Blurring the line

Three case studies from Greece

Homo Digitalis
5 Years
Protect your rights

First case - biometric police gadgets

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Early 2019	Late 2019	March 2020	August 2020	Late 2021	October '22 - today
Smart Policing Project, Hellenic Police	**Homo Digitalis request to access data**	**Homo Digitalis filed a complaint**	**Greek DPA launched an investigation**	**The Hellenic Police acquired the devices**	**Greek DPA to discuss in Plenary**
Use smart portable devices during **police stops** targeting **third country nationals.**	To get information about the legal basis and the Data Protection Impact Assessment. We got a reply but **no clear** answers provided.	Requested from the Greek Data Protection Authority to conduct an investigation over the issue	Against this smart policing contract following Homo Digitalis complaint.	No testimonies or journalists' reports about their use so far, though.	No discussions, no results and no information has yet been provided.

Second case - Centauros & Hyperion

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Centauros

- costs **9,4 million euro** (excluding VAT)
- funded by EU's "Recovery and Resilience Facility - Next Generation EU" scheme
- manages electronic and physical security around and inside the new **Closed Control Access Centers** hosting asylum seekers in Samos, Leros and Kos (also in Chios and Lesvos), using **CCTV, drones and AI Behavioral Analytics algorithms**.

Some functions include:

- **Signaling alarms of irregular behavior** of (groups) of individuals in common areas within the facilities
- **Deploying drones** to assess incidents **without human intervention**.

Hyperion

- costs **11,7 million euro** (excluding VAT)
- funded by EU's Internal Security Fund (ISF) and "Recovery and Resilience Facility - Next Generation EU" scheme.
- The related procurement process is **confidential**.
- It controls entry and exit to **Closed Control Access Centers** in Greece via the use of a special card and the simultaneous use of fingerprints for **biometric authentication**.
- In addition, this special ID card is used as a token for receiving food, clothing, and other necessities in the facilities.

Third case - social media monitoring app

Hellenic Coast Guard (HCG) published a call for acquiring a social media monitoring software tool. The tool costs **726.000 euro** (VAT included) funded by EU's Internal Security Fund. The software will support HCG's **surveillance practices:**

- On Facebook, Twitter, VK, Xing, and Instagram, including
  - collection, analysis and storage of data that are publicly displayed
  - Lists of contacts
  - Posts made and account information (past and current employment status, past and current residences, past and current education, etc).
- Software allows for the **creation of bots** that would be able to **monitor group conversations in Telegram (**up to 10,000 participants) and collect the full content within each group conversation while simulating human activity in order to avoid account blocking by the platform.

February 2022 — **Initial Discovery**

Researcher Phoebus Simeonidis discovered the call for tender

February 2022 — **Request for investigation GR DPA**

Homo Digitalis**,** The Hellenic League for Human Rights, HIAS Greece, Privacy International & Phoebus Simeonidis

November 2022 — **Contract awarded**

The companies Byte and Grivas got the contract. We reached out to the Hellenic DPA for a follow-up on its actions.

May 2023 — **Awaiting**

The DPA officially informed us that following our request in February 2022 they have opened an investigation about it ever since. Decision still pending.

Concluding remarks

Greece continues investing on the digitalisation of public sector.

Border management and surveillance is part of the strategic agenda called " The Bible of Digital Transformation" with many projects already in progress.

Transparency, enforcement of legal obligation and oversights are just three things that we will keep fighting for.

Homo Digitalis
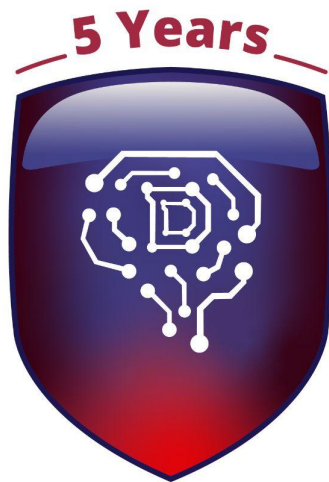Protect your rights
5 Years

Thanks!

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