



Press release

Civil society groups form 'Better Regulation' Watchdog to protect citizen, worker and consumer rights

For immediate release: Monday 18 May 2015

Brussels, 18 May 2015 – More than 50 civil society organisations have joined forces to create the '**Better Regulation Watchdog**' – a network to protect citizens', workers' and consumers' rights. The network was launched today in Brussels, one day ahead of the expected announcement of the European Commission's so-called 'Better Regulation' reforms.

The network of organisations from around Europe is concerned that the 'Better Regulation' agenda aims to weaken or undermine essential regulations and subordinate the public good to corporate interests.

The creation of the network is a response to the European Commission's attempts to remove what it deems regulatory burdens under the 'Better Regulation' initiative. Commission First Vice President Frans Timmermans is expected to unveil a package of measures in support of this initiative tomorrow.

The network comprises a wide range of public interest groups including consumer, environmental, development, financial, social, and public health organisations and trade unions, and represents tens of millions of European citizens. The members are united by a desire to build an inclusive and competitive Europe founded on economic, social and environmental sustainability.

The network will examine actions taken under the Better Regulation initiative to identify possible risks to existing and future social, labour, environmental, consumer, financial regulation and public health standards. It will then inform civil society, media and decision makers of these risks by organising public debates, promoting research, and through joint campaigning and advocacy work.

Monique Goyens of BEUC – the European Consumer Organisation said: *"We observe a lack of willingness from the new European Commission to take the measures necessary to protect consumers from unhealthy food, dangerous chemicals in consumer products or to provide for better labelling. Several initiatives have been delayed or are not being pursued anymore. The Better Regulation Watchdog network which unites civil society interest groups from various sectors is a clear signal to the European Commission not to jeopardise legislation protecting public interests."*

Christophe Nijdam, secretary general of Finance Watch said: *"Growth and jobs need financial stability. The completion of a solid regulatory framework for the financial sector is*



one of the "big things" that Europe should focus on. As a member of this network we will watch the outputs of the Better Regulation initiative closely."

Magda Stoczkiewicz, director of Friends of the Earth Europe said: *"What the European Commission presents as a 'better regulation' agenda is in reality all about deregulation. In response to strong business lobbying, the Commission is planning to weaken, delay and scrap environmental standards."*

Oliver Roethig, Regional Secretary of UNI Europa said: *"The idea to create the Better Regulation Watchdog was formed in a conversation between a small group of people. Now we are over 50 organisations! Together we will share intel, watch the Commission, and united react to safeguard the interests of workers, civil society and consumers."*

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The founding statement of the Better Regulation Watchdog and the full list of members can be found here: http://www.betterregwatch.eu/BRWN_Founding_Statement_and_Members.pdf