



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

## **PROTECTION OF YOUR PERSONAL DATA**

**This privacy statement provides information about the processing and the protection of your personal data.**

**Processing operation:** *Coordination, organisation and management of the EU Bhutan Business Forum, taking place in Brussels, Frankfurt and Prague on 26-29 January 2026.*

**Data Controller:** European Commission, Directorate-General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA), Unit C.2

**Record reference:** DPR-EC-1063

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## 1. Introduction

The European Commission is committed to protect your personal data and to respect your privacy. The Commission collects and further processes personal data pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data.

This privacy statement explains the reason for the processing of your personal data in the context of the *EU Bhutan Business Forum* undertaken by Directorate-General for International Partnership (hereinafter referred as 'INTPA'), unit C2. It explains the way we collect, handle and ensure protection of all personal data provided, how that information is used and what rights you have in relation to your personal data. It also specifies the contact details of the responsible Data Controller with whom you may exercise your rights, the Data Protection Officer and the European Data Protection Supervisor.

The information in relation to the processing of personal data linked to the *EU Bhutan Business Forum* organised by the services of the European Commission, is presented below.

## 2. Why and how do we process your personal data?

Purpose of the processing operation: DG INTPA Unit C2, collects and further processes your personal data to provide you with information about EU Bhutan Business Forum (before, during and after) and to process your application for participation in that event.

Audio-visual recording at the event of the speakers, organisers and participants, as well as photographs of the speakers and panoramic photographs of participants and organisers will be taken and published in the context of the EU Bhutan Business Forum at INTPA Europa Webpage, social media, and/or for media distribution.

Specifically, the collection and further processing of personal data is necessary:

- i. For gaining access to and participating in the forum and its activities: The personal data listed under Heading 4 below will be collected by the European Commission (DG INTPA Unit C2)'s contractor (GOPA PACE) for registering on the online platform of the EU Bhutan Business Forum. The contractor (GOPA PACE), entrusted with the event management will send out emails to registered participants regarding their participation, including logistics. This entails the management of contact lists for correspondence.
- ii. For ex ante promotion purposes: Personal data of speakers as well as moderators will be published on the EU Bhutan Business Forum site, and on the Forum's social media platforms, managed by DG INTPA Unit C2, and websites of the European Commission Directorate-General for international partnerships (DG INTPA); hence accessible to third parties.
- iii. For ex post communication and promotion purposes: Audio-visual recording at the business forum of the speakers, moderators, organisers and participants, as well as photographs of the speakers and panoramic and/or individual photographs of participants and organisers will be taken and published in the context of the business

forum. Participants may therefore appear on *panoramic* photographs of the whole event/audience on the website and the social media pages of the business forum.

The taking of *individual* photographs and their publication on the Forum's social networks and websites is subject to your consent only.

- iv. To facilitate the exchange information and documents related to the forum and sharing information with the other entities (EU member states, Royal Government of Bhutan, European Commission) for communication purposes, internal overview of events, communicating about future events;
- v. To facilitate visa: Participants who are entitled to hotel/flight facilitation will be asked to provide their passport details, which will be shared by the contractor/processor GOPA PACE and hotel/airlines providers, where applicable;
- vi. For follow-up purposes: such as drafting reports and sharing of the list of participants;
- vii. For statistical and analytical purposes: personal data on participant's gender and position might be used to generate key performance indicators.
- viii. To facilitate matchmaking activities between registered participants: Participants will have the possibility to participate in matchmaking activities managed by the European Commission and facilitated by GOPA PACE and EventsAir. If participants decide to share additional personal information during the matchmaking interaction, it will be under their own responsibility.
- ix. For future mailing purposes (e.g., for receiving invitations to similar events).

The audience or non-speaker participants are not photographed individually or in groups. They may however appear on panoramic photographs of the whole event/audience.

Participants that do not wish to be part of the above web-streaming and recording/publishing activities have the possibility to object to processing by indicating that they do not accept to be photographed close-range during the event during the registration process. They will be sitting in the dedicated area marked for participants who don't want to be filmed.

If you want to object and do not wish to be part of the above mentioned streaming and recording/publishing activities do not accept to be photographed close-range during or send any question, you can do so by sending an email to [eubhutanforum@gopa.eu](mailto:eubhutanforum@gopa.eu)

Your personal data will not be used for any automated decision-making including profiling UNLESS you have voluntarily taken part in the B2B matchmaking activity through the EU-Bhutan Business Forum. In that case, your data might be used for an automated decision-making, including profiling, to offer you suitable company profiles to contact.

<b>3. On what legal ground(s) do we process your personal data?</b>
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The processing operations on personal data, linked to the organisation, management, follow-up and promotion of the *event* (including photos, audio-visual recording) are necessary for the management and functioning of the Commission, as mandated by the Treaties. Those provisions are in particular Article 11 of the Treaty on European Union and Article 15 of the Treaty on the

Functioning of the European Union. Consequently, those processing operations are lawful under Article 5(1)(a) of Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 (processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the Union institution or body). Article 4(4) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union<sup>1</sup> (TFEU) provides that the Union shall have competence to carry out activities and conduct a common policy in the area of development cooperation. Article 208 of the TFEU provides that Union development cooperation shall have as its primary objective the eradication of poverty. Moreover, pursuant to Article 21(1) and (2) of the Treaty on the European Union<sup>2</sup> (TEU), to achieve this objective, the Union shall develop relations and build partnerships with third countries and pursue policies and actions in order to inter alia foster the sustainable economic, social and environmental development of developing countries and encourage the integration of all countries into the world economy. Engaging the private sector from the European Union and partner countries forms part of the European Commission activities to achieve its objectives. It has been an explicit integral part of the development agenda since 2011 and the Agenda for Change, and more recently of the Global Gateway strategy. Within the European Commission, DG INTPA is in charge of the European development policy in the wider framework of international cooperation. Finally, Article 15(1) TFEU foresees that in order to promote good governance and ensure the participation of civil society, the Union's institutions, bodies, offices and agencies shall conduct their work as openly as possible. Article 11(1) of the TEU stipulates that the institutions shall, by appropriate means, give citizens and representative associations the opportunity to make known and publicly exchange their views in all areas of Union action.

Moreover, pursuant to Article 58(2)(d) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509, the coordination and promotion of awareness on development issues appropriations are implemented by virtue of tasks deriving from the Commission's institutional prerogatives in line with the DG INTPA's political priorities and DG INTPA's communication strategy.

Moreover, the processing operations on personal data of the speakers with whom a contract is concluded, are carried out in line with the contractual provisions. Consequently, that processing is necessary and lawful under Article 5(1)(c) of Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 (processing is necessary for the performance of a contract to which the data subject is party or in order to take steps at the request of the data subject prior to entering into a contract).

Additionally, you have given your consent (in the meaning of Article 5(1)(d) of Regulation (EU) 2018/1725) to the processing of your personal data for one or more of the specific purposes listed below:

- ☐ the processing of your personal data relating to your dietary requirements and/or access requirements;
- ☐ the sharing of the *EU Bhutan Business Forum* participants list containing your name and affiliation with other participants
- ☐ the sharing of the meeting/event attendee list containing your name and affiliation among participants, in order to create working groups to continue the collaborate work launched during the meeting/event;
- ☐ the processing of your personal data for inviting you to future events the data controller may organise;

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<sup>1</sup> Consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (OJ C 202, 7.6.2016, p. 47).

<sup>2</sup> Consolidated version of the Treaty on the European Union (OJ C 202, 7.6.2016, p. 13).

- ☐ the recording and publication of your image (as well as videos) and voice on European Commission websites and social media, including INTPA Europa webpage, INTPA Intranet, Facebook, Instagram, etc. in the framework of the Forum communication activities and for promotion purposes, as per above;

If you opt-in, you are giving us your explicit consent under Article 5(1)(d) of Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 to process your personal data for those specific purposes. You can give your consent via a clear affirmative act by ticking the box(es) on the online registration form.

Your consent for these services can be withdrawn at any time:

- for withdrawing consent that you have provided in order to benefit from other services, please contact the controller of the meeting/event at [eubhutanforum@gopa.eu](mailto:eubhutanforum@gopa.eu)

#### **4. Which personal data do we collect and further process?**

The following personal data will be processed:

1. Data collected from all registered users/participants (mandatory):

- contact details (position/function/title, first name, last name, name of organisation, country, e-mail address);
- other required information to access premises and, where necessary, to facilitate Visa.
- Travel plans, where applicable.
- Sector of activity and type of organisation.

2. Personal data collected during the event:

- Photos
- Audio-video recordings

3. (Optional) Personal data from participants wishing to take part to the matchmaking in addition to the above:

- Preferred networking type;
- Photo;
- Bio;
- LinkedIn URL;

4. Personal data collected from moderators and speakers (in addition to the above):

- Biography
- Photo
- LinkedIn profile (including picture)

5. Any personal data voluntarily and spontaneously provided by you, regarding:

- dietary requests (if any)
- specific access requirements
- audio and/or visual material.

#### **5. How long do we keep your personal data?**

The Data Controller only keeps your personal data for the time necessary to fulfil the purpose of collection or further processing.

For each of the categories of personal data that is processed, please find below the retention details and the reference to the relevant record of processing:

- ☐ All personal data related to the organisation and management of the *EU Bhutan Business Forum* (this includes the information given during the registration, before, during or after the event) will be deleted **one year** after the last action in relation to the *event*.
- ☐ Sensitive personal data relating to dietary and/or access requirements will be deleted as soon as they are no longer necessary for the purpose for which they have been collected in the framework of the *EU Bhutan Business Forum* but no later than within **1 month** after the end of the *event*
- ☐ In case of audio-visual recording of the *event* the recordings will be kept for **3 months** after the *EU Bhutan Business Forum* before being deleted. More information is available in the Record of Processing DPR-EC-01937 (Audio-visual recording of meetings).
- ☐ Personal data shared with the data controller for future mailing purposes (e.g., for receiving newsletters or invitations to similar events) are processed inline with the Record of Processing DPR-EC-03928 (Management of subscriptions to receive information) and kept until a subscriber erases his/her account or unsubscribes from the mailing list or one week after receiving the request to unsubscribe.
- ☐ Audio-visual recordings of the web-streamed event are processed in line with the Record of Processing DPR-EC-00306 (Web-streaming of Commission events) and kept **2 years** after the event.
- ☐ Selected service providers for organisational purposes (such as caterers, travel agents or event management organisations) are contractually bound to process personal data on behalf of and in line with the instructions of the data controller, keep confidential any data they process and protect it from unauthorised access, use and retention.

#### **6. How do we protect and safeguard your personal data?**

All personal data in electronic format (e-mails, documents, databases, uploaded batches of data, etc.) are stored *either* on the servers of the European Commission *and of its contractors*. All processing operations are carried out pursuant to Commission Decision (EU, Euratom) 2017/46 of 10 January 2017 on the security of communication and information systems in the European Commission.

The Commission's contractors are bound by a specific contractual clause for any processing operations of your personal data on behalf of the Commission, and by the confidentiality obligations set out in Regulation (EU) 2018/1725.

In order to protect your personal data, the Commission has put in place a number of technical and organisational measures. Technical measures include appropriate actions to address online security, risk of data loss, alteration of data or unauthorised access, taking into consideration the risk presented by the processing and the nature of the personal data being processed. Organisational measures include restricting access to the personal data solely to authorised persons with a legitimate need to know for the purposes of this processing operation.

#### **7. Who has access to your personal data and to whom is it disclosed?**

Access to your personal data is provided to the Commission staff responsible for carrying out this processing operation and to other authorised Commission staff according to the "need to know" principle. Such staff abide by statutory, and when required, additional confidentiality agreements.

Where necessary, we may also share your information with service providers for the purposes of organising the *EU Bhutan Business Forum*:

- *GOPA PACE. Boulevard de la Woluwe 2, 1150 Brussels, Belgium, contractor and in charge of registration website via EventsAir.*
- EventsAir platform, Evert van de Beekstraat 354, 1118 CZ Luchthaven Schiphol, Noord-Holland, Netherlands, providing the forum with the registration platform and matchmaking software.

Moreover, moderators and panel speakers will have access to full name and email address of their respective panel participants only. This is necessary in order for the moderators and panellists to be able to contact each other, as the moderators will prepare the panel together with the panellists. Please note that moderators and panellists may come from non-EU/EEA countries.

Where relevant and only if required for the organisation and security of the event, your personal data may also be shared with the authorities of the event host EU countries (Kingdom of Belgium, Federal Republic of Germany, and the Czech Republic).

The general public will have access to the information displayed on the European Commission websites and social media including INTPA Europa webpage, Facebook, Instagram, etc. that are publicly available. Information about the event may be also displayed on INTPA Intranet.

The audience or non-speaker participants are not photographed individually or in groups. They may however appear on panoramic photographs of the whole event/audience. As explained, participants that do not wish to be part of the above web-streaming and recording/publishing activities have the possibility to object to processing by indicating that they do not accept to be photographed close-range during the event during the registration process. They will be sitting in the dedicated area marked for participants who don't want to be filmed.

## Cookies

Cookies are short text files stored on a user's device (such as a computer, tablet or phone) by a website. Cookies are used for the technical functioning of a website (functional cookies) or for gathering statistics (analytical cookies).

The third-party system used for this event, for hosting the event webpage, registration, and online networking activities, is GOPA PACE.

The cookies and tracking technologies employed by GOPA PACE on the registrant's device for that purpose are covered by the Privacy Policy of GOPA PACE, which is available [here](#).

The registration for the event takes place via the EventsAir platform and the data is stored in the European Union (the Netherlands).

When you visit the GOPA PACE/EventsAir website of our event and when you register, the site may collect information such as your browser history on the platform, session activity, and usage preferences. This information is retained according to GOPA PACE's retention policy and will be deleted or anonymised thereafter. GOPA PACE applies appropriate technical and organisational measures to ensure the security of this information.

Cookies are used by PACE to enable the proper functioning of the platform, to measure engagement and effectiveness of the event, and to provide a personalised experience for participants. Enabling these cookies is not strictly necessary for the platform to work, but it will improve your browsing and networking experience. You can delete or block these cookies through your browser settings, but some features of the event platform may not work as intended if cookies are disabled.

The cookie-related information collected by PACE is not used to personally identify participants without consent and is primarily used for functional, analytics, and personalisation purposes within the platform.

Should you wish to manage your cookie preferences or opt out of anonymised and aggregated statistics, you can do so via your browser settings or through the options provided in the EventsAir platform.

For further information please consult EVENTS AIR privacy policy (<https://www.eventsair.com/privacy>).

### Third party IT tools, including Social Media

We use third party IT tools to inform about and promote the *forum* through widely used communication channels, including the social media. For detailed information about the use of social media by the European Commission, see the Record of Processing DPR-EC-00073 (Social Media Use by the European Commission).

In order to protect your privacy, our use of third party IT tools to connect to those services does not set cookies when our website pages are loaded on your computer (or other devices), nor are you immediately redirected to those social media or other websites. Only in the event that you click on a button or “play” on a video to watch it, a cookie of the social media company concerned will be installed on your device. If you do not click on any social media buttons or videos, no cookies will be installed on your device by third parties.

In order to view such third-party content on our websites, a message will alert you that you need to accept those third parties’ specific Terms and Conditions, including their cookie policies, over which the Commission has no control.

More specifically, the Royal Government of Bhutan government will be part of the organisation of the Forum and might publish content on their social media and websites.

The use of a third party IT tool does not in any way imply that the European Commission endorses them or their privacy policies. In the event that one or more third party IT tools are occasionally unavailable, we accept no responsibility for lack of service due to their downtime.

### International transfers

Since the event is organised as a joint effort together with the Royal Government of Bhutan, the Royal Government of Bhutan will have access to and process your personal data.

The controller will transfer your personal data to the following recipients in a third country or to an international organisation in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2018/1725.

1. Royal Government of Bhutan

The controller will transfer your personal data (list of participants) based on:



- The derogation provided for in Article 50(1)(d) of Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 ‘the transfer is necessary for important reasons of public interest’;

Please note that pursuant to Article 3(13) of Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 public authorities (e.g. Court of Auditors, EU Court of Justice) which may receive personal data in the framework of a particular inquiry in accordance with Union or Member State law shall not be regarded as recipients. The further processing of those data by those public authorities shall be in compliance with the applicable data protection rules according to the purposes of the processing.

The information we collect will not be given to any third party, except to the extent and for the purpose we may be required to do so by law.

## **8. What are your rights and how can you exercise them?**

You have specific rights as a ‘data subject’ under Chapter III (Articles 14-25) of Regulation (EU) 2018/1725, in particular the right to access, your personal data and to rectify them in case your personal data are inaccurate or incomplete. Where applicable, you have the right to erase your personal data, to restrict the processing of your personal data, to object to the processing, and the right to data portability.

You have the right to object to the processing of your personal data, which is lawfully carried out pursuant to Article 5(1)(a) of Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 on grounds relating to your particular situation.

You have consented to provide your personal data to the data controller for the present processing operation. You can withdraw your consent at any time by notifying the data controller [eubhutanforum@gopa.eu](mailto:eubhutanforum@gopa.eu). The withdrawal of your consent will not affect the lawfulness of the processing carried out before you have withdrawn the consent.

You can exercise your rights by contacting the data controller, or in case of conflict the Data Protection Officer. If necessary, you can also address the European Data Protection Supervisor. Their contact information is given under Heading 9 below.

Where you wish to exercise your rights in the context of one or several specific processing operations, please provide their description (i.e. their Record reference(s) as specified under Heading 10 below) in your request.

## **9. Contact information**

### **- The Data Controller**

If you would like to exercise your rights under Regulation (EU) 2018/1725, or if you have comments, questions or concerns, or if you would like to submit a complaint regarding the collection and use of your personal data, please feel free to contact the Data Controller: Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development, *Unit C2 (INTPA-C2@ec.europa.eu)*

### **- The Data Protection Officer (DPO) of the Commission**

You may contact the Data Protection Officer ([DATA-PROTECTION-OFFICER@ec.europa.eu](mailto:DATA-PROTECTION-OFFICER@ec.europa.eu)) with regard to issues related to the processing of your personal data under Regulation (EU) 2018/1725.

- **The European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS)**

You have the right to have recourse (i.e. you can lodge a complaint) to the European Data Protection Supervisor ([edps@edps.europa.eu](mailto:edps@edps.europa.eu)) if you consider that your rights under Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 have been infringed as a result of the processing of your personal data by the data controller.

<b>10. Where to find more detailed information?</b>
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The Commission Data Protection Officer (DPO) publishes the register of all processing operations on personal data by the European Commission, which have been documented and notified to him. You may access the register via the following link: <http://ec.europa.eu/dpo-register>.