

ABSTRACT

In this data-driven age, cross-border data flows have emerged as an important catalyst for national security issues, international trade, and multilateral cooperation between countries. This thesis analyzes the contrasting approaches of the Trump, and Biden administrations in their efforts of creating cross-border data flows policies in the United States. Through the application of qualitative comparative case study method, this research examines crucial decision-making processes, executive orders, and international agreements of Trump, and Biden in their respective time as President of the United States, as key references to better understand the divergence in cross-border data flows policies. This research has found that Trump's cross-border data flows governance is heavily influenced by his pro-business, and isolationist tendencies, which oftentimes equate to less government intervention in consumers' data privacy regulation, and focuses on decisions that protect national security. In contrast, Biden's cross-border data flows policy-making restored internationalism back into the United States, prioritizing multilateral cooperation with other countries, emphasizing the importance of federal oversight in consumers' data privacy regulation, and guiding the United States' data protection standards to align with global data protection frameworks, specifically the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The findings suggest that the differences in policy-making approaches stem from the presidents' contrasting political ideologies, while Trump favors deregulation, pro-business policy-making, and isolationism; Biden advocates for robust governmental regulation, and the creation of new international cooperations. This research contributes to the understanding that American presidents are able to influence global data governance, and spotlights the importance of national policies in a world where cross-border data flows governance is of paramount importance.

Keywords: Cross-border data flows, United States, Donald Trump, Joe Biden