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## Press Release

### Rhein-Galerie Ludwigshafen

**New inner city attraction opens on Wednesday – city is reaching down to Rhine banks for the first time**

**Around 130 specialist stores, cafés and restaurants**

**1,200 jobs +++ 220 million euros investment**

**Ludwigshafen, September 28, 2010** – One of the most modern and architecturally sophisticated inner-city shopping centers in Germany will open tomorrow, Wednesday September 29, 2010, at 8 a.m. after a two-and-a-half-year long construction period at the premises of the former “Zollhofhafen” customs hall complex. In Ludwigshafen’s new shopping promenade around 130 specialist stores, cafés, restaurants and service providers are presenting a branch and service mixture tailor-made for the city. The center has a total sales area of 30,000 sqm on two floors. The 220 million euros project has been realized by the investor Union Investment Real Estate GmbH and ECE, who will be responsible for the center’s long-term management. With the opening of the Rhein-Galerie, around 1,200 new full and part-time jobs have been created in Ludwigshafen. The Rhein-Galerie provides the inhabitants of Ludwingshafen for the very first time direct and attractive access from the city to the banks of the Rhine: with an area of nearly 10,000 sqm, the Rhine promenade with its own gastronomy invites the visitors to stay and stroll, and creates a meeting place for culture and events.

Lord Mayor Dr. Eva Lohse: “With the opening of the Rhein-Galerie a fundamental component of our urban redevelopment titled “Today for Tomorrow” has been realized. Now it will be possible to go shopping, strolling, and stop by directly at the Rhine banks in Ludwigshafen. This is unique in the

region. With the opening of the Rhein-Galerie, the regional center Ludwigshafen is attractively positioning itself for the future also in terms of retail.”

Dr. Frank Billand, member of the management board at Union Investment Real Estate GmbH: “The Rhein-Galerie is characterized in all aspects by high quality. Out of experience in cooperating with ECE for center projects in Essen, Darmstadt and Remscheid we can say: Ludwigshafen can look forward to a perfect, professionally managed shopping experience.”

ECE CEO Alexander Otto: “The completed Rhein-Galerie with the enclosed Rhine promenade will positively influence Ludwigshafen’s cityscape and creates a world of experience shopping reaching far beyond the city boundaries. I am pleased that with the Rhein-Galerie we finally managed to integrate the Rhine in Ludwigshafen’s cityscape.”

With a total catchment area of more than one million people, the Rhein-Galerie represents a modern communication meeting point for the complete region.

The most characteristic feature of the gallery is the membrane roof, which at nighttime will be illuminated in blue and white in turns. The wave-like rhythm of its lateral arches demonstrates the connection to water. Also inside the shopping center a fountain with a seven meters high plume of water creates a topical reference to the Rhine.

The Rhein-Galerie was already awarded the pre-certificate in gold by the German Sustainable Building Council (DGNB) for sustainable planning as well as urban integration.

All shop areas are completely leased out at the time of the opening. The highlights include the Swiss grocer Migros, opening its first shop in the federal state of Rhineland-Palatinate. By the end of the year, the fashion retailer Hollister will open its first store in Rhineland-Palatinate as well. This will then be the third shop opening in Germany. Also the currently very popular fashion label Desigual will be represented with a shop. The Rhein-Galerie also provides regional stores: BASF opens a wine gallery, the Mannheim concept “Deine

Idee” offers handicraft and creative supplies. Another regional operator is the “Present Shop”, offering art and gifts. The fashion focus is placed with major fashion retailers such as Peek & Cloppenburg, H&M, C&A, and New Yorker. Moreover, on the first floor of the center is a food court with outdoor terrace. Here, the visitor can enjoy a view across the Rhine to Mannheim.

**Union Investment** is one of Europe’s leading real estate investment managers with focus on open real estate funds for private and institutional investors. Currently, Union Investment manages six real estate funds with a total volume of around 19.3 billion euros. Its real estate portfolio comprises 300 properties in Europe, America as well as Asia. The shopping center portfolio of Union Investment comprises currently 27 properties and projects with a total value of around 4.4 billion euros.

**ECE** develops, plans, builds, leases and manages large commercial real estate in the sectors shopping, office, industries since 1965 and is active in 14 European countries. The company is European market leader with 116 managed shopping centers. On an overall sales area of 3.6 million square meters, about 12,500 retail businesses generate 13.3 billion euros in annual sales. Among these centers are Potsdamer Platz Arkaden in Berlin, “Promenaden” at Leipzig central station, Schloss-Arkaden in Braunschweig or the Rhein-Neckar-Zentrum in Viernheim. Another 21 shopping centers are currently under construction or planned throughout Europe, among them the Europa-Galerie Saarbrücken, the Thier-Galerie Dortmund, Forum Mittelrhein Koblenz, BahnhofCity Vienna central station and BahnhofCity Wien West, Galeria Kaskada in the Polish Szczecin, Árkád Szeged in Hungary or the Skyline Plaza in Frankfurt. Since July 2010 ECE has also been active in Spain, where another 14 centers are taken under management as well, among others in Madrid, Alicante and San Sebastian. In the business units Office, Traffic and Industries, ECE realizes also other commercial properties such as the German Philips headquarters in Hamburg, the ThyssenKrupp Quarter in Essen or the Steigenberger hotel at the new Berlin Capital Airport BBI.

**Photos can be downloaded under:**

**[www.presseplattform.de](http://www.presseplattform.de)**

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