EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Audiovisual Services

European Consumers Summit 2013 with the participation of Tonio Borg

Type: Complete speech Reference: I-076942 Duration: 11:05:07 Lieu:
End production: 18/03/2013 First transmission: 18/03/2013

On 18 March 2013, Tonio Borg, Member of the EC in charge of Health and Consumer Policy, participated in the European Consumer Summit 2013, in Brussels. Tonio Borg made the opening speech of the ministerial session "Building a strong political case for a consumer friendly internal market".

Only the original language version is authentic and it prevails in the event of its differing from the translated versions.

TIME	DESCRIPTION	DURATION
10:00:00	Soundbite by Jacki Davis, Moderator (in ENGLISH) making an introductory speech	00:02:54
10:02:54	Soundbite by Tonio Borg, Member of the EC in charge of Health and Consumer Policy (in ENGLISH) saying that consumer trust in the way that markets operate is rather like a currency whose value only becomes truly apparent when under pressure; All of them here – given their interests and responsibilities for consumer affairs – need no convincing of the value of consumer confidence; This is why it is all the more important in the current economic context to pool their resources together so as to ensure a credible, robust enforcement capacity in the European Union; The rapid growth of on-line shopping, including its cross border dimension, and the growing muscle of large global or EU-level market players continuously shape and shift the consumer environment within the European Union and the European Economic Area; The fact that more retailers are taking full advantage of the opportunities offered by the Single Market is, of course, good for growth, competiveness and innovation; But it also creates a duty for them to ensure that consumer rules are enforced seamlessly across borders so that consumers as well as businesses can profit fully from the benefits that the single market has to offer; Saying that he is therefore delighted today that they are joining forces with so many European consumer Ministers and State Secretaries, as well as consumer and business stakeholders, to launch a strategic reflection on how best to enhance the enforcement of consumer rights across the European Union and the European Economic Area; Enforcement is, of course, one of the four pillars of the	00:17:13

Enforcement is, of course, one of the four pillars of the European Consumer Agenda, that the Commission adopted last year, and the forthcoming Consumer Programme; Saying that they have built over the years an impressive and solid set of consumer rights of which they can and should be proud; So far so good… But they need to make sure that consumers know their rights and know how to use them; This is a process that must start as early in life as possible hence their efforts should also focus on consumer education; And they all know that rights only exist in a meaningful way, only if they are properly enforced; The Consumer Scoreboard, compiled by the Commission every year, has shown substantial differences in consumer conditions across the EU Member States and across economic sectors; Too many indicators in the markets that they have studied point to a low level of consumer confidence and a high incidence of problems; Saying that they have already done much to improve the governance of the Single market as regards consumer laws; For instance, the adoption of the Directives on Unfair Commercial Practices, Consumer Credit and, more recently, Consumer Rights have contributed towards a harmonised legislative framework; The new legislation on Alternative Dispute Resolution and Online Dispute Resolution (ADR and ODR); the proposals of the Product Safety package, which he recently presented with Vice President Tajani; and the legislative initiative on bank accounts, which he is preparing with Commissioner Barnier, represent further steps forward in the enhancement of EU consumer rights; Saying that the Commission services are increasingly working with Member States to develop interpretative guidance on EU consumer laws and to help ensure accurate transposition of the Directives; The Commission is also actively engaged in direct dialogue with stakeholders to better understand and address emerging enforcement issues; The findings and conclusions from the Multi-stakeholder Dialogues on Environmental Claims and Comparison Tools, which were presented earlier today, are two concrete examples of this important part of their work; Last but not least, since 2007, the Regulation on Consumer Protection Co-operation (the "so-called" CPC Regulation) provides national enforcers with a powerful framework to stop rogue operators targeting consumers in several countries; It also facilitates the co-ordination of national enforcement actions, for example the "sweeps" in on-line retail sectors to identify breaches of consumer rules and to subsequently secure the necessary corrections from the traders concerned; However, this work can only produce its real impact if properly enforced by all of them: it is their shared responsibility at EU, national but also stakeholder level which can ensure the

	national but also stakeholder level which can ensure the success. They therefore need to identify the barriers to effective and efficient enforcement and step up their work in this area; Saying that he believes that they must be very vigilant and assertive when addressing the challenges brought about by rapid market integration, the emergence of new technologies and innovative business models; Saying that these include internet and mobile shopping, advertising via social media or comparison sites, and also complex sales systems – for example, group-buying; Products, services and sales channels are becoming increasingly sophisticated, and consumers are required to make ever more complex choices; In parallel less-than honest companies can easily spread deceitful practices across the European Union and European Economic Area, especially on-line; National enforcers are too often constrained by procedural and jurisdictional boundaries; They struggle to keep pace with the constant evolution of the market; To be effective, enforcers must have at their disposal adequate and modern tools and resources; Saying that they also need to devise more cost-efficient enforcement solutions building on the pooling of resources and expertise at national and European level, as well as on synergies between central and sector-specific regulators and with other players, such as consumer and business associations; Saying that he is hoping that today they can generate some solid conclusions in this regard; For instance, it would now be relevant to consider whether the most effective and economic approach to a EU-wide enforcement would be to consider a new type of EU-level enforcement capacity or rather strengthening the EU coordination of the enforcement facilities that already exist in the Member States; Saying that he looks forward to hearing their views of the challenges ahead and on how best to enhance enforcement of consumer laws; Saying that let us be ambitious in the interest of Europe, of our European companies and of all European citizens.	
10:20:07	Soundbite by Rudolf Hundstorfer, Austrian Federal Minister for Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection (in GERMAN)	00:06:51
10:26:59	Soundbite by Benoît Hamon, French Minister Delegate for Social and Solidarity Economy and Consumption (in FRENCH)	00:04:34
10:31:33	Soundbite by Paulius Griciūnas, Lithuanian Vice-Minister for Justice (in ENGLISH)	00:04:18
10:35:52	Soundbite by António Almeida Henriques, Portuguese Secretary of State Assistant to the Minister for Economy and Regional Development (in PORTUGUESE)	00:04:22

10:40:14	Soundbite by Oscar Wåglund Söderström, Swedish Secretary of State for EU Affairs (in ENGLISH)	00:05:36
10:45:50	Soundbite by Bogdan Cristian Nica, President of the Romanian National Authority for Consumer Protection (ANPC) (in ENGLISH)	00:02:34
10:48:25	Soundbite by Andreas Ostling, Norwegian Secretary of State for Children, Equality and Social Inclusion (in ENGLISH)	00:04:54
10:53:20	Soundbite by María Pilar Farjas Abadía, Secretary General of Health and Consumers at the Spanish Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality (in SPANISH)	00:03:34
10:56:54	Soundbite by Áron Márk Lenner, Hungarian Deputy State Secretary for National Economy (in ENGLISH)	00:03:51
11:00:45	Soundbite by Zaiga Liepiņa, Latvian Deputy State Secretary for Economics (in ENGLISH)	00:04:21
11:05:07	Questions and answers session	00:54:52

Audiovisual Services
European Commission
ec.europa.eu/avservices

Conditions of use

© European Union, 2014