

Swedish Internet firm to delete user data

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Swedish telecom supplier Tele2 said Monday it will delete information allowing their customers to be identified, a move police argue could make the hunt for Internet pirates "impossible."

"We will erase the IP addresses after they have been used for our internal use, starting today," Niclas Palmstierna, Tele2's managing director for Sweden, told AFP.

An IP address is a unique number that is used to identify each sender or receiver of information that is sent across the Internet.

Sweden recently adopted a new law April 1, inspired by an EU directive on intellectual property, that allows authorities to request the identity of

users suspected of downloading pirated material.

The move by Tele2 follows a similar policy introduced by Bahnhof, a smaller Swedish Internet firm, that said it would not reveal users' IP addresses.

A high-ranking police official told the TT news agency that this could have a serious impact on their bid to crack down on Internet pirates.

"In certain cases, this will make an investigation impossible," said Stefan Kronkvist, the head of Swedish police's [internet crime](#) unit.

Tele2 is one of Sweden's main telecom providers and counts 600,000 people among its Internet clients.

Internet piracy has become a hotly-debated subject in the Scandinavian country since the four founders of the download site, The [Pirate Bay](#), were sentenced to a year in prison on April 17.

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