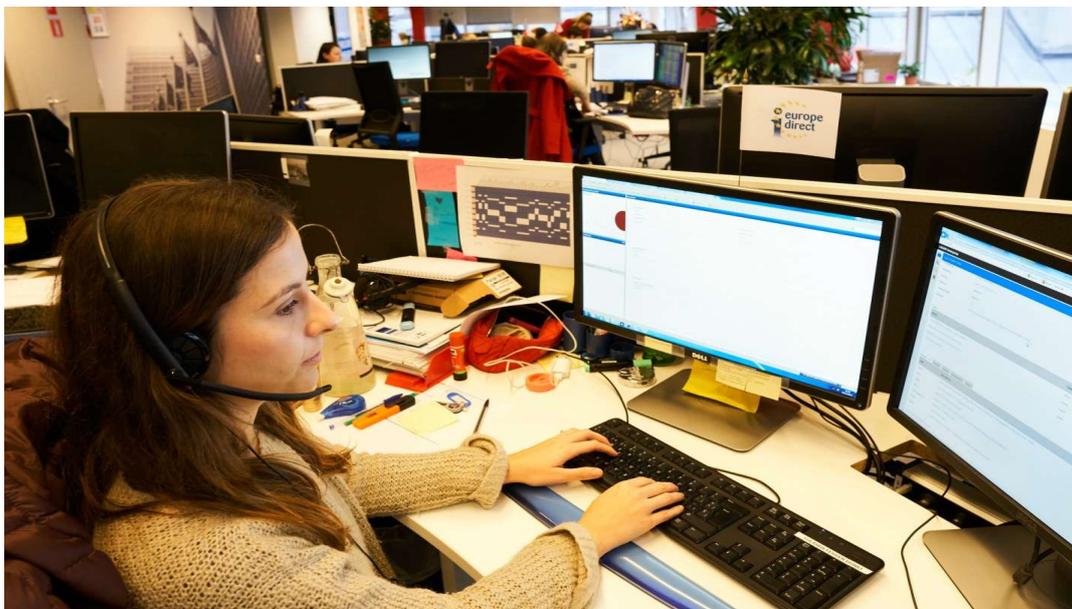




Europe Direct Contact Centre

Annual activity report 2018

Executive version



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The year in summary

In 2018, the Europe Direct Contact Centre (EDCC) continued providing citizens with all sort of replies linked to the European Union, on a wide variety of subjects often about the practical and tangible benefits of EU policies.

The EDCC replied to a total of **108,929** enquiries. They were treated via email (68.6%) and phone (31.4%).

In comparison with the previous year, the volume of cases treated by the EDCC increased with 11,3% (97,841 enquiries replied in 2017).

The largest number of enquiries concern individual rights and potential personal participation in EU activities. This includes among others consumer rights, rights of residence, the possibility for jobs and social protection, grants and passengers' rights.

In 2018, the main hot topics referred to Brexit, the Discover EU project and copyright laws.

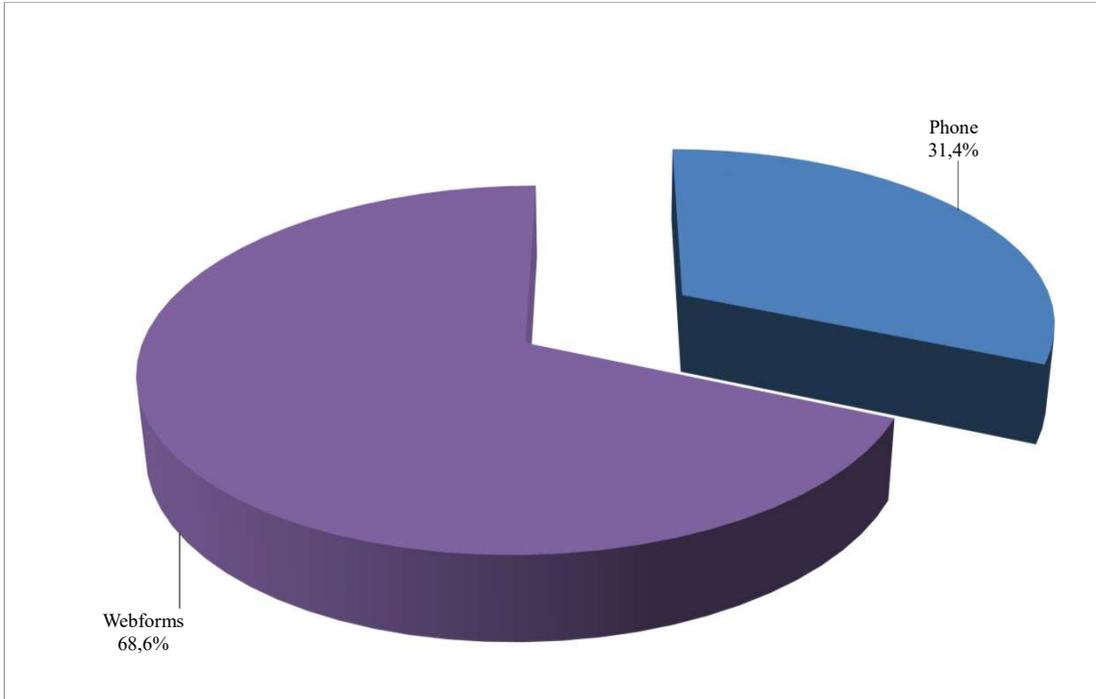
In addition, the EDCC started a cooperation with the WiFi4EU project, where the Commission gives grants in the form of simple vouchers to municipalities to set up public Wifi. This gave over 7000 questions to the EDCC.

The EDCC answers questions in cooperation with experts throughout the European Commission and other EU entities. This is among others organised via 27 formal cooperation agreements. A new agreement was concluded in 2018 with DG Environment.

86% of all the questions were replied directly by the contact centre, while 14% were so technical and sensitive that they were replied by the competent experts.

Number of enquiries

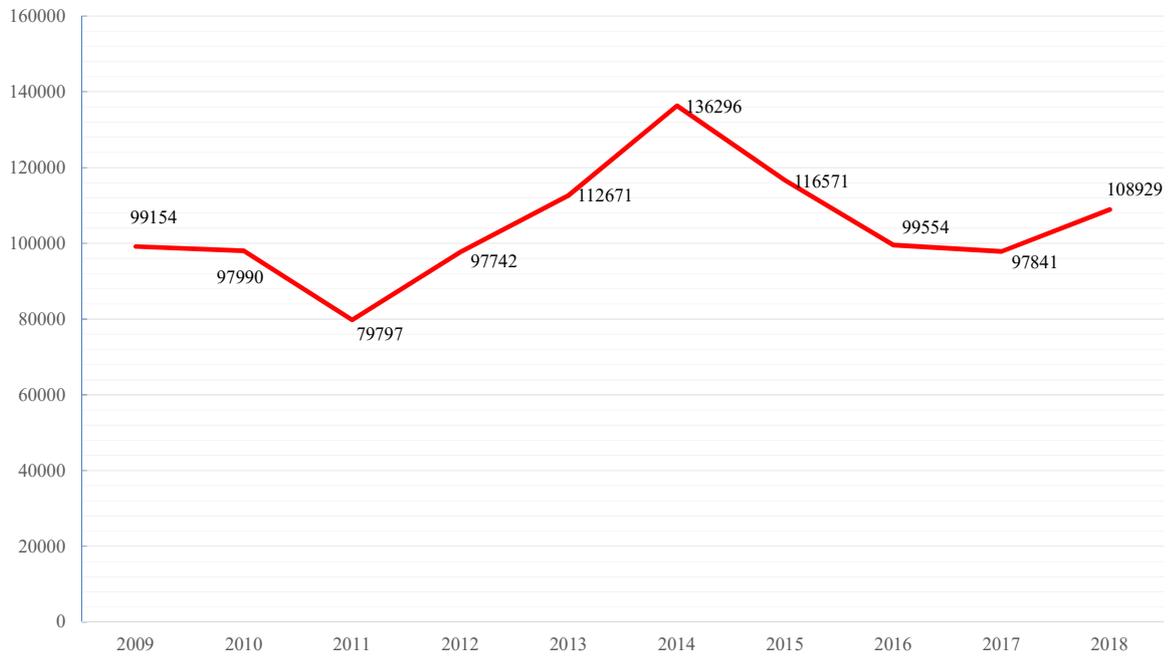
Europe Direct Contact Centre replied to 108 929 enquiries in 2018. 31% of them were phone conversations.



Total: 108 929

Trend in number of enquiries over years

The total number of enquiries fluctuate from year to year. This cannot easily be attributed to any single reason. The highest number of enquiries were in the year of the European elections in 2014.



Total number of enquiries per year

Response time

If you phoned the EDCC in 2018, we picked up the phone after an average of **14 seconds**.

95% of the questions by phone were **solved by the first contact** – that is, you got the reply during the conversation or in an email right after.

If you wrote to us, we replied on the average after **1.4 days**. Our promise is to reply within 3 days.

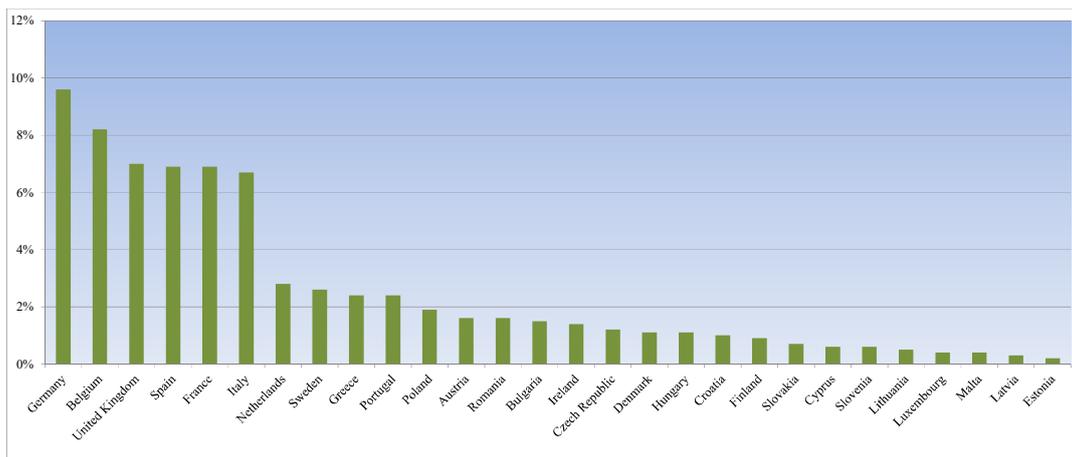
This did not include the 14% of the questions which were so complex that they had to be examined by the competent experts in the Commission services. These we replied on the average after **18.5 days**.

Enquiries by country

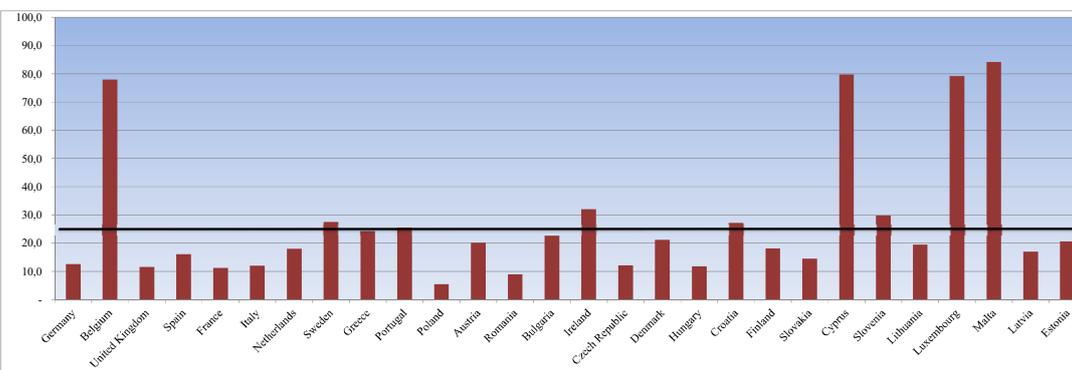
Enquiries come from all EU countries. When comparing with the size of the population, Belgium, Luxembourg and some of the smallest Member States are over-represented. Poland is the country with fewest enquiries compared to the population. 15% comes from outside the EU.

Country	EDCC enquiries	Percent of EDCC volumes	Per 100,000 of population ¹
Germany	10.423	9,6%	12,6
Belgium	8.905	8,2%	78,0
United Kingdom	7.608	7,0%	11,5
Spain	7.525	6,9%	16,1
France	7.518	6,9%	11,2
Italy	7.252	6,7%	12,0
Netherlands	3.078	2,8%	18,0
Sweden	2.784	2,6%	27,5
Greece	2.625	2,4%	24,4
Portugal	2.615	2,4%	25,4
Poland	2.033	1,9%	5,4
Austria	1.778	1,6%	20,2
Romania	1.732	1,6%	8,9
Bulgaria	1.595	1,5%	22,6
Ireland	1.550	1,4%	32,0
Czech Republic	1.282	1,2%	12,1
Denmark	1.219	1,1%	21,1
Hungary	1.158	1,1%	11,8
Croatia	1.117	1,0%	27,2
Finland	998	0,9%	18,1
Slovakia	788	0,7%	14,5
Cyprus	694	0,6%	79,8
Slovenia	616	0,6%	29,8
Lithuania	548	0,5%	19,5
Luxembourg	475	0,4%	79,2
Malta	404	0,4%	84,2
Latvia	329	0,3%	17,0
Estonia	272	0,2%	20,6
Total EU	78.921	72,5%	27,2
Non-EU	16.703	15,3%	
Unspecified	13.305	12,2%	
Grand Total	108.929	100,0%	

¹ Population is calculated based on Eurostat population data for 1st January 2018.



Enquiries by country as a percentage of EDCC total volumes
Non-EU¹ and 'unspecified' enquiries are excluded



Enquiries by country per 100,000 of the country's population
The black line represents the EU average for enquiries per 100,000 population, which is 27.2 enquiries per 100,000 inhabitants.
For example Germany is below the EU average and Belgium above.
Non-EU¹ and 'unspecified' enquiries are excluded.

Enquiries per month

Enquiries come throughout the year, with the highest number in April, May and November..

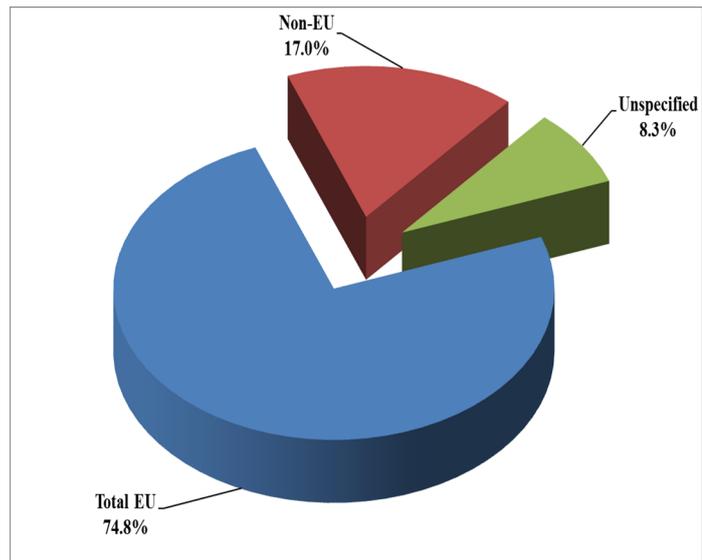


Country	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total	Average
Germany	847	817	968	937	779	861	1,039	1,015	857	901	857	545	10,423	869
Belgium	559	481	662	620	1,616	512	405	371	381	662	1,784	852	8,905	742
United Kingdom	655	592	642	634	608	681	808	811	625	646	557	349	7,608	634
Spain	693	693	697	838	586	583	605	560	596	614	626	434	7,525	627
France	674	699	739	808	583	575	582	693	562	625	570	408	7,518	627
Italy	607	578	635	766	672	593	654	472	600	606	652	417	7,252	604
Netherlands	271	276	239	275	263	260	222	238	259	310	268	197	3,078	257
Sweden	248	256	240	301	225	212	241	227	248	196	232	158	2,784	232
Greece	204	202	180	235	274	238	205	178	218	254	240	197	2,625	219
Portugal	217	187	284	255	214	208	222	237	191	204	220	176	2,615	218
Poland	166	171	184	166	170	173	136	206	162	200	151	148	2,033	169
Austria	158	150	154	174	154	133	179	135	122	167	147	105	1,778	148
Romania	189	157	172	214	118	164	125	138	99	129	118	109	1,732	144
Bulgaria	153	131	169	139	143	176	129	132	113	125	102	83	1,595	133
Ireland	140	148	148	156	118	112	162	107	98	145	116	100	1,550	129
Czech Republic	96	121	143	137	111	96	100	117	85	112	93	71	1,282	107
Denmark	112	87	114	111	102	100	101	120	91	110	94	77	1,219	102
Hungary	105	87	89	120	111	120	106	95	77	93	100	55	1,158	97
Croatia	110	96	106	118	104	85	85	88	85	80	94	66	1,117	93
Finland	87	99	83	89	95	67	86	89	73	94	81	55	998	83
Slovakia	69	83	78	78	68	76	71	64	58	61	55	27	788	66
Cyprus	21	51	45	59	63	55	60	70	72	89	57	52	694	58
Slovenia	61	44	56	65	64	50	52	45	44	59	36	40	616	51
Lithuania	55	60	59	69	38	47	45	39	41	33	33	29	548	46
Luxembourg	59	48	55	46	42	39	43	38	34	27	25	19	475	40
Malta	44	44	37	41	25	33	34	32	26	34	32	22	404	34
Latvia	34	33	33	36	30	31	31	25	18	27	14	17	329	27
Estonia	25	21	20	22	19	27	18	19	22	30	30	19	272	23
Total EU	6,659	6,412	7,031	7,509	7,395	6,307	6,546	6,361	5,857	6,633	7,384	4,827	78,921	6,577
Non-EU	1,585	1,351	1,375	1,674	1,239	1,319	1,437	1,580	1,383	1,482	1,309	969	16,703	1,392
Unspecified	882	897	1,053	1,089	1,302	1,391	1,488	1,352	954	1,119	1,095	683	13,305	1,109
Grand Total	9,126	8,660	9,459	10,272	9,936	9,017	9,471	9,293	8,194	9,234	9,788	6,479	108,929	9,077

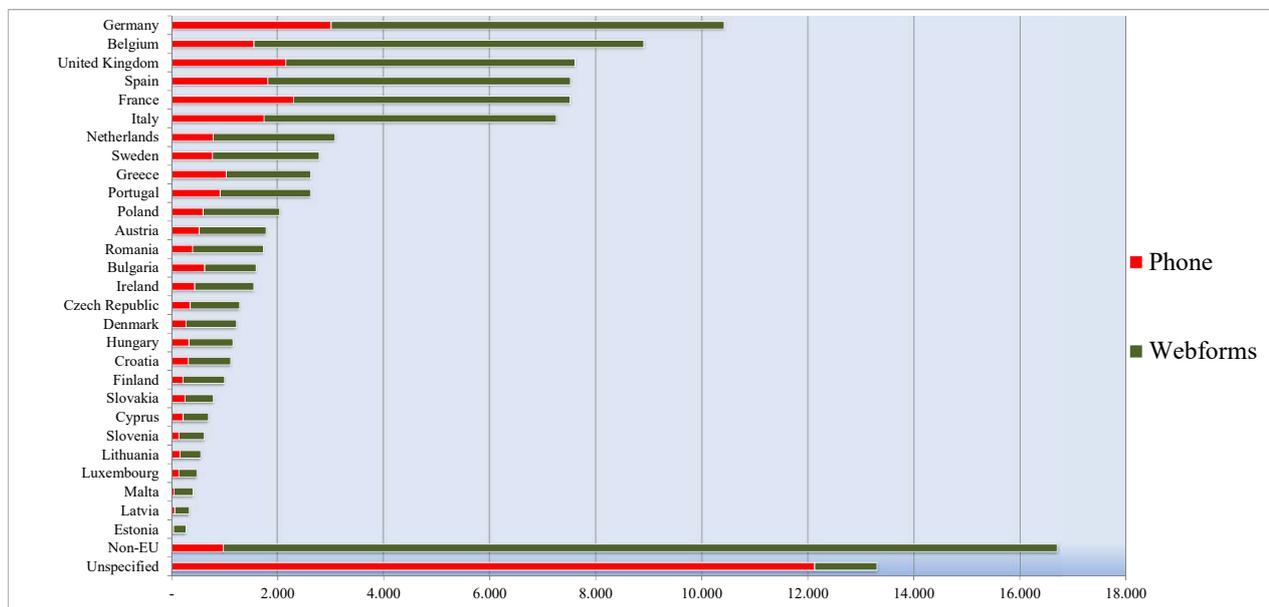
Enquiries by country and channel

About 31 % of the enquiries were phone conversations. The highest shares of phone compared to webmail are found in enquiries coming from Greece (39%) and Bulgaria (39%). Malta has the lowest share (11%).

Country	Phone	Webforms	Total
Germany	3.006	7.417	10.423
Belgium	1.552	7.353	8.905
United Kingdom	2.155	5.453	7.608
Spain	1.815	5.710	7.525
France	2.300	5.218	7.518
Italy	1.741	5.511	7.252
Netherlands	783	2.295	3.078
Sweden	772	2.012	2.784
Greece	1.029	1.596	2.625
Portugal	914	1.701	2.615
Poland	595	1.438	2.033
Austria	519	1.259	1.778
Romania	395	1.337	1.732
Bulgaria	622	973	1.595
Ireland	433	1.117	1.550
Czech Republic	352	930	1.282
Denmark	268	951	1.219
Hungary	326	832	1.158
Croatia	316	801	1.117
Finland	212	786	998
Slovakia	249	539	788
Cyprus	216	478	694
Slovenia	140	476	616
Lithuania	159	389	548
Luxembourg	136	339	475
Malta	44	360	404
Latvia	61	268	329
Estonia	32	240	272
Total EU	21.142	57.779	78.921
Non-EU	977	15.726	16.703
Unspecified	12.131	1.174	13.305
Grand Total	34.250	74.679	108.929



Share of enquiries from inside or out-side the EU.

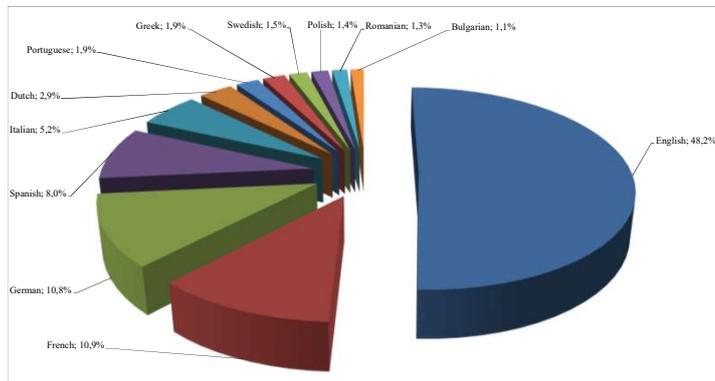


Number of enquiries per country and channel

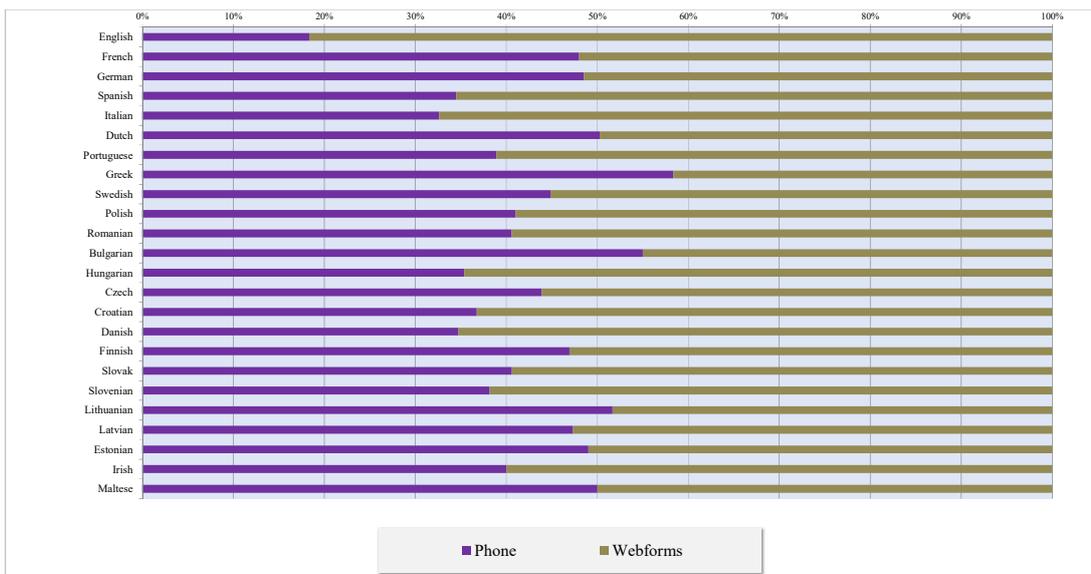
Enquiries by language and channel

All the 24 official EU languages are used. But almost half of the enquiries are in English. Some enquirers in non-English speaking countries prefer to use English, in particular for written questions. The share of English language enquiries fell from 49.4% in 2017 to 48.2% in 2018.

Language	Phone	Webforms	Total	% of total
English	9 612	42 863	52 475	48,2%
French	5 677	6 148	11 825	10,9%
German	5 697	6 038	11 735	10,8%
Spanish	2 990	5 676	8 666	8,0%
Italian	1 849	3 818	5 667	5,2%
Dutch	1 578	1 561	3 139	2,9%
Portuguese	816	1 281	2 097	1,9%
Greek	1 205	860	2 065	1,9%
Swedish	754	927	1 681	1,5%
Polish	642	924	1 566	1,4%
Romanian	565	827	1 392	1,3%
Bulgarian	671	549	1 220	1,1%
Hungarian	309	564	873	0,8%
Czech	356	455	811	0,7%
Croatian	298	513	811	0,7%
Danish	221	415	636	0,6%
Finnish	298	337	635	0,6%
Slovak	244	357	601	0,6%
Slovenian	150	243	393	0,4%
Lithuanian	168	157	325	0,3%
Latvian	88	98	186	0,2%
Estonian	50	52	102	0,1%
Irish	8	12	20	0,02%
Maltese	4	4	8	0,01%
Total	34.250	74.679	108.929	100,0%
	31,4%	68,6%	100,0%	



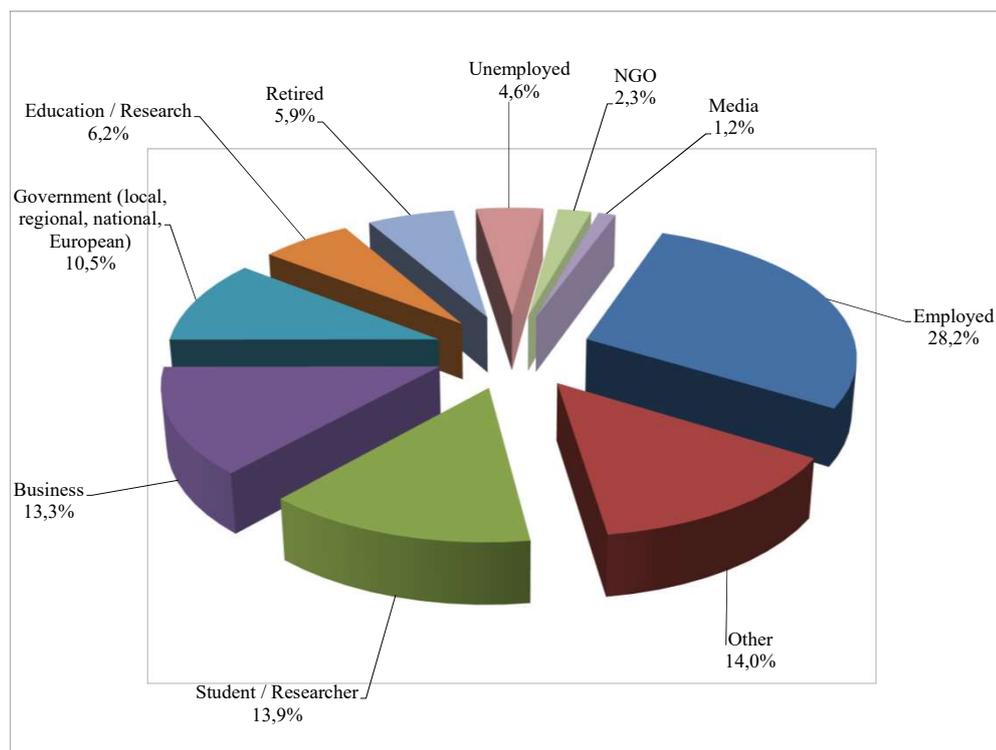
Share of enquiries per language.
Hungarian, Czech, Croatian, Danish, Finnish, Slovak, Slovenian, Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian, Irish and Maltese do not appear on the piechart because the total amount of enquiries for each language does not exceed 1% of the total.



Share of enquiries by language and channel

Enquiries by economic category

The largest categories of enquirers are citizens in employment, students and researchers and working in businesses.



Economic category	Enquiries	%
Unspecified	29.423	27,0%
Employed	22.427	20,6%
Other	11.120	10,2%
Student / Researcher	11.056	10,1%
Business	10.578	9,7%
Government (local, regional, national, European)	8.372	7,7%
Education / Research	4.904	4,5%
Retired	4.696	4,3%
Unemployed	3.619	3,3%
NGO	1.793	1,6%
Media	941	0,9%
Total	108.929	100,0%

Enquiries by subject

The largest number of enquiries concerns individual rights and potential personal participation in EU activities. This comprises consumer rights, rights of residence, the possibility for jobs and social protection, study grants and passenger rights. Questions in the category “EU general” are also often based on personal interest. EDCC has a special agreement for questions related to participation in the Horizon 2020 research programme and the WiFi4EU project, and has a large number of enquiries in that area.

TOP 10 subjects	Total	%
EU general, EU Institutions and Member States	10.485	9,6%
Justice and Consumers rights	9.723	8,9%
Education and Culture	8.809	8,1%
H2020 Enquiry Service	8.795	8,1%
WiFi4EU (including technical questions)	7.403	6,8%
Employment social affairs and inclusion	7.262	6,7%
Passengers rights	6.990	6,4%
Customs and taxation	4.171	3,8%
Migration and Home affairs	4.097	3,8%
Careers / Competitions	3.756	3,5%
Total	71.491	

Other subjects	Total	%
Other specific policies (including Internal Market and services, Budget, Environment, Enterprise and industry, Europa Server, Competition, Information Society and media, Mobility and transport other, Research and innovation, Fisheries and maritime affairs, ECHO, YEA, SOLVIT)	15.296	14,0%
Food safety and Public health	3.233	3,0%
International Cooperation and development	2.168	2,0%
External trade	1.786	1,6%
Road Safety	1.704	1,6%
Foreign Policy	1.673	1,5%
Agriculture and rural development	1.217	1,1%
Financial markets and capital movements	1.047	1,0%
Trade Helpdesk	851	0,8%
Energy	742	0,7%
Regional policy	699	0,6%
European Parliament	621	0,6%
Neighbourhood policy and Enlargement	470	0,4%
Publication Orders	463	0,4%
Europe Direct	371	0,3%
Economic and monetary affairs	308	0,3%
European Institute of Innovation and Technology	233	0,2%
Council of the European Union	193	0,2%
European Citizens Initiative	179	0,2%
Out of scope	4.184	3,8%
Grand Total	108.929	

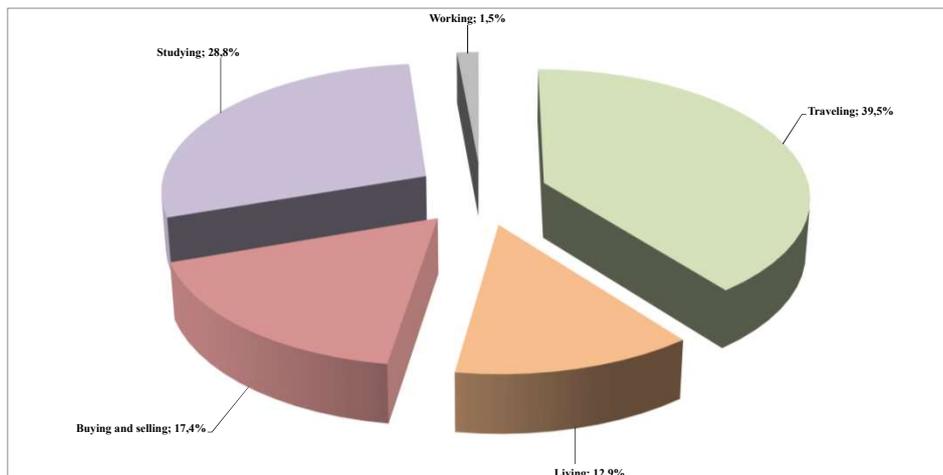
Details of the most popular subjects

This is the second level classification of the top subjects mentioned on the previous page.

Justice and Consumers rights	9723
EU family members and residence	1788
Protection of consumers economic and legal interests	1699
Data protection	1426
Free movement of persons	1093
Justice and other related policies	903
Judicial cooperation	674
Fundamental rights and citizenship	492
Consumer policy	470
Anti-discrimination and fundamental social rights	346
Specific document / report / legislation	337
Consumer information / education	155
Consumer security	118
Funding	88
Equality between women and men	57
Company law	54
Consumer food health and other related policies	13
Corporate governance	5
Corporate social responsibility	5
Education and Culture	8809
Education and Training	5300
Youth policy	2172
Culture	553
Traineeships	539
Sports policy	176
Languages	69
H2020 Enquiry Service	8795
02 Info on H2020 (NCPs legal docs guides forms)	2692
15 Validation services	1936
99 Request for clarification	986
03 Proposal submission and evaluation	746
10 Legal and financial issues	728
01 Obtaining funding under H2020	595
04 Info about on-going H2020 projects	241
12 Expert	145
14 Communication	138
07 Publications / reports of funded projects	119
09 Support activities	95
05 H2020 Policy issues	93
13 Ethics	62
20 Horizon Prize	59
06 European Research Policy and non H2020 issue	39
98 Previous Framework Programmes	34
16 FP7 on-going projects	28
08 Outstanding problem with an on-going project	24
18 FP7 legal and financial issues	17
17 FP7 policy issues	9
11 Gender equality	8
19 H2020 and FP7: Report a divergence of implementation in different grants	1
Mobility and Transport DG MOVE	8694
Passenger rights	6990
Road safety	1704
Employment Social Affairs and Inclusion	7262
Moving and working in Europe	4331
Social Protection and Social Inclusion	1738
Funding	612
European employment strategy	400
Skills	99
Analysis, evaluation, impact assessment	61
Agencies and partners	21

Cross-border issues

Many enquiries relate to the EU's effort to open up the single market and reduce the obstacles of borders in daily life: travelling, living, shopping, studying and working abroad.



Cross-border Issues		Total	% of cross-border cases	% of total volume
Travelling	Passenger rights	6.990	29,9%	7,2%
	Visa and border controls	2.235	9,6%	2,3%
Living	Free movement of persons	1.093	4,7%	1,1%
	Immigration	1.072	4,6%	1,1%
	Judicial cooperation	674	2,9%	0,7%
	Welfare (social security, rights at work)	184	0,8%	0,2%
Buying and Selling	Protection of consumers economic and legal	1.699	7,3%	1,7%
	Customs	1.544	6,6%	1,6%
	Consumers Rights	470	2,0%	0,5%
	Consumer information	155	0,7%	0,2%
	Free movement of goods	69	0,3%	0,1%
	Consumer security	118	0,5%	0,1%
Studying	Erasmus +	2.810	12,0%	2,9%
	Funding for non-EU citizens	695	3,0%	0,7%
	Youth	2.172	9,3%	2,2%
	Education and other related funding	599	2,6%	0,6%
	Recognition of diplomas	416	1,8%	0,4%
	Lifelong learning	32	0,1%	0,0%
Working	Professional qualifications	344	1,5%	0,4%
Total:		23.371	100,0%	24,0%

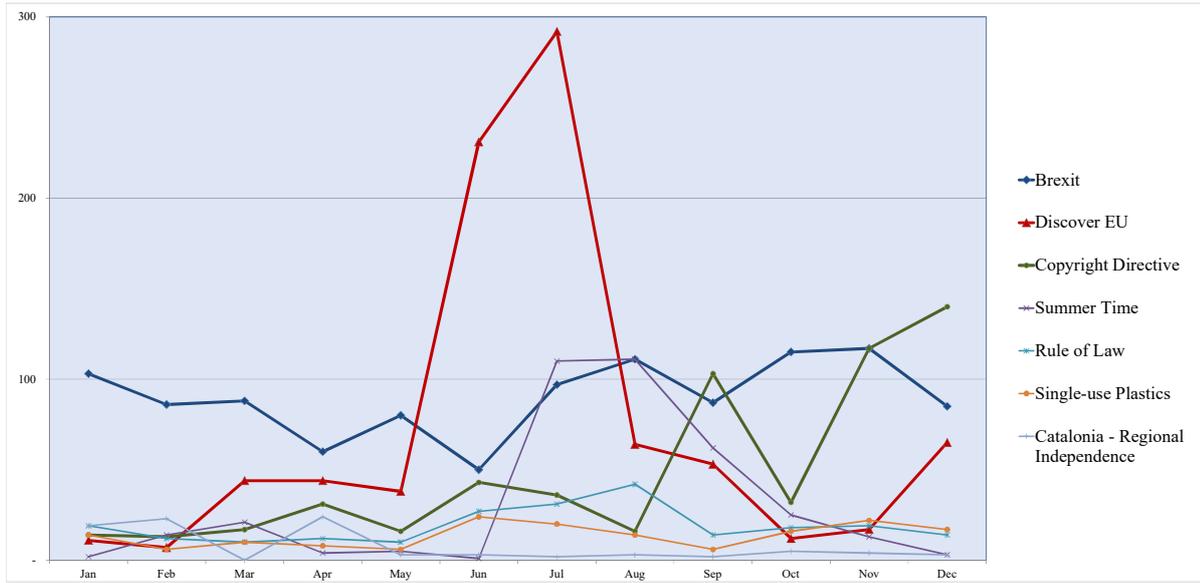
The ten political priorities of the Juncker Commission

About 75% of the questions in 2018 could be directly related to one of the 10 political priorities of the Commission. The largest share was about job, growth and investment.

Priority	Number of enquiries
Jobs, Growth and Investment	22.722
Internal Market	17.703
Justice and Fundamental Rights	19.000
A Stronger Global Actor	5.314
Migration	3.778
Democratic change	2.697
Energy Union and Climate	1.996
Digital Single Market	8.088
A Deeper and Fairer Economic and Monetary Union	1.048
A balanced EU-US Free Trade Agreement	253
Total	82.599

Hot topics

Current affairs from the media gives occasion to questions to EDCC. Brexit was the biggest subject in 2018.



	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Brexit	103	86	88	60	80	50	97	111	87	115	117	85	1.079
Discover EU	11	7	44	44	38	231	292	64	53	12	17	65	878
Copyright Directive	14	13	17	31	16	43	36	16	103	32	117	140	578
Summer Time	2	14	21	4	5	1	110	111	62	25	13	3	371
Rule of Law	19	12	10	12	10	27	31	42	14	18	19	14	228
Single-use Plastics	14	6	10	8	6	24	20	14	6	16	22	17	163
Catalonia - Regional Independence	19	23	-	24	3	3	2	3	2	5	4	3	91
Total	182	161	190	183	158	379	588	361	327	223	309	327	3.388

The figures are for individual enquiries that have been answered.

Brexit and Discover EU by country

Half of the questions about Brexit came from the United Kingdom.

Brexit	
Country	Enquiries
United Kingdom	513
Germany	85
France	70
Spain	45
Belgium	35
Netherlands	35
Italy	32
Ireland	17
Sweden	15
Greece	10
Cyprus	10
Czech Republic	8
Poland	7
Finland	7
Austria	7
Portugal	7
Luxembourg	6
Malta	5
Hungary	4
Slovakia	4
Denmark	3
Slovenia	3
Bulgaria	2
Romania	2
Latvia	1
Croatia	1
Total EU	934

Non-EU	79
Unspecified	66
Total	1.079

Discover EU	
Country	Enquiries
Germany	120
Spain	111
Italy	80
Portugal	68
United Kingdom	47
Denmark	37
Poland	32
France	32
Netherlands	29
Hungary	17
Sweden	15
Croatia	15
Greece	15
Austria	12
Belgium	10
Romania	9
Finland	7
Bulgaria	7
Ireland	4
Czech Republic	3
Latvia	3
Slovakia	2
Cyprus	2
Slovenia	2
Estonia	2
Luxembourg	2
Total EU	683

Non-EU	6
Unspecified	189
Total	878

WiFi4EU enquiries

The flow of questions about WiFi4EU follows the work of this specific project - it was first launched before summer and there were new application and decision deadlines at the end of the year



	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
WiFi4EU Content	-	-	273	435	692	110	34	60	131	330	737	852	3.654
WiFi4EU Technical	-	-	435	999	846	87	9	4	13	81	1.099	176	3.749
Total	0	0	708	1.434	1.538	197	43	64	144	411	1.836	1.028	7.403

User satisfaction

All citizens are proposed the possibility to give feedback on the service of EDCC when they have received a reply; no matter whether it is via phone or by mail. The overall satisfaction rate was 84%.



	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Average or Total
Unsatisfied citizens	67	73	70	45	61	61	64	62	54	68	64	29	718
Satisfied citizens	395	338	354	390	291	309	318	332	252	365	292	214	3.850
Total	462	411	424	435	352	370	382	394	306	433	356	243	4.568
Satisfaction rate	85.5%	82.2%	83.5%	89.7%	82.7%	83.5%	83.3%	84.3%	82.4%	84.3%	82.0%	88.1%	84.3%

Satisfaction rate