

PRESS RELEASE

**EWIA: How neutral host infrastructure can foster Europe's mobile connectivity**

**Brussels, 26 September 2018: At its inaugural event this lunchtime in Brussels, representatives from the European Wireless Infrastructure Association (EWIA) and the European institutions discussed how independent and neutral host wireless infrastructure can contribute to the growth of 5G across Europe while helping bridge the digital divide.**

The event was supported by MEP Pilar del Castillo and featured interventions by Anthony Whelan, Director in the European Commission, as well as a presentation on 5G and the associated network deployment implications and how EWIA members can help make that a reality.

"Open access is at the heart of our neutral host business model," explained Olivier Huart, Chairman of EWIA. "EWIA's members build higher capacity infrastructure which is designed for sharing by multiple network operators from the outset. We accelerate the time to market for innovators and facilitate coverage of remote areas. This in turn makes wireless services more available to end users and helps bridge the digital divide."

Connectivity is not only critical for Europe's economy – it also improves immeasurably the lives of its citizens and acts as the glue linking people and wider communities. To deliver on the promise of a connected Digital Single Market and deliver the Gigabit society by 2025 will require massive investment in new wireless infrastructure to support high speed, high capacity and pervasive 4G and 5G networks.

Pilar del Castillo MEP, who was the Rapporteur on the recast of the European Electronic Communications Code, said: "Investment, competition and regulation shape a virtuous circle that will foster the rollout of ubiquitous, very high-capacity networks and 5G broadband infrastructure. The Regulatory Framework for Electronic Communications will be a crucial tool in making Europe a Gigabit society."

Olivier Huart concluded: "Our sector can unlock new investment sources from infrastructure investors, which will be critical for Europe's wireless connectivity. We require a different regulatory lens which recognises the very different incentives in our sector. In this vein we are hopeful that future policy will reflect, and indeed support, wider and faster infrastructure deployment through neutral host investment."

Please see EWIA's infographic and narrative for more information.

[www.ewia.org](http://www.ewia.org)

**About EWIA**

The European Wireless Infrastructure Association (EWIA) is the European trade association of independent wholesale wireless infrastructure providers. Our members invest in and operate the wireless infrastructure which is essential to the delivery of mobile voice, wireless broadband, and other wireless networks, and they provide this independent neutral host infrastructure to all mobile network and other wireless operators on an open access basis. We offer a more efficient and competitive alternative to the vertically integrated business model and stimulate competition at the infrastructure level.

EWIA advocates policies that encourage the independent network infrastructure investment and deployment necessary to make advanced wireless broadband available everywhere for consumers, businesses, healthcare, public safety and the countless other sectors that rely on always-on wireless connections. Our sector is attractive for long term, low cost capital from investors and infrastructure funds which want to invest in infrastructure rather than retail network services.

EWIA has ten members operating across eight European countries who develop, acquire and operate communication towers together with investment in the fibre-connected small cell networks in buildings and on city streets needed for 5G. Together, our members have invested over €60bn of infrastructure assets globally and operate a portfolio of over 60,000 assets in Europe, representing approximately 20% of the towers in Europe.