



**Directorate General
Health and Consumers**

Multi-stakeholder Dialogue on Comparison Tools (MSDCT)

CMEG meeting – 24 January 2013

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Why a stakeholder dialogue on Comparison Tools?

Consumer market study on the functioning of e-commerce (2011):

- ***Comparison Tools increasingly important:*** over 80% of consumers use them as part of their decision-making process
- ***Significant shortcomings:***
 - best deals not always ranked first
 - information inaccurate/incomplete/difficult to compare
 - cross-border offers not included
- ***Risk of eroding consumer trust in the Digital Single Market:*** 1 in 8 consumers feel they have been misled



Setting up the MSDCT

e-Commerce Communication & Consumer Agenda (2012):

"The Commission will through dialogue with the stakeholders, develop codes of good conduct, good practice guides and guidelines giving consumers access to transparent and reliable information allowing them to compare more easily the prices, the quality and the sustainability of goods and services"

*Structure: a **series of meetings** of 25-30 representatives from*

- ***Consumer Organisations***
- ***National Authorities***
- ***EU-wide Business Associations***
+ *speakers (e.g. comparison tools operators)*

Mandate of the MSDCT

- Assess the **current quality** of comparison tools
(reliability, transparency, enhancing the consumer experience)
- Analyse **existing initiatives** at national and regional level
- Identify needs for **further research** and monitoring
- Present policy **recommendations**

Timeline

- *29 May 2012: Workshop at the 2012 European Consumer Summit*
- *9 October 2012: 1st MSDCT meeting*
- *27 November 2012: 2nd MSDCT meeting*
- *5 February 2013: 3rd MSDCT meeting*
- *18-19 March 2013: Presentation of MSDCT **report** to the 2013 European Consumer Summit*

MSDCT report: Outline

- *Background (incl. mandate of the MSDCT)*
- *Regulatory framework*
- *Challenges*
- *Examples - good practices (incl. certification schemes)*
- *Recommendations*

MSDCT Report: Key topics

- ***Transparency*** of the business model
- Criteria for ***ranking*** offers
- ***Updating*** and verifying information
- *Spontaneous vs biased user ***ratings and reviews****
- ***Tailor-made*** services
- ***Cross-border*** comparisons



Please send comments and questions to:

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