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European Parliament vote on crucial Digital Markets Act strengthens consumers' hands

The European Parliament has voted to strengthen the European Commission's Digital Markets Act (DMA) proposal - landmark legislation to create a fairer digital market - which will give consumers a greater share of the benefits of digital services.

Ursula Pachi, Deputy Director General at the European Consumer Organisation (BEUC), said:

"The European Parliament has voted to place consumer interests at the heart of the EU's Digital Markets Act. For example, the Parliament's amendments would give consumers more choice over which social networks and instant messaging services they use and prevent tech giants from using 'dark patterns' to distort consumers' choices.

"BEUC urges Member States to now follow the Parliament's position and for the EU institutions to vigorously promote consumers' interests in the forthcoming negotiations on the DMA. Consumers deserve the best possible rules to tackle tech giants' unfair business practices that deny effective choice to consumers in digital markets.

"It is crucial the EU sets the standard to the rest of world by making sure the digital economy works to the benefit of consumers rather than to the exclusive benefit of the tech giants."

BEUC particularly welcomes the amendments proposed by the Parliament in today's vote on the DMA that would:

- ensure consumer choice of social network and instant messaging services by obliging big platforms to allow competitors' services to work seamlessly with their own, just as e-mail and telephone services work perfectly regardless of the operator
- explicitly prohibit gatekeepers from circumventing their obligations through the use of 'dark patterns' (behavioural techniques) and interface design to distort consumers' choices
- allow the consumer's voice to be heard in procedures for the implementation and enforcement of the DMA
- be enforceable in Member States' courts, including through consumer organisations' collective actions.
- extend the scope of DMA rules to cover digital assistants like Amazon's Alexa and Apple's Siri

- ensure the European Commission is adequately resourced to carry out its enforcement functions under the DMA, as regards both the number of staff and the types of expertise required.

ENDS

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