European Consumers in the Era of Digital Technology and the Green Transition

European Consumer Summit 2022 and Informal Ministerial Meeting,
10 and 11 February 2022, Strasbourg, France

Press kit
Technology and the environment: issues that affect us all as consumers and citizens

The digital revolution and the green transition are the challenges of the 21st century for the European Union, its Member States and its citizens.

Digital technology is transforming how we communicate, how we do business and how we consume things. The rapid expansion of e-commerce, fuelled even faster by the COVID-19 pandemic, has completely changed our shopping habits. The major online platforms and marketplaces are continuing to eat into online market share. In order to protect consumers and preserve consumer confidence, which is vital for the health of the market, the situation calls for changes to our regulatory framework and methods.

At the same time, the climate emergency has made us aware of the need to pay more attention to what we consume, adapt our ways of living and opt for sustainable products. This will require the market to offer products that are better designed, easier to repair – only 40% of the most common product problems end up being repaired in France – and recyclable. Consumers also need to have clear and accurate information about the environmental credentials of products.

So how can we improve European regulations to better protect consumers online? How can we ensure fair competition between online retailers and traditional shops? How can we stop greenwashing and promote products that won’t deplete our natural resources?

Different pieces of legislation are being drafted at European level, such as the Digital Services Act (DSA), on which the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union will focus its negotiation efforts. The DSA will hold platforms accountable for the information they provide to consumers and the content and products they distribute – because confidence goes hand in hand with transparency.
As underlined by President Macron, the DSA is a priority of the French Presidency. The European Commission has also announced a review of the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive to address the issues of misleading environmental claims and planned obsolescence in particular.

As consumers, these are issues that affect all of us and call on us to act – government officials, civil society representatives and citizens alike.

That is why, under the French Presidency, together with the European Commission, we wanted to hold this European Consumer Summit. The hybrid event, taking place both online and at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, will bring together more than 40 participants to discuss the challenges – and opportunities – of the digital era and the green transition. It will be a forum for experts, officials, politicians and citizens to share impressions and ideas, providing valuable guidance for Europe’s decision-making bodies.

The Summit will help us find solutions to some questions, and it is certain to raise new ones. I am confident that it will spark meaningful and constructive discussions and advance the European debate on these important issues.

Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne, Minister in charge of Consumer Affairs
Introduction
The French Presidency of the Council of the European Union

On 1 January 2022, for the first time in 14 years, France will take over the Presidency of the Council of the European Union. How does the Council of the EU work and what will France’s role be?

What does the Presidency of the Council of the European Union involve?

→ A rotating Presidency
Each Member State holds the presidency of the Council of the European Union for six months on a rotating basis. France will hold the Presidency of the Council of the EU from 1 January to 30 June 2022. The Presidency of the Council organises meetings, brokers compromises, submits conclusions and ensures the coherency and continuity of the decision-making process. It ensures good cooperation between all Member States and acts as a liaison between the Council and the European institutions, in particular the Commission and the European Parliament.

→ What is the Council of the European Union?
The Council of the European Union, also called the Council of Ministers, or simply the Council, brings together the ministers of the EU Member States who meet in configurations by sector of activity. It serves as the co-legislator of the European Union, along with the European Parliament.

Concretely, ministers will chair ten sectors or configurations of the Council of the EU: general affairs, economic and financial affairs, justice and home affairs, employment, social policy, health and consumer protection policy; competitiveness (internal market, industry, research and space); transport, telecommunications and energy; agriculture and fisheries; environment; education, youth, culture and sport; trade. Exceptionally, the Foreign Affairs Council is chaired by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, currently Mr Josep Borrell.

The Council also has budgetary powers; it adopts and amends the European budget with the Parliament. Lastly, the Council adopts certain decisions as well as non-binding recommendations, concludes international agreements on behalf of the EU, and appoints members of certain institutions such as the European Court of Auditors, the European Economic and Social Committee and the European Committee of the Regions. The Council’s deliberations and votes on legislative texts are public.
What is the framework for the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union?

The PFUE follows the main policy lines that President Macron set out in his speech for a sovereign, united and democratic Europe on 26 September 2017 at the Sorbonne. For the past four years, President Macron and the Government have been working to build genuine European sovereignty, meaning Europe’s ability to exist in the world and to defend our values and interests. The French Presidency of the Council of the European Union will continue this work for a more inclusive, sovereign and democratic Europe.

The PFUE meets citizens’ expectations, which were expressed in the citizen debates held in September in 18 French regions as part of the Conference on the Future of Europe. This project, proposed by France in 2019, established a new forum for debate with European citizens. The final contribution of these national panels was submitted to the Government in the autumn. Recommendations made by citizens, in France and in Europe, have helped determine the priorities of the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

The PFUE coordinates within the trio presidency programme, with which France aligns its action. This system, which has existed since 2009, sets long-term goals and defines the main topics to be addressed over a period of 18 months. After the Slovenian Presidency, France will begin a new cycle and will work as a trio with the Czech Republic in the second half of 2022 and Sweden in the first half of 2023.

Nearly 400 events
A total of nearly 400 events planned in France and the EU will punctuate the Presidency: political meetings, a cultural programme and citizen events open to everyone.

Find all information about the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union on the Presidency’s official website and social media:
- Website: www.europe2022.fr
- Facebook
- Instagram
- LinkedIn
- Twitter
- Youtube
- Flickr
The Council of the European Union should not be confused with:

- The European Council, which brings together Heads of State and Government of Member States and defines the overall political direction and priorities of the European Union. Its current President is Charles Michel
- The Council of Europe, which is an intergovernmental organisation made up of 47 Member States. Founded in 1949, the Council of Europe promotes human rights, democracy and the rule of law. Its seat is in Strasbourg and its Secretary-General is Marija Pejčinović Burić.

For more information:
- [www.touteleurope.eu](http://www.touteleurope.eu)
10am – 10.40am

Opening plenary session

Opening of the event by moderator

Introductory speeches by:
- Didier Reynders
  European Commissioner for Justice
- Jean-Baptiste Lemoine
  French Minister in charge of Consumer Affairs
- Anna Cavazzini
  Chair, Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO), European Parliament

10.40am – 11.10am

The evolution of consumer markets today and in the future

How has the pandemic changed consumer behaviour?
- Jean-Laurent Cassely
  Journalist

Key elements to foresee and prepare for the future European consumer policy
- Jakob Edler
  Executive Director, Fraunhofer Institute for Systems and Innovation Research

What are the key consumer market trends to observe?
Breakout sessions on digital technology and the green transition

Session 1: Challenges and opportunities for the digital transition
Moderators:
Xavier Bouton
Head of the Industrial Products Bureau, French Directorate General for Competition Policy, Consumer Affairs and Fraud Control (DGCCRF)
Pinuccia Contino
Head of Unit for Product Safety & Rapid Alert System, European Commission

Panel I: Marketplace accountability
Sabah Doudou
Public Affairs Officer, French Federation of E-commerce and Distance Selling (FEVAD)
Els Brugmann
Head of Policy and Enforcement, Euroconsumers (Belgian consumer organisation)

Panel II: Digital tools supporting consumers to enforce their rights
Axelle Starek
Manager, Ombudsman for Retail, Belgium
Ana Tapadinhas
General Director, Portuguese Association for Consumer Protection (DECO)
Lars Arent
Director, European Consumer Centres Network (ECC-Net)
James Waterworth
Director of EU Public Policy, Amazon
Guillaume Defillon
Head of the SignalConso service, French Directorate General for Competition Policy, Consumer Affairs and Fraud Control (DGCCRF)

Session 2: Transparency of online markets
Moderators:
Paul-Emmanuel Piel
Head of the Media, Electronic Communications, Cultural Sector and Data Economy Bureau, French Directorate General for Competition Policy, Consumer Affairs and Fraud Control (DGCCRF)
Blanca Rodriguez
Head of Unit for Consumer and Marketing Law, European Commission Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers

Panel I: Influencer marketing
Charo Fernando Magarzo
Chair, European Advertising Standards Alliance (EASA)
Olivia Petit
Assistant Professor, KEDGE Business School

Panel II: Dark patterns
Dries Cuijpers
Senior Enforcement Official, Netherlands Authority for Consumers and Markets (ACM)
Nicholas McSpedden-Brown
Consumer Policy Analyst, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
Günes Acar
Assistant Professor, Radboud University

Session 3: Consumer information and green claims
Moderators:
Daniela Bankier
Head of Unit for Gender Equality, European Commission Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers
Philippe Guillermin
Head of the Consumer Law Bureau, French Directorate General for Competition Policy, Consumer Affairs and Fraud Control (DGCCRF)
Panel I: Consumer information
Sylvain Chevassus
Head of the Europe and International Task Force, General Commission for Sustainable Development, French Ministry for the Ecological Transition
Amandine Roggeman
Member of the Citizens’ Climate Convention
Jean-Yves Mano
President, Consommation, Logement et Cadre de Vie (French consumer organisation)

Panel II: Fighting greenwashing
Eva Schneider
Sustainability and Communications Manager, European Brands Association (AIM)
Emy Gustavsson
Legal Advisor, International Consumer Affairs, Sveriges Konsumenter (Swedish consumer organisation)
Matjaz Jakin
Head of Legal Office, Zveza Potrošnikov Slovenije (Slovenian consumer organisation)

Session 4: The right to repair and early obsolescence
Moderators:
Dirk Staudenmayer
Head of Unit for Contract Law, European Commission Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers
Diane Simiu
Deputy Director, General Commission for Sustainable Development, French Ministry for the Ecological Transition

Panel I: Right to repair
Juliette Moizo
Deputy Head of the Organisational and Business Model Transformation Bureau, General Commission for Sustainable Development, French Ministry for the Ecological Transition
Alain Bazot
President, UFC-Que Choisir (French consumer organisation)

Panel II: Fighting planned obsolescence
Giovanni Calabro
Director General, Consumer Protection, Italian Competition Authority (AGCM)
Ronan Groussier
Public Affairs Officer, HOP (French NGO committed to the green transition)

1pm – 2.30pm  Lunch break

2.35pm – 3.35pm  Breakout session summaries
Christoph Busch
Professor of Law, Osnabrück University
Caroline Cauffman
Associate Professor, Maastricht University
Jens Henriksson
International Affairs Lobbyist, Sveriges Konsumenter (Swedish consumer organisation)
Evelyne Terryn
Professor of Law, KU Leuven
3:35pm – 4pm  Adoption of proposed priority areas for action from breakout sessions

4pm – 4.30pm  Closing session

Virginie Beaumeunier  
Director General, French General Directorate for Competition Policy, Consumer Affairs and Fraud Control (DGCCRF)

Nils Behrndt  
Deputy Director-General, European Commission Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers

Jeanne Barseghian  
Mayor of Strasbourg
European Consumers in the Era of Digital Technology and the Green Transition

**Informal Ministerial Meeting**

9.30am – 12.30pm

Ministers of the EU Member States and their delegations
European Consumer Summit 2022 and Informal Ministerial Meeting: European Consumers in the Era of Digital Technology and the Green Transition

The French Presidency of the Council of the European Union is set to host the European Consumer Summit 2022 and an informal ministerial meeting. Both events will tackle the issue of consumer protection in the digital era and the green transition. Tech and environmental experts as well as EU Consumer Affairs Ministers will join citizens, in person or online, to discuss these two important topics.

Hosted at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France, and online, this conference and informal ministerial meeting will provide an opportunity to promote French and European authorities’ priority areas for action regarding consumer protection in the digital era and the green transition. The European Consumer Summit 2022 will feature opening remarks from Didier Reynders, European Commissioner for Justice, and Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne, French Minister in charge of Consumer Affairs. Experts from France and abroad will discuss topics related to the digital and environmental spheres and tackle the issue of how consumption patterns may change in the short- and medium-term.

Participants will put forward their ideas and suggestions during four breakout sessions:
• Making the digital transition without infringing the rights of consumers: Challenges and opportunities (accountability of online marketplaces and digital tools helping consumers enforce their rights)
• Transparency of online markets (influencer marketing and dark patterns)
• Consumer information and green claims (consumer information and fighting greenwashing)
• Improving the lifespan of products – the right to repair and obsolescence (right to repair and fighting early obsolescence).
Following these breakout sessions, each participant will be given the chance to vote for the specific priority areas for action they want to see addressed in 2022. The results of these sessions will inform the content of the informal meeting of EU Consumer Protection Ministers on 11 February 2022.

All told, more than 40 speakers will participate at the European Parliament or online on 10 February 2022. Academics, experts, civil servants, EU citizens, journalists, sociologists and researchers will all take part in the work spearheaded by the European Consumer Summit.

On 11 February 2022, the informal ministerial meeting will be attended by European Commissioner Didier Reynders and EU Consumer Protection Ministers. Discussions will focus on the work produced by the European Consumer Summit. Topics addressed will include:

- The impact of the pandemic on the travel sector and problems posed by the implementation of the directive on package travel and linked travel arrangements
- Matters related to the rights of consumers and the safety of products purchased online
- The future common priorities of Member States and the European Commission in the context of the Consumer Protection Cooperation (CPC) Network
- The informal dialogue with three US consumer protection agencies (the Federal Trade Commission [FTC], the Consumer Product Safety Commission [CPSC] and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau [CFPB]).

Ministers from the 27 EU Member States will join the Commission for these events at the European Parliament, with online attendance possible.

Practical information

**Event**: Consumers in the Era of Digital Technology and the Green Transition  
**Date**: 10 February 2022, from 10am to 4.30pm  
**Location**: European Parliament, Strasbourg. Watch the event live at: European Consumer Summit 2022 - Welcome (b2match.io). The event will also be available on-demand on the DGCCRF’s website (www.economie.gouv.fr/dgccrf) and live tweeted on the DGCCRF’s Twitter page (@dgccrf).
Informal Ministerial Meeting Participants

BEATE BLASCHEK
Head of Unit for Consumers, Federal Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection
Austria

CHRISTIANE ROHLEDER
State Secretary, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection
Germany

EVA DE BLEEPER
State Secretary for the Budget and Consumer Protection
Belgium

DIMITAR DANCHEV
Deputy Minister of Economy and Industry
Bulgaria

NATASA MIKUS ZIGMAN
State Secretary, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development
Croatia

ANTONIS IOANNOU
Deputy Director, Consumer Protection Service (CPS), Ministry for Energy, Commerce and Industry
Cyprus

MICHAEL DITHMER
Permanent Secretary of State for Industry, Business and Financial Affairs
Denmark

RAPHAEL ESCUDERO ALDAY
Secretary General for Consumer Affairs and Gambling
Spain

KRISTI TALVING
Deputy Secretary General for Business and Consumer Environment, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications
Estonia
VILLE KOPRA  
State Secretary, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment  
Finland

OLIVIA GRÉGOIRE  
Minister of State reporting to the Minister for the Economy, Finance and the Recovery  
France

SOTIRIOS ANAGNOSTOPOULOS  
Secretary General for Trade and Consumer Protection, Ministry of Development and Investments  
Greece

PETER CSERESNYES  
State Secretary for Trade Policy and Consumer Protection, Ministry of Innovation and Technology  
Hungary

ROBERT TROY  
Minister of State for Trade Promotion, Digital and Company Regulation, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment  
Ireland

GILBERTO PICHETTO FRATIN  
Deputy Minister for Economic Development  
Italy

ZAIGA LIEPINA  
Deputy State Secretary, Ministry of Economics  
Latvia

JURGA GREICIEŅE  
Vice-Minister, Ministry of Justice  
Lithuania

MARC FISCHER  
Government Advisor, Ministry of the Economy  
Luxembourg

TADEO DEBATTISTA  
Parliamentary Secretary for Consumer Affairs  
Malta
NADJA DUYKERS
Head of Consumer Policy, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy
Netherlands

TOMASZ CHROSTNY
President, Office of Competition and Consumer Protection
Poland

JOAO TORRES
Secretary of State for Trade, Services and Consumer Protection, Ministry for the Economy and the Digital Transition
Portugal

SILVANA JIROTKOVA
Deputy Minister for Economic Policy and Entrepreneurship, Ministry of Industry and Trade
Czech Republic

HORIA MIRON CONSTANTINESCU
President, National Authority for Consumer Protection (ANPC)
Romania

JAN ORAVEC
State Secretary, Ministry of Economy
Slovakia

SIMON ZAJC
State Secretary, Ministry of Economic Development and Technology
Slovenia

MAX ELGER
Minister for Financial Markets, Ministry of Finance
Sweden

DIDIER REYNDERS
European Commissioner
PARTICIPANTS
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, STRASBOURG
10 February 2022 - European Consumer Summit

GUNES ACAR
Assistant Professor, Radboud University

LARS ARENT
Director, European Consumer Centres Network (ECC-Net)

DANIELA BANKIER
Head of Unit for Gender Equality, European Commission Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers

ALAIN BAZOT
President, UFC-Que Choisir (French consumer organisation)

JEANNE BARSEGHIAN
Mayor of Strasbourg

VIRGINIE BEAUMEUNIER
Director General, French General Directorate for Competition Policy, Consumer Affairs and Fraud Control (DGCCRF)

NILS BEHRNDT
Deputy Director-General, European Commission Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers

XAVIER BOUTON
Head of the Industrial Products Bureau, French Directorate General for Competition Policy, Consumer Affairs and Fraud Control (DGCCRF)
PARTICIPANTS
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, STRASBOURG
10 February 2022

ELS BRUGMANN
Head of Policy and Enforcement, Euroconsumers

CHRISTOPH BUSCH
Professor of Law, Osnabrück University

GIOVANNI CALABRO
Director General, Consumer Protection, Italian Competition Authority (AGCM)

JEAN-LAURENT CASSELY
Journalist

CAROLINE CAUFFMAN
Associate Professor, Maastricht University

ANNA CAVAZZINI
Chair, Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO), European Parliament

SYLVAIN CHEVASSUS
Head of the Europe and International Task Force, General Commission for Sustainable Development, French Ministry for the Ecological Transition

PINUCCIA CONTINO
Head of Unit for Product Safety & Rapid Alert System, European Commission
PARTICIPANTS
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, STRASBOURG

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DRIES CUJJPERS
Senior Enforcement Official, Netherlands Authority for Consumers and Markets (ACM)

SABAH DOUDOU
Public Affairs Officer, French Federation of E-commerce and Distance Selling (FEVAD)

RONAN GROUSSIER
Public Affairs Officer, HOP (French NGO committed to the green transition)

EMY GUSTAVSSON
Legal Advisor, International Consumer Affairs, Sveriges Konsumenter (Swedish consumer organisation)

PINUCCIA CONTINO
Cheffe d’unité, Commission européenne

GUILLAUME DEFILLON
Head of the SignalConso service, French Directorate General for Competition Policy, Consumer Affairs and Fraud Control (DGCCRF)

JAKOB EDLER
Executive Director, Fraunhofer Institute for Systems and Innovation Research

PHILIPPE GUILLERMIN
Head of the Consumer Law Bureau, French Directorate General for Competition Policy, Consumer Affairs and Fraud Control (DGCCRF)

JENS HENRIKSSON
International Affairs Lobbyist, Sveriges Konsumenter (Swedish consumer organisation)
PARTICIPANTS
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, STRASBOURG
10 February 2022

MATJAZ JAKIN
Head of Legal Office, Zveza Potrošnikov Slovenije
(Slovenian consumer organisation)

JEAN-BAPTISTE LEMOYNE
Minister in charge of Consumer Affairs

CHARO FERNANDO MAGARZO
Chair, European Advertising Standards Alliance (EASA)

JEAN-YVES MANO
President, Consommation, Logement et Cadre de Vie
(French consumer organisation)

NICOLAS MCSPEDDEN BROWN
Consumer Policy Analyst, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

JULIETTE MOIZO
Deputy Head of the Organisational and Business Model Transformation Bureau, General Commission for Sustainable Development, French Ministry for the Ecological Transition
PARTICIPANTS
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, STRASBOURG
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OLIVIA PETIT
Assistant Professor, KEDGE Business School

PAUL-EMMANUEL PIEL
Head of the Media, Electronic Communications, Cultural Sector and Data Economy Bureau, French Directorate General for Competition Policy, Consumer Affairs and Fraud Control (DGCCRF)

DIDIER REYNDERS
European Commissioner for Justice

BLANCA RODRIGUEZ
Head of Unit for Consumer & Marketing Law, European Commission

AMANDINE ROGGEMAN
Member of the Citizens’ Climate Convention

EVA SCHNEIDER
Sustainability and Communications Manager, European Brands Association (AIM)

DIANE SIMIU
Deputy Director, General Commission for Sustainable Development, French Ministry for the Ecological Transition

AXELLE STAREK
Manager, Ombudsman for Retail, Belgium
PARTICIPANTS
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, STRASBOURG

10 February 2022

DIRK STAUDENMAYER
Head of Unit for Contract Law, European Commission Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers

ANA TAPADINHAS
General Director, Portuguese Association for Consumer Protection (DECO)

EVELYNE TERRYN
Professor of Law, KU Leuven

JAMES WATERWORTH
Director of EU Public Policy, Amazon

Note that this programme is subject to change.