



## ERG READY FOR EXTENDED ROLE

Tuesday 13 November 2007

The European Regulators' Group (ERG) has written to Information Society and Media Commissioner Viviane Reding, in advance of the publication of the European Commission's proposals on the reform of the EU Framework.

The ERG welcomes the proposals, including:

- Greater protection for the independence of National Regulatory Authorities (NRAs), which the ERG agrees is a cornerstone of effective regulation;
- Provisions enabling NRAs to pursue functional separation of telecommunications companies, where appropriate; and
- Strengthened enforcement powers to enable NRAs to deal more quickly and effectively with consumer scams.

The ERG also supports the European Commission's goal of improving the consistency and quality of regulation across Member States and argues this can be best delivered by significantly strengthening the current model of a European network of independent regulators.

The Group argues in its letter to the Commissioner that a proposed Commission power to veto remedies and new layers of unnecessary centralism risk undermining at a European level the very independence which the Commission is concerned to protect at the national level. As a result, also Commission's proposals for a new institutional set-up appear, at a *prima facie* analysis, not to be in line with the evolution of the cooperation amongst regulators toward a federal and non-bureaucratic model, as advocated by the ERG.

The ERG letter calls upon the Commission continue to work with it to achieve their shared aims for Europe's communications markets. The letter is published at:

[http://erg.ec.europa.eu/whatsnew/index\\_en.htm](http://erg.ec.europa.eu/whatsnew/index_en.htm) and  
[http://www.erg.eu/site/en/areas\\_doc.asp?id=277](http://www.erg.eu/site/en/areas_doc.asp?id=277).

Roberto Viola, Chairman of the ERG, said:

“The ERG will continue to provide its advice on the reform of the EU Framework to the Commission and other European Institutions. In the short term the ERG urges the Commission to amend the Decision that set up the ERG in order formally reflect the ERG’s current and potential role in promoting the single market. The ERG is ready to act on the agenda being proposed today by the Commission. There is no need to wait until 2010. The ERG must get on with this essential work right away.”

The ERG also notes the publication of the Commission’s revised Recommendation on Relevant Markets. In its opinion on the revision of the Recommendation the ERG welcomes the trend towards progressive deregulation, but has expressed serious concerns about the analysis undertaken by the Commission in support of its removal of key wholesale markets from the list. The ERG does not support the removal of these markets, which may undermine the ability of NRAs to regulate in the interests of consumers. The ERG opinion is published at:

[http://erg.ec.europa.eu/whatsnew/index\\_en.htm](http://erg.ec.europa.eu/whatsnew/index_en.htm) and  
[http://www.erg.eu/site/en/areas\\_doc.asp?id=277](http://www.erg.eu/site/en/areas_doc.asp?id=277).

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#### 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-seven EU Member States whilst the four EFTA States (Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein) and three EU Accession/Candidate States (Turkey, Croatia and Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia) participate as observers.

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