



**ERGA Subgroup 1 on Media Plurality  
Taskforce 1 on online disinformation  
13 March 2019**

**Minutes**

*Attendees: BAI (Ireland – Chair of SG1), AGCOM (Italy, leader of TF1), CSA (Belgium), RRTV (Czech Republic), DLM (Germany), ESR (Greece), CNMC (Spain), CSA (France), AEM (Croatia), CRTA (Cyprus), NEPLADOME (Latvia), RTK (Lithuania), ALIA (Luxembourg), NMHH (Hungary), KRRiT (Poland), ERC (Portugal), AKOS (Slovenia), RVR (Slovakia), European Commission.*

**Introductory remarks**

In his introductory remarks, the Chair Mr Kissane mentioned that the aim of this meeting would be to further discuss the ERGA's involvement in monitoring of the effectiveness of the Code of Practice on disinformation as well as to outline the specific actions to be carried out during this exercise. The meeting also aimed at verifying the interest of the particular NRAs in contributing to this exercise.

→ The Agenda was adopted

**Tour de table**

The NRAs were asked to clarify whether they have competences with regard to online environment and disinformation issues. The majority of NRAs mentioned that they do not have competences in this area.

IT, EI, PT and FR briefly presented their national actions concerning the issue of disinformation. It was also clarified, that the lack of the competences does not preclude the NRAs from participating in the monitoring process, as this exercise would focus mainly on assessing information collected by the platforms.

**Update from the Commission**

The Commission updated members on the reports by platforms covering their measures to implement the Code's commitments. The Commission stated that it has also identified gaps in the submitted reports and that it is in touch with the signatory platforms. This is particularly the case for the library/repository of ads, which should be easily searchable. According to the Commission, ERGA should treat the issue of political advertising and the libraries as a priority.

The Commission also underlined that the ERGA input would have a particular meaning in assessing if libraries/archives are searchable, if relevant services concerning advertising provided by platforms are satisfactory at the national level and in gathering information from the national electoral committees.

### **Presentation of the monitoring process (AGCOM)**

In its presentation, AGCOM focused on the goals of the TF1 in the process of monitoring as well as on the activities to be carried out by NRAs.

The phase of intermediary monitoring would focus only on scrutiny of ad placements, political advertising (including issue-based advertising) and integrity of services. The goal of the TF1 would be to monitor these parameters in at least 8-10 member states.

On the other hand, the overall assessment by the end of 2019 will include carrying out a survey on the competences of the NRAs and on the measures adopted at national level as regards online disinformation.

The presentation outlined that it would be difficult to conduct the intermediate monitoring activity only on the basis of the reports from platforms. Therefore, the NRAs should receive disaggregated data showing the implementation of the measures in each country. Consequently, each NRAs would be able to filter the relevant information.

It was also suggested that NRAs without clear legal powers in this area could establish a cooperation with local academic institutions with regard to the monitoring exercise.

Concerning the practical actions of the NRAs during the intermediate monitoring, AGCOM proposed the following:

(i) checking the status of the national election cooperation network of relevant authorities and (ii) liaising with Electoral Committees, (iii) carrying out monitoring activities focussed on transparency of political ads, using different sources and in particular the platforms' ad repositories, and (iv) establishing a regular flow of information on the monitoring activities with the Commission.

Concerning the deliverables, ERGA would like to present a first draft report to the Commission by mid-June 2019 and it will then deliver a final report to the ERGA Plenary, scheduled for 20-21 June 2019.

### **Participation of the NRAs in the monitoring**

Following the presentation of AGCOM, the NRAs from SK, SI, IE, LT, LV, HR, GR, BE and IT expressed their interest in participating in this process.

### **Next steps**

The next meeting of the Subgroup 1 is planned for 16<sup>th</sup> of April. The aim of this meeting will be to further discuss the methodology of the intermediate monitoring process.