



The Consumer Voice in Europe

Ms Henna Virkkunen
Executive Vice President for
Tech Sovereignty, Security and
Democracy
European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200

B-1049 Brussels

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Subject: The Consumer Mission Letter

Dear Executive Vice President Virkkunen,

On behalf of BEUC – The European Consumer Organisation, I wish to congratulate you on your recent appointment as Executive Vice President for Tech Sovereignty, Security and Democracy. Created in 1962, we represent 44 national consumer associations from 31 European countries. Thanks to BEUC members’ markets watchdog role, their research, product testing and daily contacts with consumers across Europe, we can support you with evidence-based recommendations and enforcement actions to ensure the European economy delivers to consumers.

We fully support your mission and commitment to implement and enforce the EU digital rulebook, take the lead in addressing the challenges of e-commerce, work to deliver a “secure, fast and reliability connectivity” for consumers, guarantee high cybersecurity standards and address the sustainability of the tech and telecoms sector. We also welcome the opportunity to support your efforts to help ensure the digital environment is more ethical and does not exploit consumers’ vulnerabilities for profit.

As Executive Vice President, you will be working with the Commissioner for Democracy, Justice, the Rule of law and Consumer Protection, Michael McGrath. In this regard, you can make an important contribution to ensure social fairness, defending democracy and offering a healthier and more prosperous future to people in the EU. We count on the European Commission to swiftly start preparing a new Consumer Agenda for the 2025-2030 period and to ensure a horizontal integration of consumer interests into all EU policies.

Consumers' proposals for your mission

1. An EU digital rulebook that delivers to people in practice

The EU has recently added very important laws to the digital rulebook such as the Digital Markets Act (DMA), the Digital Services Act (DSA) and the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Act. Improving Europe's competitiveness also means ensuring the effective implementation and enforcement of EU digital rules to protect and give swift redress to people, uphold their rights and create a level playing field between companies that respect the law and those that try to ignore or circumvent it. Consumer organisations can, and should be, part of this process. For example, we have contributed to [greater gatekeepers' compliance](#) with the DMA and the EU has recently launched investigations into Temu after [we sounded the alarm](#).

2. A fair, protective, open and competitive digital environment for all

We recommend remaining vigilant to ensure AI and other emerging technology are developed in line with our rules and values. Consumers need a fairer digital environment free from pervasive commercial surveillance, deceptive design, the targeting of vulnerable groups, unfair and discriminatory decisions made by AI systems, and monopolising practices that prevent consumers from enjoying more open and rights-protective digital markets.

We can only applaud your commitment to better protect minors online. We welcome your openness before Parliament to consider additional measures if gaps in legislation are identified. BEUC is ready to support you in this endeavour.

3. Upholding consumers' privacy and data protections

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) has served as a baseline for innovation that respects our democratic values and has proven an immense value to consumers. We are concerned about the growing narrative portraying the GDPR as being incompatible with innovation or with the uptake of AI and other technologies.

We urge you to ensure an imminent follow-up of the ePrivacy Regulation proposal and an upcoming European Data Union Strategy that builds, and does not lower, the level of consumer protection under the ePrivacy Directive and the GDPR.

4. Electronic communications market guided by competition, consumer protection and net neutrality

We were pleased to learn during your hearing and written submissions to the European Parliament that when proposing a Digital Networks Act you plan to defend the interests of consumers, and the debate is not reduced to network fees (which BEUC opposes). The Digital Networks Act can [benefit consumers](#) if rooted in competition, consumer protection and if it upholds EU's net neutrality rules.

The way forward

We are aware that you have a busy agenda but hope nonetheless that you will find the time to meet with us. We would be keen to hear your reaction to our proposals and would like to elaborate more about the expectations of European consumers towards European decision-makers.

Please count on our support if you need information about the consumer perspective in your policy area.

Please find enclosed our priorities for this new Commission.

I wish you a most successful mandate.

Yours sincerely,

Agustín Reyna
BEUC Director General

Encl.: *Europe, Consumers Count on You – BEUC priorities for the next European Commission (2024-2029)*