



Joint ERG-RSPG Press Release

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ERG-RSPG cooperation leads to first deliverables

Member States' telecoms and radio spectrum regulators adopted their first joint reports. Because of convergence in the telecoms sector, the European Regulators Group (ERG), and the Radio Spectrum Policy Group (RSPG) have been working in close cooperation to address new and common regulatory challenges. Cooperation materialised today with the publication of joint reports on two of these issues, which constitute the first attempt to examine emerging regulatory problems.

Dániel Pataki, Chairman of the RSPG (the Radio Spectrum Policy Group) and previous Chairman of the ERG (European Regulators Group) said: *"The telecoms sector in which we operate is evolving fast and we, regulators, need to adapt and think about new ways to address new regulatory challenges. Because of growing convergence in the telecoms sectors, we need to find a common regulatory approach on transversal issues such as broadband"*. Matthias Kurth, Chairman of the ERG added: *"The cooperation between the ERG and the RSPG not only works very well but also helps us foresee new complex regulatory challenges emerging from new developments in the sector."*

Because of convergence in the telecoms sector, spectrum management and telecoms market regulation are increasingly intertwined. To tackle the fast-changing environment of the telecoms sector and its regulatory challenges in a consistent way across the EU, the ERG, the group of EU national telecoms regulators, and the RSPG, its counterpart for spectrum, have set up a cooperation system. The initiative was launched at a joint ERG-RSPG plenary meeting in 2008 and has materialised in a joint ERG-RSPG working group where telecoms and spectrum regulators exchange information, best practices and discuss overlapping regulatory questions.

Today the joint ERG-RSPG working group presented its first two concrete deliverables: a report on transitional issues and a report on the use of spectrum to dominate markets, i.e. two new, growing regulatory challenges.

- The first report deals with issues arising from the transition towards new, more flexible spectrum policies. Removal of constraints on spectrum licenses will allow a more efficient

spectrum usage that consumers will benefit from, but regulators must ensure it does not distort competition.

- The report on the use of spectrum to dominate markets tackles the issue of “spectrum hoarding”, i.e. acquiring or holding spectrum for anticompetitive reasons.

The ERG-RSPG joint working group is now working on a third report on “market definitions”. The report will look into infrastructure competition, in particular competition between wireless (spectrum-based) infrastructure and wired (e.g. copper or fibre) infrastructure. First findings of the joint working group should be published in autumn 2009.

The two reports will be uploaded shortly on the ERG and the RSPG websites (contacts below).

Note to the 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 Candidate States (Turkey, Croatia and Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia) participate as observers.*

***The Radio Spectrum Policy Group (RSPG)** was created by a European Commission Decision in 2002. Comprising the Commission and the spectrum authorities of the 27 EU Member States, the RSPG provides the Commission with advice on high level policy matters in relation to spectrum. Representatives of the EEA countries, the European Parliament and the regional and international bodies may attend as observers. Before being transmitted to the Commission, the RSPG’s expert opinions are submitted to public consultations of all spectrum users, both commercial and non-commercial, as well as any other interested stakeholders. The RSPG therefore constitutes a unique platform for Member States, the Commission and all relevant stakeholders to discuss and co-ordinate regulation of radio spectrum.*

Contact the ERG

E-mail: erg-secretariat@ec.europa.eu

<http://erg.ec.europa.eu>

Contact the RSPG

E-mail: info-RSPG@ec.europa.eu

<http://rspg.groups.eu.int/>