

## PRESS RELEASE

# The Latvian Government and BEREC sign the BEREC Office Seat Agreement

Riga, 25 February 2011.

The Seat Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia, the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC) and the BEREC Office was signed Thursday evening, 24 February in Riga, Latvia. The Agreement governs the conditions of BEREC Office location in Riga, and the relationship between the parties. The Agreement was signed, for the Latvian Government, by Mr Uldis Augulis, Minister of Transport, for BEREC, by Mr Chris Fonteijn, Chairman of the BEREC Management Committee and for BEREC Office, by Mr Ando Rehema, Administrative Manager. Mr Robert Madelin, the Director General of DG Information Society and Media (DG INFSO) of the European Commission and Mr Bernd Langeheine, Director of Electronic Communications Policy Directorate in DG INFSO, also attended the signing of the Agreement.

The BEREC Office has been established as a European Body and is set up to provide administrative and professional support to the BEREC. The Office has been present in Riga since October 2010 and is expected to be formally operational in the third quarter of 2011.

According to the Seat Agreement, BEREC Office will enjoy the privileges and immunities of Community institutions in Latvia. Moreover, the Latvian Government will provide full institutional support to the BEREC Office and administrative assistance in questions related to the location in Riga. The Government will also work together with BEREC Office in finding the best solutions for schooling the children of the Office staff. BEREC Office is the first European Agency to be seated in Latvia. It has been established pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 1211/2009 together with BEREC, the new Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications.

*Mr Augulis* expressed satisfaction that work carried out by the Ministry of Transport and other parties involved have led to success and Riga is hosting this important European body. Certainly the establishment of BEREC Office in Riga has positioned Latvia on the EU electronic communications map.

*Mr Chris Fonteijn* is honoured that BEREC Office is the first European Agency to be situated in Latvia. "In the course of 2011, BEREC will increasingly be able to rely on the resources of the BEREC Office to provide professional and administrative support. Together we will build a strong European communications body to promote competition in the interest of European businesses and consumers. I am thankful for the smooth cooperation with the Latvian Government in the establishment of the BEREC Office."

*Neelie Kroes*, European Commission Vice President for the Digital Agenda said: "I welcome the signature of the Seat Agreement between the Latvian Government and the BEREC Office which can now become fully operational in Riga. BEREC has the important task of helping to ensure the consistent application of EU telecom rules and the development of best regulatory practices. The BEREC Office will play a key role assisting BEREC in meeting these objectives."

Mr Rehema expressed his gratitude to all parties involved in the negotiation process for their open attitude and efficiency. When speaking about his experience in Riga until today he was confident that the team of BEREC Office will like Latvia and Riga as their new home.

Note for the editor:

*About BEREC*

*BEREC is composed of a Board of Regulators consisting of the Heads of the 27 national regulatory authorities (NRAs). BEREC will advise the European Commission and the NRAs, and assist the European Parliament and Council, on issues related to the application of the EU regulatory framework for electronic communications. BEREC will help to ensure fair competition and consistency of regulation in the internal market for electronic communications to benefit consumers. In particular providing expert advice on market definitions, analysis and remedies, definition of transnational markets, cross-border disputes and numbering issues. Furthermore, BEREC will provide expert opinions on emerging challenges such as the promotion of broadband, net neutrality and converging markets, and is ready to play an active role in the discussions in the public domain on these issues.*

*Contact details:*

*For more information please contact:*

*berec@ec.europa.eu Tel +371 6708 5438, Website <http://berec.europa.eu>*