

Letter of Intent Cooperation ERGA | EPRA

The European regulators group for audiovisual media services, ERGA, and the European platform of regulatory authorities, EPRA, are both European networks for audiovisual media regulators with a common interest. ERGA and EPRA have expressed their intentions to further the cooperation. Both platforms aim to coordinate their activities to achieve synergies and to avoid duplication.

EPRA was set up as a strong network of broadcasting regulators; 52 regulatory authorities from 46 countries are member of EPRA. EPRA provides a transparent forum to share information, best practice, experience and expertise. It explores means of regulating and analysing the audiovisual sector and sharing that with stakeholders. EPRA has an informal character; its statutes expressly prohibit the adoption of common positions or declarations.

ERGA was established as advisory body to the European Commission and comprises of the heads of national independent regulatory authorities of the EU Member States. ERGA advises and assists the Commission on a consistent application of the AVMS Directive and on other matters related to audiovisual media services within the Commission's competence. ERGA issues common positions. ERGA's members share best practices to provide for an exchange of experiences as to the application of the regulatory framework. ERGA's members cooperate and they provide each other with the information necessary for that same purpose.

The most characteristic differences between the two platforms follow from the set-up and membership of the platforms, the nature of the meetings, the delegates attending and the formal status of the deliverables. The membership of EPRA is open to regulatory authorities of non-EU countries where ERGA is only comprised of the regulators of the EU Member States. EPRA meetings have proven to be exceptionally relevant to all professionals attending in the last 22 years. According to the ERGA Decision¹, NRA's need to be represented within ERGA by the heads or high level representatives of regulatory authorities, who are primarily responsible for strategy and policies of the regulatory authority. ERGA aims at achieving common positions in view of the digital single market, whereas EPRA intentionally does not adopt common positions or declarations.

Both ERGA and EPRA are network organisations and strengthen the links between the regulators. ERGA has established a Digital European Toolkit, that enables regulators to share their practices and policies with each other, mainly by categorising and providing access to policy papers, guidelines and comparable documents. Regulators can use these documents as inspiration to apply the tasks from the EU Directive for Audiovisual Media Services. When ERGA advises the European Commission, ERGA uses diverse sources. Sources of EPRA, including the EPRA (country) reports and background documents, function as important building blocks. EPRA and ERGA attend each other's plenary meetings. During these meetings time is dedicated to inform each other about ongoing activities, to identify possible synergy benefits. EPRA is also free to give input to and comment on common positions of ERGA.

An example of where ERGA and EPRA may find synergy benefits can be found within the ERGA Academia. ERGA announced in its Work Programme for 2017 that it will explore the possibility to set up an ERGA Academia. Within this Academia ERGA will look at different themes, i.e. Rule of Law,

¹ Commission Decision of 3.2.2014 on establishing the European Regulators Group for Audiovisual Media Services, http://erga-online.eu/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Decision_2014_en.pdf

Oversight strategies, Board Effectivity and Trends & Technology. Especially for this last theme ERGA and EPRA could complement each other.

With this letter of intent ERGA expresses its intention to further align the cooperation with EPRA and will consult EPRA on what topics are suitable for further cooperation in their mutual interest.