

Online dispute resolution for consumer disputes (Regulation on consumer ODR)

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The Council took note of two legislative proposals submitted by the Commission on 29 November 2011: [a draft directive on Alternative Dispute Resolution \(ADR\)](#) and a draft regulation on On-line Dispute Resolution (ODR).

In compliance with the ADR directive, the Commission also proposes an ODR mechanism involving the setting up of a European on-line dispute resolution platform (this will be an interactive website accessible electronically and free of charge in all languages of the Union).

ADR schemes, also known as "out-of-court mechanisms", have been set up across Europe to help citizens engaged in the resolution of disputes which they have been unable to resolve directly with the trader. These mechanisms have been developed differently across the EU, either publicly or privately, and the status of the decisions adopted by these bodies differs greatly from one Member State to another.

The Commission conducted a public consultation on this subject from 18 January and 15 March 2011.

In addition, **the Council adopted conclusion on the results of the first Single Market Forum (SIMFO)**, which took place in Krakow, Poland, on 3 and 4 October 2011. The SIMFO, which was organised jointly by the European Parliament, the Commission and the Polish presidency, is intended to be the starting point of a permanent platform for debate among EU institutions, stakeholders and citizens on the development of the internal market.

In its conclusions, the Council:

- attaches great importance to ensuring that European businesses and consumers purchasing goods and services (online, offline, cross-border or domestically) have access to efficient, affordable and simple means of resolving their disputes with traders, taking into account diversity of different national Alternative Dispute Resolution schemes;
- believes that it is essential to increase businesses' and citizens' knowledge and understanding of Alternative Dispute Resolution schemes throughout Europe;
- stresses that simple, efficient and affordable Online Dispute Resolution systems allowing consumers to solve effectively their problems when shopping on-line are crucial for improving confidence in the digital Single Market.