

Annual Report
by Members of the European Consumer Consultative Group(ECCG)
representing national and European consumer organisations
July 2014-July 2015

Name: Libor DUPAL

Organisation: Sdružení českých spotřebitelů / Czech Consumer Association

Function: Statutory Director

1. Please describe your organisation (national/European/umbrella organisation, its members, its income/support by national authorities, relations with other consumer organisations).

The Czech Consumer Association (Sdružení českých spotřebitelů, SCS), is a national civic association (NGO) established in 1990 (the oldest consumer NGO in the CzR); it sees its priorities in the development of activities which focus on supporting a precautionary (= “preventive”) approach and system tools in the field of consumer protection. These activities aim at enhancing relations between service providers and consumers. Communication, distribution of information, formulating opinions and comments to various issues are key factors and conditions of SCS involvement and activities.

Status

Under the Czech law, SCS is a public service company of non-member status. We have about 600 “sympathisants” – non-members who participate in research questionnaires and otherwise support activities of SCS.

Funding

A substantial part of the association budget is covered through grants of the Ministry of Industry and Trade (usually 45 – 50 % of SCS turnover). We appreciate support from the budgets of regional self-governments, it is, however, very low. At random, we got some support from another ministries - the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Education; several times we succeeded to achieve a support from another countries (e.g. from the Swiss-Czech Cooperation Programme).

However, the association needs to develop “secondary economic activities”, to get money to cover broad spectrum of our main, non-profit services. Significant tasks were bankrolled mainly from the Czech Office for Standards, Metrology and Testing, the Czech Technology Platform for Foodstuffs, etc.

Cooperation with stakeholders and other consumer organizations

SCS develop cooperation with various stakeholders as well as with other consumer organization. The cooperation is developed both at bilateral levels and on various platforms and fora.

SCS is a member of Consumer Advisory Committee which is a group established under the Ministry of Industry and Trade serving as a platform for communication between consumer

representatives and the Government. All the important consumer associations are members to this Committee.

SCS is a member of number of advisory and consultative groups on national and EU level in the respect of safety and quality of products and services, market surveillance, standardization, conformity assessment and accreditation, quality infrastructure etc.

- ANEC General Assembly, ANEC Steering Committee,
- Standardization Committee /Czech Office for Standards, Metrology and Testing/,
- Working Group on General Product Safety /Ministry of Industry and Trade/,
- Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade /Ministry of Industry and Trade/,
- Working Group on Prevention of Children's Injuries /Ministry of Health of the Czech Republic/,
- Coordination Group on Food Safety /Ministry of Agriculture/.

In some of these platforms, the SCS representative is the only (exclusive) representative of consumers in the body. Therefore, coordination and cooperation among relevant consumer NGOs - those who are interested in - is so important. For this purpose SCS has established several fora and formal structures (groups) to support such coordination. The consulting mechanisms for the purposes of ECCG communication are described below (Art. 2). Here are some other examples, including references where you may get more detailed information (only, however, in Czech), e. g.:

- ISO COPOLCO Working Group - <http://www.top-normy.cz/iso-copolco/koordinace-zapojeni.php>
- Section for Quality in Consumer Protection, established under the Council of the Quality of the Czech Republic - <http://npj.cz/sekce-rady-kvality-cr/kvalita-v-ochrane-spotrebitele/>.
- Working Group – Foodstuffs and Consumer, under the Czech Technology Platform for Foodsuffs - <http://spotrebitelzakvalitou.cz/o-nas/o-pracovni-skupine-ctpp.php>.

2. Please describe the consulting mechanisms you use to inform other consumer organisations at national level about the work of the ECCG or, (in the absence of other consumer organisations), to inform your members or member organisations. How do you share/circulate ECCG meeting agendas, ECCG documents, operational conclusions, minutes etc.?

- a) **National network for ECCG** was established in October 2013, just after the writer of this report was officially nominated as the Czech Member of ECCG.
- b) The platform of the **National network for ECCG** is to serve for distributing information circulated within and received from ECCG and to prepare opinions on behalf of the Czech consumers.
- c) All important documents and information on events etc. related to ECCG and other events of EC are distributed within the participating organizations. The platform of the **National network for ECCG** may be summoned in cases of exceptional needs and interest of any of the participating organization; the communication is, however, generally based on mail correspondence.

The participating organizations, contacts/email list:

- D-TEST - dtest@dtest.cz; pavlik@dtest.cz; zeleny@dtest.cz
- Občanské poradny - aop@obcanskeporadny.cz;

- Sdružení pro bezpečnost potravin a ochranu spotřebitele - davidpesekfc@gmail.com
 - Generation – Europe - info@generation-europe.cz;
 - Spotřebitel Net - spotrebitel@spotrebitel.net;
 - SOS – Moravskoslezský kraj - reichelova@sos-msk.cz;
 - SOS – Asociace - gerta.mazalova@seznam.cz;
 - European consumer center - esc@coi.cz
 - Sdružení českých spotřebitelů / Czech Consumer Association - spotrebitel@regio.cz
- For more information about these organizations, please see the **websites** [here](#).
- d) A special **section for ECCG** was opened **at web sites** of the Sdružení českých spotřebitelů / Czech Consumer Association: [see](#), [see](#) or [see](#), respectively, as examples of views. All important documents and information on events are explored here or referred from here.

3. How do you ensure that the views of those that you represent, e.g. other consumer organisations or members, are conveyed at the ECCG meetings?

- The Czech member to ECCG is prepared to communicate any opinion of the Czech consumer representatives. To stand with this, he/SCS prepared operative structures as described above and also here:
- We developed an (open) list of areas of all relevant consumer issues and topics. All the consumer organizations represented in the Consumer Advisory Committee under Ministry of Industry and Trade were invited to participate at platform of the National network for ECCG and so to be informed and or to participate in coordinated discussions and commenting on ECCG documents.
- In the overview each NGO as listed above could express its interest to be involved generally (just to be involved as a passive participant) or to cooperate actively on any of the consumer issues to be discussed. The model is considered to be an important and effective tool for Libor Dupal - the member to ECCG to contact quickly a particular expert of any NGO to prepare an opinion for ECCG, when it is not enough time.
- The list / overview of areas of all relevant consumer issues and topics is explored on the website - [here](#).
- Within the last year we addressed the participating organizations concerning the following topics for consultation and to express their opinions and suggestions.
 - Agendas of ECCG meetings and Consumer Summits (via e mail correspondence and via websites – [here](#), including supporting documents, operational conclusions, minutes etc.
 - (No particular response from participating organizations)
 - A special subsection was opened on the websites to explore the crucial document distributed under ECCG (additionally to sending them via e-mail). It is called “For information” and we explored here document related to areas like Better Regulation, Digital World, Energy Union etc. See [here](#).

4. How often do you have contact with other consumer organisations or members?

- Via the structures as described (point 2 and 3), we are at permanent contact with other consumer organizations.

5. Which media channels, including social media, do you use for communicating both national and ECCG consumer policy issues?

- We make press releases on various consumer topics, which we are sending off to more than 200 addresses (press, TV, radios, e-media, etc.).
- The press releases are explored on websites (see [here](#)). Examples of topics within last weeks:
 - o Alternative dispute resolution
 - o Consultancy and advice for seniors (project Senior Ombudsman)
 - o Regulation and quality of foodstuffs
 - o Education of the youth concerning consumer issues
 - o Consumer information for the deaf and blinds
 - o Energy marking of products
- On the basis of these press releases a representative of SCS is invited to TV or radio for discussing the issue. Within last 2 weeks or so we were about five time in TV or radio (quality of foodstuffs, senior ombudsman, return and claim the purchased goods, etc.). The references to them are also [here](#).

6. For ECCG Members from Member States: Please indicate issues that, in your opinion, have affected the consumer landscape in your country (both positively and negatively). (e.g. changes in national consumer policy approach affecting consumer organisations, level of enforcement of EU acquis, sectors/markets where consumers in particular face weak protection etc.)

- a) Nominating Mrs. V. Jourova as the Commissioner for area of consumers has made consumer affairs more visible in media in the Czech Republic.

The Czech Consumer Association was the first subject on the market who came into media with the opinion how important is the portfolio JUST-CO for Mrs Jourova (see [here](#)). The briefing report was broadly published in media.

We expect that the consumer affairs will have higher preference in the politics decisions now, while in the past the topic was diminished seriously.

- b) EU regulation very positively affected the consumer issues in the country within last years (product safety, economic interest of consumers, incl. financial services, tourist services, etc. etc.).

There are number of areas, however, where there is still lack of EU legal initiatives (safety of services as an example).

- c) TTIP: On the basis of the series of rather emotional and subjective speeches from some ECCG members within the last year on the topic of TTIP, the Czech Member has checked the ministerial structures responsible for preparing the Czech position for the negotiations. A SCS representative was invited into the team of representatives of stakeholders lead by the Deputy Minister Mr Bartl.

- d) Child shoes: The Czech Consumer Association and the writer of this report personally, for several years initiated national as well as European discussion on needs of European standardization of child footwear. Now the Commission put this this topic on the list of standardization tasks and first the mandate to be developed. The Czech member to ECCG is a members representing ANEC in the international team of EC to prepare the mandate and he is also the member of the Czech expert preparing position of the Czech member to this team.

7. Please include a list of organisations (names of organisations and websites) you have consulted during the reporting period.

Test, o.p.s. Černomořská 419/10 101 00 Praha 10 - Vršovice www.dtest.cz		dtest@dtest.cz tel.: 241404922 fax: 241406533 Martin Černý
Sdružení českých spotřebitelů Budějovická 73, 140 00 Praha 4 Postal address: Pod Altánem 99/103, 100 00 Praha 10 www.konzument.cz		spotrebitel@regio.cz tel.: 261263574 Ing. Libor Dupal Ing. Libor Novák
Asociace občanských poraden Sabinova 3 130 00 Praha 3 www.obcanskeporadny.cz		aop@obcanskeporadny.cz tel.: 284019220 Mgr. Stanislav Skalický
Občanské sdružení pro bezpečnost potravin a ochranu spotřebitele Trnavského 2392 738 01 Frýdek Místek		davidpesekfc@gmail.cz mobil: 602382424 Ing. David Pešek
Generation Europe Vratislavova 59/5 128 00 Praha 2 www.generation-europe.cz		info@generation-europe.cz tel./fax: 234697965 Bc. Petr Jakubíček
Spotřebitel net Bělehradská 118 120 00 Praha 2 www.spotrebitel.net		spotrebitel@spotrebitel.net tel./fax: 222516521 Ylona Skálová
Sdružení obrany spotřebitelů Moravy a Slezska Střelníční 8/75 702 00 Ostrava www.sos-msk.cz		reichelova@sos-msk.cz tel./fax: 596111252 Marcela Reichelová
Sdružení obrany spotřebitelů - Asociace Mečová 5 602 00 Brno www.asociace-sos.cz		gerta.mazalova@seznam.cz tel./fax: 542210778 Gerta Mazalová

Date and signature:

2016-01-11

Libor Dupal

