Exploratory study of consumer issues in peer-to-peer platform markets

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Authors: Pierre Hausemer, Julia Rzepecka, Marius Dragulin, Simone Vitiello, Lison Rabuel, Madalina Nunu, Adriana Rodriguez Diaz, Emma Psaila, Sara Fiorentini, Sara Gysen, Tim Meeusen, Simon Quaschning, Allison Dunne Vadim Grinevich, Franz Huber and Linda Baines
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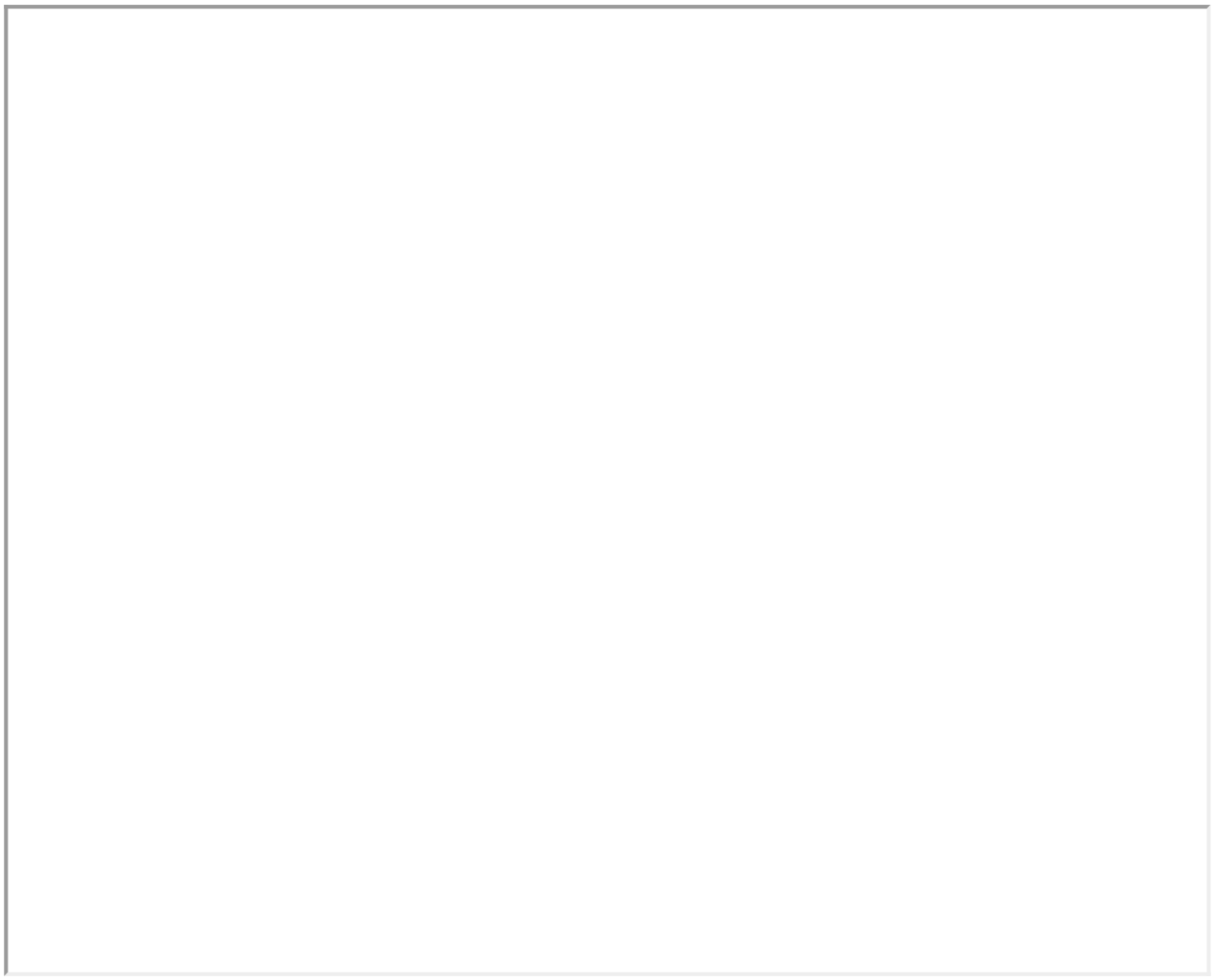
Why we select this research?

Online P2P transactions via platforms create both benefits and challenges for consumers. This research helps policy makers to develop a better understanding of the consumer issues that arise with the growth of the sharing economy.

Key findings

- 81% of the platforms operating in the EU are **small or medium-sized**.
- The **business models of P2P platforms vary**. Many of the larger ones, charge transaction fees for a variety of services they provide to peers. They actively manage or govern transactions between peers, monetise user data, and invest in market expansion.
- More than half of the revenue and expenditure on both collaborative and (re)sale of goods platforms is **generated by 10% of peers**.
- **Most active users are either satisfied or very satisfied** with their experience. However, peer consumers also report frequent problems: 55% had at least one problem over the past year, mostly related to the poor quality of goods or services, or to the goods and services not being as described.
- On the larger platforms, **peers are likely to be confused about who is responsible** when something goes wrong: platform's practices may give the impression they assume at least partial responsibility in case of problems, but their Terms and Conditions exclude any liability.
- **Consumer rights** apply to the service the platform offers to peers, but only **civil law rules** apply to rentals and sales on platforms between two private persons.

These rules are mostly not tailored to P2P transactions online via platforms, and do not facilitate easy access to redress.



Reference

European Commission (2017). Exploratory study of consumer issues in peer-to-peer platform markets. Retrieved from: https://eprints.soton.ac.uk/411699/1/FinalreportMay2017pdf_2_.pdf