

Highlights from Mobile World Congress (MWC) 2018

Joint statement of DIGITALEUROPE, ETNO and the GSMA on the outcome of the spectrum trilogue

The 2018 MWC held in Barcelona attracted more than 107,000 visitors, including 7,700 CEOs, from 205 countries and territories worldwide.

GSMA Europe organised and facilitated a comprehensive programme for senior delegates from the EU institutions:

- At the 5th GSMA Europe-EIF high-level roundtable, entitled ‘The Global 5G Promise’, legislators, regulators and industry leaders discussed the forthcoming 5G revolution.
- The European Parliament delegation visited MWC exhibition stands, including those of DT, Orange, Telefónica, Huawei, Nokia, InterDigital and Samsung.
- Vice President Andrus Ansip and Commissioner Gabriel also attended MWC, where they visited the exhibition, the GSMA Innovation City and participated in a roundtable discussion with the CEOs of European mobile operators. In addition, VP Ansip joined the Ministerial Programme panel ‘Supporting the Transition to 5G’ and delivered a keynote on The Future of the Industry: Transatlantic Digital Policy and Regulation. Commissioner Gabriel joined the Trans-Atlantic Policy Dialogue.
- The GSMA Europe-BEREC Roundtable provided an excellent opportunity for the heads of European operators and other industry executives to discuss regulatory developments and the challenges ahead.
- Finally, the GSMA Government Leadership Award went to Estonia. Mats Granryd, Director General of the GSMA, presented the award to Urve Palo, the Estonian Minister of Entrepreneurship and Information Technology.

MWC 2019 will be held on 25-28 February in Barcelona.

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From Brussels it was reported on 9 March in a joint statement from: Cecilia Bonefeld-Dahl Director-General of DIGITALEUROPE; Lise Fuhr Director General of ETNO and Afke Schaart VP and Head of Europe at the GSMA, as follows:

‘We know that reaching political agreement on EU spectrum reform is no easy task and we appreciate the co-legislators’ efforts to advance negotiations. However, we are deeply disappointed that the compromise reached last week (w/e 3 March) fails to confront the long-term challenges, falls short of boosting the region’s competitiveness on the global stage and does not establish a credible regulatory path towards 5G in Europe.

‘While we acknowledge constructive commitments regarding the award of some key 5G bands, the co-legislators clearly did not address the main issues: ensuring meaningful convergence of spectrum awards across the Member States and reassuring investors that licenses will have a longer duration compared to the status quo.

‘With the previous agreement on small cells, Europe has shown that seemingly difficult provisions can be solved to ensure a more solid and scalable EU market. This should not be just an exception and we stand united on asking all co-legislators to come together to achieve a better deal for the EU’s global technological competitiveness.’