

DECRYPTING TO SOLVE AND PREVENT CRIMES

NEW EU PROJECT WILL FIND NOVEL METHODS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT TO DEFY ENCRYPTION WHEN LOCKED TELEPHONES ARE TAKEN INTO EVIDENCE.

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While the ubiquity of the mobile phone in our society is largely beneficial, they can also be used for criminal activities. To make matters worse, the device manufacturers offer built in, robust encryption which can render data on a captured device virtually non-existent. With no help coming from the manufacturer pool, it has become a matter of public security and interest to find ways to systematically crack encrypted mobile devices to gather evidence to prosecute criminals or even thwart future attempts at criminal activity such as terrorism, targeted attacks and extortion.

Recognizing this need, the European Commission has recently kicked off funding for the EXFILES project. EXFILES is a consortium of fourteen partners including law enforcement, universities and cybersecurity companies under the coordination of Technikon in Austria. With the goal of creating tools for law enforcement agencies to extract data and related evidence from locked mobile devices, the consortium will also actively research the areas of ethical and legal aspects as well as perform dissemination and training activities for the next generation of forensic experts.

EXFILES will usher in new judicial methods of accessing data for lawful investigations. And while inroads will be made in the forensic investigation sector, the general European public will be the ultimate beneficiary as complete and thorough investigations will no longer be hampered or even blocked by data extraction challenges. A fast track to cracking a locked phone will allow investigators the ability to rapidly piece together details of criminal plans, contacts and geospatial data, thus contributing to a safer Europe.

For more information about the EXFILES project, visit our web site or contact the coordinator directly:

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