TECH AND CYBER MEET HUMAN RIGHTS

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Your Risk Management Advantage

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“Technology risks dividing the world into wealthy elites and exploited ‘data colonies’…” **Yuval Noah Harari**

“The internet is becoming the town square for the global village ... but it also gives rise to misinformation and privacy risks never before imagined.” **Bill Gates**

“With great power comes great responsibility, and that responsibility comes in the form of security and privacy.” **Suzie Compton, Salesforce**

“Science and technology revolutionize our lives, but memory, tradition, and myth frame our response.” **Arthur Schlesinger**

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WHAT'S THE WORST THAT COULD HAPPEN?

Reflect on the worst incident of technology impacting on people that you can think of

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TECH AND HUMAN RIGHTS TIMELINE

1740

Industrial Revolution beginnings- mechanisation of textile production in Britain leads to child labour and unsafe working conditions. Human rights concern: exploitation of women and children in factories.

1840

Railways expansion Enables movement of goods and people at scale. Human rights concern: land dispossession of Indigenous communities (e.g., US westward expansion, Indian railways under British rule).

1930

Radio & propaganda used by fascist regimes to spread hate (Nazi Germany, other countries later).Human rights concern: incitement to genocide, manipulation of populations.

1980

Personal computing Opens access to information, education, and communication. Human rights concern: new forms of economic inequality (digital divide).

2010

Social media platforms Amplify activism (#MeToo, #BlackLivesMatter). Also enable disinformation campaigns and targeted harassment.

2025

Artificial Intelligence Potential for predictive policing, algorithmic bias in hiring, healthcare, credit scoring. Human rights concern: discrimination, lack of accountability, erosion of privacy. Positive: AI also aids in human rights monitoring (satellite imagery of conflict zones, supply chain risk detection).

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IMPACTS ON PEOPLE

Some ways technology impacts on people

- **Change the way they work**
  Technology can empower workers with greater access to opportunities but may also threaten job security and fair labour standards.
- **Change the way they communicate**
  Digital platforms increase freedom of expression but can also facilitate censorship or surveillance, threatening privacy rights.
- **Change the way they receive information**
  Technology broadens access to information, promoting the right to education, but risks spreading misinformation that can undermine informed participation in society.
- **Change the way they think**
  Algorithms can shape beliefs and limit exposure to diverse perspectives, affecting the right to hold and receive opinions without interference.

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CYBERSECURITY

- **Privacy**
  Cyberattacks often result in the unauthorized exposure of personal data, undermining the right to privacy and leaving individuals vulnerable to surveillance, identity theft, and misuse of sensitive information.
- **Freedom of Expression**
  Breaches may lead to censorship, intimidation, or self-censorship, especially when attackers target activists or journalists, impeding their ability to speak freely or access information safely.
- **Threats to Security and Bodily Integrity**
  Stolen data or cyberbullying from breaches can escalate into real-world harm, such as harassment, discrimination, loss of employment, or even physical violence and threats to life.
- **Access to Essential Services**
  Cyberattacks on infrastructure, such as hospitals or financial systems, can disrupt vital services, jeopardizing rights related to health, safety, and economic stability for individuals and communities

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Israel

‘A million calls an hour’: Israel relying on Microsoft cloud for expansive surveillance of Palestinians

Revealed: The Israeli military undertook an ambitious project to store a giant trove of Palestinians’ phone calls on Microsoft’s servers in Europe

Harry Davies *and* Yuval Abraham

Wed 6 Aug 2025 12.00 BST

Microsoft | Microsoft On the Issues Our Company News and Stories Topics

Microsoft statement on the issues relating to technology services in Israel and Gaza

May 15, 2025

August 15, 2025 update: Microsoft Corporation announced today that it is undertaking a formal review of allegations reported by The Guardian on August 6, 2025, relating to usage of Microsoft Azure by a unit of the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF). The Guardian, on that date, reported that multiple individuals have asserted that the IDF is using Azure for the storage of data files of phone calls obtained through broad or mass surveillance of civilians in Gaza and the West Bank. Microsoft’s standard terms of service prohibit this type of usage.

Microsoft is turning to the law firm of Covington & Burling LLP, with technical assistance from an independent consulting firm, to conduct the review. This will expand on the company’s earlier review, which did not identify any usage by the IDF that violated the company’s terms of service. Microsoft appreciates that The Guardian’s recent report raises additional and precise allegations that merit a full and urgent review. The company will share with the public the factual findings that result from this review, once it is complete.

Cambridge Analytica

This article is more than **4 years old**

Cambridge Analytica did not misuse data in EU referendum, says watchdog

Information commissioner closes three-year investigation into collapsed firm after Brexit vote

Jim Waterson

Wed 7 Oct 2020 19.34 BST

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OPINION

Artificial Intelligence won’t take our jobs away at all

Last updated: August 29, 2025 | 20:33

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12 June 2018

Viet Nam: New Cybersecurity law a devastating blow for freedom of expression

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With the sweeping powers it grants the government to monitor online activity, this vote means there is now no safe place left in Viet Nam for people to speak freely.

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Change Healthcare Increases Ransomware Victim Count to 192.7 Million Individuals

Posted By Steve Alder on Aug 6, 2025

Change Healthcare has confirmed that the number of individuals affected by its February 2024 ransomware is slightly higher than its previously estimated total of 190 million individuals. The latest estimate now stands at 192.7 million individuals, which is now reflected on the HHS' Office

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Published: 09 May 2025
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London Borough of Hackney reprimanded following cyber-attack

London Borough of Hackney reprimanded following cyber-attack

Date **17 July 2024**
Type **Statement**

We have issued the London Borough of Hackney with a reprimand following a cyber-attack in 2020 that led to hackers gaining access to and encrypting 440,000 files, affecting at least 280,000 residents and other individuals including staff.

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EU AI ACT – PRINCIPLES OF HUMAN RIGHTS DUE DILIGENCE

🚫 Prohibited AI uses

Social scoring, biometric categorisation (sensitive traits), manipulation of vulnerable groups, emotion recognition in schools/workplaces.

👁️ Limits on surveillance

Strict ban on real-time facial recognition in public, with narrow law enforcement exceptions.

⚖️ High-risk AI = Due diligence

Fundamental Rights Impact Assessments (FRIAs) for employment, healthcare, education, justice, migration, infrastructure.

🔍 Transparency and accountability

Users must know when they interact with AI/synthetic content; regulators, unions, and rights bodies can raise complaints.

Scope

- Applies to all AI systems in EU market, including non-EU providers.

- Covers unacceptable risk, high-risk, and GPAI (general-purpose AI).

Timeline

2024 ✅ Adoption of AI Act.

2025 🚫 Prohibited practices banned.

2025 (late) 🖥️ GPAI obligations apply.

2026–2027 ⚖️ High-risk AI rules + FRIA requirements phased in.

2027+ 🔒 Full enforcement and penalties
(up to €35m / 7% global turnover)

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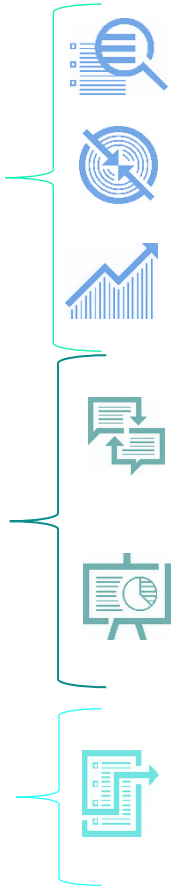
DUE DILIGENCE EXPECTATIONS UNDER CSDDD

- **Risk Identification & Assessment**: Companies must map human rights risks linked to the technologies they develop, procure, or deploy.
- **Prevent & Mitigate**: Adjust design, procurement, or deployment of technology to reduce harms (e.g., bias audits, privacy-by-design, safeguards on surveillance).
- **Stakeholder Engagement**: Consult workers, users, communities, and civil society on technology-related risks.
- **Monitoring & Tracking**: Ongoing checks on whether technology causes or contributes to rights infringements.
- **Remediation**: Provide or enable remedy if technology use causes harm (e.g., wrongful algorithmic decisions, preventable data breaches).

SOME STEPS TO ASSESS HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT

HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT ASSESSMENT (HRIA) METHODOLOGY

	Project phase	Outputs
Planning, Screening and Scoping and Baseline findings	Review of business activities and processes	What do you and how do you do it
	Scoping potentially impacted human rights	Where might the activities actually impact people
Impact assessment	*Talk (and listen) to people*	*Internal stakeholder engagement (and contractors where appointed/available)*
	Impact assessment	Impact scoring summary
Mitigation/action planning and reporting	Mitigation – what can you do about it?	Human rights management plan
	Check, then act	Implementation integration



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SOME THOUGHTS TO END

How to get to a realistic and actionable plan

Proportionality

You don’t need to chase everything

Some impacts will be much greater because of who and how….

The response should be appropriate to the risk

Just because we can implement technology, do we have to?

Politics

Human rights issues will often be extremely political

But the answer is not to hide, avoid or walk away, but to engage with the political dimension

Working out what is politics and what is actionable is key

There is help

AI can be surprisingly useful in testing the impacts of tech

If you treat the impact assessment scientifically, rather than narratively, you can get real results

There are experts out there too…

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THANK YOU

Any questions?

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