

19.03.2026 PUBLICATION

New rules for use of foreign words in consumer information

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On 1 March 2026, amendments* to the Law of the Russian Federation “On Protection of Consumer Rights” No. 2300-1 dated 7 February 1992 (the “**Consumer Law**”) came into force. These amendments introduce restrictions on the use of foreign languages in public information intended for consumers. Such information must now be provided in Russian or in both Russian and a foreign language.^[1]

What information is subject to the new requirements?

The new requirements regarding the use of the Russian language apply to public information intended for consumers. This refers to information that:

1. is not an advertisement or mandatory information about a product, its manufacturer, or other mandatory disclosures (e. g. information on product packaging; Articles 8–10 of the Consumer Law),
2. is placed in publicly accessible locations and/or communicated to consumers at large,
3. is communicated through signage or other means of displaying information (including inscriptions, signs, external surfaces, information plates, information signs, installations, technical devices, and other media intended for disseminating information, excluding advertising installations),
4. is provided as part of dealing with customers.

Based both on a literal interpretation of the above wording (considering, in particular, the reference to “signage or other means of displaying information”) and on the explanatory note* to the amendments, the new requirements should apply only to information displayed on tangible objects, such as stands, installations, pointers and so on.

However, the Federal Service for Surveillance on Consumer Rights Protection and Human Wellbeing (“**Rospotrebnadzor**”) applies a broad interpretation of the term “publicly accessible location”, extending it to the Internet (Section II of the Guidelines* on Compliance with Mandatory Requirements, approved by Rospotrebnadzor on 2 March 2026 (the “**Guidelines**”)).

As a result, in practice, the new requirements will apply not only to information displayed on tangible objects, but also to online resources through which companies deal with consumers.

What relationships are subject to the new requirements?

The requirements apply only to relationships governed by the Consumer Law, i. e. relationships involving consumers.

Rospotrebnadzor's guidance, which states that manufacturers, providers, and sellers of goods, works, and services intended for consumers are the only entities that fall under the new requirements (Section II of the Guidelines).

Thus, the new requirements do not apply if (1) the information is not accessible to consumers (for example, internal corporate communications or information displayed in staff-only areas), or (2) the company is not a manufacturer, provider, or seller under the Consumer Law, meaning it operates in B2B only.

Substance of the new requirements

The information must be presented either in Russian or in both Russian and a foreign language. In the latter case, the information in Russian and a foreign language must be:

1. identical in content;
2. equivalent in placement and in technical formatting (i. e. with the same parameters of color, font type, and size);
3. legible;
4. identical in content, pronunciation, and mode of transmission (applies to audio information).

Furthermore, the use of a foreign language is permitted only as a supplement to Russian. In duplicate translations (e. g. "магазин / shop") the text in Russian must go first (Article 10.1(3) of the Consumer Law, Section II of the Guidelines).

Consumer information must comply with the norms of Russian language, as established in dictionaries and grammars approved by the Russian Government. Currently, only four dictionaries have been approved*. In particular, when using Russian words borrowed from foreign languages (e. g. "чат", "прайс лист", "маркетплейс", "бестселлер", "лайк"), the Dictionary* of Foreign Words must be checked in advance. If a borrowed word is not included in the dictionary, its use is not permitted.

4.Exemptions

The new rules shall not apply in the following cases:

- when using trademarks and service marks registered in Russia (including under international registrations);
- when using company trade names registered in the Unified State Register of Legal Entities;
- in other cases provided for by technical regulations, acts of the Eurasian Economic Union, federal laws, and other normative legal acts.

In the cases listed above, words not included in the approved dictionaries, as well as words in a foreign language, may be left untranslated.

5.Liability for non-compliance with the new requirements

Nevertheless, Rospotrebnadzor may potentially apply one of the following Articles of the Code of Administrative Offenses of the Russian Federation (“AOC”):

Description of the Offence	Fine for Company Officials	Fine for Legal Entities
Breach of the consumer’s right to obtain necessary and accurate information, if goods have not been sold (Article 14.8(1) of AOC)	up to RUB 1 000 (approx. EUR 10)	up to RUB 10 000 (approx. EUR 100)
Breach of the consumer’s right to obtain necessary and accurate information, if goods have been sold (Article 14.5(1) of AOC)	up to RUB 4 000 (approx. EUR 40)	up to RUB 40 000 (approx. EUR 420)
Deception of the consumer (Article 14.7(2) of AOC)	up to RUB 20 000 (approx. EUR 210)	up to RUB 500 000 (approx. EUR 5 200)

Recommendations

If a business involves working with consumers or producing consumer goods, further recommendations can be considered:

- Conduct an audit of information available to consumers, including signage, websites, social media, information boards, menus, and price lists. Special attention should be paid to online resources, which are also subject to the new requirements.

If information is found in a foreign language, it must be duplicated in Russian in compliance with the requirements from this material.

- Verify whether key company brands are registered as trademarks or service marks. Where possible, register such brands.

[1]The rules set out in this material regarding the use of foreign languages apply similarly to the use (when allowed by local laws of the regions of Russia) of the official languages of the Russian regions and other languages of the peoples of Russia.

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