



Single Market Scoreboard

Performance by governance tool

Consumer Protection Cooperation Network

(Reporting period: 01/2012 - 12/2012)



About

The Consumer Protection Cooperation (CPC) Network brings together the public authorities in all the EU Member States (and other EEA countries) who are responsible for the enforcement of EU consumer protection laws.

The Network gives authorities the means to exchange relevant information and to work closely together to stop business from harming consumers who live in a different country. The Network further provides national authorities with a framework to coordinate their efforts in monitoring consumer markets as well as their enforcement actions.

The CPC Network functions since 2007.

Achievements

- The Commission coordinated the annual "sweep" exercise of the CPC Network. The 2012 sweep targeted websites offering digital products such as games, music, videos or books. 76 % of the sites scrutinised were flagged for further investigative and, possibly, enforcement work.
- In 2012 the Commission further co-funded a **common project** that strengthens the online enforcement capacities of the CPC Network through a new knowledge-sharing site and newly developed training modules and manual for online investigations. A second project focussed on the enforcement of the Consumer Credit Directive that recently entered into force and underpinned the sweep.
- The Commission finally started an **in-depth review of the CPC coordination mechanisms** to identify areas for further improvement of enforcement cooperation. The assessment is expected to conclude by the end of 2014.

What is a "sweep"?

A "sweep" is an exercise to enforce EU law. It is carried out by **national enforcement authorities** who conduct **simultaneous, coordinated checks** for breaches in consumer law in a particular sector.

In the enforcement phase of the sweep, participating authorities contact operators and ask them to take **corrective action**.

Facts and Figures



One central element of the **CPC Network** is the CPC-System, the common IT-tool used by the authorities for the exchange of information. It is an electronic database maintained by the European Commission and designed to provide a secure system for the exchange of information between competent authorities (CAs) in the Member States (MS) for the performance of their **mutual assistance** obligation under the **Consumer Protection Cooperation Regulation**.

This obligation implies three cooperation mechanisms:

- **Information requests** when a competent authority is requested to provide information to establish whether an intra-Community infringement has occurred or whether there is a reasonable suspicion it may occur;
- **Requests for enforcement measures** when a competent authority is requested to take all necessary enforcement measures to bring about the cessation or prohibition of the intra-Community infringement without delay;
- **Alerts**, an information exchange without request, that takes place when a competent authority gets warned or suspects that intra-Community infringement is occurring (or may occur) and informs the competent authorities in other Member State(s) and the European Commission.

Priorities

- Continue efforts to **improve the efficiency and effectiveness** of the CPC Network through meetings, workshops and improvements to the common IT-tool.
- High-level event and stakeholder consultation, in the context of the CPC Network review, to reflect on how enforcement of consumer rights can be stepped up in the EU and in particular, how the CPC Network can actively contribute to this goal.