

Question for written answer E-002635/2022
to the Commission
Rule 138
Mara Bizzotto (ID)

Subject: 'Shrinkflation' – a deceptive marketing practice. Commission protection for consumers against the phenomenon of product downsizing

The global economic crisis is impelling companies to surreptitiously offload matters onto consumers by using 'shrinkflation', which is a marketing technique that involves reducing the quantity of a product but selling it at the same price.

End consumers in retail stores find themselves purchasing products whose packaging is similar to what they have always been used to, but which weigh less, without this being clearly indicated on the labelling.

In Italy, this deceptive marketing technique is so widespread that Codacons (Coordination of associations for the protection of the environment and the rights of users and consumers) has filed a complaint with the Antitrust Authority and 104 public prosecutor's offices with a view to establishing whether this practice constitutes an offence such as fraud or unfair trading practice.

Changing the quantity of the product sold while keeping the same shape and size of packaging is, to say the least, a suspect practice and certainly misleading for consumers.

It is the consumer's right to be clearly informed on the characteristics of the product they are buying, as is set out in Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers.

Given the above, can the Commission state:

1. what its position is on the practice of 'shrinkflation';
2. how it plans to protect consumers against unfair practices such as this?