

**Meeting between Commissioner Reynders and the signatories of the Product Safety
Pledge**

Virtual meeting, meeting room BER - JREY - JEAN REY -09/11/2021 11:00-12:15

**High-level round table meeting with the representatives of
the signatories of the product safety pledge
Opening remarks and briefing**



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Opening remarks

- In 2018, four online marketplaces – Amazon, – voluntarily pledged their commitment to increase the safety of products sold online.
- Today, you are 11 taking part in our Product Safety Pledge.
- In the last reporting period, 97% of products identified via public recall websites, such as EU Safety Gate, were removed within two working days.
- This is brilliant.
- I want to say a big thank you, on behalf of the European Commission for your commitment.

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- We talk a lot about legislation but we know that voluntary initiatives really work.
- You are the proof.
- This is why I am keen to extend the Product Safety Pledge further and why I am happy to have you here with me today.
- For example, could we have voluntary pledges to ensure online reviews are fair?
- Could companies like yours pledge to design their online interfaces in a fair way for consumers?
- Could companies pledge to cooperate with enforcers to tackle the problem of misleading green claims for example?
- I know that you are facing changes in the legislative landscape, not least following the proposals for a Digital Services Act and a General Product Safety Regulation.
- Shortly the Commission will also make a proposal to have EU-wide rules on sustainable corporate governance.
- And we will be making a proposal to ensure that consumers are empowered to make sustainable choices and contribute to achieving the objectives of the European Green Deal.
- These are all very necessary developments.
- Take the GPSD as an example. The General Product Safety Directive, was adopted in 2002 when only nine percent of Europeans were shopping online.

- Last year, seventy-two percent of internet users shopped online in the EU and the sale of new digital products has grown in parallel.
- This legislation needs to cover these products.
- I'll give you another example. 85% of respondents to a recent Commission survey said they were unsatisfied or only partially satisfied with the environmental information available to them.
- One of the reasons frequently given was that they felt information was generally not sufficient to support consumer decision-making.
- We also know that greenwashing and planned obsolescence are very real problems which directly hinder our chances of a sustainable future.
- EU legislation needs to address this. This is what we will shortly propose.
- In the meantime, voluntary commitments from companies are already making a big difference.
- For example, the Green Consumption Pledge – which is the Product Safety Pledge's sustainable cousin – has encouraged major EU companies to make new commitments to improve their sustainability.

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- In short, my message to you is that we cannot afford to wait for legislation to catch up to reality. And nor do we have to.
- I know you know this as your companies have already gone above and beyond to protect consumers while we ensure that product safety legislation is fit for the digital era.
- So I want to make the Product Safety Pledge bigger and better, with the widest support and ideas.
- This afternoon, DG JUST is also organising the first ever Annual Digital Consumer Event where we will also share our ideas for extending voluntary cooperation to other topics.
- Of course we can't do this without you so I look forward to hearing your thoughts today!
- Thank you!

