PIlab's Blockchain symposium

22 November 2018; Jaarbeurs Utrecht

Program

13.00-13.10: Bart van der Sloot: Welcome

13.10-13.30: Mireille Hildebrandt: Mireille Hildebrandt will briefly discuss a set of myths that are often framed as 'innate' properties of blockchain applications, notably the idea of an egalitarian consensus mechanism, of 'innate' immutability and irreversibility, the idea of trestles computing and the notions of publicness and transparency. She will then argue that for each concrete application a triple test must be conducted: (1) which problem is solved (compared to status quo and alternative solutions), (2) which problem is not solved (idem), and (3) which problem is created (idem). She will conclude with a brief discussion of design-based regulation and 'legal protection by design'.

13.30-13.50 Discussion

13.50-14.10: Jaap-Henk Hoepman: "The blockchain dissected" What are blockchains/distributed ledgers? How do they work? And what are their (claimed) properties? We will dissect the blockchain and address these questions. We will pinpoint certain fundamental pitfalls surrounding blockchain technologies, and ask ourself the question: is there any use for them?

14.10-14.30: Discussion

14.30-14.45: Break

14.45-15.05: Maarten Events: Smart contract says No - Smart contracts are hyped to take on the role of incorruptible, trustable third parties. However, the “immutability” that makes this possible also means that mistakes in smart contracts can have a significant impact. How are smart contracts different from “normal” software? What are the dangers? Is it possible to keep the human in the loop?

15.05-15.25: Discussion

15.25-15.45: Michèle Finck: My paper examines smart contracts from the perspective of Article 22 GPDR. It suggests that smart contracts likely qualify as a form of solely automated data processing and are hence caught by the qualified prohibition under Article 22 GDPR. It then evaluates the consequences flowing from that state of affairs and suggests that current efforts of sophisticating these tools may have a side-effect of GDPR compliance'.

15.45-16.05: Discussion

16.05-16.20: Break

16.20-16.40: Maurice Schellekens: Asking the right question(s) about blockchain: does the law actually regulate technology?

16.40-17.00: Discussion

17.00-17.30: General debate

17.30-18.30: Drinks

Mireille Hildebrandt

Professor of Smart Environments, Data Protection and the Rule of Law at Radboud University Nijmegen, studies how constitutional governments function in cyberspace. It’s a very necessary study: on the internet, but also in other digital contexts, our behaviour is continually monitored and communicated. That's a breach of our civil rights.

Jaap-Henk Hoepman

I am an associate professor of privacy enhancing protocols and privacy by design in the Digital Security group at the Institute for Computing and Information Sciences of the Radboud University Nijmegen and principal scientist of the Privacy & Identity Lab. I am also an associate professor in the IT Law section of the Transboundary Legal Studies department of the Faculty of Law of the University of Groningen.

Maarten Everts

Research Scientist at TNO and assistant professor at the University of Twente

Michèle Finck

Senior Research Fellow Intellectual Property and Competition Law at the Max Planck Institute for Innovation and Competition. Michèle's research focuses primarily on digital platforms and blockchain technology as well as EU law. She is an editor of the Cambridge Handbook on the Law and Regulation of the Sharing Economy and the author of 'Subnational Authorities in EU Law' (OUP 2017).

Maurice Schellekens

Assistant Professor at the Tilburg Law School, Tilburg Institute for Law, Technology, and Society (TILT), Tilburg University. He specializes in Copyrights, Information Law, Intellectual Property Law and patents.