



The European Consumers' Organisation

COMMUNIQUE DE PRESSE  
PRESS RELEASE

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## **Commission still not up to speed on Net Neutrality**

Europe's 350 million internet users were today disappointed by a second chance lost to secure the neutral nature and quality of service of the internet, in today's European Commission communication on Net Neutrality.

The Net Neutrality principle asserts all internet data must be treated equally - irrespective of source, destination and type. It protects users against unfair 'traffic management' techniques by network providers, such as blocking, degradation or prioritisation of popular high-bandwidth online services e.g. voice calling<sup>1</sup> and P2P file-sharing.

BEUC today regrets that the Commission has for now passed up the opportunity to adopt specific rules on Net Neutrality for the benefit of internet users. The fact finding exercise just announced will confirm the obvious: net neutrality is endangered and significant time has already been lost. The European Consumers' Organisation is among many stakeholders calling for regulation at EU-level.

Different approaches by National Regulatory Authorities in EU countries, the increasing frequency of restrictions by operators, all combined with a lack of effective competition in the telecoms market, show the clear need for urgent EU action to ensure Net Neutrality in Europe.

Commenting, Monique Goyens, Director General of The European Consumers' Organisation said:

"It's an issue of huge importance for all Europe's internet users. Transparency alone is a level of protection so thin as to be see-through. Web users need more than that to ensure the access and quality they pay for and should be getting are not discriminated against.

"The internet after all is about openness, choice and participation. If ISPs misuse their control of internet traffic, then these essential qualities are lost. This race of technological advances is high-speed and, to remain fair, requires a referee. The EU needs take on this role while giving national regulatory authorities the means to do the same."

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**For further info, examples and comment, contact BEUC via details above.**

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<sup>1</sup> Also known as VoIP (Voice Over Internet Protocol) –voice calling services on the internet.