

URL: <https://ecorner.stanford.edu/clips/technology-and-regulation/>

Techstars CEO Maëlle Gavet articulates how different approaches to privacy and security account for the divergence between the American and European approaches to regulating technology companies and platforms. She argues that democratic governments have a distinct role to play in making sure that technology reflects democratic values. In addition, she observes that many American companies are already building global products that comply with the stricter European privacy standards, and suggests that the US government will, in the long run, take more of a leadership role in creating global data privacy standards.



Transcript

- I am not advocating for full-on top-down 00:00:06,169 let's regulate technology out of existence kind of approach.. I'm advocating for balance.. I believe that, again, in society where we have democratically elected government, the key here being democratically elected.. When we have democratically elected governments, they have a role to play in terms of giving guardrails and protecting the values we care about.. In American society, security is a value that matters a lot more than privacy, and it would take us much more than 30 seconds to talk about this.. But like, if you study history, you will see that over and over again.. While if you look at Europe, again for historical reasons that we won't have time to explore, European society value privacy way over security.. Again, there are nuances, but et cetera.. So, and that is reflected in the type of governments we elect.. And it is reflected as a result of that in the type of policy that these different governments implement..

But I do think that in general government have an absolutely critical role to play in making sure that the values that we, as a human society, which is different in the US and in Europe, that these values are being implemented and protected and strengthened.. And so I do think that in the US, the government, as the population is getting more and more aware of problem with privacy and usage of data.. The government in the US is starting to feel the pressure from the people on the ground, from us basically.. And is starting to get more conscious of it.. So that's one.. And I understand that, I'm pretty sure a lot of you are listening to that and saying, hm, god, she's naive.. So let me talk about the second part of the answer, because I am under no illusion.. It's not because suddenly the American people just woke up to the fact that Facebook and Google are misusing their data, that suddenly the government is going to start regulating them.. There's another aspect, which is dominance over the tech space and understanding that because you're up to the lead when it comes to regulation, for historical and cultural reasons that I mentioned earlier, we are now in a place where ironically, a lot of American tech companies are following European legislation when they build their products, including when they build products that are then given to the American people.. And so now we're talking about a conversation that is much more at the geopolitical level and economical level of like, who is actually defining the principles and standards of the big tech giants of the world..

And I doubt very much that the US is going to be comfortable having Europe deciding what are the standards that are going to apply to tech companies.. And so the significantly more cynical answer to your question is I am very happy that Europe took the lead and pushed much more stringent regulation around data privacy.. GDPR was in no way a perfect legislation, but it had the merit to exist and to start pushing some really important topic.. By the way, it was very much copied by California.. And that's awesome.. Please copy.. But I do expect that over time, things may be changing and that the American government may actually feel the need to be much more in the driving seat.. So I expect changes to come mainly from that.. That, and obviously your strong voice when you go and vote.. - Yeah..

00:04:05,380 - Make sure that you elect leaders 00:04:08,280 who care about the topics that we're discussing right now...