

# Newsletter

Issue 116 - February 2021

## SELECTED NEWS

### Shaping the digital future of Europe: removing barriers to the functioning of the digital single market and improving the use of AI for European consumers



On 22 February, the Committee will consider 201 amendments tabled to Ms Deirdre Clune's (EPP) draft report on Shaping the digital future of Europe. Among the most relevant issues raised by MEPs, is the need to remove existing barriers to the

functioning of the internal market, particularly for SMEs, ensuring protection of consumers and businesses in the digital environment, setting up the base for the EU to become a world leader in digital innovation, or making new technologies, data and AI key enablers of the transition to a circular economy, to name a few. Nine Committees will provide opinions to the IMCO report (INTA, EMPL, ITRE, TRAN, AGRI, CULT, JURI, LIBE and FEMM). The vote on the draft report will take place in April.

DRAFTSPERSON: [Deirdre Clune \(EPP\)](#)

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



At its 22/23 February meeting, IMCO will hold an exchange of views on the two legislative proposals put forward by the Commission on 15 December 2020: the proposal for a Digital Markets Act and the proposal for a Digital Services Act. The exchange of views will focus on the two proposals which are a response to IMCO's own initiative report on the DSA package. The DMA aims at ensuring a competitive Single Market for digital services, fair and contestable platform markets. The DSA aims to contribute to the proper functioning of the internal market for intermediary

services by setting out uniform rules for a safe, predictable and trusted online environment, where fundamental rights are effectively protected.

### A Farm to Fork Strategy for a fair, healthy and environmentally friendly food system



On 23 February, IMCO will consider amendments and compromise amendments to its draft opinion to the AGRI and ENVI Committees joint own-initiative report on a "Farm to Fork Strategy for a fair, healthy and environmentally-friendly food system". The draft opinion focuses on changes needed throughout the food supply chain to establish a more sustainable, healthy and resilient food system for the benefit of EU consumers. 197 amendments have been tabled to the draft opinion. The Rapporteur, Mr Claude Gruffat (Greens/EFA), proposed a series of draft compromises on most of the aspects covered in the draft opinion, such as the promotion of healthy and sustainable diets, consumer information and product labelling, cooperation in the food sector and more effective measures against fraud and misleading claims. IMCO will vote on the draft opinion on 17 March, ahead of the vote by the lead Committees in April 2021.

DRAFTSPERSON: [Claude Gruffat \(Greens/EFA\)](#)

# NEXT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

(22 FEBRUARY 2021, 23 FEBRUARY 2021)

[Watch the committee meeting live](#)

## 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 22 February, IMCO will vote on the Implementation Report of the 'Defence Procurement Directive' and the 'Transfers Directive' in the Member States. The twelve compromise amendments which have been proposed ahead of the vote aim at finding a common line between different political groups on issues such as the need to ensure better enforcement and stronger application of the directives, the need to improve the level of participation of SMEs in the defence market, the importance of transparency and access to data and the correct usage of exemptions. The former Rapporteur Mr Kris Peeters (EPP) and the new Rapporteur Ms Edina Tóth (EPP), as well as the majority of Shadow Rapporteurs have stressed that no revision of these directives is necessary since the existing regulatory framework should be sufficient if correctly implemented and properly used.

**DRAFTSPERSON:** [Edina Tóth \(EPP\)](#)

## Implementation of the General Vehicle Safety Regulation



On 22 February, IMCO will hold a scrutiny session with the Commission with the aim to review the Implementation of the General Vehicle Safety Regulation (GVSR) [Regulation \(EU\) 2019/2144](#). The GVSR introduces new provisions

as concerns safety features of vehicles. The regulation provides for a number of delegations of powers to the Commission, as well as the conferral of certain implementing powers, that are aimed at facilitating the progressive introduction of these features into the production of vehicles. In parallel to this, the EU type-approval system provides for the possibility that certain UN Regulations in the area of harmonization of motor vehicles can be incorporated directly within the Union type-approval legislation. At present, the UNECE is considering, by proposal of the Commission, to adopt a series of amendments of UN regulations of on Tyre Pressure Monitoring System and Tyre Installation that the Commission considers would align the UN Regulations with the scope of the General Vehicle Safety Regulation (EU) 2019/2144. The session is expected to help the Members of IMCO take stock of the current status of both alternative paths of development of the implementation measures as concerns this Regulation.

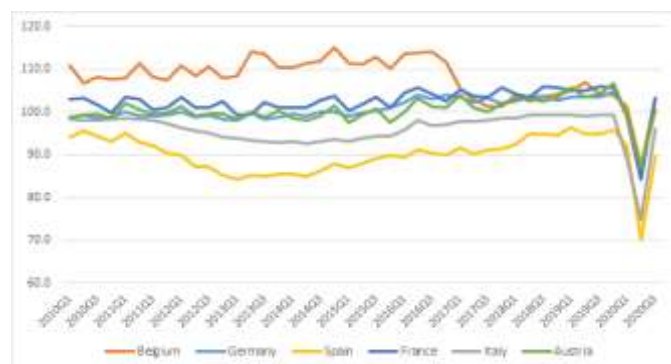
## Competition policy – annual report 2020



On 22 February 2021, IMCO will vote on the opinion by Mr Andrus Ansip (Renew) on the "Report on Competition Policy 2019". Ahead of the vote, the Rapporteur has proposed ten compromise amendments on among others, the digital single market, ex ante regulation, consumer protection, the importance of access to data, the Vertical Block Exemption Regulation, enforcement and supervision and the global dimension of competition policy. After the discussion of the compromise amendments in the Committee on 28 January 2021, the Rapporteur proposed revised versions of the compromise amendments, taking into account the requests from the political groups. The vote in ECON is expected to take place in April 2021.

**DRAFTSPERSON:** [Andrus Ansip \(Renew\)](#)

## Presentation of Policy Department study on Analysis of the COVID 19 impact



The economic and social impacts of the COVID-19 crisis have been enormous. In order to analyse its scope and evaluate the EU's response to it in the sphere of the single market and consumer protection, IMCO organised in November 2019 a workshop followed by a study, which will be presented on 22 February. Among the key findings are that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused the largest shock to the world economy since World War II, but that in general the EU's response to the crisis was good and sensible, with the noteworthy exception of vaccines orders which were placed much too late. Additionally, the Member States closure of borders has been efficient in most cases, but not in all. The study presents a thorough analysis and offers many ways forward for the EU.

# LAST COMMITTEE MEETING

( 11 JANUARY, 14 JANUARY, 28 JANUARY 2021)

## Exchange of views with Paolo Gentiloni, Commissioner for Economy



Commissioner Gentiloni appeared before IMCO on 11 January for the first series of the Structured Dialogue in the area of customs. The Commissioner presented the recently approved Action Plan of the Commission with particular stress on the proposal for a regulation on a Single Window for customs, for which IMCO is the lead committee.

The Commissioner detailed the implications of the recent agreement on trade and economic cooperation with the UK in the area of Customs, Reference was made to the interim evaluation of the Union

Customs Code, which will provide with an assessment on whether the Code provides an efficient legal and IT framework for customs activities in the Union, In the exchange that ensued, Members raised concerns on the timely implementation of the IT system and stressed its importance for the maintenance of a level playing field.

## Exchange of views with representatives of the European Commission's Task Force for Relations with the United Kingdom, on the Agreement on a New Partnership with the UK



On 14 January 2021, IMCO Members exchanged views with the United Kingdom Task Force of the European Commission (UKTF) on the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation

Agreement that was concluded on 24 December 2020. The presentation made by the Commission detailed the content of the agreement in four areas of particular interest to IMCO: customs, trade in goods, services, and implications on the Withdrawal Agreement and its Protocol on Ireland and Northern Ireland. Members stressed that from IMCO perspective it is important to maintain the integrity of the internal market and the functioning of customs, while particular attention must be given to the preservation of the current consumer rights. Members noted that the Partnership Council will have a far-reaching right, to modify the agreement and its annexes and raised questions about how to increase the parliamentary oversight in this process.

## Presentation of the Council Presidency's programme



On 28 January, Minister Pedro Siza Vieira presented the Portuguese Council Presidency programme for the coming 6 months, stressing that the Presidency will promote the necessary measures to restore and improve the functioning of the single market, as well as prompt a reflection on the functioning of the single market in times of crisis. Particular attention will be paid to the promotion of digital services in the single market. The Presidency will aim at a speedy adoption of the MFF Single Market Programme 2021 - 2027 and will focus the legislative work on files in the digital area, including the Digital Markets Act and the Digital Services Act. Also high on the Presidency's agenda are consumer protection - a follow-up to the New Consumer Agenda - and customs - the EU Single Window Environment for Customs.

## 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 31 March 2021 impacting the presence in the offices and meeting conditions of the Committee.

# OTHERS NEWS

## Next IMCO Committee meetings:

Wednesday, 17 March, 13.45-15.45

Wednesday, 17 March, 16.45-18.45

Thursday, 18 March, 09.30-12.30

### ABOUT THE EDITOR:

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