

European Regional Bureau Newsletter



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Internet Access

EU: European Commission's Digital Single Market released mid-term review

- On May 10, the European Commission published its [DSM Strategy mid-term review](#) setting out its achievement and take stock for the future. The document invites the European Parliament and the Council to finalize their position on released proposals by the end of the year, in line with the Joint Declaration on EU legislative priorities. In particular, the Commission calls for the rapid adoption of the Electronic Communications Code, and the WIFI4EU Regulation (supporting the purchase of wi-fi networks by public bodies).
- Moreover, in the communication, the European Commission lays out 3 main areas for further action: the European Data Economy; cybersecurity and the promotion of a fair Internet ecosystem for online platforms.

EU: Estonian Presidency will take on digital issues

- Estonia will assume the presidency of the Council of the EU from 1 July 2017. A [draft calendar](#) outlines 24 high-level events with a digital focus that the Estonian presidency plans to deliver over the six-month period. These events notably include a “Telecoms Director High Level Meeting” in November, as well as events on the free flow of data (July), cybersecurity (September), and connected and automated driving (November).
- European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker voiced his approval: “I think the digital is the most important performance Estonia could give as a gift”.

EU: EP JURI published Notice to Members on the European Electronic Communication Code (Recast)

- On May 10, the European Parliament Committee on Legal Affairs (JURI) published a [Notice to Members](#) presenting the Consultative Working Party’s opinion on the proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Electronic Communications Code (Recast). The Consulting Working Party consists of the respective legal services of the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission and was created for the purpose of having a “more structured use of the recasting technique for legal acts”.

- As the proposed Communications Code is a legal recast of four former European Directives, the JURI Committee was examining whether the changes made in combining these directives had inadvertently created any changes (other than those amendments intentionally proposed). The Consulting Working Party has concluded that “the proposal contains a straightforward codification of the existing legal text, without any change in its substance”.

EU: EP CULT adopted European Electronic Communications Code (Recast)

- On May 10, the European Parliament Committee on Culture and Education (CULT) adopted Curzio Maltese (GUE/NGL, IT)’s [Opinion](#) on the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Electronic Communications Code (Recast).
- The Opinion calls attention to the need to address specific issues such as media pluralism and cultural diversity, accessibility for users with disabilities, pluralism of information, end-users protection, radio access, and better access for remote regions.

EU: EP IMCO votes on the Proposal for a Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications

- On May 11, the European Parliament Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO) voted on rapporteur MEP Ivan Stefanec’s (PPE, SK)’s [Draft Opinion](#) on the Proposal for a Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications. The opinion was adopted, with 21 votes for, 13 against and 0 abstentions.
- The document supports the strengthening of the role of the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC) in order to promote access to very high capacity data connectivity and competition in the provision of electronic communications networks, services and associated facilities.

EU: Eurobarometer survey on Europeans’ opinion on the impact of digitisation unveiled

- The European Commission has issued a Eurobarometer survey’s [results](#) presenting European citizens’ opinions on the impact of digitisation and automation on daily life.
- 69% of respondents claimed that a faster and more reliable Internet connection would encourage them to make more use of innovative digital technologies, 63% would use these technologies more if online services were secure, and 57% if more public services were online. Moreover, 61% said that security and privacy play a role when purchasing an IT device, but only 27% were willing to pay more for them.

Trust

EU: EP LIBE Committee published draft report on cybercrime

- The European Parliament Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) has published a [draft report](#) on the fight against cybercrime. The draft report’s rapporteur is Elissavet Vozemberg-Vrionidi (EPP, GR).
- The document focuses on the importance of prevention and cyber-resilience, and of enhancing responsibility and liability of the service providers. It underlines that capacity-building at EU level and a common European approach to criminal justice are crucial and calls for closer cooperation with third countries.

EU: Three-year collaborative E-CRIME project concluded

- The [E-CRIME](#) (Economic Impacts of Cybercrime) project has come to an end following three years of collaborative research. The project, funded by the European

Union, aimed to reconstruct the spread and development of cybercrime in non-ICT sectors from the perspective of its economic impact.

- The project developed concrete measures to manage and deter cybercrime, including a cost-benefit calculation methodology for the assessment of cybercrime, policy briefs, and roadmap and implementation plans for cybercrime counter-measures.

Germany: German cyber agency accuses Yahoo of lack of cooperation on cybersecurity

- On 5 May, The Federal Office for Information Security (BSI) [accused Yahoo](#) of not working with officials investigating a hack that breached 1 billion accounts. The BSI investigations started in December 2016 to assess the impact on German citizens.
- BSI said Yahoo “refused to give the BSI any information and referred all questions to the Irish Data Protection Commission, without, however, giving it the authority to provide information to the BSI”.

Japan: EU-Japan trade deal: will data flows be covered?

- Data has proved to be a hurdle to the EU-Japan trade deal. According to EU officials, data flows could potentially be left out of the “political agreement” on the EU-Japan Free Trade Agreement, which it is hoped will be reached before the G20 Summit on 7/8 July.
- A “political agreement” usually means the sides have found consensus on about 90% of their trade talks, however, in this case data may not be part of that 90%.
- Hosuk Lee-Makiyama, Director of the European Centre for International Political Economy said: “Both sides seem to need commitments on data flows in order to reach an agreement. But we’re looking at two very different models”, hence more time for discussion could be needed.

EU: EP JURI adopted Opinion on Online platforms and the Digital Single Market

- On May 8, the European Parliament Committee on Legal Affairs (JURI) adopted MEP Constance Le Grip (EPP, FR)’s [Opinion](#) on Online platforms and the Digital Single Market.
- The Opinion underlines the importance of ensuring data portability for all users, especially for the platforms’ employees, and of guaranteeing its transferability and accumulation. Moreover, EP JURI calls on the European Commission, in the framework of implementing the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) to clarify requirements on data gathered at the workplace.
- The Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE), responsible for the file, still has to finalise and vote on the dossier. An indicative plenary sitting date is set for 12 June 2017.

EU: EUROCIITIES published a statement on Building a European Data Economy

- EUROCIITIES, a network of major European cities, has made public its [response](#) to European Commission’s consultation on Building a European Data Economy.
- In the statement, EUROCIITIES states its support for the free movement of data and calls for common and stronger EU regulations and frameworks on security and protection of non-personal data as well as access to and re-use of data from public spaces.

EU: European Commission to fine Facebook for issues related to WhatsApp acquisition

- Facebook faces the prospect of being hit with sanctions and fines as early as next week, with the European Commission having cleared the final procedural hurdle before adopting a decision on whether the social network misled investigators during its acquisition of WhatsApp.

- European commissioner for competition Margrethe Vestager formally charged Facebook with misleading her officials after the firm merged its user accounts with those of WhatsApp.

Other

EU: Bulgarian MEP Mariya Gabriel to replace Commissioner Oettinger

- On May 10, Bulgarian Prime Minister Boyko Borisov informed European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker of the government's decision to nominate Maryia Gabriel as the country's Commissioner. Maryia Gabriel will replace former digital Commissioner Günther Oettinger and will be working for Digital Vice President Andrus Ansip who stated his support for her candidacy. A meeting between Commission President Juncker and Maryia Gabriel is set for 16 May.
- Maryia Gabriel is currently Vice Chair of the European People's Party and member of the Civil Liberties Committee (LIBE) at the European Parliament where she is very active also on gender equality and foreign affairs.