

Press Release – For immediate release

28 July 2020

Media Contact:

Will Hummel: william.hummel@boldtpartners.com

**EUROCONSUMERS SURVEY: EU CITIZENS STRUGGLING TO GET BACK TO NORMALITY
POST COVID-19 LOCKDOWN**

Study shows that majority of respondents in Belgium, Italy, Portugal and Spain are still afraid for their safety and will refrain from their previous activities and behaviours, which has a significant impact on both their health and the economy.

Brussels, July 28 - Euroconsumers announced today the results of a new survey conducted in Belgium, Italy, Portugal and Spain on how residents are adjusting their behaviour as these countries come out of lockdown. *The study found that a majority of respondents are still afraid for their safety and will continue to refrain from their previous activities and behaviours.*

Specifically, the study found the following:

Respondents believe their health is being compromised

Since the beginning of the coronavirus crises, more than half of the respondents in every country had to postpone medical and health services and approximately 20% (from 14% in IT to 33% in ES) of the respondents had to cancel a health service. The impact of this was clear as a plurality of respondents reported that this lack of health services had negatively impacted their health (38% in BE, 41% in IT, 53% in PT, 39% in ES).

Respondents in all four countries still consider unsafe to go for a medical consultation to the family physician or a health care unit (25% in BE, 30% in IT, 52% in PT, 53% in ES) or to go to the emergency service in a hospital (41% in BE, 58% in IT, 60% in PT, 65% in ES) which is likely to perpetuate the cycle of not getting medical treatment.

Lastly, about half of the respondents reported that the COVID-19 crisis had a negative impact on their overall quality of life (from 47% in BE to 66% in PT).

Citizens are reluctant to go back to resume their previous activities and behaviours

The study showed that respondents are reluctant to resume their previous activities and behaviours following the COVID-19 lockdown. About 75% of public transportation users reduced their usage or still did not start using it again (71% in BE, 73% in IT, 81% in PT, 75% in ES).

A large majority of restaurant visitors reduced or did not start up their visits again (73% in BE, 78% in IT, 88% in PT, 86% in ES). Additionally, respondents reported having to cancel large financial decisions, such as e.g. buying a car, buying a house, etc. (9% in BE, 13% in IT, 7% in IT, 13% in ES) or postpone them beyond 2020 (22% in BE, 41% in IT, 43% in PT, 40% in ES).

Lastly, more than half of respondents (from 57% in BE to 76% in ES) had to change their summer plans, and about one out of four will stay at home or do not plan anything. This will have significant downstream economic impacts for the tourism sector.

Economic forecast: lack of trust will impact the economy

The results are clear - respondents are still afraid and their (lack of) activity will continue to impact the ongoing economic recovery. Rebuilding the economy and society will take time, but it will not be possible without the trust of consumers. Consumption rates are key to any recovery and we can see that consumers are reluctant to go back to normality, impacting all levels of the economy.

“It is clear that safety will play a significant role in rebuilding the economy. Public authorities must present ambitious solutions to address consumers’ safety concerns and rebuild the trust that is needed to protect their health and relaunch the economy. Next to a strong financial framework, it is crucial that EU and national governments install strong safety measures, to save lives and the economy.” said **Marco Pierani, Head of Public Affairs at Euroconsumers.**

About Euroconsumers

Gathering five national consumer organisations and giving voice to a total of more than 1.5 million people, Euroconsumers is the world’s leading consumer cluster in innovative information, personalised services and defence of consumer’s rights. Our organisations work together and also with BEUC, the European Consumer Organisation, and Consumers International to ensure consumers are safe, that markets are fair and benefit from honest relations with businesses and authorities.