

European Regional Bureau Newsletter



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Internet Access

EU: BEREC and RSPG's solutions to facilitate mobile connectivity in challenge areas

- On January 10, the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC) has adopted a [common report](#) with RSPG on facilitating mobile connectivity in "challenge areas". This final report takes into account comments raised during a [consultation](#) run in autumn last year.
- The document describes the main issues encountered to provide mobile connectivity in some challenge areas describing four categories of challenge areas (indoor, transportation means, non-profitable areas and others) and lists initiatives to facilitate mobile connectivity for each of these.
- It also presents feasible solutions such as developing network sharing, installing repeaters, Wi-Fi or imposing coverage obligations.

EU: WP on Telecommunications and Information Society meets on January 16

- The Working Party on Telecommunications and Information Society is meeting on January 16. The European Commission will present its 2018 work programme on this occasion.
- During the meeting, the WP will also examine the latest Presidency text on the proposal for a Directive establishing the European Electronic Communications Code (EECC), currently being discussed by the co-legislators (Commission, European Parliament and Council) during trilogue meetings.

Trust

EU: DG JUST publishes notice to stakeholders on UK-EU rules in the field of data protection

- On 9 January, the European Commission's Directorate General for Justice and Consumers issued a [notice to stakeholders](#) on the "withdrawal of the United Kingdom and EU rules in the field of data protection." The paper states that after Brexit the EU rules for transfer of personal data to third countries will apply.
- Aside from an adequacy decision, the EU's data protection rules, notably the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), allow a transfer if the controller or processor has delivered "appropriate safeguards", provided by standard data

protection clauses, binding corporate rules, Codes of Conduct and certification mechanisms.

- Without an adequacy decision, or appropriate safeguards, a transfer can happen on the basis of derogations (e.g. if based on consent or as part of a contract, for the exercise of legal claims or for important reasons of public interest).

EU: Intel faces lawsuit over “Meltdown” security flaws

- Following the [discovery](#) of serious security bugs as reported in last week’s newsletter, Intel is facing a number of [lawsuits](#) (mostly in the United States) due to security flaws and the consequent slowdown that fixing computers will bring.
- Intel has admitted that the security issues could have made PCs and servers more unstable and allow hackers to access sensitive information from computers, phones and other devices. However, the chipmaker [stated](#) that fixing the flaws would not slow down their processors.
- The company has [committed](#) to patching all recent chips by the end of the month.

EU: Commissioners meet online platforms representatives to discuss removal of illegal content online

- On 9 January, five European Commissioners [met](#) with representatives of online platforms to discuss progress made tackling the spread of illegal content online. While the focus was on terrorist propaganda and hate speech, intellectual property rights infringement was also high on the agenda.
- EC Vice-President Andrus Ansip, Commissioners Dimitris Avramopoulos (Home Affairs), Elżbieta Bieńkowska (Industry), Věra Jourová (Justice), Julian King (Security) and Mariya Gabriel (Digital) released a joint statement ahead of the meeting. Illegal content was described as a threat to security, safety, and fundamental rights, demanding a “collective response from all actors, including the Internet industry.”
- The Commissioners called on platforms to speed up efforts to quickly and comprehensively detect and remove terrorist and other illegal content online.

EU: Allocation of competences on free flow of data and cyber files within the European Parliament

- After months of controversial disputes in-house between the IMCO and the Industry Committee (ITRE), European Parliament leaders met on January 11 to decide which Committee would lead the drafting of the EU’s [free flow of non-personal data](#) and the [Cybersecurity Act](#) proposals.
- The Conference of Presidents decided the IMCO committee would lead the drafting of the regulation on the free flow of non-personal data in the EU, with the ITRE committee providing an opinion.
- On the cybersecurity proposal, the Conference of Committee Chairs ruled ITRE would lead the drafting of the new mandate for the EU’s Cybersecurity Agency, ENISA. However, both IMCO and ITRE will share the responsibility for drafting the Parliament’s position on the proposed cybersecurity certification framework.
- A first discussion within the IMCO Committee will take place on January 23. The IMCO Committee is rumoured to want to vote on its report on the free flow of non-personal data by June 18-19, 2018.

Global: WEF issues report on cyber resilience

- The World Economic Forum has released a new report, “[Cyber Resilience: Playbook for Public-Private Collaboration](#)”, to build collaboration across sectors to improve cybersecurity.
- The document covers a broad range of issues including encryption, access to sensitive data, rules for private companies to respond to cyber-threats, and intelligence sharing.
- The report comes ahead of the official launch of a new Global Centre for Cybersecurity, which will take place on the side of the [Annual Meeting 2018](#) in Davos (23-26 January).

EU: Commission appoints High-Level Group on Fake News

- Following a [selection process](#), on 12 January, the European Commission appointed 39 experts to a new [High-Level Group \(HLEG\) on fake news and online disinformation](#). It gathers representatives of social media platforms and news media organisations, journalists, tech companies and academia. Professor Dr. Madeleine de Cock Buning, from Utrecht University, chairs the Group.
- The High Level group will advise the EC on scoping the phenomenon of fake news, defining the roles and responsibilities of key actors and formulate recommendations.
- The establishment of the HLEG is part of a broader strategy the EU is implementing to tackle the spread of fake news online and online disinformation, as [announced](#) in November 2017.

Other**EU: UK and Poland appoint new Digital Ministers**

- Two EU countries, UK and Poland, are currently experiencing reshuffles at government level.
- The UK's Digital Minister, Matt Hancock has been [promoted](#) to Secretary of Culture. [Margot James](#), previously a junior Business Minister, will replace Mr Hancock as Minister of State for the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.
- In Poland, Digital Minister Anna Streżyńska has now been dismissed. The country's Prime Minister will instead create a new Ministry of Technology and Entrepreneurship, which will be led by [Jadwiga Emilewicz](#), a former Vice-Minister of Development.

EU: European Parliament Think Tank's “Ten issues to watch in 2018”

- The European Parliament Research Service Blog published an in-depth analysis on “[Ten issues to watch in 2018](#)”. Priorities include the security challenges posed by disinformation and fake news, as well as cybersecurity.
- The report identifies key issues and policy areas which are expected to feature prominently on the political agenda during the New Year. It describes the main actions and initiatives carried out at EU level on the issues, as well as key milestones expected in 2018.