Preface

The abolition of state monopolies and the liberalization of telecommuni-
cation markets were accompanied by the hope that the new dynamics based
on competition as the driving force would result in abundant investment.
Even the network infrastructure was supposed to benefit from market liberal-
ization. And – with very few exceptions – the literature showed a deep
conviction that the infrastructure would be created most efficiently under a
competitive regime. However, we were all taught otherwise. The promotion
of new telecommunications infrastructure is an open debate, and the chapters
of this book overflow with topics such as ‘regulation’, ‘state aid’ and
‘incentive programmes’. Thus, if markets do not generate satisfactory results
(or cannot rely on effective mechanisms of competition), alternative models
have to be developed using the instruments of regulation, investment sup-
port, credit facilitation or risk sharing in order to provide essential infra-
structures.

The infrastructure debate – emphasising essential facilities, unbundling
and NGN or NGA – has been reflected in the programmes of conferences of
the International Telecommunications Society for many years, proving that
the symptom is enduring. This book is based on contributions to the ITS
European Regional Conference in Rome that took place in September 2008.

Two other issues of great importance for current market dynamics and
imbued with significant policy implications, namely the pricing of NGN net-
works and innovative mobile services, make this volume complete. Both
issues – although referring to essentially different markets – reveal a com-
plex relationship of market dynamics on the one hand and regulatory need as
well as regulatory impact on the other.

The variety of the contributions in this volume bears witness to the pur-
pose of ITS conferences: policy makers, representatives of the business
world and, last but not least, academics are invited to exchange ideas, to
specify the terms of their controversies and to enhance the level of under-
standing of markets, policies and regulation. The ITS would like to thank the
editors of this book and all the authors for the documentation of these
efforts.

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