

PRESS RELEASE

**BEREC 4th Stakeholder forum
Enhancing connectivity and innovation in Europe**

On the 17th of October, BEREC will hold its 4th Stakeholder forum in Brussels. This major event in the telecoms sector will be focused this year on BEREC work programme for 2017 as well as on the ongoing review of the regulatory framework for electronic communications. In this context, the forum will be the occasion to discuss in particular two important issues: providing connectivity to every European citizen and facilitating the development of the digital economy. Around 220 participants are expected to attend the forum and interact with the speakers, including many actors from the telecoms and digital environments.

What solutions to provide connectivity to every citizen?

Providing connectivity to every citizen is a top-priority, reasserted recently by the European Commission. In this regard, investments from the operators as well as innovative solutions to facilitate the roll-outs are key to cope with the rapidly changing end users' needs. The first roundtable will provide the opportunity to analyse these different solutions and question the role regulation has to play towards them.

A first panel of speakers, moderated by Sharon White, Chief Executive of British regulator Ofcom, will provide their views on these issues:

- **Pilar del Castillo**, Member of the European Parliament;
- **Eelco Blok**, CEO of Dutch operator KPN;
- **Xavier Niel**, Deputy Chairman of the Board of Directors & Chief Strategy Officer of Iliad;
- **Sam Crawford**, Founder of SamKnows

Empowering the digital economy, which role for investments and regulation?

The development of the digital economy is also subject to intense attention. This fast-changing environment is source of innovation, new actors and new services but also of many regulatory challenges, as the debate on net neutrality has shown. Reversely, the impact of regulation, as well as investments, on this sector and their role as innovation enhancer can be questioned.

Together with the main developments in the sector, this issue will be one of the main topics discussed during the second roundtable.

Speakers for this roundtable, moderated by Johannes Gungl, Managing Director of Austrian regulator RTR, will include:

- **Gavin Patterson**, CEO of BT Group;
- **Martin Kaiser**, VP Services division at Hager Group;
- **Annina Koskiola**, CEO of Proximi.io;
- and **Winston Maxwell**, renowned expert in net neutrality.

During the different roundtables, the forum will also be the occasion to gather views from the participants on BEREC work programme for 2017 which will focus notably on connectivity challenges, open internet and the framework review.

Wilhelm Eschweiler, 2016 BEREC Chair, and Sébastien Soriano, BEREC Chair for 2017, will give opening remarks. Commissioner Oettinger will close the forum.

The event is open to the public and will be webstreamed live on BEREC website. Everyone is invited to react or ask directly questions to the speakers via Twitter #BERECforum

Link to the agenda: http://bereg.europa.eu/eng/events/bereg_events_2016/124-4th-bereg-stakeholder-forum-meeting