European Regional Bureau Newsletter

Internet Society

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http://www.Internetsociety.org/what-we-do/where-we-work/europe
(Frédéric Donck/ERB)

Internet Access

EU: Update on Public consultation into fears about future of Internet

- Despite being EU-funded, the series of surveys looking into Europeans' fears over the future of the Internet (reported in last week's European Regional Bureau Newsletter), is not considered to be an official consultation by the European Commission. The surveys are conducted by REISearch and its media partners.
- The European Commission's digital policy spokeswoman Nathalie Vandystadt said "third party campaign is not an official EU or European Commission consultation process".
- The first part of the survey looks into "New technologies for disrupting the economy: business, employment and skills"

EU: A taste of the Digital Single Market Strategy review of 10 May

- The Digital Single Market (DSM) Strategy review will be released on 10 May, however a draft version has been circulating in the media. In the draft, the European Commission lays out priority issues, including boosting cybersecurity, working with platforms on illegal content, and finalising negotiations on previously released proposals, such as the one creating the European Electronic Communications Code.

EU: Member States dispute the European Commission's 25-year spectrum licence proposal

- Germany drafted a paper opposing the European Commission (EC)'s proposal to introduce 25-year minimum spectrum licenses. Germany was joined by 14 fellow Member States, including Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, and the UK.
- The countries argue the EC's plans could block the success of 5G technology in Europe, saying it "could put an early 5G deployment in the EU at risk and has the potential to create an obstacle for Europe becoming the most flourishing and successful 5G market".
- Vice-President Andrus Ansip commented that "with 5G, and dependent emerging sectors like the Internet of Things, we simply cannot afford to "wait and see" when it comes to reforming spectrum management".

EU: European Broadband Mapping project launched

- On 26 April, The European Broadband Mapping project was presented at the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Regional Development Forum in Vilnius.

- The mapping project, launched by the European Commission, will result in an interactive online mapping application that will aggregate and benchmark measurements of fixed and mobile broadband connectivity. All Member States of the EU and EEA will be covered. The database and online application will go live in late 2017.

EU: Rapporteur wants ITRE's position on Telecom reform before summer 2017

- Rapporteur for the telecoms reform Pilar del Castillo (PPE, SP) wants the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE) to finalise its position on the European Electronic Communications Code by the end of June. After a vote in ITRE, presumably June 20, the European Parliament will ask the Council to start three-way discussions on the file as soon as possible.

EU: EP ITRE discuss Online Platforms and the Digital Single Market draft report's amendments

- On April 24, the ITRE Committee discussed the amendments to the draft report by Henna Virkkunen (PPE, FI) and Philipp Juvin (PPE, FR) on Online Platforms and the Digital Single Market.

- The most contentious issue is the topic of liability. Several MEPs pointed out that there should be no over-regulation and that it is pivotal to protect the openness of the Internet.

EU: EP IMCO considers amendments to the draft report Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications

- On April 25, the European Parliament's Committee on Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO) held a meeting to consider the amendments to Ivan Štefanec (EPP, SK)'s draft report Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC).

- MEPs paid particular attention to issues such as the body's independence, organisational structure and the process for choosing its executive director.

EU: e-Commerce: EP IMCO moves forward on Geo-blocking

- On 25 April, the European Parliament's Committee on Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO) adopted (first reading) MEP Roża Thun Und Hohenstein (EPP, PL)'s draft report on the European Commission proposal for a Regulation on Geo-blocking. The report was approved by 29 votes in favour, 2 against and 4 abstentions.

- The draft law defines specific situations in which geo-blocking will not be allowed. Hence, online sellers will not be able to discriminate against consumers elsewhere in the EU with regard to general terms and conditions, including prices, on the basis of their nationality, place of residence or even their temporary location.

EU: Countries oppose potential rules for YouTube and Facebook

- Eight countries, including the Netherlands, the U.K. and Sweden, are trying to stop new audiovisual rules that could force companies like YouTube and Facebook to police more of their online content for discrimination and communications harmful to minors, according to three sources briefed on talks.

- On 25 April, the European Parliament's Culture and Education Committee (CULT) has voted to expand the scope of the rules.

Trust

EU: MEPs' call on European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker for a new regulation on data localization

- On 25 April, at the CeBIT computer expo, a group of 29 leading MEPs on digital issues sent a letter to European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker asking the European Commission to propose a new regulation banning data localization measures in EU countries.
- In their letter, the MEPs argued that "data localization is rarely justified on any economic grounds and cannot be justified on privacy grounds" and "what matters in terms of privacy is security; how data is stored, not where".

EU: Giovanni Buttareli's opinion on the e-Privacy Regulation proposal is now out

- European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS) Giovanni Buttarelli published his opinion on the European Commission's e-Privacy Regulation proposal.
- In regards to the European Electronic Communications Code and e-Privacy Regulation, Buttarelli says "there is no legal justification today for linking the two instruments so closely and the competition and market-focused definitions from the Code are simply not fit for purpose in the fundamental rights context". He adds in the paper that the proposal fails to address "tracking walls" that block users that don't agree to be tracked, and lends his backing to the notion of privacy-by-design".

Denmark: the battle against hackers continues

- The Danish Defence Ministry has been was hacked for a period of two years, from 2015 to 2016, Berlingske newspaper has reported. The hackers gained access to the emails of targeted staff members. The hack was the work of the group ATP 28, also known as Fancy Bear, which has been linked to the Russian intelligence services and was suspected of hacking the U.S. Democratic National Committee in the American presidential election campaign.
- A report from the Government's Center for Cybersecurity claims that "the information could be abused in attempts to recruit, blackmail or plan further espionage" and "a major, serious threat of espionage against Denmark is not theoretical, it's real".

France: Emmanuel Macron targeted by a cyberespionage group

- Emmanuel Macron, the French presidential candidates, has been targeted by a cyberespionage group linked by some experts to the Russian military intelligence agency, a researcher at Trend Micro affirmed.
- The attack may be once again linked to the Russian spy-linked group ATP 28, Reuters reported.

Germany: Cybercrime spikes in Germany

- The German government registered 82,649 cases of computer fraud, espionage and other cybercrimes in 2016, an increase of just over 80 percent from 2015. In addition, German police also registered 253,290 cases of crimes carried out with the help of the Internet, an increase of 3.6 percent from 2015.

UK: UK regulator says firms must set up efforts to tackle cyberattacks

- At the Financial Information Security Network event in Luton, Nausicaa Delfas, the UK Financial Conduct Authority's acting chief operating officer said regulators and businesses have to work together to prevent breaches. She added that in order to tackle attacks against the IT networks of financial institutions, firms need to develop detective, protective, and responsive capabilities.

Global: Google saw 20% spike in government requests for user data

- According to its transparency report, in 2016, Google received more than 90,000 government requests to hand over user data — led by the U.S., Germany and France —up almost 20% from the prior year.
- Kent Walker, Google's Senior Vice-President and General Counsel, wrote in a blog post that there is a need to implement appropriate legal processes for these requests, resist overly broad requests not narrowly calibrated to legitimate law enforcement requirements, and reform data surveillance laws.