



## Consumer Summit 2021 – Workshops discussion papers

### Introduction to all workshops

The New Consumer Agenda (hereafter “the Agenda”) aims for enhanced cooperation among all consumer policy stakeholders to ensure a high level of consumer protection in the Union and a level playing field among all businesses serving the Single Market. In addition, boosting confidence on consumer markets will positively impact the post COVID-19 economic recovery.

The Agenda foresees that yearly concrete priorities are discussed at the annual Consumer Summit and the Informal Ministerial Meeting, and then implementation of the selected priorities reviewed at the Summit the year after. The workshops should therefore review the main Agenda’s themes in order to identify three actions on which to focus in the year to come until March 2022. It should set targets for concrete results, identify which partners would agree to be involved and to work together. It could be a new dedicated group or existing groups which exist under Consumer and Safety policies and laws. Each workshop should present two or three proposals for concrete priorities to the final plenary session of the Consumer Summit, where participants will vote to identify the three suggestions with the broadest support, to be transmitted to Ministers for their meeting the next day.

During each workshop, a number of areas described in the New Consumer Agenda will be highlighted with questions to help identify concrete priority activities. Such activities should be feasible within the coming year and realistic targets should be set. A vote will take place to select three of them for presentation to the plenary. Only three minutes per workshop will be available so the propositions must be S.M.A.R.T., i.e. **S**pecific (which precise area, law, economic sector), **M**asurable (with a target), **A**ssignable (who will do it), **R**ealistic (with a target that can be achieved given available resources), **T**ime-related (that can be achieved until March 2022).

### List of workshops

- Workshop 1 – COVID-19 pandemic – Addressing the most urgent impacts on the protection of consumers
- Workshop 2 – Greening consumption
- Workshop 3 – Protecting consumers in the digital age – How to speed up the transition
- Workshop 4 – Enforcement of EU Consumer Law and Product Safety – How to develop capacities of authorities and other actors of the enforcement chain

## Workshop 4 – Enforcement of EU Consumer Law and Product Safety – How to develop capacities of authorities and other actors of the enforcement chain

### Context

Consumer legislation, including product safety, is as good as its enforcement. Despite evident benefits, new types of risks and harms for consumers stem from certain online business models, or products with new technologies. The New Consumer Agenda promotes uniform enforcement in the EU and digital tools such as the establishment of an EU level laboratory to conduct investigations of online illegal practices. It further builds on the biannual release of enforcement priorities of the Consumer Protection Cooperation (CPC) Network, the evaluation of the effectiveness of the CPC Regulation, the strengthening of capacities of future qualified entities under the Directive on Representative Actions (EU) 2020/1828 and the revision of the General Products Safety Directive (GPSD). As part of the revamp of the Consumer Condition scoreboard, indicators on member States enforcement capacities and outcomes are also being prepared.

### *Prioritisation of CPC actions at EU level*

Enforcers need to identify the right national and EU level priorities on which to spend their resources while leaving space for emerging consumer threats. This is why the CPC Regulation foresees speedy intelligence gathering and use of multiple sources such as external alerts, data from European Consumer Centres and various statistics.

### *Coordinated consumer law enforcement to improve business compliance*

Investigating jointly complex issues such as misleading green claims, requires first authorities to agree on a common methodology. In turn, it can be further used as a guidance for businesses leading to a virtuous circle for better compliance. Furthermore, the interplay between consumer law and other domains such as data protection as well as active participation to international work can also set high compliance standards on world level digital markets.

### *Preparing for the implementation of collective redress in all Member States*

Under the Directive on Representative Actions (EU) 2020/1828, the Commission will set up an electronic database to facilitate the cooperation between the Member States and the Commission but also between qualified entities enabled to bring domestic and cross-border collective actions.

### *Product safety*

Current product safety enforcement priorities focus on coordinated activities on Covid 19 related products (masks, hand sanitizers, gloves), but also on child care articles and toys, while online selling remains a horizontal priority. At the international level a number of bilateral agreements on exchanges of data have been concluded and enforcement coordination has started, in particular with Canada.

## Questions to bear in mind when identifying possible priority actions

### *Prioritisation of CPC actions at EU level*

- How can the Consumer Summit assist further the CPC network and the Commission in the identification of enforcement priorities for consumer law?
- Which sources of information, for example on consumer complaints, could be better used
- Under which conditions could the intelligence gathered by online platforms be used to detect scams and unfair offers?

### *Coordinated consumer law enforcement to improve business compliance*

- What are the needs of the business sector do to improve compliance?
- In which area should international cooperation be most beneficial for higher level of compliances?
- What are the main obstacles to effective enforcement in digital markets?

### *Preparing for the implementation of collective redress in all Member States*

- How to best prepare the implementation of the Representative Actions Directive?

### *Product safety*

- How can the Consumer Summit assist further in the identification of enforcement priorities for product safety?
- What could encourage further involvement and wider participation of authorities in EU-wide cooperation projects in the area of market surveillance for the safety of products?