Directive (EU) 2018/1972 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 establishing the European Electronic Communications Code (Recast) (Text with EEA relevance)

PART II

NETWORKS

TITLE II

ACCESS

CHAPTER I

General provisions, access principles

Article 59

General framework for access and interconnection

1 Member States shall ensure that there are no restrictions which prevent undertakings in the same Member State or in different Member States from negotiating between themselves agreements on technical and commercial arrangements for access or interconnection, in accordance with Union law. The undertaking requesting access or interconnection does not need to be authorised to operate in the Member State where access or interconnection is requested, if it is not providing services and does not operate a network in that Member State.

2 Without prejudice to Article 114, Member States shall not maintain legal or administrative measures which require undertakings, when granting access or interconnection, to offer different terms and conditions to different undertakings for equivalent services or measures imposing obligations that are not related to the actual access and interconnection services provided without prejudice to the conditions set out in Annex I.

Article 60

Rights and obligations of undertakings

1 Operators of public electronic communications networks shall have a right and, when requested by other undertakings so authorised in accordance with Article 15, an obligation to negotiate with each other interconnection for the purpose of providing publicly available electronic communications services, in order to ensure provision and interoperability of services throughout the Union. Operators shall offer access and interconnection to other undertakings on terms and conditions consistent with obligations imposed by the national regulatory authority pursuant to Articles 61, 62 and 68.

2 Without prejudice to Article 21, Member States shall require that undertakings which acquire information from another undertaking before, during or after the process of negotiating access or interconnection arrangements use that information solely for the purpose for which

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it was supplied and respect at all times the confidentiality of information transmitted or stored. Such undertakings shall not pass on the received information to any other party, in particular other departments, subsidiaries or partners, for whom such information could provide a competitive advantage.

3 Member States may provide for negotiations to be conducted through neutral intermediaries when conditions of competition so require.

CHAPTER II

Access and interconnection

Article 61

Powers and responsibilities of the national regulatory and other competent authorities with regard to access and interconnection

[[X1]1 National regulatory authorities or, in the case of points (b) and (c) of the first subparagraph of paragraph 2 of this Article, national regulatory authorities or other competent authorities shall, acting in pursuit of the objectives set out in Article 3, encourage and, where appropriate, ensure, in accordance with this Directive, adequate access and interconnection, and the interoperability of services, exercising their responsibility in a way that promotes efficiency, sustainable competition, the deployment of very high capacity networks, efficient investment and innovation, and gives the maximum benefit to end-users.**]**

They shall provide guidance and make publicly available the procedures applicable to gain access and interconnection to ensure that small and medium-sized enterprises and operators with a limited geographical reach can benefit from the obligations imposed.

[[X1]2 In particular, without prejudice to measures that may be taken regarding undertakings designated as having significant market power in accordance with Article 68, national regulatory authorities or, in the case of points (b) and (c) of this subparagraph, national regulatory authorities or other competent authorities shall be able to impose:**]**

(a) to the extent necessary to ensure end-to-end connectivity, obligations on undertakings subject to general authorisation that control access to end-users, including, in justified cases, the obligation to interconnect their networks where this is not already the case;

(b) in justified cases and to the extent necessary, obligations on undertakings subject to general authorisation that control access to end-users to make their services interoperable;

(c) in justified cases, where end-to-end connectivity between end-users is endangered due to a lack of interoperability between interpersonal communications services, and to the extent necessary to ensure end-to-end connectivity between end-users, obligations on relevant providers of number-independent interpersonal communications services which reach a significant level of coverage and user uptake, to make their services interoperable;

(d) to the extent necessary to ensure accessibility for end-users to digital radio and television broadcasting services and related complementary services specified by the Member State, obligations on operators to provide access to the other facilities referred to in Part II of Annex II on fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory terms.

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The obligations referred to in point (c) of the first subparagraph shall be imposed only:

(i) to the extent necessary to ensure interoperability of interpersonal communications services and may include proportionate obligations on providers of those services to publish and allow the use, modification and redistribution of relevant information by the authorities and other providers, or to use and implement standards or specifications listed in Article 39(1) or of any other relevant European or international standards;

(ii) where the Commission, after consulting BEREC and taking utmost account of its opinion, has found an appreciable threat to end-to-end connectivity between end-users throughout the Union or in at least three Member States and has adopted implementing measures specifying the nature and scope of any obligations that may be imposed.

The implementing measures referred to in point (ii) of the second subparagraph shall be adopted in accordance with the examination procedure referred to in Article 118(4).

3 In particular, and without prejudice to paragraphs 1 and 2, national regulatory authorities may impose obligations, upon reasonable request, to grant access to wiring and cables and associated facilities inside buildings or up to the first concentration or distribution point as determined by the national regulatory authority, where that point is located outside the building. Where it is justified on the grounds that replication of such network elements would be economically inefficient or physically impracticable, such obligations may be imposed on providers of electronic communications networks or on the owners of such wiring and cables and associated facilities, where those owners are not providers of electronic communications networks. The access conditions imposed may include specific rules on access to such network elements and to associated facilities and associated services, on transparency and non-discrimination and on apportioning the costs of access, which, where appropriate, are adjusted to take into account risk factors.

Where a national regulatory authority concludes, having regard, where applicable, to the obligations resulting from any relevant market analysis, that the obligations imposed in accordance with the first subparagraph do not sufficiently address high and non-transitory economic or physical barriers to replication which underlie an existing or emerging market situation significantly limiting competitive outcomes for end-users, it may extend the imposition of such access obligations, on fair and reasonable terms and conditions, beyond the first concentration or distribution point, to a point that it determines to be the closest to end-users, capable of hosting a sufficient number of end-user connections to be commercially viable for efficient access seekers. In determining the extent of the extension beyond the first concentration or distribution point, the national regulatory authority shall take utmost account of relevant BEREC guidelines. If justified on technical or economic grounds, national regulatory authorities may impose active or virtual access obligations.

National regulatory authorities shall not impose obligations in accordance with the second subparagraph on providers of electronic communications networks where they determine that:

a the provider has the characteristics listed in Article 80(1) and makes available a viable and similar alternative means of reaching end-users by providing access to a very high capacity network to any undertaking, on fair, non-discriminatory and reasonable terms and conditions; national regulatory authorities may extend that exemption to other providers offering, on fair, non-discriminatory and reasonable terms and conditions, access to a very high capacity network; or

b the imposition of obligations would compromise the economic or financial viability of a new network deployment, in particular by small local projects.

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By way of derogation from point (a) of the third subparagraph, national regulatory authorities may impose obligations on providers of electronic communications networks fulfilling the criteria laid down in that point where the network concerned is publicly funded.

By 21 December 2020, BEREC shall publish guidelines to foster a consistent application of this paragraph, by setting out the relevant criteria for determining:

a the first concentration or distribution point;

b the point, beyond the first concentration or distribution point, capable of hosting a sufficient number of end-user connections to enable an efficient undertaking to overcome the significant replicability barriers identified;

c which network deployments can be considered to be new;

d which projects can be considered to be small; and

e which economic or physical barriers to replication are high and non-transitory.

4 Without prejudice to paragraphs 1 and 2, Member States shall ensure that competent authorities have the power to impose on undertakings providing or authorised to provide electronic communications networks obligations in relation to the sharing of passive infrastructure or obligations to conclude localised roaming access agreements, in both cases if directly necessary for the local provision of services which rely on the use of radio spectrum, in accordance with Union law and provided that no viable and similar alternative means of access to end-users is made available to any undertaking on fair and reasonable terms and conditions. Competent authorities may impose such obligations only where this possibility is clearly provided for when granting the rights of use for radio spectrum and where justified on the grounds that, in the area subject to such obligations, the market-driven deployment of infrastructure for the provision of networks or services which rely on the use of radio spectrum is subject to insurmountable economic or physical obstacles and therefore access to networks or services by end-users is severely deficient or absent. In those circumstances where access and sharing of passive infrastructure alone does not suffice to address the situation, national regulatory authorities may impose obligations on sharing of active infrastructure.

Competent authorities shall have regard to:

a the need to maximise connectivity throughout the Union, along major transport paths and in particular territorial areas, and to the possibility to significantly increase choice and higher quality of service for end-users;

b the efficient use of radio spectrum;

c the technical feasibility of sharing and associated conditions;

d the state of infrastructure-based as well as service-based competition;

e technological innovation;

f the overriding need to support the incentive of the host to roll out the infrastructure in the first place.

In the event of dispute resolution, competent authorities may, inter alia, impose on the beneficiary of the sharing or access obligation, the obligation to share radio spectrum with the infrastructure host in the relevant area.

5 Obligations and conditions imposed in accordance with paragraphs 1 to 4 of this Article shall be objective, transparent, proportionate and non-discriminatory, they shall be implemented in accordance with the procedures referred to in Articles 23, 32 and 33. The national regulatory and other competent authorities which have imposed such obligations and conditions shall assess the results thereof by five years after the adoption of the previous measure adopted in relation to the same undertakings and assess whether it would be appropriate to withdraw or amend them in light of evolving conditions. Those authorities shall notify the

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outcome of their assessment in accordance with the procedures referred to in Articles 23, 32 and 33.

6 For the purpose of paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article, Member States shall ensure that the national regulatory authority is empowered to intervene on its own initiative where justified in order to secure the policy objectives of Article 3, in accordance with this Directive and, in particular, with the procedures referred to in Articles 23 and 32.

7 By 21 June 2020 in order to contribute to a consistent definition of the location of network termination points by national regulatory authorities, BEREC shall, after consulting stakeholders and in close cooperation with the Commission, adopt guidelines on common approaches to the identification of the network termination point in different network topologies. National regulatory authorities shall take utmost account of those guidelines when defining the location of network termination points.

Editorial Information

X1 Substituted by Corrigendum to Directive (EU) 2018/1972 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 establishing the European Electronic Communications Code (Official Journal of the European Union L 321 of 17 December 2018).

Article 62

Conditional access systems and other facilities

1 Member States shall ensure that the conditions laid down in Part I of Annex II apply in relation to conditional access to digital television and radio services broadcast to viewers and listeners in the Union, irrespective of the means of transmission.

2 Where, as a result of a market analysis carried out in accordance with Article 67(1), a national regulatory authority finds that one or more undertakings do not have significant market power on the relevant market, it may amend or withdraw the conditions with respect to those undertakings, in accordance with the procedures referred to in Articles 23 and 32, only to the extent that:

a accessibility for end-users to radio and television broadcasts and broadcasting channels and services specified in accordance with Article 114 would not be adversely affected by such amendment or withdrawal; and

b the prospects for effective competition in the following markets would not be adversely affected by such amendment or withdrawal:

(i) retail digital television and radio broadcasting services; and

(ii) conditional access systems and other associated facilities.

An appropriate notice period shall be given to parties affected by such amendment or withdrawal of conditions.

3 Conditions applied in accordance with this Article are without prejudice to the ability of Member States to impose obligations in relation to the presentational aspect of EPGs and similar listing and navigation facilities.

4 Notwithstanding paragraph 1 of this Article, Member States may allow their national regulatory authority, as soon as possible after 20 December 2018 and periodically thereafter, to review the conditions applied in accordance with this Article, by undertaking a market analysis

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in accordance with Article 67(1) to determine whether to maintain, amend or withdraw the conditions applied.

CHAPTER III

Market analysis and significant market power

Article 63

Undertakings with significant market power

1 Where this Directive requires national regulatory authorities to determine whether undertakings have significant market power in accordance with the procedure referred to in Article 67, paragraph 2 of this Article shall apply.

2 An undertaking shall be deemed to have significant market power if, either individually or jointly with others, it enjoys a position equivalent to dominance, namely a position of economic strength affording it the power to behave to an appreciable extent independently of competitors, customers and ultimately consumers.

In particular, national regulatory authorities shall, when assessing whether two or more undertakings are in a joint dominant position in a market, act in accordance with Union law and take into the utmost account the guidelines on market analysis and the assessment of significant market power published by the Commission pursuant to Article 64.

3 Where an undertaking has significant market power on a specific market, it may also be designated as having significant market power on a closely related market, where the links between the two markets allow the market power held on the specific market to be leveraged into the closely related market, thereby strengthening the market power of the undertaking. Consequently, remedies aiming to prevent such leverage may be applied in the closely related market pursuant to Articles 69, 70, 71 and 74.

Article 64

Procedure for the identification and definition of markets

1 After public consultation including with national regulatory authorities and taking the utmost account of the opinion of BEREC, the Commission shall adopt a Recommendation on Relevant Product and Service Markets (‘the Recommendation’). The Recommendation shall identify those product and service markets within the electronic communications sector the characteristics of which may be such as to justify the imposition of regulatory obligations set out in this Directive, without prejudice to markets that may be defined in specific cases under competition law. The Commission shall define markets in accordance with the principles of competition law.

The Commission shall include product and service markets in the Recommendation where, after observing overall trends in the Union, it finds that each of the three criteria listed in Article 67(1) is met.

The Commission shall review the Recommendation by 21 December 2020 and regularly thereafter.

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2 After consulting BEREC, the Commission shall publish guidelines for market analysis and the assessment of significant market power ('the SMP guidelines') which shall be in accordance with the relevant principles of competition law. The SMP guidelines shall include guidance to national regulatory authorities on the application of the concept of significant market power to the specific context of ex ante regulation of electronic communications markets, taking account of the three criteria listed in Article 67(1).

3 National regulatory authorities shall, taking the utmost account of the Recommendation and the SMP guidelines, define relevant markets appropriate to national circumstances, in particular relevant geographic markets within their territory by taking into account, inter alia, the degree of infrastructure competition in those areas, in accordance with the principles of competition law. National regulatory authorities shall, where relevant, also take into account the results of the geographical survey conducted in accordance with Article 22(1). They shall follow the procedures referred to in Articles 23 and 32 before defining the markets that differ from those identified in the Recommendation.

Article 65

Procedure for the identification of transnational markets

1 If the Commission or at least two national regulatory authorities concerned submit a reasoned request, including supporting evidence, BEREC shall conduct an analysis of a potential transnational market. After consulting stakeholders and taking utmost account of the analysis carried out by BEREC, the Commission may adopt decisions identifying transnational markets in accordance with the principles of competition law and taking utmost account of the Recommendation and SMP guidelines adopted in accordance with Article 64.

2 In the case of transnational markets identified in accordance with paragraph 1 of this Article, the national regulatory authorities concerned shall jointly conduct the market analysis taking the utmost account of the SMP guidelines and, in a concerted fashion, shall decide on any imposition, maintenance, amendment or withdrawal of regulatory obligations referred to in Article 67(4). The national regulatory authorities concerned shall jointly notify to the Commission their draft measures regarding the market analysis and any regulatory obligations pursuant to Articles 32 and 33.

Two or more national regulatory authorities may also jointly notify their draft measures regarding the market analysis and any regulatory obligations in the absence of transnational markets, where they consider that market conditions in their respective jurisdictions are sufficiently homogeneous.

Article 66

Procedure for the identification of transnational demand

1 BEREC shall conduct an analysis of transnational end-user demand for products and services that are provided within the Union in one or more of the markets listed in the Recommendation, if it receives a reasoned request providing supporting evidence from the Commission or from at least two of the national regulatory authorities concerned indicating that there is a serious demand problem to be addressed. BEREC may also conduct such analysis if it receives a reasoned request from market participants providing sufficient supporting evidence and considers that there is a serious demand problem to be addressed. BEREC's analysis is without prejudice to any findings of transnational markets in accordance with Article 65(1)

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and to any findings of national or sub-national geographical markets by national regulatory authorities in accordance with Article 64(3).

That analysis of transnational end-user demand may include products and services that are supplied within product or service markets that have been defined in different ways by one or more national regulatory authorities when taking into account national circumstances, provided that those products and services are substitutable to those supplied in one of the markets listed in the Recommendation.

2 If BEREC concludes that a transnational end-user demand exists, is significant and is not sufficiently met by supply provided on a commercial or regulated basis, it shall, after consulting stakeholders and in close cooperation with the Commission, issue guidelines on common approaches for national regulatory authorities to meet the identified transnational demand, including, where appropriate, when they impose remedies in accordance with Article 68. National regulatory authorities shall take into utmost account those guidelines when performing their regulatory tasks within their jurisdiction. Those guidelines may provide the basis for interoperability of wholesale access products across the Union and may include guidance for the harmonisation of technical specifications of wholesale access products capable of meeting such identified transnational demand.

Article 67

Market analysis procedure

1 National regulatory authorities shall determine whether a relevant market defined in accordance with Article 64(3) is such as to justify the imposition of the regulatory obligations set out in this Directive. Member States shall ensure that an analysis is carried out, where appropriate, in collaboration with the national competition authorities. National regulatory authorities shall take utmost account of the SMP guidelines and shall follow the procedures referred to in Articles 23 and 32 when conducting such analysis.

A market may be considered to justify the imposition of regulatory obligations set out in this Directive if all of the following criteria are met:

a high and non-transitory structural, legal or regulatory barriers to entry are present;

b there is a market structure which does not tend towards effective competition within the relevant time horizon, having regard to the state of infrastructure-based competition and other sources of competition behind the barriers to entry;

c competition law alone is insufficient to adequately address the identified market failure(s).

Where a national regulatory authority conducts an analysis of a market that is included in the Recommendation, it shall consider that points (a), (b) and (c) of the second subparagraph have been met, unless the national regulatory authority determines that one or more of such criteria is not met in the specific national circumstances.

2 Where a national regulatory authority conducts the analysis required by paragraph 1, it shall consider developments from a forward-looking perspective in the absence of regulation imposed on the basis of this Article in that relevant market, and taking into account all of the following:

a market developments affecting the likelihood of the relevant market tending towards effective competition;

b all relevant competitive constraints, at the wholesale and retail levels, irrespective of whether the sources of such constraints are considered to be electronic communications networks, electronic communications services, or other types of services or applications

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which are comparable from the perspective of the end-user, and irrespective of whether such constraints are part of the relevant market;

c other types of regulation or measures imposed and affecting the relevant market or related retail market or markets throughout the relevant period, including, without limitation, obligations imposed in accordance with Articles 44, 60 and 61;

d regulation imposed on other relevant markets on the basis of this Article.

3 Where a national regulatory authority concludes that a relevant market does not justify the imposition of regulatory obligations in accordance with the procedure in paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article, or where the conditions set out in paragraph 4 of this Article are not met, it shall not impose or maintain any specific regulatory obligations in accordance with Article 68. Where there already are sector specific regulatory obligations imposed in accordance with Article 68, it shall withdraw such obligations placed on undertakings in that relevant market.

National regulatory authorities shall ensure that parties affected by such a withdrawal of obligations receive an appropriate notice period, defined by balancing the need to ensure a sustainable transition for the beneficiaries of those obligations and end-users, end-user choice, and that regulation does not continue for longer than necessary. When setting such a notice period, national regulatory authorities may determine specific conditions and notice periods in relation to existing access agreements.

4 Where a national regulatory authority determines that, in a relevant market the imposition of regulatory obligations in accordance with paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article is justified, it shall identify any undertakings which individually or jointly have a significant market power on that relevant market in accordance with Article 63. The national regulatory authority shall impose on such undertakings appropriate specific regulatory obligations in accordance with Article 68 or maintain or amend such obligations where they already exist if it considers that the outcome for end-users would not be effectively competitive in the absence of those obligations.

5 Measures taken in accordance with paragraphs 3 and 4 of this Article shall be subject to the procedures referred to in Articles 23 and 32. National regulatory authorities shall carry out an analysis of the relevant market and notify the corresponding draft measure in accordance with Article 32:

a within five years from the adoption of a previous measure where the national regulatory authority has defined the relevant market and determined which undertakings have significant market power; that five-year period may, on an exceptional basis, be extended for up to one year, where the national regulatory authority has notified a reasoned proposal for an extension to the Commission no later than four months before the expiry of the five-year period, and the Commission has not objected within one month of the notified extension;

b within three years from the adoption of a revised Recommendation on relevant markets, for markets not previously notified to the Commission; or

c within three years from their accession, for Member States which have newly joined the Union.

6 Where a national regulatory authority considers that it may not complete or has not completed its analysis of a relevant market identified in the Recommendation within the time limit laid down in paragraph 5 of this Article, BEREC shall, upon request, provide assistance to the national regulatory authority concerned in completing the analysis of the specific market and the specific obligations to be imposed. With this assistance, the national regulatory authority concerned shall, within six months of the limit laid down in paragraph 5 of this Article, notify the draft measure to the Commission in accordance with Article 32.

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CHAPTER IV

Access remedies imposed on undertakings with significant market power

Article 68

Imposition, amendment or withdrawal of obligations

1 Member States shall ensure that national regulatory authorities are empowered to impose the obligations set out in Articles 69 to 74 and Articles 76 to 81.

2 Where an undertaking is designated as having significant market power on a specific market as a result of a market analysis carried out in accordance with Article 67, national regulatory authorities shall, as appropriate, impose any of the obligations set out in Articles 69 to 74 and Articles 76 and 80. In accordance with the principle of proportionality, a national regulatory authority shall choose the least intrusive way of addressing the problems identified in the market analysis.

3 National regulatory authorities shall impose the obligations set out in Articles 69 to 74 and Articles 76 and 80 only on undertakings that have been designated as having significant market power in accordance with paragraph 2 of this Article, without prejudice to:

a Articles 61 and 62;

b Articles 44 and 17 of this Directive, Condition 7 in Part D of Annex I as applied by virtue of Article 13(1) of this Directive, Articles 97 and 106 of this Directive and the relevant provisions of Directive 2002/58/EC containing obligations on undertakings other than those designated as having significant market power; or

c the need to comply with international commitments.

In exceptional circumstances, where a national regulatory authority intends to impose on undertakings designated as having significant market power obligations for access or interconnection other than those set out in Articles 69 to 74 and Articles 76 and 80, it shall submit a request to the Commission.

The Commission shall, taking utmost account of the opinion of BEREC, adopt decisions by means of implementing acts, authorising or preventing the national regulatory authority from taking such measures.

Those implementing acts shall be adopted in accordance with the advisory procedure referred to in Article 118(3).

4 Obligations imposed in accordance with this Article shall be:

a based on the nature of the problem identified by a national regulatory authority in its market analysis, where appropriate taking into account the identification of transnational demand pursuant to Article 66;

b proportionate, having regard, where possible, to the costs and benefits;

c justified in light of the objectives laid down in Article 3; and

d imposed following consultation in accordance with Articles 23 and 32.

5 In relation to the need to comply with international commitments referred to in paragraph 3 of this Article, national regulatory authorities shall notify decisions to impose, amend or withdraw obligations on undertakings to the Commission, in accordance with the procedure referred to in Article 32.

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6 National regulatory authorities shall consider the impact of new market developments, such as in relation to commercial agreements, including co-investment agreements, influencing competitive dynamics.

If those developments are not sufficiently important to require a new market analysis in accordance with Article 67, the national regulatory authority shall assess without delay whether it is necessary to review the obligations imposed on undertakings designated as having significant market power and amend any previous decision, including by withdrawing obligations or imposing new obligations, in order to ensure that such obligations continue to meet the conditions set out in paragraph 4 of this Article. Such amendments shall be imposed only after consultations in accordance with Articles 23 and 32.

Article 69

Obligation of transparency

1 National regulatory authorities may, in accordance with Article 68, impose obligations of transparency in relation to interconnection or access, requiring undertakings to make public specific information, such as accounting information, prices, technical specifications, network characteristics and expected developments thereof, as well as terms and conditions for supply and use, including any conditions altering access to or use of services and applications, in particular with regard to migration from legacy infrastructure, where such conditions are allowed by Member States in accordance with Union law.

2 In particular, where an undertaking has obligations of non-discrimination, national regulatory authorities may require that undertaking to publish a reference offer, which shall be sufficiently unbundled to ensure that undertakings are not required to pay for facilities which are not necessary for the service requested. That offer shall contain a description of the relevant offerings broken down into components according to market needs, and the associated terms and conditions, including prices. The national regulatory authority may, inter alia, impose changes to reference offers to give effect to obligations imposed under this Directive.

3 National regulatory authorities may specify the precise information to be made available, the level of detail required and the manner of publication.

4 By 21 December 2019, in order to contribute to the consistent application of transparency obligations, BEREC shall, after consulting stakeholders and in close cooperation with the Commission, issue guidelines on the minimum criteria for a reference offer and shall review them where necessary in order to adapt them to technological and market developments. In providing such minimum criteria, BEREC shall pursue the objectives in Article 3, and shall have regard to the needs of the beneficiaries of access obligations and of end-users that are active in more than one Member State, as well as to any BEREC guidelines identifying transnational demand in accordance with Article 66 and to any related decision of the Commission.

Notwithstanding paragraph 3 of this Article, where an undertaking has obligations under Article 72 or 73 concerning wholesale access to network infrastructure, national regulatory authorities shall ensure the publication of a reference offer taking utmost account of the BEREC guidelines on the minimum criteria for a reference offer, shall ensure that key performance indicators are specified, where relevant, as well as corresponding service levels, and closely monitor and ensure compliance with them. In addition, national regulatory authorities may, where necessary, predetermine the associated financial penalties in accordance with Union and national law.

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Article 70

Obligations of non-discrimination

1 A national regulatory authority may, in accordance with Article 68, impose obligations of non-discrimination, in relation to interconnection or access.

2 Obligations of non-discrimination shall ensure, in particular, that the undertaking applies equivalent conditions in equivalent circumstances to other providers of equivalent services, and provides services and information to others under the same conditions and of the same quality as it provides for its own services, or those of its subsidiaries or partners. National regulatory authorities may impose on that undertaking obligations to supply access products and services to all undertakings, including to itself, on the same timescales, terms and conditions, including those relating to price and service levels, and by means of the same systems and processes, in order to ensure equivalence of access.

Article 71

Obligation of accounting separation

1 A national regulatory authority may, in accordance with Article 68, impose obligations for accounting separation in relation to specified activities related to interconnection or access.

In particular, a national regulatory authority may require a vertically integrated undertaking to make transparent its wholesale prices and its internal transfer prices, inter alia to ensure compliance where there is an obligation of non-discrimination under Article 70 or, where necessary, to prevent unfair cross-subsidy. National regulatory authorities may specify the format and accounting methodology to be used.

2 Without prejudice to Article 20, to facilitate the verification of compliance with obligations of transparency and non-discrimination, national regulatory authorities shall have the power to require that accounting records, including data on revenues received from third parties, are provided on request. National regulatory authorities may publish information that would contribute to an open and competitive market, while complying with Union and national rules on commercial confidentiality.

Article 72

Access to civil engineering

1 A national regulatory authority may, in accordance with Article 68, impose obligations on undertakings to meet reasonable requests for access to, and use of, civil engineering including, but not limited to, buildings or entries to buildings, building cables, including wiring, antennae, towers and other supporting constructions, poles, masts, ducts, conduits, inspection chambers, manholes, and cabinets, in situations where, having considered the market analysis, the national regulatory authority concludes that denial of access or access given under unreasonable terms and conditions having a similar effect would hinder the emergence of a sustainable competitive market and would not be in the end-user's interest.

2 National regulatory authorities may impose obligations on an undertaking to provide access in accordance with this Article, irrespective of whether the assets that are affected by the

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obligation are part of the relevant market in accordance with the market analysis, provided that the obligation is necessary and proportionate to meet the objectives of Article 3.

Article 73

Obligations of access to, and use of, specific network elements and associated facilities

1 National regulatory authorities may, in accordance with Article 68, impose obligations on undertakings to meet reasonable requests for access to, and use of, specific network elements and associated facilities, in situations where the national regulatory authorities consider that denial of access or unreasonable terms and conditions having a similar effect would hinder the emergence of a sustainable competitive market at the retail level, and would not be in the end-user's interest.

National regulatory authorities may require undertakings inter alia:

a to give third parties access to, and use of, specific physical network elements and associated facilities, as appropriate, including unbundled access to the local loop and sub-loop;

b to give third parties access to specific active or virtual network elements and services;

c to negotiate in good faith with undertakings requesting access;

d not to withdraw access to facilities already granted;

e to provide specific services on a wholesale basis for resale by third parties;

f to grant open access to technical interfaces, protocols or other key technologies that are indispensable for the interoperability of services or virtual network services;

g to provide co-location or other forms of associated facilities sharing;

h to provide specific services needed to ensure interoperability of end-to-end services to users, or roaming on mobile networks;

i to provide access to operational support systems or similar software systems necessary to ensure fair competition in the provision of services;

j to interconnect networks or network facilities;

k to provide access to associated services such as identity, location and presence service.

National regulatory authorities may subject those obligations to conditions covering fairness, reasonableness and timeliness.

2 Where national regulatory authorities consider the appropriateness of imposing any of the possible specific obligations referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article, and in particular where they assess, in accordance with the principle of proportionality, whether and how such obligations are to be imposed, they shall analyse whether other forms of access to wholesale inputs, either on the same or on a related wholesale market, would be sufficient to address the identified problem in the end-user's interest. That assessment shall include commercial access offers, regulated access pursuant to Article 61, or existing or planned regulated access to other wholesale inputs pursuant to this Article. National regulatory authorities shall take account in particular of the following factors:

a the technical and economic viability of using or installing competing facilities, in light of the rate of market development, taking into account the nature and type of interconnection or access involved, including the viability of other upstream access products, such as access to ducts;

b the expected technological evolution affecting network design and management;

c the need to ensure technology neutrality enabling the parties to design and manage their own networks;

d the feasibility of providing the access offered, in relation to the capacity available;

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e the initial investment by the facility owner, taking account of any public investment made and the risks involved in making the investment, with particular regard to investments in, and risk levels associated with, very high capacity networks;

f the need to safeguard competition in the long term, with particular attention to economically efficient infrastructure-based competition and innovative business models that support sustainable competition, such as those based on co-investment in networks;

g where appropriate, any relevant intellectual property rights;

h the provision of pan-European services.

Where a national regulatory authority considers, in accordance with Article 68, imposing obligations on the basis of Articles 72 or of this Article, it shall examine whether the imposition of obligations in accordance with Article 72 alone would be a proportionate means by which to promote competition and the end-user's interest.

3 When imposing obligations on an undertaking to provide access in accordance with this Article, national regulatory authorities may lay down technical or operational conditions to be met by the provider or the beneficiaries of such access, where necessary to ensure normal operation of the network. Obligations to follow specific technical standards or specifications shall comply with the standards and specifications laid down in accordance with Article 39.

Article 74

Price control and cost accounting obligations

1 A national regulatory authority may, in accordance with Article 68, impose obligations relating to cost recovery and price control, including obligations for cost orientation of prices and obligations concerning cost-accounting systems, for the provision of specific types of interconnection or access, in situations where a market analysis indicates that a lack of effective competition means that the undertaking concerned may sustain prices at an excessively high level, or may apply a price squeeze, to the detriment of end-users.

In determining whether price control obligations would be appropriate, national regulatory authorities shall take into account the need to promote competition and long-term end-user interests related to the deployment and take-up of next-generation networks, and in particular of very high capacity networks. In particular, to encourage investments by the undertaking, including in next-generation networks, national regulatory authorities shall take into account the investment made by the undertaking. Where the national regulatory authorities consider price control obligations to be appropriate, they shall allow the undertaking a reasonable rate of return on adequate capital employed, taking into account any risks specific to a particular new investment network project.

National regulatory authorities shall consider not imposing or maintaining obligations pursuant to this Article, where they establish that a demonstrable retail price constraint is present and that any obligations imposed in accordance with Articles 69 to 73, including, in particular, any economic replicability test imposed in accordance with Article 70, ensures effective and non-discriminatory access.

When national regulatory authorities consider it appropriate to impose price control obligations on access to existing network elements, they shall also take account of the benefits of predictable and stable wholesale prices in ensuring efficient market entry and sufficient incentives for all undertakings to deploy new and enhanced networks.

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2 National regulatory authorities shall ensure that any cost recovery mechanism or pricing methodology that is mandated serves to promote the deployment of new and enhanced networks, efficiency and sustainable competition and maximises sustainable end-user benefits. In this regard, national regulatory authorities may also take account of prices available in comparable competitive markets.

3 Where an undertaking has an obligation regarding the cost orientation of its prices, the burden of proof that charges are derived from costs, including a reasonable rate of return on investment, shall lie with the undertaking concerned. For the purpose of calculating the cost of efficient provision of services, national regulatory authorities may use cost accounting methods independent of those used by the undertaking. National regulatory authorities may require an undertaking to provide full justification for its prices, and may, where appropriate, require prices to be adjusted.

4 National regulatory authorities shall ensure that, where implementation of a cost-accounting system is mandated in order to support price control, a description of the cost-accounting system is made publicly available, showing at least the main categories under which costs are grouped and the rules used for the allocation of costs. A qualified independent body shall verify compliance with the cost-accounting system and shall publish annually a statement concerning compliance.

Article 75

Termination rates

1 By 31 December 2020, the Commission shall, taking utmost account of the opinion of BEREC, adopt a delegated act in accordance with Article 117 supplementing this Directive by setting a single maximum Union-wide mobile voice termination rate and a single maximum Union-wide fixed voice termination rate (together referred to as ‘the Union-wide voice termination rates’), which are imposed on any provider of mobile voice termination or fixed voice termination services, respectively, in any Member State.

To that end, the Commission shall:

a comply with the principles, criteria and parameters provided in Annex III;

b when setting the Union-wide voice termination rates for the first time, take into account the weighted average of efficient costs in fixed and mobile networks established in accordance with the principles provided in Annex III, applied across the Union; the Union-wide voice termination rates in the first delegated act shall not be higher than the highest rate among the rates that were in force six months before the adoption of that delegated act in all Member States, after any necessary adjustment for exceptional national circumstances;

c take into account the total number of end-users in each Member State, in order to ensure a proper weighting of the maximum termination rates, as well as national circumstances which result in significant differences between Member States when determining the maximum termination rates in the Union;

d take into account market information provided by BEREC, national regulatory authorities or, directly, by undertakings providing electronic communications networks and services; and

e consider the need to allow for a transitional period of no longer than 12 months in order to allow adjustments in Member States where this is necessary on the basis of rates previously imposed.

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2 Taking utmost account of the opinion of BEREC, the Commission shall review the delegated act adopted pursuant to this Article every five years and shall consider on each such occasion, by applying the criteria listed in Article 67(1), whether setting Union-wide voice termination rates continue to be necessary. Where the Commission decides, following its review in accordance with this paragraph, not to impose a maximum mobile voice termination rate or a maximum fixed voice termination rate, or neither, national regulatory authorities may conduct market analyses of voice termination markets in accordance with Article 67, to assess whether the imposition of regulatory obligations is necessary. If a national regulatory authority imposes, as a result of such analysis, cost-oriented termination rates in a relevant market, it shall follow the principles, criteria and parameters set out in Annex III and its draft measure shall be subject to the procedures referred to in Articles 23, 32 and 33.

3 National regulatory authorities shall closely monitor, and ensure compliance with, the application of the Union-wide voice termination rates by providers of voice termination services. National regulatory authorities may, at any time, require a provider of voice termination services to amend the rate it charges to other undertakings if it does not comply with the delegated act referred to in paragraph 1. National regulatory authorities shall annually report to the Commission and to BEREC with regard to the application of this Article.

Article 76

Regulatory treatment of new very high capacity network elements

1 Undertakings which have been designated as having significant market power in one or several relevant markets in accordance with Article 67 may offer commitments, in accordance with the procedure set out in Article 79 and subject to the second subparagraph of this paragraph, to open the deployment of a new very high capacity network that consists of optical fibre elements up to the end-user premises or base station to co-investment, for example by offering co-ownership or long-term risk sharing through co-financing or through purchase agreements giving rise to specific rights of a structural character by other providers of electronic communications networks or services.

When the national regulatory authority assesses those commitments, it shall determine, in particular, whether the offer to co-invest complies with all of the following conditions:

a it is open at any moment during the lifetime of the network to any provider of electronic communications networks or services;

b it would allow other co-investors which are providers of electronic communications networks or services to compete effectively and sustainably in the long term in downstream markets in which the undertaking designated as having significant market power is active, on terms which include:

(i) fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory terms allowing access to the full capacity of the network to the extent that it is subject to co-investment;

(ii) flexibility in terms of the value and timing of the participation of each co-investor;

(iii) the possibility to increase such participation in the future; and

(iv) reciprocal rights awarded by the co-investors after the deployment of the co-invested infrastructure;

c it is made public by the undertaking in a timely manner and, if the undertaking does not have the characteristics listed in Article 80(1), at least six months before the start

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of the deployment of the new network; that period may be prolonged based on national circumstances;

d access seekers not participating in the co-investment can benefit from the outset from the same quality, speed, conditions and end-user reach as were available before the deployment, accompanied by a mechanism of adaptation over time confirmed by the national regulatory authority in light of developments on the related retail markets, that maintains the incentives to participate in the co-investment; such mechanism shall ensure that access seekers have access to the very high capacity elements of the network at a time, and on the basis of transparent and non-discriminatory terms, which reflect appropriately the degrees of risk incurred by the respective co-investors at different stages of the deployment and take into account the competitive situation in retail markets;

e it complies at a minimum with the criteria set out in Annex IV and is made in good faith.

2 If the national regulatory authority concludes, taking into account the results of the market test conducted in accordance with Article 79(2), that the co-investment commitment offered complies with the conditions set out in paragraph 1 of this Article, it shall make that commitment binding pursuant to Article 79(3), and shall not impose any additional obligations pursuant to Article 68 as regards the elements of the new very high capacity network that are subject to the commitments, if at least one potential co-investor has entered into a co-investment agreement with the undertaking designated as having significant market power.

The first subparagraph shall be without prejudice to the regulatory treatment of circumstances that do not comply with the conditions set out in paragraph 1 of this Article, taking into account the results of any market test conducted in accordance with Article 79(2), but that have an impact on competition and are taken into account for the purposes of Articles 67 and 68.

By way of derogation from the first subparagraph of this paragraph, a national regulatory authority may, in duly justified circumstances, impose, maintain or adapt remedies in accordance with Articles 68 to 74 as regards new very high capacity networks in order to address significant competition problems on specific markets, where the national regulatory authority establishes that, given the specific characteristics of these markets, those competition problems would not otherwise be addressed.

3 National regulatory authorities shall, on an ongoing basis, monitor compliance with the conditions set out in paragraph 1 and may require the undertaking designated as having significant market power to provide it with annual compliance statements.

This Article shall be without prejudice to the power of a national regulatory authority to take decisions pursuant to Article 26(1) in the event of a dispute arising between undertakings in connection with a co-investment agreement considered by it to comply with the conditions set out in paragraph 1 of this Article.

4 BEREC, after consulting stakeholders and in close cooperation with the Commission, shall publish guidelines to foster the consistent application by national regulatory authorities of the conditions set out in paragraph 1, and the criteria set out in Annex IV.

Article 77

Functional separation

1 Where the national regulatory authority concludes that the appropriate obligations imposed under Articles 69 to 74 have failed to achieve effective competition and that there

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are important and persisting competition problems or market failures identified in relation to the wholesale provision of certain access product markets, it may, on an exceptional basis, in accordance with the second subparagraph of Article 68(3), impose an obligation on vertically integrated undertakings to place activities related to the wholesale provision of relevant access products in a business entity operating independently.

That business entity shall supply access products and services to all undertakings, including to other business entities within the parent company, on the same timescales, terms and conditions, including those relating to price and service levels, and by means of the same systems and processes.

2 When a national regulatory authority intends to impose an obligation of functional separation, it shall submit a request to the Commission that includes:

a evidence justifying the conclusions of the national regulatory authority as referred to in paragraph 1;

b a reasoned assessment concluding that there is no or little prospect of effective and sustainable infrastructure-based competition within a reasonable time-frame;

c an analysis of the expected impact on the national regulatory authority, on the undertaking, in particular on the workforce of the separated undertaking, and on the electronic communications sector as a whole, and on incentives to invest therein, in particular with regard to the need to ensure social and territorial cohesion, and on other stakeholders including, in particular, the expected impact on competition and any potential resulting effects on consumers;

d an analysis of the reasons justifying that this obligation would be the most efficient means to enforce remedies aimed at addressing the competition problems or the markets failures identified.

3 The draft measure shall include the following elements:

a the precise nature and level of separation, specifying in particular the legal status of the separate business entity;

b an identification of the assets of the separate business entity, and the products or services to be supplied by that entity;

c the governance arrangements to ensure the independence of the staff employed by the separate business entity, and the corresponding incentive structure;

d rules for ensuring compliance with the obligations;

e rules for ensuring transparency of operational procedures, in particular towards other stakeholders;

f a monitoring programme to ensure compliance, including the publication of an annual report.

Following the Commission's decision taken in accordance with Article 68(3) on that draft measure, the national regulatory authority shall conduct a coordinated analysis of the different markets related to the access network in accordance with the procedure set out in Article 67. On the basis of that analysis, the national regulatory authority shall impose, maintain, amend or withdraw obligations, in accordance with the procedures set out in Articles 23 and 32.

4 An undertaking on which functional separation has been imposed may be subject to any of the obligations referred to in Articles 69 to 74 in any specific market where it has been designated as having significant market power in accordance with Article 67, or any other obligations authorised by the Commission pursuant to Article 68(3).

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Article 78

Voluntary separation by a vertically integrated undertaking

1 Undertakings which have been designated as having significant market power in one or several relevant markets in accordance with Article 67 shall inform the national regulatory authority at least three months before any intended transfer of their local access network assets or a substantial part thereof to a separate legal entity under different ownership, or establishment of a separate business entity in order to provide all retail providers, including its own retail divisions, with fully equivalent access products.

Those undertakings shall also inform the national regulatory authority of any change of that intent, as well as the final outcome of the process of separation.

Such undertakings may also offer commitments regarding access conditions that are to apply to their network during an implementation period after the proposed form of separation is implemented, with a view to ensuring effective and non-discriminatory access by third parties. The offer of commitments shall include sufficient details, including in terms of timing of implementation and duration, in order to allow the national regulatory authority to conduct its tasks in accordance with paragraph 2 of this Article. Such commitments may extend beyond the maximum period for market reviews set out in Article 67(5).

2 The national regulatory authority shall assess the effect of the intended transaction, together with the commitments offered, where applicable, on existing regulatory obligations under this Directive.

For that purpose, the national regulatory authority shall conduct an analysis of the different markets related to the access network in accordance with the procedure set out in Article 67.

The national regulatory authority shall take into account any commitments offered by the undertaking, having regard in particular to the objectives set out in Article 3. In so doing, the national regulatory authority shall consult third parties in accordance with Article 23, and shall address, in particular, those third parties which are directly affected by the intended transaction.

On the basis of its analysis, the national regulatory authority shall impose, maintain, amend or withdraw obligations, in accordance with the procedures set out in Articles 23 and 32, applying, if appropriate, Article 80. In its decision, the national regulatory authority may make the commitments binding, wholly or in part. By way of derogation from Article 67(5), the national regulatory authority may make the commitments binding, wholly or in part, for the entire period for which they are offered.

3 Without prejudice to Article 80, the legally or operationally separate business entity that has been designated as having significant market power in any specific market in accordance with Article 67 may be subject, as appropriate, to any of the obligations referred to in Articles 69 to 74 or any other obligations authorised by the Commission pursuant to Article 68(3), where any commitments offered are insufficient to meet the objectives set out in Article 3.

4 The national regulatory authority shall monitor the implementation of the commitments offered by the undertakings that it has made binding in accordance with paragraph 2 and shall consider their extension when the period for which they are initially offered has expired.

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Article 79

Commitments procedure

1 Undertakings designated as having significant market power may offer to the national regulatory authority commitments regarding conditions for access, co-investment, or both, applicable to their networks in relation, inter alia, to:

a cooperative arrangements relevant to the assessment of appropriate and proportionate obligations pursuant to Article 68;

b co-investment in very high capacity networks pursuant to Article 76; or

c effective and non-discriminatory access by third parties pursuant to Article 78, both during an implementation period of voluntary separation by a vertically integrated undertaking and after the proposed form of separation is implemented.

The offer for commitments shall be sufficiently detailed including as to the timing and scope of their implementation and their duration, to allow the national regulatory authority to undertake its assessment pursuant to paragraph 2 of this Article. Such commitments may extend beyond the periods for carrying out market analysis provided in Article 67(5).

2 In order to assess any commitments offered by an undertaking pursuant to paragraph 1 of this Article, the national regulatory authority shall, except where such commitments clearly do not fulfil one or more relevant conditions or criteria, perform a market test, in particular on the offered terms, by conducting a public consultation of interested parties, in particular third parties which are directly affected. Potential co-investors or access seekers may provide views on the compliance of the commitments offered with the conditions provided, as applicable, in Article 68, 76 or 78 and may propose changes.

As regards the commitments offered under this Article, the national regulatory authority shall, when assessing obligations pursuant to Article 68(4), have particular regard to:

a evidence regarding the fair and reasonable character of the commitments offered;

b the openness of the commitments to all market participants;

c the timely availability of access under fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory conditions, including to very high capacity networks, before the launch of related retail services; and

d the overall adequacy of the commitments offered to enable sustainable competition on downstream markets and to facilitate cooperative deployment and take-up of very high capacity networks in the interest of end-users.

Taking into account all the views expressed in the consultation, and the extent to which such views are representative of different stakeholders, the national regulatory authority shall communicate to the undertaking designated as having significant market power its preliminary conclusions whether the commitments offered comply with the objectives, criteria and procedures set out in this Article and, as applicable, in Article 68, 76 or 78, and under which conditions it may consider making the commitments binding. The undertaking may revise its initial offer to take account of the preliminary conclusions of the national regulatory authority and with a view to satisfying the criteria set out in this Article and, as applicable, in Article 68, 76 or 78.

3 Without prejudice to first subparagraph of Article 76(2), the national regulatory authority may issue a decision to make the commitments binding, wholly or in part.

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By way of derogation from Article 67(5), the national regulatory authority may make some or all commitments binding for a specific period, which may be the entire period for which they are offered, and in the case of co-investment commitments made binding pursuant to first subparagraph of Article 76(2), it shall make them binding for a period of minimum seven years.

Subject to Article 76, this Article is without prejudice to the application of the market analysis procedure pursuant to Article 67 and the imposition of obligations pursuant to Article 68.

Where the national regulatory authority makes commitments binding pursuant to this Article, it shall assess under Article 68 the consequences of that decision for market development and the appropriateness of any obligation that it has imposed or would, absent those commitments, have considered imposing pursuant to that Article or Articles 69 to 74. When notifying the relevant draft measure under Article 68 in accordance with Article 32, the national regulatory authority shall accompany the notified draft measure with the commitments decision.

4 The national regulatory authority shall monitor, supervise and ensure compliance with the commitments that it has made binding in accordance with paragraph 3 of this Article in the same way in which it monitors, supervises and ensures compliance with obligations imposed under Article 68 and shall consider the extension of the period for which they have been made binding when the initial period expires. If the national regulatory authority concludes that an undertaking has not complied with the commitments that have been made binding in accordance with paragraph 3 of this Article, it may impose penalties on such undertaking in accordance with Article 29. Without prejudice to the procedure for ensuring compliance of specific obligations under Article 30, the national regulatory authority may reassess the obligations imposed in accordance with Article 68(6).

Article 80

Wholesale-only undertakings

1 A national regulatory authority that designates an undertaking which is absent from any retail markets for electronic communications services as having significant market power in one or several wholesale markets in accordance with Article 67 shall consider whether that undertaking has the following characteristics:

a all companies and business units within the undertaking, all companies that are controlled but not necessarily wholly owned by the same ultimate owner, and any shareholder capable of exercising control over the undertaking, only have activities, current and planned for the future, in wholesale markets for electronic communications services and therefore do not have activities in any retail market for electronic communications services provided to end-users in the Union;

b the undertaking is not bound to deal with a single and separate undertaking operating downstream that is active in any retail market for electronic communications services provided to end-users, because of an exclusive agreement, or an agreement which de facto amounts to an exclusive agreement.

2 If the national regulatory authority concludes that the conditions laid down in paragraph 1 of this Article are fulfilled, it may impose on that undertaking only obligations pursuant to Articles 70 and 73 or relative to fair and reasonable pricing if justified on the basis of a market analysis including a prospective assessment of the likely behaviour of the undertaking designated as having significant market power.

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3 The national regulatory authority shall review obligations imposed on the undertaking in accordance with this Article at any time if it concludes that the conditions laid down in paragraph 1 of this Article are no longer met and it shall, as appropriate, apply Articles 67 to 74. The undertakings shall, without undue delay, inform the national regulatory authority of any change of circumstance relevant to points (a) and (b) of paragraph 1 of this Article.

4 The national regulatory authority shall also review obligations imposed on the undertaking in accordance with this Article if on the basis of evidence of terms and conditions offered by the undertaking to its downstream customers, the authority concludes that competition problems have arisen or are likely to arise to the detriment of end-users which require the imposition of one or more obligations provided in Article 69, 71, 72 or 74, or the amendment of the obligations imposed in accordance with paragraph 2 of this Article.

5 The imposition of obligations and their review in accordance with this Article shall be implemented in accordance with the procedures referred to in Articles 23, 32 and 33.

Article 81

Migration from legacy infrastructure

1 Undertakings which have been designated as having significant market power in one or several relevant markets in accordance with Article 67 shall notify the national regulatory authority in advance and in a timely manner when they plan to decommission or replace with a new infrastructure parts of the network, including legacy infrastructure necessary to operate a copper network, which are subject to obligations pursuant to Articles 68 to 80.

2 The national regulatory authority shall ensure that the decommissioning or replacement process includes a transparent timetable and conditions, including an appropriate notice period for transition, and establishes the availability of alternative products of at least comparable quality providing access to the upgraded network infrastructure substituting the replaced elements if necessary to safeguard competition and the rights of end-users.

With regard to assets which are proposed for decommissioning or replacement, the national regulatory authority may withdraw the obligations after having ascertained that the access provider:

a has established the appropriate conditions for migration, including making available an alternative access product of at least comparable quality as was available using the legacy infrastructure enabling the access seekers to reach the same end-users; and

b has complied with the conditions and process notified to the national regulatory authority in accordance with this Article.

Such withdrawal shall be implemented in accordance with the procedures referred to in Articles 23, 32 and 33.

3 This Article shall be without prejudice to the availability of regulated products imposed by the national regulatory authority on the upgraded network infrastructure in accordance with the procedures set out in Articles 67 and 68.

Article 82

BEREC guidelines on very high capacity networks

By 21 December 2020, BEREC shall, after consulting stakeholders and in close cooperation with the Commission, issue guidelines on the criteria that a network is to

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fulfil in order to be considered a very high capacity network, in particular in terms of down- and uplink bandwidth, resilience, error-related parameters, and latency and its variation. The national regulatory authorities shall take those guidelines into utmost account. BEREC shall update the guidelines by 31 December 2025, and regularly thereafter.

CHAPTER V

Regulatory control of retail services

Article 83

Regulatory control of retail services

1 Member States may ensure that national regulatory authorities impose appropriate regulatory obligations on undertakings identified as having significant market power on a given retail market in accordance with Article 63, where:

a as a result of a market analysis carried out in accordance with Article 67, a national regulatory authority determines that a given retail market identified in accordance with Article 64 is not effectively competitive; and

b the national regulatory authority concludes that obligations imposed under Articles 69 to 74 would not result in the achievement of the objectives set out in Article 3.

2 Obligations imposed under paragraph 1 of this Article shall be based on the nature of the problem identified and be proportionate and justified in light of the objectives laid down in Article 3. The obligations imposed may include requirements that the identified undertakings do not charge excessive prices, inhibit market entry or restrict competition by setting predatory prices, show undue preference to specific end-users or unreasonably bundle services. National regulatory authorities may apply to such undertakings appropriate retail price cap measures, measures to control individual tariffs, or measures to orient tariffs towards costs or prices on comparable markets, in order to protect end-user interests whilst promoting effective competition.

3 National regulatory authorities shall ensure that, where an undertaking is subject to retail tariff regulation or other relevant retail controls, the necessary and appropriate cost-accounting systems are implemented. National regulatory authorities may specify the format and accounting methodology to be used. Compliance with the cost-accounting system shall be verified by a qualified independent body. National regulatory authorities shall ensure that a statement concerning compliance is published annually.

4 Without prejudice to Articles 85 and 88, national regulatory authorities shall not apply retail control mechanisms under paragraph 1 of this Article to geographical or retail markets where they are satisfied that there is effective competition.