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**The first transnational project meeting of the**

**Consumer Academy Project**

There is no doubt that raising consumer awareness is one of the core tasks of today’s consumer protection since well-informed and conscious consumers are less vulnerable to unfair commercial practices and other types of infringements. This is why the effort to increase the level of consumer awareness is a future investment in a reliable, transparent and fair shopping environment.

Within the framework of the Consumer Academy Project, which is an ERASMUS+ KA2 project prepared by the Turkish Republic Directorate General for Consumer Protection and Market Surveillance, an online educational platform was adopted in four languages (Turkish, English, Polish and Hungarian).

On 17th and 18th February 2016, the first transnational project meeting of the Consumer Academy Project took place in the building of the Hungarian Authority for Consumer Protection in Budapest, Hungary.

The participants were the project owner and the project partners of the Consumer Academy Project, namely, the Turkish Ministry of Customs and Trade, Ankara Provincial Directorship of Trade, TÜKÇEV – Consumer and Environment Education Foundation, Hacettepe University – TÜPADEM (The Centre of Consumer and Market Research Consulting Test and Education), Docklands Academy London, Aviva Poland – Vocational Training and the Hungarian Authority for Consumer Protection.

The event ensured a great opportunity for the participants to provide exciting insights into the actions that already have been taken in the course of the project. In addition, the event furthered the exchange of experiences and best practices of the project partners which served the aim to enrich the content of all language versions of the platform.

**Day1 (17th February 2016)**

The first day of the event started with the opening speech of Mr István Szente, Director General of the Hungarian Authority for Consumer Protection and the opening speech of Mr Mikayil Kiliç from the Turkish Republic Ministry of Customs and Trade.

Afterwards, Mr Péter Aranyi from the Hungarian Authority for Consumer Protection gave a brief introduction on the state of play regarding consumer protection in Hungary and the role of the Hungarian Authority for Consumer Protection. He provided information on the communication of the authority and the different types of consumer enquiries that was received during the previous years (2013-2015).

This was followed by the presentations of the project partners (Ankara Provincial Directorship of Trade, TÜKÇEV, TÜPADEM, Docklands Academy London, Hungarian Authority for Consumer Protection and Aviva Poland) on the actions performed by them.

In its presentation, Ankara Provincial Directorship of Trade informed the participants that the frequently asked questions were collected by them. Furthermore, they made 23 sample decisions and sample consumer complaints were also made by them. In addition, with the aim of improving their services, they conducted a survey. At the end of the presentation, the operation of the Consumer Complaint Committee was presented by way of a video.

Participants of the meeting were informed that TÜKÇEV is the first green office in Turkey. It has diverse activities. For example, it operates a children’s theatre, it sends CD-s to every school in Turkey in which the popular TV series “Bimek Gerek” can be found. In addition, it publishes a yearly Consumer Awareness Guide which they also send to every school in Turkey. It published two books together with TÜPADEM.

TÜPADEM is engaged in academic activity and its aim is to spread information on consumer rights. They presented the questions and answers of their survey on consumer habits based on which almost 50% of the consumers in Turkey fail to do anything if they have consumer complaints.

Docklands London summarized the nature of their activity and they draw the participants’ attention to the fact that the next project meeting will be in London on 15th and 16th June 2015.

The Hungarian Authority for Consumer Protection presented their best practices and the performed actions. They informed the participants about their survey on what consumers prefer to do in case they have a problem with the purchased product.

In its presentation, Aviva Poland informed participants about the new consumer protection act in Poland and they presented their best practices and the performed actions as well. They informed the participants about a famous TV series in Poland (Wiem, co jem) and they presented an own video as well.

Then the Turkish Ministry of Customs and Trade gave presentation on the preformed actions and the Consumer Academy website. They shared helpful practical information with the participants and advised them to make English subtitles to their videos in order to further to share these videos with as many consumers as possible.

Finally, the floor was open to the questions and answers of the participants concerning the ‘staff time sheets’.

**Day2 (18th February 2016)**

On the second day of the event, the Turkish Republic Ministry of Customs and Trade summarized the technical details of the Consumer Academy project and website. The administration panel was presented by Mr Ozan Tüysüz. He shared practical information with the participants on the operation of the system (registration, editing, uploading, etc.).

The floor was open to discuss the questions of the participants which resulted in a fruitful exchange of information and views since the participant were very active.

To sum up, the first transnational meeting of the Consumer Academy Project ensured a great opportunity for the participants to provide insights into the actions that have already been taken in the course of the project.

**Introductory meeting of the Consumer Academy Project (19th February 2016)**

Following the first transnational meeting of the Consumer Academy Project, the introductory meeting of the Consumer Academy Project took place in the building of the Hungarian Authority for Consumer Protection in Budapest, Hungary on 19th February 2016.

The participants of this event comprised of the representatives of the Hungarian consumer protection authorities and NGOs.

The aim of this event was to draw the participants’ attention to the Consumer Academy website and to provide them with information on the communication and the projects of the Hungarian Authority for Consumer Protection between 2014 and 2015.

The participants of the introductory meeting showed a great interest in the Consumer Academy website, which is a new education platform for consumers, educators, public officers and private sector personnel regardless of their age.

They enjoyed the presented videos of the project partners and expressed their gratitude for this helpful website and initiative. They listened with interest the presentations about the projects of the Hungarian Authority for Consumer Protection as well.

To sum up, the introductory meeting of the Consumer Academy Project ensured a great opportunity for the representatives of Hungarian consumer protection organisations to provide insights into the different language versions of the Consumer Academy website and the actions that have already been taken in the course of the Consumer Academy project by the project partners.

