

VODAFONE INSTITUTE FOR SOCIETY AND COMMUNICATIONS RESEARCH

TRANSPARENCY AND USER CONTROL CRITICAL TO THE SUCCESS OF BIG DATA IN EUROPE

- The Vodafone Institute for Society and Communications releases survey on Big Data and privacy
- More than 8,000 Europeans surveyed in eight countries
- European digital users remain uncertain about how Big Data will benefit them or society
- Clear communication, transparency and user control critical for success of Big Data

Berlin, 18 January 2016. A **Vodafone Institute** study of public attitudes towards Big Data has revealed that European digital users remain uncertain whether the analysis of their information as part of Big Data initiatives will benefit them or wider society. The results of the study by Vodafone's Berlin-based think tank suggest that users are sceptical of the Big Data phenomenon because public and private organisations are failing to explain clearly how and why their data is analysed, and do not give them adequate control over how their data is being used.

More than 8,000 Europeans were surveyed in eight countries between August and September 2015 by the market research institute TNS Infratest on behalf of the Vodafone Institute. Only 32% of respondents said they believe there are advantages to Big Data, 51% said there were more disadvantages, and 17% said they were unsure whether there were advantages or disadvantages.

The results of the study illustrate the challenges that public and private organisations face in convincing people to allow their data to be analysed for Big Data projects. The study found that only:

- 20% of respondents said they know where and how their personal data is collected and stored;
- 29% of respondents feel they have control over what information is collected about them;
- 26% believe that companies respect the privacy of their personal data;
- 55% said they would prefer to pay for a service than give away their personal data in exchange for a free internet service; and
- 12% of respondents said they obtain their information on data usage from the service providers' "Terms & Conditions".

However, the study also found that more people are willing to share their data for analysis if they clearly understand how it will benefit them or society:

- 53% said that they wouldn't mind their data being analysed if it would help them or other people to improve their health;
- 68% stated that they were in favour of smart meters to record data on building residents' usage behaviour so that more eco-friendly heating practices could be introduced; and
- 55% said they were happy about data from their cars being transferred in order to receive personalised traffic reports.

There was broad consensus on the issue of personal data being sold to third parties, particularly for advertising and marketing purposes: 45% of respondents strongly disapproved of this practice, irrespective of the reason or type of data, and 32% said they feel uncomfortable with the practice.

When asked what organisations can do to build confidence among users in their ability to manage and protect data, respondents said they should:

- use simple and clear language in their terms and conditions (68%);
- be transparent about how data is collected, stored and used (64%);
- avoid small print (56%); and
- allow for personal privacy settings (51%).

Dr David Deissner, Director Strategy and Programmes of the Vodafone Institute, said: "The study highlights that Europeans are fundamentally willing to share their data, as long as they see a clear personal or social benefit. However, if organisations fail to communicate clearly how and why they want to analyse data, people will be less likely to want to participate in Big Data initiatives. As European policy-makers and companies explore the societal and economic opportunities of Big Data, these concerns should be kept in mind."

A full copy of the research, including a breakdown of results by country, is available here: www.vodafone-institut.de

The countries included in the study were: Czech Republic, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, United Kingdom.

Ends.

Notes to editor:

The Vodafone Institute and Data-Pop Alliance will host a discussion on the topic "Big Data: Key to the Future or the End of Privacy" in Brussels on 25 January 2016.

For further information visit: www.vodafone-institut.de/event/big-data-key-to-the-future-or-the-end-of-privacy/

About the Vodafone Institute

The Vodafone Institute for Society and Communications explores the potential of mobile and digital technologies to improve political, social and economic participation and to give better access to education. As a think-and-do tank, the Institute fosters dialogue between academia, business and politics. It develops dedicated projects, initiates research partnerships, and publishes studies and practical recommendations for action. Through events and social media communications the Institute provides a platform for public debate. For further information visit: www.vodafone-institut.de