

EN
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Answer given by Ms Kroes
on behalf of the Commission
(11.7.2013)

The Commission is aware of Deutsche Telekom's (DT) plans to introduce restrictions on Internet flat rates in fixed networks. DT has indicated that upon reaching an agreed volume, speed will be throttled to 2 Mbps and not 384 kbps as originally announced.

The Commission does not have figures on average Internet usage, but Cisco reports that IP traffic per capita in Western Europe will reach 38 GB in 2017, up from 18 GB in 2012. In Central and Eastern Europe, Cisco forecasts 18 GB per capita in 2017 up from 7 GB in 2012¹. DT reports the average use of its customers is 15-20 GB². At this stage, the Commission does not have reliable figures on the macroeconomic effect of the currently discussed tariff models.

The Commission is fully committed to ensuring end users' ability to access and distribute information or run applications and services of their choice. The Commission is currently considering proposals as regards net neutrality, including the possibility of measures to ensure enhanced transparency, easier switching and the responsible use of traffic management tools. No blocking and throttling of competing services would be allowed, i.e. no discrimination of best effort Internet traffic, except what is strictly necessary to ensure the proper functioning of the networks (i.e. managing network congestion, security threats, etc.). This unrestricted Internet access should be guaranteed to all end-users regardless of their social situation. At the same time, companies should remain free to differentiate their offers and compete on, for example, volume or enhanced quality of service. The upcoming proposals also aim at promoting access to digital markets by young European companies to ensure that they can grow and innovate.

¹ IP traffic includes also mobile traffic. Source: Cisco Visual Networking Index Global IP Traffic Forecast, 2012-2017 available at http://www.cisco.com/web/solutions/sp/vni/vni_forecast_highlights/index.html

² <http://www.telecompaper.com/news/deutsche-telekom-confirms-new-broadband-data-limits--938900>