



## FACTSHEET #1

# YOUR DATA AND YOUR RIGHTS

### WHY DO YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR DATA AND YOUR RIGHTS?

It's stored on websites and social media platforms; it's held by employers, doctors, schools, authorities, and many others. In today's world, your personal data is found in lots of different places. Fortunately for European citizens, there are regulations to ensure that **you control who has access to your data** - and how they can use it. This factsheet introduces these rights, and explains how you can use them to ensure your personal data is not misused.

### KEY MESSAGES

- Your personal data is **your data** - in the EU, you have rights that provide protection about how your data is used.
- Many of these rights are outlined in the **General Data Protection Regulation**, better known as the **GDPR** (see factsheet #2).
- These rights apply to **all citizens living in the EU**, regardless of who they are, where they live or what they do.
- By exercising these rights, you can make sure your **personal data is private** and not used in ways you are unhappy with.

### VULNERABLE PEOPLE, DATA AND RIGHTS

Vulnerable people have the same rights regarding personal data as everyone else. However, they often face **additional barriers to exercising these rights**, and their data is more open to misuse. For example, sick people cannot always give consent to their personal data being used, or may give consent too easily if they think it is necessary for them to receive medical care. Vulnerable people need specific safeguards regarding their personal data; factsheet #9 provides more information on this.

### THE RIGHT TO BE FORGOTTEN

The 'right to be forgotten' is one of many legal protections that citizens have under the GDPR. Officially known as the 'right of erasure', it means that anyone can request that an online search engine (e.g. Google) must **remove certain information** about them in the results it displays. You can exercise this right by contacting the search engine directly. However, there are some circumstances in which they **may not** have to



remove all information about you. This website has more information: <https://bit.ly/3qgTFC8> and a template form: <https://bit.ly/3xJjopd>

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Familiarise yourself with the GDPR to understand how your personal data is legally protected; factsheet #2 is a good starting point.
- Reduce the amount of personal data held about you: for example, do not fill in optional fields in online forms, and unsubscribe from emails or websites you no longer use.
- Use secure passwords when you register with a website, and store them in a password manager.
- The free online course, 'Your right to privacy online' provides a step-by-step guide to this subject: <https://bit.ly/3j5oqbB>

### FIND OUT MORE

**READ:** The PANELFIT Guidelines provide in-depth analysis about a wide range of issues around personal data and how to ensure it is used ethically and legally: [www.panelfit.eu/](http://www.panelfit.eu/)

**WATCH:** Several of PANELFIT's monthly chats provide further details on personal data and privacy: [www.panelfit.eu/canal-youtube/](http://www.panelfit.eu/canal-youtube/)