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Press Release

## **ERGA welcomes guidance to strengthen the Code of Practice and is ready to work on its effective implementation**

On 26 May 2021, the European Commission published its Guidance on strengthening the Code of Practice on disinformation.

Tobias Schmid, Chair of ERGA and Commissioner for European Affairs of the German Media Authorities, underlines the necessity of the Guidance and the intended strengthening of the Code of Practice with view to effectively combating disinformation: *“The guidelines are an important step showing once again that the European Union may not always be the best sprinter, but nobody should underestimate us in medium and long distances.”*

ERGA especially welcomes the ambition set out in the Guidance to strengthen the Code in the key areas, such as access to data for researchers, fact-checking, user-empowerment and robust monitoring that were also highlighted in the previous relevant ERGA reports.

The Guidance proposes the establishment of a permanent task force chaired by the Commission, within which the Code’s signatories, ERGA, together with the representatives from the European External Action Service, the European Digital Media Observatory (EDMO) and relevant experts, will help to review and adapt the Code in view of technological, societal, market and legislative developments.

*“I am glad that many of ERGA’s observations have been addressed, and that the Guidance assigns a clear role to ERGA. We are looking forward to continuing a constructive collaboration with the Code’s signatories on the effective implementation of the Code”*, noted Ľuboš Kukliš of the Slovak Council for Broadcasting and Retransmission, leading the work of ERGA in the field of disinformation.

Improving the ability of the EU and its Member States in particular to effectively limit the spread of disinformation has been an integral part of media regulators’ work within ERGA for years. ERGA has delivered several relevant reports, monitoring disinformation related to both EU elections, and the current pandemic and is ready and committed to keep providing the expertise of its members to the European Commission.

### **About ERGA:**

*The European Regulators Group for Audiovisual Media Services (ERGA) 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. Dr Tobias Schmid, Director of the Media Authority of North Rhine-Westphalia, is the current Chairperson of ERGA.*