

Where to repair my plane...

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Abstract

We all know that the European Commission's strategic vision is aiming to maximize consumer participation and trust in the market by reinforcing consumer safety, enhancing knowledge, stepping up enforcement and securing redress, aligning consumer rights and policies to changes in society and in the economy. The European Union has indeed a substantial corpus of consumer law, and consumer rights exist in practice thanks to continuous improving of enforcement and securing redress. Consumers are really empowered if they can have their rights properly enforced within a robust framework which allows them to participate actively in the market. Any comments on potential ambiguities in the Consumer Rights Directive, while respecting the meaning and intent of this Directive, could bring necessary clarification, either in guidance or in the legislation itself, which would be beneficial to consumers.

Key words: Consumer protection, empowered consumers, improved legislation

JEL Classification: D18, L81

Still looking for the best solution

Suppose you traveled around Europe and consider a nice mechanical toy, a car or a plane, to make your boy happy. You were visiting some big or small commercial sites and finally you are home now and enjoy the happiness on your son's face. Some toys are so nice and well-designed that even parents may join playing with their children or happens that friends or neighbors come to your house to the same purpose. In such rapid usage after a short while your wonderful gadget stopped working. You may have a certificate of conformity and wish to solve the problem very quick. If you live in Romania you are lost and deserve the complaint of your boy. You find no place to solve your problem and I think that if the commodity is not of an international brand you can repair that gadget only in the country you bought it no matter where you live. In my opinion this is not normal since we are part of a very advanced technical era.

Consumer protection is still a matter of consideration in almost all countries of EU. In Romania gradually, from 1998, legislation have been put on the track of Europe good practice in the customer protection but still there are many things to be done. I can say that even EU as a whole is still looking for the best solution.

In 2008 I used to be cooperating with the Bucharest Chamber of Commerce and Industry and tried to start a research on this matter but unfortunately the state commission managing EU fund for Research on social economic program chapter 9.1 rejected the project as unimportant!!! Yet I think that the problem of how to manage complaints aroused from keeping with the conformity of goods is a key one mainly for customers living in other country that where commodities come from. In the case of Romania you find no shop to repair goods out of work that were bought elsewhere even during the guaranty period.

Five years ago EU start formalities of improving legislation of customer protection. Today we have an EU Directive *2011/83/UE* adopted by the EU Parliament and the EU Council in October 2011 .The new Directive is a step forward in the matter but make no reference to the protection of customer buying goods from other country on the continent then their residence.

The issue of goods taken from abroad might concern casual people and tourists all over Europe even they travel from East to West or from West to any other corner of the continent. The tourism today as well as simply traveling abroad are flourishing and sometimes good impressions on what you have seen in a country is badly damaged when the present you bought proved to be not useful soon after coming back home.

How to solve this problem?

In my opinion since the new Directive asked the national authorities to adopt specific legal paper in all countries of EU to comply with it, Romanian Government may produce ordinances to inform national customer how to protect themselves in cases shown above. It is also recommended that the Government and the institutions connected to consumer protection to suggest the EU Parliament and the Council ways and methods to improve the legislation that protect consumers that bought technical commodities abroad and claim their non-conformity legally.

I think solving these unpleasant issues might be a way to further enhance the pleasure of traveling and shopping abroad. And at least you can repair the damaged plane.....

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