

Network Neutrality and the reform proposals for the electronic communications sector

Brussels, April 17, 2008, 15:30 – 20:00

**CLEC Seminar in combination with the Annual ISPA Event,
organised by:**



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In its 2007 reform proposals, the Commission touches upon the issue of network neutrality in the context of users' rights and consumer protection. The proposed changes to the Universal Service Directive include granting the power to NRAs to prevent degradation of quality of service by setting minimum quality levels for network transmission services for end-users. However, the various forms of discrimination which are usually at the forefront of the network neutrality debate (service and/or content discrimination, blocking, prioritisation) may also trigger the application of *ex ante* remedies and competition law. This seminar intends to analyse the contentious issues related to network neutrality in the context of the EU reform of the ECNS regulatory framework. It will address questions such as:

- *To what extent should network operators be allowed to restrict the devices which can be attached to and the applications which can be run over their networks?*
- *Will network operators be able and willing to favour access to affiliated content and applications, and to block or disfavour access to unaffiliated content? Will they have the power to select what people see and hear, and if yes, how is this different from the case of conventional media?*
- *To what extent will competitive forces mitigate the risk of blockage?*
- *How can one distinguish between welfare-enhancing service differentiation, versus anticompetitive discrimination? And can competition law instruments provide an adequate answer in the latter case?*

15:30 Registration and coffee

16:00 Opening speaker

> **Milton Mueller**

(Professor, Syracuse University N.Y. and Delft University)

16:30 Unraveling the network neutrality debate

> **Pierre Larouche**

(Professor, University of Tilburg)

17:00 The EU perspective

> **Richard Cawley**

(European Commission, DG Information Society)

17:30 Coffee break

VIEWS FROM THE INDUSTRY

17:45 Net Regulations and the Drive for Investment in Competitive Markets: A network operator's viewpoint

> **Christopher Boam**

(Director International Public Policy, Verizon US)

18:15 Net Neutrality and pluralistic access: A content distributor's viewpoint

> **Nick Bambring**

(Director Content Acquisition Europe, Zattoo)

18:45 Panel discussion chaired by **Yves Blondeel (T-Regs)**

> All presenters + Catherine Rutten (BIPT), Tom Kiedrowski (Ofcom)

19:30 Cocktail reception

Registration:

<http://www.juritic.be/pages/inscriptionclecisp.html>

Venue:

Fondation Universitaire Stichting
rue d'Egmont 11, 1000 Brussels
www.fondationuniversitaire.be

Participation fee

100€ (without VAT) drinks and sandwiches included

Reductions

- ISPA Members: 1 free invitation + 50€ (without VAT) for all additional subscriptions
- Non members: 100€ (Without VAT) + 75€ for all additional subscriptions
- Former DTIC-students and doctoral students: 75€ (without VAT)