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Date: 22/05/2012
Reference: PR 2012/014

Consumer Agenda finally puts consumer at centre of EU policy-making

BEUC welcomes today's adoption by the European Commission of the Consumer Agenda - its vision for future EU consumer policy. The Agenda aims to increase consumer confidence by boosting consumer safety; enhancing consumer knowledge of their rights and the tools to make informed choices; stepping up enforcement and providing means of redress; aligning consumer rights and policies to changes in society and economies. By gathering previously scattered EU initiatives under the umbrella of this Consumer Agenda, the Commission gives a strong signal of higher standing for consumer needs and expectations in EU policy making.

BEUC is pleased to see the Agenda has taken into account many of its 2020 objectives put forward on its 50th anniversary within its 'EU Consumers' 2020 Vision'.¹

Monique Goyens, Director General of BEUC, commented:

"The Commission has engaged in a comprehensive approach to the main hurdles facing European consumers from information overload to failed liberalisation and the lack of enforcement of consumer rights. These must be urgently tackled and improved in order to allow us all to fully benefit from the Single Market."

"The Commission has presented an impressive list of initiatives, but the proof will be in the pudding. Consumers expect the EU to swiftly follow-up on its promises. The litmus test will be the introduction of an EU-wide collective redress system that would benefit Europe's 500 million consumers."

"In times of fierce budget cuts, it will be a relief across Europe that the EU is pledging to work with governments to support national consumer organisations. A first concrete step to strengthen the consumer movement would be to apportion fines in EU competition cases or data protection breaches to projects promoting the consumer interest."

"The recent PIP breast implant and Mediator scandals show that a higher focus on consumer health would be needed."

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Note:

¹ BEUC has identified 9 objectives on how Europe can achieve better consumer protection by 2020. Follow this online link to read our Vision paper: <http://bit.ly/J3DQST>