

JOINT STATEMENT ON NETWORK FEES

20 October 2023

The undersigned organisations write today in **support of the Open Internet**. We stand together fully opposed to any and all **mandatory payment or arbitration mechanisms**, as demanded by some telecom operators, including network usage fees. They are anything but “fair” and would irreversibly harm the Open Internet, as well as Europe’s digital transformation and economy.

European consumers and businesses would ultimately suffer through new fees, subsidising the same network investments they already pay for through their subscriptions. Imposing such a new unnecessary burden on the online economy is counterproductive, especially at a time when Europe is aiming at fostering its digital transformation, inflation is soaring, and the cost of living is rising.

The results of the Commission’s Exploratory Consultation confirm that the vast majority of respondents and sectors are starkly opposed to the introduction of network fees and highlight the many predictable negative consequences for Europe.

This debate has now been ongoing for close to two years. In that time, there has been no valid evidence presented on what the problem truly is, while every economic analysis, including by the European Commission, has reaffirmed multiple times that intervention is unnecessary, economically unjustifiable, and likely damaging to the economy and the principle of Net Neutrality.

Every expert, including the European regulators group BEREC, has raised significant concerns with the problems that network usage fees would create, from disincentivising network investments and slowing down internet speed, to allowing telcos to exploit their termination monopoly for their own commercial benefits. The overwhelming majority of stakeholders across sectors and society unequivocally object to network usage fees.¹

We call on all European governments to firmly reject network fees once and for all, and to ensure they will not be considered in future legislation, including the upcoming Digital Networks Act. We urge European lawmakers to work together on creating a policy environment which truly supports Europe’s digital transformation, competition and growth.

- **L’Association des Services Internet Communautaires (ASIC)**, H472708392
- **Computer & Communications Industry Association (CCIA Europe)**, 15987896534-82
- **DOT Europe**, 53905947933-43
- **France-IX**, 523 968 873
- **Information Technology Industry Council**, 061601915428-87
- **Nicolas Guillaume, Nasca Group CEO**, 013644051545-13
- **Technology Ireland**, 479468313744-50
- **Związek Cyfrowa Polska (Digital Poland Association)**, 0000250359

¹ “Summary Report on the results of the exploratory consultation on the future of the electronic communications sector and its infrastructure”, which can be [found here](#).