en | de

Press release | 20.11.2014

Air passenger data exchange

European Court must assess legality of proposed PNR scheme

The Greens/EFA group has called for the European Parliament to support the referral of a planned agreement between the EU and Canada on the exchange of air passenger data (PNR) to the European Court of Justice. MEPs will vote next week on whether to refer the agreement to the ECJ for its legal opinion, following a decision by the presidents of EP political groups today (1). Commenting on the initiative, Green home affairs spokesperson **Jan Philipp Albrecht** said:

"There are serious doubts about the legality of the planned EU-Canada PNR agreement. The landmark ruling of the European Court of Justice earlier this year made clear that the general retention of data without grounds is not compatible with EU law. This has clear implications for passenger data exchange and retention systems, which the EU Parliament's legal service is expected to confirm soon. Against this background, it would be irresponsible to proceed gung-ho with a PNR exchange system that goes in this direction and the proposed system must be legally assessed. New EU home affairs commissioner Dimitris Avramopoulos has already shared this view and we call on the bigger political groups in the European Parliament to support the referral of this agreement to the ECJ when Parliament votes next week.

"There is no proof that the mass collection and storage of air passenger data helps in combating terrorism. The recent attack on the Canadian parliament would not have been prevented by passenger name record exchange for example. While the exchange of passenger data may create a false sense of security, it is neither necessary nor effective in fighting terrorism. Instead, what we need is better cooperation between security services."

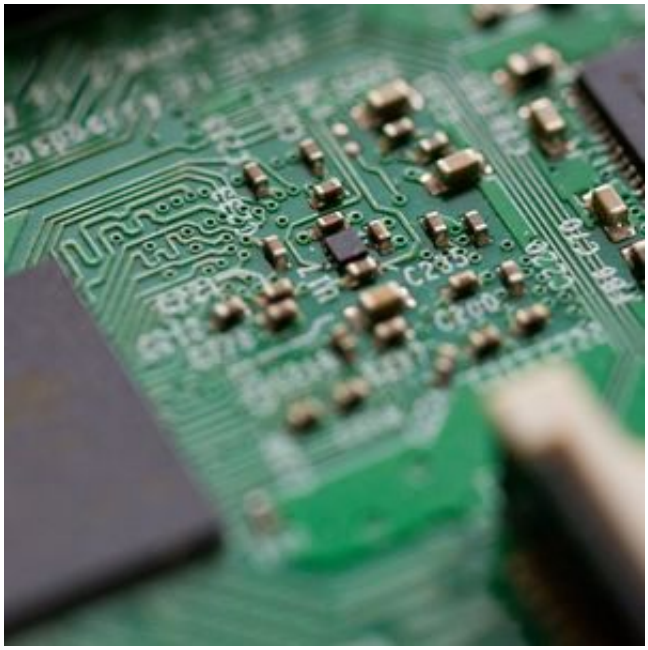
(1) The EU-Canada Passenger Name Record agreement was signed by the European Commission and the Canadian authorities in June this year after long negotiations. However, many legal experts have argued that the landmark ruling of the European Court of Justice against the EU data retention directive of April 2014 means the PNR exchange systems practised by the EU with third countries are also not valid under EU law.

The EU-Canada PNR agreement requires the consent of the European Parliament. However, in the context of the changed legal situation, the Greens (together with MEPs from the ALDE, GUE/NGL and S&D groups) support a procedure to refer the agreement to the European Court of Justice for its legal opinion before proceeding with any decision on whether or not to grant consent.

Recommended

Press release

chris-ried



Digital Fairness Act falls short on addictive design

11.11.2026

Press release

Redek Kozak



[Czech public media under attack - with Markéta Gregoro…]

11.11.2026

Press release

Sebastian P



[Commission must overhaul EU Democracy Shield]

15.09.2026

Press release

hosnysalah



[Israel: Greens/EFA urge EU response to death penalty l…]

01.04.2026

Responsible MEPs



Jan Philipp Albrecht

Member

Please share

- E-Mail