



Permanent Representation to the EU

## The Consumer Voice in Europe

BEUC-L-2026-087

12 June 2026

**Subject:** Consumer concerns on Digital Omnibus – preserve actual simplification for consumers

Dear Permanent Representative,

On behalf of **The European Consumer Organisation (BEUC)**, we would like to express our concerns about the latest Council presidency proposal for a position on Digital Omnibus. Ahead of the upcoming Council discussions, we would like to share our recommendations to preserve one of the **few actual measures for simplification that delivers for consumers: automated signals (Art. 88b)**.

Consumer organisations have been consistently expressing their concerns that, if implemented in its current form, the proposal for a Digital Omnibus, may **seriously impact the right to privacy and data protection of European citizens** and that proposal in question goes way beyond the promises of a mere “targeted modification” for simplification. It operates instead as an extensive reopening of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), representing an extensive change which would undermine fundamental safeguards for consumers and European businesses.

**Simplification should also be designed to benefit consumers.** In this regard, **BEUC welcomes the proposal** of the European Commission which **introduces automated machine-readable signals to manage consumers consent choices online**. This is fundamental for consumers as it would provide **a harmonised and centralised way for consumers to be informed and give their consent** - one of a few positive measures proposed in the Digital Omnibus which delivers actual simplification for consumers.



Although welcoming the constructive progress made in the Council discussions in the past months, we are strongly concerned by public reports<sup>1</sup> that the latest presidency proposal of compromise may suggest the deletion of Article 88b.

Consumers have been **waiting for far too long for a more consistent and easy way to express their privacy preferences online**. Cookie banners have been proven to be intrusive, disruptive and dominated by confusing and misleading user interface designs and dark patterns. The so-called '**cookie fatigue**' **has effectively denied consumers in practice from fully enjoying their rights to make genuine choices** about how they consent their personal data to being processed.

A consent which is expressed using uniform automated signals can genuinely **simplify consumers' everyday life and online experience and reduce consent fatigue**. They provide a meaningful way to express preferences, including a centralised way to manage tracking preferences, enabling more effective choices while strengthening consumer rights. By reducing repeated and disruptive consent interactions, they also help limit manipulative design practices and give consumers real control and clarity over the processing of their personal data.

Automated signals only change the format through which consumers can effectively communicate their choices in a more genuine way, without changing the legal basis for processing data or the rights consumers have under the GDPR.

**Moreover, this is already technically possible**. There are already many examples of automated machine-readable signals ready for use. Rejecting this proposal because **consumers would most likely choose not to be tracked and profiled would be an extremely concerning sign** that runs counter to one of the core objectives of the GDPR, which is between others, putting consumers in control of how their personal data is processed.

BEUC calls on Member States to **return to the previous Presidency text, improving it to guarantee that the provision clearly defines the format of automated signals** and clarify potential uncertainties in interpretation. It should also guarantee that their design meets GDPR standards for valid consent, including by providing consumers with informed, specific and granular choices. Council should ensure that the Digital Omnibus is bound by a **timely adoption, guarantees legal certainty** - rather than leaving key components to be defined at a later stage - and **ensure its consistency** between the GDPR and the ePrivacy Directive.

As the negotiations enter its decisive phase, we call on Member States to take a firm stance in their discussion of the Digital Omnibus proposals, in favour of a European, consumer-centric regulatory framework, while decisively opposing proposals for further deregulation.

**BEUC therefore urges Member States to act decisively to strengthen this provision and support the adoption of Article 88b.**

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<sup>1</sup> As reported in the media: Politico PRO, Document: Countries drop GDPR changes on cookie reforms: (paywall)

Consumer organisations have been given assurances that the simplification agenda was not going to lead a deregulation wave. Yet, the current direction of the Digital Omnibus now risks creating precisely that perception. Removing the proposal on automated signals would send a concerning signal to millions of consumers that “simplification” delivers only for the benefit of companies whilst failing to deliver any simplification for consumers. **Retaining the provision is therefore essential for consumers and the credibility of the simplification agenda itself.**

Please note that, further to our main concerns listed above, we are sharing our detailed comments and recommendations also on other provisions directly with the respective Working Party attachés in copy.

In addition, please note that due to the overarching public interest in this matter, we intend to make this letter publicly available.

Yours sincerely,

Agustín Reyna  
Director General