

Focus Dutch Data Protection Authority 2020-2023

Data protection in a digital society

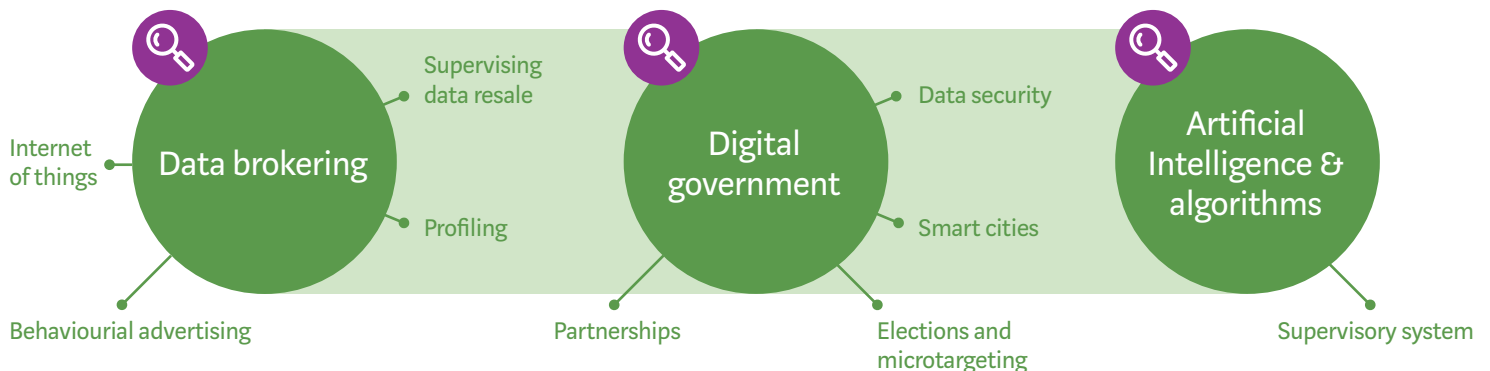
The Dutch Data Protection Authority (DPA) is the independent supervisory body in the Netherlands that promotes and monitors the protection of personal data.

What trends do we see?



What are our focus areas?

We have selected three focus areas, topics that relate directly to our mission and to the trends above. These focus areas are wide-ranging topics that apply to multiple sectors and where we can make a difference by marking out the boundaries of what is and what is not permitted under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). In the years ahead we will pay extra attention to the focus areas, without losing sight of other developments or our statutory task.



Data brokering

Data applications are making products and services increasingly smart. In turn, these products and services produce more data. This has benefits, but also downsides: unauthorised resale of personal data to third parties is on the rise.

Digital government

Both central and local governments, but also police and criminal justice authorities and other administrative bodies often have access to large quantities of personal data, often sensitive or special in nature. It is important that the government takes a responsible approach to the use of this data.

AI & algorithms

More and more companies and organisations are using algorithms and artificial intelligence (AI). This can be beneficial and lead to useful new applications. But it also poses risks and can have damaging effects.

What do we do?

To make sure we address the right problems, we take a risk-based approach to our supervision. This means that in our supervisory activities we make judgments and decisions in a methodical and considered manner. We will focus on issues that carry a high risk for the public. An important consideration in this regard is how much data is involved and how sensitive that data is. Depending on our assessment, we use one or more supervisory instruments, such as explaining standards, legislative advice, providing information, issuing reprimands and enforcing rules. We do this together with our European counterparts.

Much of the comfort in our lives we owe to technology and digitalisation. We all carry a smartphone around with us, and more and more people are using smart meters, smart speakers and devices with voice recognition. We are increasingly using online services, from banking to tax returns to finding a partner.

All these devices and services gather personal data, meaning they know more and more about us. Given all the information that is now gathered from our searches and messages, it is hardly surprising that some people feel that search engines and social media platforms know us better than our own family and friends do. The vast amount of data available makes it possible to determine our sexual preference, the political party we vote for, how often we visit our doctor or specialist and what we spend our money on. In other words, more and more information is being recorded about our personal lives without us knowing exactly what is being done with that data and who has access to it. This is making us and our democracy more vulnerable.

In our digital society personal data protection is essential. That is why the right to personal data protection is included in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. It is an important fundamental right that was put in place to protect us from misuse of data. In essence, this is about control, autonomy and ensuring that we as citizens can determine for ourselves what we share and with whom. In short, the fundamental right to privacy is intended to prevent the foundations of our legal order, our free will and our autonomy from being eroded.

The Dutch Data Protection Authority (DPA) plays a key role in this. The DPA is the independent supervisory body in the Netherlands that promotes and enforces personal data protection rights. We are part of a European network of supervisory authorities. Our field of work is broad, encompassing supervision of national and international businesses and organisations, all of central government (including the police and the criminal justice authorities), as well as associations, schools, foundations and individual citizens. Since data goes beyond borders, we work internationally, which means our supervisory activities are a perfect example of cross-border operations. Together with our European counterparts we provide information, conduct research and impose fines on companies and organisations that fail to comply with the law. In order to boost prosperity and comfort, we want to ensure scope for innovation. We believe that innovation can and should go hand in hand with the protection of personal data. In the case of new technologies the DPA therefore promotes privacy by design and privacy by default.

The Focus Dutch Data Protection Authority 2020-2023 sets out the developments and risks we have identified and areas we will be paying close attention to in the years ahead to safeguard the protection of personal data.

Katja Mur, Monique Verdier and Aleid Wolfsen
Board of the Dutch Data Protection Authority



AUTORITEIT
PERSOONSgegevens