

# Privacy Laws & Business

# NEWSLETTER

data protection and privacy worldwide

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For many years, Italy and Greece have lagged behind other European Union Member States in terms of adopting a comprehensive data protection law. Their lack of such a law has provided one of the reasons for adopting the EU Data Protection Directive. Now there are signs of change. Greece, under a new prime minister, has prepared a new draft law which reflects the EU Directive's requirements. Italy, only narrowly, failed to adopt a bill at the end of last year. Now, Italy's new government has given the revived bill priority status to speed its passage through the legislature (p.2) and it is expected to be adopted later this year.

There are signs of the Member States now tackling with urgency the challenge of transposing the EU Data Protection Directive into national law. Sweden and Spain have officially designated their Data Protection Authorities as their official supervisory bodies. The Netherlands is close to a draft law. Belgium's Conseil d'Etat cited the EU Directive when giving its advice on the draft royal decree on exemptions from registration, published in *Le Moniteur Belge* on 15th March. Germany's Federal Data Protection Commissioner has submitted a paper to the Interior Minister. Denmark has established a committee, chaired by the former director of the Registertilsynet, which also includes the current director and the leading academic expert. The UK's Data Protection Registrar has published a detailed paper inviting all interested parties to join the debate (p. 16).

Of course, domestic agendas remain. Public spending cuts have encouraged some fundamental thinking on the resources which can be devoted to funding the work of Data Protection Authorities. The Director General of Sweden's Data Inspection Board discusses the limits of her powers in an increasingly computerised society (p. 7).

The UK's Home Office published, on 19th June, its white paper on access to criminal records for employment and related purposes. We will discuss the policy implications for employers, the police and the individual in our next issue.



**Stewart Dresner, Publisher**

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## in this issue

- Italy's new government gives priority to data protection bill . . . . . 2**
- Privacy Laws & Business Newsletter subscription form . . . . . 3**
- Italy's Data Protection Bill's main features . . . . . 4**
- Ontario defines privacy protection principles for voice mail systems .. 5**
- What can Privacy Commissioners do? The limits of bureaucratic intervention . . . . . 7**
- Hungary adopts new sectoral data protection laws . . . . . 11**
- US Department of Health appoints a Privacy Advocate . . . . . 14**
- The UK Registrar stimulates debate on implementation of the EU Data Protection Directive . . . . . 15**
- Data Protection and the Police workshop papers available . . . . . 16**

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