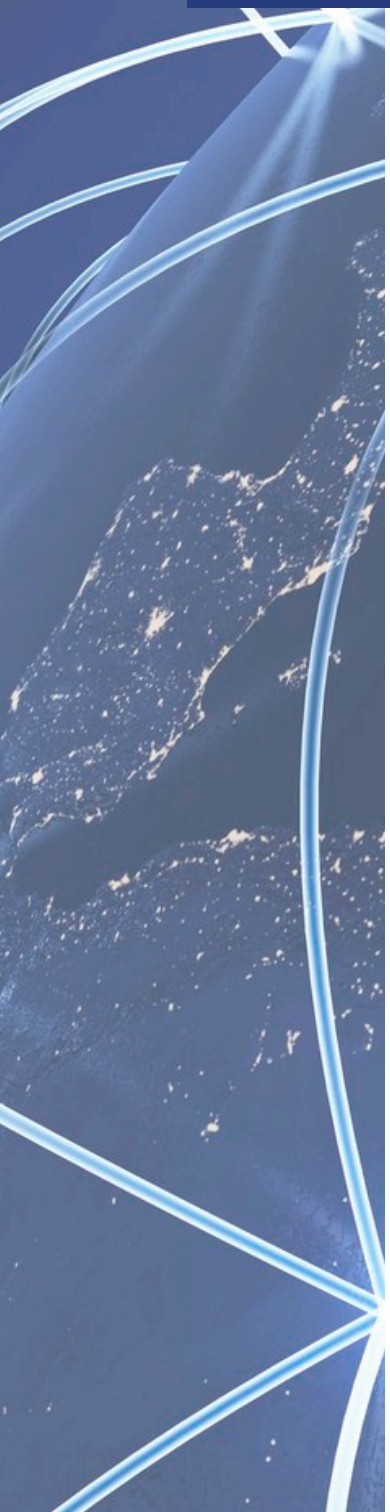
International Institute of Communications

enquiries@iicom.org www.iicom.org

REGULATORY WATCH

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

NOVEMBER 2026



EU renews push for global regulation of AI

The EU's determination to achieve a global governance pact for AI has been renewed following the US midterm elections. Donald Trump has so far been unconvinced, but the elections are seen as having weakened him in the face of a voter backlash against big tech. With the Democrats about to take control of the Senate and the House of Representatives the EU see a fresh opportunity to discuss a deal on AI. European Commission President Ursula von der Lyen said it would be 'very interesting to work with the Congress', and that 'this will not be an easy goal' but 'you have to start somewhere'. The UK has announced its intention to prioritise AI during its forthcoming presidency of the G20. (Financial Times)

European Commission sets out Digital Fairness Act proposal

The EU's Digital Fairness Act (DFA), designed to achieve 'better protection for consumers and fairer competition for businesses', has been unveiled by the European Commission. Key elements include a ban on manipulative marketing practices, such as fake claims that a product is about to sell out, clear pricing and disclosure of influencer marketing. The Act will also put an end to unwanted automatic renewals and free trials that turn into subscription traps. The Commission will be given powers to investigate large scale cases directly and non-EU companies will be required to appoint a legal representative in the EU to cooperate with national authorities and the Commission. Click here to read more.

South Korea planning for autonomous ships by 2032

The South Korean government has announced the development of core technologies for fully autonomous unmanned ships, to be in place by 2032. The initiative is part of the Maritime and Fisheries AI transformation strategy, which includes the use of artificial intelligence to achieve a reduction in casualties from marine accidents of 30 per cent by 2030. The plan is to introduce systems capable of analysing real-time vessel operations and maritime conditions to provide ships with relevant safety information. AI will also support the early identification of disruptions and emerging risks, with data used to help develop passage plans. There will also be an automated port testbed established at Gwangyang Port. South Korea is aiming to dominate global orders for automated ships by 2035. (Safety4Sea and Business Korea)

Continue on next page...



Australia introduces contentious new internet safety bill

The Australian parliament is set to pass a new internet safety bill after the ruling Labor party agreed to concessions including giving Australians the right to sue companies for harm suffered online. The Digital Duty of Care bill has been criticised by opposition parties and free speech advocates, who argue that it gives the government powers of online censorship. The US government has also expressed its objections to 'vaguely defined harms' which are backed by fines of up to 5 per cent of global revenue. Under the plans social media companies will be required to submit annual risk assessments. (Politico)

UK admits to secret 'backdoor order' after court case

In what privacy campaigners a calling a 'big win for accountability, transparency and online security' the UK government has been forced to admit that it issued a secret order to Apple to allow it access to encrypted data. The Investigatory Powers Tribunal rejected the government's bid to keep secret its attempts to force Apple create a 'backdoor', bypassing encryption systems that protect user data. Apple had opposed the 'technical capability notice' and the ruling means that much of the challenge from Apple and non-profits can now be heard in open court. The UK Home Office said that it simply required that Apple 'maintain the ability' to help the police and intelligence agencies bring criminals to justice. (Financial Times)

Signal restricts screenshots to block AI agents

Messaging service Signal said that it will restrict screenshots to stop AI agents from reading private chats on phones. The platform warned that the push by the tech industry to embed AI in consumer devices was eroding its ability to guarantee privacy. It urged operating system providers Apple, Google and Microsoft, to give app developers more concrete ways to block the agents from accessing sensitive data. Signal also called on the companies for more information about how their agents function, so developers can assess what data the bots are accessing and adjust their systems accordingly. (Reuters)