Consumer Policy @ OECD

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Chair, OECD Committee on Consumer Policy

European Consumer Summit
Brussels, 2 June 2015

OECD
BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER LIVES

Committee on Consumer Policy (CCP) and WP on Consumer Product Safety

Objectives :

- Carry out research and analysis
- Develop policy recommendations and guidance

Participants :

- Members : consumer policy officials from 34 OECD governments
- Non-members : including Brazil, Colombia, Latvia, Egypt, India and Peru
- European commission
- Business and Industry Advisory Council (BIAC)
- Consumers International (CI)

Key work streams :

- E-commerce
- Consumer policy decision making
- Product safety

OECD 1999 E-commerce Guidelines

- Consumers engaging in e-commerce should be afforded **transparent and effective consumer protection that is no less than the level of protection afforded in other forms of commerce**

- Consumers should benefit from :
  - Fair business advertising and marketing practices
  - Clear and transparent information disclosures
  - Ways to confirm/cancel a transaction
  - Secure and easy-to-use payment mechanisms
  - Privacy
  - Education and awareness

- Industry-self regulation should be encouraged

- Members should co-operate to combat cross-border fraudulent, misleading and unfair commerce practices


Guidelines for Consumer Protection in the Context of Electronic Commerce

Lignes directrices régissant la protection des consommateurs dans le contexte du commerce électronique

INFORMATION SOCIETY/SOCIÉTÉ DE L'INFORMATION

OECD

The Evolving E-commerce Marketplace Challenges for Consumers

- **Scope of revised Recommendation :**
  - o B2C e-commerce, including non-monetary transactions ?
  - o What about internet platforms used in C2C transactions ?

- **Fair advertising and commercial practices**
  - o How to distinguish commercial advertising from consumer endorsements ?

- **Payments** (including all mandatory charges)
  - o What kind of redress if the product does not work (bought with a pre-paid card or charged on mobile phone bill) ?

- **Digital content**
  - o Is it possible to copy, share, format-shift a product?
  - o What kind of redress if a kid purchased a product when playing an online game, thinking it was part of it – while parents did not know/consent to it ?

Rethinking Consumer Policy Making

- ***Consumer Policy Toolkit* (2010)**
  - Communication services workshop (2011)
  - Recommendation on Consumer Policy Decision Making (2014) $_0$

- **Indicators**
  - Role of surveys in policy making (2012))
  - Consumer complaints (2012)

- **Industry self regulation**
  - Industry self regulation, role and use in supporting consumer interest (2014)

- **Behavioural economics**
  - OECD initiative on "New Approaches to Economic Challenges (NAEC)"
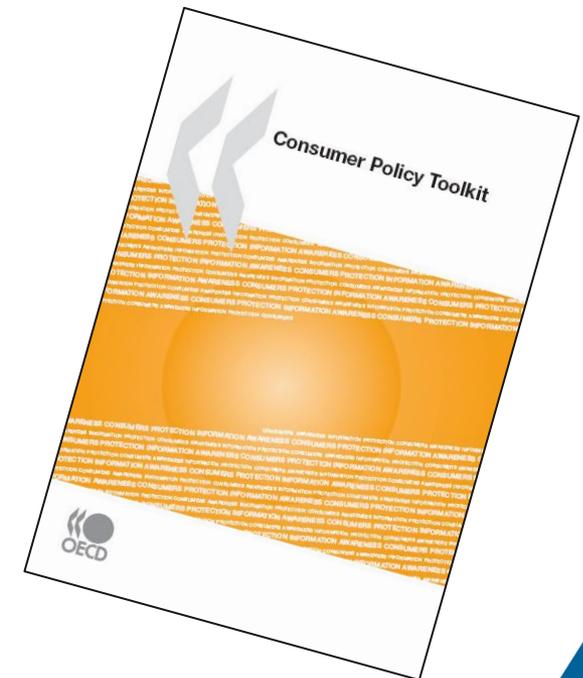
Consumer Product Safety

- **Creation of Working Party (2010)**
- **Objectives**
  - Identifying and acting on safety issues at an early point
  - Sharing information on policy and other developments
  - Addressing safety concerns in a consistent way
  - Supporting global and regional fora
- **Examples of projects**
  - *GlobalRecalls* portal
  - Education and awareness campaigns : Button battery (2014) ; Laundry detergent capsules (2015) **together with EU countries**
  - Online product safety

GlobalRecalls **Portal**

(www.globalrecalls.oecd.org)

Ministerial on the Digital Economy

"Innovation, Growth and Social Prosperity"
22- 23 June 2016, Cancun, Mexico

Main themes

1. The Open Internet : a Platform for Growth and Inclusiveness
2. Building Global Connectivity
3. *Trust in the Digital Economy*
4. Jobs and Skills in the Digital Economy

3.1 Consumer Trust for Market Growth

- **Overall Objectives:**
  - o Substantiate the link between consumer trust and market growth
  - o Promote the revised OECD 1999 E-commerce Recommendation and steps for implementation
  - o Identify good policies to encourage cross-border e-commerce and address emerging issues
  - o Focus on consumer protection in the context of the **sharing economy.**

- **Input:**
  - – revised E-commerce Recommendation and related guidance.
  - – work on online product safety issues by the working party.

- **Outcome:**
  - Ministerial endorsement of revised e-commerce Recommendation
  - call for further work.

"Sharing Economy"

Key consumer issues :

- What kinds of reputation-related initiatives best build trust among peers (e.g. ratings) ?

- What level of responsibility should be borne by the business platforms ?

- When is the extent of an individual's "sharing" activity sufficient to treat the individual as a business ?

International co-operation

- **European union :**
  - EC participate in the CCP
  - EU members participated in the <u>education and awareness campaign</u>
  - Co-operation in the consumer product safety area
- **UNCTAD :**
  - Review of UN consumer protection guidelines
  - 2015 information economy report
- **Other fora :**
  - ICPEN (mobile payments, children online games and apps)
  - ISO (e-commerce standard, M-payments standard)
  - Etc.

For further information

Visit : www.oecd.org/sti/consumer-policy

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