



## **PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE USE**

### **GS1 welcomes European Commission endorsement of new industry privacy framework**

**Brussels, 6 April 2011** - GS1 and Neelie Kroes, the Commission Vice-President in charge of the Digital Agenda, today signed the new Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) Framework for RFID applications at a ceremony in Brussels. Signatories to the PIA Framework also include the main European associations representing the retail industry as well as some of the leading companies that will deploy RFID in Europe.

The new procedures have been drawn up to ensure the privacy of personal data as Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) becomes more commonplace. They were developed by commercial companies under the leadership of GS1, a neutral not-for-profit organisation focusing on the design and implementation of global standards to improve efficiency in supply chains.

Speaking at the ceremony, Miguel Lopera, President and CEO of GS1 said: "GS1 welcomes this Commission initiative and has strongly supported a co-regulatory approach through all the preparatory discussions that led to this text. I would also like to acknowledge the substantive and constructive dialogue we have had with the data protection authorities throughout." Mr. Kohnstamm added: "Compliance with data protection regulation is of course needed. And therefore Privacy by Design and Privacy Impact Assessments are crucial. This is a perfect example that suits industry, data subjects and compliance with data protection regulation."

Mrs Kroes also paid tribute to industry's commitment in developing the new privacy guidelines. "I warmly welcome today's move by the industry, civil society and policymakers to put consumers' privacy at the centre of RFID technology. The agreement is a milestone and I'm happy the industry will remedy public concerns over consumers' data security, which is the best way to make sure that RFID technology can become a major economic success," she declared during the ceremony.

Blue Tower  
Avenue Louise 326, bte 10  
B-1050 Brussels  
T +32 (0)2 788 78 00  
F + 32 (0)2 788 78 99

[www.gs1.org](http://www.gs1.org)



Radio Frequency Identification is a fast developing technology that makes it possible to automatically identify objects by attaching a small electronic chip, or smart tag. They are similar to barcodes, but improve supply chain efficiency since they can be read at a distance by another wireless machine.

GS1 developed the Gen 2 standard for Electronic Product Code (EPC) RFID applications in the supply chain that are increasingly being used by retailers to track items such as apparel and consumer electronics in the supply chain. The GS1 EPCglobal GEN 2 standards can also be deployed in many non-supply chain applications, for instance, to record a marathon runner's time in a race.

The new Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) framework is in line with the European Commission RFID Recommendation of 12 May 2009. It was approved by the Article 29 Data Protection Working Party established by the Recommendation. GS1's work on the Framework builds on its *Privacy Guidelines for Consumer Products* developed in 2003 and adopted in 2005.

The PIA process sets out the initial analysis and then the risk assessment which operators of RFID should carry out to determine any potential privacy risks and the steps to take to eliminate them. Its use is designed to strengthen consumer understanding and confidence in the new technology and so accelerate its wider deployment.

Mr Lopera added: "The use of the PIA framework will increase consumer trust in the technology, which will increase adoption of RFID technology in Europe. I'd like to point out that our GS1 EPCglobal applications were developed so that no personal data is actually present on a tag."

GS1 will work closely with its member organisations throughout the European Union to ensure that the Privacy Impact Assessments are implemented in as harmonised a way as possible.



NOTE: GS1 is a neutral, not-for-profit organisation dedicated to the design and implementation of global standards and solutions to improve efficiency and visibility in supply chains. It is driven by 1.3 million companies, which execute more than six billion transactions daily in 150 countries with the GS1 System of Standards. GS1 has local member organisations in 108 countries. Its global office is in Brussels.

CONTACT DETAILS FOR EU: Massimiliano Minisci, Director EU Public Policy - [massimiliano.minisci@GS1.org](mailto:massimiliano.minisci@GS1.org), +32 498 92 47 27

Web: [www.gs1.org](http://www.gs1.org)