PNR air passenger data retention

MEPs wave through new PNR system

The European Parliament's lead civil liberties and home affairs committee today approved a legislative agreement on the creation of an EU passenger name record system (1). The Greens have criticised the creation of the system and voted against the agreement, with Green home affairs spokesperson Jan Philipp Albrecht stating:

"A majority of MEPs has brushed aside concerns with an EU PNR system and caved in to the demands of EU governments. Centre-right, socialist and liberal MEPs today waved through this flawed agreement on the creation of an EU passenger name record system. The concerns expressed by the European Parliament in 2013 in opposing this mass surveillance system remain exactly the same today; the only difference is the context and it is seriously regrettable that this has been used to simply ignore these concerns, which have since been reinforced by the 2014 ruling of the European Court of Justice against the retention of the private data of individuals without suspicion.

"The blanket collection and retention of all air passengers' data, without suspicion, is nothing more than a placebo, with no evidence it will improve security. With an estimated cost of €500 million, it is an expensive diversion from real solutions to combating terrorism where resources are badly needed, like for police and security services and cooperation between the different authorities across Europe.

"The Greens/EFA group has fought to avoid the worst with this proposal and we will continue to do so up to the plenary vote. There should be a clear time limit on any surveillance and data retention and only for flights from destinations with a known risk, like Turkey or Syria, and for a limited amount of time. Unfortunately, there seems to be no majority in the Parliament for these proposals."

(1) The European Parliament is expected to vote to confirm the agreement in a plenary session in early 2016 and the system would enter into force thereafter, with EU member states to implement the system within two years.

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Responsible MEPs

Jan Philipp Albrecht

Member

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