



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

Transport, Telecommunications and Energy



17.04.09

Commissioner Reding speaks about the use of personal information

In a video posted on her website on the 14th of April, Viviane Reding, the European Union's Commissioner for Information Society and Media, said that Europeans must have the right to control how their personal information is used, and said that the Commission would take action wherever EU Member States failed to ensure that new technologies such as behavioural advertising, 'smart chips' or online social networking respected this right.

"European privacy rules are crystal clear: a person's information can only be used with their prior consent. We cannot give up this basic principle, and have all our exchanges monitored, surveyed and stored in exchange for a promise of 'more relevant' advertising! I will not shy away from taking action where an EU country falls short of this duty," said Commissioner Reding in her video message.

The Commissioner also called on social networking companies to reinforce privacy protection online: "Privacy must in my view be a high priority for social networking providers and their users. I firmly believe that at least the profiles of minors must be private by default and unavailable to internet search engines. The European Commission has already called on social networking sites to deal with minors' profiles carefully, by means of self-regulation. I am ready to follow this up with new rules if I have to."

Background Documents: The EU Directive on privacy and electronic communications requires EU Member States to ensure confidentiality of the communications by prohibiting unlawful interception and surveillance unless the users concerned have given their consent (Article 5(1) of [Directive 2002/58/EC](#)). The EU Data Protection Directive specifies that a person must freely give specific consent and be informed before their personal information is processed (Article 2(h) of [Directive 95/46/EC](#)).



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Last February the Commission brokered an agreement between 17 major social networking companies to improve privacy, especially of minors, on social networking websites. In this agreement companies recognised their responsibility to ensure child safety and committed to enabling and encouraging users to employ a safe approach to personal information and privacy. Later this month they will inform the Commission about their individual safety policies and how they will put in place the principles in the agreement.

View Commissioner Reding's video message here:

http://ec.europa.eu/commission_barroso/reding/video/index_en.htm

Consultation Note

Public Consultation on the options for new initiative regarding dismantling of ships

The dismantling of end-of-life ships is an issue of international concern: ships from all over the world are dismantled in South Asia in grave environmental and occupational health and safety conditions. Urgent action to improve the situation is needed, also in view of the expected increase of the numbers of ships going for dismantling. It is predicted that in 2010 nearly 800 single hull tankers will have to be dismantled well before the new IMO Convention enters into force. Furthermore, as a consequence of the economic crisis, experts predict that up to 1000 ships/year will be dismantled in 2009-2011. The adoption of legally binding measures is therefore of utmost urgency.

The European Commission is conducting a consultation process with citizens, organisations and public authorities on the matter. To view the consultation page and make your contribution, please follow this link:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/consultations/ship_dismantling_en.htm

Public consultation document:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/ships/pdf/Consultation-doc_ship_dismanling.doc



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News from the European Parliament

Compensation for Bus and Ferry Passengers (Codecision Procedure)

On Wednesday, MEPs will discuss a new series of rights for passengers who travel by bus and ferry. MEPs are envisaging compensation and arranging alternative ways of travelling. The proposed rules also protect the right of disabled passengers to board ships and buses. French Socialist Michel Teychenne drafted a report that covers compensations for any delays and cancellations. What is being proposed is:

- 25% of the ticket price back for a delay of 1-2 hours
- 50% of the ticket price for a delay of 2 hours plus
- 100% of the ticket price if no other transport means are available



For bus and coach travel Italian Christian Democrat Gabriele Albertini has also drafted a report which says that if people are delayed by 2 hours for a journey that should take at least 3 hours they are entitled to another form of transport. If this is not possible passengers must receive compensation or at least half the ticket price back.

Both reports stated that people with reduced mobility may not be refused the right to board a ship, bus or coach except where their safety would be endangered. MEPs ensured that the disability of a passenger cannot be used as a reason for denying them the right to board.