OVER PLN 8 MILLION FINE FOR TELESTRADA – DECISION OF THE PRESIDENT OF UOKiK

* **Over PLN 8 million fine for misleading consumers and unfair market practices - President of UOKiK Tomasz Chróstny has issued his decision in the case against Telestrada.**
* **The company's representatives were soliciting customers, pretending to be acting on behalf of their existing service provider.**
* **The company would not issue documents signed with them: contracts and attachments.**

**[Warsaw, 18 December 2020]** The President of the Office of Competition and Consumer Protection **issued a decision against the company providing communication services - Telestrada S.A. based in Warsaw.**

*“We have been scrutinizing Telestrada's activities since the end of 2019, when we started to receive numerous complaints about its practices.* [*We have initiated proceedings against the company*](https://www.uokik.gov.pl/news.php?news_id=15900)*, which confirmed consumers' feedback. Impersonating other businesses and using this to mislead consumers is absolutely unacceptable. In this case, seniors constituted a major group of victims, so the behaviour of the entrepreneur should be denounced with even greater firmness,”* informs President of UOKiK Tomasz Chróstny.

Telestrada's agents, after a telephone contact between an employee of the company and a prospective customer, would show up at their home to sign the contract. They were mainly targeting older people, aged 65 and over. In one of the complaints of a consumer from Ostróda we read (original spelling): "A man came to my house to renew my landline contract with Orange. I asked him if he was from Orange. He said they had to change from Orange to Telestrada because of the tax. I believed it and he told a lie, because we got bills from Orange and Telestrada. I am 89 years old and cannot pay for two companies". In the consumer's granddaughter's complaint, in turn, we read: "From the grandfather's account, the contract was literally signed on the hood of the car.”

*“First of all, Telestrada's agents* ***misled their potential customers by suggesting that they represented their existing provider****, which offers them a change of conditions to more favourable ones. Under the law, prior to signing a contract* ***we should receive full, unambiguous and reliable information about the offer and the entrepreneur who presents it.*** *Only then do we have the chance to make an informed decision whether to be sing a new contract. Secondly, the company* ***would not issue the consumers with the contracts signed with them and related attachments,”*** explains President UOKiK Tomasz Chróstny.

Telestrada's practices have been detrimental to consumers’ interests. The Company was aware that the actions of its representatives in various regions of the country are illegal. The company knew of the questionable practices of its employees not only from consumer complaints, but also from numerous interventions by municipal and county consumer advocate or the Office of Electronic Communications. Taking into account all the circumstances, President of UOKiK Tomasz Chróstny decided to impose a financial fine in the amount of over PLN 8 million on the entity, assessing the trader's practices as particularly damaging to consumers' interests. The decision is not final.

**Pursuant to the President of UOKiK’s decision, Telestrada is to:**

* pay a **financial fine of over PLN 8 million,**
* **communicate the decision of the President of UOKiK** **to the consumers** who from 1st January 2018 to 30th June 2020 concluded agreements on the provision of telecommunications services with the company,
* **post a statement on the decision of the President of UOKiK** on its website.

**Misleading consumers is an unfair market practice.** This is subject to a **fine of up to 10 percent of the company’s turnover.** In the past, UOKiK has already fined telecommunication companies for impersonating an existing service provider, e.g.: [Telekomunikacja Stacjonarna](https://www.uokik.gov.pl/news.php?news_id=16634).

For details, check the [UOKiK’s decision](https://www.uokik.gov.pl/download.php?plik=25142) (the decision is not final).

**Hints and tips for consumers:**

1. **Exercise caution and limited trust in verbal offers, information, proposals to conclude a contract.**
2. **Request to indicate in the documents you have to sign, the wording of the verbally presented offer, information, or proposal.**
3. **Give yourself time to make a decision, do not sign documents and contracts "right here and right now".**
4. **Do not sign contracts that seem incomprehensible to you and require consultation with your relatives or a lawyer. Under no circumstances sign anything before reading or while being in a hurry.**
5. **Demand that copies of signed documents be issued to you with no exceptions.**
6. **Should you be refused copies of signed documents, please contact a consumer advocate in your city or district. You will find them in the search engine:** <https://www.uokik.gov.pl/pomoc.php>**.**
7. **Remember, if you have concluded a remote contract, you may withdraw from the contract without providing any reason within 14 days. It is a so-called right to reflection, allowing the consumer to become acquainted with the goods or services and to consider the reasonableness of the purchase.**

**Consumer support:**

Phone: +48 801 440 220 or +48 22 290 89 16 – consumer helpline
E-mail: porady@dlakonsumentow.pl
[Consumer advocates](https://uokik.gov.pl/pomoc.php) – in your town or district
Office of Electronic Communications [- Consumer Information Centre](https://cik.uke.gov.pl/) – 22 33 04 000