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EU to better protect consumers in case defective products cause damage

Today, the EU reached an [agreement](#) to ensure broader protection for consumers if harmed by defective products. Consumers will finally be able to claim compensation with less difficulty. This update to the almost 40-year-old Product Liability Directive was urgently needed to adapt to the digital world around us.

Ursula Pachi, Deputy Director General at BEUC, commented:

"Thanks to today's deal, consumers will be better protected and will find it easier to claim compensation in case they were harmed by a faulty product. On top of manufacturers, importers, and distributors, online marketplaces will now also be liable for damage in specific circumstances.

"Software is increasingly present in consumers' lives but can also cause severe harm. For example, your battery-saving app can make your smartphone overheat and ignite. You could be injured, or property can be damaged. It's great news that the new rules will allow consumers to claim compensation for harm caused by software products such as apps.

"Proving that the product was defective – the so-called burden of proof – is a key obstacle for consumers when claiming compensation. This is especially true for the complex products we use every day, such as connected AI-driven products. Therefore, we're happy to see that the EU has decided to ease the burden of proof for consumers."

Background

The Council and European Parliament must still formally confirm the agreement in the next few months. Once the new rules are adopted, Member States will have to transpose them into national law.

Documents

[BEUC recommendations for trilogues](#)
[BEUC position paper on the Product Liability Directive](#)