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United States

Margarethe Vestager, Executive Vice President  
Thierry Breton, Commissioner for Internal Market

22 June 2022

European Commission  
Rue de la Loi / Wetstraat 200  
1049 Brussels  
Belgium

**Re: Maintaining the European Union's global leadership on net neutrality**

Dear Executive Vice President Vestager,  
Dear Commissioner Breton,

I write to urge you to maintain the EU's global leadership on net neutrality.

At Mozilla, we consider net neutrality to be the foundational pillar of an internet that is a global public resource, open and accessible to all. This is as true in the EU as it is anywhere else in the world, in industrialised and emerging markets alike. It is why we strongly supported the EU Single Telecoms Market regulation and why we have sought to capitalise on its norm-setting power to advance net neutrality protections in other regions.

Accordingly, we are alarmed by recent reports that suggest the European Commission is considering new rules that would oblige certain online service providers to make dedicated financial contributions to telecommunications network operators. The 'sending party pays' policy approach, as this is known as, would violate a core tenet of net neutrality, and would have harmful knock-on consequences for European consumers, creators, and innovators. [34 authoritative civil society stakeholders](#) have already raised these concerns. We seek to complement and reinforce them.



Net neutrality ensures an 'open door' to the internet for European small businesses and consumers alike. It creates a level-playing field, where innovators can disrupt the status quo by offering new value-adding services that compete with Gatekeepers. It also allows individuals to sample content and services options that suit their preferences, not those chosen by service providers. Unfortunately the inverse is also true. Without strong and rigorously enforced net neutrality protections, consumers and small businesses don't have access to all of the content and possibility the internet offers..

In this current case, adopting a 'sending party pays' provision would harm consumers because the online services that are subject to the levy would inevitably seek to pass those costs down to consumers in one form or another. It would harm smaller European businesses because it would put a premium on scale – any European scale-up or challenger company would need to factor in additional costs should they try to compete against Big Tech. And more broadly, it would harm Europe's standing as a beacon for 21st century tech regulation and as a shining light for those in other regions who believe the internet should be open and accessible to all.

With the recently-adopted Digital Services Act and Digital Markets Act the EU has once again set down a marker for an accessible, more open internet. We commend you for this leadership. But these advancements today will be blunted if the internet of tomorrow is one marked by an unlevel playing field for European consumers and smaller businesses.

Net neutrality is and will remain fundamental to Europe's digital future. I urge you to protect it.

Yours sincerely,

Ashley Boyd  
Vice President of Advocacy  
Mozilla Foundation