Forward Compatibility 1

This topic explains when and how project files that were created or modified in one version of Virtualize can be opened in an earlier version of the product. It applies to the following types of project files: .pva, .pvn, .changetemplate.

Sections include:

- Understanding the Available Project File Formats
- XML and Compressed XML Files - Forward Compatibility
- Binary Files - Forward Compatibility
- Making Your Existing Binary Files Forward Compatible
- Data Repositories - Forward Compatibility
- Backward Compatibility

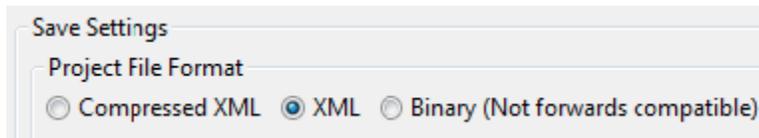## Understanding the Available Project File Formats

Project files can be saved in three formats—XML, binary, and compressed XML. The following table outlines the key differences between the formats:

File Format	Readable /Searchable	Size	Performance	Forward Compatible
Compressed XML		Smallest	Faster than XML	X
XML	X	Significantly larger than Compressed XML		X
Binary		Somewhat larger than Compressed XML	Faster save and read times than XML and Compressed XML	

From 9.7.x forward, the default project file format is compressed XML—unless it was already set to binary or XML.
To change the file format used:

1. Choose **Parasoft> Preferences**.
2. Open **Parasoft> Misc**.
3. In the Save Settings area, select the desired option.

XML and Compressed XML Files - Forward Compatibility

If an XML or compressed XML project file was created (or opened and saved with minor changes) in a newer version of the product, it can still be opened in earlier subminor versions. Note that changes involving a feature that was modified or added in a newer version of the product are not considered minor changes.

For example, if Virtualize 9.7.5 provides new options in a certain tool and you change the default values for these options, you will no longer be able to open the related file in earlier versions of Virtualize (e.g., Virtualize 9.7.1). On the other hand, if you opened a 9.7.1 file in 9.7.5, modified options that are shared among the two versions, then resaved the file, it would still be possible to open that file in 9.7.1.

In some cases, an XML or compressed XML project file that was created (or opened and saved with minor changes) in a newer version of the product can still be opened in earlier major versions (e.g. a file from 9.8 can be opened in 9.7); however, this forward compatibility across major versions is not guaranteed.

Binary Files - Forward Compatibility

If a binary project file was created or modified in a newer version of the product, it cannot be opened in an earlier version—unless you first convert it to an XML or compressed XML file as outlined below.

Making Your Existing Binary Files Forward Compatible

If you have a binary-format project file that you want to open in an earlier version, first save it in compressed XML format or XML format (for details on the available file formats, see Understanding the Available Project File Formats):

1. Open the project file in the newer version of the product.
2. Configure the preferences to save the project file as either Compressed XML or XML as follows:
    a. Choose **Parasoft> Preferences**.
    b. Open **Parasoft> Misc**.
    c. In the Save Settings area, select either **Compressed XML** or **XML**.
3. Re-save the project file.

You can then open the file in an earlier version of the product—provided that the associated product functionality was not added or modified in the newer version.

Data Repositories - Forward Compatibility

Certain product releases may change the data format used when adding data to the Data Repository Server. In these cases, data repositories from earlier version need to be migrated as described in Migrating Data Repository Servers from Version 9.8.3 and Earlier. The new-format data repositories (newly-created or migrated) cannot be opened in product versions that expect the older-format data repositories.

Backward Compatibility

Project files created in one version of the product can always be opened in newer versions of the product. For example, a suite created in version 9.1 can be opened in version 9.7.