LEGAL FEASIBILITY FOR STATISTICAL METHODS ON INTERNET AS A SOURCE OF DATA GATHERING IN THE EU

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Abstract

Internet-based measurement is using Internet as source of data gathering and it is a method of automated data collection. The three most common Internet-based measurement approaches are user-centric, network-centric and site-centric measurements. User-centric relies on in-depth analysis of behaviour of users by installing software and application; network-centric measures traffic flows between users and content throughout the network; and site-centric collects data from one to more websites. Internet as a source of data gathering could lower the costs and increase the speed of data collection for statistical purposes compared with traditional manual methods. Statistics analysis is important as it may contribute to value added service. On the other hand, data privacy rights may be at risk under such measurement approaches if technical measures for data security are not appropriate or users did not give prior consent to the use of such data. This paper discusses the current EU data privacy protection legislation and analyses the overall legal feasibility of the development of Internet-based measurements with regard to automated data collection for statistical purposes by looking into the detail of the reform of the new EC e-Privacy Directive and the current review of the EC Data Protection Directive.

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