

ANALYTICAL REPORT

Raising Consumer Awareness of Ukrainians

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1. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE SURVEY

Within the survey structure, 12 focus-group interviews in the cities of Kyiv, Poltava, Donetsk, Lviv.

The survey was carried out on:

Kyiv	March 12-13, 2007
Poltava	March 14-15, 2007
Donetsk	March 15-16, 2007
Lviv	March 17-18, 2007

In each of the cities, three focus-group interviews were held.

Each focus group consisted of 4 women and 4 men, who:

- take personal decisions concerning purchases of goods of every-day use (e.g. food, household cleaning products, personal care products)
- actively participate in selection and purchases of durable consumption articles (e.g. household appliances, clothes, footwear)
- over the last six month, had the experience of buying low-quality goods of every-day use in at least two different categories, out of those listed below: foodstuffs; clothing/footwear; personal care items; household cleaning products, home appliances
- remember sufficiently well at least one instance of buying low-quality goods
- are marked with a sufficiently active style of interpersonal communication and an active citizenship

The focus groups interview participants were divided by age as follows:

focus group №1	Men and women (50x50), aged 18 to 25
focus group №2	Men and women (50x50), aged 26 to 40
focus group №3	Men and women (50x50), aged 41 to 55

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2. THE SURVEY OBJECTIVES

- Study of the specific features of purchases of products of everyday use and foodstuffs, and definition of factors that influence choices the most
- Determining which place among those factors belongs to information about quality and safety of goods, and why
- Determining consumers' level of interest in obtaining information about quality and safety of goods and about their current sources of such information
- Determining sources and forms of information, preferable for consumers, about quality and safety of goods
- Studying of whether or not people encounter facts of sales of low-quality goods and services
- Determining consumers' behaviour patterns in situations when they encounter sales of low-quality goods and services, and studying why they behaved in that manner
- Determining of main stereotypes and barriers that prevent consumers from taking an active position and from protecting their rights by legitimate methods when they encounter sales of low-quality goods and services
- Determining of arguments, examples, life situations, information about which could stimulate consumers to be more active in protecting their rights when they encounter sales of low-quality goods and services
- Determining of situations in consumers' lives when, in their opinion, people's approach to purchase of goods is responsible, and when they behave correctly when they encounter sales of low-quality goods and services
- Finding out whether there exists any groups of people (age, gender, social status) that can be used as a reference group as regards behaviour in situations when they encounter sales of low-quality goods and services
- Studying of specific features of perception of what the system of legal protection must be like, with account to the experience of the European countries
- Determining of which properties/specific features of the European experience in the sphere of consumers' legal protection and regulation of the consumer behaviour may be the most useful for the Ukrainian consumers, and why

3. SPECIFIC FEATURES OF PURCHASES OF GOODS

3.1. Factors That Influence Purchase of Goods

The survey demonstrated that quality plays a very important role in selection and purchase of goods (both food and non-food items). The majority of factors that consumers pay attention to when buying various products are connected with being confident about their quality.

Factors determining purchase of various commodities are grouped in the chart below:

Factors Determining Purchase of Alimentary Products
<p><i>The majority of factors that the overwhelming majority of consumers pay attention to in the course of a purchase, are aimed at determining the quality of alimentary products.</i></p> <p>In general, the most important factors determining selection of alimentary products are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. A familiar brand/ producer of alimentary products The survey demonstrated that, as a rule, consumers buy products of the brands/ by the producers that are well-known to them – i.e. those that they had bought before, and of whose quality/ good taste they are confident: <i>«we buy what we know, what was tested before», «I buy what I know», «producer, brand... for example, I only buy local meat products, made in Poltava by the Zarya factory... Their quality is good, I already tested that»</i>2. «Degree of freshness», which, in its turn, consumers determine paying attention to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– <i>«shelf life»/«date of manufacture»,</i>– <i>«appearance» of the product itself – «I pay attention to what that sausage looks like, what colour it is», «I pay attention to its proper appearance»</i>3. Integrity of packaging - «the condition of packaging», «integrity of packaging» <p>If consumers buy products of unknown brands, in order to determine the quality level they, as a rule, also pay attention to such factors as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">4. Details about the product's composition - «composition... what components it is made of», «I will definitely read about the composition»5. «Country of origin» (preference is given to the national producers) - <i>«if products are imported from abroad, what quality can we talk about – they travelled all across the world, they sure contain lots of preservation agents»</i>6. References/ recommendations by shop assistants/ friends – «I ask sales people, ask

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for their opinion... whether it is tasty, whether the quality is good»

7. **Price as an indicator of quality** - *«if the price is low, that is suspicious; how can sausage be good for 18 hryvnias, if a kilo of meat costs 30 hryvnias».*

8. **Tasting at points of sales, ads** - *«promo events, tasting do influence... I tried something, I liked it and bought it», «I saw an ad and wanted to buy it»*

Apart from the factors mentioned above (that are quality indicators), consumers (especially older ones, in the 41 to 55 age group) pay attention to **affordability** – *«I look at the price, if it is too expensive, I won't buy».*

In rare cases, consumers (women, as a rule) pay attention to the **nutritional value** of products – *«I look at the nutritional value, not to gain weight».*

Factors Determining Purchases of Household Cleaning Products

Quality is of primary importance for purchases of household cleaning products.

To determine quality, consumers pay attention to the following:

1. **The product brand – it must be one that they previously tested and/or reputable:**
«brand... if it is well known, the degree of trust to it is higher, its quality is higher», «the brand that I bought before, that I liked... I bought this detergent, I used it for washing, I saw that it washes well, so I keep buying it»

2. **«Integrity of packaging»**

3. **«Term of validity»**

4. **«Place of purchase»** - *«I will not buy on a marketplace, you can get a fake there»*

5. **«Advice and references from friends and acquaintances» about the commodity** – *«If I hear that people speak well about something, I buy it too, because people tested it before»*

Besides, important are also such factors as:

6. **«Price/quality ratio» of a commodity** - *«you can buy an expensive cleaning agent that will be totally useless and ineffective, and you can buy something cheaper that will clean well».*

7. **Weight packaging of commodities** – *«I am looking at the packaging, whether it is 200 or 400 grams that I need»*

8. **The quantity of the agent in the packaging** - *«if it is a cleaning liquid, I look how much of it there is in a bottle – there are some that are far from being full»*

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Factors Determining Purchases of Personal Care Items

Purchases of personal care items, as a rule, are determined by:

1. **Brand – products of the brands whose quality was verified earlier are usually those that are bought** - *«I buy what I trust», «the manufacturer, the trade mark»*
2. **Place of purchase – goods are bought at retail outlets that consumers trust, where, in their opinion, they are unlikely to buy a fake** - *«place of purchase... at buy at pharmacies because it is safer there, they control quality better, and everything is certified there», «I do not buy at marketplaces, quality is lower there»*
3. **«Advertisements»**
4. **«Recommendations by Friends»**

Therefore, it is obvious that quality is the factor of primary importance at purchases of personal care items as well.

Factors Determining Purchases of Household Appliances

The following factors are important for consumers when purchasing household appliances:

1. **Brand name – it must be well-known** - *«the brand speaks for the quality»*
2. **Availability and term of warranty** – *«there must be a warranty», «term of warranty»*
3. **Advice by shop assistants and friends** - *«consulting with the salesman», «friends' advice»*
4. **Country of assembly** - *«country of assembly»*
5. **Technical specifications of the item** - *«quality of casing», «it must fit the electric circuit», «I browse the manual, look at the specifications»*
6. **«Price» of the item**
7. **Design** - *«the appearance»*

Therefore, it is obvious that the majority of factors are aimed at confirming the quality of the commodity.

Factors Determining Purchases of Clothes

In purchases of clothes, an important role is played by the following factors:

1. **Trendiness/ attractive appearance of the design** - *«whether it is fashionable», «whether I like the way it looks»*
2. **Quality**, which is determined by:
 - *quality of the fabric*

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- *quality of tailoring*
- *comfort level of the item* (i.e. how comfortable one feels wearing it)
- *reputation of, and trust to the brand/ manufacturer of clothing:*

«quality», «I turn it inside out and look at the seams», «quality of fabric», «quality of seams», «comfort», «name of the manufacturer, brand»

3. Price

Factors Determining Purchases of Footwear

Purchases of footwear, as a rule, are determined by:

1. **Attractive appearance – trendiness, neatness of its outward appearance** - «appearance», «no glue stains»
2. **Quality**, the main indicators of which are the following factors:
 - *stitched sole* - «the sole must be stitched on»
 - *comfort of the footwear* - «I always try it on», «how comfortable the footwear feels»

Less frequently, the following quality indicators are mentioned:

- **place of purchase** - «if I ever bought low-quality shoes somewhere, I will never again buy anything there», «I buy at «Intertop», you can return things if something is wrong»
- **brand/ manufacturer** - «I look at the brand», «I pay attention to the manufacturer»

Therefore, when buying footwear, consumers pay great attention to its quality as well.

3.2. Specifics of Perception of the «High-Quality Goods/Products» Notion

It is obvious that the notion of high-quality goods and products is comprehensive and depends on many factors.

Requirements to High-Quality Alimentary Products

In the interviewees' opinion, the notion of high-quality goods and products implies their:

1. **Freshness**
2. **Tastiness, good taste**
3. **Natural** - «no chemicals»
4. **Usefulness and not being harmful** - «useful, those that will not do you any harm», «those are products that do you good and will not disappointment»
5. **Short shelf life** and «shelf life term not being expired»

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6. **Compliance with quality standards (GOST)** - *«made in compliance with the GOST»*

7. **Integrity of packaging/absence of defects** - *«packaging not damaged»*

Requirements to High-Quality Personal Care Products

High-quality personal care products, according to the survey participants, must:

1. **be effective** - *«if they promise that it fights dandruff, it must do it, because all those shampoos just grease my hair», «a razor must shave, there are razors that cannot shave me»*
2. **Have sealed/undamaged packaging** - *«sealed, undamaged packaging»*
3. **«the validity term must not be expired»**
4. **«to contain as little chemicals, or non-natural components, as possible»**

Requirements to High-Quality Household Cleaning Products

The survey participants expressed the following requirements to the high-quality household cleaning products:

1. **Safety, absence of harm for the body** - *«they should not burn the skin on the hands», «they must be sparing on my hands»*
2. **Effectiveness** - *«it must do what they promise... if it is a stain-remover, then it must really remove them», «if it is a detergent, it must wash well»*
3. **Convenient and undamaged packaging** - *«it must be well packaged, with no defects», «packaged in a convenient way», «the packaging must be convenient, so that it is easy to use»*
4. **Economical use** – *«the products must be allow for economical use, that is, a small amount of the product must do the job well»*
5. **Pleasant/ non-caustic smell** - *«no caustic smells», «it must smell good»*

Requirements to High-Quality Domestic Appliances

In the opinion of the interviewees, high-quality domestic appliances are appliances:

- **«by a well-known, strong brand»**
- **with a long term of use** - *«if it is a microwave oven, it must work for a long time», «durability»*
- **«reliable»** - *«it must work and not break down»*
- **with a warranty** - *«they must provide a warranty»*
- **that are easy to use** - *«easy to use», «if it is a telephone, it must work fast»*

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- **that has «an attractive design»**
- **complying with the GOST**

Requirements to High-Quality Footwear

Consumers` requirements to high-quality footwear are as follows:

1. **natural materials** - «*natural materials*», «*not a lot of synthetic materials*», «*of leather*»
2. **«stitched sole»**
3. **neat and reliable seams** - «*seams are straight*», «*well sewn*»
4. **Wearable** - «*wears well*», «*wears for a long time*»
5. **comfortable wear** - «*comfortable*»

Requirements to High-Quality Clothing

According to the respondents, high-quality clothing must be:

- **made from fabrics with natural fibre prevailing; fabric must not galvanise** - «*non-synthetic, should not galvanise*»
- **wearable** (that is, must wear for a long time and remain attractive) - «*things must not stretch*», «*colours must not fade*»
- **«fit nicely»**

3.3. Specifics of Perception of the «Safe Goods/Products» Notion

Safety of goods/products, as perceived by the respondents, primarily means absence of potential harm for health or life of people.

Requirements to Safe Alimentary Products

In the respondents` opinion, safe alimentary products are those that:

1. **are not harmful for health, do not contain any components that are harmful for the body (chemical substances, genetically modified ingredients)** - «*no preserving agents*», «*no nitrates*», «*so that they do not do harm to health*», «*environmentally clear goods*», «*no genetically modified components*»

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2. **consist of natural components** - *«natural»*
3. **are fresh** - *«not expired», «fresh»*
4. **have a short shelf life** - *«shelf life term must be short... if a yoghurt can be preserved for over two weeks, it means it contains preservation agents»*
5. **«passed certification»**
6. **are sold packaged** - *«bread must be in packages, so that it stays clean»*
7. **have «safe packaging»**

Requirements to Safe Household Cleaning Products

The survey participants expressed the following requirements to the safe household cleaning products:

1. **It must not do any harm to health (i.e., it must not cause allergic reactions, rash or burns)** - *«does not cause allergies, chemical burns», «should not cause any rash», «so that it does not harm my hands», «my eyes must not swell after I have used it»*
2. **I must pass the state certification** - *«it passed state certification»*
3. **It must consist of natural components** - *«so that it was made of natural components»*

Requirements to Safe Personal Care Products

The safe personal care products must be:

1. **non-harmful, non-toxic** - *«so that they do not cause allergic reactions», «safe for health»*
2. **«certified, approved by trustworthy authorities, institutes»**

Requirements to Safe Domestic Appliances

The safe domestic appliances, in the respondents' opinions, are domestic appliances that:

1. **are not dangerous for health and life** - *«it must not catch fire... I bought extension cords two times – both caught fire», «no chance for electric shock»*
2. **are produced by a well-known manufacturer** - *«it must be a brand name»*
3. **have the automatic on/off function** – *«it must be equipped with a thermostatic regulator»*
4. **are produced in compliance with the GOST** - *«GOSTs must be complied with»*

Requirements to Safe Footwear

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According to the consumers, the safe footwear must:

- 1) **have a steady sole, that is not slippery** - *«it must not slip», «the sole must grip well on the ice», «a steady sole»*
- 2) **be well sewn/bonded** - *«it must not tear, heels must not fall off, or else you can injure yourself»*
- 3) **be wear comfortably, must prevent development of flat foot** - *«practical; it must not give you blisters», «it must be comfortable to walk in it, so that legs do not get tired and do not ache», «so that the flat foot does not develop»*
- 4) **be made from non-harmful/non-toxic materials** - *«the glues must be non-toxic, because the evaporations get absorbed by the skin on your feet»*
- 5) **«if it is winter footwear, it must have a thick sole that keeps you warm»**

Requirements to Safe Clothing

According to the respondent, the safe clothing is manufactured from:

1. **natural fabrics that do not caused irritations/ allergic reactions** - *«non-synthetic», «natural fabrics that do not cause allergic reactions»*
2. **fabrics that are dyed with non-toxic/safe dyes** - *«so the dyes are not harmful»*

3.4. Perception of the Notions of Quality and Safety of Goods/ Products

Most often, in the respondents' perception, the notions of quality and safety of goods and products are interrelated. In their opinion, quality is a wider notion that encompasses safety:

«if a commodity is of high quality, it means it is safe, safety depends of quality», «safety is a prerequisite of quality», «quality is a more general term».

On the other hand, certain participants of the survey noted that:

- high-quality goods are not always safe - *«some high-quality goods just cannot be safe, a razor, for example», «high-quality does not mean it is always safe – like cigarettes», «household cleaning products may be of high quality but dangerous for children»*
- it is not always that sage goods are of high-quality - *«a commodity may be safe, that is, not do any harm, but low quality... for example, I bought a loaf of bread, it was not*

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fully baked, although it did not harm me in any way», «there are shoes that are quite comfortable to wear, but they do not wear long enough»

3.5. Role of Information about Quality/Safety of Goods in Purchasing of Goods

The majority of the survey participants believe that, in the course of purchasing of both food and non-food products they attach significant attention to their quality/safety – «it is very important...».

The survey demonstrated that the respondents use the following **sources of information about quality/safety of alimentary products**:

Primary Sources
1. their own experience of consumption of a product
2. the product itself (its packaging, appearance, price)
3. shop assistants
4. advertisement
Secondary Sources
1. Friends and acquaintances
2. Place of purchase (that is, the level of trustworthiness of the retail outlet)
3. Information from specialised TV programmes

The types of information below are used by consumers as information about quality/ safety of alimentary products:

<i>Types of information that consumers use most often</i>
<p>1. A trade mark that is reliable or familiar/ confirmed by their own experience: <i>«when you see a brand... it can tell you a lot about the quality», «I will prefer a product that I know, rather than an unfamiliar one», «I buy sausage by our local producer in Poltava, because we tasted before and know it», «what I am accustomed to», «I must know the trade mark»</i></p> <p>2. The product composition (which is examined, as a rule, only in the course of the first</p>

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purchase):

«I read everything what is written on the packaging, if the composition is not indicated, I will not buy», «it is important to know what the product is made of... there must not be all those E240, E121», «I look and read when I first buy something, because there may be certain counter indications»

3. Term of validity of the product:

«shelf life is an indicator of quality, I always pay attention to that», «I always notice the term of validity, this is for sure... there were poisonings»

4. Region/country of origin:

«there are regions that products generated there are not recommended because of bad environmental situation there», «if I buy milk, the city matters», «I buy foodstuffs that are domestically made»

5. Visual assessment of the product appearance:

«the goods' appearance also speaks about their quality», «the product itself, its appearance give information about it, when you are looking what it looks like»

6. References/ recommendations by shop assistants:

«we, women, have a habit of asking sales people whether or not the products are fresh», «I always ask the sales people, I trust them»

- A part of respondents are sceptical about this source of information because they believe that not all sales people will provide true information:

«sometimes the sales people will withhold information», «they often tell deliberate lies just to make the sale»

- It is noticeable that some consumers, seeking to obtain true information about the quality of the product, warn the shop assistant that, if the product proves to be bad, they will bring it back. In their opinion, the «threat» works rather well:

«I give myself an additional kind of warranty – I ask whether the product is really good quality, or otherwise I will bring it back... I bought a mixer tap in a marketplace like that... I said that if there is anything wrong with it, I will return it to you, so you better give me a good one right away... the salesman gave me another one immediately»

7. The product price.

The price must not be prohibitively low - *«if it is sausage, I look at the price, I do not buy cheap stuff, for 15 hryvnias, because it is not sausage», «they cut prices on low-quality goods»*. On the other hand, in the opinion of a part of respondents, high prices do not always serve as a reliable indicator of quality – *«I recently witnessed how a man bought two scombers, rather expensive, and one of those turned out to be bad... here your high price goes, just try and guess»*.

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8. **Advertisement** – *«you learn from ads... they do tell about quality, about usefulness»*

It should be mentioned that, for a small part of respondents, excessive advertisement of a product is a signal that it should not be bought - *«the less advertisement, the greater the probability that I will buy the product», «if a product is advertised, that means there will be imitations».*

Types of Information that Consumers Use Less Frequently

1. **References from friends** - *«recommendations by friends... they tried something and shared their impressions»*

2. **Place of purchase (trustworthiness of the retail outlet)** - *«you should not buy meat products in Silpo, they forge validity term labels», «it is better to buy in a booth at a market place than in a supermarket»*

Types of Information that Consumers Use Infrequently or Seldom

1. **Information from the «Consumer Rights Protection» TV programme** – *«there is a TV programme, «Consumer Rights Protection», so I watch it... they said recently that «Activia» does not meet what its advertisements say.*

The types of information below are used by consumers as information about quality/ safety of non-food products:

Information That Respondents Use Most Often

1. **Reputation/credibility of the trade mark or previous experience in using products by the trademark:**

«if it is domestic appliances, information is provided by the reputation of the company, you tend to trust such companies as Philips or Sharp», «renown of the company».

There are some respondents, however, who noted that a brand name is not necessarily an indicator of quality, because there are many imitations – *«we bought Calgon for our washer, but the box contained ordinary soda»*

2. **Information obtained in the course of consultations:**

- **with a shop assistant**
- **with friends and acquaintances,**
- **with experts in this or that product** (for example, with repair personnel at repair shops):

«I definitely ask a consultant», «I follow a friend of mine, she understands everything and gives

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me tips», «my friends' and acquaintances' opinion is important... they will tell how the equipment works, how long it has worked», «a friend of mine wanted to buy a washing machine but did not want to trust the advice that shop assistants were giving her, so she went to a repair shop where those machines are repaired and asked a mechanic which machines break most often, and only then she made her choice»

3. The degree of reputation/ trustworthiness of the retail outlet:

«I buy equipment at large stores only – «ABV Tekhnika», «Piramida»»; «I try to buy foodstuffs in one and the same store where they know me», «I buy meat at the market, from sellers that I know», «I only buy footwear in «Intertop»»

4. Country of origin of the product:

«as regards equipment, I always look at the country of origin, if it is China, I will not buy it, but I will buy if it is Japan», «brand name is not always an indicator of quality of a tool, country where it was assembled matters also; for example, we bought a Bosch grinding machine, and it broke down in a month... was assembled in Ukraine»

5. Advertisement:

«you learn from ads as well», «when there are promo events at supermarkets, there are girls who tell about the product and about its quality... or they can demonstrate its quality, or you can even try the product», «I bought a hairdryer... I saw it in an ad, and friends of mine advised that same hairdryer later», «from ads... for example, they say there is a cream that «removes wrinkles»

6. Information about features/ specifications of the product (indicated on packaging or in user manuals):

- technical specifications, if it is domestic appliances
- information concerning hypoallergenic properties, if it is household cleanings products
- information about whether or not the product passed certification:

«if those are more expensive things, you will always read whether it was certified, whether it is suitable for our networks», « information concerning hypoallergenic properties of household cleanings products»

7. Price of the product – «a good product cannot be cheap»

Types of Information that Consumers Use Less Frequently

1. Information found on the Internet

As demonstrated by the survey, in general, few respondents use that source of information, and

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when they do, they predominantly search for information about equipment. Kievites use this source of information most often; in this respect, residents of Poltava, Lviv and Donetsk are less active. Among the Kievites, the most active Internet users (as regards search of information about quality of goods) are respondents aged from 18 to 25:

«as regards equipment, I read information on the Internet», «I visit Internet forums, where you can read references... of course, they can place promotional materials there, but you can still find objective information»

Types of Information that Consumers Seldom Use

1. **Information obtained from manufacturers' telephone hot lines** - *«I telephoned the manufacturer's hot line, they told about their DVD players»*
2. **Information from the press** – *«I read medical newspapers where they publish research results».*

It should be noted that some respondents believe that both themselves and the majority of Ukrainian consumers are not sufficiently interested in quality/ safety of goods – *«we pay little attention to it... we must demand quality certificates... but in reality we do not, we are far from it»*. One of the reasons behind it is the belief that the information will be difficult to obtain (shop assistants/ managers are reluctant to provide it) and, therefore, the requirement may create a conflict situation – *«even if I am interested, I do not want to engage in a discussion with the management of the store»*.

3.6. Sufficiency of Information About Quality/Safety of Products

The survey demonstrated that **the majority of the respondents are not satisfied with the level of availability of information about quality/safety of Products.**

This is explained by:

1. **Lack of reliable/ trustworthy/ objective information** about quality/ safety of products. Thus, in part, consumers frequently encounter cases when shop assistants and consultants at stores give them false or controversial information:

«this is a matter of how trustworthy the information is, but in general, what is written on the product is enough», «I was helping someone to choose a DVD player and I called the manufacturer's direct line for consultations, then I decided to read more about that device

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and it turned out that the manufacturer did not tell me the whole truth», «there is a lot of information, but it is not very reliable, everyone will praise their own stuff», «in one store sales people advise to buy one thing, in another store it is something else... it makes your head spin, they make you even more confused», «I would want more honesty from consultants, because now everything seems to boil down to selling more, even if it is low quality», «we were buying a TV set recently, so one sales agent advised one brand, another sales agent – another brand, the third one – something new again», «I was buying some sausage and I asked, whether it is fresh/ Sure it is, they say... I asked them to cut off a bit to see, they refused... I bought it and cut it at home, and it turned out to be all green inside...», «when you buy something and ask whether it is fresh, sales people say, like, I don't know, I did not check it».

As regards alimentary products, the situation could be improved if producers:

- **indicated the product composition honestly and completely**

According to the respondents, at present some products either do not have their composition indicated (this is especially true in relation to meat products), or if it is indicated, it is either incomplete or false. Sometimes certain imported goods do not have information about the product and its composition in Russian or Ukrainian:

- **information about origin of the product components on the packaging** (where those were grown):

«you cannot always see any indications on sausage as to where it was made», «that is why they do not honestly write what that sausage is made from... those who want meet will buy meet, maybe more expensive, but those who are fine with soy will buy soy, but let them write honestly about it», «in supermarkets they sell Indian tea, but there is not a single Russian word on the packaging... shop assistants do not know anything about it either...», «we buy juices... nothing is written on them about what kind of fruits those are made from, or what countries those fruits were grown», «it would be useful to know where that cow was grown that the sausage was made from», «let them honestly indicate presence of additives, so that people know what it is that they eat», « you drink a juice that they say is made from simply magical fruits, and then you feel a chemical aftertaste... let them write honestly about everything»

2. Lack of information about safety of products and their components:

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«there is nothing, especially about safety», «no information whatsoever about safety», «on household cleaning substances, on cosmetics, they indicate some components that I do not know, how am I supposed to know whether or not those are harmful».

3. Lack of comparative information about quality about the same kind of products of different brands:

«at present, there are lots of similar products that are manufactured by various producers, but it is not clear which of those are better, the information is insufficient», «I was choosing juices, they have the same things written on them, and it is not clear which is better».

4. Lack of information about disadvantages and weaknesses of goods:

«Not enough information, advertisements only tell about positive features», «I would like food products to be accompanied by the same kind of description as drugs are, those that contain warnings».

5. Lack of information about how an authentic product can be distinguished from a fake:

«no information about how to choose correctly... for example, how to choose brandy correctly...my husband bought brandy, opened it, and it just reeked of alcohol, so he took it back to the store, and they said that it was okay, and showed the quality certificates».

6. An acute lack of information about quality/ safety of such groups of products as:

- household cleaning chemicals
- clothing
- bathroom fixtures
- alimentary products

«it is especially problematic with foodstuffs and household cleaning products... you may ask sales people but they would snap back, like, are you buying or not», «lack of information about domestic cleaning products», «too little information about food products, I wanted to find information about milk, they say it is made from powder... did not find anything», «too little information about clothing, bathroom fixtures».

It should be stressed that **quite often, dissatisfaction with the level of information about quality/safety of goods is connected with the fact that consumers do not know where to find it** – *«you just do not know who to ask for information... sales people are only interested in selling».*

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Only a few of the respondents (for example, the Donetsk respondents aged 26 to 40, half of the Kiev respondents in the same age groups and, and half of the Kiev respondents aged 18 to 25) believe that there is enough information about quality of goods. In their opinion, the majority of consumers *«just do not want to bother being interested»:*

«information is available but nobody wants to seek it, those who do will find that «Activia» contains that same kind of bacteria as the plain kefir».

Based upon the experience of that group of respondents, quite exhaustive information may be obtained either from **shop assistants**, or in **mass media**, or **on the Internet**, or from **advertisements**, or by demanding a **quality certificate** at a store:

«I trust shop assistants, I bough a TV set, a vacuum cleaner and a microwave based on their advice... that is, information I got at the store was quite sufficient for me», «there is plenty of information – radio, TV, what they will tell at stores», «I am satisfied with the level of information, all you have to do is wish to seek... the sources are the radio, sales people at stores, the Internet, advertisements, and you can always demand quality certificates».

3.7. Desirable Types of Information About Quality/Safety of Goods/Products

Information about quality of goods that would evoke confidence with the majority of respondents

1. Objective and comprehensive information about quality/safety of goods that is generated by independent organisations and based upon the results of testing of products for their quality/safety:

«there must be an organisation that would deal with products, determine their real composition and what effects on health those produce», «it would be good if there was an independent magazine by that telling the truth... but nobody is going to invest into that», «an observer magazine would be good... for example, that organisation could test one and the same kind of products by different producers and assess those».

That information, in the respondents' opinion, must be published in mass media and be written in a style comprehensible by consumers – *«the style should not be too high-brow, but rather understandable, popular scientific», «not everyone has access to the Internet, and consultants will not tell you much... there may be magazines, columns in newspapers or magazines that people can read».*

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It should be noted that for respondents it is important to see statements as to whether or not a product is of high-quality and safe, but also to know that sanctions are taken against unscrupulous producers – *«those producers must be fined»*.

2. Quality certificates/ conclusions about quality of goods issued by special supervisory bodies proceeding from expert studies of goods for their compliance with the quality /safety requirements:

«every product must be accompanied by a certificate showing whether the products complies with the quality requirements», «there must be a laboratory that determines if what is stated on the packaging in fact is contained in it», «all cosmetics and all pharmaceuticals must be approved by the Health Ministry», «as for creams, there must be some sanitary conclusions».

According to respondents, for that purpose, there must exist GOSTs and independent/ non-corrupted supervisory authorities. A part of the consumers believe that at present such authorities are absent or they do not function: *«there must be special supervisory bodies, as it used to be earlier, they must carry out analyses», «at present such authorities are absent, but they must exist for consumers' safety», «for promotion of their products, some producers create some pseudo associations... for example, some dentists association recommends «blend-a-med»», «quality control must be exercised on the state level, but this is a country of crooks... no control»*.

A desirable source of such information are stands and monitors at points of sales:

«so that we could come to any store and at any moment demand a certificate... it would be a civilised society», «quality certificates must be displayed in a noticeable place... on stands near the entrance», «in stores there must be reference monitors, if you need to verify some information about the product, you can use that monitor, find what you need and read».

According to the respondents, existence of certificates at points of sales must also be controlled, for example, by the taxation inspectorate or the Consumer Rights Protection Society.

Ideally, consumers would like to see that only high-quality goods are allowed for sale, by any manufacturer, those that have passed tests before being offered for retail sales.

«It would be nice if you did not have to think about quality every time, so that stores took care about it themselves, and sold us only high-quality goods».

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3. **Information about the state standards of product quality that could be accessible at points of sales.**

The information would enable consumers, if they wish to do so, to conduct their own expert study of correspondence between the claimed composition of products/goods with the quality standards:

«there must be some standards and information about them», «I would like to see stands in every store where everyone could read which standard requirements every type of goods must meet, for example, cooked sausage, 1st grade smoked sausage... what shelf life the standards for each product envisage», «I could personally come to a store and compare».

4. **Comments on the products quality from:**

- **either independent experts** (that is, specialists in this or that sector)
- **or from ordinary consumers who used this or that product.**

The Internet or printed publications may be a source of that information:

«only an expert or people who used a product before can persuade me about its quality... there are sites where people leave their comments», «there must be consumer groups where people could simply share their information», «an evaluation by food industry experts, or experts in footwear».

5. **Reference books on various product groups for consumers**, containing comprehensive information about requirements to quality of products, real composition of products, safety levels of their components, production technologies:

«If it were possible to buy a consumer reference book... on household cleaning products, for example, to contain description of their composition, how to choose correctly, telling about their production technologies», «there must be special reference books on various commodity groups, so that it could be possible to browse through them at stores».

Information about product quality that would be regarded as trustworthy by individual respondents

1. **Information about quality of products based upon the results of contests** - *«results of contests, awarding of medals»*

2. **TV programmes where producers would demonstrate production processes** - *«on the TV, where producers could show what they are putting into their products, what conditions the products is made in... that would be enough for me», «let the state launch a*

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programme on the 1st National TV Channel and educate people about the quality of goods».

It should be noted that for many respondents shop assistants and sales consultants remain to be a desirable source of objective information about quality of products – *«Of course, I would like to learn it from a shop assistant...».*

Proceeding from the survey participants' responses, we can conclude that **the more expensive a product is and the less frequently it is bought, the more attention is attached to the search of information about its quality/safety, and the more profound and comprehensive information about it is gathered.**

In connection with it, most respondents assert that, generally search of information about non-food products (unlike alimentary products) is more focused and profound. In that case, consumers often do not stop at the information that they can obtain at a store - *«we buy non-food products less frequently, that is why we pay more attention <to them>, and you develop an intuitive understanding of alimentary products».*

The same is confirmed by reference to such source of information as friends and acquaintances. Thus, in case of food products, information about their quality is transferred to consumers from their friends in a rather accidental manner, while in case of non-food products, consumers tend to deliberately seek it.

4. EXPERIENCES OF PURCHASES OF LOW-QUALITY GOODS

4.1. Unprompted Associations With the Phrase «Purchase of Low-Quality Goods»

The respondents most often associated the phrase «purchase of low-quality goods» with:

- ***a range of negative emotions***

«unpleasant», «disappointment», «the sense of deceit», «negative», «anger», «resentment», «they had me», «bad mood», «scandal», «made me a fool», «indignation»

- ***images of spoiled goods***

«bad smell», «crumpled packaging», «defect», «expired validity term»

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- **waste of time and money** - «*money down the drain*», «*lost time*»
- **negative consequences from using/ consuming low-quality goods:**
«*poisoning*», «*losing hair because of shampoo*», «*hospital*»
- **specifics of manufacture and the manufacturer of low-quality goods** - «*made in China*», «*underground manufacturing*»

The survey showed that, in general, the majority of respondents do not experience purchasing of low-quality good very often – «*it does happen, but not really very often*». It should be noted that consumers from Lviv encounter that problem more frequently, compared to the survey participants from Kyiv, Poltava and Donetsk.

According to the experience of the survey participants, the most problematic groups of commodities, in relation to their quality, are the following:

- alimentary products (especially fish, dairy products, meat products),
- footwear
- household cleaning products
- electric appliances (in the opinion of men)

The majority of respondents believe that there exist risks to buy low-quality goods at any point of sale, whether a supermarket, an open marketplace or a manufacturer's store:

«*I bought low-quality goods at a manufacturer's store*», «*you can get low-quality stuff anywhere*».

At the same time, however, it is marketplaces that are associated with chances to buy low-quality goods:

«*storage conditions are much better in supermarkets than at marketplaces*», «*at marketplaces they push goods by manufacturers that cannot pass any quality controls*».

4.2. Models of Consumers' Behaviour After Buying of Low-Quality Goods

On the basis of examples cited by the respondents, it is obvious that in situations when they experience purchases of low-quality goods, consumers take one of the two principal positions:

- **active**

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- or passive

4.2.1. Active Position

In general, the «active consumer positions» means such behaviour when consumers take any measures to protect their interests, regardless of their results.

It should be noted that, if difficulties or obstacles emerge in the course of consumer rights protection, behaviour of respondents with the active position, in principle, can be divided into two models, which can be termed as:

1. **semi-active** – when, after a failed attempt to protect their rights by their own resources, consumers give up, lose heart and do not push the matter through, in reality having every chance for it
2. **active proper** – when consumers, in spite of the obstacles, manage to protect their rights.

Proceeding from the respondents' real experiences, it is obvious that the process of their consumer rights developed along the following paths:

I. THE STAGE OF SELF-DEFENSE that takes place on the level of a trade outlet

Protection by Way of Appeal to the Seller

A consumer is coming back to the point of sales meaning to replace a low-quality product or get a refund. Most often, the first person he or she addressed about his or her problem is the shop assistant. shop assistants are the persons to whom consumers voice their dissatisfaction with the purchase:

«I bought sour cream at a supermarket, failing to notice that the pack was swollen, and there was mildew inside, so I came back to the store, having the receipt with me, I stood in a line to exchange the low-quality products, the people there admitted it was their fault and returned the money to me, I felt relieved... the problem was resolved without a row», «I bought ravioli,

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they said they were fresh, but when I cooked them they turned out to be bad, I brought them back and they returned the money».

Judging by the respondents' comments, quite often the issue is resolved by shop assistants, without any difficulties or conflicts by the shop assistants. Such situations take place:

- both in stores and at marketplaces

It should be noted that, in the respondents' opinion, food products are easier to return without producing the cash register receipt in small shops, but it does not work in large ones – *«you can't come to a large store without a receipt...».*

- even if a consumers do not have a receipt.

In that case, consumers demonstrate the spoiled product to the shop assistant, or offer to try some (if those are alimentary products):

«I bought a Bosch angle grinder from a seller who has a license to sell tools of that brand, but he did not have a warranty agreement; in four days the tool broke down... the seller recognised me and returned the money», «I bought sugar at a marketplace, and at home my wife noticed that it was mixed with salt, so I came back and invited the seller to try some... she replaced the sugar», «I bought some cooked sausage in the evening; when I took out of the fridge what I bought as sausage, I was shocked because it turned into some strange mass where mince meat separated from soy... I brought that back to the store, the shop assistant just had a look and returned the money on the spot, without even asking for the receipt....», «I bought some condensed milk, its validity term was ok, so I opened it and saw it was all green, the store was nearby, I came back and had it replaced without any problems», «I bought some pate, its validity term turned out to have expired 3 months ago, so I addressed the manager, showing my receipt, and they replaced it promptly, and even gave me a bottle of wine».

On the other hand, quite common are situations when shop assistants refuse to return money or replace products to consumers (even if they have a receipt).

In that case communication often acquires an aggressive, conflicting nature. Persistent consumers note that they have to resort to threats or use tricks to protect their rights:

«I bought a chicken, took the receipt... when it defrosted at home, it started to stink... I went back to the store with the receipt, they did not want to replace the chicken, I called the manager and threatened to explode the store's reputation... you must be determined», «I bought toilet water, and at home I realised it was just alcohol without any aroma, I kept the receipt but they didn't want to replace it; the situation was really nasty, when I had to prove

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obvious things... I threatened to go to the SBU... then their manager came and settled the issue», «In a store I bought a device that regulates lighting in the room, for 80 hryvnias, and when I came home it did not work, so I went back with a friend of mine, I was curious, whether they cheated on purpose or didn't know themselves... they refused to replace it at the store... my friend threatened to use force... in the end, they did replace it», «I bought a disk drive at a second-hand store, it refused to read certain disks, so they didn't want to replace it claiming those were not available, so I had to use a trick, I came there and asked if I can buy a disk drive? They said sure you can... so that was when I confronted them and offered to replace the one I had with a new one... they had no escape».

Quite often at this stage (that is, encountering refusal on part of the shop assistants) the quitting consumers (even those who have receipts) cease to prove that they are right and leave with nothing:

«I bought a tape recorder but did not check how it operates at the store because there was no electricity; at home we realised that it didn't work, came back to the store and they said that it's over, we can't return it, because the sale was registered, so they told me I should go to the service centre and have it repaired for my own money; at the service centre they said that it was a defect of manufacture, and took about six month to repair it 6», «I bought some cheese spreads at the Barvinok supermarket, which turned out to be bad, I wanted to return them but the cashier refused... ».

In those situations, the shop assistants at the store may quench activity of consumers who do not have a receipt or a warranty document, because, as a rule, the majority of consumers know that they must have those to have their merchandise returned or replaces. Many respondents noted that their bitter experience taught them to be more vigilant, and now they demand, take and keep receipts and warranty documents, not ignoring them as they used to do:

«I bought a shower gel at a supermarket, the one that we always use, and it gave rash both to me and to my girlfriend... I had to stay at home for a week; I did not have a receipt but I came back to the store because I did not want other people to suffer... the sales people got scared at first but then calmed down when they found out that I did not have a receipt, I was helpless without it... I did not even go to the supermarket manager because I didn't have the receipt», « I bought winter boots and started wearing them in the autumn; in winter, when the weather was wet, they started leaking, the one-month warranty term had already expired by then; I came to the seller, the talk was long but the result was zero... I understand that they were right from the legal point of view, but I expected simple human understanding... I was

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defending my right for high-quality products», «I bought yoghurt for my daughter, it turned out bad, when I brought it back to the Furshet supermarket, the sales people looked at it and agreed - «yes, it is bad, but if you don't have a receipt you cannot prove it you bought it here» – so I went away; what else could I do?», «I bought some sausage... it turned out to be all green; within half an hour I came back to the store to show them what they had sold, and they said, how can we know that you bought it here, we can't accept it without a receipt... they said I can appeal to the consumer protection society or sue them...», «I bought footwear at a marketplace, in a week the sole came off... they didn't replace it, I could not prove that I had bought it from that person, so I did not try to do anything else, did not appeal anywhere... but now I keep receipts and warranty documents», «...now I always demand receipts, whatever I buy...».

It should be noted that sellers sometimes quench consumers' eagerness using the argument that a product that consumers believe is defective, is not in fact defective or of low quality:

«a friend of mine bought boots and its heel turned out to be weak... she went to the seller – they did not return the money she paid, and did not replace them either because they did not have the right size; they also said it is not to be regarded as defective merchandise...», «I remember I bought some dairy products, which turned out to be sour... I told the sales agent about it, but she replied that all products tend to spoil, things like that can happen to everyone...».

It is noticeable that a part of respondents did try, and not without success, to protect their rights, even without a receipt. In those circumstances they were counting on the sense of justice, common sense, human understanding on part of sellers:

«I bought a jar of pickles at a wholesale market, they turned out to be bad, too soft, and when I came back they gave me another jar... I was counting on the goodwill of the company, on their justice, I paid the money for good-quality products... I was acting on common sense», «at a marketplace I bought boots for 140 hryvnias, in 10 days the heel broke but the seller refused to return the money, I called a consumers protection authority, but they said they could not help me because I didn't have the receipt... but I came back to the little shop at the marketplace where I had bought the boots – its owner was there... she got scared and returned 100 hryvnias to me... after that, I always take receipts».

It is worth noticing that some consumers who bought low-quality products and who did not have receipts or warranty documents, did come back to the place where they bought them not

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really hoping for refund but rather meaning to warn the sellers that they are selling inadequate merchandise and thus prevent other buyers from buying those products:

«I bought sneakers, they fell apart in a month... when I was buying them, I got no warranty... the sellers refused to return the money claiming it was manufacturer's fault... I did not try to do anything else because I had no warranty... actually, I did not even hope to achieve anything, I rather wanted to warn them that they sell bad footwear».

It should be noted that if low-quality goods were bought at a marketplace, then it often turns out that consumers, however determined they may be, just cannot protect their rights because there is nobody to make a claim to (for example, the seller and the outlet may be gone):

«I bought boots at a marketplace; in 1,5 months, the heel fell off – they could not be repaired, I came back to the marketplace, to the booth where I had bought the boots, but there were absolutely strange people there who sold foodstuffs», «we bought ham at a marketplace, it was okay when we tried it, but while we were looking at something else, she pushed in bad one – we found it was stinking when we were coming home; we returned but she was gone», «I bought cheese at the marketplace, looked at it closer at work and saw that it was not fresh, I came back but that person was gone», «...it is difficult to find a person at a marketplace».

Protection By Appealing to the Administration/ Manager/ Director of an Outlet

In case talking with the shop assistants fails, some consumers do not quit but bring their claims to the administration of the outlet. Judging by consumers' stories, contacts with the administration quite often bring success to the consumer (even in the absence of a receipt):

«I bought pineapples which turned out badly sour, the shop assistant did not want to do anything and just drove me away, so I went to talk to the Director; they gave me two cans of pineapples instead», «I bought some cottage cheese in Silpo, but it did not smell like cheese; good that I kept the receipt... I came up to the manager and they returned the money».

Some respondents underline that they go directly to the administration or managers, bypassing the shop assistants. Some do so because they had the experience to be sure that it is a more effective way of resolving the problem; others (as a rule, those are customers at large supermarkets) – because there is nobody else they can address. It is noticeable that, unlike shop assistants, managers often behave in a correct, diplomatic, non-aggressive manner:

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«... I always go to the administration right away because from my experience I know that shop assistants will stand their ground to the end, to do anything but not replace the merchandise...», «you should go to the people who take decisions, shop assistants do not decide anything... I know it from my own experience», «...if you bought something in a large supermarket, who else can you come to but the manager... there is nobody else, those at cash registers have nothing to do with it».

It should be noted that in rare cases sales personnel at an outlet (either shop assistants or the administration) do not only readily return the money for low-quality merchandise or replace it, but also thank the consumer for taking the trouble of coming and bringing the product back:

«I bought canned silver carp, opened the can and all I saw was a head staring at me...the shop assistants did not want to return the money but the manager did, and even thanked me saying that it was what she expected», «I bought stale butter and only noticed it when eating... but they gave me a fresh pack right away, said they were sorry and thanked me for paying attention».

Protection By Way of Appealing to the Manufacturer

In individual cases, when consumers bought low-quality goods, they addressed the manufacturer. According to the respondents, their purpose was to express their dissatisfaction with the products and to make the manufacturers aware about the fact of their products being dissatisfactory. It is noticeable that for one respondent from Kiev, quite unexpectedly for himself, doing so resulted very successfully – a representative of the manufacturing company came to his home and returned the money:

«I bought a pack of «President» cheese for my child, it the cheese had mildew on it, so I came back to the store and they returned the money... then I telephoned the manufacturer's direct line and complained about low-quality goods being on sale – they said they were sorry... later I found out from shop assistants at the store that they had to return the entire batch of that cheese, because all of it was bad», «I bought ice-cream, «Tri Medvedya», our family ate half the box and then we all felt sick; my wife told me to bring it back to the store, though I hesitated whether they would take it back – we did eat half of it; so I noticed the manufacturer's number at the box, promotion department, and thought I should call them anyway, maybe only to vent out, or threaten with the sanitary inspection... they recorded our

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address, promising to resolve the issue... on the next day one of their managers came to us and brought the money... I did not expect anything like that... I did not have the receipt».

II. STAGE OF RIGHTS PROTECTION WITH THE HELP OF THIRD ORGANISATIONS/AUTHORITIES/PERSONS

Protection by way of appealing to the Consumer Rights Protection Society

In general the survey showed that **very few** respondents (who may be regarded as the most active consumers in terms of protection of their rights), did resort to help of the Consumer Rights Protection Society. Those were found among representatives of different regions and different age groups.

Practically all consumers addressed that organisation:

- after they **had failed to resolve the issue of low-quality goods purchased at the level of the retail outlet**
- in connection with a purchase of low-quality large and/or expensive items (e.g. footwear, equipment):

Many of those consumers addressed the Consumer Rights Protection Society for the first time. Some did it proceeding from their own knowledge (*«I seemed to have heard something like you can appeal to the Society»*), others were prompted by friends:

«I bought a vacuum cleaner by a well-known company; it 2 months its motor burned. I had warranty documents so I took it to a service shop where they fixed it for free, but it burned again; so I went to the store demanding money back, but they refused, even the director; I appealed to the consumer rights protection department, as a friend of mine advised me to do, because he did, so they returned the money... I spent of lot of time and nerves».

Only one of the respondents, after he bought low-quality footwear and not knowing what to do in that situation, addressed the Consumer Rights Protection Society for advice:

«I did address them once... I bought footwear, the sole tore off; I had the receipt but did not know what to do – so I found their telephone number and called that Society, they said – if you have the receipt, go straight ahead, and if anything goes wrong, give us a call... they replaced the shoes».

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It should be noted that many participants in the survey are generally aware about existence of the Consumer Rights Protection Society. They do not resort to its help, however, because they:

- (1) are not convinced that doing so will yield a positive result because they do not believe that authority is not corrupt,
- (2) do not know any contact information,
- (3) are convinced that the process will require considerable time,
- (4) suspect that the move will be just another nerve-racking:

«... those societies do not decide anything now, they get their stories straight with producers and sellers», «...I am not sure if they will help but it will sure involve a lot of red-tape... no thank you...», «...I do not know where they are...», «I know about the Society but do not go there, I do not want to waste my efforts», «you never know how to find that society».

Protection by way of Application to Court

In general, many respondents are aware that they can protect their rights at a court. None of the survey participants, however, had that experience. Nevertheless, some of them referred to the experiences of their friends who resorted to justice trying to protect their consumer rights: *«a friend of mine bought a pair of blue jeans at a marketplace, they fell apart... I do not know the details but in the end she went to court and she won the case, although it took quite a long time», «I have a friend, and the bank where his wife had an account made deductions from her salary to pay for mobile telephony every month; when she stopped using that operator, she came to the bank and asked to stop the deductions; she asked whether she has to write a written request but they said she didn't, everything would be settled without it... It was okay for some time but then the bank made deductions again; she went to the bank claiming the money back but they refused, and even called her «stupid hen», for failing to insist on the written request... her husband is a lawyer, he knows what to do and he went to court... at present, the case has not yet been decided but it is moving... ».*

Protection with the help of an active and self-assured friend

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In this context it is worthwhile paying a separate attention to such a method of consumer rights protection as **protection with the help of an active and self-assured friend**. In the entire survey, such examples were just a few. Apparently, the method is used by bashful and indecisive consumers. On the other hand, active and self-assured persons may wish to help their bashful and indecisive or elderly friends and acquaintances to protect their rights. Among the respondents there were both those who used friends' help and those who helped:

«I have an elderly neighbour, and her eyesight is weak, so once she bought sausage at a shop and showed it to me; I looked at the sausage and saw it was all slimy... I was beyond myself with indignation, how could they sell it to an old and ill person, anyone can see how helpless she is... I rushed to the store and told off to the shop assistant everything that I thought... she replaced the sausage». «At a marketplace I bought Moscow-made boots that I liked very much, but the sole fell off right on the next day... I am rather shy, I do not like rows but I did go; the seller said she was not going to return the money to me; when I asked to call her manager or give me her telephone number, she just ignored me... I went to a friend of mine, she is very active and doesn't mind a good scandal... I didn't have a receipt but I did have a slip for exchanging the currency that I spent on the boots... so she raised a row, went to the director of the market, threatened to call the Consumers Protection Society... thanks to her self-confidence and assertiveness, they gave me the money back, and it also turned out that the seller charged me more than the boots really cost».

Therefore, practically all consumers know or guess that in principle they have the right to demand their money back for low-quality alimentary products or non-food items that they have a warranty to. It is noticeable that the knowledge, as a rule, is gained through personal experience or the experience of their friends or relatives. Very few of the respondents made a point of reading the Law on Consumer Rights.

At the same time, quite a few respondents are not aware about their consumer rights, in case:

- they have bought a low-quality non-food product without a warranty, for example, clothes or headgear
- or if they bought low-quality alimentary products, opened the packaging or cut it, or consumed a part of it

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Those gaps in the knowledge about consumer rights make consumers hesitant as to whether or not they have the right to demand the money back for the defective products or have them replaced:

«I bought an eared-seal fur hat for 500 hryvnias; in two or three weeks a bald patch appeared there. It took me a while to decide and go there, I thought the shop owner would say it was all my fault... but I did go, I didn't want to just waste my money... the owner gave the money back», «I was going to the marketplace with that grinder and didn't know whether the seller will give the money back, I wasn't sure at all», «I did cut the cake, I didn't know you can return it that way».

In general it is possible to conclude that many respondents' overall perception of the algorithm of protection of their consumer rights is the following:

- addressing personnel of the retail outlet (a shop assistant or manager)
- addressing the Consumer Rights Protection Society
- application to court

«first you must try and resolve the problem on the spot, with the shop assistant; it doesn't work – with the management; then you go to the Consumer Rights Protection Society», «...you can come to court too... except that nobody is going to do it».

4.2.2. Reasons Causing Consumers to Assert Their Rights

The survey demonstrated that, in their desire to protect their rights, consumers are governed, as a rule, by a range of reasons. Those are similar for respondents in different age groups and regions.

The reasons that govern consumers are **both rational and emotional and, as a rule, are closely intertwined**. It should be noted that **emotional factors (against the background of rational ones) have a somewhat stronger driving force**.

EMOTIONAL FACTORS causing respondents to assert their consumer rights	
<i>The most common reasons</i>	
<p style="text-align: center;">(I)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Self-respect, the sense of dignity, desire to feel like a HUMAN BEING ▪ Reluctance to be fooled and 	<p><i>«It is a matter of self-respect», «I respect myself and I was fooled, they sold me a defective vacuum cleaner, I was asserting my rights...», «...you know, you want to feel a civilised</i></p>

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<p>cheated</p>	<p><i>person, not a sucker who gets fooled», «...I do not want to be fooled event in the scope of a cheese spread», «when you realise that you have been fooled, you must get it straight», «I felt deceived», «I hate it when they arrogantly try to fool me», «I do not want to feel like a sucker», «I do not want to be tricked, why do I have to be a fool for my own money?», «...so that I'm not more stupid than the seller», “I am defending myself and asserting my rights», «I do not want to be a fool, even if it's just a chocolate bar» «I didn't always come back but now I had enough... Why should I be a sheep? I always return bad things now»</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">(II)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The desire to restore justice ▪ Conviction that sellers of bad products must bear responsibility for that 	<p><i>“...although the store itself is not to blame but they must be responsible for what they sell», “I bought a cheese spread at a supermarket, unwrapped and saw that it had mildew on it, I called the manager, although I didn't have the receipt, and they gave me another one... It is not about those kopecks, it is a matter of principle – it is a reputable supermarket, why should they sell bad stuff? ...they must be responsible for that...”, “they must be responsible for everything... if you sold something bad – well, face the consequences... everyone must assert their rights”</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">(III)</p> <p>The sense of being insulted, anger because of the false answer to the consumer's direct question about the quality of the merchandise, that is, in case of an overt deception</p>	<p><i>«I bought some pate and asked whether it was fresh, they said it was; I looked at home – it was all bad, so I brought it back out of principle, because I asked directly whether it was good», «I was buying a cake because I had to treat my colleagues at work; I asked whether it was fresh, they said «yes»... I was insulted”, «...I felt angered that's why I went...»,</i></p>

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	<i>«realising that the seller just deliberately pushed you his bad products simply triples your readiness to go to that shop and demand justice»</i>
(IV) Indignation caused by the chances to be poisoned	<i>“...I bought a cheese spread for children, it had mildew on it... I could poison my child!”, “...I was about to eat that butter, I could get food poisoning...”</i>
(V) If the products were bought for children	<i>«before going on vacation I bought some juice for my children; they drank it and then I noticed that its validity term had expired, and we had to be travelling on the following day...I rushed to the manager», “...I was buying that sausage for the child, and I did mention that to the shop assistant...”</i>
Less Common Reasons	
(VI) The desire to make the sellers <u>realise</u> that they are selling bad products, and to <u>prevent</u> them from continuing to sell those. The desire to prevent other people from buying those products. <i>(It was mentioned earlier that this reason makes some people come back to the outlets even if they do not intend to claim compensation and/or are not convinced that the merchandise will be replaced.)</i>	<i>«I brought the ravioli back to the shop because I did not want somebody else to buy them and got into the same situation that I got into», «I felt pity for other people who may also buy the same toilet water», «I bought a shower gel at a supermarket, the one that we always use, and it gave rash both to me and to my girlfriend... I had to stay at home for a week; I did not have a receipt but I came back to the store because I did not want other people to suffer...», “I bought jeans at the market place but they kept leaking colour on light-coloured shoes... I came to the marketplace and explained that all jeans do it... I just wanted to let them know that they are selling bad-quality things, but I did not try to return the money, because I didn’t have the receipt”</i>
(VII) To prevent deliberate deception of consumers	<i>«I always go, so that they are not so ready to cheat and poison», «...so that the sellers</i>

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by sellers	<i>stopped deceiving people...»</i>
RATIONAL FACTORS causing respondents to assert their consumer rights	
<i>The Most Common Factors</i>	
(I) Unwillingness to incur financial losses (however small)	<i>«I am not that rich to just waste my money down the drain», «I paid good money for the shoes, I just cannot afford to throw them out and buy new», «I want my money back», “...buy boots for 140 hryvnias and be able to walk in them 10 days only – I won’t excuse it to anyone”, “I have a rule, if I paid money, I must get a good product”</i>
(II) If an outlet is located close to home/place of work, or generally close to the respondent’s location	<i>«...It was not a far walk, so I went», «...It was not far away, the store is right next to my place of work...»</i>
(II) If the fact of buying a bad product was discovered immediately after it had been bought	<i>«I dropped in at the shop and bought a yoghurt, its validity term was okay, but it did not taste like yoghurt, they mixed something in, I returned and raised a row – I offered the shop assistant to try some, so they returned the money», «I bought an ice cream and right outside I noticed that its packaging had been unwrapped... I returned it without the receipt»</i>
(III) The need for the product	<i>«...because of the price and because I needed the telephone», «I went to the seller because I needed the tool», “...my colleagues were waiting for the cake, I needed it to give a treat to people”, “I went to the store to have the products replaced because I had the receipts... I always keep the receipts, my mom advised me to do so... and I desperately wanted caviar”, “...I came back to the store because I was going to give the cheese spread to the child”, «my plans made me to return the milk, I was going</i>

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	<i>to cook something on it in the morning»</i>
(IV) Availability of receipt or slip	<i>“...I had the receipt so I went...”, «I bought a curling iron, it had a warranty and I knew that the warranty allows to return it; it had problems with the electric cord, the people at the shop offered to fix it, I agreed, and now its all okay»,</i>
(V) Instructions/ recommendations by relatives (wife, husband, mother)	<i>«I bought frozen fish in the «Velyka Kyshenia» supermarket, you just could not put it in your mouth, it smelled terrible, so my wife said I should bring it back...», «my husband encourages me to go and have stuff replaced», «...I told everything to my mom, and she is like, don't keep mum... I went back to the store... they gave the money back»</i>
Infrequent Factors	
(VI) Recommendations to return the product expressed by an expert in this or that item	<i>«we bought shoes for our daughter's graduation party, she tried them on and the heel fell off; we took them to a shoe repair shop where they advised us to return them to the shop rather than try to have them repaired»</i>
(VII) Self-righteousness, supported by real knowledge of one's rights	<i>«In a shop I bought a summer shirt on coloured snaps, there was a tag saying to wash it in water up to 40 degrees, I washed it and the dye from the snaps leaked on the white fabric... I kept the receipt, quite by accident... although I came in a week, they gave the money back with no problems, as if I was not the first one... I wanted to return my money and to restore justice... I was sure that I was right because I am interested in law, and I read the laws on consumer rights protection during my studies».</i>

Special attention should be given to a stimulus that does not allow consumers to give up while trying to protect their rights and encourages them to push their matter through:

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- it is the overtly scornful attitude to consumers on part of the personnel at a retail outlet (or an organisation providing services) at the time when the former try to protect/ assert their rights:

«I bought a telephone, it had a warranty and it broke down... I suggested at the shop that they replace it but they refused and sent it for repairs to Dnipropetrovsk instead; besides, I really did not like their attitude to me... I had to address a consumer protection centre... the telephone was returned from Dnipropetrovsk and replaced with another one», “I was indignant when I came to return the boots and they said, what did you expect for 140 hryvnias?”, “...my friends were insulted that the bank personnel called the woman «a stupid hen» ...», «...for the «stupid hen» I would also show them a thing or two...”.

4.2.3. Circumstances Under Which the Majority of Respondents Will Definitely Assert Their Consumer Rights

<p>1. In case of purchase of an expensive and low-quality product</p>	<p><i>«If the amount of money is considerable, I will definitely go», «we bought a microwave oven and in a month it stopped heating; we brought it for warranty repair, it turned out to be a manufacturing defect, so we took it back to the shop...for us it is a considerable purchase»</i></p>
<p>2. If the low-quality product brought harm to health</p>	<p><i>«If I got food poisoning», «If I some harm to my health was done»”</i></p>
<p>3. When buying alimentary products that were intended for children or sick people</p>	<p><i>«my sister was operated and I came to see her, I had to bring her some fat-free kefir... so I bought that kefir at a shop, mentioned to the shop assistant that I need fresh one because I am going to visit a sick person, and he replied that in their shop everything is fresh; I didn't check though because it was too dark... when I stepped outside and saw that the kefir they sold me was with the expired validity term, I felt so angry that the first thing I did was give them hell...», «if products were bought for a child»</i></p>
<p>3. In any situation, when feeling like it</p>	<p><i>«If you feel like it»</i></p>
<p>4. Being absolutely self-righteous</p>	<p><i>“I am 100% sure that I am right”</i></p>

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5. If the retail outlet is located close to the respondent's home	<i>“if the shop is nearby”</i>
6. If the service life was expected to be long	<i>«If I counted that the thing will serve for along time... but it broke down right away»</i>
7. If low quality of the merchandise was discovered on the spot	<i>«If I immediately saw that they sold me something wrong...»</i>
According to the respondents, the probability that they will be asserting their rights is higher if products were bought in a shop than at a marketplace. It is connected with the fact that, in their opinion, it is more difficult to find justice with the marketplace traders – <i>«at the marketplace it is next to impossible, they hang out notices that their merchandise is not subject to return or replacement», “shops value their reputation more”</i> .	

4.2.4. Passive Position. Obstacles Preventing Respondents from Asserting Their Consumer Rights

By «passive position» we mean consumers' behaviour when, in a situation of purchasing of low-quality goods, they do not take any steps to assert their interests.

Obstacles preventing the survey participants from protecting their consumer rights, are both emotional and rational. The survey demonstrated that they are predominantly identical with respondents in different age groups and regions.

It can be stated that:

- for people with sufficiently high consumer awareness, rational barriers are the predominant obstacles (especially rational barriers №№ I, II,III)
- for people with low consumer awareness, or for people who are naturally shy and indecisive, trying to avoid conflict, both emotional and rational factors pose serious obstacles. At the same time, emotional barriers are still stronger than rational ones.

EMOTIONAL OBSTACLES, preventing respondents from asserting their consumer rights	
<i>The most typical barriers</i>	
(I)	<i>«this gives you fatigues and grey hair», «I do</i>

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<p>A widely spread belief that the process of consumer rights protection will necessarily be connected with a conflict/scandal and, consequently, with negative emotions.</p> <p>Therefore, consumers do not wish to engage in a conflict and «waste their nerves and health».</p>	<p><i>not want to flog a dead horse», «...I'll just waste my nerves trying to get the money back, I do not enjoy scandals», “I do not want to quarrel, to spoil my mood, because I know there will be a conflict, it just doesn't work out any other way”, “...I didn't want to waste my nerves”, «...I didn't want to waste my nerves... we all know at what a low level business ethics is here, you just subconsciously expect a scandal», «my mom won't go, she fears scandals, when she quarrels she may feel sick, she has hypertension», «...I don't want to be cursed at», «I wanted to replace a jacket at the marketplace because the zipper broke and a sleeve tore off on the one I just bought; so I was coming to the marketplace but turned around and went home, because I saw a scene at the marketplace, when a granny wanted to replace slippers and the seller just told her to get lost...»</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">(II)</p> <p>Disregard/ ignoring of consumers' rights by sellers.</p> <p>Consumers believe that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the sellers will use every means to prevent return of the merchandise ▪ any attempts to assert one's rights are in vain in this country 	<p><i>«I bought a can of stewed meat in a mini-market and found a wad of fur there; I just through it away, didn't go to replace it... I am sure the shop assistant will say that he did not make it... will not give the money back... all it will bring is scandal», «my husband says there's no point», «...not in this country».</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">(III)</p> <p>A sense of guilt for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ having bought a low-quality product ▪ having spoiled the product <p>Based upon the respondents' stories it is obvious that they often blame themselves, due to lack of knowledge of their consumer</p>	<p><i>«...the vacuum cleaner has a regulator to change the power from minimal to maximal; it does not clean on the minimal power, and just melts down on the maximal – that's our fault that we bought it, we should have thought better», «I bought trainers and played soccer in them – they fell apart... I had the receipt, but I</i></p>

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<p>rights.</p> <p>It is interesting that people are often inclined to blame themselves for buying low-quality products if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the product's validity term had expired (<i>«my fault, I should have looked more attentively»</i>) ▪ the product was bought in an «unreliable place», for example, at a marketplace/ on a train, in a non-specialised or non-brand store. 	<p><i>didn't go... It was all my fault, I should have worn sneakers, not trainers» – «if the manual says I cannot switch on the tool outdoors but I did, I won't go, it's my fault...», «I bought beer and it was stale, I didn't look at the expiry date... just threw it away – it was my own fault», «I bought chicken on a train although I knew I shouldn't... it was all green... threw it away, felt very upset... you can only trust yourself», «I bought a telephone in a non-specialised store because I wanted to save money; in a couple of days it started to act up on me, and although I did have the receipt, they didn't replace it saying that it did not have a warranty... I understand it was my fault, I should have bought one in a specialised store», «when I buy something bad at a marketplace, I understand that it is my fault, I should buy at stores or from sellers that I trust»</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">(IV)</p> <p>Fear that the sellers will accuse them of intentionally spoiling the merchandise</p>	<p><i>«I bought an eared-seal fur hat for 500 hryvnias; in two or three weeks a bald patch appeared there. It took me a while to decide and go there, I thought the shop owner would say it was all my fault...»</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">(V)</p> <p>Lack of desire to assert one's rights, explained by fatigue or laziness</p>	<p><i>“When I come home tired, I won't go... But I can tell the seller later that I bought low-quality stuff from them”, “...I was home already and felt too lazy to go back”.</i></p>
<p><i>Emotional barriers that emerged less frequently</i></p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">(VI)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sense of shame, shyness <p>This barrier is more typical for quiet, shy, bashful people. In the group of the respondents, they were more numerous among young girls (around 20 years old) and</p>	<p><i>«my mom will never go, she will feel ashamed», «...I am too shy, I won't go», “this is like humiliating to me...”, “my bashful nature did not allow me to assert my rights...”, “I was buying a meat-stuffed roll... it's not meat they put in there but some garbage; I didn't feel like</i></p>

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<p>older people (around 55)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unwillingness to appear as a «schlub», «a niggling person». <p>This barrier is more pronounced with the male part of the audience, especially men from Poltava.</p>	<p><i>arguing over that roll, so that they didn't say that I'm too petty», «I felt too embarrassed to return because of some trifle, I thought they would take me for some kind of schlub», "...we didn't want to condescend to those trifles..."</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">(VII)</p> <p>Lack of knowledge about their consumer rights and what actions are to be taken.</p> <p><i>It should be noted that, although the respondents themselves did not cite that reason very often, it was apparent, however, that it is often the barrier that prevented them from acting to protect their consumer rights.</i></p>	<p><i>«If you do not know what to do», "I bought a cake for my birthday and noticed by the guests' dead-pan faces that something is wrong... they could not even chew the cake, it was like rubber... my husband took three days to finish it off... I didn't know I could return the cake, it was already sliced", "...I do not know who to go to...", "...If I were alone, without my friend, I wouldn't have known who to address, I didn't have enough information"</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">(VIII)</p> <p>Lack of confidence in legitimacy of one's claims if the product has a good validity term but it does not meet its quality</p>	<p><i>«I often buy sour cream; sometimes it is okay, both the taste and consistence; some other time it may be sour and bitter; still at other times it may contain some specks or be thin as milk; and with all that, its validity term is ok... I never go to have it replaces, I don't know, maybe it should be that way...», «I buy «Galakton» milk; I once bought it and it was all diluted with water, but how can I prove it...»</i></p>
<p>RATIONAL OBSTACLES, preventing respondents from asserting their consumer rights</p>	
<p><i>The most common obstacles</i></p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">(I)</p> <p>Lack of time</p>	<p><i>«I bought a jumper at the Troyeshchina market, I was trying on a different one from the one they gave me in a sealed package; I saw at home that they gave me the wrong one... it was the wrong fabric – this and synthetic, but I had no spare time, and there's no point going in a week or two – you can't prove anything;</i></p>

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	<i>besides, I didn't have the receipt», «I do not replace the goods every time, I value my time»</i>
(II) Long distance from home to the place of purchase	<i>«I bought sauce at the supermarket, it was all sour, we even put it on the chicken; we didn't go to have it replaced, just didn't want to, because the store is too far away», “I was on a business trip and bought a China-made mixer for my wife; on the third time it broke down... the distance didn't let me go, I won't go to another city”</i>
(III) Absence of a receipt or warranty documents for the products, or the expired warranty term.	<i>«I bought a bad lotion, and I didn't have the receipt, I didn't go because I didn't have any proof», “...I didn't try to have the money back because I didn't have the receipt”, “when the warranty term expired”, «I bought a meat grinder, domestically made, it kept breaking down all the time, I had it replaced three times but it broke down again... now it just sits there idle... I didn't go to have it replaced again because the receipt is only valid 14 days»</i>
(IV) Petty or inexpensive merchandise. Generally, many respondents are not very upset with buying petty or inexpensive products that turned out to be of inadequate quality. In that situation, however, young respondents (18 to 25 years old) appear to be the most passive.	<i>«It happens sometimes that a product costs less than the fare to the place where you bought it...why bother going to have it replaced it?», “If the price of the product is not higher than the cost of getting to the place of purchase, then I won't go”, “sometimes you have to pay more just to get to that shop than that products costs”, “I never go if the product is alimentary, I save my energy”, «I do not replace petty merchandise, my time costs more», «I bought a torchlight for 4 hryvnias... what's the point of going?»</i>
(V) Lack of evidence to confirm that the person bought low-quality goods/	<i>«I bought a drill, and it turned out it did not have the workholder... they might say I had removed it myself... Like, I should have looked</i>

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<p>impossibility to prove that the product bought was low-quality.</p>	<p><i>right away, when buying... I wouldn't have proven anything»</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">(VI)</p> <p>If the person started to use the product or consumed some of it</p>	<p><i>«If those are alimentary products... for example, if I opened the packaging...», «I bought a widely advertised hair dye, and half of my hair ended up in the bath tub... I can't return it, can I – it was already opened», «I bought some sausage, sliced it at home – it just stank; I didn't go, I thought they wouldn't give the money back because I had it sliced...», «I always return bad products, but it happened once that we bought meat at the Yunost marketplace, made shashlyk out of the meat but couldn't eat it... I cannot bring back the shashlyks, can I?»</i></p>

It should be noted, that in most cases respondents criticize their behaviour in cases when they could have protected their rights but did not do it. In their opinion, that behaviour reinforces sellers' sense of impunity and creates conditions for further deceptions – *«...although it was just beer, but I did wrong when I did not return, because they will continue to sell low-quality stuff...»*.

It is interesting that some respondents who demonstrated passive behaviour when they purchased low-quality goods and later had an opportunity to tell sellers about, were informed by those latter that it could have been possible to have the money back, should the goods been returned to the sellers:

«I got a bad herring... I threw it away because I didn't want to raise a row, it was rather late at night... in the morning, however, I told the sellers about it, they said they were sorry and told me they would have replaced it if I brought it back», «...I didn't want to carry that stinking herring back – just threw it away, but I returned to the store and told them about what they sell... the shop assistance said it was too bad I had thrown it away because in a situation like that it should be returned to the store, and they would have given the money back».

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Consumers who did not attempt to assert their consumer rights in active manner, when they bought low-quality goods, noted that «they had a good lesson». They draw conclusions from such situations and the next time will either not go shopping to that outlet, or will be more attentive selecting and buying products:

«we bought lotion for our daughter... inside was plain water... they did not replace it... but now we do not go here and keep warning others», «...I draw conclusions, it is important for me that I do not get in such situations in the future, I will now be more exacting and attentive».

It is noticeable that some of the buyers who managed to assert their rights after purchasing low-quality goods, also try to avoid shopping at those retail outlets – *«true, they did return the money but I do not buy anything there anyway».*

4.3. Conditions Necessary to Enable Customers to Assert Their Rights Successfully

According to respondents, in order to successfully their consumer rights, people must:

1.
to be <u>determined</u> to do it
For that, some respondents feel it is necessary to have a degree of <i>«healthy aggressiveness, as in sports competition»</i>
<i>“you must want it, no excuses, don’t keep mum!”</i> , <i>«you must want to defend yourself», «don’t be indifferent, you must have determination», “there are people who don’t care, so they are the ones who get deceived”, “less indifference!”</i>

2.
not to be afraid, not to feel embarrassed, not to think that the sellers will repulse them
<i>“don’t be afraid”, «do not think they are going to repulse you at the store»</i>

3.
be assured:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ <i>in oneself and in being right</i>○ <i>about being able to assert their rights</i>
<i>«being confident that you are right... then it works out», “being assured about your stand”,</i>

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*“being sure about your victory”, “you must be calm and confident that you are right”,
«being sure that you are right, that you are there to restore justice»*

4.

to present your claim to the shop assistant/ manager in a calm manner, with confidence, keeping your dignity, in a diplomatic way – not raising a row and not asking, and being argumentative

«no rudeness, being diplomatic, but do not be asking in any way», «do not raise hell, but assert your point of view, keeping your dignity, and also have your arguments ready», «don't use timid words – «would you be so kind as...» - you have to say firmly - «I want this replaced, please», «do not ask, you need to present your point of view in a self-assured manner», “you must prove that you are right and provide arguments why you are right”

5.

(if necessary) **demonstrate insistence и self-assertiveness when talking with shop assistants/ managers**

“drive is what matters!”, «insistently, but no fights», «if they refuse, stand your ground, it is insistence that matters», “knock and they will open”

4.4. Factors That Stimulate More Active Protections by Respondents of Consumer Rights

Respondents cited the following factors that can stimulate their and other people's active attitudes as regards protection of their consumer rights:

External Stimuli	
<p style="text-align: center;">(1)</p> <p>Awareness of the people about their consumer rights or raising of their awareness about that via broad-scale publication of relevant information in mass media</p>	<p><i>«it is necessary to make people aware that there exists a consumer rights protection society», «they must tell it in programmes», «programmes that could eliminate illiteracy in those issues», «clear understanding of what I must do», «everyone knows what a Tampax is but not everyone knows that there exists Consumer Rights Protection Society... it must</i></p>

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	<i>be printed on every package», «people must be taught what to do in those situations»</i>
<p style="text-align: center;">(2)</p> <p>Awareness of the public at large about examples of successful protection of consumer rights by individuals.</p> <p>Those must be ordinary consumers that respondents can associate themselves with.</p> <p>Doing so will enable people to realise that they too can assert their consumer interests.</p> <p>It is important to show examples involving various commodities, including petty merchandise, because, in the respondents' opinion, it will stimulate consumers' activity related to protection of the rights when buying both small and large products that prove to be of inadequate quality.</p>	<p><i>«we must talk about specific examples», «there must be concrete examples», «to tell that there were similar cases and the person concerned managed to have the justice restored», «even petty examples must be shown so that people could assert their rights in very different situations», “...experiences of other people – our parents”, «real-life stories from people like us», «I had been afraid for year, had never gone anywhere, but then I got tired of it and I did go... when I saw just once that you can win, I now always do», “there must be examples... thanks to me, for example, a friend of mine managed to have a construction company to replace her laminated flooring, at their own expense, she saw that I always get my money back, that I do not excuse bad products, and decided to do the same”</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">(3)</p> <p>Readily available information about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>consumer rights</u> ▪ <u>contact details of the Consumer Rights Protection Society</u> 	<p><i>«information that is kept handy, what to do and who to go to», «advertisements of the Consumer Rights Protection Society, with contact details», «the information must be hung out in every store, indicating the address of the Consumer Rights Protection Society»</i></p>
<p>Sellers must know and respect consumers' rights. They must not ignore consumers' justified requests, but, on the contrary, must promptly react to those.</p>	<p><i>«there must be a rule at stores, when consumers have bought a low-quality products, they may return it», “so that they decide my matter immediately”, “I must be sure that the shop assistant also knows that I am right”</i></p>
<p>Enhancing publicity of the Consumer Rights Protection Society</p>	<p><i>«it is necessary for newspapers and magazines write about the Society, giving</i></p>

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	<i>examples of its work», «there must be information about such a Society existing»</i>
Social advertisements on those matters	<i>«there must be social advertisement»</i>
A Law stipulating mandatory payment of moral damages to consumers in case they have bought low-quality products	<i>«I wish they also paid moral damages»</i>
<i>Internal Stimuli</i>	
The sense of being confident about potential success of presenting claims	<i>«If I could be sure that it will not just be red-tape and waste of time and nerves, and that they will really resolve my issue», «I want to be sure of the final result», «to make people convinced that their rights will be protected», “so that people are confident that the product will be replaced or they will have their money back”, “to be sure that it’s not a hopeless situation”</i>
The sense of being potentially protected , based upon consumers’ confidence that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>a law to protect their rights exists and is effective</i> • <i>there exist certain organisations that can provide people with actual help in protection of their rights_</i> 	<i>«to be sure that my rights will be protected, it is the feeling of being protected that matters»</i>
Being sure that protection of one’s interests will not be associated with scandal	<i>«the atmosphere must be quiet, business-like, devoid of scandal», “I wish shop assistants reacted in a more quiet manner”</i>
Readiness to protect their consumer rights and unwillingness to put up with their violation	<i>«nothing will work if people will not realise why they need it», «if someone is not active, you cannot help him or her in any way», «people’s mentality must change... I believe that you must always assert your rights... people must want to do it»</i>

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4.5. The Image of A Person Whose Example Could Encourage Respondents To Seek Protection of Their Consumer Rights More Actively

According to the majority of respondents, a person whose example could encourage respondents to seek protection of their consumer rights more actively, must have the following personality traits:

- *self-assured*
- *principled*
- *even-tempered*
- *assertive*

It does not matter whether that person is male or female, it is important that it is an **ordinary person (not a lawyer), middle-aged or older**:

«not a lawyer but an ordinary person, so that everyone can see that ordinary people can protect their rights as well», «a young but mature person, aged 35 to 40, even-tempered, self-assured, principled», «to show an ordinary woman, busy with her job and family, with children, how she asserts her rights».

A part of respondents noted that they could be inspired by an example of an organisation, rather than an individual, that helps people to protect their consumer rights - *«an organisation should be shown, to demonstrate that we can count on it».*

4.6. Examples Demonstrating Consumers' Correct Behaviour As Regards Protection of Their Consumer Rights

Following is a number of examples that, in the respondents' opinion, demonstrate the correct behaviour by consumers in a situation when a low-quality product is bought.

The correct behaviour in such situations is for the consumers to:

- a) **demonstrate their active attitude, readiness to assert their rights, that they are not indifferent to the fact of purchasing of a low-quality product;**
- б) **demonstrate insistence and consistency in the course of protection of their consumer rights, did not surrender but successfully pushed their matter through;**

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B) in the course of protection of their rights, showed a good example to follow by other people, encouraged them to be more attentive:

«a neighbour of mine bought a low-quality product, she wrote about it to the Society, she was invited, an expert confirmed that she was right and she had her money paid back», «I bought a chicken, it defrosted at home and started to stink... with the receipt I went back to the store, asked to called the manager, threatened to explode the store's reputation... you must be determined», «in such matters people go as far as a court, I know a case when ordinary workers managed to win through a court... a woman bought eggs, her child ate them and had to be hospitalised to an intensive-therapy ward... the woman did not have a degree in law but she insistently sought information, stood her ground and won», «I know about a case when friends of mine managed to have their money back for boots that they bought at a marketplace, they appealed to the Consumer Rights Protection Society», “...a construction company laid laminated flooring for a friend of mine, but it was very creaky, she presented her claims to them but they replied they cannot help in any way... my friend wrote a letter to Germany, to the manufacturer, and they responded... a representative from their Kiev office came to her, examined the flooring and determined that the flooring was laid incorrectly, so that company presented the builders with an option, either go to court or re-do the job at their own expense... they re-did it”, “my mom always gets her money back for low-quality products, the shop assistance do not like the row that she can raise... unlike me, my mom is more self-assured, she is more experienced and more aggressive, and she has a more acute sense of justice”, «we bought a microwave oven, it broke down in no time, I disassembled it to see maybe some bug got into it; so I noticed that the mechanism was stuck with ordinary plasticine... and that was a new product... they did not want to pay the money back, kept swearing for 20 minutes, sent me to a service centre but I refused to go, they don't like freeloaders either... I had to wait for the manager, for more than an hour, and he ordered to have it replaced», «I bought a watch... it turned out the seconds hand did not move, I thought I must replace the battery – didn't help... they refused to have the watch replaced because I removed the seal... the shop assistance and I argued for quite a while, she kept refusing but I insisted... she did give the money back in the end... I knew I was right», «I bought sauce at the marketplace, opened it and saw that it was not tomatoes but rather rotten apples; I came back – not so much because of the money but because of the very fact that they sell stuff like that... it was very upsetting, she did not want to take it back – like, «you opened it, you shouldn't have...»; then she said she had no money... she did not return the money but gave me something else instead», «...the milk turned out to be bitter, I poured it into a cooker... so

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I went to the shop with that cooker, even picked up the milk container from the garbage bin... they said that products have a tendency to spoil ... I raised a row so they replaced the milk.

4.7. Degree of Satisfaction With the Consumer Rights Awareness

The majority of respondents, in general, regard themselves as being inadequately knowledgeable in matters of their consumer rights protection, although they know «some basic things» - «I do not consider myself to be an expert», «I know the basic stuff – about the receipt, or the Consumer Rights Protection Society».

It feels that quite often consumers (including those who take a pro-active position when they have bought a low-quality product) act being governed by common sense, rather than by solid knowledge of their consumer rights. They are not 100% sure whether their actions are correct; there is always a shade of doubt:

«Although you do know some things from your own experience or heard something from other people – receipt, shop assistant, Consumer Rights Protection Society – you still have certain doubts as to how it all must be done correctly... real knowledge is lacking».

In the respondents' opinion, the basics of consumer rights should be taught as early as at school – *«this must be taught to children at school, as they do in foreign countries».*

4.8. Information About Consumer Rights That Is Lacking

The survey participants noted that they feel a shortage about the following information about their consumer rights:

- what the steps/ stages are that the process of consumer rights protection process must include:

«there is not enough information about what the protection process must be», “we do not know what steps are to be taken if you do not manage to resolve the issue with the shop assistant”, “in stores there must be a description of actions to be taken when somebody buys a low-quality product”

- what consumers' rights are in situations when they have bought a low-quality products at a marketplace:

“I do not know what rights I have at a marketplace, whether it is possible to returns anything or if you bought something, that's it, it's forever yours”

what consumer rights are in the case of buying of low-quality non-food products:

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“there serious gaps about non-food products... well, it is clear about equipment or footwear, you can return it on the basis of the warranty, but what about a hat, clothes, a razor, etc...?”

- contact details of organisations assisting consumers in protection of their rights

“telephone numbers of organisations where you can come for help”

Many respondents would like to see that information available on stands (consumer information displays) in retail outlets - *«there must be a consumer information displays in shops», «so that there is a consumer information display in the shop, containing all information and the telephone number of the Consumer Rights Protection Society».*

5. TESTING OF STIMULI AND OPTIONS OF CONSUMERS BEHAVIOUR

5.1. Assessment of Stimuli for More Active Protection of Consumer Rights

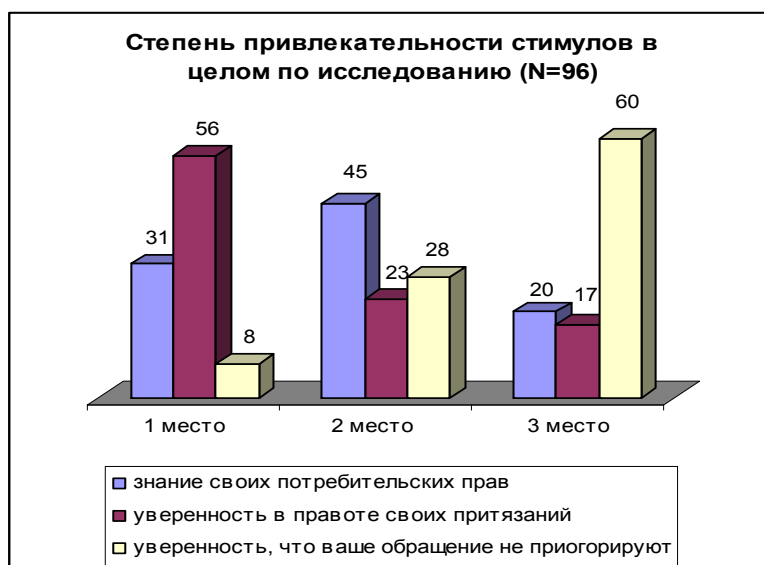
By the Respondents

In the course of the survey, respondents were offered to rate three kinds of stimuli, according to their level of effect, that could potentially encourage them to protect their consumer rights more actively.

Generally for the survey:

- the top rating was given to *«being confident in legitimacy of one’s claims»*
- the second-highest rating (with a relatively short difference from the first on) was given to *«knowledge of one’s consumer rights»*
- the third place (with a considerable gap from the second stimulus) was taken by *«being confident that your claim will not be ignored»*

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Degree of preference of different stimuli for the entire survey

- knowledge of one's consumer rights
- being confident in legitimacy of one's claims
- being confident that your request will not be ignored

Speaking about regional and age differences in assessment of the stimuli, they are the following:

- o general results in such cities as **Kyiv, Donetsk, Lviv** + in **the 26 to 40 and 41 to 55 age groups** totally coincide with the results, general for the entire survey
- o **general results in Poltava** + **general results for the 18 to 25 age group** are as follows:

- *«knowledge of one's consumer rights»* is the leader
- *«being confident in legitimacy of one's claims»* **placed second**
- *the third place*, without any changes, *was taken by «being confident that your claim will not be ignored»*



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Degree of preference of different stimuli for Poltava in general

- knowledge of one's consumer rights
- being confident in legitimacy of one's claims
- being confident that your request will not be ignored

Degree of preference of different stimuli for the 18 to 25 age group

- knowledge of one's consumer rights
- being confident in legitimacy of one's claims
- being confident that your request will not be ignored

From the point of view of content analysis of the stimuli, all of them are relevant for the consumers.

«Being Confident in Legitimacy of One's Claims»

The main strengths of this stimulus, in the opinion of the respondents who gave the highest rating to it, are as follows:

1. Being confident in legitimacy of your claims, in their opinion, is **the fundamental motive, an axiom that drives consumers in their desire to protect their rights** - *«if I am confident that I am right, that I will win, I do not have to know any rights», «if I am right, I will just go and demand what is due to me, I do not want any rights», «this is impossible without being confident... this is the primary thing».*
2. It is a **strong driving force to just return to the outlet** - *«if I am confident, I will go», «I must be sure that I am right, I will not go otherwise...»*
3. Being confident about legitimacy of one's claims, **it is much easier for consumers to prove it** - *«if someone is not sure, he cannot prove that he is right»*
4. Being confident about one's right **encourages more insistent protection of one's rights** - *«If I am sure, I will keep proving that I am right until the end».*
5. Being confident about legitimacy of one's claims – **is a guarantee that the consumer will not be ignored** - *«if you are sure, you will not be ignored».*
6. Being confident about legitimacy of one's claims (in case of necessity) may become a **stimulus for a more profound study of consumer rights** – *«realising that I am right may encourage me to learn more about my rights, if that is necessary»*

«Knowledge of One's Consumer Rights »

The main strengths of this stimulus, according to the respondents who gave the top priority to it, are as follows:

1. In their opinion, it is the stimulus that is **fundamental, primary, to make a person learn**

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more about his or her rights, because:

- **people without knowledge are unarmed and do not know what to do** - *«this is of paramount importance; if people do not know their rights they are blind, they do not know what to do and where to go, and if they do go, they may just be told to go swim in a lake», «if you are going to present claims about rights infringement, first of all, you must know those rights, otherwise how can you know that you are right?»*

- **knowledge of one's rights creates confidence in the legitimacy of one's claims** - *«if I know my rights, I will be confident, it will be easier for me to stand my ground», «how can you be confident without knowing your rights»/*

2. Knowledge of consumer rights means that the person:

- **acts correctly, proceeding from the law** - *«it means you are based on the law»*

- **knows how to assert his or her rights** - *«you must know the steps, if you encountered a refusal, you must know how to push the matter through»*

3. **«To ignore someone who knows his rights is difficult»** - *«if you know your rights, your opponent will treat you differently».*

«Being Confident That Your Claim Will Not Be Ignored»

For the majority of the respondents, this stimulus is not a factor of primary importance, one that can encourage them to start protecting their consumer rights - *«the first two do encourage to go and defend your rights, but if you do not go, ignoring may simply not take place».*

For some, it does not matter at all - *«I do not care if they want to ignore me, if I am right, I will assert my case, and I don't care if they like it or not», «you can simply disregard it... big deal».*

Only for some participants in the survey it was a very important, or sufficiency important stimulus, because:

- disregard of their requests is a serious factor that can inhibit their resolve to assert their rights – *«If I knew that will not be rude to me, I would go, because I do not want a scandal».*

- this is a factor that, in their opinion, the result of their attempts to assert their consumer rights will depend upon – *«I may be convinced that I am right but when they disregard me, I'll turn around and go».*

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5.2. Assessment of Options of Consumers' Behaviour in Situations When Their Rights Are Infringed Upon

The respondents were offered to assess two options of consumers' behaviour in situations when their rights were infringed upon:

- 1) unwillingness to tolerate violation of your legitimate rights and disrespect to client/ customer
- 2) active actions «here and now»

All of the survey participants, without any exception, consider both options to be absolutely correct. That is explained by the following reasons:

unwillingness to tolerate violation of one's legitimate rights...	active actions «here and now»
<p>1. <u>such behaviour is regarded as a natural reaction of a person who does not want to be deceived:</u> <i>«it is acceptable and correct, it is incorrect not to do it», «unwillingness to be deceived is a natural human reaction»</i></p> <p>2. <u>such behaviour testifies to the sense of the consumer's sense of self-respect, which is a guarantee that sales personnel will treat the consumer respectfully, too:</u> <i>«this proves that we respect ourselves, and if we respect ourselves, others will respect us as well», «if it is any other way, you do not respect yourself».</i></p> <p>3. <u>such behaviour serves as a preventive measure against violation/ disregard of consumer rights by sales personnel:</u></p>	<p>1. such behaviour is a very effective way of consumer rights protection, because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>«they cannot claim that you bought it somewhere else or spoiled the product yourself»:</u> <i>«this is best... when you just have taken a product and saw that it is bad, the easier it will be to return it; shop assistants cannot claim that it was you who spoiled it, that is, you will be definitely be right», «it works, sellers can't get away with it»,</i> • <u>«later you may not be able to find the seller who sold the bad product to you»:</u> <i>«of course you can come later, but it's not every time that you can find the seller, and the other one can refuse».</i> • <u>otherwise, consumers may «lose their desire to come back and assert their rights»:</u>

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«it helps to cut the shop assistants down to their size», «if we do not do it, violations will continue», «to tolerate it means to allow them to deceive us».

With all correctness of such behaviour, respondents note that «it is not sufficient, action is needed too» - *«you may not tolerate, but not go anywhere, in other words, you must also take action».*

«it is good, because if you notice it later you may just give up and not to go».

2. such behaviour will promote respect of consumer rights by sellers:

«if more and more customers address them immediately after the purchase, the amounts of low-quality goods will decrease», «people at the store will realise that they will not be able to sell anything if they continue to try and push low-quality goods».

The above option of behaviour, however, may not always be realised either. It is only realistic when the low quality of the product was discovered immediately, or soon after the purchase:

«It is correct depending on the situation, you cannot start slicing your sausage on the cash register», «you cannot always notice poor when you are in the store»

6. THE IDEAL SYSTEM OF CONSUMER RIGHTS LEGAL PROTECTION

In the opinion of the survey participants, activity of the ideal system of consumer rights legal protection should develop along three directions:

1. Legal education of consumers
2. Protection of consumer rights
3. prevention of sales of low-quality goods

Legal Education of Consumers

1. **Serious education activities must be conducted** (for instance, via mass media) on

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matters of protections of people's consumer rights and methods of such protection, i.e. consumers must know that they have rights and that they can protect them:

«there must be more information in mass media about people being able to protect their rights», «it is necessary to conduct educational activities about the rights, so that people knew them and knew where to come for help».

2. The above-mentioned information must be:

- expressed **in a language that is understandable for consumers** (i.e. «clearly and understandably») - *«the effect of the law must be explained clearly and understandably»*
- **readily available**, so that it can be read at any time, for example, on the consumer information display in retail outlets – *«there must be consumer information displays everywhere»*

3. Mass media must **publicize interesting/ educating/ serious example** of consumer rights protection either by consumers themselves or with assistance of the respective organisations/ authorities:

«they should publish interesting, serious cases», «publicise examples, statistics of addresses to the Society, how many cases were won – it should be inspiring»

Protection of Consumer Rights

I. **Within the state structure there must exist, and be enforced, a law regulating consumer rights:**

«there must be standards that regulate consumer relations between sellers, manufacturers and consumers, there must exist clearly delineated rights of the seller and the consumer», «that organisation's address at stores», «the law must be observed», «you must know that there is a law, a foundation to proceed from»

II. Ideally, **consumer rights protection methods** must be as follows:

1. **Independent protection of consumer rights at the level of a retail outlet** – *«first, you should try to resolve the issue at the level of the retail outlet».*

For that purpose:

- Sales personnel/ manufacturers must know and respect consumer rights, i.e. they may not ignore consumers' claims:

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«so that they respect and understand us», «if I bring back a low-quality product to a store, I want support and help there», «I wish I am able to replace the product without obstacles», «I want to be heard», «claims must not be ignored».

- It is important that consumers are able to resolve their problems promptly and without restrictions:

«Promptness is what matters, I wish it is possible to quickly resolve the issue with the shop assistant», «so that it is possible to have a product replaced fast, without unnecessary paperwork».

2. Protection of consumer rights with assistance of respective organisations (Consumer Rights Protection Society)

For that purpose:

- Consumers must know that such organisation(s) exist, and that they are actually interested in helping consumers to resolve their issues:

«there must be an organisation where we could come for help», «knowing that such a society exists and that it will help».

- Staff members in that organisation must be competent, honest, incorruptible people:

«so that they treat you adequately, with respect», «staff members must be honest, so that it is impossible to bribe them; objective and competent».

- Consumer Rights Protection Society must provide prompt assistance to consumers.

Thus, respondents would like:

- the organisation to have a telephone hot line that people could call and receive a consultation
- a representative of the organisation to be permanently present at every retail outlet to provide help to consumers:

«so that I could contact them by telephone and they could respond promptly, for example, to call the director of the store and influence him or her to set the situation straight», «that organisation must have a telephone hot line, or there must be a representative of the organisation to be permanently present at every retail outlet».

- Contact information of the Consumer Rights Protection Society must be accessible in every store - *«so that we could find their telephone number and address while still in the store».*

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- Addressing the Consumer Rights Protection Society for help must be as easy as possible, without extra formalities - «so that it is easy to address», «so that it is easy to address them, without lengthy paperwork».

3. Consumers must have possibilities to contact manufacturers in connection with claims concerning quality of products - «possibilities to contact manufacturers, to let them know that their products are low-quality».

III. Consumers who bought low-quality goods must be paid monetary compensation for moral damages (apart from refund of the money paid for the product):

«people who bought low-quality goods must be paid monetary compensation for moral damages»

IV. Consumers must feel protected – «must feel protected»

Prevention of sales of low-quality goods

Respondents would like the following steps to be taken in that direction:

3. Imposition of heavy fines to those retail outlets or sellers that/who sell low-quality goods:

«in this country it is necessary to make people fear selling low-quality goods, it is necessary to impose heavy fines on such sellers, then it will be all right».

4. Publication of information about unscrupulous manufacturers or retail outlets:

«manufacturers or retail outlets that sell low-quality stuff must be shown on the TV, so that people know them and do not buy from them».

6.1. Assessment of Options of Consumers Legal Protection

Respondents were offered to assess three options of consumers legal protection:

- self-protection
- expert-assisted protection
- a court application

SELF-PROTECTION

This method in general appeals to the majority of the respondents and they use it most frequently.

Advantages	Disadvantages
1. A considerable probability of being	1. Does not always yield result.

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<p>effective, because «it involves personal interest», «nobody can protect you better than you yourself can».</p> <p>2. It does not require money to be spent – «no expenses», «zero cost».</p> <p>3. It is the fastest method of protection – «the speed is maximal»</p> <p>4. It is helpful in acquiring experience of actions in situations of purchasing of low-quality goods – «you gain experience, you know how to behave in the future, in order to be able to successfully protect yourself»</p> <p>5. «stimulates to learn more about your rights»</p>	<p>For that reason, it can be regarded as one of the stages in the course of consumer rights protection:</p> <p>«it is possible that you do not win anything», «it does not always yield results»</p> <p>2. «Not every consumer may dare it»:</p> <p>«not everyone can do it, not all know their rights», «some people may not risk it...»</p>
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EXPERT-ASSISTED PROTECTION

Respondents assess this method of legal protection very positively.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>1. Highly effective, because «competent people deal with your issue»:</p> <p>«they will explain everything to you», «it is more effective when a qualified specialist protects you».</p>	<p>1. Time spent – «in the end, it requires more time to be spent»</p> <p>2. Possible financial costs – «hiring a lawyer requires money».</p> <p>According to the survey participants, knowing that the service is free of charge, could be an additional stimulus to encourage them to use it in case of necessity.</p>

APPLICATION TO COURT

This option of legal protection does not appeal to the overwhelming majority of respondents.

It is regarded as acceptable in exceptional cases, for example:

- when a low-quality caused damage to health,
- when a person is well-versed in legislation and is convinced in the positive outcome of the case,
- when it does not matter for a person how long the proceedings will take
- if the case concerns a very expensive product

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The drawbacks of this method are the following:

1. It requires considerable monetary expenses:

«it means endless financial costs, payments to lawyers»

2. It requires considerable time:

«it takes a long time, the defendant may not appear for a session, it gets adjourned...», «it can drag for a long time», «proceedings can be endless, there are no time limits, I can get stuck in litigations until the end of my term on the Earth».

3. It is connected with moral damages:

«you have to waste so much nerves», «our courts are just one insult to human dignity», «they themselves treat people nastily».

4. People are not convinced about the positive outcome of the case, because Ukrainian courts are very corrupt:

«a large company will buy the whole court in bulk and you won't get anything», «it is useless in this country».

6.2. The Image of a Society With a High Level of Consumer Rights Protection

(on the basis of the collage projective technique)

Results of the collage projective technique made it possible to expose the image of a society that the respondents associate with **a society with a high level of consumer rights protection:**

Feelings, emotions that people living in such society must feel

- **reliable protection - «like in a fortress», «like in family», «like under your parents' wing»; comfort, cosiness, calmness:**

«an angel protecting a person», «a happy family, everything is nice at their home, quality situation... it is apparent that if something goes wrong, the Dad will make it hot for the offender, he is strong, a man of principles, like a wall», «a dog protecting a girl», «a family of penguins, being protected, parental warmth», «a young man in his new apartment; windows are shut against bad weather; he is protected», «a good care, you feel more protected in it than in a Zaporozhets», «a home where I'd like to live, family comfort; if you are protected, you feel comfortable», «I wouldn't want to feel like that woman with her hand stretched out to beg, unprotected», «a girl in a warm fur coat – protection», «children on the floor with no roof above – no protection, it must not happen», «trees, lake, quiet», «my home is my fortress; it is

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light and quiet».

- **Serenity, nonchalance, satisfaction with life, life with no fears, joy, easiness, relaxation/ absence of suspicion:**

«girls feel no need, do not have to run around courts, protected from counterfeited products», «nature, clean air, relaxed, protected», «nature, natural dishes, I can eat anything and it is not going to hurt me», «everything must be fine and the person does not grow thorns», «everyone is smiling», «a spa where you can relax», «mother can dedicate her time to the child – a society with no troubles», «people enjoy life, there are no problems», «a happy, light-hearted family», «a relaxed, protected woman»

- **the sense of being a Personality + the sense of pride for your society:**

«the person feels he is a personality and there is pride for the society where he lives»

Mood, behaviour, specific features of consumers

- **self-assured people who know their consumer rights,**
- **they actively assert their consumer rights, are not afraid to do it:**

«self-assured people who know their rights», «people is confident about their rights, they will not tolerate injustice», «people are self-assured, they are not afraid and are able to protect themselves», «grown-up boys play with toys here, escaping problems, it must not be that way», «someone got into a hippo's jaws – he is not afraid to assert his rights», «cowboys who fight for their right to survival, fighters», «a zoo, the animals know the laws of nature and people also must know laws that protects their consumer rights», «self-assured people do not look like clowns while asserting their rights», «a courageous, purposeful man», «they know what to do, how to resolve the problem».

«People sound in spirit and body» - «healthy people», «no threat of poisoning – youth, health»

Atmosphere and relations in the society

- **harmonious, warm and sincere, open relations between people in the society (between consumers and sellers) – responsibility, mutual respect, clean relations:**

«a cat and a dog getting along – harmonious relations in the society, we do not feel hatred to each other», «no conflicts, quiet, understanding, harmony», «purity of the rock crystal – purity of thoughts, sincerity, no quarrels», «responsibility, consciousness, respect», «church – faith, purity, eternity», «clear water – purity of the soul».

«well-being», «brightness»

Specific features of the consumer legal protection system

- **well-thought nature of the consumer legal protection system, when rights are protected without having to go to court:**

«An ideal city. Everything is thought of», «a tender girl lives in a protected society, she does not have to keep going to courts».

- **rights of every consumer, with no exception, are protected by a really effective law. People feel protection/ support of the law and the respective organisations. Organisation called to protect consumers' rights are interested in the people and are open towards them:**

«even if a person is dirty and unwanted, law must protect him or her», «here you have a marshmallow, chocolates, but you can't eat them because it's just a picture; it is the same way with the law – it seems to be there, but it's no use», «people must not feel lonely and abandoned», «the Verkhovna Rada, the law must take care about people», «a cobweb, mist, a maze, a dead end – it must not be that way».

- **consumers do not encounter obstacles in protection of their rights:**

«when people are right nobody tries to gag them»

- **if educational activities related to consumer rights are conducted among people, they do not feel any shortage of that kind of information:**

«...a civilised man is sitting near a bushman educating him on his rights», «not to feel like a rhino in a cage, so that there is no information vacuum», «children are taught to walk – informing people about their rights»

- **the state constantly struggles against low-quality goods, only high-quality goods are on sale:**

«a law-enforcement agent prevents import of low-quality goods», «good products – only high-quality goods are sold at stores».

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7. ANNEX

- Guidelines for Moderators

GUIDELINES FOR MODERATORS

«Consumer Behaviour of the Ukrainian Population and Opportunities for Development of the Consumer Mentality»

A) Introduction of the moderator, introduction of the theme and rules of the discussion

B) Introduction respondents (name, age, family status, occupation)

C) Specific details of shopping

1. What factors in general determine your choice of:

- alimentary products,
- household cleaning products,
- personal care products

- which of those are primary and which are secondary?

(a probe whether the factor of information of quality and safety of FMCG will emerge spontaneously)

2. What factors in general determine your choice of:

- small household appliances ,
- clothing/ footwear

(a probe whether the factor of information of quality and safety of sustained-use goods will emerge spontaneously)

3. I am pronouncing the words **«high-quality alimentary products (high-quality personal care products/ small household appliances / footwear, clothing/ household cleaning products)»**. What associations emerge immediately?

- What, in your understanding, the words **«high-quality alimentary products (high-quality personal care products/ small household appliances / footwear, clothing/ household cleaning products) mean?** What requirements do they have to meet?

(probing may take place separately for alimentary products, non-food products, but in general in no relation to separate kinds of products, etc.)

4. I am pronouncing the words «safe-quality alimentary products, personal care products/ small household appliances / footwear, clothing/ household cleaning products». What associations emerge immediately?

- What, in your understanding, the words «safe-quality alimentary products, personal care products/ small household appliances / footwear, clothing/ household cleaning products» mean? What requirements do they have to meet?

(probing may take place separately for alimentary products, non-food products, but in general in no relation to separate kinds of products, etc.)

5. To what extent, in your opinion, are the words «high-quality products» and «safe products» synonymous, and why? If they are not synonymous, what are the differences?

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(probing – maybe some of the notions is for them more general, for instance, safety – it is a property, features of high quality of a product).

LATER, AGREE WITH THE RESPONDENTS THAT WE WILL CONSIDRE THOSE NOTIONS TO BE SYNONYMOUS

6. What place, in the course of buying of alimentary products, does the factor of **INFORMAITION about their quality/ safety** really occupy? And why?

- How much importance do you **really** attach to **the moment of information about quality/safety when buying alimentary products**? How much are you **really** interested in the information about quality/safety of alimentary products and why?
- **What kind** of information serves for You as information about quality/safety of alimentary products?
- What do you currently do to obtain it? **Where** exactly and **when** do You look for such information?

Please provide real examples from your life. Those may be examples related to buying different groups of FMCG

(it is important to understand whether consumers seek that information pro-actively or do they acquire it accidentally, or do not attach any importance to those issues at all; if they do seek, then what kind of information that is, when and where).

7. Speaking about non-food products (personal care products/ household cleaning products/ small domestic appliances): **how important** is the factor of **searching/ availability of INFORMAITION about their quality and safety** in the course of their buying?

- **Do You pay attention** to that factor while **really** buying non-food products? How much are you currently interested in information about quality/ safety of goods of sustainable use?
- Comparing it with purchases of alimentary products, does the factor of availability and searching for information about quality of such products play a greater or a smaller role, and why?
- What kind of information serves for You as information about quality/safety of non-food products?
- What do you currently do to obtain it? Where exactly and when do You look for such information?

Please provide real examples from your life. Those may be examples related to buying different groups of sustainable-use goods .

(it is important to understand whether consumers seek that information pro-actively or do they acquire it accidentally, or do not attach any importance to those issues at all; if they do seek, then what kind of information that is, when and where).

8. **How satisfied are you with the degree of availability of information about quality/safety of goods?** How well / sufficiently it is covered in mass media? **What makes you think so?**

- Is there a **shortage** of such information?
- Please provide examples when you felt a shortage of information, and what way out of the situation did you find?

9. *(If there is sufficient information)* Where do you find that information? Where would you advise other people to find it?

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10. *(If there is not sufficient information)* **What information about safety/ quality of goods/ products is lacking?**

- What **form / way** must it be provided?
- What style should the information be in?
- **What kind of information would evoke your greatest trust?** Who must be its author? What should be based upon?
- Information about what groups of products/ goods do you feel short of most of all?

11. **What sources of information would you like to use / would be the most convenient for you to obtain such information?**

- What sources of information are the most reputable for you? Why?

D) Experience of buying low-quality goods

1. I am pronouncing the words «**buying low-quality goods/ products**»? What associations and feelings do they immediately evoke?

2. How often have you experienced buying low-quality goods?

3. In what groups of goods, based upon your experience, it is more likely to encounter poor quality?

4. In your opinion, is there any relation between the place of purchase and the probability of buying low-quality goods? What are those relations? What are their reasons?

5. Have you ever experienced buying low-quality goods (either food or non-food)? Please recall and describe those situations.

- What group of products was it? What exactly was the problem with their quality?
- What did you feel at that moment? How would you describe your inner feelings at that moment?
- How did you react to the fact? What were your actions?
- *(If they asserted their consumer rights)* **What made you to assert your rights? What did you do?** Who did you address? How did the process of «consumer rights protection» develop in general? In what atmosphere? What was the final result? What did you feel in the end? **How satisfied were you?** In your opinion, **Did you behave correctly? Why do you think so?**
- **How did your knowledge / skills in protection of your rights form?**
- *(If they took a passive position)* – Why were you not more assertive? What is it connected with? What else can prevent one from asserting one's consumer rights?

6. Do you always assert your rights?

- In what **cases/ situations you will be determined to assert your consumer rights?** Why? What is it connected with?
- **HOW MUST YOU FEEL, what mood must you have to go and assert your rights?**
- In what **cases/ situations you are not going to present claims** in connection with buying of a low-quality goods? What is it connected with?

12. How do you evaluate your level of knowledge of your consumer rights? Why?

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- How well-informed are you about what steps you must take, and who to go to in case of buying of low-quality products?
- What kind of information is lacking?
- What form would you like to receive it?

13. What could serve as a **stimulus to encourage more active protection of one's consumer rights**?

- What could become a weighty argument for you to start to actively assert your consumer rights?
- What situation and with what product would be the most suitable for you in that respect? Why that situation?
- What must the atmosphere of that situation be?

14. Please provide **examples from your life/ life** of your friends and relatives, where you or them, having experienced a purchase of a low-quality product, behaved in the most correct manner? What is unique/ illustrative about that example?

- What kind of people they were?
- Whose example could encourage you to be more assertive in protection of your consumer rights? Who are those people by their gender, age, social status? Why them?

15. **What would you advise to people who cannot decide to start asserting their rights, so that they are more active in protection of their consumer rights?** Why?

16. I am going to hand out cards with description of different behaviour options in a situation when your consumer rights are infringed upon.

My question is: **WHAT WILL ENCOURAGE YOU TO BE MORE ACTIVE IN A SITUATION WHEN YOU ENCOUNTER VIOLATION OF YOUR CONSUMER RIGHTS?** Please give the first place to THE OPTION that will encourage you the most, second place – to a somewhat weaker one, and the third place, to the weakest stimulus:

- 1) **knowledge of your consumer rights**
- 2) **being confident about legitimacy of your claims**
- 3) **being confident that your request will not be ignored**

The rating results are then discussed – Why option X turned out to be the most preferable? Why option Y turned out to be less preferable? Why option Z turned out to be the least preferable?

17. Now let us talk about **How correct the following types of behaviour are in situations when your consumer rights are violated (TO BE DISCUSSED IN TURN, WITHOUT CARDS, THEN SUMMARY CAN BE DRAWN BY):**

A) unwillingness to tolerate violation of your legitimate rights are demonstration of disrespect to clients/ customers (for example, long lines to cash registers, when other cash registers are idle, absence of a cash register for quick pay for 1 or 2 units of goods).

B) active actions «here and now»

18. The collage technique. Respondents are asked to select 2 or 3 pictures that illustrate:

- Either the society where people pay attention to quality of products and try to assert their rights in cases when they encounter low-quality goods
- Or feelings that people living in a society like that must feel.

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E) Specifics of perception of the legal protection system, with account to the European experience

1. **How do you view the ideal system of consumer legal protection?** Maybe its individual features/ specifics?

- What wishes emerge in your head in that respect?
- What model of consumer behaviour could be ideal?
- What the consumer rights protection levers must be like?
- How consumers must feel in the conditions of the ideal system of consumer legal protection?

Respondents are asked to evaluate options of legal protection that take into account the European experiences. Those are:

1. Self-protection (by using one's own knowledge and skills)
2. Protection with expert assistance (consultants, lawyers, counsellors), using of alternative (extrajudicial) methods (explicate in guide for moderator)
3. Application to court

Each of the legal protection options is discussed by the unified range of questions:

1. How do you generally assess this method of legal protection? Does it appeal to you/ Do you assess it neutrally/ Does not appeal at all? Why?
2. What are the advantages of this method of legal protection?
3. Does method of legal protection have any drawbacks? How are they demonstrated?
4. How must this mechanism work to enable you to use it?

E) Testing of Creative Materials

The respondents are offered to evaluate three creative ideas for outdoor ads. The ideas are discussed in succession, by the unified range of questions:

1. What is your general impression of the material?
 - Did you like it/ is your attitude neutral/ did you dislike it? Why?
 - What associations does it evoke?
2. What is the main idea of the advertisement?
 - What message did its authors wanted to send, primarily?
 - How interesting/important is this idea for You?
3. What are the merits of the material?
4. What mood does the advertisement create?
5. Does it have shortcomings? Are there any moments that concern You?
6. To what extent does the advertisement encourage action?
7. How noticeable and memorable is the advertisement?