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PRESS RELEASE ERGA 9TH PLENARY MEETING

At the ERGA Plenary meeting in Zagreb, EU Commissioner Gabriel stressed the importance of regulatory coherence between the EU and the Western Balkans countries, the role of women in media and the fight against online disinformation.

The European regulators, working together in ERGA (European Regulators Group for Audiovisual Media Services), convened in Zagreb, Croatia, on 23 March 2018.

During the meeting, which was chaired by the ERGA Chair Damir Hajduk (Director of the Croatian Media Authority), all proposed Terms of Reference of the ERGA Subgroups were presented and adopted. In 2018, ERGA will continue its work on self- and co-regulation and the exchange of experiences and best practices. ERGA will also start exploring the topic of internal plurality and prepare itself further for potential new tasks, once the revised Directive for audiovisual media services is adopted.

Commissioner Gabriel and the Croatian Minister for Culture stressed the importance of ERGA

Ms Mariya Gabriel, EU Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society, attended the Plenary and made a speech stressing the importance of regulatory coherence between the EU and the Western Balkans countries, the role of women in media and the fight against online disinformation. Commissioner Gabriel also thanked ERGA members for their support to the Commission in matters related to audiovisual media services within the Commission's competence.

The Commissioner was joined by the Croatian Minister for Culture, Nina Obuljen Koržinek, who underlined the importance of ERGA as a platform of independent national regulators. She also congratulated the Croatian regulator on its 10th anniversary.

Speaking about women in media and in the society on general, the Commissioner stressed that women already in leadership and senior management are key to boosting confidence and providing inspiration for the younger generation. The Commissioner stressed that she would like to address this issue in the context of the upcoming Women in Digital strategy and asked ERGA to contribute with exchange of best practices to tackle stereotypes in the media.

In mid-March the High Level Expert Group established to advise the Commission on Fake News and Online disinformation published its report. Transparency, diversity of information, their credibility and inclusivity of all involved parties are the four main principles for a more credible and enriching news environment, said Gabriel.

Damir Hajduk, ERGA Chair and director of the Agency for Electronic Media: *We are currently in times when the AVMSD is being adapted to new realities in the extremely dynamic electronic media ecosystem.*

At the same time, new issues relevant for European regulators are gaining in prominence, such as fake news and illegal use of private data. The exchange of experience and good practice within expert groups are of great importance for smaller members. This is especially true for Croatia, where the changes of the Electronic Media Act are ongoing.

It has been our great pleasure to welcome you in Zagreb at the meeting of heads of EU regulators. I am very proud to have had with us Commissioner Mariya Gabriel who has, among others, recognised the importance of media regulators in raising awareness in gender equality matters.

ERGA Academy tackling Online disinformation and the use of Algorithms

ERGA Members were also informed about the outcomes of the Strategy Session on “Online disinformation: the impact assessment”, which took place the day before. It included prof. Oreste Pollicino from the Bocconi University, who made an introductory speech, followed by case studies and presentations by the UK, Italian, Slovak and Swedish regulators and a discussion and exchange of experiences among all participants.

Dr Judith Möller from the University of Amsterdam gave an enlightening lecture on the role of algorithmic news recommendations, where she touched upon the functioning and consequences of the use of algorithms in users' access to news.

Note for editors

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

Damir Hajduk, Director of the Croatian Media Authority, is the Chairperson of ERGA. The spokesperson of the Chair can be contacted on pr@e-mediji.hr.