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The Effectiveness of the General Data Protection Regulation

The one constant in the Universe is impermanence, or the constant change with everything is undergoing at once. Part of the challenge with change is its rate cannot be truly controlled, massive paradigm shifts occur despite the best attempts to slow them. The invention of the Internet was one of those changes. Very quickly over the past couple decades the digital environment has altered how people live in ways never before seen in human history. The increasingly rapid nature of development has brought countless benefits but also comes with immense challenges. In the European Union they have established the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) to help protect their citizens from many of the dangers regarding digital data. While aimed at protecting data protection rights in the EU, there are questions about how effective this strategy has been.

The General Data Protection Regulation was created to protect and expand the data rights of the individuals living in the European Union. Corporations which operate in the digital space often collect a user's personal data either for further development or selling that information to data brokers who will then in turn resell it further. Some practices are predatory and a user may not even realize that their data is being

collected and sold. There are massive privacy issues with how data is being collected. The GDPR sought to bring transparency and regulation to an area which desperately needed it. Oftentimes with cyber policy it can be more of a reactionary response rather than a deliberate approach but the GDPR has set out to modernize human data protection in the face of rising risks and bad actors.

Six years down the road after being first implemented, the GDPR has been met with a mix of praise and criticism. Many times for something as large as the GDPR, there will always be portions which work better than others. Largely, the main praise for the GDPR is the huge step it took by even being implemented. There was nothing as progressive in the world prior to that point. The social and moral ideals of the policy strikes a cord in many that this is the proper path. Giving citizens the power and transparency needed to protect their data and know what is being collected. With severe penalties in place for violating the law, the GDPR truly is focused on bringing power to the people.

Valid criticisms have been brought up in the wake of the EU rolling out the GDPR. A general, overall consensus is that the enforcement of violations is severely lacking. Implementing a law is one thing but enforcing it can be even more difficult, particularly in online environments where there is not always a watchful eye on the processes. Particularly when it comes to cross border violations, which many are working within a digital environment. Progress has been consistent yet slow to bridge the enforcement gap.

The European Union truly set the standard for data protections policies when they approved the General Data Protection Regulation. It has spawned many other policies worldwide to be passed which furthers the digital rights of people everywhere. Here in the United States, with California passing the California Consumer Privacy Act, has shown that by setting the standard, it opens the door for more change to come with it. The GDPR will go down in history as the beginning of the age of digital rights and protections. It is the front runner in terms of policy to bring data protections into the future.

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