

European Commission  
President Mrs. Ursula von der Leyen  
Berlaymont building (BERL)  
Rue de la Loi 200  
1040 Bruxelles

Brussels, 6th July 2020

Dear President von der Leyen,

We have learned that Volkswagen has chosen to settle the Dieselpgate scandal with German consumers (with 260,000 German consumers receiving compensation of up to €6,500, according to the information available to the public). Whilst we applaud Volkswagen's decision to recognize the harm it has inflicted upon consumers, we are baffled to see that only German consumers are being compensated, while other European victims are not.

Indeed, Volkswagen, as a company, is active throughout Europe and has benefited significantly from the advantages given to it by the European Union. Through its Dieselpgate scandal, Volkswagen has also polluted all over Europe. By doing so, it has defrauded and harmed the interests of all European consumers. However, when it comes to taking responsibility, the Dieselpgate scandal is only being resolved between Volkswagen and German consumers.

Obviously, for Euroconsumers - the world's leading consumer cluster gathering five national consumer organisations in Belgium, Spain, Portugal, Italy and Brazil - Volkswagen's decision is unacceptable. All consumers that have been cheated have the right to be compensated. That is the reason why, four years ago, all of Euroconsumers' European members have started class actions against Volkswagen: Deco in Portugal, OCU in Spain, Test-Achats in Belgium and Altroconsumo in Italy. The four proceedings are currently pending before the courts.

Dieselpgate is not merely a German problem. It is a global and hence, a European one. By granting German consumers access to fair compensation, whilst denying the same to all other European victims, the Volkswagen Group is jeopardizing one of the core values of the European Union - that all European citizens are equal and should be treated that way. Indeed, with its discriminating behavior Volkswagen does not only inflict harm on consumers, it also puts at risk the European project itself.

Moreover, what Europe needs right now, maybe more than ever, are responsible companies that engage in rebuilding the economy in a more sustainable way. Covid19 has shown us once more we cannot go back to business as usual, but need to invest in a smart and just green transition. We will need everyone on board, including the automotive sector. Therefore, it is time to turn this black page in one of Europe's leading companies and focus on the important challenges ahead: ensuring a green transition, which includes a greener mobile sector.

That is why we would like to call on your support and we trust that as President of the European Commission, guardian of Europe's core values and of the Green Deal, you will take all necessary action to compel Volkswagen to treat all European consumers equal, finally compensate all of them for the Dieselpgate fraud and from now on focus fully on the shift towards more sustainable vehicles.

Europe needs strong, successful companies. But with power comes responsibility. Almost five years since the Dieselgate scandal started, it is time for Volkswagen to clean up the past in order to ensure a sustainable future.

Mr Herbert Diess, Chairman of the Board of Management of Volkswagen AG, and Mr Hans Dieter Pötsch, Chairman of Volkswagen's Supervisory Board, are copied into this letter. We have also called on them to take action.

We hope to meet you soon to discuss this topic in person. Euroconsumers remains at your disposal and looks forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Ivo Mechels  
Executive Director – Euroconsumers



Marco Pierani  
Director of Public Affairs at Euroconsumers



Els Bruggeman  
Head Policy and Enforcement at Euroconsumers

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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 with BEUC and Consumers International to ensure safe, fair and honest relations between consumers, businesses and public authorities.

