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PRESS RELEASE

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EU once again fails to deliver on Net Neutrality

In a vote last Tuesday, Members of the European Parliament overwhelmingly decided to reject the Council's proposals on the Telecom Single Market. In doing so, they have clearly affirmed that they will not accept the least common denominator proposed by EU Member States on roaming and net neutrality. This is an important decision – and OFE congratulates the Parliament for their firm stance – but one that brings policy debates at a dangerous deadlock. It also seriously undermines the intentions of the Digital Single Market programme itself.

Since the launch of the Commission initiative in September 2013, the scope and ambition of the legislative package has been progressively chipped away, to the point that the Commission now [plans](#) to launch a separate policy initiative in 2016 to deal with the remaining aspects not covered in the current one. On net neutrality however, the vote of the Parliament in its [Report](#) of April 2014 showed some hope of progress, in the form of clear legal definitions minimising the risk of loopholes, and an unambiguous distinction between the provision of (paid for) “specialised services” with improved quality of service and the Open Internet as we know it today. These efforts have now been compromised by the weakened and unacceptable proposals of the Council.

Society will not wait for policy makers – all signs already [point](#) to an increase in net neutrality violations. Meanwhile, the US is [moving forward](#) and risks to leave Europe on the side. If we want the Internet to remain an engine for growth, creativity and innovation, Europe needs to act now. “OFE hopes that the Luxembourg presidency, taking office in July, will take note of the urgency of the situation and lead the Council to a more ambitious and constructive position”, said Graham Taylor, CEO of OpenForum Europe, adding that “otherwise there must be every doubt that the Commission' Digital Single Market programme will ever reach reality”.

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About OpenForum Europe

(OFE) is an independent, not-for-profit organisation, supported by major IT suppliers including Google, IBM, Oracle and Red Hat, as well as SMEs, user and consumer organisations, and national partners across Europe. It focuses on delivering an open, competitive ICT market. Views expressed by OFE do not necessarily reflect those held by all its supporters.

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