

AT A GLANCE: COMMISSION PRAISES ELECTRONICS IN SUCCESS WIRELESS TECHNOLOGIES – HYBRID THREAT REPORT OUT – PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON HEALTH AND CARE IN THE DSM

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EU DIGITAL POLICY

Estonia's tech power players in Brussels

Estonia's presidency of the Council of the EU kicked off this month, and Estonia's tech army in Brussels will be its loudest supporter in the coming six months.

The **Estonian presidency** insists it will be a neutral arbiter in the coming six months of negotiations between 28 polarized EU member countries. But there's no denying that their common view on how Europe should tweak its economy and public sector to accommodate tech will affect their leadership.

Here are the key influencers:



Andrus Ansip

Former Prime Minister Andrus Ansip is Estonia's most senior political official in Brussels. By chance or by design, he is the European Commission's vice president on digital affairs – and will look to the presidency to push through several digital single market policies already proposed by the Commission.

Ansip was most recognized for keeping Estonia's economy stable over the course of the financial crisis. He also notched some major digital achievements: mobile parking and e-banking were brought into everyday use under his watch.

Ansip faces one challenge: The presidency is spearheaded by an Estonian government run by Ansip's rival party. The Centre Party of current Prime Minister Jüri Ratas caters more to Estonia's Russian minority, in contrast to the pro-EU views of Ansip's Estonian Reform Party. So far, however, it seems like national political rifts haven't gotten in the way of EU digital policy.

Assuming Ansip can navigate national politics, the free flow of data and telecoms reform will be two areas where he and the presidency will be in lockstep most visibly. Both files remain blocked in inter-institutional negotiations. Expect Ansip to make many trips to Tallinn in the coming months as he seeks to ratchet up cooperation back home.



Juhan Lepassaar

Lepassaar is Ansip's chef de cabinet and has the ear of the vice president on digital policy decisions. He is a political animal more than a digital one: He got his start in Brussels working as a sherpa for the Estonian government, then as an EU adviser for Ansip while he was still Estonia's prime minister.

Lepassaar's political prowess lent him a key role in the difficult negotiations on copyright that defined last summer. It will again prove invaluable in the tricky discussions to come on reforming cybersecurity and the free flow of data.

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Lepasaar joined the cabinet of Ansip's predecessor in the EU, former Commission Vice President Siim Kallas, in 2013. He was quickly poached when Ansip was nominated as replacement in 2014.



Kaja Kallas

Kaja Kallas is one of the most visible Estonians on digital in the European Parliament, where she is involved with issues including telecoms, e-privacy and broadcasting rights. She is a regular on the Brussels conference panel circuit, often advocating for a more liberal market that allows for innovation in tech.

A competition lawyer by background, Kallas first ran for election in Estonia's national parliament in 2011. She has been an MEP since 2014 and often advocates for more attention on the fate of small businesses. She has also been known to grumble about the slow pace of European politics in general, especially in a fast-moving sector like tech.

Kallas is the daughter of former Commission Vice President Siim Kallas, who was Estonian prime minister from 2002 to 2003. She is from the same party, the Estonian Reform Party, as Commissioner Ansip.



Luukas Ilves

Luukas Ilves, an interview with whom we published last month, is the Estonian presidency's designated digital specialist and will be in charge of getting EU member countries to agree on digital files such as the telecoms reform. Ilves is already somewhat of a Brussels veteran at 29 years old.

Ilves moves into his presidency role from his position as a telecoms attaché at the Estonian permanent representation. He arrived in Brussels in March 2014 to join Dutch Commissioner Neelie Kroes' cabinet for a few months as a national expert while Kroes held the position of digital commissioner. Before that, Ilves was head of international relations at Estonia's Information System Authority.



Christian-Marc Lifländer

Lifländer is the head of NATO's cyber defense section and the organization's most visible face on all things cyber. The American-educated defense expert worked for the Estonian ministry of defense for many years before moving to NATO.

With Estonia's expertise in cybersecurity – after a large-scale Russian cyberattack in 2007 prompted the country to put an outsized focus on securing its digital infrastructure – Lifländer already employed his national experience to reform and update NATO's approach.

His competence will again take center stage when the European Commission releases its reviewed cybersecurity strategy, likely in September. He won't just provide technical knowledge: Lifländer's clout means he's expected to weigh in on political decisions on how to beef up cybersecurity across the EU bloc.

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Henrik Hololei

As head of the Commission's transport arm DG Move, Hololei has worked closely with DG Connect boss Roberto Viola – the Italian director-general who led much of the drafting of the Commission's digital single market strategy. Hololei continues to advocate vocally for the modernization of mobility, whether through self-driving car corridors or changes to public transport infrastructure.

Hololei is extremely well connected: He was head of cabinet under former Commission Vice President Kallas, and many members of that same team now work in Ansip's cabinet – including Hanna Hinrikus, who is personal assistant to the vice president. Hololei kept another Estonian, Marit Ruuda, with him at DG Move to oversee the department's communications.

Hololei previously held the senior role of deputy secretary-general of the European Commission, giving him a valuable birds-eye view of the workings of the executive.

Source: Politico Pro

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ELECTRONICS

Commission praises electronics in success of EU in wireless technologies

On 3 July the European Commission held an **event** to consider the role of science, research, and innovation in shaping the future of Europe. The conference, which is particularly timely given the Commission is currently reflecting on



Europe's future through the White Paper process, considered both the great changes and challenges which science can bring about. The Conference considered how, while automation can liberate humans from repetitive and tedious occupations, it can also lead to displacement and large scale unemployment. Equally, while the use of Big Data could help policymakers and authorities manage/govern their cities more effectively, there are also questions pertaining to cybersecurity and privacy. Finally, a recurrent issue which participants brought up was the supranational level's inadequate budget. Indeed, many felt that far too many good projects do not get the funding they deserve because the EU's budget is too limited. Accordingly, some participants went so far as to call for a doubling of the EU's science funding budget.

Khalil Rouhana, Deputy Director-General at DG Connect, talked about the success of EU in the area of mobile and wireless technologies: *"There are two major innovations that the EU programmes were instrumental to bringing in. The first is the low power electronics and low power microelectronics that enable people to have electronic devices on them the whole time and to be able to use them almost everywhere. The EU is a global leader in the area of low power electronics. This technology continues to develop every day and it has expanded to the car sector as billions of euros have been invested. The second innovation is cellular technology that make communication easy. This technology was brought in with many projects starting from 2G to 5G. These two big innovations made mobiles happen and it happened because different sectors and stakeholders from all over Europe came together."* He concluded by noting that a big success of all these, is that it is possible to track which European programme contributed to the development of these technologies, from FP4 to HORIZON 2020.

Source: Dods

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CYBERSECURITY

Hybrid threat report out

This month the European Commission and the High Representative **reported** on actions taken and next steps to be implemented for the **2016 Joint Framework on countering hybrid threats**. Overall, the European Commission seems to have trouble figuring out which face to

put on the issue of cybersecurity. Security Commissioner Julian King is vocal about it, and so is Digital Single Market Commissioner Ansip. High Commissioner Federica Mogherini is naturally involved when it comes to slamming foreign countries for misbehaviour in cyberspace.

The European Commission summed up a list of measures it has taken to fight the "hybrid threat," which it defined in a **2016 communication**. The list goes from EU centers that monitor things like Russian propaganda efforts, to cybersecurity measures taken in the aviation or energy sector.

Source: [Político Pro + Interel](#)



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ICT FOR NCD PREVENTION

Public Consultation on Health and Care in the Digital Single Market



The European Commission has launched a **public consultation** on digital transformation of health and care on 20 July 2017. This consultation investigates the need for policy measures that will promote digital innovation for better health and care in Europe and feed into a new Policy Communication to be adopted by the end of 2017. Several questions in the consultation specifically focus on measures for widespread uptake of digital innovation, supporting citizen feedback and interaction between patients and healthcare providers. The consultation is open until 12 October 2017.

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DATA PROTECTION

Clouds linger over troubled transatlantic data-transfer deal



A year after European and American officials hammered out a [data-sharing deal](#) to allow companies to move people's digital information across the Atlantic, the agreement's future looks likely to be settled by lawyers, not lawmakers.

Discussions between European and American officials are focused on small tweaks to the deal, and the upcoming review looks unlikely to solve that uncertainty. Instead, how companies move digital data – everything from social media posts and search queries to companies' payroll and pension data – is expected to be resolved eventually by legal challenges and other disagreements that still swirl over the data-transfer agreement.

At the heart of the debate are differences in how Europe and the United States handle people's online data and whether European standards for data protection are upheld by American officials. Privacy advocates and some European countries' national data protection watchdogs claim that the current data-transfer deal still does not go far enough in upholding Europeans' data protection rights, some of the most stringent in the world, when their online data is shipped electronically to the United States.

American and European authorities are already haggling over the details of the first annual review to be held the week of September 18. The discussions have mostly focused on small changes to the current agreement, including efforts by European officials to receive guarantees from their American counterparts that commitments from the previous White House will be upheld.

With few major changes expected from the review in September, companies and privacy campaigners are turning their attention to a relatively small number of legal challenges in European courts that will likely decide how transatlantic data transfers will eventually be determined. That includes several cases filed in Europe's highest court against the European Commission that will test whether the current privacy shield agreement adequately protects Europeans' rights when their data is moved to the United States. Hearings in those cases are expected to take place in late 2017, at the earliest.

Source: Politico Pro

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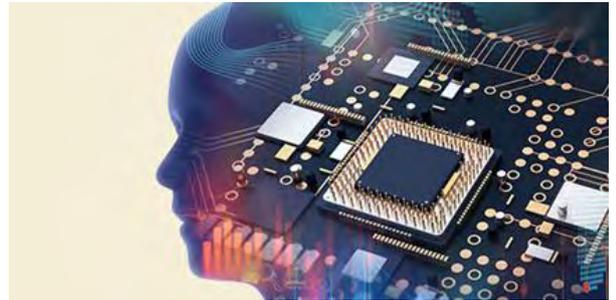
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Currently the IEEE EPPI ICT Working Group is drafting a paper on artificial intelligence. During this process, the Working Group is closely following the policy making process on artificial intelligence and robotics at EU level and in national Member States.



Last month the UK House of Lords [Select Committee on Artificial Intelligence](#) published a call for evidence.

Lord Clement-Jones, who chairs the Committee, said the inquiry comes at a time when artificial intelligence is increasingly seizing the attention of industry, policymakers and the general public. He stressed that the Committee wants to use this inquiry to understand what opportunities exist for society in the development and use of artificial intelligence, as well as what risks there might be.

The Committee is looking to be pragmatic in its approach, and wants to make sure its recommendations to Government and others will be practical and sensible. There are significant questions to address relevant to both the present and the future, and the Committee wants to help inform the answers to them. To do this, the Committee needs the help of the widest range of people and organisations.

The deadline for submitting written evidence is 6 September.

Source: [UK Parliament](#), [IEEE](#), [Interel](#)