

EU

European Court Rules That Employers May Monitor Company Devices Used in Work Hours

The European Court of Human Rights has ruled that companies have the right to monitor their workers' online private messages. In the case of *Barbulescu v Romania*, it was ruled that the employee's rights had not been infringed when his employer read personal conversations on Yahoo Messenger that were between that employee and his fiancée and brother. Employees of the company were asked to create the Yahoo account in order to answer client queries and the company policy clearly stated that the Yahoo account should be used for work purposes only.

[Press article](#)

[Court Judgment](#)

Germany

New Presidency of the Conference of German Data Protection Authorities

As of 1 January 2016, Reinhard Dankert, the Data Protection Officer of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, has taken the position of the 2016 Chairman of the Conference of Independent Data Protection authorities of the Bund and the Länder for the current year. Dankert announced that in the current year, the conference will focus on the implementation of the EU General Data Protection Regulation in Germany. What is needed, according to Dankert, is better national and international cooperation in order to preserve the high level of German data protection.

[Press release](#) (in German)

UK

Information Commissioner Repeats Call for Stronger Penalties

The Information Commissioner has reiterated his call for stronger sentencing powers for people convicted of stealing personal data, following the sentencing of an employee of a car rental company who stole customer information and sold it to accident claims companies. The Information Commissioner has stated that they would like to see the courts given more options, including suspended sentences, community service and prison, in more serious cases.

[Blog post](#)

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