



This week, ECC Ireland launched a report on with car rental. It found that many of you have experienced problems with renting cars, in particular with charges for alleged damage, without your knowledge, following the return of the car (45% of complaints).

Our consumer query this month comes from a person who is irate following the loss of his luggage recently.

If you have had a problem with a purchase of goods or services from another EU country, please contact us on 01 8090600 or at info@eccdublin.ie. For information on your consumer rights when buying something in another European country, see www.eccdublin.ie.

Rosaleen Quinlan

Editor

1. Driving a hard bargain... Tips to remember when renting a car

Most of us when renting a car on our holidays just want to just get the keys and head off on the open road. However, the recent *ECC Ireland Car Rental report* shows that most problems encountered by consumers are as a result of unclear, misleading or unfair terms in the agreements signed when renting the car. Clearly, consumers need to pay attention; the following tips should help:

- Make sure you check what is included in the price quoted and what is not.
- Ensure that you understand what is covered by your insurance and what is left out. It is also very important to know the excess amount that could be charged to your credit card in case of an accident.
- Try to return the car during the working hours of the car rental company and have it inspected by a competent employee. The condition of the vehicle should be confirmed in writing and signed by you and a representative of the company.

For more tips, see http://www.eccdublin.ie/topics/buying_cars.html#car

To read the report, see http://www.eccdublin.ie/publications/ecc_reports.html

If you have had a problem with renting a car in another European country, and you cannot resolve it yourself, please contact us at info@eccdublin.ie or on 01 8090600.

2. Consumer query of the month

I was traveling via the new terminal in Heathrow recently and my luggage was lost. My suitcase contained expensive specialised photography equipment so I'm extremely annoyed. What are my rights?

Compensation for lost luggage is covered by an international law called the Montreal Convention, under which you can make a claim up to a maximum of approx €1050 for checked baggage whether the luggage is lost, delayed or missing. Luggage is considered 'lost' if it has not arrived 21 days from the date it was supposed to arrive. Ideally, you should have completed a PIR (Passenger Regularity Report) at the airport detailing your loss. However, the PIR does not itself constitute a formal claim. You should also follow up immediately with a formal letter to the airline outlining the date, flight, and extent of loss. Unfortunately, in your case, it would seem that even if the maximum compensation is secured, it will be inadequate to cover your loss.

Most airlines have a clause in their terms and conditions saying that they do not accept responsibility for perishable or valuable items (such as cameras, camcorders, mobile phones, documents or jewellery). An airline is liable only for items that it has agreed to carry. If you packed items in your luggage that were listed as "items unacceptable as baggage" in the airline's conditions of carriage, you will not be able to claim against the airline if they go missing. Therefore, you should also consider additional travel insurance, specifying the items to be carried. Alternatively you should carry the items in your hand luggage where practical.

If you have had a problem with lost luggage when in Europe, and you cannot resolve it yourself, please contact us at info@eccdublin.ie or on 01 8090600.

[The European Consumer Centre is funded by the European Commission and the National Consumer Agency.](#)

[Disclaimer: Whilst every effort is made to ensure accuracy, the European Consumer Centre cannot be held responsible for matters arising from any errors or omissions contained in this publication. The information provided is intended as a guide only and not as a legal interpretation.](#)