



# Summary of the Seminar on “Effective enforcement in digital environment”

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The digital economy and on-line trade hold an important potential to contribute significantly to economic growth and consumer welfare, if consumer rights and product safety rules are respected. Digital markets can also be challenging when it comes to enforcement of consumer rules. The cross-border or even international nature of many transactions, often indirect interaction between consumer and trader, the unclear roles of the different parties as well as the speed of transactions lead to confusion about the roles of the various stakeholders and their rights and responsibilities.

## **In particular, three questions were discussed in sub-groups:**

1. What should I do to prevent infringements [as a consumer organisation, enforcement authority, platform, on-line business, domain registry, European Commission]?
2. What should I do to stop infringements and help consumers that are victims of such infringements [as a consumer organisation, enforcement authority, platform, on-line business, domain registry, European Commission]?
3. As [consumer organisation, enforcement authority, platform, on-line business, domain registry, European Commission] what are my 3 main learnings from the discussion and what could be my 3 next steps for the future?

## **The participants identified the following main learnings:**

- Lack of mutual understanding among stakeholders regarding roles, responsibilities, powers and available tools
- Complex legal and technical architecture leading to unclear responsibilities and liabilities of different stakeholders reducing their willingness to act
- Need to better work together to solve problems

The participants stressed the need for closer cooperation and active involvement of all stakeholders to achieve better digital environment for consumers, in particular by sharing information, improving mutual understanding of roles and possibilities, building knowledge and trust.

The participants identified the following recommendations/possible actions:

1. Work together with all stakeholders to create the best ways to empower consumers who purchase online
2. Clarify the legal framework for internet intermediaries
3. Develop an international e-enforcement capacity

In this context the participants emphasized the need to better share information, to have a regular dialogue with stakeholders (for instance through an Advisory Stakeholder Board with business representation) and also to identify together enforcement priorities in the EU.

Participants added that this needs to be supported by effective redress mechanisms for consumers (collective redress) and by better coordination of enforcement in the EU.

It was also stressed that consumers are going global and so should also enforcement cooperation. The participants therefore underlined the importance of international enforcement cooperation (e.g. information sharing with non-EU registries and cooperation among enforcers).