

Digital Single Market

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Commission underlines commitment to ensure open internet principles applied in practice

The need to ensure that citizens and businesses are easily able to access an open and neutral internet has been underlined by the European Commission in a report adopted today. The Commission will be vigilant that new EU telecoms rules on transparency, quality of service and the ability to switch operator, due to enter into force on 25th May 2011, are applied in a way that ensures that these open and neutral internet principles are respected in practice. For example, the Commission will pay close attention to the existence of generalised restrictions of lawful services and applications and to EU citizens' and businesses' broadband connections being as fast as indicated by Internet Service Providers' advertising. The Commission has asked the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC) to undertake a rigorous fact-finding exercise on issues crucial to ensuring an open and neutral internet, including barriers to changing operators, blocking or throttling internet traffic (e.g. voice over internet services), transparency and quality of service. The Commission will publish, by the end of the year, evidence from BEREC's investigation, including any instances of blocking or throttling certain types of traffic. If BEREC's findings and other feedback indicate outstanding problems, the Commission will assess the need for more stringent measures.

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