
ARCHIVES AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Newsletter from the Section on Archives and Human Rights

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Commentary

This month, we focus on recent developments in the United States, highlighting threats to privacy and the historical record that impact humanitarian aid, research and development, public health, classified intelligence, and archives. Although SAHR typically avoids letting any single country dominate our news collection, we've included an expanded selection of articles this month to comprehensively document the Trump administration's actions.

Here's a roundup of the big stories, by government office:

- **Department of Agriculture (USDA):** Trump ordered USDA to [take down websites that reference the climate crisis](#), followed shortly by [farmers suing over deletion of climate data](#) from government websites.
- **Department of Health and Human Services (HHS):** the Trump administration is seeking [access to a database of immigrant minors](#), [CDC web pages have gone dark](#) as Trump targets public health information, and [top Social Security official exits](#) after clash with Musk's DOGE over data.
- **Department of Justice (DOJ):** [video evidence](#) of January 6 Capitol attack is missing from the DOJ website.

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Send your suggestions for news items or comments to sahr-newsletter@ica.org.

- **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA):** Trump is [gutting environmental data](#), [removing climate data](#) from public websites, obscuring climate and pollution risks to the public and [removing access to the Council on Environmental Quality's Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool](#). As the Trump administration [purges climate data and web pages](#), [environmental researchers are uploading backups](#).
- **Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD):** DOGE [gains access to confidential records](#) on housing discrimination, medical details, and domestic violence
- **National Archives and Records Administration (NARA):** the White House is [forcing out top leadership at the National Archives](#) in a major shakeup.
- **Treasury Department:** the IRS reportedly was preparing to [give Musk's Doge agency access](#) to taxpayer data, but a [judge temporarily blocked](#) the access.
- **U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID):** [senior officials were put on leave](#) after denying access to Musk's Doge team.

[Conflicts over access to Americans' personal data](#) are emerging across the federal government, and there are a number of groups and institutions working to preserve the federal record, such as the [Data Rescue Project](#), [Harvard University's Law Library](#), the [Public Environmental Data Partners](#), and the [Preservation of Electronic Government Information project](#).

Events

[SAHR Tuesday Talks - The documents of the undocumented](#). How legal processes generate records that transform individuals often labeled as “undocumented” into holders of official files, essential for defending their rights and preserving their personal histories. ICA SAHR, 2025-04-01.

Would you like to promote your event (conference, webinar, exhibition, etc.) to an international audience? Please submit information, including title, description, date(s) and URL to sahr-newsletter@ica.org for upcoming publication.

Editor's Note

The newsletters and items are added to the Section's “Rights and Records Knowledge Base”, available at <https://rightsandrecords.ica.org>.

If you would like to volunteer as a news collector, please send an email to sahr-newsletter@ica.org. We'd love to have you! We're currently looking for collectors who can focus on Latin America, South America, Africa, Oceania and Asia to ensure a more global coverage.

News by topic

Armed Conflict and Groups

Europe: [The Vanishing Archive: UNHCR Archives' Recovery and Preservation of the Records from the Former Yugoslavia](#). In 2015, a major legacy project began in the Records and Archives Section to document, declassify, and preserve the records created by UNHCR staff during the Balkans Wars. Our internal estimation of the fax paper contained in this collection is around 20%, or 300,000 pages – all of which will be lost to time without intervention. Laura Bernier Ebell, UNHCR Blog, 2025-02-18.

Child Abuse

France: ['My paedophile letters': French surgeon to stand trial accused of abusing 299 child patients](#). Joël Le Scouarnec's 'black books' of handwritten notes in which alleged sexual abuse was recorded are at the heart of case against him. Willsher, Kim, The Observer, 2025-02-22.

Climate Change

Canada: [Polar heritage sites are slipping into the sea – but can one island live forever online?](#). On Qikiqtaruk, off Canada's Yukon coast, scientists are wielding virtual-reality cameras, 3D models and digital archives to protect the island's history and culture before it disappears. Cecco, Leyland, The Guardian, 2025-02-10.

Colonialism

Nigeria: [Tiny Nigerian museum marking a forgotten British invasion pushes for recognition](#). In the sleepy Nigerian port town of Koko, the reminder of a forgotten invasion by the British more than a century ago has itself been forgotten. Officially known as the Nanna Living History Museum, the building was designated a national monument in 1990. Egbejule, Eromo, The Guardian, 2025-02-03.

Spain: [Why has the Spanish government removed a mummy from museum view?](#). Spain's Ministry of Culture has ordered a Madrid museum to remove a mummy from view as part of a government policy to "decolonise" state-owned museums. Walfisz, Jonny, euronews, 2025-02-26.

Corruption

United States of America: [DOGE threat: How government data would give an AI company extraordinary power](#). As DOGE taps into sensitive federal agency data repositories, many people fear what could happen to the data. One little-discussed but hugely consequential possibility: fueling Elon Musk's xAI company. Stanger, Allison, The Conversation, 2025-03-06.

Crimes Against Humanity

Argentina: [Argentine Navy ordered to preserve dictatorship archive](#). Judge Alicia Vence halted the planned destruction of archives which could serve as potential evidence of crimes against humanity. Jaureguy, Martina, Buenos Aires Herald, 2025-02-02.

Disability Rights

Worldwide: [Preserving Disability: Disability & the Archival Profession](#). The book weaves together first-person narratives and case studies contributed from disabled archivists and disabled archives users, bringing critical perspectives and approaches to the archival profession. Collectively, these works address the nuances of both disability and archives-critically drawing attention to the histories, present experiences, and future possibilities of the archival profession. Cheryl, Publishing in the Archives Profession, 2025-02-07.

Disinformation

Europe: [As conflict rates soar, misinformation is getting worse](#). We may not be able to change how people ingest information, but we can and should place guardrails around the evidence we use to inform the public. Clionadh Raleigh, POLITICO, 2025-01-27.

Europe: [The F.R.E.I.H.E.I.T. Project: tackling disinformation in Eastern Europe](#). The F.R.E.I.H.E.I.T. Project is a bold and ambitious initiative currently tackling the growing threat of disinformation, particularly in Europe's Eastern Neighbourhood. It is expanding its focus to critical areas such as energy, agriculture, security, and migration, all of which are vulnerable to manipulation. Euractiv, Euractiv, 2025-02-14.

Germany: [Between Russia and Elon Musk, German Voters Face a 'Dual Front' of Disinformation](#). In the first major European vote since President Trump's re-election, influence campaigns are targeting Germany from two sides. Bennhold, Katrin; Myers, Steven Lee, The New York Times, 2025-02-13.

Ukraine/United States of America: [Kyiv's White House wooing implodes as Zelenskyy tells the truth about Trump](#). All America's allies know that Trump is trapped in a disinformation bubble, but Zelenskyy said it out loud. Borger, Julian, The Guardian, 2025-02-19.

United States of America: [Musk's 'efficiency' agency site adds data from controversial rightwing thinktank](#). Website of 'Doge' includes information published by thinktank CEI, which claims to fight 'climate alarmism'. Sainato, Michael; Noor, Dharna, The Guardian, 2025-02-12.

Worldwide: [The dark side of AI innovation is supercharging disinformation and damaging democracy](#). Misinformation and disinformation have always existed, but technological advancements have accelerated their impact. This Special Report looks at how AI misuse is damaging democracy. Euractiv, Euractiv, 2025-02-13.

Worldwide: [The deadly consequences of disinformation in the Pacific](#). International partners, including Australia and India, are well placed to counter the scourge. Lisa Singh; Tushar Joshi, The Interpreter, 2025-03-02.

Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Cambodia: [Cambodia's Stolen Statues Are Coming Home to an Overflowing Museum](#). Foreign institutions and collectors are returning artifacts with deep spiritual meaning for Cambodians. Where and how to display them remain open questions. Ives, Mike, The New York Times, 2025-02-19.

Tanzania: [**Giving Voice to Data: How Community Radio in Zanzibar is Using Gender-based Violence \(GBV\) Data to Drive Change.**](#) Giving Voice to Data: How Community Radio in Zanzibar is Using Gender-based Violence (GBV) Data to Drive Change. UN Women - Africa, Zawya, 2025-02-20.

United States of America: [**From archives to impact: Historian, UWG alumna is changing how America sees black history.**](#) How does one define history? For University of West Georgia alumna Autumn Smith '21, that isn't a rhetorical question. The historian has already made an impact preserving, presenting and promoting the untold stories of Black history and culture. There are even three Emmy awards to prove it. "(Re)Defining History: Uncovering the 1906 Atlanta Race Massacre," produced by WABE Studios, explores the truth behind the carnage, what led to the violence and how it spawned resilience in Atlanta's Black communities. Press Release, The City Menus, 2025-02-07.

Worldwide: [**Map wars in the Middle East: How cartographers charted and helped shape a regional conflict.**](#) But no matter the purpose, all maps have something in common: They are political. Making maps is about making decisions about what to omit and what to include. They are subject to selection, classification, abstractions and simplifications. And studying the choices that go into maps can reveal different stories about land and the people who claim it as theirs. Leuenberger, Christine, The Conversation, 2025-02-07.

Freedom of Expression

Australia: [**'This is censorship': Palestinian flags covered up in major exhibition at National Gallery of Australia.**](#) Pacific Indigenous art collective claims NGA cited 'high level' security risk in direction to remove Palestinian flag from tapestry. Haydar, Nour, The Guardian, 2025-02-20.

Bangladesh: [**Digital laws must be transparent and protect free expression.**](#) Bangladesh's Interim Government must prioritise transparency, public accountability, and human rights in its drafting of new digital laws. Article 19, ARTICLE 19, 2025-02-26.

Pakistan: [**Repeal Amendment to Draconian Cyber Law.**](#) The Pakistan government's recent amendment to the country's cybercrimes act seriously threatens internet freedom and free expression. Human Rights Watch, Human Rights Watch, 2025-02-03.

Freedom of Information

Poland/United States of America: [**'It allowed us to survive, to not go mad': the CIA book smuggling operation that helped bring down communism.**](#) From George Orwell to Hannah Arendt and John le Carré, thousands of blacklisted books flooded into Poland during the cold war, as publishers and printers risked their lives for literature. English, Charlie, The Guardian, 2025-02-22.

United States of America: [**As Data Goes Off-Line Under Trump, Environmental Researchers Are Uploading Backups.**](#) A team of scholars has worked since November to archive resources that are valuable to themselves and the public—just in case they were taken down. In the first few days of Donald Trump's second term as president, the White House Council on Environmental Quality's Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST, for short) disappeared from government websites. It was an interactive map of U.S. Census tracts that are "marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution," as the pre-Trump federal government put it—something researchers and the public could use to quickly locate and zoom in on specific communities and analyze the problems they face. Quinn, Ryan, Inside Higher Ed, 2025-01-29.

United States of America: [As Trump Administration Purges Climate Data and Web Pages, Research Groups Scramble to Save Information](#). The Trump administration has directed federal agency staff to remove climate references and scientific data from many web pages. Researchers are rushing to archive it. Price, By Kiley, Inside Climate News, 2025-02-04.

United States of America: [CDC webpages go dark as Trump targets public health information](#). Resources for contraception, gender-affirming care, STIs and HIV flicker in and out of existence or vanish completely. Sherman, Carter; Glenza, Jessica, The Guardian, 2025-02-04.

United States of America: [Contre la purge « sans précédent » des sites ordonnée par Trump, les archivistes du numérique à l'offensive](#). Des décrets signés par le nouveau président des Etats-Unis ont entraîné la disparition de milliers de pages, liées notamment au changement climatique ou aux politiques d'égalité. Plusieurs initiatives coordonnées cherchent à les préserver. Michaël Szadkowski, Le Monde, 2025-02-16.

United States of America: [Disappearing Data: Trump Administration Removing Climate Information from Government Websites](#). In the first two weeks of President Donald Trump's second term, the administration has begun to scrub critical environmental resources and datasets from federal agency websites. To combat this effort to suppress and censor public data, the National Security Archive's Climate Change Transparency Project today publishes a selection of materials on climate change and environmental justice that have been deleted from agency web pages and spotlights the environmental and archivist organizations working to identify, scrape, and preserve these critical data. Rachel Santarsiero, National Security Archive, 2025-02-06.

United States of America: [Farmers Sue Over Deletion of Climate Data From Government Websites](#). The data, which disappeared from Agriculture Department sites in recent weeks, was useful to farmers for business planning, the lawsuit said. Zraick, Karen, The New York Times, 2025-02-24.

United States of America: [Harvard law library acts to preserve government data amid sweeping purges](#). A unit of Harvard University's Law Library says it is releasing an archive of more than 300,000 government data sets, aiming to protect vital public information at a time when President Donald Trump's administration is wiping it from the web. Satter, Raphael; Satter, Raphael, Reuters, 2025-02-06.

United States of America: [Preserving Our Public Data Heritage](#). The PEGI Project recently released a post about the preservation of public federal data in support of the Data Rescue Project. PEGI stands for Preservation of Electronic Government Information and was created in 2016 by a group of government information librarians who were concerned about the future of electronic forms. Data Rescue Project, Data Rescue Project, 2025-02-17.

United States of America: [Trump administration shuts down national database documenting police misconduct](#). Database, first proposed by Trump in 2020 and created by Biden administration in 2023, is now offline. Oladipo, Gloria, The Guardian, 2025-02-22.

United States of America: [Trump is gutting environmental data, obscuring climate and pollution risks to the public](#). Deleting websites and ignoring scientific data threatens to undo clean air and water regulations. Zwarenstein, Carlyn, Salon, 2025-02-27.

United States of America: [Trump orders USDA to take down websites referencing climate crisis](#). Forest service website among many sites affected as agencies scramble to comply with president's orders. Canon, Gabrielle, The Guardian, 2025-01-31.

United States of America: [Trump Removes Access to CEJST, Our New Coalition Restores It](#). Last week the Trump administration removed access to the Council on Environmental Quality's Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST). The public web tool allowed users to see on a map which places in the US face marginalization and disproportionate climate and pollution burdens. EDGI_Team, Environmental Data and Governance Initiative, 2025-01-31.

Worldwide: [Joint UN submission to protect a healthy future for our information society](#). A review is underway of the UN Member States' commitments to a people-centred, inclusive, and development-oriented information society. Article 19, ARTICLE 19, 2025-02-19.

Worldwide: [The Digital Preservation Coalition welcomes the Common Crawl Foundation as its newest member](#). The Common Crawl Foundation (CCF) has joined the Digital Preservation Coalition (DPC) this month, becoming the Coalition's newest Associate Member. As a non-profit foundation dedicated to the Open Web, Common Crawl maintains a free, open repository of web crawl data that can be used by anyone. Digital Preservation Coalition, DPC Blog, 2025-02-18.

Freedom of the Press

Croatia: [Tackling political pressure and legal hurdles to revive media freedom](#). Outdated laws, issues with public media, SLAPPs, mounting economic, political, and physical pressures undermine media freedom in Croatia. Article 19, ARTICLE 19, 2025-02-24.

United States of America: [Trump called the press 'the enemy of the people'. Now it's time to defend ourselves](#). The one-time defiance and solidarity of publications across the political aisle is strained as outlets cave to Trump's threats. Ginsberg, Jodie, The Guardian, 2025-02-14.

Government

Chile: [Undersecretariat of Cultural Heritage \(Chile\) secures UNESCO fund to enable the National Library's preservation of photographic, audiovisual, and sound archives from the dictatorship era](#). . UNESCO, UNESCO, 2025-02-14.

Haiti/United States of America: [Former Haitian first lady seeks to declassify documents related to her husband's assassination](#). Martine Moise, former first lady of Haiti, appealed to U.S. President Donald Trump to declassify documents related to the assassination of her husband, Haitian President Jovenel Moise. Ducrepin, Sindy, Voice of America, 2025-02-13.

Panama: [The Panama Canal Treaty Declassified](#). The documents posted today include CIA reports, NSC briefing papers, White House meeting minutes, telephone transcripts and audio tapes dating back to the Kennedy era. These fascinating archival records provide a contextual, factual overview to understand and appreciate the historical foundations of the foreign policy crisis that is escalating today over Panama. National Security Archive, National Security Archives, 2025-02-03.

United States of America: [**FBI says it has discovered 2,400 new records related to JFK assassination**](#). The agency was transferring the records for declassification and did not say what information they contained. Press, Associated, The Guardian, 2025-02-11.

United States of America: [**How to find climate data and science the Trump administration doesn't want you to see**](#). Several groups are working to preserve webpages, tools and data – some of which have already gone missing from government webpages since the start of the Trump administration. Paz, Alejandro; Nost, Eric, The Conversation, 2025-02-14.

United States of America: [**MLK's family fear new batch of assassination files will have FBI 'smears'**](#). Family of Martin Luther King Jr says Trump mandate could revive J Edgar Hoover's efforts to discredit revered activist. Yang, Maya, The Guardian, 2025-02-16.

United States of America: [**Top Social Security official exits after clash with Musk's DOGE over data**](#). Yet another top career staffer is leaving the administration amid a disagreement over a request by Elon Musk's team for sensitive government information. Rein, Lisa; Bailey, Holly; Stein, Jeff; Bogage, Jacob, Washington Post, 2025-02-18.

United States of America: [**Video evidence of January 6 Capitol attack missing from US government website**](#). Attorneys representing a collection of news organizations said in a legal filing submitted on Tuesday that video evidence used during the sentencing of a rioter involved in the 6 January 2021 attack on the US Capitol had vanished from an online government platform. Betts, Anna, The Guardian, 2025-02-12.

United States of America: [**White House forcing out National Archives top leadership in major shakeup**](#). The Trump administration is forcing out senior leadership at the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration in a major shakeup. Reuters, Reuters, 2025-02-15.

Human Rights Defenders and Activists

Bangladesh: [**1,500 videos, photos of July atrocities collected**](#). Bangladesh Protest Archive, a digital platform that has been collecting videos, audio recordings, and photos documenting the state-led atrocities, including police brutality, perpetrated during the July uprising last year, announced its official launch yesterday. Staff Correspondant, The Daily Star, 2025-02-02.

El Salvador: [**Exonerated environmental defenders to face murder retrial in El Salvador**](#). Critics decry 'politically motivated' decision to revisit civil war-era charges against leaders of anti-mining campaign. Five Salvadorian environmental defenders who were exonerated of bogus civil war charges will face retrial this week amid growing evidence of political interference. Lakhani, Nina, The Guardian, 2025-02-02.

Italy/Libya: [**Campaigner for migrants in Libya targeted in spyware attack**](#). An Italy-based human rights activist whose work supports the international criminal court in providing evidence about cases of abuse suffered by migrants and refugees held in Libyan detention camps and prisons has revealed that Apple informed him his phone was targeted in a spyware attack. Giuffrida, Angela; Kirchaessner, Stephanie, The Guardian, 2025-02-11.

Syria: [Defector who exposed Assad's brutality calls for Syria sanctions to be lifted](#). The former military officer, previously known only as 'Caesar', smuggled evidence of thousands of deaths out of the country. Christou, William, The Guardian, 2025-02-06.

United Kingdom: ['I have a lot to contribute': Whitehall whistleblower wants her job back](#). Josie Stewart won an employment tribunal case against the government for unfair dismissal, after she leaked information in the public interest. Weaver, Matthew, The Guardian, 2025-02-20.

United States of America: [Federal data is disappearing. Meet the teams working to rescue it and learn how you can help](#). Since the start of the new Trump administration, hundreds of federal data sets and government websites have gone offline without warning, sometimes returning with major changes and sometimes not returning at all. On February 13th, MuckRock hosted an event with organizations that are helping lead the efforts to preserve the public's data. MuckRockNews, 2025-02-14.

United States of America: [Senior USAid officials put on leave after denying access to Musk's Doge team](#). After standoff, Doge members gained control over access system, letting them lock out workers and read emails. Roth, Andrew, The Guardian, 2025-02-03.

Worldwide: [China tops list of countries trying to silence exiled dissidents over past decade, study shows](#). A quarter of the world's countries have engaged in transnational repression – targeting political exiles abroad to silence dissent – in the past decade, new research reveals. The Washington DC-based non-profit organisation Freedom House has documented 1,219 incidents carried out by 48 governments across 103 countries, from 2014 to 2024. McQue, Katie, The Guardian, 2025-02-12.

Worldwide: [Deference to Passports Puts Dissidents at Risk](#). Biometrics, already used in some border crossings, could help protect activists. Feigenbaum, Alena Popova, Evan A., Foreign Policy, 2025-02-27.

Worldwide: [Who Owns the Story? Ethical Approaches to Humanitarian Narratives](#). How humanitarian organisations can incorporate storytelling ethically in their communications. Bullen, Maya, LSE International Development, 2025-03-03.

Humanitarian Aid

Ukraine: [Ukraine Humanitarian Fund: Introducing the UHF Data Hub](#). This dynamic, user-friendly dashboard is a go-to source for up-to-the-minute information on how UHF funding drives humanitarian action in Ukraine. OCHA, ReliefWeb, 2025-02-26.

Indigenous Matters

Canada: [Human rights museum removes Buffy Sainte-Marie from exhibit](#). The Canadian Museum for Human Rights has removed singer-songwriter Buffy Sainte-Marie from an exhibit because of questions about her First Nations identity. Press, Steve Lambert The Canadian, Toronto Star, 2025-02-27.

New Zealand: [Collecting our loss](#). "There is little or no information recording where the taonga came from, who they belonged to, who made them, what their names were, or how they were used." —

Matariki Williams on how the majority of taonga stored in collections have been separated from their stories. Williams, Matariki, E-Tangata, 2025-03-01.

United States of America: [ProPublica Updates Its Database of Museums' and Universities' Compliance With Federal Repatriation Law](#). Institutions across the U.S. returned more than 10,300 Native American ancestors to tribes in 2024, making it the third-biggest year for repatriation under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. Hudetz, Mary, ProPublica, 2025-02-25.

International Justice

United States of America: [Trump launches sanctions against the ICC](#). The decision comes as no surprise, but the reactions are massive, and its consequences could threaten the existence of the International Criminal Court (ICC): on Thursday 6 February 2025, US President Donald Trump signed an executive order providing for sanctions against the Hague Court, which he accused of 'taking illegal and unfounded actions against America and (its) close ally Israel'. AFP, JusticeInfo.net, 2025-02-06.

Israel-Gaza Crisis

Israel/Palestine (Permanent Observer to the United Nations): [Stop attacks on journalists and media freedom in the West Bank](#). Israel authorities must stop the assault on journalists and the media in Palestine's West Bank, and protect vital reporting. Article 19, ARTICLE 19, 2025-02-25.

Palestine (Permanent Observer to the United Nations): [Archiving Gaza: The Race to Save Evidence of War Crimes and Mass Destruction](#). Inside the dangerous effort to dodge censorship and document the horrors of Israel's war against Gaza. Hassan, Lila, Drop Site News, 2025-01-27.

Palestine (Permanent Observer to the United Nations): [Israeli Police Raid Palestinian Bookshops in East Jerusalem](#). The police said the stores were selling books that supported terrorism and that two members of the family who owned the business had been arrested. A lawyer said their detention was "political" rather than legal. Odenheimer, Natan; Jakes, Lara, The New York Times, 2025-02-10.

Labor Rights

United States of America: [Digging in to Black Labor History at GW](#). Archives available through the Special Collections Research Center include historical material from two of the largest and most iconic American labor unions. Ruth Steinhardt, GW Today, 2025-02-26.

Privacy

Europe: [DeepSeek making a splash with EU data protection bodies](#). DeepSeek's emergence in the European digital space has been closely watched by national data protection authorities, who are concerned the company is breaching the GDPR by transferring EU personal data to China. Moreau, Claudie, Euractiv, 2025-02-03.

India: [India regulator seeks greater access to social media records, source and memo say](#). India's markets regulator is seeking broader powers from the government to remove unauthorised financial advice from social media platforms such as WhatsApp and Telegram, and to access their call records for investigations into market violations, a government source and a document reviewed by Reuters showed. Batra, Shubham, Zawya, 2024-02-14.

South Korea: [South Korea Bans Downloads of DeepSeek, the Chinese A.I. App](#). Regulators said they would suspend the app until they could be sure it complied with the country's data protection laws. Tobin, Meaghan; Young, Jin Yu, The New York Times, 2025-02-17.

United Kingdom: [Apple removes advanced data protection tool in face of UK government request](#). Apple says removal of tool after government asked for right to see data will make iCloud users more vulnerable. Hall, Rachel, The Guardian, 2025-02-21.

United Kingdom: [UK Encryption Order Threatens Global Privacy Rights](#). The United Kingdom government's order to Apple to allow access to encrypted cloud data harms the privacy rights of users in the UK and worldwide. Human Rights Watch, Human Rights Watch, 2025-02-14.

United States of America: [Conflicts over access to Americans' personal data emerging across federal government](#). The Trump administration's fast-moving efforts to limit the size of the U.S. federal bureaucracy, primarily through the recently minted Department of Government Efficiency, are raising privacy and data security concerns among current and former officials across the government, particularly as the administration scales back positions charged with privacy oversight. Efforts to limit the independence of a host of federal agencies through a new executive order — including the independence of the Federal Trade Commission and Securities and Exchange Commission — are also ringing alarm bells among civil society and some legal experts. Caitlin Andrews, IAPP, 2025-02-19.

United States of America: [DOGE Gains Access to Confidential Records on Housing Discrimination, Medical Details — Even Domestic Violence](#). While some agencies have resisted efforts by Elon Musk's team to access confidential records, HUD has opened the door. The potential harm to privacy could be significant. Coburn, Jesse, ProPublica, 2025-02-26.

United States of America: [IRS reportedly preparing to give Musk's Doge agency access to taxpayer data](#). US agency reviewing request for access to classified system containing personal financial records of US taxpayers. Helmore, Edward, The Guardian, 2025-02-17.

United States of America: [Judge temporarily blocks Musk's 'Doge' team from accessing treasury records](#). Injunction granted in response to lawsuit alleging the Trump administration allowed Musk's team access to sensitive data in violation of federal law. Press, Associated, The Guardian, 2025-02-08.

United States of America: [Trump administration seeking access to database of immigrant minors](#). The Office of Refugee Resettlement, which is responsible for caring for unaccompanied minors, has long operated independently of ICE. Miroff, Nick; Sacchetti, Maria, The Washington Post, 2025-01-31.

Racism

United States of America: [Green Book exhibit showcases history, struggles and triumphs of Black travel in the U.S.](#) The "Negro Motorist Green Book," a guide for African Americans first published in 1936, was a valued resource at a time when travel held the promise of adventure but was also perilous. It is now the subject of an exhibit showcasing the history, struggles and triumphs of Black travel in America. Sarah Clune Hartman; Gabrielle Hays, PBS NewsHour, 2025-02-21.

Spying

India: [Revealing India's Cold War secrets](#). Indians worried about interference by “the foreign hand” in their affairs might have over-estimated their adversaries. Mark Pierce, The Interpreter, 2025-02-07.

Technology

Europe: [Meta Will Escalate Any Concerns of Unfair E.U. Regulation to Trump](#). When companies are treated differently and in a way that is discriminatory against them, then that should be highlighted to that company’s home government,” Meta’s global affairs head said. Jackson, Fiona, TechRepublic, 2025-02-18.

Germany: [Berlin court rules against X on data access](#). Two civil society organisations sued X after the platform refused to grant systematic access to publicly available data. Datta, Anupriya, Euractiv, 2025-02-07.

South Sudan: [Peace Begins with Access to Information in Romich](#). For years, the people of Romich lived in near-complete isolation—no radio, no reliable phone signal, and during the rainy season, no way out. “When it rains, we are completely cut off,” says Mary Nyak, a local resident. “To make a call, we climb trees, hoping to catch a weak signal. But most of the time, we are left in silence.” Romich became the county headquarters of Tonj East in 2020, following South Sudan’s peace agreement. But despite its new status, progress remained slow. Roads were barely passable, and frequent communal clashes made travel even riskier. Zejin Yin, UNMISS, 2025-02-23.

United States of America: [Meta Will Escalate Any Concerns of Unfair E.U. Regulation to Trump](#). When companies are treated differently and in a way that is discriminatory against them, then that should be highlighted to that company’s home government,” Meta’s global affairs head said. Jackson, Fiona, TechRepublic, 2025-02-18.

Worldwide: [Why Responsible Data Access will determine the Future of AI: The Increased Importance of Data](#). At this moment, the AI Action Summit is taking place in Paris, bringing together heads of state and government, international organizations, civil society, and CEOs to look at how artificial intelligence can be most effectively harnessed by society. Achieving these goals requires something more foundational — responsible data access. Without data to train, finetune, and augment them, there can be no AI systems. Chafetz, Hannah, Data Stewards Network, 2025-02-08.

Ukraine War

Russian Federation: [‘Many teachers don’t want to do this, but they’re trapped’: film shows extent of Putin indoctrination in Russian schools](#). Two years after he started documenting the effect of the Ukraine war on his pupils, Pavel Talankin reveals how it led to accolade – and exile from home. Sauer, Pjotr, The Observer, 2025-02-09.

Russian Federation/Ukraine: [Specters of the Past: How Russia and Ukraine are Weaponizing History](#). History is a powerful tool so it would make sense that both Ukraine and Russia are rewriting their histories. Piccoli, Erik, International Policy Digest, 2025-02-01.

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