



Joint Statement on saving Europe's 5G ambition

Leading EU associations urge lawmakers to put 5G at the heart of telecoms reforms

Brussels, 7 June 2017 – Our Associations are concerned about the current legislative debate on telecoms reform. The ambitions set out in the European Commission's 5G Action Plan and Gigabit Society Communication – which are built on pro-investment and pro-innovation foundations – can only be met if the future European Electronic Communications Code and e-Privacy Regulation create the right conditions for the broad uptake of innovative services and business models. Unfortunately, discussions seem to have lost their focus on the importance of 5G as one of the key technologies that will underpin the ecosystem and the competitiveness of newly connected sectors of the European economy.

The 5G ambition

5G is much more than a telecommunications matter, as [studies](#) estimate it can enable up to 5% of GDP growth across the world economy and across all industries. We share the view of the European Commission and of the European Parliament that 5G is one of the engines of European innovation, a tool to ensure improved consumer experience across industries, as well as a crucial enabler of the Continent's competitiveness. This will be vital for a series of sectors. For example, 5G will be essential in the connected and automated driving context, as recognised in the Declaration of Amsterdam and in the respective follow-up strategy by the European Commission. This is also the case in critical sectors such as healthcare, developers and manufacturing, where this new communications standard is set to boost productivity, enable new business models and enrich consumer experience.

The telecoms ecosystem is advancing rapidly in the standardisation and testing of 5G. As this work continues, the collaboration between the telecoms sector and a range of industries (i.e. verticals) has intensified, leading to a convergence across sectors and to concrete, current discussions on future business models. However, if we are to achieve widespread deployment of 5G for all sectors we need this cross-industrial collaboration to be supported by the right regulatory tools.

Regulatory enablers

The proposed European Electronic Communications Code and the e-Privacy Regulation should be seen as instruments to enable widespread innovation in all networks, services and business models.

As identified in the "[Manifesto for timely deployment of 5G in Europe](#)", telecoms reform should ensure, in particular:

- A regulatory environment that puts investment at its core, including a cross-sectorial perspective;
- Pro-innovation rules that allow the development of new business models and services across sectors and ensure that the development of IoT and machine-to-machine services is not hampered;
- A harmonised and predictable spectrum policy;
- Flexible privacy requirements empowering innovation in data-driven markets and through mobile connectivity.

The current legislative debate

At present, despite some positive elements, we are afraid that discussions in the European Parliament and Council have largely overlooked these aspects in favour of a more timid approach that will do little to improve Europe's chances of success. Currently, the outlook for innovators appears quite grim. There little focus on easing regulatory burdens; on the contrary, there are plans to further increase rules and complexity. This extends to both the Electronic Communications Code and to the new ePrivacy Regulation.

Our Associations therefore call on all the EU institutions to maintain a high level of ambition to ensure that the strategic 5G objectives remain at the core of Europe's digital reforms. The upcoming regulatory choices on telecoms and privacy laws need to be fully coherent with the overarching aim of increasing network investment, allowing more space for innovation, boosting the competitiveness of Europe's vertical industries and creating further choice for European consumers.

The signatories

COCIR, European Coordination Committee of the Radiological, Electromedical and healthcare IT industry – www.cocir.org

Cable Europe, The voice of broadband cable TV operators – www.cable-europe.eu

Developers Alliance, The voice of the software industry – www.appdevelopersalliance.org

DIGITALEUROPE, Representing the digital technology industry in Europe – www.digitaleurope.org

ETNO, European Telecommunications Network Operators Association – www.etno.eu

GSMA Europe, The voice of mobile operators worldwide – www.gsma.com