

NGOs Call on the Commission to Give Up Data Retention Plans



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European Law Forum: Prevention • Investigation • Prosecution

Thomas Wahl

News

On the eve of the CJEU's judgment on the data retention rules in France, Belgium and the UK of 6 October 2020 ([separate news item](#)), more than 40 civil society organisations from 16 countries sent a [joint letter](#) to the Commission calling for a ban on blanket telecommunications data retention. The organisations expressed their deep concern over announcements that the Commission intends to assess the need for further action on communications data retention once the judgments in pending cases are delivered. The commissioned study on the feasibility of an EU-wide data retention scheme is considered biased since it does not take into account the threats of telecommunications data retention. The letter lists reasons why the invasive surveillance of the entire population must be deemed unacceptable.

It also points to studies proving that the communications data available without data retention are generally sufficient for effective criminal investigations; it is stated that blanket data retention has proven to be superfluous, harmful or even unconstitutional in many states across Europe. The Commission is urged to:

- Give up any attempts to re-introduce telecommunications data retention;
- Open infringement procedures to ensure that national data retention laws are repealed in all Member States concerned;
- Work towards an EU-wide ban on blanket and indiscriminate data retention practices that capture people's activities.

AUTHOR

Thomas Wahl

Senior Researcher
Max Planck Institute for the
Study of Crime, Security and
Law

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