



*your update*

UK European Consumer Centre

## Information and support for consumers shopping across the EU

Welcome to the May issue of *Your Update* in 2017 brought to you by the UK European Consumer Centre. This edition reports on the practice of unjustified discrimination due to your nationality and where you live and also looks at how to spot fake goods, the end of roaming charges and a case study about a foot massager. If you wish to subscribe to the UK ECC Newsletter – Your Update – please register for your copy of YOUR UPDATE from the home page of [www.ukecc.net](http://www.ukecc.net) For free legal advice, call the UK ECC on 01268 886690 weekdays between 9am and 5pm.

**Andy Allen, UK European Consumer Centre Director**

### Still facing unjustified discrimination due to nationality and where you live?

UK consumers are being urged to contact the UK ECC's sister service – the European Consumer Centre for Services – if they feel they have been victim of discrimination by a business, based on nationality and place of residence.



A report (by the European Consumer Centre Network - ECC-Net), called ***Do Invisible Borders Still Restrict Consumer Access to Services in the EU?***, has found that some traders are using business practices such as geo-blocking to create artificial barriers and restrict consumers' access to goods and services.

It says that despite EU legislation prohibiting discrimination based on nationality and place of residence, business practices such as geo-blocking are still preventing consumers from accessing services when shopping online.

Geo-blocking is where online sellers restrict access to their website by either refusing to sell to you or redirecting you to another website with different (often higher) prices. This practice is usually based solely on where you are located'.

Andy Allen, UK ECC Director, said: "Consumers too often face restrictions with no justification while the reasons invoked by traders are unconvincing and lack objective criteria. ECC-Net welcomes the European Commission's acknowledgement that further action is necessary for the principle of non-discrimination to be effective and in order to develop rules against discrimination based on the nationality or place of residence of consumers."

Check the [UK ECC website](http://www.ukecc.net) for the report's key findings and a case study.

If you have experienced discrimination by a business, based on nationality and place of residence, please contact the European Consumer Centre for Services for advice at [www.ukecc-services.net](http://www.ukecc-services.net)

### Did you know?

Luxstyle ApS and Lux International Sales ApS have been reported to the Danish police over the sending of unsolicited goods along with demands for payments from consumers all over the world.



The ECC-Net and other consumer bodies have received complaints about this company which concern the advertisement of a number of beauty aids. The consumers report that they can only view a price once their address details have been entered on a webform. It is at this point that the company registers an "order". Typically the consumers have not given their payment details so an invoice is sent with the goods.

The company has suggested to the Danish consumer authority that they do not consider their practice to be in violation of any laws.

We feel that the company has not clearly stated that an order is being placed at the moment the consumer enters their details onto the webform.

What can you do? If you have received an invoice for goods that you haven't ordered, then you can call us for advice on 01268 886690 or email details to [ecc@tsi.org.uk](mailto:ecc@tsi.org.uk).

### UK ECC staff tip

If you want to avoid falling victim to buying fake goods, then you could take the opportunity to watch our short video - ECC-Net tips to help you to avoid buying fake products? on our Twitter feed ([March 21 tweet](#)).

## Case study:



A UK consumer bought a foot massager from an online trader based in Bulgaria. The product became faulty and the consumer contacted the manufacturer, who informed him that the item was counterfeit.

Mr S contacted the UK ECC for advice, as he had not received any response from the trader. We shared the case with our colleagues at ECC Bulgaria. They contacted the seller of the foot massager, who agreed to refund the consumer.

## Have you seen?

Roaming charges when travelling in the EU are to take on a new face as from 15 June 2017, when they are being phased out.

Thanks to EU roaming rules introduced by the European Commission, the cost of making and receiving calls abroad within the EU are now much cheaper – excessive roaming charges are things of the past.

Roaming is when you travel to another EU country and use your phone there. The proposal to end such charges was agreed by the European Parliament and the European Council in autumn 2015.

Read more [here](#):

## Contact us:

### [UK ECC contact details](#)

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Disclaimer: Whilst every effort is made to ensure accuracy, the UK European Consumer Centre cannot be held responsible for matters arising from any errors or omissions contained in this publication. The information provided is intended as a guide only and not as a legal interpretation.

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