Price hikes on autopilot – Netflix to raise fees without users’ clear approval

* **You have been watching the same series, you have had the same subscription fee… and you have noticed that you had been paying more for the service for a while.**
* **The Netflix platform has increased the fees from the new subscription period with no consumer consent.**
* **The President of UOKiK says definite NO to such practices and presses charges on using abusive clauses.**
* **The preliminary investigations are pending where UOKiK will verify regulations and practices applied by: Google, Sony, Disney+, Microsoft, Apple, Adobe and HBO Max.**

 **[Warsaw, 25 August 2025]** You watch the same series - just like usual, with the same quality and the same subscription schedule. You do not change any settings or services terms and conditions; despite that, you have noticed that your payment card had been charged with a fee higher than the one you had approved when buying the service. Numerous Netflix users were affected with similar situation. The information provided by the platform about the fee increase starting from the new monthly subscription period was indeed included in the email message, for example, and appeared as you signed in to your account, however, the requirements necessary to make those changes legitimate were not satisfied. Absence of reaction to the fee increase message on consumer’s part was treated by Netflix as a consent to a higher fee.

**- We cannot talk about fair treatment of a consumer if a streaming platform assumes that “no objection” equals consent to the updated material contractual terms and conditions.** It’s the same as if somebody introduced new rules of the game without your consent and without asking you if you still wanted to participate. For years, we have stressed that a price for a service, just like every single service, should not be changed unilaterally, without an explicit consent of the user. Such an action constitutes an infringement of law, therefore we have pressed charges to the Netflix platform **– says Tomasz Chróstny, the President of UOKiK.**

**Silence does not entail approval**

In August 2024, Netflix increased their service prices unilaterally - even as much as by PLN 7 per month. There was no explicit consent of subscribers to this fee increase. The President of UOKiK challenged the provisions from the regulations whereunder the platform could unilaterally change prices and some other material terms and conditions of the contract - with no active consent of the users. Such practices may result in an infringement of consumer material interests.

It is worth emphasising that if a platform operates under a subscription-fee model where a fee for a subsequent period is charged from a consumer automatically, from a payment card attached to the account, then every change to a price, price schedule or material elements of a contract must be held upon an informed consumer consent. If the consent is missing, the contract should not be prolonged under the amended terms and conditions. This will not be changed by a modification clause inserted in the contract which, in the case of Netflix, gives the entrepreneurs almost unlimited freedom when introducing changes. This type of modifications cannot be made unilaterally.

For using prohibited clauses, there is a fine of maximum 10 per cent of the turnover per each provision and a capacity to rectify the consequences of the infringement, including a refund, to the customer, of the fees charged illegally by the entrepreneur. If the charges of the President of UOKiK are substantiated in the proceedings held, they will not be binding for subscribers and Netflix will not be able to use them for consumers in the future.

**Declarations - that’s not all**

This is not the first action taken by the President of UOKiK in this regard. [As early as in 2023, the Authority informed](https://uokik.gov.pl/zmiana-warunkow-subskrypcji-tylko-za-twoja-zgoda) that as a result of the intervention made, Amazon changed its practices and contractual terms and conditions as part of the Amazon Prime and Amazon Prime Video services.

Currently, in the preliminary investigations, the President of the Competition Authority is verifying the regulations and practices applied by: Apple, Disney+, Google (with YouTube Premium), HBO Max, Microsoft (with GamePass), Sony (with PlayStation Plus) and Adobe. Some of the verified entities have already declared to change their practices.

- We have been noticing some slow but positive changes in the market. Large players offering subscription fees to Polish consumers are aware that we are firm and persistent in eliminating practices infringing consumer rights. Two companies, namely Google and Apple, in the course of pending investigations, made their declarations that they would observe the regulations binding in Poland on changing material terms and conditions of subscription service contracts. We appreciate that, but we expect not only changing the practice in the future. If there have been any infringements in the past, it is natural to compensate for the losses to consumers. If subscription fees were increased with no consumer consent, the platforms should reimburse those fee differences to consumers and this should be done automatically - summarises the President of UOKiK, Tomasz Chróstny.