

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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WRITTEN DECLARATION

pursuant to Rule 116 of the Rules of Procedure

by Caroline Lucas, Gyula Hegyi, Janusz Wojciechowski, Harlem Désir, Hélène Flautre

on investigating and remedying the abuse of power by large supermarkets operating in the European Union

Lapse date: 24.1.2008

0088/2007

Written declaration on investigating and remedying the abuse of power by large supermarkets operating in the European Union

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Rule 116 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas, throughout the EU, retailing is increasingly dominated by a small number of supermarket chains,
- B. whereas these retailers are fast-becoming ‘gatekeepers’, controlling farmers’ and other suppliers’ only real access to EU consumers,
- C. whereas evidence from across the EU suggests big supermarkets are abusing their buying power to force down prices paid to suppliers (based both within the EU and overseas) to unsustainable levels and impose unfair conditions upon them,
- D. whereas such squeezes on suppliers have negative knock-on effects on both quality of employment and environmental protection,
- E. whereas consumers potentially face a loss in diversity of products, the cultural heritage and retail outlets,
- F. whereas some EU countries have introduced national legislation attempting to limit such abuse, yet large supermarkets increasingly operate across national boundaries, making harmonised EU legislation desirable,
- 1. Calls upon DG Competition to investigate the impacts that concentration of the EU supermarket sector is having on small businesses, suppliers, workers and consumers and, in particular, to assess any abuses of buying power which may follow from such concentration;
- 2. Requests the Commission to propose appropriate measures, including regulation, to protect consumers, workers and producers from any abuse of dominant position or negative impacts identified in the course of this investigation;
- 3. Instructs its President to forward this declaration, together with the names of the signatories, to the Commission, the Council and the parliaments of the Member States.