

## SAUDI ARABIA: CITC ISSUES PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON DIGITAL CONTENT PLATFORM REGULATIONS

The Saudi ICT regulator, the Communications & Information Technology Commission ("**CITC**"), has launched a public consultation on a proposal to regulate the Kingdom's digital media sector, the objective of which is to create a clear and transparent regulatory framework for digital content platforms. The consultation invites interested parties to submit their comments on the draft [Digital Content Platform Regulations](#) ("**Regulations**") by **30 November 2021**.

If passed, the Regulations will introduce a regulatory framework for four categories of online media activity, namely:

- Video (OTT, Satellite TV and IPTV);
- Audio (Internet Radio);
- Gaming (E-sports and online gaming platforms); and
- Advertising (social media and online advertising platforms).

The Regulations propose three types of authorization mechanisms dependent on the nature of the activity: license, registration and notification. Most notably, providers of audio and video services, including SVOD and online streaming services, would be required to:

- establish a local presence in the Kingdom;
- pay annual fees of between 0.2% and 0.5%, calculated on a tiered basis with reference to the annual revenues generated from providing the services in the Kingdom; and
- comply with the CITC's General Principles for Personal Data Protection and the CITC's Regulations on the Protection of Rights of ICT Service Users and the Terms of ICT Service Provision.

Providers of all four categories of media activity would be expressly obliged to:

- cooperate fully with the CITC, including by allowing inspection of their systems and provision of all required documents and information to demonstrate compliance with the CITC regulations;

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- comply with the applicable law in the Kingdom, including requests to remove content (although in practice this obligation may only apply following a final ruling from the relevant authorities); and
- comply with Saudization requirements.

If you would like any assistance in responding to the consultation on the Regulations, or on any data or technology related matters generally, please feel free to contact any of our lawyers above.

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