

Key Facts



European consumers are now living in a digital age. As more consumers shop online within the EU it's important that they are offered the same rights and protection online as on the high street.

We surveyed **4135 European consumers** from 22 EU countries between July and August 2015 to learn about their experiences of online shopping cross-border.

99.5% had experience of **buying a product or service online**, either in their home country, within the EU or outside the EU.



9 out of 10 bought something online within the last month. A fifth had bought something online during the last 24 hours.

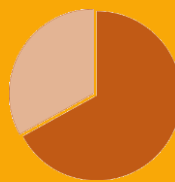
Cross-border online shopping habits



Of those that have **never shopped cross-border**

the most common barrier (74%) is being 'worried about **resolving problems or returning goods** if something went wrong'.

Half of consumers find it difficult to know **where internet retailers are based**, which can lead to unintentional cross-border purchases.



Two thirds have bought something from an internet retailer based **in a different EU country**.

The **main reasons** for shopping cross-border:

66%

"To get items not available in my home country"

"To get items at a cheaper price"

58%

Goods and services **most frequently purchased** cross-border:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 Clothes, shoes, accessories | 4 Electrical products or accessories (e.g. TV, computer, washing machine) |
| 2 Travel (e.g. flights, hotels, package holidays) | 5 Books, magazines or newspapers |
| 3 Downloads (e.g. streamed software, music, movies) | |

Frequency



- Cross-border purchases tend to be infrequent with the majority of people buying something once a year or less.
- Only 10% of respondents shop regularly (once a month or more) from websites based in other EU countries, compared to 63.4% who shop regularly from websites based in their home country.

Confidence and trust



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Online reviews are influential - three quarters (77.7%) of online shoppers agree that online review sites influence their purchasing decisions.

Three quarters of respondents (76%) agree that they would be more likely to use a website with a **trust-mark label or logo**.

Confidence decreases the farther they shop from home



Almost one in three online shoppers (28.3%) do **not trust online sellers in other countries**.

Problems shopping cross-border

15.2% of cross-border shoppers have experienced a **problem** with a transaction. Of these:

- ★ 27.4% had received items later than the specified date
- ★ 24.5% had been refused service due to their geographical location
- ★ 23.1% had problems with faulty goods
- ★ 22.1% had ordered something that had never arrived



Respondents were more **likely to experience problems with products than services**

14.3% of those who bought a product cross-border experiencing a problem, compared to only 4.3% of those who bought a service.



14.3%

vs.

4.3%



Complaints

EU consumers are not shy about complaining

Of those that experienced a problem while shopping cross-border

7 in **10** made a complaint.



... agree with the statement:

"I am less likely to complain about problems to an online retailer based abroad, than an online retailer in my own country."

Satisfaction with complaints is low

6 in **10**

respondents with a problem **complained directly** to the online retailer.

56.2% were satisfied with the outcome of their last complaint to an online retailer

32.5% were dissatisfied



Complaints are not escalated - only a fraction of people who experienced problems took the matter further.



Only 3% complained to their local European Consumer Centre (ECC).



2.7% contacted an independent dispute resolution scheme, such as an ombudsman.

Dissatisfied shoppers are more likely to 'spread the word' than make a formal complaint

Of those people who had a problem serious enough to warrant a complaint:



75% told family or friends about their negative experience

52% left a negative review online

Knowledge of consumer rights

Only 2.2%

felt 'very confident' about their **knowledge of consumer rights when shopping cross-border.**



When tested on nine 'true or false' statements about EU consumer rights, **only 10.5%** of online shoppers got them all right.

For more information about EU consumers' experiences of online shopping – including details of problems, case studies and quotes – please contact ANEC.

For a copy of the full report: "Cross-Border Online Shopping within the EU - Learning from Consumer Experiences", December 2015, please check [ANEC's website](http://tinyurl.com/o5rdqkz) (<http://tinyurl.com/o5rdqkz>)



Raising Standards for Consumers

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ANEC is the European consumer voice in standardisation, defending consumer interests in the processes of technical standardisation and conformity assessment, as well as related legislation and public policies.

ANEC was established in 1995 as an international non-profit association under Belgian law and represents consumer organisations in 33 European countries.

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