

About ECC-Iceland:

Our host organisation is Neytendasamtökin, the Consumers Association of Iceland (NS). Their offices deal with similar complaints as the ECC, but on a national level, so we benefit greatly from the close cooperation with NS. The cost of the ECC project is divided between the Icelandic ministry of business affairs and the European Commission.

The office:

Our offices are open from 09:00 until 16:00 (15:00 during the summer months) and our telephone service is open between 10:00 and 15:00 on weekdays. Our time zone is GMT. Feel free to contact us if you have any questions about your rights as a consumer in Iceland or the EU.

Our website:

Our website is www.ena.is. On the site, which gets about 6 - 800 hits a week, we inform consumers about their rights, and keep them informed of news of the centre and the net as a whole. We also post publications from the net on our website.



Due to the small population of Iceland (approx. 315.000) we are a very small centre, and all our staff is part-time. However there has been a considerable increase in our cases, simple complaints and information requests. For example we got more cases in the first six months of 2008 than in the whole year of 2007. In the whole year of 2008 we got 260% more complaints than in 2007.



The Nordic centres: Iceland, Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden at a Nordic meeting held in Reykjavík in May 2008.

The ECC-Net (European Consumer Centres) operates in all the EU member states as well as Norway and Iceland. Should you need to contact any of the ECCs please find a list of the centres and their contact info on our website, www.ena.is.



The current staff of ECC-Iceland:
Director: Hildigunnur Hafsteinsdóttir, lawyer.
Case-handler: Kristín H. Einarsdóttir
Secretary: Ásta Vigdís Bjarnadóttir
Legal Trainee: Guðmundur Bjarni Ragnarsson

ECC-ICELAND
Evrópska Neytendaaðstoðin á Íslandi
European Consumer Centre in Iceland



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The European market

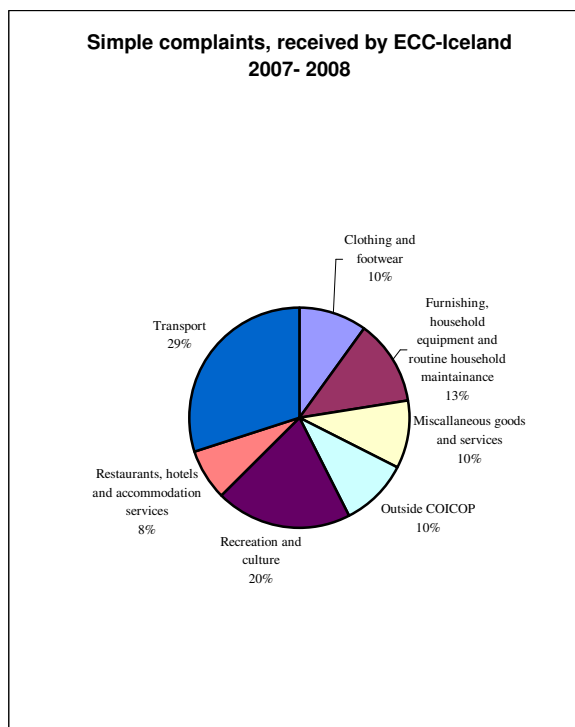
Since Iceland became a member nation of the European Economic Area the cross border commercial activities of Icelandic consumers have increased. This is a very good thing and leads to more variety in consumer goods and more competition. However cross border shopping can also lead to more complicated disputes. Therefore it is very important for Icelandic consumer to have access to the ECC. Of course it is also important for people of other nationalities, who purchase items or services from Icelandic traders, to have somewhere to turn in case of a disagreement between trader and consumer.



What does ECC-Iceland do?

- Provides consumers with information and gives them advice on cross border shopping.
- Shares a complaint with the trader-ECC: acts as mediator between consumer and trader when problems arise from cross-border transaction and if needed, transfer the case to a competent ADR.
- Takes part in joint projects with the other centres, for example on tourism in the EU.
- Takes part in ECC-Net-meetings, cooperation days and meetings with the other Nordic centres.
- Provides the other centres with information on the legal status of consumers in Iceland.
- Promotes the ECC by writing articles, f. ex. on the websites www.ena.is and www.ns.is, and in the newspapers, publishing brochures, giving interviews and sending out press releases.

What do consumers complain about? What are their questions?



When looking at just the simple complaints from consumers it is clear that problems are most likely to arise when it comes to cross-border *transport* services. These mostly regard car-rentals and the delay or cancellation of flights. These are also the most common reasons for disputes between trader and consumer.

There are also many complaints in the field of *recreation and culture*. Sadly, most of these regard internet fraud or lottery scams.

The third most common complaints regard *furnishing, household equipments and routine household maintenance*. These complaints regard various electronic equipment, from coffeemakers to refrigerators bought in other countries.

This is similar to the statistics in cases the ECC-Net as a whole receives.

Examples of cases handled by ECC-Iceland:

An Icelandic consumer bought some clothes from a Danish trader. Due to a mistake her credit card was charged ten times the right amount. When the consumer noticed the mistake the company refused to refund the amount. Sadly the consumer had thrown away the receipt so the mistake was rather difficult to prove. ECC-Iceland shared the case with ECC-Denmark, which sent the case to an ADR. Before the ADR had come to a decision the trader admitted the mistake and refunded the amount to the consumers credit card.

A Belgian consumer bought some DVDs from an Icelandic trader. The subtitles were supposed to be Dutch. When the consumer got home and planned to watch the movies it turned out that there weren't any Dutch subtitles. The consumer turned to the Belgian ECC, which shared the case with ECC-Iceland. ECC-Iceland contacted the trader who agreed to refund the consumer the price of the DVDs.

A Danish consumer contacted ECC-Iceland directly after he had had some trouble in dealing with an Icelandic car-rental. The trader had charged him extra fee because the consumer returned the car three minutes too late. This late return of the car was however due to the fact that the consumer had to stand in line for ten minutes before he was able to return the car! The staff of ECC-Iceland negotiated with the trader and the consumer received a refund.



For further info and reports see www.ena.is

A few facts about Iceland:

Official language: Icelandic
Capital/largest city: Reykjavík
Government: Parliamentary republic
Size: 103.000 square kilometers
Currency: the Icelandic Króna (ISK)
Climate: Maximum average temperature in Reykjavík in July is 13,3 °C, and in January 1,9°C.
And more mobile phone subscriptions than people!