Consumers - A new European Consumer Agenda

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On 22 May 2012, the European Commission adopted a European consumer agenda which presents its strategic vision for EU consumer policy for the years to come, with a view to maximise consumer participation and trust in the market. This agenda is built around four main objectives: reinforcing consumer safety ; enhancing knowledge ; stepping up enforcement and securing redress; aligning consumer rights and policies to changes in society and in the economy. It also presents a number of key actions to be implemented between now and 2014.

In the framework of the third objective, the European Commission intends to make a better use of the European Judicial Network which, as it is underlines in the agenda, facilitate access to justice, to ensure smooth operation of procedures with a cross-border impact and to facilitate requests for judicial cooperation across Member States. Concerning the right to redress, the Commission will focus in the short-to-medium-term on ensuring the adoption and application of its recent proposals on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) and Online Dispute Resolution (ODR). At the same time, the European Commission announces that the European Small Claims procedure will be made more accessible for consumers : in 2012, a guide providing practical advice to consumers and legal practitioners will be issued to this end and, during the course of 2013, the Commission intends to make the small claims forms available online and report on the operation of the procedure as a whole, including on the need to revise the level of the threshold (currently : 2000 euros).

http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/strategy/docs/consumer_agenda_2012_en.pdf [2]

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