

News Release

Gigabit Infrastructure Act: Vantage Towers sees level playing field for towers companies maintained, as a key element for 5G connectivity

- Vantage Towers welcomes that the GIA targets bureaucratic obstacles and streamlines administrative procedures
- Agreement lacks harmonised binding tacit approval mechanism across the EU
- Christian Hillabrant, CEO of Vantage Towers: "Maintaining a level playing field between TowerCos is crucial to promote competition on this dynamic and well-functioning market."

Düsseldorf, 06 February 2024 – Last night the European Parliament and the Council reached a provisional political agreement on the Gigabit Infrastructure Act ("GIA"). The GIA's objective is to accelerate the deployment of gigabit networks, reduce costs, attract investment, and enable the EU to achieve its connectivity targets, including 5G in all populated areas by 2030.

As a key investor in 5G networks in Europe, tower infrastructure operator Vantage Towers welcomes that the GIA targets bureaucratic obstacles and streamlines administrative procedures that impede 5G rollout. This will help improving mobile connectivity in particular in rural areas and for transport corridors.

Tower companies' ("TowerCos") main hurdles when building infrastructure are permitting and getting access to buildings and land as location for towers. While on access to sites the GIA brings considerable improvements, on permitting, Vantage Towers would have preferred a fully harmonised binding tacit approval mechanism across the European Union. Vantage Towers hopes that the solution found by the co-legislators will bring tangible results in reducing time to obtain permits, and we stand ready to work within this framework to speed up and facilitate smoother rollouts.

Vantage Towers firmly believes that access to tower infrastructure should be market-driven. A regulatory mandate on terms and conditions, including pricing, is unnecessary in an industry where competitive forces are effectively ensuring wide accessibility of infrastructure at fair market-based conditions. As neutral hosts, there is a strong commercial incentive for TowerCos to share their infrastructure with as many tenants as possible. Vantage Towers therefore considers that the settlement mechanism for access disputes introduced by the GIA to the still nascent sector will not serve the European Union's goal to speed up deployment of 5G networks.

As a pan-European investor, however, Vantage Towers very much commends the co-legislators for creating a harmonised framework for the TowerCo sector that recognises the specific features of the companies' business model and the existence of commercial relationships between TowerCos and their customers reflecting fair and reasonable market prices and conditions.

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Christian Hillabrant, CEO of Vantage Towers: “We strongly welcome that substantial safeguards have been introduced to avoid overregulating the European TowerCo sector and that all TowerCos will be subject to the same regulatory treatment in the GIA. Indeed, maintaining a level playing field between TowerCos is crucial to promote competition on this dynamic and well-functioning market.”

Finally, the fact that the GIA also addresses the issue of land aggregation is a very positive development for the TowerCo industry. This is a first move to make sure that TowerCos' investments are not targeted at substantial lease price increases for the land but rather at deploying efficiently new infrastructure for 5G connectivity.

Vantage Towers believes that the GIA is another important step towards the completion of a European single market and would welcome that more steps follow in the near future. The TowerCo sector has the potential to become a true pan-European market and Vantage Towers is eager to bring its contribution to make ubiquitous 5G connectivity a reality for European citizens and businesses.

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About Vantage Towers

Vantage Towers is a leading tower company in Europe with more than 84,000 sites in ten countries, connecting people, businesses and devices in cities and rural areas. The company was founded in 2020 and is headquartered in Düsseldorf.

Vantage Towers' portfolio includes towers, masts, rooftop sites, distributed antenna systems (DAS) and small cells. By building, operating and leasing this infrastructure to MNOs or other network providers such as IoT companies or utilities, Vantage Towers is making a significant contribution to a better-connected Europe.

While already 100% of the electricity that Vantage Towers uses to operate its infrastructure is obtained from renewable energy sources, green energy generation is piloted directly on site with the help of solar panels and micro wind turbines, and also hydrogen solutions are under testing. This fits well into the overall strategy of the company to drive a sustainable digitalisation in Europe and to support partners through technological innovation in decarbonisation and achieving their climate goals.

For more information, please visit our website at <https://www.vantagetowers.com/en>, follow us on X at @VantageTowers or connect with us on LinkedIn at www.linkedin.com/company/vantagetowers.

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