



TRAVEL TIPS

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TRAVEL TIPS: HELP AND ADVICE FOR CONSUMERS IN EUROPE

<http://ec.europa.eu/ecc-net>





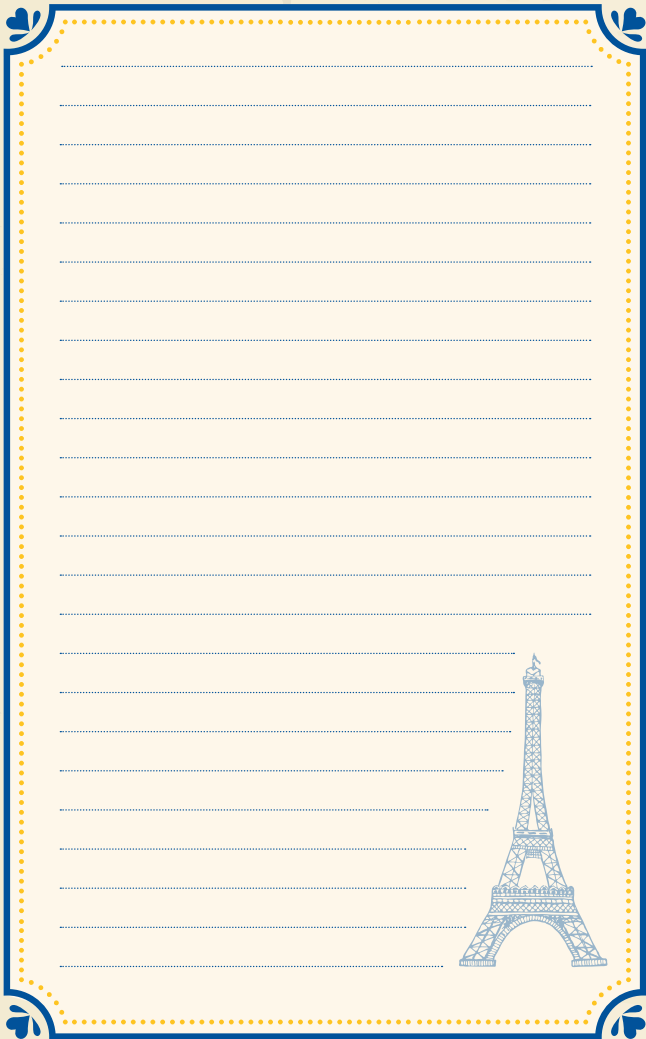


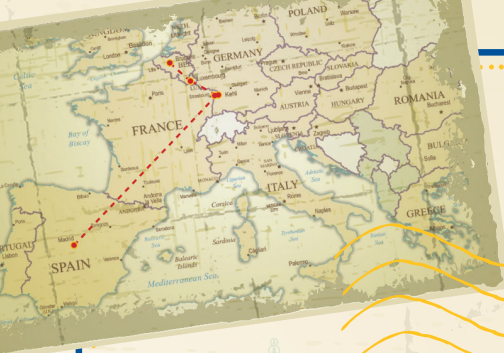
WHY DO I NEED THESE TIPS?

Do you buy your airline tickets or book foreign hotels online?
Do you go abroad for your holidays?
Do you buy things while you are there?
Do you rent a car in another country?

If you do and if you live and travel in the EU, Iceland or Norway, then these tips are for you. Our tips sum up your rights when making a cross-border travel purchase. You enjoy these rights wherever you travel or buy in these 30 countries.

If you want to know more, get in touch with your local European Consumer Centre (ECC). This ECC is part of a network (ECC-Net). The ECC-Net exists specifically to answer your questions about cross-border rights.





WHAT CAN THE ECC-Net DO FOR ME?

If you live in the EU, Iceland or Norway, your local ECC will give you independent help and advice on your rights when you travel and buy abroad.

If you run into a specific problem with a trader abroad, your local ECC is there to help in your own language.

If it is necessary to contact a trader in another country, your local ECC contacts its network partner to do that for you.

ECCs are staffed by legal experts who specialise in supporting consumers with travel advice and problems. There is no charge for this service.

Go to pp. 34-35 to find out how to contact your local ECC by phone, email or internet.

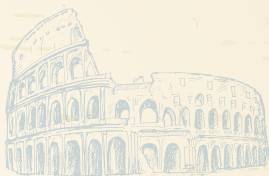
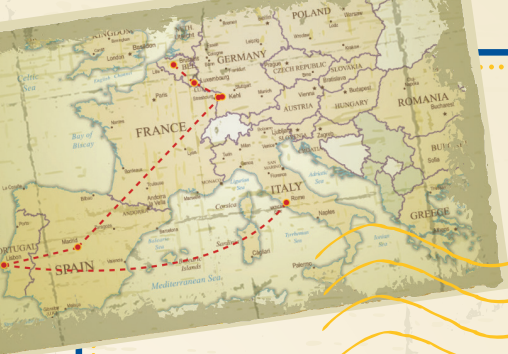
'Mrs H. from Belgium booked a hotel room on a French website that promised any customer who found a better deal elsewhere to match that price and give an additional 10 % discount.

When Mrs H. did find a lower price on an Italian website, the original website claimed this referred to a different room. After ECC Belgium got involved, the French website accepted that the rooms were identical and Mrs H. paid the lower price and got the discount.'



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TIPS FOR BOOKING ONLINE

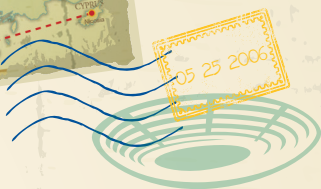
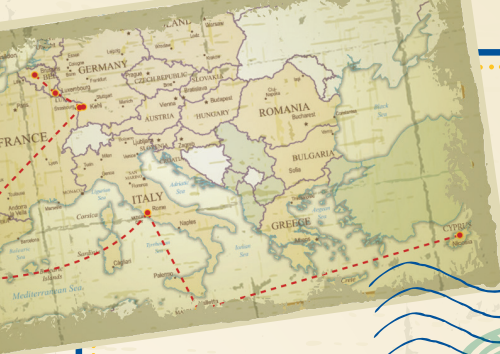
Check that the company provides complete contact details. You have a right to these.

Think about extra costs for paying by credit card or a local tourist tax. You must be given this information before you pay.

Beware of pre-ticked boxes for items like insurance which are illegal.

Find out what cancelling or changing your booking will cost. Take a copy of the booking and the booking terms with you.





TIPS FOR YOUR FLIGHT

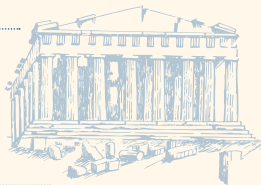
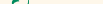
You have a right to get to your destination on time. If there is a long delay, you are entitled to compensation. The type and amount will depend on how serious the delay is.

It does not matter where you are flying to. You are entitled to compensation if you started your journey in the EU, Iceland or Norway.

If you come back on an airline based in one of these countries, it also does not matter where you started your journey.

Make claiming compensation easier by taking a photo of the departure screen showing the delay.

When at the airport, pick up claim forms at the earliest opportunity.





TIPS FOR TRAVELLING BY COACH, TRAIN AND FERRY

If you take a coach, a train or a ferry, you are entitled to expect to arrive on schedule.

The longer the delays, the greater your right to some form of compensation.

If you have a disability or your mobility is reduced, you cannot be discriminated against; you have the right to receive assistance.

If you do need assistance, don't forget to inform the transport company before you travel.

Handwriting practice sheet with a blue border and yellow dotted lines. The page contains 20 horizontal dotted lines for writing. The bottom right corner features a line drawing of a classical building with a dome and columns.



TIPS FOR YOUR STAY

Whether you are staying in a hotel, a cabin cruiser, at a campsite pitch or in a holiday flat, you must get what you were promised.

Check that you have been given a full description of what you are booking. For example, if the room is not at all like the picture in the brochure or the hotel is farther from the beach than the website said, you are entitled to complain!

If you do not get satisfaction on the spot, take photos and save any documentary evidence (like a local map) to lodge a complaint when you get home.

'Jānis from Riga checked his rental car when he picked it up, but did not find any problems. Nevertheless, he was careful to take photos. When the car hire company later debited him for damage, Jānis sent them the photos. They proved that the car was in fact already damaged when he picked it up, even though he had not spotted it at the time. He got his money back, but only after ECC Latvia intervened.'







TIPS ON RENTING A CAR

Find a company providing clear and complete information before you book. Look out for exceptions to the insurance cover, like the windscreen or the tyres.

Check whether you can take out separate cover for damages not covered by the contract. Don't sign contracts you don't understand. You are entitled to explanations.

Watch out for 'hidden' extras like having to pay more to pick up a car at an airport or for a child seat.

Return the car with a full tank unless you are sure you won't be charged premium rates to fill it up.

Forestall arguments over damage by taking photos when you pick the car up and when you drop it off.

'Two Czech consumers purchased a package tour to Gabon from a Dutch tour operator, but the 'private boat' they were promised turned out to be a regular supply boat shared with other people. As for the so-called safari included in the trip, it lasted only 2 hours. The company paid compensation after the ECC-Net intervened.'



Handwriting practice lines consisting of 18 horizontal dotted lines. The first 15 lines are full-width. The last three lines are partially obscured by the building illustration on the right.





TIPS ON PACKAGE TOURS

A package tour is not just travel and hotel. If you bought a hotel and concert tickets together, package tour rules apply to you.

The price of a package tour is fixed with a few exceptions, like a fuel surcharge. Any price increase within 20 days of departure is illegal.

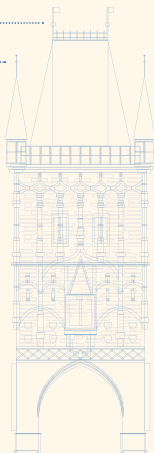
Obtain the number to call in emergencies. You have a right to assistance if you are on a package tour.

Check your contract to see what the time limit is if you need to complain.

'Ole from Voss in Norway was approached by a Norwegian pensioner while on holiday in Gran Canaria about buying membership of a holiday club. The pensioner seemed very pleasant and Ole was in a holiday mood, so he soon signed on the dotted line. Afterwards he felt he had been tricked. He took ECC Norway's advice to exercise his right to withdraw within 14 days and got his EUR 400 deposit back.'



Handwriting practice lines consisting of 15 horizontal dotted lines. The first 10 lines are on the left side of the page, and the last 5 lines are on the right side, adjacent to the castle illustration.





TIPS ON TIMESHARE AND HOLIDAY CLUBS

Be suspicious of aggressive sales tactics. Do you really want to holiday in the same place year after year?

Do your sums. Are savings on future holidays really worth the price? Ask for the contract in your language. It's your right.

Remember that you have 14 days to withdraw from the contract. You do not have to give a reason.

Do not pay anything during the 14-day cooling-off period. You cannot be required to.

Do not pay anything on a resale until the contract is signed. That is the law.





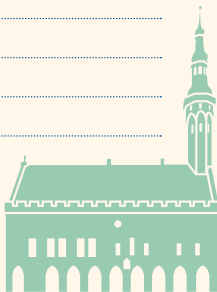
TIPS ON YOUR HOLIDAY PURCHASES

Do not worry about what will happen if the camera or the shoes you buy turn out to have defects. You have the right to have this remedied irrespective of where in the EU, Iceland and Norway you made the purchase.

There is a minimum 2-year guarantee on anything you buy. This is the case whether you buy something in your own country or anywhere else in the countries covered by the ECCs.

If a fault develops or your purchase does not have all the features that were claimed for it, you have a right to redress. The shop must repair the item, replace it free of charge, or give you all or some of your money back.

'An Austrian family wanted to book via the German website of an international cruise company. They were redirected to the Austrian website where an identical cabin cost almost three times as much. After ECC Austria pointed out that all EU consumers must be treated the same, the company changed its policy.'





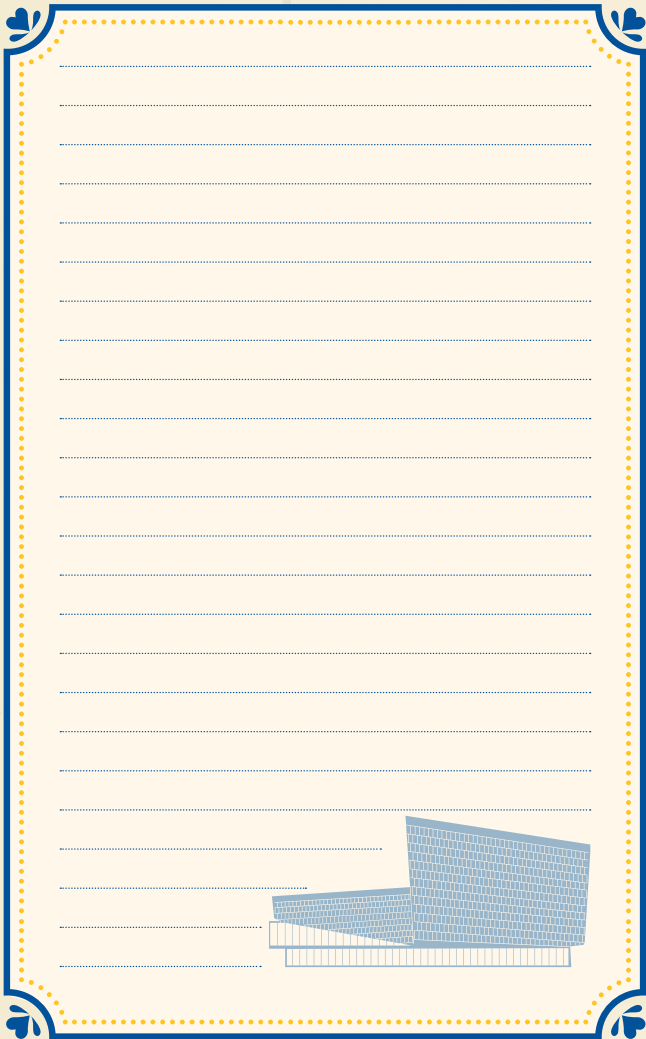
SOME FINAL TIPS

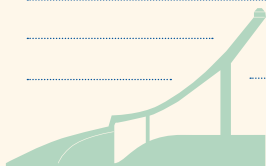
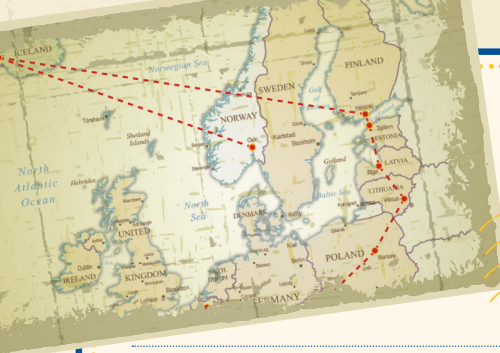
Download the ECC-Net travel app. There are tips on your rights and phrases on what to say in 25 languages. It works online and offline.

Don't let yourself be overcharged. Traders cannot charge you more solely because you live in another country.

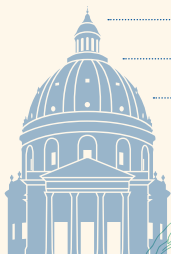
Get a European health insurance card. That way, you will be treated on the same terms as someone living in the country you are visiting.

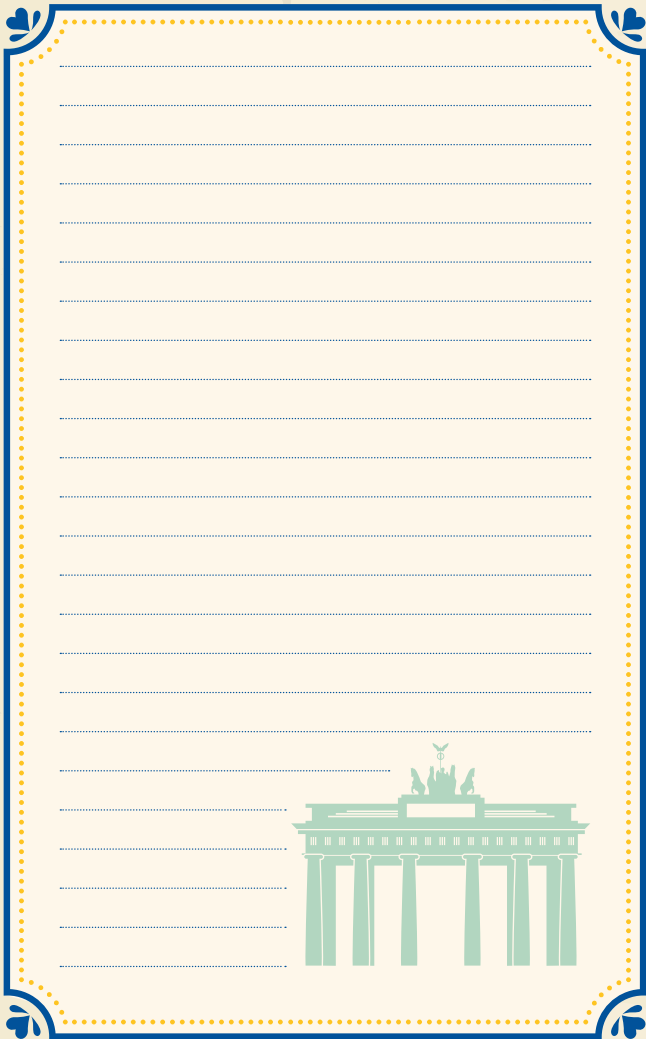
Spend some time on the website of your local ECC before spending your money. It's a good investment.



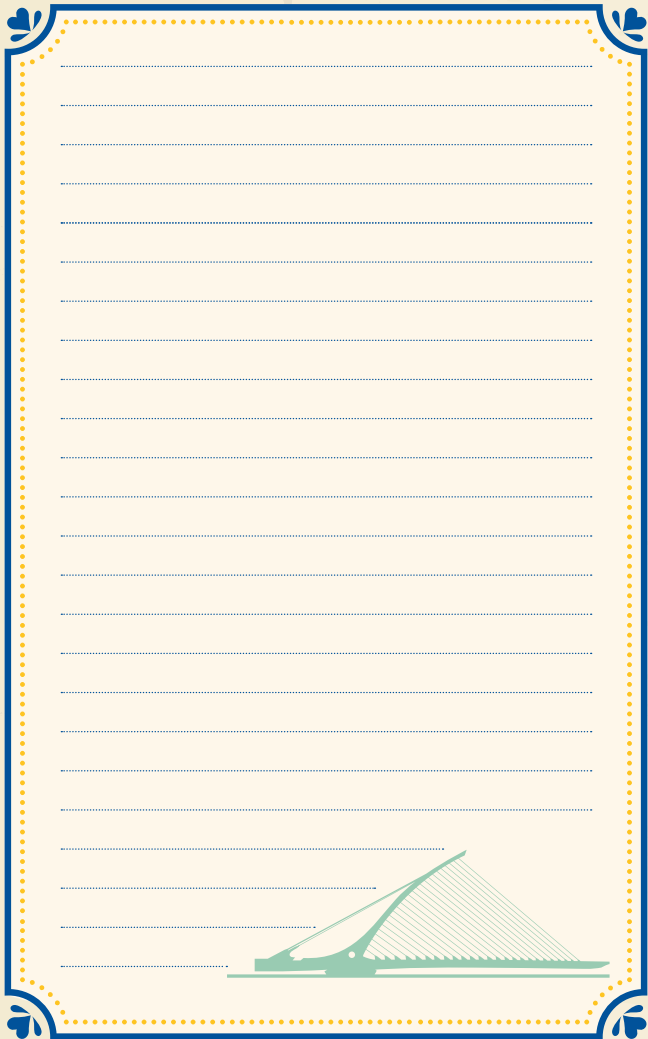


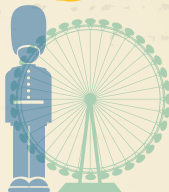
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USEFUL LINKS

More info about

Passenger rights:

http://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/travel/passenger-rights/index_en.htm

Travellers with reduced mobility:

http://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/travel/passenger-rights/reduced-mobility/index_en.htm

Package tours, timeshare and holiday clubs:

http://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/travel/holidays/index_en.htm

Rights when shopping:

http://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/consumers/shopping/index_en.htm

Getting a fair deal:

http://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/consumers/unfair-treatment/index_en.htm

THERE ARE EUROPEAN CONSUMER CENTRES IN

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