



FREEDOM NOT FEAR



Surveillance mania is spreading. Governments and businesses register, monitor and control our behaviour ever more thoroughly. No matter what we do, who we phone and talk to, where we go, whom we are friends with, what our interests are, which groups we participate in – “big brother” government and “little brothers” in business know it more and more thoroughly.

Yet, the increasing electronic registration and surveillance of the entire population

- ➔ does not make us any safer from crime,
- ➔ costs millions of euros and
- ➔ puts the privacy of innocent citizens at risk.

Under the reign of fear and blind impulsive action, targeted and sustained security measures fall by the wayside, as well as tackling peoples’ actual daily problems such as unemployment and poverty.

People who constantly feel watched and under surveillance cannot freely and courageously stand up for their rights and for a just society. Surveillance, distrust and fear are gradually transforming our society into one of uncritical consumers who have “nothing to hide” and – in a vain attempt to achieve total security – are prepared to give up their freedoms. We do not want to live in such a society!

Our demands:

- ➔ Cutback on surveillance
- ➔ Evaluation of existing surveillance powers
- ➔ Moratorium for new surveillance powers
- ➔ Guaranteeing freedom of expression, dialogue and information on the Internet

What you can do:

- ➔ Raise your friends and colleagues awareness
- ➔ Contact your members of parliament
- ➔ Join civil liberties groups

For a list of civil liberties groups visit

www.freedom-not-fear.eu



Nothing to hide



Populist themes on surveillance properly addressed

“I have nothing to hide”

Why should an upright citizen have anything to hide? Simply because there are things that are none of the government's business. Every person has a right to respect for their private and intimate life, enshrined in constitutional law and the European Convention on Human Rights. If you have nothing to hide, why do you close the toilet door behind yourself? Why do you not show everyone your bank account statements, your telephone bills or tell them your entire life story? Those who really believe they have „nothing to hide“ are welcome to live in a „Big Brother“ container – but they should not accuse others of wishing to keep their secrets to themselves. Also: There is simply no need to put people under surveillance who have done no wrong.

“But I am afraid of terrorism, it is the government's duty to protect me”

A strong and democratic state under the rule of law takes decisive action against crime but does not blindly treat everybody a suspect. Targeted investigations of suspects and suspicious groups are proportionate and effective but not the arbitrary surveillance of people who are completely innocent and harmless. A fearful and over-reacting state that considers every citizen a threat and endeavours to know and control everything is not strong. Strong is the state that defends the rights of its citizens and conducts targeted investigations upon specific clues. No government can prevent all crime, and if it tries, it is no longer a democratic government based on the rule of law. Those who demand protection at any price would also have to demand the abolition of road traffic as it costs thousands of human lives every year. In truth we are living comparatively safe lives. The risk of becoming a victim of serious crime or even terrorism is marginal – especially in comparison to other life risks such as illnesses, car accidents, poverty or unemployment.

“If you have nothing to hide, you have nothing to fear”

Even if you are innocent, you increasingly need to expect intrusive police measures. A simple (false) suspicion or an entry in a “watch list” can entail dramatic consequences such as observations, house searches or questioning of people you know. These measures can result in social prejudgements – or what would you think if two police officers stood in front of your neighbour's door, asking „some questions on Mr. Smith next door“? Entry or exit denials due to the confusion of names or even inadvertent killings by security forces keep happening. Nobody can rely on staying safe from the consequences of excessive surveillance.