

ISOC EUROPEAN REGIONAL BUREAU - EU issues overview

21 – 26 April 2013

General

European Commission consults on Internet/TV convergence

- The European Commission has adopted a [Green Paper](#) to address the **convergence between traditional broadcast services and the Internet**.
- With regards to **net neutrality**, the paper says that **filtering practices**, such as those enabling users to receive information they chose, **strengthen the role of platform providers** as they could ultimately determine, by pre-defining filtering mechanisms, which content is accessible and under which form.
- The paper also states that EU Member states could impose '**must-carry obligations**' on network operators to ensure that specified broadcast channels can reach the public.
- With regards to the **protection of minors**, the document highlights the input provided by a coalition of 31 companies with regards to a safer Internet that could be reflected in possible amendments to the [Audiovisual Media Services Directive](#). The five key actions the coalition looked into were:
 - simple and robust reporting tools for users
 - age-appropriate privacy settings
 - wider use of content classification
 - wider availability and use of parental control
 - effective removal of child abuse material
- The Commission has asked specific questions on these issues: stakeholders are invited to respond by 31 August.

Open Internet

MEPs call on Commission to support online child abuse content take-down mechanisms

A group of 12 MEPs have submitted a [proposal for a Written Declaration](#) on 'highlighting the global dimension of the fight **against online child sexual abuse content**'. This stresses the importance of **adequate reporting and take-down mechanisms** to combat child sexual abuse online, and calls on the Commission 'to support the creation of online child sexual abuse reporting mechanisms that meet acceptable global standards regarding transparency and freedom of expression'.

Comment:

A Parliament Written Declaration is a short non-legislative text on a matter falling with EU competences. To be adopted, it must be signed by a majority of MEPs within three months. The Commission would then have to give a response, which would address these reporting mechanisms and probably what this would mean for ISPs.

MEPs propose blocking illegal gambling websites

- Three tabled [amendments](#) to the draft Report of the European Parliament's Internal Market Committee on online gambling address **blacklisting and banning of illegal gambling websites**.
- This non-legislative report addresses the Commission's 2012 Communication [Towards a comprehensive European framework for online gambling](#), in which the Commission said it would: 'Provide clarification on the procedures for notifying and acting on unauthorised content hosted in the EU by online intermediaries'. The report is due to be adopted in plenary in early 1 July.

Data protection

Data protection (update/France)

French Data protection authority **CNIL has published its 2012 activity report**. Last year, it received the highest number of complaints yet (over 6,000), which underlines the growing **concerns of users about data protection**, according to the report. The main reason for complaints (in 46% of cases) was the opposition of a user to appear in a file. A growing number (31%) also voiced their concern about policies of **Internet services** and telecoms companies, especially the **right to be forgotten**: CNIL reiterates that in the current EU discussions on data protection reform, it supports strong provisions for this right. The report also shows the importance of CNIL's role in developing tools for data protection conformity checks.

Copyright infringement

Kroes regrets slow progress of EU copyright revision

- At a conference in Brussels on 23 April, **Digital Agenda Commissioner Neelie Kroes** voiced her regrets regarding the **lack of progress of the EU's copyright framework reform**.
- The Commissioner said that the EU needs to address the causes of copyright infringements and not just the consequences. Taking the example of **illegal downloading**, she underlined the rapidly evolving Internet environment marked by a greater use of **mobile devices** by all generations.
- Currently, the European Commission is consulting with different stakeholders on this issue. The whole reform should be ready before the end of Commission's term on 31 October 2014.

Net neutrality

Germany: Deutsche Telekom sets preferential treatment for own services

- German ISP **Deutsche Telekom (DT)** has [announced](#) that it is terminating its flat rate Internet connection contracts and is to introduce new contracts with **fixed data caps**. The moment a user exceeds the allocated caps, the Internet connection will be slowed down, but the **speed limitation will not to apply to DT's own entertainment service** 'T-Entertain'.
- The move has been criticised by consumer associations and stakeholders both in [Germany \(Digitale Gesellschaft\)](#) and at [EU level \(EDRi\)](#) for privileging DT's own services over those of other Internet players, violating the net neutrality principle.