

# European Regional Bureau Newsletter



3 November 2018 – 9 November 2018

<https://www.Internetsociety.org/regions/europe/>

[Frédéric Donck \(ERB\)](#)

## Internet Access

### EU: European Commission refutes claims of hacking in the WiFi4EU launch

- The European Commission strongly [refuted](#) claims made in the Portuguese Jornal de Noticias that its WiFi4EU programme was hacked.
- The Portuguese news outlet [wrote](#) that over 11,000 personal data records of city officials “were exposed” when the EU unsuccessfully launched the programme’s first call for funding.
- The WiFi4EU initiative awards funding to municipalities for the installation of free Wi-Fi spaces in their cities, but the Commission’s online [portal](#) crashed due to technical problems when the first call for applications was opened in May 2018.
- The Commission re-opened the portal this week for applications and hopes to begin allocating the EUR 120m foreseen in the programme as soon as possible.

### EU: Recent successful 5G projects spotlighted by the European Commission

- To provide an example of the work the EU is doing to support faster connectivity, the Commission highlighted the Fantastic-5G [project](#), a 8m EUR project coordinated by Germany between 2015 and 2017.
- The Fantastic-5G project (also referred to by its full name: Flexible Air iNTERfAce for Scalable service delivery wITHin wireless Communication networks of the 5th Generation) developed a new air interface technology that transmits information between Internet-connected devices and base stations in a network.
- The project team, composed of 18 partners from academia and industry, worked to develop an interface flexible enough to meet the surging number of connected devices and growing demand for wireless data.

### Austria: EU approves €60m of public subsidy for broadband networks

- The European Commission [approved](#) this week €60m of public support for the deployment and maintenance of broadband infrastructure in the remote rural areas of the Styria region, located in the south-east of Austria.

- The beneficiary of the aid is a newly established company owned by the state of Styria and access to the infrastructure will be provided to third party network operators on “equal and non-discriminatory” terms.
- These measures should enable access speeds of at least 100 megabits per second (Mbps) for both downloads and uploads in the rural areas concerned.

### **Ireland: Broadband sparks heated political debate**

- A controversy around the Irish government’s plans to expand broadband access is [sparking](#) a heated debate between government and opposition politicians.
- The current government led by Fine Gael’s Leo Varadkar has pledged to roll-out broadband connections to every Irish home, targeting the 1.1m people in rural areas that lack a decent connection.
- The government had initially budgeted the plans at €500m, but delays and unforeseen costs have caused some reports to estimate it closer to €3bn in what will become one of Ireland’s biggest state-funded infrastructure programmes.
- Timmy Dooley, an opposition politician from the Fianna Fáil party, criticised the consortium responsible for delivering the project, chaired by investment firm Granaham McCourt, for not having the capacity.

## Trust

### **Global: Six global norms introduced by Global Commission on the Stability of Cyberspace**

- The Global Commission on the Stability of Cyberspace (GCSC), an initiative of the The Hague Centre for Strategic Studies and the EastWest Institute to promote dialogue on international cybersecurity, [released](#) this week a package of measures containing six global norms to promote the peaceful use of cyberspace.
- The [Norms Package](#) covers the following areas: norms to avoid tampering; norms against commandeering ICT devices into botnets; a norm for States to create a vulnerability equities process; a norm to reduce and mitigate significant vulnerabilities; a norm on basic cyber hygiene; and a norm against offensive cyber operations by non-state actors.
- Speaking about the package, Marina Kaljurand, Chair of the GCSC, said the initiative was an important step in creative consensus on “rules of the road” that can be applied by all decision-makers to enable greater cyber stability.

### **EU: Cyber arms race is inevitable, says Microsoft**

- We are seeing an arms race of invisible, cyber weapons that diplomatic tools may not be sufficient to contain, said John Frank, Microsoft’s Vice-President for EU Government Affairs, at a conference this week in Brussels.
- The Microsoft representative argues the tech industry is trying to limit this threat by collectively agreeing to principles of no offense, stronger defence, collective

action and more capacity building, as was set out in the [Cybersecurity Tech Accord](#), an agreement signed by 60 companies (mostly American and European).

#### EU: ePrivacy discussions pushed to political level

- The Austrian Presidency of the EU Council has decided to move the sensitive e-Privacy (ePR) Regulation out of technical discussions and into the higher political level – the meeting of deputy ambassadors known as COREPER – in an attempt to unblock negotiations.
- The Regulation concerning the respect for private life and the protection of personal data in electronic communications, or ePrivacy regulation, complements the GDPR with stronger privacy safeguards for new players (WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger and Skype), simpler rules on cookies and protection against spam with a ban on unsolicited electronic communications by email, SMS and automated calling.
- The proposals have been hotly contested since the Commission [published](#) its plans in January 2017, since then, some Member States have echoed the concerns of big technology companies and start-ups about “overly strict” privacy restraints killing off data-driven online services, while others assert it will be a big step towards more security, for individual Internet users.
- The Austrian Presidency hopes the deputy ambassadors will meet later in the month and rally all Member States behind a single mandate so that it can begin negotiating with the European Parliament before the end of the year.

#### EU: La Quadrature du Net calls for a return to Net Neutrality

- In an op-ed [published](#) this week by digital NGO, La Quadrature du Net, Arthur Messaud argues for measures that will limit the excessive power of Internet giants like Google, Apple, Facebook, Amazon and Microsoft.
- The author argues that a new legal status based on “power of constraint” could be created for tech giants, granting regulators an objective criterion to measure their market power online. This “power” manifests itself when, for example, users of a platform cannot leave it without facing “negative consequences” such as blocked access to information or loss of thousands of “human links”. The harsher the consequences, the stronger the power of constraint.
- However, before introducing such principles, the author argues regulators must ensure the principles of Net Neutrality and greater decentralisation are respected. For the latter to be possible, Europe’s regulators should force stronger levels of interoperability onto platforms, so that users of companies like, for example, Twitter, can easily move to other micro-blogging services without losing data that has been accumulated over several years.

#### EU: The EU adopts Free Flow of Data proposal

- On Friday 9 November, Member States in the Council [signed off](#) new rules to bring down barriers to the free movement of non-personal data within the EU.

- The reforms bans data localisation imposed by EU countries on the geographical location for storing or processing of non-personal data, unless such restrictions are justified on grounds of public security.
- On behalf of the Council, Austria's Digital Minister Margarete Schramböck spoke warmly of the agreement: "The free flow of data is key for growth, creating jobs, and will provide more flexibility for our companies. From now on they will be able to choose the cloud provider that suits them best".
- The agreement concludes the legislative procedure for the file. The new rules will be applicable across the EU exactly six months after its publication in the EU's Official Journal, likely to be soon after the Parliament and Council sign the law in Mid-November.

#### **UK: Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg called for testimony before "grand committee"**

- Damian Collins, Chair of the UK parliament's digital committee, is calling for Mark Zuckerberg to present evidence to an "international grand committee" hearing on November 27 in Westminster, together with MPs from the Australian, Argentinian, Canadian and Irish parliaments.
- In a [letter](#) co-signed with the five other countries, Damian Collins says that MPs were disappointed by Mark Zuckerberg's "dismissive response" in declining a older invitation, and that, having appeared before the US Congress, Mark Zuckerberg now owed users in their countries the same line of accountability.

#### **UK: Home Secretary defends encryption but insists Big Tech can do more to cooperate**

- The UK's Home Secretary Sajid Javid, responsible for home affairs and public safety, said this week that encryption is "here to stay" and while he does not think it is realistic for a government to ask technology companies to have "back door" access to its encrypted data, these companies must "do more" to cooperate with police.
- In an interview with the news outlet Politico, Sajid Javid said that "encryption played a very important role" in the modern Internet.
- In September 2018, the minister signed the Five Eyes [ministerial communiqué](#) alongside Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States, which said there was an urgent need for "law enforcement to gain targeted access to data, subject to strict safeguards, legal limitations, and respective domestic consultations".