



How effective is EU consumer legislation? We suggest that it is as good as we make it and now is our opportunity to make it better. We review the Commission's Green Paper on the Review of the Consumer Acquis and invite you to have your say.


This month's consumer query relates to the online purchase of personalised registration plates for a car which the consumer now wants to reject and get a refund.

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Editor

- 1. What's bothering you? – How effective is EU consumer legislation?**
- 2. Consumer query of the month – Looking for a refund on personalised registration plates for a car**

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1. What's bothering you? – How effective is EU consumer legislation?

In brief not as good as we would like it to be and the Commission recognizes this. So on 8 February, the [Green Paper on the Review of the Consumer Acquis](#)  was adopted to identify existing problems and suggest reform.

The Commission is reviewing the following Directives:

- [Sale of consumer goods and guarantees \(99/44/EC\)](#)
- [Price indication \(98/6/EC\)](#)
- [Injunctions \(98/27/EC\)](#)
- [Distance selling \(97/7/EC\)](#)
- [Timeshare \(94/47/EC\)](#)
- [Unfair contract terms \(93/13/EC\)](#)
- [Package travel \(90/314/EC\)](#)
- [Doorstep selling \(85/577/EC\)](#)

All these Directives are based on minimum harmonisation. This means that Member States can go beyond the degree of protection granted to consumers in EC law by introducing or maintaining stricter national consumer rules. As a consequence, differences exist in the level of protection afforded to EU consumers. Another problem is that some of the Directives date back to the 1980s or early 1990s.

There is a need to assess how these Directives are working in practice, to check whether they are enforced properly and whether new products or marketing techniques are causing any detriment for consumers.

In the light of the results, the legislation may need to be revised.

The Commission is therefore calling on all interested parties to express their views on the issues identified in the Review by sending their replies (marked "Response to the Green Paper on the Review of Consumer Acquis") no later than **15 May 2007** to SANCO-B2@ec.europa.eu.

2. Consumer question of the month – Looking for a refund on personalised registration plates for a car

A consumer contacted ECC Dublin to ask if he is entitled to return personalised registration plates to an online web trader and get a refund. There is nothing wrong with the plates but he decided he didn't want them and feels he is entitled to a 7 day cooling off period. Unfortunately this is not the case because the plates were specifically made following the consumer's specifications so he must accept the product.

If you wish to email your consumer queries to us please do so to info@eccdublin.ie

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