**Be safe within pre-Christmas online shopping**

***(Prague, November 9, 2015)* More than 250 million consumers regularly shop over the internet in the EU internal market. Considering the variety of offers – from serious deals to frauds – it is key to know elementary recommendations for safe purchases online not only in Europe, but also elsewhere in the world. A website in your national language doesn’t necessarily mean that the trader is based in your country and it takes just a minute to check elementary parameters of a purchase, emphasises the European Consumer Centre Czech Republic.**

„It is important to know how to check a trader if a consumer has had no experience with him so far. You can use practical instructions on our website [www.evropskyspotrebitel.cz/fraud](http://www.evropskyspotrebitel.cz/fraud) which for example provides links to business registers of European countries and warnings against suspicious payment requirements,” says Tomáš Večl, the Director of the European Consumer Centre Czech Republic. The instructions also help find out when, where and by who a particular e-shop’s domain was registered. Was it recently on an island in the Pacific? Then it probably isn’t the right choice.

Tomáš Večl claims that it doesn’t take much time to make sure that a vendor states his name and complete contact details about himself, including postal address, as required by legal regulations. Entrepreneurs are also obliged to provide information about the right to withdraw from the contract within 14 days from delivery. This period is applicable all around Europe, but with exceptions – e.g. unpacked video games and cd’s and well as package holidays and accommodation services are excluded from this rule.

“Consumer has to have at least elementary knowledge of what he agrees with when concluding a sales contract. He should always read the conditions valid for his order. If a trader is fair and acts in a transparent manner, such check shouldn’t take more than a few minutes. And it is worth before sending thousands of crowns to someone out there,” emphasises Tomáš Večl.

A number of foreign vendors focus on the Czech market promoting their goods in Czech on their websites. “If it is a vendor from another EU country, consumers can rely on the same rights that they are used to within purchases from Czech traders, i.e. a two-year warranty and so forth. But there are people who thought that they were purchasing from a Czech e-shop, but the seller was based in South-East Asia and he delivered poor quality goods and doesn’t want to settle claims,” says Tomáš Večl.

*The European Consumer Centre provides a free-of-charge service, resolving consumers’ disputes against vendors from other EU countries as well as Norway and Iceland. More practical information about consumer rights concerning shopping in the internal market are available on the ECC CZ website* [*www.europeanconsumer.cz*](http://www.europeanconsumer.cz)*.*

**Use chargeback in case of non-delivery of goods**

If a consumer paid his online purchase via a debit or credit card and goods were not delivered and the vendor isn’t willing to send the paid amount back to the consumer, it is possible to ask the payment card issuer to use a procedure called chargeback. The consumer’s bank can withdraw the paid amount from the trader’s bank if the trader doesn’t prove that he delivered the goods. Similar procedure can be used within electronic payment systems providing resolution centres for disputes between sellers and buyers.

In case of any problem the consumer should immediately contact his bank and require the chargeback procedure. The claim should be supported by relevant documents, e.g. communication with the vendor. Chargeback can be the only way to get your money back.

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