

# Newsletter

Issue 113 - October 2020

## SELECTED NEWS

### Election of Chair and first Vice Chair

On 1 October the IMCO Chair, Ms Petra de Sutter, became deputy prime minister of the new Belgian government and resigned as Member of the European Parliament. The IMCO Committee is expected to elect the successor of Ms de Sutter at its forthcoming meeting of 26 October. The election takes place by the IMCO Members who will vote by a secret ballot if there are more than one candidates. A separate vote is foreseen at the same meeting for the post of the first vice-chair which is vacant. The Members present in the room may vote using the electronic voting system in the meeting room and those who participate remotely may use the iVote system.

### Exchange of views with Margrethe Vestager, Executive Vice President of the European Commission for a Europe Fit for the Digital Age - as part of the structured dialogue



The IMCO Committee will hold a Structured Dialogue with Margrethe Vestager, Executive Vice President of the European Commission for a Europe Fit for the Digital Age on 27 October 2020, at 9:00 - 10:30. The debate is expected to look into the [Digital Services Act package](#) and its different proposals, expected later this year as well as the recently adopted IMCO own initiative legislative report (INL) on the DSA.

### Exchange of views with Maroš Šefčovič, Vice-President for Interinstitutional Relations and Foresight, on Strategic Foresight Communication



On 26 October, IMCO will exchange views with Commissioner Maroš Šefčovič on the [2020 Strategic Foresight Report](#). This first annual report presents the Commission's strategy to integrate strategic foresight into EU policy-making. It identifies first lessons from the COVID-19 crisis, introduces resilience as a new compass for EU policy-making and discusses the role of strategic foresight in

strengthening the resilience of the EU and its Member States. The report analyses resilience along four interrelated dimensions – social and economic, geopolitical, green and digital.

### Presentation of the new Consumer Agenda by Didier Reynders, Commissioner for Justice and Consumers



On 19 November, the Commissioner for Justice and Consumers, Didier Reynders will present to the IMCO Committee the new Consumer Agenda, the Commission's new consumer policy strategy. It will look at the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on consumers and will address the longer-term consumer policy challenges. The new Agenda would offer a new coherent vision on the role of consumers in five key priority areas, namely the green and digital transitions, the response to consumer vulnerabilities, the effective enforcement of consumer rights and the international cooperation with major partner countries. Furthermore, it would seek to end the gaps in effective enforcement of consumer rights, address the disparities between national consumer policies, redesign the structures for stakeholder engagement on the future consumer policy and improve the existing instruments for data collection and analysis. The exchange will also be an opportunity for IMCO Members to debate with the Commissioner on the impact of the corona crisis on citizens and consumers and the future of EU consumer policy.

# NEXT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

(26/27 OCTOBER, 9/10 NOVEMBER, 19 NOVEMBER 2020)

[Watch the committee meeting live](#)

## Addressing product safety in the Single Market



On 26 October, IMCO will vote on the draft Report on “Addressing product safety in the single market” (Rapporteur Ms Marion Walsmann - EPP). The draft Report underlines that transparency and robust enforcement of EU rules on product safety are essential for the proper protection of consumers and fair competition among businesses. Compliance of products to the safety rules must be ensured, regardless of whether they are placed on the market via offline or online means and whether they are manufactured in the Union or not. The draft Report provides a set of overarching guidelines to the Commission, particularly in view of the revision of the General Product Safety Directive (Directive 2001/95/EC), on which a proposal is due in 2021.

DRAFTSPERSON: [Marion Walsmann \(EPP\)](#)

## Towards a more sustainable single market for business and consumers



On 26 October, IMCO will vote on Mr David Cormand’s (Greens/EFA) draft report on “Towards a more sustainable single market”. The draft report focuses on different policy areas, especially in the area of consumer protection, which are key to enhancing the sustainability of the single market. The Rapporteur proposed 20 compromise amendments, based on the 355 amendments tabled to the draft report. The compromise amendments refer to various issues, such as strengthened consumer rights and information on durability of products and services, increased repair and reuse of products, tackling of premature obsolescence, responsible marketing and advertising, sustainable public procurement. The vote in plenary is expected to take place in November 2020.

DRAFTSPERSON: [David Cormand \(GREEN/EFA\)](#)

## Strengthening the Single Market: the future of free movement of services



On 8 June, Mr Morten Løkkegaard (Renew) presented in IMCO his report on the future of free movement of services in which he highlighted the role of the services sector for the EU economy, especially during the current crisis. 288 amendments, presented in IMCO on 28 September, were submitted to the report. Some Members called for further liberalisation of services, while others underlined the importance of workers’ rights and circular green economy. The rapporteur drafted 24 compromise amendments aiming at finding a common ground for these issues. Due to current restrictions in holding Shadows’ meetings, the report will be put to vote in IMCO on 2/3 December instead of 26/27 October.

DRAFTSPERSON: [Morten Løkkegaard \(Renew\)](#)

## New Circular Economy Action Plan



On 26 October, IMCO will consider the amendments and compromise amendments of Ms Anna Cavazzini’s (Greens/EFA) draft opinion on the ENVI own-initiative report on “New Circular Economy Action Plan”. The draft opinion highlights various IMCO policy areas, which are crucial to the circular economy. Members tabled 117 amendments to the draft opinion. The Rapporteur has proposed a series of draft compromises on all the aspects covered in the draft opinion, such as fostering reparability of products, consumer information and transparency, green public procurement and standardisation. The vote in IMCO on this file is scheduled for 9 November 2020.

DRAFTSPERSON: [Anna Cavazzini \(GREEN/EFA\)](#)

## Implementation of Directive 2009/81/EC, concerning procurement in the fields of defence and security, and of Directive 2009/43/EC, concerning the transfer of defence-related products



On 26 October, Mr Kris Peeters (EPP) will present his draft implementation report, which takes stock of the status of the implementation and application of the 'Defence Procurement Directive' and the 'Transfers Directive' in Member States. The report focuses on three main areas: the need for better implementation and

enforcement of the Defence Package, the need for combating market fragmentation and increasing SME participation and, finally, the prospects for the establishment of a European Defence Equipment Market (EDEM). The Rapporteur welcomes the work of the Commission on the implementation of the Directives and stresses the importance of future cooperation between the Commission and Member States. In Rapporteur's opinion, no revision of these Directives is necessary but certain elements can be further improved, for example, greater consistency with general Public Procurement Directive.

**DRAFTSPERSON:** [Kris Peeters \(EPP\)](#)

## Amending Regulation (EU) 2017/1129 as regards the EU Recovery prospectus and targeted adjustments for financial intermediaries to help the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic

On 9 November, IMCO will vote on the draft opinion by MEP Virginie Joron (ID) to ECON on the EU Recovery prospectus proposal. The aim of the proposal is to allow companies already established on the capital markets to access new financing faster by simplifying the information required, in order to contribute to the post-COVID-19 pandemic economic recovery. This concerns the creation of a new type of simplified prospectus, called by the rapporteur the 'temporary EU Recovery prospectus', in order to reduce the pressure on financial intermediaries and issuers. The rapporteur proposes supporting the measures aimed at simplifying access to finance and liquidity for European companies, while ensuring an adequate and necessary level of consumer information and protection.

**DRAFTSPERSON:** [Virginie Joron \(ID\)](#)

## Webinar on impact of Covid-19 on Internal Market and consumer protection

On 9 November, IMCO will hold a webinar on the impact of Covid-19. The invited experts should assess the effect of the crisis on the internal market and consumer protection, including the impact of measures introduced at national and EU level to mitigate the consequences of the crisis, and to suggest what more could be done to ensure a well-functioning internal market. The webinar will be followed by a study, which should be published in February 2021.

## Loot boxes - PolDep study presentation

In September 2019, IMCO requested a study on online games, in particular on features such as "Loot boxes" that may affect consumers. The study "Loot boxes in online games and their effect on consumers, in particular young consumers" was published in July 2020 and will be presented in IMCO on 27 October. The research focuses on consumer protection in the video games sector, and suggests possible policy actions.

## Impacts of EU rules on the free movements of workers and services: intra-EU labour mobility as a tool to match labour market needs and skills



Mr Morten Løkkegaard (Renew) will present his draft opinion to EMPL report on free movement of workers and services at the IMCO meeting of 26/27 October. The opinion will add elements on key legislation within IMCO competences:

Services Directive, the Professional Qualifications Directive and the Proportionality Test Directive. Mr Løkkegaard highlights that insufficient national implementation of existing legislation continues to seriously hamper free mobility of workers within the EU to the detriment of the workers themselves and of the European economy as a whole. The deadline to submit amendments is on 29 October (noon). The vote is scheduled for January 2021, while the vote in EMPL will take place in February 2021.

**DRAFTSPERSON:** [Morten Løkkegaard \(Renew\)](#)

## Implementation of Regulation (EU) No 305/2011 laying down harmonised conditions for the marketing of construction products (the Construction Products Regulation)

On 9/10 November, the IMCO Committee will consider the amendments to the draft report of Mr Christian Doleschal (EPP) on the implementation of Construction Products Regulation. A total of 110 amendments were tabled, focusing on the need to find short-term and long-term effective solutions to overcome the current deadlock in the standardisation process for construction products and to ensure the safety of construction products circulating on the EU market. The amendments also highlight the need to ensure an SMEs-friendly system, sustainability and circularity, as well as the importance of strengthening market surveillance and the use of digital tools.

**DRAFTSPERSON:** [Christian Doleschal \(EPP\)](#)

## EPRS study on the implementation of the EU defence package



On 26 October, the EPRS study on the implementation of the EU Defence Package will be presented. The study examines the evaluations carried out on the implementation of the 'Defence Procurement Directive' and the 'Transfers Directive' from

2016-2020. It assesses the effectiveness, relevance and added value of the Directives, lays out the main elements that are likely to affect the future of EU defence industrial cooperation and provides options for moving forward.

# LAST COMMITTEE MEETING

(28 SEPTEMBER 2020)

## Exchange of views with Thierry Breton, Commissioner for Internal Market, on addressing the challenges of the COVID-19 crisis



On 28 September IMCO held an exchange of views with Commissioner Breton on Member States' responses to the COVID crisis. The Commissioner stressed that the Single Market has faced an unprecedented challenge and warned

against the detrimental effects of uncoordinated decisions and unilateral restrictive measures on the free movement of people, services and goods. A Strategic Report exploring further measures is to be adopted by the Commission in January 2021. Moreover new initiatives are foreseen to enhance the Digital Single Market. During the debate, IMCO Members expressed concerns about the fragmentation of the internal market resulting from uncoordinated measures and called for a closer cooperation between Member States and a better consumer protection. Members also insisted on the use of infringement procedures in case of disproportionate measures taken at national level.

## Exchange of views with representative from German Presidency, State Secretary Ms Claudia Dörr-Voß, on Member states' response to the COVID-19 crisis

On 28 September, IMCO exchanged views with the State Secretary Dörr-Voß representing the German Presidency on the different response measures, adopted by Member States in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, especially concerning the internal market but also with regard to coordination and cooperation between Member States. In particular, the State Secretary referred to the actions taken so far regarding the free movement of goods, services and people, the recognition and removal of internal market obstacles, the exchange of information and the use of protective equipment.

Ms Dörr-Voß pointed out that the strengthening of the internal market is crucial for enhancing the competitiveness, innovation and resilience of the European economy.

During the exchange of views, Members raised questions related to the Customs Union and border controls, the need for harmonised rules on quarantine (particularly in border areas), the importance of a common approach regarding health data and regarding colouring of different areas, the recognition of tests carried out in different Member States and the impact of the pandemic on tourism.

## Digital Services Act: Improving the functioning of the Single Market



On 28 September 2020, IMCO adopted its own initiative legislative report entitled "[Digital Services Act: Improving the functioning of the Single Market](#)", calling on the Commission to put forward a proposal for a Digital Services Act following a set of recommendations on transparency and consumer protection, artificial intelligence, the need to tackle the spread of illegal content online, ex ante regulation of systemic platforms and on ensuring a better enforcement.

The report was adopted by a large majority: 39 votes in favour, 1 against and 5 abstention. All 24 compromise amendments were adopted. The vote in plenary is expected to take place in October 2020.

## Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulation (EU) No 168/2013 as regards specific measures on L-category end-of-series vehicles in response to the COVID-19 outbreak



On 29 September, IMCO received a presentation of the content of the proposal for a Regulation amending Regulation (EU) No 168/2013 as regards specific measures on L-category end-of-series vehicles in response to the COVID-19 outbreak by the European Commission. The measures proposed intend to support the motorcycle manufacturing industry by enlarging the possibilities to put the existing stock of unsold vehicles into the market.

The Members of IMCO adopted the decision to use the simplified procedure for this report by majority, expressed through a single vote. The majority of groups decided to not seek amendments to the proposal of the Commission. The proposal is scheduled for Plenary for October II.

# UPDATE FROM TRILOGUE

## Rail passengers rights

The final, fourth trilogue took place on 1 October 2020, and concluded with a provisional agreement. The provisional agreement will result in improved rights for passengers travelling by train on some issues. When adopted, the legislation will guarantee rerouting and help passengers when there are delays and cancellations. It will also improve access and assistance to people with reduced mobility, and help to create more dedicated spaces for bicycles. The provisional agreement was supported by a majority of EP's negotiating team. However, IMCO Rapporteur for opinion Ms Kateřina Konečná was disappointed by the outcome which is much less ambitious than the IMCO opinion.



# EVENTS



Due to the ongoing safety measures in place in response to the COVID-19 crisis, no IMCO missions, public hearings, or other events have taken place in Committee since March 2020.

These safety measures have been prolonged till 30 November 2020 impacting the presence in the offices and meeting conditions of the Committee.

# OTHERS NEWS

Next IMCO Committee meetings:

Monday 9 November 2020, 13.45 – 15.46 and 16.45 – 18.45

Tuesday 10 November 2020, 13.45 – 15.45

Thursday 19 November 2020, 16.45 – 18.45

### ABOUT THE EDITOR:

European Parliament  
Directorate General for Internal Policies of the Union  
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Head of Unit / Editor: Panos Konstantopoulos  
Responsible administrator: Michal Czaplicki, Soutana Dimou  
Layout: Gina Duma

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