

Citizen's enquiries

SANTE receives an average of **500 citizens'** enquiries regarding its policies **every month**. This is our most direct interaction with citizens. It allows us to explain to citizens what rights and responsibilities they have as EU citizens, how to exercise these rights and what concrete benefits they draw from our work.

As of the 1st July 2013 the management of the SANTE policy enquiries has been outsourced to the **Europe Direct Contact Centre (EDCC)**. The Centre handles all enquiries whether received via the SANTE website or via the EDCC standard channels: telephone, email, web chat or in person at a local information centre.

EDCC has the capacity to provide direct and timely responses to the citizen in their own language (provided it is an official EU language). The EDCC answers most of the requests for information received directly. The more complicated ones are sent to the DG SANTE back office (Unit 02). DG SANTE should provide the EDCC with a draft reply or with the necessary information as soon as possible and at the latest 12 working days after the receipt of the request.

The **following requests are always sent to DG SANTE**:

- Requests addressed to the Commissioner.
- Requests for paper publications.
- Requests for group or individual visits to DG SANTE.
- Requests for information on on-going or closed infringements procedures.
- Political questions on sensitive on-going issues - these are issues which crop up on a regular basis. Such issues will be identified by the DG SANTE back office and brought to the attention of the EDCC. When possible, a line-to-take will be provided as quickly as possible.
- Highly technical requests - this is especially true of questions related to pharmaceuticals (especially when specific questions on particular medicines/chemicals are asked), pesticides, additives and biocides.
- Formal complaints.
- Information about future policy initiatives

Unit 02 normally sends those escalated enquiries to the functional mailbox of the relevant unit within the DG for the Unit Secretariat to then assign to a specific person(s).

To comply with the Code of Good Administrative Behaviour, these requests **must be answered within 12 days**, providing a substantial answer that can be the basis of possible future questions on the same issue.

If a Unit wishes to reply directly to the citizen, they can do so putting the functional mailbox **SANTE INFO** in copy of all correspondence. Units do not need to ARESize such interactions but can do so if they wish.

To increase the knowledge basis of EDCC staff and hence their capacity to respond to more complex questions Unit 02 also facilitates briefings with our specialists on various files. This investment on our side reduces in time the number of questions that are sent to our DG.

Contact

SANTE INFO