

European Regional Bureau Newsletter



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Internet Access

EU: European Parliament adopted provisional agreement on WiFi4EU

- On September 12, the European Parliament adopted the provisional agreement on the promotion of Internet connectivity in local communities ([WiFi4EU](#)), reached at the trilogue between the European Commission, the Council and the Parliament, on May 29. The agreement was approved with 582 votes in favour, 98 against and 9 abstentions.
- During the debate that preceded the vote, the MEPs noted the importance of WiFi4EU – a scheme that provides €120M of funding to support the installation of state-of-the-art Wi-Fi equipment in the centres of community life. MEPs emphasised the need for the scheme to be regionally fair.
- EU Digital Commissioner Mariya Gabriel congratulated the European Parliament, described the Commission proposal balanced and explained that they would do their utmost to limit the administrative burden of its implementation.

EU: Tender for study on net neutrality in the TSM Regulation open until October 11

- The European Commission has launched a [call](#) for tenders to carry out a €250 000 max study on the implementation of the net neutrality provisions of the Telecoms Single Market (TSM) [Regulation](#), which was adopted in 2015 and puts binding net neutrality rules into EU law.
- The aim of this study is to collect factual evidence and analysis to help the Commission to prepare the review report required by the TSM Regulation. The findings of the study will be reported to the European Parliament and the Council.

EU: ECA publishes briefing on EU plans for broadband

- On September 14, the European Court of Auditors (ECA) published a [briefing](#) providing background information on an ongoing audit of the European Commission's and EU Member States' efforts to achieve the Europe 2020 broadband objectives.
- The auditors will consider a sample of five Member States (Ireland, Germany, Hungary, Poland and Italy).
- The auditors have already found a number of risks to sound financial management in this area including weaknesses in the Commission's and Member States broadband strategies and poor monitoring by the Commission of the Member States' progress.

Global: UN Broadband Commission's annual report on the state of broadband access

- The UN Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development released its annual country-by-country [report](#) on state of broadband access worldwide, ahead of its meeting on 17 September.
- The report argues that promoting investments in broadband connectivity from a broad range of sectors can bring the world closer to the goal of an inclusive digital society accessible by all.
- By the end of 2017, 3.58 billion people are projected to be online. 76% of the world's population live within access of a 3G signal, while 43% live within access of a 4G connection.
- The study finds that Internet penetration in the developing world is projected to reach 41.3% by the end of 2017, but will only reach 17.5% in the Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

EU: White Paper on key issues concerning the Next Generation of Internet

- The HUB4NGI consortium has published a [White Paper](#) on emerging research challenges and key issues for the Next Generation of Internet (NGI).
- The White Paper argues key technology drivers such as the Internet of Things (IoT), and convergence between 5G, IoT and edge computing need to be supported, but “respect must be paid to any implications they have on privacy,” which is high among citizens’ concerns.
- The document also suggests physical (e.g. incubators) and virtual places (e.g. Internet forums or virtual communities) should be encouraged where stakeholders can interact and share ideas.

Trust**EE: e-Volution of data protection**

- On 7-8 September, the Estonian Ministry of Justice organised a high-level international [conference](#) on the implementation of the EU data protection reform, in Tartu. The conference was an occasion to discuss the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which will enter into force in May 2018.
- Deputy Secretary General of the Estonian Ministry of Justice Kai Härmand noted that national data protection authorities (DPAs) were very committed to making the GDPR a success story.
- He claimed that the participants to the conference agreed that “national DPAs should not focus on penalties and fines, but rather on giving advice and providing guidance”.

EU: Estonian presidency's new e-Privacy text

- On 8 September, the Estonian presidency of the Council of the EU published the text of its latest position on the [new e-Privacy Regulation](#) ahead of meetings on September 19, 20 and 25.
- The new regulation will provide privacy rules for the telecommunications sector as well in some cases to so-called over-the-top operators (e.g. WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger).
- An agreement on the regulation is not expected before the Bulgarians take over the rolling Presidency of the Council of the EU at the beginning of 2018.

EU: Google appeals against record EU antitrust fine

- On September 11, Google filed an [appeal](#) against the record €2.4 billion antitrust fine imposed by the EU for what was described as an abuse of its dominance in the search

engine markets, promoting Google Shopping in organic search results while simultaneously demoting rival services.

- The Luxembourg-based General Court, the EU's second-highest, could take several years before ruling on the appeal.

EU: European Commission published proposal on Free flow of Data in the EU

- On September 13, the proposed [Regulation on the Free Flow of Data](#) was released. As stated in Commission Vice-President Andrus Ansip's recent [blog](#), the proposal aims to unlock the potential of the data economy by ensuring the free flow of non-personal data in the Single Market.
- The proposal addresses data localization, data availability and storage, as well as data portability. As reported last week, EU countries would be allowed to store data for security reasons, but national requirements to store health data or accounting data locally would have to be repealed within a year.

EU: European Commission's cybersecurity package

- On September 13, the European Commission has released a number of proposals aimed at reinforcing the EU's cybersecurity strategy. Cybersecurity was mentioned in President Juncker's State of the European Union speech, however the full details of the measures will not be presented until 19 September by Vice President Ansip, Commissioner Gabriel, and Commissioner King.
- The package includes a proposed [regulation](#) on ENISA, the EU cybersecurity Agency; and a new (voluntary) European cybersecurity certification framework.
- The draft regulation proposes that ENISA becomes the "information hub of the EU", playing a key role in providing guidance and expertise to EU countries while also drafting a new common cybersecurity certification framework for tech products. The certification scheme will be voluntary and will not include labelling.
- ENISA will also have additional resources of about €12m annually, with a gradual increase over four years (starting with an additional €5m in the first year).

EU: Cybersecurity, digital economy and e-Government on top of Digital Summit agenda

- Estonia's [Digital Summit](#), set for September 29, will focus heavily on the cybersecurity strategy announced during the State of the Union 2017 speech on September 13; the future of the digital economy and society; and e-government.
- Kersti Kaljulaid, President of the Republic of Estonia will start the summit at noon, followed by a working lunch on the future of governments, likely with a focus on e-Government and digital administration.

UK: New National Innovation Centre for Data announced

- On 14 September, UK Minister for Digital Matt Hancock, [confirmed](#) the Government will invest £15m in a new National Innovation Centre for Data (NICD), matched by £15m from Newcastle University.
- The centre aims "to see the next Google or Facebook started in the UK and help the country capitalise on a potential £40bn a year boost to the economy."
- NICD will bring together academics, the public sector and the industry to address the current data skills and talent gap, by taking a practical hands-on approach.

US: Federal government's first event to hire IT and cybersecurity specialists

- On 14 September, the US General Services Administration (GSA) [announced](#) the federal government will organise its first event to recruit new IT and cybersecurity talent. The event will take place in Maryland on November 6-7 and will also offer free training seminars for participants.

- The event comes at a time when US agencies and departments are facing difficulties filling positions. Earlier this year, the CIO at Homeland Security resigned after only three months.