

CONNECT University Online Session on Data Brokers in the EU

- 07 July 2022

The event will explore the value of data, the role of diverse stakeholders, and governance as it relates to data-brokers.



What type of data do data brokers collect and what do they do with it?

Data brokers, or information brokers, are individuals or companies that specialise in the collection of personal data or data about companies. Clients of information brokers come from a wide range of industries and professions, both private and public. While access to data can be crucial to companies and institutions, it is equally important to ensure that such data is properly handled so that privacy rights are respected. This session will map the EU data landscape and the stakeholders involved. The context will be set in order to better understand the EU data landscape and actors involved.

Furthermore, we will explore how data-brokers can operate effectively yet ethically, evaluating how to balance privacy and security, accuracy and democratic control, fairness and efficiency.

In the EU, explicit consent from users is required, and data should only be collected for legally-mandated re-use, requiring legitimate interest. In some cases, the data is merely derived, inferred, or predicted, thus it can be argued that it is not personal data. We will explore the practical implications of this, and how at times given the ambiguity, such use is abused or misinterpreted.

Lastly, we will touch upon the challenges the EU faces in protecting our privacy and upholding transparency and examine the role of research in strengthening independent and public institutions.

Overall, the subtopics will aim at covering:

- understanding the process of collecting, cleaning, packaging, and selling or licensing information to third parties; ad-tech brokerage
- data democracy and ownership; good governance principles
- social processes of platformisation, algorithmisation, and datafication
- using consumer data in an ethical way

Speakers

- **Anne Helmond**, Associate Professor of Media, Data & Society at Utrecht University

- **Fernando van der Vlist**, researcher in Media and Culture Studies at Utrecht University
- **Dr Christian Rusche**, economist in the 'Digitalisation, Structural Change and Competition' research unit at the German Economic Institute

Organiser

CONNECT University (DG CNECT)

Register here for the session

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