

Workshop on Subnational Markets

RTR, 20 June 2008, Vienna, Austria

Vienna, Mariahilferstraße 77 – 79, House B

Scope of Workshop

Subnational markets have recently become the focus of a new regulatory debate. Ofcom has geographically differentiated remedies for the wholesale broadband access market based on a definition of subnational markets with varying degrees of competition. A number of other EU regulators have also considered such an approach. Guidance on an EU level is currently being formulated, with extensive comments of the Commission on the Ofcom notification and a Common Position of the European Regulators Group expected to be put out for consultation in June.

The Workshop provides an excellent opportunity to discuss the pros and cons of defining subnational markets and geographically differentiating remedies with representatives from regulatory authorities, operators and academia. What should be the criteria for defining subnational markets? What are the consequences for the future availability of wholesale offerings if access obligations are removed in parts of the territory? Which is the impact on the vertical consistency of prices across access levels and what is the impact on the business models of alternative operators and competition in the retail broadband access market? Will consumers benefit from geographically differentiated remedies? Should regulators bother about subnational market definition or implement geographically differentiated remedies based on SMP in a national market? Those are a few of the many issues which have been raised in the debate.