



your update

Information and support for consumers shopping across the EU

Welcome to the third issue of Your Update in 2015, brought to you by the UK European Consumer Centre. The aim is for this newsletter to give you a flavour of what the UK ECC does to help consumers, show examples of cases we have worked on and give you useful tips and advice to make the most of your cross-border shopping. I hope you find this newsletter useful and look forward to receiving the last edition of 2015. 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 **Andy Allen, UK European Consumer Centre Director**

Cheaper mobile calls in Europe

It's not just technology in making mobile phone calls which has changed in the eight years since the EU Roaming regulation was adopted; prices have too. Now the cost of making a mobile call is set for an even bigger change, following a vote by MEPs in October (2015).



Because of European rules, there is a limit to what an operator can charge consumers when using mobile phones in another EU country. This means, for example, that an international voice call costs much less than it did in 1998 (EUR 0.19 per minute in 2015 compared to EUR 1.63 per minute in 1998).

MEPs have now voted to adopt a complete ban on roaming charges for using mobile phones abroad in the EU from June 2017. Roaming fees for calling, sending text messages and using the mobile internet abroad in the EU (and European Economic Area countries) will be banned from 15 June 2017.

These new rules go one step further than the caps imposed before and actually abolish roaming charges - good news for everybody. More information is available on the European Parliament website. See here for [questions and answers](#).

Did you know?

The theme for this year's National Consumer Week



campaign,

which ran from 2 - 6 November 2015, was '[Know Your New Rights](#)'. The aim of the week was to raise awareness of the new Consumer Rights Act, which came into force on 1 October 2015.

The [Act](#) sees the biggest changes in consumer law for some time, reducing several pieces of legislation into one and making consumer rights clearer and easier to understand. For the first time, it gives better protection when buying digital products and shopping online.

The campaign was a partnership between by the Citizens Advice Bureau, the Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI), the National Trading Standards Board and BIS, the government department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

Case study:



Mr B booked four nights in a suite at a hotel in Italy, but the room's spa bath only worked on the first night. Mr B reported the fault two days in a row, but it was only on day three that maintenance staff said that the system had broken. All the other suites were occupied, so reception could not change the room; but on checkout, the consumer was only refunded €10 a night.

Mr B liaised with the hotel once back in the UK, saying that he wasn't satisfied with the compensation. He was promised a further refund which didn't materialise. He approached the UK ECC. We liaised with colleagues in ECC Italy. Mr B subsequently received a refund of €380, equal to 50% of the cost of his stay.

Have you seen?



. . . Changes are all set for the European Small Claims Procedure, opening the door to more cases by raising the ceiling for claims from the current 2,000 Euro to 5,000 Euro.

The European Parliament has supported changes to the European Small Claims Procedure proposed by the European Commission. The [new rules](#), which have yet to be approved by the Council, aim to streamline the procedure and increase the amount that can be recovered.

UK ECC staff top tips



For a smoother journey if you're planning a trip elsewhere to Europe this Christmas, then you'd be wise to check out the UK European Consumer Centre's ['Trains, planes, cars and boats'](#) publication.

You'll find a summary of your consumer rights when travelling by any of these means. The leaflet covers everything from cancellation or delay to damaged luggage, overbooked flights/denied boarding and cancellation.

Armed with this information, you will know what you're entitled to should anything go wrong.

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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