



Joint Statement: European telecom operators are united in voicing strong concerns regarding the current GIA negotiations

Brussels, February 1st, 2024 – The EU telecommunications industry is united in voicing strong concerns around the ongoing “Gigabit Infrastructure Act” Regulation negotiations and warns of unintended consequences if proposals are implemented in their current form.

The European Commission originally intended for this Regulation to provide a way to reduce the cost and time of 5G and gigabit network roll-out. Instead, current negotiations risk turning it into a measure that penalises telecoms operators, without producing any real benefit in terms of administrative simplification.

Key measures that would help speed up network roll-out are now being placed into doubt. These include so-called ‘tacit approvals’, which allow fibre installation when construction permits are not granted within a reasonable timeframe. Furthermore, the historic effort to invest in 5G and fibre across the EU will be undermined by proposals of aggressive and unjustified price regulation in competitive markets for intra-EU communications, without any impact assessment or evidence of market failure.

The provision of digital networks is not solely the concern of telecom companies: they are critical for the prosperity of the whole of Europe, providing the backbone of a modern, efficient and sustainable economy for European citizens.

Unless the original spirit of the European Commission proposal is preserved, the EU telecom industry believes that retaining current rules would be less damaging to network roll-out than implementing an ill-conceived Regulation. This risks leaving a damaging legacy on our sector under the remaining EU mandate.