



Single Market Scoreboard

The United Kingdom withdrew from the EU on 31 January, 2020. The 2020 edition of the Single Market Scoreboard refers to time periods preceding the withdrawal of the UK, and the UK is therefore listed as a Member State.

Consumer Protection Cooperation Network (CPC)

Reporting period:
01/2019 – 12/2019

The [Consumer Protection Cooperation \(CPC\) Network](#) consists of **authorities** responsible for enforcing EU consumer protection laws to protect consumers' interests in EU and EEA countries.

The new [CPC Regulation](#) **applies from 17 January 2020**. It introduces several improvements so that EU consumer protection laws can be better enforced.

CPC and the Single Market – why does it matter?

The new CPC Regulation improves the current framework by putting in place stronger mechanisms to investigate and tackle widespread infringements and allowing cooperation on infringements of short duration such as misleading advertising campaigns.

Have you encountered problems when buying goods or services from a trader abroad? Contact the [European Consumer Centres](#) network for help.

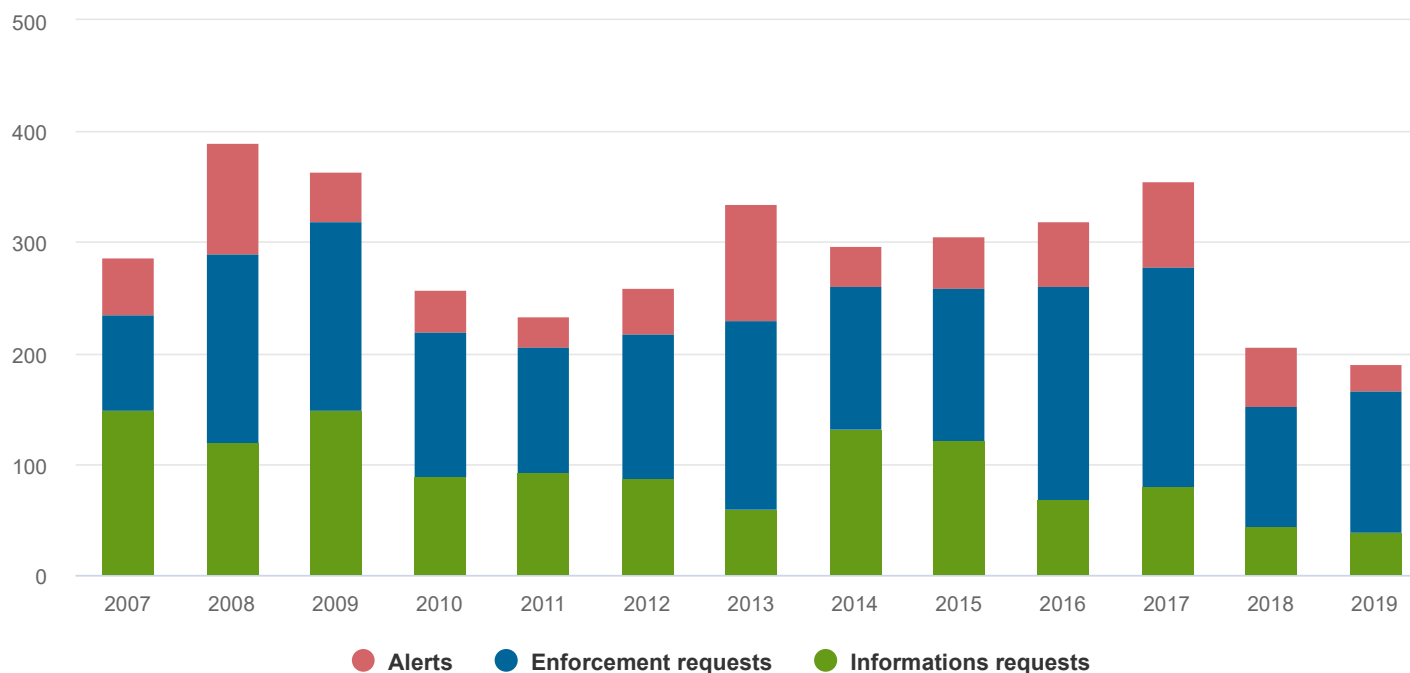
Key messages

- Stronger powers for consumer law enforcers across the EU to protect consumers from major non-compliant traders;
- More rigorous coordinated enforcement on widespread infringements of consumer law at EU level to boost consumer confidence in the Digital Single Market. The Commission also plays a stronger coordination role and can trigger coordinated actions by alerting the network;
- Revamped CPC framework for administrative cooperation between authorities is supported by a modern IT tool implemented via the [Internal Market Information System](#) which replaces the old CPC IT tool.

Facts and figures – recap of the old CPC framework

Number of CPC cases

2007-2019



Priorities

- Continue working together with national authorities and stakeholders to ensure that the new cooperation mechanism is implemented consistently across the EU and that stakeholders are also on-board;
- Tackle the latest scams and digital fraud promptly to ensure minimal consumer detriment (e.g. delayed delivery, substandard service, faulty items, financial loss);
- Target major non-compliant traders by launching coordinated actions based on the new procedures under the CPC Regulation to address widespread issues that are extremely important to consumers across the EU;
- Continue building the capacity of the network to conduct online investigations, also by driving forward the e-enforcement academy project;
- Actively promote international cooperation with non-EU countries in existing international fora and through bilateral international agreements.

Achievements

A) Coordinated actions

The CPC network has already tackled several EU-wide issues:

- Booking.com pledged to change how it presents offers, discounts and prices;
- Airbnb improved and clarified how it presents offers, for example by providing adequate and complete price information (including all mandatory charges and fees);
- Unfair terms in social media contracts: Facebook, Twitter and Google+ updated their terms of service and implemented a dedicated procedure so that consumer authorities can signal problematic content;
- Unclear conditions for car rentals: the five industry leaders – Avis, Europcar, Enterprise, Hertz and Sixt – improved the transparency of their offers and how they handle damages.
- Apple iTunes and Google Play created information on in-app purchases.



What is a “coordinated action”?

National authorities in EU and EEA countries, with the steering of the Commission, coordinate their investigation and enforcement approaches to effectively tackle widespread infringements of EU consumer laws. After various signals on the alleged infringement and the review of the commercial practices of traders involved, CPC Authorities can decide to launch a coordinated action. Following the coordinated investigation phase they might adopt a Common Position, in which they inform the trader about their concerns. Subsequently CPC Authorities and the Commission start discussions with the trader to make him comply with EU consumer laws or take enforcement measures in a coordinated manner.

Find out more about [coordinated actions](#).

C) Sweeps

The CPC network's **2019 sweep** was launched in November 2019 and targeted problems with the delivery of goods and issues related to the consumer's right of withdrawal when shopping online. This time, the CPC authorities in 27 countries (25 EU countries, Norway and Iceland) screened **481 websites selling clothing and footwear, furniture, household items and appliances**. It revealed that 2 out of 3 online shops may be breaching basic EU consumer law. The main issues relate to unclear information on the right to withdraw, without justification, the contract within 14 days, issues with the final price – which did not contain applicable additional charges and the traders failed to explain that such additional charges may be payable – or reminders about the guarantee if something you have bought is faulty.



What is a “sweep”?

A “sweep” is a set of **checks** carried out **simultaneously** by **national enforcement authorities** to identify breaches of EU consumer law in a particular sector.

In the enforcement phase, the authorities ask the traders concerned to take **corrective action**.

The Commission coordinates the sweep action.

Find out more about [sweeps](#).

C) Other activities

- An **e-enforcement academy was set up** to boost the CPC network and the ability of product safety networks to conduct online investigations. The first phase of the project (2017-18) and second phase (2019) of the project were both successful, providing national CPC and product safety authorities with various deliverables. The network is looking into how to drive forward the project in 2020 to further strengthen enforcement of consumer legislation in B2C online shopping;
- CPC authorities are now using the **CPC knowledge exchange platform**, an IT tool developed in 2014-15 to support collaborative work and share results with the wider CPC network;
- CPC Market Watch is an internal EU monitoring project launched in 2019 to collect information on market trends that might affect consumer interests across the EU/EEA;
- The CPC network cooperates with the network of European Consumer Centres and representatives of various EU-level consumer associations to gather information and detect threats faster.