Empowering EU Citizens with the Multilingual Europe Direct Contact Centre

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About the Client

The European Commission (EC) is the executive authority of the European Union, overseeing EU strategy, legislation, policies, and budget, as well as contributing to international aid and development. As part of its initiatives, the EC operates the Europe Direct Contact Centre (EDCC) to provide citizens and other interested parties with relevant information related to the EU. The EDCC is tasked with responding to all inquiries received via phone, e-mail and messaging apps in all official EU languages, complemented with Ukrainian and Russian.
These requests can pertain to various topics, such as laws and regulations, labour markets, travel issues, health concerns, etc.

The European Commission has chosen the Conectys and the European Service Network (ESN) consortium to modernise EDCC and efficiently deliver the EU multilingual citizen support line. The project aimed to bring cost efficiency, ensure inhabitants' engagement across all channels, offer multilingual assistance, and maintain scalability to handle unexpected events.

Europe Direct Contact Centre (EDCC) Multilingual Citizen Support Line run by the European Commission **(Client)**

Contract Team: DG Communication (Direct Client), **Cooperation Units:** several services in the European Commission and other EU Institutions

European Service Network (Leader)

Contract management, relationship management and EU consultancy, provision of multilingual experts

Conectys (Partner)

CX consultancy, provision of multilingual experts, innovative technology, comprehensive process management

Summary

- Multilingual Citizen Support Line run by the European Commission **(Client)**

  European Service Network **(Leader)**

  Conectys **(Partner)**

Overview

Conectys and the European Service Network (ESN) consortium successfully modernised the Multilingual Europe Direct Contact Centre (EDCC). The project aimed to ensure cost efficiency, engage inhabitants across channels, provide multilingual assistance, and maintain scalability for unexpected events.

Delivered

Coverage:
27 countries
(EU members)

Support In
26 Languages

50+ Agents
With Mother Tongue

Services:
Content, Technology, Processes, Consultancy, Integration

Channels:
Voice, Sms, E-Mail, Messengers

Results

- **Scaling the system from less than 200 users to 500+ in just six months.**
- **Working through an annual volume of around 200,000 cases, ensuring the addressing of every citizen's request.**
- **Consistently exceeding the 80% citizen satisfaction rate target (averaging 90%).**
- **Strong innovation in the digital space, including the use of RPA, AI, and MLA.**
- **Achievement of critical SLA even during peaks and new language addition.**

Scope of the **Project**

- **Objective:** Accelerating the modernisation of the Europe Direct Contact Centre through innovative tools and practices, making EU knowledge more accessible and appealing to citizens and contributing to process efficiencies.

- **Approach:** Adopting a digitally transformed approach to contact centres, enhancing native support, improving location-independent work, offering cutting-edge mobility solutions, and leveraging cultural alignment.

- **Markets:** At least 27 markets (the EU Member States: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, the Slovak Republic, Sweden). The EDCC is also accessible to citizens outside of the European Union when they have inquiries related to EU activities.

Services:

Eu Contents
Handling an average of 14,000 inquiries on EU issues monthly.

People
A team of 50+ 'mother tongue' agents raised in the culture of the countries supported.

Technology
Omnichannel CRM (in-house built BlueTweak), NLP, KB, Analytics, and Citizen Insights solutions

Processes
Training, quality assurance, employee engagement, and performance management.

Consultancy
Sourcing, journey analysis, and redesign services.

Integration
With popular instant messaging apps.

Channels: Voice (inbound and outbound), SMS (inbound and outbound), e-mail, messengers.

Languages: 26 languages.

Business Need Analysis

To improve the speed and accuracy of its support services, the European Commission (EC) aims to enhance its ability to provide EU citizens with relevant and accurate information about the European Union promptly and in multiple languages.

To achieve this, the Commission is interested in a contractor with a reputable European-headquartered partner, including expertise in Customer Experience services and EU policies and the resources, knowledge, and technology to modernise the existing EU contact centre. The consortium must also be agile in hiring the right people, implementing smart processes, and equipping them with the right technologies.

The EC had several desired outcomes, including:

• Boosting citizens' understanding of EU policies.
• Enabling efficient problem-solving via digital channels.
• Increasing efficiency through technological innovations.
• Enlarging audiences.
• Offering services from multiple geographic locations across the EU.
• Ensuring strict compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Conectys and ESN offer the assets and solutions critical to building an outstanding contact centre for the future in order to address the EC's needs and requirements. Bidding for this contract is a unique experience involving a customer reference audit and operational, technological, and data security audits conducted by the client.

Results

Customer Experience

- Consistently exceeding the 80% citizen satisfaction rate target (averaging 90%).
- Providing communication services and answers to incoming enquiries in 26 languages with mother-tongue agents to ensure accuracy and understanding.
- Scaling the system from less than 200 users to 500+ in just six months, ensuring efficient and effective support for all EU citizens.
- Responding quickly to increased demand by adding two new languages, Russian and Ukrainian, within two weeks to support citizens seeking assistance during the Russia-Ukraine conflict.
- Strong innovation in the digital space, including the use of RPA, AI, and MLA.
- Technology-led solutions, including an omnichannel standalone CRM application that provides enhanced and personalised CX insights and analytics.
- ISO 9001:2015 certified Quality Management System and an operating framework based on the COPC CSP standard.
- Implementing an AI-assisted translation engine for streamlined review and predictive software for SPAM closure, ensuring more efficient and timely customer support and a cleaner, more relevant interaction environment.
- Building a back-end infrastructure for over 30 phone numbers corresponded to unique geographies and languages, allowing for appropriate agent routing, response, and call-back capability.
- Integrating Facebook Messenger and WhatsApp into the CRM system.

Results

Employee Experience

- The ability to deliver a hybrid (on-site and work-at-home models) large-scale operation of tenured Customer Experience agents and experts who are familiar with the EU regulations and policies and fluently speak the 24 EU official languages, as well as Ukrainian and Russian.
- Managing exceptional demand increased during the summer of 2021 while Europe was lifting COVID-19 restrictions. Additionally, increasing first-time resolution rates for agents through AI-guided responses.
- Working through an annual volume of around 200,000 cases, ensuring the addressing of every citizen's request.
- Implementing a multilingual, transferable, NLP-built-in Knowledge Base system supporting over 400 users.
- Employee retention, wellbeing and gamification programs that incentivise agent performance, promoting retention and contributing to continuous improvement.
- Introducing Natural Language Processing to streamline agent work and improve their experience.

Business Impact

- **Efficiency gains by eliminating manual work with SPAM management, automated translations, and automated SLA mishap and analytics.**
- **Automated SLA notifications for agents and management, detecting the risk of SLA failure and identifying abnormal events in support activities.**
- **Deployed an AI-assisted translation engine to streamline internal escalation and review processes.**
- **Critical SLA achieved even during peaks and new language addition.**
- **Compliance: 1-click anonymisation of citizens' private data from reviewed cases.**

The Future of the Project

The project will prioritise maintaining high-quality standards and expanding CX services by rolling out instant messaging support.

In addition, it will continue to enhance its technology by utilising artificial intelligence for self-service while keeping human agents at the heart of the communication flows.

The collaboration between Conectys, ESN and the European Commission reflects where contact centers are headed: omnichannel, digitally advanced, highly customized, and more reputable than ever before, all without sacrificing SLAs, deliverables, or language fluency requirements.

We are proud of what we accomplish when modernizing the EU citizen support line while still meeting core goals.

~ Arnold Cobbaert, CEO at Conectys

CONTACT US!

Would love to connect with you to discuss how our team at Conectys can help enhance your Trust & Safety and Customer Experience services.

Let's talk!

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