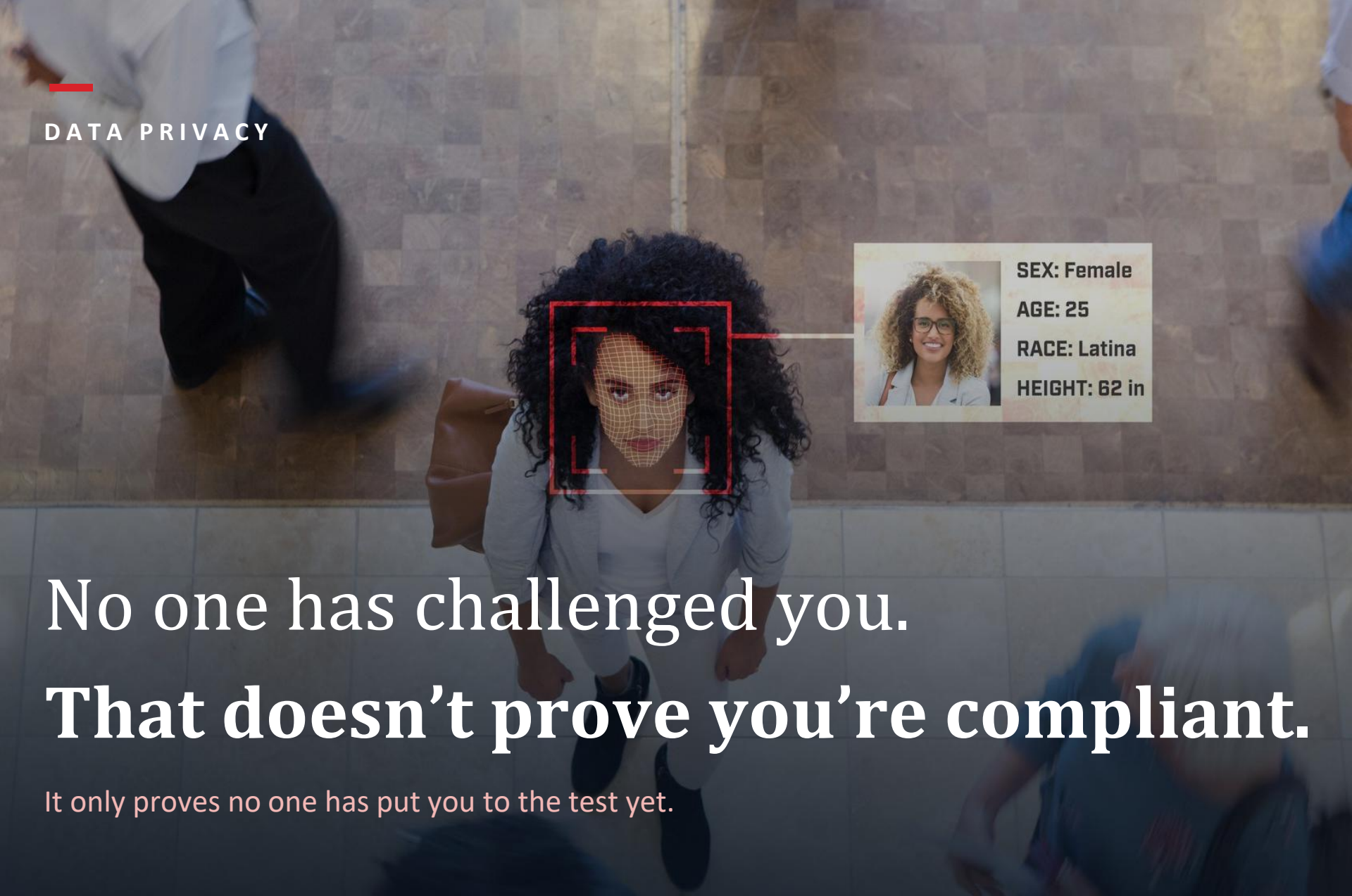
DATA PRIVACY



No one has challenged you.

That doesn’t prove you’re compliant.

It only proves no one has put you to the test yet.

August 8, 2026 | 5 minutes | 1056words

RISCCO

THE SCENARIO

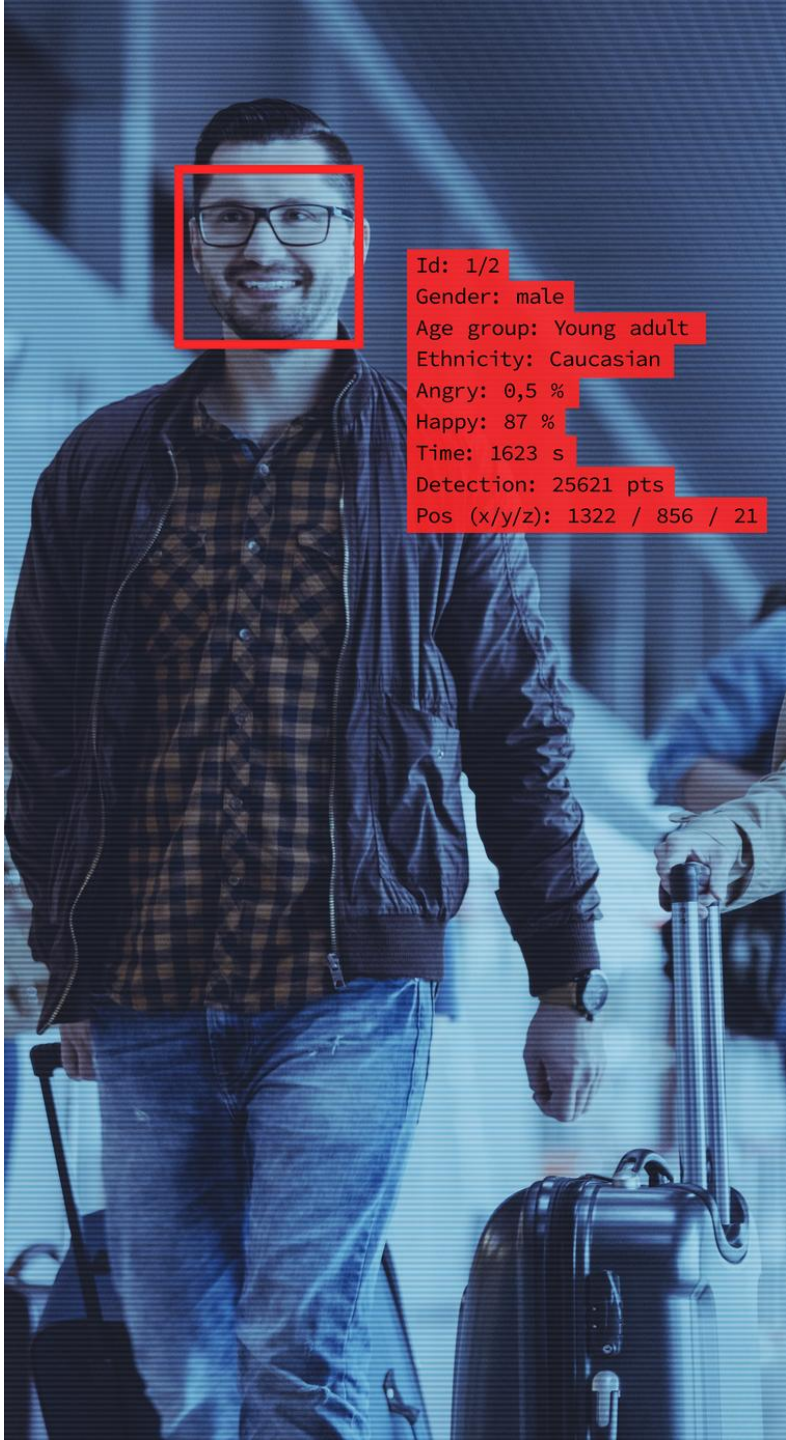
An ordinary Tuesday…

An email arrives. It is not from a regulator. It is from a former employee, a customer, or someone who applied for a job three years ago. The request is brief and perfectly reasonable: "*tell me what personal data you hold about me, where you obtained it, who you have shared it with, and how long you plan to retain it*."

In Central America and the Caribbean, current privacy regulations were built on the same principles as the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and they measure your response in business days — not months. The response is not a policy. It is not a verbal assurance. It is the data. And if the deadline expires, the requester does not need a lawyer. They go straight to the regulator.

Now follow that email through your own organization. Legal forwards it to IT. IT explains that customers' personal data exists in four systems, two inherited through an acquisition. Marketing mentions a software platform no one in the meeting knew existed. Human Resources is certain the résumé was deleted, but cannot show when or by whom. Someone asks whether backups count too.

Half the response period is gone, and the organization still is not discussing the response. It is still discussing who should provide it.



THE GAP ISN'T IN YOUR DOCUMENTS. IT'S RIGHT NEXT TO THEM.

A well-written privacy notice is not a defense. It is a set of public commitments — and your exposure lies in the distance between what those commitments say and what your operations actually do.

WHAT YOU PUBLISHED OR DISCLOSED	WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENS IN YOUR ORGANIZATION
"We retain personal data only for as long as necessary."	Eleven years of applicants' résumés in a shared folder on an ownerless server.
"We share data only with authorized service providers."	Fourteen cloud software platforms procured independently by departments. None reviewed.
"You may request deletion of your data at any time."	No one has ever carried out a deletion. There is no procedure for doing so, and the organization cannot say with certainty where all of a given person's personal data resides.
"Your information is protected."	Access profiles were last reviewed three years ago, when the system was implemented.

None of these gaps triggers a complaint. For years, they trigger absolutely nothing. Until one person asks a question, or a service provider suffers an incident, and all of them become visible that same afternoon.

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EUROPEAN EVIDENCE

Eight years of evidence from a region that went first

Europe has operated under the GDPR since May 2018 — the framework on which most privacy laws in our region were modeled. Eight years later, with dedicated data protection officers and real budgets, the numbers are not leveling off.

EUR 1.2B

In fines imposed by European authorities during 2025

443

Data breaches reported per day in Europe, up from 363 the previous year

+22%

Increase in reported breaches in a single year

The numbers are not evidence that Europe is failing. They show what becomes visible when organizations are able to detect and report what happens to personal data.

Our region does not have comparable figures. Not because less is happening, but because far fewer organizations are in a position to notice or detect it.

Source: DLA Piper, GDPR Fines and Data Breach Survey, January 2026. Cumulative GDPR fines since 2018: EUR 7.1 billion.

THE REAL TEST.

Change the question management asks

THE QUESTION EVERYONE ASKS

"Do we have a privacy policy?"

Almost any organization can answer that.

THE QUESTION THAT MATTERS

"Can we demonstrate, this week, everything we know about one person — and why we know it?"

Very few can answer the second question — yet that is the one a regulator, customer, or court will actually ask you to prove.

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If you are regulated, read this twice

TWO SUPERVISORS, NOT ONE

Your regulator's circular or resolution sits on top of the general privacy law; it does not replace it. That means two supervisors looking at the same personal data, with different deadlines and different reporting expectations. Satisfying one has never been a defense against the other. Being audited more often by your regulator does not mean you are better protected.

THE REAL COST COMPARISON

An independent review is the only version of this exercise you get to schedule. The other one gets scheduled for you: a complaint, a regulator, an incident. The work is the same. What changes is the timing, the audience, and the consequences.

IT DOESN'T END WITH THE FINE

Behind the fine and the reputational damage sits the possible suspension or revocation of your organization's ability to process personal data.

The first person to test the effectiveness of your data privacy program will not be a regulator.

It will be a person, with a question, on an ordinary Tuesday.

¿WHY RISCCO?

Treating data privacy as a purely technological matter is the most common mistake — and the most expensive one. The gaps aren't only in a firewall or an access list; they're in a poorly drafted contract, in a legal basis that was never defined, in a weak consent clause.

RISCCO conducts independent data privacy compliance reviews across Central America and the Caribbean, with teams that combine risk, cybersecurity, and lawyers who apply these regulations every day.

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About RISCCO

RISCCO is an independent international consulting firm committed to transforming how organizations manage risk and adopt Artificial Intelligence. We combine a rigorous GRC (Governance, Risk and Compliance) approach with advanced data analytics and Artificial Intelligence to help our clients anticipate risk, strengthen governance, and solve complex challenges. Headquartered in Panama and present in six countries, in 2026 we mark 17 years serving more than 200 leading organizations across Central America and the Caribbean.

International rigor. Agile execution. Measurable impact.
We think like strategists. We execute like specialists.

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