

European Consumers in the Digital Era



Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the 2014 European Consumer Summit, which is dedicated to EU consumers in the digital era.

The very first Consumer Summit took place six years ago and focused on consumers' trust in the digital marketplace. Looking back, it is clear that the EU digital economy has undergone a rapid transformation which has heavily impacted the life of consumers.

The figures speak for themselves: There are currently more than 790 million mobile phone subscriptions in Europe and the Internet is used by more than 370 million EU citizens. More than half of EU consumers have made at least one online purchase in the last twelve months and 80% of online consumers are using price comparison websites to find better deals.

The digital economy brings great benefits for consumers, but also raises important questions about consumers' rights online. At the Consumer Summit 2014, I would like to invite you to share your opinions and experiences on every aspect of the digital environment where consumers can make a difference:

- How can consumers best benefit from and contribute to the EU's digital economy?
- How can we effectively protect consumer rights online?
- What are the skills necessary for consumers – including the more vulnerable ones – to be able to find their way in today's complex digital landscape?
- What needs to be done to promote a more consumer-oriented and trustworthy digital environment?

Your ideas can help shape a consumer policy that is fit for the digital era. I count on your contribution and look forward to meeting you at the Summit.

Neven Mimica,
EU Commissioner for Consumer Policy