

# ISOC European Regional Bureau Newsletter

20 - 26 September 2014

<http://www.Internetsociety.org/what-we-do/where-we-work/europe>

## Data protection

### EU: Irish Data Protection Commissioner Hawkes' last intervention

- In his last intervention as the **Irish Data Protection Commissioner**, **Billy Hawkes** gave a speech in the US on the **European perspective on data protection**.
- Hawkes underlined that in the EU **data protection is considered as a core personal right**, distinct from the right to privacy. He also said that considering the increased information-gathering by non-state actors that seem to operate freely, individual rights need to be better protected.
- The proposed Regulation puts a strong **emphasis on the accountability of organisations** processing personal data and strengthens users' rights in what Hawkes described as an increasingly uneven relationship with holders of personal data.
- The Commissioner highlighted that the main difference between the EU and the US in terms of data protection is that in Europe, the main **driver is prescriptive law**, while in the US it is the **financial and reputational risks** arising from class-actions.

### EU: Article 29 handles data treatment guidelines to Google

- The EU Member States data protection authorities, gathered in the **Article 29 Working Party**, handed Google a **set of guidelines** designed to help the company bring its data collection and data storage policies in line with EU law.
- The list of requirements and possible measures that Google could implement are provided for illustrative purposes and they do not pre-empt enforcement actions by national authorities based on national law, stressed the party.
- The recommendations mostly concern the **visibility of privacy policy, clarity with regards to the purpose of data collections** and definition of **data retention policies**.
- Regulators in **six EU Member States**, among which **France**, Germany and the UK, have opened investigations into Google after it consolidated its 60 privacy policies into one and started combining data collected on individual users across its services.
- Meanwhile, Google organises a tour around the EU, discussing the **implementation of the right to be forgotten** ruling. During the meeting in Paris, a representative of France's highest administrative court, the Conseil d'Etat, suggested that Google breaks EU law as it only applies the ruling to European URLs (e.g. Google.fr) but not on Google.com, although the latter is accessed in Europe.

### Germany: Interior Minister calls on tougher limits on profiling

- **Thomas de Maizière**, German Interior Minister was quoted as saying that Google and other Internet companies should be **banned from building profiles of customers** using their personal data.
- According to de Maizière, the EU has the unique opportunity to **establish a standard** that could become a global safety standard.

# Net neutrality

## EU: Member States discuss European single market for telecommunications

- On 26 September, the EU Member States governments were expected to suggest the most appropriate approach wrt the **draft legislation on European market for telecommunications**. It is expected that there will be a decision to either **push a slimmed-down version** of the law into the final stage of negotiations with the European Parliament or to **put the bill on ice** until a new European Commission takes office.
- The **European Parliament** approved a revised version of the draft before the parliamentary elections in May. In the draft, the Parliament focused on **frequency auctions** and **net neutrality**.

# Open Internet

## France: Proposed anti-terrorist law raises concerns of civil rights organisations

- Civil rights organisations have denounced the **new French anti-terror law** that is perceived as eroding civil liberties.
- Last week, the French National Assembly adopted a law that allows for **administrative blocking of Internet websites** that promote terrorism. While French Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve argued that an administrative judge will intervene as a mediator in the blocking process, the organisations argued that such mechanism is not foreseen by the law.
- The French Senate will consider the text in the coming weeks.

## Turkey: Turkish government tightens the Internet

- The Turkish parliament passed an amendment to the **Internet law** that allows the **Turkish Telecommunication Authority (TIB)** to block any website that appears to threaten national security or public order. According to the new law **Internet Service Providers (ISPs)** are required to execute the blocking order of the TIB within **four hours**.
- In addition, the law requires ISPs **to store all data on web users' activities**, such as browsing history, for two years, and make it available to the authorities upon request.

## Russia: State plans control over Internet traffic in case of national emergency

- Russian media reported that the government plans to **ensure state control** over its **Internet traffic** in case of a national emergency, such as war or uprising. In addition, the Russian authorities are also said to be considering tying the **country's Internet connections** into big nodes which can be monitored more easily.
- It is reported that the country's **Security Council** discussed plans to boost cyber security, including a back-up in case Russia is cut off from the Internet, where the country relies on foreign hosting of websites. **The Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov** confirmed the meeting on Internet security but declined to discuss details stating only that the recent EU and US actions were unpredictable and Russia has to be ready for anything. He also told that Russian authorities have no plans to disconnect Russian cyberspace, but that they need measures to protect the country from the West.
- **The Communication Minister Nikolai Nikiforov** commented the government's plans saying that the government is working on **scenarios** in case the West decides to cut Russia off from the Internet. The minister also confirmed that exercises were held with the defence ministry and FSB intelligence service to prepare for the scenario.
- The experts argue that the **Russian federal body in charge of communications Rossvyaz** could take over as administrator of Internet domains, meaning that the body would have **direct control** over Russia's domains and service providers in Russia's regions would be subordinate to it.

# General

## EU: Commissioner Kroes suggests a transatlantic digital single market

- On 19 September, **the Digital Agenda Commissioner Neelie Kroes** spoke in Washington DC about **the EU-US relations** and the opportunities which new technology could bring for that relationship, suggesting a **transatlantic digital single market**.
- In order to create such a common market, she proposed to start with **safe and trustworthy online transactions, better protection of networks and systems** as an essential part of policies, and a **global governance of Internet**.
- Following the recent revelations about mass surveillance and recent examples of Internet fraud, hacking and cybercrime, she also urged Europe **to strengthen Internet security** as the biggest risk would be a loss of **confidence in the Internet** and thus a loss of the huge **economic and social benefits** for Europe that come from digital technologies and services.
- Kroes underlined that **American tech leadership is not a threat** and that many ICT innovations in the field came from Europe. She however stressed that Europe has to change its **mind-set** and to be ready to take a risk. The relationship between EU and US should imply **trade and exchange** of products, people and ideas, where an **Open Internet** should be a natural source of innovations.

## EU: Digital leaders call on the Commission to support investment in digital skills

- In a **letter** to the incoming President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker, some of the leaders of digital economy (e.g. Google, Facebook, Oracle etc.) underlined the **importance of digital skills** for the recovery of the European economy.
- The letter noted that despite **high unemployment** figures in several EU Member States, by 2020, there would be some 900,000 ICT practitioners missing in Europe. Considering the relation between ICT-related jobs and the wider economy, the companies called on Juncker to maintain efforts undertaken by the so-called **Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs** that the Commission, in partnership with the industry, launched last year. According to the letter, for every high tech job, up to four non high-tech jobs are created in the local economy.

## EU: Commissioner Kroes presents EU's big data approach to the Council

- The EU Digital Agenda Commissioner Kroes presented the **Big Data Communication** to the Competitiveness Council that took place in Brussels this week.
- The Communication "*Towards a thriving data-driven economy*" presented in July 2014 aims at putting Europe at the forefront of the global data revolution.
- As a next step, the Commission intends to launch a debate with the Parliament, Council and the key stakeholders on a **more detailed EU action plan** that would complement and implement the strategy.
- The Commission will present initiatives taken in the field of big data and the data-driven economy to the European Council in spring 2015.

## UN Broadband Commission says 50% of global population to have Internet access by 2017

- Based on the latest figures by the **UN Broadband Commission**, over 50% of the global population would have access to the Internet by 2017. Nowadays, over 40% of world's population is online. By the end of the year, 2.9 billion people are expected to have Internet access.
- The 2014 edition of the **State of Broadband** report confirmed that the mobile broadband over smartphones and tablets is now the fastest growing technology in history.