

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****ERG accelerates plans to deliver similar regulatory solutions in priority markets across EU**

12 October 2006

The European Regulators Group (ERG) today announced a number of steps aimed at delivering an increasingly harmonised approach to the regulation of electronic communications markets in the EU.

It will create and maintain a list of priority areas where harmonisation will be of most value and will put in place measures to enable the more effective sharing of regulatory best-practice among National Regulatory Authorities (NRAs).

The ERG was set up by the European Commission to provide advice on the implementation of the EU Regulatory Framework for electronic communications (the Framework) and to help deliver the benefits of a single market by promoting greater harmonisation in the application of regulation.

In May, the ERG began work on a project to re-examine its working practices to improve its operational effectiveness. During its Plenary meeting in Madeira last week, the ERG agreed the following actions that will deliver a more rigorous approach to harmonisation:

**1) Identify priority areas**

In collaboration with stakeholders, and employing an evidence-based assessment of the cost and benefit of harmonisation, the ERG will build and maintain a list of markets where a common approach might particularly help deliver the benefits of a single market for communications products and services.

It expects to consult on the first priority areas dealing with broadband access markets later this year.

**2) Encourage a consistent approach to regulatory remedies**

To complement its existing common position on regulatory remedies ([http://www.erg.eu.int/doc/meeting/erg\\_06\\_33\\_remedies\\_common\\_position\\_june\\_06.pdf](http://www.erg.eu.int/doc/meeting/erg_06_33_remedies_common_position_june_06.pdf)) the ERG is developing guidance to help NRAs choose appropriate remedies in specific markets, starting with the highest priority markets.

The ERG will also identify individual NRAs with relevant experience and knowledge of resolving competition problems in particular areas. They will be on hand to provide advice and information to other NRAs, thereby further disseminating best-practice regulatory approaches.

### 3) Report, explain and monitor regulatory approaches

In line with obligations contained within the Framework, an NRA will provide a reasoned regulatory decision on how to resolve an identified competition problem by reference to the relevant ERG Common Position(s).

ERG members will also monitor the impact of regulation across the EU and compare the effect of any alternative approaches adopted, with a view to further developing best-practice implementation of the Framework.

A statement covering these topics as agreed by the ERG is attached.

#### Other activity

The ERG is publishing a series of documents that assess how regulation might need to evolve in line with the development of next generation networks and services. These include:

- a report on Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) which reveals that regulation in this area varies considerably across Europe. VoIP has been identified by ERG as a priority area for harmonisation and consequently the ERG has committed to work together to promote consistency of regulatory approach;
- a report on transparency of international roaming retail tariffs.

In addition, the ERG is publishing for consultation:

- a study of competition in the wholesale broadband access market and how it relates to broadband uptake in different member states
- a study on how the evolution from legacy to next generation, IP-based networks will affect the regulatory approach to IP interconnection and interoperability issues (work on NGN access is being addressed separately);
- draft principles for implementation and best practice on the calculation of the cost of capital; and
- draft 2007 Work programme.

These documents and others published can be found at [http://erg.eu.int/whatsnew/index\\_en.htm](http://erg.eu.int/whatsnew/index_en.htm)

Ends.

#### NOTES FOR EDITORS

The European Regulators Group (ERG) was created to act as an advisory group to help the European Commission develop the internal market for electronic communications and services and ensure the consistent application of the regulatory Framework.

The ERG takes into account in its work the objectives given to NRAs in Article 8 of the Framework Directive (2002/21/EC) to promote competition, contribute to the development of the internal market and promote the interests of EU citizens.

The ERG consists of European National Regulatory Authorities (NRAs). Its full members are the twenty-five EU Member States whilst the four EFTA States (Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein) and four EU Accession/Candidate States (Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey and Croatia) participate as observers. To ensure harmonisation across the EEA, experts from the EFTA Surveillance Authority attend the ERG meetings.

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