The General Data Regulation Protection was implemented by the European Union in May of 2018 and it served as the beginning of a new age of data protection. As technology continued to grow and evolve, there became a need to create legislation that could hold companies and businesses accountable for their systems. With the GDPR, this was made possible as it created compliance standards for companies to abide by and it gave consumers full control over their personal information. However, the GDPR is not a one size fits all solution to the issues that plague the technological world. There are several concerns and implications from the policy that have arised just as much as the positives and advantages have. In this paper, the goal is to take into consideration the ethical, political, and social implications to determine whether or not the GDPR was effective in mitigating cybersecurity concerns.

Constantly, the ethicality of the GDPR has been questioned, particularly due to how it determines the middle ground for consumer privacy rights and the way corporations may use it. This is explored by Luciano Floridi and they state, “GDPR embodies ‘soft ethics’ but raises questions of fairness and inclusivity.” It then goes further to mention how small businesses can struggle due to smaller resource availability to bolster systems to meet the standards. They also mention that certain demographics may also be underrepresented in the ability to be protected efficiently by the policy. In order to combat this, the European Union has created ways for companies to earn money based on their compliance with their policies. This helps small businesses survive the harsh nature of compliance costs and enables further reach of the policy to other demographics. Therefore, it creates the ability for the policy to be more widely implemented and rewards those who are able to do so consistently.

Another common concern for the implementation of the GDPR are the political implications of the policy, as it has to do with how the policy is able to influence and change the

world. In an article by Tikkinen-Piri et al., they stated that, “GDPR has forced companies operating in multiple jurisdictions to improve data handling practices; however, cross-border data sharing remains challenging due to regulatory mismatches with the non-EU privacy laws.” This implication is one of the more unintentional sides as it helps the European Union which is their goal, but creates issues for millions in other parts of the world. The concern is then worsened for companies outside of the European Union as compliance costs can be much harsher and force many to avoid European markets. With that being said, the political implications can be particularly harsh for the world outside of the European Union which brings the universality of the policy into question.

Social implications of the GDPR have been widely debated even now after the policy being in effect for almost a decade. The most debated issue is highlighted in an article by Shoshana Zuboff, and it states, “GDPR addresses data transparency, yet surveillance capitalism’s opaque data practices remain entrenched.” This creates more of a panic for consumers as while they have control, there is still much that is unknown as to how their data is used within these businesses. The concern makes it obvious that there is a need for a better and safer means of communication between consumer and company to help ease the fear of data malpractice. Even with the raised awareness and control, consumers still have not gotten what they truly wanted, which is the truth.

Through the policy analyses that I have conducted on the GDPR, I have been able to come to the conclusion that while it is effective in giving consumers the control they want over their personal data, it fails in giving peace of mind. It creates barriers and regulations for companies, but it still leaves consumers trusting these businesses blindly. Therefore, I do not believe this policy is successful and it could be further ratified to improve consumer satisfaction.

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