

## Newsletter

Issue 104 - October 2019

### HEARINGS OF COMMISSIONERS-DESIGNATE

The hearings of the Commissioners-designate proposed by the President-elect of the Commission are a fundamental factor in informing Parliament's decision to consent to, or reject, the proposed College.



IMCO is involved in four hearings. On Wednesday 2 October, IMCO organised, jointly with ITRE, the hearing of Sylvie Goulard, who is proposed as Commissioner for the Internal Market. On the same day IMCO was an associated committee in the hearing of Didier Reynders, who is proposed as Commissioner for Justice, with competence also for consumer protection. On Thursday 3 October, IMCO was an 'invited' committee in the hearing of Paolo Gentiloni, who is proposed as Commissioner for the Economy, with competence also for the Customs Union.

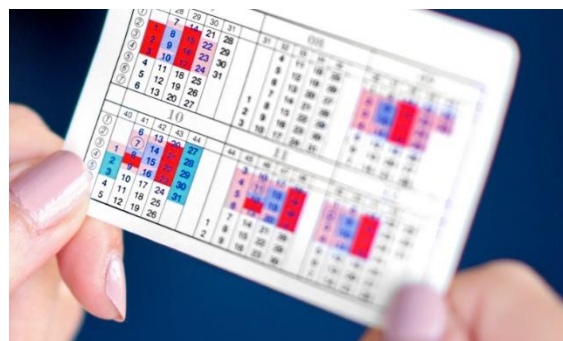
At the time of publication, only one hearing involving IMCO remains: the hearing on Tuesday 8 October, of Margrethe Vestager, who is proposed as Executive Vice-President for a Europe fit for the Digital Age. This hearing will be organised jointly with ITRE and ECON.

After each hearing, the coordinators of the relevant committees evaluate the candidates. In the event of a negative evaluation, further written questions are sent to the candidate in question and there is the possibility to organise a second hearing. Once all hearings are closed, the evaluation letters will be published simultaneously. If all goes to plan, Parliament is expected to vote in plenary on the Commission as a whole on 23 October.

### CALENDAR OF IMCO MEETINGS FOR 2020

On 8 October, IMCO will adopt the calendar of committee meetings for 2020. The proposed dates are as follows:

22-23 January 2020	13-14 July 2020
17-18 February 2020	2-3 September 2020
18-19 March 2020	28 September 2020
27-28 April 2020	26-27 October 2020
25-26 May 2020	9-10 November 2020
24-25 June 2020	2-3 December 2020



## NEXT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

(8 OCTOBER 2019)

[Watch the committee meeting live](#)

### Single Market Programme 2021-2027 (MFF)

On 8 October 2019 IMCO will decide whether to enter into interinstitutional negotiations with Council on the Proposal for Establishing the Programme for single market, competitiveness of enterprises, including SMEs, and European statistics. The IMCO report, adopted on 22 January 2019, aimed to implement and enforce a number of activities supporting consumer protection and competitiveness of businesses, with a view to increasing the effectiveness of the single market. The main changes include an increase in the overall budget for the programme from EUR 4 billion to EUR 6,5 billion, including additional funding for SMEs and market surveillance. The IMCO report was endorsed in plenary on 12 February 2019. If an absolute majority of IMCO Members is in favour of opening negotiations, this will be on the basis of Parliament's first reading position and the partial mandate of the Council. The intention would be to reach a political agreement ahead of the second reading.



**DRAFTSPERSON:** [Brando Benifei \(S&D\)](#)

[Procedure file](#)

### Customs Programme 2021-2027 and Customs Control Equipment (MFF)

On 8 October, IMCO will vote on the decision to enter into interinstitutional negotiations with Council on two customs-related regulations which are part of the multi-annual financial framework (MFF) package. One establishes a Customs Programme (rapporteur Ms Grapini (S&D)); the other establishes an instrument for financial support for customs control equipment (rapporteur Mr Pospíšil (EPP)). IMCO adopted the reports on both files on 6 December 2018, and EP adopted its first reading in plenary on 16 April 2019.

The draft Regulation that establishes the "Customs' Programme for cooperation in the field of customs for the years 2021-2027" is the successor to the Customs 2020 Programme. The main objective of the Programme is to fund actions aimed at strengthening the Customs Union. Specific objectives include areas such as supporting the preparation and uniform implementation of customs legislation and policy, and the development and operation of European electronic systems.

The draft Regulation that establishes the "Instrument for financial support for customs control equipment" is part of the Integrated Border Management Fund. It aims to provide vital and reinforced support to Member States to secure the common external borders.

**DRAFTSPERSON:** [Svenja Hahn \(Renew\)](#)

[Procedure file](#)

**DRAFTSPERSON:** [Jiří Pospíšil \(EPP\)](#)

[Procedure file](#)

## LAST COMMITTEE MEETINGS

(2 – 3 SEPTEMBER)

### Presentation of the studies on the digital single market and on consumer protection

On 2 September, a set of studies prepared by Parliament's Policy Department were presented to IMCO on the digital single market and on consumer protection. The presentations focused on analysing existing legislation and on solutions to key future challenges facing the internal market. In particular, the experts presented new market trends, such as the importance of online platforms, the fading of the relevance of the distinction between consumers and traders, the emergence of artificial intelligence and the integration of environmental concerns into consumer policy.

**LINK:** [study](#)

**LINK:** [study](#)

### Presentation of the Finnish Council Presidency's programme

On 2 September the Finnish Minister for Employment, Mr Timo Harakka, presented the Council Presidency's Programme to IMCO Members. The Presidency stressed that the EU needs a comprehensive long-term strategy for sustainable growth and competitiveness that specifically includes measures to improve the functioning of the single market. IMCO Members enquired about the intentions and concrete actions of the Presidency to improve the single market for services, including digital services and about eliminating the barriers to cross-border trade. Members also enquired about transparency in the digital world, customs and the multiannual financial framework (MFF). The Finnish Presidency stressed that it will seek to finalise the negotiations on the MFF in autumn 2019.

**LINK:** [Presidency](#)

### General budget of the European Union for the financial year 2020



On 3 September, IMCO held two votes relating to the EU budget for the financial year 2020. First, IMCO adopted its opinion on Draft Budget 2020, which will feed into a broader Resolution of Parliament later this October. The IMCO opinion stresses the importance of securing the necessary funding in the 2020 Budget for the single market, SMEs, consumer protection, competitiveness and customs.

Second, IMCO adopted a set of budgetary amendments on budget lines under IMCO's responsibility. On 1 October, those amendments along with budgetary amendments from all other committees were voted on in the BUDG committee. The vote in plenary is scheduled for later in October. You can find out more about the budgetary procedure on the [BUDG committee's webpage](#).

**DRAFTSPERSON:** [Svenja Hahn \(Renew\)](#)

[Procedure file](#)

# LAST COMMITTEE MEETINGS

(25 SEPTEMBER 2019)

## Presentation of the studies on Single Market and Customs

On 25 September, a set of studies on developments in the area of Customs and Single Market, prepared by Parliament's Policy Department was presented by experts to IMCO. The [study](#) on customs focused on the status of the implementation of the Union Customs Code and the achievements of this policy area, underlining the importance that seamless trade has for companies. The Single Market studies covered the areas of free movement of [goods](#), free movement of [services](#) and public procurement (in the context of [improved rights](#) and [economic benefits](#)). IMCO Members showed particular interest in solutions for better enforcement of EU rules, enhancement of free movement, as well as better integration of concepts such as consumer protection, sustainability and protection of environment.

## Better enforcement and modernisation of EU consumer protection rules

On 25 September, IMCO Members adopted (32 votes for, 8 against, 1 abstention) a draft corrigendum to the Parliament's first reading position adopted on 17 April 2019 regarding the directive on Better enforcement and modernisation of EU consumer protection rules. The directive introduces transparency rules for online rankings and consumer reviews, clarifies how to tackle the marketing of 'dual quality' products and strengthens the enforcement of EU consumer protection rules. The corrigendum reflects the technical modifications made in the legal-linguistic finalisation procedure. The draft corrigendum is scheduled for announcement in Plenary in the October I part-session, in accordance with Rule 241(3) of the rules of procedure.

[LINK: Procedure file](#)

## Presentation of EU customs system and legislative framework

On 25 September, the European Commission presented to IMCO Members the legislative framework that underpins the activity of the customs administrations in the Member States. Among other points, they noted that customs activity is very high, with nearly 350 million customs declarations being made per year, and stressed the importance of the customs duties for the EU budget which, at 13%, is bigger than the VAT-based resource contribution. They highlighted that more than 60 pieces of legislation underpin the policy area, and mentioned the important role of customs for the safety and security of the Union and its citizens. One of the main topics raised in the debate with Members was the digitisation of customs procedures, both as concerns current procedures and planned changes for the future.

## Presentation of the 2018 Single Market Scoreboard

On 25 September 2019, Valentina Superti, a Director at DG GROW, presented to IMCO Members the "Single Market Scoreboard 2018", which was published in July 2019 and which is used to monitor the performance of Member States in transposing Internal Market law. The Commission reported that EU countries had improved the functioning of some single market tools, such as the "Your Europe" portal and the Internal Market Information System (IMI). However, Member States did less well in other policy areas, for example in relation to the fairness of public procurement systems and the recognition of professional qualifications. IMCO Members voiced their concerns at the slow development of the single market in several areas (e.g. procurement) and urged the Commission to improve data gathering that would enable a better understanding of the problem.

## Type-approval requirements for motor vehicle safety



On 25 September, IMCO Members adopted (41 votes for, 0 against, 1 abstention) a draft corrigendum to the position of the European Parliament adopted at first reading on 16 April 2019 with a view to the adoption of the regulation on the Type-approval requirements for motor vehicle safety. The regulation adapts and modernises the provisions of the former Vehicle Safety Regulation and the Pedestrian Safety Regulation, which it repeals, and introduces a new set of safety features adapted to the current technical possibilities that will gradually be put into production. The corrigendum reflects the technical modifications made in the legal-linguistic finalisation procedure. The draft corrigendum is scheduled for announcement in Plenary in the October I part-session, in accordance with Rule 241(3) of the rules of procedure.

**DRAFTSPERSON:** [Petra De Sutter \(Greens/EFA\)](#) [Procedure file](#)

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**Closure date of the current issue: 7 October 2019**

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