

ISOC European Regional Bureau Newsletter

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Privacy Shield

EU: Privacy Shield agreement – EU-U.S talks continue

- On 13 June, Justice Commissioner Věra Jourová met Edith Ramirez, chairwoman of the U.S. Federal Trade Commission to discuss EU-U.S. data transfer agreements. Both parties offered assurances that the deal is still on track.
- The text – which is still being worked on – is expected to be circulated within the European Commission and to national representatives who will ultimately have the final vote on the deal.
- The EU's article 31 Committee will meet on 29 June and decide whether to approve the revised text.

Cybersecurity

EU: European Parliament approves the NIS Directive proposal

- On 14 June, the European parliament Internal Market and Consumer Protection committee (IMCO) adopted - by 33 votes to 1 - the draft recommendation for a second reading of the Network and Information Security (NIS) proposal.
- The draft recommendation notes that the Parliament approves the Council position at first reading and instructs its President to sign the act with the President of the Council. MEPs will now vote on the text in plenary.

NATO: Members classify cyber as an official domain of warfare

- Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg confirmed that a major cyberattack on NATO members could lead to a collective response.
- This followed a NATO Ministerial decision to classify cyber on a par with conventional means of warfare (air, sea, land) in recognition of the increasing complexity and seriousness of cyberattacks.
- Whilst this means NATO could potentially respond to a cyberattack via conventional means, the Alliance was keen to stress that its cyber preparedness activities are for defensive purposes only.

Online Platforms

EU: Member States on Online Platforms

- During the telecommunication working group held on 13 June, Belgium advocated a European approach to online platforms which should not endanger innovation but promote digital entrepreneurship. France however called for targeted regulation on internet platforms.

- The Commission confirmed it will hold a series of expert meetings during autumn to obtain additional input. September's Digital Assembly in Bratislava will also represent an opportunity for views to be exchanged and evidence gathered.

Standards

EU: Agreement reached on Standards

- A Joint Initiative on Standardisation was published on 13 June, containing a number of initiatives based on three priority areas: awareness-raising to ensure that the importance of standardisation is understood more widely; coordination and openness to ensure user-friendly and timely European standards; and measures to promote European competitiveness.
- Signatories included representatives from EU and EFTA Member States, standardisation organisations and bodies, European industry and industry associations, SMEs, and societal stakeholders.
- This follows the adoption of the EU standardisation package on 1 June, in which the European Commission outlined its proposals on how to ensure the EU becomes the global leader in standardization setting.

Net Neutrality

US: Federal Court upholds Net Neutrality

- In what was seen as a victory for President Obama's preference for an Open Internet, an appeals court upheld – by two votes to one - the Federal Communications Commission's 2015 ruling on net neutrality, in which Internet service providers are required to treat web traffic on an equal footing.
- The legal challenge had been initiated by the cable industry, opposed to the FCC's decision to treat internet service providers along the lines of a public utility.
- The cable industry is expected to appeal the decision; should this happen, it will involve the participation of more than three judges at supreme court level.

Telecoms

EU: European Commission launches consultation on the introduction of 5G networks in the EU

- The consultation – launched on 15 June - addresses issues such as spectrum, standards, investment and regulation.
- Contributions are requested from the Telecom/ICT sector and stakeholders from “any sector that perceives benefits from connectivity to improve its process, products or services”. The deadline – 11 July – means that the consultation is only open for four weeks, rather than the standard twelve.
- The responses will contribute towards a 5G Action Plan, scheduled to be published before the year end; this forms a key plank of Commissioner Oettinger's ambitions to digitize the EU's economy and society.