STOA
Science and Technology Options Assessment

STOA Panel meeting
Thursday, 18 December 2014, 9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
LOW N1.4, Strasbourg

Minutes

The meeting started at 09:35 with Mr Paul RÜBIG, Chairman of the STOA Panel, in the chair.

1. Adoption of the draft agenda (PE 527.405)

– The Chair:
  - announced that interpretation was available in the following languages: English (EN), German (DE), Czech (CZ), Bulgarian (BG) and Croatian (HR);
  - welcomed Mr Claude MORAES, MEP, Chairman of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE), as well as Mr Patrick DE GRAFF, from CapGemini, and Mr Stefan SCHUSTER, from Tecnalia, who presented the study on *'Mass Surveillance'* under agenda item 3;
  - also welcomed Mr Joe DUNNE, (Acting) Director for Impact Assessment and European Added Value, DG EPRS; Mr Peter TINDEMANS, Secretary-General of EuroScience; and Ms Urska GRAHEK, co-ordinator for relations with the European Parliament, Joint Research Centre (JRC);
  - recalled that the draft agenda was in the dossier, and asked Members if anyone would like to request any changes or additions.

– The draft agenda was adopted without modifications.

2. Approval of draft minutes - STOA Panel meeting of 27 November 2014 (PE 527.403)

– The draft minutes were approved without modifications.

3. Presentation of the final reports of the STOA project 'Mass Surveillance of IT users: Risks and benefits for the European Information Society'

- The Chair:
  - informed Panel members that this STOA project was initiated upon request of the LIBE committee following the adoption by the European Parliament, on 12 March 2014, of a resolution on the 'US NSA surveillance programme, surveillance bodies in various Member States and their impact on EU citizens' fundamental rights and on transatlantic cooperation in Justice and Home Affairs';
  - informed Panel members that Ms KAILI was Lead Panel Member for this project;
  - informed the Panel that the study contained two parts: Part 1 was a Technology Assessment report addressing "the risks and opportunities raised by the current generation of network services and applications"; Part 2 was a Technology Foresight report addressing "the technology foresight options for longer-term security and privacy improvements";
  - informed the Panel that the results of the two studies would be presented at the conference 'Protecting on-line privacy by enhancing IT security and EU IT autonomy', which the LIBE Committee was planning for the first half of 2015;
  - informed the Panel that STOA would produce in the first quarter of 2015 two YouTube video teasers of 3 minutes each to advertise the reports and disseminate their content via social media;
  - gave the floor to Mr Stefan SCHUSTER and Mr Patrick DE GRAFF for the presentation of the results of the two parts of the study, respectively.
- Following the two presentations, the Chair gave the floor to:
  - Mr MORAES, who thanked the STOA Panel for launching this very important study;
  - Ms KAILI, who asked the following questions:
    - Could digital traces left by metadata be hidden?
    - What personal information was kept (stored) by service providers and for how long?

- Did information deleted by users really disappear completely from any form of digital storage?
- Was it possible for users to manage access to their personal information in a very granular way (through an adequate consent and privacy warning system)?
- Could users be informed where their data was stored (since applicable legislation depended on location)?
- Was it possible to protect European data by a European firewall?
- Was it possible to design a system where personal data would be 'self-protected'?
- Could the use of all sorts of 'blacklists' help mitigate privacy threats?
- What budget would be required to fix the Internet?
- Should fixing the Internet be financed and coordinated by the EU only, or should Member States act independently?

- Mr Carlo COELHO, STOA Panel member and, from July 2000 to September 2001, Chairman of the Temporary Committee on the Echelon Interception System, who asked what would be the increase in difficulty to do mass surveillance if 'End-to-End Encryption' (E2EE) were massively deployed on the Internet as a default for applications and services; he also wondered if the usage of Open Source Software (OSS) really guaranteed absence of backdoors into proprietary software.

- The speakers replied to the above questions and comments as follows:
  - Yes, digital traces could indeed be partially (but not totally) blurred and hidden by using appropriate anonymising tools and services, such as Virtual Private Networks (VPN), The Onion Routing (TOR) network, and anonymous proxies;
  - No, different operational and legal policies applied for the retention time of communication data depending on national legislations;
  - No, when users deleted personal data, there was no guarantee that all existing electronic copies of it were deleted at the same time (information can be duplicated without any control of the owner);
  - Yes, it was technically possible to design information systems allowing the management of the sharing of personal data in a very granular way;
  - No, the physical location of the stored data was not transparent to users (service providers often used underlying Cloud Computing infrastructures);
  - Yes, it was conceptually possible to create a protected 'EU data space' using firewalls, however such a compartmentalisation of the Internet into regional 'sandboxes' would destroy the open character of the Net;
  - Yes, the concept of self-protected data existed, it was called 'data-centric security' and it was one the policy option of the study;
  - Yes, blacklists were already in use, however their efficiency was limited (users were not aware of their existence or they did not follow them);
  - No, it was not possible to give a cost estimate "for fixing the Internet"; it was a major task that demanded international cooperation;
  - Yes, default implementation of E2EE among users of a given on-line service would make mass surveillance practices more difficult (however, it is impossible to quantify the gains);
  - No, the usage of open source software did not guarantee the absence of security bugs and malicious backdoors into it (however, it gave users the possibility to inspect, validate and verify the code, which was not possible with proprietary black-box software).
- The Chair agreed with the speakers that ENISA[1] might be an appropriate institution to work with for establishing an EU certification scheme for cryptography implementations; he finally proposed that the two reports presented should be published on-line as soon as possible; the Panel agreed.

4. Priorities for the new legislature and implementation of the Action Plan

- The Chair proposed that, due to time constraints, this agenda item should be discussed at the next Panel meeting; the Panel agreed.

[1] European Network and Information Security Agency

5. Update on on-going STOA projects and forthcoming events

- The Chair announced that all related information was to be found in the dossier.
- In particular, he informed the meeting that the internal STOA study on Scientific Foresight methodologies for the European Parliament was close to completion and a report would soon be ready for publication; the study would be presented in a forthcoming Panel meeting by Ms VAN WOENSEL, Head of the Scientific Foresight Service, who had conducted this study.
- He finally drew Members' attention to the STOA workshop '*Impact and potential Internet and additive manufacturing technologies'*, scheduled for 27 January 2015 in Brussels.

6. Any other business

- The Panel decided, upon a proposal of the Chairman, that a STOA delegation for 8-9 May 2015 to the World Exhibition EXPO 2015 (May – October 2015) in Milan should be added to the list of delegations for which STOA, as decided at the previous Panel meeting, would request authorisation from the European Parliament's Bureau.

7. Date of next meeting

- The Chair announced that the next Panel meeting was scheduled for Thursday, 15 January 2015, at 9:30 a.m., in Room LOW N 1.4 in Strasbourg.
- He finally conveyed to all participants his best wishes for the festive season and the New Year.

The meeting ended at 10:35.

Brussels, 7 January 2015

ANNEX

List of participants

STOA Panel members

Mr Rübig, Ms Kaili, Mr Tošenovský, Mr Coelho, Ms Jazłowiecka, Mr Girauta Vidal, Mr Nekov, Ms Petir.

Other Members

Ms Ford (IMCO Committee), Mr Moraes (LIBE Committee).

Scientific Foresight (STOA) Unit

Mr Karapiperis, Mr Pataki, Ms Van Woensel, Mr Ide-Kostic, Mr Evrard, Mr Archer (Trainee), Ms Vrscaj (Trainee).

Other participants

Mr Dunne (DG EPRS), Mr Györffi (EP), Ms Laperrouze (Assistant to Mr Girauta Vidal), Mr Trump (Assistant to Ms Ford), Ms Huber (LIBE Secretariat), Mr de Graaf (CapGemini), Ms van den Berg (CapGemini), Mr Schuster (Tecnalia), Mr Weber (KIT), Ms Canales (EASAC), Ms Grahek (JRC), Ms Karanjac (Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly), Mr Tindemans (EuroScience).