Internet Governance BAROMETER (FEBRUARY 2016)

IG Barometer indicates the presence of specific IG issues in the public policy debate in comparison to the previous month

Global IG Architecture

GSMA's new report☑ recommends a 'reset' of legacy regulations, which are considered outdated, and puts forward principles for policy-makers that have an impact on access regulation, barriers to entry and exit, privacy and data protection, merger review, spectrum management, and universal availability and access.

Sustainable development

The global indicator framework as a basis for the annual progress report on SDGs is under development; the UN Statistical Commission is expected to reach agreement next month☑. Digital aspects are likely to feature prominently in the creation of the indicators.

Security

A US Court's ruling☑ requesting Apple to assist the FBI in unlocking an iPhone triggered a global controversy over encryption and the creation of backdoors. FBI asked Apple to create 'a new version of the iPhone operating system, circumventing several important security features'. In a letter to its customers,☑ Apple's CEO said the company was challenging the court order, arguing that the FBI's request can endanger user data and privacy. The outcome of this case is likely to have major impact on security and privacy. A few days before the court's ruling, a US senator argued for legislation that obliges tech companies to comply with government requests for access to data.☑

Encryption debates over the Snooper's Bill continued in the UK, with parliamentary committees asking the government to clarify its proposed legislation on encryption,☑ while the Investigatory Powers Tribunal has ruled that GCHQ hacking is lawful.☑

One in every four users in the EU faced an online security issue last year, a Eurostat study released on Safer Internet Day, revealed.☑

Privacy and human rights

EU and USA negotiators have reached a deal over a new EU-US privacy shield.☑ Details of the deal are expected in the coming days.

Apple's CEO reacted strongly to the US Court's order announcing that it would oppose the order.☑ The Electronic Frontier Foundation said it will legally support Apple's position.☑ Facebook, Google and other Internet companies expressed support for Apple.

Google is extending the 'right to be forgotten' rule to its global sites accessed within Europe; filtering will be based on European IP addresses.☑ The Korean Communications Commission will introduce guidelines to uphold the right to be forgotten by mid-2016.☑

Kuwait's new Cybercrime Law, which imposes severe restrictions on freedom of speech, came into effect.☑
Consultations under way in Brazil over proposed amendments to Marco Civil,☑ which are seen as an attempt to amend particular protections, such as those on user's privacy.

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Infrastructure

A considerable increase in the adoption of mobile technologies that will make the Internet of Everything more sustainable is predicted by Cisco, while research suggests the Internet of Things in the utility market will be worth more than $10 billion by 2020. Microsoft is testing whether data centres can operate below the surface of the ocean, in a bid to prevent computer services from overheating.

Net neutrality

After months of controversy, the Indian Telecom Regulatory Authority ruled in favour of net neutrality principles and against discriminatory tariffs for data services, blocking Facebook's Free Basics service in the country.

E-commerce and Internet economy

The US Senate has passed legislation that puts a permanent ban on states' and local governments' taxing of Internet access, while the British Chancellor has called for an update in international tax laws which he believes have not 'kept pace' with the development of the Internet.

The European Central Bank plans to introduce a system that would allow consumers to transfer money using phone numbers or email addresses, rather than a bank account number, while the EU plans to propose measures for transactions in virtual currency.

Jurisdiction and legal issues

A French court has ruled that Facebook can be sued in French courts, despite the company's terms of service stating that its jurisdiction lies in California, while the French data protection authority ordered Facebook to comply with formal notice within 3 months or face sanctions.

IANA transition

ICANN has named its new CEO – Göran Marby, Director-General of the Swedish Post and Telecom Authority (PTS) – who will assume office in May, replacing outgoing CEO Fadi Chehade.

The Cross Community Working Group on Enhancing ICANN Accountability (CCWG-Accountability) has published its supplemental final proposal on accountability recommendations under Work Stream 1, which need to be in place during the transition phase.

Presented during the Geneva Internet Platform briefing on 23 February 2016. More: giplatform.org/briefings

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