



Summary

Online holiday booking

Is the initial price the final price ?

Report of the European Consumer
Centres Network (ECC-Net) 2016



Co-funded by
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Help and advice
for consumers
in Europe



European Consumer Centre Luxembourg

Summary of the report

The European Consumer Centres Network (ECC-Net) is an EU-wide network that provides consumers with information on their rights when shopping across borders and supports consumers with seeking redress when a dispute has arisen as a consequence of a cross border transaction. The ECC-Net consists of 30 European Consumer Centres, one in each of the 28 Member States plus one in Iceland and another in Norway. ECC-Net is co-financed by the European Commission and the respective countries.

The services which ECC-Net provides to consumers concentrate on business-to-consumer matters when citizens shop across borders, either in person or in the form of distance purchases (mainly e-commerce).

In 2015 the ECC-Net has received over 93.694 enquiries⁽⁰¹⁾ from consumers.

More and more consumers use online service to book their holidays: reservation can be made online in only one click. In 2015, 19 % of the contacts received by ECCs concerned the topic of holidays.

The ECC-Net has therefore decided to carry an investigation on whether the price of flights, hotels, cars, timeshare or other holiday services indicated at the beginning of the booking process corresponded to the price which was finally paid by a consumer.

This study consisted of a thorough review of 539 consumer complaints received by the ECC-Net, 237 simulated booking, and 513 replies from consumers in an online survey.

The results show that price differences between the booking and the final payment exist, and are the most frequent in air travel. In a majority of such cases price increase is linked to: management fees, credit card fees and fees for checking-in passengers.

The questionnaire for consumers has shown that there are still many consumers who do not complain if the final price for a flight, a hotel or a rental car does not correspond to the indicated price because they are unaware on how or where to complain.

The ECC-Net therefore has decided to raise the awareness of consumers and traders, publishing a list of recommendations.

⁽⁰¹⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/solving_consumer_disputes/non-judicial_redress/ecc-net/index_en.htm

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The European Consumer Centres Network (ECC-Net)

We...

- inform consumers about their rights and opportunities in Europe
- advise on cross-border consumer topics
- offer legal support for the settlement of cross-border disputes with a company in the EU, Iceland and Norway

You can contact us by phone or visit us in our office
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 9 am to 4 pm
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