

EUROPEAN CONSUMER PREFERENCES IN PRACTICE



The EU is an internal market where we can be free consumers without borders and bureaucratic obstacles and do business within a harmonized European legal framework. That is why I find it very strange that service companies in Transylvania do not offer multilingual services and that most customer services are monolingual, while this is self-evident in multilingual Belgium, (for example *service providers communicate with consumers in all three languages: Dutch, French and German*). It is interesting that in the Netherlands, like Romania, there is also a national minority which, like the Hungarians in Transylvania, is protected by the Strasbourg Framework Convention and the Charter for Regional and Minority Languages. However, there are huge differences between countries in trade and corporate cultures. In Frisia, Frisian flags can be found at McDonalds restaurants, Frisian language inscriptions can be found and the Frisian culture and language is popularized in their advertising campaigns. McDonalds is also active in Romania, in Marosvásárhely (Romanian: Târgu Mureş). Almost 50% of the population here is Hungarian-speaking, moreover, this share is even higher in Szeklerland. Nevertheless, it is not possible to find even one word in Hungarian, no Szekler or regional flags can be found in the McDonald restaurant in a region where Hungarians live. This is strange because McDonald's only exists for the benefit of the customer. If a new department is opened then this happens only on the basis of marketing data on the basis that restaurants are only opened in cities with more than 100,000 people, so in the case of Târgu Mureş, the Hungarian-speaking population was also counted. However, the manager of McDonalds in Romania could not explain why a different language policy applied in the same situation on the same European market. Why is it possible to use Frisian inscriptions in the Netherlands and no Hungarian inscriptions in Romania? What's next on the menu in Târgu Mureş? The McVatra? G. Landman



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