Axel Pawlik
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RIPE Network Coordination Centre (RIPE NCC)
Amsterdam, The Netherlands

28 June 2013

Dear Member of the European Parliament,

**Re. Amendments to Proposal for a Regulation on electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions in the internal market [COM(2012)238]**

The RIPE NCC has followed with great interest the discussions on the European Commission's proposal for EU Regulation on electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions in the internal market.

Based on feedback received from the open RIPE community and analysis by RIPE NCC staff, the RIPE NCC would like to draw your attention to a number of serious concerns regarding the current proposal. We believe that the text of this proposal may in fact be interpreted in ways that conflict with the fundamental intent of the Regulation.

We have been pleased to see many of our concerns reflected in amendments already proposed by the Members of the European Parliament and recorded in the Draft Report on the proposed Regulation of the European Parliament[1].

The RIPE NCC has identified three major areas of concern that correspond with specific amendments proposed by Members of the European Parliament. These concerns are laid out below.

**1. The scope of the proposed Regulation**

The RIPE NCC believes that the current proposal could be interpreted as applying to technologies and services beyond electronic identification (eID) and eID-related trust services, i.e. to protocols and technical standards for securing communication, such as computer and telecommunication networks. Such protocols and technical standards are managed very differently from security arrangements related to eID. In particular the reference to website authentication in the proposed Regulation is an indication towards such broad interpretation.

Over-reach by the Regulation could have significant implications for global efforts to improve network security. It would be contrary to what we understand is the intent of the Regulation, and would contradict other statements made by the European Commission regarding Internet regulation.

[1] http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/itre/draft-reports.html?linkedDocument=true&ufolderComCode=&ufolderLegId=&ufolderId=&urefProcYear=2012&urefProcNum=0146&urefProcCode=COD#menuzone

More importantly, it could inhibit ongoing efforts by the Internet technical community in the EU (often in collaboration with colleagues and counterparts around the world) to secure the infrastructure of the Internet via standards and protocols developed and agreed upon collectively.

We are pleased to see that MEPs propose the deletion of any reference to website authentication from the proposed Regulation and we would like to express our support for these amendments (**amendments 99, 127, 137, 138, 426, 427 and 446**).

**2. The trust mechanism introduced by the proposed Regulation**

The proposed Regulation's requirement for lists of qualified trust providers would actually hinder the important, ongoing evolution of Internet security mechanisms.
All modern trust mechanisms rely on so-called "chains of trust", which are validated automatically. Possible conflicts arising between the "trusted list" and the digital chain of trust would have serious security implications.

We see that Members of the European Parliament have identified this issue as well, and we support the proposed amendments that would abolish the concept of "trusted lists" in relation to "qualified" trust services (**amendments 68, 81, 91, 315, 320 and 337**).

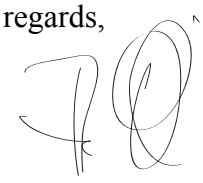
**3. Requirements for the provision of security trust services**

The proposed Regulation details explicit requirements for the provision of security trust services. Currently, security requirements and specifications are adopted through bottom up procedures and are codified in standards developed within bodies like the IETF, IEEE, ETSI or ISO. Rather than creating a rigid framework of requirements, the RIPE NCC would prefer to see the Regulation refer to existing processes for establishing trust services, thereby accommodating the need for evolution of these processes and the technology over time.

We are glad to see the Members of the European Parliament have taken into account such processes and the role of other stakeholders in the development and adoption of security requirements and standards, and we support the amendments proposed to that effect (**amendments 93, 275, 297, 298, 301, 302, 317, 318 and 428**).

The RIPE NCC would be happy to provide further information on any of these concerns if that would be helpful. We are also available for face-to-face briefings or discussions between interested MEPs or their staff and RIPE NCC staff or RIPE community members.

Best regards,



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**About RIPE**
RIPE (Réseaux IP Européens) is a collaborative forum open to all parties interested in wide area IP networks in Europe and beyond. The objective of RIPE is to ensure the administrative and technical coordination necessary to enable the operation of the Internet, including the bottom-up development of policy relating to the management and distribution of Internet number resources (IPv4, IPv6 and Autonomous System Numbers).

**About the RIPE NCC**
The RIPE NCC (RIPE Network Coordination Centre) was established in 1992 by the RIPE community to serve as an administrative body and as Regional Internet Registry (RIR) for Europe, the Middle East and parts of central Asia. It provides administrative support to RIPE and fulfills a number of technical roles, including operation of the RIPE Database and management of the k-root name server.