



# Privacy and Data protection

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**BIC Discussion Paper**

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## Introduction

The notion of privacy is changing, and there are active campaigns to promote the thesis that “Privacy is dead – get used to it” as stated by several leading American academics and business people. The rise of social networking online means that people no longer have an expectation of privacy, according to Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg. ([guardian.co.uk](http://guardian.co.uk))

## The Challenges

An experiment conducted by Steve Rambam reveals the extent of data available on the internet concerning most US citizens. The situation in Europe is relatively better, since privacy laws are stricter and more strictly enforced. The „Privacy is dead“ thesis is actively being promoted by the marketing industry and social networking sites, since the sale of data, which in Europe is private, is an increasingly profitable industry (see the recent New York Times article on the Acxiom corporation).

The questions that need to be discussed in order to stop the erosion of privacy are:

- Who is responsible for the preservation of an individual's privacy? Is it the government? The corporations? Or the responsibility of the individual?
- How can we as a research community empower the individual to take control of his or her own private data?
- What new powers are needed by the governments to restrain the “privacy violation industries“?
- How can corporations be convinced of the added value provided by privacy preserving services (see the ENISA report on the Monetization of Privacy)?

## Required action

International cooperation projects are necessary to tackle these questions for several reasons. The foremost of these challenges to address being the trans-national nature of most information available on the internet, the different legal frameworks in a variety of countries, and the social variability between individuals in different regions of the world. (see the BIC presentation by Marijke Coetzee of University of Johannesburg on the different social norms in emerging markets [http://www.bic-trust.eu/files/2012/04/WG1\\_6\\_MC.pdf](http://www.bic-trust.eu/files/2012/04/WG1_6_MC.pdf))

The types of international based socio-technical projects necessary are the following:

- For the individual: A comprehensive, easy to use, privacy enhancing technology, that takes into account the “do not track”, “do not link”, and “minimize data exposure” principles. Some of

these technologies already exist, but none are widely available in a single package, that can be tuned to individual preferences, and used unobtrusively whenever the individual engages in online activity.

- For corporations: A set of tools and an extensible framework for the conduct of privacy audits. Currently privacy audits are conducted manually using highly skilled personnel – and are prohibitively expensive for small enterprises. It should be possible to create tools to analyze web-sites, data-stores, and other corporate activities using a framework with plugins for the different legal frameworks under which the audit is being conducted.
- For governments: A privacy policing toolbox for the detection of privacy law breaches, and the gathering of evidence for privacy violation prosecution. This could also be a by-product of the previous bullet.

## Recommendation

In conclusion, further international projects in the area of privacy education should also be promoted, including instruction on the use of privacy enhancing technologies, and on the protection of children and other vulnerable groups.

## References

*Privacy no longer a social norm, says Facebook founder*, The Guardian, 11-JAN-2010  
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2010/jan/11/facebook-privacy>

ENISA – *Study on monetising privacy. An economic model for pricing personal information*  
<http://www.enisa.europa.eu/activities/identity-and-trust/library/deliverables/monetising-privacy>

BIC [Discussion Paper and presentation] of Prof. Marijke Coetzee of University of Johannesburg.

Discussion paper:

[http://www.bic-trust.eu/files/2013/01/Coetzee\\_SocialComputing\\_June2012.pdf](http://www.bic-trust.eu/files/2013/01/Coetzee_SocialComputing_June2012.pdf)

Presentation:

[http://www.bic-trust.eu/files/2012/04/WG1\\_6\\_MC.pdf](http://www.bic-trust.eu/files/2012/04/WG1_6_MC.pdf)