Issue Monitoring

Telecom Industry Progress Report

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Telecommunications

NATIONAL NEWS

VALERIU ZGONEA, ON THE RO-MD AGREEMENT ON ROAMING. Valeriu Zgonea, the President of ANCOM, believes that the RO-MD Agreement on the reduction of tariffs for the provision of international roaming services and international calls between the two countries represents both "a significant step for increasing connectivity", as well as a "profound economic development". Additionally, Valeriu Zgonea announced that the results of this agreement's first year show that the roaming internet traffic was 20 times bigger for users from Moldova who used roaming in Romania, respectively three times for users from Romania who used roaming in Moldova, while the average consumption cost in roaming between the two countries decreased by 70% in the case of users from the Moldova and by 30% in the case of users from Romania.

ANCOM REQUESTS MONEY FOR INVESTMENTS. At the request of ANCOM, the Government adopted a memorandum approving the conclusion of legal commitments for some investment categories. For example, ANCOM plans to purchase 43 portable spectrum analyzers for radio frequency signal analysis, with accessories, worth RON 23,556,109.50. The authority claims that its current equipment is at the level of technological developments of 2010 and has a very high degree of wear. Thus, the equipment shall be used mainly in the control activity. Additionally, ANCOM needs 3 stations for monitoring and ranging of the radio spectrum and a regional control center, worth RON 6,907,950.05, to expand the monitoring capabilities of the existing system. Finally, the authority also wants to buy 5 stations of electric field monitoring for mobile measurements (RON 580,125.00) and a software development service in order to expand the functionalities of the existing System for the collection, processing, and reporting of related statistical data of the telecommunication service providers (RON 1,768,092.48).

EUROPEAN NEWS

4iG SIGNS MoU WITH HUNGARY. The Hungarian telecommunications 4iG has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the government from Budapest, to strengthen the company's role in the implementation of the government's policy of increasing competitiveness and the national digitalization strategy. We remind you that 4iG bought Digi's operations in Hungary and was part of a consortium that bought Vodafone's operations in the same country. 4iG has also entered a partnership with German arms manufacturer Rheinmetall.

Data protection

NATIONAL NEWS

PENALTIES FOR GDPR VIOLATION. Rompetrol Downstream SRL was fined EUR 110,000 after the National Supervisory Authority (ANSPDCP) completed the investigation for violation of art. 32 of the GDPR. The data of several customers from the computer program owned by the company was accessed from the internal level and repeatedly used in an unauthorized manner, while the personal data of other customers were illegally disclosed for the purpose of obtaining loans from non-banking financial companies on their behalf.

EUROPEAN NEWS

GUIDELINES ON E-PRIVACY DIRECTIVE. The European Data Protection Board (EDPB) adopted the Guidelines that aim to clarify which technical operations, in particular new and emerging tracking techniques, are covered by the e-Privacy Directive, and to provide greater legal certainty to data controllers and individuals. In order to clarify the scope of Art. 5(3) of this Directive, the Guidelines analyse the key notions referred to in this article, such as 'information', 'terminal equipment of a subscriber or user', 'electronic communications network', 'gaining access', and 'stored information/storage'. The Guidelines also include a set of practical use cases featuring common tracking techniques. Now, the Guidelines are subject of a public consultation for a period of six weeks.

Digitalization and AI

NATIONAL NEWS

ANAF GUIDE ON TAX FACILITIES FOR IT. This week, the National Agency for Fiscal Administration (ANAF) published the Guide on how to apply the tax facilities granted to employees from the IT sector, starting with the related income in November 2023. The guide, therefore, contains the following information: (1) the method of calculating the determination of the tax on income from salaries and incomes assimilated to salaries for these employees who benefit from tax facilities; (2) the reduction of the social insurance contribution rate (CAS) by the percentage points corresponding to the contribution rate to the privately administered pension fund, provided for in Law no. 411/2004; (3) the method of calculating income tax and mandatory social contributions for a gross income greater than RON 10,000. We remind you that these measures are part of Law no. 296/2023.

EUROPEAN NEWS

EU FUNDS FOR DATA, COMPUTING AND AI. A new set of calls worth over EUR 290 million was launched this week. For example, EUR 60 million of this will invest in research in AI and data solutions to support the objectives of the European Green Deal (e.g.: robotics data and AI solutions to optimise production), EUR 76 million will be invested in research in areas such as AI, data, and robotics, with research projects that will allow robots to perform non-repetitive tasks in everyday settings and see the wider integration of robots in industry

and society, while the remaining EUR 70 million will invest in projects such as the development of cloud-to-edge servers which will help to bring about a full European open cloud and edge computing architecture.

FINAL AGREEMENT ON THE DIGITAL WALLET. The European Commission welcomed the final agreement between the Parliament and the Council on the proposal for a regulation that introduces the European Digital Identity Wallets. According to the Commission, all EU citizens will be offered the possibility to have an EU Digital Identity Wallet to access public and private online services in full security and protection of personal data all over Europe. Additionally, according to this proposal for a regulation, all private services that are legally required to authenticate their users will have to accept the EU Digital Identity Wallet for logging into their online services. This is because the Digital Wallet will allow users to open bank accounts, make payments, and hold digital documents. Following this agreement, the proposal for a regulation will be subject to formal approval by both the Parliament and the Council.

MAIN LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

ANCOM Draft Decision - *approval of the National Table of Radio Frequency Bands' Allocation*
Status: On November 15, it was included on the agenda of the ANCOM Consultative Council meeting held on November 21.
Next step: Adoption in the Consultative Council.

COM/2022/68 – *Data Act*
Status: On November 15, the outcome of the European Parliament's first reading was published.
Next step: Approval by the Council.

B653/2023 – *legislative proposal on a new Broadcasting Law*
Status: On November 14, it was registered in the Senate for debate.
Next step: Submitting it to the committees for the start of the debates.

Law no. 344/2023 - *the protection of critical infrastructures becomes a component of national security*
Status: On November 13, it was published in the Official Gazette, Part I, no. 1029.

MCID Order no. 21.324/2023 - *approval of the State Aid Scheme "Financing of economic research, development and innovation activities within the National Research, Development and Innovation Plan 2022—2027 of the Ministry of Research, Innovation and Digitalization"*
Status: On November 13, it was published in the Official Gazette, Part I, no. 1029.

MCID Order no. 21.253/2023 - *approval of the Data Framing Procedure and of the impact assessment model for the data used in the government cloud platform*
Status: On November 7, it was published in the Official Gazette, Part I, no. 1012.

PL-x 701/2023 – *draft bill on a new legal framework for all types of e-signature*
Status: On November 6, after it was adopted by the Senate, it was registered in the Chamber of Deputies and sent for a joint report to the Legal and the Information and Communication Technology Committees.
Next step: Issuance of the report (deadline: November 22).

MCID Order no. 21.286/2023 - *approval of the Reference Norms for achieving interoperability in the field of information and communications technology (NRRI)*
Status: On November 3, it was published in the Official Gazette, Part I, no. 1001 bis.

Issue Monitoring provides companies and business associations with real time alerts and periodic reports on various policies that are under debate in Parliament, Government or Authorities. The monitoring includes the entire legislative life cycle of draft bills, relevant news in mass media and stakeholders' profiles. For an in-depth monitoring, experts are present at public debates and industry events, providing a detailed synthesis of discussions.