Press release

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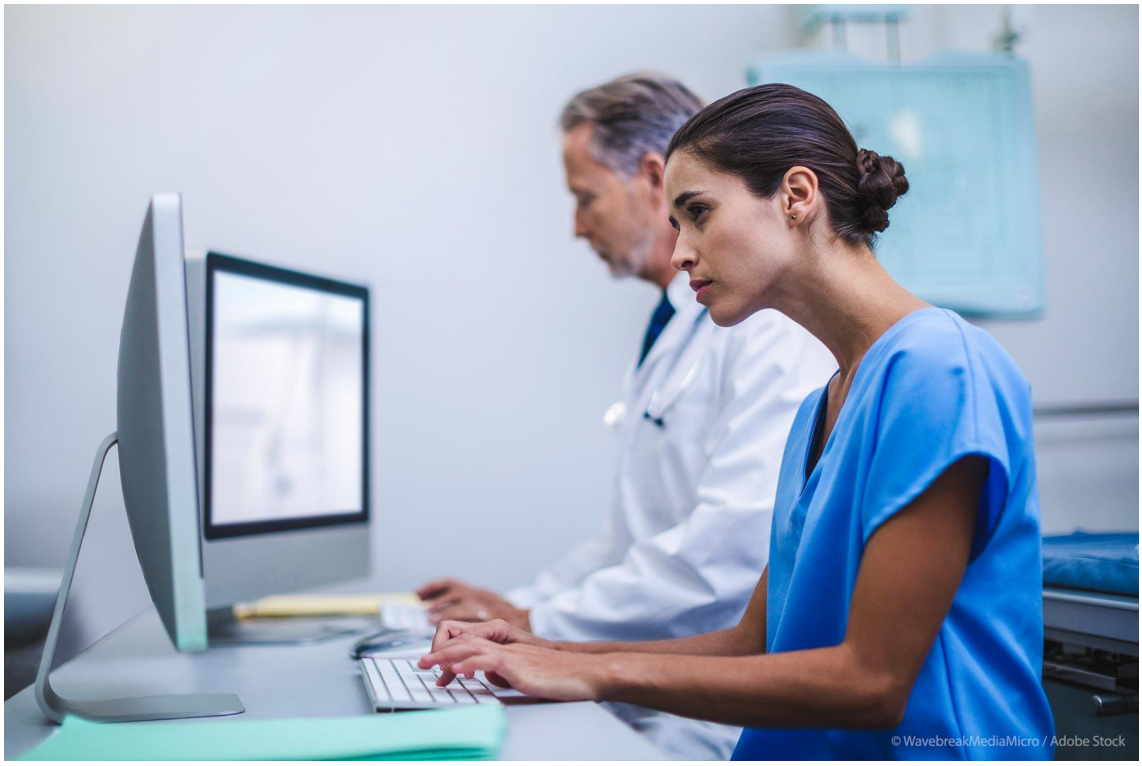
European Parliament

Cybersecurity: Parliament adopts new law to strengthen EU-wide resilience

- New legislation sets tighter requirements for businesses, administrations, infrastructure
- Differing national cybersecurity measures make the EU more vulnerable
- New “essential sectors” covered such as energy, transport, banking, health



Health sector will have to beef up its cybersecurity resilience under new rules © WavebreakMediaMicro / Adobe Stock

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Rules requiring EU countries to meet stricter supervisory and enforcement measures and harmonise their sanctions were approved by MEPs on Thursday.

The legislation, already agreed between MEPs and the Council in May, will set tighter cybersecurity obligations for risk management, reporting obligations and information sharing. The requirements cover incident response, supply chain security, encryption and vulnerability disclosure, among other provisions.

More entities and sectors will have to take measures to protect themselves. “Essential sectors” such as the energy, transport, banking, health, digital infrastructure, public administration and space sectors will be covered by the new security provisions.

During negotiations, MEPs insisted on the need for clear and precise rules for companies, and pushed for the inclusion of as many governmental and public bodies as possible within the scope of the directive.

The new rules will also protect so-called “important sectors” such as postal services, waste management, chemicals, food, manufacturing of medical devices, electronics, machinery, motor vehicles and digital providers. All medium-sized and large companies in selected sectors would fall under the legislation.

It also establishes a framework for better cooperation and information sharing between different authorities and member states and creates a European vulnerability database.

Quote

“Ransomware and other cyber threats have preyed on Europe for far too long. We need to act to make our businesses, governments and society more resilient to hostile cyber operations” said lead MEP Bart Groothuis (Renew, NL).

“This European directive is going to help around 160,000 entities tighten their grip on security and make Europe a safe place to live and work. It will also enable information sharing with the private sector and partners around the world. If we are being attacked on an industrial scale, we need to respond on an industrial scale,” he said.

“This is the best cyber security legislation this continent has yet seen, because it will transform Europe to handling cyber incidents pro-actively and service orientated,” he added.

Next steps

MEPs adopted the text with 577 votes to 6, with 31 abstentions. After Parliament’s approval, Council also has to formally adopt the law before it will be published in the EU’s Official Journal.

Background

The Network and Information Security (NIS) Directive was the first piece of EU-wide legislation on cybersecurity, and its specific aim was to achieve a high common level of cybersecurity

across the Member States. While it increased the Member States' cybersecurity capabilities, its implementation proved difficult, resulting in fragmentation at different levels across the internal market.

To respond to the growing threats posed by digitalisation and the surge in cyber-attacks, the Commission has submitted a proposal to replace the NIS Directive and thereby strengthen the security requirements, address the security of supply chains, streamline reporting obligations, and introduce more stringent supervisory measures and stricter enforcement requirements, including harmonised sanctions across the EU.

Further information

Adopted text (10.11.2022)
Video recording of the debate (10.11.2022)
Committee on Energy, Research and Energy
Procedure file
The NIS2 Directive: A high common level of cybersecurity in the EU

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