**Interview with the representative of the Slovenian DPA, Andrej Tomsic**

**12 March 2018**

1. **Do you offer some training on the GDPR now? If not, are you planning to develop training packages in the future? If yes, please describe the proposed structure and main elements of the packages.**

As a DPA we do perform - not quite - trainings but awareness-raising lectures. We had almost 100 events in the last year. I don’t have the concrete numbers for this year. They are mostly directed towards different associations of data controllers and processors, such as banking associations, insurance companies, SME organisations, etc. So we try to cover as much areas as possible while doing these lectures. We teach the basic fundamentals of the GDPR, the basic points where some adjustments need to be made for controllers and processors, explain the basic new rights and offer them a glance for what is next for them to come. we don’t foresee now to develop some specific training materials, however we did apply for one new EU project which help us bringing this awareness-raising activities closer to our fundamental audiences.

1. **To whom do you offer that training (e.g., DPA employees, lawyers, judges, civil servants, general public)? Do you provide training to DPOs as well?**

We don’t specifically train DPOs. Our lectures/seminars that last some hours are mostly offered to associations of different controllers to have the widest reach possible. Banking associations, municipalities, schools etc. So we try not to focus on individual controllers or processors. We also perform various lectures on conferences, roundtables and other events dedicated to the promotion of the GDPR. The lectures are specifically on the GDPR. The materials are a bit tailored to the needs of the sectors but not completely to their skin. For example, regarding consent we try to use examples – what would it mean for their particular sector.

1. **What is the scope of the GDPR training you provide? What topics or issues do you cover?**

Mostly we try to provide a general overview of the GDPR. We tend to focus on legal grounds, on the new definitions, on rights of data subjects, also as regard to the new obligations for data controllers, such as privacy by design or DPOs. All the new things that are not present in our current law – certification, codes of conduct, fines, etc. We also try to destroy the myths about GDPR (i.e. partial information, misinformation, lies, etc.).

1. **Please describe the type of training with special attention to its attributes, such as form of contact (online, face-to-face, etc.), size of groups, length of sessions, length of the whole training, evaluation process, further trainings, etc.**

This is not an official training, more like a lecture, thus evaluations are not performed afterwards. In terms of time: these vary from 15 mins to 6 hours (e.g. on our GDPR day in January the whole day was dedicated to it), set of 6 lectures in 6 hours. This was also the most attended – close to 200 people. The audience varies from 10 to 200, depending on the colleagues who organize it. We will also dedicate the 25 May and it will also be on the scope of 4-5 hour-long lectures. The frequency of repetition varies. We had 100 events last year, so one every 3 days. Some events are closed, others are public. We organized 2 dedicated trainings to all the ministries, and national assembly to join and have a dedicated GDPR lesson. For associations they invite all their employees. The form of contact is face-to-face – we don’t do webinars or create pre-recorded materials. It has the most advantages as people can pose questions directly and get answers. Also from the point of view of feedback it provides a better quality.

1. **What are three topics you consider most important for trainees?**

I would say the obligations of data controllers and processor (new and old), the rights of the individual and the sheer definitions and concepts including basic principles. There is quite good knowledge on the existing regulation among institutions and companies (i.e. among our audience) but there is a long tail with smaller companies whose understanding is really poor. Roughly half of the questions we get during the lectures are actually not GDPR-related questions but existing legislation-related questions: e.g. what should we do with backups, what should we do with audits, etc. For them it is more important to make them aware of the GDPR as such.

1. **What kind of materials do you currently use for your training activities (slides, brochures, essays, books, case studies, legal materials etc.)? Would you be willing to share with us some of your current training materials for best-practices-identification purposes (even materials addressing the directive)?**

in general, for lectures we use mostly power point materials. They are given to the audience, mostly in advance or afterwards in an electronic version. We also publish a lot of materials on our website – mostly guidelines. A huge number of opinions and also some brochures and reports, but many of them are in our local language. Our newest one is the DPIA guideline, to provide a more hands-on approach with some more concrete examples. In general they are more readable and useable to our local public. We also provide a list of top10 things to be done until the GDPR (in form of a flyer). Another information flyer describes what is GDPR and we also have a FAQ section – most common questions we get about the GDPR. The website also has link to relevant art29 guidelines, our guidelines, etc. These materials touch upon the most common issues such as designation of DPOs, the need to acquire consent, DPIA and fines. People are also interested in contracts with data processors – templates for contracts and internal policies. This is our approach. We also do a lot of press coverage. We have been applying for another EU project which targeted DPAs to promote their awareness-raising activities.

1. **Do you gather feedback on your training courses or training materials? How do you gather such feedback (e.g. online questionnaires, paper questionnaires, e-mail)? Based on the feedback you’ve received, what do you think would be the most effective way to provide training (e.g. webinars, videos, workshops, online courses, etc.)? What types of materials would you create?**

In terms of some dedicated evaluations we don’t have them. Don’t have questionnaires to be given to the attendees. We do get informal feedback from the audience in terms of the most common questions, most serious issues which need to be replied. What we need to take into account is that our resources are rather limited. So we are not in the position to provide training everyone who requires data protection training. There are also private initiatives offering different forms of trainings (by e.g. companies). In terms of training it really needs to be taken into account that the potential audience is very wide. Every company, every public institution which acts as data controller or data processor. The resources of the DPA should be smartly distributed. You can never reach all of them. Thus, our approach was to focus on branches and sectors and provide the most important lectures for the key decision makers in companies. We found it hard to support everyone. We think it would not be feasible. The multiplication of knowledge (i.e. training those who are decision-makers and (should) know something about the GDPR) is the most efficient.

1. **What variety of training level do you consider appropriate (e.g., general overviews vis-à-vis specialised training on selected issues, etc.)? Why?**

I think from the DPA point of view the general lecture is the most appropriate – most DPAs don’t have enough resources to provide spec trainings regarding specific topics. The most important role of the DPA is to clarify what is true, what is not true with the GDPR – to destroy the surrounding myths and to provide the most general novelties that come with the GDPR – obligations, rights of individuals, etc.

1. **How long do you think training sessions should last (e.g. an hour-long webinar or a half-day workshop)?**

It depends on the audience and on the goal of the training. If you are speaking about data protection trainings and lectures from a DPA point of view it is very hard to describe all the most important novelties of the GDPR in less than one hour, but as soon as you get a dedicated session it goes beyond 4-5 hours or a whole day. If there are particular needs from specific data controllers it can last even for a few days to dive deep in the specific topics but I don’t think it should be organized by a DPA. From DPA point of view the lectures between 1-4 hours should be ok.

1. **According to your observations and expertise what would you suggest keeping in mind when preparing the STAR training materials?**

I would suggest to keep in mind the sheer role of DPAs and their resources and the need to “be selective to be effective”. We try to provide trainings which have the highest leverage. doing something that the market cannot provide. This is trustworthy information coming from the official source of what are the rights and obligations under the GDPR. Leave it to the market to satisfy individual needs of particular companies. DPA is in a unique position to be trustworthy voice regarding the GDPR. Of course try to do these materials in a user-friendly way. Put it in a manner, language and format which would be appealing for the target audience. As a legal text – experience is very important, how to engage non-lawyers.

1. **Would you be willing to test the training materials in actual training sessions (in later stages of the project)?**

I can’t promise in advance but sure!

1. **We aim at identifying best practices and evaluate existing training materials on the following criteria: comprehensiveness, suitability, coherence with the regulatory environment, delivery quality, certification, cross-border relevance, accessibility. Do you consider these criteria as appropriate for a proper assessment of best practices? Are there any other criteria you would recommend for consideration?**

I would say all of them are relevant. maybe cross-border relevance is not something that is as important as other criteria. the other ones are quite okay. I think you cover the most important aspects.

1. **As I mentioned at the beginning, the EU is funding the STAR project the aim of which is to develop training materials that DPAs and DPOs can use in providing training to their stakeholders. To what extent would DPAs need or could benefit from harmonised training materials?**

It can benefit providing that the language barriers are taken into account. For smaller DPAs who don’t have enough resources to develop and provide trainings the project could be essential. I suppose larger DPAs have more experience. Nonetheless. I see the added value for all the DPAs. However, some things that might work in one country wouldn’t necessarily work or be as successful as in others.

1. **Would you be willing to participate in further interviews, should they be necessary?**

Sure, no problem.

1. **Do you wish to add anything?**

There is high value of these materials (if developed properly) for DPOs. Those who have knowledge in data protection, but necessarily know to develop further.