

## #netcompetition

# Supporting broadband choice and freedom of communication

Experience shows that markets function best and society benefits most where competition is allowed to flourish. Broadband, as well as digital markets, are no exception.

The telecom sector liberalisation in the early 90s and the consequent **ability of end-users to choose between several telecom providers** has been key in driving network roll-out, increasing broadband performances, low prices and innovative features in all EU Member States.

The European Commission is getting ready for a major review of the rules governing the entire digital sector. Big telecom players push for getting rid of the rules that have precisely enabled competition. Instead, these big players ask for consolidation of the sector, in both fixed and mobile markets, to reduce the number of competitors, in exchange for promises of investment.

#### **#NetCompetition is a community**

...of organisations supporting competition and consumer choice in broadband and through all layers of the digital economy as the most effective way to spur innovation, drive investments in infrastructure and create consumer welfare

## supporting competition in the digital environment,

Competition is not automatic, natural and irrevocable: in markets that naturally tend to form oligopolies or monopolies, competition needs to be enabled, fostered and safeguarded against foreclosure, excessive market concentration and attempts of re-monopolisation. Policy makers should resist the pressure to dismantle the set of rules that allows a competitive provision of broadband in the EU, as there is no trade-off between competition and network investments.

## business diversity and economic pluralism

A merger-mania is raging in the European telecom scene. Big operators are looking to increase their size and reduce the number of Internet service providers in each market to gain more bargaining power towards

end-users as well as content and app providers that use broadband as a key enabler. We urge the EU to carefully assess each proposed merger and take steps to ensure that consolidation is not detrimental for consumers and incentives to innovate.

#### more consumer benefits and protection

Competition is an essential ingredient for any market to deliver benefits to consumers, but competition alone is not enough. A strong framework of consumer rights is necessary for consumers to reap the benefits of a competitive market. The review of the rules is a unique opportunity to update the sector's consumer protection framework and ensure that barriers to switching are addressed, unfair conditions eliminated, and consumers get accurate information and effective redress.

### and respect for fundamental rights

Last, but not least, safeguarding broadband choice in both fixed and mobile markets is not only an issue of economic dimensions. **Only a competitive broadband sector and open digital market can serve a democratic society** allowing all voices to be heard at any level, without censorship, discrimination or undue restrictions to freedom of communication.

Whether you are an organisation or an individual, make your voice heard and tell the policy makers in Europe that you support #NetCompetition

Follow <a>@SaveNetComp</a> on Twitter to stay up to date on how to defend users' choice to broadband services and join the conversation on <a>#NetCompetition</a>