

# Consultation document on developing a harmonised methodology for classifying and reporting consumer complaints across the European Union

## Meta Informations

Creation date

03-10-2008

Last update date

User name

null

Case Number

129499739031827708

Invitation Ref.

Status

N

## Questionnaire

Do you collect consumer complaints?

Yes

Do you collect consumer enquiries?

Yes

Do you classify complaints and enquiries separately?

Yes

How do you define complaints?

We make a simple distinction; enquiry when the consumer has so far not made a purchase and complaint once he has already made it.

How do you define enquiries?

We make a simple distinction; enquiry when the consumer has so far not made a purchase and complaint once he has already made it. Under the category "enquiries" we also record cases that fall outside our competence whether or not the purchase has been made, e.g complaints about air passenger rights when the traveller has been on a business trip.

Other definitions. Please specify here.

Who is eligible to send you a complaint? Consumer

For which sectors do you collect data?

Please send a copy of the classification structure you use (e.g. a table indicating the different sectors) to [SANCO-consumercomplaints@ec.europa.eu](mailto:SANCO-consumercomplaints@ec.europa.eu)

We use the IT-tool provided by the European Commission and therefore COICOP + some elements provided by the Commission

Which is your preferred policy option on the issue of harmonising consumer complaints classification systems? Introduce a voluntary system

Please explain.

Systems - and the interests of different stakeholders collection such data - differ. It is more likely that some steps can be taken in this field if it is based on voluntary participation

Do you agree that only the classification of complaints addressed to third parties (e.g. public agencies, ministries, self-regulatory bodies, consumer NGOs, trade associations, ADR bodies, others) should be harmonised and not those made to sellers/retailers? Yes

**Please give your view on whether a new classification system should include data on the following variables.**

Number of complaints Yes

Number of enquiries Yes

Sectors Yes

Nature/type of complaint (e.g. faulty goods, late delivery, overcharging, incorrect labelling, etc.) Yes

Mediums of transaction (e.g. face to face, internet, telephone sales, etc.) Yes

Associated monetary value Yes

Type of infringement and relevant legislation (e.g. horizontal legislation such as Unfair Commercial Practices or sector specific legislation such as Package Travel) No

Should the system use COICOP? No

Should the system use an alternative sectorial classification?	Yes
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Please specify

ECC Finland has been using the COICOP for almost two years now; we find it too complicated especially when complaints arriving over the phone are recorded. When it comes to classification based on type of infringement or sector specific legislation it needs to be pointed out that often such classification requires that stakeholders recording complaints should be specialists on certain legislation to very detailed issues. As those recording can not always have such inner knowledge of certain sector specific details (such as the new legislation on Unfair Commercial Practices, it is likely that stakeholders recording do so in different ways which may lead to misleading or even false signals about problems that consumers encounter. Please note that ECC Finland is not opposed to classification in this category; we only need to point that it may lead to difficulties interpreting the statistics.

How often should participating parties report aggregate collected complaints to the Commission?	Yearly
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Would you be prepared to change your existing classification methodology to be in line with a voluntary harmonised methodology?	Do not know
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What would be the cost implications of changing your methodology?	Do not know
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Do you use an IT tool to classify complaints?	Yes
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Please provide more information on the system: is it a specialised software or a single spreadsheet, etc.

We use the tool provided to us by the Commission

Comments

One of the disadvantages of the present recording system within the European Consumer Centre's network is that it does not provide stakeholder's information on one of the major issues, namely categories product/service. With the service sector and complaints related to services rising any future classification should highlight this point. We already take note that amicable settlement of consumer complaints/disputes is well available for consumer purchasing products but the situation is - an will remain to be so - quite different in the services sector.

## Personal data

Name of organisation

European Consumer Centre Finland

Country of establishment of the Organisation

Finland

Address	
Haapaniemenkatu 4 00530 Helsinki	
Website address (if available)	
www.ecc.fi	
Name contact person	
Leena Lindström	
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+358 9 7726 7826	
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Stakeholder group	Other
Please specify	
ECC Finland is located within the Finnish Consumer Agency which is a state body under the Ministry of Employment and the Economy	
Size of the organisation	1 - 49