*******PRESS RELEASE*

*EUROPEAN CONSUMER CENTRE CZECH REPUBLIC*

**Record of consumer contacts in 2017**

***(Prague, March 15, 2018)* A record number of consumers turned to the European Consumer Centre Czech Republic. We speak about 1,633 contacts last year, which represented an increase by 46% when compared with 2016. They sought assistance for their claims against traders from other EU countries and information about their rights in the internal market. The success rate within the out-of-court resolution was almost 45% last year. The centre announced it on the World Consumer Day, March 15.**

„Our lawyers provide a free-of-charge assistance within complaints against traders from other EU countries, as well as Norway and Iceland. Problems mostly constitute of compensations for delayed or cancelled flights and disputes against online vendors,” said Ondřej Tichota of the European Consumer Centre. Other areas are for example travel packages, accommodation services as well as purchases in ordinary shops abroad.

The amounts in question reach up to tens of thousands crowns – e.g. compensations in air transport or car rental services. Nonetheless, the European Consumer Centre has lately been successful in resolving disputes in which Czech seniors withdraw from a contract on hearing aids sent to for about CZK 1,200 them from Poland. These products are advertised in major Czech printed media and online servers, but they don’t work in a number of cases.

“The vendor refuses to return the money, but after the European Consumer Centres’ Network intervenes, they repay the amounts of more than a thousand crowns. This is a significant help for people in a higher senior age,” said Ondřej Tichota.

The ECC Czech Republic is one of 30 members of the European Consumer Centres’ Network whose activities are financed by the European Commission and participating countries, including EU Member States as well as Norway and Iceland. Centres cooperate on out-of-court resolution of cross-border consumer disputes in the following way: the consumer communicates with the centre in the country of their residence which would consider the case and share it with the partner centre in the trader’s country. The foreign centre would negotiate an amicable solution of a particular problem with the vendor in their mother tongue. Centres’ services are free-of-charge. You can find more information about the ECC-Net activities on [www.europeanconsumer.cz](http://www.europeanconsumer.cz).

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