

Infrastructure

EU States Extend Life of Internet Security Body  
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Telecom ministers agree to extend the life of the European Network and Information Security Agency by three years as threats to the Web increase.

LUXEMBOURG (Reuters) - European Union telecoms ministers agreed on Thursday to extend the life of the bloc's Internet security watchdog by three years as threats to the Web increase.

The European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA), a small body set up in 2004, was due to be closed down next year. But rising cyber-crime and attacks such as one suffered by EU member Estonia last year has triggered a rethink.

The bloc's 27 telecoms industry ministers, meeting in Luxembourg, agreed a three-year reprieve until 2012 to give time to decide how to take Greek-based ENISA forward.

The European Parliament is set to formally endorse the move next week.

ENISA's executive director, Andrea Pirotti, said network security was crucial for the European economy, which increasingly depends on a trouble-free Internet.

"The need for secure networks, systems and services will certainly not suddenly disappear in 2012," Pirotti said in a statement.


"Network and information security touches business and the daily lives of citizens in Europe. It consequently needs constant reinforcement to keep up with the evolving threats landscape," Pirotti said.

With an annual budget of 8 million euros and fewer than 50 staff, ENISA had no remit or resources to deal with cyber attacks like that experienced by Estonia last year, when the Baltic state accused Russia of causing government websites to crash.

*(Reporting by Huw Jones; Editing by Catherine Evans)*

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