NATCP National Authority for Trade and Consumer Protection

PRESS RELEASE

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Good news during the sales: the authorities found faults in just 11 out of 205 items on offer

Under the professional guidance of the National Authority for Trade and Consumer Protection (NATCP), government agencies across the country checked the price labelling of more than 200 items of clothing on special offer. The effectiveness of the official inspections, which have been carried out regularly for several years, is demonstrated by the fact that objections were raised in relation to only 5 percent of the products; however, consumers would also be well advised to be aware of the specific features of pricing for discounted clothing items.

The NATCP's key task is to protect consumers' financial interests and to uncover unlawful price-display practices and irregularities that result in harm to consumers. The authority scrutinises these practices particularly closely during sales periods, as special offers can significantly influence purchasing decisions; it is therefore a fundamental requirement of consumer protection that advertised discounts are genuine and transparent.

When running promotions on products, retailers – with a few exceptions – must, in accordance with uniform EU-wide consumer protection regulations, indicate the lowest price over a period of at least 30 days prior to the promotion (this is known as the 'reference price' or 'previous price'). The aim of the regulations is to prevent traders from misleading consumers regarding the amount of the discount, or from increasing the reference price immediately before the promotion and then advertising a substantial price reduction to create the impression that the offer is more favourable than it actually is.

The Consumer Protection Authority examined randomly selected items on special offer from well-known clothing brands in order to verify that the advertised discounts complied with the regulations.

During the nationwide inspection, staff from the Consumer Protection Authority checked a total of 205 items of clothing on special offer, of which only 11 failed to comply with the rules governing special offer prices. Based on the 5 percent non-compliance rate, a significant proportion of businesses are acting in accordance with the law, which is also due to the Authority's regular inspections.

The NATCP's aim is to ensure that consumers receive accurate and compliant information about prices. Where infringements are identified, the authority takes the necessary measures to ensure that the legal requirements regarding promotional prices are fully complied with in business practice.

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