

# Transparency in the scope of net neutrality (NN) *Status and perspectives*

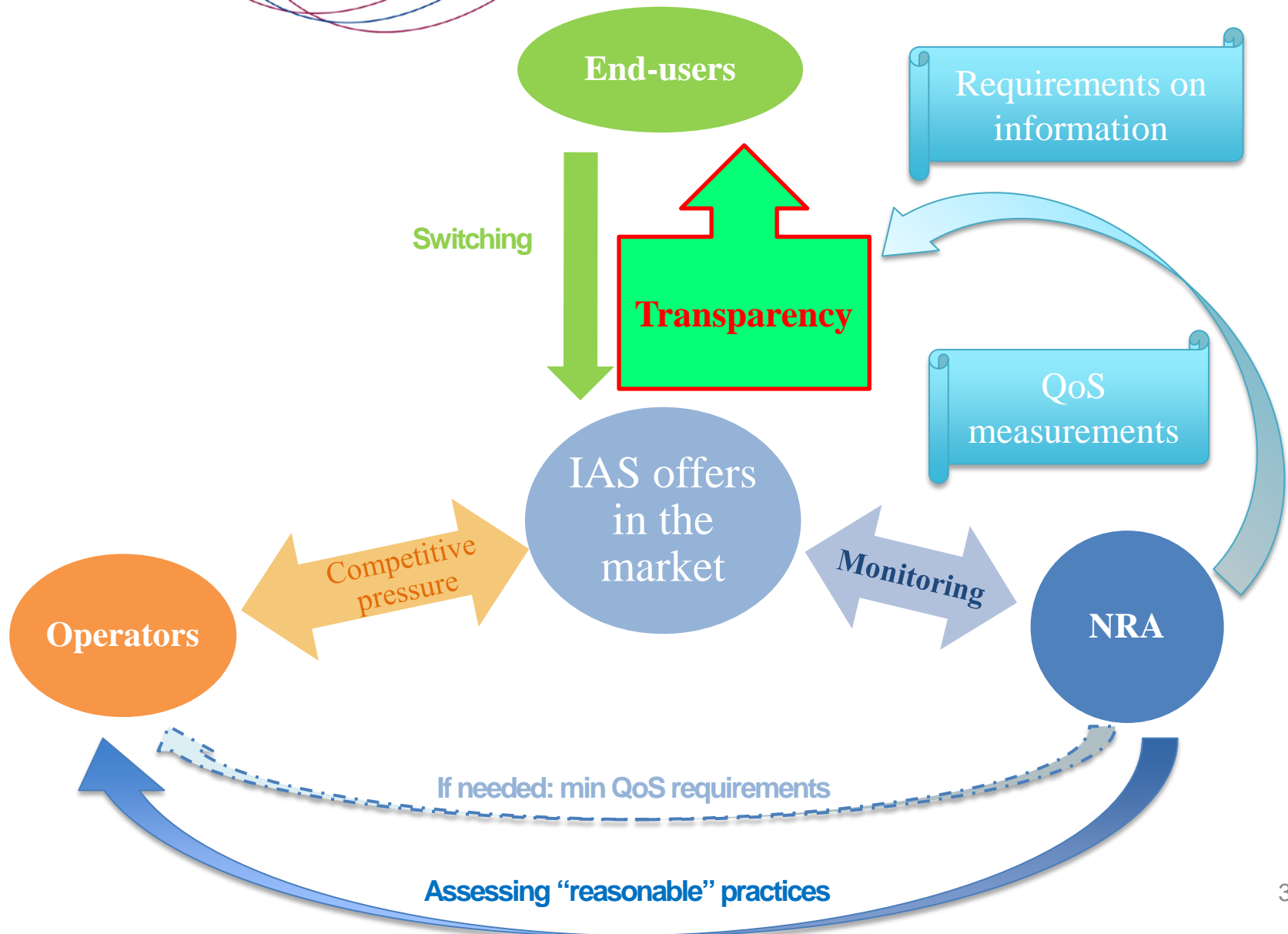
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## SUMMARY

- Role of transparency in the regulatory approach to promote NN
- Are ISPs implementing BEREC recommendations?
  - Key areas of improvement
  - Challenges to an effective transparency policy
- Perspectives
  - The need to go further
  - The role of NRAs, the Commission and BEREC

*I am so clever that sometimes I don't understand a single word of what I'm saying.*  
Oscar Wilde



Key BEREC recommendations (2011 Guidelines)	Observations
<p>include all the categories of information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- in an <i>accessible</i> place</li> </ul>	<p><u>Greater information provided:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Scope of service (but low info on <i>actual speed</i>)</li> <li>- General limitations like <i>volume caps and fair use</i> (though real-time tools are lacking)</li> <li>- Specific limitations - TM &amp; other differentiations (but some unclear concepts (e.g. “p2p”))</li> </ul>
<p>achieve <i>understandability</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>empowering end users: meaningful</i> explanations</li> </ul>	<p><u>Some efforts but insufficient results</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Guides and definitions increasingly provided</li> <li>- Information is too dense, technical, unattractive</li> </ul>
<p>ensure <i>comparability</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- provide <i>accurate</i> data to third parties</li> </ul>	<p><u>Little achievements:</u></p> <p>Usually, no common terminology and references            Very few comparison sites include NN-related info            No monitoring in place to verify information</p>

## Key areas of improvement\*

- **Adapt to users' expectations and concrete experience**
  - The label "internet access" must be primarily related to unrestricted service
  - Distinguish from offers with application-specific measures
    - Why differentiations, what practical implications?
    - Meaningful explanation of policies (e.g. hours of streaming allowed vs. how many MB)
- **Improve the format in which information is conveyed**
  - Apply methods such as *tiered approach* and *visual representations*
  - Explain technical terms in clear and simple language
- **Enable comparison at market level**
  - Standard terminology must be fostered (primarily at national level)
  - Centralized trusted tools for QoS measurements need to be developed

## Challenges to an effective transparency policy

- **Users' awareness and interest in NN is low**
  - Results from a research published by Ofcom in September 2013:
    - Most consumers have very little knowledge about how the internet works
    - 11% of UK internet consumers are familiar with the term "traffic management"
    - 1% claiming to have considered this when choosing their broadband service
- **ISPs develop practices which are increasingly sophisticated**
  - Less blocking in several member states
  - More focus on prioritization or slowing-down of certain activities

***Is there much to be expected from more transparency ?***



## NRAs have a crucial role to play

- Users have a clear preference for information provided by independent 3rd parties
  - NRAs (through own publications or certification) are needed to
    - Guarantee a sufficient level of trust
    - Ensure the common application of *detailed* concepts and methodologies
- Importance of Quality measurements: to demystify abstract concepts, to compare
  - E.g. pre-purchase speed tests, post-purchase monitoring of traffic management
  - NRAs expertise on their market is essential for sound results. Cf. BEREC work.

## Is this reflected in the STM proposal?

- NRAs role in QoS measurement and monitoring is highlighted
- Commission has the main role in prescribing further transparency
  - However NRAs are best placed for a constructive dialogue with operators



**Thanks !**

*I know you believe you understand what you think I said, but I'm not sure you realize that what you heard is not what I meant.*

Robert McCloskey