



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

COMPETITIVENESS AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS

Sectoral Committee
Weekly Update
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Spanish Presidency 2010

On the 1st of January 2010 Spain took over the presidency of the European Union. It will hold this presidency until the end of June following which Belgium will take over.

In brief, the four main priorities of the Spanish Presidency are the following:

- The full and effective application of the Lisbon Treaty.
- The economic recovery of Europe through greater co-ordination of every member state and the approval of the European strategy for sustainable growth for 2020.
- The reinforcement of the presence and influence of the European Union in the new world order.
- Placing European citizens at the centre of EU policy, with initiatives designed to develop their rights and freedoms.

Regarding Competitiveness Spain recognises that the first challenge is globalisation itself since the European economy is facing intense competition from the emerging economies in the area of costs. This emphasises the need for the European Union to improve its capacity to innovate. Therefore, the Spanish Presidency aims to promote the adoption of an ambitious European Innovation Plan that will cover the different aspects of innovation -regulatory, financial, educational and, of course, the reinforcement of specific policies to support research and development.

(To see the full programme of the Presidency see document in attachment)

During this Presidency meetings of the Council of Ministers on Competitiveness are scheduled as follows:

7-9 February (*informal meeting*)

1-2 March

25-26 May

Meetings of the Council of Ministers on Consumer affairs¹:

8-9 March

7-8 June

¹ Here the configuration of the Council is that of Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs