

Consumer rights

2008/0196(COD) - 25/05/2010

In public session, the Council held a **policy debate** on a draft directive aimed at improving the functioning of the internal market while ensuring a high level of consumer rights across the EU, by revising and complementing four existing directives¹ and introducing new rules on delivery and the passing on of risk.

The outcome of this second ministerial debate, after the first one held on 3 December 2009, provides guidance and a solid basis for continuing work, pending the opinion of the European Parliament.

Ministers examined key political aspects of the proposal, notably concerning maximum harmonization as a general principle governing the directive and the level of harmonisation as regards consumer information, the right of withdrawal and guarantees (covered by chapters II to IV of the proposal) for distance contracts (including off-premises contracts) and face-to-face contracts.

All delegations **subscribed to the objective of an updated, clear and more uniform set of rules concerning consumer rights** when purchasing goods and services in order to contribute to a properly functioning internal market as well as to ensure a high level of protection for consumers. The Commission proposal covers the right to information and withdrawal when buying at a distance and off premises, refund when terminating a contract due to late delivery and remedies for faulty goods. There is also a ban on unfair contract terms.