The National Council of the Slovak Republic has passed the following Act:

Article I

General provisions

§ 1

Subject and scope of the Act

(1) This Act governs the rights of consumers and the obligations of producers, traders, importers and suppliers, the competency of public administration authorities with respect to consumer protection, and the position of legal persons created or established for the purpose of consumer protection (hereinafter only the “association”).

(2) This Act applies to the sale of products and provision of services, where performance is being delivered in the territory of the Slovak Republic or where performance concerns business activities in the Slovak Republic.

§ 2

Definition of selected terms

For the purpose of this Act

a) a consumer is a natural person or legal person purchasing products or using services in order to satisfy his own personal needs or the needs of his family members.

b) a trader is

1. an entrepreneur offering or selling products to the consumer or providing services to the consumer;
2. a natural person selling plant and animal products to the consumer, which originate from his own minor agricultural activities, or non-wood forest products;
3. a natural person selling his own used products, with the exception of food;

c) a producer is an entity that

1. produces, extracts, restores, modifies or otherwise obtains a product, and has a registered office or place of business in the territory of a Member State of the European Union, a Member State of the European Economic Area or Turkey (hereinafter only the “Member State”) or an entity that identifies itself as the producer by placing its name, trademark or another distinguishing symbol on the product or an entity in the supplier chain, whose activities can affect the product's safety characteristics;
2. has a registered office or place of business in the territory of a Member State and is the agent of a producer that does not have a registered office or place of business in the territory of a Member State;

d) an importer is an entrepreneur, who imported the product into the Member State from a state that is not a Member State, or his agent;

e) a supplier is an entrepreneur who supplied the product to the trader directly or via other entrepreneurs and whose activities do not affect the product’s properties, or his agent;

f) a product is a new, used or modified movable item produced, extracted or otherwise obtained, regardless of its stage of processing, which is intended to be offered to the consumer or which can be assumed to be used by the consumer; it can be supplied for consideration or not; a product is also a movable item comprising part or accessories of another movable or immovable item, electricity, gas, water or heat intended for the consumer;

g) a safe product is a product that, when used, installed or maintained under normal or reasonably foreseeable conditions, does not endanger the consumer during the time period stipulated by the producer or during standard service life or that presents minimal danger to the consumer when used, in terms of safety and protection of health; a safe product must comply with the requirements pursuant to a separate regulation;

h) a dangerous product is a product not complying with the requirements identified in subparagraph g); a product may not be deemed dangerous solely on the grounds that a safer product was marketed;

i) a service is any activity or performance offered to the consumer, whether for consideration or not, with the exception of activities governed by separate regulations, which are supervised by professional

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1) §2(2) of the Commercial Code.
3) §2(1)(d) of Act No. 264/1999 Coll. on Technical Requirements for Products and on Conformity Assessment and on amendments to certain acts, as amended.
4) Act No. 264/1999 Coll.
chambers or other state administration authorities as specified in §19;

j) a safe service is a service that, when provided under normal or reasonably foreseeable conditions, does not endanger or presents minimal danger to the consumer in terms of safety and protection of health;

k) standard quality is a level of quality ensuring the preservation of all the product’s material characteristics, which are essential for its immediate use and which fulfill the consumer’s foreseen expectations;

l) complaint means the assertion of liability for product or service defects;

m) handling of a complaint means the complaint procedure completion by returning a repaired product, replacing the product, reimbursing the product purchase price, payment of an appropriate discount from the product price, a written call for acceptance of performance or its justified rejection;

n) expert opinion is the opinion of an expert 6) or a justified rejection;

o) dangerous imitation is a product which possesses a form, odour, colour, appearance, packaging, labelling, volume or size, such that it is likely that consumers, especially children, will confuse them with foodstuffs which might be dangerous to their health;

p) commercial practice means any act, omission, course of conduct or representation, commercial communication including advertising and marketing, by a trader, directly connected with the promotion, sale or supply of a product to consumers;

q) aggressive commercial practice is any action which, by harassment, coercion, including the use of physical force, or undue influence, significantly impairs or is likely to significantly impair the average consumer’s freedom of choice or conduct with regard to the product and thereby causes him or is likely to cause him to take a transactional decision that he would not have taken otherwise;

r) material distortion of the economic behaviour of consumers means the using a commercial practice to appreciably impair the consumer’s ability to take a decision that he would not have taken otherwise;

s) code of conduct means an agreement or set of rules which defines the behaviour of traders who undertake to be bound by the code in relation to one or more particular commercial practices or business sectors, unless such rules are imposed by law, regulation or administrative provision of a public administration authority;

t) code owner means any entity, including a trader or group of traders, which is responsible for the formulation and revision of a code of conduct and/or for monitoring compliance with the code by those who have undertaken to be bound by it;

u) professional diligence means the standard of special skill and care which a trader may reasonably be expected to exercise towards consumers, commensurate with honest market practice and/or the general principle of good faith in the trader’s field of activity;

v) invitation to purchase means a commercial communication which indicates characteristics of the product and the price in a way appropriate to the means of the commercial communication used and thereby enables the consumer to make a;

w) undue influence means exploiting a position of power in relation to the consumer so as to apply pressure, even without using or threatening to use physical force, in a way which significantly limits the consumer's ability to make an informed decision;

z) transactional decision means any decision taken by a consumer concerning whether, how and on what terms to purchase, make payment in whole or in part for, retain or dispose of a product or to exercise a contractual right in relation to the product, whether the consumer decides to act or to refrain from acting.

§3

Consumer rights

(1) Each consumer has the right to obtain products and services of good quality, the right to submit a complaint, the right to damages, edification, information, protection of his own health, safety and economic interests, and the right to submit motions and complaints to supervisory and inspection authorities8) (hereinafter only the “supervisory authority”) and to the municipality in the event of breach of the consumer’s statutory rights.

(2) The consumer’s right to information is ensured via a public authority’s obligation to publish final decisions in cases concerning the provisions of this Act, as well as of other separate regulations governing consumer rights. If a consumer exercises the right of access to a final decision by perusing the decision at the registered office of the public authority issuing the decision, the consumer is entitled to make extracts from and transcriptions of the decision. The consumer also has the right to request the public authority to

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8) §3 of Act No. 128/2002 Coll. on State Control of Internal Market in Consumer Protection Issues and on amendments to certain acts, as amended.  
§§ 58 through 66a of Act No. 140/1998 Coll. on Drugs and Medical Aids, on the amendment of Act No. 455/1991 Coll. on Licensed Trade (the Trades Act), as amended, and on the amendment of Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 220/1996 Coll. on Advertising, as amended.  
§ 4 through 16 of Act No. 39/2007 Coll. on Veterinary Care, as amended.  
§3 of Act No. 126/2006 Coll. on Public Healthcare and on amendments to certain acts.  
§21 of Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 152/1995 Coll. on Foodstuffs, as amended.  
§33 of Act No. 142/2000 Coll. on Metrology and on amendments to certain acts, as amended by Act No. 431/2004 Coll.
make a copy of the decision. The actual costs of copying are borne by the consumer.

(3) Each consumer has the right to protection against unacceptable conditions in consumer contracts, which comprise contracts concluded pursuant to the Civil Code\textsuperscript{9}) or the Commercial Code, as well as all other contracts with a common characteristic feature of being concluded in multiple cases, where the consumer usually does not materially affect the contract’s content; provisions of the Civil Code will be applied accordingly also to consumer contracts not concluded pursuant to the Civil Code.

(4) Every consumer has the right to organise, along with other consumers, in consumer protection organisations and, by means of these organisations, to protect and assert the consumers’ eligible interests in accordance with the law and to assert liability rights against persons who impaired the consumers’ rights.

(5) In the event of a breach of the statutory rights and obligations aimed at consumer protection, a consumer may seek to protect his right against the breaching party before a court. Before a court, an association may seek that the breaching party refrain from unlawful conduct and that it remove the unlawful state of affairs. The person successfully asserting a breach of right or obligation stipulated in this Act and in separate regulations has the right to adequate financial compensation from the party, whose breach of a right or obligation stipulated in this Act and in separate regulations is capable of inflicting damage to the consumer.

\section*{§4}

The trader’s obligations

(1) The trader is obliged

\begin{itemize}
  \item[a)] to sell products of the correct weight, measure or quantity and to allow the consumer to verify the correctness of these data;
  \item[b)] to sell products and provide services of standard quality; where quality is not prescribed, the trader may sell products of substandard quality only after having notified the consumer of all the differences;
  \item[c)] to sell products and provide services at agreed prices\textsuperscript{10});
  \item[d)] to correctly charge prices when selling products or providing services;
  \item[e)] to ensure compliance with the hygienic conditions when selling products and providing services;
  \item[f)] when selling products and providing services, to comply with the product storage conditions stipulated by the producer or in a separate regulation\textsuperscript{11}) in order to prevent the deterioration of products;
  \item[g)] to present the product to the consumer, where applicable in view of the nature of the product;
  \item[h)] to ensure the sale of products and provision of services in a way allowing for their safe use.
\end{itemize}

(2) The trader may not

\begin{itemize}
  \item[a)] impose obligations upon the consumer without legal grounds;
  \item[b)] deny the consumer’s rights pursuant to §3.
\end{itemize}

(3) The trader may not refuse selling a product to the consumer, if the product is displayed or otherwise prepared for sale, nor may he refuse the provision of a service, if it is possible in terms of operational capacity; the sale of a product or the provision of a service may not be conditioned by the sale of another product or the provision of another service. This does not apply, if the consumer does not comply with the conditions of purchase pursuant to separate regulations.\textsuperscript{12})

(4) During the entire reservation period, the trader is obliged to mark the reserved products, stating the time until which they are reserved; the same applies to products that were already paid for and are located in the establishment until the consumer collects them or until they are delivered to the consumer.

(5) The trader may not act in conflict with good morals. For the purposes of this Act, acting in conflict with good morals constitutes, in particular, conduct in conflict with conventional traditions, showing clear signs of discrimination or deviation from the rules of decency accepted with respect to the sale of products and provision of services, or conduct that may cause harm to consumers if not undertaken in line with good faith, honesty, usual conduct and practice, whereby making use of mistake, deceit, threat, significant inequity between the parties and breach of contractual freedom.

(6) The obligation pursuant to paragraph 1(b) and the ban pursuant to paragraph 2(b) applies accordingly also to the producer, importer and supplier.

\section*{§5}

Ban of consumer deceit

(1) The producer, trader, importer or supplier may not deceive the consumer; in particular, they may not state untrue, undocumented, incomplete, inaccurate, obscure or ambiguous information or withhold information concerning the characteristics of a product or service or concerning purchase terms and conditions.

(2) Consumer deceit also encompasses the offer or sale of products or the provision of services violating intellectual property rights, as well as the storage of such products with the intention of offering or selling them.

\section*{§6}

Placement of products on the market and provision of services

\textsuperscript{9}) §§ 52 through 60 of the Civil Code.

\textsuperscript{10}) For example, Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 18/1996 Coll. on Prices, as amended; Act No. 276/2001 Coll. on Regulation in Network Industries and on amendments to certain acts, as amended.


\textsuperscript{12}) For example, Act No. 190/2003 Coll. on Firearms and Ammunition and on amendments to certain acts.
(1) Only safe products may be placed, offered or sold on the market; this does not apply to used products supplied as antiques or products which are to be repaired or restored prior to use, provided that the supplier demonstrably communicated this fact to the person to whom the product is being supplied.

(2) It is forbidden to market, produce, import and sell dangerous copies.

(3) Products with a specified expiration date in view of their characteristics may not be placed on the market, and upon the lapse of the expiration date the trader is obliged to withdraw them from the market.

(4) The trader is relieved of liability for the breach of obligations pursuant to paragraph 1 if he demonstrates that, at the time of sale or offer, he could not have known of the dangerous nature of the product.

(5) If the trader becomes aware of any facts indicating that he sold to the consumer a product that is not safe, he is obliged to inform the consumer of this fact without undue delay. If it is not possible to inform the individual consumers, the trader is obliged to employ an effective method to notify the public and public administration authorities conducting supervision of compliance with the provisions of this Act.

(6) The obligations stipulated in paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 5 apply equally to the producer, trader, importer and supplier.

(7) The consumer has the right to return a product that is not safe to the producer, trader, importer or supplier. If the consumer exercises the above right, the producer, trader, importer or supplier is obliged to accept the product back, and no later than within three business days of accepting the product, to reimburse the product purchase price along with purposefully incurred costs, which the consumer is obliged to demonstrate. The producer or importer is obliged to accept an unsafe product back also in the event that the consumer does not have a product purchase receipt.

(8) The provisions of paragraphs 1 through 6 apply accordingly also to the provision of services.

(9) If a producer, trader, importer or supplier learns, based on information discovered by the experts, that a product which he placed on the market is dangerous, he must immediately inform the Slovak Commercial Inspection thereof and present information concerning the measures undertaken or measures that need to be undertaken to prevent consumer endangerment. The Slovak Commercial Inspection is obliged to publish the information about a dangerous product without undue delay, in the form of an announcement via public information institutions. 13)

(10) The details concerning the requirements for product or service safety will be laid down in a generally binding regulation to be issued by the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter only the “Ministry”).

§7

§8

Unfair commercial practice

(1) Unfair commercial practices shall be prohibited.

(2) A commercial practice is considered unfair, if

a) it is contrary to the requirements of professional diligence;

b) it materially distorts or may materially distort the economic behaviour with regard to the product of the average consumer whom it reaches or to whom it is addressed, or of the average member of the group when a commercial practice is directed to a particular group of consumers.

(3) Commercial practices which may materially distort the economic behaviour only of a group of consumers who are particularly vulnerable because of their mental or physical infirmity, age or credulity in a way which the trader could reasonably be expected to foresee, shall be assessed from the perspective of the average member of that group. This is without prejudice to the common and legitimate advertising practice of making exaggerated statements or statements which are not meant to be taken literally.

(4) In particular, commercial practice is deemed unfair if it is a misleading action and misleading omission as set out in §8 and an aggressive commercial practice as set out in §9. The list of commercial practices which are in all circumstances considered unfair is included in Annex 1.

§10

Misleading action and misleading omission

(1) A commercial practice shall be regarded as misleading if it causes or is likely to cause the consumer to take a transactional decision that he would not have taken otherwise because it contains false information and is therefore untruthful or in any way deceives or is likely to deceive the average consumer, even if the information is factually correct in relation to

a) the existence of the product or nature of the product;

b) the main characteristics of the product, such as its availability, benefits, risks, execution, composition, accessories, after-sale customer assistance and complaint handling, method and date of manufacture or provision, delivery, fitness for purpose, usage, quantity, specification, geographical or commercial origin or the results to be expected from its use, or the results and material features of tests or checks carried out on the product;

c) the extent of the trader's commitments, the motives for the commercial practice and the nature of the sales process, any statement or symbol in relation to direct or indirect sponsorship or approval of the trader or the product;

d) the price or the manner in which the price is calculated, or the existence of a specific price advantage;

e) the need for a service, part, replacement or repair;

f) the nature, attributes and rights of the trader or his agent, such as his identity and assets, his qualifications, status, approval, affiliation or connection and ownership of

(7) Material information requirements with respect to commercial communication including advertising or marketing are laid down by separate regulations.¹⁵)

§9

Aggressive commercial practice

In determining whether an aggressive commercial practice uses harassment, coercion, including the use of physical force, or undue influence, account shall be taken of:

a) the timing, location, nature or persistence;
b) the use of threatening or abusive language or behaviour;
c) the exploitation by the trader of any personal misfortune or circumstance of such gravity as to impair the consumer's judgement, of which the trader is aware, to influence the consumer's decision with regard to the product;
d) onerous or disproportionate non-contractual barriers imposed by the trader where a consumer wishes to exercise rights under the contract, including rights to terminate a contract or to switch to another product or another trader;
e) threat to take any action that cannot legally be taken.

§10

Code of conduct

The use of unfair commercial practices may also be inspected by code owners or persons and associations through the code owner. Such activity may be performed irrespective of court proceedings or administrative proceedings.

Information obligations

§11

(1) Upon effecting the sale, the trader is obliged to inform the consumer about the characteristics of the product being sold or the nature of the service being provided, on the method of use and maintenance of the product, on the hazards associated with its incorrect use or maintenance, on storage conditions and on the risk associated with the provided service. If necessary in view of the nature of the product and in view of the method and time of its use, the trader is obliged to ensure that the information also be intelligibly provided in an appended written manual.

(2) If the producer or importer does not enter into a direct relationship with the trader, they are obliged to provide


¹⁴) §623 of the Civil Code.
truthful and complete information about the product’s characteristics to the supplier. The supplier is obliged to provide truthful and complete information about the product’s characteristics to the trader. The information to be provided by the producer, importer or supplier include:

a) full description of the risk associated with the product, including the risk of a product used in the provision of a service;
b) all information necessary for the use of the product; andc) measures that need to be adopted in order to prevent risk to the consumer when using the product.

(3) The trader may not relieve himself of the obligations referred to in paragraph 1 by stating that the producer, importer or supplier failed to provide him with the necessary or correct information; this does not apply to instances when such facts are commonly known.

§12

(1) The producer or importer is obliged to label the product with data that provide the trader with truthful and complete information about the supplied product’s characteristics.

(2) The trader is obliged to ensure that the product sold by him is clearly labelled, indicating the producer, importer or trader, measure or quantity, method of product use and maintenance and the hazard associated with incorrect use or maintenance of the product, the product storage conditions, as well as the risk associated with the provided service, or information pursuant to separate regulations. Upon request by the supervisory authority or by the consumer, the trader is obliged to notify or document the product’s data, if the product cannot be labelled.

(3) The trader may not remove, cover or modify the product label or any other data indicated by the producer, importer or supplier.

(4) In the event of selling a used or modified product, a defective product or a product whose utility is otherwise impaired, the trader must notify the consumer of this fact in advance. The trader is obliged to sell such a product separately from other products.

(5) In the case of the sale of a used product, paragraph 1 applies accordingly.

(6) Details concerning the indication of material composition of the individual product types, the methods of product material composition testing and the method of packaging and handling of products designed for the consumer will be stipulated by the Ministry in a generally binding regulation.

(7) The obligation stipulated in paragraph 2 also applies accordingly to the producer, importer and supplier.

§13

If the information in §§ 11 and 12 is provided in writing, it must be provided in the state language. This is without prejudice to the possibility of parallel usage of other forms of indication, in particular graphical symbols and pictograms, as well as other languages. Physical and technical parameters must be expressed in statutory measurement units.

§14

(1) The trader is obliged to inform the consumer about the final price of the product being sold or service being provided, and to clearly indicate the price of the product or service or to make the price information available in a different suitable form.

(2) A price information, incomplete price, missing price or information about the method of price determination may not invoke the impression that a) the price is lower than it actually is, b) the price determination depends on circumstances on which it in fact does not depend, c) the price includes the delivery of a product, performance, work or service, which is in fact charged separately, d) the price is or may be increased, reduced or may remain unchanged although it is not true, e) the value-for-money ratio of the offered product or service corresponds to reality, although such information is untrue.

§15

(1) The following information must indicated on a suitable and permanently visible place in the establishment:

a) the business name and registered office of the trader or place of business of a natural person;
b) first name and surname of the person responsible for the operation of the establishment;
c) the business hours for consumers;
d) in the case of an accommodation facility, the category and type of accommodation facility.

(2) The obligation to indicate the information necessary for the submission of a complaint also pertains to the sale of products and provision of services outside the establishment.

(3) The trader and his staff in the establishment coming into contact with the consumer must wear an identification or clothing distinguishing them from the consumers; this obligation does not apply to sale at market places.

(4) In the event of temporary closure of the establishment, the trader is obliged to indicate the commencement and end of establishment closure at the place where business hours are indicated, no later than 24 hours prior to the temporary closure of the establishment, assuming that the establishment will be closed for more than one day.

§16

(1) The trader is obliged to provide the consumer with a receipt confirming the purchase of a product or the provision of a service; the receipt must indicate:

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16) For instance, Act No. 264/1999 Coll.
18) §3 of Act No. 142/2000 Coll.
a) the business name, identification number and registered office of the trader or the place of business of a natural person;
b) the address of the establishment;
c) the date of sale;
d) product title and quantity or type of service;
e) the unit price per product or service and the total price paid by the consumer.

(2) In the case of product sale with subsequent delivery, the receipt must indicate the delivery destination, date and time.

(3) In the case of selling a used product or modified product, a defective product or a product whose utility is otherwise impaired, these facts must clearly be stated on the receipt.

(4) The obligation pursuant to paragraph 1 does not apply to a trader selling plant and animal products to the consumer, which originate from his own minor agricultural activities, or non-wood forest products, unless stipulated otherwise in a separate regulation.  

§17

The trader is obliged to sell the product in hygienically suitable packaging or to place it in such packaging upon sale if necessary in view of the nature of the product. In the event of self-service sale, he is obliged to provide the consumer with packaging material. The costs of packaging material and product packaging are borne by the trader.

§18

(1) The trader is obliged to duly inform the consumer about the conditions for, and method of, filing a complaint, including the information on where a complaint can be submitted and on the performance of warranty repairs. The rules of complaint procedure must be displayed on a visible place accessible to the consumer.

(2) The trader is obliged to accept a complaint in any establishment where the complaint can be accepted with regard to the products sold or services provided, or at a designated place; this does not apply if a different person is designated to perform the repair.

(3) During the business hours, an employee authorised to handle complaints must be present in the establishment. In the event of group tours, the trader must arrange constant presence of an authorised worker designated to handle complaints during the entire tour.

(4) The trader, or an employee designated by him or another person obliged to perform repair, shall handle the complaint immediately; in the event of complex cases, the complaint must be handled within three business days. This time period does not include the time necessary for the preparation of an expert opinion regarding the defect. However, the handling of a complaint may not take longer than 30 days. Upon the lapse of this period, the consumer has equal rights as if the defect were irreparable. If the trader does not accept the complaint within three business days, he is obliged to send, at his own expense, the product for expert opinion. Upon request by the supervisory authority, the trader is obliged to prove that the product has been sent or produce the results of expert opinion.

(5) Upon the submission of a complaint, the trader is obliged to provide the consumer with a receipt.

(6) The trader is obliged to issue a written document confirming the complaint handling no later than within 30 days of the date of complaint submission.

(7) The trader is obliged to maintain complaint records and to submit them to the supervisory authority for perusal upon request. The complaint records must include the date of complaint submission, date and method of complaint handling.

(8) The obligations identified in paragraph 4 also apply to the person designated to perform repairs.

Public administration authorities

§19

(1) The public administration authorities for consumer protection include:
a) the Ministry;
b) supervisory authorities;
c) municipalities.

(2) With respect to consumer protection, the Ministry
a) governs state administration;
b) prepares and submits a draft state consumer policy concept to the Government of the Slovak Republic;
c) is the notification authority within the system of rapid exchange of information with the European Union authorities in the cases of serious and imminent risk to the safety and protection of consumers’ health arising from non-food products;
d) informs the competent authorities of Member States about complaints concerning the breach of European Communities’ legal acts governing consumer protection;

e) informs consumers about their rights and obligations;
f) maintains and regularly updates information on
1. programmes of surveillance based on product or risk categories;
2. scientific and technical knowledge concerning product safety;
3. inspections and the functioning of inspection activities;
g) performs the tasks of a single liaison office pursuant to a separate regulation.

21) §3 of Act No. 455/1991 Coll. as amended.
22) §625 of the Civil Code.
h) Informs the Commission of the European Communities (hereinafter only the “Commission”) about:
1. the authorities responsible for the implementation of legal acts of the European Communities and for internal market supervision;
2. associations authorised to file actions in the area of consumer rights protection;
3. the adoption of generally binding regulations and measures in the area of consumer protection; where a measure pertains to a dangerous imitation, the information contains the description of the respective product and the decision justification;
i) controls and oversees the Slovak Commercial Inspection.

§20

Supervisory authorities

(1) The compliance with the obligations stipulated in this Act is supervised by the supervisory authorities. Where the competency of the supervisory authority cannot be determined, the Slovak Commercial Inspection is authorised to conduct supervision and inspection.

(2) In the control of introduction of a product or service to the market from a non-member state, the supervisory authority proceeds pursuant to a separate regulation.25)

(3) The supervisory authority is obliged to conduct inspection of product or service safety, and for this purpose it is authorised
a) to request the necessary information from the producer, trader, importer or supplier;
b) to take a product or sample from a series of products and examine the safety thereof;
c) to assess whether a product or service introduced to the market contains notifications of the potential risks associated with the use of the product or the provision of the service;
d) to provide timely and appropriate notification to the persons who may be exposed to the risk induced by a product or by a provided service;
e) to temporarily ban the introduction of a product, a series of products or a service to the market, their presentation, offer or sale, if it is reasonable to suspect that the product or service is not safe, for a time period necessary to perform tests or to examine the suspicion;
f) to ban the introduction of a product, a series of products or a service to the market, their presentation, offer or sale, if it has been proven that they are not safe, and to put in place accompanying measures ensuring that the ban is complied with;
g) to order or organise immediate withdrawal of a product, a series of products or a service from the market or the acceptance of a product back from the consumer, if it has been proven that it is not safe and had been introduced to the market; where necessary, also to order the liquidation thereof;
h) to issue binding instructions aimed at the removal of the discovered deficiencies; to adopt the necessary measures and determine the time period for the submission of a report on their completion.

(4) The supervisory authority may apply the procedure pursuant to paragraph 3 with respect to a producer, trader, importer or supplier and persons obtaining the product or service as part of an item, and with respect to any other person, if necessary to ensure the cooperation in measures designed to prevent a threat originating from the product. The producer, trader, importer or supplier may be ordered to accept a product back from the consumer, if the threat of damage to the consumer persisted even despite the procedure pursuant to paragraph 3(d).

(5) The supervisory authority may ban the provision of a service, introduction of a product to the market or the sale thereof, it may order immediate withdrawal of the product or service from the market or the acceptance of a product back also if it is proven that despite a determined or demonstrated conformity4) of the product or service with their respective safety requirements, the product or service is not safe. In its decision upon the withdrawal of the product from the market, the supervisory authority will also determine the method of disposal of such a product.

(6) The supervisory authority will support voluntary activities of the producers, traders, importers and suppliers associated with the fulfilment of their obligations in the area of product and service safety, and, where appropriate, will draw the principles of good practice.

(7) Written objections may be filed against the decision supervisory authority’s decision issued pursuant to paragraph 3(f) through (g) and paragraphs (4) and (5) within five business days of the decision issuance. Objections do not have a dilatory effect.

(8) In the event that the supervisory authority does not uphold the objections in full scope, it is obliged to refer the case file to the respective appellate authority within five business days.

(9) The respective appellate authority is obliged to decide upon the objections within 30 days of the date of case file delivery.

(10) The supervisory authority is obliged to publish final decisions issued pursuant to this Act, including final court decisions concerning the judicial review of the supervisory authority’s decisions. The supervisory authority must ensure that the entrepreneurs’ right to trade secret protection be observed when publishing. The publishing obligation is fulfilled once the decisions are published on the day following their finality date for a period of six months at the supervisory authority’s official website, and once the final decisions are made available at departments designated by the competent supervisory authority.

(11) In the decisions published pursuant to paragraph 10, the supervisory authority shall, apart from the description of the facts of the case, indicate:
a) the name and surname of a natural person, his place of business and identification number or
b) business name or title of a legal person, its registered office and identification number.

(12) A consumer or an association representing the consumer has the right to peruse the case file at the office of the supervisory authority issuing the decision, and the right to make extracts from and transcriptions of the case file. The consumer or association has the right to request the supervisory authority to make copies of the case file documents. The costs of copying are borne by the consumer or association.

(13) The supervisory authorities conduct their activities within the scope of separate regulations.3) The supervisory authority handles consumer complaints that are investigated as offence if the consumer was harmed by a lie concerning the quality, quantity or safety of a product or unfair commercial practice. The supervisory authority will submit the written preliminary measure to the entity against which it is aimed, stating the facts that gave rise to its suspicion concerning the safety of a product or unfair commercial practice.

§21
Preliminary measure

(1) The supervisory authority will issue a preliminary measure to ban the introduction of an unsafe product to the market or will issue an order to stop unfair commercial practice. The supervisory authority will submit the written preliminary measure to the entity against which it is aimed, stating the facts that gave rise to its suspicion concerning the safety of a product or unfair commercial practice.

(2) Subsequently, the preliminary measure is delivered to other persons concerned. Written objections may be filed against the preliminary measure within three days. The objections do not have a dilatory effect. The authority superior to the supervisory authority issuing the preliminary measure will deliver a decision regarding the objections within five days of receipt thereof. No remedy may be filed against the superior authority’s decision.

(3) The supervisory authority will accordingly apply the provisions of paragraphs 1 and 2 also in the case of other material inspection results, and against the code owner.

§22
Municipality

(1) The municipality
a) approves market rules,
b) oversees compliance with the obligations laid down in this Act at markets and market places,
c) investigates offences arising from a breach of this Act during the sale of products at markets and market places.

(2) Provisions of §20 apply to activities performed by the municipality in respect of consumer protection at markets and market places accordingly.

§23
Offences

(1) Anyone who harms consumer rights by having acted in breach of this Act or separate consumer protection regulations26) is deemed to have committed an offence.

(2) A fine up to the amount of SKK 10,000 may be imposed for the offence referred to in paragraph 1.

(3) A general regulation on offences shall apply to offences under this Act and related proceedings.27)

(4) Revenues from the fines imposed by a municipal authority for committed offences constitute revenues of the municipal budget.

§24
Sanctions

(1) Where the obligations laid down in this Act or in European Community consumer protection laws28) are breached, the supervisory authority shall fine the producer, trader, importer or supplier or the person referred to in §26 who had produced, sold, imported or supplied a product whose defect caused damage to life or health. The identical fine shall be imposed upon anyone who caused such damage by defective delivery of a service. The fine may not be imposed upon persons who demonstrate that they could not have avoided such damage despite having exerted all effort which could reasonably be expected.

(3) A disciplinary fine up to SKK50,000 shall be imposed by the supervisory authority upon the producer, trader, importer and supplier or the person referred to in §26 who mars, thwarts or otherwise hinders the performance of

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supervisory activities or who, as the case might be, fails to meet the binding instruction referred to in §20(3)(h); the fine may be imposed repeatedly.

(4) The fine referred to in paragraph 1 shall not be imposed where a fine under a separate regulation was imposed, or if the fine referred to in paragraph 2 may be imposed.

(5) When determining the amount of the fine, an account shall be taken of the nature of the unlawful conduct, gravity of the breach of an obligation and the method and consequences of the breach.

(6) Revenues from the fines imposed pursuant to paragraph 1 through 3 constitute revenues of the state budget.

(7) The fine may be imposed within one year from the day when the supervisory authority ascertained the breach of an obligation under this Act, however no later than within three years for fines set out in paragraphs 1 and 3 and, for fines set out in paragraph 3, no later than within ten years from the day on which such breach occurred.

§25

Association

(1) An association may file a petition to initiate proceedings before an administrative authority or a court concerning the protection of consumer rights or may be a party to such proceedings
a) if such objectives constitute the main purpose of its activity and
b) is included on the list of qualified entities maintained by the Commission (hereinafter “list of qualified entities”) without prejudice to the right of the court to review as to whether the entity in question is qualified to bring an action in the given case.

(2) The association shall submit an application to be included on the list of qualified entities to the Ministry which shall assess whether the following conditions have been met:
a) the association was established in compliance with the law,
b) the association has been actively engaged in consumer protection for at least two years,
c) the association is independent and non-for-profit,
d) the association has no outstanding obligations towards the state.

(3) The Ministry shall propose to the Commission to include the association complying with the conditions specified in paragraph 2 on the list of qualified entities.

(4) With consumer’s and trader’s consent, the association is entitled to mediate resolution of disputes between the consumer and trader pertaining to the settlement of claims.

(5) The Ministry shall support an association if its activity focuses at
a) consumer rights protection before courts,
b) mediation of disputes between consumers and traders pertaining to the settlement of claims,
c) assistance in enforcing economic interests and rights of consumers through surveys, including surveys on consumers’ problems, and assessment of consumer rights enforcement,
d) the monitoring of general terms and conditions contained in consumer contracts,
e) initiating negotiations and activities affecting legislation for the benefit of consumer rights protection,
f) the monitoring of consumer policy implementation and its application in practice,
g) publishing periodicals and publications on consumer policy, product testing and experiences of associations,
h) operating consultancy offices which provide information and advise to consumers,
i) consumer protection trainings.

§26

Consumer protection in the case of non-licensed business

Obligations of the producer, trader, importer or supplier shall also apply to persons who carry out the activities specified in §2(b) through (e) without a business license.

§27

Relation to the Administrative Code

Unless this Act provides to the contrary, any proceedings hereunder are governed by the general regulation on administrative proceedings.29)

Final provisions

§28

This Act transposes the legal acts of the European Communities and the European Union listed in Annex 2.

§29

Transitional provisions

Any proceedings initiated prior to 30 June 2007 shall be completed in compliance with the current regulations.

§30

Repealing provisions

The following is repealed:


Article II


1. §24(1)(a) is deleted.
   Sub-paragraphs (b) through (e) are renamed to (a) through (d).

2. §24(2) reads as follows:
   “A fine up to SKK5,000 may be imposed for an offence under paragraph 1(a), up to SKK10,000 for an offence under paragraph 1(b) and (c), and up to SKK100,000 for an offence under paragraph 1(d). Ban on activity for up to one year may be imposed for an offence under paragraph 1(a) through (c).”.

3. In §58(4)(a) the words “in §24(1)(d)” are replaced with the words “§24(1)(c)”.

4. In §86(b) the words “in §24(1)(a) and (d)” are replaced with the words “§24(1)(c)”.

   Article III
   This Act shall enter into force as of 1 July 2007.
   
   Ivan Gašparovič
   Pavol Paška
   Robert Fico
COMMERCIAL PRACTICES WHICH ARE IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES CONSIDERED UNFAIR

Misleading commercial practices

1. Claiming to be a signatory to a code of conduct when the trader is not.
2. Displaying a trust mark, quality mark or equivalent without having obtained the necessary authorisation.
3. Claiming that a code of conduct has an endorsement from a public or other body which it does not have.
4. Claiming that a trader (including his commercial practices) or a product has been approved, endorsed or authorised by a public or private body when he/she has not or making such a claim without complying with the terms of the approval, endorsement or authorisation.
5. Making an invitation to purchase products at a specified price without disclosing the existence of any reasonable grounds the trader may have for believing that he will not be able to offer for supply or to procure another trader to supply, those products or equivalent products at that price for a period that is, and in quantities that are, reasonable having regard to the product, the scale of advertising of the product and the price offered (bait advertising).
6. Making an invitation to purchase products at a specified price and then: a) refusing to show the advertised item to consumers, b) refusing to take orders for it or deliver it within a reasonable time, c) demonstrating a defective sample of it with the intention of promoting a different product (bait and switch).
7. Falsely stating that a product is only available for a very limited time, or that it is only available on particular terms for a very limited time, in order to elicit an immediate decision and deprive consumers of sufficient opportunity or time to make an informed choice.
8. Undertaking to provide after-sales service to consumers with whom the trader has communicated prior to a transaction in an official state language and then making such service available only in another language without clearly disclosing this to the consumer before the consumer is committed to the transaction.
9. Stating or otherwise creating the impression that a product can legally be sold when it cannot.
10. Presenting rights given to consumers in law as a distinctive feature of the trader's offer.
11. Using editorial content in the media to promote a product where a trader has paid for the promotion without making that clear in the content or by images or sounds clearly identifiable by the consumer (advertorial).
12. Making a materially inaccurate claim concerning the nature and extent of the risk to the personal security of the consumer or his family if the consumer does not purchase the product.
13. Promoting a product similar to a product made by a particular manufacturer in such a manner as deliberately to mislead the consumer into believing that the product is made by that same manufacturer when it is not.
14. Establishing, operating or promoting a pyramid promotional scheme where a consumer gives consideration for the opportunity to receive compensation that is derived primarily from the introduction of other consumers into the scheme rather than from the sale or consumption of products.
15. Claiming that the trader is about to cease trading or move premises when he is not.
16. Claiming that products are able to facilitate winning in games of chance.
17. Falsely claiming that a product is able to cure illnesses, dysfunction or malformations.
18. Passing on materially inaccurate information on market conditions or on the possibility of finding the product with the intention of inducing the consumer to acquire the product at conditions less favourable than normal market conditions.
19. Claiming in a commercial practice to offer a competition or prize promotion without awarding the prizes described or a reasonable equivalent.
20. Describing a product as “gratis”, “free”, “without charge” or similar if the consumer has to pay anything other than the unavoidable cost of responding to the commercial practice and collecting or paying for delivery of the item.
21. Including in marketing material an invoice or similar document seeking payment which gives the consumer the impression that he has already ordered the marketed product when he has not.
22. Falsely claiming or creating the impression that the trader is not acting for purposes relating to his trade, business, craft or profession, or falsely representing oneself as a consumer.
23. Creating the false impression that after-sales service in relation to a product is available in a Member State other than the one in which the product is sold.
**Aggressive commercial practices**

1. Creating the impression that the consumer cannot leave the premises until a contract is formed.
2. Conducting personal visits to the consumer’s home ignoring the consumer’s request to leave or not to return except in circumstances and to the extent justified to enforce a contractual obligation.
3. Making persistent and unwanted solicitations by telephone, fax, e-mail or other remote media except in circumstances and to the extent justified to enforce a contractual obligation.
4. Requiring a consumer who wishes to claim on an insurance policy to produce documents which could not reasonably be considered relevant as to whether the claim was valid, or failing systematically to respond to pertinent correspondence, in order to dissuade a consumer from exercising his contractual rights.
5. Including in an advertisement a direct exhortation to children to buy advertised products or persuade their parents or other adults to buy advertised products for them.
6. Demanding immediate or deferred payment for or the return or safekeeping of products supplied by the trader, but not solicited by the consumer except where the product is a substitute supplied in conformity with a separate regulation.
7. Explicitly informing a consumer that if he does not buy the product or service, the trader's job or livelihood will be in jeopardy.
8. Creating the false impression that the consumer has already won, will win, or will on doing a particular act win, a prize or other equivalent benefit, when in fact either a) there is no prize or other equivalent benefit, b) taking any action in relation to claiming the prize or other equivalent benefit is subject to the consumer paying money or incurring a cost.
LIST OF TRANPOSED LEGAL ACTS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES AND THE EUROPEAN UNION


