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The European Federation of National Associations of Measurement, Testing and Analytical Laboratories

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EUROLAB Special Briefing

The European Parliament voted in favour of the Product Safety and Market Surveillance Package report

On Tuesday, 15th April, the European Parliament voted in favour of the Product Safety and Market Surveillance report proposed by the Internal Market and Consumer Protection committee. On the one hand "EU Safety Tested" marking was not approved; on the other hand country of origin labelling should be made mandatory for non-food products on the single market. The European Parliament plans to tighten up product safety requirements and market surveillance rules so as to strengthen consumer protection in the EU.

"*This is a big step forward for transparency in the product supply chain, and that is good for consumers*", said Parliament's rapporteur on product safety Christel Schaldemose (S&D, DK).

Country of origin labels are currently voluntary in the European Union. Many of the bloc's governments want to keep it that way, and may oppose the move when they resume debate of the consumer product safety legislation later this year.

"*New products are flowing into the European market and new means of doing business, such as e-commerce, take place, but the vast majority of products - 99.7 percent - are not checked by any authorities*," said Parliament's rapporteur on market surveillance Sirpa Pietikainen (EPP, FI).

On request of the political parties EEP, ALDE and ECR the vote on the relevant EU Safety Tested marking amendments (60 and 19) was held separately. These proposed amendments have not been in the end adopted. Despite this, the EUROLAB International General Secretariat will follow this package in the coming months and make sure that the laboratory interests are represented.

Market Surveillance of Products Regulation

The Plenary adopted all the proposed amendments to the MSPR. The EUROLAB General Secretariat followed closely Article 28 and 33.

Article 28 – EU reference laboratories:

Amendement 125:
be accredited pursuant to the provisions of Regulation (EC) No 765/2008.

The suggested EU reference laboratories should be accredited pursuant to Regulation (EC) 765/2008, to ensure they are placed on an equal footing with other accredited conformity assessment bodies.

Article 33 – Compulsory third party auditing schemes:

Amendment 133:
No later than [five] years after the date of application, the Commission shall assess the application of this Regulation and transmit an evaluation report to the European Parliament and the Council. That report shall assess if this Regulation achieved its objectives, in particular with regard to ensuring more effective and efficient enforcement of product safety rules and Union harmonisation legislation, improving cooperation between market surveillance authorities, strengthening the controls of products entering the Union and better protecting the health and safety of persons in general, health and safety in the workplace, consumer protection, the environment, ***energy efficiency,*** public security and other public interests, taking into account its impact on business and in particular on ***SMEs***. ***In addition, that report shall explore new and innovative, market-based solutions that could effectively complement the market surveillance actions carried out by the market surveillance authorities, and shall include, but not be limited to, exploring the potential of compulsory third party auditing schemes.***

VOTE RESULTS

The Schaldemose report (Product Safety) was approved by 485 votes to 130, with 27 abstentions.

The Pietikäinen report (Market surveillance) was approved by 573 votes to 18, with 52 abstentions.

NEXT STEPS

Parliament voted at the first reading to ensure that the work done during this mandate can be taken up by the new Parliament and used as a basis for further negotiations with EU member states.

TIMELINE

2013-2014
European Parliament and Member States discuss proposals by the Commission

2013
February 2013 - European Commission proposed the product safety and market surveillance package

2012
September 2012 - impact assessment report

2011
January-March 2011 - targeted stakeholder workshops

2010
May-August 2010 - public consultation
December 2010 - workshop on the revision of the General Product Safety Directive

2009
January 2009 - report on the implementation of the General Product Safety Directive

Source:

http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/safety/product_safety_legislation/product_safety_and_market_surveillance_package/index_en.htm

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20140411IPR43453/html/MEPs-push-for-mandatory-made-in-labelling-to-tighten-up-product-safety-rules

http://www.euractiv.com/sections/health-consumers/parliament-votes-compulsory-made-labels-301605

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