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NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS IN EUROPEAN UNION AND ITS ROLE IN CONSUMER PROTECTION

Abstract:

The article is based on an analysis of the subject literature, the legal acts and information from the official web sites of European non-governmental organisations (NGO's), the main purpose of which is to present the idea and the primary role of NGO's, whose priority is to propagate and popularize consumer protection in the European Union.

In addition an analysis is conducted of the systematics of Consumer non-governmental sector in European Union. Also the relation between non-governmental organisations and European Commission are indicated. The article includes a characterisation of the specific role of the European Economic and Social Committee, which consists of representatives of the various economic and social components of organised civil society, such as consumers in the development of consumer protection in the European market.

Generally consumer protection policy was established after the year 1992. At that time, on 7 February 1992 in Maastricht, the Treaty on the European Union undertaken to integrate Europe was signed by the members of the European Community. The Treaty devoted to consumer protection is under a separate title, XI. From that time, the Community shall contribute to the attainment of a high level of consumer protection. One of the ways to achieve this aim is the development of NGO's within the consumer sectors, which can be called the dedicated voice of the consumer at national and Community level.

In the next section of the article the chosen European Union non-government organization and its role in consumer protection is analyzed. In particular the specific actions undertaken on that matter by the European Community of Consumer Co-operatives (Euro Coop), the European Farmers Organisation, the European Association for the co-ordination of Consumer Representation in Standardisation (ANEC) and the Bureau Européen des Unions de Consommateurs (BEUC) are analysed.

The final section of the article is the conclusion of the real role of consumer NGO's both now and in the future in European Union policy. Those considerations are based on real European Union regulations such as Regulation (EU) No 254/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on a multiannual consumer programme for the years 2014-20, and the Opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee on the Proposal for the Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Consumer Programme 2014-2020.

Keywords:

non-governmental organisations, consumer protection, European Union.

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