Developments at EU level December 2012 – March 2013

January 2013

Rising Popularity of Mobile Health Apps

23 January 2013 — The use of mobile health apps is rising in a fast pace. This Infographic on "Rising Popularity of Mobile Health Apps" published by Indus Net Technologies and designed by InfoGraphic Design Team, talks over the rising popularity and usability of mobile health apps.

Commission takes Bulgaria to Court over assignment of digital terrestrial broadcasting authorisations

24 January 2013 — The European Commission has decided to refer Bulgaria to the EU's Court of Justice over the assignment of digital broadcast spectrum. The Commission found that the procedure followed by Bulgaria was based on disproportionately restrictive award conditions, leading to the exclusion of potential candidates. This hampers competition in the future Bulgarian digital terrestrial television (DTT) infrastructure market, in breach of the applicable EU Directives on electronic communications.
See also: **January infringements package: main decisions**

Commission asks Court of Justice to fine Portugal over exclusion of companies from providing universal service

24 January 2013 - The European Commission has asked the European Court of Justice to impose a fine on Portugal because it has not respected a 2010 Court judgment requiring it to follow EU telecoms rules when deciding who should provide universal service in Portugal. The Commission is suggesting a lump sum of € 5 277.30 per day for the period between the 2010 judgement and eventual second Court ruling.
See also: **January infringements package: main decisions**

January infringements package: main decisions

24 January 2013 — In its monthly package of infringement decisions, the European Commission is pursuing legal action against Member States for failing to comply properly with their obligations under EU law. These decisions covering many sectors aim at ensuring proper application of EU law for the benefit of citizens and businesses. The Commission has taken today 171 decisions, including 24 reasoned opinions and 10 referrals to the European Union's Court of Justice, out of which 7 include financial penalties. Below is a summary of the main decisions.
See also: **More information on infringements procedure**

Commission issues action call in Davos - with IT sector and telecoms companies - to close digital skills and jobs gap in Europe

25 January 2013 — Europe faces up to 700.000 unfilled ICT jobs and declining competitiveness. The number of digital jobs is growing – by 3% each year during the crisis – but the number of new ICT graduates and other skilled ICT workers is shrinking. Our youth need actions not words, and companies operating in Europe need the right people or they will move operations elsewhere. Today, the Commission is issuing a call to action to companies, governments, educators, social partners, employment service providers and civil society to join us in a massive effort to "turn the tide". Young Europeans should have the tools to enter digital careers or to create jobs as entrepreneurs.

February 2013

53rd Communications Committee meeting – 18 February 2013

30th Radio Sprectrum Policy Group – 20 February 2013

Benchmarking study of parental control tools - Latest findings
4 February 2013 — Commission study on benchmarking of parental control tools shows a positive trend in the availability of parental controls.

Better Internet for Kids: CEO Coalition 1 year on
5 February 2013 — The CEO Coalition makes its first recommendations to make the internet a better and safer place for kids.
See also: **Digital Agenda: Coalition of top tech & media companies to make internet better place for our kids**

Safer Internet Day 2013
5 February 2013 — Links to company statements and other key documents

Safer Internet Day 2013: "Connect with Respect"
5 February 2013 — The Commission has presented the results of joint work of media, technology, telecoms and online companies undertaken since their December 2011 commitment to make the internet a better and safer place for kids.

OMEGA research project uses light to help achieve higher broadband speeds
6 February 2013 — An EU-funded research project has created a system for higher broadband speeds that can connect many more devices in the home. Today, Wi-Fi is the home networking solution everyone uses, but it is unlikely to be able to meet future demands by itself. To ensure, for example, that families could stream multiple movies at the same time, researchers on the "HOME Gigabit Access" (OMEGA) project have developed a network using a combination of power cables, radio signals and light. This technology could ensure that every office and household has enough bandwidth to connect a range of "smart" objects to each other like phones, cars and domestic appliances. The OMEGA project is run by researchers from companies, universities and research institutions in Austria, France, Germany, Greece, Slovenia and the United Kingdom. The EU provided €12.41 million of a total budget of €19.13 million.

EU Cybersecurity plan to protect open internet and online freedom and opportunity
7 February 2013 — The European Commission, together with the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, has published a cybersecurity strategy alongside a Commission proposed directive on network and information security (NIS). See also: **Proposed Directive on Network and Information Security – frequently asked questions.**

Proposed Directive on Network and Information Security – frequently asked questions
7 February 2013 — Information systems can be affected by security incidents, such as human mistakes, natural events, technical failures or malicious attacks. These incidents are becoming bigger, more frequent, and more complex. 57% of people who responded to a Commission consultation said they had experienced Network Information Security (NIS) incidents over the previous year. A lack of NIS can compromise vital services: it can stop businesses functioning, generate substantial financial losses for the EU economy and negatively affect societal welfare. Digital information systems, in particular the internet, work across borders. A disruption in one EU country can have a knock-on effect in other Member States or the EU as a whole - for example, cross-border movement of goods, services and people could be hampered.

European Commission questions Italian telecoms proposal to regulate rates for fixed termination services
7 February 2013 — The European Commission has called a halt to the plans of the Italian telecoms regulator (AGCOM) regarding termination rates which would negatively affect consumers in Italy as well as operators in other Member States.

Commission calls on Polish telecom regulator to base deregulation proposal on an up-to-date market assessment
8 February 2013 - — The European Commission has asked the Polish telecoms regulator (UKE) to withdraw its proposal to deregulate conditions under which other operators can access Polish telecom company Telekomunikacja Polska's (TP) broadband network in 11 communes of Poland. In the Commission's view, fully supported by the body of European Telecoms Regulators (BEREC), UKE's decision could have a negative effect on competition in Poland, and thus limit the offers available to consumers and businesses. This is the second time within the last six months that the Commission requests UKE to withdraw a proposal for regulation in this market.

Invitation to market participants to submit observations regarding the Commission's serious doubts letter under Article 7 of Directive 2002/21/EC - Case IT/2013/1415

A budget for European growth
9 February 2013 — A blog post by Neelie Kroes on the EU budget negotiations

Launch of the 2013 promotional campaign on the European emergency number 112
11 February 2013 — Tour Operators and Travel Agents are invited to join the European Commission in its promotional campaign of the European emergency number - 112. Vice President of the European Commission, Neelie Kroes, has sent a letter to the European Travel Agents' and Tour Operators' Association (ECTAA) to launch this initiative.

Tour operators and travel agents join '112' emergency number campaign
11 February 2013 — The European Commission and The European Travel Agents' and Tour Operators' Associations (ECTAA) are asking tour operators, travel agents to promote the pan-European emergency number '112' on their websites, on e-tickets, and at major tourist destinations.

Join our Community of Practice for better self- & co-regulation
11 February 2013 — DG CONNECT is setting up a pilot Community of Practice in which companies, industry associations, NGOs, universities, researchers or other organisations linked to internet or ICT sector can exchange ideas and best practices about better self- and co-regulation.

Europe bands together to fight against botnets
14 February 2013 — Eco, the Association of German Internet Industry together with 28 partners from 14 European countries are launching a project against one of the biggest Internet security threats: Every fifth computer is currently estimated to be part of a botnet used by cyber criminals to infect end user computers with malware and gain remote access to them. Kicking off today in Frankfurt, the association begins its work as the coordinator of the Advanced Cyber Defence Center (ACDC) which is supported by the European Union. The project will offer a full range of services for increased cyber security ranging from malware recognition to prevention. The campaign partners are large public network providers, software producers, scientific institutions, law enforcement and administrative bodies, banks, as well as certification authorities.

February infringements package: main decisions
21 February 2013 — In its monthly package of infringement decisions, the European Commission is pursuing legal action against Member States for failing to comply properly with their obligations under EU law. These decisions covering many sectors aim at ensuring proper application of EU law for the benefit of citizens and businesses.

What did the EU ever do for the mobile industry?
27 February 2013 - Cut the roaming prices; made the market work more efficiently; delivered extra spectrum for new industry; gave funding to develop 5G technology and much more.

€50 million EU research grants in 2013 to develop '5G' technology
26 February 2013 — European Commission Vice President Neelie Kroes announces €50 million for research to deliver 5G mobile technology by 2020, with the aim to put Europe back in the lead of the global mobile industry. "I want 5G be pioneered by European industry, based on European research and creating jobs in Europe – and we will put our money where our mouth is," Kroes said.

March 2013

43rd Radio Spectrum Committee meeting – 20-21 March 2013

14th BEREC Board of Regulators meeting – 7-8 March 2013

Commission insists German operators should not be allowed special treatment on mobile rates
1 March 2013 - The European Commission has halted plans of the German telecoms regulator (BNetzA) which could result in mobile termination rates (MTR) more than 80% higher than in many other Member States. This could mean that German consumers pay unjustifiably high prices for their mobile calls.

European Commission launches Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs
4 March 2013 - Commission President José Manuel Barroso today called on Europe's digital businesses, governments, training and education sectors to join a Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs to address up to 900 000 job vacancies expected to exist in Europe in Information and Communication technologies (ICT) by 2015. Despite the current levels of unemployment, the number of digital jobs is growing by more than 100 000 per year. Yet the number of fresh ICT graduates and skilled ICT workers is not keeping up.

Telecoms Regulatory body (BEREC) issues opinion on proposed rules for enhancing high speed internet roll-out – Statement from Vice President Neelie Kroes

11 March 2013 - I am very happy that BEREC (Body of European Regulators of Electronic Communications) has given a positive opinion on our draft Recommendation on non-discrimination obligations and costing methodology for regulated wholesale network access. BEREC fully supports our overarching objective to encourage high-speed internet investment across Europe and our strategic objective of ensuring predictable and stable access copper prices, effective non-discrimination obligations that sustain competition, and pricing flexibility for such services to meet demand. Predictable and consistent rules which contribute to a competitive EU single telecoms market are what market players and investors need for long-term planning. We will take account of BEREC's constructive opinion and work closely together to ensure that we deliver a pro-competitive, pro-investment regulatory environment. I am confident that industry will respond positively and invest.

EU says we should glorify our entrepreneurs:Skype, Spotify and Angry Birds creators advise EU – first stage of "Startup Europe" campaign

21 March 2013 - Most people think of Silicon Valley in the United States when they think about technology and entrepreneurs – the European Commission wants young Europeans to be inspired by home-grown entrepreneurs, so their bright ideas start and stay in Europe. With help from the creators of Spotify, Angry Birds, Tuenti, Skype, SeedCamp, HackFwd, London's Tech City and TheNextWeb, the Commission is creating a platform for star entrepreneurs to tell their stories of inspirations and frustration, to wake-up young Europeans and leaders to the potential of entrepreneurial careers.

Commission opens consultations on media freedom and pluralism and audiovisual media regulator independence

22 March 2013 - The European Commission launches today two public consultations, open until 7th June 2013. The consultations formalise a debate started by recommendations made in January 2013 by an independent High Level Group (HLG) on Media Freedom and Pluralism convened by the Commission.
See also: **More information on the two consultations**

Commission proposes rules to cut broadband installation costs

26 March 2013 - The European Commission today proposed new rules to cut by 30% the cost of rolling out high-speed Internet. Civil engineering, such as the digging up of roads to lay down fibre, accounts for up to 80% of the cost of deploying high-speed networks. Today's proposal may save companies €40 to 60 billion. See link below.
http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-281_en.htm