



## **BEREC Office Opening Ceremony, Riga, Latvia, October 2011**

**The BEREC office has now been established in Riga, Latvia, by adapting existing premises. A team of 30 people is already working there. The BEREC Office is a European institution established to support the BEREC organization, which was created by the 27 EU National Regulatory Authorities (NRAs).**

### **Workshop**

A workshop had been held involving all the NRAs and it is clear that BEREC itself is not a EU body, but coordination between the different national regulatory bodies. The BEREC presidency will operate by rotation. Currently it is being chaired by Austria.

Most of the presentations at the opening came from the Baltic and Nordic countries, who all listed the familiar common challenges regarding network neutrality, roaming, etc. There are now only 7 (previously 18) Relevant Markets for NRAs to subject to regular analysis. Next Generation Access remains an issue in most countries with major concern regarding funding of next generation networks remains the main topic. In the larger countries, like Germany, the cost of developing a complete NGN is so big it will hardly be economically feasible for the different carriers. Even half the country might not be feasible in a monopoly, much less in market situations where no carrier reaches a 50% market share. Due to bad experiences on Internet security, including a massive Russian attack, concerns were raised, as this is a subject in the hands of the NRA in some countries.

### **Speech by Neelie Kroes, Vice President European Commission**

Commissioner Kroes reviewed the process to reach this moment, the negotiations for the Telecom package, the pros and cons, the parliament reading and many other things. She stressed that all the time we have lost in the process must now be recovered. "Time is not our friend," she said as she repeated her commitment to the June 2012 deadline.

All action must be empowered by facts and figures, and the BEREC office should provide this information to all the NRAs as well as to the European Commission. Remedies need to be adjusted to fit the new conditions. Until now Europe has taken different approaches to similar



problems. This is not the best nor a clever way to do things. We need to analyze problems in a common way and find common positions that help us to create a common digital market. Europe needs a predictable, safe regulatory environment where carriers can make decisions as efficiently as possible. There are many things to do. 25% of the European population has never used Internet. This is what we have to change.

## **INTUG**

INTUG gained benefit from attending the event, and the invitation to participate confirmed the recognition INTUG has within the EU. BEREC and the BEREC Office are important counterparts for INTUG's representational and lobbying activities. A close relationship was established with Ando Rehemma, Head of BEREC Office and his team. INTUG also had an opportunity to talk to Commissioner Kroes and Anthony Whelan, her Head of Cabinet, with whom INTUG has a meeting on 21 November in Brussels.

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