

PRESS RELEASE

«Regulators can play a key role in making Europe a leader in Tech again» says BEREC Chair Sebastien Soriano about the Internet of Things at the BEREC Workshop

On 1 February 2017, BEREC held an expert workshop dedicated to the topic “Enabling the Internet of Things (IoT)” where approximately 100 experts and stakeholders discussed the regulatory implications and solutions that might be required to ensure a large-scale and sustainable IoT roll-out that delivers significant benefits to citizens and consumers across several industry sectors.

Benefits of IoT are both societal and economical

The workshop provided an extensive overview of various IoT business models, opportunities and practical examples. IoT could bring benefits for individuals, businesses and society as a whole, for example – the intelligence of smart meters, cars, homes, utility grids, and indeed cities altogether could be improved, for the purpose of attaining energy efficient and pollution-free metropolises. The potential for innovation in the electronic communications sector does not only lie within mobile, but also with completely new types of solutions and technologies, which help to make the market more competitive and bring benefits to consumers.

The workshop helped to further raise awareness of IoT issues and the potential challenges ahead in the fast developing environment of the electronic communications sector. Important questions on privacy and consumer protection security were also raised: the concepts of privacy and security by design were both endorsed.

In a discussion about extraterritorial use of numbers, applied specifically to IoT, it was recognised that IoT, as a fundamentally global market, would benefit from reaching global solutions.

Preparing the revolution, welcoming innovation

Above all, the core issue that permeated throughout the day is that of the relevance of public action in an ever evolving market: IoT is still immature and, as such, should be treated very cautiously from a regulatory perspective. Privacy, security and competition should be closely monitored, for the benefit of potential users, but innovation must thrive on order for IoT to reach its full potential.

When discussing the position of regulators with respect to the innovative and international topic that is the Internet of Things, the BEREC Chair Sebastien Soriano suggested that regulators “in their beginnings, opened up the national monopolists to competition, but IoT is now a completely different story.”

However, he underlined that, prior to defining new standards and rules, an open environment should be preserved and the exploration of all solutions by the entrepreneurs must be allowed. As such, regulators could play a key role in restoring Europe’s leadership in technology.

The workshop was live streamed on the [BEREC website](#) and it got a total viewership of more than 1000. A video recording of the event will be available on the [BEREC YouTube channel](#) soon.

Media contacts

press@berec.europa.eu

Note for editors

The workshop was a follow-up to BEREC’s February 2016 report on “Enabling the Internet of Things”, which assessed whether, and to what extent, existing telecoms rules (primarily construed for voice telephony) are also a fit for Machine-to-Machine (M2M) communications. In light of the European Commission’s review of the telecoms framework, BEREC considers that, in general, no special treatment of IoT services and/or M2M communication is necessary, except for roaming, switching and number portability. With regard to privacy, BEREC sees the need for a careful evolution, though not a complete overhaul, of the existing EU data protection rules.

With this workshop, BEREC provided a forum for dialogue between national regulatory authorities and authorities which are competent for other matters regarding the IoT, as well as with other stakeholders in the industry in order to create awareness and foster both an innovation- and consumer-friendly environment.