

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection

2008/2224(INI)

23.1.2009

OPINION

of the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection

for the Committee on Culture and Education

on active dialogue with citizens on Europe
(2008/2224(INI))

Rapporteur: Magor Imre Csibi

PA_NonLeg

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection calls on the Committee on Culture and Education, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Considers the policy areas of consumer protection and the internal market to be of the utmost importance in communicating Europe to consumers and businesses; calls on Member States to increase efforts to communicate the benefits of the Single Market at national, regional and local level; calls on the Commission and Member States to promote and strengthen interactive communication and information for an effective dialogue between consumers, businesses and institutions by various electronic means of the latest technology and to contribute to the development of e-commerce;
2. Welcomes the Commission's Communication of 2 April 2008 entitled 'Debate Europe – building on the experience of Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate' (COM(2008)0158) as a useful initiative to restore public confidence in the common European project after the negative results of the recent referenda; calls for an effective framework for communication between civil society and the European Union that will enable citizens to play an active part in European affairs; considers it essential that Members of the European Parliament, Members of the Commission and the staff of the European institutions are able to travel across the European Union in order to engage in dialogue with citizens from all the Member States, better understand their situation and explain the ongoing legislative work;
3. Calls on the Commission to widen the range of stakeholders' views heard during consultations on EU legislation; emphasises in this context the importance of representatives of civil society, such as networks of professionals and consumers, at all levels from transnational to local, which provide platforms for an informed exchange of views on EU policies, thus contributing to an improved quality of EU legislation; recognises the problems in the implementation and enforcement of legislation and encourages consumers and businesses to exercise their rights and to report existing problems to the EU institutions;
4. Calls on Member States to increase the human and financial resources allocated to the SOLVIT network that makes it possible to resolve problems arising from the misapplication or non-application of Community legislation free of charge; asks the Commission to accelerate the streamlining of the different services providing information and advice regarding the Single Market; supports, therefore, the concept contained in the Commission's Communication of 20 November 2007 entitled 'A single market for 21st century Europe' (COM(2007)0724) of an integrated approach to the provision of Single Market Assistance Services through the creation of a single-entry webpage;
5. Asks the Commission to strengthen its coordination efforts in the fields of consumer education and information on consumers' rights and obligations by increasing its financial and human resources; calls on Member States to boost the financial and human resources allocated to the European Consumer Centres Network in order to raise awareness and ensure the application of EU consumer rights;

6. Urges Member States, in view of the global financial crisis and rising levels of consumer indebtedness, to make efforts to improve the level of financial literacy of consumers in particular concerning their rights and obligations as well as their means of redress with regard to savings and loans;
7. Calls on the three main institutions to consider the possibility of holding joint open debates that would supplement the European Parliament's open debates, addressing topics that concern consumers and their daily lives and thereby strengthening their confidence in the internal market and consumer protection;
8. Notes the Commission's initiatives on the reduction of administrative burdens and better regulation; calls in particular for improvements to support small and medium-sized enterprises, which represent an important source of jobs in Europe.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	22.1.2009
Result of final vote	+: 30 -: 0 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Cristian Silviu Buşoi, Charlotte Cederschiöld, Janelly Fourtou, Evelyne Gebhardt, Martí Grau i Segú, Malcolm Harbour, Iliana Malinova Iotova, Kurt Lechner, Toine Manders, Nickolay Mladenov, Catherine Neris, Zita Pleštinská, Karin Riis-Jørgensen, Zuzana Roithová, Heide Rühle, Leopold Józef Rutowicz, Christel Schaldemose, Andreas Schwab, Eva-Britt Svensson, Marianne Thyssen, Bernadette Vergnaud, Barbara Weiler
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Emmanouil Angelakas, Wolfgang Bulfon, Colm Burke, Giovanna Corda, Joel Hasse Ferreira, Olle Schmidt
Substitute(s) under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote	Jean-Pierre Audy, Michel Teychenné