

European Consumer Day

"Sustainable consumption in a time of crisis"

Thursday, 15 March 2012

DRAFT PROGRAMME

08.30 – 09.00 **Registration and Coffee**

09.00 – 10.15 **Opening session**

Introduction and moderation: **Mr Staffan NILSSON**, President of the EESC

Ms Connie HEDEGAARD, Video message from Commissioner for Climate, European Commission

Mr Ole SOHN, Danish Minister for Business and Growth

Mr Malcolm HARBOUR, MEP, President of IMCO Committee

Ms Jacqueline MCGLADE, Executive Director of the EEA

10.15 – 12.00 **Panel 1: Potentials and limitations of market driven sustainability**

A What instruments should we use to stimulate market driven strategies? How can we anticipate market and societal needs? How can we drive consumption change? What are the limits? Did the crisis have an impact on those strategies? Can retailers' agreements foster smarter consumption? Can sustainable production be a key to sustainable consumption?

B

C Chairperson: **Mr Ivan VOLEŠ**, Member of the EESC (group I)

D Key note speaker: **Mr Mads ØVLISEN**, Chair-UN Global Compact Advisory Group on Supply Chain Sustainability, Former President of Novo Presentations:

E • **Mr Will DAY**, PwC's Sustainability Adviser, Director of Water and Sanitation for the Urban Poor (WSUP)

F • **Ms Stine BOSSE**, Chairman of CONCITO, Denmark's green think tank

G • **Mr Luc HENDRICKX**, Director for Enterprise Policy and External Relations, UEAPME

Followed by a general debate

12.00 – 13.30 **Lunch break**

13.30 – 15.00 **Panel 2: How can sustainable consumption be the easy choice?**

Taking into account consumer behaviour, consumption styles & target groups, how can we engage communication to achieve consumption change for consumers? Do consumers have trust in sustainable products? How can we empower consumers and raise their awareness?

Chairperson: **Ms Reine-Claude MADER**, Member of the EESC (group III)

Key note speaker: **Ms Jacqueline MINOR**, Director, DG SANCO, European Commission

Presentations:

- **Mr Guido KAYAERT**, Chairman of the Consumer Marketing Working Group, BUSINESSEUROPE
- **Ms Fanny DEMASSIEUX**, Head of the Responsible Consumption Unit, Division of Technology, Industry and Economics, UNEP
- **Ms Monique GOYENS**, Director General, BEUC

Followed by a general debate

15.00 – 15.15 **Coffee break**

15.15 – 16.30 **Panel 3: New roads to sustainable consumption**

How to promote alternative consumption practices? Eco-label – a conscious choice for the future? What is the role of consumption and production technologies in approaching climate change mitigation and adaptation? Smart grids – our hope for better energy effectiveness?

Chairperson: **Mr Sandy BOYLE**, Member of the EESC (Group II)

Key note speaker: **Mr Martin LIDEGAARD**, DK Minister for Climate, Energy and Building

Presentations:

- **Mr Michael KUHNDE**, Head of UNEP/Wuppertal Institute Collaborating Centre on Sustainable Consumption and Production
- **Mr Kim CARSTENSEN**, owner of FairGreenSolutions, former CEO of WWF Denmark and former leader of Global Climate Initiative at WWF International
- **Mr Lars Fogh MORTENSEN**, Head of Group Sustainable Consumption and Production, EEA

Followed by a general debate

16.30 – 17.00 **Conference Summary & Closing**

Main points and conclusions by Mr Rasmus KJELDAHL, Executive director of The Danish Consumer Council

Final conclusions by Mr Bryan CASSIDY, President of the Section for the Single Market, Production and Consumption, EESC



European Economic and Social Committee

European Consumer Day



www.eesc.europa.eu

1999 – Brussels – European Consumers' Day

Mrs Emma Bonino *Commissioner in charge of Consumer Affairs*
Mr Ulf Boge *Representing the German Presidency of the EU*
Mr Phillip Whitehead *Member of the European Parliament*
[Presidency of the EESC](#) Mrs Beatrice Rangoni Machiavelli

2000 – Brussels – Consumer and Consumption

Mr Armando Vara *Minister attached to the Portuguese Prime Minister –
Acting President of the Consumers Council*
Mr David Byrne *Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection*
[Presidency of the EESC](#) Mrs Beatrice Rangoni Machiavelli

2001 – Brussels – Food Quality in Europe

Mrs Magda Aelvoet *Belgian Minister for Consumer Affairs,
Public Health and the Environment*
Mr Axel Edling *Director-General for Consumer Affairs at the
Swedish Ministry of Justice, Chairman of the Council's
Consumer Affairs Group*
Mrs Caroline F. Jackson *Chair of the Committee on the Environment,
Public Health and Consumer Policy, European Parliament*
[Presidency of the EESC](#) Mr Göke Frerichs

2002 – Madrid – Consumer Representation

Mr Luis Blázquez Torres *Economic and Tecnological Innovation Regional Minister of
the Community of Madrid*
Mr Julio Sánchez Fierro *Undersecretary of the Ministry of Health and Consumer
Affairs. President of the National Consumers' Institute*
[Presidency of the EESC](#) Mr Göke Frerichs



2003 – Thessaloniki – Consumers and the enlargement of the EU

Mr Andreas Kintis	<i>President of the Greek Economic and Social Council</i>
Mr Akis Tsohatzopoulos	<i>Greek Minister for Development</i>
Mr Ioannis Koukiadis	<i>Member of the European Parliament</i>
Presidency of the EESC	Mr Roger Briesch

2004 – Dublin – Building Consumer Confidence in the European Online Marketplace

Mr David Byrne	<i>Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection</i>
Mr Brian Lenihan	<i>Irish Minister of State with responsibility for Children</i>
Mrs Diana Wallis	<i>Member of the European Parliament</i>
Presidency of the EESC	Mr Roger Briesch

2005 – Brussels – Sustainable Consumption

Mr Markos Kyprianou	<i>Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection, European Commission</i>
Mr Phillip Whitehead	<i>Chairman of the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection, European Parliament</i>
Presidency of the EESC	Mrs Anne-Marie Sigmund

2006 – Vienna – Consumer Education

Mrs Ursula Haubner	<i>Austrian Federal Minister for Social Security, Generations and Consumer Protection</i>
Mr Markos Kyprianou	<i>Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection, European Commission</i>
Presidency of the EESC	Mrs Anne-Marie Sigmund

2007 – Berlin – Financial Services in the European Union

Mr Walter Momper	<i>President of the Berlin House of Representatives</i>
Mrs Brigitte Zypries	<i>German Minister of Justice</i>
Mrs Meglena Kuneva	<i>European Commissioner for Consumer Protection</i>
Presidency of the EESC	Mr Dimitris Dimitriadis



2008 – Brussels – Consumer Redress

Mr Andreij Vizjak	<i>Slovenian Minister of Economy</i>
Mrs Meglena Kuneva	<i>European Commissioner for Consumer Protection</i>
Presidency of the EESC	Mr Dimitris Dimitriadis

2009 – Brussels – Consumer rights

Ms Meglena Kuneva	<i>Commissioner for Consumer Protection</i>
Presidency of the EESC	Mr Mario Sepi

2010 – Madrid – Enforcement of consumer rights

Mr John Dalli	<i>Commissioner for Health and Consumer Policy</i>
Ms Viviane Reding	<i>Commissioner for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship</i>
Mr F. M. Zapatero	<i>Secretary General of Social Policy and Consumption, Spanish Ministry of Health and Social Policy</i>
Mr Malcolm Harbour	<i>Chairman of the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection, European Parliament</i>
Presidency of the EESC	Mr Mario Sepi

2011 – Budapest – Consumption without borders

Mr Kristóf Szatmáry	<i>State Secretary, Ministry for National Economy</i>
Mr John Dalli	<i>Commissioner for Health and Consumer Policy (video speech)</i>
Ms Viviane Reding	<i>Commissioner for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship (video speech)</i>
Presidency of the EESC	Mr Staffan Nilsson

2012 – Copenhagen – Sustainable consumption in a time of crisis

The 14th edition of the European Consumer Day will be held in Copenhagen on 15 March 2012 and will focus on sustainable consumption.

Sustainable consumption implies the use of goods and services that respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life without jeopardising the needs of future generations.

The current financial crisis plays a role in sustainable consumption patterns as new needs and new ways of buying have emerged, urging consumers to be better protected and informed as they are the driving force of innovation and growth by demanding value, quality and service.

Some history

European Consumer Day

At the initiative of its president, Ms Rangoni Machiavelli, the European Economic and Social Committee organised the first European Consumer Day on 15 March 1999. This initiative was extremely successful and received the immediate support of the European Commission and successive EU Presidencies.

As a result, since the first three events held in Brussels, during which issues such as food security and safe use of the Internet were debated, the European Consumer Day has often been held in the country holding the EU presidency: Madrid 2002, Thessaloniki 2003, Dublin 2004, Vienna 2006, Berlin 2007, Madrid 2010 and Budapest 2011.

The EESC is a bridge between Europe and organised civil society. In this context, the European Consumer Day provides a forum where representatives of government, EU institutions and civil society organisations can exchange their views on various problems related to consumer affairs. Every year the event gathers high-level participants to discuss topical issues, whether focusing on the ongoing Commission initiatives or signalling problems that require more attention.

International Consumer Rights Day

On 15 March 1962, President John Kennedy made a declaration before Congress, during which he called for consumer rights to be defended and set out four fundamental rights:



- the right to safety;
- the right to be informed;
- the right to choose;
- the right to be heard.

President Kennedy's words have lost none of their relevance in today's world:

"Consumers, by definition, include us all. They are the largest economic group in the economy, affecting and affected by almost every public and private economic decision. Two-thirds of all spending in the economy is by consumers. But they are the only important group in the economy which is not effectively organized, and whose views are often not heard..."

The European Union has been developing a consumer protection policy since 1973. The European Economic and Social Committee has supported it since the first action programme was adopted in 1975.



European Economic and Social Committee

Visits and Publications Unit

Tel. +32 25469604 • Fax +32 25469926

Rue Belliard/Belliardstraat 99 • 1040 Bruxelles/Brussel
BELGIQUE/BELGIË

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In 2009, the EESC was awarded the prestigious «Ecodynamic Enterprise» label by the Brussels Institute for Management of the Environment (IBGE), obtaining 3 stars, the highest level possible. This label rewards organisations for good environmental performance.



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