

CCPC Consumer Helpline Report H1 2024

Statistics report on consumer contacts
to the Competition and Consumer
Protection Commission helpline

1 January – 30 June 2024



Coimisiún um
Iomalocht agus
Cosaint Tomhaltóirí

Competition and
Consumer Protection
Commission

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January - June 2024 in numbers

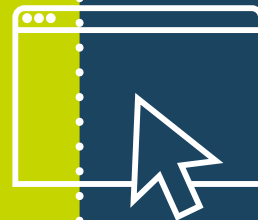
22,347 consumers contacted our helpline to report a problem, ask a personal finance question, or get free, independent information on their consumer rights.



There were **850,577** visits to **CCPC.ie**



There were **439,609** visits to our online Money Tools. These free comparison tools allow users to find the financial products that suit them best, calculate costs, and create budgets.



Overview

1: How consumers contacted us

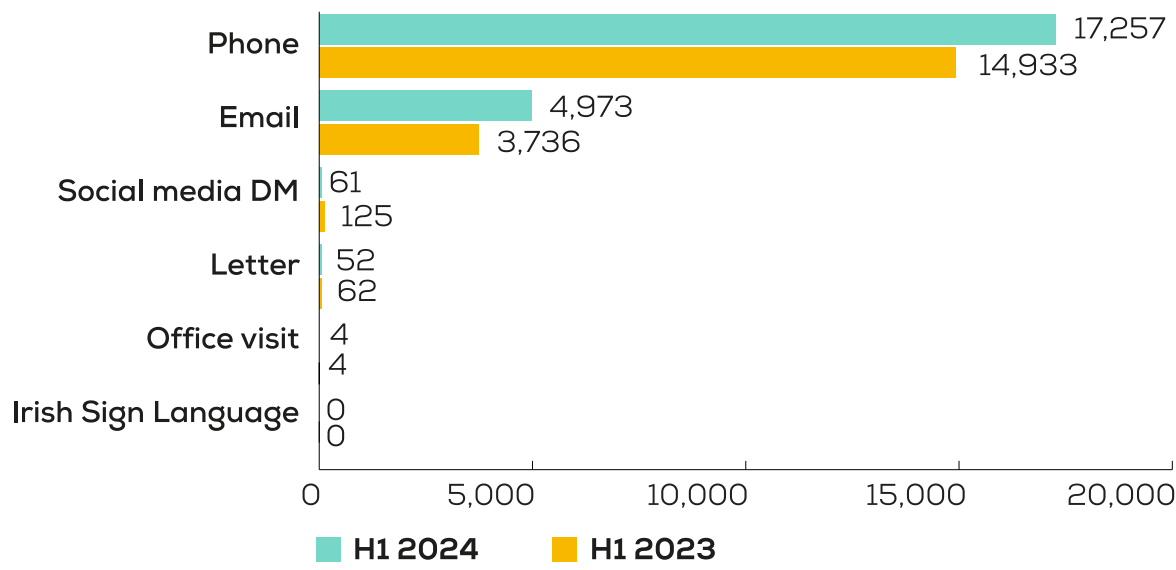


Figure 1: How consumers contacted the CCPC in H1 2024, listed by channel. The equivalent breakdown for H1 2023 is included for comparison.

Consumer contacts

2: Where consumers bought from

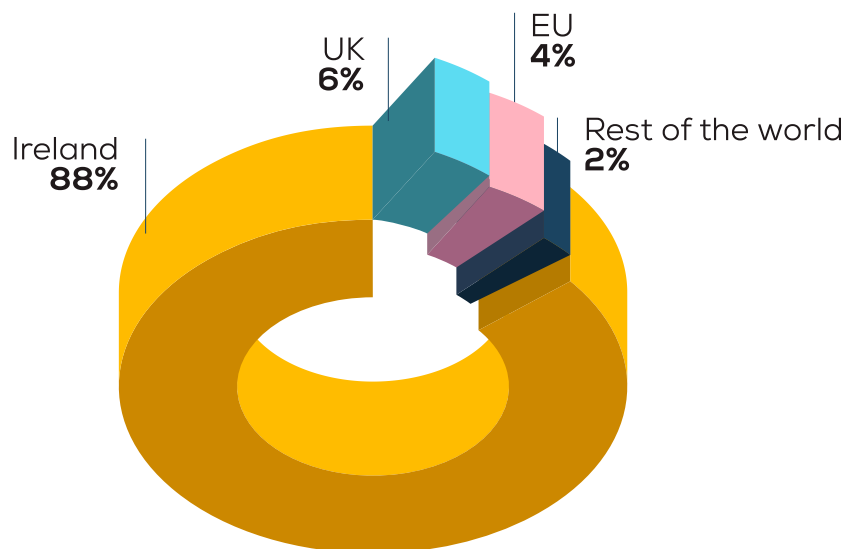


Figure 2: In 88% of contacts, consumers sought information or made a report related to a specific transaction or business and provided the CCPC with information on where the business was based. This chart shows the location of the businesses for which this information was provided.

3: How consumers shopped

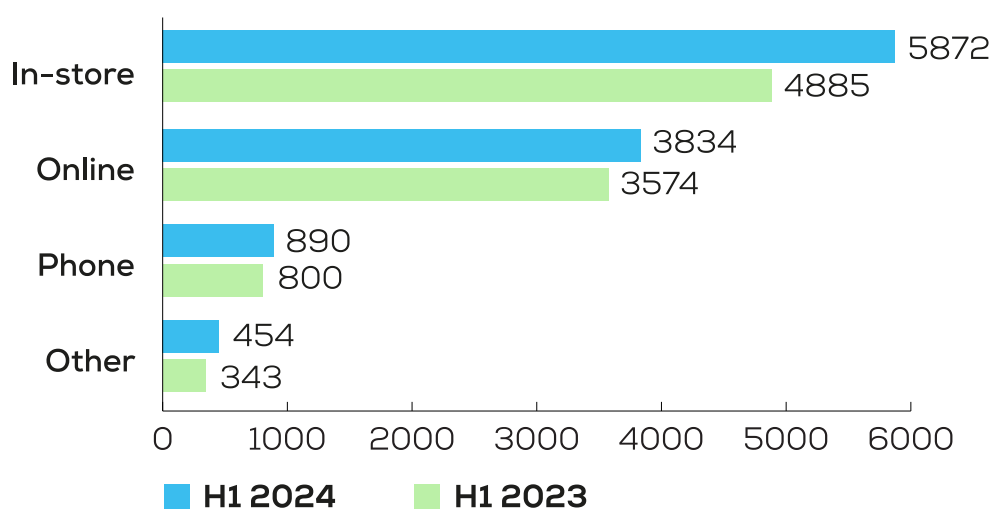


Figure 3: In 75% of contacts, consumers sought information or made a report related to a specific transaction or business and provided the CCPC with information on how they had made the purchase. This chart shows the number of contacts related to in-store, online and phone purchases, where this information was provided. The equivalent number of contacts for H1 2023 is displayed for comparison.

4: How consumers shopped from Irish businesses

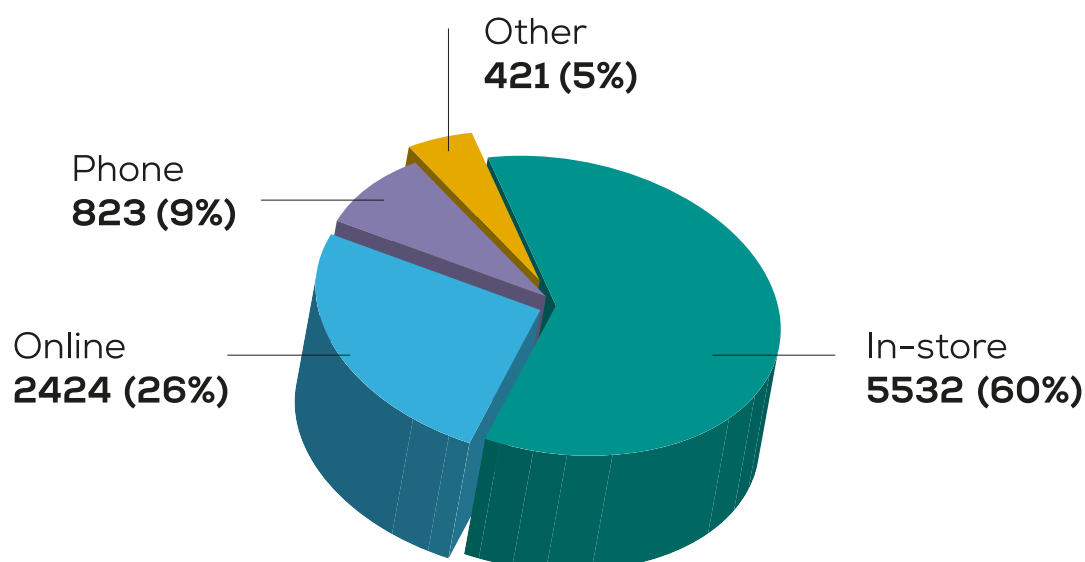


Figure 4: In 81% of contacts where consumers sought information or made a report related to an Irish-registered business, the CCPC was also provided with information on the method of sale. This chart shows the number of contacts related to in-store, online and phone purchases, where this information was provided.

5: Trends in online vs. in-store shopping

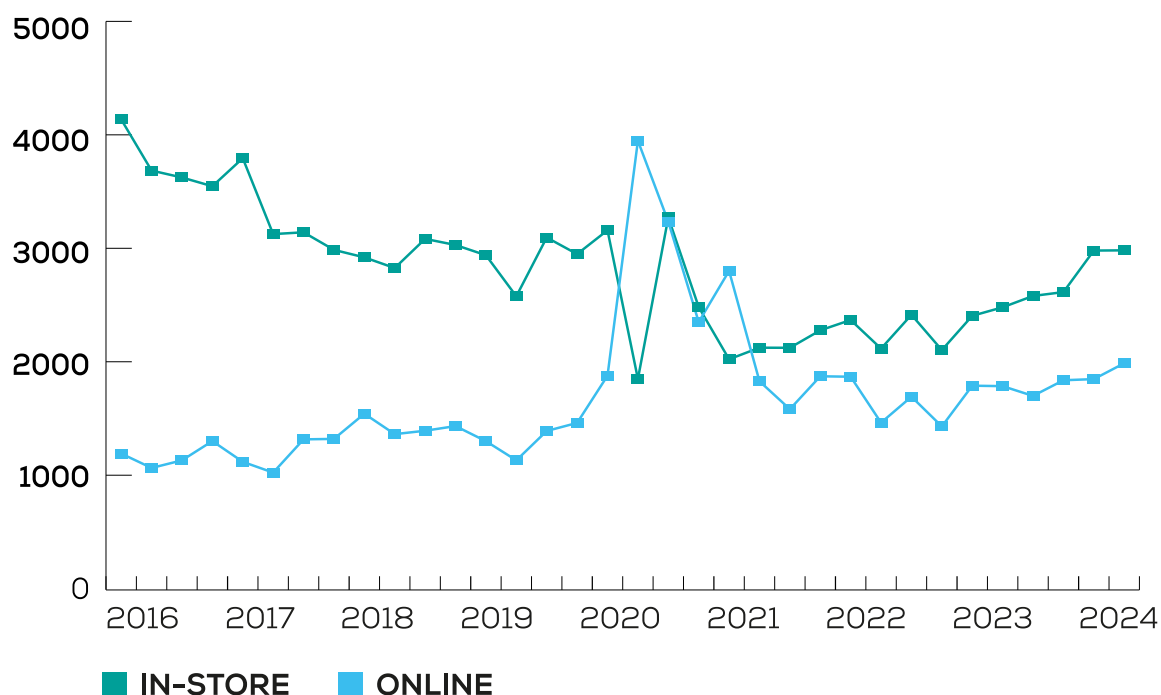


Figure 5: This chart shows the quarter-by-quarter trend of contacts relating to online vs. in-store purchases, where this information was provided by consumers, over the period from 2016 to H1 2024.

Top queries

6: Most common consumer queries

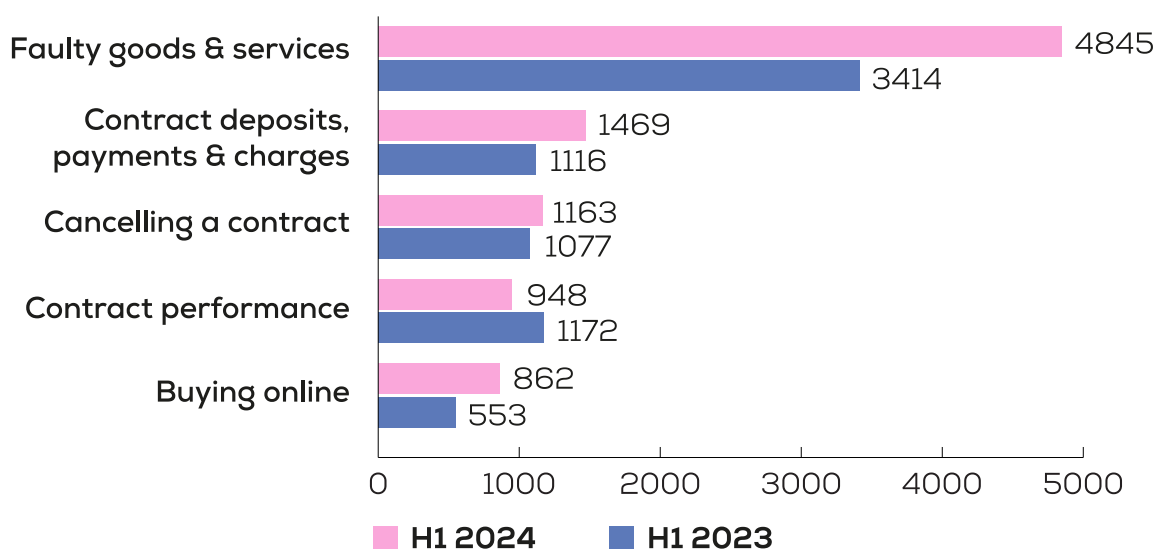


Figure 6: The top five categories of queries from consumers who contacted the CCPC in H1 2024. These five categories represent 63% of the total contacts received in this period. The number of contacts received in these categories in H1 2023 is displayed for comparison.

Business sectors

7: Top ten business sectors

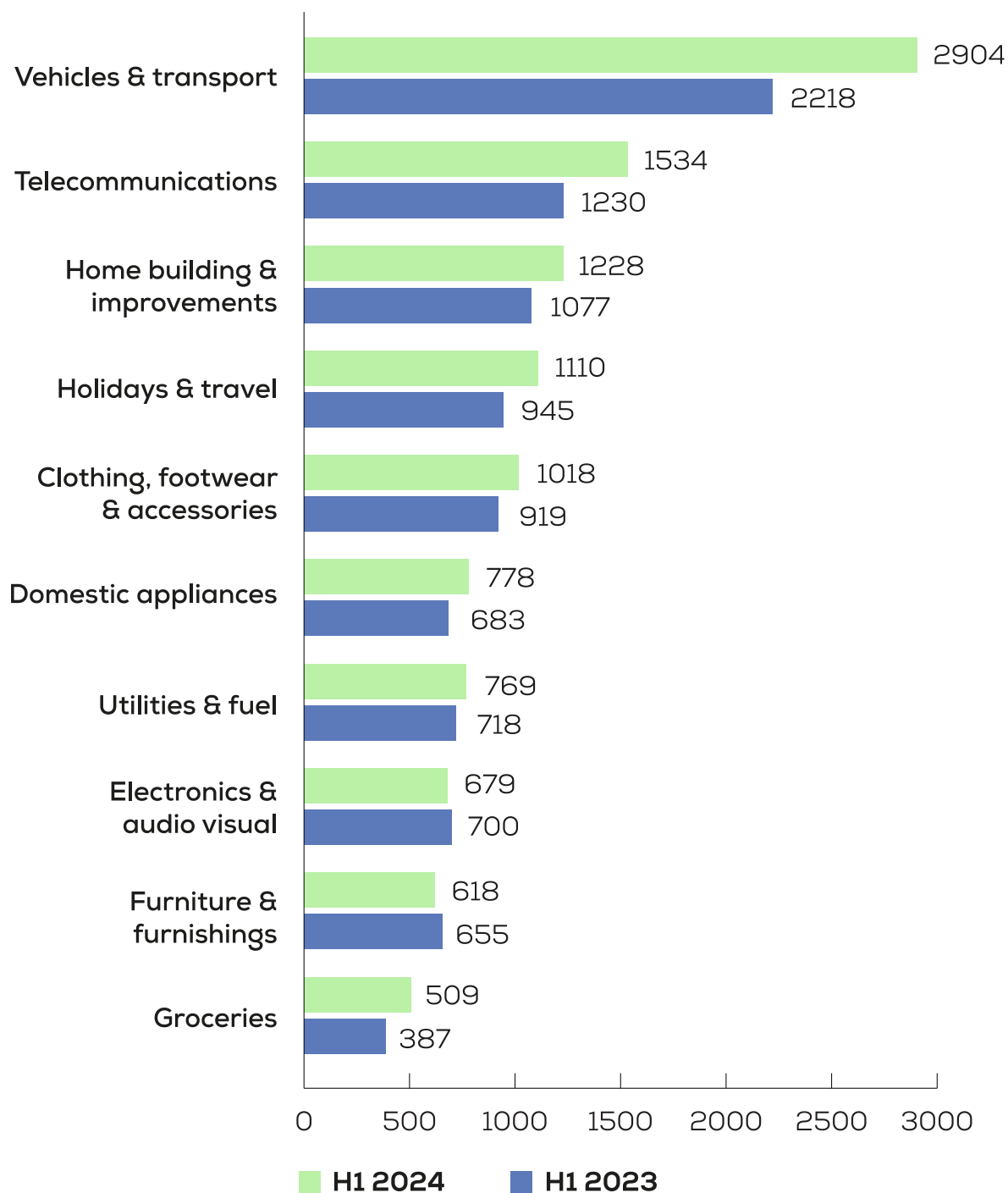


Figure 7: The top ten business sectors the CCPC received contacts about in H1 2024. The number of contacts received relating to these sectors in H1 2023 is displayed for comparison.

8: Changes within top business sectors

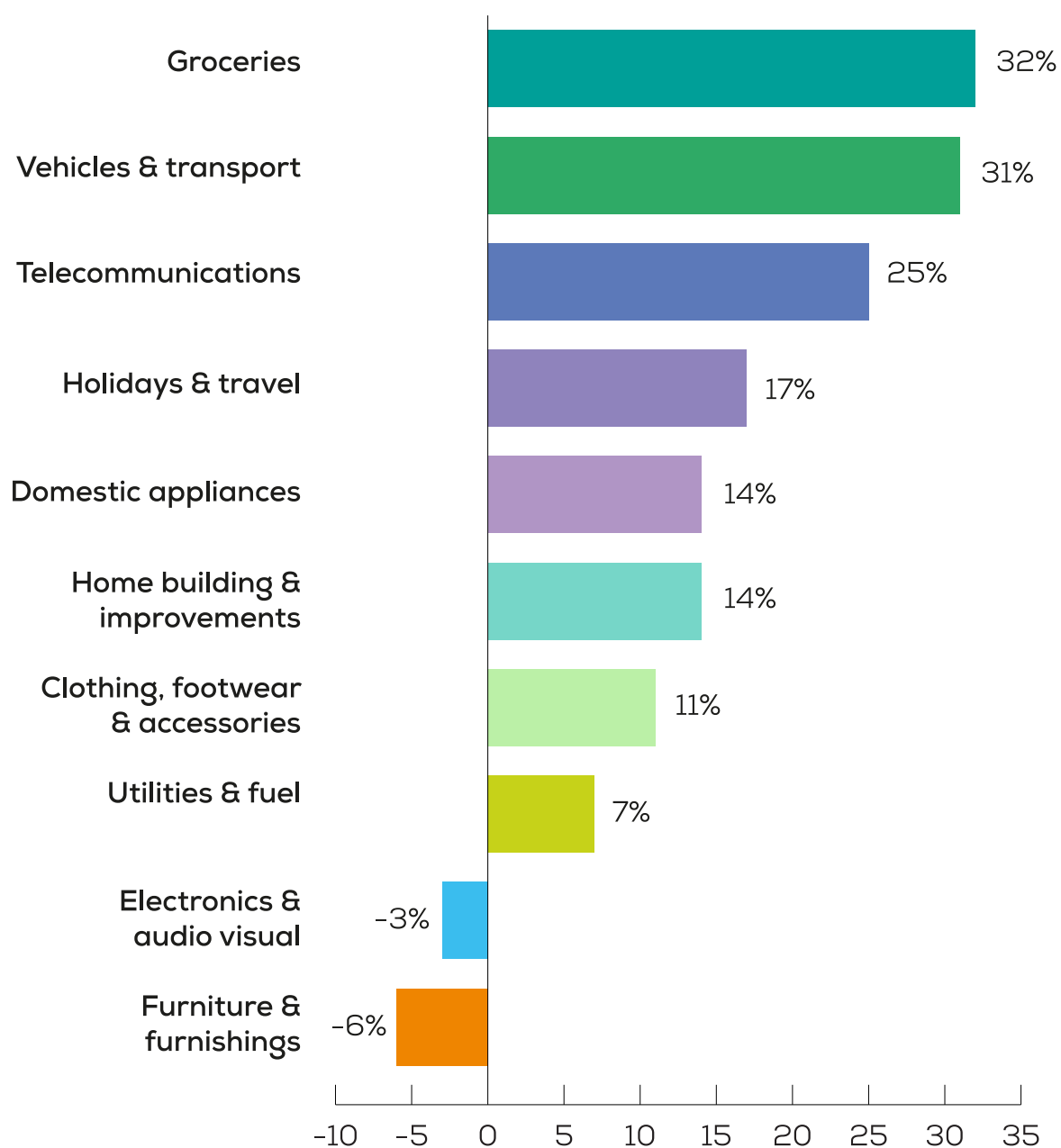


Figure 8: The top ten business sectors the CCPC received contacts about in H1 2024, listed according to the percentage change in volume when compared to H1 2023 contacts related to the same business sectors.

Sample queries

A faulty sofa



Ben bought a new sofa in-store and paid almost €2,000 for it. When delivered, it had a crack in the frame. Ben emailed the trader on the same day, exercising his short-term right to cancel under the Consumer Rights Act, but the trader insisted they would need to send someone out to assess it first. Ben called us for help.

We confirmed to Ben if a fault appears within 30 days of receiving an item, he has a straightforward right to cancel for a full refund. We gave him information about making a formal complaint and taking a case to the Small Claims Court if the trader refused to act.

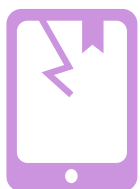
Travel issues



Kayleigh booked a flight from Liverpool to Knock but the flight was cancelled and Kayleigh had to make alternative travel arrangements at the last minute, leaving her out of pocket. She contacted us for information on her rights.

Passenger rights are covered by European legislation, and we were able to direct Kayleigh to the relevant Irish regulator, the IAA, for details on refunds, rerouting and possible compensation.

A broken e-reader



Amir bought an e-reader in-store for €240. It became faulty after six weeks, but the trader refused to deal with the issue and told Amir to contact the manufacturer. Amir called us to find out if this was correct.

Our team confirmed that Amir was right – his contract is with the trader, not the manufacturer. We explained that he is entitled to seek a repair or a replacement, and if the trader refuses, he can request a full refund instead.

Car trouble



Pádraig bought a new car under hire purchase, but there was a recurring problem with the gears even after the garage had tried three times to fix them.

Our team explained Pádraig's right to redress, and suggested he make a formal complaint to the finance company handling his hire purchase agreement as they are the legal owners of the car. Then, if still not resolved, we suggested he report the matter to the Central Bank of Ireland and make a complaint to the Financial Services and Pensions Ombudsman (FSPO).

Misleading prices



Andrew noticed numerous issues with pricing in his local shop. The shop often advertised special offers, but when he went to the till to pay, the price was higher. He rang us to find out if this was against the law.

We informed Andrew that businesses must display the correct prices on their products and must not mislead consumers. Our team also told him that when selling goods at a sale price or special offer, businesses must display the 'prior price' or lowest price the goods were on sale for in the 30 days prior to the sale. We asked Andrew to submit receipts, photos and any evidence he had to us.

All reports, complaints and queries received by our helpline are screened by our enforcement divisions to help them identify persistent and serious breaches of consumer rights.

9: Top ten traders named by contacts

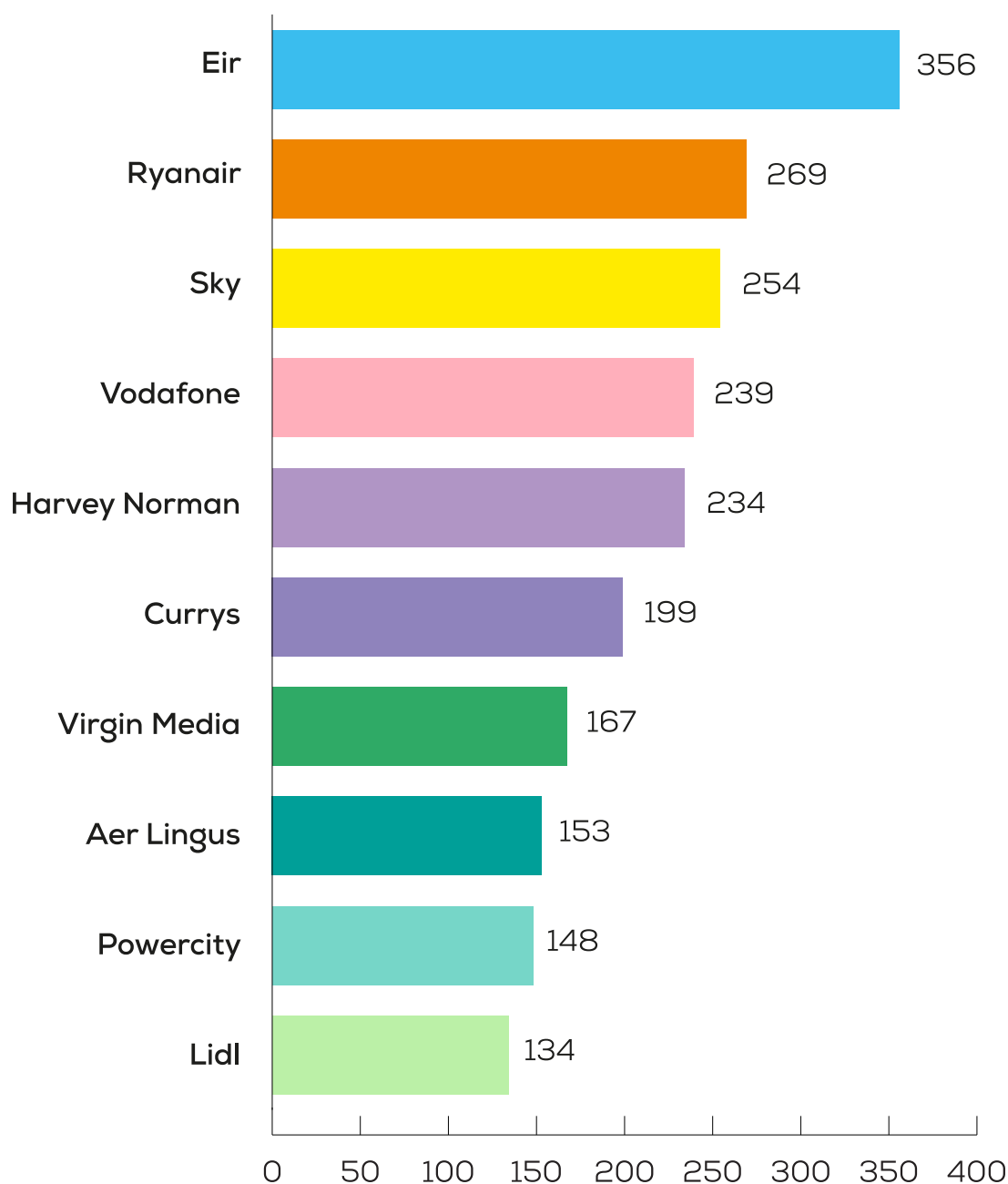


Figure 9: In 85% of contacts where consumers sought information or made a report related to consumer rights, the consumer supplied the name of the trader. This chart shows the top ten traders the CCPC received contacts about in H1 2024. Contacts relating to these ten traders make up 15% of the total number of named trader contacts.

Next steps for consumers

10: Top helpline referrals

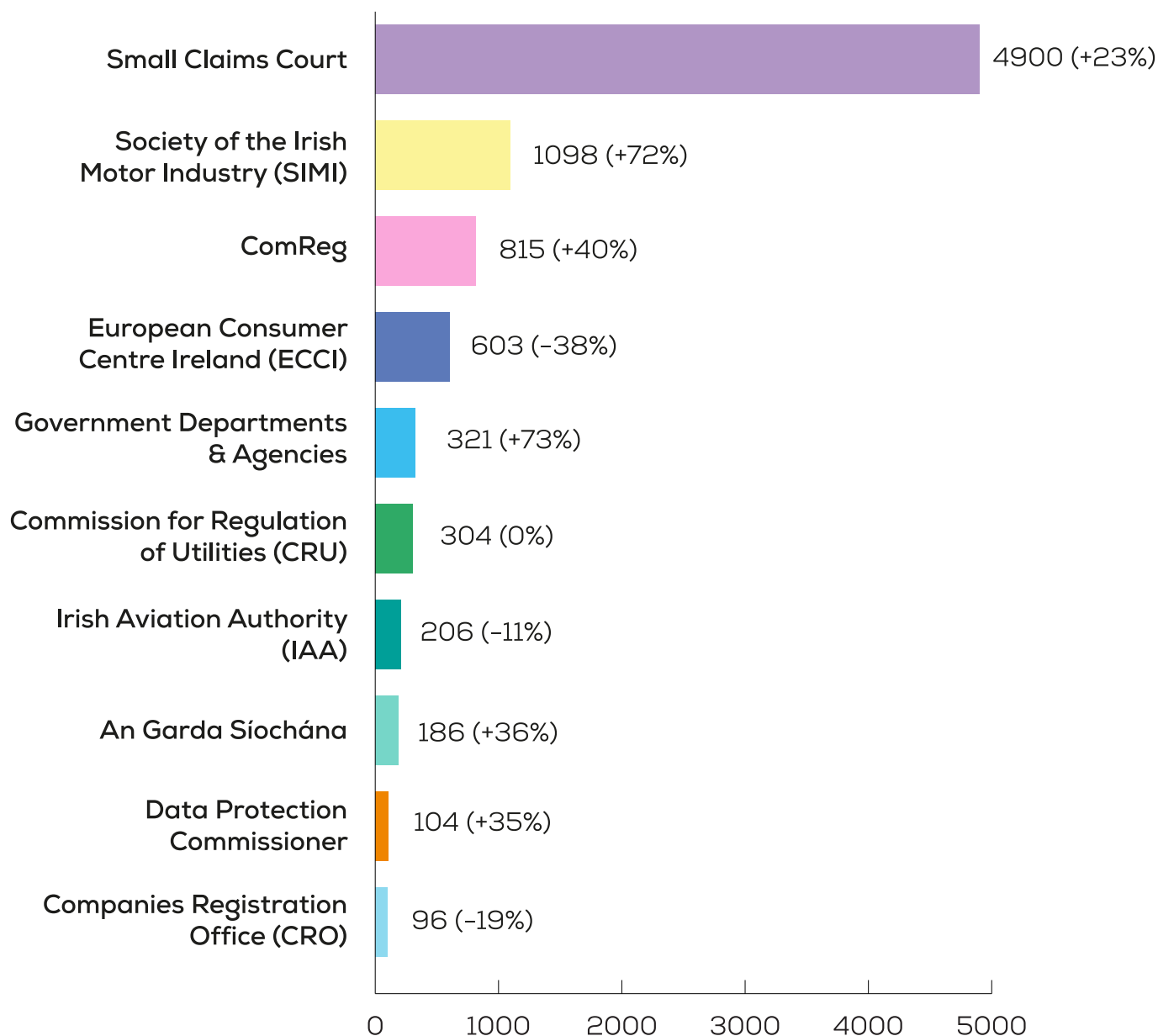


Figure 10: In 64% of contacts, consumers were referred or signposted to another organisation as a source of specialist information or support for consumers seeking redress. This chart shows the top ten organisations that consumers were referred or signposted to in H1 2024. It also shows the percentage change in the number of consumers that were signposted to the same organisation compared to H1 2023.

Next Steps Explained

The **Small Claims Court** allows consumers to resolve certain disputes with businesses through the District Court without having to engage the services of a solicitor. The Court deals with claims up to the value of €2,000. It costs €25 to make a claim. www.courts.ie

When a consumer contacts us about an issue with a business based outside Ireland but within the EU, Iceland or Norway we may refer them to the **European Consumer Centre Ireland**. The Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (CCPC) is the body designated to host the **ECCI**. The **ECCI** supports consumers with cross-border issues and complaints and operates a dispute resolution service for consumers and traders based in different EU countries, Iceland, and Norway. www.eccireland.ie

SIMI (Society of the Irish Motor Industry) operates a consumer complaints and arbitration service dealing with used cars, repairs and services purchased from its members. www.simi.ie

The **Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg)** handles consumer complaints about telecommunications, radio communications, broadcasting transmission, premium rate services and the postal sector in Ireland. www.comreg.ie

The **Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU)** supports consumers with questions or complaints about energy and water. www.cru.ie

An Garda Síochána deal with all matters relating to fraud, scams and other criminal activity. www.garda.ie

The **Irish Aviation Authority (IAA)** is responsible for enforcing EU rules on flights when it comes to delays, cancellations and compensation. www.iaa.ie

The **Data Protection Commissioner** protects individuals' personal data in Ireland under the GDPR and other regulatory frameworks. www.dataprotection.ie

The **Companies Registration Office (CRO)** holds all public statutory information on Irish companies and business names. Consumers are referred here if they need information about a company, such as its status or registered office. www.cro.ie

Government Departments & Agencies have different responsibilities. We refer consumers to the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications for issues regarding the household waste sector and the Deposit Return Scheme, for example. Other queries are directed to the relevant departments or agencies, where appropriate. www.gov.ie

11: Small Claims Court referrals: Top five business sectors

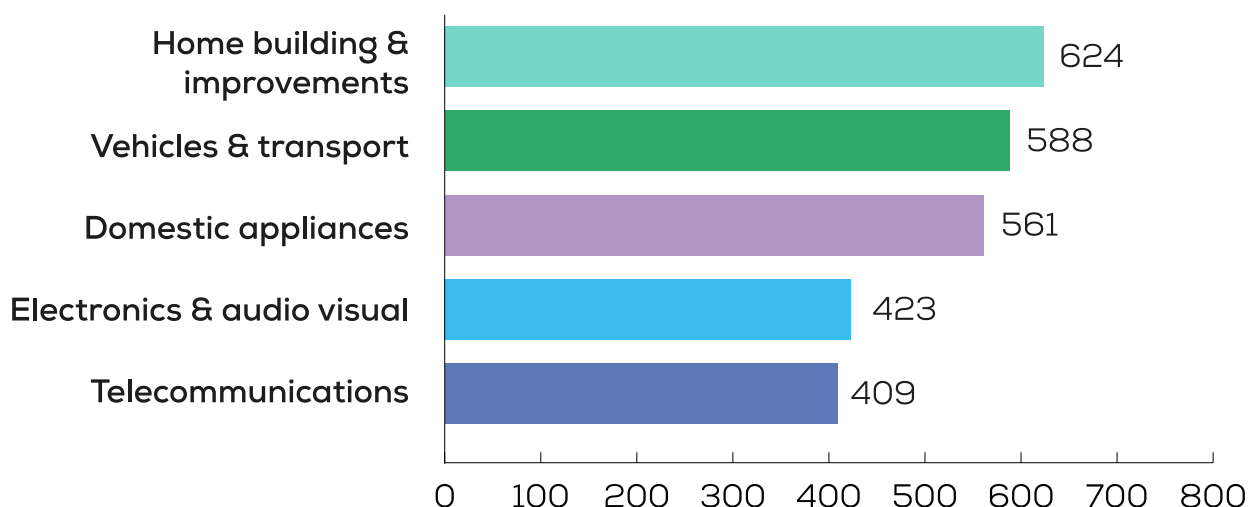


Figure 11: The top five business sectors where consumers were referred or signposted to the Small Claims Procedure in H1 2024. The top five sectors make up 53% of the overall CCPC referrals to the Small Claims Procedure.

12: Small Claims Court referrals: Top five query categories

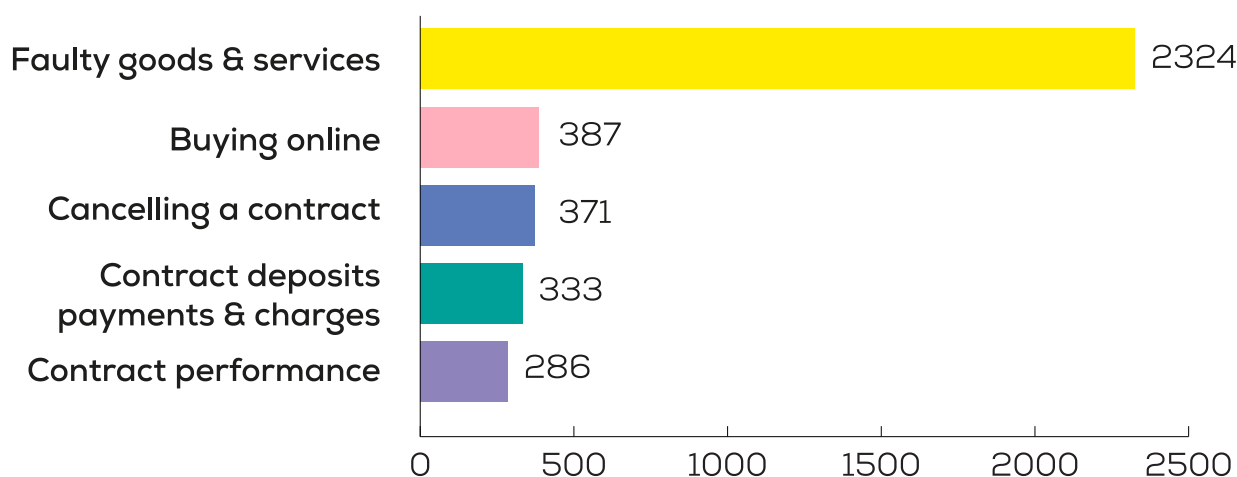


Figure 12: The top five query categories where consumers were referred or signposted to the Small Claims Procedure in H1 2024. The top five query categories make up 76% of the overall CCPC referrals to the Small Claims Procedure.

13: European Consumer Centre referrals: Top five business sectors

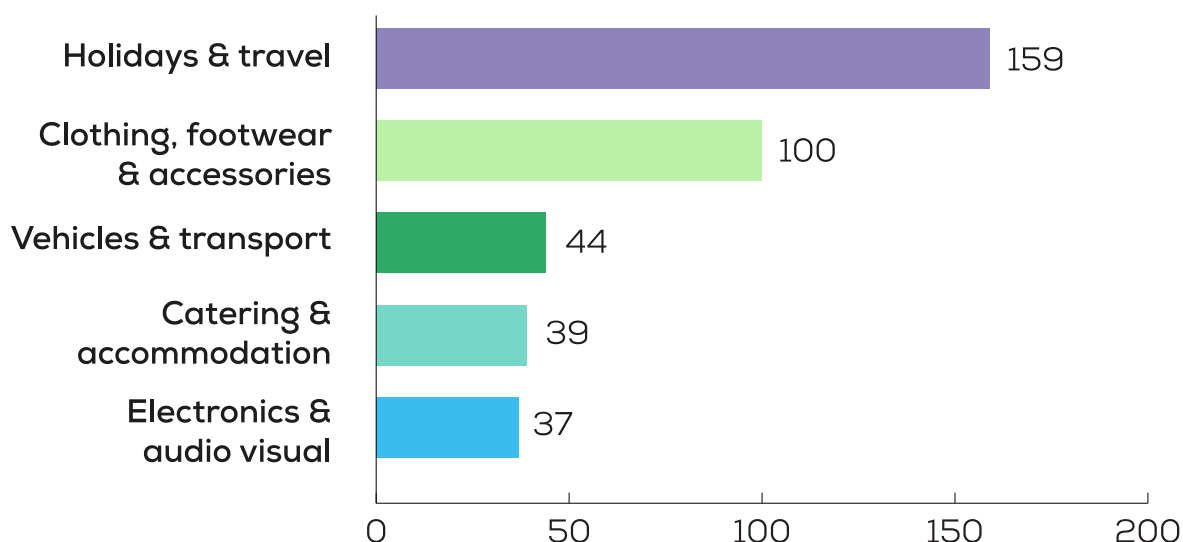


Figure 13: The top five business sectors where consumers were referred or signposted to the European Consumer Centre in H1 2024. The top five sectors make up 63% of the overall CCPC referrals to the European Consumer Centre.

14: European Consumer Centre referrals: Top five query categories

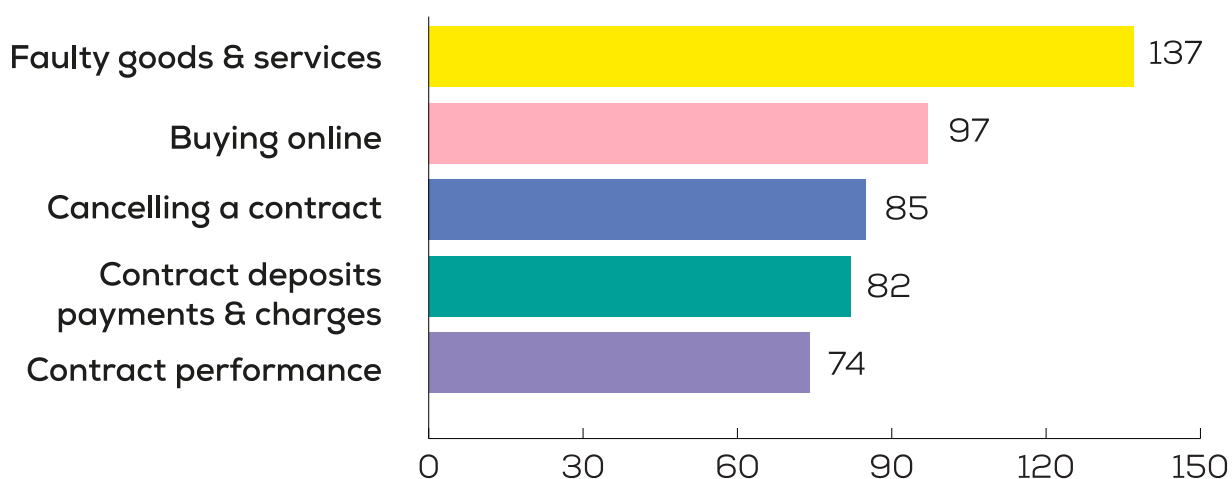
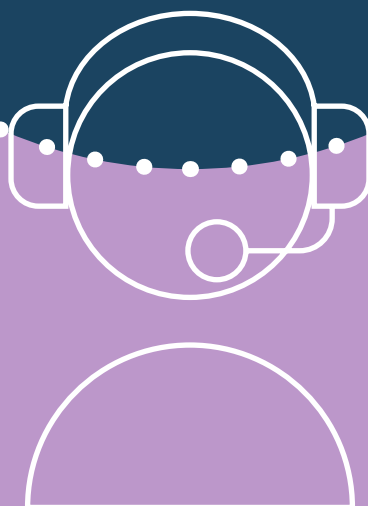


Figure 14: This chart shows the top five query categories where consumers were referred or signposted to the European Consumer Centre in H1 2024. The top five query categories make up 79% of the overall CCPC referrals to the European Consumer Centre.

1,990
of our helpline
contacts related to
personal finance



15: Personal finance queries

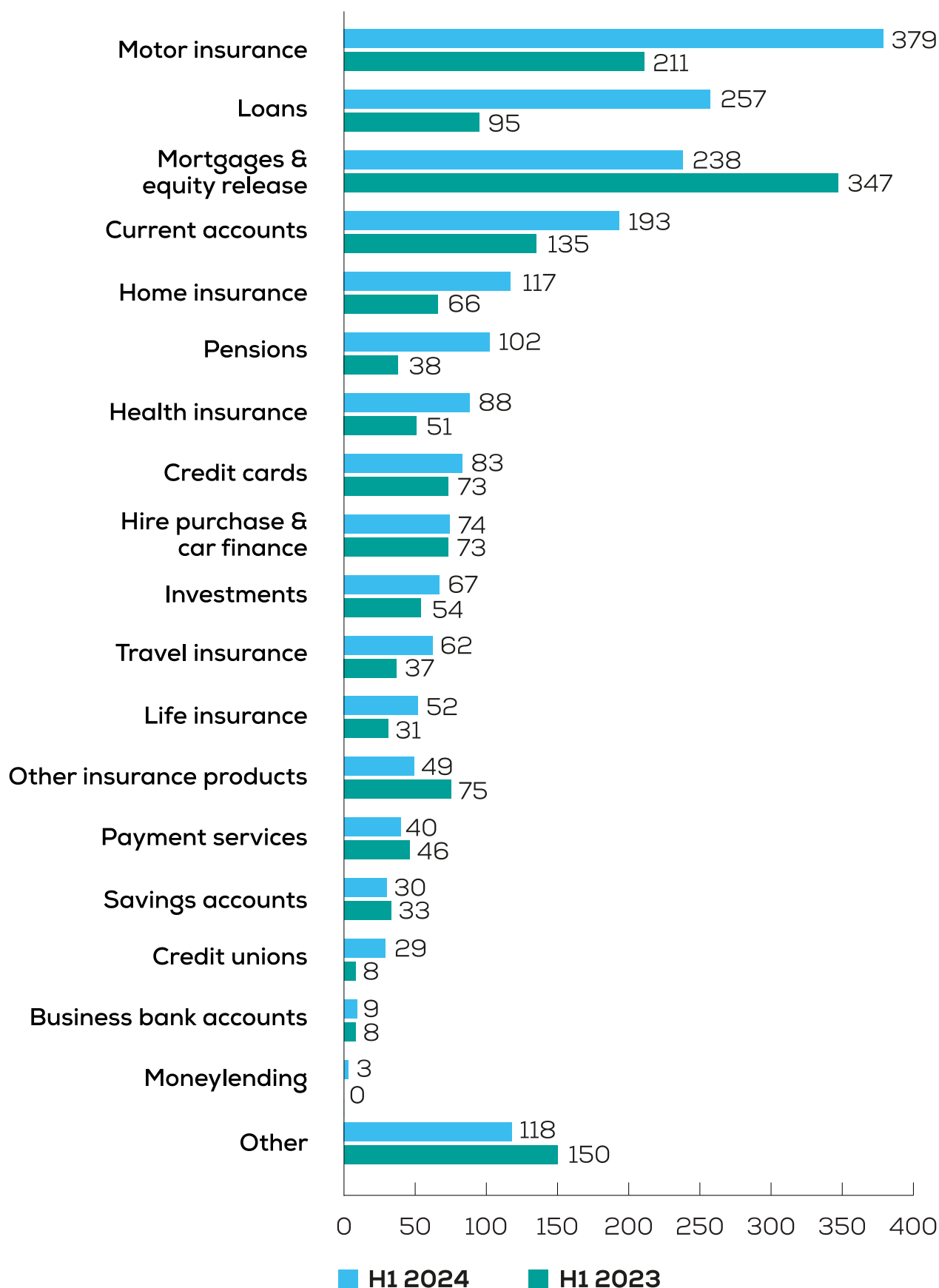
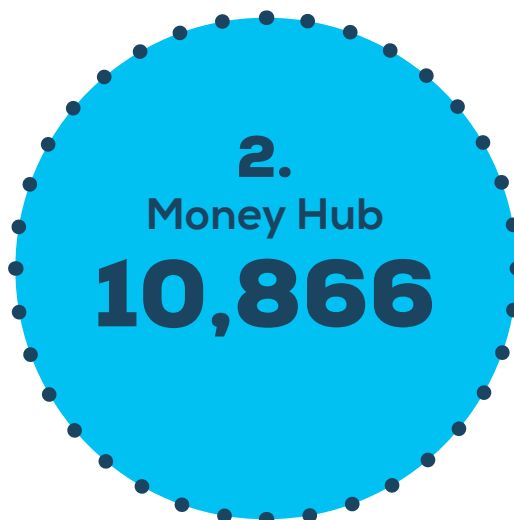


Figure 15: Personal finance contacts to the CCPC in H1 2024 listed by category. The number of contacts received in these categories in H1 2023 is displayed for comparison.

16: Most popular personal finance pages on CCPC.ie



Competition and Consumer Protection Commission

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