

European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Fake News Policy in Slovakia

Europe has the toughest privacy laws in the world; one's right to privacy is a fundamental right under European law. However, many corporations largely ignore it by using private information for their financial gain. This led to the application of General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which is a European privacy and security law. It had been put into effect on May 25, 2018. Viennese activist Max Schrems asserted the rights it gives people over the data that companies want to collect about them. It is valid in EU countries today. With the significant development of social media, we tend to give out personal information, sometimes without any hesitation. In terms of accessing the use of a significant social networking app, we give permission to collect data about ourselves that the companies keep. This can turn into a risk circle that some may or may not know about. These companies such as Google, Facebook, Instagram and many more act illegally by forcing users to accept intrusive terms of service, or lose access. According to this Max Schrems stated that there needs to be an option to make a choice. Therefore he filed all the complaints and started working on this big project dedicated to data protection.

As it was slowly getting the attention of important authorities, Andrea Jelinek, who leads Austria's and European Data Protection Board, expressed interest in Schrems's idea. Jelinek very clearly stated: "If there is forced consent, there is no consent."

Max Schrems showed that a pop up message on Facebook gets the approval to use our data. Our only way is to really just accept it, unless we want to use our Facebook account.

The whole service, including the advertisements necessary, in order to remain free is meant to be personalized on user data. The same applies for Instagram and Whatsapp which are owned by Facebook. Austria's Data Protection Authority had been asked to investigate and prohibit data processing operations based on invalid consent. It also asked the regulator to impose fines, which could

rise up to 1.3 billion dollars for Facebook. Schrems said: “So far it was cheaper just to ignore privacy rights. Now, hopefully, it’s going to be cheaper to follow them, because the penalties are so high.

With GDPR in mind Schrems came up with a non-profit organization called None of Your Business.

“Noyb uses best practices from consumer rights groups, privacy activists, hackers, and legal tech initiatives and merges them into a stable European enforcement platform. Together with the many new enforcement possibilities under the new EU data protection regulation (GDPR), noyb is able to submit privacy cases in a much more effective way than before. Additionally, noyb follows the idea of targeted and strategic litigation in order to strengthen your right to privacy. We will also make use of PR and media initiatives to emphasize and ensure your right to privacy without having to go before court. Ultimately, noyb is designed to join forces with existing organizations, resources and structures to maximize the impact of GDPR, while avoiding parallel structures.

We focus on commercial privacy and data protection violations, because they are wide-spread, frequent and affect millions of people.

These corporate violations of your privacy and your digital rights are currently not being addressed by other organizations. ”

This law applies to any global company doing business in Europe. The effective European enforcement will raise privacy protections worldwide as global products and services will have to meet these EU standards.

GDPR defines a range of legal terms. Some of the most important ones are: personal data (names, email addresses, location information, ethnicity, gender, religious beliefs, web cookies); data processing (collecting, recording, organizing, structuring, storing, using, erasing...); data subject - The

person whose data is processed (these are customers or site visitors); data controller - The person who decides why and how personal data will be processed; data processor - A third party that processes personal data on behalf of a data controller.

When a company is collecting and processing data, it has to do so according to seven protection and accountability principles - lawfulness, fairness and transparency; purpose limitation; data minimization; accuracy; storage limitation; integrity and confidentiality; accountability.

With all this being said, Europe is becoming the world's leader in internet privacy and data protection... In contrast with America, big tech has been called on to answer for the endless amounts of personal data that's being gathered on Americans. Sen. Mark Warner said: "The era of the Wild West in social media is coming to an end." It certainly is a big step forward in privacy terms on social media.

Tim Cook (Apple CEO) stated: "Our own information from the everyday to the deeply personal, is being weaponized against us with military efficiency. It is time for the rest of the world, including my home country, to follow your lead. The echo originated in Austria and now it's being followed by some of the world's largest tech companies in America.

On a related note, the Fake News phenomenon still poses challenges despite GDPR. We live in the age of disinformation, when it is difficult to decide about the Truth. Armies of ideologically motivated opponents, radicalized citizens, paid trolls, and automated bots exchange online masses of posts, likes, and comments. In Slovakia, only three public institutions' Facebook pages counter disinformation coming from 166 known disinformation websites. Almost one half of Slovaks tend to believe disinformation. In response to Facebook's poor reactions to fake news in March 2019, Slovakia created a bot which chats with people. Supposedly, it does not tell whether something is true or not, it helps you decide yourself. "The Slovak internet faced the first large-scale disinformation campaign after the war in Ukraine started in 2014, and the campaigns have continued ever since. In Slovakia,

45.4 percent of people tended to believe conspiracy theories in 2014. Disinformation, fake news and non-reliable and untrusted information are a current issue in my country that only has begun its journey of development and literacy.

Citations

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