



UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM  
Institute for Information Law

**IVIR LECTURE SERIES**

# Does Information Law Suit Information Machines?

by Prof. Nadya Purtova  
(Utrecht University)

Friday  
27 March  
REC A5.24



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## Does Information Law Suit Information Machines?

Law regulates information and depends on understanding information. Yet, this understanding is not based on the scientific study of information. Law relies on the ordinary meaning of information: something which has meaning to a human. Information has impact when humans know and use it. This human-centric understanding, however, is unhelpful when law tackles algorithmic processes. Advanced algorithms draw meaning where humans see none and convert information to impact without humans, beyond human grasp. Data protection and discrimination law are just two legal areas that fall into the trap of regulating information without understanding it, unproductively targeting algorithmic processes based on notions of human cognitive interpretation.

At the same time, human-centric understanding and nature of some information processes, such as expression, might be compromised if the legal heuristic of regulating information becomes too algorithm-focused.

A central question that should be resolved for information law now is what the difference is between how humans and algorithms deal with information, and when this difference should make a difference in law.



### Speaker

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Nadya Purtova is a Professor of Law, Innovation, and Technology at Utrecht University's School of Law. She joined Utrecht University following previous positions at Tilburg Institute of Law, Technology and Society (TILT), and Groningen University, the Netherlands.

Her research focuses on how to understand and tackle socio-technical change related to information technologies in areas including data protection law, data ownership, data law and (collective) governance.

### Practical details

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**Date:** 27 March

**Time:** 15:30 - 16:45 CET  
(Amsterdam)

**Place:** REC A5.24, Nieuwe  
Achtergracht 166, 1018 WV  
Amsterdam & online via  
Zoom

