HIDE

HOMELAND SECURITY
BIOMETRIC IDENTIFICATION & PERSONAL DETECTION
ETHICS
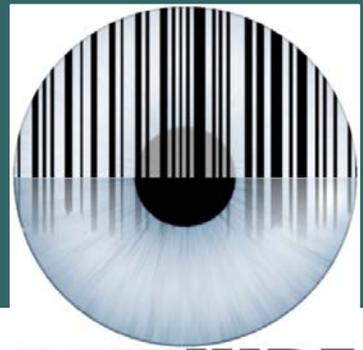
HIDE

We work to make the world a safer and freer place by promoting an open dialogue on liberty, security and democracy and by building confidence and improving understanding among key international actors.

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HIDE is a project promoted by the European Commission (EC) and coordinated by the Centre for Science, Society and Citizenship, an independent research centre based in Rome (IT).

HIDE aims to establish a platform devoted to monitoring the ethical and privacy implications of biometrics and personal detection technologies. Detection technologies are technologies used to detect something or someone within a security or safety context. Personal Detection Technologies focus specifically on individuals, they include for example CCTV, infrared detectors and thermal imaging, GPS and other Geographical Information Systems (GISs), RFID, MEMS, smart ID cards, transponders, body scanners, etc. Biometrics is the application of technologies that make use of a measurable, physical characteristic or personal behavioural trait in recognizing the identity, or verifying the claimed identity of a previously registered individual.

Personal detection technologies and biometrics are increasingly interwoven within a variety of applications. Most of these applications seek to create sensor network infrastructures for continuous detection, authentication and identification of individuals within diverse settings ranging from, amongst others, commercial, transport, public locales and border control. Moreover, by developing multimodal signal analyses, these technologies may allow activity recognition, indoor movement monitoring and non-verbal communication cues (body language, facial expressions, speech intonation, etc) which may assist in the prediction of behaviour. In its recent Green Paper on Detection Technologies, the EC argues that personal detection technologies and biometrics are "inherently intrusive" and "their use needs to be carefully analyzed, in order to establish limitations to their intrusiveness where necessary". HIDE meets this call and promotes open conversation between technology, security, ethics and policy experts as well as encouraging public discussions and dialogue. HIDE is based on the values of dialogue, responsibility, and integrity.

OVERALL GOALS

HIDE will engage in a comprehensive scanning of existing resources on ethics and privacy of biometrics and personal detection technologies, it will set up a permanent platform devoted to exploring the issues involved in ethics and privacy of new and personal detection technologies, it will reframe and promote debate on the most controversial ethical and privacy issues raised by the convergence between biometrics detection and identification technologies.

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IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVES

HIDE will develop and consist of several integrated activities, including focus groups, policy forums as well as problem solving workshops.

Focus Groups monitor and explore for the project's entire duration four technological areas. Focus groups' activities will result in ethical briefs, which will crystallize conversation in a form comprehensible for policy makers and, generally speaking, for the "lay" reader. The four technological areas are: 1) Technology Convergence; 2) System Interoperability; 3) Embedded Technology; 4) Privacy Enhancing Technology.

Policy Forums offer a setting for exploratory discussions of complex issues involving multiple parties. Unlike focus groups, policy forums do not have the direct tie-in to a particular technology or a set of technology solutions; instead they address wide ranging general policy issues, which crosscut all technological fields. The general remit of Policy Forums is to reflect on and question basic assumptions and values involved in the public conversation on biometrics and personal detection technologies. They issue a yearly comprehensive report on their activity. Policy areas to be examined are: 1) Contextualization of privacy; 2) Bodily Issues; 3) Outsourcing of Surveillance.

Problem Solving Workshops are designed to bring together individuals from different groups in a "safe" environment to address questions which are otherwise difficult to discuss in more formal or structured settings. While the participants may or may not occupy official positions – it is hoped that they might influence policy decisions in a variety of ways. Workshops aim to strengthen the perception that further dialogue among the participants is going to be fruitful and conversation is worth pursuing. Problem solving workshops are thus designed to reach two parallel and coordinated results: 1) First, they should encourage an analytical approach to joint problem solving that will be conducive to the emergence of creative win-win solutions; 2) Second, they should also alter and combat stereotyped, negative, and rigid images thereby paving the way for a constructive approach to debated issues. HIDE will organize two workshops: 1) Transatlantic and International data sharing and the APEC Privacy Framework (Singapore); 2) Restrictions of EU Data Protection Directive for public interest, security and defense (Ljubljana).

A **Final Conference** will conclude the project. The conference will summarize HIDE results into a form meaningful for policy-makers and stakeholders. Conference participants include EU MPs, EC officers from all affected services (DG Research, Enterprise, JLS, Information Society, etc.), key agencies such as ENISA, Europol, IPTS, IPSC, industry, academia, civil society organizations, as well as any other relevant stakeholder. With the final conference HIDE seeks an endorsement for its platform to engage with issues beyond the duration of the project.

KEY RESULT

The overarching objective of the HIDE project is to create a DIALOGUE PLATFORM ON ETHICS AND GOVERNANCE OF PERSONAL DETECTION TECHNOLOGIES AND BIOMETRICS. Not only individuals but also communities, governments, international agencies may greatly benefit from a structured space for open conversation on the ethics and governance of personal detection/identification technologies. Implicit in our view is the idea that these technologies play a peculiar role that goes beyond standard security technologies. The processes of identity formation and of identification touch on some of the deepest and most sensitive areas of human life. Who we are and how we relate to others whom we know or do not know are basic social and cultural questions that are at the heart of modern as well as future modes and means of living.

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