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A Single Market for consumers How to make it a reality in all Member States

BEUC Conference on the consumer movements in post-2004 EU accession countries

Today in Warsaw, the European Consumers' Organisation BEUC organised with its members Polish Consumer Federation (FK) and Association of Polish Consumers (SKP) a high-level conference devoted to the better empowerment of consumers and the consumer movement in those countries who have joined the EU most recently. Key speakers included Under-Secretary of State Mr. Marcin Korolec and Member of the European Parliament, Ms. Roza Thun.

In light of manifold difficulties faced by consumer organisations in these countries, consumer representatives from across the EU have called for a prioritisation of consumer concerns in all policy areas, acceptance of consumer organisations as an eye-level partner of governments, efficient and well-targeted public funding leading to the medium-term financial independence of consumer organisations.

Paolo Martinello, President of BEUC, commented:

"Consumers throughout the EU should enjoy a high level of protection and act as confident players in Europe's markets. To fully realise this, we need a strong consumer movement. Governments, European institutions, media and consumer organisations must join forces to help this materialise in all Member States."

High-level meetings ahead of Polish EU Presidency

The conference is the highlight of a series of events held in Warsaw, coinciding with the 30th anniversary of the Polish Consumer Federation, the oldest consumer organisation in the newer Member States.

In particular, a delegation headed by BEUC including FK and SKP met with the Ministry of Economy and the Office of Competition and Consumer Protection to present their priorities for the upcoming, 6 month Polish Presidency of the EU.

BEUC and its members asked Mr. Korolec to advance the Single Market by prioritising measures which truly serve European consumers and increase their confidence in Europe's markets.

Olesia Frączek, Vice-President of the Polish Consumer Federation (FK) commented:

"The European Single Market is becoming a reality for all European consumers. The objective of consumer organisations should be co-operation – starting with the identification of consumer problems and ending with common actions to eliminate them."

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Grażyna Rokicka, President of the Association of Polish Consumers (SKP) said:

“Strong consumer organisations can contribute to an ethically functioning market by balancing the market power of businesses. Therefore, governments across Europe should support the activities of such organisations.

“Unfortunately, public funding of consumer organisations in Poland is one of the lowest in the EU, equal to €11 per 1000 citizens.”

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