

## **Meeting of the Ministers of Consumer Affairs of the Nordic and Baltic States**

### **Akureyri Declaration on increased Nordic-Baltic Co-operation in the field of Consumer Protection**

Agreed on 2 September 2004

The Nordic and Baltic Ministers responsible for Consumer Affairs have, at a meeting in Akureyri 2 September 2004, adopted this Declaration in order to consolidate co-operation in the field of Consumer Protection in the Nordic-Baltic region.

The Ministers welcomed the good co-operation that has been established in recent years between the Nordic and Baltic states in various fields of consumer protection, and declared their intention to pursue and consolidate this co-operation. The membership of the Baltic States in the European Union provides an extended basis for co-operation on topics of consumer policy relevant for the whole EEA area, and for joint efforts to increase their influence on international negotiations and processes. Moreover, the Nordic and Baltic States should exchange experiences on national consumer policy issues where this could be of mutual interest.

To this end, and in the light of the Nordic sector's programme for co-operation, the Ministers emphasised the need for an exchange of experience and competence between the Nordic and the Baltic States. For the period 2004-2007, the Ministers agreed to give priority to cooperation and consultation in relation to the following subject areas:

#### EEA-related topics

- Developing legislation: Exchange of information in the preparation of various EU directives as well as on implementation of directives
- Enforcement of legislation
- Activities under the Commission Consumer Framework Programme

## National consumer policy topics

- General Policy issues and national action plans: organisation of consumer policy, interplay between the actors, and preparation of national action plans and other official consumer policy documents.
- Relationship to other policy areas: the role of competition law and policy in a consumer policy context.
- Complaint handling: private and public out of court bodies and other types of simplified redress mechanisms.

The co-operation should take any form the parties consider appropriate. Initial focus on the above priority areas should not exclude co-operation and consultation in relation to other relevant issues.

The Committee of Senior Officials for Consumer Affairs of the Nordic Council of Ministers and the Nordic Working Group for Consumer Policy for the Adjacent Regions will monitor the co-operation on behalf of the Nordic countries, and responsible national ministries in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania on behalf of the Baltic States.

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