

UK

Investigatory Powers Bill One Step Closer to Royal Assent

This week sees the controversial [Investigatory Powers Bill](#) enter the final stages of its [passage through parliament](#) before it becomes law. Once passed by the House of Lords, the amendments will be voted on by both houses before receiving royal assent to become law. It was the Prime Minister Theresa May who sponsored the bill in the first instance – a factor which many think will help its rapid progress. The bill updates the [Data Retention and Investigatory Powers Act](#) (DRIPA) which expires on 31 December 2016 and regulates the mass collection of data by government agencies. The government argues it is a necessity in the context of national security.

Gambling Websites Warned About Using Personal Data

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) has issued a [press release](#) warning companies believed to be using individual's personal details to promote online gambling websites that they are being targeted. The ICO has requested that such companies explain how they use the personal data and how many texts they have sent for marketing purposes. The ICO has threatened to use its powers to demand the information in the event that companies are not forthcoming, and has reiterated its ability to issue a fine of up to £500,000.

Germany

Data Protection Authorities Examine Data Transfers

The Data Protection Authorities of Bavaria, Berlin, Bremen, Hamburg, Niedersachsen, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Rheinland-Pfalz, Saarland and Sachsen-Anhalt [have announced](#) that they are conducting a coordinated, written examination of corporate data transfers. The authorities plan to contact about 500 companies and require them to complete a questionnaire regarding the products and services of external providers and the legal basis for data transfers. One of the key aims of the examination is to raise awareness of the privacy problems related to data transfers to countries outside of the EU.

France

France issues new clinical trial and medical research norms

After consultation with more than 70 stakeholders, the French Data Protection Authority (CNIL) has adopted two "reference methodologies" that support data processing for medical research projects. If a data controller strictly complies with either of the methodologies, the registration formalities with the CNIL are simplified as they will have been deemed to have passed the test for self-certification.

Reference methodology [MR-001](#), initially adopted in October 2010, has been completely revised in order to extend its scope. It now concerns research requiring the express or written consent of the patient or his legal representatives. The new [MR-003](#) reference methodology concerns research for which the patient does not object, after being individually informed.

US

Russian Court Upholds LinkedIn Block

On November 10, 2016, a Russian appellate court upheld a lower court decision that allows for a block on access to LinkedIn. The appellate court agreed that [the professional networking site had violated a recent 2015 law that requires data on Russian citizens to be stored domestically](#). The LinkedIn case is the first enforcement action taken since the law was passed last year. The Russian government stated that the privacy law is aimed at protecting its citizens' personal data. In contrast, opponents consider it as a further mechanism to tighten control over social networks in the country or an attempt to stifle the operations of western companies to the benefit of domestic organisations. The court's order will permit LinkedIn access to be blocked until the data of the approximately five million Russian users is moved. Enforcement of the law has important implications for other American and foreign companies like Google, Facebook, and Twitter as they attempt to gain users in Russia, and may bolster similar efforts by other countries to consider and proceed with domestic storage requirements. This also raises significant issues for multinational companies that have employees or customers in Russia and maintain personal data on these individuals outside of the jurisdiction.

Contacts

**Philip Zender**

Partner, San Francisco
T +1 415 393 9827
E philip.zender@squirepb.com

**Francesca Fellowes**

Senior Associate, Leeds
T +44 113 284 7459
E francesca.fellowes@squirepb.com

**Stephanie Faber**

Of Counsel, Paris
T +33 1 5383 7400
E stephanie.faber@squirepb.com

**Annette Demmel**

Partner, Berlin
T +49 30 7261 68 108
E annette.demmel@squirepb.com

**Caroline Egan**

Consultant, Birmingham
T +44 121 222 3386
E caroline.egan@squirepb.com

**Emma Garner**

Associate, Leeds
T +44 113 284 7416
E emma.garner@squirepb.com

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