

The European Consumer Centres Network (ECC-NET)



Evidences of the European Consumers:
Does the Internal Market function from
a consumer point of view?

ECC-Net – why?



The ECC-Net is a project of DG SANCO and is subsidized by the European Commission (50%) and the Member States

- GOAL:

- ✓ To promote consumer confidence in the Internal Market

- HOW:

- ✓ Through solving consumer complaints
- ✓ Through information provision and education

ECC Network



- Currently 23 ECCs across Europe
- Information on consumer rights in the EU
- Assist consumers with cross-border disputes
- Participate in pan-European projects
- Feedback information to European Commission

ECC Net – where?



ECC Net - Statistics 2004



- Number of cases received by the ECCs IN 2004:

AUSTRIA	3 594
BELGIUM	5 817
FRANCE	1 452
FINLAND	6 829
GERMANY	10 770
IRELAND	4 582
ITALY	1 604
LUXEMBURG	2 244
PORTUGAL	10 977
SPAIN	8 438
SWEDEN	2 920
U.K.	776
TOTAL	59 227

Nature of complaints



■ E-commerce

- ECC-Net report published in June 2005 :
 - 2 544 cases, 831 complaints & disputes
 - non-delivery of goods (31%); product (25%), price & payment (8%)
 - Increase of online-fraud (fake lottery wins, phishing, internet auction fraud, fake web traders)
 - Internet auctions: C2C, not covered by consumer legislation
 - Huge increases in complaints: Ireland: +150%, Belgium: + 122%, Finland: + 67%

Nature of Complaints



■ Air passengers rights

- ECC Ireland 'Airline complaints report' published February 2005:
 - Delayed, damaged & lost luggage (25%), cancelled flights (9%), delayed flights (7%)
- Enforcement of EC Regulation 261 lacking (resources of enforcement bodies, force majeure)
- Field of Application (Belgium-Turkey and return with Turkish airline)
- Passengers' rights and other means of transport (train, bus, boat) : no rights

Nature of complaints



- Buying cars in another EU country
 - Administrative formalities
 - Second hand cars

 - Timeshare / Holiday Clubs
 - Holiday clubs and other by-passes
 - Resell problems

 - Others: car rentals, guarantee of goods, frauds
 - Distance is a barrier to obtain satisfaction of consumer rights
-

Problem n°1: enforcement



- Enforcement of consumer legislation remains difficult, especially in cross border disputes
- Amicable solution is not always found
- Judicial procedure is too difficult & expensive for the value involved
- Serious lack of Alternative Dispute Resolution bodies

More information?



http://europa.eu.int/comm/consumers/redress/ecc_network/index_en.htm