



Tuesday, 26 July, 2016

### **Single Market: Commission launches consultation on the Single Digital Gateway**

The European Commission is today launching a public consultation on the Single Digital Gateway, an instrument that will provide user-friendly access to information, e-procedures and advice services throughout Europe. Citizens and businesses who want to move to another EU country, do business or buy products from abroad are often confronted with a lack of information available online, limited access to assistance and no possibility to use e-procedures across borders. As a result, they do not move to, or buy or sell to other EU countries, which in turn stifles job creation and slows down economic growth. In the [Single Market Strategy](#) and the [Digital Single Market Strategy](#) the Commission announced the creation of a Single Digital Gateway – a tool providing online all the information that entrepreneurs and citizens need to know to move or do business in another EU country. Commissioner Elżbieta **Bieńkowska**, responsible for Internal market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs said: *"Citizens and businesses are often not aware of their rights or face difficulties to access the relevant information when they want to move or do business in another EU country. We need to create the conditions and tools that will allow them to tap into opportunities the EU Single Market offers. Such a tool is the Single Digital Gateway which will provide everything people need to know to do business cross-border, travel, live, study or work within the EU. It will guide users online through the whole process, from accessing information to getting advice and assistance when encountering problems. If we are to create jobs and build a competitive economy, we must unleash the full potential of the Single Market."* The Gateway will focus on addressing the current information gap and fragmentation by integrating, completing and improving relevant EU and national-level online information, assistance services and procedures in a user-friendly way. The consultation on the Single Digital Gateway is available [here](#) and will be open until 21 November 2016. The Commission seeks the views of entrepreneurs, citizens and public administrations, as well as other stakeholders, on how to best develop such a tool according to the needs of its users.

### **Antitrust: Commission accepts commitments by Paramount on cross-border pay-TV services**

The European Commission has made commitments offered by Paramount legally binding under EU antitrust rules. These address the Commission's concerns regarding certain clauses in film licensing contracts for pay-TV between Paramount and Sky UK. These clauses prevented Sky UK from allowing EU consumers outside the UK and Ireland to access films via satellite or online. They also required Paramount to ensure that broadcasters other than Sky UK are prevented from making their pay-TV services available in the UK and Ireland. Paramount has now committed that it will neither act upon nor

enforce these clauses in existing film licensing contracts for pay-TV with any broadcaster in the European Economic Area (EEA). It has also committed to refrain from (re)introducing such clauses in film licensing contracts for pay-TV with any broadcaster in the EEA. This follows a Statement of Objections the Commission had sent [in July 2015](#) setting out its preliminary view that certain clauses in film licensing contracts for pay-TV between Paramount (amongst other studios) and Sky UK breach EU antitrust rules. A full press release is available online [here](#)

### **Antitrust: successful opening of German gas markets allows early termination of E.ON commitments**

The European Commission has released German energy firm E.ON from commitments to reduce long-term bookings on the German gas grid almost five years ahead of schedule. This is because, thanks to the successful implementation of the commitments, competition on the market has increased significantly. Commissioner Margrethe **Vestager**, in charge of competition policy, said: *“This case is a good example of how commitments decisions can open up markets to competition quickly and effectively. Since E.ON started to reduce its long-term bookings of pipeline capacity, other companies have been able to enter and take part in the German gas market. The commitments have resolved the competition problem even quicker than expected and are no longer needed now.”* In [May 2010](#), the Commission accepted commitments from E.ON to release large volumes of gas pipeline capacity and to reduce its bookings of long-term entry capacity in the NetConnect Germany grid. They were originally due to last until April 2021 and addressed the Commission's concerns that long-term bookings may have prevented other gas suppliers from accessing the German gas market and competing with E.ON. Following the Commission's decision, E.ON has actually booked significantly less capacity than the threshold set out the commitments. As a result, competitors have been able to enter the market and gain significant market shares. In addition, large amounts of transport capacity are now available so that competitors will continue to have access to the capacity they need to operate on the market. Moreover, the gas market has evolved insofar as market participants, including E.ON, now generally prefer short-term bookings, to be able to respond flexibly to changing market demand and market shares. A full press release is available online [here](#)

### **Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of joint control over Slovenske elektrarne by EPH and Enel**

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the proposed acquisition of joint control over Slovenske elektrarne, a.s. of Slovakia by EPH of the Czech Republic and Enel SpA of Italy. Slovenske elektrarne is active in electricity generation, wholesale and retail supply of electricity, as well as balancing and ancillary services in Slovakia. EPH is a utility company active in coal extraction, electricity and heat generation, distribution and supply, as well as transmission, distribution, supply and storage of gas. Enel is an integrated global player, active in electricity generation and gas distribution and supply. The Commission concluded that the proposed transaction would raise no competition concerns. This is because the overlaps between the companies' activities are either small or will continue to face strong competition from rival players. Moreover, given the existence of alternative sources of supply at the wholesale level, the companies would have neither the ability nor the incentive to prevent their competitors from accessing electricity on the retail market after the transaction. The transaction was examined under the normal merger review procedure. More information is available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the case number [M.7927](#).

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## Upcoming Events

### Summer Recess



Find out [here](#) what will be discussed next week in the European Commission, the European Council and the European Parliament.