

Data Protection Ireland

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Headlines:

- Germany approves law banning employers from networking sites, p.14
- Facebook introduces new location-revealing service, p.15
- CAO targeted by cyber attackers, p.16

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DPC's concern over 'sharing' of department data

Concerns have been raised that the Department of Social Protection is using its strong powers to require excessive information from public bodies to gather data on Irish citizens' marrying abroad.

The Department relies on Section 261 of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005 to gather data, which provides that information held by another government department or a public body, which is required for the purposes of the Act, may be transferred to the Department.

The Department of Social Protection has an ongoing

dialogue with the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner on the use of its Section 261 powers, "in order to ensure compliance with data protection obligations in addition to the public policy obligation to tackle welfare fraud."

The concerns came about after the Department of Social Protection requested data from the Department of Foreign Affairs earlier this year, saying that it needed it to investigate levels of welfare fraud.

Concerned about the nature of the request, staff at the Department of Foreign Affairs

contacted the Data Protection Commissioner to seek his views, and later refused to hand over the details. Data Protection Commissioner, Gary Davis, said his office is currently engaged in 'constructive' discussions with the Department of Social Protection. "Those discussions are predicated on the basis that the department is anxious to use this power in a manner that is compliant with its data protection obligations but also its public policy obligation to tackle welfare fraud," he said.

A spokesperson for the Department of Social

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DPC declares WiFi as 'matter closed' in Ireland

The Office of the Data Protection Commissioner has confirmed that Billy Hawkes considers the Google WiFi data collection fiasco as a "matter closed in this jurisdiction." Diarmuid Hallinan from the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner told *Data Protection Ireland* that the Commissioner is "satisfied that Google complied with his instructions in regard to this issue."

The investigations of Street View by Data Protection Authorities in other jurisdictions are still ongoing. In Spain, Google's legal representatives are to appear before a Spanish court on 4th October to explain Google's activities in Spain. The court ordered the appearance after the Spanish Legal Advanced Communications and Computer Crime Association (Apedanica),

an internet rights group, complained to the Spanish Authorities. The court's main concern is to establish what information Google collected, the manner in which it was collected, and from how many people.

In France, Google has announced that it has resumed photographing France for Street View, despite the ongoing

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