

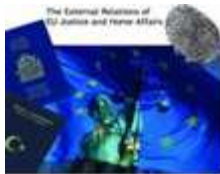


Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

Sectoral Committee
Weekly Update
29.01.10

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The main priorities of the Spanish Presidency

In his appearance before the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs of the European Parliament, the Spanish Minister for Justice, Francisco Caamaño, spoke about the main priorities of the Spanish Presidency in terms of judicial cooperation.

One of the main priorities is to focus attention on the victims with the aim of improving their protection and support.

Other initiatives for this area include the setting up of a European e-justice portal or mechanisms to strengthen judicial cooperation with third countries, especially the United States.

The Spanish Minister highlighted the importance of continuing to make progress in the legislative harmonisation in general procedural guarantees and rights in order to apply the existing criminal legal cooperation instruments in a better and more effective way.

The minister also underlined Spain's readiness to promote the directive on criminal penalties for infringing intellectual property as soon as the Committee presents the proposal and stressed the efforts that the Spanish Presidency will make to build an online legal system, via the e-Justice portal, that is accessible and useful for everybody, with a view to creating a European legal space.

Read more:

http://www.eu2010.es/en/documentosynoticias/noticias/caamano_parlamento.html



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

Measures to improve police coordination and cooperation in Europe

The Spanish Minister for Home Affairs, Alfredo Pérez Rubalcaba, explained to the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs of the European Parliament, the initiatives that his Presidency is going to promote in order to improve police cooperation and operating coordination capacity.

The Minister explained that Europe is facing many global threats that can only be tackled globally and with a joint strategy. The fight against terrorism, organised crime, drug trafficking or trafficking in human beings are matters that require special cooperation between the security forces of the different States.

In order to generate trust among the police forces, the Spanish Presidency will promote the creation of joint teams, and will facilitate mechanisms for information transfer and will launch a kind of police 'Erasmus', which will enable police forces to attend training courses in other countries.

Exchanging "best practices" in the fight against radicalisation and recruitment by extremist groups; money laundering and locating assets resulting from crime are some of the other matters at the centre of home affairs activities in the next six months.

<http://www.eu2010.es/en/documentosnoticias/noticias/RubalcabaParlamento.html>



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Challenges to Europeans' Privacy

Our privacy faces new challenges: behavioural advertising can use your internet history to better market products; social networking sites used by 41.7 million Europeans allow personal information like photos to be seen by others; and the 6 billion smart chips used today can trace your movements.

On Data Protection Day (28th January 2010) the European Commission warned that data protection rules must be updated to keep abreast of technological change to ensure the right to privacy, legal certainty for industry, and the take-up of new technologies. EU rules say that a person's information can only be used on legitimate grounds, with their prior consent. With the Lisbon Treaty and the Charter of Fundamental Rights now in force, the Commission said it wants to create a clear, modern set of rules for the whole EU guaranteeing a high level of personal data protection and privacy, starting with a reform of the 1995 EU Data Protection Directive.

In 2009 the Commission took a number of initiatives to make sure that privacy keeps up with technology:

- **A Recommendation on Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) smart tags** in products like bus passes, saying that tags used in retail should be automatically deactivated unless the consumer purchasing an item with a tag "opts in".
- In February 2009, it **brokered an agreement between 18 (20 since June) major social networking companies to improve minors' online safety, and privacy, on social networking sites** like Facebook. The Commission will report on their progress at Safer Internet Day 2010 next month.
- **New EU telecoms rules** oblige providers of communications services like the internet to tell authorities when security breaches lead to personal data loss or misuse. They strengthen consumers' rights to be informed when information like internet cookies is stored or accessed on their equipment.
- The Commission launched **legal action against the UK** on 14 April 2009, reacting to citizens' concerns about UK internet providers testing **behavioural advertising (PHORM) that scanned their internet use**. The Commission warned the UK that its law does not comply with EU rules on confidentiality in telecoms in areas like user consent to interception of communications, sanctions against unlawful interception and supervision of interception activities. The case entered its second phase on 3 November 2009. If the Commission does not get a satisfactory reply, it may refer the case to the European Court of Justice.

Read more:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/63&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>