

Swiss want new rules to regulate firms like Google

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Switzerland's data protection chief said Sunday that the country needs new rules to regulate Internet services such as Google which could pose a problem to individuals' privacy.

"I believe that Internet services and applications that could endanger personal rights must be subject to a licensing procedure," said Hanspeter Thuer, Swiss data protection commissioner, in an interview with newspaper Sonntag.

Asked if this meant that a sort of Google-law was required, Thuer said: "Yes. A change in legislation is needed not just for Google, but for all IT

applications. Everyone that offers applications on the market that could harm personal rights must be certified."

Thuer had said last year that he was taking Google to court in a dispute over [privacy concerns](#) on the US Internet giant's "Street View" picture map.

It emerged this month that Google had collected personal information from Swiss private wireless Internet networks (WLAN) while it was assembling pictures for the "[Street View](#)" map.

[Google](#) has said that this was done "in error" and that it would destroy the data as soon as possible.

Thuer said a group of experts should be established to find out what had happened in this case, and what kind of data had been captured.

To Google's claim that it was a blunder, Thuer said it is "difficult to imagine that a multinational group with so many experts had collected data over years and that this was just an error."

"But I will also not exclude this. I am now expecting a full disclosure on what happened exactly. The credibility of this company now depends on this disclosure," he said.

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