

I M C O

Newsletter

Issue 2 - May 2010

SUMMARY

During the next meeting of the internal market and consumer protection committee, on 10 May, Professor Mario Monti will present his report on the relaunch of the EU single market in the presence of the EP President Jerzy Buzek. Commissioner Šemeta, responsible for Taxation, Customs Union, Audit and Anti-Fraud, will debate on his legislative and work programme for 2010 and 2011 with Members.



In addition, the Newsletter reports about the main outcomes of the meeting held on 27 and 28 April.

Members voted, inter alia, a report on the directive on combating late payment in commercial transactions, as well as two own-initiative reports on the developments in public procurement and on the relaunch of the single market to further benefit consumers and citizens. Members adopted also an opinion on the placing on the market and use of biocidal products.

The implementation and the challenges ahead of the Services Directive were the subjects debated with national parliamentarians. Commissioners Barnier, Tajani and Dalli exchanged views with Members about the legislative and work programme for 2010-2011. The committee also listened to a presentation by a European Commission's high official on the 'Your Europe' portal: a new website assisting citizens and businesses in the single market.

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING (10 May 2010)

[Watch the committee meeting live](#)

[Agenda and meeting documents](#)

Mario Monti presents his Report on the relaunch of the Single Market

Professor Mario Monti is to present his report on the relaunch of the EU market to the Members of the internal market and consumer protection committee in the presence of the EP President Jerzy Buzek. The report, drawn up on Commission President's request, will suggest measures for revitalising the single market. The intention is to prepare the ground for an overall review of the Internal Market on its 20th anniversary in 2012, to fill in the gaps, to improve the implementation, and to get the Member States to take 'ownership' and to better communicate results to citizens.

During the IMCO meeting on 8 April, Prof. Monti had promised that his report would draw inspiration from the discussions the committee had on the draft report on delivering a single market to consumers and citizens by Louis Grech (voted the 28 April). He supported the holistic approach of this report, saying that it could include references to competition, state aid, tax, industrial and social policy plus the external dimension of the single market. He underlined that not only consumers and citizens, but also big businesses are losing their confidence in the single market.

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Customs Union: debate with Commissioner Šemeta on his legislative programme for 2010/2011

In the context of the structured dialogue with the European Commission, Algirdas Šemeta, commissioner responsible for Taxation and Customs Union, Audit and Anti-Fraud, will debate on the legislative and work programme for 2010/2011 with Members.

[Commission Legislative and Work programme](#)

Debates on the agenda

Members will have an exchange of views on the future of the European standardisation and will consider two draft opinions: one on the interconnection of business registers and one on the control by member states of the Commission's exercise of implementing powers.

FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING (27-28 April 2010)

Combating late payment in commercial transactions

By 30 votes in favour 0 against and 6 abstentions, the Committee adopted a report on a directive which aims to combat delays of payments in commercial transactions between businesses or between businesses and public authorities. Late payments affect the competitiveness and viability of companies, notably SMEs, and have also negative effects on intra-EU commercial transactions. Seven compromise amendments facilitated this wide backing.



Members supported, inter alia, a capping of 60 days for payments by public authorities, limiting the verification and acceptance period to 30 days. They also fixed at 40 Euros the minimum sum for the compensation of recovery costs, deleted the lump-sum compensation and increased the statutory interest rate to the sum of the reference rate, plus at least nine percentage points.

As for the payment periods in business-to-business transactions, the Committee opted for allowing contractual agreements beyond 60 days only in cases where it is specifically agreed and does not lead to unjustified damages to any of the contracting parties.

RAPporteur: Barbara Weiler (S&D, DE)
TIMETABLE: Plenary: May 2010
[Late payment dossier](#)
[Press release](#)

New developments in public procurement

The committee adopted (by 28 votes in favour 0 against and 8 abstentions) an own initiative report on new developments in public procurement. The report comments the current situation and suggests improvements to be implemented in the context of a future revision of the existing directives, like more transparency, legal certainty and a better coordination between European, national and regional law. Particular attention is paid to the latest judgements of the EU Court of Justice and the importance of public procurement for innovation as well as environmental and social issues.

RAPporteur: Heide Rühle (Greens/EFA, DE)
TIMETABLE: Plenary: June 2010
[Public procurement dossier](#)

Marketing and use of biocidal products

By 24 votes in favour, 3 against and 9 abstentions, Members adopted an opinion on the proposal seeking to improve the existing legislation on the placing on the market and use of biocidal products. They suggested extending the application of the centralised authorisation procedure to more categories of products. On the labelling of treated articles and materials, the Committee proposed that the incorporation of biocidal products should be indicated on the label provided that these may be released into the environment or come into direct contact with humans. An amendment requires more information to consumers, via the Internet, on the properties and conditions of use of biocidal products. The Committee asked the Commission to submit a report regarding adequate measures to promote the sustainable use of pesticides, and reinforced the provisions related to market surveillance and mutual recognition.

RAPporteur: Amalia Sartori (EPP, IT)
TIMETABLE: Plenary May 2010
[Biocidal products dossier](#)

A single market for consumers and citizens

A stronger, deeper and expanded single market is of vital importance for growth and job creation. This is what emphasises a report adopted by the Committee (32 votes in favour 0 against and 3 abstentions), setting out priorities for revitalizing the single market, against the backdrop of the recent crisis and the EU 2020 strategy. Members call for a more holistic and citizen-based approach to the European market, by tabling in 2011 a package of legislative and non-legislative measures (the "Single Market Act") integrated into all the EU policies.

The single market - say Members - should provide benefits for consumers in terms of better quality, greater variety, reasonable prices, and safety of goods and services. At the same time, greater efforts must be made to facilitate SMEs development and to enable them to take full advantage of their entrepreneurial potential, e.g. by reducing red tape. Members also call for a better transposition and implementation of internal market legislation and a better communication of its benefits.

RAPporteur: Louis Grech (S&D, MT)

TIMETABLE: Plenary: May 2010

[Single Market dossier](#)

[Press Release](#)

Your Europe: a new website to assist citizens and businesses in the single market

Mrs Daly, Director at the European Commission, presented to Members the brand new portal 'Your Europe' which provides on-line information on all single market rights and opportunities, and represents an access point to more specific assistance services. Based on a user friendly approach, it offers an on-line complement to the 'Europe Direct' telephone service.



The website is an outcome of the Single Market Assistance Service (SMAS) action plan adopted by the Commission in May 2008. So far half of the sections are online while remaining sections will be published end May. In autumn more language versions will be available and a promotion campaign will be launched. Members expressed their warm support to this new tool.

[Your Europe web-site](#)

Commission's work programme for 2010-2011

Commissioners Barnier, Tajani and Dalli outlined and debated with Members about the major initiatives included under their portfolios in the Commission work programme for 2010/2011.

Mr **Barnier** emphasized the need of relaunching the single market in the framework of the EU 2020 strategy. He supported the key ideas expressed in the Grech report and the proposal to hold a bi-annual single market forum. He also said that the Commission is considering the idea of a European Professional Card, on which a legislative proposal could be tabled in 2012. He announced an impact assessment on concessions in public procurement by the end of 2010. Questioned by Members, Mr Barnier reassured that the implementation of the services directive is a priority. He then announced his intention to 'tour' all over the EU to assess the implementation of the directives on services, on professional qualifications and on public procurements.

Vice-President **Tajani** stressed the need to promote competitiveness and innovation in the framework of EU 2020 strategy. He made specific reference to the ongoing work of the Commission on the revision of the European Standardisation System, stating that the public consultation will be concluded on 21 May and the Commission will submit its "standardisation package" in autumn. The Commissioner referred to the new legislative framework and the need to reinforce market surveillance and announced the launch of an information campaign on the CE marking. He mentioned also a number of more technical forthcoming proposals such as the Regulation relating to the type-approval of agricultural and forestry vehicles and the Regulation establishing a framework for the approval of motor vehicles of the L-category.

Commissioner **Dalli** emphasised that his objective will be to ensure that consumer interests are integrated into all EU policies. He stressed the need to further develop the consumer markets scoreboard and mentioned that the Commission will carry out every year two in-depth market studies on different retail markets. Moreover, the Commission will adopt a recommendation on consumer complaints which will put in place the necessary tools to develop EU-wide comparable data. The Commission, he added, is in the process of revising the general product safety directive, and has started negotiating an agreement on cooperation and information exchange on product safety with the US authorities. As a follow-up to the Green Paper on consumer collective redress, the Commission will launch a public consultation with a view to create a coherent framework for consumer redress.

In the follow up discussions, interventions by Members focused on bank loans, social services, recovering from the crisis and on the outcome of the vote of the directive on late payments in commercial transactions. Members also referred to the need to reinforce the CE marking, improve market surveillance and better implement internal market legislation. Postal services, e-commerce, toy safety, textile labelling, goods package, the small business act and funding of consumers' projects were some of the other issues addressed by Members.

[Commission Legislative and Work programme](#)

Completing the internal market for e-commerce

Overcoming barriers to cross-border e-commerce and boosting consumer confidence through the development of effective policy and practice. These are the main challenges for achieving a digital single market for Europe raised during the first debate held in committee. Despite the regulatory attention at EU level in this field for many years, more remains to be achieved before the goal of consumer policy of an integrated retail internal market is achieved.

RAPporteur: Pablo Arias Echeverría (EPP, ES)

TIMETABLE:

Deadline for amendments: 8 June 2010 at 16.00

Consideration of amendments: 12 July 2010

Vote in IMCO: 13 July 2010

[Draft report](#)

Other votes and debates

Members voted two opinion reports about a directive and a regulation concerning information on medicinal products subject to medical prescription, and an opinion about the 'Internet of things' (the development of a network of interconnected objects, such as books, cars, electrical appliances or food).

EVENTS

Making the internal market for services work

Representatives of 12 national chambers debated with Members of the committee about the implementation of the Services Directive; namely on the screening of member states laws, the points of single contact (PSCs) and the scope of the directive. Participants unanimously agreed on the importance of the transposition procedure, underlining that implementation is an extraordinary challenge for the Member States: most of them have already adopted horizontal laws. However, parliamentarians said, efforts are still needed to amend legislation in specific sectors. The speakers also agreed that the efficient operation of the PSCs is essential, and their availability in multiple languages has been addressed as a prerequisite for ensuring efficient access to markets for foreign nationals.

LOOKING AHEAD

Using complaints to improve consumers' lives

Bringing together experts in complaints and policymakers to exchange views on how to best improve understanding on analysing and using complaints data. This is the aim of the high-level conference organised by the European Commission, DG Health and Consumers, on 27 May in Brussels.

[Dossier on the Directive](#) (Rapporteur: Cristian Silviu Buşoi - ALDE, RO)

[Dossier on the Regulation](#) (Rapporteur: António Fernando Correia De Campos - S&D, PT)

[Internet of things dossier](#) (Rapporteur Engström - Greens/EFA, SV)

The committee had a first exchange of views on the future of social services of general interest (opinion for Employment committee).

RAPporteur: Damien Abad (EPP, FR)

TIMETABLE:

Consideration of draft opinion: 3 June 2010

Deadline for amendments: 8 June 2010 at 12.00

Consideration of amendments: 12 July 2010

Vote in IMCO: 13 July 2010

And finally, members debated a draft opinion concerning fair revenues for farmers and a better functioning food supply chain in Europe (opinion for Agricultural committee).

RAPporteur: Ashley Fox (ECR, UK)

TIMETABLE:

Consideration of amendments: 2 June 2010

Vote in IMCO: 3 June 2010

[Draft opinion](#)

Moreover, the PSCs should not only provide information, but also ensure the completion of procedures.

As underlined by the Commissioner M. Barnier, the implementation of the Directive is an ongoing process thus there is still room for improvement. It was commonly agreed that it is necessary to raise awareness among service providers, especially among SMEs, so that they could truly benefit from the Directive. Some speakers underlined that it should be concentrated on the opportunities that the Directive offers rather than on the difficulties that might arise for the implementation.

[Programme and background documents](#)

The Commission will present a harmonised methodology for classifying and reporting consumer complaints. The conference will be web-streamed.

[Website of the event](#)

Disclaimer:

Closure date of the current issue: 7 May 2010

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