



ANNUAL REPORT

2019
/ 20

Dear Friends,

We at the Consumer Choice Center are excited to share this first comprehensive annual report with you. The year 2019 was definitely our best years so far. We were able to promote choice and evidence-based policies on four different continents and change policies and regulations towards more innovation and choice in several countries.

We helped to preserve streaming and payTV in Brazil, made cannabis more accessible for consumers in Canada, promoted smarter alcohol regulation in several US States, and showed the risks for consumers of 5G infrastructure providers that are de facto controlled by the Communist Party of China. We wrote several policy papers on innovative topics such as ‘The Consumer Case for Intellectual Property’, ‘The Return of Supersonic Passenger Travel’, and ‘The Gene Revolution: Make Britain a Biotech Bonanza’.

Our indices on Europe’s most passenger-friendly airports and railway stations got hundreds of media hits and were even prominently featured in the annual reports of bluechip companies. Our reports also helped consumers to plan their trips and navigate airports and railway stations around Europe, choosing those more friendly and open for innovation.

The current COVID-19 crisis shows how much the legacy model of civil society engagement is challenged by social distancing and self-isolation. Fortunately, we at the CCC have always had a large digital component in our campaign strategies.

We have been a remote organization from the beginning on, and our daily work routine has not much changed. In late February, our web traffic began exploding as more and more people started staying home and reading up on policy suggestions on how to tackle this public health crisis.

Right now, we see that more digitization, liberalization, and the sharing economy are usually the catalysts that enable our society to cope with all the restrictions imposed on us. We are happy to take on the fight to ensure smart rules such as online ordering of alcohol, expansion of retail shopping hours, and fast-tracking of innovative medicines and devices, much beyond COVID-19. At the same time, we will fight against bad policies and proposals that are being considered or implemented in times of crisis: Some of them are ideas such as infringing on intellectual property rights, banning alcohol consumption, and limiting consumers’ freedom of movement.

The next twelve months will be challenging but we as a team are very eager to fight for our core principles: consumer choice, unbiased evidence, and innovation.

On behalf of the Consumer Choice Center Team,

Fred Roeder,
Managing Director of the Consumer Choice Center



THE GLOBAL GRASSROOTS MOVEMENT FOR CONSUMER CHOICE

The Consumer Choice Center is the consumer advocacy group supporting lifestyle freedom, innovation, privacy, science, and consumer choice. The main policy areas we focus on are digital, mobility, lifestyle & consumer goods, and health & science.

The CCC represents consumers in over 100 countries across the globe. We closely monitor regulatory trends in Ottawa, Washington, Brussels, Brasilia, London, Geneva and other hotspots of regulation and inform and activate consumers to fight for #ConsumerChoice. Learn more at consumerchoicecenter.org



A FEW OF OUR MEDIA HITS

Media Hits

1164

Social Media Echo Reach

+17M



EVENTS 2019

APRIL

Luxembourg Cannabis Legalisation

During a three-day visit of the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg, the Consumer Choice Center staff met and held significant meetings with various policymakers from the ruling parties, opposition parties, community groups, labour unions, and religious leaders in order to provide lessons learned from the Canadian experience of legalising cannabis.

JUNE

Testimony in Canada about Cannabis' Tax

CCC North American David Clement testified at the Canadian Senate Committee on National Finance about changes to the taxation of medical cannabis and excise taxes on edibles, extracts, and topicals.



Meeting with EU Director-General for Mobility and Transport

CCC Managing Director Frederik Cyrus Roeder and European Affairs Manager Luca Bertolotti met with EU Director-General for Mobility and Transport Mr Hololei to discuss consumer choice in aviation.



JANUARY

1st Annual Cannabis Conclave - Davos

The CCC hosted its first Cannabis Conclave in the Swiss Alps during Davos 2019, welcoming policymakers, journalists, investors and consumers to discuss the legalisation of cannabis

1st Media Innovation Summit - Davos

The CCC hosted its first Media Innovation Summit during Davos 2019 to examine how current innovations in the digital sphere will positively impact consumers in global markets going forward into the 21st century.

MAY

Testimony to the U.S FDA on Cannabis

CCC Deputy Director Yaël Ossowski was invited to provide testimony to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration on regulations for cannabis and cannabis-derived compounds such as CBD.



Fighting Flight Taxes

CCC European Affairs Associate Maria Chaplia spoke at Europe Liberty Forum in Greece hosted by Atlas Network about flight taxes.

JULY

Meeting with US Ambassador Richard Grenell

CCC Managing Director Fred Roeder had the opportunity to share our views on consumer privacy and trans-Atlantic collaboration with US Ambassador Richard Grenell.

Discussing Digitalisation with Congressmen and Senators in Brasilia

*CCC Brazilian Affairs Manager Andre Freo and Managing Director Fred Roeder met with over 20 Congressmen, Senators, and regulators in Brasilia to discuss our *chegadebarreiras* campaign.*

AUGUST

Consumer Choice Team: Presentation

CCC's Bill Wirtz, Luca Bertoletti and Maria Chaplia hosted a panel discussion about consumer choice at European Students For Liberty annual retreat with more than 100 students in audience.

SEPTEMBER

UN General Assembly - Cannabis

CCC North American Affairs Manager David Clement spoke at the First Global Hemp/CBD summit entitled C3 Canna Summit alongside the UN General Assembly in New York City.

NOVEMBER

Market Solutions to Environmental Issues

On November 14th, the CCC team attended a summit organised by the ECR Party to discuss the best ways to improve our environment using market mechanisms.

Discussing 5G with Stakeholders

CCC European Affairs Associate Maria Chaplia took part in the 5G assembly to discuss with relevant stakeholders data protection and consumer privacy.

Innovation & IP Report: ECR Gala Dinner

On the 12th of November, our Fred Roeder, Yaël Ossowski, Bill Wirtz, Maria Chaplia, Fabio Fernandes and Luca Bertoletti attended the ECR Party Gala Dinner to present our newest report on innovation and IP. Fred's talk was titled 'From Alzheimer's to Zika: Let's find cures rather than halt innovation', and covered some key policy positions of the CCC on how the EU can remain an innovation powerhouse.



OCTOBER

Advocating for Innovation in Agriculture

CCC European Affairs Associate Maria Chaplia attended a POLITICO summit on innovation in agriculture in Brussels.

Event with Gianna Gancia MEP

On October 14th, CCC's Luca Bertoletti hosted an event with Gianna Gancia MEP to discuss consumer choice issues of the day in Italy and the EU.



DECEMBER

Farmers Scientists Network Event at EP

CCC Senior Policy Analyst Bill Wirtz and European Affairs Associate Maria Chaplia attended a Farmers Scientists Network event in the European Parliament on innovation in agriculture.



Discussing 5G in Ankara, Turkey

CCC Senior Policy Analyst Bill Wirtz spoke about 5G technology and cybersecurity in Ankara, Turkey.

Fighting for Consumers in Hong Kong

We joined our friends at Students For Liberty at the Atlanta Hawks vs. Miami Heat basketball game donning FREE HONG KONG shirts and throwing out chants between baskets. We Stand With Hong Kong, and so should everyone who believes in liberal democracies.

Official Secretariat for an MEP intergroup

In collaboration with leading MEPs such as Gianna Gancia, Massimiliano Salini, Patrizia Toia, Ivan Stefanec and many others we put together a new group of MEPs named "IP, Innovation and Brands: The Future of Europe".

JANUARY

1st Meeting Innovation, Brands and IP Group at the European Parliament

CCC Senior European Affairs Manager Luca Bertoletti coordinated the first meeting of the Innovation, Brands and IP MEP intergroup, the first group in the European Parliament promoting & defending Europe's Intellectual Property rights, Brands and Innovation.

2nd Annual Cannabis Conclave - Davos

On January 23rd, we hosted our second Cannabis Conclave in Davos, Switzerland with over 100 attendees. It was a great event, with lots of social media echo and media hits.



Gene-editing in Italy

In January 2019 - February 2020, CCC Senior European Affairs Manager Luca Bertoletti met with a number of Italian policymakers to discuss gene-editing.

MARCH

LibertyCon Europe and Meeting Consumers

On March 7th, The Consumer Choice Center hosted a panel discussion at Students For Liberty's LibertyCon 2020 in Madrid. Our Senior Policy Analyst Bill Wirtz and Fred Roeder spoke to debunk some urban legends on vaping. Meanwhile, Fabio Fernandes held a Meet and Greet with Consumers and supporters.



EVENTS

2020

FEBRUARY

Round Table at Adam Smith Institute

On February 3rd, the Consumer Choice Center joined the Genetic Literacy Project and the British Conservation Alliance at the Adam Smith Institute in London to discuss "The Future of Food in a Climate-Changing World". The event had over 60 attendees.



Cannabis Europa in Madrid

On February 10th, CCC Senior Policy Analyst attended Cannabis Europa in Madrid to discuss European and global efforts towards medical and recreational use of #cannabis.

Meeting with the Federal Communications Commission in Washington

CCC Deputy Director Yael Ossowski and Managing Director Fred Roeder went to Washington DC and met the Federal Communications Commission's Commissioner Brendan Carr to discuss 5G, NetNeutrality, and #consumerchoice. Meanwhile, our Senior European Affairs Manager Luca Bertoletti met with the cabinet of the Italian Minister of Agriculture, and with the minister of economics of the Region of Madrid.



PUBLICATIONS 2019

JULY

Brazil's Barriers for a Digital Single Market - How to Prepare Brazil for a Digital Future

Outdated regulations prevent Brazil from becoming competitive in global digital markets and deprive Brazilian consumers of the freedom to choose services and content. Our policy note looks at what can be done to integrate digital services in Brazil.

SEPTEMBER

Myths and Facts on Vaping: What Policymakers Should Know

The report dispels the myths that surround vaping, offers factual scientific and health evidence, and gives recommendations to uphold public health all the while reducing harm.



NOVEMBER

The Consumer Case for Intellectual Property

As part of this analysis, the authors assess current attitudes towards intellectual property rights in Europe, and make the consumer case for strong intellectual property rights. The author makes the case for several policy recommendations the European Commission and the European Parliament. Prepared by Fred Roeder, Managing Director of the Consumer Choice Center and published by the ECR party.

**THE CONSUMER CASE FOR
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**



How To Protect Consumer Privacy and Data Security in The Age of 5G?

The policy note discusses current privacy threats for European consumers in the light of the emergence of the Internet of Things and the rollout of 5G networks. The authors Mikolaj Barczentewicz and Fred Roeder suggest a multifactorial approach in order to safeguard consumer privacy in the age of rapidly developing connectivity.



AUGUST

Supersonic Travel Policy Note

More consumers are travelling by plane than ever before, connecting people, friends and families across long distances. The Consumer Choice Center applauds the availability of air transport as a connector for everyone. As innovation progresses, we also see innovative types of aircraft hitting the market, increasing fuel efficiency and reducing costs for consumers and airlines.



Gene-revolution in Post-Brexit UK

The policy note discusses the current EU and UK legislation in regard to gene editing and gene modification and set out the steps the UK should take in order to become a forward-looking global biotech hub after Brexit.

Europe's Top 10 Airports: Ranking Passenger-Friendly Airports

In order to prevent a negative passenger experience and pick the optimal hubs for future trips, we examined Europe's 30 largest airports (by passenger volume) and ranked them in terms of passenger experience, ranked according to a mix of factors ranging from location and transportation options to in-airport experience and flight network access.

JANUARY

Gene Editing Regulation Index

Food could be so much cheaper and better in Europe if the EU would allow novel breeding techniques such as gene editing for plants. The Gene-Editing Index produced by the Genetic Literacy Project and us shows which countries currently lead the way in offering consumers the future of agriculture.



PUBLICATIONS 2020

FEBRUARY

Europe's Most Passenger-Friendly Stations Index

European Railway Station Index highlights the top 50 railway stations in Europe ranked by passenger-friendliness. The index is the first of its kind in Europe and should be used to inform both consumers and administrators as to who is doing the best job accommodating passengers. It got over 600 media hits in February alone covering the sister index of the European Airport Index.



PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

2019 / 20

- Tax fraud and evasion – better cooperation between national tax authorities on exchanging information (EU)
- Europe's Beating Cancer Plan - Consultation (EU)
- Post Implementation of Tobacco Legislation (UK)
- Advancing Our Health: Prevention in the 2020s (UK)
- Evaluation of marketing standards [Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013] (EU)
- Ex post evaluation of the impact of the trade chapters of the EU's Association Agreements with six EuroMed countries (EU)

HIGHLIGHTS

OPEN LETTER ON CLIMATE CHANGE

*to European Commission Executive Vice-President
Frans Timmermans*

On December 3rd, CCC Managing Director Fred Roeder sent an open letter on Climate Change to European Commission Executive Vice-President Frans Timmermans, emphasising the importance of putting consumers and stable costs of living first in Europe.



OPEN LETTER ON CONSUMER-FRIENDLY WAY TO REDUCE THE USE OF PESTICIDES

to Commissioner for Food and Health Safety Stella Kyriakides

On December 17th, CCC's Luca Bertoletti and Maria Chaplia sent an open letter on the reduction of pesticide use to Commissioner Stella Kyriakides, emphasising the benefits of a pro-consumer, pro-science and pro-innovation approach towards this issue.





info@consumerchoicecenter.org

2221 S Clark St. 12th Floor Arlington, VA 22202

www.consumerchoicecenter.org

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