Major points of the Finnish ECCG representative Juha Beurling on digital issues 20.11.2014

# Major goal of the Consumers’ Union of Finland is the easy access for all people to the most important internet sites (both public and private sites) . If there is no forcing legislation coming from the EU to make these kind of sites easily accessible for all people, we want to have this nationally. This is what we are lobbying to the political parties in our country at the moment.

# More competition in retail business through competition online. In Finland the business of selling food is very concentrated around two big chains. In a country geographically as big as Germany but with the population of Berlin scattered around the country the only way to get competition is to enhance competition online

* A national law in Finland guarantees everyone the possibility to access Internet with the minimum speed of 1 megabites. We are lobbying for the change of this national law so that everyone should have the right to 10 megabites connection regardless of their place on residence.
* Digital signature has been in the hand of banks (bank codes) because no real public digital signature system has been created instead. Thanks to new EU regulations this will be solved in the way that banks need to give bank codes to anyone unlike today when banks do not need to do it if someone has e.g. a history of not paying their bills on time.
* The present government of Finland revised legislation on electronic communication (The Information Society Code). Major stakeholders like the Consumers’ Union of Finland was integrated in their work from the very beginning. The new legislation will enter into force at the beginning of 2015 Number of key problems solved. The Consumers’ Union of Finland will monitor practical effects of the new legislation
* From the Finnish point of view Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL laying down measures concerning the European single market for electronic communications has been prepared too quickly. Therefore preparation should be stopped and started from scratch on a new basis. One of the key consumer issue is net neutrality. This issue was resolved in a good way in Finland in the above mentioned national Information Society Code project. Therefore we wish that EU rules do not force Finland to lower its’ national standards in this question.

Another worry Finland has is the question of price of roaming. At the moment Finland has the lowest mobile data and mobile call costs in the EU. If Finnish consumers, due to EU legislation, get higher national fees, it will not be easily accepted.