

Norwegian telecom regulator unambiguously states that zero-rating violates net neutrality

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This week we saw two notable net neutrality developments in Europe.

First on Tuesday the **Norwegian** regulator, in a blog post¹ reconfirmed Norway's pro-net neutrality stance and unambiguously stated that under the Norwegian co-regulatory guidelines **zero-rating** would constitute a violation of net neutrality. Note that according to DFMonitor research Norway is among the very few OECD countries where there is no **zero-rating** today.²

⇒ To study Norwegian mobile internet access prices, consumption, adoption and speeds and benchmark them against other OECD and EU countries go to <http://dfmonitor.eu/NO>

Then on Thursday in the **United Kingdom** Prime Minister Cameron's digital adviser Baroness Joanna Shields has openly backed US president Barack Obama's stand on net neutrality, saying it has become a "worrying" topic. She reportedly said: "It's a hot topic and a worrying one, because it could go in the wrong direction...If it [net neutrality] goes the wrong way in the US this could become a competitive advantage in Europe,"³ DFMonitor research⁴ shows that UK is a borderline case from **zero-rating** point of view. As of November 2014 the only **zero-rated** mobile service is Everything Everywhere's EE Film service, and it is zero-rated on a promotional basis till the end of December 2014⁵. The Q4 DFMonitor update (available for premium subscribers) has reported a significant, double digit increase in the price of incremental gigabyte consumption on smartphones in the UK (while the EU weighted average price per incremental internet GB on smartphones has fallen from 5.0 to 4.1 Euro/Gigabyte)

⇒ To study UK mobile internet access prices, consumption, adoption and speeds and benchmark them against other OECD and EU countries go to <http://dfmonitor.eu/UK>

The Norwegian and the UK positions are in sharp contrast with the position taken by the previous European Commission⁶. The ex EU digital chief, Neelie Kroes's Connected Continent provisions undermined genuine net neutrality and would have allowed⁷ ISPs a free hand to vertically discriminate (favour by **zero-rating**) their own or their selected partner's services (e.g. video-on-demand film stores). Earlier this year the German regulator has taken a similar position with the Norwegian regulator by preliminary concluding that **zero-rating** internet services infringes net neutrality⁸.

¹ <http://eng.npt.no/topical-issues/news/net-neutrality-and-charging-models>

² http://dfmonitor.eu/insights/2014_nov_premium_q4_update/

³ <http://www.thedrum.com/news/2014/11/19/net-neutrality-could-be-competitive-advantage-europe-if-wrong-decision-made-us-says>

⁴ http://dfmonitor.eu/insights/2014_nov_premium_q4_update/

⁵ <https://ee.co.uk/ee-and-me/entertainment-sport/ee-film>

⁶ <https://gigaom.com/2014/11/18/pro-net-neutrality-norway-advises-carriers-to-avoid-zero-rating/>

⁷ http://www.dfmonitor.eu/insights/2014_oct_premium_EU_specialised_services/

⁸ http://dfmonitor.eu/insights/2014_sept_premium_germany_zerorating