

Joint Note of the European Telecom Social Partners:

Our concern regarding the negotiations on the European Electronic Communications Code

Brussels, 19 April 2018 – UNI Europa, the European trade union federation representing service workers, and ETNO, the Association representing Europe’s leading telecom operators, jointly express their concern with regard to the on-going negotiations for a European Electronic Communications Code (EECC).

Last year, in a joint [position](#), the social partners UNI Europa and ETNO supported a pro-investment and pro-innovation EECC, aimed at underpinning European jobs and growth. In this context, we detailed the areas in which progress was necessary. Unfortunately, as of today, some of those key areas have still not been addressed. Among others:

- **Fibre and 5G roll-out requires ambition and the EECC should result in more regulatory certainty as well as clear investment incentives for network deployment.** Unfortunately, the current negotiations appear not only to fall short of this ambition, but also to threaten the stability of the current framework. Network roll-out is essential to ensure that connectivity underpins current jobs, promotes creation of new jobs and ensures sustainable economic growth;
- **Network regulation should ensure that all investment models are strongly encouraged**, in order to create inclusive incentives for all. Unfortunately, the current negotiations appear to rule out collaboration models that might significantly increase the pace of network roll-out;
- **Spectrum policy in Europe should be credible** and lead to increased certainty and investment levels into the 5G and mobile economy by means of longer and predictable spectrum licenses. Unfortunately, recent outcomes suggest that the EU has given up on real harmonisation;
- **A sustainable and effective EECC regulation should lead to the creation of high quality employment.** The current draft for the regulation still lacks the necessary drive to ensure that Europe combines incentives for innovation and the necessary labour market policies that ensure we maintain current jobs and create new ones, of a higher quality. As we previously warned, sustainable competition for all industry players should not be based solely on prices, as this could impact employment in the sector.

In this context, we would like to strongly reiterate our support for the European Commission efforts in creating an innovative Gigabit Society. One in which 5G and fibre networks create quality jobs and activate growth for both major industrial groups and SMEs across Europe. We stress that this crucial political objective cannot be achieved without credible and coherent outcome for the EECC. Similarly, we would like to express our support for unwavering action on the ICT skills gap and we remain committed to working with Commissioner Mariya Gabriel on both the connectivity and skills front.