

EU

European Council Agrees Partial General Approach to One-Stop Shop Mechanism in Draft Data Protection Regulation

The EU Council has reached a partial general approach on specific issues of the Draft Data Protection Regulation. The general approach includes chapters and recitals concerning the “one-stop shop” mechanism. According to the text agreed by the Council, the one stop shop mechanism should only play a role in important cross-border cases and will provide for cooperation and joint-decision making between several data protection authorities concerned. The text clarifies that any jointly agreed decision will be adopted by the data protection authority best placed to deliver the most effective protection from the perspective of the data subject. However, the partial general approach was only reached on the understanding that nothing is agreed until everything is agreed and that future changes can be made to the text of the provisionally agreed Articles.

[Council of the European Union Press Release](#)

Online Behavioural Advertising Report Published

The European Interactive Digital Advertising Alliance (EDAA) has published its Report into the work being undertaken across Europe to help give consumers greater transparency and control over Online Behavioural Advertising (OBA). OBA involves the collection of information from a computer’s web browser in order to deliver targeted online marketing to the user. The EDAA states that its ongoing roll out of the pan-European Self-Regulatory Programme saw considerable take-up across European markets during 2014, as well as growing consumer awareness of privacy tools. For example, the Report highlights a number of key developments, including: consumer awareness campaigns being rolled out in France, Finland, Greece, Portugal and Sweden; one in 25 European citizens say they have visited www.youronlinechoices.eu for more information about OBA; and over 96 individual companies signing up to the Consumer Choice Platform which is aimed at providing increased control to European consumers.

[EDAA 2014 Activity Report](#)

Germany

Associations Calls for Better Protection of Consumers in Draft Law on E-Health

The Federation of German Consumer Organisations (Vebrucherzentrale Bundesverband (VZBV)) recently criticized the new draft law on e-health stating that it does not sufficiently protect consumers. Although the VZBV recognizes that the draft is a big step forward for German healthcare as regards telematics infrastructure and the electronic health card, the VZBV criticizes the fact that, unlike care providers, patients are not given access to their medical data, except to certain applications of the electronic health card like emergency data.

The VZBV also calls for rights of objection to specific applications and incentives for better communication between doctors and patients.

[The Federation of German Consumer Organisations Press Release](#)

Association Warns Against Decline of IT Security Through TTIP

In a recent press release, the German Federal Association for IT Security “TeleTrusT” (Bundesverband IT-Sicherheit) has warned that German and European data protection standards could be lowered through the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). TeleTrusT raised concerns about data protection, IT security as well as the IT standardization deriving from TTIP. TeleTrusT sees cryptoalgorithms as a particularly sensitive issue and has criticized certain national institutions, such as the Federal Office for Information Security in Germany, for not directly participating in the TTIP negotiations.

[TeleTrust Press Release](#)

Federal Labor Court: Employee Consent Does Not Expire Automatically When Employment Ceases

The German Federal Labor Court has ruled that an employee’s consent to be filmed for company advertising does not expire automatically when the employment ceases. The employee, however, can cancel his consent if he asserts a plausible reason. In the case, the employee no longer wanted his personal data to be used in an internet publication of a commercial by his former employer. The Court held that publishing the commercial on the internet was legal owing to valid consent and that there was no plausible reason for its subsequent cancellation.

[German Federal Court Press Release](#)

United Kingdom

ICO Issues Warning to Call Centre

The Information Commissioner (ICO) has issued an enforcement notice to Help Direct UK, a financial services call centre, to stop sending spam texts asking people if they want a review of their pension. A total of 659 complaints were made to the ICO about the spam text messages. The ICO investigation discovered that 187,960 texts were sent by the company over nine months, covering a range of subjects. The ICO held that the call centre had contravened the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003 by sending such communications to individual subscribers for direct marketing purposes without their prior consent and by concealing the identity of the person on whose behalf they were sent.

[ICO Enforcement Notice](#)

Launch of ICO Corporate Plan

The ICO has published its corporate plan which sets out the ICO's priorities for 2015 -2018. The priorities include preparing for a period of substantial change with the implementation of a new EU data protection framework and the outcome of the Ministry of Justice's Triennial Review; developing and promoting an ICO privacy seal scheme as a means of demonstrating a commitment to good data protection practices; and engaging with transparency and Open Data initiatives to ensure a balanced information rights perspective.

[ICO Plan 2015-18](#)

Government Announces Investment in Internet of Things (IOT)

The Government has published its 2015 Budget, which includes a commitment to provide further strategic science and innovation investments, with the aim of making the UK a global leader in emerging markets and technologies. The Government has stated that it will commit £40 million for demonstrator programmes, business incubator space and a research hub to develop applications for Internet of Things technologies in healthcare and social care, and Smart Cities.

[2015 Budget](#)

Government Publishes Response to Digital Currencies Consultation

Following a consultation published last year, the Government has published its report on the benefits offered by digital currencies and the technology that underpins them. The report recognises the benefits of digital currencies but also highlights some concerns around the use of digital currencies such as the lack of a regulatory framework; and the risk of criminal use of digital currencies. The government have outlined their next steps in the report, which include applying anti-money laundering regulation to digital currency exchanges in the UK; and working with the British Standards Institution and the digital currency industry to develop voluntary standards for consumer protection.

[HM Treasury Press Release and Report](#)

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