

EU

Draft Directive on Protection of Trade Secrets Agreed

Drawing on a Commission initiative from 2013, the European Council and Parliament have agreed on a draft directive for the protection of trade secrets and confidential information within the European Union. The aim of the directive is to implement measures against the unlawful acquisition, use and disclosure of trade secrets while balancing this with basic rights and the public interest, including consumer protection, public health, environmental protection, whistleblower protection and worker mobility.

[Press release](#)

European Data Protection Supervisor Guidelines on eCommunications and Mobile Devices

The European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS) has issued two sets of guidelines on electronic communications and mobile devices. While the guidelines are issued for EU institutions and other bodies, the EDPS states that the guidance set out will be useful for any organisation as there are similarities in the legislation applicable to both. The EDPS notes the importance of data protection for eCommunications and mobile devices because of their integral role in everyday professional and personal life, as well as the portability of many devices.

[Press release](#) (PDF)

EDPS Sets Out Priorities for 2016

The EDPS has published its priorities for 2016 in line with its strategy for 2015-19. The priorities are those subjects of particular interest to the EDPS and give an indication of the proposals that the EDPS intends to comment on. Its main priorities for 2016 are supporting the EU institutions in finalising the *General Data Protection Regulation*, ensuring trans-border data flows with adequate data protection following the removal of the Safe Harbor system and enhancing security and protecting EU borders. Additionally, the EDPS has set out a number of initiatives for the year ahead, including the digital single market strategy and embedding data protection in the international trade agreements currently under negotiation.

[Statement of priorities](#) (PDF)

Germany

Post-Safe Harbor Corporate Conduct Evaluated

The data protection office of Rheinland-Pfalz has published a report on data transfers to the United States in the aftermath of the Safe Harbor ruling by the European Court of Justice. The report emphasised that companies must be able to respond comprehensively on their privacy conduct at any time – the office found that although it received a 95% response rate, 47% of responses were insufficient or delayed. It also criticised the fact that many companies were unaware of the fact that the use of cloud services and other online resources involves data transfers to the US.

[Press release](#) (in German)

Federal Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information Becomes Independent

As of 1 January 2016, the Federal Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information has gained independence from government, becoming a separate supreme federal authority (eigenständige oberste Bundesbehörde). The commissioner is now responsible only to parliament, and its decisions may be judicially reviewed. Through this, Germany has met the European requirement for a completely independent federal data protection authority. The current federal commissioner has welcomed the change.

[Press release](#) (in German)

Qatar

Draft Privacy Law Approved

The Cabinet has approved the draft of a new data privacy law. The law will apply to personal data processed in electronic form or obtained and prepared in order to be processed electronically. The law also contains specific provisions prohibiting the sending of electronic communications for direct marketing purposes unless the consent of the individual has been obtained. This provision is partly aimed at decreasing the number of marketing text messages sent. The next step will be for the law to be approved by the Advisory (Shura) Council.

[Press release](#)

UK

Information Commissioner's Office Guidance for Campaign Groups

With the EU referendum campaigns heating up this year, the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) has suggested nine points for referendum campaign groups to consider to ensure they do not fall foul of data protection law, in particular in relation to direct marketing. The ICO's guidance highlights the need to ensure consent to direct marketing, identifying the organisation when contacting individuals and the need for registration with the ICO where an organisation is processing personal data. ICO also highlights the potential for penalties and reputational damage for groups that fail to comply.

[Blog post](#)

US

Deadline Extended for Cybersecurity Compliance

The Department of Defense has extended the deadline for federal contractors to implement new cybersecurity requirements until 31 December 2017. The requirements are imposed under the Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement. The interim rule which extended the deadline also provides that contractors must notify the Department of Defense Chief Information Office of any security requirements that are not implemented at the time the contract is awarded. This notification must be made within 30 days of the contract being awarded.

[Federal Register](#) (PDF)

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