

LeADS Newsletter

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A Recap of the Training Module 3

From 28th March to 9th April 2022, the 15 ESRs met again for two weeks in Pisa at Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna (SSSA) for their third training module of the LeADS project. Whereas the first training modules in Novembre-December 2021 involved mainly the discussion of subjects related to computer and data science, this training module focussed on the legal perspective.

Training Week 1: Digitalisation, the Law and Challenges Related to its Enforcement

The first week began with a research design course on how to assess the **societal relevance of research questions** taught by **Madeline Polmear** from Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB). The following lectures were marked in particular by introductory courses to EU and international law for non-experts to level the playing field between lawyers and computer scientists in the group.

Fryderyk Zoll from Jagiellonian University (JU) introduced the researchers to **EU anti-discrimination law** and how it translates into legislation that prohibits, for instance, unjustified geo-blocking to prevent discriminations based on customers' nationality or their place of residence. A more general introduction to international and European protection of **human rights** was given by **Paul De Hert** (VUB). In addition, an introduction to human rights theory and how human rights law developed since the creation of the first international instruments, De Hert gave an outlook on possible new **fundamental rights** that might emerge in the **digital era**.

Gloria González Fuster (VUB) zoomed into the regulatory framework that surrounds a fundamental right that is of particular importance for the LeADS project: the **right to data protection**. In her engaging presentation she gave a short overview on the history of the right to data protection and presented both the **key players** (data subjects, data controllers & processors, data protection authorities) as well as the main **data protection principles** that lie at the heart of the protection regime of the GDPR. **Vagelis Papakonstantinou** (VUB) introduced the researchers to another important branch of law in the context of digitalisation: **cyber security law**. In his lectures he presented EU law and policy with a particular focus on legislative instruments such as the NIS directive or the EU Cybersecurity Act.

Besides various introductory lectures to different fields of law, the researchers had the opportunity to gain practical insights into enforceability of technological regulation in the EU, thanks to the intervention by Anotonio Buttà, chief economist at the Italian competition authority AGCM (Garante della Concorrenza e del Mercato).



He elucidated how the competition authority had to set up a diverse team of computer scientists, data scientists, economists, and lawyers in order to address challenges and identify collusive and discriminatory practices in an environment characterized by the implementation of new technologies like machine learning algorithms.

The researchers had furthermore the opportunity to present and discuss the advancement of their work within the **four crossroads** of the **LeADS project** (1. Privacy vs Intellectual Property 2. Trust in Data processing & Algorithmic Design 3. Data Ownership 4. Empowering individuals), i. e. challenges that still need to be addressed in data-driven societies. Since all ESRs are placed in beneficiary institutions in six different countries, the meeting in Pisa constituted a valuable opportunity to discuss and give meaningful feedback in person on each other's research. The first training week ended with the **mid-term meeting** where the general advancement of the LeADS project was discussed together with the project officer from the **European Commission** and where the researchers had the opportunity to present themselves and their individual research.



Training Week 2: The Law and Challenges Posed by New Technologies

During the second training week **Giovanni Comandé** (SSSA) ensured that the perspective would not only remain interdisciplinary but also cross-cultural, by introducing the researchers to **American and Chinese approaches** to privacy. The international perspective was maintained in the class by **Maria Gagliardi** (SSSA) who presented the complex rules of the GDPR that apply to **international transfers** of personal data.

Furthermore, **Giovanni Comandé** explained how new computing capabilities and processing technologies transformed us into a networked, data driven, **classifying society**, where data is increasingly being exploited and used, for instance, to make predictions about individuals' future actions and to increasingly employ **nudging techniques** that impact our decision-making behaviour. Questions that will have to be dealt with would therefore concern the frontier between techniques that merely support the decision-making process versus techniques that coerce somebody to take a specific decision.



Arianna Rossi and **Marietjie Botes** from University of Luxembourg (LU) further elaborated on this topic by introducing **dark patterns** and **ethics of online manipulative behaviour**.

Gianclaudio Malgieri (VUB) elucidated how big data and AI technologies have created new risks for data subjects since discrimination would be possible based on new “affinity profiling” characteristics. The AI ecosystem would thus lead to **layers of vulnerability** based on specific contexts.

Caterina Sganga (SSSA) presented in her lecture how AI technology challenges the regulatory framework of **intellectual property** – would it be possible to conceive machines as an inventor or author and what happens if AI agents infringe IP rights?

Finally, one of the latest legislative proposals, the **AI Act**, was presented in detail by **Giovanni Comandé** and enabled discussions on how EU policy attempts to respond to challenges posed by new technologies.

The next training module in June 2022 will take the ESRs to Greece where, in addition to courses in data management and

analytics, the ESRs will have the possibility to present and discuss in detail the findings of their research which they have gathered within the first months of their participation in the **LeADS project**.

ESRs at the Brussels Privacy Hub Summer Academy for Global Privacy Law

Right after the upcoming training Module 4 in Greece several ESRs will continue their travel directly from the Island of Crete to the Capital of Europe: Brussels, Belgium.

The reason is the **Summer Academy for Global Privacy** that is organized by the **Brussels Privacy Hub** with whom the LeADS project has previously organized an awareness conference on explainability of AI.

During this Summer Academy with the title “Engineering Data Regulation(s) in an Age of Reform” some of the most important proposals for data governance reform will be analyzed in detail, such as the Artificial Intelligence Act, the Digital Markets Act, the Digital

Service Act, the Data Governance Act or the revised NIS Directive.

Several stellar speakers will participate during the Summer Academy such as Mireille Hildebrandt talking about ‘Making fundamental rights work in the era of AI; Vagelis Papakonstantinou on EU cybersecurity law; Caterina Sganga on ‘Making sense of the Digital Governance Act: background, key provisions and interplay with the EU regulatory framework or the European Data Protection Supervisor Wojciech Wiewiórowski will present the road ahead for the EU data governance policy.

Bárbara Lazarotto will furthermore participate in a role playing session on an e-commerce (cross-border) application in relation to the Digital Markets Act.

Since all the ESRs are attempting to reconcile the conflicting objectives of EU regulatory policy: fostering innovation while championing the protection of fundamental rights, the current EU policy proposals are at the heart of the research of the ESRs. The Summer Academy thus constitutes a great opportunity for the researchers to be informed and discuss the latest developments in EU digital policy.

ESRs presenting their Research at Conferences

ESR **Xengie Doan**, together with other researchers, presented her research about “Conciseness, interest, and unexpectedness: user attitudes towards infographic and comic consent mediums” at the 2nd International Workshop on Consent Management in Online Services, Networks and Things in April 2022.

They presented their first findings from a study based on interviews investigating participants’ expectations and opinions toward consent in a data sharing scenario with a data trustee.

The Program of the Conference can be accessed under [this Link](#).

ESR **Aizhan Abdrassulova** presented her research in the International Conference “The Paradigm of Modern Science in the Conditions of Modernization and Innovative Development of Scientific Thought: Theory and Practice on April 13th, 2022, organized by the Eurasian National University, Kazakhstan.

In her presentation she presented her research on the comparison of the EU Digital Single Market Strategy for Europe and the state program “Digital Kazakhstan”.

ESR **Bárbara da Rosa Lazarotto** will present her research at the Surveillance Studies Network 2022 in Rotterdam on June 3rd, 2022.

In her presentation she will talk about the use of private databases by States for surveillance purposes and its implications to individual’s fundamental rights. Whereas previously states were the ones that held the majority of individuals data it is now private companies that have the most amount of data within their private databases.

More information about the conference can be found under [this Link](#).

LeADS Project at CPDP 2022

The annual [Computers, Privacy and Data Protection conference \(CPDP\)](#) will take place from 23 May to 25 May in Brussels, Belgium. CPDP is widely considered as the go-to conference for everyone whose work touches privacy and data protection. CPDP brings together a stimulating mix of stakeholders from all over the world to exchange ideas and discuss the emerging issues and the latest trends.

LeADS Project is organising a dissemination and public engagement activity at CPDP. Through interacting with the diverse community that CPDP brings to Brussels, we will spread the word about the ongoing research and activities taking place within the LeADS Project.

Apart from informing the conference participants about LeADS Project, we will also organize a dissemination activity where ESRs Xengie Doan and Barbara Lazarotto will present their research using creative tactics. You can find us at the exhibit space in the main venue (Les Halles de Schaerbeek).

Some of LeADS Project beneficiaries are also contributing to CPDP with panels and talks. Scuola Superiore Sant’Anna di Pisa is organising a panel titled “Justice 3.0: AI In and For Justice and Case Law as Big Data Challenges” which is programmed to take place on Wednesday, 25th May. Prof. Giovanni Comandé from LeADS consortium will be moderating the panel.

Another LeADS beneficiary, University of Luxembourg's Interdisciplinary Centre for Security, Reliability and Trust (SnT) is also organizing a panel which is titled “Privacy Design, Dark Patterns, and Speculative Data Futures”. The panel is scheduled to take place on Tuesday, 24th May. Dr. Arianna Rossi from LeADS consortium will speak on the panel. Prof. Paul De Hert, from Vrije Universiteit Brussel will deliver the opening remarks to the conference.

We are looking forward to engaging with the interdisciplinary and diverse community at CPDP, sharing our research and having fruitful discussions surrounding our project.

Key facts

Grant Agreement N° 956562
Start Date: 1 January 2021
Duration: 4 years
Coordinator: SCUOLA
SUPERIORE DI STUDI
UNIVERSITARI E DI
PERFEZIONAMENTO S
ANNA

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