European Commission: Communication on mid-term review of Digital Single Market Strategy

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On 10 May 2017, the European Commission published a Communication on the Mid-Term Review on the implementation of the Digital Single Market (DSM) Strategy: A Connected Digital Single Market for All. This Communication marks a two-year anniversary of the Digital Single Market Strategy published on 6 May 2015 (see IRIS 2015-6/3). The mid-term review discusses progress towards the implementation of the DSM strategy, identifies areas where more efforts are needed, and calls for further actions necessary for changing digital landscape.

Within the past two years, the Commission made proposals on all of the 16 DSM strategy's high priority actions, presenting 35 proposals in total (see, for example, IRIS 2017-3/6, IRIS 2016-10/4, IRIS 2016-9/4, IRIS 2016-5/5, and IRIS 2015-10/4). Nevertheless, so far, only one of the Commission's proposals has been approved by co-legislators. Therefore, the Commission calls on the EU Parliament and the Council for swift agreements on the Commission's proposals under the DSM strategy. The mid-term review proposes to extend the DSM strategy "to keep up to date with emerging trends and challenges such as those related to online platforms, the data economy and cybersecurity." The Commission outlines three areas that require further EU action: (1) promoting fairness and responsibility of online platforms; (2) developing the data economy to its full potential; and (3) tackling cybersecurity challenges.

In relation to online platforms, the Commission will address the issues of unfair contractual clauses and platform-to-business trading practices. It will also focus on the problem of mechanisms and technical solutions for removal of illegal content in order to enhance their effectiveness while ensuring full respect to fundamental rights.

In the area of data economy, the Commission is planning to prepare legislative initiatives on the cross-border free flow of non-personal data by autumn 2017, and an initiative on accessibility and re-use of public and publicly funded data by spring 2018.

In cybersecurity, by September 2017 the Commission will review the 2013 EU Cybersecurity Strategy and the mandate of the European Union Agency for Network and Information Security (ENISA) to define its role in the changed

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cybersecurity ecosystem. The Commission will also focus on measures on cyber security standards, certification, and labelling, to make ICT-based systems, including connected objects, more cyber-secure. The mid-term review also flags the necessity of further investment in digital skills as well as infrastructure and technologies, such as quantum computing.

Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the Mid-Term Review on the implementation of the Digital Single Market Strategy: "A Connected Digital Single Market for All" COM(2017) 228 final, 10 May 2017

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