

# ADR Entity Reporting – Annual Report

## Communications & Internet Services Adjudication Scheme (CISAS)

Reporting period: 1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024

In June 2015 CISAS was approved by Ofcom to provide alternative dispute resolution under the Alternative Dispute Resolution for Consumer Disputes (Competent Authorities and Information) Regulations 2015 (“the Regulations”).

As part of Ofcom’s approval, CISAS is required under Schedule 5 of the Regulations to produce an annual activity report containing the following information:

(a) The number of domestic disputes and cross-border disputes the ADR entity has received

In the reporting period, CISAS received a total of 5469 domestic disputes and no cross-border disputes. Of these, 5006 disputes came within the scope of what CISAS can deal with, while 463 were either out of scope or were discontinued for operational reasons.

(b) The types of complaints to which the domestic disputes and cross-border disputes relate

The following table sets out the types of domestic disputes that were referred to CISAS in the reporting period which came within the scope of what CISAS can deal with. No cross-border disputes were received by CISAS.

Complaint Types	Number of Cases
Billing	1290
Service quality	1010
Contract issues	1038
Customer service	749
Mis-selling	519
Equipment	364
Security	36

- (c) A description of any systematic or significant problems that occur frequently and lead to disputes between consumers and traders of which the ADR entity has become aware due to its operations as an ADR entity

A lack of awareness of consumer vulnerability and taking appropriate measures to provide meaningful assistance and support continues to drive disputes where more bespoke responsiveness could help to avoid conflict. Where customers who are vulnerable (including those who are temporarily vulnerable) are not offered support that is tailored to their particular needs at that time, the likelihood is higher that relatively minor problems will escalate into disputes that are referred to ADR.

- (d) Any recommendations the ADR entity may have as to how the problems referred to in paragraph (c) could be avoided or resolved in future, in order to raise traders' standards and to facilitate the exchange of information and best practices

Providing real and meaningful outreach to vulnerable consumers at all levels of the customer contact and complaint journeys is key to ensuring consumers feel heard and valued, which avoids disputes. Providing specialised services for vulnerable customers (including those who are temporarily vulnerable), such as the availability of social tariffs or more lenient billing arrangements, can help those customers who are in acute need of support, avoiding the escalation of problems into disputes.

- (e) The number of disputes which the ADR entity has refused to deal with, and percentage share of the grounds set out in paragraph 13 of Schedule 3 on which the ADR entity has declined to consider such disputes

CISAS refused to deal with a total of 221 disputes in the reporting period. The following table sets out the percentage share of the grounds on which CISAS declined to consider these disputes:

Reason for Refusal	Percentage Share
Prior to submitting the complaint to the body, the consumer has not attempted to contact the trader concerned in order	9%

to discuss the consumer's complaint and sought, as a first step, to resolve the matter directly with the trader	
The dispute is frivolous or vexatious	Nil
The dispute is being, or has been previously, considered by another ADR entity or by a court	31%
The value of the claim falls below or above the monetary thresholds set by the body	1%
The consumer has not submitted the complaint to the body within the time period specified by the body, provided that such time period is not less than 12 months from the date upon which the trader has given notice to the consumer that the trader is unable to resolve the complaint with the consumer	59%
Dealing with such a type of dispute would seriously impair the effective operation of the body	Nil

(f) The percentage of alternative dispute resolution procedures which were discontinued for operational reasons and, if known, the reasons for the discontinuation

During the reporting period, CISAS discontinued a total of 242 cases for operational reasons. This represents 4.4% of the total amount of disputes received by CISAS.

The following table sets out the percentage share of the reasons for which CISAS discontinued cases for operational reasons:

Reason for Discontinuance	Percentage Share
The subject matter of the dispute did not fall within the scope of what CISAS can consider under its Scheme Rules	63%
The consumer submitted an incomplete application to CISAS which could not be taken forward owing to the lack of information	Nil
The trader that the consumer is complaining about was not registered with CISAS as its ADR entity	26%

The consumer was not a 'customer' of the trader under the definition set out in the CISAS Scheme Rules	10%
The consumer voluntarily withdrew their dispute from CISAS while it was in progress	1%

(g) The average time taken to resolve domestic disputes and cross-border disputes

Domestic disputes took an average of 37 calendar days to resolve.

No cross-border disputes were received by CISAS.

(h) The rate of compliance, if known, with the outcomes of the alternative dispute resolution procedures

CISAS does not record data on the rate of compliance with outcomes.

CISAS has a process in place whereby a trader that fails to comply with an adjudicator's decision that has been accepted by the consumer has their membership of CISAS suspended. If non-compliance persists, the trader's membership of CISAS is terminated.

(i) The co-operation, if any, of the ADR entity within any network of ADR entities which facilitates the resolution of cross-border disputes

Since 2019, CEDR has been a founding member of the Telecoms-Net group of European ADR entities facilitating the sharing of best practice in dispute resolution in the telecommunications sector. The latest meeting was in May 2024 in Brussels, Belgium.