

Contact: Johannes Kleis: +32 (0)2 789 24 01
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US Volkswagen settlement for consumer compensation imminent – EU consumers still ignored

A deadline for Volkswagen Group to reach a settlement with US regulators and consumers after its use of defeat devices to trick air pollutant emission tests expires on the 28th of June. The San Francisco federal court is expected to rubberstamp an agreement which includes compensation for US car owners of up to \$7,000, a buyback of an affected car by VW and a fine for the car-maker.

The European Consumer Organisation (BEUC) urges Volkswagen to tackle EU consumers' compensation claims next. EU consumers have been misled in the same way as US drivers, they deserve the same treatment.

BEUC had engaged with Volkswagen to find an amicable solution. However, VW refused to respond to repeated calls to compensate European car owners. Owing to this disregard of EU consumers' legitimate claims, BEUC is considering next steps and its members in Italy, Spain, Belgium and Austria have decided to launch legal actions against Volkswagen¹.

Monique Goyens, Director General of The European Consumer Organisation (BEUC), commented:

"Consumers have been massively misled by Volkswagen and this settlement in the US recognises the damage suffered by car drivers. It is inconceivable that consumers in the EU get treated differently. Volkswagen would be well-advised to offer a similar settlement to EU consumers, and we expect national authorities to support consumers and finally break their silence."

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¹ BEUC members Altroconsumo in Italy, Test-Achats in Belgium and OCU in Spain have launched group actions against Volkswagen. Our Austrian member VKI has joined (as a private party) the criminal proceedings against VW to try to facilitate remedies for consumer compensation.