Overview
Charles Helleputte heads the EU cybersecurity, data, and privacy practice at Steptoe. He focuses on existing EU and national cybersecurity, data, and privacy laws such as the NIS Directive, GDPR or the Cybersecurity Act and on upcoming developments such as NIS 2, DORA, the Digital Services Act, the Data Governance Act or the ePrivacy Regulation.

He has specific experience preparing and managing incidents in a cross-border context, where it is necessary to consider multiple cybersecurity, privacy, and other regulatory and enforcement frameworks (such as NIS, PSD2, CTR, etc.). He provides practical and pragmatic advice to clients faced with increased accountability requirements towards users, helping organizations testing new responses, such as broader use of standards or certification mechanisms across the data lifecycle in a wide range of industries (regulated and not regulated). He is also experienced in representing clients before national and EU supervisory authorities and courts, including the Working Party No. 29 (now the European Data Protection Board).

Charles holds a Certified Information Privacy Professional/Europe (CIPP/E) certification. He is a former co-chair of the Brussels KnowledgeNet Chapter of the International Association of Privacy Professionals (IAPP) and an appointed Legal Expert at ENISA, the European Union Cybersecurity Agency. He is a member of IAPP EU Advisory Board. He plays an active role in the Digital Economy Committee at AmCham EU, which represents interests of American businesses in Europe. He also lectures at UCLouvain and is part of the research group DRAILS (Data, Robotics, Artificial Intelligence, Law and Society).

Representative Publications
- “EU to Keep Its Ability to Sanction Foreign Cyber Attackers for One More Year,” Legal Update, May 20, 2020
- “Undoing and Redoing Is Still Working (but Scrolling Down and Swiping Through Is Not Consenting),” May 7, 2020

“EU Positions on Contact Tracking Applications During COVID-19: No Lockdown for Privacy & Cybersecurity,” April 28, 2020

“Data Protection Rules (Such as the GDPR) Do Not Hinder Measures Taken in the Fight Against the COVID-19 Pandemic,” April 22, 2020

“Advancing Software Security in the EU – The Role of the EU Cybersecurity Certification Framework: ENISA Puts Another Brick Towards a Wall of Cybersecurity Certification Schemes,” April 21, 2020

“Irish Data Protection Commission (DPC) Report on the Use of Cookies – No Need to Digest It All; We Serve Up the Tastiest Morsels,” April 10, 2020

“No One Is Perfect… Not Even the GDPR — #TellTheEUWhy,” April 6, 2020

“Sharing geolocation data during the COVID-19 pandemic in Europe,” Legal Update, April 2, 2020

“The European Commission proposes the creation of a single European data space,” Legal Update, March 30, 2020


“EU Commission Publishes Its White Paper on Artificial Intelligence: Will the EU Be (Again) a Rule Maker?,” February 19, 2020

“10 Commandments for Processing Personal Data Through Video Devices in the EU,” February 12, 2020


“Cookies Consent CNIL Steps in with a Proposal for Compliance,” January 14, 2020

“A Proposal for a European Cybersecurity Taxonomy—The End of the Tower of Babel?,” Legal Update, December 9, 2019

“EU Cybersecurity Act Published,” June 7, 2019

“The GDPR: One Year On,” Legal Update, May 24, 2019

“Foreign Cyber Attackers to Face EU Sanctions,” Legal Update, May 22, 2019

“Using Performance of a Contract as a Legal Basis for Processing in the context of Online Services,” Legal Update, May 2, 2019

“One Size Does Not Fit All: EU Commission Recommendations on Cybersecurity in the Energy Sector,” April 16, 2019

“EU Cyber Threat Landscape and Outlook: What You Should Know about the ENISA 2018 Report,” Legal Update, February 6, 2019

“Free Flow of Personal Data Between the European Union and Japan Starts Now,” January 23, 2019

“Keeping It Private: GDPR and Developments in Data Privacy in 2018,” January 14, 2019

“EU-US Privacy Shield Undergoes Second Review by EU Commission and (Re)Passes the Test—for Certifying Companies, Santa Has Come to Town,” Legal Update, December 26, 2018

“The EU Cybersecurity Act is (Almost) There,” Legal Update, December 12, 2018

“EDPB’s new draft guidelines on the territorial scope of the GDPR,” Legal Update, December 2018

“5 Considerations for General Counsel Regarding the EU General Data Protection Regulation,” October 30, 2018


“The GDPR Patchwork: What Does Italian Style Bring to the Show?,” September 21, 2018

“The Clock is Ticking: Negotiating an Enhanced EU Cybersecurity Framework,” September 14, 2018

“5 Lessons Learned on Data Breach Management after 2 Months of GDPR: Friday Is Calling,” Legal Update, July 25, 2018

“Privacy Regulation: What to Expect (and When) — Why Does It Take Time (or Even Three) to Tread?” Legal Update, July 12, 2018
Areas of Work
Privacy & Cybersecurity
Internet, Telecom & Media
Life Sciences
Autonomous Vehicles
Insurance & Reinsurance
Blockchain & Cryptocurrency
Representative Matters

Cybersecurity and Data Privacy

Assisted a cryptocurrency player in cybersecurity and privacy compliance aspects of its global operations and online platforms taking EU GDPR as benchmark.

Assisted a podcast platform in dealing with information requirements under GDPR and ePrivacy Directive, including drafting of the website’s privacy notice and cookies notice.

Worked on the development and setup of an API used to facilitate acceptance by merchants of cryptocurrency as means of payment on their platforms. From a privacy compliance point of view, the indirect collection of data and complexity of the supply chain made the representation particularly innovative.

Participated to the deployment of a cryptocurrency designed as digital cash on phone by reviewing privacy settings and disclosure language.

Counselled various clients with global operations in assessing the impact of the EU developments around personal data transfers post-Schrems II decision and in implementing supplementary measures for data transfers. A data transfer tool we developed was used for assessing and documenting the steps undertaken to authorize the data transfers to take place on the basis of standard contractual clauses.

Contributed (in a personal capacity) to the INTERLINK consortium, a Horizon 2020 project, aiming at developing a new collaborative governance model between administrations and private partners, including citizen. INTERLINK will provide a set of digital building blocks, called “Interlinkers” with the view to implement the defined governance model and standardizes the basic functionalities needed to enable private actors to co-operate in the delivery of a service.

Assisted a global insurance brokers group of companies in ensuring their readiness for uninterrupted personal data flows at the end of the Brexit transition period, taking into account upcoming revision of standard contractual clauses and post-Schrems II situation.

Assisted a client in developing a line of defense and arguments to challenge the request from a non-EEA based enforcement to access personal data of some of its EU-based customers, whilst preserving a good level of cooperation and constructive dialogue.

Counselled an international financial service institution in assessing roles of parties under GDPR and consequent compliance steps (including applicable contractual settings) in relation to the development of an e-wallet API. The representation included a determination of the likely GDPR nexus arising from the specifics of the EMV SRC ‘Click to Pay’ standards.

Represented ILGA Europe on a pro bono basis in the privacy and cybersecurity aspects of the Hub, a resource-sharing tool for LGBTI activists’ in Europe and Central Asia.

Represented a major insurance group in its integration of EU operations from a cybersecurity and data privacy point of view.*

Assisted a regulated institution in the management, follow up and remediation of a data breach. The representation includes dealing with cross-border regulatory context.*

Counselled a chemical manufacturer in the privacy aspects of the deployment of a whistleblowing hotline solution.*

Advised on a pro bono basis the Red Cross EU Office, the European Council on Refugees and Exiles, Medair, and the International Lesbian, Gay, Trans & Intersex Association in the review of their data mapping, legal basis for processing, privacy notices, privacy policies and in their vendor remediation exercise.*

Represented clients in the cybersecurity and data privacy aspects of due diligence, SPA negotiation and integration.*

Counselled a Chinese financial institution in relation to the technical standards, organizational measures and incident reporting under the PSD2 and the interplay with GDPR and national laws implementing the NIS Directive.*

Assisted US B2B marketing companies, email service providers, payment services providers, actor of the entertainment industry in assessing the impact of GDPR on their operations.*

Represented a hospitality client in the management of a high-profile data breach taking place at the level of its booking platform.*

Counselled an international financial service institution in designing and implementing a cloud-based SaaS monitoring tool aiming to protect the integrity of its systems and networks.*

Advised the United Nations regarding international legal issues related to e-evidence and processing of personal data for law enforcement purposes.*
Represented an Italian brand of shoes and clothing in its GDPR readiness exercise and in navigating the changes of the CCTV legislation post GDPR in multiple countries.*

Assisted a global company providing payment solutions for e-commerce app in assessing its role (data controller/data processor) and related requirements under GDPR.*

Advised clients in a number of industries such as financial, marketing, insurance, in the drafting and negotiation of Art. 28 GDPR data processing agreements, representing both controllers and processors.*

Represented a leading supplier of automotive parts in dealing with the data privacy aspects of its global HR management and operations. The representation includes the assessment of the role of various group entities and in analyzing appropriate data transfer mechanisms to support the exchange of data necessary for staff appraisal.*

Developed a structured approach to GDPR compliance for several trade associations in multiple EU countries.*

Contributed to the HTNG Working Group on GDPR. The outcome is a White Paper and Self-Assessment Tool adopted in March 2018. The White Paper describes key considerations of GDPR for the hospitality industry. The Assessment Tool aims to help professionals in the industry to evaluate their company's ability to comply with the new regulation. Over 50 companies (from hotel brands, to software companies) participated in HTNG's GDPR for Hospitality Workgroup.*

Part of the team who represented Nestlé S.A. its agreement to acquire privately-held Atrium Innovations, a Montreal-based global leader in nutritional health products, from a group of investors for $2.3 billion.*

Represented a US financial group active in the credit card business in its negotiations with a payment network in France. The representation includes negotiations with the French DPA.*

Represented booking platforms in their challenge in front of the Working Party No. 29 of a new standard developed by the travel industry.*

Assisted a European actor in infusion therapy and clinical nutrition in dealing with the Belgian aspects of the acquisition of a US-headquartered group active in transfusion technology products for blood collection, separation and processing.*

Transactions

Represented a French bank in its $800 million ICO monetization transaction with a Brazilian credit institution.*

Represented a French-listed company and its subsidiaries in the context of a $600 million term loan with a pool of Asian lenders used to refinance existing indebtedness.*

Advised the Brussels branch of the Bank of China (Luxembourg) SA on a €31 million bridge loan facility.*

Assisted a client in the hospitality sector in the negotiation of the disposal of one of its assets to public authorities, as part of the redeployment of the Heysel plateau (Neo project).*

Part of a four-office, five-practice team who advised a French investment fund in the acquisition of a 85 hotels portfolio belonging to a major hospitality actor and other real estate investment funds.*

Represented an international bank in a $370 million margin financing for a Brazilian credit institution.*

Represented Solvay SA and its affiliates in the $220 million acquisition of the global Ryton polyphenylene sulfide (PPS) business of Chevron Phillips Chemical Company LP.*

Represented a French bank in the refinancing of an hotel portfolio a private equity fund owned in Belgium.*

Assisted a global healthcare company to restructure its Belgian activities, in particular, to structure and negotiate an acceleration of the immovable lease on the former European HQ of an acquired business.*

Advised a group in the hospitality sector in its acquisition and financing of a five hotels portfolio in Belgium.*

Represented the Belgian subsidiary of a European toy group, headquartered in France in a combined equivalent €160 million acquisition, revolving and CAPEX facilities agreements.*

Represented the Belgian subsidiary of a European property management group to access combined €485 million facilities agreements.*

Represented a Belgian software company in the negotiation of the assignment of a VAT leasing and related aspects on a 7,000 square meter building where it will relocate its headquarters.*

Assisting one of the largest Brazilian chemical companies in the tax structuring and contractual implementation of the Only Representative activities (in the context of the REACH regulation).*

Advised a French telecommunications group in the corporate and tax aspects of the restructuring of €3 billion facility arrangement.*

Advised and assisted the Belgian branch of a Japanese credit institution in launching a new Swap activity in more than twenty countries.*

€208 million securitization of consumer credit loan receivables for a Dutch bank with branches in Belgium and Germany.*

Pan-European structuring and organization of operations of a $500 million feeder fund.*
Speaking Engagements
• "Enterprise Supply Chain Ransomware Risks: Strategic Resilience, Legal, Automotive Insights," Celerium Webinar, August 11, 2021
• "Open Talk Around the EU Regulation of #AI," Research Group on Data, Robotics, Artificial Intelligence, Law & Society (DRAILS), May 4, 2021
• "Is EU Cybersecurity the Missing Piece to Sustainable Digital Environment?,” Natural Environment Research Council Webinar Series: Constructing a Digital Environment, March 2, 2021
• "Brexit and International Transfers of Personal Data 5 Action Points in 15 Days," BIPAR Webinar, December 14, 2020
• "Privacy & Cybersecurity Brexit Planning: 15 Actions in 15 Days Before the UK Goes Away," CLEPA Webinar Series, December 9, 2020
• "Data as a (New) Core Company Asset to Protect: Who’s Who?,” UCLouvain Cybersecurity Month Seminars, October 29, 2020
• "A Fireside Chat with Commissioner Didier Reynders on Europe’s Digital Future - Where Does Privacy Stand?,” IAPP Brussels KnowledgeNet Chapter Meeting, Brussels, Belgium, October 27, 2020
• "Cybersecurity as a key European Policy: Right or Wrong?,” Louvain-La-Neuve University Online Courses, October 22, 2020
• "Workshop: Cybersecurity & Pharma: Patient Data, Public Perception & Preventing Attacks,” EU Pharma Law Academy, September 24, 2020
• "GDPR Second Year Anniversary Quiz,” International Association of Privacy Professionals, May 25, 2020
• "Is Certification the Future of Privacy? Yes, No, Maybe?,” International Association of Privacy Professionals Brussels KnowledgeNet Chapter, February 3, 2020
• "Celebrate Data Privacy Day 2020,” International Association of Privacy Professionals Brussels KnowledgeNet Chapter, January 28, 2020
• "University of Louvain Debate: Would You Trade Privacy Rights Against Data Security? Is There A (Healthy) Cyber Balance?,” University of Louvain, Louvain, Belgium, October 31, 2019
• "WWW (or What we Want for your Website),” European Pro Bono Alliance, October 25, 2019
• "Cybersecurity & Pharma: Patient Data, Public Perception & Preventing Attacks,” European Pharma Law Academy, Cambridge, United Kingdom, September 9-12, 2019
• "GDPR After GDPR Day: Which Rating Does it Deserve?,” Data Protection Forum Association of Consumer Credit Information Suppliers, Brussels, Belgium, March 13, 2019
• "The Impact of GDPR on Clinical Trials,” Patient Engagement Through Education (EUPATI) Webinar, October 29, 2018
• "GDPR & Data Breaches Management: 5 Lessons Learned,” European Conference of Hotel Technology Next Generation (HTNG), Lisbon, Portugal, October 23-24, 2018
• "Public Affairs Post-GDPR: What You Need to Know,” Public Affairs Council Webinar, June 12, 2018
• "GDPR Workshop – GDPR is There: Are you Ready?,” European Council of Optometry and Optics Annual General Assembly, Pula, Croatia, May 30, 2018
• "GDPR Workshop – GDPR Is Coming: Are you Ready?,” European Council of Optometry and Optics, May 11, 2018
• "General Data Protection Regulation and NGOs: Are you Ready?,” Advocates for International Development, April 24, 2018
• "GDPR Breakfast Session,” United Network of Interventional Corporate Events Organizers, March 30, 2018
• "Skills Development Program,” European Public Affairs Consultancies’ Association (EPACA), March 26, 2018
• "General Data Protection Regulation,” Association of Mutual Insurers and Insurance Cooperatives in Europe (AMICE), Brussels, Belgium, March 21, 2018
• "Legal Perspectives,” Humentum Legal Roundtable Covering Trending Cyber & Data Issues, Washington, DC, March 8, 2018
• "Hospitality: are you ready for GDPR,” Hospitality Technology Next Generation (HTNG) Annual European Conference,
News & Publications

CLIENT ALERTS

European Commission Proposes to Overhaul AML Framework with New Legislative Package
August 16, 2021
By: Guy Soussan, Charles-Albert Helleputte, Diletta De Cicco, Stefan Tsakanakis, Charlotte Brett

Belgium: Balancing Data Protection and National Security
July 2020
By: Diletta De Cicco, Charles-Albert Helleputte

PUBLICATIONS

Personal Data Transfers After Year Zero: A More Appealing Set of EDPB Recommendations?
July 2020
By: Diletta De Cicco, Charles-Albert Helleputte

PUBLICATIONS

Personal Data Transfers After Year Zero: Are the New SCCs a Paradigm Shift?
June 30, 2021
By: Diletta De Cicco, Charles-Albert Helleputte

CLIENT ALERTS

European Commission Releases Proposed Regulation on Artificial Intelligence
April 22, 2021
By: Charles-Albert Helleputte, Diletta De Cicco

CLIENT ALERTS

NIST Gives Eight Keys to Better Lock (Back)Doors in Supply Chain Management
March 1, 2021
By: Diletta De Cicco, Charles-Albert Helleputte, Jeffrey G. Weiss, Cole Musto (Project Assistant)

CLIENT ALERTS

The Council Agrees on ePrivacy Regulation...Or When a Deal is Not "THE" Deal
February 15, 2021
By: Charles-Albert Helleputte, Diletta De Cicco

MEDIA MENTIONS

Cybersecurity Law Report Quotes Charles Helleputte on Breach Response Lessons
January 20, 2021

PUBLICATIONS

Recent EU Privacy Developments Are Not Just an EU Problem
Bloomberg Law
January 19, 2021
By: Diletta De Cicco, Charles-Albert Helleputte

PUBLICATIONS

The Garante Public Consultation on Draft Cookies Guidelines: Our Response and Comments
January 12, 2021
By: Diletta De Cicco, Charles-Albert Helleputte
Resources
FINANCIAL SERVICES UNIVERSITY
Financial Services University

Noteworthy
- Client Choice Award, IP & IT, Belgium (2019)

Professional Affiliations
- European Advisory Board Member, International Association of Privacy Professionals (IAPP)
- Legal Expert, ENISA, the European Union Cybersecurity Agency
- Member, American Chamber in Europe (AmCham), EU chapter