



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

COMPETITIVENESS AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS

Sectoral Committee
Weekly Update
28.05.10

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Council Conclusions

The Council of the EU on Competitiveness (Internal Market and Research) met on the 25th and 26th May in Brussels and reached agreement on a number of issues.

The items debated include:

- Marketing of construction products
- Automotive industry: clean and energy efficient vehicles
- Trade mark system in the EU
- Consumer rights directive
- Services directive: implementation and evaluation process
- Strategy for growth and jobs: targets for investment in research
- European Research Area
- European Earth observation programme (GMES) and its initial operations (2011-2013)
- Baltic Sea research project ("BONUS-169 programme")
- ITER experimental reactor for nuclear fusion

The Council reached a political agreement on a draft regulation updating the conditions for the **marketing of construction products** in the internal market. The Council also adopted conclusions on **clean and energy efficient vehicles** for a competitive automotive industry and decarbonised road transport. An agreement was also reached on the future revision of the **trade mark system** in the EU.

Research ministers exchanged views on the setting of national **targets for investment in research** and development, as foreseen in the strategy for the creation of jobs and growth («Europe 2020 strategy»), in view of the June European Council summit. Here, the Council carried out an in-depth examination of the development of the **European Research Area** and adopted a set of conclusions, including its social dimension, and a resolution concerning its governance.

The Council also adopted conclusions on ways for creating an **innovative Europe** and on the **simplification of research programmes**.



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The Maltese delegation was composed by the Hon. Dr. Jason Azzopardi Parliamentary Secretary and Ms. Theresa Cutajar Deputy Permanent Representative.

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/intm/114631.pdf

Mergers: Commission approves proposed acquisition of sole control of Mobil Oil Austria by ENI

The European Commission has cleared, under the EU Merger Regulation, the proposed acquisition of Mobil Oil Austria by Agip Austria, which is wholly controlled by ENI of Italy. After examining the operation, the Commission concluded that the transaction would not significantly impede effective competition in the European Economic Area (EEA). The transaction was notified to the Commission on 20th April 2010.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/626&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&quiLanguage=en>

State aid: latest Scoreboard shows reduced use of crisis support to banks

The reliance of financial institutions on emergency support through state guarantees is declining. This encouraging early indicator of a gradual return to market conditions in the banking sector is the key finding of the spring state aid scoreboard issued by the European Commission today. Altogether, the Commission has approved crisis measures put forward by Member States for an overall maximum volume of €4131.1 billion. Guarantee umbrellas account for over three quarters of this volume, amounting to €3149.8 billion. The effective use of the possibilities for state guaranteed funding and of recapitalisation measures taken together amounted to €1235.2 billion, significantly less than a third of the total.

http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/studies_reports/studies_reports.html



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Antitrust: Commission opens proceedings against Czech J&T Group for obstruction during inspection

The European Commission has opened proceedings against J&T Finance Group, J&T Investment Advisors (both part of the "J&T Group") and Energetický a průmyslový Holding, active in the electricity and lignite sectors in the Czech Republic, to investigate whether these companies have obstructed the Commission's inspection of 24 to 26 November 2009 at their premises. The Commission will in particular examine whether these companies produced the required records in incomplete form and whether their behaviour constitutes a refusal to submit to an inspection, in violation of EU rules governing antitrust investigations.

The opening of proceedings does not imply that the Commission has proof of an infringement. It means that the Commission will conduct an in-depth investigation of the case as a matter of priority. The company's rights of defence will be fully respected. There is no strict deadline to complete such inquiries. Their duration depends on a number of factors, including the complexity of each case, the extent to which the undertakings concerned co-operate with the Commission and the exercise of the rights of defence.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/627&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>