

# Data Sharing Review

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Richard Thomas and Dr Mark Walport

## Consultation paper on the use and sharing of personal information in the public and private sector

### List of questions for response

We would welcome responses to the following questions set out in this consultation paper. Please follow the question order as set out in the consultation paper, leaving a blank response box for any questions not answered.

Please email your completed form to [contact@datasharingreview.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:contact@datasharingreview.gsi.gov.uk)

Alternatively you can send a hard copy response to:

**Data Sharing Review Secretariat**  
**5.26 Steel House**  
**11 Tothill Street**  
**London**  
**SW1H 9LJ**

Thank you.

### Section 1: Background

Question 1.
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Comments:
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### Section 2: Scope of personal information sharing, including benefits, barriers and risks of data sharing and data protection

Question 2.
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Comments:
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Question 3.
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Comments:
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Question 4.
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Comments:
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Question 5.
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Comments: A central problem in the British approach to privacy and data-sharing is the absence of a clear role for government in the authentication of personal identity. There is no central register or database of people living in the country. This is due to concerns about 'big government', and abuse of this information
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by the government. The result of this has been that the authentication of identity has been privatised.

Rather than having a government-authenticated identity, people have to prove their identity and address by using credit cards, bank statement, utility bills etc. As result, there is hardly any control on how this data is used, and on the correctness of this data. The provision and documentation of identity is a government monopoly in most European countries. In Anglo-Saxon countries this documentation is organised by the private sector: your identity is confirmed by e.g. your credit card, and not by your identity card or passport.

The result is that this data is not protected and shared in many ways that are not controlled. Building a fake identity and address therefore becomes very easy, because all that is needed to start is some easy to falsify utility bill and other documents. This is less the case when identity and address are confirmed correct by government. Another example is where citizens can easily change their official name without informing any government body (or working thjrough a government body)

Question 6.

Comments:

Question 7.

Comments:

Question 8.

Comments: When someone registers oneself on the electoral register, the documents make clear there is a distinction between the full and edited register. When I registered for the first time (I'm a recent immigrant to the UK), I was surprised to see that you have to explicitly opt out of the edited register. The information from the edited register is then for sale for private companies (marketeers etc?). Having worked on survey data collection, I know that using the 'opt out' option is very practical for the person collecting the data, because many people don't bother to tick the box, or don't read the small print. Wouldn't it be a more sensible thing to make this edited electoral register an 'opt in' register, where you have to explicitly agree to have your information on the edited register, rather than opt out, where you have to ask that your details are not included in it?

An even better solution would be to make it illegal for councils to sell this information from the electoral register to the private sector. This would greatly reduce privacy risks, and reduce junk mail. It may also result in a higher number of registered voters, because citizens would know the information is not used for other purposes. This may be a cultural thing, but I felt extremely uncomfortable with a government selling my personal details to private companies.

### **Section 3: The legal framework**

Question 9.
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Comments:
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Question 10.
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Question 11.
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Question 12.
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Question 13.
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Question 14.
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Question 15.
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Comments:
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### **Section 4: Consent and transparency**

Question 16.
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Comments:
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Question 17.
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Comments:
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Question 18.
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Comments:
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Question 19.
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Comments:
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### **Section 5: Technology**

Question 20.
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Comments:
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Question 21.
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Comments:
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Question 22.
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Comments:
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### **Section 6: International comparisons**

Question 23.
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Comments:
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Question 24.

Comments: The Crossroads Bank for Social Security in Belgium realised a back-office integration of 2000 social security institutions, and is recognised throughout Europe as a best data-sharing practice - <http://ksz-bcss.fgov.be>

Question 25.

Comments:

Question 26.

Comments:

### **Section 7: Additional questions**

Question 27.

Comments:

Question 28.

Comments: