



Brussels, 3 December 2021

Press Release

Transparency only harms those who have something to hide

ERGA expresses itself on the Regulation on Transparency and Targeting of Political Advertising

Just a few days ago, the European Commission published its proposal for regulation on Transparency and Targeting of Political Advertising. The regulation aims at establishing harmonised rules on transparency, targeting and amplification of political advertising, both online and offline, involving personal data processing activities.

ERGA welcomes the European Commission's willingness to address the specific issue of political advertising also online. This new regulation – together with the DSA – has the potential to finally create a legislative framework for online platforms' involvement in providing political advertising, as anticipated in the Code of Practice on Disinformation. ERGA emphasizes that the envisaged transparency provisions will allow advertising to be labelled as political in a simple and understandable way for which it has advocated before. The scope of the definition of "political advertising services" will however need further discussions.

"Transparency only harms those who have something to hide. Therefore, we welcome the European Commission's initiative to make legally binding rules concerning political advertising. From our experience and monitoring performed within ERGA, we believe that more transparency is the most useful tool to tackle disinformation and related behaviours. We further welcome the Commission considering ERGA's demands to ensure that labels to mark political advertising should stay with the content even if it is shared by third parties" said Dr Tobias Schmid, chair of ERGA, and highlights another welcome element of the proposal.

ERGA proposes to clearly distribute responsibilities and to use existing governance resources. Therefore, we call once again for a reinforcement of an explicit reliance on existing cooperation structures like ERGA. ERGA stands ready to further exchange its experience and practical insights with relevant actors in order to work together on a more transparent and fair political advertising environment.

About ERGA:

The European Regulators Group for Audiovisual Media Services (ERGA) consists of the national regulatory authorities in the field of audiovisual media services. ERGA advises the European Commission and facilitates cooperation between the regulatory bodies in the EU. Dr Tobias Schmid, Director of the Media Authority of North Rhine-Westphalia, is the current Chairperson of ERGA.