

Consumer protection: indication of prices of products offered to consumers

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OBJECTIVE: to adopt a new measure to improve consumer information about prices of products offered for sale by traders. **COMMUNITY MEASURE:** European Parliament and Council Directive 98/6/EC on consumer protection in the indication of the prices of products offered to consumers. **SUBSTANCE:** the Directive establishes the general principle that selling prices and unit prices should both be indicated when traders offer products to consumers. The main points of the Directive are as follows: -both the selling price and the unit price must be indicated for products covered by the Directive (the unit price need not be indicated if it is the same as the selling price); -where products are sold in bulk, only the unit price need be indicated; -the selling price and the unit price must be unambiguous, easily identifiable and clearly legible; -the unit price must refer to a declared quantity. The Directive authorizes Member States not to apply the principle that both the selling price and the unit price must be indicated: -in the case of products supplied in the course of the provision of a service, -in the case of sales by auction and sales of works of art and antiques. The Directive also permits Member States to waive the obligation to indicate the unit price in the case of products in relation to which such an indication would not be useful because of the products' nature or purpose or would be liable to create confusion. If the obligation to indicate the unit price would be liable to constitute an excessive burden for certain small retail businesses, Member States may, during a transitional period, stipulate that the obligation for them to indicate the unit price of products other than those sold in bulk shall not apply. **ENTRY INTO FORCE:** 18/03/1998 **DEADLINE FOR TRANSPOSITION:** 18/03/2000