



REGULATORY WATCH

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

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Trust in news hits an all-time low

New research suggests that trust in the news has fallen to an all-time low globally. In its latest Digital News Report, the Reuters Institute found that public trust is at 37 per cent – three per cent down on last year – and said that audiences around the world are ‘reacting with growing unease to successive episodes of political, economic and technological turbulence’. The research also revealed that, for the first time, more than half of respondents claimed to get their news from third-party platforms such as social media and video networks, although these formats were trusted less than average, at 22 per cent. The report’s authors suggest that the data suggests ‘a mix of anxiety, disengagement and cynicism’ from audiences. They did however, sound a note of optimism, pointing out that ‘the report also finds openness to new sources and formats, and a belief in what news at its best can offer’. The full report is available [here](#).

Anthropic suspends advanced AI models after export ban

The Trump administration ban on the export of Anthropic’s Fable and Mythos models has blindsided the AI industry, according to the Financial Times. The Department of Commerce imposed export controls days after the models had been released to the public, barring foreign nationals from using the technology and prompting the company to suspend their use for all users. The move followed a report by Amazon researchers which had apparently identified a means, known as a ‘jailbreak’, of bypassing the models’ guardrails to reveal software security vulnerabilities. Anthropic argues that the capability is not unique, and notes that the Fable model had previously been approved for launch. The ban raises questions among many in the industry over how the administration plans to oversee increasingly powerful AI models. Anthropic said it will meet administration officials urgently to discuss next steps. (Financial Times)

Continue on next page...



UK to introduce 'Australia plus' social media ban

UK prime minister Sir Keir Starmer has announced that the government will introduce a ban on under-16s use of social media platforms, arguing that it will 'make our children happier'. The minimum age will rise on sites including Snapchat, TikTok, YouTube, Instagram Facebook and X, but messaging sites such as WhatsApp and Signal will be excluded. The government is considering additional restrictions, including a ban on live-streaming, overnight curfews and 'breaks in infinite scrolling' for under-18s. Under criticism that teenagers will simply evade the rules as they have in Australia, the prime minister said that the ban will 'change the conversation over time' and pointed to the results of a consultation in which 90 per cent of parents supported a ban. (Financial Times)

EU orders Meta to open WhatsApp to rival AI chatbots

Meta must allow other AI providers access to WhatsApp in order to prevent 'serious and irreparable harm' to competition according to the European Commission. Access must be maintained as an interim measure while the Commission looks to complete its investigation into Meta, which began in December 2025. However, Meta described the move as 'regulatory overreach' and says it will appeal. (BBC)

EU announces tech sovereignty package

The European Commission has announced a set of measures designed to 'strengthen Europe's digital autonomy and resilience'. Included in the package are two new bills, a 'Chips Act', which will speed up permitting and build capacity in Europe's semiconductor industry, and the Cloud and AI Development Act, which aims to triple data centre capacity in Europe over the next five to seven years. The other components are an open source strategy which will invest in skills and support start-ups, and a roadmap for the digitalisation of the energy sector, which includes measures to integrate data centres into Europe's energy system and accelerate the deployment of digital and AI systems in the sector. More details [here](#). (European Commission)

