5G: tech and telecom industries support initiatives to put EU in the lead

Brussels and Barcelona, 23 February 2016 – The technology and telecoms industries are leading the work on the development and future launch of 5G networks and services. For this reason, we welcome and support the European Commission's efforts and commitment to promoting EU leadership in 5G.

The Opportunities Ahead

5G is vital for Europe's future success: it represents a real technological leap, which will translate into new unique network and service opportunities. We envisage benefits for citizens and businesses in 5 key areas:

- Enhanced Broadband: Broadband will be boosted, delivering a real step change in capacity, connectivity, bandwidth and a higher Quality of Service;

- Smarter Transport: Vehicles, transport and the respective infrastructure will become smarter, with connected applications for logistics, driving and public transport;

- High-quality Media: High-quality media will be ubiquitous, with new prospects for production and distribution of content;

- Internet of Things: Devices will be remotely controllable in an ever reliable, secure and energy-efficient way, offering unprecedented opportunities in sectors such as manufacturing, wearables and healthcare;

- Human-object interaction communication: Ultra-reliable, low-latency communications will become easier, with new innovations in augmented reality, wearables, tactile internet and smart housing.

The Policy Challenge

Policymakers and regulators have an important task ahead in supporting and facilitating EU leadership in 5G. We have therefore identified 4 key policy challenges:

- **Innovation**: Regulation can prevent innovations in the digital ecosystem from reaching their potential. Policies and rules should be future-oriented and pro-innovation, so that all players in the digital value chain are empowered to innovate. The implementation of the current Open Internet rules should ensure networks are able to meet increasing demand.

- **Incentivising Infrastructure Investment**: To meet future connectivity needs and ever-growing demand for high-speed broadband, the climate for fixed and mobile network investment should be improved, with a significant simplification of the current set of rules and incentives to invest.

- **Spectrum harmonisation**: More harmonised and affordable spectrum is needed, with a view to facilitating a timely roll-out and maximising network investment.

- **Standardisation & Verticals:** Continued efforts in 5G-PPP are crucial to ensure that standardisation ensures interoperability and facilitates economies of scale. In this context, collaboration with adjacent industry sectors, such as automotive, healthcare and utilities, is crucial, with a view to meeting their needs and boosting the integration in the wider economy and society.

DIGITALEUROPE Director-General, John Higgins said: "*Speed is of the essence. The sooner Europe can get 5G up and running, the sooner Europeans will be able to benefit from the wide array of applications waiting for this network upgrade, from next-generation mobile devices to connected cars and smart household appliances*".

ETNO Director-General, Lise Fuhr said: "*5G is the platform for Europe's societal and economic progress. Policy and regulation should help facilitate the massive investment required. Telecom operators are ready to ensure that Europeans enjoy the fastest and most innovative networks in the world*".

GSMA Chief Regulatory Officer, John Giusti said: "*5G has the potential to enhance the power of mobile as a tool to improve the lives of European citizens. While 5G is still a nascent technology, the steps we take today to foster an enabling environment will be crucial to ensuring the future success of this technology. We welcome the development of an ambitious 5G Action Plan for Europe*".

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DIGITALEUROPE represents the digital technology industry in Europe. Our members include some of the world's largest IT, telecoms and consumer electronics companies and national associations from every part of Europe. DIGITALEUROPE wants European businesses and citizens to benefit fully from digital technologies and for Europe to grow, attract and sustain the world's best digital technology companies.

DIGITALEUROPE ensures industry participation in the development and implementation of EU policies. DIGITALEUROPE's members include 60 corporate members and 37 national trade associations from across Europe. Our website provides further information on our recent news and activities: http://www.digitaleurope.org

ETNO has been the voice of Europe's telecommunications network operators since 1992 and has become the principal policy group for European electronic communications network operators. Its 50 members and observers in 35 countries collectively account for a turnover of more than € 600 billion and employ over 1.6 million people. ETNO companies are the main drivers of broadband and are committed to its continual growth in Europe. ETNO members are pan-European operators, also holding new entrant positions outside their national markets. ETNO brings together the main investors in innovative and high-quality e-communications platforms and services, representing 60% of total sector investment.

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GSMA represents the interests of mobile operators worldwide, uniting nearly 800 operators with more than 250 companies in the broader mobile ecosystem, including handset and device makers, software companies, equipment providers and internet companies, as well as organisations in adjacent industry sectors. The GSMA also produces industry-leading events such as Mobile World Congress, Mobile World Congress Shanghai and the Mobile 360 Series conferences.

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