

Eight Dimensions for Consumer Protection in the Digital World

Extract of the ConPolicy Study, commissioned by vzbv (2017)

The UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection (UNGCP) serve as a conceptual framework to analyse consumer protection. This framework consists of eight dimensions and forms the starting point for these Digital Consumer Protection and Empowerment Indicators.



Figure 2: The eight dimensions of the Digital Consumer Protection and Empowerment indicators

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Based on the eight dimensions derived from the UNGCP the study develops a wide-ranging set of indicators to describe the state of protection and empowerment in the digital world.









Access 	Economic interests 	Product safety and liability 	Privacy and data security 	Information and transparency 	Education and awareness 	Dispute resolution and redress 	Governance and participation 
Consumer outcomes	Regulatory context	Regulatory context	Regulatory context	Regulatory context	Regulatory context	Regulatory context	Regulatory context
<p>Access to networks</p> <p>Proportion of the population which is covered by a high-speed mobile-cellular network</p> <p>Proportion of the population which is covered by a high-speed fixed-broadband network</p> <p>Mobile uptake</p> <p>Proportion of the population using a high-speed mobile-cellular service</p> <p>Proportion of the population using a high-speed fixed-broadband subscription</p>	<p>Adequacy of competition law and its enforcement</p> <p>Expert satisfaction with competition law to address the particularities of the digital economy</p> <p>Expert satisfaction with competition law enforcement</p> <p>Expert satisfaction with rules and regulations regarding interoperability and data portability</p> <p>Expert satisfaction with net neutrality rules and regulations</p>	<p>Adequacy of safety & liability laws and their enforcement</p> <p>Expert satisfaction with safety and liability laws</p> <p>Existence of regulatory authorities for safety</p> <p>Existence of a market monitoring system for digital products and services (including independent testing facilities)</p> <p>Expert satisfaction with the enforcement of safety and liability laws</p>	<p>Adequacy of privacy & data security laws and their enforcement</p> <p>Expert satisfaction with privacy and data security laws</p> <p>Extent to which the laws correspond with the abovementioned good practices</p>	<p>Adequacy of consumer information & disclosure laws and their enforcement</p> <p>Expert satisfaction with consumer information and disclosure laws</p> <p>Extent to which the laws correspond with the abovementioned good practices</p>	<p>Regulatory framework</p> <p>Consumer education is an integral part of the basic curriculum of the educational system</p>	<p>Adequacy of legislation about dispute resolution and redress</p> <p>Expert satisfaction with the legislation about dispute resolution and redress</p> <p>Extent to which the laws correspond with good practices</p>	<p>Law-making</p> <p>Existence of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a parliamentary committee a dedicated ministry a national strategy ... about consumer protection and empowerment (in the digital world)
Consumer outcomes	Consumer outcomes	Business conduct	Consumer outcomes	Consumer outcomes	Consumer outcomes	Business conduct	Consumer outcomes
<p>Affordability</p> <p>High speed mobile-cellular prices</p> <p>High speed fixed-broadband prices</p> <p>Use</p> <p>Proportion of individuals using the Internet</p> <p>Consumer satisfaction</p> <p>Consumer satisfaction with the quality of and costs for the Internet connection</p>	<p>Consumer experience</p> <p>Degree of liberalisation in various ICT sectors</p> <p>Consumer satisfaction with the ability to easily switch to an alternative supplier if they dislike the practices of an online service</p> <p>Consumer switching behaviour in various ICT sectors</p> <p>Consumer concerns about personalised pricing and price discrimination</p>	<p>Business behaviour</p> <p>Extent to which businesses respect safety standards in pre-market design</p> <p>Extent to which businesses monitor their products once they are in the market</p> <p>Extent to which businesses have in place product recall procedures</p>	<p>State of privacy protection and data security</p> <p>Number and severity of reported incidences of data breaches</p> <p>Number of secure Internet servers (per 1 million people) (secure Internet servers are servers using encryption technology in Internet transactions)</p> <p>Consumer concerns about privacy</p> <p>Consumer concerns about data security</p>	<p>State of consumer information and disclosure practices</p> <p>Consumer satisfaction with consumer information and disclosure practices</p> <p>Number of consumer protection issues in media</p> <p>Existence of comparative testing organisations</p> <p>Existence of independent consumer organisations offering pre-purchase advice</p>	<p>Consumers' digital literacy</p> <p>Information and data literacy</p> <p>Communication and collaboration</p> <p>Content creation</p> <p>Safety</p> <p>Problem solving</p> <p>Consumers' general literacy</p> <p>General consumer skills such as recognising a cheaper product or recognising logos correctly</p> <p>Awareness of consumer legislation</p> <p>Consumer engagement</p> <p>Percentage of consumers who know national consumer organisations</p>	<p>Business behaviour</p> <p>Awareness of businesses of dispute resolution and redress legislation</p> <p>Existence of complaint management systems by businesses</p> <p>State of dispute resolution and redress</p> <p>Consumer satisfaction with dispute resolution and redress practices</p> <p>Awareness of consumers about their rights and dispute and redress possibilities</p> <p>Experiences of consumers in attaining their rights</p>	<p>Enforcement</p> <p>Existence of dedicated enforcement authorities</p> <p>ICT regulators perform their functions according to published and transparent rules</p> <p>Existence of the power of consumer organisations for collective legal action on behalf of consumers</p> <p>Participation of consumer organisations (c.o.) in law-making and enforcement</p> <p>Level of governmental financial contributions to independent c.o.</p> <p>Level of participation of c.o. at hearings in the parliament, ministries and enforcement entities</p>
Consumer outcomes	Consumer outcomes	Consumer outcomes	Consumer outcomes	Consumer outcomes	Consumer outcomes	Consumer outcomes	Consumer outcomes
<p>Safety of ICT sector</p> <p>Number and severity of reported incidences of unsafe digital products and services</p>							<p>Consumer trust</p> <p>Percentage of consumers that trust their governments and c.o. to protect their digital rights</p>

Table 12: Overview of dimensions and indicators