European Regional Bureau Newsletter

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Internet Access

EU: Ansip calls for better coordination to develop 5G

- On 28 February, in a keynote speech at the World Mobile Congress (WMC), Commission Vice President Andrus Ansip stressed that for full coordinated deployment of 5G across the EU it needed "vision, speed and cooperation."
- He also called on industries to collaborate, deploy and trial 5G capabilities as of 2018 and underlined the challenges ahead regarding 5G standards, interoperability gaps and coordination of the technical and economic conditions of spectrum use.

EU: Telcos call for EU action on spectrum and investment

- On 28 February, during a meeting between telecoms and Commission Vice President Andrus Ansip, Orange Group's Chairman and Chief Executive Stéphane Richard called for 25-year exclusive licenses for 5G spectrum.
- Together with Vodafone, he asked the European Commission to support investment in 5G through the current reform of the European Electronic Communications Code.

EU: WMC talks on the future of 5G and connected cars

- Talks between the car industry and telecom companies underlined that the car industry and the IoT sector would need a faster development track for 5G and might turn to alternative technologies like ITS-G5 and 4G LTE, for its test pilots.
- The European Automotive Telecom Alliance and 5GAA, a global consortium for 5G and automotive industries, signed a memorandum of understanding to work on connected driving.

EU: Roberto Viola unveils a map of 5G trials in Europe

- On 28 February, at the WMC, Director General of DG Connect, Roberto Viola presented a White Paper on 5G innovations for new business opportunities.
- The White Paper highlights the progress made under the 5G Public Private Partnership (PPP) and identifies recommendations of the EU telecom sector for harmonized 5G standardisation, spectrum, deployment and regulation.
- A roadmap for the implementation of advanced pre-commercial trials in key sectors will be launched in 2018.

EU: European Commission White Paper and the future of the DSM
- On 1 March, European Commission released a White Paper on the future of Europe.
- The document includes an outline of how the tech sector could be affected under the five considered scenarios for the future of Europe by 2025.
- In particular, the idea of a « European Telecoms Authority » « which will have the power to free up frequencies for cross-border communication services, such as the ones used by connected cars » and which « will also protect the rights of mobile and Internet users wherever they are in the EU » is being recalled.

EU: results of the 2017 Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI)
- On 3 March, the European Commission published the results of the 2017 Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI).
- Commission Vice President Ansip commented "Europe is gradually becoming more digital but many countries need to step up their efforts. All Member States should invest more to fully benefit from the Digital Single Market. We do not want a two-speed digital Europe. We should work together to make the EU a digital world leader."

UK: British government releases its digital strategy
- On 1 March, the UK government released its digital plan to make Britain the best place in the world to start and grow a digital business.
- The plan reconfirms a series of pledges the government announced in recent months, including a £1 billion investment program in 5G and full fibre broadband.

Global: Tech Industry Groups advocate for free flow of data across borders
- Ahead of the G20 summit of ministers responsible for digital issues next April, 11 leading technology trade groups from Asia, Australia, Europe, and North America called on G20 leaders to "address privacy protections; enhance national security and data security and ensure that online data can freely travel across borders."

France: Emmanuel Macron develops his vision of Europe's digital future
- On 2 March, French presidential candidate Emmanuel Macron unveiled his program, including his positions on digital issues.
- He committed to better connectivity and data protection and called for the renegotiation of the EU-US Privacy Shield agreement by 2018. He wants a European agency to regulate big internet platforms to ensure fair competition and consumer rights.

Trust

Global: US Administration claims executive orders do not undercut Privacy Shield
- The US Administration sent a letter to the European Commission claiming that President Trump's recent executive orders do not undermine the EU-US Privacy Shield, a deal also supported by newly appointed Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross.
- Ahead of Commissioner Věra Jourová's visit to Washington DC, several European and global civil society groups asked her to call for a reform of US surveillance law as a condition for maintaining the Privacy Shield agreement.

EU: CCIA argues that Europe is undermining its regulation on data encryption
- The Computer & Communications Industry Association (CCIA) responded to French and German interior ministers' counter terrorism call.

- It claimed their proposal would undermine the use of encryption in communication in Europe as it requires online service providers to give law enforcement authorities access to end-to-end encrypted user data and opens the way to encryption backdoors.
- The French/German joint letter calls for EU legislation on encryption by October 2017 to put "new obligations on electronic communication providers."

EU: ENISA guidelines on incident notification for digital service providers
- On 28 February, the European Union Agency for Network and Information Security published guidelines on how to implement incident notification requirements for Digital Service Providers (DSPs), in the context of the NIS Directive.
- The European Commission is expected to adopt an implementing act on security and notification requirements for DSPs in August 2017.

EU: Dombrovskis calls for a common approach on testing banks' cyber-risks
- Commissioner Valdis Dombrovskis warned that individual EU Member States' initiatives regarding tests on banks' security systems may be less effective and more costly than a common EU approach.

UK: National Health Agency accused of covering up huge data loss
- More than 500,000 pieces of patient data between general practitioners and hospitals went undelivered between 2011 and 2016 in one of the biggest losses of sensitive clinical information in the institution's history.
- The mislaid documents failed to reach their intended recipients because the company meant to ensure their delivery mistakenly stored them in a warehouse.

UK: Release of draft guidance on data protection
- The British Information Commissioner's Office published draft guidance on how organisations should ask for permission to use personal data.
- The government took a step forward in the implementation of the European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) ahead of the deadline for implementation set for May 2018.

Spain: Telefónica to launch app to manage privacy
- On 27 February, Telefónica Chairman and CEO José María Álvarez-Pallete López announced the upcoming launch of the "Aura" application. The app is intended to give consumers more direct control over personal data collected by the Spanish telecoms company.

Finland: Hybrid Warfare Centre of Excellence Due to Open in Helsinki
- The centre will be focussed on countering cyberattacks and misinformation and will be operational by the end of 2017 or start of 2018.
- It is backed by 10 EU Member States and the US but will operate independently from both the EU and NATO.