



December 2025

European Consumer Debt

Network Newsletter



Welcome to the December edition of our newsletter!

In this issue, we share key updates from Brussels and the European Parliament, highlights from ECDN's participation in major financial literacy initiatives in Germany, a powerful intervention by Jimmi Greselin in the Italian Senate on over-indebtedness, and a brief update from Slovakia.

Save the date: 13–14 April 2026 – ECDN General Assembly & Conference at the European Parliament in Strasbourg.

As the festive season approaches, we wish you and your families:

A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A PEACEFUL NEW YEAR

We look forward to working with you again in 2026.

In this edition:



News from Brussels



FinKom – Specialist Exchange for Financial Literacy and Prevention – Frankfurt



Statement by Dr Jimmy Gresselin before the Senate of the Italian Republic – key conclusions



LETTER FROM SLOVAKIA: Information on SOP Activities in Slovakia for ECDN



ECDN Conference & General Assembly in 2026 – Save the Date



Invest in What Matters – What is at Stake in the Next EU Long-Term Budget



On 3–4 November 2025, the European Parliament hosted the event **“INVEST IN WHAT MATTERS”**, dedicated to shaping the next EU long-term budget for 2028–2034, valued at nearly €2 trillion. The meeting, organized by the Civil Society Outreach Unit, brought together around 160 NGOs, and key EU decision-makers, including Vice-President Sabine Verheyen and MEPs Siegfried Mureşan and Carla Tavares. ECDN was represented at the event by its President, Dieter Korcza.

Discussions focused on budget priorities such as economic competitiveness, agriculture, and the **implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights**, which promises additional opportunities to support quality employment, skills development, social inclusion, and the fight against poverty across all member states. The event promote an open dialogue on how to ensure that European funds are allocated effectively to support democracy, inclusion, and sustainable development across the Union. While the plans are not yet fully concrete, detailed proposals are expected in the coming year. Given the significant implications of the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for civil society work, it will be important to closely monitor the process.

Recording of the debate: <https://multimedia.europarl.europa.eu/en/webstreaming/20251104-1400-SPECIAL-OTHER>



Photos from the website of the European Parliament and from the private collection of Dieter Korcza

Consumer Agenda 2030 and the transposition of the CCD II

On 5–6 December 2025, a FUSG meeting was held in Brussels, where the Consumer Agenda 2030 was presented to members. ECDN was represented in FUSG by its President, Dieter Korczak. The meeting also featured a keynote address by Commissioner Maria Luís Albuquerque on the key steps and achievements of **the Savings and Investments Union (SIU)**.

At the same time, it was announced that **the European Commission will send a formal letter to all Member States, reminding them of the obligation to ensure the timely transposition of the CCD II into national law.**

A similar message appeared in the December newsletter of the European Parliament's Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO), which confirmed that it **will question the Commission on the progress made—or the lack of it—in transposing the Directive.** Member States were required to adopt, publish, and notify the relevant measures by 20 November 2025. These developments suggest that the implementation of CCD II will be closely monitored at EU level in the coming months.

The **"Consumer Agenda 2030"** presents a comprehensive strategy of the European Commission aimed at strengthening consumer protection, increasing competitiveness, and promoting sustainable growth in the Single Market. The main pillars of the agenda focus on adapting consumer rights to the **digital and green transitions, tackling barriers to access to cross-border services (particularly financial services), counteracting rising living costs and poverty, and strengthening law enforcement mechanisms.** Key initiatives include the introduction of European Digital Identity Wallets by 2026, the implementation of an anti-poverty strategy, the development of a plan for affordable housing, and a citizens' energy package.

The agenda also announces decisive action against online fraud, unjustified territorial restrictions, and practices such as dropshipping, while simultaneously placing emphasis on financial education and support for the circular economy.



Key Actions and Priorities

Financial Literacy & Debt, Over-Indebtedness and Consumer Protection

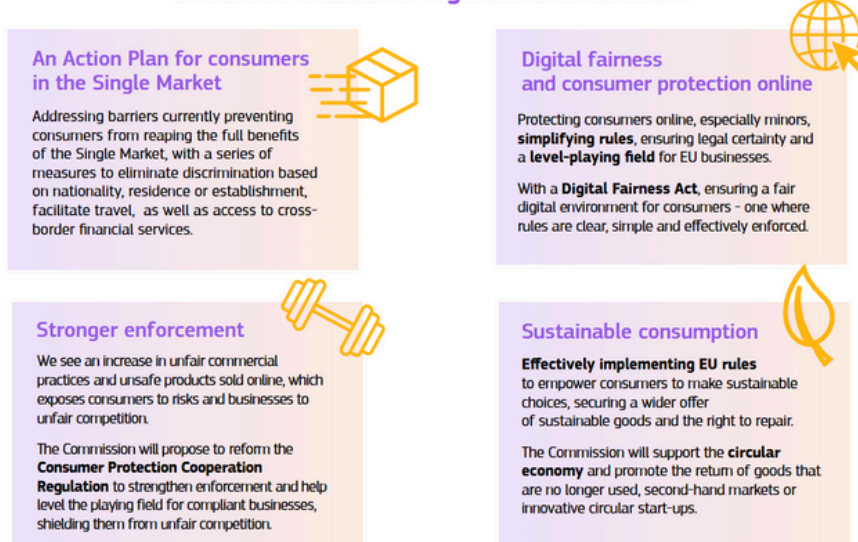
- The European Commission will implement the **EU Financial Literacy Strategy starting in Q1 2026**.
- The EU will strengthen consumer protection against over-indebtedness, while **promoting cross-border retail financial services**.
- The Payment Accounts Directive guarantees all EU residents the **right to a basic payment account and prohibits discrimination based on nationality or residence**; the Commission will work with Member States to ensure effective implementation and enforcement.
- In the context of the new Consumer Credit Directive, the Commission will assess the impact of digitalisation on the retail financial services market, with a particular focus on consumer credit.

EU Anti-Poverty Strategy

- The European Commission will present its first-ever EU Anti-Poverty Strategy in 2026.
- The strategy aims to reduce the number of people at risk of poverty by 15 million by 2030 and to address the root causes of poverty with a long-term goal of elimination by 2050.
- It will be supported by a strengthened **Child Guarantee** and funding from the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+).
- The Commission will closely monitor cost-of-living trends and price developments across the Single Market, using Eurostat data to inform consumer policy responses.

More information: <https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/consumers/consumer-protection-policy/2030-consumer-agenda>

The 2030 Consumer Agenda will focus on

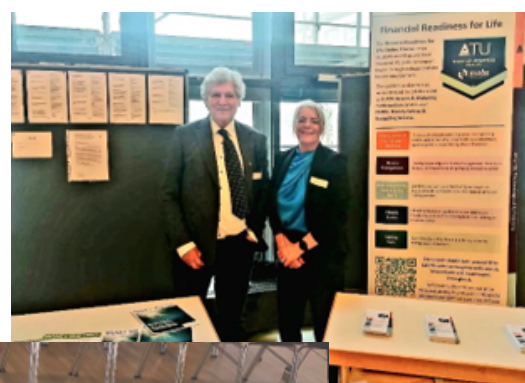


FinKom – Specialist Exchange for Financial Literacy and Prevention – Frankfurt



MABS, Crésus, and ECDN were honoured to be invited as international guests to **FinKom Conference in Frankfurt on November 20th**. The Conference is a one-day event showcasing projects and programmes for **financial literacy from across Germany**. This is the first year that there was an invitation extended to non-German organisations.

The agenda for the day was full and had a variety of approaches to financial literacy. In addition to a number of speakers, there was an exhibition of projects on display for all attendees to view and discuss with each organisation.



MABS exhibited **Financial Readiness for Life**, a financial literacy programme for young adults and students, and **ECDN displayed a Risk Assessment tool being developed**, which drew much interest from the attendees.

Crésus, from France, delivered the keynote address on their **game 'Dilemme'**, which generated many questions and support from the floor.

The German member of ECDN, IFF, was also involved in the event, Dr Sally Peters, Managing Director of IFF, has for many years been a board member of the Financial Literacy Prevention Network (PNFK), which is organised by FinKom. Clara Baumann from IFF, together with Marina Rößner (University of Duisburg-Essen), presented the project **"Financial Education in Vulnerable Situations (FIBILA)"**.

Other projects on the day included finance for parents and for women transitioning to parenthood, and programmes for young people and those who are more vulnerable in society. Hessian Minister of Finance **Prof. Dr. R. Alexander Lorz**, praised the work of the Conference members and announced his continued support for financial literacy.



In international comparison, Italy performs exceptionally poorly. Annually, **just over 7,500 debt relief procedures** are carried out, compared to approximately 100,000 in Germany and France, and 18,000 in the Czech Republic—proportionally up to 15 times fewer than in those countries.



As an alternative to the current model, Dr Gresselin proposed strengthening and formally recognising the **role of an independent Debt Advisor**, acting exclusively in the interest of the debtor and not linked to OCCs, banks, or financial institutions. In his view, the financing of such a role could follow a model similar to that of the OCC, with costs partially covered through fees associated with the debt relief procedure.

The statement also emphasised the need for **stricter regulation of banks and debt collection companies**, particularly regarding breaches of creditworthiness assessment rules, as well as the need to **redefine financial education**. According to Dr Gresselin, financial education should focus on practical household budget management and building resilience to aggressive credit marketing, rather than on providing information about financial products.

With regard to housing protection, Dr Gresselin pointed out that the home-saving funds (EUR 50 million) proposed in Draft Law No. 1434 are unnecessary in light of existing but unimplemented legal instruments. Both the 2019 decree (allowing mortgage renegotiation or subrogation with a 50% state guarantee) and the 2020 budget law (introducing so-called “social securitisations”) have largely remained dormant due to ineffective implementation. The key recommendation is therefore to activate and strengthen existing mechanisms, rather than creating new, similar tools.

The statement concluded with an appeal for a fundamental change in the approach to over-indebtedness—moving away from the punitive logic of **“decoctor ut fraudator” (the bankrupt as a fraudster) towards a supportive approach based on the principle of “in dubio pro reo”**. The objective of this shift is to make procedures more accessible and less repressive, and to provide over-indebted individuals with a genuine opportunity for a fresh start in line with EU standards.

Speech by: Jimmy Gresselin

Summary prepared by: Malwina Silva da Mota

LETTER FROM SLOVAKIA: Information on SOP Activities in Slovakia for ECDN

Dear Madam, Dear Sir,

Our activities in the extended scope have been underway since 1 March 2025, and the free counselling service is no longer focused solely on debt relief. It now also supports individuals and families with social and often psychological problems arising from adverse financial situations.

As of today, 336 staff members work in 46 Comprehensive Assistance Counselling Centres across Slovakia, in the following professional structure: first-contact staff, financial specialist, psychologist, lawyer, social worker, coordinator, and outreach consultant. The planned average staffing is 10 counsellors per centre. Due to consolidation measures adopted by the Government of the Slovak Republic, recruitment procedures for vacant posts have been temporarily suspended, and the target of 407 counsellors will be reached only at the beginning of next year.



Photos from methodological training days for a subset of advisors

Between 1 March 2025 and 1 December 2025, we received approximately 16,211 clients with diverse problems and backgrounds. The counselling process was completed for 9,450 clients. Most often, our support was sought by individuals (59%), families (3.5%), seniors (6%), marginalised groups (17%), and persons with severe disabilities (4.9%), with particular attention devoted to single parents and families raising a child with a disability.

In the field of debt relief counselling, we cooperate primarily with banks and the Slovak Banking Association (SBA), Národná banka Slovenska (NBS – the National Bank of Slovakia), the Centre for Legal Aid (CPP), the Slovak Chamber of Executors (SKE), the Slovak Bar Association (SAK), and the health insurance funds Všeobecná zdravotná poisťovňa (VšZP), Union ZP and Dôvera ZP. Memoranda of cooperation have been concluded with these partners, who also provide professional training to ensure high-quality and safe counselling services.

For our activities, a trademark has been registered for the logo of the Comprehensive Assistance Counselling Centre and for the services it provides in the economic, legal, social and psychological fields, which may be positively recognised in the future.

Yours faithfully,
Jozef Hudák
Project Director



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Project Director

ECDN CONFERENCE & GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN 2026 - SAVE THE DATE

We are happy to announce that our next ECDN event will take place on **13-14 April 2026** at the European Parliament in Strasbourg.

Please save the date in your calendars!

SAVE THE DATE

ECDN General Assembly
& Conference:
Gambling,
Over-Indebtedness
and the Transposition
of CCD II

 13-14 April 2026

 European Parliament,
Strasbourg

More details coming soon



We would like to encourage you to share your new materials, educational resource publications, best practices (case studies, reports, and research), tools, templates, and success stories with us in our next edition. We are a growing community, and sharing our work helps us all learn and grow stronger as a consumer debt network.

You can email your contributions to secretary@ecdnet.eu with a brief description of the materials.

Thank you for your dedication and support.