

ISOC European Regional Bureau Newsletter

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Data protection

UK: Government proposes emergency data retention law

- **UK Prime Minister David Cameron** has announced that an emergency law - which will be debated next week by the Parliament- will ensure that the **police and security services can keep accessing users' Internet and mobile phone data**.
- UK government argued that following the ECJ ruling (which has annulled the **EU data retention Directive**, as it interfered with the right to respect for private life), providers could start deleting communications data, unless a new legislation is introduced. This is considered a potential threat to security. Opponents said that the government is rushing through intrusive legislation, potentially infringing privacy rights.

UK: Justice Minister says EU right to be forgotten law unenforceable

- **UK Justice Minister Simon Hughes** stated that a new **EU law on the right to be forgotten/RTBF** (part of the proposed EU data protection Regulation) would be technically unenforceable and lead to numerous misconceived complaints.
- Addressing the Lords' home affairs committee, Hughes said that the UK government is concerned about the draft version of the RTBF, stating that the **EU should not want a law in the way that is implied by the ECJ judgment**, as it closes down access to information in the EU, which is open to the rest of the world. Pointing to the task of removing all traces of data, Hughes argued that **because of technical reasons, a RTBF cannot be exercised**. Hughes said that Google has been cooperative; stating that the company would probably be keen for the **law to be modified**, something the **UK government is ready to work on**. Hughes estimated that **enforcing an EU law** on the right to be forgotten and related regulations would cost UK businesses up to **£360 million a year**.

EU: Informal meeting of EU Justice Ministers

- The Italian Presidency of the EU hosted an informal meeting at which EU Justice Ministers tried to **overcome their differences** on the proposed rules for data protection.
- **French Minister Taubira** expressed her optimism with regards to an agreement being reached by 2015 at the latest. In her intervention, she noted the **differences in approach** to data protection between the **EU and the US**, and also among EU Member States. The main difference would be that data in the US is regarded as a commercial product, whereas in the EU, data protection is one of the fundamental rights. **Dutch Minister Fred Teeven** underlined his country's concerns with regards to **administrative burdens** of the proposed legislation. In his opinion, the progress on the dossier has been too slow.

(Cyber)Security/Open Internet

EU: Public-private partnership to counter terrorism

- **Gilles de Kerchove, the EU's counter-terrorism coordinator confirmed** that at the margins of the information meeting of **EU interior Ministers** that took place in Milan on 7 July, several EU Member States (Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Poland, Spain, the Netherlands and the UK) agreed to enhance their surveillance of Europeans who have gone or are at risk of going to Syria to fight alongside extremist Islamic groups.
- The Member States also agreed to **develop a public-private partnership with Internet companies** that should prevent websites such as Facebook and YouTube from being used by militant groups to radicalise youngsters. A meeting with the industry to discuss the partnership will be hosted by the European Commission in **October**. An EU official underlined that a delicate balance between freedom of speech and security needs to be struck.

Copyright

EU: Juncker says no plans to change Commission's copyright responsibilities

- European Commission **President-designate Jean-Claude Juncker** said that there are **no immediate plans to change the way the Commission oversees copyright**. Currently, the responsibility falls under DG Internal Market.
- Responding to MEP **Julia Reda's** (Germany, Pirate Party) question whether EU technology and telecom staff might assume copyright responsibility, Juncker stated that the question will have to be addressed in the future. The President-designate admitted that digital changes mean the **EU needs to seriously deal with copyright issues**, making them simpler, cleaner and easier to apply.

Open Internet

Turkey: Civil society organisations denounce Türk Telekom's intention to tighten control over the Internet

- In a statement issued on 9 July, a group of ten civil society organisations drew attention to **alleged censorship by Türk Telekom**, as the company is said to have bought equipment to **tighten its control over the Internet and service providers**.
- The equipment is said to enable the company to monitor social media networks (e.g. WhatsApp and Skype) and block access to certain websites. While websites of the likes of Spotflux, Hotspot VPN, Mobile VPN and Safe Tun, were already banned by Türk Telekom, they will be totally blocked now.
- According to the information-sector organisations, **Türk Telekom's decision goes against fundamental principles of law** as well as fundamental human rights and freedoms. While not denying having bought the equipment, the company underlined it **undertakes all its activities within the framework of the law**.
- In **February**, the Turkish Parliament passed a new law on the Internet that **extended the power of the Telecommunications Directorate** over Internet censorship. The controversial law on the **National Intelligence Organization (MİT)** entered into force on 26 April. The law is said to allow MİT to use the infrastructure of Türk Telekom and access information.

Net neutrality

EU/Germany: eco calls on the German government to support universally available high-speed networks

- **Klaus Landefeld, eco Director of Infrastructure and Networks** took part in the fifth expert dialogue on net neutrality that took place this week in the German Federal Ministry for Economics. With regards to the **European debate on net neutrality**, Landefeld stated that the **debate is taking place only because of the current deficits**. If, thanks to broadband expansion, **data transfers would not suffer** from capacity constraints, the **debate would be resolved**.
- According to eco, the **German Federal Government should bring the debate to a swift end** by supporting universally available high-speed networks.