



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, 14.11.2006
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2005/0042B (COD)

**COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION
TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**

pursuant to the second subparagraph of Article 251 (2) of the EC Treaty

concerning the

**common position of the Council on the adoption of a Decision of the European
Parliament and of the Council establishing a programme of Community action in the
field of consumer policy (2007-2013)**

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(text with EEA relevance)

1. BACKGROUND

Date of transmission of the proposal to the EP and the Council (document COM(2005)115 – 2005/0042B (COD))	13 April 2005
Date of the opinion of the Committee of the Regions:	16 February 2006
Date of the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee	14 February 2006
Date of the opinion of the European Parliament, first reading:	23 March 2006
Date of the revised proposal of the Commission (document COM(2006) 235)	24 May 2006
Date of the political agreement in the Council	25 September 2006
Date of adoption of the common position:	13 November 2006

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE COMMISSION PROPOSAL

The programme aims to contribute to protecting the safety and economic interests of consumers, and promoting their right to information and education. It enables the EU to complement, support and monitor the policies of the Member States, to support consumer organisations, to enforce EU consumer legislation, and help the European consumers to become active players in the internal market. The programme for 2007-2013 will have two main objectives: to ensure high levels of consumer protection, through effective representation of consumer interests, and to ensure that consumer protection rules are effectively applied, i.e. through enforcement, cooperation, information, education and redress.

These objectives shall be achieved through a combination of actions and instruments, according to the priorities set out in the annual work plans.

3. COMMENTS ON THE COMMON POSITION

On 25 September 2006, the Council reached by unanimity a political agreement on the draft Decision establishing a programme of Community action in the field of consumer policy (2007-2013). It was largely based on the Commission's modified proposal issued on 24 May 2006. This modified proposal took into account the substantial shortfall in the programme budget resulting from the inter-institutional agreement on the financial perspectives; as well as the formal views expressed by the European Parliament in first reading. It introduced substantial modifications to the original proposal and split it between a public health programme and a consumer policy programme.

During the discussion on the modified proposal some members of the Council had reservations on specific projects, on the establishment of a European Master programme and scholarship grants; and the European Parliament also had reservations on the European Master programme as well as on decentralised actions and vulnerable consumers.

All the Member State reservations were finally lifted with a view to reach an agreement given the need for an early adoption of the programme. The common position consequently reflects the results of these inter-institutional contacts and is supported by the Commission.

4. CONCLUSION

The Commission considers that the common position adopted on 13.11.2006 by unanimity is in line with the essential objectives and underlying approach of its modified proposal. It notes that the Chair of the EP IMCO committee confirmed that, should the Council reach a political agreement on the basis of the Presidency compromise text, he would recommend the committee to adopt the common position without amendments. The Commission can therefore support the common position which reflects the agreement reached between the three institutions.