

## Press release

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# Europe Day: European Consumer Centres Network recovers more than 4 million euros for consumers during COVID-19 pandemic

Since March 2020, consumers have even more than before turned to the European Consumer Centres Network (ECC-Net) for help with cross-border problems. The network has recovered a total of over 4 million euros since the beginning of the pandemic for consumers whose flights were cancelled, whose hotels were closed or who suffered another COVID-19 related breach of their rights, for example an online purchase that went wrong due to the pandemic.

### **The ECC-Net helps to get a refund**

Not being able to travel is one thing. Losing money is another. The European network helps consumers who cannot find an agreement with the tour operator or any other company based in another EU country, Iceland or Norway.

Especially since the pandemic, it repeatedly happens that travellers have **the lawful right to get a refund**, but only receive a partial amount or nothing at all. Or they are offered a voucher when in fact they are entitled to an immediate **refund**. This is exactly where the network comes in. In almost 70 % of the disputes it received, it has been able to achieve a positive and out-of-court solution for the consumer.

### **ECC-Net COVID-19 year in figures**

Between March 2020 and March 2021, the network received **170,000 enquiries** from consumers across Europe whose consumer rights had been infringed or who had a question about European consumer law.

This is **44 % more** than in the same period the year before. The vast majority of enquiries related to the tourism sector: cancelled flights, consumers who did not want to or could not travel due to the pandemic, closed accommodation or cancelled package holidays.

### **Context:**

*Each EU country as well as Iceland, Norway and the United Kingdom have a European Consumer Centre and together they form the ECC-Net. The ECC-Net informs consumers in Europe about their rights and provides free help with cross-border problems. More information is available on the website of the EU Commission, which co-finances the network: [www.eccnet.eu](http://www.eccnet.eu)*