European Commission: New European Communications Body

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The Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communication (BEREC) was established in January 2010. The creation of BEREC was one of the reforms included in the package of rules for Europe's telecoms networks and services as formally approved by the European Parliament on 24 November 2009 (see IRIS 2010-1: 1/7). BEREC unites the national telecoms regulators of the EU Member States and seeks to strengthen the European telecoms market and guarantee fair competition. The establishment of an internal market for electronic communication is a topic of high priority because of the increasing economic importance of the telecoms sector in Europe.

BEREC replaces the European Regulators Group (ERG), the previous organisation within which National Regulatory Authorities (NRAs) exchanged their expertise and thoughts on the functioning of the telecoms market in the EU. Today there are 27 NRAs represented in BEREC.

The first meeting of BEREC took place on 28 January in Brussels, where the essential issues on the establishment of the organisation were dealt with. One of those issues concerned the election of the chairpersons for the upcoming two years. John Doherty, the chair of the Irish communication regulator ComReg, was chosen as chairperson for 2010 and Chris Fonteijn, the current chair of the Dutch regulator OPTA, will be chairperson in 2011. BEREC is composed of the Board of Regulators, which will be provided with professional and administrative support through “the Office”. The board consists of one member from each Member State, while “the Office” consists of a management committee and an administrative manager. In principle the Board of Regulators makes decisions by a two-thirds majority of its members.

BEREC provides a forum for the regulators to coordinate pan-European policies and study new developments in the telecoms market. The organisation makes use of the expertise available in the NRAs and cooperates with the NRAs and the Commission in order to carry out its tasks. The role and tasks of BEREC are set out in Articles 2 and 3 of the Regulation (No 1211/2009). BEREC will provide opinions, reports and advice to the NRAs, the Commission and, on request, to the European Parliament and the Council. Furthermore, BEREC will assist the institutions where considered necessary.

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Regulation (EC) No 1211/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2009 establishing the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC) and the Office

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