

**Declaration adopted at the  
Conference of European Data Protection Authorities  
in Budapest from 24 to 25 April 2006**

Expanding the crossborder exchange of information, subject to the principle of availability, as part of the co-operation between police and judicial authorities at EU level has become the focus of discussions within Europe.

In this context, the Conference of European Data Protection Authorities reminds Member States that the sharing of personal information between their law enforcement authorities is permissible only on the basis of data protection regulations ensuring a high and harmonized data protection standard in all participating states. Already in its declaration adopted at the Krakow conference on 26 April 2005 the Conference pointed out that the existing legal instruments of the Community on data protection were too general to provide effective data protection in the field of law enforcement. Therefore, the Conference welcomed the proposal of the EU Commission to harmonize and strengthen data protection by police and judicial authorities.

There is no alternative to creating a high and harmonized data protection standard in the EU Third Pillar. This is a logical consequence of the Hague Programme, according to which the safeguarding of freedom, security and justice are indivisible elements of an overall task of the whole EU. Only then will it be possible to maintain a reasonable balance between the existing and future forms of information sharing between EU law enforcement authorities, and to comply with the principle of proportionality in safeguarding the security of the EU citizens on the one hand and civil liberties in an area of freedom, security and justice on the other. The Conference hopes that the parliaments – both the European Parliament and the national representative bodies - will exert their influence on the governments of the EU Member States to this effect. The Conference expects Member State governments to respect and strengthen the civil liberties of the citizens who live here when expanding the possibilities for information exchange among Member States' security agencies. The Conference sees an urgent need to adopt and apply relevant data protection provisions as soon as possible.