation from all regions and insofar as possible, a Working Group's members represent different cultural, geographic and legal backgrounds.

Working Groups typically operate for a single year and their work culminates in a report given to the Closed Session of the annual conference. However, the Executive Committee is kept informed of their progress throughout.

Working Groups may be temporary or permanent, as stated at the time of their establishment.

Current Working Groups are:

- Ethics and Data Protection in Artificial Intelligence
- Digital Education
- Digital Citizen and Consumers
- International Enforcement Cooperation
- Future of the Conference
- Data Protection Metrics

Would you like to join a Working Group? Any member can join a Working Group. Please contact the Secretariat at [secretariat@globalprivacyassembly.org](mailto:secretariat@globalprivacyassembly.org) to be put in touch with the relevant Working Group coordinator.

You can view the Working Group Reports on our [website](#), as well as their [Quarterly Stocktake Reports to the Executive Committee](#).

## Tools for cooperation with other GPA members

The international enforcement cooperation tools can help GPA members advance their knowledge in many areas, including:

- Understanding members' respective enforcement powers and how they differ to other authorities.
- Assisting in identifying which other members are able to cooperate on a cross-border investigation.
- Deepening cooperation via relevant agreements between authorities.
- Identifying other sectoral regulators of importance to cooperate with, e.g. financial, competition, etc.
- Discovering opportunities to avoid duplication in investigations running in two or more jurisdictions.

Significant work has been done by Privacy Enforcement Authorities, both bilaterally and multilaterally, to improve cooperation, particularly in the areas of enforcement and investigation, by concentrating in the first instance on practical measures that the authorities can take. Those authorities whose legislation already enables cooperation are, in fact, cooperating increasingly, in different ways, which has yielded great successes.

However, legal barriers still exist for some authorities, either with respect to their ability, or breadth of that ability, to cooperate.

The GPA has long been an active proponent of enforcement cooperation among its members. A number of historic [resolutions](#) at the annual conferences have focussed on this and advanced members' collective thinking on this important topic.

The GPA website features a section dedicated to enforcement cooperation which also links to the [enforcement cooperation tools](#), such as the Key Principles on Cooperation, and the Global Cross Border Enforcement Cooperation Arrangement.

One particularly important resource which can serve as a useful starting point for new members, and which was developed by members of the GPA community is the [Handbook on International Enforcement Cooperation](#).

### **Are you thinking of running a workshop or seminar on enforcement cooperation?**

The GPA can also endorse and promote members' enforcement cooperation events.

The Secretariat developed guidance for authorities submitting a proposal to host a GPA-recognised Enforcement Cooperation meeting which is available on our [website](#).

In addition, the Secretariat has prepared [suggestions](#) for organising a successful GPA-recognised enforcement cooperation meeting.

You can contact the Secretariat at [secretariat@globalprivacyassembly.org](mailto:secretariat@globalprivacyassembly.org) to find out more about how to obtain recognition for your event.

### **Would you like to reach out to other authorities who have worked on advancing enforcement cooperation?**

A list of previous events recognised by the GPA can be found [here](#).

The most recent work on international enforcement cooperation was undertaken by the GPA Working Group on International Enforcement Cooperation in 2017-2019.

For more information, you can contact the Secretariat at [secretariat@globalprivacyassembly.org](mailto:secretariat@globalprivacyassembly.org) to be put in touch with the authorities from the Netherlands and the United Kingdom which are the most recent Co-chairs of that working group.

## Rules & Procedures

The Rules & Procedures express the GPA's purposes and set out its governance arrangements and the processes for its annual meetings and ancillary matters. The Rules and Procedures as consolidated in their present form took effect in October 2018.

A consolidated version of the Rules and Procedures, incorporating amendments has been compiled by the Secretariat and is available [here](#).

## Resolutions

The GPA began routinely adopting and publishing resolutions in 2003, when firm procedures for submitting and adopting resolutions were in place.

Members or Working Groups may submit proposed resolutions or declarations to the Chair of the Executive Committee, with a copy to the Hosting Authority for consideration at the Closed Session of the annual conference.

Proposed resolutions or declarations must have at least four other co-sponsors, representing insofar as possible, different cultural, geographic and legal backgrounds.

Proposed resolutions or declarations are circulated to all GPA Members in advance for review and for the proposal of amendments, and following debate and Q&A in the Closed Session of the annual conference, it will be voted on by accredited members.

Proposed resolutions or declarations should be:

- clearly and concisely expressed;
- address matters that are sufficiently related to the purposes of the GPA;
- an offer of enduring guidance or contributing to public debate on matters related to data protection of privacy rights; and
- made available in English and the language of other major linguistic communities.

View more information on [Adopted Resolutions](#).

**Declarations and communiques** have been released by the hosts of various annual conferences both before and since the establishment of formal criteria and rules for adoption of resolutions. These differ from resolutions in that they often have not been debated by GPA Members, nor voted upon, but instead seek to celebrate and mark the event and reflect the spirit of the presentations and discussions.

View more information on [Declarations & Communiques](#).

## Key dates

The GPA website has an [Events Calendar](#) which provides information on upcoming events of interest to the membership.

# Making the most of your membership

## Benefits and opportunities

We welcome new members to the Global Privacy Assembly (GPA) and hope that the information contained so far has helped with your understanding of its role and work.

We have included a list of new members below, as the GPA wishes to encourage the creation of 'Buddy Groups' – a list of authorities prepared to provide guidance to new members on how to make the most of the membership opportunities available. This project is currently being set up and this section will be updated in due course.

List of New Members:

- Chilean Transparency Council, Chile
- Commission Nationale pour la Protection des Données à Caractère Personnel, Gabon
- Data Protection Commissioner, OECD
- Autorità Garante per la protezione dei dati personali, San Marino
- National Agency for the Protection of Personal Data, Sao Tome and Principe

For more information or if you wish to take part in the 'Buddy Groups' project, please contact the Secretariat at [secretariat@globalprivacyassembly.org](mailto:secretariat@globalprivacyassembly.org)

## Resource repository

Members have offered some golden nuggets from their knowledge bank of resources in the list below which they believe might offer some assistance to new authorities which are just starting up.

The 2019 conference also presented ideas on management strategies of data protection authorities.

You can find a variety of ideas about good practice undertaken by other member authorities in the GPA community by visiting our roundup of the Global Privacy and Data Protection Awards entries [here](#).

Finally, the GPA website [resources page](#) also enables access to the World Legal Information Institute (WorldLII) Privacy Law Library.

The International Privacy Law Library is the world's largest freely available online searchable database of privacy cases in one place.

## Contacting your member community

If you wish to contact another authority member, have you seen the list of [GPA accredited members](#)? Many members have a social media presence, so you can also follow them via these [channels](#).

You can also see the [Working Groups section](#) for a list of the relevant coordinators in charge of activities in each Working Group.

You can also contact the Secretariat at [secretariat@globalprivacyassembly.org](mailto:secretariat@globalprivacyassembly.org) which can assist you in making contact to a particular authority.

## Other networks

The GPA as the premier global forum for data protection and privacy authorities has established collaborative relationships with other networks, for example, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), Global Privacy Enforcement Network (GPEN) and Asia-Pacific Privacy Authorities (APPA).

Moreover, the data protection authority members of the GPA also participate in a variety of networks of different kinds whether focussed on a specific regulatory/enforcement topic (e.g. border enforcement and telecommunications) and these exist at different geographic levels, either regionally, or globally.

In addition, the GPA has formal reciprocal observer arrangements with the following; APEC Electronic Commerce Steering Group (ECSG), OECD Data Privacy Committee, Council of Europe Committee of Convention 108 and the UN Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee.

Some privacy and data protection networks are also arranged on the basis of common language or cultural affinities.

Privacy and data protection authorities work together in specialist areas like cross-border enforcement and telecommunications.

Specialist networks can involve GPA member authorities. Some of these networks involve only member authorities while others include participation of other experts, government representatives or enforcement authorities.

More information can be found about this range of networks on our [website](#). While the GPA works closely with some of these networks, it should not be assumed that there is an established relationship between the GPA and these other networks in all instances.