PRESS RELEASE

 **Information for consumers: online marketplaces
and the activities of the Czech Trade Inspection
Authority in this area**

(Prague, 9 June 2025) **In recent years, the so-called online marketplaces have been growing in the area of distance selling. These are not traditional e-shops, but platforms whose providers allow other entities to place their offers here and sell products directly via these platforms.**

The Consumer Protection Act defines an online marketplace as *a service that allows a consumer to enter into a distance contract with a seller or another person using software including a website, part of a website or an application operated by or on behalf of an entrepreneur other than the seller*.

The provider of the online marketplace will thus usually not be the seller, but only the intermediary. However, the online marketplace provider must properly inform the seller who the seller is. It is therefore necessary to focus on this information and find out **with whom the purchase contract is actually concluded.** Often it may be a seller from a third country. For this reason, it may be more difficult to exercise the right of withdrawal (to return the product), for example. It is also important to pay attention to **the division of responsibilities between the online marketplace provider and the sellers**. This information should also be made sufficiently clear and understandable on the online marketplace.

**The purchase of products on online marketplaces is particularly attractive to consumers because of their price, but the issue of the safety of the products offered in this way should not be overlooked and should be one of the most important criteria when making purchasing decisions.**

The Czech Trade Inspection Authority also focuses on compliance with legal regulations on online marketplaces. It is one of the bodies responsible for enforcing consumer protection legislation and is part of the European network of such bodies, the CPC network. The cooperation of the competent authorities is carried out in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2017/2394 of the European Parliament and of the Council. The cooperation mechanisms include coordinated procedures to deal with cases where consumers in at least two other Member States are affected by infringements.

The Czech Trade Inspection Authority also participates in these coordinated actions. During all coordinated actions, it is informed from the outset of each step, can make comments at all stages of the action, and participates in meetings with traders and assesses their proposed commitments for their sufficiency.

Coordinated actions with the participation of the Czech Trade Inspection Authority also take place with the providers of the online marketplaces TEMU and SHEIN. A coordinated action focusing on TEMU was launched on 31 July 2024 under the leadership of the relevant supervisory authorities from Belgium, Germany and Ireland, coordinated by the European Commission.

It addresses the following shortcomings: **providing false discounts, pressuring consumers to make purchases on the platform** (using claims of low stock), **using forced ‘gamification’, providing misleading and deceptive information** (e.g. about the consumer's right of withdrawal), **publishing false reviews or hiding contact details.**

A common position and a request for information were sent to TEMU, to which TEMU responded and proposed commitments to stop the infringements. If the proposed commitments are deemed sufficient, the CPC network supervisors will accept them and subsequently monitor the timeliness and correctness of their implementation.

The European Commission's press release from the time of sending the common position and the request for information to the marketplace provider TEMU is available here:

[**https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/cs/ip\_24\_5707**](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/cs/ip_24_5707)**.**

As regards the coordinated action on SHEIN, on 3 February 2025 the provider of this marketplace was informed of the launch of a joint investigation at EU/EEA level, coordinated by the European Commission. The action is led by the competent authorities of Belgium, France, Ireland and the Netherlands. On 26.5.2025, SHEIN was informed of the results of the investigation.

The following deficiencies were found: **provision of false discounts** (resp. Giving discounts that are not based on the lowest price in the thirty days prior to the discount), **pressuring consumers to make purchases on the platform** (fake time counters), **missing, incorrect or misleading information about consumers' rights to withdraw from the contract, and difficulties in obtaining refunds after withdrawal from the contract, misleading product labelling** (implying that a product is special when this is a feature required by law), **misleading information about the sustainability of products, hiding contact details.** In addition, the CPC Network asked SHEIN to comment on the fulfilment of other obligations imposed by consumer protection legislation, e.g. on the ranking of offers, consumer reviews, the allocation of responsibilities between the marketplace and specific sellers.

SHEIN was given one month to comment and propose remedial action. Subsequently, the CPC network may enter into dialogue with SHEIN. If the SHEIN fails to take sufficient corrective action, the national authorities may take enforcement action, including the imposition of a fine, to ensure that the infringement found is remedied.

The European Commission's press release is available in English here:

[**https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip\_25\_1331**](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_25_1331)**.**

Ongoing coordinated actions do not preclude national investigation and management. The Czech Trade Inspection Authority is thus also focusing on the activities of online marketplaces in its own inspection activities. TEMU was already inspected last year. Based on submissions from consumers, institutions and on its own initiative, the Czech Trade Inspection Authority has carried out several inspections of TEMU since the second half of April 2024. The inspections focused on compliance with information obligations, the prohibition on the use of unfair commercial practices, as well as product safety and technical requirements.

A control action is now being launched to ensure that seven online marketplaces comply with their legal obligations. The inspections are to be focused on both general (compliance with information obligations, compliance with the ban on unfair commercial practices) and product control (general product safety, technical requirements for products).