

Europe Needs Digital Independence in Networks and Routers: SAFENet Launches

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Media:

Governments around the world are increasingly recognizing that technology supply chains pose a security risk to critical digital infrastructure. The EU has not yet done so. Its markets remain open to products from outside Europe that create strategic dependencies and entail major security risks. Moreover, one central component is often overlooked in discussions about digital and technological independence: the router. As the digital hub in homes and offices, more than 90 percent of all data flows through it. Four leading European manufacturers are therefore founding SAFENet, the Sovereignty Alliance for European Network Technology, and are calling for routers and network devices to be protected by policymakers just as rigorously as 5G networks.

Berlin, 15 June 2026 – **Four leading European manufacturers of network technology – devolo, FRITZ!, LANCOM and TDT – are founding SAFENet, the Sovereignty Alliance for European Network Technology. Their objective: Europe must retain control over its networks and digital infrastructure. To this end, the alliance seeks to engage in dialogue with European policymakers, businesses and society to highlight the key role that routers and network technology play in securing Europe's digital and technological sovereignty.**

A The urgency of this initiative is underlined by a recent study by the Innovate Europe Foundation (IE.F): around 93 percent of European internet traffic runs through routers and home network gateways – the devices to which families entrust their banking data, medical records and private conversations. Mobile communications account for just 7 percent. Chinese manufacturers control just under 40 percent of this market. While the EU is taking active steps in areas such as cloud services and semiconductors, the central hardware interface for every form of digital communication and connectivity – the router – remains a strategic blind spot, often without users knowing who actually controls it.

On this basis, SAFENet is addressing three core demands to European and national decision-makers:

- **Transparency for users:** Manufacturers and internet service providers must disclose where hardware, firmware and updates are actually produced or developed – including for white-label and provider products.
- **Procurement:** Public authorities, critical infrastructure operators and publicly funded institutions should rely on trustworthy European network technology – supported by exchange incentives and programmes for high-risk hardware.
- **Priority and risk assessment:** Routers and network technology must be recognized as a priority sector in the current debate on strengthening the sovereignty and security of the digital ecosystem. Europe needs a “Router and Network Technology Security Toolbox” – analogous to the EU Toolbox for 5G Security – with a harmonized risk assessment and high-risk classification.

European manufacturers already provide sovereign, trustworthy and innovative technology solutions to serve the market. What has been lacking so far is the political will to recognize routers and network technology as a lever for digital and technological sovereignty and to create the corresponding regulatory framework.

The alliance is open to additional European manufacturers. Further information is available at safe-net.tech.

About SAFENet

The Sovereignty Alliance for European Network Technology (SAFENet) is a strategic alliance of leading European network technology companies. SAFENet understands network technology as the backbone of the digital ecosystem. The alliance represents the interests of European manufacturers in political and regulatory processes, thereby contributing to digital sovereignty and the long-term security of Europe's own digital infrastructure. Its goal is a digital Europe that is self-determined, resilient and future-proof.

Contact:

SAFENet
Unter den Linden 32-34, 10117 Berlin, Germany



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