

EENA's Response to the consultation on the draft BEREC guidelines on how to assess the effectiveness of public warning systems transmitted by other means.

EENA, the European Emergency Number Association welcomes the draft guidelines published by BEREC on how to assess the effectiveness of public warning systems transmitted by different means. The document shows a high degree of research and provides a good basis to compare the effectiveness of public warning systems as described in paragraphs 1 and 2 of article 110.

EENA is however strongly concerned regarding the assessment of equivalence of the effectiveness of IAS-PWS based on the coverage criterion. While the document states that "a device using an IAS-PWS will be within coverage as long as a data connection exists to enable the communication with the IAS application server" (section 3.3.1.1.), it should be highlighted that the main drawback of a mobile app is actually the coverage, since in practice, very few people download it. For instance, the document refers to the German apps Katwarn and NINA. In a country of over 80 million inhabitants and where the penetration rate of Android smartphones is 70% (see [here](#)), both apps have less than 5 million of downloads on Play Store (see [here](#) for Katwarn and [here](#) for NINA; data is unfortunately not available for Apple Store). Despite the considerable efforts of relevant authorities to promote these apps, it remains a very low rate of downloads (especially considering the high number of visitors in the country). Similarly, the former SAIP app in France had alarmingly low download rates. Hence, it would be dangerous to consider that IAS-PWS could reach as many people as CB or LB-SMS, simply because data connection exists! The guidelines should thus reflect this major drawback of an app.

According to 3.1.3., the fact that roamers must be informed when entering a Member State on how to receive Public Warning alert "is the only sub-criterion explicitly mentioned by the EECC, thus BEREC considers it to be of specific importance for the legislator". However, in recital 294, the EECC refers to other sub-criteria: the fact that the alert should be received in an "easily receivable manner" (end-users should not be required to login or register); the alternative should be compliant with relevant privacy legislations and it should be free for the user to receive the alert. While most of these requirements are well detailed in the guidelines, the requirement on privacy-compliance should be better highlighted in the guidelines. For instance, in section 3.3.1., BEREC reminds that "when rolling-out an IAS-PWS Member States need to ensure that an end-user can receive warning messages after installing the application on his device without further need for registration or log-in". In other words, this means that an app should be able to send alerts as soon as it is installed on the phone. However, processing the user's privacy would require the active consent from the user. Hence, privacy issues should be better highlighted, either as a separate criterion or should be taken into account when detailing other criteria.

Considering the last two paragraphs, another criterion that could be defined is the criterion of required action from the end-user. While no prior action is required for other technologies, an end-user do have to install the app before receiving the alert and consent that his/her location will be processed, which in practice few people will do.

Finally, EENA entirely shares BEREC's view that some criteria are more important than others and that the assessment of which solution should be implemented should be based on the overall aim of article 110 and recitals 293, 294 and 295 of the EECC.

Hence, EENA welcomes BEREC's work in these guidelines and is looking forward to see the points above better highlighted in the final document. Article 110 of the EECC aims at making people safer in Europe and we hope that these guidelines will help the Member States implement the best technology to meet this objective.