

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

Meta Informations

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User name

null

Case Number

817975228491527608

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?

According to the user guide for the ECC-Net's IT tool a complaint is a statement of dissatisfaction by a consumer concerning a cross border transaction with a seller or a supplier.

How do you define enquiries?

According to the user guide for the ECC-Net's IT tool an information request is any query by a consumer regarding a national or cross border consumer issue not related to a complaint.

Other definitions. Please specify here.

According to the user guide for the ECC-Net's IT tool we distinguish between simple complaints, normal complaints and disputes: A simple complaint requires no follow-up by an ECC (one-step-operation). A normal complaint is a complaint is a statement of dissatisfaction by a consumer concerning a cross border transaction with a seller or a supplier which is not a simple complaint (further intervention by an ECC needed). A dispute is a referral of a complaint to an out-of-court scheme (ADR body).

Who is eligible to send you a complaint?	Consumer Other
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Please specify other

Consumer associations, ADR bodies, Lawyer (forwarding a consumer's complaint), Ministries and other stakeholders

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

The ECC-Net IT tool is based on the COICOP classification.

Which is your preferred policy option on the issue of harmonising consumer complaints classification systems?	Introduce an obligatory system
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Please explain.

If the Commission and/or the Member States wish to have complete comparable data, an obligatory system is the only way to gather reliable statistics. For the ECC-Net the use of the COICOP classification is compulsory.

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?	No
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Please explain.

This question is not really clear to us: If you want to say that also the customer services of sellers/retailers should use a harmonised classification for complaint only addressed to them, the answer would be "yes, only the complaints addressed to third parties should be registered in a harmonised way". Only if the data is meant to be published or transferred in order to be published/compared with other data, then the sellers/retailers should use a harmonised classification in order to make the data comparable. If the question refers to cases that could be solved directly between consumer and seller/retailer without intervention of a third party ("simple complaint") the answer should be "no" as to the registration of the cases in the data systems of the third parties in order to allow them to analyse the problem that might occur regularly in the Internal Market.

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

Number of complaints	Yes
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Number of enquiries	Yes
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Sectors	Yes
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Nature/type of complaint (e.g. faulty goods, late delivery, overcharging, incorrect labelling, etc.)	Yes
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Mediums of transaction (e.g. face to face, internet, telephone sales, etc.)	Yes
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Associated monetary value	Yes
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Type of infringement and relevant legislation (e.g. horizontal legislation such as Unfair Commercial Practices or sector specific legislation such as Package Travel)	Yes
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Should the system use COICOP?	No
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Should the system use an alternative sectorial classification?	Yes
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Please specify The classification should cover those topics that from our experience are the most common in order to allow to identify the real problems consumers face. Please see our contributions to DG Sanco during the development of the ECC-Net IT tool.	
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How often should participating parties report aggregate collected complaints to the Commission?	Quarterly
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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. DG Sanco's IT tool for the European Consumer Centres' Network (based on the SOLVIT database)	
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Comments

Please see the e-mail exchange with DG Sanco's IT tool team as well as with B5.

Personal data

Name of organisation

ECC France and ECC Germany (c/o EURO-INFO-VERBRAUCHER e.V.)

Country of establishment of the Organisation

Germany

Address

Rehfusplatz 11 77694 Kehl

Website address (if available)

www.euroinfo-kehl.eu

Name contact person

Bianca Schulz Jutta Gurkmann

Telephone number contact person

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E-mail contact person

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Stakeholder group

NGO

Size of the organisation

1 - 49