

**Contact: Johannes Kleis: +32 (0)2 789 24 01**  
**Date: 20/06/2013**  
**Reference: PR 2013/014**

### **Alliance of Lithuanian Consumer Organisations and European consumer group BEUC meet Lithuanian EU Presidency**

With the 6 month Lithuanian Presidency of the European Union starting July 1, The European Consumer Organisation (BEUC) and its new member Alliance of Lithuanian Consumer Organisations<sup>1</sup> today present their priorities to Vice-Minister of Justice Paulius Griciūnas and Director General of the State Consumer Rights Protection Authority, Feliksas Petrauskas in Vilnius.

The Lithuanian Government will be responsible for leading EU ministers' negotiations on a number of initiatives with important implications for Europe's consumers:

- Updating the EU's personal data protection rules to strengthen citizens' protection and control over their own data;
- New rules to prevent consumers being exposed to unsafe products and improve market surveillance;
- Modernisation of legal protection for holiday makers who book travel packages online.

Monique Goyens, Director General of BEUC said:

"Lithuania can make a real difference to Europe's consumers. A lot is at stake to advance key laws on product safety, data protection, online sales and for European holiday makers. We hope the Lithuanian Government places a clear focus on consumers when they take over the Presidency in July."

The Lithuanian Presidency will also have a decisive role on the future of European consumer law when it comes to ministers' decisions on the so-called "28<sup>th</sup> regime", an optional legal framework for cross-border, online sales. Consumer groups across Europe, together with e-commerce traders believe it will not provide added value for consumers nor businesses, but rather add legal complexity and compliance costs for business, confuse consumers or even reduce their rights.

BEUC and its Lithuanian counterpart also urged prioritising a European Commission draft bill to give all consumers access to a bank account, facilitate switching to another bank and increase the transparency of fees.

Egle Kybartiene, President of the Alliance of Lithuanian Consumers' Associations said:

"We have high expectations for the first Lithuanian Presidency and urge the Vice-Minister to put European consumers' interest on the top of its agenda."

ENDS

Note to editors:

<sup>1</sup> The delegation included Egle Kybartiene, President, Alliance of Lithuanian Consumer Organisations; Monique Goyens, BEUC Director General; Ursula Pahl, BEUC Deputy Director General.

<sup>2</sup> BEUC's Memorandum for the Lithuanian Presidency and detailed BEUC positions on all its priorities can be found on our website: [www.beuc.eu](http://www.beuc.eu).