

European Parliament report on product safety increases legal certainty for retailers but a pragmatic solution for loyalty schemes is still needed.

The position of the European Parliament's Internal Market Committee on the General Product Safety Regulation (GPSR) increases legal certainty for retailers, while allowing for the pragmatic use of complementary digital labelling on product safety information.

Independent Retail Europe calls on the European Parliament plenary and on the Council to use the same pragmatism to ensure that provisions on product recalls do not force independent retailers to phase out loyalty schemes.

On 15 June 2022, the European Parliament's Internal Market Committee adopted its report on the proposed GPSR. We very much welcome the text agreed on distributors' obligations (article 11) and on notification of market surveillance authorities in case of individual accidents (article 19-2); this will provide a clearer set of obligations for distributors, while ensuring that accidents will be notified without souring relations between supply chain partners. **These provisions should be used as the new gold standard for all product safety legislation.**

We also welcome the proposal to allow product information to be available via a QR code in addition to paper printouts in the box. Complementary QR codes are a workable solution for all economic operators, rethinking consumer information in a digitized century, while the interest of consumers with limited access to the internet remain protected.

As the report represents a sensible basis for discussion with the Council, we call on EU policy makers to find pragmatic solutions to ensure that the GPSR provisions on product recalls (article 33-2) do not force independent retailers to phase out loyalty schemes that do not involve the collection of personal product information. **An obligation to turn loyalty schemes into product recall schemes would represent a major burden for independent retailers, often leaving them with no choice but to abandon them. This would hurt both SME retailers and consumers.**

*Established in 1963, **Independent Retail Europe** is the European association that acts as an umbrella organisation for groups of independent retailers in the food and non-food sectors.*

Independent Retail Europe represents retail groups characterised by the provision of a support network to independent SME retail entrepreneurs; joint purchasing of goods and services to attain efficiencies and economies of scale, as well as respect for the independent character of the individual retailer. Our members are groups of independent retailers, associations representing them as well as service organisations built to support independent retailers.

Independent Retail Europe represents 23 groups and their over 403.900 independent retailers, who manage more than 759.000 sales outlets, with a combined retail turnover of more than 1,314 billion euros and generating a combined wholesale turnover of 484 billion euros. This represents a total employment of more than 6.620.000 persons.

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