



REGULATORY WATCH

A round up of the latest news from the world of communications and media policy

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'48 hours to remove abusive images' under new UK law

The UK government has announced new laws as part of a wider crackdown on violence against women and girls. The plans impose a number of obligations on tech companies, including a requirement to take down abusive images from the internet within 48 hours and to detect and remove intimate images shared without content. Along with a number of countries, the UK government is also consulting on a social media ban for under-16s.

US reaffirms opposition to global governance of AI

The debate around regulation dominated discussions at the AI Summit in New Delhi, with calls for more global governance of AI. Sam Altman of OpenAI argued for 'urgent regulation' while Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said countries had to work together to benefit from AI. However, the US confirmed its opposition to this view. 'As the Trump administration has said many times, we totally reject global governance of AI' said the head of the US delegation, Michael Kratsios. The AI Impact Summit was held for the first time in a developing country, and the Indian hosts positioned the event as a platform to amplify the voices of developing nations in AI governance.

Digital euro to cost banks '4-6 billion euros'

Setting up the digital euro will cost European banks between 4 and 6 billion euros over four years, according to European Central Bank governing council member. Piero Cipollone also said that the ECB would incur set-up costs of 1.3 billion euros and operational costs of c.300 million euros per year. The ECB is in the process of creating the infrastructure for the digital euro, which is seen as a way of keeping public money relevant in a digital economy and an opportunity to curb Europe's fragmentary payments landscape, as well as restrict the role of non-EU providers.

Continue on next page...



5G Americas winds down operations

Wireless industry body 5G Americas has announced that it is dissolving itself and will close on 27 February 2026. The organisation's stated aim was 'to foster collaboration among leading industry operators and vendors to support the growth of the wireless ecosystem', but there was no reason given for the closure. In a statement, 5G Americas said that 'as the industry landscape evolves, this is the appropriate time to conclude the association's work'. Members of the organisation are known to include AT&T, Cisco, Ericsson, Nokia and Qualcomm.

Chinese AI labs targeting products over frontier dominance

The Financial Times notes that the week-long holiday for the lunar new year has seen the release of a series of new AI models as Chinese labs seek a competitive edge over their US rivals. Importantly, they are focused on models that are useful for building applications, according to Ritwik Gupta, an AI researcher at the University of California, Berkeley. This contrasts with US labs which view it as a 'race for frontier dominance first, product second', he said. Observers cite ByteDance's new video-generating model, Seedance 2.0, which has spooked Hollywood with its ability to produce multi-scene clips with realistic imagery and synchronised sound effects. Alibaba has released a model targeted at developers of AI agents. The Chinese companies are exploiting opportunities by offering greater freedom than US companies such as Anthropic and OpenAI, which place restrictions, such as usage limits, on developers. Additional note: In a post on X, Anthropic claimed to have identified 'industrial-scale distillation attacks on our models by (Chinese companies) DeepSeek, MoonshotAI and MiniMax. These labs created over 24,000 fraudulent accounts and generated over 16 million exchanges with Claude, extracting its capabilities to train and improve their own models'.

Sources: *The Financial Times, The Wall Street Journal, Bird and Bird, APNews, Euronews, CNN, The Guardian, The Daily Telegraph, Bloomberg, Euractiv, Ars Technica, Reuters, BBC, Politico, Telecompaper*

