



For immediate release

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PrinterGate:

Euroconsumers asks HP to compensate printer owners up to €150 each for unlawfully blocking 3rd party cartridges by pushing firmware update

Brussels – Today, 3rd May 2021, Euroconsumers, the world’s leading consumer cluster, is calling HP Inc. to pay damages to consumers in Italy, Belgium, Spain, Portugal and Brazil for the failed compatibility of its printers with third-party cartridges. Euroconsumers also asks HP to immediately stop this misleading, detrimental and anticompetitive practice.

Since at least the end of 2016, HP has promoted that its printers were compatible with third-party cartridges while in practice they were not. Following a firmware update, users received an error message when installing third-party cartridges on HP printers. This error message led users to believe the perfectly good third-party cartridge was defective and forced them to purchase more expensive HP ones, or even replace their printer entirely.

“This HP practice linked to planned obsolescence is not only illegal, it is also irresponsible. It causes financial detriment to consumers and willfully increases the volume of waste when we should put all efforts on reducing it” said Els Bruggeman, Head of Policy and Enforcement at Euroconsumers. “It is moreover totally unacceptable that HP takes over the control of consumers’ devices for its own benefit, by reading printer information and pushing updates without them knowing about it. Users should be in full control of their own devices.”

“There is a strong case against HP”, says Marco Scialdone, Head Litigation at Euroconsumers:

- In the US, [HP has recently reached a settlement over similar claims](#), agreeing to compensate each plaintiff with USD 100-150 for a total amount of USD 1,5 million.
- On 17 November 2020 the Italian Antitrust Authority concluded HP is liable for the same charges and received a sanction of EUR 10 million.
- The Italian law that allowed for that decision derives from the EU’s Unfair Commercial Practices Directive (2005/29/EC). This means similar charges can be claimed in other European countries.

“This is why we request HP to compensate each HP printer owner in Italy, Belgium, Spain, Portugal and Brazil affected by these practices with an amount of up to EUR 150, just like they did in the United States. In case of no satisfactory answer, Euroconsumers is ready to launch a class action to get proper redress for consumers.”

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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 innovative information, personalised services and defence of consumer's rights. We work closely together with Consumers International to ensure consumers are safe, that markets are fair and benefit from honest relations with businesses and authorities. Our European member groups are also part of the umbrella network of BEUC, the European Consumer Organisation. Together we advocate for EU policies that benefit consumers in their daily lives.