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Payments on vote in European Parliament

The EU's Payment Services Directive was voted on today in the European Parliament's Economic Affairs committee.

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

"Whenever consumers make a payment they must be able to be sure it is safe and they are protected when things go wrong. So we welcome the decrease of consumer liability in fraud incidents from €150 to €50. In addition, Member States are free to decide to waive consumer liability altogether. Another improvement is that banks will have to refund their customers within 24 hours of being notified of an unwanted transaction.

"Consumers want to have control when making payments. MEPs today decided to grant consumers an unconditional refund right for direct debits. It would allow consumers to ask for a refund for instance when goods were not delivered.

"More and more players are entering the payments market. We welcome such competition if it leads to better and more user-friendly services for consumers. However, the safety of payments has to come first. It's reassuring news that this has been addressed by ensuring sensitive account data will not be given to third parties."

Also on the agenda was a vote to bring down debit and credit card fees. These hidden interchange fees occur with every card transaction and increase the cost of products and services we buy.

Monique Goyens added:

"These unregulated and unjustifiably high card fees only benefit banks and card companies. As banks cherish this income, they have no interest in letting cheaper card services or innovative payment players enter the market. Capping these fees by 0.3% and 0.2% of the transaction amount for credit and debit cards will bring down the cost of making payments significantly."

ENDS