

British Naturism

Malcolm Boura
campaigns@bn.org.uk

What evidence is there that the EU's competence and the way it has used it (principally the Data Protection Directive) has been advantageous or disadvantageous to individuals, business, the public sector or any other groups in the UK?

It is self evident that agreed international minimum enable the costs of evaluating risks and safeguards to be reduced. This is advantageous to everyone.

What evidence is there that the EU's competence and the way it has used it (principally the Data Protection Directive) strikes the right balance between individuals' data protection rights and the pursuit of economic growth?

This question presupposes that there is a conflict between the two. In the longer term, as opposed to the short term interests of a few companies, be any.

What evidence is there that proposals for a new EU Data Protection Regulation will be advantageous or disadvantageous to individuals, business, the public sector or any other groups in the UK?

It is obvious that agreed and enforceable minimum standards across international borders reduce the costs to business of working across borders. The costs of evaluating foreign legal provisions can be a serious deterrent to UK business seeking best value suppliers and to overseas customers considering UK suppliers.

I am considering various options for the part of this organisation that I am responsible for but at present that has stalled due to the costs of evaluating the privacy and data security implications. Accordingly we will probably keep our systems in house despite cheaper and probably better alternatives being available.

How would UK citizens' ability to access official information benefit from more or less EU action?

We strongly suspect that the ethos of The Freedom of Information Act is being ignored by some institutions. For example we notice a considerable difference between the police and other agencies. There seems to be a policy, no doubt unwritten and deniable, that responses should be delayed for as long as possible, and denied as much as is possible. There is a role for European competences in ensuring that state institutions are accountable.

How could action, in respect of information rights, be taken differently at national, regional or international level and what would be the advantages and disadvantages to the UK?

There are many advantages to an external agency:

1. It helps to hold national governments to account. It makes it harder for a national governments to mislead their electorates. Power corrupts and strong mechanisms to keep government honest are essential, indeed they need to be strengthened.
2. It helps to ensure consistency. It should not be necessary, and it is impracticable, to evaluate the legal and other safeguards underpinning every internet service before using it.

Hence the role of international bodies should be strengthened and preference must be given to those that recognise the need to put the interests of consumers of services first.

What future challenges or opportunities in respect of Information Rights might be relevant at a UK, EU or international level; for example cloud computing?

There is a minority of people who are deeply prejudiced against naturists and Naturism. Hence protecting the privacy of naturists, most of whom keep their Naturism secret because of the prejudice, is essential.

The internet, and cloud computing, is international. It is impossible for individuals to protect themselves and continue to use them. Indeed for most people, businesses, and organisations it is impossible to even evaluate the risks. Accordingly there is a need for international action that sets agreed and enforceable minimum standards. A rhetorical question illustrates the problem. Have you read and understood the terms of service for all the internet services that you use? Do you even know which countries laws apply?

Some sectors of the internet industries are dominated by a small number of largely unaccountable and monopolistic overseas corporations. There is little or no indication that national governments are prepared to remedy the problem of accountability.