



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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NOTE

from :	General Secretariat of the Council
to :	Delegations
Subject :	Summary record of the meeting of the Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO) , held in Brussels on 25 January 2012: Presentation of the priorities of the Danish Presidency

Mr. Ole Sohn, Danish Minister of Business and Growth, presented the priorities of the Danish Presidency. He stressed the importance of preserving the Community method and considered that growth and fiscal consolidation were the pillars of the strategy leading out of the crisis.

On public procurement, he indicated that the Council would work on simplifying the rules and on allowing different political goals, such as the promotion of innovation and the protection of environment, to be taken into account. Mr Sohn expressed the hope that an agreement could be reached before the end of the year.

On the revision of the EU standard system, Mr Sohn hoped that a first reading agreement would be reached this spring, and stressed that the Council supported the development of a common system and the revision of common standards for communication technologies.

On the digital internal market, Mr Sohn emphasised the need to reach agreement on dispute settlement and to discuss the information requirements for companies. He indicated that an agreement could be reached before the end of the year.

On mobility, Mr Sohn took the view that the mutual recognition of professional qualifications should be improved, while on the Roaming III Regulation, he indicated that he hoped to reach an agreement by spring.

With regard to the better regulation, Mr Sohn said that he wanted to make progress in order to guarantee a level-playing field, but indicated that he did not think that the dossier would be closed under Danish Presidency. Concerning Intellectual Property Rights customs enforcement, Mr Sohn stressed that the Council had a positive approach, but still had to reach an agreement on scope and on some definitions. He hoped that a first reading agreement could be reached under the Danish Presidency.

The chairman, Mr Harbour (ECR, UK), considered that it was important to make life easier for consumers in the internal market, and shared the Presidency's perspective with regard to the need to simplify public procurement rules. He then gave the floor to the group coordinators.

Mr Schwab (EPP, DE) considered that the cross-border trade of services should be expanded, and welcomed the Presidency's focus on standardisation and public procurement. Ms Gebhardt (S&D, DE) praised the Presidency for its support for the Community method, but did not think that the discussions on public procurement would progress as quickly as the Presidency hoped. She also indicated that the recognition of professional qualifications should be a priority, and warned in this respect against forum shopping. Mr Manders (ALDE, NL) considered that it was important to make progress on the Sales Directive, and regretted that the Council did not dare to act on the economic crisis. Ms Rühle (Greens/ALE, DE) stressed the need to simplify public procurement rules and to standardise industrial services, whilst Mr Kozusnik (ECR, CS) asked whether the Presidency would favour standardisation over harmonisation.

Mr Sohn considered that the simplification of public procurement rules would be particularly useful for SMEs, and that, at the same time, the circumvention of these rules should be avoided. He stressed in particular that, with regard to thresholds, a balance had to be struck in order to limit costs. Mr Sohn also assured that the Presidency would put the dossier of professional qualifications recognition on the Council's agenda.
