



PRESS RELEASE ERGA 8TH PLENARY MEETING

ERGA launches academy for media regulators

ERGA has launched its ‘ERGA academy’, a programme where competences and expertise from all regulators are shared and harvested. The aim of the programme is to increase the independence and effectiveness of the individual regulators and to bolster the quality of all the regulators as a group. This is particularly important in a time where independence of audiovisual media regulators is not self-evident.

Professor Madeleine de Cock Buning, Chair of ERGA: *“Through the ERGA Academy we share and gain knowledge to improve our oversight. Individual regulators gain more potential and effectiveness. By exchanging knowledge experiences, regulators do not have to stand alone and are in a position to strengthen their efficiency and autonomous functioning.”* For that reason De Cock Buning was highly committed herself to the set-up of the ERGA Academy.

As part of the programme ERGA will organise various activities. ERGA will invite renowned speakers to give guest lectures to the heads of the regulators. Dedicated special sessions will enable the chairpersons and representatives to exchange thoughts and possible solutions for similar dilemmas that regulators are facing. In addition, an expertise pool will be set up to identify the expert areas of each ERGA member to be shared inside of the academy.

The ERGA Academy will further prepare ERGA for new tasks it is likely to face after the revision of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive. The academy was launched at the ERGA plenary meeting in Brussels. The ERGA members concluded that the further professionalisation has resulted in strengthening the structure of ERGA, very efficient decision-making and highly qualitative exchanges of views of a very high quality.

As a launch of the ERGA Academy, Prof. Dr Annetje Ottow, professor of public economic law and non-executive Director of the Competition and Markets Authority in the UK, was the first renowned speaker to give a very informative guest lecture on good oversight principles in the context of the ERGA Academy. She ignited an inspiring exchange of views between the ERGA members. Furthermore, Tony Close, the high-level representative from the UK, OFCOM, gave an inspirational presentation on [diversity in broadcasting](#).

More harmonisation to protect minors

In 2017 ERGA published a report that contains an overview of the measures currently employed in the sector to protect minors from audiovisual media content harmful to minors. As a follow-up and under the leadership of its Vice-Chair L'uboš Kukliš ERGA organised a workshop on ***Protecting Children in Audiovisual Media Services – Current and Future Measures*** in the beginning of October. During the plenary meeting ERGA members reflected on the results of the workshop. At the workshop a wide range of stakeholders were present, including industry, representatives from parental organisations and universities. One of the main results of the workshop was that all stakeholders present were committed to take further aligning actions in this area, specifically in the field of so-called classification methods.

According to Madeleine de Cock Buning, who opened and closed the workshop, broad involvement and participation from the relevant stakeholders is crucial for taking further steps to protect our children. *“We used to see that online and new media companies somewhat avoided these discussions regarding the protection of vulnerable groups. However, that is really changing now and they do tend to take on their responsibility more and more. This ERGA workshop certainly has provided all of its participants with further inspiration”*. According to De Cock Buning it is acknowledged in a growing number of countries that all stakeholders have to collaborate as borders fade in a converged media environment. For users the most important aspect is that the protection measures are as simple as possible and work on as many devices as possible.

ERGA members have broad and positive experiences with self- and co-regulation

The members of ERGA discussed the topic of self- and co-regulation during the plenary meeting. In a dynamic audiovisual media sector self- and co-regulatory approaches are becoming more effective and more prevalent since they can offer increased flexibility and adaptability compared with traditional regulation. An ERGA survey during 2017 found there is already widespread use of these approaches by ERGA members across a diverse range of regulatory applications and members have therefore begun exchanging experiences and best practices. Active involvement of stakeholders can help achieve strong support for self- and co-regulation and its intended goals. Some risks and weaknesses have also been discussed with the aim of finding useful lessons to learn.

ERGA members have identified further opportunities to collaborate and share their experiences of self- and co-regulatory models. This will be the subject of further work by ERGA during 2018.

ERGA in 2018

During its plenary meeting in Brussels on 9 November ERGA elected Damir Hajduk, President of the Croatian Council for Electronic Media (AEM), as its Chair for 2018. L'uboš Kukliš of the Council for Broadcasting and Retransmission of the Slovak Republic will remain Vice-Chair in 2018. Tobias Schmid of the German State Media Authorities was newly elected as Vice-Chair in 2018. After being in the board of ERGA for four years and chairing ERGA for two years, Madeleine de Cock Buning, president of the Dutch Media Authority, will step down in 2018.

Under the leadership of Damir Hajduk, ERGA will in 2018 continue its work on self- and co-regulation and the exchange of experiences and best practices. ERGA will also start exploring the topic of plurality and foster co-operation amongst national regulatory authorities when it comes to the enforcement of the Directive regarding audio-visual media services in an online environment. In addition, ERGA will prepare itself further for potential new tasks, once the revised directive for audiovisual media services is adopted, for example regarding territorial jurisdiction or the promotion of European works.

Notes for Editors

The European Regulators Group for Audio-visual Media Services consists of the national regulatory authorities in the field of audio-visual media services. ERGA advises the European Commission and facilitates cooperation between the regulatory bodies in the EU.

Madeleine de Cock Buning, President of the Dutch Media Authority, is the Chairperson of ERGA in 2017. The spokesperson of the Chair, Karen Temmink, can be contacted at + 31 6 57 41 53 95.