

European Regional Bureau Newsletter



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Internet Access

EU: Council Conclusions on “Digital for Development”

- On November 20, the Council adopted [Conclusions on “Digital for Development”](#), reaffirming its support for digital technologies and services in developing countries as powerful enablers of inclusive growth and sustainable development.
- The Council expressed concern that more than half of the world's population is still lacking access to the Internet and urged a redoubling of efforts to bridge the digital divides within and between countries.
- The Council called on the Commission to implement the Staff Working Document “Digital4Development” and bring pilot projects to scale.
- It also notes the critical role the private sector plays in promoting digital for development, in particular in terms of investments, innovation, market knowledge and expertise.

EU: Feedback on the negotiations on the European Electronic Communications Code

- On November 20, the European Parliament Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO) [heard](#) feedback from rapporteur Dita Charanzová (ALDE, CZ) on the interinstitutional negotiations on the European Electronic Communications Code (EECC).
- MEP Charanzová reminded the Committee that although the negotiations are led by the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE), IMCO has exclusive competence over a third of the text, which means it is also directly involved in negotiations with the co-legislators (Commission and Council).
- She noted that IMCO’s priorities during the first trilogue meeting (October 25) were intra-EU call tariffs, universal service obligations, consumer protection, fostering innovation and the importance of setting up a public warning system.
- During the second trilogue on December 6 they will address overall approach to end user rights, harmonisation and scope, as well as intra-union calls.

EU: Commission steps up efforts to connect rural areas

- On November 20, during the [Broadband Days](#), the European Commission [announced](#) a toolkit for rural broadband. This will be finalised by mid-2018 and entails a 5 point action plan with concrete deadlines to bring more broadband in rural areas across the

region. The first action consists of the [Broadband Competence Offices Network and Support Facility](#) launched on the same day.

- Other actions include the deployment of broadband missions to Member States and regions, comprised of European Commission experts (by June 2018) and designing a common methodology for planning and monitoring broadband investments (by April 2018).
- The Commission also aims at drafting a "rural proof test" to prioritise rural broadband in the reprogramming of any structural and investment fund (by April 2018); and update the guidelines to high-speed broadband investment to help communities launch successful projects (by March 2018).

EU: WP on Telecommunications and Information Society and TTE meeting

- On November 21, the Working Party on Telecommunications and Information Society [met](#) to discuss the proposal for a regulation on a framework for the free flow of non-personal data in the EU. The following day, it [met](#) again to examine the presidency text on the European Electronic Communications Code (EECC).
- The discussions on the EECC largely centred on the negotiations on spectrum, with the Member States discussing a common negotiating position on peer review, licence length, and many other issues.
- The two files will also be discussed at the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council [meeting](#), on December 4-5.
- During the TTE Council meeting, the upcoming Bulgaria presidency will also present its work programme.

Trust

EU: ENISA's study on securing the Internet of Things

- On November 20, the EU Cybersecurity Agency ENISA published a [report](#) on "Baseline Security Recommendations for Internet of Things (IoT) in the context of critical information infrastructures".
- The document addresses how to face cyber threats to critical information infrastructures, what exactly needs to be secured and what specific measures are needed.
- The report's key recommendations include increased harmonisation of IoT security initiatives and regulations, improved interoperability, clarification of liability among IoT stakeholders, raising awareness for the need for IoT cybersecurity, and defining lifecycle guidelines.
- ISOC contributed to this report.

EU: General Affairs Council adopts conclusions on cybersecurity

- On November 20, the General Affairs Council [agreed](#) on measures to strengthen cybersecurity and enhance cyber resilience in Europe.
- The [conclusions](#) outline that strong and trusted encryption is highly important to ensure human rights and fundamental freedoms in EU and for public trust in the Digital Single Market.
- The Council also called on the Commission to present, by December 2017, a progress report on the implementation of the practical measures to improve cross-border access to electronic evidence, and to present in early 2018 a concrete legislative proposal on the matter.
- The Council also considers a world-class European cybersecurity certification framework to be a key element to enhance trust and security in digital solutions.

EU: EU-South Korea strengthen data protection cooperation efforts, moving forward on Japan

- The EU and South Korea are aiming to reach an adequacy decision dealing with data transfers in 2018, according to a [joint statement](#) issued by officials from the European Commission and South Korea on November 20.
- European Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, Věra Jourová, Korea Communications Commission Chairman, Lee Hyo-seong, and Korea Internet & Security Agency Vice President, Jeong Hyun-cheol, expressed their “readiness to enhance cooperation in promoting strong data protection standards, both bilaterally and at multilateral level.”
- They agreed that recent privacy reforms in both regions offered new opportunities to facilitate data exchange and further intensify cooperation efforts in the field.
- The European Commission is also gearing up to propose an adequacy decision with Japan to allow the free flow of personal data between the two regions. Commissioner Jourová will travel to Japan on December 13-15, but it seems that the EU-Japan data decision is less advanced.

EU: Uber could face joint EU investigation in wake of data hack

- Uber [concealed](#) a global breach of the personal information of 57 million customers and drivers in October 2016. The company paid hackers \$100,000 to delete the stolen data and failed to notify the individuals and regulators.
- The Article 29 Data Protection Working Party will [discuss](#) the data breach at its meeting on November 28-29, and will consider whether to set up taskforces to coordinate national investigations.
- After the breach was revealed on November 21, many countries vowed to start investigations, including the UK and Italy.

EU: MEPs urge Commission to come up with rules to include data in trade deals

- On November 23, the Members of the European Parliament’s International Trade Committee (INTA) approved Marietje Schaake (ALDE, NL)’s report “[Toward a Digital Trade Strategy](#).”
- Among other things, the INTA Committee’s report calls for strong encryption; for secure access to broadband Internet connectivity; the ban of unjustified data localisation requirements in free trade agreements; and interoperability of systems.

US: FCC reveals plan for net neutrality rules

- The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Chair Ajit Pai [revealed](#) on November 21 a plan to dismantle net neutrality rules that require Internet providers to give consumers equal access to all content online.
- The proposal "Restoring Internet Freedom Order", which is an extensive repeal of rules put in place by the Obama administration, will be voted by the Commission on December 14.
- Internet Society’s North America Regional Bureau Director, Mark Buell, [commented](#) “strong rules are still needed – merely focusing on transparency is not enough to protect users’ access to an Open Internet.”