

# Implementation of the harmonised methodology for classifying and reporting consumer complaints and enquiries in Cyprus

Presentation to the Consumer Complaints Expert Group –  
25/01/2013



MINISTRY OF COMMERCE,  
INDUSTRY AND TOURISM



REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS



COMPETITION AND CONSUMER  
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# Introduction

- The Competition and Consumer Protection Service (CCPS) of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism is the major consumer complaints & enquiries governmental handling body in Cyprus.
- The CCPS handled 6638 complaints in 2010 and 2087 complaints in 2011.
- Complaints and Enquiries recording, reporting and interpretation processes are of immense importance for market monitoring, decision making and policy formulation.



# The current situation cont'd

- The CCPS encourages the implementation of the harmonised methodology for classifying and reporting consumer complaints and enquiries.
- The CCPS and the European Commission organized a two-day seminar (26-27/04/2012) in Cyprus aiming at promoting the adoption of the harmonised methodology and the use of the European Consumer Complaints Registration System (ECCRS).
- Twenty five people from ten different organizations (government departments, regulators, NGOs of consumers) participated in the seminar.



# The current situation cont'd

- According to participants' testimonies the seminar was very beneficial since they had the opportunity to:
  - Inform each other about their current work
  - Exchange best practices in complaint handling
  - Learn about the provisions of the Recommendation
  - Learn how to use ECCRS
  - Practice using the ECCRS



# The current situation

- The CCPS has in place its own complaint classification structure supported by simple tools i.e. Access and Excel.
- However, this system is not compliant with the harmonised methodology.
- Two options for implementing the harmonized methodology:
  1. either developing a new and enhanced IT tool in compliance with the harmonised methodology
  2. or using the European Consumer Complaints Registration System (ECCRS)



# Development of a new IT tool

- Developing a new IT Tool has been considered as the best solution.
- This tool is envisaged to enable the integrated and unified processing of complaints (i.e. collection, investigation, result) as well as the production of statistics.
- However such an endeavor is costly and under the current economic conditions cannot be implemented.
- Look forward to the next call for proposals by the European Commission for co-financing the establishment of IT systems that would ensure the implementation of the Recommendation.



# The use of ECCRS

cont'd

- The use of ECCRS is considered as the second best solution.
- Positive aspects:
  - Free
  - Available in Greek (and all other languages)
  - User friendly



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# The use of ECCRS

- Negative aspects to be addressed for improvement:
  - ECCRS relates only to the collection stage of complaints' handling. Therefore, the parallel use of current systems is imperative in order to cover other stages (i.e. investigation and results). This would put extra burden in terms of time consumed and resources needed.
  - Each user of the ECCRS acts in an independent/autonomous way resulting in the:
    - submission of the data without prior check and approval
    - fragmentation of the data submitted by the same organization
  - Need for developing a better than the existing tool, allowing the production of statistics from submitted data.



# The way forward

- Currently, the ECCRS is being tested in order determine whether its use will be beneficial for the CCPS.
- A final assessment report will be prepared and the final decision is expected to be made in February 2013.
- Given the circumstances (i.e. lack of sufficient alternative IT solution) the result of the testing period will determine whether the CCPS will implement the harmonised methodology or not.





*Thank you for your attention!*

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