

Data Protection Authority Registration and Data Protection Officer Requirements for Data Controllers: Turkey

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This Q&A discusses obligations for private-sector data controllers in Turkey to notify, register with, or obtain authorization from the data protection authority under Turkey's comprehensive data protection law before processing personal data. It also discusses any requirements for data controllers to appoint a data protection officer (DPO) and any applicable notification or registration obligations relating to DPO appointments. This Q&A does not cover notification, registration, or authorization requirements for data processors or arising under sectoral laws. For an overview of the data protection law in Turkey, see [Country Q&A, Data Protection in Turkey: Overview](#).

Data Protection Authority

1. What is the name and contact information of the country's data protection authority or supervisory authority responsible for data protection?

Name

Data Protection Authority (KVKK).

DPA Contact Information

W: kvkk.gov.tr

W: [English Home Page](#)

W: [Agency Contact Webpage](#)

Notification or Registration

2. Does the country's comprehensive data protection law require private-sector data controllers to notify or register with the data protection authority before processing personal data?

Yes. The [Law on Protection of Personal Data No. 6698 \(April 7, 2016\)](#) (DP Law) and [Regulation on Data Controllers' Registry \(December 30, 2017\)](#) (Registry Regulation) have registration requirements for:

- Controllers established in Turkey (Turkish Controllers).
- Controllers established outside of Turkey that collect or process personal data from data subjects in Turkey (Foreign Controllers).

The requirements change depending on whether the controller is a Foreign Controller or a Turkish Controller.

Before processing personal data, Foreign Controllers must generally:

- Appoint a local representative who must be a Turkish individual or legal person. An authorized individual must sign the appointment decision on the controller's behalf.
- Appoint an individual to act as a "contact person" with the KVKK.
- Prepare a data processing inventory.
- Register with the Data Controllers' Registry (VERBIS).

(Article 16(3), DP Law; Articles 5(1), 8, and 11, Registry Regulation; see also [KVKK: Personal Data Processing Inventory Preparation Guide](#) (in Turkish) (KVKK Processing Preparation Guide).)

Only local representatives can conduct the registration on the Foreign Controller's behalf. The local representative completes the registration online (see [KVKK: VERBIS](#) (in Turkish)).

Before processing personal data, Turkish Controllers must generally:

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- Appoint an individual to act as a contact person with the KVKK.
- Prepare a data processing inventory.
- Register with VERBIS.

(Article 16(3), DP Law; Articles 5(1), 8, and 11, Registry Regulation; see also KVKK Processing Preparation Guide.)

During registration, the Foreign Controller's local representative or the Turkish Controller must provide the following information:

- Identifying information, including the address of the controller or its representative.
- The data processing purpose.
- A data processing inventory, including the applicable data subject groups and personal data categories.
- Any third parties or groups of recipients to whom the personal data may be transferred, including details of any cross-border data transfers.
- A description of the safety and security measures they take.
- The maximum term for processing personal data, which must correspond to the data processing's purpose.

(Article 16(3), DP Law; Articles 9(1) and 11, Registry Regulation.)

Provided the processing complies with and is proportionate to other fundamental processing principles, the DP Law and the Registry Regulation exempt controllers from the obligation to register and notify the KVKK if they limit their activities to processing:

- Necessary for crime prevention or investigation.
- Necessary for public agencies and authorized organizations to perform their regulatory compliance and supervision duties.
- Necessary to protect Turkey's economic and financial interests related to budgetary, tax, and financial matters.
- Personal data that the data subject has made public.

(Article 28(2), DP Law; Article 15(1), Registry Regulation.)

Through its Personal Data Protection Board (PDPB), the KVKK may also provide other derogations from registration obligations, depending on:

- The subject or categories of personal data.
- The nature and quantity of the personal data.
- The processing purpose and activities.
- Any potential transfers to third parties.

- The legal basis for processing.
- The storage period for the personal data.
- The controller's size and scope, including its number of employees or financial balance sheet.

(Article 16(1), Registration Regulation.)

The PDPB has issued regulations that exempt:

- Turkish small-to-medium enterprises, meaning Turkish controllers with up to 50 employees and an annual net sales revenue or annual financial balance sheet of up to TRY100 million, unless their main business relies on processing special category data, also known as personal data of a special nature or sensitive personal data (for more on what Turkey considers special category data, see [Country Q&A, Data Protection in Turkey: Overview: Question 11](#)). These thresholds do not apply to Foreign Controllers. If a Foreign Controller collects or processes personal data from Turkey, it must appoint a local representative and register.
- Controllers that process personal data using only non-automated means.
- Notaries public.
- Non-profit organizations, such as associations, foundations, and unions if they process personal data:
 - appropriate for their purpose;
 - limited to their field of activity; and
 - only for their own employees, members, and donors.
- Political parties.
- Lawyers.
- Accountants.
- Customs advisors.
- Mediators.

(KVKK: Board Decisions on Providing Derogations from the Obligation of Registration with the Data Controllers' Registry.)

Previously exempt controllers whose status changes must register within 30 days of meeting the registration criteria. Controllers subject to registration obligations that fail to register due to legal or technical reasons may request an extension from the KVKK within seven days after the legal or technical reason occurs. The KVKK may grant one extension for no more than 30 days. (Article 8(2), (3), Registry Regulation.)

The KVKK has released [information videos](#) (in Turkish) to help controllers meet their registration obligations and submit their required VERBIS applications.

Authorization

3. Does the country's comprehensive data protection law require private-sector data controllers to seek authorization from the data protection authority before processing personal data?

In certain circumstances. Under the [Law on Protection of Personal Data No. 6698 \(April 7, 2016\)](#) (DP Law), controllers may need to obtain authorization from Turkey's data protection authority (KVKK) when transferring data abroad, based on the relevant data transfer mechanism (Article 9, DP Law). For more information on cross-border data transfers, see [Country Q&A, Data Protection in Turkey: Overview: Question 20](#). For the KVKK's contact information, see Question 1.

Data Protection Officers

4. Does the country's comprehensive data protection law require private-sector data controllers to appoint a data protection officer?

No. There is no obligation to appoint a data protection officer under Turkey's [Law on Protection of Personal Data No. 6698 \(April 7, 2016\)](#).

5. If the comprehensive data protection law requires private-sector data controllers to appoint a data protection officer (DPO), do data controllers have any obligations to notify or communicate the DPO's contact details to the data protection authority or register with the data protection authority?

See Question 4.

Contributor Profiles

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