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German highest civil court ruling underlines consumers must be compensated for Dieselgate scandal

The owner of a Volkswagen car affected by the Dieselgate emissions scandal is due compensation, Germany's highest civil court (*Bundesgerichtshof*) [ruled today](#).

This landmark ruling from the Federal Court confirms the view of consumer groups that Volkswagen's manipulation of car emissions has harmed consumers and that they are due compensation.

This decision is a very clear signal and will have important consequences for complaints filed against the car maker in Germany and should, hopefully, also have an impact on pending proceedings elsewhere in Europe.

Earlier this year, our German member Verbraucherzentrale Bundesverband (vzbv) reached an [out-of-court settlement](#) with Volkswagen, which benefits consumers resident in Germany with a partial refund of the car price. However, Volkswagen refused to include consumers elsewhere in Europe. Thus all other European consumers are still empty-handed. Consumer groups from the BEUC network have [launched court actions to obtain redress](#) using all available means for example in Austria, Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia, Switzerland and Spain [1].

Monique Goyens, BEUC Director General, commented:

"The fact that Germany's highest civil court rules in favour of the consumer is a clear and very much welcome signal. Volkswagen must finally put an end to its stalling tactics and compensate consumers for its deception.

"Today's ruling ought to resonate across Europe. We call upon other courts to follow suit and make Volkswagen finally face the consequences of its actions."

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[1] The consumer groups involved are Verein für Konsumenteninformation (VKI), Test Achats/Test Aankoop, UFC-Que Choisir, Altroconsumo, Union Luxembourgeoise des Consommateurs (ULC), Consumentenbond, DECO, Zveza Potrošnikov Slovenije (ZPS), Fédération romande des consommateurs and OCU.

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