

Class Action in EU

Status of implementation
of the Class Action
Directive 2020/1828



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Foreword

On November 25, 2020, the European Parliament approved DIRECTIVE (EU) 2020/1828 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on representative actions for the protection of the collective interests of consumers and repealing Directive 2009/22/EC (Directive).

The Directive entered into force on December 24, 2020. Member states were given 24 months to transpose the directive into national law, and an additional six months to implement it. The new rules will apply to representative actions that were filed on or after the Directive's date of application. Therefore, we expect these changes to be implemented starting from mid-2023.

This publication provides a picture of the status of implementation of the Directive across major EU jurisdictions as at January 2022, including the current collective litigation mechanisms in place in these jurisdictions. It also describes what changes respective governments are already doing to update the current legal regime according to the indications provided by the European Parliament.

You can also find links here to the main representative members of the Dentons Litigation team in Europe, should you wish to discuss your litigation strategy in preparation for possible future class actions under the new legal regime.



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Has the directive been implemented in the jurisdiction?

No.

Latest reform entered into force (date):

September 1, 2014.

Does this latest reform take the directive into account? Is there a draft under discussion?

No.

Latest reform details: actionable rights.

Consumer and SME right to a collective claim for individual losses resulting from a common cause.

Latest reform details: who is entitled to start an action?

One group representative (a legal entity) that is one of the following:

- An association for the protection of consumer rights with legal personality and represented in the Special Advisory Committee on Consumer Affairs, or is recognized by the competent ministry
- A governmentally recognized nonprofit organization whose corporate purpose is directly linked to the collective loss suffered by the group of consumers or SMEs. Such organization should have had legal personality for at least three years when filing the collective claim
- An autonomous public service representing consumers
- A group representative of consumers or SMEs recognized by a member state of the European Union or the European Economic Area

- An interprofessional organization and a member of the high council for independent workers and SMEs or an entity with legal personality recognized by the competent ministry.

Latest reform details: opt-in/opt-out system.

Both the opt-in and opt-out system can be applied.

However, for class actions aimed at remedying physical or moral collective damages, only the opt-in system can be applied.

Latest reform details: outcome: AN/Quantum (Declaratory judgment /Quantification of damages).

Judgment includes inter alia a quantification of damages and the modalities and amount of compensation to be paid by defendant.

No follow-up action from the group representative or member of the class action is required to seek compensation, except if the exclusion of a member in the class action is disputed.

Latest reform details: what is the final term for claimants to adhere to the action?

Within the deadline set in the agreement of class action attached to the introductory document for the class action.

Brief description of major class action cases, including details if the new legislation applies.

All cases fall under the current regime and therefore do not relate to the Directive.

Recent representative cases:

- Decision of the court of first instance of Brussels dated April 4, 2016 regarding a class action initiated by group representative NGO Test Aankoop against Thomas Cook Airlines Belgium NV regarding the payment of €400 in compensation to each of the 183 passengers for a delayed flight. The court decided not to grant the compensation since all passengers had already been compensated.
- Decision of the court of first instance of Brussels dated December 18, 2017 regarding the admissibility of a class action initiated by group representative NGO Test Aankoop against five companies of the Volkswagen group (Volkswagen AG, Audi AG, S.A. Seat, Škoda Auto and Dr.-Ing. h.c. F. Porsche AG) and the Belgian importer and distributor of the group (i.e.: D'leteren NV) following the so-called Dieseldgate emissions scandal. The group representative requested compensation of €1 provisional per car involved in the scandal. The pleadings on the grounds of the class action will take place on February 14 and 15, 2022.
- Decision of the court of appeal of Brussels dated January 30, 2019 between group representative NGO Test Aankoop against Proximus (a telecommunications company) regarding a class action initiated in the first instance alleging misleading commercial practices of the telecommunications company regarding the implementation of decoders to watch digital television. The court of appeal declared the class action unfounded.

Czech Republic

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Has the directive been implemented in the jurisdiction?

No.

Latest reform entered into force (date):

Not applicable.

Class actions are currently not available under Czech law.

Does this latest reform take the directive into account? Is there a draft under discussion?

Draft of the new law implementing the Directive has been recently discussed in Parliament.

The comments in this table relate to the proposed new law (which may change during the legislative process).

Latest reform details: actionable rights.

Consumer rights.

Latest reform details: who is entitled to start an action?

The affected consumer or a non-profit organization defending consumer rights.

Latest reform details: opt-in/opt-out system.

Opt-out in case of small disputes (under approximatively €120 per person).

Opt-in in other cases.

Latest reform details: outcome: AN/Quantum (Declaratory judgment /Quantification of damages).

Declaratory judgment together with decision on compensation.

Latest reform details: what is the final term for claimants to adhere to the action?

Within two to six months from publication of decision on the admissibility of the class action in a special register.

Brief description of major class action cases, including details if the new legislation applies.

Not applicable.



France

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Has the directive been implemented in the jurisdiction?

No.

Latest reform entered into force (date):

March 17, 2014.

Does this latest reform take the directive into account? Is there a draft under discussion?

No, the EU Directive postdates the French legislation.

No action has been taken yet to implement the Directive into French law.

Latest reform details: actionable rights.

Consumer and specific individual rights.

Specific collective claims exist in relation to:

- Health
- Discrimination and employment
- Environmental damages
- Data privacy

Latest reform details: who is entitled to start an action?

Consumer associations (minimum two individuals).

Latest reform details: opt-in/opt-out system.

Opt-in.

Latest reform details: outcome: AN/Quantum (Declaratory judgment /Quantification of damages).

Judgment on responsibility, categories of plaintiffs, types of damage and criteria of indemnification.

Follow-up action to seek compensation payment can only be initiated by the association..

Latest reform details: what is the final term for claimants to adhere to the action?

Within a maximum of six months from publication of the judgment on responsibility.

Brief description of major class action cases, including details if the new legislation applies.

No public record is available in France in relation to collective actions.

In 2021, it is believed that around 30 class actions were launched in France, although it is impossible to know the exact number or the exact number of those cases that were successfully terminated.

- Among these actions, 18 cases would most likely be grounded on consumer law and would tend to revolve around the fault of the provider to effectively offer the services subscribed by the consumer. None of these has given way to a decision on the merits in relation to the liability of the professional. Three would have been settled amicably. The remaining have been either dismissed or are still be in discussion as to the formal requirements at the initial stage of the procedure.

- Several of these relate to leases for housing purposes. By a decision of the French Supreme Court dated June 19, 2019 (n° 18-10424), it is now ruled that leases for housing under the Law n° 89-462 of July 6, 1989 are excluded from the scope of the collective claims of article L. 423-1 (now L 623-1) of the Consumer Code. In a decision dated June 27, 2018 (n° 17-10891) (this decision being the first-ever decision on collective claims rendered in France by the French Supreme Court), the French Supreme Court ruled that if the writ of summons must expressly list the individual cases grounding the collective claims under the collective claims of article L. 423-1 (now L 623-1) of the Consumer Code, it is not a requirement that the judge assess the representativeness of the cases for the validity of the filing.
- Two cases relate to data privacy. However, it is yet unclear whether these two claims are grounded in collective actions or are based on certain GDPR provisions that allow associations to seek remedy in courts for breach of GDPR requirements.
- Three cases relate to the Health sector in relation to Valproate/Depakine, contraceptive devices, and Androcur. These cases are ongoing. Note that French law knows other grounds to compensate such claims; notably the ONIAM/CCI commissions, which are more accessible for patients to individually seek remedy and are frequently used for that purposes.
- Seven cases relate to discrimination, in relation to employment and remuneration. In three of them, claims have been dismissed at the initial stage on procedural grounds (however one is being heard on appeal). In one case, the employment representatives withdrew their claims. Two cases are ongoing.



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Has the directive been implemented in the jurisdiction?

No.

Latest reform entered into force (date):

July 18, 2018.

Does this latest reform take the directive into account? Is there a draft under discussion?

No, the latest reform does not consider the Directive.

There is no draft being discussed; however, the German Ministry of Justice and Consumer Protection is preparing a first draft for early 2022 to implement the Directive before the end of 2022.

Latest reform details: actionable rights.

Consumer and investor rights.

Latest reform details: who is entitled to start an action?

Investors or consumer associations (consumer umbrella associations with a minimum of 10 consumer associations as members or a single consumer association with at least 350 individual members).

Latest reform details: opt-in/opt-out system.

Opt-in.

Latest reform details: outcome: AN/Quantum (Declaratory judgment /Quantification of damages).

Judgment on responsibility only.

Individuals must file their own claims to seek damages.

Latest reform details: what is the final term for claimants to adhere to the action?

Consumers: until the day before first hearing.

Investors: within six months from publication of the notice of the proceedings.

Brief description of major class action cases, including details if the new legislation applies.

All cases fall under the current regime and therefore do not relate to the Directive.

Recent representative cases:

- Investors against Telekom AG (Capital Markets Model Case Act).
- Consumers in the aftermath of the "Dieselgate" emissions scandal against Volkswagen AG (model declaratory action under German Code of Civil Procedure).

Hungary

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Has the directive been implemented in the jurisdiction?

No.

Latest reform entered into force (date):

January 1, 2020.

Does this latest reform take the directive into account? Is there a draft under discussion?

No

To date, no draft law implementing Directive (EU) 2020/1828 has been prepared.

Latest reform details: actionable rights.

Consumer rights.

Latest reform details: who is entitled to start an action?

As regards contracts that involve a consumer and a business party, an action may be brought for the annulment of an unfair contract term that has been incorporated into a contract by any of the following:

- A public prosecutor
- A minister, autonomous administrative agency, general government agency, the director of a head office
- The head of a Budapest or county government agency
- An economic and trade organization or interest-representation body, an associations for the protection of consumer affairs within the scope of the consumer interests they protect, or an organization set up for the protection of consumers' interests under the laws of any member state of the European Economic Area.

Latest reform details: opt-in/opt-out system.

Opt-out.

Latest reform details: outcome: AN/Quantum (Declaratory judgment /Quantification of damages).

Judgment on the annulment of an unfair contract term, prohibition from further infringements, restoring the pre-infringement conditions, specifying the beneficiaries and the method to verify them, the amount of indemnification.

In addition, the consumer can initiate follow-up action to seek compensation under civil law.

Latest reform details: what is the final term for claimants to adhere to the action?

Not applicable.

Brief description of major class action cases, including details if the new legislation applies.

Representative case:

- A real estate agency has its clients complete a pre-printed contract. According to the decision, the requirements of good faith and fairness were violated by a contractual provision that did not allow consumers to sell their property themselves. (Kúria Gfv. 30.200/2020/8.) According to the decision, a foreign currency loan contract is not in breach of good morals, nor is it a usury contract, an impossible service, or a sham contract due to the fact that the exchange-rate risk is incurred by the debtor against a more favorable interest rate. The information obligation of the financial institution had to cover the possibility of an exchange rate change and its effect on the instalments. The obligation to provide such information could not cover the extent of the exchange rate change. (6/2013. PJE).

Ireland

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Has the directive been implemented in the jurisdiction?

No.

Latest reform entered into force (date):

Not applicable.

Ireland is one of a minority of EU member states that do not have a compensatory collective redress procedure. There is currently no comprehensive provision in Irish court rules for tackling class claims in a uniform and consistent manner.

Instead, a range of procedural options are available to allow claims involving multiple parties to be litigated as private actions.

Does this latest reform take the directive into account? Is there a draft under discussion?

Not applicable.

The Irish Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment launched a public consultation on March 15, 2021 to seek views of interested parties on the implementation of the Directive in Ireland.

Respondents had until May 7, 2021 to submit their views to the department on how the Directive might be implemented.

The department is currently reviewing the content of the received submissions.

Latest reform details: actionable rights.

Not applicable.

Latest reform details: who is entitled to start an action?

Not applicable.

Latest reform details: opt-in/opt-out system.

Not applicable.

Latest reform details: outcome: AN/Quantum (Declaratory judgment /Quantification of damages).

Not applicable.

Latest reform details: what is the final term for claimants to adhere to the action?

Not applicable.

Brief description of major class action cases, including details if the new legislation applies.

Not applicable.



Italy

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Has the directive been implemented in the jurisdiction?

No.

Latest reform entered into force (date):

May 19, 2021.

Ireland is one of a minority of EU member states that do not have a compensatory collective redress procedure. There is currently no comprehensive provision in Irish court rules for tackling class claims in a uniform and consistent manner.

Instead, a range of procedural options are available to allow claims involving multiple parties to be litigated as private actions.

Does this latest reform take the directive into account? Is there a draft under discussion?

The new law in Italy was drafted before the Directive was approved; therefore, its implementation into national law was not considered.

We therefore believe the Italian legislators will soon need to revise the law within the Directive's framework and adopt some measures to make it fully compliant (although the scope of the current law is much broader in many respects than that set forth the Directive).

Latest reform details: actionable rights.

Individual homogenous rights.

Latest reform details: who is entitled to start an action?

Associations, organizations or individuals (no minimum number of individuals).

Latest reform details: opt-in/opt-out system.

Opt-in.

Latest reform details: outcome: AN/Quantum (Declaratory judgment /Quantification of damages).

Judgment on responsibility.

Representative of claimants manages the quantum phase.

Latest reform details: what is the final term for claimants to adhere to the action?

Within the deadline fixed by the Tribunal, after the judgment on responsibility.

Brief description of major class action cases, including details if the new legislation applies.

Cases listed below fall under the current regime and therefore do not relate to the Directive.

Recent representative cases (under the newest regime) as published on the class action platform:

- Various Unions (Filcams Cgil Roma Lazio / Uiltrasporti Lazio / Fisascac Cisl Roma Capitale e Rieti) and some individuals, the municipality of Rome, public prosecutor: a class action was filed by various unions to keep Roma Capitale from continuing with a procurement procedure unless 1,400 employees were hired with full-time contracts (instead of part time). The contract was eventually awarded to another company, the case was declared closed due to the cessation of the subject matter of the dispute.
- Class action filed before the Catania Court (other details are currently missing on the class action portal).

The following cases were reported on in the national press and relate to very recent cases:

- Delivery workers / Deliveroo: a class action was initiated before the Court of Bologna by delivery workers against a food delivery company in order to oppose, at the national level, the application of a national collective bargaining agreement.

- Families of the victims of COVID-19 / Office of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Health and the Lombardy Region: a class action has been filed against the Office of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Health and the Lombardy Region seeking damages of some €100 million for the alleged negligent management of healthcare facilities during the first phase of the pandemic.
- Consumers / Pay TV and Media platform Dazn: a class action is being filed against Dazn for malfunctions that caused an interruption of service.
- Families of Taranto / ILVA spa: a class action was filed against ILVA, a steel group operating in Taranto, on health damages caused by pollution.
- Consumers / U-Mask: a class action has been filed before the Court of Milan on the low filtering capacity of the "U-mask." Hearing is scheduled for April 2022.
- Group of Italian and international investors / Binance: a class action has been launched by a group of Italian and international investors against Binance to obtain repayment of capital invested.

Netherlands

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Has the directive been implemented in the jurisdiction?

Yes.

Latest reform entered into force (date):

January 1, 2020, following prior legislation of 1 July 2004.

Does this latest reform take the directive into account? Is there a draft under discussion?

Yes.

Latest reform details: actionable rights.

Individual homogenous rights.

Latest reform details: who is entitled to start an action?

Associations or foundations (so-called interest groups—no minimum number of members).

Latest reform details: opt-in/opt-out system.

Opt-out for Dutch nationals.

Opt-in for foreign individuals.

Latest reform details: outcome:

AN/Quantum (Declaratory judgment /Quantification of damages).

Prior to January 2020 only judgment on responsibility could be sought.

With the reform of January 2020, declaratory judgments and judgments on compensation are possible.

Latest reform details: what is the final term for claimants to adhere to the action?

Due to the opt-out nature for Dutch nationals, no deadline applies.

Foreign individuals need to opt in at the commencement of the legal proceedings.

Brief description of major class action cases, including details if the new legislation applies.

Recent representative cases (under the newest regime):

- Class actions against social media platforms: several interest groups against Tik-Tok seeking compensation for minors for inappropriate use of data.
- Class actions against car manufacturers: several interest groups seeking compensation for consequences of the “Dieselgate” emissions scandal.
- In addition, the following is under the old regime, and only a declaratory judgment:
- Collective action on climate goals: interest group seeking adherence by Dutch government to Paris Climate Goals.



Poland

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Has the directive been implemented in the jurisdiction?

No.

Latest reform entered into force (date):

November 7, 2019.

Does this latest reform take the directive into account? Is there a draft under discussion?

The amendment took effect before adoption of Directive (EU) 2020/1828 and mainly addressed procedural issues (e.g.: introduced the possibility to hold case management hearings).

To date, no draft law implementing Directive (EU) 2020/1828 has been prepared.

Latest reform details: actionable rights.

Actionable rights:

- Product liability
- Tort liability
- Contractual liability (breach of contract)
- Unjust enrichment
- Any claims for consumer protection
- Claims arising out of bodily injury or health disorder, including claims by immediate family members of the injured party who died as a result of bodily injury or health disorder.

Latest reform details: who is entitled to start an action?

A class action member or a consumer rights commissioner, acting for a group of at least 10 individuals pursuing homogeneous claims based on the same factual basis.

Latest reform details: opt-in/opt-out system.

Opt-in.

Latest reform details: outcome: AN/Quantum (Declaratory judgment /Quantification of damages).

Any civil law claims can be heard in the class action (including monetary claims, whose amount needs to be assessed).

Additionally, in cases involving monetary claims, the action may be limited to seeking a declaratory judgment on the defendant's responsibility for a specific event or events.

Latest reform details: what is the final term for claimants to adhere to the action?

After the decision to hear the case in a class action becomes final, the court announces the commencement of the class action, e.g.: in the press, on the defendant's website. In the public announcement, the court sets a deadline to join the class action, which must not be shorter than one month or longer than three months, for individuals who have the same (homogenous) claims as the initial group.

If an individual has already brought a claim against the defendant, against whom the class action is to take place, he/she may join the class until the end of the first-instance proceedings.

Brief description of major class action cases, including details if the new legislation applies.

Cases listed below fall under the current regime and therefore do not relate to the Directive.

Recent representative cases:

- Consumer claims against banks for loan agreements indexed to/denominated in a foreign currency (Swiss franc): the cases involve borrowers who dispute the validity of their mortgage loans. These were one of the first landmark proceedings under the class action regime.
- Consumer claims against life insurers: Consumers contest the validity of the unit-linked insurance products and the values of their surrender benefits (the amounts paid upon an early withdrawal).
- Consumer class actions against real estate developers: the cases concern claims for reimbursement of a price adjustment and for damages due to construction defects.
- Entertainment and tourist industry businesses against the State Treasury: In these class actions, group members filed for establishing the liability of the State Treasury for damages resulting from the prohibitions / restriction imposed on certain business activities in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Romania

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Has the directive been implemented in the jurisdiction?

No.

Latest reform entered into force (date):

No uniform framework regarding class actions exist in Romanian law.

Provisions similar to those governing typical class actions can be found in the Romanian Civil Procedure Code and in other special laws. What differentiates these from typical class actions is that in Romanian law the representative usually needs a special power of attorney from each class member in order to act on the member's behalf.

Does this latest reform take the directive into account? Is there a draft under discussion?

Not applicable.

Latest reform details: actionable rights.

There are specific actions, similar to classic collective actions, regarding:

- Defense of consumer rights
- Human rights protection
- Labor law (especially in cases involving workers' unions).

Latest reform details: who is entitled to start an action?

Various consumer associations, NGOs, workers' unions.

Latest reform details: opt-in/opt-out system.

Both the opt-in and opt-out system can be applied.

Latest reform details: outcome: AN/Quantum (Declaratory judgment /Quantification of damages).

Individuals to file single claims to seek damages.

Latest reform details: what is the final term for claimants to adhere to the action?

It depends on the specific action and case; there is no unique regulation regarding this matter.

Brief description of major class action cases, including details if the new legislation applies.

Not applicable.



Slovakia

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Has the directive been implemented in the jurisdiction?

No.

Implementing legislation is planned for adoption in 2022.

Latest reform entered into force (date):

July 1, 2016.

Does this latest reform take the directive into account? Is there a draft under discussion?

See point 1.

Latest reform details: actionable rights.

These are the actions that are permitted:

- Actions filed for inadmissibility of a contractual term or terms in a consumer contract and unfair commercial practices (i.e., “abstract control in consumer matters proceedings”)
- Anti-discriminatory actions (which are filed for a breach of the principle of equal treatment under the rules on equal treatment and protection against discrimination)
- Actions filed for unfair competition proceedings according to Act No. 513/1991 Coll., the Commercial Code (the “Slovak Commercial Code”); this includes misleading advertising, misleading labelling of goods and services, parasitism on the reputation of the company and bribery.

Latest reform details: who is entitled to start an action?

The Slovak Dispute Code distinguishes between the following types of joint actions:

- An independent joint action (where every party exercises their own rights and where a legal act performed by one party does not affect the other parties and each claim is decided by the court separately)
- An inseparable joint action (where a procedural act of one party binds the other parties and where the judgment must apply to anyone acting as claimant or defendant)
- A compulsory joint action (where the legitimacy in any dispute is attributed to several parties; under the relevant substantive law, it is necessary for several parties to bring an action jointly or it is necessary to bring an action against more than one party).

Latest reform details: opt-in/opt-out system.

Slovakia has procedures and respective legal instruments that are similar to opt-in class actions. They include when a group of persons is a party to the proceedings.

A group of persons can collectively bring a claim for damages caused to several victims by the same or similar illegal conduct.

Slovakia does not have a specific procedure for bringing “opt-out” class actions.

**Latest reform details: outcome:
AN/Quantum (Declaratory
judgment /Quantification of damages).**

The damages are available and could be collectively enforced.

In respect of actions filed for unfair competition proceedings, persons whose rights have been violated by unfair competition practices may demand:

1. To refrain from such practices; and
2. To rectify the consequences of unfair competition.

They may also demand adequate financial compensation, damages, and the issuance of unjust enrichment.

In abstract control of consumer matters, if the court determines that the contract term is inadmissible or that the business practice is unfair, then it shall prohibit the defendant from using a contractual term or a term with the same meaning in all consumer contracts or other contractual documents related to that consumer contract. The court shall also prohibit the defendant from using an unfair business practice.

In anti-discriminatory actions, a court may:

1. Declare that the principle of equal treatment has been infringed
2. Order the defendant to refrain from such discriminatory actions and, if possible, to
3. Order the defendant to remedy the infringement. If any damage occurs as a result of discriminatory proceedings, the damages are also available.

There is no specific legal framework for the calculation of damages.

Latest reform details: what is the final term for claimants to adhere to the action?

No specific term since there is no procedural framework for true class actions.

Brief description of major class action cases, including details if the new legislation applies.

The Directive has not yet been implemented; therefore, the cases listed below fall under the current regime.

Recent representative cases:

- A discrimination dispute against a school that placed children of Romani origin in special classes, separate from other children, only on the basis of their ethnicity.
- The Volkswagen emissions scandal (“Dieselgate”) related to fraudulent emissions testing. A few Volkswagen car owners initially showed interest in filing a “class action” for damages, but due to little interest, the filing of a “class action” was abandoned.
- In relation to a proceeding dealing with “abstract control in consumer matters,” a decision was issued that demanding “2.5 per 1,000” from apartment owners for each day of delay in payment under a contract of administration is an inadmissible contractual term.

Spain

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Has the directive been implemented in the jurisdiction?

No.

The Ministry of Justice held the mandatory public consultation on the Directive's implementation in September 2021, but the Government has not presented yet any law proposal before the Parliament to implement it.

Latest reform entered into force (date):

July 22, 2015.

Does this latest reform take the directive into account? Is there a draft under discussion?

No (the reform was enacted before the Directive was approved).

Latest reform details: actionable rights.

Consumer rights.

Latest reform details: who is entitled to start an action?

Consumer associations (no minimum number of individuals).

Consumer associations must be representative in accordance with the provisions of Title II of the Spanish Consumer Law ("Texto Refundido de la Ley General de Consumidores y Usuarios").

Latest reform details: opt-in/opt-out system.

Opt-in.

Latest reform details: outcome: AN/Quantum (Declaratory judgment /Quantification of damages).

Judgment on responsibility.

Individuals must file:

1. A claim requesting recognition of their status as aggrieved under the judgment; and
2. An enforcement claim to collect the damages.

Claims may be also initiated by the public prosecutor.

Latest reform details: what is the final term for claimants to adhere to the action?

Within two months after publication of the filing.

Non-adhered individuals can still request recognition and enforcement within five years after the court decision has become final and non-appealable.

Brief description of major class action cases, including details if the new legislation applies.

The following two examples are the closest equivalent to class actions under Spanish law.

- Supreme Court Decision no. 473/2010, dated July 15: A highway operator is declared liable for damages to drivers and travelers on a highway affected by extreme weather conditions due to a lack of diligence.
- Provincial Court of Barcelona Decision no. 527/2010, dated October 21: Electricity distributors are declared liable to all consumers affected by a city-wide blackout.

Consumer association claims for damages have become increasingly rare, since their function has been largely superseded by mass claims (“pleitos-masa”), which are individual claims filed by law firms specialized in managing clients en masse in litigious sectors, such as consumer finance, abusive conditions in loans, financial derivatives commercialized at the retail level or damages claims against truck manufacturers acting under a cartel. Because of this, consumer associations have focused their efforts on managing individual claims, as well as filing collective consumer claims, not to seek damages, but to strike down abusive general terms and conditions used by companies.

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