Developments at EU level July 2012 – October 2012

June 2012

Digital Agenda: Wave goodbye to mobile internet rip-offs from 1 July; voice and SMS prices to fall also
28 June 2012 — From 1 July 2012, using mobile internet to access maps, videos, photos, social networks and email will be much cheaper while travelling in other EU member states. A new EU regulation means that, for the first time, there will be a maximum charge for "data roaming" - downloading data from the internet when using a mobile connection. The data roaming rules will mean savings of over €1000 per year for a typical businessperson travelling in the EU. A family taking an annual holiday in another EU country can expect to save at least €200. The new rules will also cut the maximum prices for voice calls and texts.

July 2012

Cybercrime: EU citizens concerned by security of personal information and online payments
9 July 2012 — A new Eurobarometer survey shows that Internet users are very concerned about cyber security: 89% avoid disclosing personal information online, and 74% agree that the risk of becoming a victim of cybercrime has increased in the past year. 12% of internet users across the EU have already experienced online fraud, and 8% have fallen victim to identity theft. Nonetheless, 53% have not changed any of their online passwords during the past year.

Final conference of REACH 112 pilot shows that 112 emergency call centers could be accessible
10 July 2012 — Emergency services and the European emergency number 112 are currently not fully accessible to the deaf and hard of hearing. In this context, the EU-funded REACH112 project (Responding to All Citizens needing help) was closed end of June in Santiago de Compostela, Spain. "This 3-year project clearly demonstrated that communication solutions such as Total Conversation, a combination of voice, video and live text can be implemented for person-to-person communications and for 112 accessibility", commented Uberto Delprato, Project Coordinator of REACH112. During the final conference, deaf associations, emergency services and telecommunication providers got acquainted with the technological solutions deployed and tested during the three last years in five pilot countries (France, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the UK).

Europe needs more entrepreneurs - public consultation
11 July 2012 — More new businesses mean more jobs and more growth. More new businesses also mean a more competitive economy which will better enable European companies to compete internationally and reap the opportunities offered both inside and outside the single market. The lack of entrepreneurial drive in Europe is not due to an overall dislike of European population towards entrepreneurship but to concrete structural, administrative and cultural reasons that put a brake on enterprise creation and that can be tackled. Fostering and promoting entrepreneurs, entrepreneurship and an entrepreneurial culture are thus a must for European, national, and regional policy-makers to increase our ability to create jobs and prosperity. A European Entrepreneurship Action Plan is therefore needed to address areas where entrepreneurial potential can be unleashed and where key bottlenecks can be overcome and obstacles to entrepreneurial activities removed. This consultation seeks to identify possible measures which could usefully contribute to the goals of such an Action Plan. Progress in attaining the goals of this Action Plan will be measured through the recommendation and monitoring processes of the Annual Growth Survey and the Small Business Act and its Review. The Entrepreneurship 2020 Consultation is open until 1 October.

Copyright: Commission proposes easier music licensing in the Single Market
11 July 2012 — The European Commission has proposed measures to modernise collecting societies and put in place incentives to promote their transparency and efficiency. New digital technologies are opening up great opportunities for creators, consumers and businesses alike. Increased demand for online access to cultural content (e.g. music, films, books) does not recognise borders or national restrictions. Neither do the online services used to access them. This is where collecting societies come into play, in particular in the music sector, where they collectively manage the licensing of copyright-protected music tracks for online use on behalf of composers and lyricists and collect and redistribute to them corresponding royalties. See also:**Blog post by Commissioner Kroes: Reforming copyright for the digital age**

Enhancing the broadband investment environment – policy statement by Vice President Kroes
12 July 2012 — In this policy statement Vice-President Kroes outlines her thoughts on how to spur investment into the rollout of very high speed broadband networks.

Italian regulator to decide on unbundling of ancillary services
19 July 2012 — The Commission decided today to send a letter of formal notice to Italy on the regulation of telecom markets and on the margin of discretion of the regulator (AGCOM).

Commission seeks information from four Member States on their implementation of Audiovisual Media Services Directive
23 July 2012 — The European Commission has written to Portugal, Slovenia, Finland (concerning the autonomous region of Åland) and the United Kingdom (concerning the British overseas territory Gibraltar) seeking information about their implementation of the Audiovisual Media Services (AVMS) Directive. The Commission has asked the responsible authorities to reply within 10 weeks. The fact-finding letters are part of the Commission's efforts to ensure that the national media laws of all Member States correctly implement all aspects of the AVMS rules. The requests for information do not imply that the Directive has been incorrectly implemented but simply that, at this stage, the Commission has some outstanding questions concerning their implementation of the Directive.

Commission consults on a future EU Network and Information Security legislative initiative
23 July 2012 — The European Commission is seeking the views of governments, businesses, citizens about their experiences and EU possible responses to cyber incidents which cause disruption to essential Network and Information Systems (NIS), including the internet. The Commission has launched this consultation to help it prepare a legislative proposal on network and information security, which will be an important element of the upcoming EU strategy on Cyber security. Feedback received will help the Commission draw up an approach to possible future risk management and security breach reporting requirements that would affect businesses in particular. The consultation runs until 12 October 2012.

Commission opens public consultation on preservation of the open internet (net neutrality)
23 July 2012 — The European Commission is today launching a public consultation seeking answers to questions on transparency, switching and certain aspects of internet traffic management, with a view to its commitment to preserve the open and neutral character of the Internet. These questions have emerged as key issues in the "net neutrality" debate that has taken place in Europe over the past years, including the recent findings of the Body of European Regulators of European Communications (BEREC). Input is sought from all interested public and private parties, including fixed and mobile internet service providers, Internet content and application providers (including comparison websites), equipment manufacturers, transit providers, investors, public authorities, consumers and their associations. The responses to this consultation will be crucial input for the Commission's planned recommendations announced by European Commission Vice President Neelie Kroes on 29 May 2012.

August 2012

Commission suspends Latvian proposal to uphold excessive level of wholesale rates for fixed telephony and starts an in-depth review
13 August 2012 — The European Commission has expressed serious doubts about a new proposal from the Latvian telecoms regulator (SPRK) regarding fixed termination rates which would negatively affect consumers in Latvia. Termination rates are the rates telecoms networks charge each other to deliver calls between networks, and each operator has market power over access to customers on its own network. These costs are ultimately included in call prices paid by consumers and businesses.

Commission rules against Czech regulator's plans to regulate access to its broadband networks
13 August 2012 — The European Commission has ruled that the Czech telecoms regulator (ČTÚ) must withdraw its plans to include wholesale broadband services based on cable and Wi-Fi platforms into its definition of the wholesale broadband access product market.

Public consultation on a "Code for Effective Open Voluntarism: Good design principles for self- and co-regulation and other multistakeholder actions"
16 August - 30 September 2012 — The European Commission has launched a public consultation seeking input from citizens, organisations, public authorities and all stakeholders potentially engaged or interested in self- and co-regulation and other multistakeholder voluntary actions in the EU on how best to codify a set of design principles for achieving objectives through a multi-stakeholder process. The aim of this code is to improve the framework for achieving EU policy objectives. The consultation covers the following three points: 1) to gather comments on the draft Code; 2) to develop a cross-EU and multi-sectoral Network of Excellence, including the sharing of useful reference material and best practices; 3) to gather knowledge, ideas and opinions about how to ensure that voluntarism receives its appropriate share of attention in the policy-making toolbox.

EU steps up support to reforms in public broadcasting
24 July 2012 — Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy Štefan Füle and President of the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) Jean-Paul Philippot signed a Memorandum of Understanding establishing closer cooperation in assisting the reform of public broadcasters in the countries that aspire to join the EU.

Digital Agenda: Commission calls on Polish telecoms regulator to improve access to fibre network
27 August 2012 — The European Commission has called on the Polish telecoms regulator (UKE) to amend or withdraw its proposal to give alternative operators only limited access to Telekomunikacja Polska's (TP) fibre networks. In the Commission's view, UKE's decision could have a negative effect on competition and the future development of fibre networks, and thus limit offers available to consumers and businesses.

September 2012

Commission moves to foster wireless innovation through sharing of radio spectrum
3 September 2012 — The European Commission today unveiled plans to deal with the exponential growth in mobile and wireless data traffic by enabling wireless technologies, including broadband, to share the use of the radio spectrum. With new technologies it is possible to share radio spectrum amongst several users – such as internet providers – or use the spectrum available between TV frequencies, for example, for other purposes. National spectrum regulation often does not reflect the new technical possibilities, leaving mobile and broadband users at risk of poor service as demand grows, and preventing a single market for investment in such communications markets. A coordinated European approach to sharing spectrum will lead to greater mobile network capacity, cheaper wireless broadband, and new markets such as tradable secondary rights for a given spectrum allocation.
See also: **Maximising radio spectrum efficiency by sharing it - Frequently Asked Questions**

Maximising radio spectrum efficiency by sharing it
3 September 2012 — In its Communication on "Promoting the shared use of radio spectrum resources in the internal market" the Commission pushes and supports Member States to move to an enhanced innovation-friendly internal market framework for the shared use of spectrum. Meeting the growing spectrum needs resulting from the exponential growth in wireless data traffic and the increasing importance of wireless connectivity in the economy, is limited by the absence of vacant spectrum. However, the radio spectrum is a unique resource that can be re-used more efficiently with advances in technologies. This makes additional spectrum resources available and lowers the spectrum access hurdles for new users. To cope with the demand and to attract investments into new technologies, the EU needs a supportive regulatory framework that enables legally binding spectrum sharing contracts between users to encourage wireless innovation in the internal market.
See also: **Press release: Commission welcomes step forward for wireless broadband with adoption of Radio Spectrum Policy Programme**

Cyber security strengthened at EU institutions following successful pilot scheme
12 September 2012 — The EU institutions have reinforced their fight against cyber threats by establishing the EU's Computer Emergency Response Team, or CERT-EU, on a permanent basis. This decision follows a successful one-year pilot for the team, which drew positive assessments from clients and peers.

Study on the standardisation aspects of e-signatures - 2007
20 September 2012 — The study presents an in-depth analysis of the technical requirements aimed to support the review of the EC Decision on generally recognised standards for eSignature products. The legal, policy and standardisation recommendations are based on the results of a large survey. An organisational model is also proposed to reshape and review the eSignatures standards.

New strategy to drive European business and government productivity via cloud computing
27 September 2012 — The European Commission's new strategy for "Unleashing the potential of cloud computing in Europe" outlines actions to deliver a net gain of 2.5 million new European jobs, and an annual boost of EUR 160 billion to EU GDP (around 1%), by 2020. The strategy is designed to speed up and increase the use of cloud computing across the economy. 'Cloud computing' refers to the storage of data (such as text files, pictures and video) and software on remote computers, which users access over the internet on the device of their choice. This is faster, cheaper, more flexible and potentially more secure than on-site IT solutions. Many popular services such as Facebook, Spotify and web-based email use cloud computing technologies but the real economic benefits come through widespread use of cloud solutions by businesses and the public sector.
See also: **Unleashing the Potential of Cloud Computing in Europe - What is it and what does it mean for me?**

EU-funded research to make the "cloud" greener
26 September 2012 — A special 3D microchip, being designed by an EU-funded research project, looks set to drastically cut the electricity and the installation costs of servers in cloud computing data centres, cementing Europe's place as the home of green computing. Cloud data centres – thousands of computer servers in one location - can be the size of football fields and consume the same amount of electricity as 40,000 homes. The data centres are essential because they enable the cloud computing revolution: consumer services like Facebook, Gmail, Spotify and mobile apps, and business services like customer databases.

Unleashing the Potential of Cloud Computing in Europe - What is it and what does it mean for me?
27 September 2012 — Frequently Asked Questions on Cloud computing and the European Cloud Partnership (ECP).

October 2012

'Connecting Europe' – business leaders and policy-makers strongly support the Commission's 50 billion plan for strategic infrastructure investment in transport, energy and internet
2 October 2012 — At a high-level conference in Brussels, business leaders and policy-makers strongly supported the creation of a Connecting Europe Facility as proposed by the European Commission for the European Union's new financing period 2014-2020. With up to 50 billion euros the Connecting Europe Facility could become a key instrument for targeted infrastructure investment at European level to ensure the smooth functioning of the Single Market and boost sustainable growth, jobs and competitiveness across the European Union.

Orphan works – Frequently asked questions
4 October 2012 — What are orphan works and why is a directive to deal with them needed? What organisations will benefit from the Directive? What works are covered by the Directive? What are the main elements of the new Directive? What more can be done to promote digital libraries?

Commissioner Barnier welcomes final adoption of the Orphan Works Directive by the Council
4 October 2012 — "Today's adoption of the Orphan Works Directive is a significant achievement in our efforts to create a digital single market. It will enable easy online access for all citizens to our cultural heritage. The swift and successful outcome of the legislative process and the broad consensus reached both in the Council and the Parliament prove that by working together we can agree on measures to ensure that the EU copyright rules are fit for purpose in the digital age. Alongside other achievements such as the European Memorandum of Understanding to facilitate the mass digitisation of out-of-commerce books, this Directive is one more step in making licensing and online access to cultural content easier."
See also: **Orphan works – Frequently asked questions**

Major banks, telecoms companies and governments join forces in EU-wide cyberattack exercise
4 October 2012 — Hundreds of cyber security experts from across the EU are testing their readiness to combat cyber-attacks in a day-long simulation across Europe today. In Cyber Europe 2012, 400 experts from major financial institutions, telecoms companies, internet service providers and local and national governments across Europe are facing more than 1200 separate cyber incidents (including more than 30 000 emails) during a simulated distributed denial of service (DDoS) campaign. The exercise is testing how they would respond and co-operate in the event of sustained attacks against the public websites and computer systems of major European banks. If real, such an attack would cause massive disruption for millions of citizens and businesses across Europe, and millions of euros of damage to the EU economy.

Transforming our society through great innovations, "Made in Europe"
9 October 2012 — Blog by Neelie Kroes, Vice-President of the European Commission, on the occasion of the opening of the 'Made in Europe' event at the European Parliament.

Commission consults on telecoms markets Recommendation
16 October 2012 — The European Commission has launched a public consultation with a view to updating the current list of relevant wholesale and retail telecoms markets subject to the Commission's "Article 7" procedure under EU telecoms rules. These markets include retail access to the public telephone network and wholesale broadband access. Having a list of relevant markets helps National Regulatory Authorities (NRAs) regulate their markets in a coordinated manner. The review will take into account major market and technological developments, such as internet-based applications and services, the convergence between different types of networks and services and the development of very fast internet networks and services. Based on its results, the Commission will then revise the current Recommendation on Relevant Markets which was last updated in 2007. The Commission invites interested parties to respond to the consultation by 8th January 2013.

Commission asks Finnish telecoms regulator to improve access conditions to fibre network

18 October 2012 — The European Commission has called on the Finnish telecoms regulator (FICORA) to amend or withdraw its proposal on regulated access to dominant operators' broadband networks. If implemented, FICORA's plans would damage competition and hamper investment in competitive broadband services. This could limit current and future offers available to consumers and businesses. This is the third time that the Commission has issued a formal recommendation under Article 7a of the Telecoms Directive.