

Massive Mobilization Against EDVIGE, The New French Database

Thursday 17 July 2008, by [MARZOUKI Meryem](#) (Date first published: 16 July 2008).

Much more documentation on Edvige can be found on ESSF in the corresponding French section. See the key word: [Fichiers](#)

Remember the movie 'Das Leben der Anderen' (*The Lives of Others*), where a Stasi agent was monitoring a playwright's life? This doesn't translate anymore in French into 'La vie des autres', but rather into EDVIGE, the name of a newly created database to be used by French intelligence services and the administrative police.

EDVIGE will file "individuals, groups, organisations and moral persons which, due to their individual or collective activity, are likely to attempt to public order". Not only these persons will be filed (without any offence committed), but also "those who undertake or have undertaken direct and non fortuitous relations with them." Filing starts at age 13.

This, clearly, means filing everyone, in view of "informing the government and the representatives of the State" in any and all French town and region. In other words, EDVIGE, which has been created by a decree issued on 27 June 2008 in the framework of the merging of two French intelligence services (RG and DST), is the perfect instrument of a political police.

EDVIGE will contains data on "civil status and occupation; physical addresses, phone numbers, email addresses; physical characteristics, photographs and behaviour; identity papers; car plate numbers; fiscal and patrimonial information; moves and legal history."

As highlighted by lesbians and gays associations, this will include data on sexual orientation and health, in particular HIV seropositivity. This has been confirmed by a representative of the Interior ministry, who declared that "the mention of these data will only be authorised for incidental need in relation with an activity. In the intelligence field, this mainly means activism." Moreover, French EDRI member IRIS notes that the inclusion of "identity papers" in these data is particularly significant in the context of the newly created French biometric passport including 8 fingerprints and of the draft law in preparation on biometric ID cards.

A large mobilization against EDVIGE immediately started, with a petition calling for the withdrawal of this file. This petition is hosted and maintained by RAS ('Réseau associatif et syndical'), an NGO acting as an ISP for its members, almost 200 activist NGOs and trade unions, among them EDRI member IRIS. The petition has already gathered since 10 July 2008 more than 16.000 individual signatures, and more than 170 signatures from associations, trade unions and political parties from the opposition. Signatories will organize into a global coordination against the EDVIGE file, and are preparing various actions starting from next September. In the mean time, some of these groups will

file a complaint against the French government, requesting the annulment of the EDVIGE decree.

But EDVIGE is not alone. Her twin sister, CRISTINA, has also been created on the same day. CRISTINA aims at “Centralising inland intelligence for homeland security and national interests.” But that’s all that we know about CRISTINA: using the article 26.III provision of the French Data Protection Act, the government decided not to publish the decree creating CRISTINA. As a consequence, the CNIL’s opinion on CRISTINA has not been published either, except to attest that this opinion was “favourable, with reservations.” Actually, the same secret has been observed for 6 other newly created files, related to inland and foreign intelligence, as well as military services. Not a good sign for these “Sarkozy’s babies.”

Decree n° 2008-632 creating EDVIGE file (only in French, 27.06.2008)

<http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/WAspa...>

CNIL’s opinion on EDVIGE (only in French, 16.06.2008)

<http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/WAspa...>

Têtu: L’Intérieur reconnaît qu’«Edvige» sera utilisé pour ficher les militants (only in French, 12.07.2008)

<http://www.tetu.com/rubrique/infos/...>

IRIS: Appel à signatures : IRIS soutient l’appel pour l’abandon du fichier EDVIGE (only in French, 11.07.2008)

<http://www.iris.sgdg.org/info-debat...>

‘Non à EDVIGE’: Petition website, with press releases and press articles (only in French, since 10.07.2008)

<http://nonaedvige.ras.eu.org/>

Decree n° 2007-914 of 15 May 2007, as modified by Decree n°2008-631 of 27 June 2008 to create CRISTINA and other files (only in French, 01.07.2008 consolidated version)

<http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affic...>

CNIL’s opinion on CRISTINA (only in French, 16.06.2008)

<http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/WAspa...>

P.S.

* From EDRI-gram, Digital Civil Rights in Europe:

<http://www.edri.org/edrigram/number6.14/edvige-french-database>

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