

**Press release**  
**31 October 2018**



**UK European Consumer Centre**

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## **50 per cent increase in UK consumers asking for help from consumer advice organisation**

A whopping 51% more UK consumers asked for help last year from the UK European Consumer Centre (UK ECC) in dealing with complaints linked to EU traders.

The UK ECC's annual report, published today (30 October), shows that the centre (part of a network of consumer centres in 30 countries) also topped the number of phone calls it received from UK consumers from the previous year by 16%.

Andy Allen, service director at the UK ECC, said: "In 2017 we dealt with 15,240 consumer cases, that's a big increase on the previous year. We were exceptionally busy, dealing with a very high number of contacts from consumers; mostly either by phone or email. This is in addition to the almost 1,500 cases we dealt with from European consumers in 2017, referred to us from our ECC-Net counterparts."

The news of the UK ECC's big increase in the number of UK consumer cases it handles in a year comes as the UK faces life outside the EU.

Andy said: "The UK ECC forms part of the wider framework of the ECC-Net that allows for EU-wide advice and complaint handling on behalf of consumers. It is a vital network for consumers that provides cross-border access to justice and it is at risk from Brexit. Our strength is in numbers: ECC-Net has 30 centres covering Europe, plus Iceland and Norway. It is vital that when the UK leaves the EU, the government makes good on the promise of ensuring 'no less protection' for consumers."

Every year UK consumers find themselves in dispute with EU companies over problems with purchases such as timeshares and discount holiday clubs and the resale of both), transport (including air travel and car rental) and recreation and culture (including 'sold-out ticket' events).

The aim of the UK ECC is to help as many UK consumers to achieve a positive result as possible: a refund, replacement, repair or cancellation of their contract. Our core purpose is to help consumers. Check out the UK ECC's Annual Report 2017 at <http://www.ukecc.net/> for a more in-depth look at our work.

UK consumers can use the advice and support of the [UK European Consumer Centre](http://www.ukecc.net/) if they have a dispute with a trader based in an EU country outside the UK – **01268 886690** between 9am and 5pm or <http://www.ukecc.net/>

**ENDS**

## Notes to Editors

For further information please contact UK European Consumer Centre's press office on 01268 582206.

- The UK ECC Annual Report 2016 can be found here: <http://www.ukecc.net/>
- Chartered Trading Standards Institute's Brexit Think Tank report – Cutting EU Ties – is available on [CTSI's website](#).

The UK European Consumer Centre is part of the European Consumer Centre Network (ECC-Net). There are 30 centres in the EU, plus Iceland and Norway. The aim of the network is to provide advice and support to consumers who have a dispute with a trader based in a European country outside the UK. The Network will assist consumers in the attempt to resolve the complaint.

UK ECC can provide advice in the following main areas: buying goods and services, online shopping, internet auctions, holidays, timeshare and holiday clubs, air travel.

UK ECC is co-funded by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and the European Commission. The UK ECC service is delivered by the Chartered Trading Standards Institute <https://www.tradingstandards.uk/>

- Consumers can make contact with the UK European Consumer Centre via the website – [www.ukecc.net](http://www.ukecc.net) – or by phone on 01268 886690 weekdays between 9am and 5pm.
- If in doubt before you buy, contact our sister organisation – the European Consumer Centre for Services – for pre-purchasing advice: [www.ukecc-services.net](http://www.ukecc-services.net)