



Issue 3 - May 2026

# NEWSLETTER

**Helping SMEs Identify and Analyze Data Protection and Privacy Risks**

**Raising Awareness of Data Protection and Privacy Risks Among SMEs and the General Public**

The byRisk project is funded by the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme (CERV) of the European Union and is coordinated by the Hellenic Data Protection Authority.

Views and opinions expressed are however those of the project partners only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or European Commission. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

# The Partners

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The byRisk Consortium is made up of three partners, each representing a different sector: regulatory, academic, and software industry. The project is coordinated by the Hellenic Data Protection Authority, with the other two partners being the University of Piraeus Research Center and ICT Abovo PC.



# The project in brief

On December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, the Hellenic Data Protection Authority launched the project titled “**Driven by risk: Fostering data protection risk assessment for SMEs and raising risk awareness among the general public (‘byRisk’)**”, following a successful proposal to the European Commission.

Visit the website of the project at  
<https://byrisk-project.eu/>

The byRisk project is funded by the European Union’s Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme (CERV) under Grant Agreement No. 101193352. It is coordinated by the Hellenic Data Protection Authority.

The project is scheduled for completion in November 2026.

# From Design to Implementation

Building on the foundations presented in the second newsletter — including the development of the new risk taxonomy, the design of the risk assessment framework, and the initial specifications of the awareness and assessment tools — the third edition highlights the project’s transition from conceptual design to practical implementation and stakeholder engagement.

It presents the latest developments in the byRisk tools, while further demonstrating how the project aims to support SMEs and the wider public in understanding and addressing data protection and privacy risks through stakeholder-focused seminars.

## Awareness Raising Strategy

An effective awareness-raising strategy is essential to help the general public, SMEs, and ICT professionals mitigate data protection risks in digital environments. As technology becomes increasingly integrated into everyday life, individuals and organizations face growing privacy and security threats that may compromise personal and customer data. Addressing these challenges requires not only advanced technological solutions, but also the promotion of a privacy- and security-aware culture, putting emphasis on various fundamental human rights – apart from privacy and personal data protection – that may be affected.

To achieve this, the strategy should be tailored to different target groups, taking into account their level of knowledge and professional background. It is therefore important to clearly define the target audiences, the objectives of the strategy, and the specific data protection risks relevant to each group.



# Target Groups

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To ensure that awareness-raising activities are both relevant and effective, the project has identified four key target groups, each facing distinct data protection challenges and therefore requiring tailored communication, tools, and educational approaches. This audience segmentation enables the strategy to address group-specific risks more effectively while fostering a broader and more inclusive culture of privacy and data protection.

The identified target groups are:

- 1. SMEs:** Representing the vast majority of businesses in Greece.
- 2. Citizens/Consumers:** Representing the general public interacting with digital services and products.
- 3. University Students:** Representing the future workforce and society.
- 4. ICT Professionals:** Representing a key group responsible for ensuring the security and privacy of digital systems.

## 1. SMEs

SMEs are increasingly exposed to cybersecurity and data protection risks arising from the improper handling of customers' and employees' personal data, as well as from limited awareness of appropriate mitigation measures. Such risks may lead not only to violations of data protection legislation, including the GDPR, but also to significant harms for individuals, such as psychological, financial, or reputational harm. Given the wide range of potential risk sources and the diversity of real-world scenarios, the need

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for an effective mitigation and awareness strategy is evident.

The awareness seminars aim to ensure that SMEs:

- ⇒ **Understand data protection risks**
- ⇒ **Develop effective risk identification skills**
- ⇒ **Link risks to regulatory issues and mitigation measures**
- ⇒ **Use the byRisk assessment tool effectively**
- ⇒ **Promote a human-centric approach to risk**

**Table 1 – Awareness Seminar Schedule for SMEs**

| Date           | Status | Number of Seminar | Duration of Seminar |
|----------------|--------|-------------------|---------------------|
| July 2026      | Online | First             | 3 – 4 hours         |
| September 2026 | Online | Second            | 3 – 4 hours         |

The seminars aim to attract at least 150 participants in total.

## 2. Citizens/Consumers

For citizens and consumers, everyday digital activities — such as using social media, conducting online transactions, or accessing digital public services — may result in the unintended disclosure of personal data. Their exposure to privacy risks is often



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increased by limited awareness of privacy settings, insufficient understanding of data-sharing practices, and the widespread use of digital platforms without fully understanding the potential implications for their personal information.

The main objective for the citizens/consumers target group is to empower individuals to develop a stronger awareness of data protection and privacy risks by:

- ⇒ **Understanding how organisational failures affect individuals**
- ⇒ **Recognising harms and high-risk situations**
- ⇒ **Developing vigilance towards organisational practices**
- ⇒ **Using the byRisk Awareness Tool**

**Table 2 – Awareness Seminar Schedule for the General Public**

| Date       | Status | Number of Seminar | Duration of Seminar |
|------------|--------|-------------------|---------------------|
| March 2026 | Online | First             | 3 hours             |
| April 2026 | Online | Second            | 3 hours             |
| May 2026   | Online | Third             | 3 hours             |
| June 2026  | Online | Fourth            | 3 hours             |

The seminars aim to attract at least 200 participants in total.



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## 3. University Students

The university student target group focuses on building a strong understanding of the harms that may arise when organisations fail to comply with data protection requirements. The objective is to help students — regardless of their field of study or background — develop awareness of how poor data protection practices can negatively affect individuals' rights, freedoms, and wellbeing in digital environments.

More specifically, students will:

- ⇒ **Understand harms and rights violations**
- ⇒ **Apply rights-based thinking in academic and digital design activities**
- ⇒ **Critically evaluate digital services and environments**
- ⇒ **Become familiar with key data protection principles**
- ⇒ **Use the byRisk tools in practice**

**Table 3 – Awareness Seminar Schedule for University students**

| Date       | Status   | Number of Seminar | Duration of Seminar |
|------------|----------|-------------------|---------------------|
| April 2026 | Physical | First             | 2 hours             |
| May 2026   | Online   | Second            | 2 hours             |

The seminars aim to attract at least 100 participants in total.



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## 4. ICT Professionals

The objectives for the last target group — ICT professionals — differ significantly from those of the other groups due to the critical role they play in designing, operating, and maintaining systems that process large volumes of personal data. The awareness activities for this group focus on strengthening their understanding of how technical decisions may create or amplify risks and harms for individuals, while promoting a rights-based and privacy-oriented approach to system design and implementation.

More specifically, ICT professionals will:

- ⇒ **Understand rights-based risks in technical systems**
- ⇒ **Apply risk-based assessment methods**
- ⇒ **Design privacy-respecting systems**
- ⇒ **Recognise and avoid harmful design practices**
- ⇒ **Assess third-party services and data flows**

**Table 4 – Awareness Seminar Schedule for ICT professionals**

| <b>Date</b>            | <b>Status</b> | <b>Number of Seminar</b> | <b>Duration of Seminar</b> |
|------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Beginning of June 2026 | Online        | First                    | 3 hours                    |
| End of June 2026       | Online        | Second                   | 3 hours                    |

The seminars aim to attract at least 200 participants in total.

# The byRisk project at the Venice Privacy Symposium

The 2026 international [Privacy Symposium](#), held in Venice from 20–24 April, aimed to foster international dialogue, collaboration, and knowledge exchange on data governance, regulatory compliance, and innovative technologies. At the same time, it highlighted current developments and emerging challenges in the fields of data protection and privacy.

Within this framework, the Hellenic Data Protection Authority actively participated in the Symposium’s proceedings. Dr. Konstantinos Limniotis, Head of the Research and Studies Department, delivered a presentation focused on the byRisk project during the session “**Privacy and Compliance-Enhancing Technologies from DPAs: Tools that Help.**” In addition, at a dedicated exhibition space within the Symposium, expert scientists and representatives of the Authority provided attendees with information and updates regarding the byRisk project and its objectives.





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