

Challenges for Consumer Research and Consumer Policy in Europe

International Conference on Consumer Research (ICCR) 2014

September 29-30, 2014

North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany

Call for Papers

The international conference is hosted by the Competence Center of Consumer Research North Rhine-Westphalia ([CECORE NRW](http://www.cec-core-nrw.de)), a think tank connecting researchers in Germany's biggest state and beyond. The conference brings together state-of-the-art research and supports seminal, multidisciplinary research perspectives. It features roundtable discussions with participants from politics, the media, and academic disciplines. Officials from the European Union and national governments will join the conference to foster networks of researchers, funding agencies, and government officials. A core element of the conference is parallel sessions on a wide range of topics. For these sessions, experts from different disciplines are welcome to focus on core challenges to consumer research and consumer policy in Europe. A highly salient international publication will result from this event.

Crucial questions are tackled on the conference: How do consumers actually behave, what obstacles do they face in markets and technologies, are consumers' interests effectively represented? These are classic questions in consumer research. However, new answers have been given to these classic questions. Behavioral economics has dismissed long-established models of consumer behavior, empirical research has revealed flawed competition, and political science has scrutinized new forms of consumer mobilization and representation. These answers address major issues of social and behavioral sciences and connect them to consumer research.

Furthermore, new research questions have been raised in recent times: What is consumers' responsibility for sustainable growth? How can vulnerable consumers be protected? Is there a revolution of consumer-rights? Meanwhile, some markets have transformed dramatically. In financial, digital or health care markets complex structures have evolved and these developments pose challenges consumers have to cope with. At the same time, the Internet empowers consumers and their advocates. The European Union with its Single Market and its distinctive societies is facing grand challenges: demographic change, energy provision, and new technologies transform contemporary consumption. More than ever, consumer research is in charge to unfold its interdisciplinary potential without sacrificing specific research foci and approaches from different disciplines. The following cross-cutting questions will shape the conference:

1. Is there a new paradigm of consumer behavior?
2. What are the causes and consequences of collaborative consumption?
3. What are the merits and limits of consumer information?
4. What are the merits and limits of consumer rights?
5. Who represents consumers' interests at national and European level?
6. Are there new ways of mobilizing consumers?
7. What is the impact of the internet on consumer behavior, interest representation and consumer policy?
8. Are consumer policies converging in Europe?
9. Is there a shift of responsibility from producers to consumers?
10. What factors constitute, ease and limit consumers' responsibility?
11. What are core economic, technological, social, or political challenges to consumers in different markets?

These general questions serve as a framework for parallel sessions. These sessions address the following topics:

Workshop 1: What's on the European Consumer agenda?

Parallel sessions 1:

- Digital revolution
- Political consumerism
- Vulnerable consumers
- Sustainable Consumption

Parallel sessions 2:

- Challenges regarding product, service and food safety
- Information overload - knowledge deficit
- Rights not fully respected in practice
- Specific challenges: Financial Markets

Workshop 2: Horizons for European consumer research

Parallel sessions 1:

- Europe in a changing world - Inclusive, innovative and reflective societies
- Food security, sustainable agriculture, and forestry, marine and maritime and inland water research and the bio-economy
- Secure, clean and efficient energy

Parallel sessions 2:

- Smart, green and integrated transport
- Health, demographic change and well-being
- Climate action, resource efficiency and raw materials
- Secure societies

Researchers from disciplines such as sociology, political science, economics, law, psychology, history, food sciences, environmental sciences, or engineering are welcome to present their work on one of those topics. If you are interested in presenting a paper please send an abstract (max. 2 pages) that contains your institutional affiliation and address, the status of your research, and your main thesis and findings.

Please send it until May 2, 2014 to the following address:



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The conference committee will contact you until the end of May. Travel expenses will be reimbursed if your paper is accepted.

Website ICCR 2014: www.vz-nrw.de/iccr.

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