

Press release

## **Consumers support use of apps in fighting virus, although privacy concerns remain top of mind - latest survey**

**Brussels, 7<sup>th</sup> May** - Euroconsumers' most recent survey, conducted in Belgium, Italy, Portugal and Spain, shows that a majority of Europeans support the development of data contact tracing apps to fight the corona pandemic, although most are also concerned about potential abuses of privacy. They depend on technology to deliver privacy-friendly solutions.

**[Join our webinar](#) today at 14:30 CEST: *COVID-19 Apps: Data Privacy & the consumer perspective* for a deeper look into these issues.**

Here are the main findings of the survey<sup>1</sup>:

### **Consumers understand the potential of COVID-19 apps**

The latest Euroconsumers survey indicates that most consumers believe technology can play a positive role in the fight against coronavirus, with a majority believing that contact tracing can help save lives - 66% in Belgium, 67% in Spain, 73% in Italy and 78% in Portugal. More than 60% of respondents agree the use of personal data can help mitigate the spread of the disease, with the figure reaching 70% in Portugal.

The majority support using apps that collect health information, send alerts when one comes in contact with an infected individual or monitor if those infected are respecting quarantine. However, public support depends largely on whether these apps use anonymised data.

### **However, citizens concerned about potential privacy violations**

Indeed, while most consumers (ranging from 55% in Belgium to 71% in Portugal) agree the experience of Asian countries such as China and South Korea shows the use of personal data is essential to fight COVID-19, many (60 to 70%) are also concerned about potential privacy violations.

More than 3 of 4 respondents from the four countries agree that anonymised data can never truly be anonymous. When respondents were asked if they would use an

---

<sup>1</sup> The survey was conducted in Belgium, Italy, Portugal and Spain between 24th and 27th April.

app tracking their movements and locations, 1 of 2 would only do so if that measure was compulsory.

### **Consumers trust on technology to deliver privacy-friendly contact tracing apps**

In Euroconsumers' member countries, over half of the population agrees a temporary erosion of privacy is acceptable to fight the pandemic, with citizens having already had to compromise their fundamental rights. An overall majority (70% and more) is also convinced that technology solutions enabling personal data use in the fight against COVID-19 can be identified, while safeguarding privacy. It is therefore critical that lawmakers take all necessary steps to minimise potential breaches of data privacy, primarily by prioritising, when possible, the anonymity of data.

*“Our survey shows that European consumers trust in the potential of technology as an effective tool to exiting this crisis. Euroconsumers’ commitment to protecting consumers’ personal data in the digital age is at the heart of our manifesto (My Data is Mine) but in this scenario we cannot limit ourselves to merely demand compliance with privacy legislation or the avoidance of abuses - this would simply be stating the obvious. Consumers are asking us to fight for solutions that technology can and should provide to win the collective battle against COVID-19. That is also what we expect from Governments and tech companies.”* said **Marco Pierani, Head of Public Affairs at 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. Our organisations work together and also with BEUC, the European Consumer Organisation, and Consumers International to ensure consumers are safe, that markets are fair and benefit from honest relations with businesses and authorities.

#### **Contacts:**

Simone Ceruti- [simone.ceruti@boldtpartners.com](mailto:simone.ceruti@boldtpartners.com) - Lou Juget - [lou.juget@boldtpartners.com](mailto:lou.juget@boldtpartners.com)

