

ETNO Note on Spectrum Negotiations

Brussels, 5 March 2018 – ETNO, the Association representing Europe’s leading telecom operators, is evaluating the results of the Electronic Communications Code negotiations on spectrum policy. Such results fall short of the initial ambition of 5G needs and they have to be assessed in the context of all the remaining parts of the Code. This is essential to ascertain whether European citizens and businesses will benefit from higher levels of investment and innovation, which are essential for timely and inclusive 5G roll-out.

For this to happen, ETNO has been clear that users, technology and markets require increased investment certainty delivered by a pro-investment access regime, simple horizontal rules for all providers of electronic communications services as well as real and credible spectrum reform. This requires predictable licenses of at least 25 years, in line with the original ambition, and a binding peer review system ensuring a harmonised approach at the EU level.

Unfortunately, despite the efforts of the parties involved, the negotiations fell short of delivering the expected result on license duration and eluded the peer review question. The current average license duration is higher than the guaranteed 15-years baseline currently negotiated and it would be anyway distant from the 25 years of Europe’s leading Member States. We ask legislators to ensure that the final text delivers far more ambition, more certainty, less complexity and a credible governance system.

Lise Fuhr, ETNO Director General, said: *“5G is too important for Europe to accept a compromise falling short of the original ambition. Future licences needs to deliver increased certainty with respect to the status quo and a truly effective peer review system is essential to ensure the credibility of spectrum policy”*.