



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

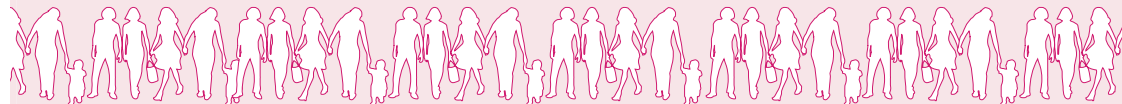


ECC-Net

# The European Consumer Centres Network

Information and support to consumers across Europe





## The European Consumer Centres Network

### Information and support to consumers across Europe

*Consumers must be able to take advantage of the best deals on offer in the EU and feel confident in making purchases both at home and abroad. The ECC-Net is there to help consumers with questions and problems they may encounter as they shop across Europe.*

### WHAT IS THE ECC-NET AND WHEN WAS IT SET UP?

- The ECC-Net is a European network consisting of 29 European Consumer Centres (in all 27 Member States, Iceland and Norway), which work together to provide consumers with information on cross-border shopping and assist in the resolution of cross-border complaints and disputes.
- The ECC-Net is co-financed by the European Commission, the EU Member States, Norway and Iceland.
- The ECC-Net was launched in 2005 (result of a merger of 2 previous networks - Euroguichets and Clearing Houses).



More information on the European Union is available on the Internet (<http://europa.eu>).

Cataloguing data can be found at the end of this publication.

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## WHAT ARE THE ECC-NET'S ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES?

- The ECC-Net provides information on cross-border shopping and ensures that consumers are aware of their rights. It also provides information on both EU and national rules and on opportunities offered by the Internal Market.
- It gives advice and support to any individual with a problem related to a cross border purchase. The contacted ECC will work together with the ECC of the country where the problem has originated.
- In most cases ECC-Net help consumers reach an amicable solution with the trader.
- Alternatively, the ECC-Net will help the consumer reach an out-of-court agreement through the appropriate mechanism (a neutral third party). In some cases the only solution may be taking the case to court.
- Members of the EEC-Net cooperate in so called joint-projects to investigate specific sectors where consumers experience particular difficulties. On the basis of registered cases the ECC-Net reports periodically on air passenger rights and e-commerce problems in Europe.
- A specifically developed IT-tool, where all complaints are registered, connects the different ECCs and facilitates sharing cases. This IT-tool is also useful for compiling different types of statistics. An online complaint form will be available as of 2009 on the 29 ECC-Net websites and will allow consumers to register their questions or complaints online.
- The ECC-Net also cooperates with other EU-wide networks, for example the European Judicial Network which is concerned with improving the implementation of civil and commercial law, SOLVIT which addresses problems arising from misapplication of Internal Market rules, and FIN-NET which is an out-of-court network for financial services.
- The ECC-Net, on the basis of its practical experience with everyday consumers, also provides highly relevant input for consumer policy makers at national and EU level.



## Activities of the European Consumer Centres

The 29

European Consumer Centers

work together  
and with  
other European Networks  
to:

### Inform citizens

about their rights as consumers

### Help consumers

address problems  
with cross-border  
shopping

### Provide input

to the EU's new consumer policy,  
based on consumers' experience

The ECC-Net helps consumers make a complaint and reach an amicable solution with the trader

The ECC-Net also helps consumers reach a solution through the appropriate mechanism (a third party)

**ALL SUPPORT OFFERED BY THE ECC-NET IS FREE OF CHARGE FOR THE CONSUMER**



## THE ECC-NET AND YOU

### WHEN CAN A EUROPEAN CONSUMER CENTRE HELP YOU?

- When you need general information on consumer rights in Europe
- When you need help if you have a problem with a trader in another country of the EU, Iceland or Norway.

### HOW WILL THE ECC-NET HELP YOU?

The ECC-Net will:

- Inform you on your rights under European and national consumer legislation
- Give you advice on possible ways of dealing with your complaint
- Provide you with assistance in resolving your complaint
- Refer you to the appropriate body if not able to resolve your complaint

### WHICH TYPES OF PROBLEMS CAN THE ECC-NET HELP YOU WITH?

The ECC-Net provides information, advice and assistance relating to any purchase of goods or services within the EU, Iceland and Norway. The following consumer areas are subject to close monitoring by the ECC-Net:

- Air travel
- Shopping online
- Package travel
- Timeshare and holiday clubs

### THE SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE ECC-NET ARE FREE OF CHARGE FOR YOU

The ECC-Net provides free information, through:

- Brochures
- Internet sites
- Press releases
- Electronic newsletters
- Presentations to interested organisations

The ECC-Net provides free legal assistance, in particular:

- Analysis of consumer situations and provision of legal advice
- Assistance in the formal filing of complaints
- Intervention with the trader in order to reach an amicable solution
- Search for an alternative resolution in case an amicable solution cannot be reached

### HOW CAN YOU CONTACT THE ECC-NET?

Any consumer from the EU, Iceland and Norway can contact the ECC office in their own country by phone, fax, mail, e-mail or by visit in person.



## WHERE CAN YOU CONTACT THE ECCS?

### AUSTRIA

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## Further information

**The European Commission Directorate General for Health and Consumer Affairs**

[http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/index_en.htm)

**European Consumer Centres Network**

[http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/redress/ecc\\_network/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/redress/ecc_network/index_en.htm)

**FIN-NET : Consumer Complaints Network for Financial Services**

[http://ec.europa.eu/internal\\_market/finservices-retail/finnet/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/finservices-retail/finnet/index_en.htm)

**SOLVIT : Effective Problem Solving in the Internal Market**

[http://ec.europa.eu/solvit/site/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/solvit/site/index_en.htm)

**European Judicial Network**

<http://ec.europa.eu/civiljustice/>

**Eurobarometers**

[http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/strategy/facts\\_eurobar\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/strategy/facts_eurobar_en.htm)

**ECC-Net joint projects**

[http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/redress/ecc\\_network/joint\\_projects\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/redress/ecc_network/joint_projects_en.htm)

**Unfair Commercial Practices Directive**

[http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/rights/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/rights/index_en.htm)

**Regulation on European Small Claims Procedure**

[http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/redress\\_cons/individual\\_redress\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/redress_cons/individual_redress_en.htm)

**Regulation on Air Passenger Rights**

[http://ec.europa.eu/transport/air\\_portal/passenger\\_rights/legislation\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/air_portal/passenger_rights/legislation_en.htm)

**Air Services Regulation**

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:293:0003:0020:EN:PDF>

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