

# European Media Policy

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# Digital rules

## Child sexual abuse law: Privacy regulators concerned

[EU's draft law to prevent and combat child sexual abuse online](#) – proposed by the Commission in May – has continued to spark controversy in recent months.

Soon after its publication, the draft Regulation was criticised by journalists and civil society groups for containing measures which seem to allow the widespread scanning of people's private communications.

The European Federation of Journalists (EFJ) said it was concerned that the legislation could “jeopardise the fundamental protection of journalistic sources” and “could have serious implications for journalists using end-to-end encryption to communicate with their sources and colleagues. ([EFJ warns that EU legislation to prevent child abuse online...](#))

This summer, the Commission's proposal incited a heated debate in Germany, where privacy issues tend to be extra sensitive.

New data released by the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) had shown that the hosting of child pornographic content in Germany exploded tenfold from 2020 to 2021, “making it one of the most exploiting locations in the EU”. ([Germany hotspot for hosting child porn](#))

In the debate, critics argued that what they call “chat control” is mass surveillance that interferes with data protection and privacy, and alternatives to this measure should be considered. Proponents said that with the rapidly worsening child pornography situation, it is a matter of child protection rather than breaking encryption.

Then, at the end of July, European privacy regulators announced that they were not at all happy with the EU draft law. In a [Joint Opinion \(4/2022\)](#) on the proposed legislation, they said it poses “serious risks for fundamental rights”.

In their assessment, the European Data Protection Board (EDPB) – the network of national privacy watchdogs – and the European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS) said they were seriously concerned that the bill could undermine people's privacy.

The proposal contains many shortcomings, including vague language, they said, also criticising the strong links between a potential future EU centre to deal with illegal content and the EU's law enforcement agency, Europol. ([European privacy regulators slam online child abuse law](#))

Surely chagrined by this rebuke, Ylva Johansson – the Swedish EU Home Affairs Commissioner responsible for the proposal – soon thereafter gave a line-by-line

response saying the proposal was “well-reasoned, legally solid and entirely necessary to fight the scourge of child sexual abuse online”. ([Children deserve protection and privacy](#))

“Our proposed legislation strikes the right balance between the various fundamental rights concerned, in particular in view of the serious nature of child sexual abuse”, she underlined.

The Commissioner points out, for example, that detection systems are only to be used for the sole purpose of detecting and reporting child sexual abuse, and strict safeguards prevent use for other purposes.

The proposal also provides for judicial redress, with both providers and users having the right to challenge any measure affecting them in Court.

Want to have your say on the draft rules? The Commission invites feedback on the proposal from members of the public until 12 September 2022. ([Fighting child sexual abuse](#))

## EU Parliament adopts landmark digital rulebook

Loud cheers were surely heard on 5 July when the European Parliament adopted the so-called Digital services package, consisting of the Digital Services Act (DSA) and Digital Markets Act (DMA). ([Texts adopted by the EU Parliament](#))

The two bills aim to address the societal and economic effects of the tech industry by setting clear standards for how they operate and provide services in the EU, in line with the EU’s fundamental rights and values, explains Parliament. ([Digital Services: landmark rules adopted](#))

More on the two bills below.

## Digital Markets Act (DMA): Reigning in Big Tech

Tech giants like Google and Meta are probably not overly happy about the DMA, which aims to secure competition in the digital economy. It sets obligations for large online platforms acting as “gatekeepers” on the digital market to ensure a fairer business environment and more services for consumers.

Gatekeepers can no longer, for example, rank their own services or products more favourably than others, prevent users from easily un-installing any pre-loaded software or apps, or process users’ personal data for targeted advertising, unless consent is explicitly granted.

On 18 July, the EU Council approved Parliament's position on the DMA, and the law was thereby adopted. ([DMA: Council gives final approval to new rules](#))

The legislation – which is directly applicable across the EU – will enter into force twenty days after its publication in the EU Official Journal and will start to apply six months later.

The gatekeepers will have a maximum of six months after having been designated as such by the Commission to comply with the new obligations.

## Digital Services Act (DSA): Tackling illegal content and disinformation

Much interest has been focused on the DSA, which sets obligations for digital service providers, such as social media or marketplaces, to tackle the spread of illegal content, online disinformation and other societal risks.

“The digital world has developed into a Wild West, with the biggest and strongest setting the rules. But there is a new sheriff in town – the DSA. Now rules and rights will be strengthened. We are opening up the black box of algorithms so that we can have a proper look at the moneymaking machines behind these social platforms”, said Danish MEP Christel Schaldemose, rapporteur for the DSA, after the vote on 5 July.

The DSA’s requirements are proportionate to the size and risks platforms pose to society. Very large online platforms and search engines (with 45 million or more monthly users), which present the highest risk, will have to comply with stricter obligations, enforced by the Commission.

Among these is a controversial “crisis response mechanism” – set out in the new article (59a) added in the context of the war in Ukraine and the manipulation of online information – which says that when a crisis occurs, such as a public security or health threat, the Commission may require very large platforms to limit any urgent threats on its platforms.

The provisional agreement on the Digital Services Act that was reached by the Council and the Parliament in April and adopted by Parliament on 5 July is expected to be approved by the Council this September.

Then it will be published in the EU Official Journal and enter into force twenty days later.

The DSA Regulation will be directly applicable across the EU and will apply fifteen months or from 1 January 2024 (whichever comes later) after coming into force. As regards the obligations for very large online platforms and very large online search engines, the DSA will apply earlier – four months after they have been designated as such by the Commission.

## Concerns about enforcement of new rules

All eyes are now turning to enforcement of the new digital rulebook, something many worry about. Meanwhile, an army of Big Tech lawyers are sharpening their knives.

Particular concerns have been raised on the need for the EU executive to have sufficient resources to implement the DMA, which introduces a set of ex-ante rules for the largest tech companies to make their dominant market position more easily contestable by competitors, reports EURACTIV. ([Commissioner hints at enforcement details](#))

Resources are less of a problem for the DSA, where the Commission will only enforce the new rulebook on big platforms with more than 45 million users in the EU and will be able to charge them a supervisory fee of up to 1 per cent of their annual turnover.

The Commission's Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology (DG CNECT) will play a key role in providing the technical expertise.

In terms of staff, DG CNECT is expected to dedicate a total of 100 employees fully to the enforcement of the two regulations, via both recruitment and internal reallocation of EU officials. Additional support is expected to be provided via a pool of experts and external contractors.

As for the DMA, the enforcement will be equally shared with the department for competition policy (DG COMP).

The Commission admits that the EU executive needs to bolster its technical expertise, notably in data science and algorithms. A European Centre for Algorithmic Transparency will be set up jointly by DG CNECT and the Joint Research Centre.

The Commission had better be well prepared. "An army of lawyers in Brussels, vying for multimillion-dollar contracts with Big Tech, is preparing to evade or even tear up the EU's landmark attempt to rein in digital giants", warns POLITICO. ([EU braces for Big Tech's legal backlash](#))

## EU opens new US office to counter Big Tech's backlash

On 1 September, the European Union will open an office in San Francisco. One of the main tasks of the new office in Silicon Valley will be to keep relations with the US tech giants constructive, rather than conflictual, as new digital rules step in.

"It's important to have a positive relationship between the regulator and the regulated", explains the EU Commission's Gerard de Graaf, who will be heading the office. "I see it as our role is to try and facilitate the implementation and the compliance". ([New EU office in the Silicon Valley](#))

De Graaf is no novice at these matters. A Commission veteran, he was the director who oversaw the drafting and approval of the Digital Markets Act (DMA) and Digital Services Act (DSA).

De Graaf's role will be especially significant in the case of the DMA, which allows for a regulatory dialogue between the Commission and the so-called gatekeepers, so that they better incorporate the new legal obligations into the way they operate.

Some of the DMA obligations touch upon the very business model of the companies concerned, de Graaf notes, making an example of operating systems that will have to open up to alternative app stores.

The establishment of the EU office in San Francisco was welcomed in the recent Council conclusions on EU Digital Diplomacy (more on this below), as a means of "building contacts with authorities and stakeholders on the ground".

## New policy to strengthen EU's global role in digital affairs

Digital technologies have brought new opportunities and risks into the lives of EU citizens and people around the globe. They have also become "key competitive parameters that can shift the geopolitical balance of power", says the EU Council

Against this background, the Council in July invited all relevant parties to ensure that digital diplomacy becomes a core component and an integral part of the EU external action (foreign policy). (See [conclusions on EU digital diplomacy](#))

A main purpose of this new policy is to strengthen the Union's global role in digital affairs.

The EU intends to "actively promote universal human rights and fundamental freedoms, the rule of law and democratic principles in the digital space" and advance a human-centric and human rights-based approach to digital technologies in relevant multilateral fora and other platforms.

It will build partnerships and coalitions with like-minded countries and strengthen cooperation in and with the UN system, the G7, the OSCE, the OECD, the WTO, NATO, the Council of Europe and other multilateral fora.

Here, the Council notes the "increasing importance of EU coordination on elections and appointments for positions at UN and other relevant multilateral bodies".

The Council could well have been thinking of an impending important event in Romania. From 26 September to 14 October, the UN's International Telecommunication Union (ITU) will be holding its [Plenipotentiary Conference](#) in Bucharest. Here, policy-makers are to decide between US candidate Doreen Bodgan-Martin and her Russian counterpart Rashid Ismailov for the agency's new secretary general. Possibly a nail-biter.

# Disinformation

## Stronger commitments to fight disinformation

On 16 June, the long-awaited [strengthened Code of Practice on Disinformation](#) was published. Importantly, this revised set of voluntary rules will come into force by early 2023, before the binding guidelines of the new Digital Services Act (DSA) – to which it is linked – start applying in 2024.

The list of signatories of the new Code has been extended from major online platforms, like Meta, Google, Twitter and TikTok, to include smaller platforms and a variety of other players like ad-tech companies, fact-checkers and groups that offer expertise and solutions to fight disinformation.

“We now have very significant commitments to reduce the impact of disinformation online and much more robust tools to measure how these are implemented across the EU in all countries and in all its languages. Users will also have better tools to flag disinformation and understand what they are seeing. The new Code will also reduce financial incentives for disseminating disinformation and allow researchers to access to platforms' data more easily”, explained EU Commission Vice-President Věra Jourová. ([Commission welcomes the new stronger and more comprehensive Code of Practice](#))

Signatories would, for example, give users tools to assess the accuracy of sources via fact-checking organisations, reports EURACTIV. ([Platforms prepare for new anti-disinformation commitments](#))

As for helping researchers, the signatories commit to providing automated access to non-personal and anonymised data. Such access would be given by an independent body that will vet the researchers and their research proposals.

The new code's voluntary commitments will become a code of conduct under the DSA for very large online platforms.

“To be credible, the new Code of Practice will be backed up by the DSA – including for heavy dissuasive sanctions. Very large platforms that repeatedly break the Code and do not carry out risk mitigation measures properly risk fines of up to 6% of their global turnover”, warned Thierry Breton, EU Commissioner for Internal Market.

## New Code of Practice: More to sign up?

Some important online actors are missing among the signatories of the new Code of Practice on Disinformation, the American tech news website *The Verge* pointed out.

“Despite the scope of the anti-disinformation code, there are some notable absences from the list of signatories. Apple, for example, has not signed up, despite its burgeoning advertising business and the code’s focus on demonetizing sources of disinformation by cutting off ads. Other large platforms, like Telegram, which has been a major battleground for propaganda following the Russian invasion of Ukraine, are also absent”. ([Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, Google and others agree to new EU rules](#))

Now here’s a chance for these companies to join the signatories: In July, the EU Commission and current signatories launched a [call for interest for new signatories to join the 2022 Code of Practice](#).

The call is addressed to a wide range of stakeholders, for example, social media, private messaging applications and search engines; stakeholders who provide technological solutions to combat disinformation; and fact-checkers and civil society organisations specialising in countering disinformation.

## Gaming exploited by young extremists

Europol’s recently published [2022 report on the EU terrorism situation](#) contains some media-related passages that may interest media scholars and policy-makers.

The report describes how the online environment is used by violent extremists and terrorists of all ideologies to connect, share instructions, issue propaganda and recruit new followers.

“This is likely to become a more frequent occurrence, as new platforms emerge and more users are attracted and exposed to extremist narratives”.

The ages of the suspects involved in law enforcement investigations and of those participating in right-wing online communities continued to decrease, perhaps as a result of more time generally spent online during the Covid-19 pandemic.

“The radicalisation of very young males, often still minors, is of great concern”, say the authors.

The very young males observed in right-wing online communities do not match the classic profile of a right-wing extremist and come from a diversified background. Many still live with their parents and attend school.

Some common features have been repeatedly observed, such as psychological issues and issues in engaging socially with peers. “In that sense, right-wing extremist online networks may offer a sense of community and belonging”, conclude the researchers.

Regarding the increase in the number of radicalised minors, “the exploitation of the gaming landscape by extremists is an unsettling trend”, write the authors.



Not only do right-wing extremists use gaming apps, gaming platforms and video games for communication, but they are also used for the gamification of propaganda, for example, through the creation of fascist utopias where racist role-play is facilitated in video games.

## Media Freedom

### Rule of Law report: Much focus on media issues

On 13 July, the Commission published its [third annual Rule of Law Report](#), which examines developments in the EU in key areas for the rule of law, among them media pluralism and freedom.

The report includes an overview of the trends in the EU as a whole and country chapters looking at developments in every Member State since July 2021. This year's report for the first time contains specific recommendations addressed to each Member State.

As for media pluralism and freedom, the Commission found that several Member States have adopted, stepped up or are considering measures to improve journalists' safety and working conditions. Since the last report, several Member States have also made efforts to improve the transparency of media ownership.

However, concerns remain regarding the lack of transparency in the distribution of state advertising, conflict of interests and obstacles related to the access to public documents – “these are some of the important issues highlighted in the report which require attention”, underlines the Commission. ([Rule of Law Report 2022: Commission issues specific recommendations to Member States](#))

For the first time, the Rule of Law report also looks into public service media, recognising their special role for society and democracy (more on this below).

The report's media focus comes ahead of the publication of the long-awaited European Media Freedom Act, scheduled for release in September, which will establish a legal framework for safeguarding media independence and pluralism.

### EU: Protect independence of public service media!

In many parts of Europe, there are concerns about the future of public broadcasting, often tied to its financing. At the end of June, for example, French public television and radio groups went on strike against the planned abolition of the broadcasting licence fee paid by French households.

“Abolishing the licence fee, an allocated revenue, means making public broadcasting more precarious and impoverished by transferring it to the government budget and

making it dependent on constant political choices and pressures”, the unions argued in a joint press release stressing that “the licence fee is currently the only permanent method of financing that guarantees the independence of public broadcasting”. ([French public broadcasting sector on strike, uncertain about its future](#))

The EU Commission is concerned about public broadcasting too. In Its recently published [2022 Rule of Law Report](#), it included a new section dealing specifically with this issue.

“For the first time, the report looks into public service media”, pointed out Commission Vice-President Věra Jourová. “More safeguards are needed to ensure that the independence of public service media is protected, that public funding is adequate and not used to put political pressure on those media”.

In eight EU member states, there were concerns about insufficient guarantees against the politicisation of appointments and dismissals of executive positions in these media. In four other EU countries, weaknesses in the funding and independence of media regulators were noted. ([Commission deep-dives over media freedom in annual rule of law report](#))

The report also calls for greater transparency and equity when it comes to the allocation of state advertising, as well as greater safeguards to prevent political influence from being exerted over media through broadcast licensing systems.

## Hungary twice referred to EU’s top court

This summer, the EU Commission seems to really have had it in for Hungary. On 15 July, two days after the release of its 2022 Rule of Law report, the Commission filed two media-related cases with the Court of Justice, the EU’s top court.

In the first case, the Commission refers Hungary to the court for breaching EU telecoms rules, by the Hungarian Media Council's decision to reject opposition radio broadcaster Klubradio's application for the use of radio spectrum. ([Media freedom: the Commission refers Hungary to the Court of Justice](#))

The conditions attached to the use of radio spectrum and procedures to grant, prolong, renew or revoke those rights are subject to EU electronic communications rules set out in the [European Electronic Communications Code](#) (Directive (EU) 2018/1972), points out the Commission.

Hungary is in breach of this law by applying disproportionate and non-transparent conditions to the renewal of Klubradio's rights to use radio spectrum, believes the EU Commission

Furthermore, Hungary applied the relevant rules in a disproportionate and discriminatory manner, and the government failed to adopt timely decisions.

Through its conduct, Hungary has also violated the freedom of speech as enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU, says the Commission, which launched the infringement procedure over a year ago.

On the same day, the Commission also decided to refer Hungary to the EU top court over a Hungarian law that discriminates against people on the basis of their sexual orientation and gender identity.

The law particularly singles out and targets content that “promotes or portrays” what it refers to as “divergence from self-identity corresponding to sex at birth, sex change or homosexuality” for individuals under 18. ([Commission refers Hungary to the Court of Justice](#))

The Commission says the law violates a number of EU rules, among them the Audiovisual Media Services Directive. It also violates “in a systematic manner” several fundamental rights enshrined in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, for example, the right to non-discrimination and the right to freedom of expression and information.

The Hungarian government doesn't seem overly fazed by this sabre rattling. A month later, Hungary's National Media and Communications Authority said it was investigating Netflix for potentially violating the controversial anti-LGBTQ+ law, citing “several complaints” over a cartoon showing girls kissing. ([Not chill with Netflix. Hungary probes kids' cartoon](#))

## EUR 4.1 million to defend media freedom and pluralism

The European Commission has published a [€4.1 million call to monitor and defend media freedom and pluralism](#), financed through the EU's Creative Europe programme.

EUR 1 million will be allocated to further strengthen the position of media councils and to develop journalistic standards, the other EUR 3.1 million will make sure the EU continues providing a rapid response mechanism to protect journalists under threat after 2023. The mechanism includes concrete tools enabling targeted journalists to pursue their professional activities.

“Since 2020, our EU-wide rapid response mechanism has successfully provided assistance, legal aid, and shelters to journalists under threat. Most recently, it has helped Ukrainian journalists in exile”, explained Commission Vice-President Věra Jourová.

Non-profit organisations, international organisations, universities, educational institutions and research centres within the EU and in [associated countries](#), including Ukraine, may submit their proposals until 20 September 2022.

- [Call: Defending media freedom and pluralism - Press and media councils](#)
- [Call: Defending media freedom and pluralism - Rapid response mechanism](#)

## Media Economy

### Google's commitments on rights for news media approved

A recent ruling by France's competition watchdog should be of interest not only to the French news media. On 21 June, the authority announced that it had accepted the commitments Google had made to solve the copyright dispute with news organisations over online content.

This concludes a three-year-old case triggered by complaints from some of France's biggest news organisations, including AFP. Google also dropped its appeal against a EUR 500 million fine paid last year, reports Reuters. ([Google resolves French copyright dispute over online content](#))

The head of the antitrust authority, Benoit Coeure, said the ruling would be closely examined by other European countries.

France was the first EU country to transpose the EU [copyright directive of April 2019](#), which includes "neighbouring rights" that allow press agencies and publishers to claim compensation for the re-use of their journalistic content by search engines like Google or social networks like Facebook.

News publishers had argued that the rise of Google's ad sales online was underpinned by the exploitation of excerpts of their news content online, depriving them of a potential revenue stream at a time of decline in print sales.

Google will commit to a remuneration proposal within three months of the start of negotiations, and if no agreement can be found, the matter will be settled by a court. The company will also ensure the negotiations will have no impact on the way the news is presented on its search pages, explains Reuters.

Perhaps news media in the United States will soon be able to get a better deal too. Recently, a bipartisan group of US lawmakers released a revised version of a bill aimed

at making it easier for news organisations to negotiate collectively with platforms like Google and Facebook. ([U.S. lawmakers unveil bill to help news media negotiate](#))

The Journalism Competition and Preservation Act "removes legal obstacles to news organizations' ability to negotiate collectively and secure fair terms from gatekeeper platforms that regularly access news content without paying for its value", explain the lawmakers.

## EU support for local media

The EU Commission seems aware of the value of local, regional and community media and the dire situation many of them are in.

These media "foster social cohesion and democracy...increase trust, provide stories of relevance to local communities and ensure political accountability". However, new consumption habits and falling revenues are challenging their business models, "posing risks for citizens' access to reliable and diverse information in certain areas", points out the EU executive.

Therefore, the Commission has designed a new call for proposals to support innovation and long-term resilience in the local, regional and community media ecosystems as well as to increase understanding of the phenomenon of "media deserts". ([Supporting local and regional news media in face of emerging news deserts](#))

The maximum grant amount is EUR 1,990,000. Applications must be sent by 19 September 2022 at the latest.

The [call for proposals, application forms and all relevant documents are available here](#).

## News avoidance latest industry woe

Although financial support may be welcome, it may take more than that to improve the situation in the news industry, shows the [Reuters Institute 2022 Digital News Report](#).

It might, for example, be a good idea to look into why more and more people are avoiding the news. The *Digital News Report* provides some insights:

"...we find that interest in news and overall news consumption has declined considerably in many countries while trust has fallen back almost everywhere .... We're also seeing news fatigue setting in – not just around COVID-19 but around politics and a range of other subjects – with the number of people actively avoiding news increasing markedly", write the researchers.

The researchers found evidence that “the overwhelming and depressing nature of the news, feelings of powerlessness, and toxic online debates are turning many people away – temporarily or permanently”.

And that was how people felt even *before* they were hit by all the cheerful news published in the past six months about the war in Ukraine, the soaring inflation, the energy and food crisis, not to mention the recurring heatwaves and droughts fuelling worries about climate change. (The research for the report was conducted at the end of January and beginning of February this year.)

The authors of the report also point out that “paywalls and registration gates may not be helping either, putting further barriers in the way of the content that audiences want to consume, even as they are creating more sustainable businesses for some”.

## Information Technology

### Metaverse: Next big headache for policy-makers?

After Facebook renamed itself Meta last year, and its founder, Mark Zuckerberg, announced his ambitions for the “metaverse”, the hype is not letting up. Big bucks are on the horizon, and everyone seems to want a piece of the pie. Will policy-makers be able to keep up?

Although difficult to define, the metaverse is set to become the next stage of the Internet, where the user is fully immersed in the online environment thanks to virtual reality, rather than just browsing on a two-dimensional screen, explains EURACTIV.

Soon, consumers will, for example, test a luxury car in the metaverse before buying it or do their shopping and try on new clothes in a virtual, immersive store.

Companies that harness the technology could make massive profits, as the technology is expected to generate USD five trillion by the end of the decade, according to a recent report from consulting giant McKinsey, presented at the annual event VivaTech in Paris in June. ([Value creation in the metaverse](#))

French companies seem very enthusiastic about this new development, maybe partly inspired by President Emmanuel Macron.

In Macron’s re-election speech, he urged to “build a European metaverse” so as not to depend on Anglo-Saxon or Chinese players and aggregators, “who will be able to completely bypass the rules of respecting copyright and neighbouring rights today. ([French companies line up for piece of the ‘metaverse pie’](#))

The rise of the metaverse is, however, likely to be fraught with plenty of challenges and thorny questions, writes EURACTIV, pointing to its capacity to magnify pre-existing online

issues such as cyberbullying, scamming or hate speech. ([Metaverse expected to generate \\$5 trillion](#))

A new headache for regulators, in other words. “Policymakers will benefit from planning ahead and defining the legal, policy, and governance of the metaverse and its broad implications in these discussions”, comment the authors of the McKinsey report.

Privacy and data protection concerns should be part of the debate. Competition policies and anti-trust rules will also likely require some upgrading.

The EU executive has reportedly started looking into this. “The metaverse is here already. So of course we start analysing what will be the role for a regulator, what is the role for our legislature”, the Commission’s Executive Vice-President Margrethe Vestager told an online event in February.

## Moldova: Europe’s hotspot for IT outsourcing

On 23 June, in a geopolitical move dubbed an “historic moment” for the bloc, European leaders approved granting EU candidate status to Ukraine and Moldova. The urgency to embrace Ukraine needs no explanation; but Moldova?

One of reasons may well be Moldova’s IT resources. In one of the poorest countries in Europe, exports of IT products and services have increased fivefold over the past five years, mostly to EU countries, reports EURACTIV. ([Moldova: Europe’s hotspot for IT outsourcing](#))

“The sphere of information technologies is one of the most developed and dynamic in the Moldovan economy. The IT industry already provides 3.5% of the national GDP. Our country exports 85% of the products produced by Moldova IT Park residents. The main export countries are the European Union, the USA, Great Britain and Canada”, says the Economy Minister Sergiu Gaibu.

The minister explains that Moldovan IT companies can focus on – and benefit from – the European market, thanks to geographical proximity, common linguistic and cultural traits, and, most importantly, the constant demand for outsourcing; it is much more profitable for European companies to purchase software and other IT products in other countries than to maintain a staff of programmers.

Moldova’s growing IT market is thriving also because the EU is not able to satisfy the growing demand for qualified IT specialists.

According to [Eurostat](#), companies registered in the European Union are experiencing difficulties in hiring IT specialists. At least 55 per cent of companies participating in the 2020 survey said so. This fact may slow down one of the EU’s goals – of having at least 20 million IT professionals by 2030 – as part of its drive for digital transformation.

# European Media Policy

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The Newsletter provides an update on policy developments at the European level. We concentrate on news from the European Union – current issues and trends in media policy, new proposals for legislation, debates in the European Parliament, recently taken or impending policy decisions and reactions among those concerned, new support programmes, EU studies in the field etc. There will also be some coverage of policy developments in the Council of Europe and at the international level. The newsletter is published three times a year.