

## **Abstract**

In today's world of new media and big data, our personal data is a valuable commodity. This Master's thesis presents a little-known industry of personal data brokers. Databases of US data brokers contain surprisingly detailed and sensitive information of millions of Americans. The thesis also contains an analysis of risks related to insufficient protection of personal information in digital economy along with possibilities how to enhance our digital privacy in connection with data brokers.

The core of the thesis is a comparative analysis of data broker legislation in the US, Canada and the European Union. The analysis shows that in the US there is no unified regulation of personal data protection from activities of data brokers but several laws partially regulating some aspects of personal data protection; this system allows trade in personal data even without the acknowledgement of the persons.

On the other hand, regulation in the EU and Canada favours protection of personal data and privacy. In the EU each member state has its legal act on personal data protection based on the EU directive. In April 2018 this directive will be replaced by General Data Protection Regulation which will be directly applicable in all member states. Both current and future legislation, however, make the data broker industry as described in the US practically impossible.