



MEPs zero in on internet search companies and clouds

Plenary sessions [27-11-2014 - 12:58]

The European Parliament called on EU member states and the European Commission to break down barriers to the growth of the EU's digital single market in a resolution voted on Thursday. MEPs also stressed the need to prevent online companies from abusing dominant positions by enforcing EU competition rules and unbundling search engines from other commercial services.

The digital single market could generate an additional €260 billion a year for the EU economy, as well as boosting its competitiveness, says the text, which was approved by 384 votes to 174, with 56 abstentions. However, it warns that important challenges, such as market fragmentation, lack of interoperability as well as regional and demographic inequalities in access to the technology, need to be tackled in order to unlock this potential.

Enforcing EU rules for online search companies

The resolution underlines that “the online search market is of particular importance in ensuring competitive conditions within the digital single market” and welcomes the Commission’s pledges to investigate further the search engines’ practices.

It calls on the Commission “to prevent any abuse in the marketing of interlinked services by operators of search engines”, stressing the importance of non-discriminatory online search. “Indexation, evaluation, presentation and ranking by search engines must be unbiased and transparent”, MEPs say.

Given the role of internet search engines in “commercialising secondary exploitation of obtained information” and the need to enforce EU competition rules, MEPs also call on the Commission “to consider proposals with the aim of unbundling search engines from other commercial services” in the long run.

Fast track telecoms package

MEPs stress that “all internet traffic should be treated equally, without discrimination, restriction or interference”. Parliament urges member states to start negotiations on the telecoms package, so as to “put an end to roaming charges inside the EU, provide more legal certainty as regards net neutrality and improve consumer protection”.

Common standards for cloud computing

MEPs call on the Commission “to take the lead in promoting international standards and specifications for cloud computing” so as to ensure that it is privacy friendly, reliable, accessible, highly interoperable, secure and energy efficient.

Procedure: Non-legislative resolution

Press release

Contact

Gediminas VILKAS

BXL: (+32) 2 28 46396

STR: (+33) 3 881 64504

PORT: (+32) 498 98 33 30

EMAIL: imco-press@europarl.europa.eu

TWITTER: EP_SingleMarket