



European
Commission



NEW CONSUMER AGENDA

2020 – 2025 ACTIONS TO PROTECT
EUROPEAN CONSUMERS



Factsheet, November 2020
#NewConsumerAgenda

Over the last five decades, the European Union has put in place a robust set of policies and rules ensuring a very high level of protection and strong rights for consumers. Building on such achievements, the New Consumer Agenda sets out how to foster those rights while protecting and empowering consumers in current pandemic circumstances, as well as for the years to come.



Consumer spending represents 54% of the EU's GDP

How will the New Consumer Agenda impact EU consumers?

The New Consumer Agenda aims to respond to consumers' needs during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. It sets out a long-term vision up to 2025, and introduces concrete actions in five key areas, to protect consumers and empower them to play an active role in the green and digital transition.

Consumer rights after COVID-19

The European Commission will address the main concerns for consumers triggered by the pandemic, by:

- ✓ Continuing to defend consumer rights in the travel sector
- ✓ Examining the longer-term impact of COVID-19 on the consumption patterns of Europeans
- ✓ Continuing to tackle consumer scams, unfair marketing practices and fraud.

Five key areas of the New Consumer Agenda



1. GREEN TRANSITION

empowering consumers to play an active role

Consumers are willing to pay more for products with longer durability. When consumers receive better information on product durability, the sales of the most durable versions of products can almost triple.



Better inform consumers on the environmental sustainability characteristics of products, such as their durability or reparability



Protect consumers against certain practices such as greenwashing or early obsolescence and ensure they have access to reliable information



Promote companies' pledges to sustainable consumption actions, going beyond legal obligations



Repair products and encourage purchase of more sustainable and circular products → review of the [Sales of Goods Directive](#) after 2022



2. DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

ensuring consumers are as protected online as they are offline

Compared with 2009, the share of online shoppers had almost doubled from 32% to 60%.



Reinforce consumer protection in the context of digitalisation of retail financial services → review the [Consumer Credit Directive](#) and the [Distance Marketing of Financial Services Directive](#)



Address new challenges to product safety caused by new technologies and online selling → review the [General Product Safety Directive](#)



Ensure consumer protection and protect fundamental rights in relation to Artificial Intelligence → proposal for a horizontal legal act laying down requirements for Artificial Intelligence



Tackle online commercial practices that disregard consumers' rights → update guidance documents on the [Unfair Commercial Practices Directive](#) and the [Consumer Rights Directive](#), and analyse whether additional legislation or other action are needed



3. EFFECTIVE ENFORCEMENT AND REDRESS ensuring all consumers fully benefit from their rights

The Commission will support Member States in implementing [recently updated consumer rules](#) that will strengthen consumer rights, provide more digital fairness, stronger sanctions and an effective mechanism to sue collectively in cases of mass harm.



Coordinate and support the enforcement work of the Consumer Protection Cooperation (CPC) network to tackle illegal practices



Support authorities by providing common and innovative e-tools for online investigations



Assess authorities' toolbox to tackle practices breaching EU consumer law -> evaluation of the [CPC Regulation](#)

4. CONSUMER VULNERABILITY strengthen consumer awareness, addressing the needs of different consumer groups

Supporting consumers that are more vulnerable than others due to specific information needs, for instance children, older people or those with disabilities.



Improve availability of debt advice services in Member States



Strengthen safety of childcare products -> revision of the General Product Safety Directive and new Safety Requirements for standards on childcare products



Support for local initiatives providing advice to consumers, including in remote areas

5. CONSUMER PROTECTION IN THE GLOBAL CONTEXT promoting high-level consumer protection abroad

Purchases from sellers outside the EU increased from 17% in 2014 to 27% in 2019.



Set up an Action Plan with China to enhance cooperation on product safety for products sold online



Offer regulatory support to EU partner countries

