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News | 26.01.2012

Digital and fundamental rights (ACTA)

ACTA signing an unfortunate symbolic step for controversial agreement

The EU and 22 of its member states (1) [signed up](#) to the controversial Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA) in Tokyo today. While the signing process is symbolic - and the agreement must still be ratified by member states and the European Parliament - it has provoked demonstrations across Europe, [notably in Poland](#), and prompted [cyber attacks](#) from online activist group [Anonymous](#).

The Greens [have criticised the decision](#) to proceed with the signing, highlighting persisting concerns about the legality of the deal and its compatibility with EU provisions on fundamental rights. However, the group has committed to push for the agreement to be rejected when the European Parliament considers whether or not to give its assent to the ratification of ACTA.

Numerous analyses (2) have raised serious doubts about the compatibility of ACTA with EU law, particularly provisions on fundamental rights. Of particular concern: ACTA encourages its signatory states to step up cooperation with private actors, like internet providers, for intellectual property enforcement in the absence of any minimum standards for legal procedures. This opens the door to undermining the basic rights of individuals with no protection for those affected.

Experts have also pointed out that ACTA could undermine access to medicines, particularly in developing countries, which are more dependent on generics, but were not even part of the negotiations.

Once the file is officially transmitted to the European Parliament, as part of the ratification process, the Greens intend to use all available parliamentary measures to convince a majority of MEPs to withhold giving their consent to ACTA. As a first step, the group will push for the ACTA deal to should be assessed by the European Court of Justice.

[Confirming this in a statement today](#), Green MEP **Ska Keller** said:

"ACTA is wrong and should be rejected. The last word has not yet been spoken however: the European Parliament and national parliaments will now have their say as part of the ratification process. The Greens will push to ensure that ACTA is consigned to history."

(1) Cyprus, Estonia, Slovakia, Germany and Holland did not sign but committed to do so in the near future.

(2) Studies on ACTA commissioned by Greens/EFA:

- ACTA and Access to Medicines, <http://rfc.act-on-acta.eu/access-to-medicines>

- Compatibility ACTA with the European Convention on Human Rights & the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, <http://rfc.act-on-acta.eu/fundamental-rights>

ACTA text: <http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/html/147937.htm>

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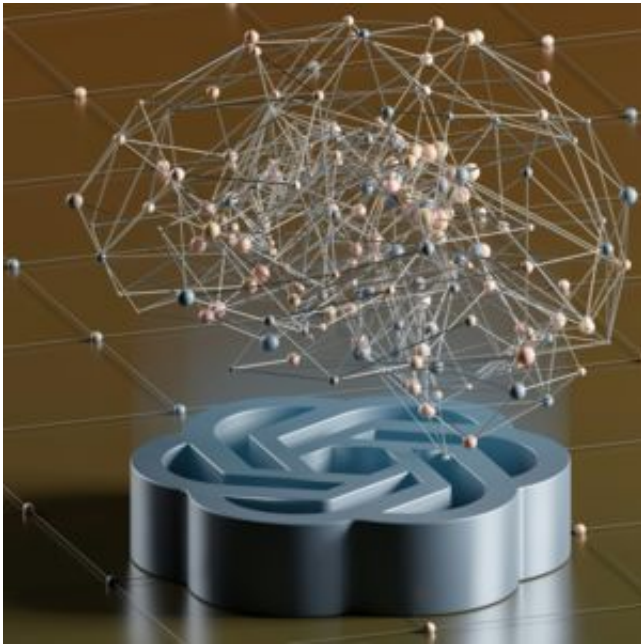


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Responsible MEPs



Ska Keller

Member

Contact person



Ska Keller

Member

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