

Module	Consumer Protections
Jurisdictions	European Union

Module Scope

Does the trader engaging in digital commercial activity must follow applicable requirements governing conformity and supply of digital content and services, platform due diligence, content moderation, transparency in algorithm-driven practices, advertising and pricing disclosures, e-commerce information and ordering procedures, and non-discriminatory cross-border access to online interfaces, goods, services, and payment methods?

Does the trader ensure that standard consumer contract terms, including terms governing digital content and digital services, are fair, transparent, legally compliant, and free from terms that create a significant imbalance to the detriment of the consumer?

Does the trader ensure that its marketing, advertising, environmental claims, comparative campaigns, and pre-contractual disclosures to consumers are clear, truthful, substantiated, and compliant with applicable consumer protection law?

Does the trader conduct comprehensive pre-market safety risk assessments, fulfil its role-specific product safety duties as a manufacturer, importer or distributor, and accept liability for damage caused by defective products in accordance with applicable EU product safety and product liability laws?

Does the trader ensure that all mandatory consumer rights and guarantees are accounted for in their operations, including those related to withdrawal, transactions, conformity claims, repair of goods and passenger travel?

Does the trader must ensure products placed on the market comply with applicable harmonisation legislation, cooperate with market surveillance authorities, take prompt corrective action when non-compliance or product risks are identified, and must not unjustifiably discriminate against customers based on nationality, place of residence or place of establishment when providing access to online interfaces, selling goods, providing services or processing payments across EU Member States?

Does the trader disclose require pre contractual information on the durability and repairability of a product before the conclusion of a contract and ensure that every environmental claim made in a commercial communication is specific, substantiated by verifiable evidence, and not misleading to consumers?

Module Application

The EU Consumer Protection module addresses the comprehensive regulatory framework established by the European Union to protect consumers across the digital economy and the broader internal market. It covers the obligations imposed on traders in relation to digital content and services, platform governance, unfair contract terms, marketing and advertising, product safety and liability, consumer rights and guarantees, cross-border market surveillance, and sustainability and green claims. The module is designed to provide organisations with a structured approach to understanding and meeting these obligations across the full lifecycle of the consumer relationship.

Regulatory Coverage

The EU Consumer Protection framework is composed of a broad and interconnected body of directly applicable regulations and directives transposed into national law across all Member States. The regulatory landscape encompasses rules governing the supply and conformity of digital content and digital services, due diligence and transparency requirements for intermediary services and online platforms, fairness standards for consumer contract terms, prohibitions on unfair, misleading, and aggressive commercial practices, pre-contractual information disclosure obligations, product safety and strict liability regimes for defective products, statutory consumer rights including withdrawal, delivery, conformity, repair, and remedy entitlements, passenger rights across multiple transport modes, package travel protections, cross-border non-discrimination and geo-blocking rules, market surveillance and enforcement cooperation frameworks, and requirements governing environmental claims and sustainability labelling. The framework is dynamic, with obligations that escalate based on the nature, scale, and reach of the organisation's commercial activities.

What the module helps organisations do?

This module supports organisations in identifying which categories of consumer protection obligation apply to their operations and in aligning their practices with the corresponding requirements. It enables organisations to ensure that digital products and services meet prescribed conformity standards, that platform interfaces and algorithmic systems operate transparently and without manipulative design, and that all standard contract terms used in consumer dealings are fair, intelligible, and balanced. The module assists organisations in verifying that marketing communications, advertising campaigns, environmental claims, and comparative statements are truthful, substantiated, and presented in a manner that does not mislead consumers.

The module further supports organisations in meeting their product safety obligations, including pre-market risk assessment, role-specific duties as manufacturers, importers, or distributors, and the management of liability exposure for defective products. It addresses the full range of consumer rights and guarantees, from withdrawal and delivery entitlements through to conformity remedies, repair obligations, package travel protections, and passenger rights across air, rail, bus and coach, and sea and inland waterway transport. The module also assists organisations in ensuring that cross-border sales practices do not unjustifiably discriminate against customers and that market surveillance cooperation obligations are met consistently across all Member States.

In relation to sustainability and green claims, the module helps organisations ensure that environmental messaging is specific, evidence-based, and free from greenwashing, and that pre-contractual disclosures on durability, repairability, and software updates are accurate and complete.

The module applies to any organisation operating as a trader within the European Union, including manufacturers, importers, distributors, service providers, online platform operators, carriers, travel organisers, and retailers. It applies regardless of whether the organisation is established in a Member State or in a third country, provided its activities involve the supply of goods, digital content, digital services, or other services to consumers located within the EU.

The obligations extend across all sales channels, including on-premises, off-premises, and distance contracts, and cover both online and offline commercial activity. Certain obligations escalate for organisations operating very large online platforms, very large online search engines, or deploying high-risk artificial intelligence systems. The cross-border dimensions of the framework mean that compliance in one Member State does not relieve the organisation of its obligations in others, and enforcement actions in one jurisdiction may trigger consequences across the internal market.

Consequences of Non-Compliance

Non-compliance with EU consumer protection requirements exposes organisations to a range of significant consequences. Under applicable digital services legislation, fines may reach up to 6% of annual worldwide turnover for substantive infringements, with periodic penalty payments of up to 5% of average daily worldwide turnover. For unfair commercial practices, misleading advertising, unfair contract terms, and consumer information failures, cross-border enforcement fines must be capable of reaching at least 4% of the organisation's annual turnover in the relevant Member States, or at least EUR 2,000,000 where turnover information is unavailable. Product liability regimes impose strict, no-fault liability for damage caused by defective products, covering death, personal injury, property damage, and data corruption, with liability that cannot be limited or excluded by contract. Market surveillance authorities may order product withdrawal, recall, or prohibition and recover the full costs of enforcement activities from the responsible economic operator. At the national level, criminal penalties including fines and imprisonment apply across multiple areas of consumer protection law. Consumers harmed by unfair commercial practices have access to remedies including compensation, price reduction, and contract termination. Contractual terms that exclude or restrict statutory consumer rights may be declared void or non-binding.

Closing

The EU Consumer Protection module provides organisations with a structured and comprehensive framework for understanding, assessing, and meeting the full range of consumer protection obligations applicable to their operations within the European Union. By consolidating requirements spanning digital services, contractual fairness, marketing integrity, product safety and liability, consumer rights and guarantees, cross-border compliance, and sustainability claims into a single coherent framework, the module supports organisations in achieving and maintaining compliance across an evolving and multi-layered regulatory environment.

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