

European Regional Bureau Newsletter



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Internet Access

EU: Chair says 5G is BEREC's top priority for this year

- On January 31, at the [ETNO-MLex Regulatory Summit 2018](#), Johannes Gung, Chair of the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC), outlined that the top priority for the agency this year is 5G.
- Mr Gung [stated](#) BEREC had much work to do, including eliminating “hurdles to fast 5G deployment and [ensuring that] existing practices are adequate for 5G”.
- He also confirmed BEREC has to contribute to the ongoing discussions on the European Electronic Communications Code (EECC), providing technical advice if requested. BEREC will intervene if it considers the negotiations are going in the wrong direction, he added.

EU: WP on Telecommunications and Information Society meeting

- The Working Party on Telecommunications and Information Society is [meeting](#) on February 8 to examine the latest Presidency text on the EECC.
- The EECC is currently being discussed by the co-legislators and the European Commission in trilogue meetings. The latest one, which was the first under the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the EU, took place on February 1.
- The discussion largely focused on spectrum-related issues, with no conclusive agreement being reached in the end. The most debated topics remain the peer-review system and the renewal and duration of spectrum licenses.

DE: Germany to boost investment in fast data networks

- The future German government coalition aims to invest up to €12 billion in gigabit-speed fixed-line data networks over the next four years.
- An agreement paper seen by [Reuters](#) highlights the importance of 5G connectivity and states that Germany will be “the first country in Europe with a 5G network”.
- The Social Democrats and the Christian Democratic Party have started talks on digital policies on January 30 and plan to finish negotiations on all issues by Sunday, February 4.

Trust

EU: EP Committee discusses Privacy Shield and GDPR implementation

- On January 29, Isabelle Falque-Pierrotin, Chairwoman of the Article 29 Working Party, was invited by the European Parliament’s Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs to give a presentation on the implementation of the EU-US Privacy Shield and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The slow implementation process of the GDPR was criticised by those present at the discussion.
- On the EU-US Privacy Shield, Ms Falque-Pierrotin called on the US authorities to meet the standards set by the EU Data Protection Supervisor. In particular, she stressed the need to quickly create the role of an ombudsman.
- Should the US Authorities fail to deliver on their commitments, the European Supervisory Authorities envisage lodging a formal complaint as early as May 2018.

EU: Justice Commissioner Jourová on EU data protection and the GDPR

- During a [Twitter](#) and Facebook [live chat](#) on January 29, European Justice Commissioner Věra Jourová said individuals need to decide by themselves whether they want their “identity (e.g. data) to be sold or not.” The GDPR will set higher standards and will require cooperation from each individual, she added.
- Regarding enforcement and sanctions under the GDPR, she reminded that fines could go up to 4% of companies’ annual turnover. But, she added, those “ceilings would be used only in grave breaches of people’s protection of private data”.
- Commissioner Jourová also said the “right to be forgotten” would be strengthened to introduce and enforce new rights for citizens.

EU: First cyber-exercise to boost CSIRT cooperation

- On January 30, the EU Cybersecurity Agency, ENISA, organised “[Cyber SOPEX](#)” the first cooperation exercise of the Computer Security Incident Response Teams (“[CSIRTs Network](#)”).
- This was the first of a series of exercises aimed at raising awareness, encouraging information and best practices sharing, and providing training.

UK: mass digital surveillance bill ruled unlawful

- The UK Court of Appeals found that large parts of the Government’s mass surveillance bill (the Investigatory Powers Act, nicknamed “Snoopers Charter”) to collect data on users’ Internet activity and phone records to be [unlawful](#). On January 30, three UK judges [confirmed](#) the rules breached EU law, as it allowed the data to be collected for reasons other than fighting serious crimes.
- The case was first brought to Court by Tom Watson a Member of Parliament from the Labour Party following the introduction of the 2014 Data Retention and Investigatory Powers Act (DRIP). This Act expired in 2016 and was then replaced by the Investigatory Powers Act that actually further expands on the existing posers of the government’s surveillance authority.

EU: ENISA’s “Crystal Ball” report

- On January 31, the European Union Agency for Network and Information Society (ENISA) issued a first [report](#) that assesses key emerging technologies and their associated existing and future security challenges.

- Among others, the report analyses technological and security challenges linked to the Internet of Things, Next Generation IT infrastructure, gamification, Artificial Intelligence and robotics.
- ENISA stated that these areas will present challenges to the cybersecurity community in the upcoming years and calls on all stakeholders to engage in a constructive, continuous dialogue.

DE: German national competition regulator scrutinises Google and Facebook

- On February 1, the German Antitrust Office [announced](#) a sector inquiry into market conditions in the online advertising sector. The regulator will also investigate whether large ad platforms such as those ran by Google and Facebook are operating as closed systems and evaluate their potential impact on competition.
- The President of the *Bundeskartellamt* said they decided to start the investigation “due to the great economic importance of this sector for advertisers and content providers active on the Internet and in view of discussions about the difficult competitive environment in this market.”

EU: CEN and CENELEC’s position on the Cybersecurity Act

- CENELEC, the European regional standards organization, together with its sister organization CEN, has published a [position paper](#) on the draft regulation “Cybersecurity Act”, currently under discussion by the co-legislators.
- The Cybersecurity Act aims to set up an EU certification framework for ICT products and services. CEN and CENELEC invite the Commission to engage with the European Standardisation Organisations (ESOs) to create a priority list of products and services.
- Among other recommendations, the two organisations also invite all the formally recognized standardization organizations to define the requirements and standards to be used in certification schemes, prioritising international standards.