

EU insurance rules must be digital-friendly to reflect consumers' needs

Speaking at Insurance Europe's 9th International Conference today in Zurich, the European insurance and reinsurance federation's president, Sergio Balbinot, said the constantly evolving demands of consumers mean that rules governing insurers must allow them to provide innovative products to meet those needs.

However, insurers are concerned that new consumer protection rules — such as the Packaged Retail and Insurance-based Investment Products Regulation (PRIIPs) and the Insurance Distribution Directive (IDD) — do not reflect those needs. This is because they will require insurers to provide huge amounts of, sometimes duplicative, information to consumers and to provide this in a paper format by default.

Balbinot commented: "People are increasingly buying products online and on mobile devices. However, the PRIIPs Regulation and the IDD mean that consumers will have to make sense of up to 161 items of information on paper. Does that reflect the needs of someone buying insurance on a mobile phone? I don't think so."

Moving to the subject of insurtech, Balbinot said that both traditional insurers and start-ups are working — sometimes together — to harness new technological developments for the benefit of their clients. While these innovations bring exciting possibilities, consumers must be confident that they enjoy the same protection from EU consumer protection rules, whether they buy an insurance product from a traditional insurer or from a start-up.

Balbinot said: "Policymakers must therefore balance safeguarding consumer protection and fair competition on the one hand, and the ensuring the removal of regulatory obstacles to innovation on the other."

Balbinot was speaking in front of 400 delegates at Insurance Europe's 9th International Conference, "Digitisation today and tomorrow". Videos of the plenary conference session will be available on Insurance Europe's website later this month and you can read more about Insurance Europe's positions on a range of subjects in its newly published [annual report](#).

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Notes for editors

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