

PETITION

**AGAINST THE DOUBLE STANDARD ON FOODSTUFFS AND DRINKS
FROM THE SAME BRANDS IN THE EU MEMBER STATES**



THE PROBLEM:

- **The double standards on foodstuffs from the same brands produced and marketed in East and West Europe;**
- **The differing ingredients and the quality of products discriminate consumers in East Europe – Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Greece, Croatia, Romania, Bulgaria**
- **“A two-speed Europe” – “A double-standard Europe”**



OUR RESEARCH:

PROVEN DIFFERENCES IN QUALITY AND PRICE:



Baby food puree



INGREDIENTS:

Rape oil 1.3%
in 125 g

PRICE:

BGN 2.15



Rape oil 0.9%
in 190 g

BGN 1.66

The "Bulgarian" puree of pumpkin and potato has a **higher percentage** of rape oil in the smaller jar; moreover, compared to the German product its price is **26% higher**.

PROVEN DIFFERENCES IN QUALITY:



INGREDIENTS:

97% juice from concentrate
and
3% orange pulp

PRICE:

BGN 2.99



100% fruit

BGN 3.50

The lower price of the Bulgarian juice **-17%** accounts for its inferior quality.

PROVEN DIFFERENCES IN QUALITY AND PRICE:



Child's dessert



INGREDIENTS:

milk 21%; chocolate 20%

PRICE:

BGN 0.95

93% more expensive than the German product
16% more expensive than the Austrian product



milk 24%; chocolate 21%

BGN 0.49

DEVIATION

milk +3%; chocolate +1%

BGN -0.46



milk 24%; chocolate 21%

BGN 0.82

DEVIATION

milk +3%; chocolate +1%

BGN -0.13

8 pcs. in Germany - BGN 3.89, 4 pcs. in Austria – BGN 3.31, 1 pc. in Bulgaria – BGN 0.95

PROVEN DIFFERENCES IN QUALITY:



INGREDIENTS:

FRUCTOSE-GLUCOSE SYRUP
Carbon dioxide

PRICE:

BGN 1.09



SUGAR; carbonic acid

BGN 1.74



SUGAR; carbonic acid

BGN 2.44

INFRINGEMENT ON EU LAW

- Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers
- Directive 2005/29 / EC concerning unfair business-to-consumer commercial practices



OUR STEPS UNDERTAKEN:



- **22 February 2017: forum on fighting food fraud, attended by branch organizations;**
- **March 2017: a complaint by mothers reporting differences in the quality and prices of baby foods and products;**
- **Ombudsman's letters to Ms. Emily O'Reilly, European Ombudsman, and to Ms. Věra Jourová, European Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality;**
- **June 2017: a meeting devoted to the issue with European Ombudsman Ms. Emily O'Reilly;**
- **Reference of the matter to the Ombudsmen of the EU member states and a series of meetings with the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Mr. Rumen Porodzanov, Bulgarian EU Commissioner Ms. Mariya Gabriel, the Bulgarian Food Safety Agency and members of consumer organizations and associations;**
- **A public forum in the National Assembly and the adoption of a declaration against the problem arising from the double standards on foodstuffs from the same brands;**
- **Participation of the Ombudsman and the Deputy Ombudsman in a high-level forum on the matter with the V4 Prime Ministers in Bratislava and proposed amendments to EU law.**

“TIME TO TABLE THE EU DOUBLE STANDARDS ON FOODSTUFFS!”

- A high-level forum within the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, 30 April 2018, on an initiative of the Ombudsman, under the patronage of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Bulgaria Mr. Boyko Borissov, attended by Ms. Věra Jourová, European Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, Ms. Mariya Gabriel, European Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society, ministers and experts from the EU member states



F  RUM

TIME TO TABLE THE EU DOUBLE STANDARDS
ON FOODSTUFFS!

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S ACTIVE ROLE:



- **Proposition of a New Deal for Consumers package**
- **Allocation of 2 million Euro for national research and development of a standardized methodology**
- **Declaration of the end of double standards on foodstuffs from the same brands and statement of intended legislative changes at EU level**



OUR SUGGESTIONS:

- To initiate legislative changes at EU level to prohibit the production and distribution within the EU member states of foodstuffs from the same brand where the ingredients and the quality may differ from country to country;
- To establish a single agency or network at EU level to see that the prohibition is enforced as we are worried that the national government agencies will hardly resist pressure from the strong corporate interests in this sector;
- To impose efficient sanctions for noncompliance with the prohibition.

