

Consumer Protection. A Point of View

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Abstract

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. But if consumers live at the edge of a poor existence they tend to buy the cheapest commodities and less expensive goods mean less quality and thus more danger. Consumers may be well informed but their money cannot cover the demands. Poverty is an important media for villain traders and speculators to place their fake commodities and dangerous foods. The future of consumer's protection lays on making a better life for all citizens.

Key words: Consumer protection, empowered consumers, improved legislation

JEL Classification: D18, L81

There are numerous ways to consider the consumer protection. Usually, specialists in commercial practices put this issue mainly on a good knowledge and awareness of a consumer when buying goods. Yes, this is true. Nobody can protect himself from toxic products unless is well informed about what he is going to purchase. There are many laws and regulations in this

respect. Besides there are lots of initiatives from governmental and nongovernmental entities meant to inform and protect consumers. As a matter of fact all regulations refer to industries and commerce as well.

Yes, some consumers are more vulnerable

Can anyone say that being well informed there is nothing else to do to protect himself from being a victim of trade ill practices? Can anyone avoid buying foods that may affect his health by only reading goods label? Or a simple authority's control of quality inside a shop can make someone free of danger? At least here in Romania we do the same things as in the whole Europe and yet Romanian consumers are more vulnerable. And do you know why? The answer is: in this country people are poorer than in many other places in Europe. It is very easy to find this out comparing about 500 Euros a monthly wage in Romania with let say Austrian wage of more than 1300 Euros and 3000 Euros in Switzerland. We and Bulgarians occupy the last 2 places in the rank.

If consumers live at the edge of a poor existence they tend to buy the cheapest commodities and less expensive goods mean less quality and thus more danger. Yes they may be well informed but their money cannot cover the demands. Statistically most part of Romanians spend almost half of their monthly earnings for food and another big part for house and medical expenses while savings are almost zero.

It is for sure extremely important that consumers be all informed about the goods to buy but one have to admit that a wealthy illiterate boss in a poor country can protect himself more in comparison to a poor well informed people elsewhere in the civilized world. Poverty is an important media for villain traders and speculators to place their fake commodities and dangerous foods.

The main ways of strengthening consumer protection

To my point of view the following are the main ways of strengthening consumer protection in Romania and maybe in other similar country:

- Rise the living standard of people and encourage the middle class as the promoter in this respect. This is the task for the Government and is part of any policy for global economy and society development. A low living standard leads to lower consumer protection;
- A more efficient monitoring of trade competition and harder market rules;
- A more efficient consumer's education;
- A set of goods production standards and regulations meant to avoid dangerous commodity to enter the market;
- More control of the market and harder punishment for any ill practices that may affect the consumers.

I hope one day the leaders of this country will understand the importance of finding the best way to make consumers be less vulnerable. The future of consumer's protection lays, in my opinion, on making a better life for all citizens.



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May 28, 2014, on the occasion of the Roundtable
“Consumer protection and the pressure of economic and societal changes”,
organized by the Romanian-American University (RAU)
in collaboration with the Romanian Distribution Committee (CRD)