

Cabinet Newsletter

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Dear Reader,

During the last Strasbourg session of 2010, Vice President Tajani was able to speak on two important issues: toy safety and the repeal of outdated metrology directives.



Antonio Preto
Head of Cabinet

This morning, the Vice President welcomed the European Parliament's decision to repeal eight outdated metrology directives in six legal categories of metrological instruments. These directives are not only obsolete and no longer useful to Member States, but also unnecessarily add to the EU's regulation. Better regulation has been a key priority for Vice President Tajani, and also for the European communities, following the objective of the Treaty of Lisbon to simplify EU law. The directives concerned regulated mechanical measuring instruments, including cold water meters for non-clean water, alcohol meters and tables, and tyre pressure gauges for motor vehicles, among others. In fact, international standards already cover these instruments and their more technical improved replacements, making these former tools redundant and unsuccessful.

The Vice President noted, "Technological progress is a characteristic of most industrial goods and measuring instruments are no exception. I am satisfied to see that the European Parliament followed the Commission's proposal to repeal these outdated pieces of legislation, simplifying and reducing the administrative burden put on European companies. I would like to stress the advantages that such legislative simplification implies, and consequently, the benefits that it brings. It implies advantages to consumers, instrument manufacturers, and national administrations."

Product safety in the domain of toys was also discussed in Strasbourg, an issue about which Vice President Tajani is passionate. Referring to the May 2009 directive on toy safety, Vice President Tajani noted that the directive does indeed prioritise chemical product safety and stressed the importance of having a sufficiently high level of protection for children. This directive calls for greater market vigilance, requiring that Member States put forth only secured products to European consumers. Greater vigilance and inspection of products already present on the European market are therefore essential, as well as the reinforcement of border security.

Vice President Tajani also noted the Commission has already begun adapting the directive to scientific progress in the area of several chemical substances. He also added that the directive does define specific limitations on toys for children under the age of three, where there is toy-to-mouth contact. Referring to the recent report by the Scientific Committee on Health and Environmental Risks, the Vice President concluded that their recent statement largely substantiates and supports the Commission's approach.

Finally, we are happy to note that with the Holiday season nearing, European industry has registered strong growth this month. Compared to September, October 2010 saw a rise of 0.7% in industrial growth in the euro area.

Happy holidays to all and we will look forward to updating you in January!