

Round-up of the latest news

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Technology companies may have to bear some of the cost of Europe’s telecoms network, according to Margarethe Vestager, the EU competition commissioner. Describing it as an issue of ‘fair contribution’ she went on to say that companies ‘generating a lot of traffic… have not been contributing to enabling the **investments in the rollout of connectivity**’. Vestager was less impressed by industry demands to allow more consolidation, saying the arguments were ‘not new’.

Elon Musk’s takeover of Twitter is ‘on hold’ until the company provides more evidence on the number of **fake accounts on the social media site**. The company says the number is ‘less than 5 per cent’, while Musk says the figure could be ’20 per cent or higher’.

Google’s Russian subsidiary has filed for insolvency. It’s thought the move could be linked to fines imposed on the company for **failing to remove content** the Russian government has deemed illegal, although Russia has said it was not planning to block YouTube, as it has several other social media platforms.

India’s government has said that it will not make any changes to **new cybersecurity rules** in spite of concerns raised by technology companies. Under the directive, coming into force in June, data breaches will be required to be reported within six hours. Companies point out that this is unreasonable when compared with European rules, under which reporting must be within 72 hours. The measures will result in a higher compliance burden and increased costs, the companies say.

A study for the Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL) has found that the average European’s data is shared 376 times per day, with the figure rising to 747 times for US users. The ICCL says the figures are based on one month of a Google feed. Although the data, used for advertising targeting and bidding, does not reveal information that it ‘personally identifying’, the ICCL argues that the **volume of data represents a violation of privacy.**

Facial Recognition company Clearview AI has been fined £7.5 million by the UK’s Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) for **breaking data protection laws.** The firm had collected images from Facebook and other social media platforms to create a database of more than 20 billion images. The investigation was carried out in conjunction with the Australian Information Commissioner, who has also announced an intention to fine the company. Clearview AI was fined EUR 20 million by watchdog Italian SA in February.

Italy’s Innovation and Digital Transition Ministry has awarded EUR 3.4 billion to two operators, Open Fiber and Telecom Italia, to bring **high-speed broadband infrastructure** to 7 million addresses in ‘grey areas’ of the country. The government is aiming to bring high speed broadband to close Italy’s digital divide by 2026, financed by the EU’s post-pandemic recovery fund.

A deal to reallocate **digital taxation rights** may not be ready until 2024, said French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire. The plan is part of a major overhaul of cross-border taxation and is meant to allow for large digital companies to be taxed in countries where the end-users are located. The agreement to re-write the rules was agreed at an OECD meeting by nearly 140 countries last October.

South Korean prosecutors have launched an investigation into crypto firm Terraform labs after the 40 billion dollar **collapse of cryptocurrency ‘Luna’**, once described as ‘the oldest and most widely used algo stablecoin in existence’ by its founder, Do Kwon. The currency was designed to be pegged to the dollar via a ‘see-saw’ algorithm and, at the time of its collapse was offering a 20 per cent yield to clients. Insiders working with Kwon described investors as ‘mesmerised by his genius’.

*Sources: The Financial Times, The Guardian, Ars Technica, Daily Telegraph, Reuters, BBC, telecom.com, telecommpaper, WSJ, edpb.europa, .*