

Consumer Protection in a Connected World

**Multi-stakeholder forum hosted by TACD
19 June 2018, Brussels**

Venue: Stanhope Hotel, Rue du Commerce 9, Brussels

The first steps towards large scale dismantling of important legal protections in the US, and the wider challenge of the digitalization of our markets will be the focus of the 2018 annual Forum in Brussels. The Forum will look at issues such as food, privacy, e-commerce, financial services and product safety through the lens of the connected world, as well as examine ways to achieve transatlantic cooperation to better enforce consumer rights.

08.00 Registration and coffee

The forum will be moderated by Jennifer Baker, Journalist

08.50 Chairs' opening remarks

- Ed Mierzwinski, U.S. PIRG

09.00 Opening Session – a ‘fireside’ discussion on current realities

Lessons for the future from past deregulation; consequences of dismantling protections and how to combat them; effects of trade wars on consumers; and other current realities to set the scene for the day's discussions.

Speakers (in alphabetical order)

- Monique Goyens, BEUC
- Bernd Lange, MEP
- Luisa Santos, BusinessEurope
- Robert Weissman, Public Citizen, U.S.

10.00 Session 2 – Face-crash: how to reduce the harms of technology

The impact of technology that is deliberately designed to be addictive, as in the case of social media, has been much in the news recently. It has been suggested that this could have a potentially devastating impact on youth, manipulate consumers and could have a larger effect on our democracy. This session will deliberate how to promote the benefits of technology without the harms, whether by law, data ethics or humane business models.

Speakers (in alphabetical order)

- Joe Edelman, nxhx.org
- Frederike Kaltheuner, Privacy International
- Sunny Kang, EPIC
- Cornelia Kutterer, Microsoft

Discussion with participants

11.15 Coffee Break

11.30 Session 3 - Marketing of unhealthy food to children online

Food marketers in the US and EU are using the latest techniques to target youth – from online influencers to neuromarketing designed to penetrate emotions, and most recently the use of Artificial Intelligence applications to sell foods high in sugar, fat and salt. The session will review possible effects on children, consequences for regulation and put forward solutions.

Speakers (in alphabetical order)

- Joao Breda, WHO Europe
- Kaja Lund-Iversen, Norwegian Consumer Council
- Professor Kathryn Montgomery, American University

Discussion with participants

12:45 Lunch

13:45 The new deal for consumers

- Francisco Fonseca Morillo, DG Justice

14.00 Session 4 – Fintech – how to achieve gain without pain?

Fundamental changes are taking place in the financial services industry, and technology is the key driver, with important implications for both consumer and human rights. It is important that innovations are open to scrutiny and benefit consumers.

Speakers (in alphabetical order)

- Rohit Chopra, Commissioner, Federal Trade Commission
- Peter Kerstens, DG FISMA, European Commission
- Ira Rheingold, National Association of Consumer Advocates, U.S.

Discussion with participants

15.00 Coffee Break

15:15 Session 5 Cybersecurity: the Achille's heel of connected societies

There's now a mass of evidence showing security vulnerabilities in internet connected products have become a major safety, as well as privacy concern. Should product safety rules be extended to cover internet connected products and services?

Speakers (in alphabetical order)

- Ralf Bendrath, European Parliament
- Justin Brookman, Consumer Reports U.S.
- Pinuccia Contino, DG Justice and Consumers, European Commission
- Finn Myrstad, Norwegian Consumer Council
- Despina Spanou, DG CONNECT, European Commission

Discussion with participants

16:45 Final session: is AI undermining consumer protection laws?

Regulatory authorities are increasingly wondering how to address Artificial Intelligence (AI) infringements: smart customer service, or smart contracts, smart insurance decisions, or AI-based directional pricing and information, affecting essential protections and informed choice. Should AI itself be regulated as some have recommended, or be subject to oversight or ethical boards?

Speakers (in alphabetical order)

- Rohit Chopra, Commissioner, Federal Trade Commission
- Pam Dixon, World Privacy Forum, U.S.
- Achim Klabunde, European Data Protection Supervisor
- Justin MacMullan, Consumers International
- Klaus Muller, VZBV German Consumer Federation

Discussion with participants

18.15 Closing, followed by cocktail (hosted by BEUC) and networking
