

"Freedom AND Security - Killing the zero sum process #kill0sum"

Thomas Wahl



Report

22-23 November 2018, The Hague Europol published the [conference report](#) of an inspiring, unconventional data protection conference that took place at Europol headquarters in autumn 2018.

Speakers and participants came from different sectors all over the world, including practicing officials and lawyers, data protection officers, academics, policy makers, members of civil society organisations, and staff from private enterprises. The event also convened members of EDEN, the Europol Data Protection Experts Network.

Daniel Drewer, Europol's Data Protection Officer, welcomed the guests by explaining the idea behind the conference: the notion of balancing "freedom versus security" wrongfully implies a unitary dial: if we turn up freedom, we get less security, and if we turn down freedom, we get more security. Basically, freedom and security are viewed as a zero-sum trade-off. Of course there is a relationship between freedom and security – a change to one will sometimes affect the other. But often it is also possible to increase security without decreasing freedom, and sometimes a decrease in our freedom does not even lead to a meaningful increase in security.

The EDEN conference aimed at creating a platform for an open discussion on the data protection in a law enforcement context. Hence, many assumptions and prejudices were challenged.

The conference report summarises the main statements and results of the different panels, which included:

- Keynote speech by the Assistant Supervisor at the EDPS;
- Impact of General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) on law enforcement;
- Data as the new oil? Risks and opportunities for citizens and law enforcement;
- Data as the hostage – ransomware is still alive!
- The take-down of Hansa – at times the Darknet ain't that dark!
- The death of data retention at EU level – the mass surveillance scandal fallout and its detrimental consequences for law enforcement;
- Data protection by design for cooperation between law enforcement and intelligence services;
- From law enforcement fiction to future – will there be any privacy left in 2030, anyway?

The next EDEN conference will take place in Copenhagen.

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