IT developments have made it possible to collect, store, retrieve and disseminate individual criminal history information in ways that would not have been possible, even imagined, a generation ago. While these developments have obvious law enforcement (and social protection) advantages, they also conflict with policies to restrict the accessibility of criminal history information in order to avoid stigmatizing ex-offenders and promoting rehabilitation. Nowhere is the pressure on confidentiality stronger than when dealing with sex offenders, especially pedophiles. Over the last twenty years there have been continuous, albeit strikingly different, efforts in the U.S. and Europe to expand access to convicted sex offenders’ identities. What have we learned from these efforts? What future initiatives can we expect? What are the implications for criminal record policy generally?

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