

## Newsletter

Issue 108 - February 2020

### SELECTED NEWS



#### IMCO marks 15-year anniversary

The IMCO committee marked its recent 15th anniversary on 23 January 2020 with a photograph of the committee's Members. The Chair, Ms de Sutter, paid special tribute to Evelyne Gebhardt (S&D) and Andreas Schwab (EPP), both of whom have been Members of the committee since its creation in 2004. Tribute was also paid to the departing British MEPs, for their role in the work of the committee over the last 15 years, noting that four of IMCO's six Chairs, since its creation in 2004, were from the UK. The overall size of the committee after Brexit will remain the same – 45 Members – but the composition has been slightly adjusted, with EPP and ID Groups gaining one Member each, and Renew and the Non-Attached losing one Member each.

#### Commission Work Programme 2020 and upcoming Structured Dialogue

On 29 January, the Commission published its work programme for 2020 under the motto "A Union that strives for more". The Work Programme sets out six headline ambitions – A European Green Deal; A Europe fit for the digital age; An economy that works for people; A strong Europe in the world; Promoting our European way of life; and A new push for European democracy – and sets out the initiatives that it will adopt to fulfil each of those ambitions. The Work Programme includes a number of initiatives that the IMCO committee has been actively calling for, such as a common charger for mobile phones and similar devices, and a White Paper on artificial intelligence. Over the next two months, the Commissioners responsible for IMCO's areas of competence will present the relevant parts of the Work Programme to the committee within the framework of "Structured Dialogue", each time followed by a debate with IMCO Members: On 18 March, Margarethe Vestager, Executive Vice President for a Europe Fit for the Digital Age, and Thierry Breton, Commissioner for Internal Market; on 19 March, Didier Reynders, Commissioner for Justice; and on 28 April, Paolo Gentiloni, Commissioner for Economy.

# NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING

(17 - 18 FEBRUARY 2020)

[Watch the committee meeting live](#)

Emissions from light passenger and commercial vehicles - vote

IMCO will vote on 18 February on the draft Opinion and the amendments tabled by Members to the Commission's proposal for a regulation on motor vehicle emissions. The aim of the proposal is to control the emissions of motor vehicles in order to achieve fundamental air quality objectives, and to clarify the legal framework for repair and maintenance information. Many amendments concern access to vehicle repair and maintenance information and consumers protection measures, both of which issues fall within IMCO's exclusive competence. Amendments adopted by IMCO on those issues will automatically be added to the final report of the lead committee, ENVI. ENVI will vote on the other parts of the proposal on 19 March. Interinstitutional negotiations are expected to begin under the Croatian presidency.

DRAFTSPERSON: [Anna Cavazzini \(Greens/EFA\)](#) [Procedure file](#)

Third annual review of the functioning of the EU-U.S. Privacy Shield



The European Commission will present the findings and current developments on the implementation and enforcement of the [EU-U.S. Privacy Shield framework](#) (the "Privacy Shield") in its third year of operation.

The findings are based on information gathered from relevant stakeholders and U.S. authorities both in the preparation of and during the Annual Joint Review meetings held in Washington D.C. on 12 and 13 September 2019. As in previous years, the findings have been further informed by publicly available material, such as court decisions, implementing rules and procedures of relevant U.S. authorities, reports and studies from non-governmental organisations, transparency reports issued by Privacy Shield-certified companies, annual reports from independent recourse mechanisms, as well as media reports.

Exchange of views with Commission on the digital transformation of European public administrations

On 18 February, IMCO will hold an exchange of views with Ms Gertrud Ingestad, Director General of the Commission's Department for Informatics, "DG DIGIT", on the digital transformation of public administrations. One of DG DIGIT's responsibilities is to help public administrations in Member States work better together, and in the current Commission mandate it is focussing especially on modernising public administrations and promoting national and local strategies on e-government. The exchange of views will be an opportunity to take note of the Commission's current and planned work in this area.

## UPDATE ON IMCO TRILOGUES

Motor Insurance Directive

On 18 February the IMCO rapporteur Ms Charanzová will report back on the first trilogue on the proposal amending the Motor Insurance Directive (2009/103/EC) that took place on 29 January. The proposal seeks to amend the current Directive in five areas, namely the insolvency of the insurer, claims-history statements, risks due to uninsured driving, minimum amounts of cover and the scope of the Directive. At the first trilogue, the EP negotiating team and the Croatian Presidency held an exchange of views on the key political points of the proposal. The next trilogue is scheduled to take place on 4 March 2020.

DRAFTSPERSON: [Dita Charanzová \(Renew\)](#) [Procedure file](#)

Representative Actions for the protection of the collective interests of consumers

On 18 February IMCO rapporteur Kateřina Konečná will report back on the first trilogue on this file, which took place on 22 January 2020. That first trilogue resulted in commitments to seek to conclude negotiations during the Croatian Presidency. The most significant change proposed by the Council concerns the distinction between domestic and cross-border actions. The funding of the qualifying representative entities and actions and the transposition deadlines will also be important political issues to resolve. The EP negotiating team is led by JURI and three more trilogues are being scheduled between March and May 2020.

DRAFTSPERSON: [Kateřina Konečná \(GUE/NGL\)](#)

## EVENTS

Hearing on Digital advertising and consumer information

On 17 February, the IMCO Committee will hold a [public hearing on "Digital advertising and consumer information"](#), involving experts and representatives from academia, consumer protection organisations, enforcement authorities and business. The hearing will address the challenges posed by a changing advertising environment that includes online platforms and social media, and in which users are often subject to targeted advertising that can influence their choices. The hearing will be divided into two panels. The first will look at how consumers are informed and if they have a choice when it comes to online profiling; the second will address whether consumers and especially vulnerable groups are protected from disguised digital advertising.

Workshop on Digital Service Act



On 18 February Parliament's policy department is organising a [workshop entitled "E-commerce rules, fit for the digital age"](#) for the IMCO Committee. The workshop will support IMCO's work on the upcoming Digital Services

Act. Discussions will cover the state of play and possible ways to improve the E-commerce Directive, and challenges and opportunities brought by new technologies. There will be a roundtable with stakeholders, the Commission and Members. The Workshop will be chaired by the Chair of IMCO Committee, Petra de Sutter, and the IMCO Rapporteur on the DSA, Agius Saliba.

# LAST COMMITTEE MEETING

(22 - 23 JANUARY 2020)

Presentation of the Council Presidency's programme with Darko Horvat, Croatian Minister of Economy, Entrepreneurship and Crafts



Minister Darko Horvat addressed the IMCO Committee Members on 22 January, as customary for the incoming Council Presidency. He presented the four priorities of the Croatian Presidency,

namely "a Europe that develops; a Europe that connects; a Europe that protects, and an influential Europe". The Minister stressed the Presidency's commitment to engage constructively with Parliament. He also informed Members that the Presidency would convene an informal ministerial conference on consumer protection in March 2020. The debate with IMCO Members covered, amongst other, the topics of dual quality of food, collective redress, Brexit, and SMEs, and work on an AI strategy for the EU.

## Legislative scrutiny: NIS Directive

On 22 January, Jakub Boratynski, Head of Unit from DG CNECT, updated IMCO Members on the status of implementation of [Directive EU \(2016/1148\)](#) concerning cybersecurity (the NIS Directive). The main focus of his presentation was the [report published by the Commission](#) on 28 October 2019, which assessed the consistency of Member State approaches to implementing the Directive. In the debate with Members, questions were raised about why Member State approaches should vary to such an extent, and whether definitions needed to be tightened when the Directive is reviewed next year.

## Legislative scrutiny: Construction Products Regulation

On 22 January, IMCO held a legislative scrutiny session on the status of implementation of the Construction Products Regulation ([Regulation \(EU\) No 305/2011](#)). Mr Gwenole Cozigou (DG GROW) presented how the Regulation works, as compared to other market harmonisation instruments, and outlined the Commission's work in the evaluation process. During the debate that followed, the Members raised the issue of improving the standardisation process and the role of EOTA, as well as the need for further harmonisation, particularly in light of the controversy over national legislation that sets requirements relating to safety that are additional to harmonised standards.

Oral question on automated decision-making processes

On 23 January, IMCO Members adopted a ["question for an oral answer"](#) with a [motion for a resolution](#), under Rule 136 of the Rules of Procedure, on the topic of AI and automated decision-making processes. The question was then debated in plenary on 10 February, with Commissioner Breton providing oral answers. The motion for resolution was adopted on 12 February. The focus of the oral question and resolution is on promoting consumer choice, trust and welfare and reviewing rules on product safety and liability, among other things.

## JRC study on the dual quality of food products in the single market

On 23 January, the JRC presented an advance summary of their economic assessment study of the dual quality of food products in the single market, which builds on its [report of June 2019](#). The JRC presented the conclusions of experiments it had conducted with consumers, both on-line and in laboratory conditions. The experiments showed little evidence of consumer preference between products when no information as to the country of destination (the "made for") was provided. On the other hand, when consumers were told which country a product was intended for, they were more likely to express a preference.

## Hearing on Product Liability Directive



On 22 January, IMCO held a [public hearing](#) entitled "Product Liability Directive: protecting consumers in the Digital Single Market". A panel of experts presented their views on whether the Product Liability Directive and the overall liability regime is adequate to facilitate the uptake of the new technologies. Commission representatives presented the evaluation of Directive and the results of the Expert group on liability and new technologies. In the debate that followed, Members highlighted the need to improve liability regime in light of the new technological developments to ensure adequate compensation and protection of consumers.

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