



# News Release

## Cable Europe warns of “unjustified” draft measures which fall short of European legal, economic and policy criteria

Belgian regulators’ proposals risks stifling infrastructure investment across Europe says trade body

Brussels, 29<sup>th</sup> September 2017

Cable Europe has today voiced concerns over the future of investment in telecommunications network infrastructure, as it responds to the Belgian consultation on levels of competition in the broadband and broadcasting markets.

Submitting a formal response to a national consultation is a rarity for the association of cable operators. Cable Europe feels urged to warn that the proposals to further regulate cable operators are diametrically opposed to the investment objectives of the European telecoms framework and the European Single Market Strategy.

In the draft, Belgian telecom and media regulators – including BIPT – propose to define separate wholesale fixed broadband markets based on technology and impose wholesale bitstream access on Belgian cable operators. This market definition would be an anomaly in Europe, creating perpetual regulation – certainly not deregulation.

Said Matthias Kurth, Executive Chairman of Cable Europe, “Infrastructure competition should be promoted, not regulated. This means that telecom access rules should be lowered as much as possible in order to stimulate investments in high speed digital networks across Europe.

“The proposals from the Belgian regulators would result in deeper broadband regulation on a competing fixed infrastructure – coax networks – next to the existing regulation of the incumbent copper network. The end result will be a disincentive to investment in the very fixed infrastructure which will deliver the gigabit society we share as our common goal.

“The Belgian regulators’ proposals neglect important market dynamics and are not forward-looking” added Kurth. “As we look towards a connected society and the technological potential unlocked by IoT, this is no time to handcuff an industry which is already vibrantly competitive.



“Consumer behaviour is changing and the technological landscape is transforming far faster than public policy can ever anticipate. We need a pragmatic framework in which to plan, to innovate and to invest. We are at a loss to see how these proposals can be justified on legal, economic, political or societal grounds and urge the European Commission to safeguard their objectives”.

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**Cable Europe’ submission can be found [here](#)**

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### **About Cable Europe**

Cable Europe is the trade association that connects leading broadband cable TV operators and their national trade associations throughout the European Union. The regulatory and public policy activities of Cable Europe aim to promote and defend the industry’s policies and business interests at European and international level. The European cable industry provides high speed broadband internet, TV services, and telephony to more than 63 million homes in the European Union. [www.cable-europe.eu](http://www.cable-europe.eu)

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