

ETHICAL BOUNDARIES IN FURNITURE ADVERTISING: ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC COMPLAINTS AND REGULATORY FINDINGS IN SR

Martina Nosáľová, Erika Loučanová, Miriam Olšiaková

Department of Marketing, Trade and World Forestry
Faculty of Wood Sciences and Technology
Technical University in Zvolen

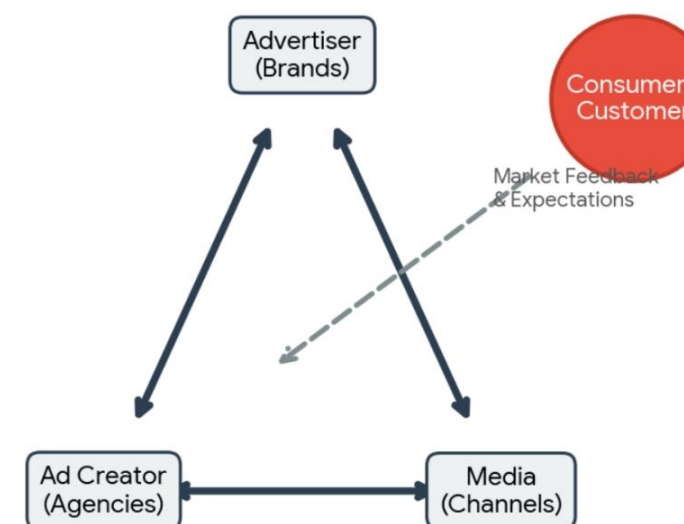
Objectives & Significance of the Study

- **Main Objective:** To identify the most frequent violations of ethical advertising principles in the furniture segment and map areas perceived by the public as *unethical, misleading, or inappropriate*.
- **Significance & Contribution:**
 - Enhances understanding of how Slovak consumers perceive advertising ethics.
 - Provides a baseline for more responsible practices among advertisers.
 - Contributes to the ongoing discussion on advertising self-regulation in Slovakia.



Research Methodology

- **Method:** Qualitative and quantitative content analysis.
- **Research Sample:** Official rulings issued by the Arbitration Commission of **The Advertising Standards Council – RPR** (2014 – 2024).
- **Data Source:** Systematically gathered from the RPR's publicly available online archive.
- **Selection Criteria:** Product category (furniture, interior furnishings)
- **Analytical Phases:**
 - *Quantitative:* Tracking the number of cases over time (frequency/trends), categorizing (upheld vs. not upheld), and media types.
 - *Qualitative:* Textual content analysis of complaints and the ethical evaluation of the rulings.



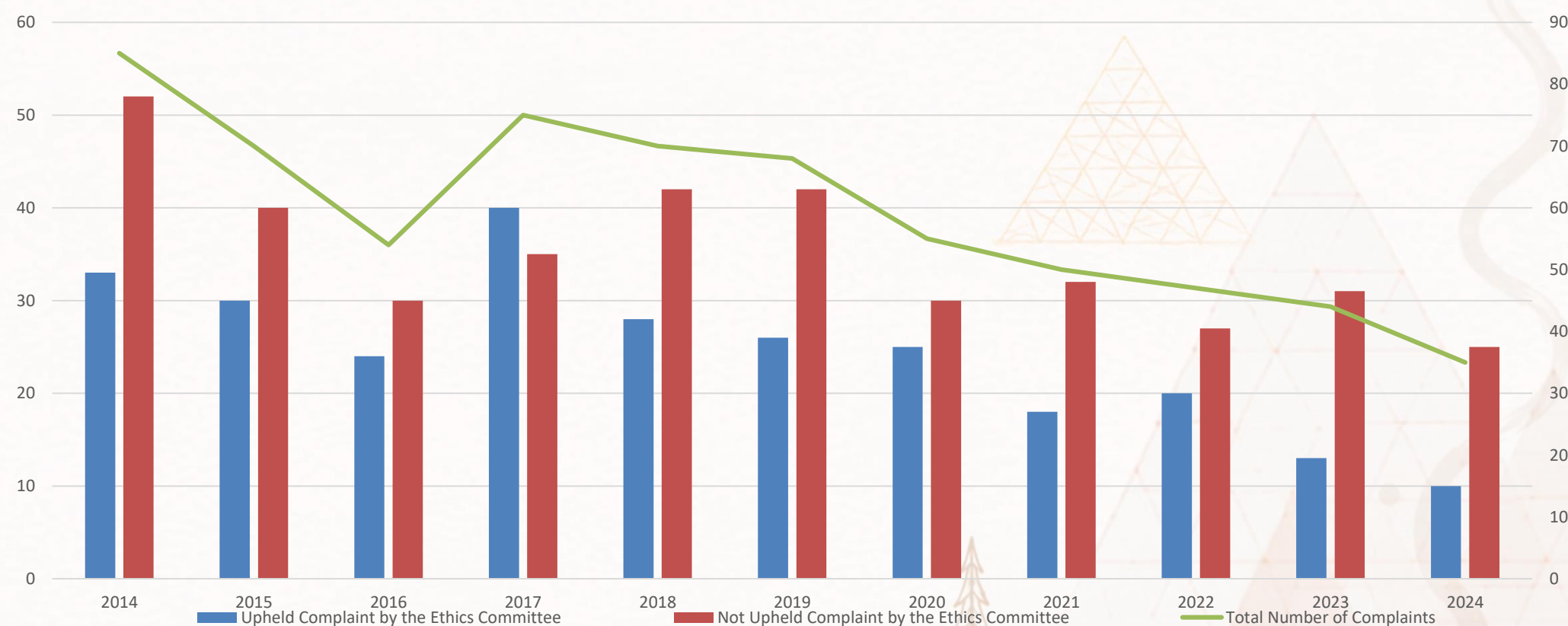
General Trend of Advertising Complaints in Slovakia

Overall Trend: A long-term, steady downward trend in the total volume of complaints since 2017.

- **Key Timeline Highlights:**

- **2017:** Total complaints peaked at approximately 110 cases, followed by a decline to 35 cases in 2024.
- **2024:** A historical low in both categories, with only 10 upheld violations.
- Not upheld complaints maintained a clear majority → most public complaints were unfounded, and the campaigns did not breach the ethical code.

Comparison of the total number of complaints received by the RPR and reports in the furniture sector (2014–2024)



The Furniture Sector in Numbers (2014 – 2024)

- The furniture segment accounts for a minimal share of the RPR's total volume, averaging only a few cases per year.
- **10-Year Statistics:**
 - A total of **11 complaints** identified (**10 cases** fully evaluated by the Commission).
 - **Outcome Split:** 5 cases upheld (ethical violations) vs. 6 cases not upheld.
- **Temporal Distribution:**
 - *Peak activity:* 2015 (3 cases).
 - *Market lull:* Zero cases reviewed between 2019–2022 and in 2024.



Overview of Ethical Challenges in Furniture Advertising

YEAR	COMPANY	MEDIUM	NATURE OF COMPLAINT	RPR RULING	CODE BREACH ACCORDING TO RPR CODE
2014	Oresi Slovakia s.r.o.	Print advertising	Misleading information about price	Complaint Not Upheld	
2015	Kika Nábytok Slovensko s.r.o.	TV commercial	Misleading information about price	Complaint Upheld	Art. 14 Truthfulness of Advertising, par. 5, let. b) Financial value of a product
2015	Exima s.r.o.	Billboard	Inappropriate depiction of the female body	Complaint Upheld	Art. 11 Decency of Advertising, par. 1, let. e) Depiction of women
2015	PHASE s.r.o.	Billboard	Visual and slogan evoke an immoral meaning	Complaint Not Upheld	
2016	Black Red White a.s.	Radio commercial	Misleading information about price	Complaint Upheld	Art. 14 Truthfulness of Advertising, par. 5, let. b) Financial value of a product
2016	Tempo Kondela s.r.o.	Catalog and website	Misleading information about product origin	Complaint Upheld	Art. 14 Truthfulness of Advertising, par. 5, let. a) Misleading the consumer
2017 2018	Mobelix s.r.o.	TV commercial	Sexual content and broadcasting at inappropriate time	Complaint Not Upheld	
2018	Mobelix s.r.o.	TV commercial	Animal cruelty	Complaint Not Upheld	
2023	XLSK Nábytok s.r.o.	Leaflet	Misleading information about price	Complaint Not Upheld	
2023	Mojaskrina.sk	Internet advertising	Inappropriate depiction of the female body	Complaint Upheld	Art. 11 Decency of Advertising, par. 1, let. e) Depiction of women

Overview of Ethical Challenges in Furniture Advertising

- **Two Dominant Themes (5 cases each):**
 - ***Decency / Erotica (The sexualization of advertising):*** Art. 11 Decency of Advertising, par. 1, let. e) Depiction of women
 - ***Truthfulness / Misleading the consumer (Inaccurate information):*** Art. 14 Truthfulness of Advertising, par. 5, let. a) Misleading the consumer; par. 5, let. b) Financial value of a product
- **Emerging Theme (1 case):** Advertising ethics in relation to animals.

Complaints by Category



Evolving Trends & Market Sensitivity

- **Broader Social Lens:** Modern consumers look beyond traditional boundaries like protecting human dignity or minors; they view advertising through a humanitarian lens.
- **Case Example:** The 2018 complaint against a *Möbelix* TV commercial challenged on suspicions of promoting cruelty to animals.
- **Market Repetition:** *Möbelix s. r. o.* appeared repeatedly in the data (3 complaints between 2017–2018), highlighting an higher-risk marketing strategy during that specific period.





Thank you for your attention!

We wish to thank The Ministry of Education, Research, Development and Youth of the Slovak Republic, grant VEGA [number 1/0513/25] and The Slovak Research and Development Agency, grant APVV [number 23-0022].

Ing. Martina Nosáľová, PhD.

Department of Marketing, Trade and World Forestry
Faculty of Wood Sciences and Technology
Technical University in Zvolen

e-mail: nosalova@tuzvo.sk