

MY DATA IS MINE DECLARATION

Consumers as crucial catalysts of a more sustainable and responsible digital value chain to make the data economy flourish



ALTROCONSUMO, DECO-PROTESTE, OCU, PROTESTE and TEST-AANKOOP/TEST-ACHATS agree that:

- To fully grasp the extraordinary potential that the Internet offers us today, we have to overcome the often sterile and fruitless opposition between entrepreneurial freedom and the fundamental rights of citizens/consumers. As Consumers Organizations, we are therefore ready to join forces with all stakeholders to foster the conditions for a stable social economic development on the basis of a new digital value chain;
- In order to embrace this future with optimism, we argue that the recognition of consumer's rights and trust is key to inspiring innovation in institutions, companies and corporate policies and hence to leveraging the benefits of technological evolutions to the whole ecosystem;
- Data has become an essential resource for economic growth, job creation and societal progress but big data exploitation should not be considered in contradiction with an adequate protection of consumers' privacy. We believe that the data economy can only flourish and avoid a very dangerous degeneration by restoring consumers and citizens to a central position in its evolution;
- Thanks to digital developments we get "free" contents and services, new games and divertissements in social media, more targeted advertisements, data analytics that facilitate decision making, innovation and the prediction of future events; we may even envisage that in few years business will know so much about us that it will be able to infer our desires before we even form them and perhaps buy products on our behalf before we know we need them;
- The accelerating introduction of "connected products" will further leverage the power of big data in the years to come. With the venue of IoT, big data may not only be derived from the way consumers interact with their laptops, tablets, smartphones – their main access points to the world of digital services for the time being –, but an enormous amount of additional data on consumer behaviors will be generated through the interaction with objects and products in the real, physical world. The addition of IoT-generated (personal) data to the mix of (personal) data from other sources is a true game-changer and will give a turbo-boost to big-data based "predictive profiling".
- IoT will add even more opportunities to existing big data capabilities in order to make consumption highly personal and customized. Optimistic voices suggest that this will

make consumers' lives simpler and more enjoyable. We believe, however, that this will only be true if the complexity of a technology-driven, highly distributed and fragmented ecosystem of suppliers of devices, platforms, software and communication services is managed efficiently. This implies that the owners/users of sensor-equipped machines or devices are to be recognized as the owners of the data produced and that protocol standardization and interoperability should be developed. Also justified concerns about physical integrity and digital safety, data protection and privacy in particular have to be addressed.

- The technology we created to expand our freedom should not develop into a system that coerces and controls us; we cannot relinquish our autonomy and freedom in exchange of our comfort;

In light of the above:

- As Consumers Organizations of continued relevance in a hyperconnected world, we are committed to assisting consumers in their changing relationship to products and services but also in managing their more complex relations with a variety of companies on the supply-side, product, software and service providers;
- As Consumers Organizations that aim to become a trusted and collaborative ecosystem player in a complex environment of market players, institutions and other stakeholders, we are committed to setting up, supporting and promoting initiatives that empower consumers in terms of cybersecurity and privacy in the digital landscape;
- As Consumers Organizations that uphold the protection and enforcement of consumer rights as a crucial vehicle of access to citizens' fundamental rights on digital platforms, we are committed to making big data and IoT become a force for freedom rather than a force of concealed manipulation. In order to win this battle, we will not confine ourselves to adequate compliance with legislation, because observing rules and avoiding abuse should be matched with other, equally important action. We are therefore also committed to achieving the full acknowledgment and widespread defense of the central role of the human being in the information society as well as consumers' legitimate economic interests in the emerging market of data;

To this end:

As Signatories of this Common Declaration, identifying with the principles outlined above and convinced of the need to lay the foundations for the development of a data economy which should become more responsible, sustainable and respectful of consumers' rights, through an open dialogue involving Institutions and market players, we stress the importance that all involved stakeholders:

- cease to conceive the market of data exclusively as a business-to-business market, considering that the end consumers almost fully account for the added value sources;
- acknowledge that consumers are among the major drivers of innovation and contributors to the survival of the digital ecosystem;
- accept as a consequence that the benefits of the data economy have to be shared on a fair basis between data controllers and data subjects;
- implement interoperability correctly to avoid lock-in and enable consumers to switch between different service providers easily;
- grant an exclusive right to the owners/users of sensor-equipped machines or devices to license the use of data collected to any party they wish;
- develop efficient and easy-to-handle tools and rules so that consumers and citizens can manage their data easily and securely;
- focus on delivering innovative and personalized services that better fit consumers' real needs and expectations, and by doing so enhance consumers' lives, uphold their fundamental rights and freedoms and those of society as a whole.

Signed in Bruxelles on the 16th June 2017

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