

## 4.1. Responsible consumer behaviour



### 4.1.1. What is important to know?

The most important question of the 21st century is whether humanity can solve the problems appearing in its environment and society. Can you transform your thinking and behavior for a good and sustainable future. (Imre, G. V. (2013). Társadalmi részvétel helyi környezeti ügyekben.)

#### Responsible consumer behaviour

- Nowadays, consumption is increasing to a great extent.
- Economic growth has limits and limitations, which we must take into account.
- This is why environmentally conscious behaviour is important. This means a lifestyle change in our lives.
- In our decisions, we must take into account the protection of our environment and reduce our own consumption.
- It is necessary to reduce our consumption in order to protect our environment and society.

Many research has been devoted to examining and explaining shopping habits. Who buys what product in which store. Sometimes the purchase is also influenced by our mood.

**We know two types of consumption.** One is functional consumption, the other is symbolic consumption.

**Functional consumption** is consumption when we buy and consume the products we need. We only buy as much as we need. When shopping, we often compare the quality and prices of individual products. In this case, we usually choose the cheap and medium quality product.

Another form of consumption is **symbolic consumption**. In this case, we buy products that we don't really need. In such cases, shopping is an experience for us, it improves our mood. This is called experience shopping.

Let's be responsible consumers. This means conscious and critical consumption. It is based on two expectations.

**The first: consume less, the second: what you consume should be sustainable.**

Responsible consumption is characterized by: awareness – pre-considered purchases.

#### **Forms of conscious shopping:**

- – **task-oriented shopping**, the goal of which is to complete the task as soon as possible. In such cases, the products necessary for the individual or the family is purchased.
- **smart shopping**: in this case, the customer buys products, which price and quality are suitable for him.
- **buying discount products**: in this case, the customer can buy the product cheaper; in this case, be careful not to buy a low-quality product, and don't buy unnecessary ones from the cheap ones either.
- **constant hunting for good products**: in this case, the customer constantly monitors when the desired product appears and when it is cheaper.
- **obtaining an individual offer**: in this case, the customer can receive a special good price offer for the given product..

Critical consumption means that when buying, we review the quality of the product and whether it is expensive.

**A condition for sustainability is environmental awareness.**

Sustainable development is achieved by observing the rules of environmental protection (environmentalism). This means harmonizing the rules of economic + environmental + social development.

It is important to learn about the way the product is produced. Buy healthy, high-quality products.

The "**green**" consumer learns about how the product was made before purchasing. Was the production environmentally friendly? Such products are marked with a green mark. The best-known green (environmental) mark on

products is "EU - Jour Europe". There is also a list of green products, published under the name "Catalog of green products with environmental EU label".

### **Why buy "green" products?**

These products come from a nature-friendly environment and have natural ingredients. These products are often sold in recycled packaging and have an (environmental) green label. Such a textile brand is, for example, the "GOTS" biotextile brand (Global Organic Textile Standard), a textile produced from natural materials. The raw material of biotextile products is most often bio-wool, bio-cotton, bio-linen. Their production requires great care. Most often, the plants and animals required for the raw material are grown in organic farming. No artificial fertilizers or chemicals are used in the cultivation of organic plants.

The raw material produced in this way is also processed and packaged in an environmentally friendly manner.

When buying a cleaning agent, it is important to consider that the product is environmentally friendly, since it is used in the kitchen near food.

The customer card can also be an environmentally friendly "ecological card". It is made of biodegradable material, so it can be composted together with natural materials.



Organic products are not cheap, but they are of high quality, healthy, and by purchasing them you contribute to the protection of our environment.

Toy - green product characteristics: made of natural materials, ingredients: wood, posto, mat.



**In summary:** The four points of an environmentally friendly, smart purchase:

**1. We should write** a shopping list: Write down only what you need.

**2. We should buy** fresh goods from local producers at markets.

When buying, we not only think about what and how much we buy, but also that the product comes from an environmentally friendly environment.

**3. Pay attention** to the packaging.

We put the purchased goods in baskets made of natural materials, canvas bags and satchels instead of advertising bags made of plastic.

**4. Take some time to learn** about the ingredients. The use of additives makes food tastier and more desirable, but this happens at the expense of our health. Therefore, choose products that contain only a few additives (flavor enhancers, dyes, preservatives).