

J. Kohnstamm LL.M.



Curriculum vitae

Jacob Kohnstamm has served as chairman of the Dutch Data Protection Authority from August 2004 until August 2016. Between 2008 and 2010 he also served as the elected vice chairman of the Article 29 Data Protection Working Party (WP29). He was subsequently elected chairman of that body in 2010, and re-elected for a two-year mandate in 2012. WP29 is an independent advisory body composed of representatives of the various data protection supervisors in the European Union. Between 2011 and 2014 Kohnstamm was chairman of the Executive Committee of the International Conference of Data Protection and Privacy Commissioners. As a preparation for hosting that Conference in Amsterdam in 2015, he initiated the Privacy Bridges project in 2014. The Privacy Bridges project united twenty U.S. and EU privacy specialists to find pragmatic and workable solutions to overcome the differences in privacy legislation in all parts of the world; solutions that have as primary goal to improve the control of users over their data.

Since his retirement as chairman of the Dutch DPA in August 2016, Kohnstamm serves as vice-chair of the Royal Commission on Parliamentary Reform and as chairman of the Dutch Euthanasia Review Committee.

Between 1999 and 2004, prior to his appointment as chairman of the Dutch DPA, Kohnstamm was a member of the Senate of the States General for D66 [Liberal Democrats]. He also was chairman of a large number of organisations and committees, including the Police IT Control Board.

He was state secretary for Home Affairs between 1994 and 1998, in particular responsible for Urban Policy.

Between 1981 and 1994 Kohnstamm served multiple terms as a member of the House of Representatives of the States General. During his first parliamentary term (1981-1982) he was spokesperson for his political group on matters related to defence, the police and justice. After the 1982 elections, Kohnstamm left parliament and became party chairman of D66, a post he fulfilled until the 1986 elections. Back in parliament, Kohnstamm was spokesperson on matters related to Home Affairs, police and the Middle East in the 1986-1989 term. During this term, he also was chairman of the standing Parliamentary Committee for the National Ombudsman. In the subsequent parliamentary term (1989-1994), he was spokesperson for matters related to public health, police and the Middle East, as well as chairman of the standing Parliamentary Committee for the Police.

Kohnstamm holds a graduate degree in law from the University of Amsterdam. He worked as a solicitor following his graduation in 1977 until 1981, and again between 1982 and 1986.