

Functioning of the European ODR Platform

Statistical report 2020

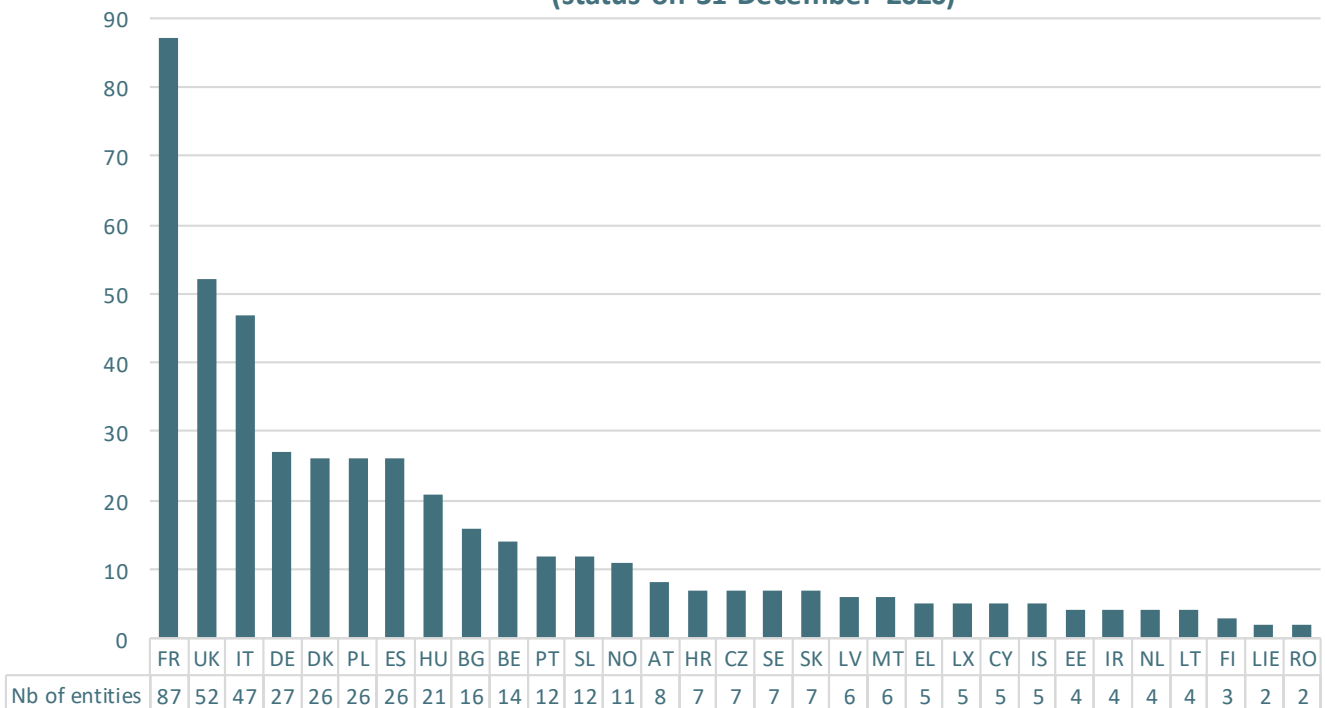
December 2021

In line with the obligation laid down in Article 21 of the Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) Regulation (524/2013/EU), this report is about the functioning of the European ODR platform regarding all new cases and visits made in 2020 (and what happened to the cases subsequently).

The ODR platform provides a user-friendly means for consumers to submit complaints to a trader related to an online purchase. It contains a multilingual register of 468 quality Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) bodies currently active across the Union, Liechtenstein and Norway. It also offers information on other consumer redress possibilities.

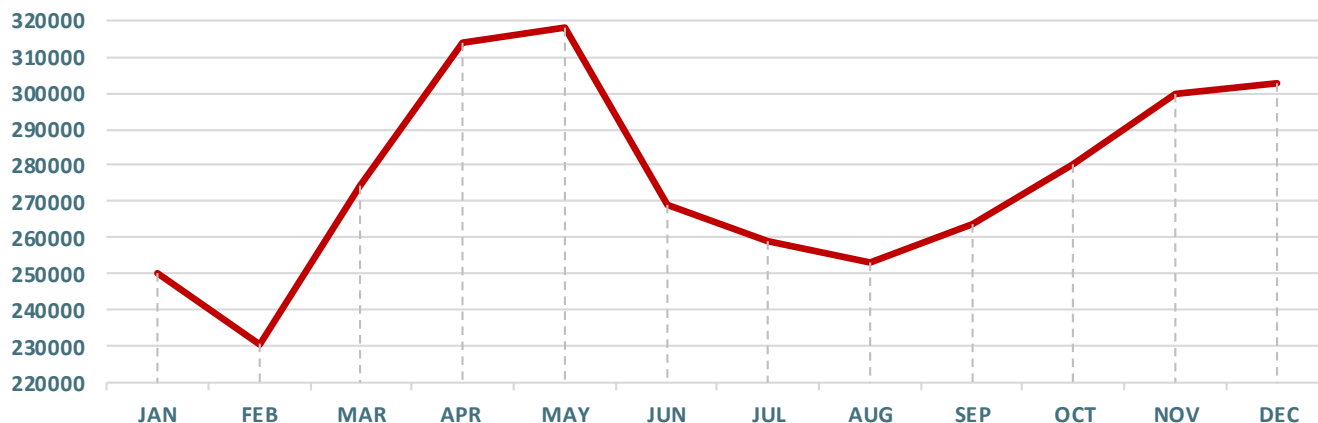
2020 was the last year when the ODR platform was accessible for resolving the disputes by ADR entities established in the UK, and for the disputes involving either UK consumers or traders.

Number of ADR entities published on the ODR platform
(status on 31 December 2020)



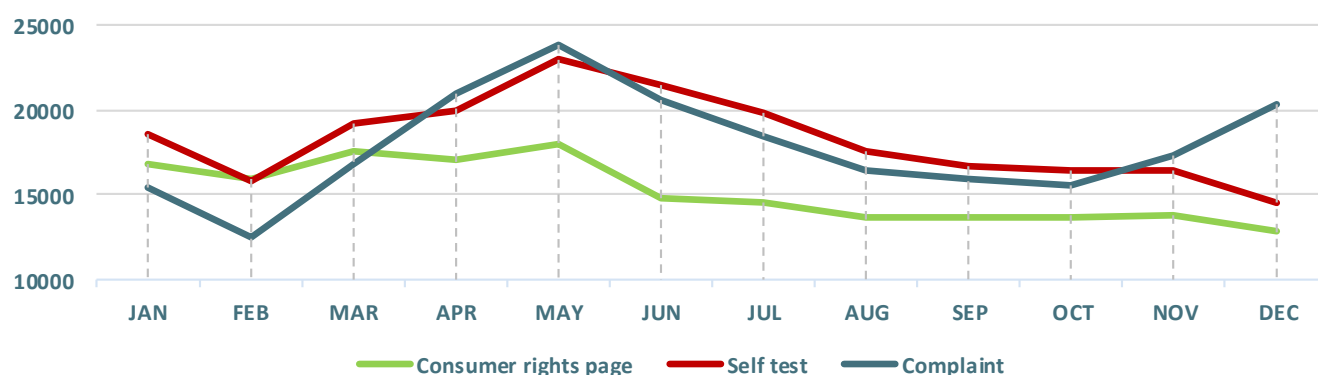
The platform saw **3,3 million unique visitors in 2020**, an average of 275,000 unique visitors per month.

Unique visitors in 2020



This is a significant increase compared to 2019 (**2,8 million** visits per year, an average of 200,000 unique visitors per month). The biggest increase (+30 to 40% compared to the same month of the year before) was in the period April-June. It corresponds to first month of the COVID 19 pandemic when national confinement measures were introduced and resulted in cancellations of travel. At the same time, consumers used much more e-commerce. The increase in the number of visitors observed during the first months of the pandemic shows that more visitors have been looking for assistance to concrete problems. A “self-test” functionality introduced in 2019 helps consumers to identify a redress solution most appropriate for their specific problem: launching a complaint on the ODR platform, contacting the trader bilaterally or a European Consumer Centre or an ADR entity directly. Throughout the year, the visits to the pages concerning the self-test and complaint form increased the most.

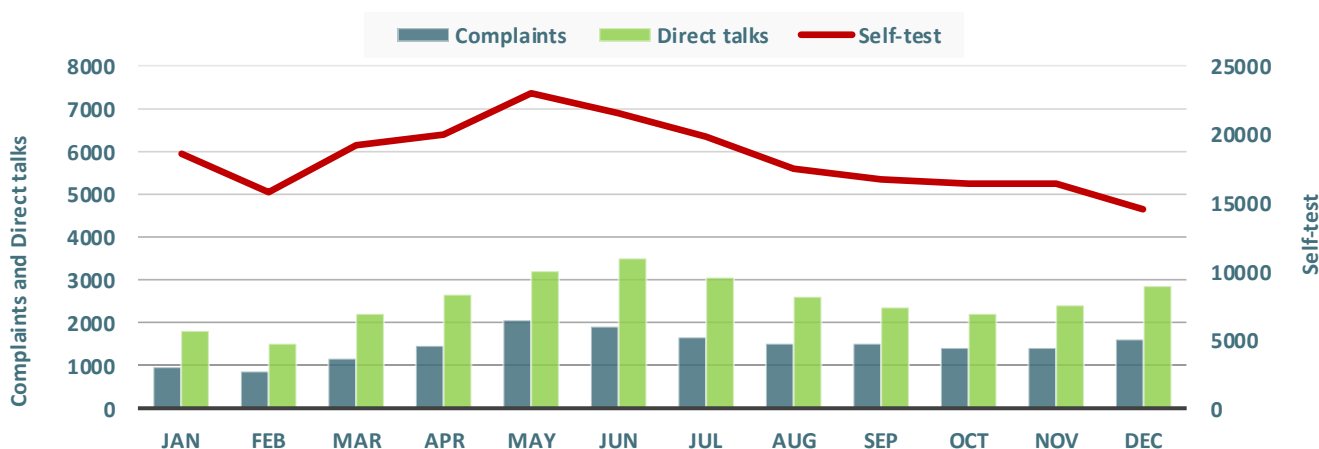
Pages visited details (2020, monthly averages)



At the end of the process, however, only a small proportion of visitors submitted a finalised complaint (17 461). Further 30 319 visitors submitted the request for direct talks, which is a new module introduced mid-2019: the consumers are given an option to share a draft complaint with a trader before submitting it officially, to try to settle the dispute directly.

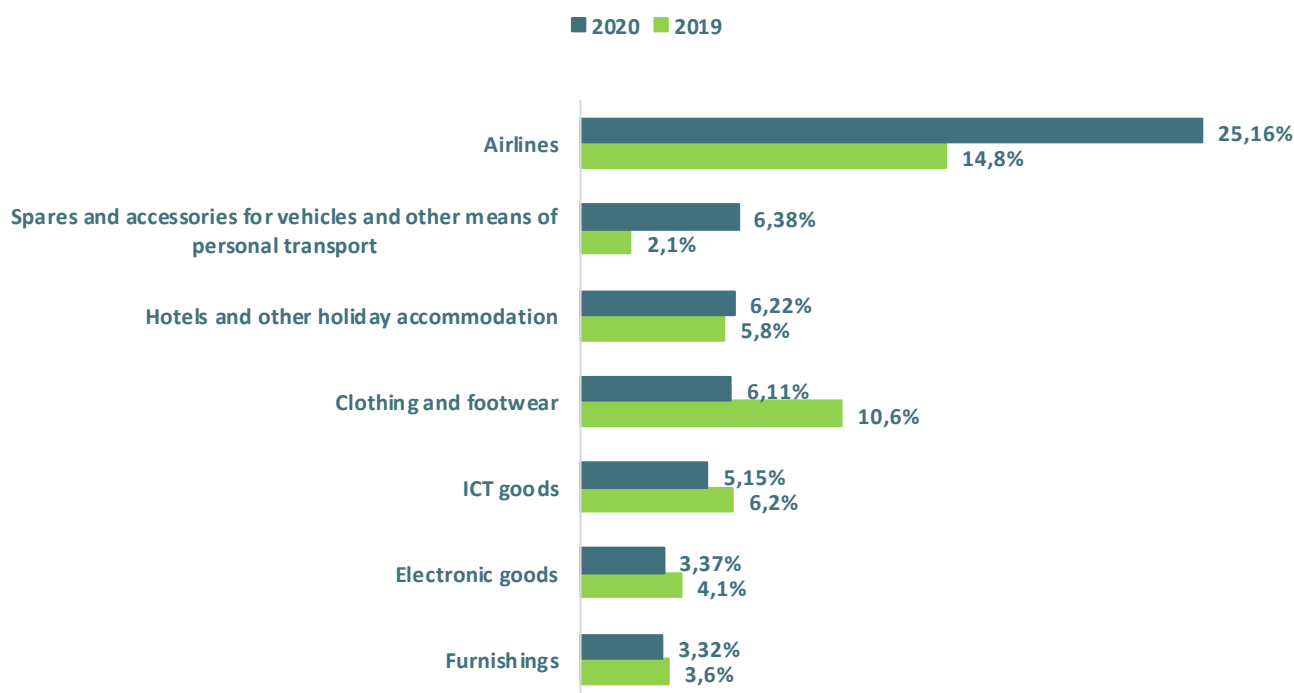
Nevertheless, side-by-side comparison to 2019 (August to December, as the direct talks were introduced in July 2019) show a 70% increase in submissions (both for traditional complaints and for direct talks).

Number of submissions per month in 2020

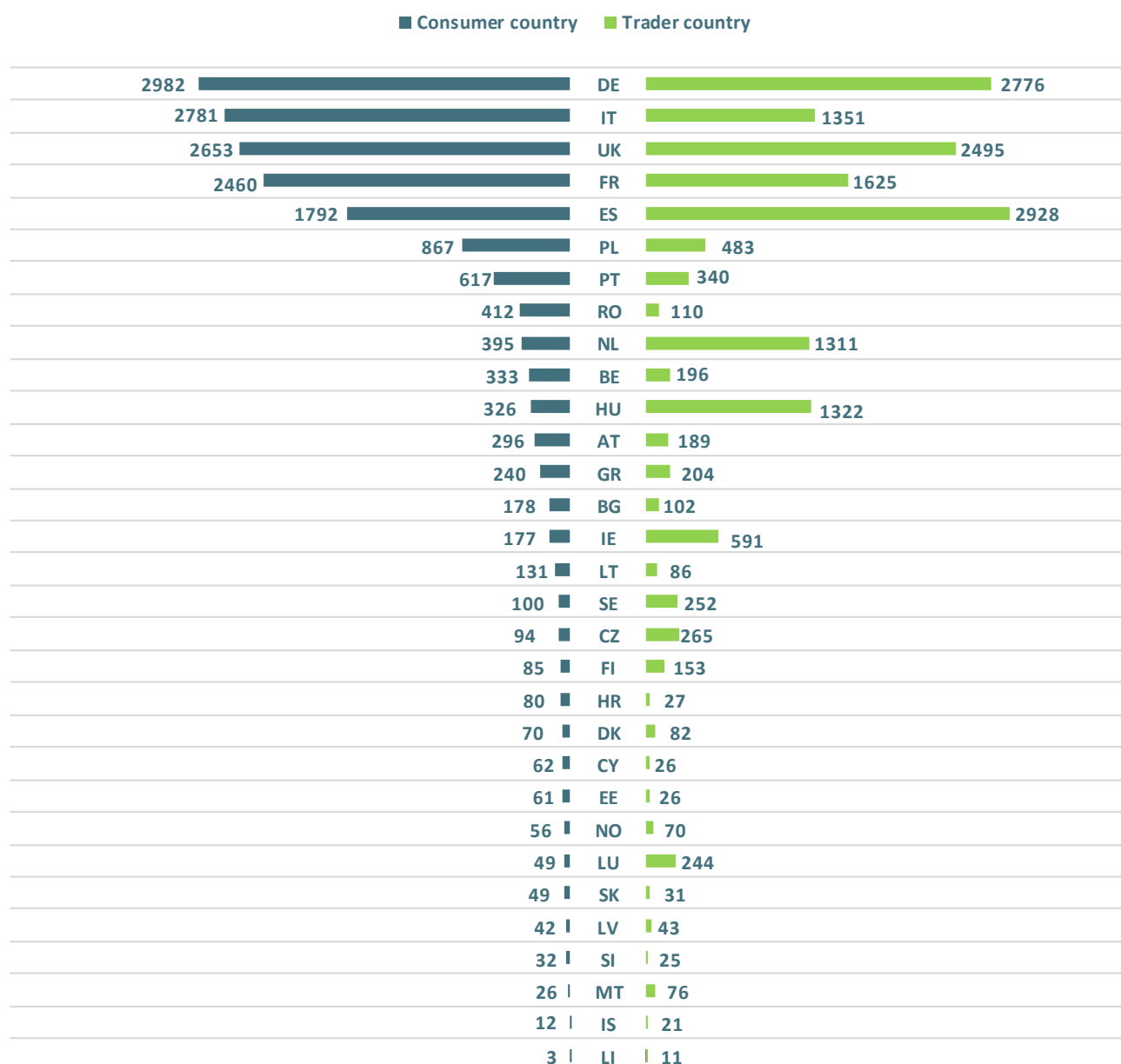


One out of four complaints on the ODR platform related to airlines (presumably in connection to flight cancellations), There was a significant increase in dispute on spares and accessories for vehicles. 77% of these disputes seem to be linked to a specific issue experienced by many consumers in relation to a particular trader.

Top 7 most complained retail sectors in 2020 compared to 2019



Number of complaints per consumer and trader country



50% of the complaints on the ODR platform are cross-border, this is clearly reflected in the graph above as for certain countries there is a large difference between the number of complaint by the country of the consumer or of the trader.

89% of complaints formally launched on the platform were automatically closed after the 30-day legal deadline for the trader to eventually agree to proceed to an ADR procedure. 6% were refused by the trader and 4% withdrawn by consumer. As a result, only 1% of the complaints reached an ADR body.

However, in a survey of all consumers who launched a complaint (or direct talks) 20% of respondents say that their dispute had been resolved either on the platform or outside the platform, and further 19% responded that they were continuing to discuss with the trader.
