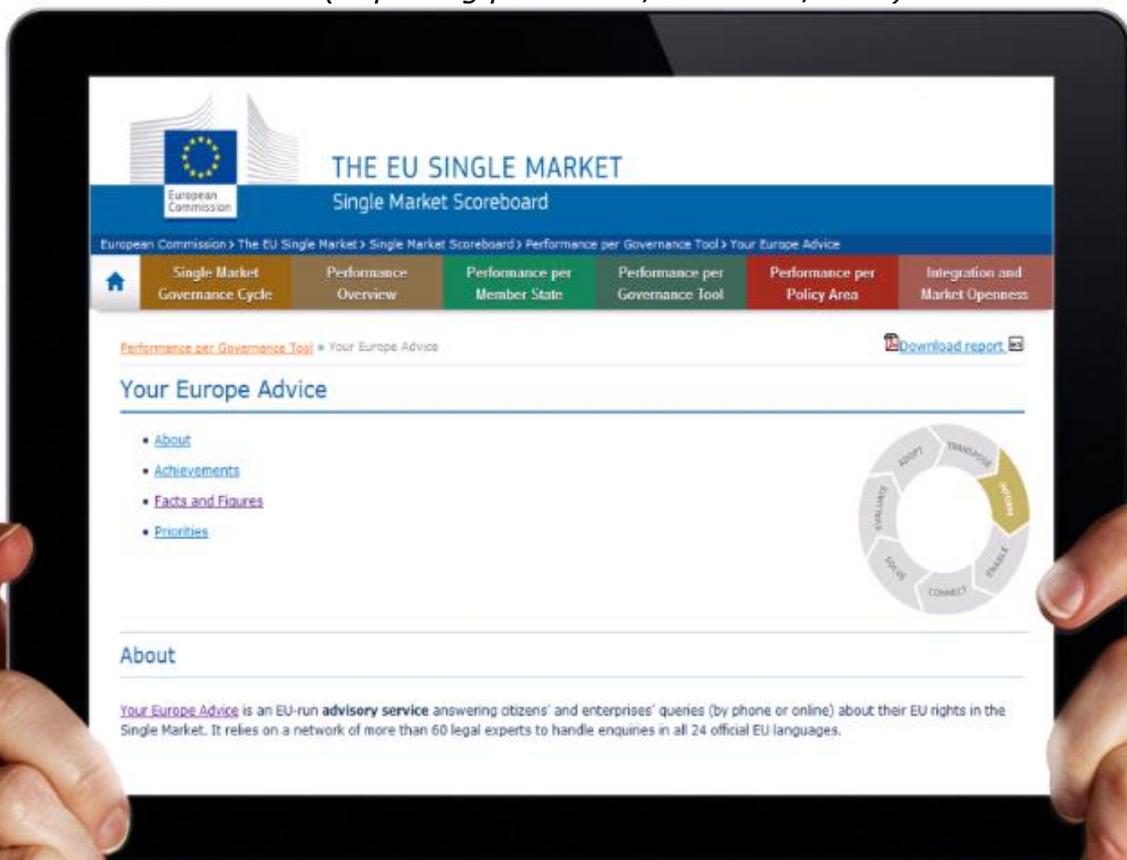


Single Market Scoreboard

Performance per governance tool

Your Europe Advice

(Reporting period: 01/2017 - 12/2017)



About

Your Europe Advice is an EU-run **advisory service** answering citizens' and enterprises' queries (by phone or online) about their EU rights in the Single Market. It relies on a network of more than 60 legal experts who handle enquiries in all 24 official EU languages.

Achievements

- Since 2009 the **number of enquiries** has more than **doubled** (90% of enquiries are eligible) although there was a slight decrease in the number of enquiries in 2017.
- The timeliness and quality of replies is being maintained even though the questions put to Your Europe Advice are **increasingly specific and complex**.
- Quality controls of experts' replies continue to be very strict.
- Your Europe Advice's experts have benefited from a 2-days in-house **training seminar on new EU law**
- The system of **quarterly feedback reporting** - based on legal analysis of the problem areas identified via the enquiries - is by now well established and allows providing useful feedback to policy units of the European Commission.
- Experts participated in two facebook chats on start-ups and professional qualifications. Such social media activities allow providing real-time online advice to citizens and businesses.
- **Cooperation & coordination** with the Commission's related support services (SOLVIT, [Europe Direct Contact Centre \(EDCC\)](#), Your Europe website) have been further developed.
- Your Europe Advice has significantly contributed to updating and developing the Your Europe Portal.
- The **direct transfer system** between Your Europe Advice, SOLVIT and EDCC is working smoothly.

A typical question to "Your Europe Advice"

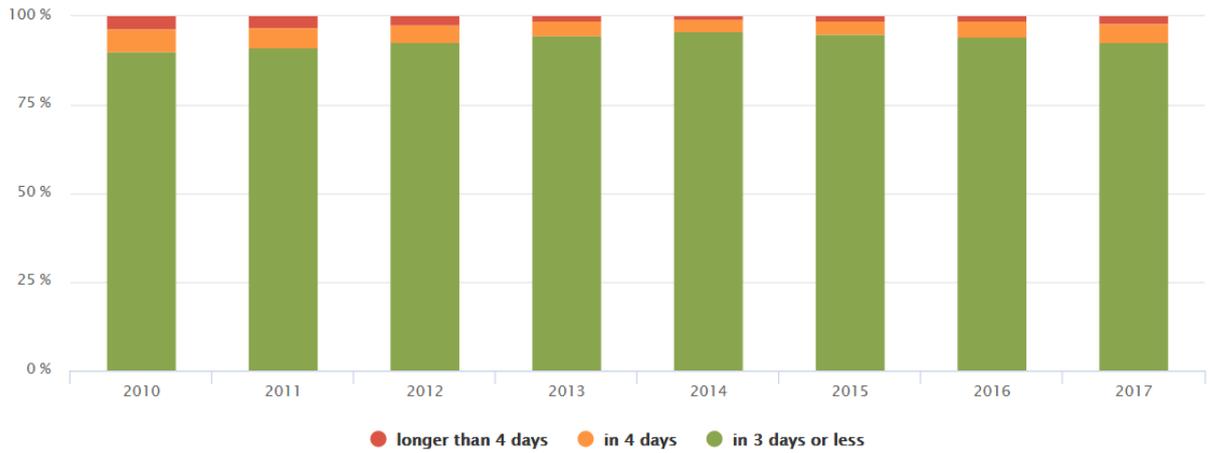
A Belgian who had worked in France for 4 years lost his job recently. He moved back to Belgium to look for work and wanted to know whether he would receive unemployment benefits from the French or the Belgian social security system. Your Europe Advice told him that France - where he had last worked - was responsible for examining his right to unemployment benefit under national law. French unemployment benefit could be transferred to Belgium for up to 3 months, with the option of one renewal.

Facts and figures

Running the Service

Service efficiency is measured primarily by the speed of replies. The aim is to reply to enquiries within **3** working days. 94,14% of replies are sent within that deadline and nearly 99% within four working days.

Speed of replies



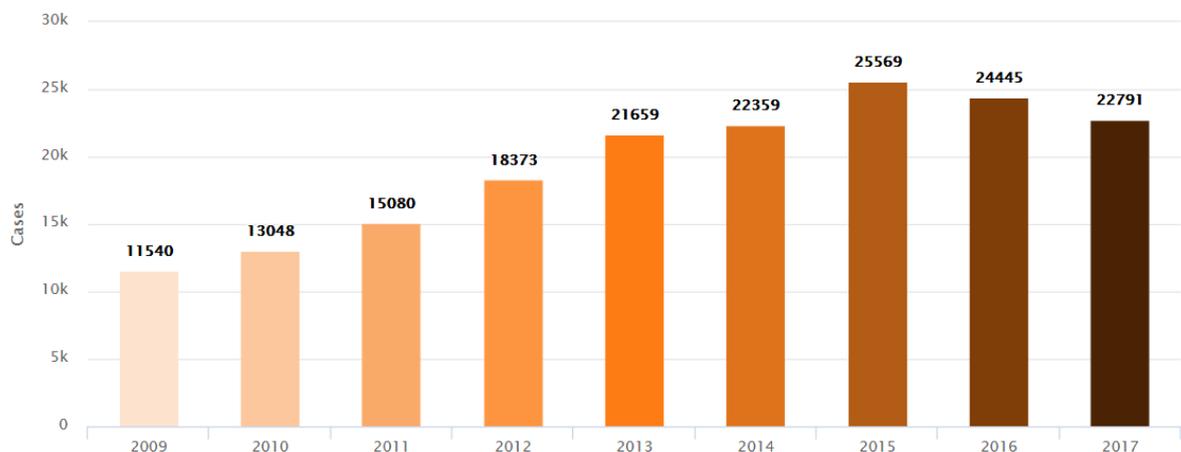
Service effectiveness is measured by testing the quality of the replies through randomly selected samples of 10% of cases each month. Each sample case is assessed according to the following nine substantial or formal criteria agreed with the Commission:

substantial (content)	formal (style)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relevance • accuracy • completeness • legal reference • enabling (signposting) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expression • focus • structure • personal

Replies are found to provide comprehensive and accurate advice on the issues in question. Completeness is an important criterion as many enquiries are rather complex.

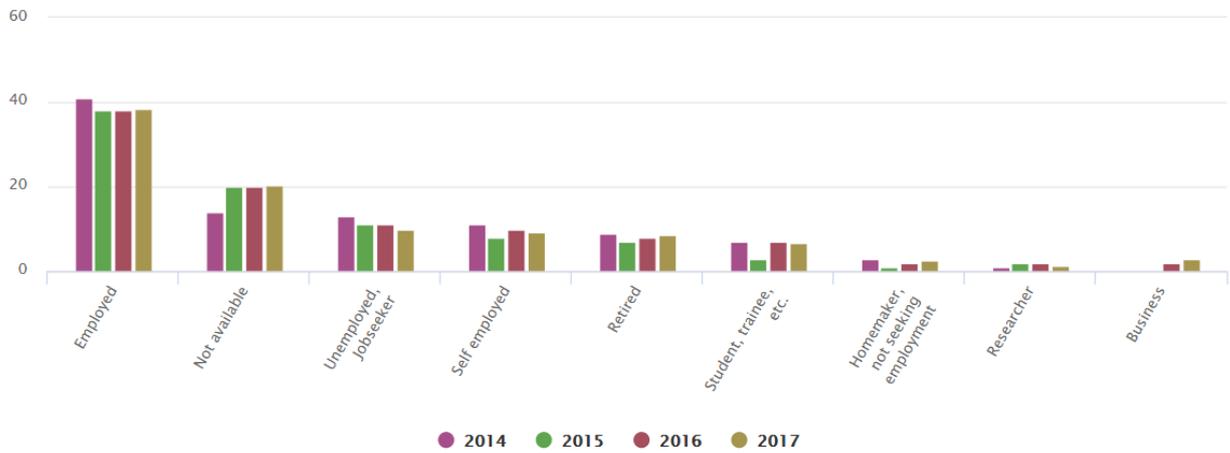
Particular attention is paid to the user-friendliness of replies such as tailor-made answers, clear structures and easily understandable language (no EU or legal jargon).

Total annual enquiries

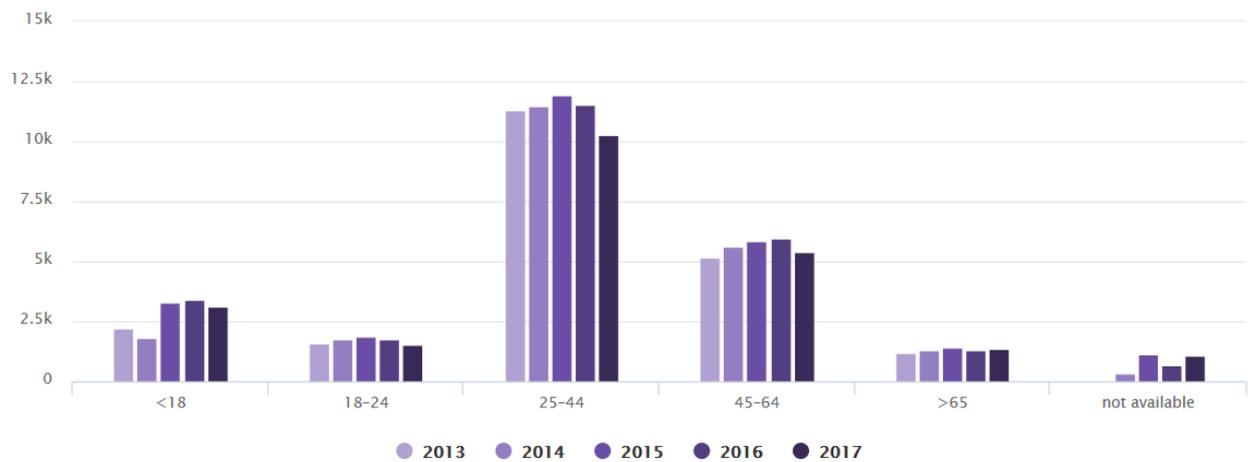


Between 2009 and 2017 the number of enquiries more than doubled. Compared to last year, the use of Your Europe Advice slightly decreased which is due to more, more relevant and more user-friendly information on the Your Europe website.

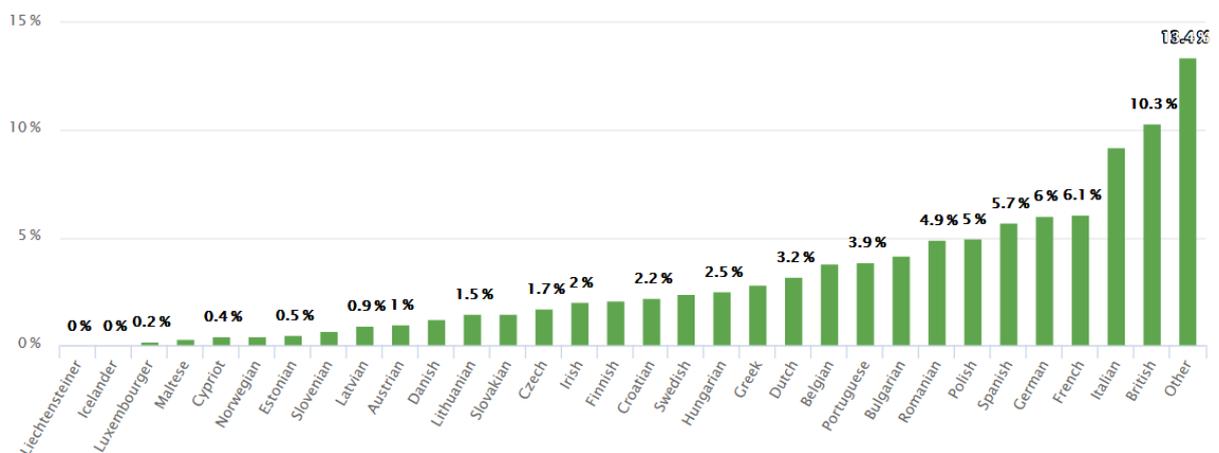
Enquiries by type of user

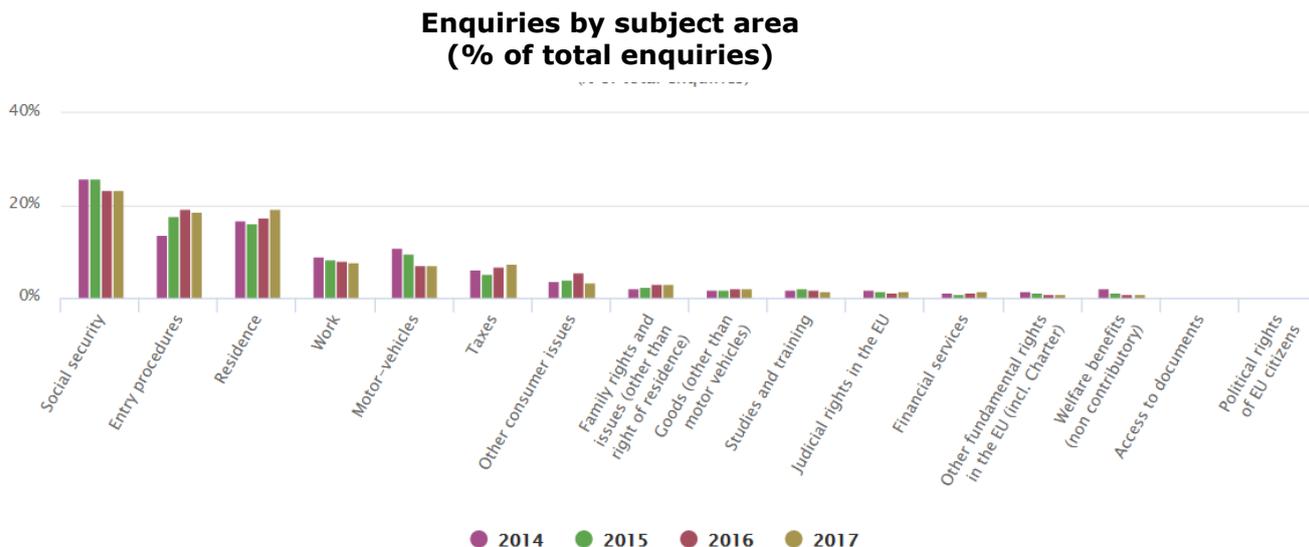


Enquiries by age scale



Enquiries by nationality





The main subject areas stayed the same in comparison to previous years. Regarding entry procedures, taxation and consumer rights a certain increase could be observed. They show where people's real problems with the Single Market lie.

Feedback

Enquiries are analysed and regular reports are sent to the Commission. These reports provide an up-to-date picture of where obstacles to exercising EU rights persist. The following examples show striking issues.

Gaps and grey areas in EU legislation:

- There were difficulties in obtaining recognition of marriages conducted within the EU. Extra documentation and legalisation were required. Foreign marriage certificates were not accepted and citizens had to go through additional formalities. In some cases, the documentation requested was not available: registration of a marriage in the UK.
- Some socio-economic categories are not covered by the social security coordination system (especially trainees).
- Gap in Directive 2004/38: Article 5(2) provides that possession of a valid residence card by a family member of an EU citizen shall exempt such family members from a visa requirement for short stays. This exemption requires that the residence card must have been issued to a family member of a migrant EU citizen, i.e. it excludes residence cards issued to family members of home nationals (Article 10). For the visa exemption to apply, the family member must travel with the EU citizen or join them in the host Member State. Non-EU family members of EU citizens who have not exercised EU Treaty rights by living in another Member State cannot travel freely with their EU spouses within the Union even after many years of residence in the EU because the visa exemption does not apply to them. However, the same facility is not expressly provided for holders of permanent residence cards issued under Article 20.
- Opening cross-border bank accounts is still difficult for citizens. Banks operate in a national context, which makes it very difficult for non-nationals to open a bank

account in another country. The need to have a residential address or a national ID card to open an account is the most striking problem. A business employing temporary workers from Spain in various regions in France complained that banks will not open accounts for them because they do not have stable residence in France. By extension, social security bodies refuse to register them under the French system unless they have a bank account in France.

Recurrent problems:

- Most of the enquiries on residence rights in Sweden have concerned presentation of the Form S1. No other proof of insurance is accepted in Sweden, even if the citizen is a family member of a Swedish citizen. SOLVIT has intervened, but without success. This problem has persisted for more than three years. The situation is not only frustrating for EU citizens, as they cannot register and secure their right to residence, but also makes all other administrative steps impossible, such as opening a bank account, accessing internet or telephone services, taking courses in Swedish.
- Excessive delays in processing their family benefit claims by the German authorities: Some citizens submitted their applications more than a year ago, but they are still waiting for their family benefits or differential payment claims to be decided upon.

Lack of or wrong information:

- misleading information from national authorities on the health insurance for children as temporary residents
- lack of awareness of EU rules regarding the S2 form at the hospitals where the citizen is receiving programmed care, as well as at the local health insurance body
- wrong information from immigration authority regarding the application for a residence card as a family member of an EU citizen (article 10 Directive 2004/38/EC)
- Some national administrations remain unfamiliar with the requirements of Directive 2004/38/EC. Notably, EU citizens experienced difficulties in obtaining information about residence certificates; permanent residence cards; competent authorities; and supporting documentation.

Priorities

- intensify cooperation with SOLVIT, Europe Direct and other networks
- further improve quality and user-friendliness
- contribute to improving the Your Europe Portal
- ensure that experts continue to provide high quality replies
- further explore the use of interactive tools for delivering advice