European Regional Bureau Newsletter

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Internet Access

Global: VP Ansip on Security and Standards at G20 Digital Ministers meeting

- On 7 April 2017, Commission Vice President Ansip addressed the G20 digital ministers during their meeting in Germany, calling for greater attention on the need for both security and standards for the Internet of Things.
- In his statement, he has also said that "for data to flow smoothly and freely, systems, devices and networks need a common language: standards".

EU: Parliament discussions on the report on European gigabit society

- On 10 April, the European Parliament Committee on Transport and Tourism held a discussion on the amendments to the draft opinion by Kosma Złotowski (PL, ECR) on a European Gigabit society.
- The debate focused on the need for investment, on public-private partnerships to provide the necessary infrastructure, and on the removal of the digital divide between different regions.

EU: European telecoms regulator warns European Parliament on spectrum

- The Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC) has sent a paper to Parliament's rapporteur and shadow rapporteurs in an effort to give companies long licenses for spectrum frequencies, "crucial for future technologies".
- BEREC agreed that a licence duration should take into account "the need to ensure effective and efficient use of spectrum", but "this will vary from band to band and from member state to member state, harmonization should not be the objective".

EU: ETNO - IPSOS survey shows change in digital consumers' habits in the region

- On 12 April, ETNO, the Association representing Europe's largest telecom operators, and IPSOS, the global market research leader, presented a new consumer survey on the digital habits and expectations of Europeans in ten major EU markets.
- The survey unveils that the 65% of consumers considering telecommunication services fundamental in their daily lives and an increasing use of Internet services (online calls, streaming music and videos and social media).

Trust

EU: Eurojust second plenary meeting
- On 6 and 7 April, the second plenary meeting of the European Judicial Cybercrime Network (EJCN or the Network) was held at Eurojust.
- The EJCN adopted its two-year work programme, which includes topics such as electronic evidence, encryption and data retention.

EU: Watchdogs affirm ePrivacy Regulation hurts GDPR protections
- The Article 29 Working Party adopted an opinion on the European Commission's proposal of an ePrivacy Regulation, arguing that it risks lowering protection for EU citizens compared to the General Data Protection Regulation. The European Data Protection Supervisor is expected to adopt a similar position after Easter.

EU: Article 29 WP welcome comments on the data protection impact assessment guidelines
- The Article 29 Working Party welcomes comments on the data protection impact assessment guidelines it has recently adopted.

EU: EP LIBE Committee held Hearing on ePrivacy reform
- On 11 April, the Committee on civil liberties, justice and home affairs (LIBE) organized a Public Hearing on the European Commission's ePrivacy proposal, as one of the initiatives aimed at preparing its report on this proposal. The rapporteur is Ms Marju LAURISTIN (EE, S&D).

Global: G7 foreign ministers express concern on cyberwarfare but hesitate to take further action
- On 11 April, foreign ministers of the G7 issued a joint declaration outlining their concern about the risk of escalation and retaliation in cyberspace, and reaffirming "The Principles and Actions on Cyber" endorsed in Japan on 26 and 27 May 2016.
- However, it seems countries are more confused on national attack and defence than strengthening diplomatic ties.

Ireland: Irish privacy watchdog set to move against Yahoo
- The Irish Data Protection Commissioner Helen Dixon said they are preparing to serve the final report on Yahoo's hack that affected 500 million users worldwide (2016).
- Dixon is also overseeing ongoing negotiations with Facebook on its plans to siphon off data from its WhatsApp division, hoping to reach a deal in the upcoming months.

EU: European Commission discloses first batch of documents on EU-US Umbrella Agreement
- On 12 April, upon request of MEP Sophie In't Veld, the European Commission has disclosed a first batch of documents on the EU-US Umbrella Agreement on the protection of personal data when transferred for the purposes of law enforcement and the fight against terrorism.
- An explanation on the partial disclosure of the documents was sent to MEP In't Veld.

EU: MEPs address the European Commission on W3C's DRM standard
- On 12 April, MEPs Julia Reda (GE, Greens/EFA) and Lucy Anderson (UK, S&D) published an open-letter addressed to the European Commission.
- The letter included several questions on the Commission's position and involvement into the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C)'s consideration to standardize Encrypted Media Extensions for the use of DRM technology in modern web browsers.