

EUROCONSUMERS INTERNATIONAL FORUM

Bridging the Gap between Consumers and Businesses

in the Digital Age

Euroconsumers' First International Forum

Strengthened by the achievements of its national member organisations, Test Achats/Test Aankoop in Belgium, OCU in Spain, Deco Proteste in Portugal, Altroconsumo in Italy and Proteste in Brazil, Euroconsumers is set to launch an ambitious new challenge in the consumer ecosystem with its first International Forum, to be held on 12 November at the Claridge in Brussels. Powering a pragmatic modern dialogue, the event will bring together leading market players, high-level EU decision makers, Members of the European Parliament, digital thinkers, researchers and key representatives of the consumer world and academia from all over the world.

The Forum - Bridging the Gap between Consumers and Businesses in the Digital Age - will focus unflinchingly on burning issues, from data security and fake news to Artificial Intelligence, human rights and empowerment, technological sovereignty, greening technology, smart transport solutions, digital platforms and the fairer sharing of the economic benefits of digital technology between all stakeholders, including consumers.

The digital ecosystem is currently unbalanced. A significant reduction in competition has considerably weakened the added value that major Internet players transfer to end consumers despite exponential technological development. The innovation/competition trade-off has become stuck in a loop, making it urgent to find solutions to rebalance it.

Initiating this, the Euroconsumers Forum embodies a paradigm shift that acknowledges the changing role of the consumer in the digital era. No longer weak subjects in need solely of protection, consumers are now the drivers of development and new digital markets in which they disclose their personal data. Euroconsumers sees the role of consumer organizations changing to reflect this, moving beyond the often sterile and fruitless polarisation of consumer rights and entrepreneurial

freedom to also serve consumer interests by working with forward-looking responsible market players, heralding a new era for consumerism as an engine of development.

On the industry side, the Forum likewise signals a recognition that no innovation can be sustainable if it does not bring benefits to end consumers and citizens, whose data are now essential for the development of products and services, and whose trust is the lubricant that makes this possible.

The Forum is set to be a disruptive event on many levels, not only bringing consumers, businesses and policymakers together collaboratively, but also supporting productive discussion through an innovatively disruptive format. Instead of podium speakers there will be three stages, each simultaneously an arena of panel debate actively involving the public, who can choose which they engage with over headphones and microphone.

Finally, the event will inaugurate the annual Euroconsumers BeXt Awards for the household appliance and electronic device brands that achieve the highest standards in meeting consumer expectations, based on the results of Euroconsumers' rigorous comparative reviews and consumer surveys. These two concepts - eXpertise and eXperience - inspired the name of the award "BeXt", which combines them with the sense of excellence that the word "Best" invokes.

Registration for the Forum is free on the website <https://consumerpower2019.com> but places are limited and fast disappearing, so don't delay for your opportunity to take part in and influence this historic occasion.

About Euroconsumers

Gathering five national consumer organisations and giving voice to a total of more than 1.5 million people, Euroconsumers is the world's leading consumer cluster in terms of innovative information, personalised services and defence of consumer's rights. Our organisations work closely together and with the BEUC and Consumers International to ensure safe, fair and honest relations between consumers and businesses or authorities.

For further information:

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