



MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY AND TRADE
VIETNAM COMPETITION COMMISSION



ANNUAL REPORT
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ABBREVIATIONS

ABBREVIATION	DEFINITION
AANZFTA	ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Area
ACAFTA	ASEAN-Canada Free Trade Agreement
ACFTA	ASEAN-China Free Trade Agreement
ACCP	ASEAN Committee on Consumer Protection
AEGC	ASEAN Expert Group on Competition
AFAC	ASEAN Framework Agreement on Competition
APEC	Asia - Pacific Economic Cooperation
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asia Nations
PCR	Protection of consumers' rights
CPTPP	Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership
EU	European Union
EVFTA	European-Viet Nam Free Trade Agreement

ABBREVIATION	DEFINITION
SFC/GC	Standard form contracts/General conditions
ICN	International Competition Network
ICPEN	International Consumer Protection Enforcement Network
IPEF	Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity
M&A	Merger and Acquisition
Consumer	Consumer
MLMM	Multi-level marketing management
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
EC	Economic concentration
UBCTQG	VCC (in Vietnamese)
VCC	Vietnam Competition Commission
VJEPA	Vietnam-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement
VKFTA	Vietnam - Korea Free Trade Agreement
WTO	World Trade Organization



Vietnam Competition Commission (VCC) is the authority with the function of conducting competition proceedings, supervising economic concentration, determining exemptions from prohibited anti-competitive agreements, settling complaints on decision to handle competition cases in accordance with the prevailing regulations; advising the Minister of Industry and Trade in the implementation of state management of competition, protection of consumer rights and management of multi-level marketing activities.

AGENCIES UNDER VCC INCLUDE:

- 1 Administrative Office
- 2 Competition Investigation Bureau
- 3 Secretariat of Councils for Handling Competition Cases
- 4 Competition Supervision Board
- 5 Consumer Protection Board
- 6 Standard Form Contract and General Condition Control Board
- 7 Multi-level Marketing Management Board
- 8 Center for Information, Consultation and Training

THE VCC'S OPERATION FOCUSES ON:

Promotion of a healthy competitive environment

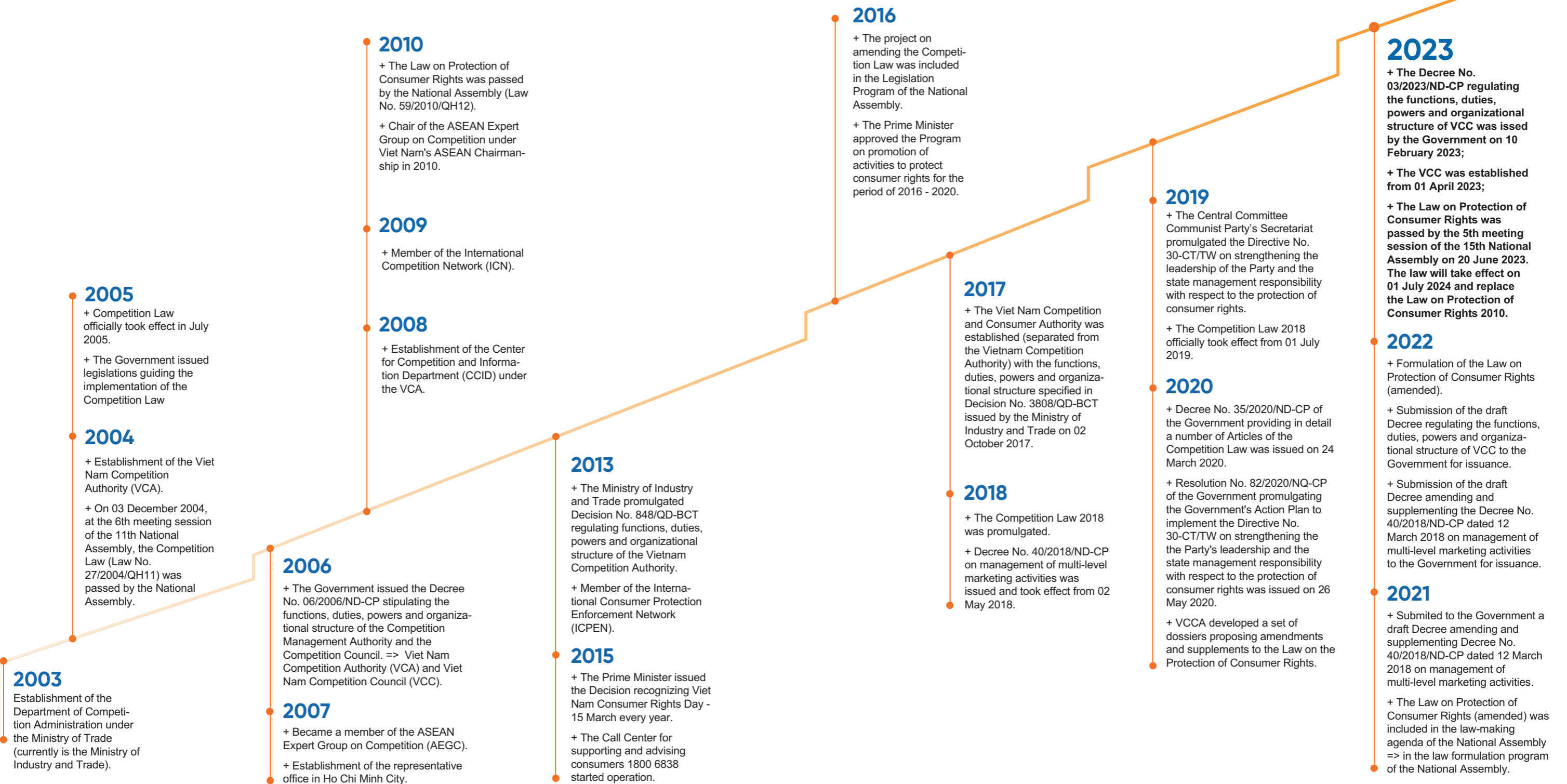
The VCC's operation aims at creating and maintaining a healthy and fair competitive environment in accordance with the laws for all enterprises in the market. The Commission encourages and promotes competition among enterprises, thereby ensuring consumer interests as well as the development of science, technology and society.

State management of multi-level marketing activities

In order to implement effective and efficient state management of multi-level marketing activities, the Commission closely coordinates with other competent authorities, provincial Departments of Industry and Trade nationwide to ensure that multi-level marketing activities are developed and implemented in accordance with the provisions of laws, promptly detect and handle illegal multi-level marketing activities.

Protection of consumer rights

The Commission coordinates with other competent authorities and organizations for consumer rights protection in Viet Nam to ensure that consumer rights and interests are respected by manufacturers as well as suppliers of goods and services.



ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



COMPETITION

- Competition Investigation Bureau
- Secretariat of Councils for handling competition cases
- Competition Supervision Board

CONSUMER PROTECTION

- Multi-level marketing Management Board
- Consumer Protection Board
- Standard Form Contract and General Condition Control Board

GENERAL AND SUPPORT DEPARTMENT

- Administrative Office
- Center for Information, Consultation and Training



STATE MANAGEMENT OF COMPETITION

A. THE FORMULATION OF LEGAL DOCUMENTS

I. The Decree providing in detail the duties, powers and organizational structure of the VCC

On 10 February 2023, the Government issued the Decree No. 03/2023/ND-CP providing in detail the functions, duties, powers and organizational structure of VCC. The Decree took effect from 01 April 2023.

II. The Circular promulgating the Regulations on organization and operation of the VCC

On 28 December 2023, the Minister of Industry and Trade issued the Circular No. 40/2023/TT-BCT promulgating the Regulations on organization and operation of the VCC. This Circular took effect from 15 February 2024.

III. Formulation and promulgation of documents and forms in the field of competition

The Competition Law 2018 assigns the VCC to issue various forms for enterprises to use when applying for exemptions from the prohibition of anti-competitive agreements, notifying on economic concentration, and filing complaints in competition cases.

Therefore, immediately after its establishment, the VCC developed and issued the Decision No. 28/QD-CT dated 19 May 2023 on the issuance of the form for notification on economic concentration¹; Decision No. 60/QD-CT dated 05 July 2023 on the issuance of the form for complaint of competition case²; Decision No. 352/QD-CT dated 21 November 2023 on the issuance of an application form for exemption from prohibition of anti-competitive agreements³.

In addition, the VCC developed other templates used in competition proceedings to ensure that the investigation and resolution of competition cases are conducted smoothly and consistently.

⁽¹⁾ https://www.bvntd.gov.vn/tintuc_sukien/quyet-dinh-ban-hanh-mau-thong-bao-tap-trung-kinh-te-cua-uy-ban-canh-tranh-quoc-gia-va-huong-dan-quy-trinh-tiep-nhan-va-xu-ly-ho-so-thong-bao-tap-trung-kinh-te/

⁽²⁾ https://vcc.gov.vn/default.aspx?page=news&do=detail&category_id=e0904ba0-4694-4595-9f66-dc2df621842a&id=de79de1a-9f72-4a80-9f28-1c14385a9b86

⁽³⁾ https://vcc.gov.vn/default.aspx?page=news&do=detail&category_id=e0904ba0-4694-4595-9f66-dc2df621842a&id=de79de1a-9f72-4a80-9f28-1c14385a9b86

B. ENFORCEMENT OF COMPETITION LAW AND POLICY

I. Verifying and investigating competition cases

In 2023, the VCC reviewed and verified 40 cases that might indicate signs of violations of competition law, including:

- 08 complaints in competition cases:
- 21 reports from business organizations and individuals on signs of violations of regulations on anti-competitive conduct, unfair competition, and economic concentration
- 11 cases proactively detected by the VCC

Regarding the type of behavior reported and detected, among the 40 cases mentioned above, there are:

- 25 cases related to unfair competitive behavior, mainly in fields such as formula milk, colostrum, aviation, fine arts, building materials, plant protection drugs, cosmetics, electronics, and refrigeration;
- 12 cases related to competition-restraining acts, mainly in areas such as vacation ownership business, telecommunications, LPG, and e-commerce;
- 03 cases related to signs of violation of regulations on economic concentration in the fields of insurance and chemicals.

Currently, the VCC is working to verify and clarify signs of violations of competition law in the above-mentioned cases. If signs of violations are detected, the VCC will investigate and resolve these cases in accordance with legal provisions.

II. Monitoring and managing competition in the market

In 2023, the VCC conducted inspections to ensure compliance with competition laws, carried out research, and gathered information and data to supervise and review competitive practices in various industries. These industries included passenger air transportation, postal services, milk and nutritional products, electronics, refrigeration equipment, life insurance, non-life insurance, chemicals, e-commerce platforms, goods exchange platforms, logistics services, and motorcycle manufacturing and trading, among others.

The review and monitoring of competition in the market play a crucial role, and the VCC consistently carries out these activities to detect, verify, and collect information on signs of competition law violations. This enables timely intervention, investigation, and handling of competition cases, thus minimizing adverse impacts on market competition. Moreover, this facilitates competition proceedings based on the information and data collected during competition monitoring.

III. Reviewing applications for exemptions from prohibition of anti-competitive agreements

Regarding the joint venture agreement in the field of aviation, the VCC has informed the related parties about its establishment and the review of the application for exemption from the anti-competitive agreement by the VCC under the Competition Law 2018 and relevant regulations.

IV. Economic concentration control

In 2023, the VCC received a total of 183 economic concentration filings ("EC filings"), of which 04 were subjected to official appraisal and were conditionally approved for implementation. The sectors with the highest number of EC filings include energy, industrial real estate, and industrial manufacturing.



01

NEWS BOX

Economic concentration transaction in Urea and NPK fertilizer production industry: Petro Viet Nam Ca Mau Fertilizer JSC acquired Korea - Vietnam Fertilizer Co., Ltd.

1. Participating parties

- Petro Viet Nam Ca Mau Fertilizer JSC
- Korea-Vietnam Fertilizer Co., Ltd.
- TKG Huchems Co., Ltd
- TKG Taekwang

2. Description

The VCC received the notification dossier on economic concentration related to the acquisition of Korea-Vietnam Fertilizer Co., Ltd. by PetroVietnam Ca Mau Fertilizer JSC from TKG Huchems Co., Ltd and TKG Taekwang.

PetroVietnam Ca Mau Fertilizer JSC is a subsidiary of Vietnam Oil and Gas Group (PetroVietnam). PVCFC engages primarily in producing and trading fertilizers and petroleum chemicals such as NPK fertilizer, Urea fertilizer, etc mainly used for agricultural sector.

Korea-Vietnam Fertilizer Co., Ltd., from TKG Huchems Co., Ltd, is a foreign invested company established and operating in Vietnam with main activities in the production and trading of NPK fertilizer.

Since PVCFC and Korea-Vietnam Fertilizer Co., Ltd. are both enterprises with large market shares in the markets of Urea fertilizer and NPK fertilizer respectively, the economic concentration transaction is subject to official appraisal according to the provisions of Decree No. 35/2020/ND-CP.

3. Result

After the official appraisal process, VCC issued a Decision on conditional economic concentration for enterprises participating in the economic concentration on 19 January 2024. Please refer to the website of VCC at <https://vcc.gov.vn> for more details of the Decision.

02

NEWS BOX

Economic concentration transaction in the chemical industry: Aekyung Chemical Co., LTD acquired to control Vina Plasticizers Chemical Company Limited.

1. Participating parties

- Aekyung Chemical Co., LTD
- Vina Plasticizers Chemical Company Limited.
- LG Chem, Ltd

2. Description

VCC received the notification dossier on economic concentration related to Aekyung Chemical Co., LTD (AKC - the buyer) contemplating to acquire 50% of the contribution capital in Vina Plasticizer Chemicals Company Limited (VP-Chem – the target) from LG Chem, Ltd. (LGChem – the seller).

Upon completion of the transaction, AKC will replace LGChem to own 50% of the contribution capital at VP-Chem, and indirectly have the right to appoint the General Director of VP-Chem, thereby controlling and governing VP-Chem according to the provisions of point c, clause 1, Article 2 of Decree No. 35/2020/ND-CP.

AKC primarily distributes Diopeo Bis (2-ethyl hexyl) phthalate (“DOP”) plasticizers and phthalic anhydride (“PA”) in Vietnam through direct export to end customers; or through foreign traders and distributors in Vietnam.

VP-Chem has a factory producing plasticizers including DOP and Diisonomy Phthalate (“DINP”) in Dong Nai province.

3. Result

After the official appraisal process, VCC issued a Decision on conditional economic concentration for enterprises participating in economic concentration on 06 November 2023. Please refer to the website of VCC at <https://vcc.gov.vn> for more details of the Decision.

03

NEWS BOX

Information on the economic concentration of Baoshan Iron & Steel Co., Ltd and Inner Mongolia BaoTou Steel Union Co., Ltd

1. Participating parties

- Baoshan Iron & Steel Co. Ltd
- Inner Mongolia Baotou Steel Union Co., Ltd

2. Description

On 02 March 2023, Vietnam Competition and Consumer Authority (VCCA, currently known as VCC) received the complete and valid notification dossier on economic concentration of Baoshan Iron & Steel Co. Ltd and Inner Mongolia Baotou Steel Union Co., Ltd. (enterprises participating in EC).

The enterprises participating in EC are all Chinese State-owned enterprises including: Baoshan Iron & Steel Co., Ltd. (“Baosteel”), and Inner Mongolia BaoTou Steel Union Co., Ltd, (“Baogang”) contemplate to establish Baosteel Pipe Science and Technology Co., Ltd. – a joint venture in China operating in the steel pipe business. The new joint venture is formed in offshore jurisdiction.

According to the notification dossier on economic concentration: the establishment of Baosteel Pipe Science and Technology Co., Ltd by Baosteel and Baogang is an economic concentration case in the form of joint venture between enterprises specified in Clause 5, Article 29 of the Competition Law 2018.

3. Result

Based on the results of determining the relevant product market and relevant geographical market, the economic concentration between Baosteel and Baogang has a relevant market of hot rolled carbon steel product nationwide, with combined market share of enterprises participating in economic concentration less than 20%.

Thus, the economic concentration transaction between Baoshan Iron & Steel Co. Ltd and Inner Mongolia Baotou Steel Union Co., Ltd. is permitted to be implemented according to point a, clause 2, Article 36 of the Competition Law 2018.

STATE MANAGEMENT OF MULTI-LEVEL MARKETING BUSINESS

A. THE FORMULATION OF LEGAL DOCUMENTS

Formulation and completion of legal regulations on management of multi-level marketing activities

To complete the legal regulations regarding the management of multi-level marketing activities, VCC has developed and advised the Minister of Industry and Trade to submit to the Government for promulgation Decree No. 18/2023/ND-CP, dated 28 April 2023, amending and supplementing a number of articles of Decree No. 40/2018/ND-CP of the Government dated 12 March on the management of multi-level marketing activities.

Upon the issuance of the Decree, VCC proposed to the Minister of Industry and Trade for the promulgation of Circular No. 12/2023/TT-BCT, providing amendments and supplements to a number of articles of Circular No. 10/2018/TT-BCT of the Minister of Industry and Trade dated 24 May 2018, which details several articles of Decree No. 40/2018/ND-CP of the Government dated 12 March 2018 on the management of multi-level marketing activities.

To implement Decree No. 18/2023/ND-CP and Circular No. 12/2023/TT-BCT, VCC has completed the procedures to announce recently issued business conditions, administrative procedures, and consolidated documents to ensure thorough and consistent implementation.

VCC organized two conferences to summarize the management of multi-level marketing activities in 2022 in the North and Central regions, introducing and disseminating the regulations of Decree No. 18/2023/ND-CP with the participation of the provincial Department of Industry and Trade, representatives of the Multi-level Marketing Association, and representatives of the multi-level marketing enterprise community. Additionally, they held one training conference to improve the capability of officials who manage multi-level marketing activities in the Central region, developed video clips for the dissemination of the regulations of Decree No. 18/2023/ND-CP, held a seminar on the publication and dissemination of the regulations of Decree No. 18/2023/ND-CP, and published the handbook "Q&A on legal regulations on management of multi-level marketing activities."

B. LAW ENFORCEMENT ON MULTI-LEVEL MARKETING MANAGEMENT

I. Receipt and settlement of administrative procedures

In 2023, VCC has received and processed 149 administrative procedures in multi-level marketing activities, specifically:

- 18 applications for the Certificate of registration of multi-level marketing activities (some enterprises re-submit for multiple times);
- 46 applications for amendment and supplementation of the Certificate of registration of multi-level marketing activities;
- 80 dossiers of notifications of change of information on the list of goods traded under multi-level marketing method;
- 02 dossiers on notice of termination of multi-level marketing activities;
- 03 dossiers of request for deposit withdrawal.

While online public services in the field of multi-level marketing management have been maintained, enterprises predominantly opt for in-person or postal applications in practice. Currently, VCC is collaborating with the Department of E-Commerce and Digital Economy to enhance technical infrastructure, aiming to elevate the quality of online public services and promote the adoption of the online system among enterprises.



II. Investigation, inspection and settlement of violations

In 2023, VCC conducted inspections to ensure compliance with laws governing multi-level marketing activities. During these inspections, decisions were made to impose administrative sanctions on 05 multi-level marketing enterprises and 01 individual participant, resulting in a total fine of VND 1,150,000,000 (one billion one hundred and fifty million Vietnamese dong). Notable violations identified include:

- Non-compliance with registered operating rules approved by competent authorities and failure to monitor the activities of multi-level marketing participants to ensure adherence to these rules;
- Neglecting regulations regarding training for multi-level marketing participants;
- Failure to fulfill obligations related to amending and updating the Certificate of registration for multi-level marketing activities and the procedure for notifying changes in information regarding the list of goods traded using the multi-level marketing method;
- Non-adherence to reporting responsibilities by the enterprise;
- Failure to establish written contracts for participation in multi-level marketing with participants, or signing contracts that inadequately cover the basic contents as prescribed by law;
- Neglecting to notify the Department of Industry and Trade when organizing conferences, seminars, or training sessions on multi-level marketing with participation exceeding 30 individuals or 10 multi-level marketing participants in the locality where the company is granted a Certificate of registration for multi-level marketing activities;
- Neglecting to regularly update websites in Vietnamese to disseminate information about enterprises and their multi-level marketing activities, as stipulated by regulations;
- Engaging in multi-level marketing activities in certain areas before obtaining a Certificate of registration for multi-level marketing activities from the Department of Industry and Trade in the respective locality.

Through inspection activities, VCC has provided guidance to enterprises to enhance their compliance with legal regulations governing multi-level marketing. These inspections also enable VCC to gain insights into the market's actual operations, facilitating prompt reviews of current regulations and timely proposals for amendments and supplements.

III. Inspection and certification of legal knowledge on multi-level marketing

In 2023, VCC conducted 03 sessions to assess legal knowledge on multi-level marketing and knowledge for local agents. These sessions resulted in the issuance of 14 confirmations of legal knowledge for multi-level marketing and 23 confirmations of knowledge for local agents, as requested by multi-level marketing enterprises.

IV. Settlement of petitions, reports and disputes

In 2023, VCC received approximately 15 complaints concerning disputes related to multi-level marketing activities. Compared to the period from 2015 to 2020, the number of complaints in 2023 has significantly decreased. These complaints primarily revolved around disputes between multi-level marketing enterprises and participants that remained unresolved. In response to the issues raised in the complaints, VCC mediated between the parties involved and provided written responses.

By the end of 2023, the petitions and complaints received by VCC mainly centered on conferences, seminars, and training activities organized by multi-level marketing enterprises, which attracted a large number of participants and potentially led to violations of multi-level marketing laws. After review and evaluation, VCC issued documents advising multi-level marketing enterprises to heighten their compliance awareness when conducting such events. Concurrently, VCC sent written requests to provincial Departments of Industry and Trade, urging them to strengthen supervision of conferences, seminars, and training courses organized by multi-level marketing enterprises within their jurisdictions.

V. Coordination

VCC continues to maintain close connections and effective coordination with provincial Departments of Industry and Trade and other organizations through various channels, including conferences, local trainings, and updates published on VCC's website regarding consultation and the results of administrative procedure handling related to multi-level marketing activities.

In 2023, VCC collaborated closely with police agencies to combat crimes associated with multi-level marketing activities. The Management Board of multi-level marketing activities advised VCC's leaders to relay information concerning five cases displaying signs of improper conduct in multi-level marketing business without proper licenses to the Department of Cyber Security and High-tech Crime Prevention under the Ministry of Public Security. This was done to ensure timely monitoring, supervision, and resolution. Additionally, VCC coordinated with local police agencies in Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Ha Tinh, Ha Nam, Quang Binh, and Da Nang to identify and address illegal multi-level business activities.





STATE MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTION OF CONSUMER RIGHTS

A. THE FORMULATION OF LEGAL DOCUMENTS

I. Formulating the Law on Protection of Consumer Rights (amended)

On June 20, 2023, the 15th National Assembly passed the Law on Protection of Consumer Rights 2023 with an approval rate of 93.72%. This significant legislation has broad implications across various industries and sectors. The law was developed with the principle of building upon, promoting, and refining regulations that remain relevant from the Law on Protection of Consumer Rights 2010, while also addressing unclear, inadequate, and inconsistent provisions to uphold principles of constitutionality, legality, and uniformity within the legal framework. The Law is scheduled to take effect on July 1, 2024.

Following the promulgation of the Law, VCC promptly reported to relevant authorities to initiate necessary actions, including:

- Reporting to Ministerial leaders for submission to the Prime Minister to promulgate Decision No. 1012/QĐ-TTg dated August 31, 2023, outlining the implementation plan of the Law on Protection of Consumer Rights.
- Undertaking the formulation of a draft Government Decree detailing specific articles of the Law on Protection of Consumer Rights.

SOME NEW REGULATIONS OF LAW ON PROTECTION OF CONSUMER RIGHTS 2023

01 On the structure and layout

The Law on Protection of Consumer Rights 2023 has 7 Chapters and 80 Articles. Compared to the Law on Protection of Consumer Rights 2010, the new Law adds Chapter III on responsibilities of business organizations and individuals towards consumers in specific transactions. The number of articles increased from 51 to 80 Articles.

02 On the applicable entities

The new Law supplements some applicable entities, specifically: supplementing Vietnam Fatherland Front; socio-political organizations as applicable entities; clarifying social organizations including socio-political-professional organizations, social organizations, socio-professional organizations.

03 On identifying new subjects

The law supplements, clarifies the concept of a number of new subjects, including:

- *Consumer*: The new law adds “not for commercial purposes” criteria to clearly identify consumer, forming a uniform basis in definition of a consumer.
- *Influencers*.
- *Vulnerable consumers*.
- *Organization and individual conducting online transactions*.
- *Multi-level marketing organization and participant*.

04 On the rights and obligations of consumers

The law adds several new consumer rights such as the right to be enabled to select a healthy and sustainable consumption environment; the right to request organization or assistance in negotiations to resolve disputes.

Moreover, to balance between the rights and obligations of consumers, the Law adds a number of obligations such as complying with regulations on inspection, environmental protection, sustainable consumption in accordance with the law; responsibility for providing inaccurate or incomplete information related to transactions between consumers and organizations, individuals in accordance with the provisions of law.

05 On sustainable production and consumption

To promptly meet the practical requirements, and at the same time, clearly demonstrate the role of consumers in new consumption trends, the Law supplements provisions for sustainable production and consumption. Accordingly, the Law supplements the definition of sustainable consumption, provisions on activities to promote sustainable production and consumption and responsibilities of Ministries, Ministerial-level agencies, and People's Committees at all levels in promoting sustainable production and consumption.

06 On protection of the rights of vulnerable consumers

The law clearly identifies vulnerable consumer groups, including: the elderly; persons with disabilities; children; ethnics; persons living in ethnic minority areas, mountainous areas, islands, disadvantaged and extremely disadvantaged areas prescribed by law; pregnant women or women raising a child under 36 months of age; persons suffering from serious illnesses and members of poor households as prescribed by law.

07 On prohibited acts

The Law supplements a number of prohibited acts, including prohibited acts for organizations and individuals performing multi-level marketing activities; Traders establishing, operating and supplying digital platform services such as: failure to notify in advance and publicize to consumers the sponsorship of influencers in any form to use their images, advice and recommendations to promote trading or encourage consumers to buy, use products, goods and services; preventing consumers from inspecting products, goods and/or services, unless otherwise provided by law; or require consumers to purchase additional products, goods or services as a mandatory condition for entering into contracts against the intention of the consumers.

08 On responsibilities of business organizations and individuals towards consumers

The Law supplements responsibilities for ensuring safety, measurement, quantity, volume, quality and using purpose of products, goods and services sold and supplied to consumers; specifying regulations on responsibilities for protection of consumers' information; clarifying the recalculation of warranty period in case of renewal of products or goods; supplementing regulations on responsibility for receiving and settling consumer feedbacks, requests and complaints.

On recall of defective products and goods regulation: The Law classifies 02 groups of products and goods with defects, including groups A and B, and stipulates corresponding recall responsibilities.

To comprehensively protect the consumers' rights, the Law supplements regulations on responsibilities for providing services that are not in line with contents registered, notified, announced, listed, advertised, introduced, engaged and committed.

09 On some specific transactions

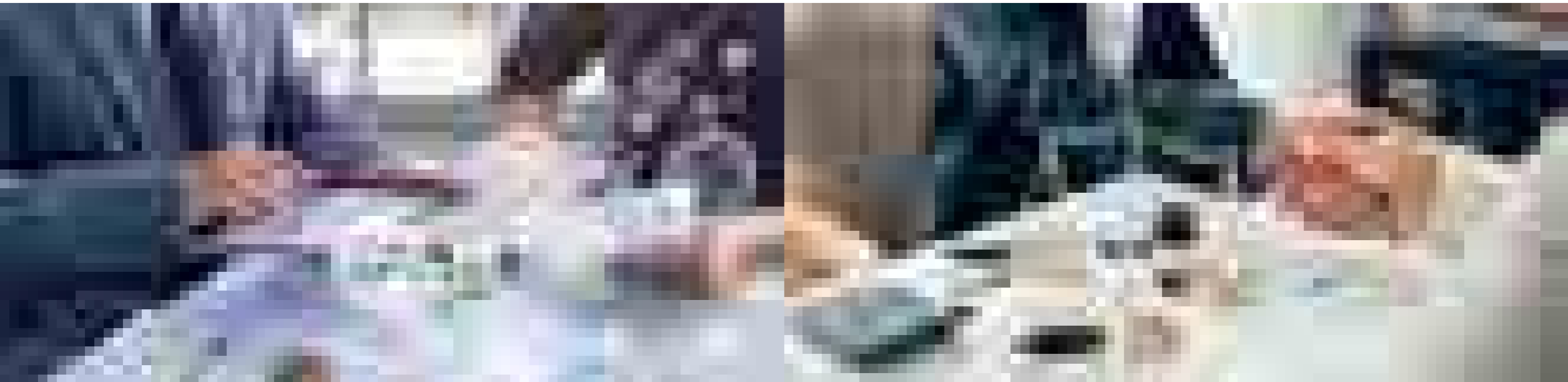
- The Law clarifies the information to be provided in remote transactions; additional responsibilities of organizations and individuals doing business with consumers in online transactions.

- The Law stipulates the responsibility for publicly announcing the legal representative in Viet Nam or appointing an authorized representative in Vietnam and publicly notify the authorized representative in Vietnam in the continuous supply of services.

- The Law supplements multi-level marketing, sale of goods not at regular business locations, at the same time, supplementing more specific responsibilities of business organizations and individuals when conducting the above transactions with consumers.

10 On activities of protecting the consumers' rights of the Vietnam Fatherland Front, socio-political organizations, and social organizations

The Law supplements the participation of the Vietnam Fatherland Front, socio-political organizations, and social organizations in the protection of consumers' rights. The diverse and comprehensive participation of these organizations will contribute to improving the effectiveness of enforcement of consumers' rights protection nationwide.



11

On dispute resolution methods

The Law supplements regulations on consumer rights to request business organizations and individuals to negotiate or the right to request State management agencies in charge of protecting the consumers' rights and social organizations involved in protecting consumers' rights to support the negotiations when their legitimate rights and interests are infringed.

For disputes at courts: The Law completes the provisions on the fast-track procedure applicable to the settlement of civil cases on the protection of consumers' rights. Accordingly, any civil case of protection of consumer rights which values less than 100 million dong shall be handled following simplified procedures without satisfying the conditions specified in clause 1 Article 317 of the Code of Civil Procedure.

The Law supplements regulations on compensation for damages in civil lawsuits over protection of consumers' rights, specifically as follows: in case of failure to determine the beneficiaries, damages in civil lawsuits over protection of consumers' rights in the public interests initiated by social organizations participating in protection of consumers' rights shall be used to service general activities with the aim of protecting consumers' rights according to the Government's regulations.

12

On the State management of protection of consumer rights

The new law supplements specific responsibilities of each provincial, district and ward-level People's Committee. Such implementation is to clarify the responsibilities of State management agencies and provincial People's Committees in: building a national information database on protecting consumers' rights; assigning duties to social organizations whose principles and purposes are to participate in protecting the consumers' rights and building a coordination mechanism to protect the consumers' rights at the central and local levels.

II. Formulating a draft Decree providing in details a number of articles of the Law on Protection of Consumer Rights

In carrying out its assigned responsibilities, the VCC, in collaboration with relevant units, has developed and finalized the draft Decree outlining specific articles of the Law on Protection of Consumer Rights, in accordance with prescribed regulations and procedures.

In December 2023, the Ministry of Industry and Trade issued a submission to report to the Government on a draft Decree providing detailed regulations for several articles and guiding the implementation of the Law on Protection of Consumer Rights.

III. Formulating the Prime Minister's Decision promulgating the list of products, goods and services for which standard form contracts and general transaction conditions are subject to registration

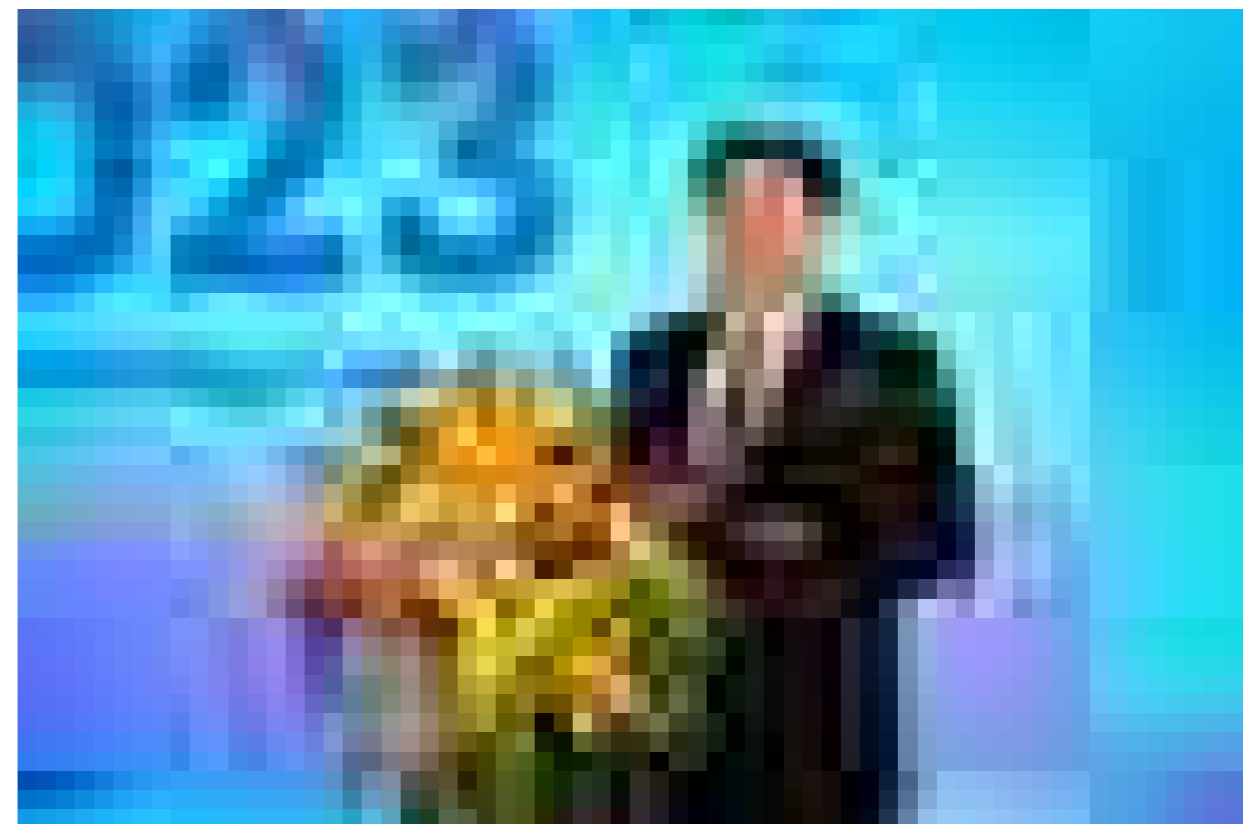
In accordance with the Prime Minister's Decision No. 857/QĐ-TTg dated July 18, 2023, which promulgated the List and assigned agencies to lead the drafting of documents detailing the implementation of laws and resolutions adopted by the 15th National Assembly at its 5th meeting session, the Ministry of Industry and Trade has been designated to oversee the drafting of the Prime Minister's Decision promulgating the List of products, goods, and services for which standard form contracts and general transaction conditions are subject to registration (SFC, GC).

Following this directive and pursuant to the Ministry of Industry and Trade's Program on formulating legal documents in 2024 and Clause 1, Article 28 of the Law on Protection of Consumer Rights 2023, the VCC has collaborated with relevant agencies and units to compile an overview of the enforcement of regulations on standard form contracts and general conditions from 2012 until the present. Simultaneously, efforts were made to develop the draft dossier for the Prime Minister's Decision.

On December 13, 2023, the draft Decision dossier was published and circulated to gather opinions from Ministries, departments, provincial People's Committees, relevant organizations, and stakeholders as prescribed. Subsequently, based on the collected feedback, the Ministry of Industry and Trade conducted research, received input, provided explanations, and finalized the draft Decision dossier. It was then forwarded to the Ministry of Justice for appraisal in accordance with legal procedures. It is anticipated that, following the Ministry of Justice's appraisal, the draft Decision will be finalized and submitted to the Prime Minister in April 2024.



Leaders of state management authorities, social and political organizations, social organizations, international organizations press the button to launch the Vietnam Consumer Rights Day 2023 in Hanoi



Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade Nguyen Sinh Nhat Tan deliver speech at the Launching Ceremony of Vietnam Consumer Rights Day 2023 in Hanoi

B. ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS AND POLICIES TO PROTECT CONSUMER RIGHTS

I. The implementation of Directive No. 30-CT/TW on strengthening the Party's leadership and the State management responsibility for the protection of consumer rights

In 2023, VCC continued to implement the duties assigned under Resolution No. 82/NQ-CP of the Government on promulgating the Action Plan to implement Directive No. 30-CT/TW of the Secretariat of the Party on strengthening the leadership of the Party and the State's management responsibility for the protection of consumer rights, specially:

- Coordinated with relevant units of the Economic Commission under Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV) Central Committee to formulate and complete the report for 03-year implementation of Directive No. 30-CT/TW to report to the Secretariat of the CPV.

- Coordinated with the Office of the CPV Designated Representation of the Ministry of Industry and Trade to develop and organize 04 working groups to monitor, inspected and followed up the implementation of Directive No. 30-CT/TW in Nghe An, Binh Duong provinces, Ministry of Information and Communications and Vietnam Post and Telecommunications Group to monitor the implementation status, difficulties and obstacles (if any) to promptly acknowledge, report and propose solutions to promote the effectiveness of the implementation of Directive No. 30-CT/TW in the upcoming time.

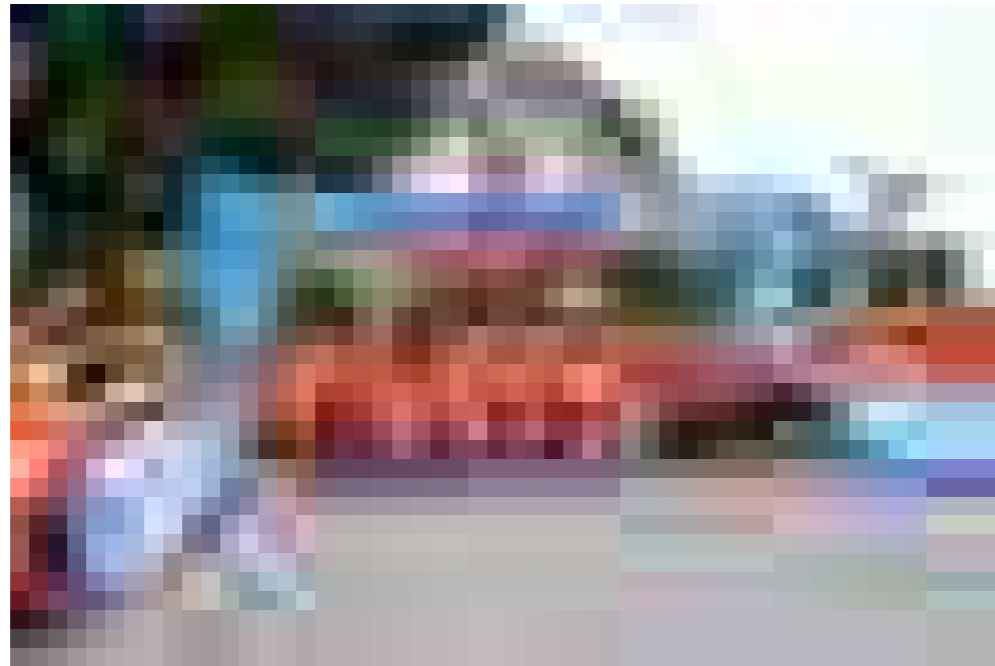
- Discussed and acknowledged the operation status to promptly support the activities of the Vietnam Consumer Protection Association.

II. Organizing Vietnam Consumer Rights Day

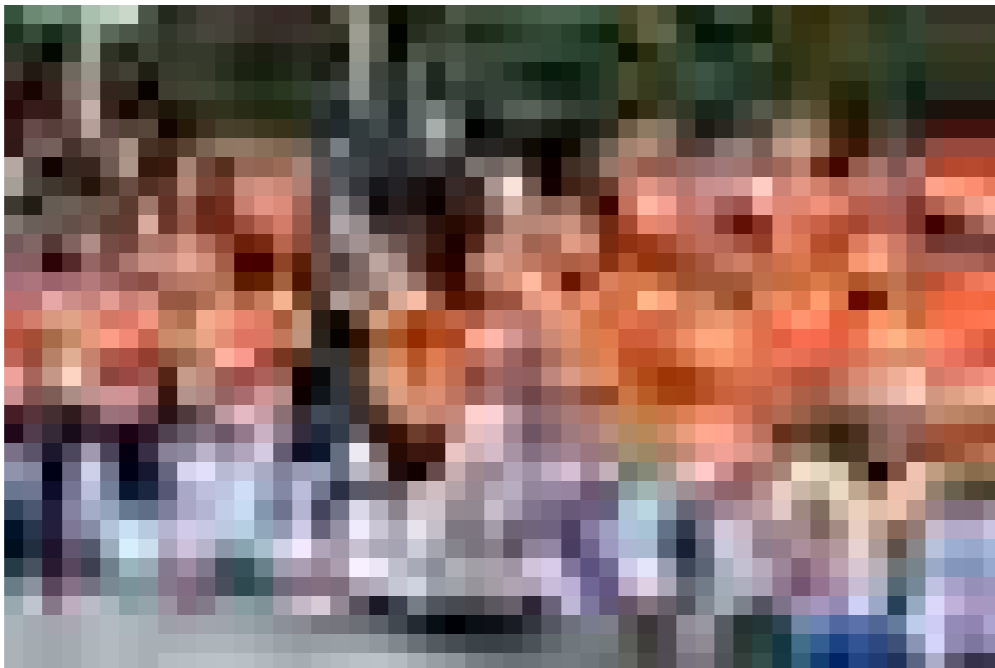
With the theme of "Transparent Information - Safe Consumption," VCC, in partnership with the Hanoi Department of Industry and Trade (DOIT), hosted the Launching Ceremony of Vietnam Consumer Rights Day 2023. The event saw the participation of governmental departments, divisions, international organizations, and the enterprise community. During the Launching Ceremony, enterprises showcased their commitment to responsible business practices that prioritize consumer interests by jointly implementing the "Code of Conduct on Responsible Business Practices for E-commerce merchants and sellers". In conjunction with the Launching Ceremony, VCC and the Hanoi DOIT organized a Fair titled "Goods and Products for Consumers," featuring over 100 booths. Additionally, a marathon, namely, "Run For Consumer Rights" was held, attracting over 1,000 athletes. These activities aimed to promote awareness of consumer rights and encourage responsible business conduct within the enterprise community.

Beside the Launching Ceremony, VCC, in collaboration with the Industry and Trade Magazine and Hanoi DOIT, organized the Run "For Consumer Rights". The event attracted the participation of more than 1,000 athletes who are officials, civil servants of the Ministry of Industry and Trade and related ministries and departments; representatives of domestic and foreign organizations, manufacturing and business enterprises, socio-economic organizations, industrial associations, consumers, people who love running and press agencies. This is the first time since 2015 that the celebration of Consumer Rights Day has been organized through a large-scale running tournament and attracted a large number of people to directly participate in.

In addition to the main activities mentioned above, VCC has sent officials to coordinate in organizing activities to respond to 15 March in localities such as An Giang, Ba Ria – Vung Tau, Thai Nguyen, Binh Phuoc Province, etc.



More than 1000 athletes who are officials, civil servants and workers in the field of industry and trade participated in the Marathon "Run For Consumer Rights"

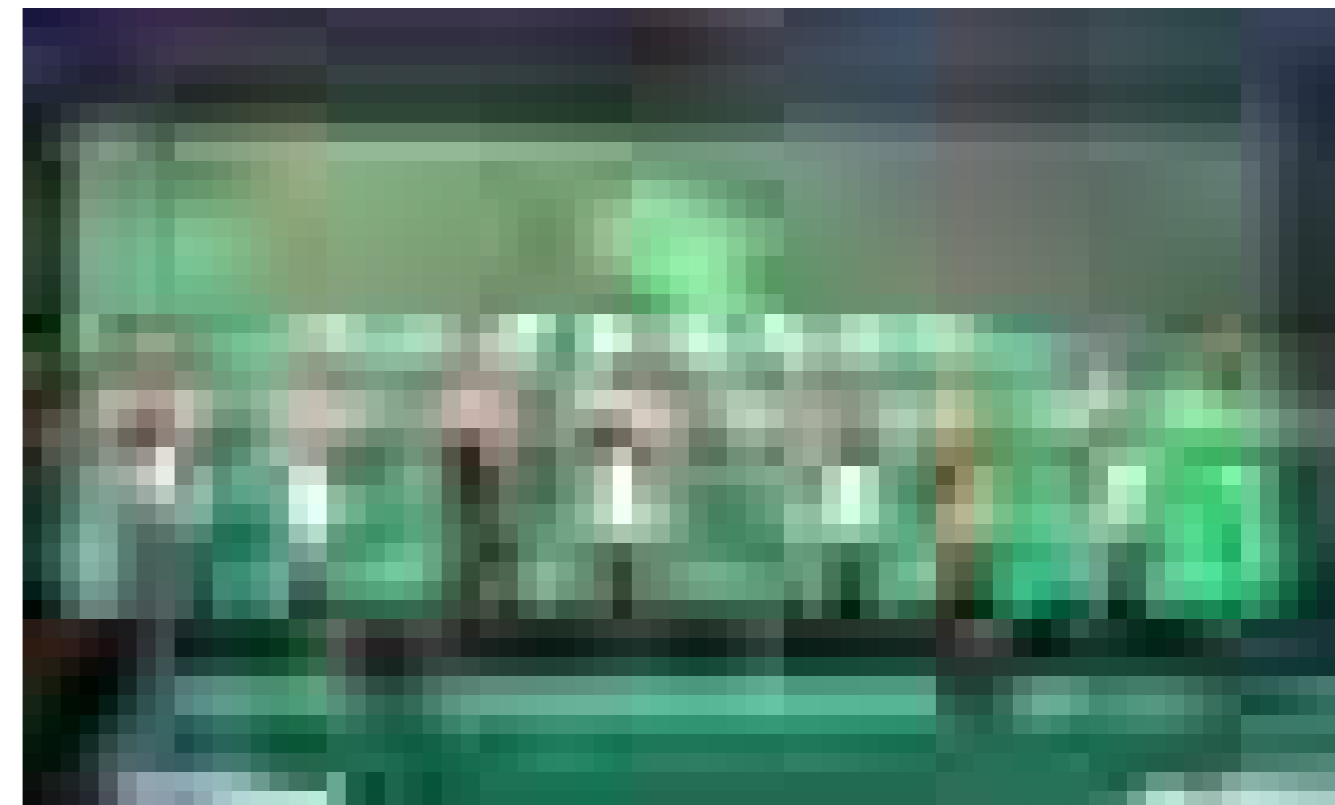


The Marathon "Run For Consumer Rights" at Thong Nhat Park, Hanoi

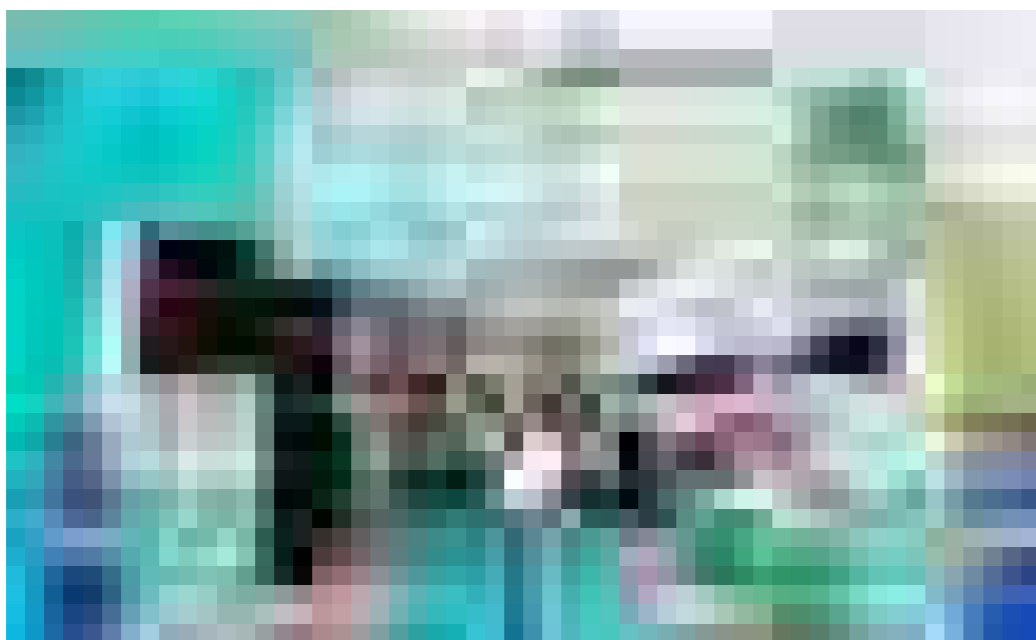
III. The Implementation of Decision No. 889/QD-TTG of the Prime Minister approving the National Action Plan on Sustainable Production and Consumption for the period of 2023 – 2030

VCC collaborated with the Energy efficiency and Sustainable Development Department to execute a series of activities aimed at implementing Prime Minister's Decision No. 889/QD-TTG, which approves the National Action Plan on Sustainable Production and Consumption for the period 2023 – 2030. In May 2023, VCC organized multiple business survey delegations in the North to study sustainable production and consumption models, gathering essential information to prepare for a series of activities promoting sustainable practices throughout the year. Building upon these efforts, VCC continued to host various events, including seminars and workshops. Two significant events aimed at promoting sustainable production and consumption were organized:

- Exhibition of Sustainable Production and Consumption Models themed "Consume Green – Live Green": The exhibition featured participation from over 30 enterprises, showcasing a diverse array of sustainable production and consumption models across various product categories. Held at the Big C shopping center, the exhibition drew significant attention from consumers and customers. In addition to trade introduction and promotion activities, the event facilitated lively and insightful discussions. Notable participants included Miss H'Hen Niê, representatives from enterprises, and groups of young environmental activists.



Opening Ceremony of the Exhibition "Consume Green – Live Green" in Hanoi



"Consume Green – Live Green" exhibition in Hanoi



Mr. Do Tien Sy, Member of the Party Central Committee, Director of the Voice of Vietnam and Mr. Le Trieu Dzung, Chairman of the VCC delivering the opening speech of the Forum on Promoting Sustainable Production and Consumption in Modern Distribution System

- "Promoting Sustainable Production and Consumption in Modern Distribution System" Forum: With the aim of discussing mechanisms and policies to overcome difficulties in sustainable production and consumption, the Forum attracted 200 participants from State management agencies, international organizations, embassies, representatives of Ministries, Departments, Institutes of ministries, domestic and foreign organizations, the business community, consumers and the press.

IV. Consulting and supporting consumers

In 2023, the consumer support call center 1800.6838 received 11,236 incoming calls. In which, the operators received 8,853 incoming calls from consumers (accounting for 78.8%) focusing on several major categories such as industrial field involving automobiles, motorcycles, food safety and hygiene before providing to consumers, warranty.

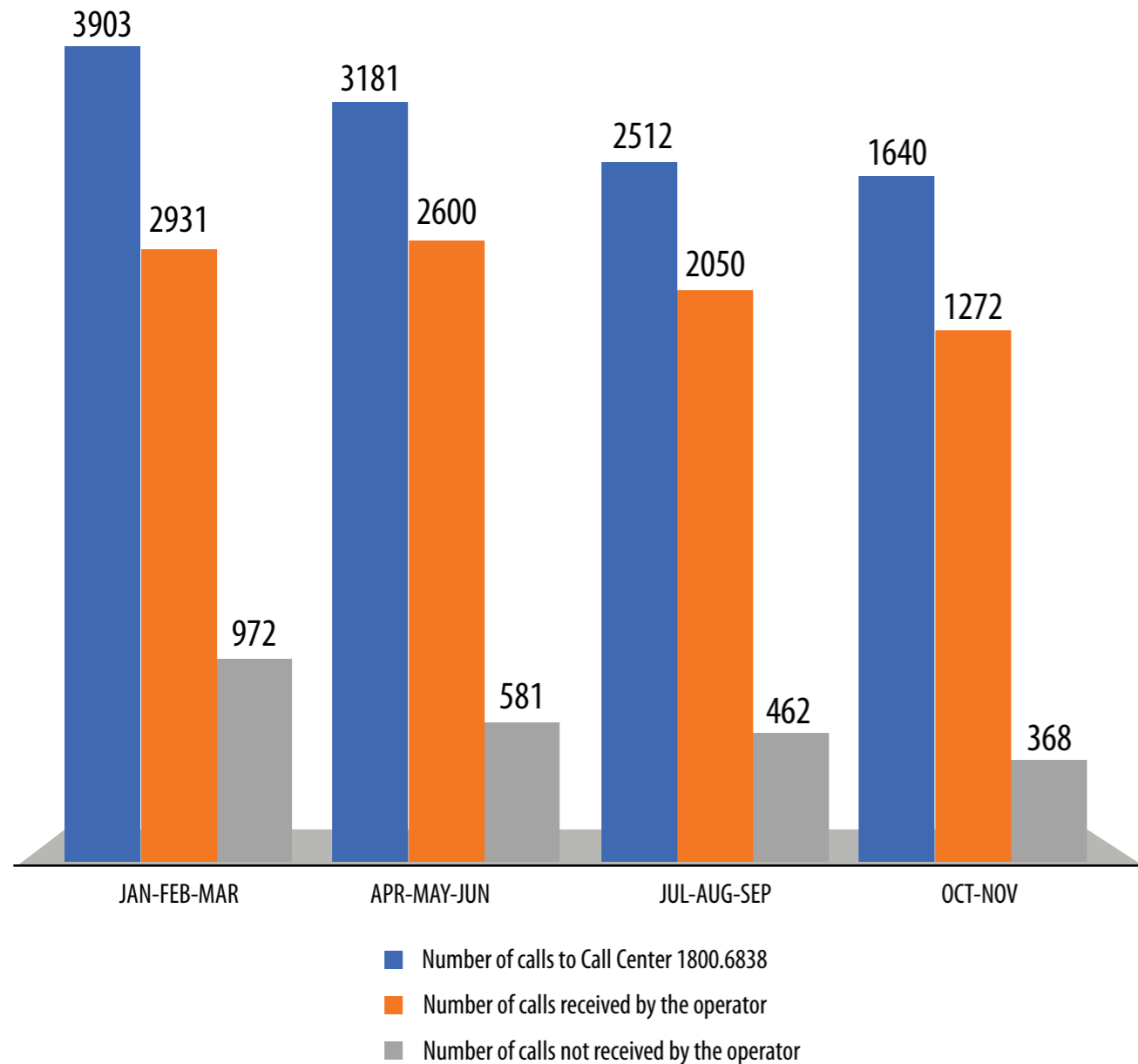


Figure 1. Statistics on the number of calls answered, consulted through Call Center 1800.6838 in 2023

V. Receiving, supporting and settling consumers' request, petition and complaint

1. Receiving and handling consumers' request/petition/complaint in 2023 by form of receipt

In 2023, VCC received 1,567 forms, letters of request, petitions, complaints from the consumers, mainly through the following channels:

- Email (at: khieunai@bvntd.gov.vn): 335 forms, letters (accounting for 21.4%);
- Online system for receiving requests, petitions and complaints (at: http://khieunai.bvntd.gov.vn): 148 forms, letters (accounting for 9.45%);
- Postal, official letters: 879 forms, letters (accounting for 56.1%);
- National Public Service Portal: 7 forms, letters (accounting for 0.4%);
- At the Office of VCC: 198 forms, letters (accounting for 12.6%)

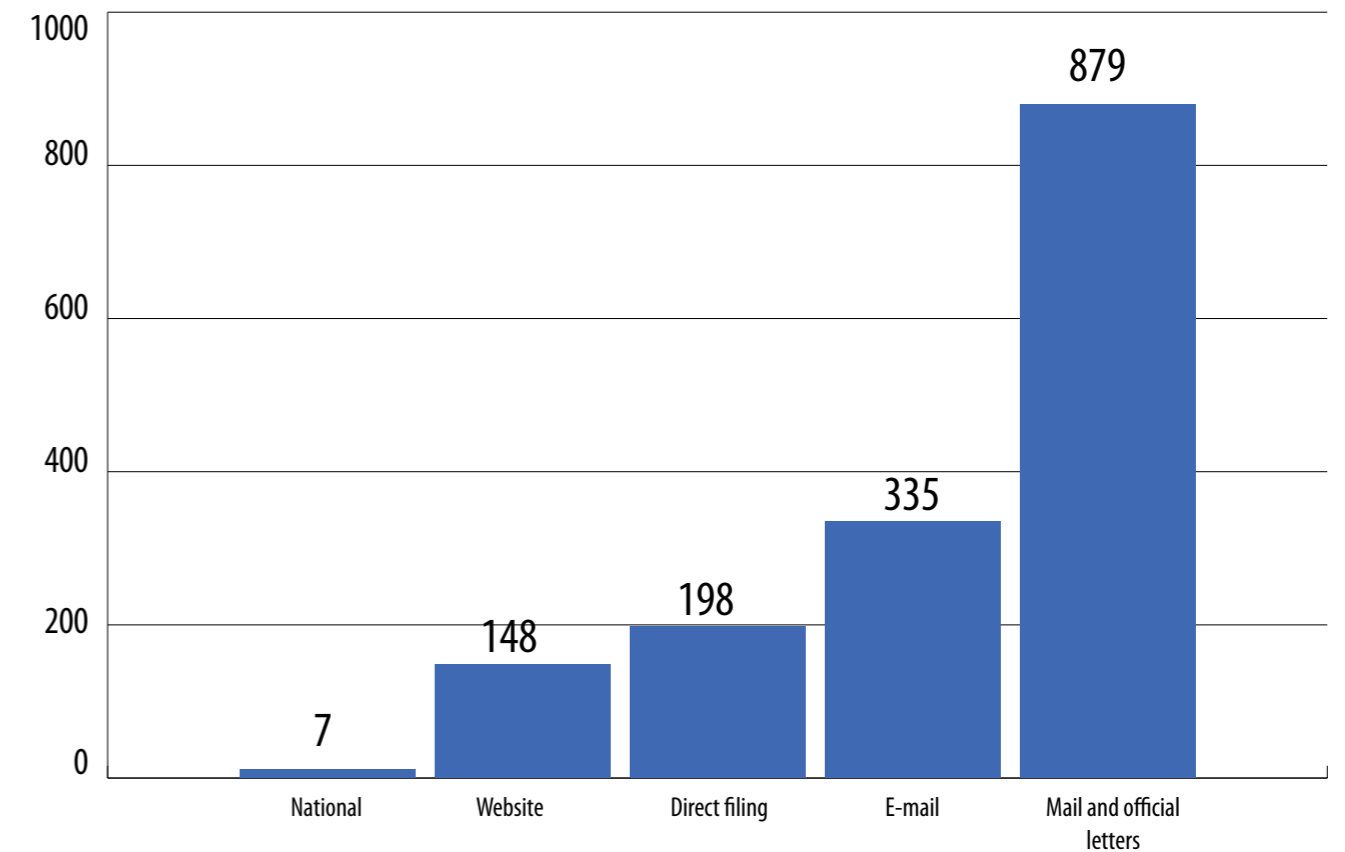


Figure 2. Statistics on the number of consumers' complaint by form of receipt in 2023

2. Receiving and handling consumers' request/ petition/ complaint in 2023 by sectors of goods and services

Of the total 1,567 forms, letters received, the sectors of goods and services receive the most complaints include: Residential real estate, apartments, vacation ownership business (accounting for approx. 49.9%); life insurance services (accounting for approx. 12.9%); e-commerce (accounting for approx. 5.5%); air transport services (accounting for approx. 4.4%); education and entertainment (accounting for approx. 4.3%); household electronics (accounting for approx. 3.9%); land mobile

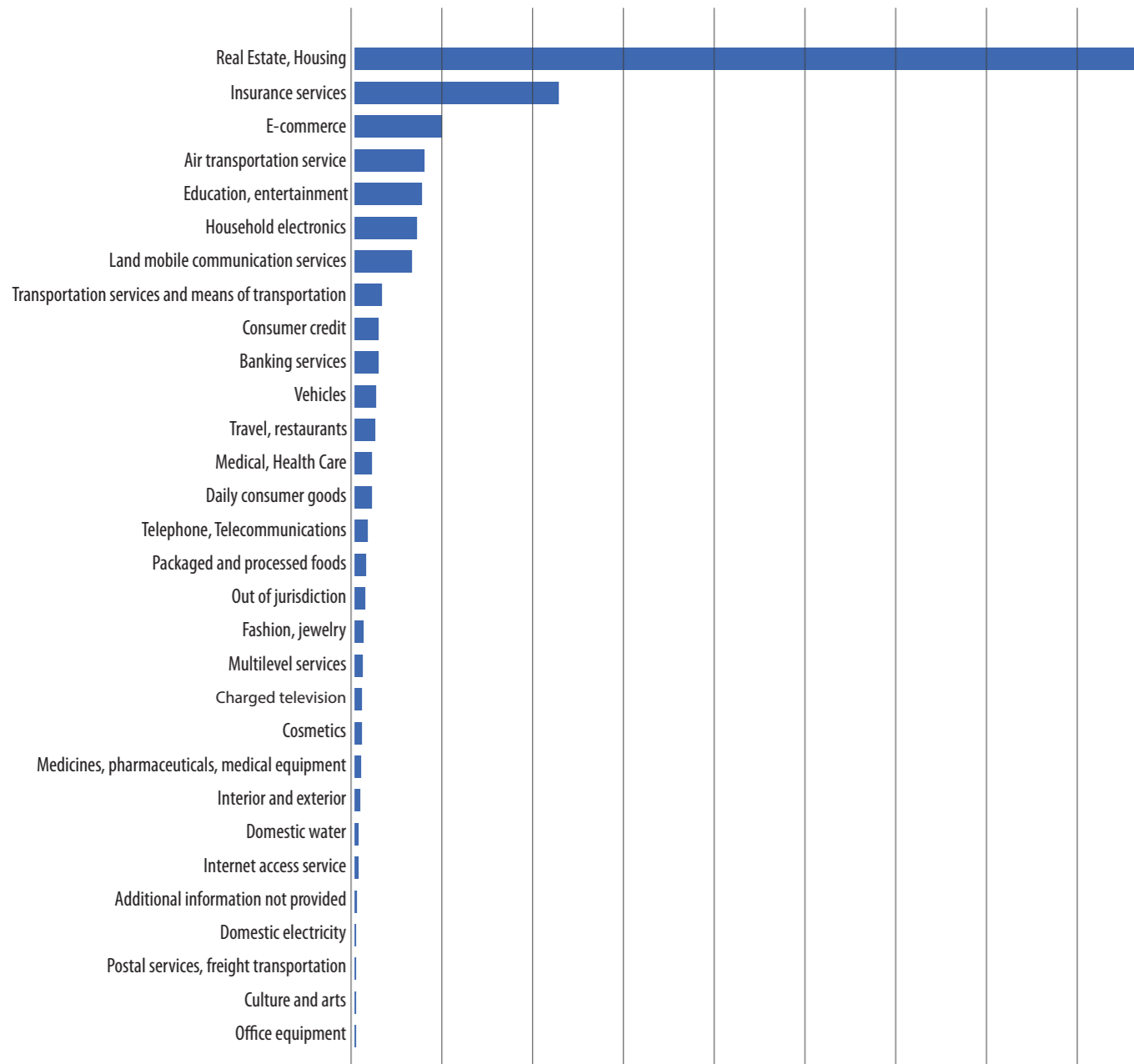


Figure 3. Statistics on the number of consumers' request/ petition/complaint in 2023 by sectors of goods and services

communication services (accounting for approx. 3.6%). In addition, there are some new sectors having complaints, which are: Banking services and other financial services (accounting for approx. 3.06%); transport services, means of transportation, vehicles and postal services, freight transport (accounting for approx. 3.12%). Some areas of goods and services receiving a relatively low number of complaints include: Office equipment; Arts and Culture; Domestic electricity; Domestic water; Internet access services; Interior, Exterior furnitures; Medicines, pharmaceuticals, medical devices; Cosmetics; Fashion, jewelry, etc. (accounting for approx. 1.5%).

3. Receiving and handling consumers' request/ petition/complaint in 2023 by behavior

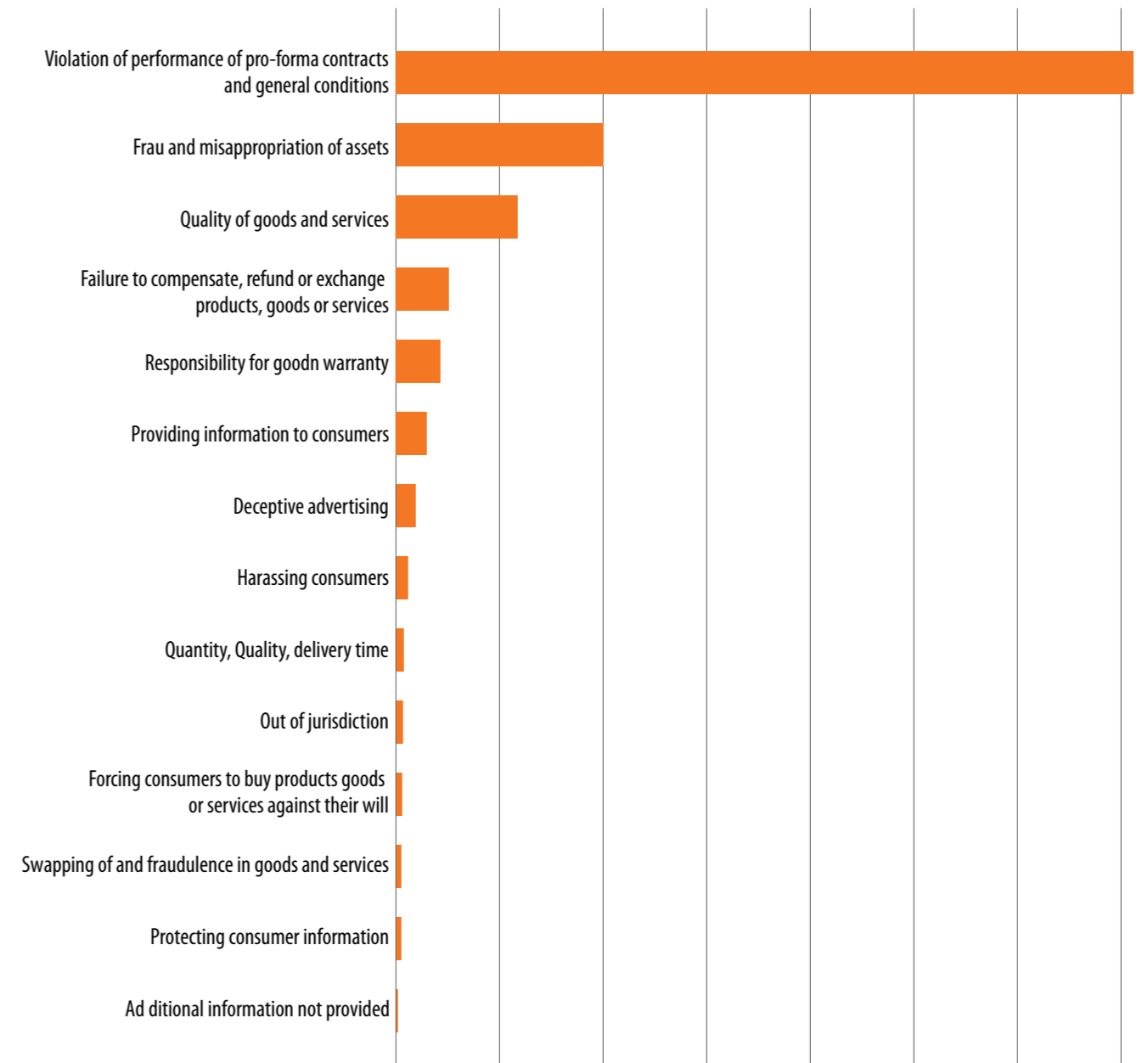


Figure 4. Statistics on the number of consumers' requests by behavior in 2023

The type of violations on the protection of consumers' rights which primarily receiving complaints are related to the failure to comply with the provisions on control of standard form contracts and general conditions in the area of vacation ownership business; real estate, houses and apartments (accounting for approx. 60.6%); Fraud and misappropriation of assets in bancassurance services (accounting for approx. 15.6%); Failure to ensure the quality and quantity of goods according to the order made or failure to ensure the quality of transportation and delivery services in e-commerce transactions (accounting for approx. 9.18%); Failure to compensate, return or exchange products, goods and services in e-commerce transactions (accounting for approx. 4%); Failure to comply with goods warranty responsibilities for transactions of buying and selling transportation vehicles, electronics, household appliances (accounting for approx. 3.38%); Advertising that deceives, provides false, incomplete or inaccurate information about products, goods and services that business organizations or individuals sell or provide; prestige, business capability, the ability to provide products, goods and services of business organizations and individuals; contents and characteristics of transactions between consumers and business organizations and individuals; images, papers and certification documents of competent State agencies on products, goods, services or organizations or individuals doing business and harassing consumers (accounting for approx. 3.82%), etc.

4. Receiving and handling consumers' request/ petition/complaint in 2023 by region and geography

Regarding consumers' complaint related to real estate and residential houses with violations in the execution of standard form contracts and general conditions, the data indicates that the largest number of complaints come from groups of consumers across numerous provinces and cities. Specifically:

- Groups of consumers from various provinces and cities account for the majority, with 872 complaints, representing 56% of the total.

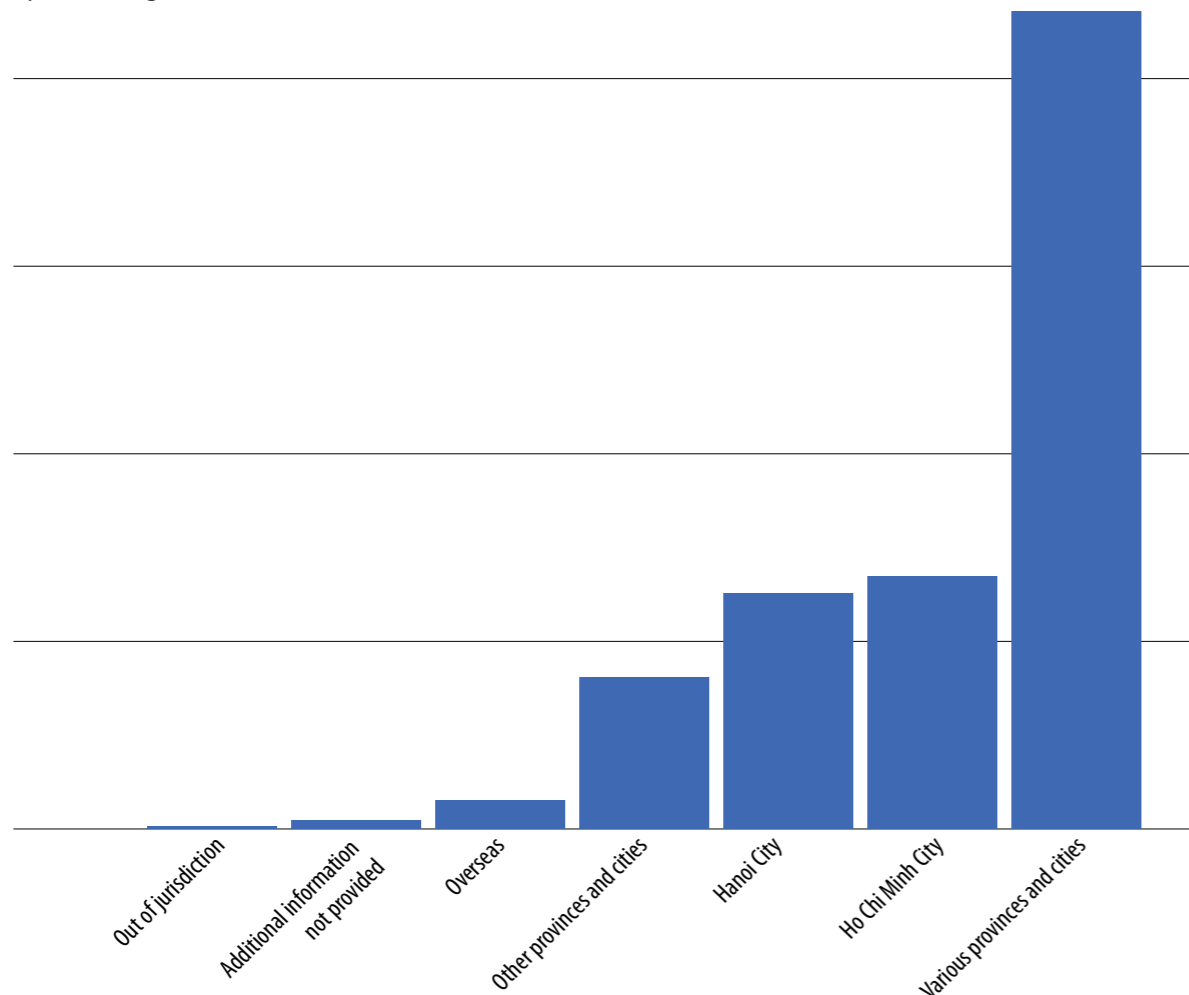


Figure 5. Statistics on the number of consumers' complaint by region and geography in 2023

- Ho Chi Minh City ranks as the second-largest contributor, with 269 complaints, comprising 17% of the total.
- Hanoi follows closely as the third-largest contributor, with 251 complaints, making up 16% of the total.

It's important to note that the aggregated data still contains incomplete figures, as many consumers' feedback and requests lack information about the consumer's living area, categorized under "Additional information not provided."

Furthermore, the total number of cases where consumers seek advice and support in these two cities exceeds half of the country's total cases. These cities consistently lead in the number of consumers' requests and complaints due to their large population, high consumption power, and significant volume of transactions of goods and services. This underscores the need to strengthen consumer protection enforcement in these two major cities.

5. Receiving and handling consumers' request/ petition /complaint in 2023 by gender

In 2023, there were lots of consumers complaints (made by both male and female individuals) to complain about or denounce the violations of consumer laws mainly related to the failure to comply with regulations on control of standard form contracts and general conditions in the field of vacation ownership business; real estate, residential house, apartment, and fraudulent activities and asset misappropriation in bancassurance services accounted for the largest proportion (with 882 requests, accounting for approx. 56.3%).

In addition, the number of male consumers sending complaints, requests, recommendations and petitions to the Commission for assistance is greater than that of female consumers (specifically: male consumers submitted a total of 438 requests, accounting for 27.9%; while female consumers submitted a total of 244, accounting for 15.6%). This trend may be attributed to the increasing involvement of men in shopping and consumption activities compared to women. Male consumers are also becoming more and more proactive in seeking consultation from authorities upon noticing that their consumer rights are affected or under the risk of being affected.

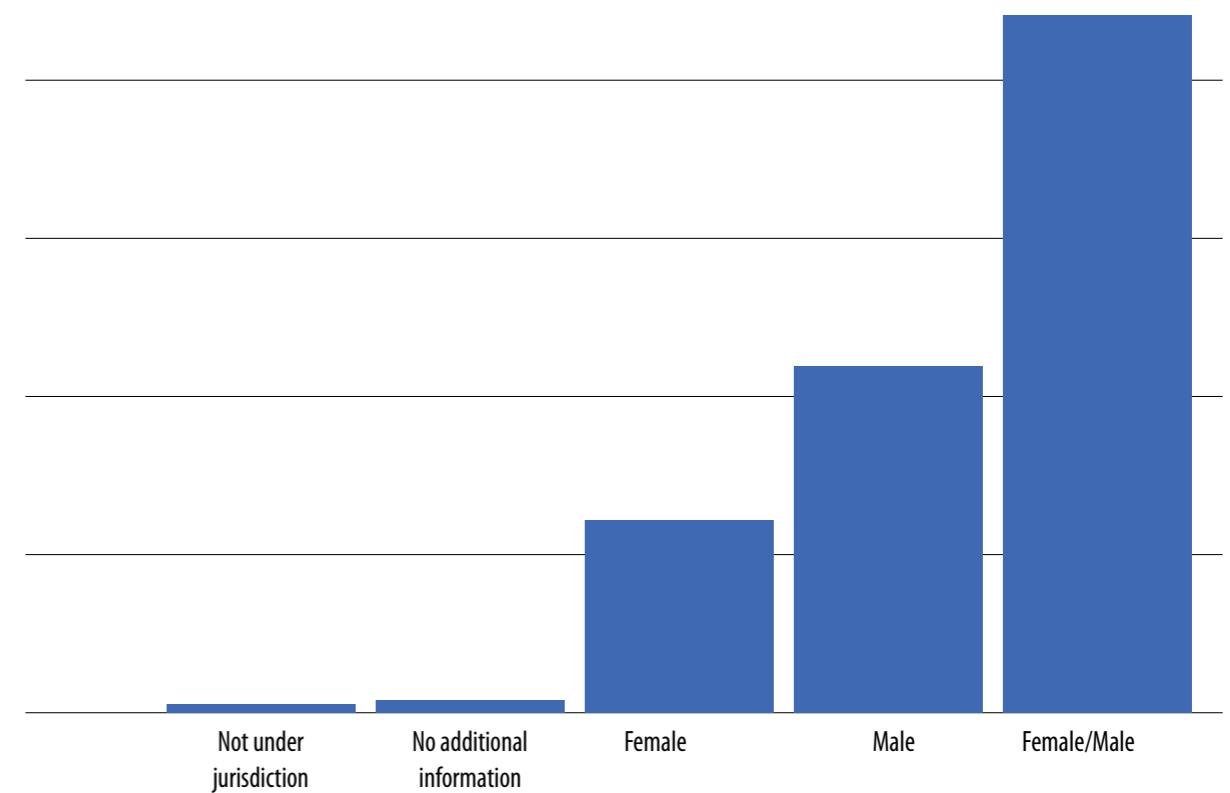


Figure 6. Statistics on the number of consumers' complaint by gender

VI. Control of standard form contracts and general conditions (SFC/ GC)

1. Receiving and appraising the application dossier for SFC/ GC

In 2023, VCC received 161 application dossiers for Standard Form Contracts (SFC) and General Conditions (GC), representing a decrease of nearly 40% compared to 2022 (251 dossiers). Despite the reduced number of applications, VCC ensured timely processing and issuance of registration results for all submitted dossiers, adhering to the prescribed timeline and procedures mandated by law. Of the total received dossiers, 108 (approximately 70%) were approved earlier than the stipulated timeline. This accomplishment not only met but also exceeded the quality target for handling administrative procedures, as per the national standard TCVN ISO 9001:2015 set by VCC. This efficient handling of administrative procedures contributed significantly to providing maximum convenience for enterprises, facilitating their smooth operation.

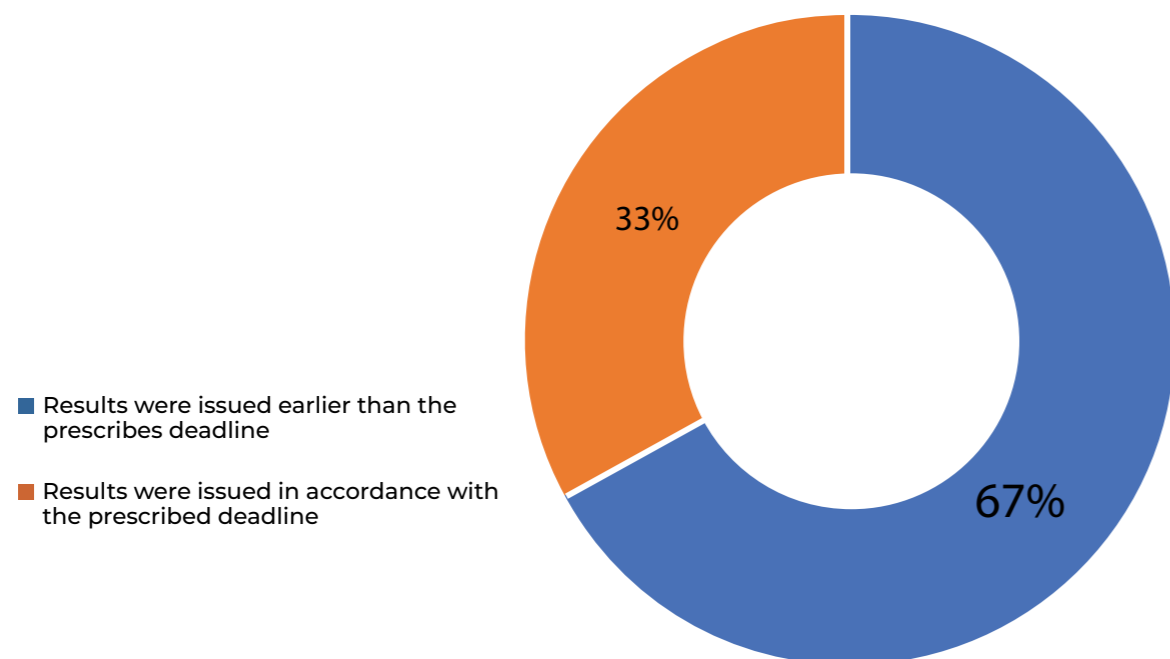


Figure 7. Ratio of application dossiers for SFC and GC processed by VCC in 2023

In terms of the registration sector in 2023, the number of application dossiers registered at VCC in the field of sale and purchase of apartments accounts for the highest proportion of 49%, the telecommunications and pay television sector accounts for 42%, the domestic electricity sector accounts for 4%, and other fields account for 5% (of which, air passenger transport does not generate any application dossier).

In terms of application results, the ratio of enterprises completing the registration procedures for SFC/ GC only reached nearly 25% among total number of application dossiers submitted to VCC, marking a significant decrease compared to previous years (nearly 40% in 2022, 28% in 2021 and over 34% in 2020). The number of application dossiers needs to be revised as following the laws on protection of the consumers' rights and dossiers proactively withdrawn by enterprises for completion accounts for more than 70% of the total submitted application dossiers. The limited rate of application dossiers completing the registration procedures for SFC/GC reveals the importance of raising businesses' responsibility and proactiveness in properly and fully acknowledging the legitimate consumers rights as well as obeying the consumer law. There is also necessity of organizing legal educational and training as well as enhancing enterprises' technical skills in drafting SFC/GC.

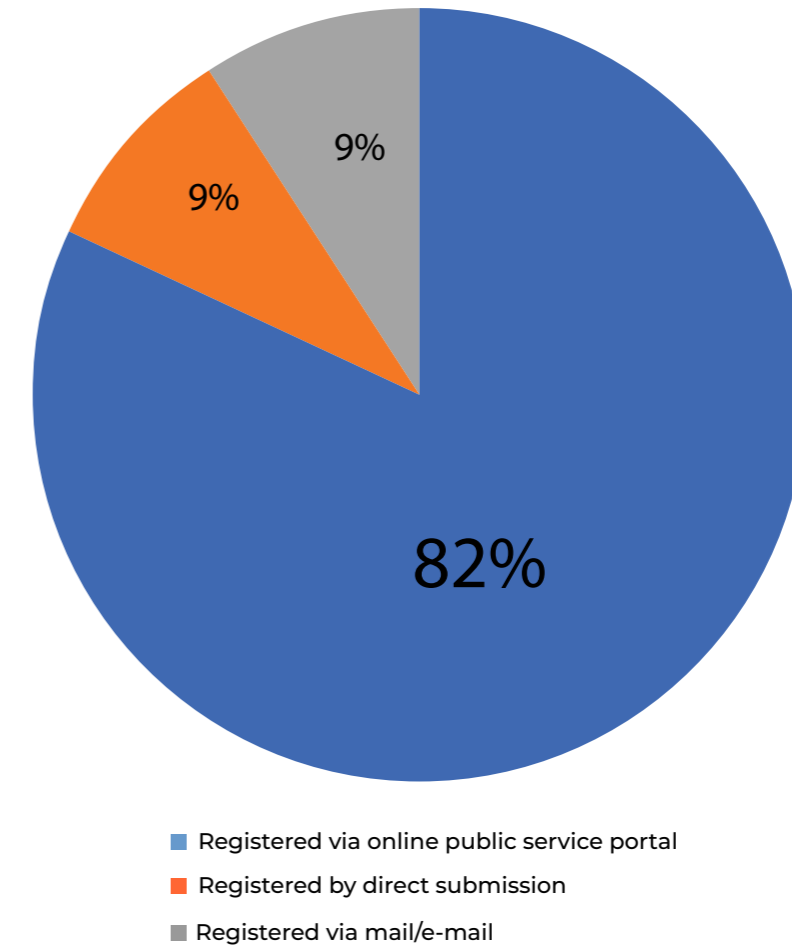


Figure 8. The ratio of application dossiers for SFC/GC at VCC in 2023 classified by registration methods

Regarding SFC/GC registration method, another positive point in 2023 is that the ratio of application dossiers submitted directly, by post and email to VCC, is very low, accounting for approx. 18%; the remaining 82% of the application dossiers were submitted through the online public service portal of the Ministry of Industry and Trade (<https://dichvucong.moit.gov.vn/HomePage.aspx>). Thus, from 2020 up to now, the rate of application dossiers submitted through the online public service portal of the Ministry of Industry and Trade has always reached over 80%. The submission and return of application results through the online public service portal (level 4) not only helps enterprises significantly shorten the time to fulfill the obligation to register SFC/GC as prescribed, but also contributes to limiting direct contact, ensuring safety against epidemics and maximizing convenience in the implementation of administrative procedures for enterprises.

2. Control of SFC/GC which are not subject to registration

In addition to the appraisal of application dossiers under the List of SFC/GC subject to registration, in 2023, VCC has carried out the work of controlling a number of SFC/GC which is not subject to registration in accordance with the Decision of the Prime Minister, such as a "travel vacation" contract (also known as a "vacation ownership contract").

NEWS BOX

Some notable issues concerning “travel vacation” or “vacation ownership” business

In substance, the “travel vacation” business is a civil transaction which are subject to regulations by numerous different legal documents and under the scope of management of various management authorities according to their assigned authority. The Ministry of Industry and Trade only considers consumers’ opinions and complaints from the perspective of consumer rights protection. Other Ministries, departments and provincial authorities shall perform State management on this kind of business under their power, for example: signs of fraud shall fall under the authority of the Ministry of Public Security, etc.

In the recent times, the Ministry of Industry and Trade has received a number of consumers’ complaints and petitions related to the “travel vacation” business concerning criminal, civil, tourism, consumer protection, competition issues

From the perspective of protecting consumer rights, since 2021, the Ministry of Industry and Trade has provided extensive information for people to acknowledge the nature of the vacation ownership contract as well as those issues consumers need to consider carefully before entering this type of contract. Recently, in order to continuously update and provide information to consumers about this type of business, the Ministry of Industry and Trade keeps warning consumers through relevant news articles on the official website of the Ministry of Industry and Trade, VCC and other media channels⁴.

In addition, recently, the Ministry of Industry and Trade has carried out activities to protect consumers’ rights in the field of travel vacations. These activities include conducting inspections of several enterprises, imposing sanctions for administrative violations, requiring enterprises to amend standard form contracts to comply with laws on consumer rights protection, and mandating corrections to information published to consumers. The Ministry has also organized citizen meeting sessions, worked with enterprises, collected and verified information, and coordinated with relevant parties to handle consumer complaints and petitions. Additionally, the Ministry has instructed

⁽⁴⁾ Other media channels include:
 - News article namely “Notice on advising businesses and consumers to comply with legal regulations protecting consumers’ interests when signing resort service contracts”;
 - News article namely “Some issues to note for consumers before deciding to enter into a type of vacation ownership contract”;
 - News article namely “Owning a vacation - From finding information to carefully studying the contract”;
 - News article namely “Consumer advice when signing a vacation ownership contract”;
 - News article namely “Owning a vacation - Consider carefully from finding information to concluding a contract”;
 - News article namely “Contents of vacation ownership contract - Perspective from consumer rights”;
 - Today’s Issue Program – Topic “Be careful in Vacation Ownership” broadcast on 30 and 31 May 2023 on VTV1 Vietnam Television.
 - 24h Motion Program broadcasted on 13 and 14 June 2023 on VTV1 Vietnam Television...

people to submit applications to competent authorities such as the investigation agency of the Ministry of Public Security (to report signs of criminal law violations) and the court (to report signs of civil law violations related to established civil transactions). To report signs of violations of the Competition Law by some enterprises providing vacation ownership services, the Ministry of Industry and Trade is reviewing and verifying information according to the provisions of law, within the scope of its assigned functions, duties, and powers.

In the forthcoming period, the Ministry of Industry and Trade will continue to coordinate with relevant Ministries, industries and localities to closely monitor the situation, conduct specialized inspections of enterprises providing travel vacation service, then report and recommend appropriate management measures to the Government and Prime Minister to protect the legitimate rights of consumers.

Besides, the Ministry of Industry and Trade recommends that consumers should carefully study the warning information and analysis of the Ministry of Industry and Trade (VCC) and relevant Ministries, industries and localities in term of travel vacation contracts before making decision to sign any contract to protect your own legitimate rights.



VII. Defective product recall

In 2023, VCC has supervised 09 Programs to recall defective products in the fields of vehicles (automobiles), swimming floats for children, books and car tires, specifically as follows:

MONITORING THE SITUATION OF DEFECTIVE PRODUCTS RECALL IN 2023

NO.	ENTERPRISE	PRODUCT NAME	EXECUTION TIME
1	Toyota Motor Vietnam Co., Ltd	Toyota Veloz manufactured from 11 April 2022 to 18 April 2022	Start date: 4 January 2023 Expected end date: 4 January 2026
2	VinFast Trading and Production Joint Stock Company	VF 8 ECO and VF 8 PLUS manufactured and assembled from September 2022 and February 2023.	Start dated: 19 February 2023 Expected end dated: 19 February 2024
3	Toyota Motor Vietnam Co., Ltd	Lexus GS200t/ GS350/ RC200t manufactured from 9 November 2012 to 10 November 2017 officially imported and distributed by Toyota Motor Vietnam Co., Ltd	Start date: 2 February 2023 Expected end date: 2 February 2026
4	Toyota Motor Vietnam Co., Ltd	Toyota Vios and Toyota Yaris with spare parts installed at the Company's authorized dealers from 29 June 2022 – 31 October 2022	Start date: 17 April 2023 Expected end date: 17 April 2023
5	Toyota Motor Vietnam Co., Ltd	Toyota Yaris manufactured on 12 March 2012 and 9 June 2012, officially imported and distributed by Toyota Motor Vietnam Co., Ltd	Start date: 3 May 2023 Expected end date: 3 May 2026
6	Toyota Motor Vietnam Co., Ltd	Toyota Raize manufactured from 15 December 2022 to 07 January 2023, officially imported and distributed by Toyota Motor Vietnam Co., Ltd	Start date: 20 June 2023 Expected end date: 20 June 2026
7	Decathlon Vietnam Co., Ltd	Inflatable floats for children (Product code: 8752139) distributed by Decathlon Vietnam Co., Ltd.	Start date: 10 July 2023 End date: 31 July 2023
8	Make Believe Ideas Ltd	04 titles of the Rainbow Road Board Book series	Start date: 21 September 2023.
9	Michelin Vietnam Company Limited	BFGOODRICH 205/60R16 92H TL ADVANTAGE TOURING GO tires (Product code 737253)	Start date: 13 July 2023 Expected end date: End of 2023

Table 1. Recalled product in 2023

VCC has also promptly posted warning information about the consumption of products posing risks of being unsafe to consumers' health, and issued a number of recommendations for the selection and procurement of goods and services to help consumers protect their legitimate rights and interests when purchasing.

VIII. Specialized examination and inspection

In 2023, the inspection has achieved the following specific results:

- Inspected the compliance with laws on protection of consumers' rights of 05 enterprises: 01 in telecommunications, 02 in insurance and 02 in retails; issuing decisions on administrative sanctions against the above 05 enterprises with a total fine of VND 600,000,000.

- In managing multi-level marketing activities: completed inspections for 06 multi-level marketing enterprises: Vietnam Link Group Joint Stock Company; Herbalife Vietnam Single Member Limited Liability Company; Oriflame Vietnam Limited; Seacret Limited Company; Gcoop Vietnam Co., Ltd; Kyowon The Orm Vietnam Company Limited; issued decisions on administrative sanctions decisions for those 06 enterprises and 01 participant in the violation with a total fine of VND 1,490,000,000.

Additionally, VCC has organized 02 inspection teams for compliance with the competition law according to schedule, including Yamaha Motor Vietnam Co., Ltd. and Honda Vietnam Company Ltd.

IX. Implementation of Programs on consumer protection

1. Enterprise for Consumers Program

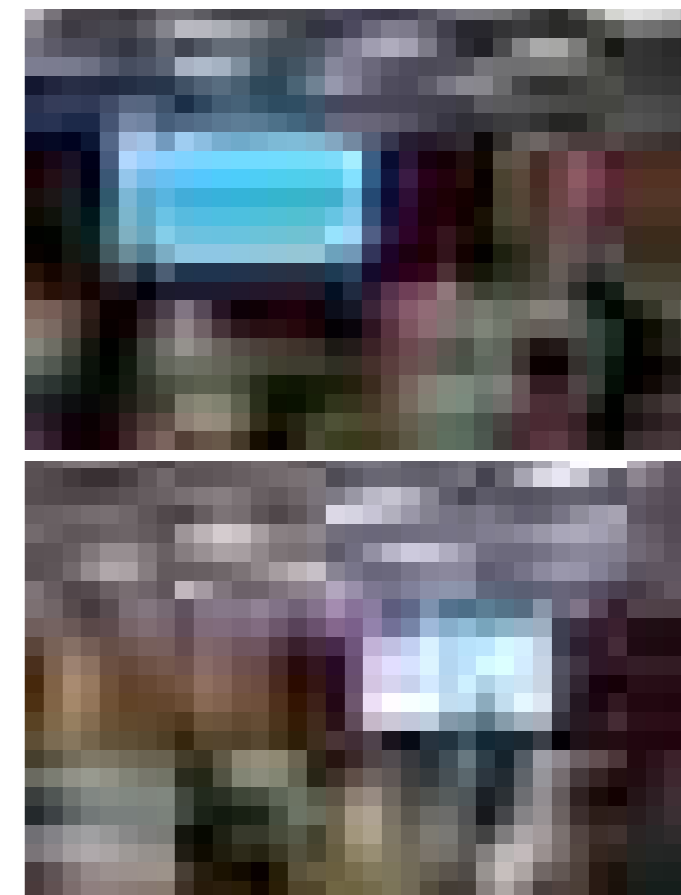
In 2023, VCC held a workshop to collect recommendations and improvise the draft Set of criteria for enterprises for consumers in the area of e-commerce (the "Set of criteria");

Organized activities for promotion and introduction of 2023 Enterprise for Consumers Program, including developing and posting news and articles on the Enterprise for Consumers section of VTC News and website of the Enterprise for Consumers Program;

Produced and posted video clips and reportages introducing the Set of criteria on digital newspapers and social networks;

Organized 01 seminar and 02 training courses in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City to guide enterprises to participate in the 2023 Enterprises for Consumers Program; organized a seminar broadcasted on television with the topic: "Some solutions for improving the responsibility of enterprises doing business in the field of e-commerce to consumers";

Maintained information technology systems to facilitate enterprises in self-assessing and receiving online results according to the Set of criteria, etc.



Instruction workshop for enterprises to participate in the 2023 Enterprises for Consumers Program (organized within the framework of the Enterprises for Consumers Program)

2. Program “Developing the System of Call Center to consult and support consumer in the period of 2021-2025” (Call System)

By 2023, VCC successfully completed the handover of equipment to Departments of Industry and Trade and Consumer Protection Associations in 52 provinces and cities nationwide. This included 35 Departments of Industry and Trade and 17 Consumer Protection Associations. Following the equipment handover, VCC provided support to these entities, assisting in equipment installation, connection to the Call System 1800.6838, and offering guidance on system operation, login procedures, and overall functionality.

Additionally, VCC conducted training courses for Departments of Industry and Trade and Consumer Protection Associations across provinces and cities. These courses focused on methodology and experience in consulting and supporting consumers via the Call System 1800.6838. Notably, VCC organized three training sessions on consulting and supporting consumers through the Call Center System 1800.6838 in Hai Phong City, Thua Thien Hue Province, and Ho Chi Minh City. During these sessions, VCC shared valuable experiences and skills to effectively address consumer complaints and petitions, providing support, answers, and resolutions to challenges encountered during the utilization of the Call System 1800.6838.

3. Program “Development of National Database on Consumer Protection in the period of 2021-2025” (Database Program)

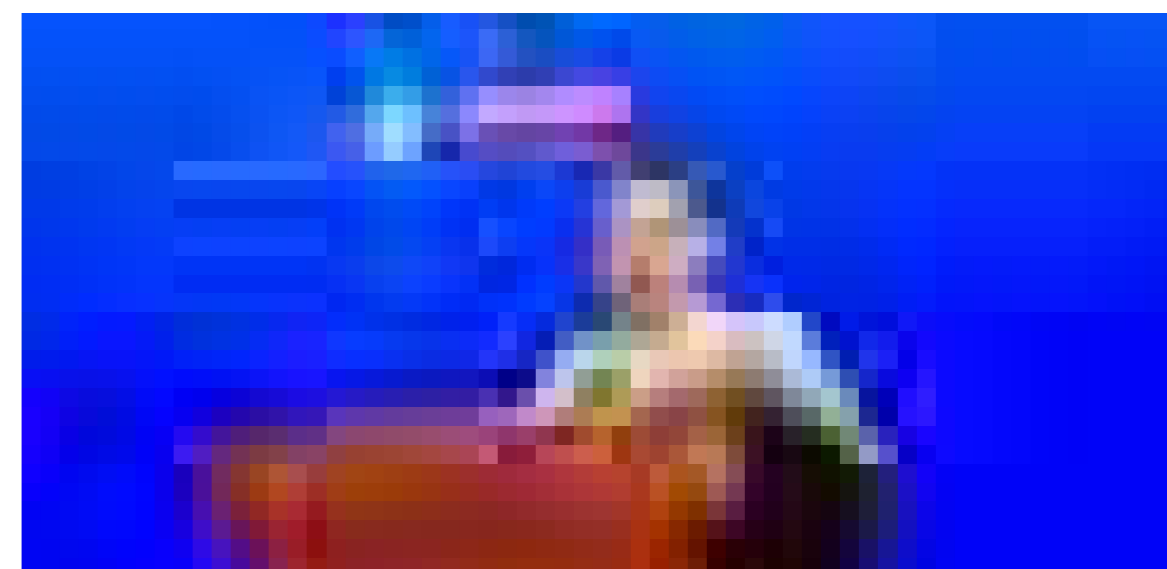
Currently, VCC has largely fulfilled the activities and tasks outlined for the 2023 Database Program. Moving forward, VCC will maintain coordination with relevant entities to operate and enhance the software system of the Database Program.

Moreover, in 2023, the Commission organized three training courses and one seminar aimed at disseminating legal knowledge on consumer protection and the application of information technology in safeguarding consumers' rights. These events took place in Hai Phong City, Can Tho City, Nghe An Province, and Quang Ninh Province, providing valuable insights and education to participants in these regions.

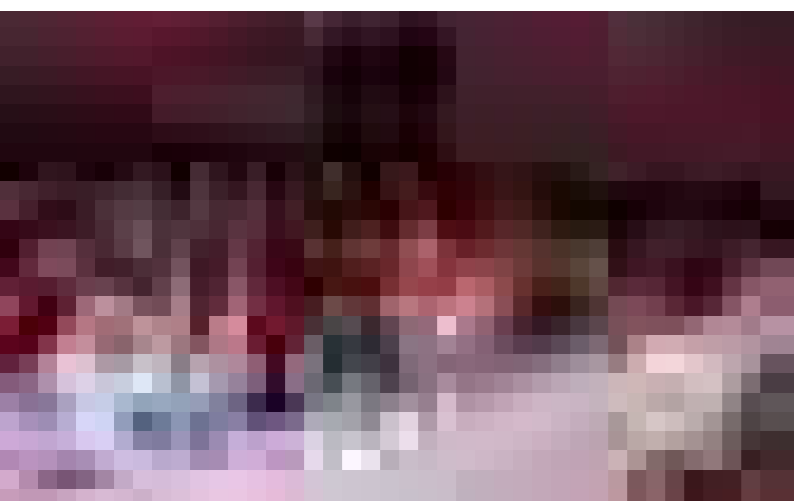
4. Program “Developing a digital ecosystem, strengthening protection of consumers’ rights in e-commerce” (“Consumers in e-commerce” Program)

To fulfill its assigned duties, VCC executed the objectives outlined for the 2023 Project, with a particular focus on engaging students through various practical and highly interactive activities. These activities included seminars, conferences, reportages, and the establishment of a TikTok channel. The centerpiece of these efforts was the “Young Consumers in E-commerce” Contest.

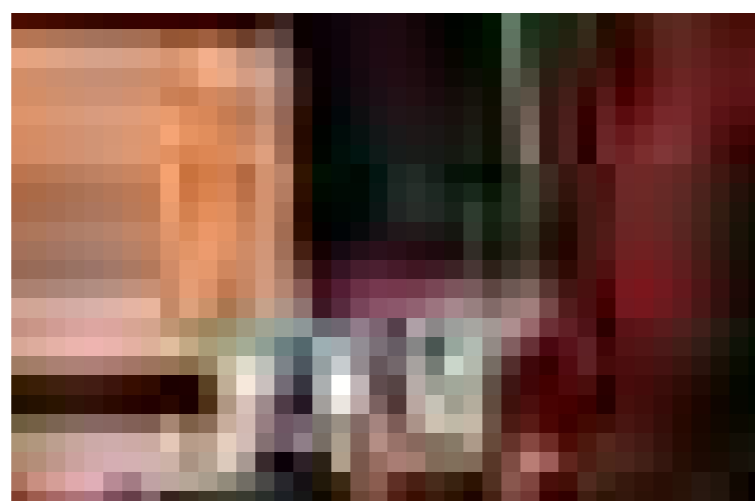
The selection round of the Contest garnered participation from over 10,000 students. Following this round, five teams were chosen to represent schools in the Southern region at the final round held on December 16, 2023, in Ho Chi Minh City. The final round was attended by leaders from VCC, Ministries, central and provincial departments, as well as nearly 1,000 university students who participated in and supported the Contest.



Mr. Le Trieu Dzung, Chairman of VCC, delivering the opening speech at the “Young Consumers in E-commerce” Contest in Ho Chi Minh City



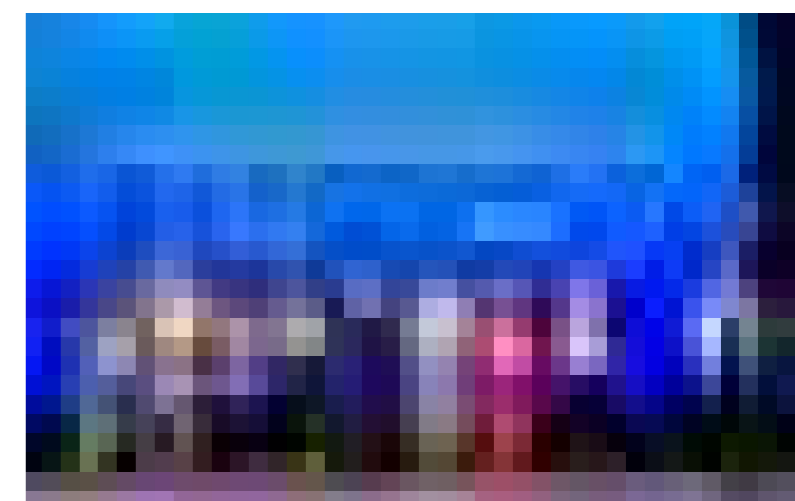
Judges of the “Young Consumers in E-commerce 2023” Contest in Ho Chi Minh City



Competing teams will have up to 10 seconds to provide answers to each question

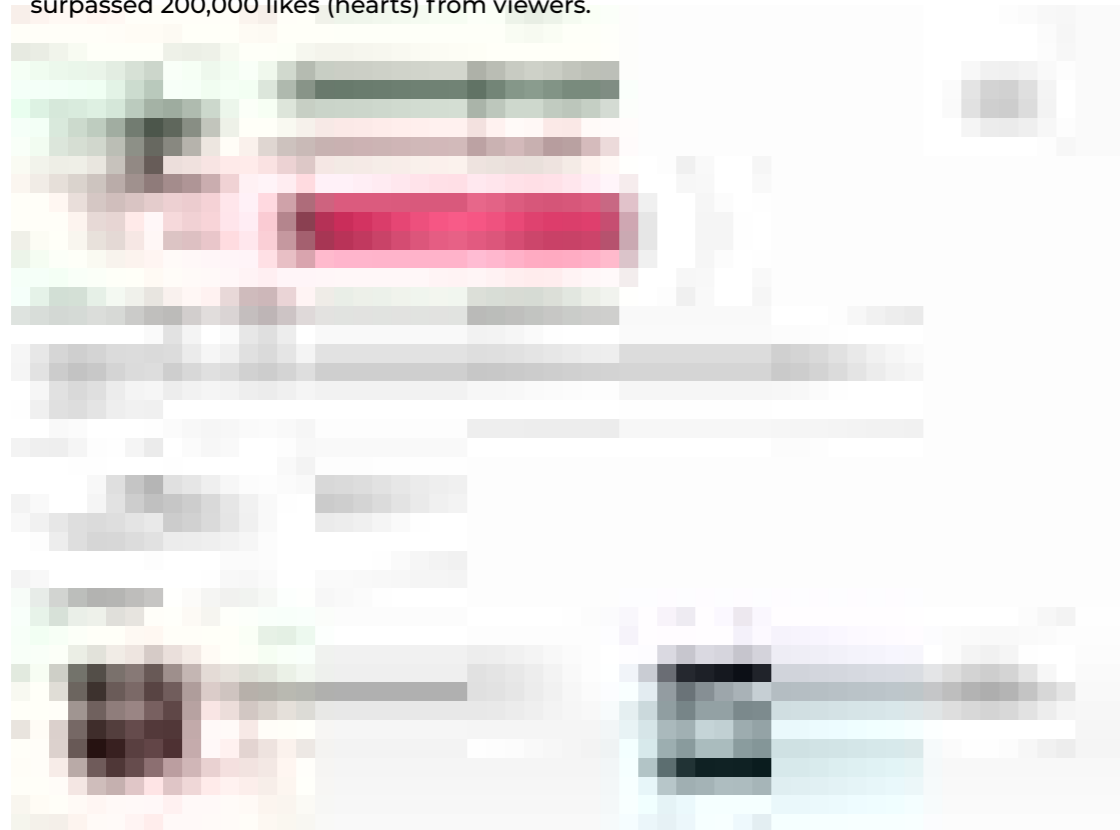


The Organizing Committee awarding the First Prize to the University of Economics and Law, Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City



“Young Consumers in E-commerce” Contest

In addition, in 2023, VCC has organized a series of seminars and trainings for students from colleges and universities as well as workers, etc.; developed videos and reports to propagate, disseminate and educate to improve legal knowledge on consumer protection. On the Tiktok chanel @ntdtrongtmdt (GenZ Consumers), VCC has uploaded nearly 30 video clips to the Tiktok chanel @ntdtrongtmdt (GenZ Consumers) with content related to consumer protection in e-commerce, and at the same time, built one separate category on consumer protection in e-commerce. Up til now, the videos have surpassed 200,000 likes (hearts) from viewers.



Tiktok chanel @ntdtrongtmdt (GenZ Consumers)

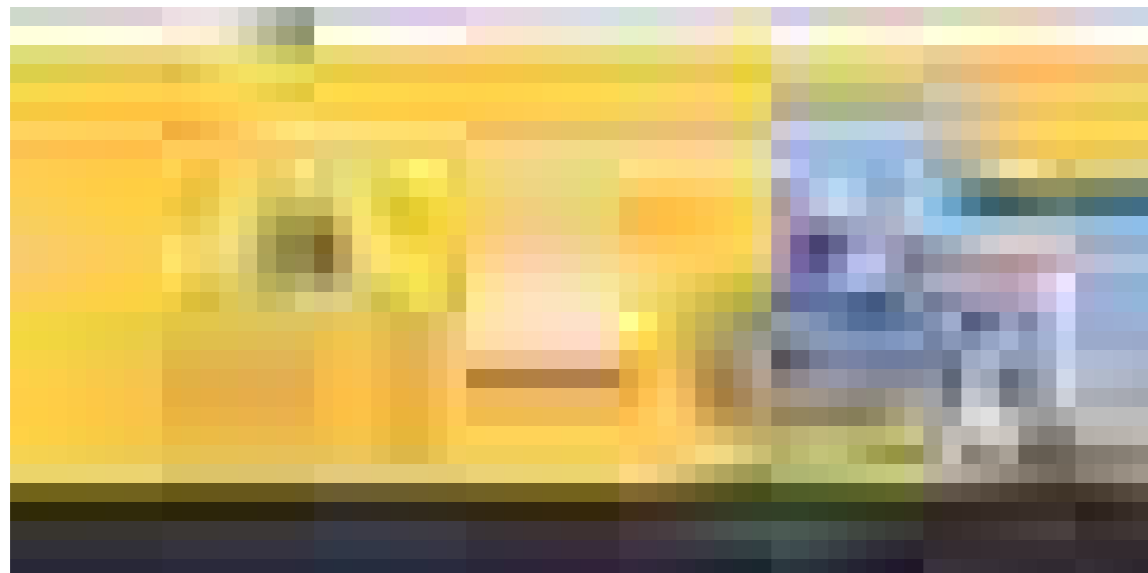
5. Program “Strengthening advocacy, education and dissemination of legal policies to protect consumer rights for vulnerable consumers in the period of 2021 – 2025” (“Vulnerable Consumers” Program)

In 2023, the Project's activities centered on two groups of consumers: the elderly and those residing in remote areas or working in factories and industrial parks. The project formed survey teams to gather information, leading to the development of two sets of handbooks focused on safeguarding the rights of these vulnerable consumer groups. Furthermore, workshops were organized to disseminate knowledge aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of protecting the rights of elderly consumers. Additionally, reportages and radio broadcast series were conducted to raise awareness among vulnerable consumers about laws pertaining to the protection of consumer rights. These efforts aimed to empower and support these marginalized consumer groups in understanding and asserting their rights.

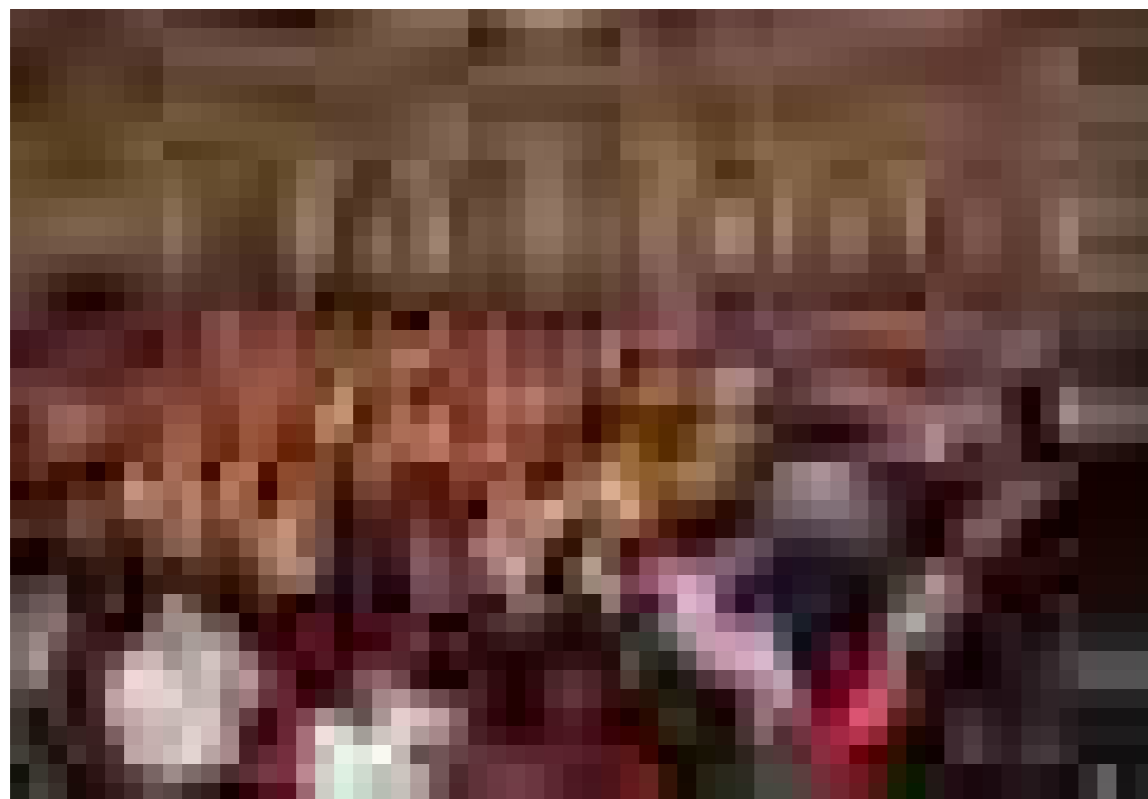


Handbook on some skills in consumption transactions for elderly consumers

Especially, VCC has organized the “Understanding the Laws on Protection of Consumer Rights” Contest with the participation of teams being representatives of enterprises in the Northern region. The preliminary round of the Contest had the participation of nearly 1,500 employees from many enterprises, manufacturing and business establishments, after which, 03 excellent teams were selected to participate in the Final Round which hold at Hai Phong Opera House on the afternoon of 26 November 2023.



Preliminary round of the 2023 Understanding the Laws on Protection of Consumer Rights Contest



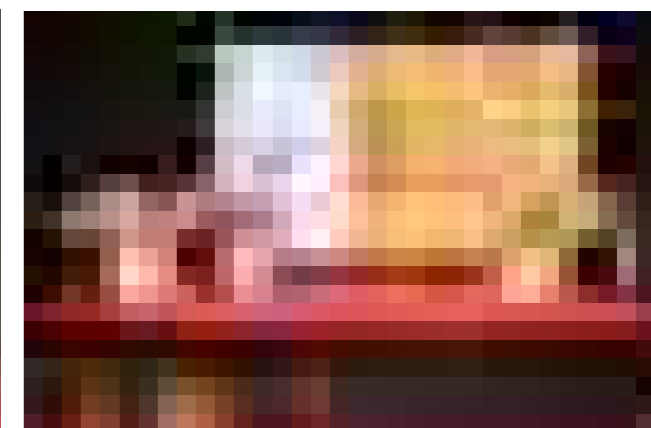
Audience cheering for the 2023 Understanding the Laws on Protection of Consumer Rights Contest in Hai Phong City



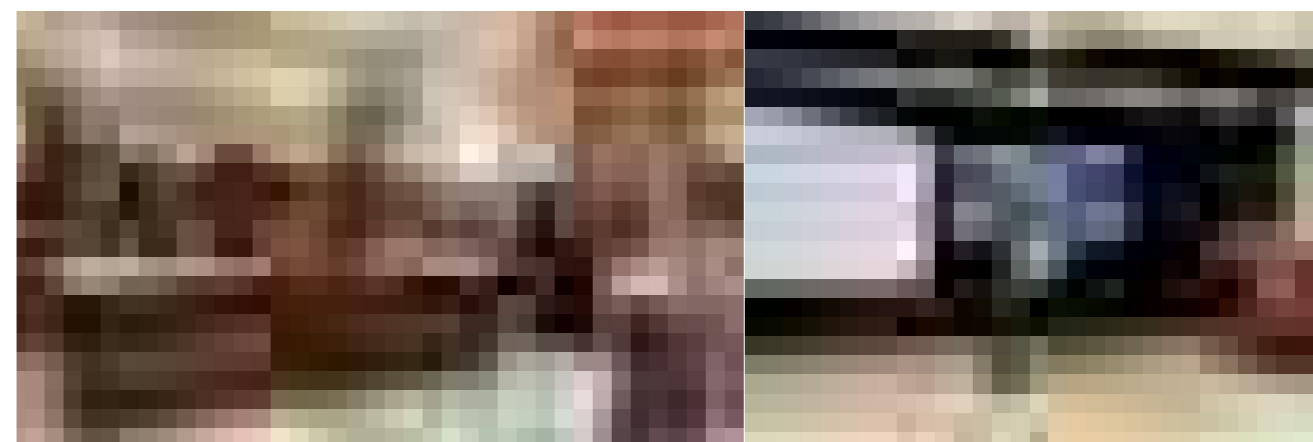
The Organizing Committee awarding prizes at the final round of the 2023 Understanding the Laws on Protection of Consumer Rights Contest



The judges giving scores at the 2023 Understanding the Laws on Protection of Consumer Rights Contest in Hai Phong City



Teams answering questions in the 2023 Understanding the Laws on Protection of Consumer Rights Contest in Hai Phong City



Workshop on Strengthening the protection of elderly consumers in Vietnam

OTHER SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES

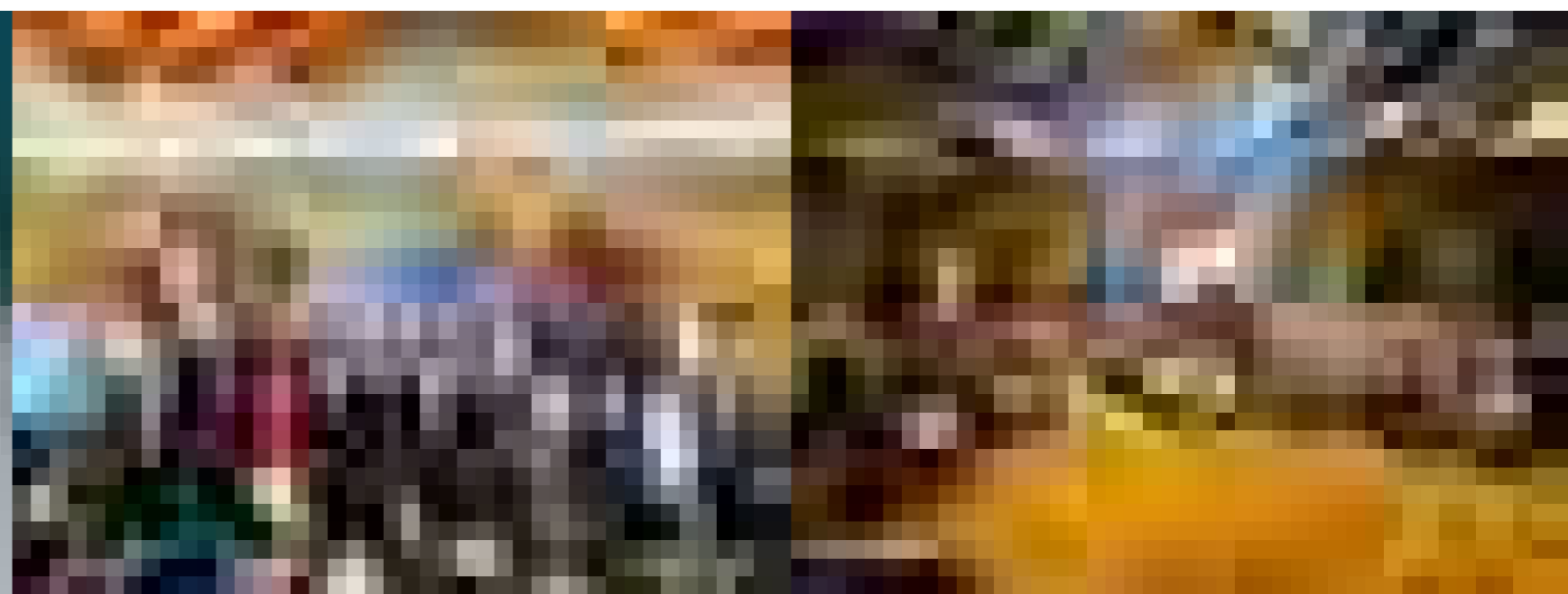
I. International cooperation

1. Cooperation within the framework of ASEAN

Within ASEAN's cooperation framework on competition and consumer protection, VCC has enthusiastically and actively participated in and contributed to regional competition and consumer protection affairs, in particular:

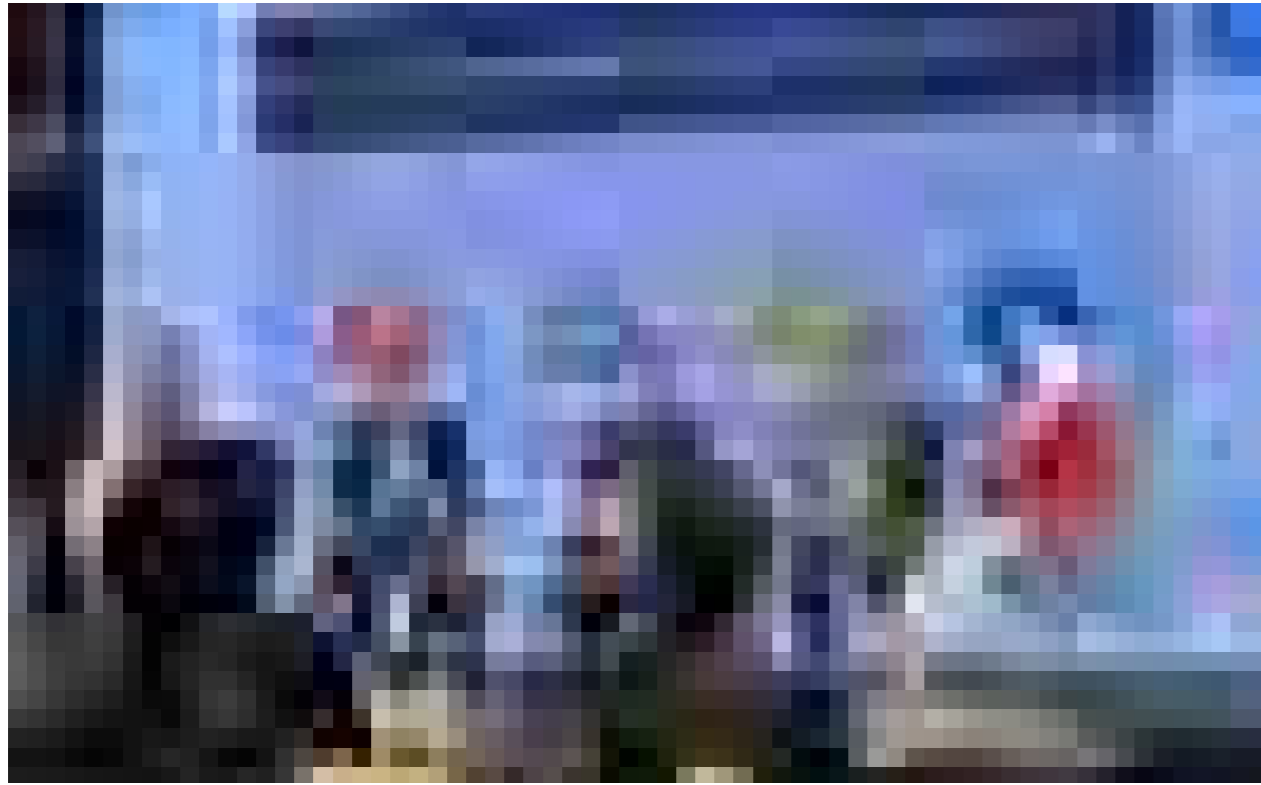
1.1. Competition

In 2023, as a member of the ASEAN Expert Group on Competition (AEGC), VCC has assigned representatives to participate in the 30th and 31st regular meetings of ASEAN Expert Group on Competition (AEGC Meeting) which took place in March and October every year in the Philippines. Within the regional cooperation framework, VCC has participated in cooperation activities on competition of the AEGC Group, specifically:



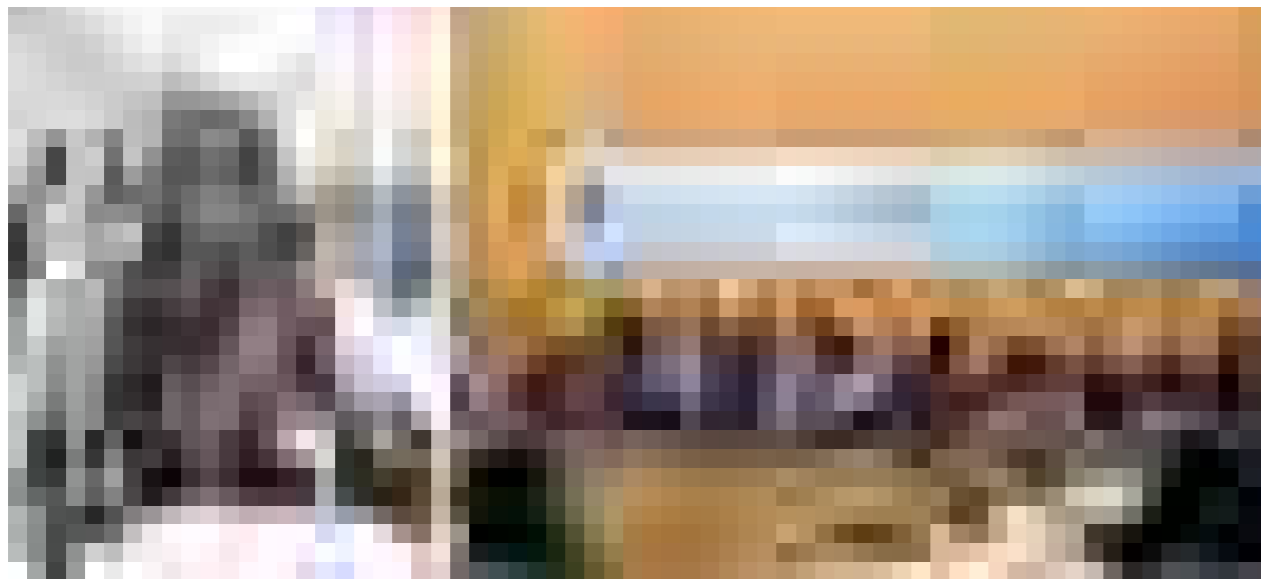
VCC participating in the AEGC meeting

- (i) Participated in the development of the ASEAN Portal for Sharing Economic Concentration Cases;
- (ii) Participated in the development of the AEGC's Operation Report for the period 2020-2022 to update the implementation of policies and laws on competition in ASEAN member countries in recent years;
- (iii) Assigned representatives to participate in and present at a number of international competition events, including:
 - Participated in and contributed opinions at the Meeting on the development of the ASEAN Portal for Sharing Economic Concentration Cases in Cambodia;
 - Participated in and delivered a speech with the topic of "Overview of competition in Vietnam's pharmaceutical industry" at the 10th ASEAN Conference on Competition in Philippines;
 - Participated in the 18th East Asia Meeting on Competition Policy and the 15th East Asia Conference on Competition Law and Policy held in Bangkok, Thailand;



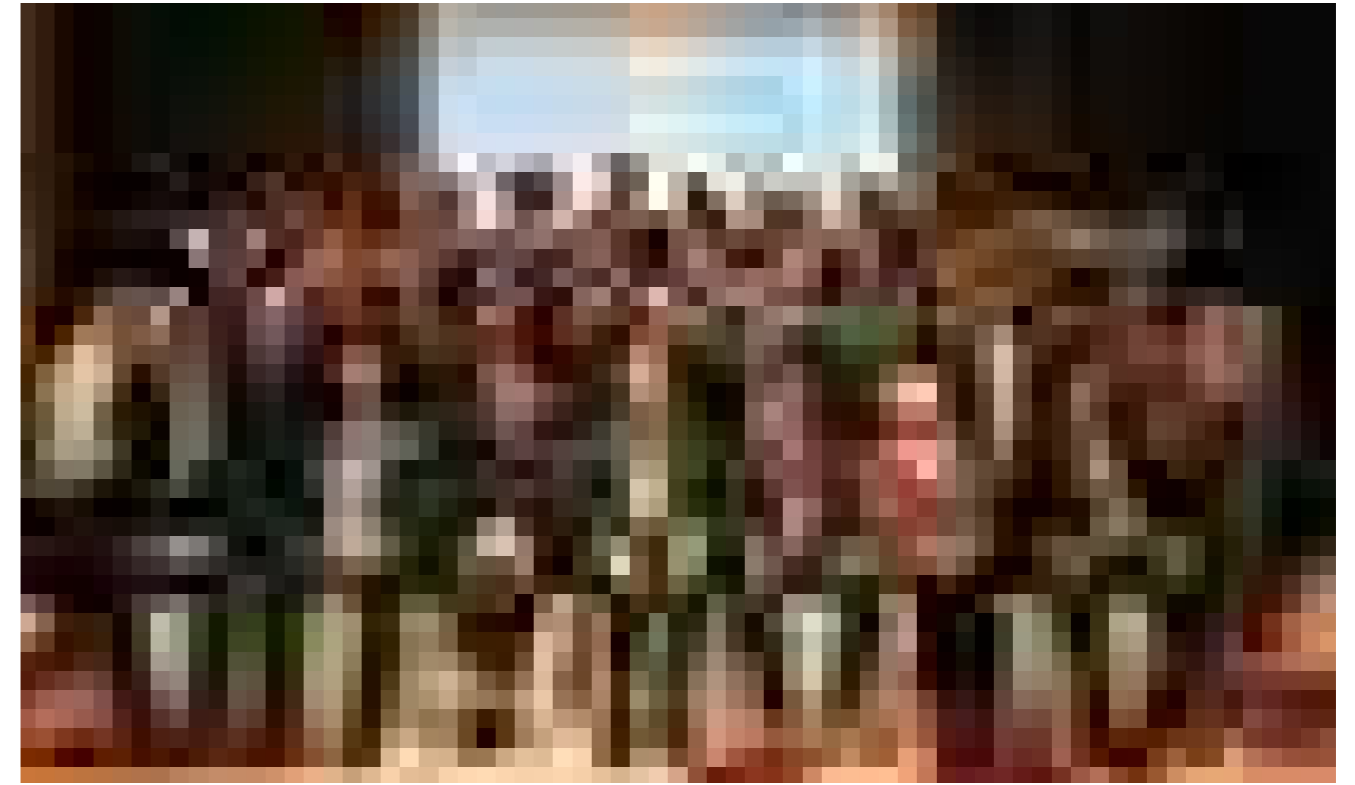
Representatives of VCC presenting at the 15th EATOP in Thailand

- Attended the 22nd OECD Global Forum on Competition and the 8th High-level Representatives Meeting of Asian-Pacific Competition Authorities in Paris, France;



Representatives of VCC attending the 22nd OECD Global Forum on Competition and the 8th High-level Representatives Meeting of Asian-Pacific Competition Authorities in Paris - France

- Participated in the training course of the OECD Korea Policy Center with the topic of "Anti-competition agreements and bid rigging" in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia;



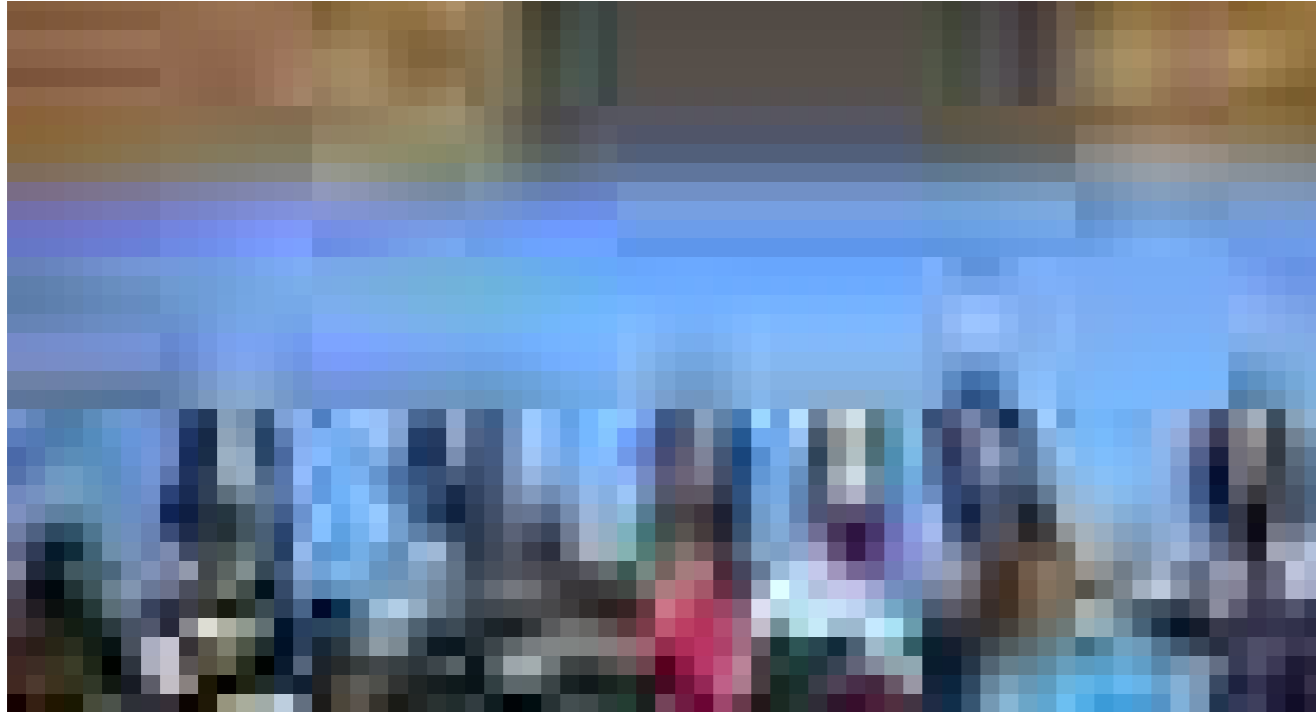
Representatives of VCC attending OECD training course in Malaysia

- Participated in the OECD Training Course on Competition Case Assessment Skills in the Republic of Korea;
- Participated in the ASEAN Training Course on Unilateral Exclusion Behavior in Manila, Philippines;
- Participated in the AANZFTA Competition Commissioners Meet in Brisbane, Australia;



Representatives of VCC attending the AANZFTA Competition Commissioners Meet in Brisbane, Australia

- Attended the 2023 ICN Annual Conference in Spain;



Attending the 2023 ICN Annual Conference in Spain

- Participated in and presented at the Hong Kong Competition Conference



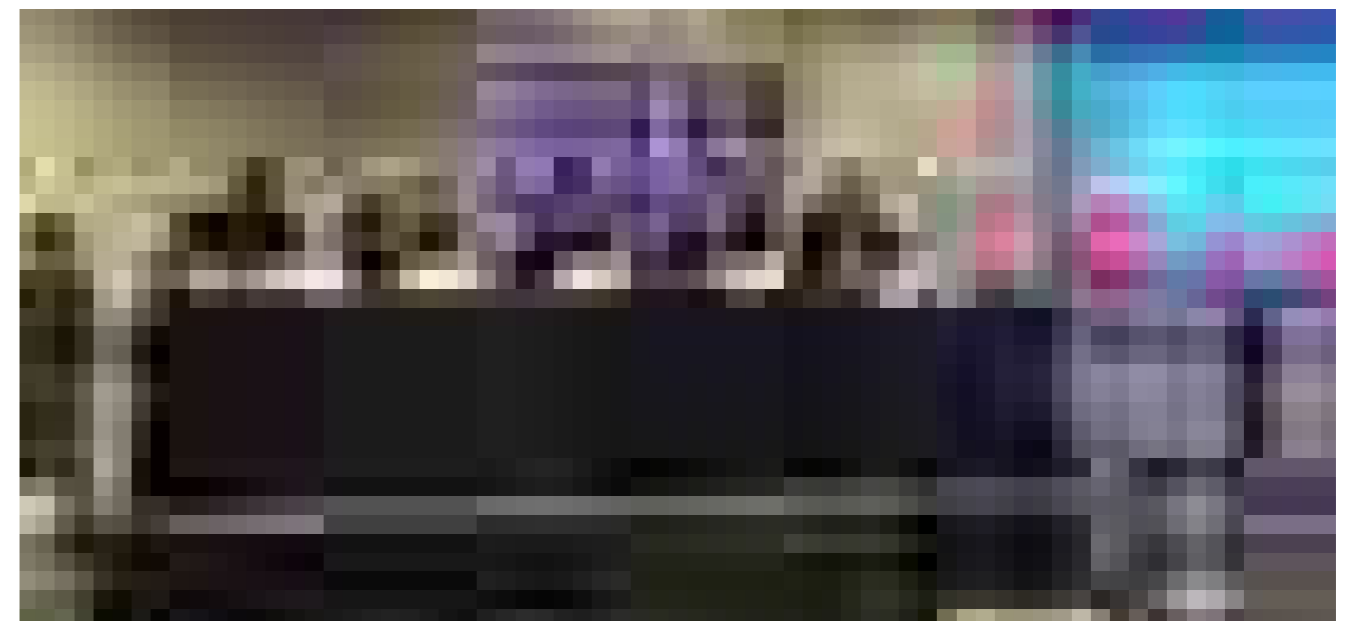
Representatives of VCC at the Competition Conference in Hong Kong

- Participated in an internship course at the Korea Fair Trade Commission in Sejong, South Korea;



Representatives of VCC participating in an internship course at the Korea Fair Trade Commission in Sejong, South Korea

- Participated in and presented at the APEC Competition Policy and Law Group Meeting and related events in California, USA



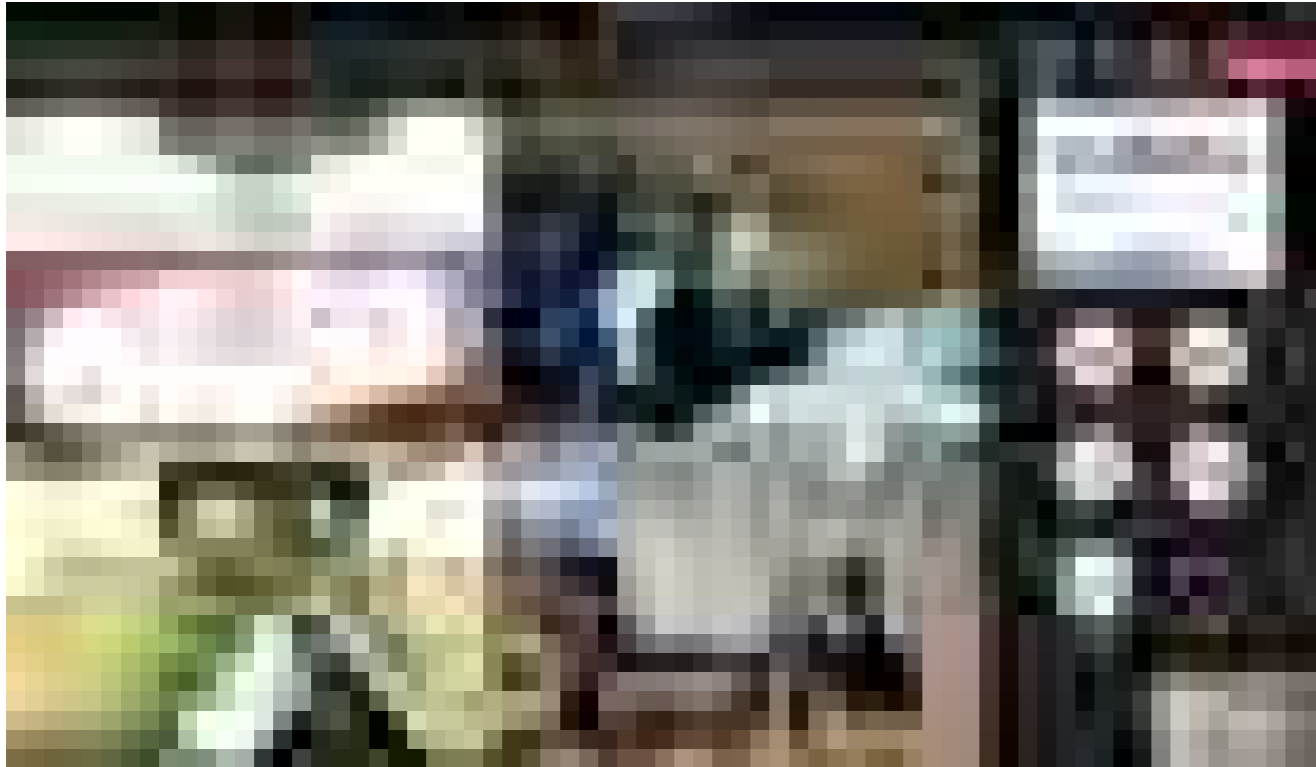
Representatives of VCC presenting at the APEC Competition Policy and Law Group Meeting and related events in California, USA

- Participated in the ICN Conference on Unilateral Behavior in Japan;
- Participated in the ASEAN Competition Conference on Strengthening Cooperation in Indonesia;
- Participated in the Conference on economic concentration in Indonesia.

1.2. In the field of consumer protection

In 2023, as a member of the ASEAN Committee on Consumer Protection (ACCP), VCC has enthusiastically and actively participated in and implemented cooperation activities on consumer protection of ASEAN. A number of activities and results achieved in consumer protection affairs within ASEAN framework are detailed as below:

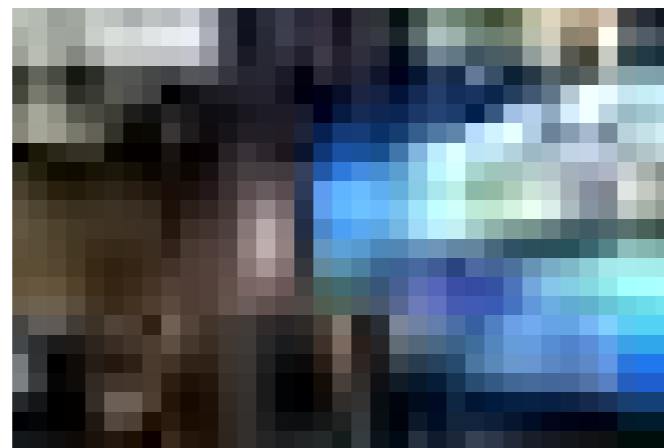
- Participated in the 26th Conference of ACCP and the 27th Conference of ACCP; actively exchanged information, experiences and proposed cooperation initiatives to develop ASEAN's consumer protection activities.



Representatives of VCC participating in the 27th Annual Meeting of the ASEAN Committee on Consumer Protection (ACCP)

- Together with ACCP members, VCC reviewed, updated, improved and developed products of projects and consumer protection activities for ASEAN organized by the ASEAN Secretariat and ACCP such as: ASEAN Consumer Distance Learning Tools (LMS); ASEAN Sustainable Consumption Toolkit; ASEAN Guidelines on Online Dispute Resolution (ODR); ASEAN Guidelines on Consumer Associations; Support Tool for Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) for ASEAN Consumers; ASEAN Guidelines on Consumer Impact Assessment (CIA); the ASEAN Consumer Empowerment Index (ACEI), etc.

- Participated via online platform in the 9th Asia Forum on Consumer Policy held in the Republic of Korea.



Representatives of VCC participating in (online) the 9th Asia Forum on Consumer Policy held in the Republic of Korea

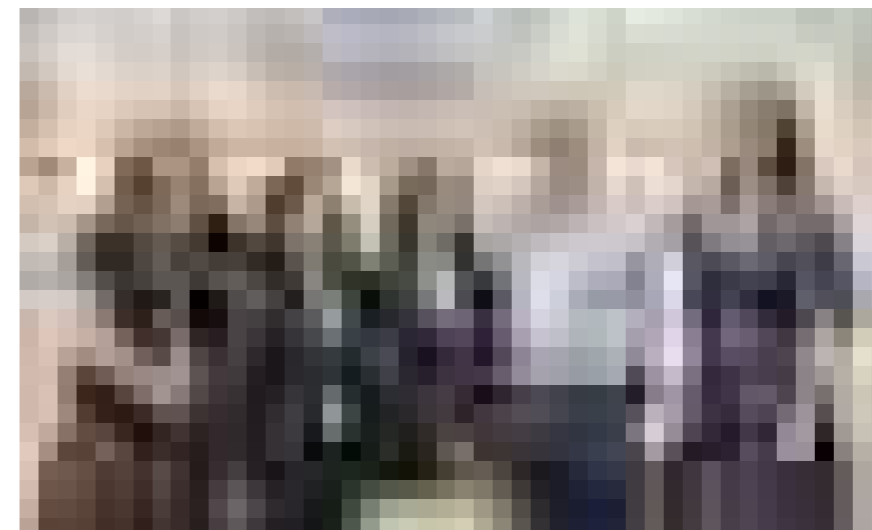
2. Bilateral cooperation

VCC has proactively contacted and coordinated with a number of national competition agencies and international organizations on competition, implementing a number of cooperative activities in competition and consumer protection area, specifically:

- Coordinated with the Australian Competition & Consumer Commission to organize a workshop on consumer protection and sustainable development in Hanoi, Vietnam from 23 – 25 October 2023.



Mr. Le Trieu Dzung, Chairman of VCC, speaking at the Workshop on consumer protection and sustainable development in Hanoi



Representative of VCC participating in the Internship Course at the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC)

- Appointed officials to participate in secondment at the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission; coordinated with the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission to organize a training course on consumer protection for Vietnamese officials working on consumer protection;

- Coordinated with ACCC to carry out a number of trainings and propaganda publications on the topics of protecting consumer rights, controlling standard form contracts, general conditions and raising consumer awareness about illegal multi-level marketing activities.

- Strengthened cooperation with agencies and organizations on competition and consumer protection around the world through information and opinions exchange at online meetings organized by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD); online survey activities organized and deployed by OECD, UNCTAD and partner agencies in the Republic of Korea.

- Developed Project Documents “ Consumer Protection in ASEAN implemented in Vietnam (PROTECT II)” and “Promoting competitiveness within the framework of ASEAN, COMPETE II Project – Phase 2” sponsored by the German Government;

- Cooperated with the United Nations Development Program in Vietnam: In 2023, VCC coordinated with the United Nations Development Program in Vietnam (UNDP) to develop and publish the Code of Conduct on Responsible business practices for E-commerce merchants and sellers. During the process of developing the Code of Conduct, VCC and UNDP jointly organized many seminars and meetings to collect opinions from State management agencies, domestic and foreign organizations, business community, and consumers on draft content. In March 2023, the Code of Conduct was completed and announced at the Launching Ceremony of Consumer Rights Day 2023 in Hanoi with the signing participation of 08 enterprises operating in the internet environment. In guiding vendors to comply with legal regulations and implement responsible business practices for consumers, the Code of Conduct has been positively responded to by many e-commerce enterprises in Vietnam, laying the next foundation for legal compliance in general and in the field of e-commerce in particular.



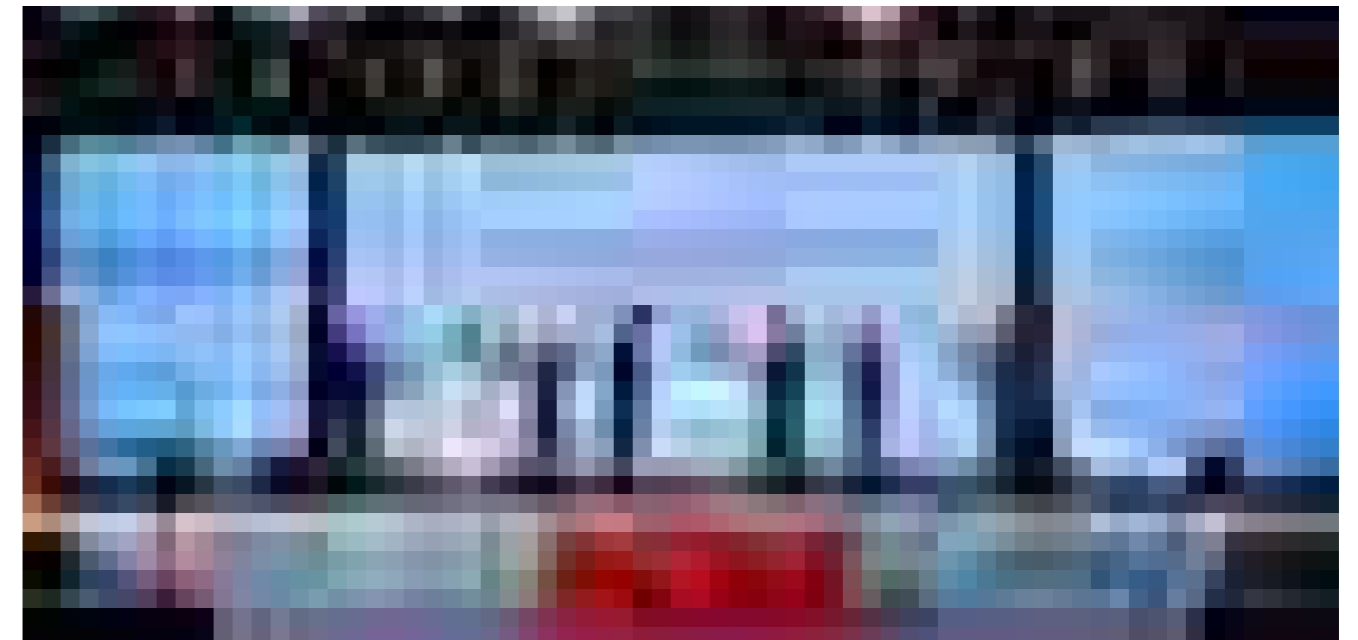
The Launching Ceremony of the Code of Conduct on Responsible business practices for E-commerce merchants and sellers in Hanoi



Consultation workshop (1st time) on the content of the draft Code of Conduct in Ho Chi Minh City

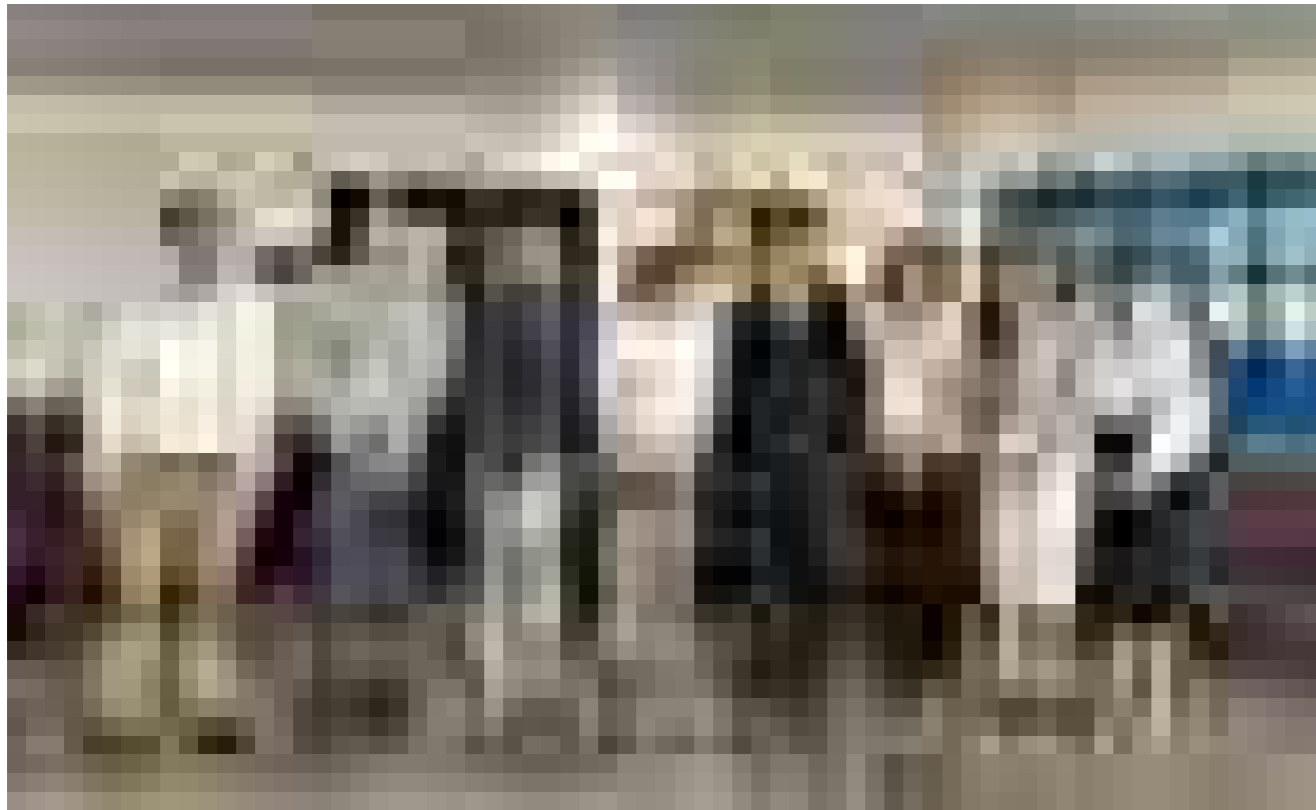


Consultation workshop (2nd time) on the content of the draft Code of Conduct in Hanoi



Pledge Ceremony on implementing the Code of Conduct on Responsible business practices for E-commerce merchants and sellers in Hanoi

- Discuss the cooperation plan for 2024 with the competition authorities of the US and Australia; OECD Korea.



VCC discussing the cooperation plan for 2024 with the competition authorities of the US, Australia and OECD Korea

II. Training and propaganda activities

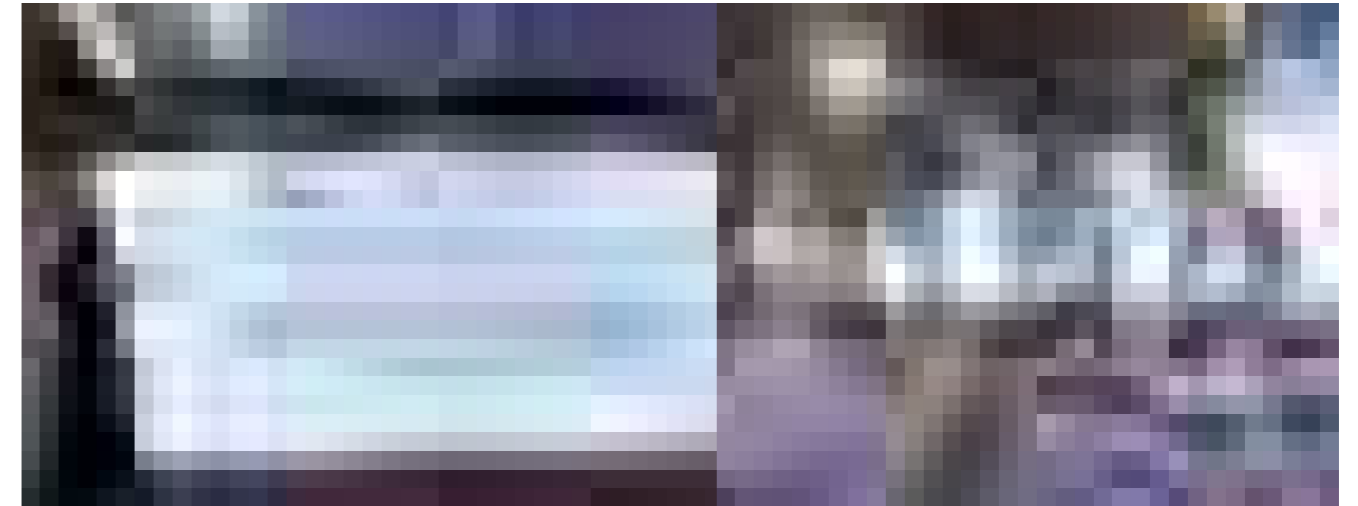
In 2023, training, propaganda and dissemination of legal knowledge on competition, consumer protection, multi-level marketing and related knowledge have been continuously focused to implement by VCC.

1. Training, propagation and dissemination of legal knowledge:

1.1 Competition

Implemented the Competition Law Implementation Plan promulgated together with Decision No. 1227/QĐ-TTg dated 24 September 2018 of the Prime Minister; duties assigned to VCC in accordance with the implementation plan of the Free Trade Agreement between Vietnam and the European Union (EVFTA) in 2023 of the Ministry of Industry and Trade promulgated together with Decision No. 1043/QĐ-BCT dated 28 April 2023 of the Minister of Industry and Trade; operational plans approved 2023, in 2023, VCC has coordinated with relevant agencies, organizations and individuals to organize seminars to disseminate knowledge, policies, competition regulations, training and guidance on competition law compliance for government agencies, departments and enterprises in many localities nationwide, specifically as follows:

- 02 training workshops for management agencies and enterprises on competition policies of Vietnam and EU countries in Quang Ninh Province and Ho Chi Minh City;
- 02 training workshops on competition law, compliance guidance and coordination in the implementation of State management of competition for government agencies and departments in Da Nang City and Ho Chi Minh City;
- 04 training courses for management agencies and enterprises on competition policies of Vietnam and member countries of EVFTA and CPTPP in Quang Ninh Province and Ho Chi Minh City;



Training course on competition law for the agencies and departments in Da Nang City

- 05 training courses on competition law compliance for enterprises in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City;

The above seminars and training courses have attracted the participation of many government agencies, departments as well as enterprises in the locality where the event is organized and the neighboring localities. Through these activities, VCC has propagated and disseminated knowledge of competition laws; professional exchanges to instruct local agencies and departments to comply with competition laws; coordinate the implementation of the State management of competition in the locality; guide enterprises to abide by the law and apply the provisions of competition law to protect the legitimate rights and interests of enterprises in the business operation and competition, especially in the context of changes in both domestic and global socio-economic situation.

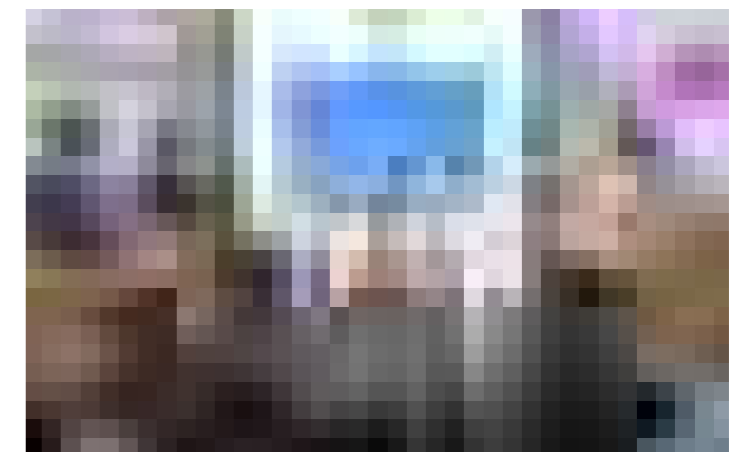
1.2 Management of Multi-level marketing activities

To use resources effectively, the propaganda and dissemination of laws are integrated and implemented within the framework of the Project on improving the efficiency of State management in multi-level marketing activities. The propaganda and dissemination of the law continues to be promoted in many different forms:

- Organized conferences to disseminate legal regulations on multi-level marketing business in Decree No. 18/2023/ND-CP for enterprises and provincial Departments of Industry and Trade;



Dissemination conference on regulations of Decree No. 18/2023/ND-CP in Ho Chi Minh City



Dissemination conference on regulations of Decree No. 18/2023/ND-CP VTV6 channel

- Coordinated with many Departments of Industry and Trade in organizing training on management of multi-level marketing activities for local officials and civil servants;



Photo: Training workshop in Bac Giang Province

- Published legal Q&A handbook;
- Developed propaganda video clips;
- Organized training courses on legal knowledge on multi-level marketing for individuals in need according to the program recognized by the Ministry of Industry and Trade and internal training courses on professional expertise in the field of enforcement of competition and consumer protection.
- Organized propaganda activities directly to students of universities in Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Thai Nguyen Province;



Conference on propaganda and dissemination of legal regulations on multi-level marketing business and identification of illegal multi-level marketing activities at the University of Economics and Finance in Ho Chi Minh City

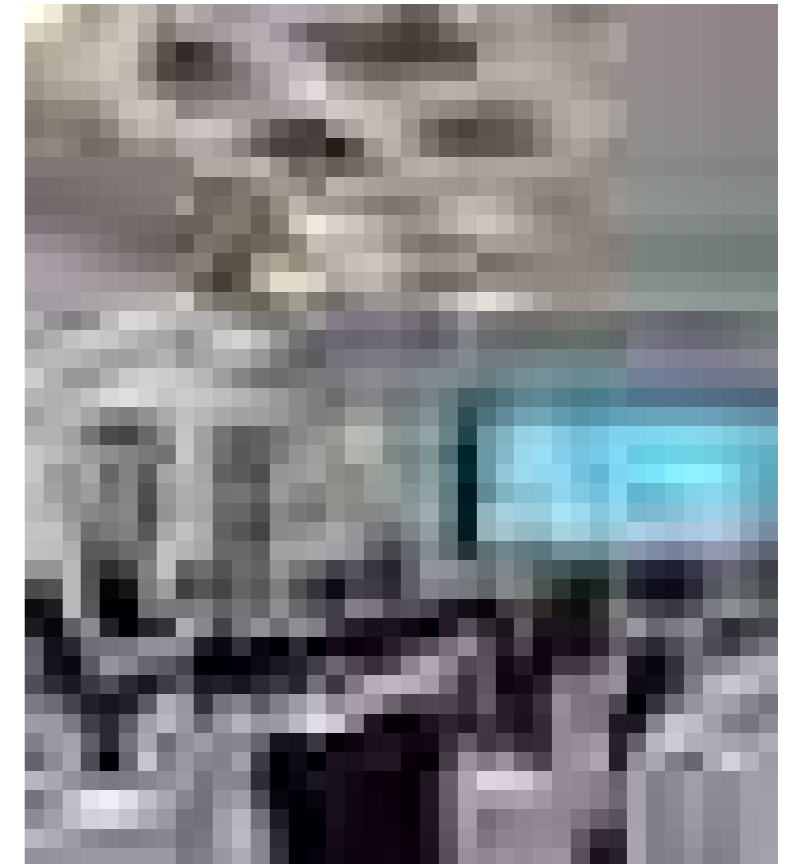


Dissemination conference for students of Foreign Trade University in Hanoi

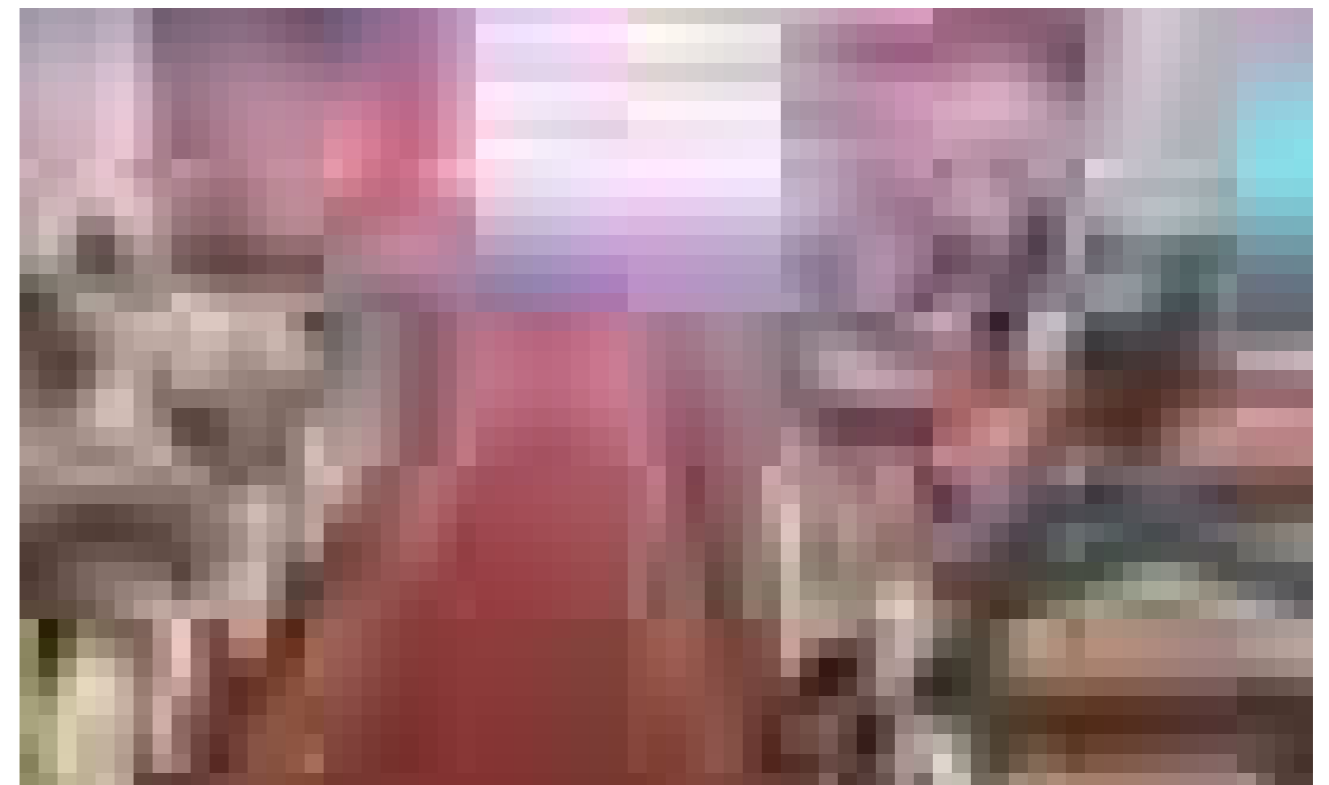
1.3. Consumer protection

In 2023, VCC has coordinated with many relevant agencies and organizations (including media and press) to organize seminars and workshops on knowledge and laws on protecting consumers' rights, promoting sustainable production and consumption as well as collecting public comments on the Draft Law on Protection of Consumer Rights (amended). Propaganda and publication on the protection of consumers' rights have been carried out actively with a variety of contents and methods of implementation (both face-to-face and online), becoming one of the outstanding activities in 2023 of VCC.

In addition, VCC has also coordinated with the Departments of Industry and Trade and Consumer Protection Associations of many provinces and cities nationwide to organize propaganda training seminars to raise awareness of the Law on Protection of Consumer Rights in provinces and cities.



VCC speaking at the training workshop on controlling of standard form contracts and general conditions in Hanoi



Representative of VCC speaking at the training session on knowledge of protecting consumers' interests in Thai Nguyen Province

2. Information and communication:

In 2023, VCC published 250 news and articles on law enforcement and State management activities in its assigned field;

VCC warned of acts showing signs of violation of laws on competition, protection of consumers' rights and management of multi-level marketing business;

Published program for defective product recall on VCC's website: <http://vcc.gov.vn/>;

Posted more than 50 news articles on activities to protect consumers' interests on VCC's website and dozens of news articles on the website of the Ministry of Industry and Trade, including propaganda information on activities of consumer protection, promotion of sustainable production – consumption, development process, content, new points, etc. of the Law on Protection of Consumer Rights (amended). Many news articles have been used by other media outlets and newspapers to inform the public;

In addition, VCCVCC also coordinated with the Ministerial Office, media agencies and the press to provide information to people and social community on hot issues of public concern, such as warning consumers to be cautious when participating in transactions in the field of vacation ownership, unauthorized multi-level marketing business, etc.

In addition to posting news, articles and publications on websites, television, newspapers and radios, VCC continues to increase the use of social network channels to promote communication in the field of competition, protect consumers' interests and management of multi-level marketing business. Those activities facilitate businesses and individuals to access information easily, conveniently and effectively.

III. Video clips, reportages

VCC has developed and broadcasted many propaganda reportages on protection of consumers' rights such as:

- Reportages for broadcast in “Launching Ceremony of Vietnam Consumer Rights Day 2023” event on 15 March 2023 in Hanoi.

- Reportages for introduction of new content of the Law on Protection of Consumer Rights 2023⁵.

- Propaganda reportage under the Project of developing the digital ecosystem and strengthening the protection of consumers' rights in e-commerce⁶.

- Propaganda reportage under the Project of strengthening propaganda, education and dissemination of legal policies to protect consumers' rights for vulnerable consumers in the period of 2021 – 2025.

- Propaganda reportage for promotion of sustainable production and consumption in Vietnam.



⁵<https://media.congthuong.vn/mot-so-diem-moi-trong-luat-bao-ve-quyen-loi-nguoi-tieu-dung-sua-doi-ve-giao-dich-truc-tuyen-6776.media&secureURL=1&previews=1>

⁶<https://media.congthuong.vn/mot-so-diem-moi-trong-luat-bao-ve-quyen-loi-nguoi-tieu-dung-sua-doi-ve-giao-dich-truc-tuyen-6776.media&secureURL=1&previews=1>

IV. Negotiation and enforcement of competitive contents in Free Trade Agreements (FTAs)

1. Implementation of FTAs

VCC has participated in the implementation of commitments in Competition chapters in AANZFTA, VJEP, VN – EAEU FTA, VKFTA; participated in the implementation of commitments in Chapters of Competition and State-owned enterprises and designated monopolies in CPTPP; participated in the 18th and 19th Meetings of the Competition Committee within the framework of AANZFTA Joint Committee; participated in the 1st Meeting of RCEP Committee on Business Environment.

2. Participation in the negotiation of FTA agreements

VCC has been actively involved in the development of plans and negotiations for various agreements, including the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Competition (AFAC). The competition chapters in agreements encompass the ASEAN-Canada Free Trade Agreement (ACAFTA), ASEAN-China Free Trade Agreement (ACFTA), Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF), Vietnam – UAE FTA (CEPA), and Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA). The specific negotiation status of these agreements is outlined as follows:

(i) AFAC:

In 2023, ASEAN member countries conducted 07 negotiation sessions for the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Competition. As per the plan, ASEAN countries aim to conclude negotiations by June 2024 and submit the draft AFAC for approval at the ASEAN Economic Ministers' Meeting (AEC) in August 2024.

(ii) ACAFTA:

In 2023, VCC representatives participated in 5 negotiation sessions on competition and consumer protection within the ASEAN-Canada Free Trade Agreement.

(iii) ACFTA:

In 2023, VCC representatives engaged in 4 negotiation sessions on competition and consumer protection within the upgraded ASEAN-China Free Trade Agreement.

(iv) IPEF:

The chapter on Competition Policy within the IPEF is currently under negotiation. The final negotiation session for the Competition Policy chapter occurred in November 2023, with the US expected to recommence negotiations in 2024.

(v) CEPA: I

In 2023, the negotiation team concluded discussions on the competition policy clause within CEPA, reaching consensus on the wording of the clause.

(vi) DEFA:

At present, the wording of the Competition Chapter within DEFA has just begun drafting, and no negotiation sessions have commenced. Members are anticipated to initiate negotiations in 2024.



PLAN FOR 2024

VCC shall implement the Competition Law 2018 and organize the implementation of VCC model on the basis of consolidation and reorganization of Vietnam Competition and Consumer Association and the Office of the Competition Council; at the same time, VCC shall continue implementing the State management of competition, protecting the rights of consumers and multi-level marketing business, in the coming time, it is necessary to focus on solving and implementing the following contents:

I. Development of legal document

In 2024, VCC plans to:

- Persist in formulating a draft Decree that guides the amended Law on Protection of Consumer Rights and submit it to the Government for consideration and promulgation.
- Continue to receive, clarify, and finalize the dossier for the draft Decision of the Prime Minister, which aims to promulgate the list of products, goods, and services necessitating the registration of standard form contracts and general conditions, to be submitted to the Prime Minister.
- Sustain efforts in receiving, clarifying, and finalizing the draft Decision of the Prime Minister regarding the remuneration regime for VCC members, individuals conducting competition proceedings, assessors, interpreters, and witnesses. This will ensure compliance with the submission deadline outlined in the Ministry of Industry and Trade's laws and regulations development program and the Government's Work Program.

II. Enforcement of competition laws

1. Monitoring and managing competition in the market

- Focus on detecting and investigating competition cases, as well as receiving, processing, and appraising applications for exemption from anti-competitive agreements in accordance with the current order and procedures outlined in competition laws.
- Conduct inspections to ensure compliance with competition laws according to the inspection plan approved by the Ministry of Industry and Trade.
- Lead and collaborate with relevant agencies and organizations to develop and submit to the Prime Minister for approval the Project on Enhancing Competition Law Enforcement Efficiency until 2030. This project will serve as the groundwork for activities, including reviewing and refining competition policies and laws, strengthening capacity in enforcing competition law, and promoting awareness and dissemination of competition policies and laws, all aimed at ensuring effective competition law enforcement in the future.
- Continue to carry out research, collect information and data to facilitate competition supervision in a number of important markets of the economy.
- Continue to participate in formulating and providing opinions to complete legal documents with competition-related contents to achieve the objectives of the competition policy set by the State, ensuring uniformity and synchronization in the legal system on competition.
- Continue to consult, cooperate in information sharing, and coordinate with specialized management agencies and other relevant State agencies in carrying out operations in the process of investigating and handling competition cases, considering and appraising dossiers of application for exemption from competition-restraining agreements, and appraising economic concentration.

2. Controlling economic concentration

- Continue to promote awareness of competition laws and policies among domestic and foreign enterprises, ensuring their compliance with these laws and enhancing their ability to utilize competition laws as a tool to safeguard their legitimate rights and interests in business activities and foreign investment.
- Develop international cooperation activities in competition law enforcement, with a focus on monitoring economic concentration in M&A transactions that occur abroad but have an impact or are likely to impact competition in the Vietnamese market.



- Develop and submit to the leaders of the Ministry of Industry and Trade the project “Completing and improving the capacity to implement regulations on economic concentration of competition law in the period of 2024 – 2027” (expected in June 2024) to enhance the effectiveness of implementing regulations on economic concentration in the future.

III. Management of multi-level marketing activities

Perform all functions and duties under the Resolution of the Government and the Decision of the Ministry of Industry and Trade in strictly controlling and managing multi-level marketing activities through the following activities:

- Continue to receive and process administrative procedures to ensure adherence to proper processes and procedures.
- Maintain supervision and inspection of compliance with laws regarding multi-level marketing management according to the established plan. Conduct inspections on the enforcement of multi-level marketing laws in collaboration with provincial Departments of Industry and Trade.
- Sustain coordination with relevant agencies in managing multi-level marketing, particularly by collaborating with police departments to combat business-related crimes involving multi-level marketing.
- Continue to conduct activities to propagate, disseminate, and enhance public awareness of laws governing multi-level marketing activities.

IV. Enforcement of laws on protection of consumers’ rights

1. Implementation of protection of consumers’ rights

- Implement the Decision No. 1012/QĐ-TTg dated 31 August 2023 of the Prime Minister, which promulgates the implementation plan of the Law on Protection of Consumer Rights.
- Conduct regular activities to raise awareness of protecting consumers’ interests alongside the professional works of the Department.

- Preside over and coordinate with relevant entities in organizing the implementation of Directive No. 30-CT/TW of the Secretariat of the Communist Party on strengthening the leadership of the Party and the State management responsibility for the protection of consumers’ rights. Complete the report on the implementation of Resolution No. 82/NQ-CP and propose solutions to advise on the effective implementation of the Resolution in the next period.

- Effectively and synchronously implement specific activities of the two proposals of the Ministry of Industry and Trade under Decision No. 1157/QĐ-TTg of the Prime Minister: the Project on strengthening propaganda, education, and dissemination of legal policies to protect consumers’ rights for vulnerable consumers in the period of 2021-2025, and the Project to develop a digital ecosystem and strengthen the protection of consumers’ rights in e-commerce.

- Coordinate with local management authorities to strengthen propaganda, education, training, and guidance activities to enhance the proactiveness and effectiveness of compliance with laws on the protection of consumers’ rights.

2. Control of standard form contracts and general conditions

- Complete the dossier for the draft Decision of the Prime Minister, which promulgates the list of products, goods, and services subject to the registration of standard form contracts and general conditions, and submit it to the Prime Minister in April 2024.

- Receive and assess dossiers for the registration/re-registration of standard form contracts and general conditions within VCC’s jurisdiction.

- Conduct training, advocacy, and guidance on controlling standard form contracts and general conditions under the Law on Protection of Consumer Rights 2023 to ensure its prompt implementation. This includes enhancing the knowledge and proactive compliance of organizations, business individuals, and other relevant entities.

- Strengthen supervision of enterprises’ compliance with laws on standard form contracts and general conditions in key areas, aligning oversight with practical needs.

- Research, review, and evaluate the application and compliance with laws on standard form contracts and general conditions between business organizations, individuals, and consumers in emerging fields.



- Carry out specialized inspections according to the plan assigned by the Ministry of Industry and Trade, and conduct unscheduled inspections when there are signs of violations of consumer protection laws.

V. Training, propaganda and dissemination of laws

- Organize training, advocacy, and dissemination programs on laws, alongside providing information and consultancy services, to enhance the state management activities of VCC. Simultaneously, raise awareness on compliance with policies and laws in the fields of competition, consumer protection, and multi-level marketing business activities for organizations, individuals, and society.

- Continue to enhance communication efforts, including increasing the dissemination of information on digital media platforms such as websites, social networks, and applications managed and operated by the Center for Information, Consultancy, and Education.

- Strengthen public services in information, consultancy, and training to support state management of competition, protection of consumers' rights, and management of multi-level marketing businesses.

- Organize conferences and seminars to promote awareness and understanding of laws within VCC's areas of management. Additionally, conduct internal training sessions to enhance the skills and knowledge of VCC's civil servants and employees, extending these educational efforts to meet the needs of individuals, organizations, and businesses

VI. Information and consultancy

- Continue to operate the Consulting Call Center on 1800.6838, upgrade and expand the system to localities across the country to better meet the consulting and support needs of consumers.

- Continue to coordinate with units inside and outside VCC to receive, advise, support and resolve consumer feedbacks, requests, recommendations and complaints.

- Promote communication, including increasing the posting of information on digital media, such as websites, social network, and applications managed and operated by VCC.

- Continue to effectively implement the activities in 2024 which VCC is assigned to, including: Enterprise for Consumers Program for the period of 2021-2025; Development of Customer Support Call Center System of the Ministry of Industry and Trade for the period of 2021-2025; Building a National Database on Consumer Protection in the period of 2021-2025; Development of digital ecosystem, strengthening the protection of consumers' interests in e-commerce; Strengthening propaganda, education and dissemination of legal policies on the protection of consumers' interests for vulnerable consumers in the period of 2021 - 2025.



MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY AND TRADE

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