

EU, US seek 'quick solutions' to data deal void

October 9 2015



Brussels and Washington want "quick solutions" to the legal void left by the collapse of a transatlantic data deal

Brussels and Washington want "quick solutions" to the legal void left by the collapse of a transatlantic data deal on which major companies like Facebook depend, a senior EU official said Friday.

The European Court of Justice on Tuesday ruled that the EU-US "Safe

Harbour" arrangement allowing firms to transfer European citizens' personal information to the US was "invalid" because it did not properly protect the data from spy agencies.

European Commissioner Vera Jourova said she and US Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker agreed in a phone call Thursday that they needed to move quickly for the sake of crucial Internet businesses.

"We both felt the urgency and need for quick solutions," Jourova said after a meeting of EU justice ministers.

"We fully understand that for the businesses, especially for the small and medium-sized companies, this sudden legal vacuum might be detrimental," Jourova added.

The Czech commissioner said she would visit the United States in November to tackle the issue and teams from the two sides would meet next week.

The landmark verdict stemmed from a case lodged by Austrian law student Max Schrems, who challenged the deal between Washington and Brussels on the grounds it did not properly protect European data.

His concerns were raised by the scandal involving Edward Snowden, the former National Security Agency whistleblower who in 2013 revealed a worldwide US surveillance programme harvesting the data.

Jourova said in the absence of "Safe Harbour," data can still flow between the two continents under provisions of a 1995 EU directive where data protection, for example, is guaranteed by clauses in individual contracts.

The EU says it had started negotiating a new Safe Harbour arrangement

with the US before the verdict.

The US has says the judgment put the transatlantic digital economy at risk.

© 2015 AFP

Citation: EU, US seek 'quick solutions' to data deal void (2015, October 9) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2015-10-eu-quick-solutions-void.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.