



# Retailers' attitudes towards cross-border trade and consumer protection 2016

Final Report



**TNS opinion**

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# Retailers' attitudes towards cross-border trade and consumer protection 2016

## Main Report

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## INTRODUCTION

The internal market of the EU has the potential to be the largest retail market in the world. Consumer spending accounts for 57% of EU GDP, making it a critical factor in the European economy, and consumer conditions are positively related to economic situation in Member States<sup>1</sup>.

The European Commission is continually working to improve the rights and protections for consumers, whilst still facilitating business competition. In June 2014 a new Directive on Consumer Rights came into force, aiming to provide the right balance between consumer protection and business competition. As well as providing enhanced consumer protection - particularly in the area of online purchasing - this directive set out improvements for businesses such as common rules for trading across Europe to ensure a more level playing field<sup>2</sup>. Both consumers and retailers need to be aware of their rights and obligations under this new directive.

This report presents the results of the survey “Retailers’ attitudes towards cross-border trade and consumer protection”, carried out in May and June 2016. The present survey is designed to enhance the general knowledge base of national and European consumer and retailer conditions by investigating the perceptions and experiences of European retailers in the following areas:

- Characteristics of retailers in terms of the sales channels used, as well as the languages used to sell to consumers
- Current levels of cross-border trade
- Current levels of online sales, confidence to sell online, and obstacles to developing domestic and cross-border online sales
- Knowledge of their legal obligations towards consumers
- Knowledge of and compliance with consumer legislation, as well as views on product safety
- Consumer complaints and awareness of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms

### Methodological changes with respect to the previous waves and comparability of results

This survey follows on from a series of consumer protection surveys targeting retailers, conducted since 2006 on behalf of the European Commission, DG SANCO - Flash Eurobarometer surveys 396 (2014), 359 (2012), 331 (2011), 300 (2010), 278 (2009), 224 (2008) and 186 (2006)<sup>3</sup>. The current study introduces two important methodological changes with respect to the previous exercises. First, in terms of scope of the survey, the target population was expanded to companies in the sectors (NACE Rev 2 code) of transmission of electricity (D3512), trade of electricity (D3514), trade of gas through mains (D3523), motion picture projection activities (J5914) and other personal service

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<sup>1</sup> European Commission. Consumer Conditions Scoreboard – 2015 edition. Downloadable from: [http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/consumer\\_evidence/consumer\\_scoreboards/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/consumer_evidence/consumer_scoreboards/index_en.htm)

<sup>2</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/consumer\\_rights/rights-contracts/directive/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/consumer_rights/rights-contracts/directive/index_en.htm)

<sup>3</sup> All reports can be found at [http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/strategy/facts\\_eurobar\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/strategy/facts_eurobar_en.htm)

activities (S96). These changes did not affect the comparability of the 2016 edition with previous waves.

Second, the weighting procedure used in previous waves was adapted to take into account only companies selling to final consumers. Additionally, a second weighting scheme was added in the 2016 edition to present results based on the number of persons employed (rather than the number of companies).

Results from the current 2016 wave were computed based on this revised methodology (expanded scope of NACE codes + new weighting scheme taking into account companies selling to final consumers). Additionally, differences between the current wave and the previous 2014 wave were computed according to the methodology used in 2014 (scope and weighting design), in order to maintain methodological consistency (and the same goes for the changes between the 2014 wave and the previous waves). However, as a result of the methodological novelties applied in 2016 it is not possible to estimate data in level for the years 2014 and before by applying back observed changes between waves.

### Structure of the results

The analyses presented for each of the different topics dealt with by the survey, throughout sections one to five of the present report, follow the structured order presented below. Only statistically significant<sup>4</sup> findings are discussed.

- Figures at EU level weighted by number of companies and by number of persons employed, visualized with bar charts;
- Figures at the level of Eurozone, differences between EU15 and NMS 13, and differences between regions, as well as year-to-year differences;
- Figures at the countries level in the current survey and, if available, comparison with prior editions of the study; these and the two former analysis are visualized with maps and tables in the main corpus of the report;
- Analysis of figures by characteristics of retailers, visualized with tables in the annex of the report.

A few elements related to the visual elements of this report:

- In bar charts and similar resources, the “Total” refers to the average of all European Union 28 Member States, unless explicitly mentioned. Please note that Croatia is included in the computation of the EU28 total starting from 2012, and Bulgaria and Romania from 2008 (as these three countries were not covered in all the survey's editions).

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<sup>4</sup> Statistical significance is determined by observing the p-value obtained from a Student's t-test across two dimensions. The first one is about means, or whether the difference between EU mean and average figures for the Eurozone, regions and countries, is too wide to be random, based on all the observations of the sample (e.g. the figures falls out of the range within which theoretically 95% of the observations would be found). The second one is about increase or decrease, or comparing the change in the figure from one year to the other and whether such difference can be considered as random at a specific level of confidence (e.g. “T-test at 95% level” means there is a 5% theoretical probability the difference is random).

- In tables presenting current year figures and year-to-year change, current year figures are expressed as percentages (%), while changes are expressed in percentage points (pp), unless another methodology is explicitly mentioned;
- Base sizes accompanying charts, tables and other graphic elements refer to the unweighted sample size;
- In a few cases, results for some countries are based on a very small sample (less than 100 observations) and should therefore be considered as mainly indicative. We have included a specific footnote to highlight these cases.



This survey was carried out by TNS Political & Social network in the 28 Member States of the European Union and in Iceland and Norway between 9 May and 14 June 2016. The target companies are retail companies selling goods or services directly to end consumers and employing at least 10 people<sup>5</sup>. Eligible respondents were individuals with decision-making responsibilities<sup>6</sup>. In each country around 400 retailers were interviewed, with the exception of Cyprus, Luxembourg, Malta and Iceland (each around 150). In those four countries, the margin of errors is therefore higher than in the other countries surveyed (as explained in the technical specifications).

All interviews were carried by telephone, using the TNS e-Call centre (our centralized CATI system). The sample was selected from a combination of international and local business databases.

A technical note on the manner in which interviews were conducted by the Institutes within the TNS Political & Social network is appended as an annex to this report.

Note: In this report, countries are referred to by their official abbreviation. The abbreviations used in this report correspond to:

ABBREVIATIONS			
BE	Belgium	LT	Lithuania
BG	Bulgaria	LU	Luxembourg
CZ	Czech Republic	HU	Hungary
DK	Denmark	MT	Malta
DE	Germany	NL	The Netherlands
EE	Estonia	AT	Austria
IE	Ireland	PL	Poland
EL	Greece	PT	Portugal
ES	Spain	RO	Romania
FR	France	SI	Slovenia
HR	Croatia	SK	Slovakia
IT	Italy	FI	Finland
CY	Republic of Cyprus*	SE	Sweden
LV	Latvia	UK	The United Kingdom
IS	Iceland	EU28	European Union – 28 Member States
NO	Norway		
EURO ZONE	BE, DE, EE, IE, EL, ES, FR, IT, CY, LV, LT, LU, MT, NL, AT, PT, SI, SK, FI	EU15	BE, DK, DE, IE, EL, ES, FR, IT, LU, NL, AT, PT, FI, SE, UK
NMS 13	BG, CZ, EE, HR, CY, LV, LT, HU, MT, PL, RO, SI, SK		
Region North	DK, FI, SE	Region East	BG, CZ, EE, HR, LV, LT, HU, PL, RO, SI, SK
Region South	EL, ES, IT, CY, MT, PT	Region West	BE, DE, IE, FR, LU, NL, AT, UK

\* Cyprus as a whole is one of the 28 European Union Member States. However, the 'acquis communautaire' has been suspended in the part of the country which is not controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus. For practical reasons, only the interviews carried out in the part of the country controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus are included in the 'CY' category and in the EU28 average.

<sup>5</sup> More specifically, the target population is defined as "all enterprises established in the country surveyed, selling to final consumers and employing at least 10 persons, belonging to the following NACE Rev2 categories: D3512, D3514, D3523, G45, G47, H49, H50, H51, H52, H53, I55, I56, J5914, J61, J62, K64, K65, L68, N77, N79, S95 and S96".

<sup>6</sup> Whenever a company was eligible the selected respondent had to be someone with decision making responsibilities in the company (managing director, CEO) or leading the commercial activities of the company (Commercial managers, sales managers, marketing managers). When there are several decision-makers, the respondent selects oneself.

## KEY FINDINGS

The figures below represent the average of the 28 European Union Member States unless explicitly mentioned.

A small majority of retailers are fully aware of consumer's rights

- Only around half (53.5%) of all retailers know consumer rights in all five target areas:
  - Retailers are most likely to know it is not prohibited to promote products for children by directly targeting the parents in the advertisements (75.0%).
  - Almost two thirds (64.5%) know it is prohibited to describe a product as "free" although it is only available free of charge to consumers calling a premium rate phone number.
  - Almost six in ten (56.0%) know it is prohibited to include an invoice or a similar document seeking payment in marketing material.
  - Almost four in ten are aware that it is prohibited to run a promotional campaign stating "we offer a discount of 60%" although the products offered with a 60% discount are almost out of stock (38.9%).
  - Almost three in ten know a consumer is entitled to free repair or replacement of a new durable good which breaks down without any fault on his/her part 18 months after the purchase (29.4%).
- Only around a third of all retailers (36.8%) know a consumer who bought a good online, by mail or by phone has 14 days from receipt of the good to change his/her mind and cancel the order.

Less than half have come across unfair commercial practices by competitors in their own country, and the majority are positive about compliance with consumer legislation

- Retailers are much more likely to have come across unfair commercial practices by competitors in their own country (30.1%) than in other EU country (5.5%) in the last 12 months.
- Retailers are most likely to have come across domestic competitors pressuring consumers with persistent commercial calls or messages (43.3%), writing fake reviews which are in fact hidden adverts or hidden attacks (34.5%), or competitors advertising falsely that a product is available only for a limited period (33.6%).
- Not more than 7% of the retailers that sell cross-border have experienced each unfair commercial practices from a competitor in another EU country.
- The majority of retailers agree it is easy to comply with consumer legislation in their sector in their own country (71.2%), that their competitors comply with consumer legislation in their own country (67.1%), and that the costs of compliance with consumer legislation in their sector are reasonable (66.2%).
- For retailers that sell to other EU countries, 55% agree it is easy to comply with consumer legislation for their sector in other EU countries, 49.3% agree companies competing with them in other EU countries comply with consumer legislation and 47.6% agree costs related to compliance with consumer legislation are reasonable in other EU countries.

- Nearly three quarters of companies (74.7%) agree public authorities actively monitor and ensure compliance with product safety legislation in their sector, 66.7% agree public authorities actively monitor and ensure compliance with consumer legislation in their sector and 60.1% agree self-regulatory bodies actively monitor respect of codes of conduct or codes of practice in their sector. Almost as many (58.2%) agree consumer NGOs actively monitor compliance with consumer legislation, while 50.2% agree the media regularly report on businesses which do not respect consumer legislation in their sector.

Most retailers think non-food products are safe, and only a minority report product withdrawals or public safety warnings

- More than three quarters of retailers (76.4%) think non-food products are safe.
- Almost seven in ten retailers (68.9%) agree most environmental claims made about goods or services in their sector are reliable.
- Just over a third of companies (36.1%) say product withdrawals by public authorities have taken place in their sector in the last 24 months.
- Almost as many retailers (34.2%) say public warnings on product safety by public authorities have taken place in their sector in the last 24 months.

Almost four in ten retailers have received complaints from domestic consumers in the last 12 months, and most of these were about the product itself

- More than one third of retailers (37.6%) have received complaints from consumers in their own country in the past 12 months. Only 15.7% of retailers selling cross border received complaints from consumers located in other EU countries.
- Complaints are much more likely to come via in-house customer service than via any other medium (from consumers located in their country: 28.1%, from consumers located in other EU countries: 11.3%)
- Retailers are most likely to say complaints from consumers in their own country were about the product (66.9%), while more than one in twenty say complaints were about late or non-delivery (23.4%).
- For retailers selling in other EU countries, complaints received from consumers in other EU countries are most likely to have been about the product (62.4%), while 27.2% say complaints were received about late or no delivery.
- More than half of all companies (55.2%) are aware of ADR bodies, while almost one third (31.8%) participates in ADR mechanisms.

Almost four in ten retailers sell via mobile commerce or e-commerce

- More than half of all retailers (52.1%) are currently engaged in distance selling, with e-commerce (36.0%), telesales (17.0%) and mobile commerce (15.4%) the three most common methods.
  - Overall, almost four in ten retailers sell via e-commerce or mobile commerce (39.2%).

- Just over a third of retailers (34.4%) sell online to final consumers in their country, 11.3% sell online to consumers in non-EU countries and 11.2% to those in other EU countries (11.2%).
- 90.5% of companies that currently sell online plan to continue to do so over the next 12 months, while 21.4% of those that do not currently sell online are interested in doing so in the next 12 months.
- Most retailers (58%) are confident to sell online.
- The most important obstacles to the development of online sales to other EU countries are the higher risk of fraud and non-payments in cross border sales (39.7%), differences in national tax regulations (39.6%), differences in national contract law (38.1%) and differences in national consumer protection rules (37.4%).
- For retailers that do not sell online, the most important obstacles to developing online sales are the nature of their business (51.6%), higher risk of fraud and non-payment (46.6%), additional consumer protection rules (44.9%) and the extra need for IT skills (41.9%).

The majority of retailers only sell to consumers in their own country, and only sell in their own language.

- Nearly three quarters of companies (73.5%) only sell to consumers in their own country, while one quarter (25.3%) sells to consumers in at least one other EU country. In all countries, the majority of retailers only sell to consumers in their own country.
- At least half of retailers (52.6%) say 0%-10% of their total sales to final consumers are cross-border sales to consumers in other EU Member States.
- Most retailers (60.1%) only sell in their country's language. Just over one in five retailers (22.0%) sell in two languages, while less than one in ten sell in three (9.0%) or in four or more languages (6.9%).

## DETAILED RESULTS

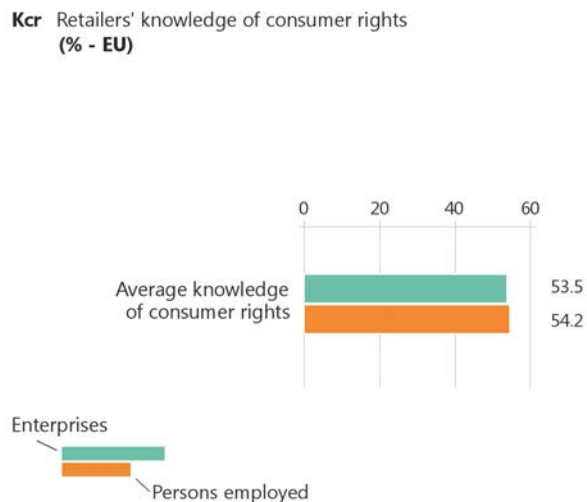
### 1. Knowledge And Trust

This first part of the report explores retailers’ knowledge about the rights of consumers in a range of areas, including the use of premium rate numbers, guarantees for faulty products, and the promotion of products to children. The discussion also considers retailers’ trust in products, as well as their trust in environmental claims made about products.

#### 1.1. Retailers’ knowledge of consumer rights

Retailers were questioned about their knowledge of consumer rights in the following areas: faulty product guarantees, promoting products for children, using premium rate phone numbers for free products, including invoices for payment in marketing material, and running discount promotions with insufficient stock. An indicator called “Retailers’ knowledge of consumers rights” was computed tallying the average number of correct answers to five questions at country level, each question covering one of these areas<sup>7</sup>. A score of 0% in this indicator means the retailer did not provide any correct answer, while a score of 100% means the retailer provided the right answer to all five questions.

Overall, the retailers surveyed were able to provide correct answers to just above half of the five questions (53.5%). This result is very similar (54.2%) when looking at the total number of people employed by the companies that responded.

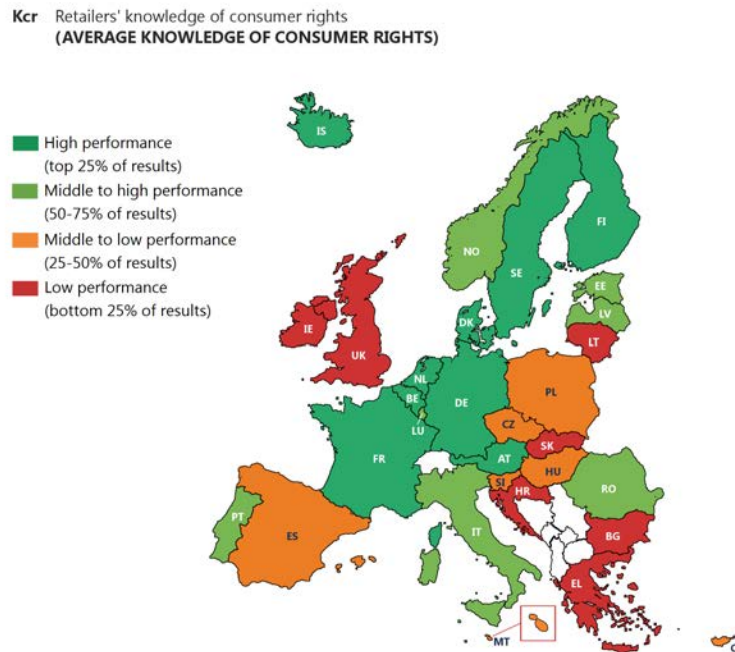


Base: Retailers in EU Member States (n=10,437).

<sup>7</sup> The five questions included in the index Kcr “Retailers’ knowledge of consumers rights” are Q5 (faulty product guarantees), Q6.1 (seeking payment in marketing material), Q6.2 (insufficient quantity of discounted products), Q6.3 (promoting products for children) and Q6.4 (use of premium rate phone numbers). There is only one correct answer amongst the response choices available in the interview. Kcr is calculated at the level of country averages (see table on page 14). Although all five questions were asked to all retailers that contributed to the survey, the country level averages for Q5 has been calculated only based on the answers of retailers that sell non-food products.

Companies in the Eurozone have a higher average knowledge of consumer rights than those outside the zone (56.4% vs. 47.5%). Retailers in EU15<sup>8</sup> countries also have a higher average knowledge compared to those in NMS13<sup>9</sup> countries (54.7% vs. 48.0%).

The map below illustrates that retailers in the northern and western regions<sup>10</sup> have a better average knowledge of consumer rights in the five areas asked about.



Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

Retailers in Germany (62.3%), Sweden (61.5%) and Belgium (59.8%) have the highest average knowledge of consumer rights, while those in Croatia (36.2%), Lithuania (39.5%) and Greece (40.1%) have the lowest.

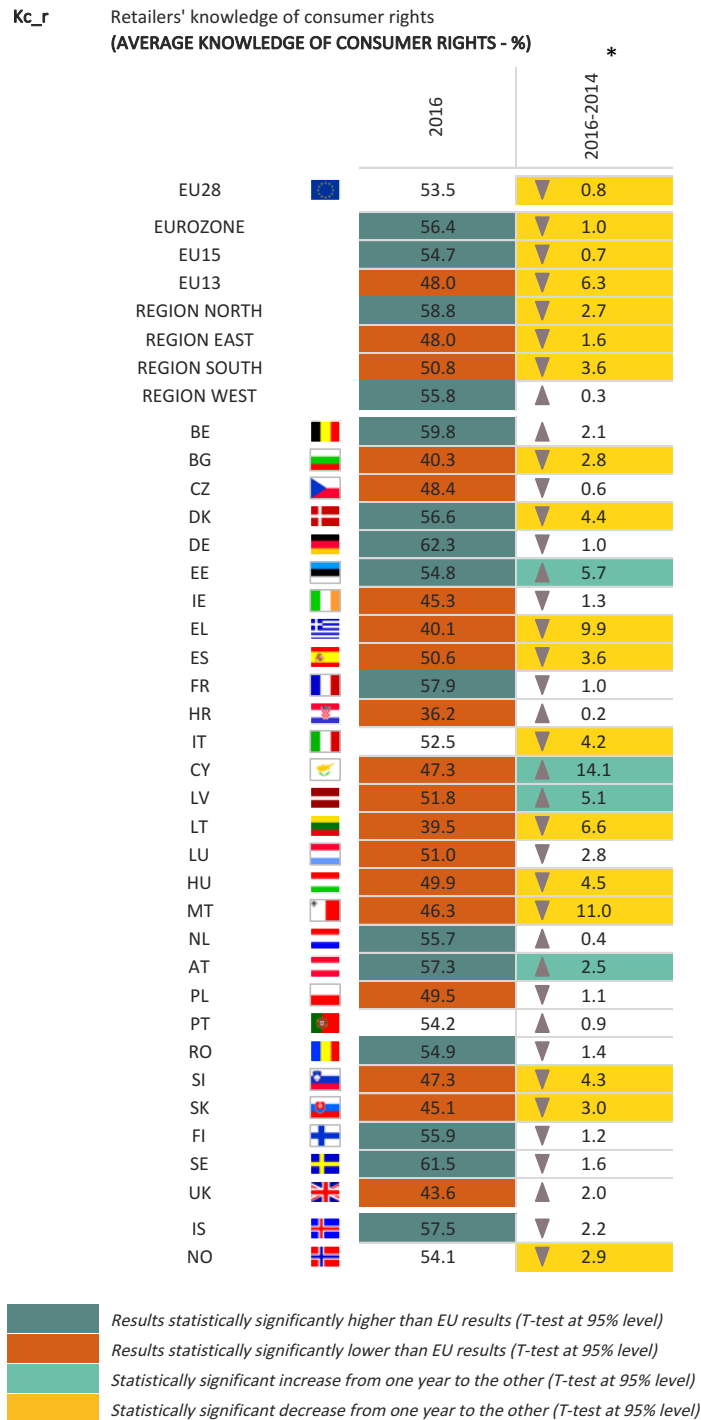
The average score on this composite indicator on retailers' knowledge of consumers rights is presented below. The index is built as a percentage of correct answers to these five questions, where 100% means that a retailers know which are the consumers' rights in all five situations<sup>11</sup>. The average EU retailers knows the correct answer to less than three of these statements (53.5%).

<sup>8</sup> The "EU15" designation refers to the 15 Member States in the European Union, prior to the accession of ten candidate countries on 1 May 2004 (BE, DK, DE, IE, EL, ES, FR, IT, LU, NL, AT, PT, FI, SE, UK).

<sup>9</sup> The "NMS13" designation refers to the 13 countries who joined the European Union in 2004, 2007 and 2013 (BG, CZ, EE, HR, CY, LV, LT, HU, MT, PL, RO, SI, SK)

<sup>10</sup> For analysis purposes, EU Members States were divided into four geographical regions: the northern region refers to Denmark, Finland and Sweden; the eastern region includes Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Croatia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovenia and Slovakia; the southern region refers to Greece, Spain, Italy, Cyprus, Malta and Portugal; and the western region is composed of Belgium, Germany, Ireland, France, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Austria and the United Kingdom.

<sup>11</sup> The country average scores in Kcr results from the average number of correct answers to Q5 (for retailers selling non-food products in the country) and to the four items of Q6 (for all retailers in each country).



Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

A review of company characteristics shows that retailers in the trade sector have a better average knowledge of consumers' rights in all of these situations, compared to those in the services sector (55.1% vs 51.9%<sup>12</sup>). Other variables recorded on companies' characteristics do not have any ability to discriminate.

\* : please refer to section "Methodological changes" (in the introduction of this report) for information on the comparability of results across the survey's waves.

Results for each of the five areas are presented in detail in the following sections.

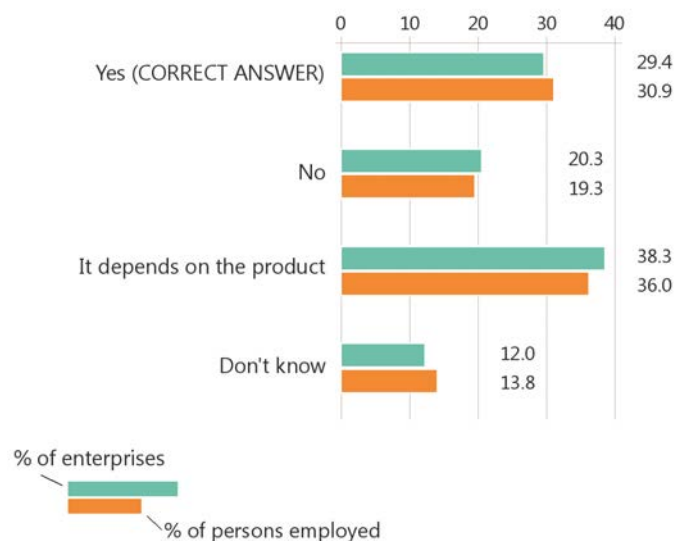
a) Knowledge on faulty product guarantees (Q5)

- Only a minority of retailers know the rights of consumers in relation to defective durable goods –

The first question relates to faulty product guarantees. Almost three in ten retailers (29.4%) know a consumer is entitled to free repair or replacement of a new durable good which breaks down without any fault on his/her part 18 months after the purchase. This represents 30.9% of the total persons employed at the companies surveyed. This is a statistically significant decrease of 3.3pp with respect to the proportion of retailers who answered correctly in 2014.

Nearly six in ten retailers (58.6%) answer incorrectly: 38.3% say whether or not this right applies depends on the product, while 20.3% say a consumer does not have the right to free repair or replacement in this scenario. Finally, just over one in ten retailers (12.0%) do not know what the consumer’s rights are in this situation<sup>13</sup>.

**Q5** Imagine that a consumer bought a durable good new 18 months ago and it breaks down without any fault on his part. He didn't buy or benefit from any extended commercial guarantee. Does he have the right to have it repaired or replaced for free?  
(% - EU)



Base: Retailers in EU Member States (n=10,437).

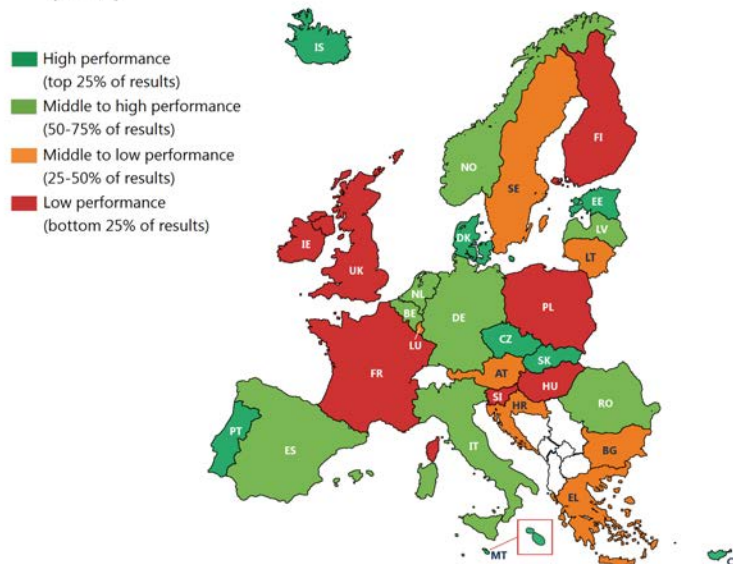
<sup>12</sup> As mentioned in the introduction, these results refer to the average of the EU28, unless explicitly mentioned. Tables detailing differences for this and all other indices are found in the annex.

<sup>13</sup> All results in this report are presented with one decimal. In the case of single answer questions, results are rounded, in order for the sum of individual answers not to exceed 100%.



Retailers in the Eurozone (31.4%) and in NEM13 countries (32.5%) are statistically significantly more likely to know the consumer's rights in this situation. Countries in the eastern and southern regions are significantly more likely to know the consumer has the right to a free repair or replacement in this situation.

**Q5** Imagine that a consumer bought a durable good new 18 months ago and it breaks down without any fault on his part. He didn't buy or benefit from any extended commercial guarantee. Does he have the right to have it repaired or replaced for free? (% - YES)



Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

There are differences between countries in this figure. Retailers in Denmark (51.7%), the Czech Republic (51.1%) and Cyprus (50.3%) are the most likely to give the correct answer. In contrast, fewer than one in five companies in Finland (12.5%), the United Kingdom (16.6%) and Hungary (17.3%) are aware of the consumer's rights in this situation.

Companies in Slovenia (30.6%), France (26.8%) and the United Kingdom (25.6%) are the most likely to think a consumer doesn't have the right to have repaired or replaced for free a durable good bought new 18 months ago (incorrect). In comparison, fewer than one in ten companies in Slovakia (7.4%), the Czech Republic (8.6%) and Denmark (9.1%) give this answer.

Around half of the companies in Finland (57.8%), Spain (50.3%) and France (50.2%) think the consumer's rights depends on the product (incorrect), compared to 10.6% of companies in Cyprus, 12.0% in Denmark and, outside the EU, 13.9% in Iceland.

Around a third of companies in Sweden (33.5%), Hungary (30.6%) and Romania (30.9%), within the EU, as well as in Norway (30.4%), claimed not to know the consumer's rights in this situation, compared to a small minority of companies in France (2.9%), Spain and Italy (both 3.1%).

Looking at the 2014-2016 trend, the proportion of retailers in the EU aware of consumers' right to have such a good repaired or replaced for free has declined (-3.3pp). There has also been an increase in the proportion of retailers that do not know (+5.9pp), and a slight increase in the proportion who think a consumer doesn't have such a right (+2.6pp). Conversely, a smaller proportion think it depends on the product (-5.2pp).

At a country level, the largest increase since the previous survey in the proportion of companies that give the correct answer can be observed amongst retailers in Cyprus (+20.6pp), while the largest decrease has been recorded amongst retailers in Luxembourg (-13.1pp).

Retailers in Luxembourg are, however much more likely to say a consumer doesn't have the right to a free repair or replacement, compared to 2014 (+16.4pp). Conversely, retailers in Estonia are now much less likely to say this (-5.8pp).

Since the last wave, the largest decrease in the proportion of companies saying it depends on the product is observed in Cyprus (-20.7pp). There were no statistically significant increases. The highest increase in the proportion of companies that do not know is observed in Hungary (+21.5pp) and the largest decrease is seen amongst those in Cyprus (-14.3pp).

Q5 Imagine that a consumer bought a durable good new 18 months ago and it breaks down without any fault on his part. He didn't buy or benefit from any extended commercial guarantee. Does he have the right to have it repaired or replaced for free? (%)

		Yes		No		It depends on the product		Don't know	
		2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014
EU28		29.4	▼ 3.3	20.3	▲ 2.6	38.3	▼ 5.2	12.0	▲ 5.9
EUROZONE		31.4	▼ 1.9	20.6	▲ 2.7	37.2	▼ 6.7	10.8	▲ 5.9
EU15		28.8	▼ 3.3	21.3	▲ 3.0	38.6	▼ 5.4	11.3	▲ 5.7
EU13		32.5	▼ 0.6	15.4	▼ 2.3	37.0	▼ 5.2	15.1	▲ 8.1
REGION NORTH		32.1	▼ 6.6	13.9	▼ 2.1	27.2	▼ 3.5	26.8	▲ 12.2
REGION EAST		32.1	▼ 3.4	15.4	▲ 0.7	37.5	▼ 4.2	15.0	▲ 6.9
REGION SOUTH		35.5	▼ 0.4	14.8	▲ 4.7	44.2	▼ 3.6	5.5	▼ 0.7
REGION WEST		26.4	▼ 3.2	24.0	▲ 1.9	37.4	▼ 6.0	12.2	▲ 7.3
BE		32.6	▲ 1.8	16.8	▲ 3.1	39.4	▼ 8.4	11.2	▲ 3.5
BG		25.7	▼ 11.4	18.5	▲ 1.0	38.0	▲ 1.3	17.8	▲ 9.1
CZ		51.1	▲ 4.9	8.6	▲ 1.4	25.5	▼ 9.5	14.8	▲ 3.2
DK		51.7	▼ 4.2	9.1	▼ 4.3	12.0	▼ 7.3	27.2	▲ 15.8
DE		32.8	▼ 3.4	24.8	▲ 0.6	26.0	▼ 9.9	16.4	▲ 12.7
EE		47.7	▲ 6.9	10.8	▼ 5.8	24.6	▼ 8.3	16.9	▲ 7.2
IE		20.6	▼ 5.7	19.8	▲ 0.8	46.7	▲ 0.8	12.9	▲ 4.1
EL		29.6	▼ 1.4	10.9	▲ 0.5	43.5	▼ 9.3	16.0	▲ 10.2
ES		30.3	▼ 5.1	16.3	▲ 3.5	50.3	▲ 0.4	3.1	▲ 1.2
FR		20.1	▼ 3.4	26.8	▲ 1.7	50.2	▲ 2.8	2.9	▼ 1.1
HR		26.4	▼ 0.4	14.8	▼ 1.9	43.7	▼ 6.1	15.1	▲ 8.4
IT		39.6	▲ 2.9	14.1	▲ 6.1	43.2	▼ 2.4	3.1	▼ 6.6
CY		50.3	▲ 20.6	19.6	▲ 14.4	10.6	▼ 20.7	19.5	▼ 14.3
LV		39.9	▲ 2.7	9.3	▼ 2.7	34.2	▼ 8.1	16.6	▲ 8.1
LT		27.0	▼ 5.3	21.2	▲ 6.0	44.6	▲ 0.5	7.2	▼ 1.2
LU		26.4	▼ 13.1	21.9	▲ 16.4	36.4	▼ 14.9	15.3	▲ 11.6
HU		17.3	▼ 6.0	15.3	▼ 3.9	36.8	▼ 11.6	30.6	▲ 21.5
MT		48.7	▼ 7.4	11.1	▼ 0.7	23.0	▲ 4.4	17.2	▲ 3.7
NL		31.5	▼ 1.1	15.5	▲ 1.2	39.8	▼ 6.8	13.2	▲ 6.7
AT		28.3	▼ 2.0	22.9	▲ 1.4	37.5	▼ 4.9	11.3	▲ 5.5
PL		24.1	=	18.3	▲ 1.3	45.8	▼ 4.0	11.8	▲ 2.7
PT		45.1	▼ 1.6	14.0	▲ 8.1	26.8	▼ 16.1	14.1	▲ 9.6
RO		39.1	▼ 8.1	15.4	▲ 0.8	34.3	▼ 0.2	11.2	▲ 7.5
SI		23.1	▲ 3.5	30.6	▲ 10.7	37.4	▼ 12.9	8.9	▼ 1.3
SK		43.9	▼ 4.7	7.4	▼ 0.2	33.8	▼ 3.0	14.9	▲ 7.9
FI		12.5	▲ 1.5	20.4	▲ 0.7	57.8	▼ 5.4	9.3	▲ 3.2
SE		29.8	▼ 5.1	13.8	▼ 2.6	22.9	▼ 1.7	33.5	▲ 9.4
UK		16.6	▼ 6.3	25.6	▲ 5.1	48.2	▼ 0.8	9.6	▲ 2.0
IS		45.2	▲ 6.1	18.5	▲ 6.4	13.9	▼ 11.3	22.4	▼ 1.2
NO		39.0	▼ 12.1	9.2	▲ 0.3	21.4	▼ 9.2	30.4	▲ 21.0

Results statistically significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Results statistically significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Statistically significant increase from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)  
 Statistically significant decrease from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988)

The analysis of company characteristics shows companies that give the correct answer are more likely to:

- o be in the wholesale and retail trade - repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles sector (NACE G) (33.8%) and less likely to be in the sectors of accommodation and food services (NACE I), financial and insurance services (NACE K) and administrative and support services (NACE N);
- o have been established between 1990 and 1999 (31.7%);
- o be selling non-food products (33.3%);

- o be retailers where the respondent is a commercial or sales manager (35.1%).

Retailers that are not aware of the consumer's rights in this scenario are most likely to:

- o belong to sector N - administrative and support service activities (66.7%) or sector S - other services activities (65.6%);
- o have been established after 2000 (61.8%);
- o be selling products (61.7%) rather than services (57.3%).

#### b) Knowledge of authorized or prohibited commercial practices (Q6)

The remaining four questions relate to retailers' knowledge about authorised or prohibited commercial practices.

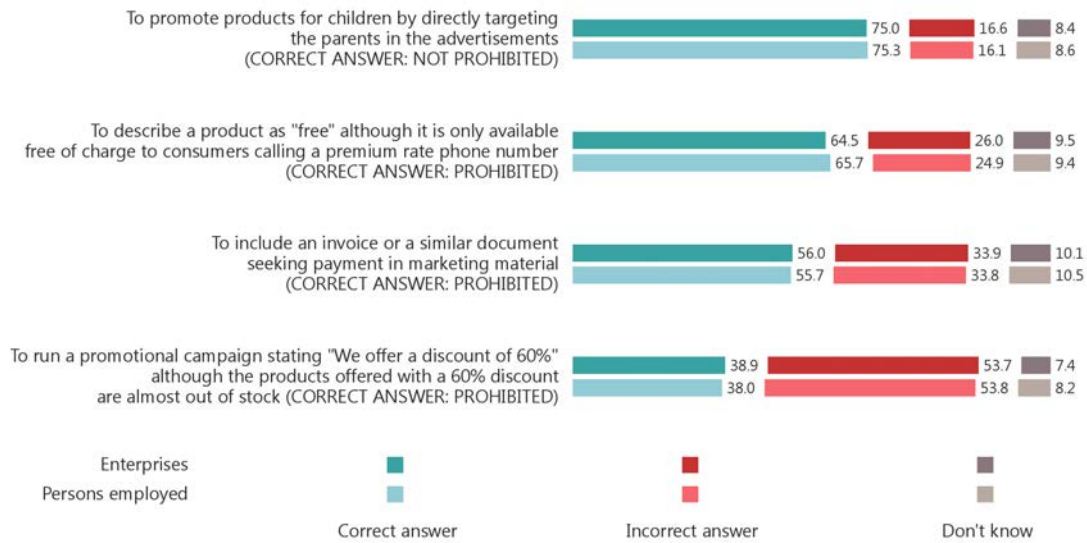
- Only 13.7% of retailers in the EU provided correct responses to all 4 of the commercial practices asked about -

Considering these four practices, retailers are most likely to know it is not prohibited to promote products for children by directly targeting the parents in the advertisements (75.0%). Almost two thirds (64.5%) know it is prohibited to describe a product as "free" although it is only available free of charge to consumers calling a premium rate phone number, while more than half know it is prohibited to include an invoice or a similar document seeking payment in marketing material (56.0%). However, only a minority of retailers are aware that it is prohibited to run a promotional campaign stating "we offer a discount of 60%" although the products offered with a 60% discount are almost out of stock (38.9%).

For each of these four practices, around one in ten retailers say they do not know whether the practice is prohibited or not.

The results based on the total number of persons employed follow the same pattern, with only minor differences (1-2 percentage points) in proportions.

**Q6** I will read 4 statements concerning legislation in (OUR COUNTRY) related to commercial practices. Some of them are prohibited and some are not. For each statement, please tell me if you think it is prohibited or not?  
(% - EU)



Base: Retailers in EU Member States (n=10,437).

Retailers in the northern region are significantly more likely to know promoting products for children by directly targeting the parents in the advertisements is not prohibited.

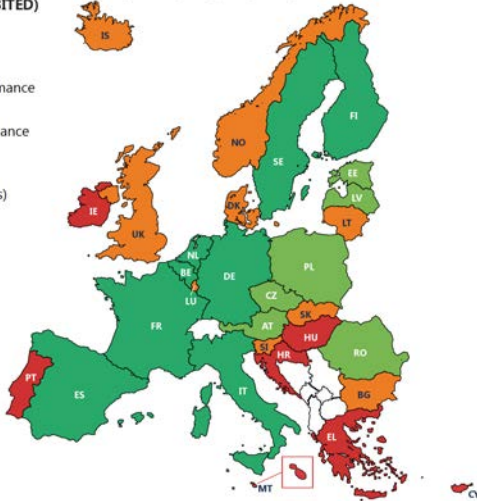
Companies in EU15 countries, as well as those in the northern and western regions are significantly more likely to know that it is prohibited to describe a product as "free" although it requires calling a premium rate phone number.

Companies in EU15 countries and in the northern and western regions are significantly more likely to know it is prohibited to include an invoice or a similar document seeking payment in marketing material.

Companies in the western region are significantly more likely to know it is prohibited to run a promotional campaign offering a discount when the discounted product is almost out of stock.

**Q6.3** I will read 4 statements concerning legislation in (OUR COUNTRY) related to commercial practices. Some of them are prohibited and some are not. For each statement, please tell me if you think it is prohibited or not?  
**To promote products for children by directly targeting the parents in the advertisements**  
 (% - NOT PROHIBITED)

- High performance (top 25% of results)
- Middle to high performance (50-75% of results)
- Middle to low performance (25-50% of results)
- Low performance (bottom 25% of results)



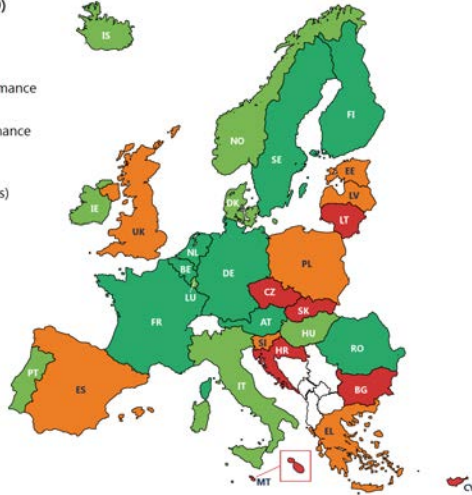
**Q6.4** I will read 4 statements concerning legislation in (OUR COUNTRY) related to commercial practices. Some of them are prohibited and some are not. For each statement, please tell me if you think it is prohibited or not?  
**To describe a product as "free" although it is only available free of charge to consumers calling a premium rate phone number**  
 (% - PROHIBITED)

- High performance (top 25% of results)
- Middle to high performance (50-75% of results)
- Middle to low performance (25-50% of results)
- Low performance (bottom 25% of results)



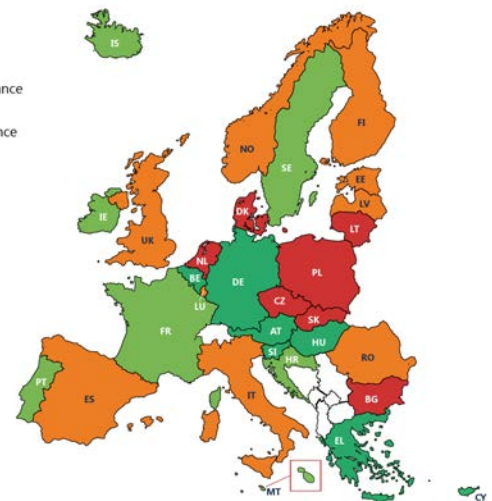
**Q6.1** I will read 4 statements concerning legislation in (OUR COUNTRY) related to commercial practices. Some of them are prohibited and some are not. For each statement, please tell me if you think it is prohibited or not?  
**To include an invoice or a similar document seeking payment in marketing material**  
 (% - PROHIBITED)

- High performance (top 25% of results)
- Middle to high performance (50-75% of results)
- Middle to low performance (25-50% of results)
- Low performance (bottom 25% of results)



**Q6.2** I will read 4 statements concerning legislation in (OUR COUNTRY) related to commercial practices. Some of them are prohibited and some are not. For each statement, please tell me if you think it is prohibited or not?  
**To run a promotional campaign stating "We offer a discount of 60%" although the products offered with a 60% discount are almost out of stock**  
 (% - PROHIBITED)

- High performance (top 25% of results)
- Middle to high performance (50-75% of results)
- Middle to low performance (25-50% of results)
- Low performance (bottom 25% of results)

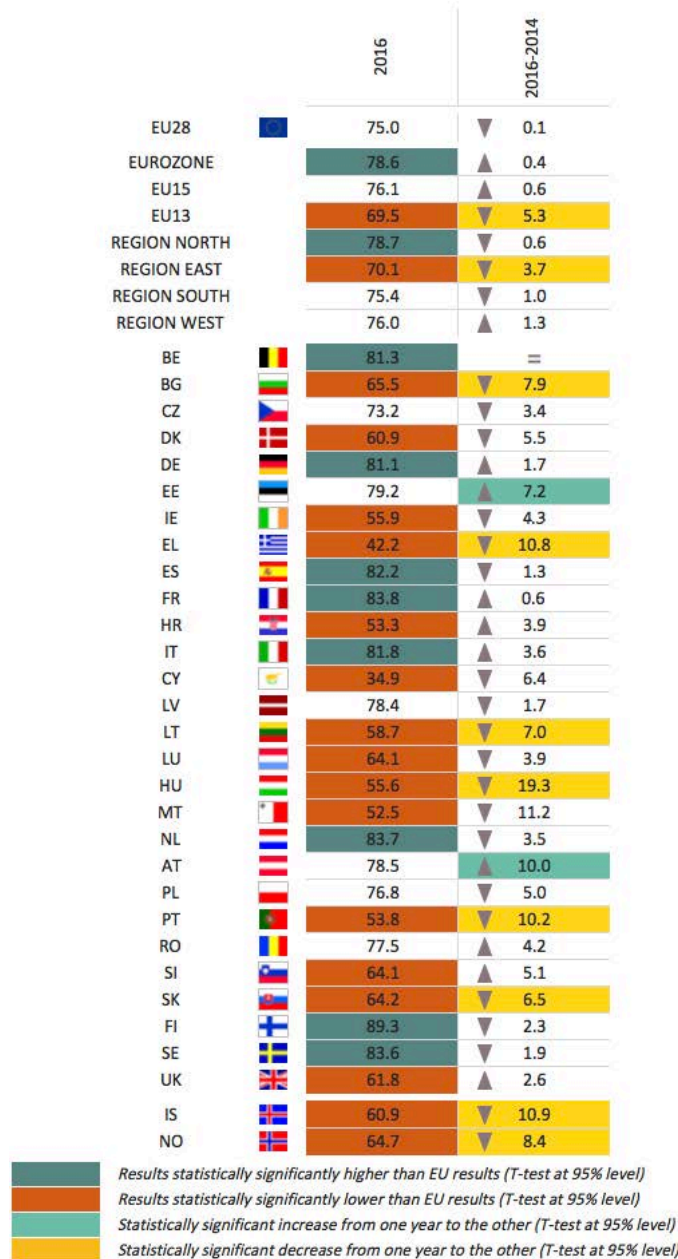


Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

More than eight in ten retailers in Finland (89.3%), France (83.8%), and the Netherlands (83.7%) know it is not prohibited to promote products for children by directly targeting the parents in the advertisements. The lowest proportions of retailers that are aware this practice is not prohibited are observed in Cyprus (34.9%), Greece (42.2%) and Malta (52.5%).

Since the last Retailers' survey in 2014, there has been a very slight decrease at EU28 level (-0.1pp), which is however not statistically significant. At country level, the largest increase in the proportion of companies that know that it is not prohibited to promote products for children by targeting the parents is found in Austria (+10.0pp), while the highest decrease is recorded in Hungary (-19.3pp).

Q6.3 I will read 4 statements concerning legislation in (OUR COUNTRY) related to commercial practices. Some of them are prohibited and some are not. For each statement, please tell me if you think it is prohibited or not?  
 To promote products for children by directly targeting the parents in the advertisements (% - NOT PROHIBITED)



Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

At least three quarters of retailers in France (78.0%) and Sweden (77.1%), as well as in Iceland (81.5%), if considering non-EU countries, know it is prohibited to describe a product as "free" although it is only available free of charge to consumers calling a premium rate phone number. The lowest proportions are observed amongst those in Greece (41.5%), Malta (42.6%), and Croatia (44.0%), although these still represent more than four in ten retailers.

Since 2014, the results at EU28 level have slightly decreased (-1pp), although not statistically significantly. At country level, the largest increase in the proportion of companies that know this is prohibited has been recorded in Cyprus (+19.8pp), where the 2012-2014 trend (-27pp) was notably reversed. Meanwhile, the largest decrease is observed amongst retailers in Greece (-11.2pp).

**Q6.4** I will read 4 statements concerning legislation in (OUR COUNTRY) related to commercial practices. Some of them are prohibited and some are not. For each statement, please tell me if you think it is prohibited or not?  
To describe a product as "free" although it is only available free of charge to consumers calling a premium rate phone number  
(% - NOT PROHIBITED)

	2016	2016-2014	2014-2012	2012-2011	2011-2010	2010-2009	2016-2009
EU28	64.5	▼ 1.0	▼ 2.1	▲ 5.2	▲ 0.5	▲ 0.8	▲ 3.4
EUROZONE	67.5	▼ 2.1	▼ 0.5	▲ 6.3	▲ 0.8	▼ 0.9	▲ 3.6
EU15	66.4	▼ 0.9	▼ 1.7	▲ 5.8	▲ 0.7	▼ 0.6	▲ 3.3
EU13	55.6	▼ 9.9	▲ 4.9	▲ 2.1	▼ 0.3	▲ 8.0	▲ 4.8
REGION NORTH	73.2	▼ 4.0	▼ 2.5	▼ 0.1	▲ 4.4	▼ 1.8	▼ 4.0
REGION EAST	55.8	▼ 1.5	▼ 3.3	▲ 2.1	▼ 0.1	▲ 7.6	▲ 4.8
REGION SOUTH	57.5	▼ 3.5	▼ 2.2	▲ 6.9	▼ 0.5	▼ 4.5	▼ 3.8
REGION WEST	68.8	▼ 0.2	▼ 1.6	▲ 5.8	▲ 0.6	▲ 1.5	▲ 6.1
BE	72.1	▲ 5.8	▲ 0.1	▲ 0.9	▲ 2.5	▲ 9.2	▲ 18.5
BG	51.6	▼ 0.4	▼ 7.8	▲ 3.1	▲ 2.7	▲ 29.1	▲ 26.7
CZ	46.9	▼ 3.4	▲ 12.5	▼ 7.9	▼ 6.8	▲ 9.8	▲ 4.2
DK	70.4	▼ 7.4	▲ 1.5	▼ 4.4	▲ 9.1	▼ 11.3	▼ 12.5
DE	74.1	▼ 2.9	▼ 2.7	▲ 6.8	▼ 0.2	▲ 2.2	▲ 3.2
EE	62.5	▲ 8.4	▼ 4.0	▲ 6.5	▼ 17.5	▲ 15.6	▲ 9.0
IE	58.1	▼ 2.1	▲ 3.1	▼ 4.8	▲ 10.6	▼ 10.6	▼ 3.8
EL	41.5	▼ 11.2	▲ 0.3	▲ 3.3	▼ 10.8	▲ 7.5	▼ 10.9
ES	55.1	▼ 6.2	▼ 5.2	▲ 4.8	▲ 8.2	▼ 6.3	▼ 4.7
FR	78.0	▼ 1.7	▲ 10.1	▲ 7.9	▲ 1.2	▼ 0.1	▲ 15.0
HR	44.0	▲ 2.1	▼ 4.3	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A
IT	61.0	▼ 3.6	▲ 2.8	▲ 10.4	▼ 9.1	▼ 8.0	▼ 7.5
CY	48.8	▲ 19.8	▼ 27.0	▲ 6.3	▼ 11.4	▲ 26.2	▲ 13.9
LV	60.0	▲ 6.8	▼ 9.2	▲ 5.9	▲ 2.2	▲ 2.5	▲ 8.2
LT	46.6	▼ 9.4	▼ 12.5	▲ 3.9	▲ 6.6	▲ 11.4	=
LU	69.0	▲ 4.9	▼ 9.5	▲ 12.5	▼ 19.7	▲ 12.6	▲ 0.8
HU	67.6	▲ 1.4	▼ 8.8	▼ 0.4	▲ 6.9	▼ 7.6	▼ 8.5
MT	42.6	▼ 10.4	▼ 16.5	▼ 1.8	▼ 16.1	▲ 30.7	▼ 14.1
NL	67.0	▼ 2.8	▼ 0.9	▲ 3.3	▲ 14.8	▲ 0.1	▲ 14.5
AT	64.7	▼ 6.0	▼ 2.0	▲ 6.1	▲ 0.3	▲ 1.2	▼ 0.4
PL	61.2	▼ 3.5	▼ 2.5	▲ 7.5	▲ 3.4	=	▲ 4.9
PT	69.5	▲ 7.3	▼ 10.8	▲ 3.6	▲ 9.1	▲ 2.5	▲ 11.7
RO	55.8	▼ 3.1	▼ 1.9	▲ 0.6	▼ 1.2	▲ 10.5	▲ 4.9
SI	60.7	▼ 4.5	▼ 5.5	▲ 5.3	▲ 3.3	▲ 8.5	▲ 0.5
SK	50.1	▼ 0.5	▲ 1.3	▲ 3.4	▼ 11.8	▲ 12.8	▲ 5.2
FI	66.9	▼ 3.8	▼ 10.3	▲ 6.9	▼ 7.6	▲ 4.0	▼ 10.8
SE	77.1	▼ 1.7	▼ 3.8	▲ 2.0	▲ 5.0	▲ 4.2	▲ 5.7
UK	56.4	▲ 8.7	▼ 10.1	▲ 5.0	▼ 5.3	▲ 2.1	▲ 0.4
IS	81.5	▲ 2.6	▼ 8.4	▲ 5.7	▲ 3.6	▲ 1.3	▲ 4.8
NO	67.9	▼ 5.6	▼ 7.6	▲ 6.2	▲ 4.4	▼ 9.4	▼ 12.0

Results statistically significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
Results statistically significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
Statistically significant increase from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)  
Statistically significant decrease from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

Around seven in ten retailers in Finland (72.4%), the Netherlands (69.2%), and Austria (68.1%) know it is prohibited to include an invoice or a similar document seeking payment in marketing material. At the other end of the scale, 24.0% in Croatia, 28.3% in Bulgaria and 30.1% in Slovakia also know the correct answer.



There is a slight increase in the proportion of retailers that know this in the EU (+1.7pp) compared to 2014, following on the positive change since 2009.

At a country level, the largest increase since 2014 in this figure can be observed amongst retailers in Latvia (+12.8pp), while the largest decrease is found amongst those in Malta (-26.4pp). In several countries the trend has reversed when compared to 2012-2014, notably in Cyprus (+11.3 pp vs. -10.8pp) and Greece (-13.0pp vs. +12.1pp).

**Q6.1** I will read 4 statements concerning legislation in (OUR COUNTRY) related to commercial practices. Some of them are prohibited and some are not. For each statement, please tell me if you think it is prohibited or not?  
To include an invoice or a similar document seeking payment in marketing material  
(% - PROHIBITED)

	2016	2016-2014	2014-2012	2012-2011	2011-2010	2010-2009	2016-2009
EU28	56.0	▲ 1.7	▲ 1.9	▲ 1.8	▼ 1.1	▲ 4.0	▲ 8.3
EUROZONE	59.2	▲ 1.4	▲ 3.0	▲ 1.7	▼ 1.1	▲ 4.1	▲ 9.1
EU15	58.4	▲ 1.8	▲ 1.4	▲ 2.0	▼ 0.4	▲ 3.1	▲ 7.9
EU13	45.1	▼ 9.1	▲ 15.2	▲ 1.0	▼ 4.3	▲ 8.3	▲ 11.1
REGION NORTH	66.0	▼ 2.6	▼ 6.3	▲ 0.3	▲ 1.8	▲ 4.7	▼ 2.1
REGION EAST	45.4	▲ 0.9	▲ 5.7	▲ 0.9	▼ 4.3	▲ 8.3	▲ 11.5
REGION SOUTH	48.9	▼ 2.0	▲ 11.2	▼ 0.9	=	▼ 5.6	▲ 2.7
REGION WEST	60.8	▲ 3.0	▼ 2.2	▲ 3.5	▼ 1.3	▲ 6.9	▲ 9.9
BE	62.3	▲ 4.5	▼ 6.5	▲ 2.8	▲ 11.6	▼ 7.0	▲ 5.4
BG	28.3	▲ 4.7	▲ 3.5	▼ 1.6	▼ 1.4	▲ 16.0	▲ 21.2
CZ	36.0	▲ 0.1	▼ 5.8	▼ 2.1	▼ 9.1	▲ 9.7	▼ 7.2
DK	60.6	▼ 4.9	▼ 10.8	▲ 5.3	▲ 5.9	▼ 4.8	▼ 9.3
DE	64.5	▲ 1.4	▼ 3.4	▲ 9.2	▼ 11.2	▼ 1.8	▼ 5.8
EE	42.6	▲ 8.4	▲ 3.6	▼ 0.3	▼ 7.2	▼ 7.9	▼ 3.4
IE	52.5	▲ 5.9	▼ 1.4	▼ 5.4	▲ 1.1	▲ 9.1	▲ 9.3
EL	39.1	▼ 13.0	▲ 12.1	▲ 6.7	▼ 12.3	▼ 15.0	▼ 21.5
ES	45.8	▼ 1.4	▲ 14.1	=	▲ 3.3	▼ 6.8	▲ 9.2
FR	67.9	▼ 1.0	▲ 8.9	▼ 6.7	▲ 6.6	▲ 40.6	▲ 48.4
HR	24.0	▼ 2.8	▲ 6.7	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A
IT	53.0	▼ 2.0	▲ 11.7	▼ 4.6	▼ 5.5	▲ 2.4	▲ 2.0
CY	31.3	▲ 11.3	▼ 10.8	▲ 2.5	▼ 15.3	▼ 3.2	▼ 15.5
LV	41.1	▲ 12.8	▼ 0.8	▲ 1.3	▲ 0.6	▲ 19.4	▲ 33.3
LT	31.7	▼ 6.3	▲ 14.8	▲ 1.4	▲ 4.5	▼ 4.2	▲ 10.2
LU	56.5	▼ 1.7	▼ 0.1	▼ 5.2	▼ 4.2	▲ 36.1	▲ 24.9
HU	61.2	▼ 0.2	▼ 6.4	▲ 1.0	▲ 8.5	▲ 1.6	▲ 4.5
MT	32.5	▼ 26.4	▼ 1.0	▲ 0.7	▼ 14.5	▲ 42.4	▲ 1.2
NL	69.2	▲ 8.6	▼ 9.7	▲ 4.9	▲ 16.3	▼ 1.1	▲ 19.0
AT	68.1	▲ 10.2	▼ 3.7	▲ 1.0	▼ 5.8	▼ 1.9	▼ 0.2
PL	50.5	▼ 0.1	▲ 8.9	▲ 1.1	▼ 8.3	▲ 9.0	▲ 10.6
PT	58.5	▲ 1.4	▼ 0.4	▲ 4.5	▲ 13.2	▼ 25.4	▲ 6.7
RO	64.1	▲ 2.1	▲ 23.2	▲ 2.9	▼ 5.1	▲ 9.3	▲ 32.4
SI	46.3	▼ 5.7	▲ 3.5	▲ 3.8	▲ 6.7	▼ 24.7	▼ 16.4
SK	30.1	▼ 4.1	▼ 3.8	▲ 4.0	▼ 12.5	▲ 29.7	▲ 13.3
FI	72.4	▲ 0.7	▼ 2.3	▼ 4.4	▲ 1.1	▲ 5.3	▲ 0.4
SE	66.3	▼ 3.6	▼ 2.3	▼ 3.7	▼ 0.7	▲ 12.9	▲ 2.6
UK	47.6	▲ 6.9	▼ 6.8	▲ 3.6	▼ 1.6	▼ 2.4	▼ 0.3
IS	54.1	▼ 1.3	▼ 10.7	▲ 4.0	▲ 2.7	▲ 28.7	▲ 15.4
NO	53.4	▲ 4.5	▼ 14.8	▲ 2.9	▲ 4.5	▼ 3.7	▼ 6.6

Results statistically significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
Results statistically significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
Statistically significant increase from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)  
Statistically significant decrease from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

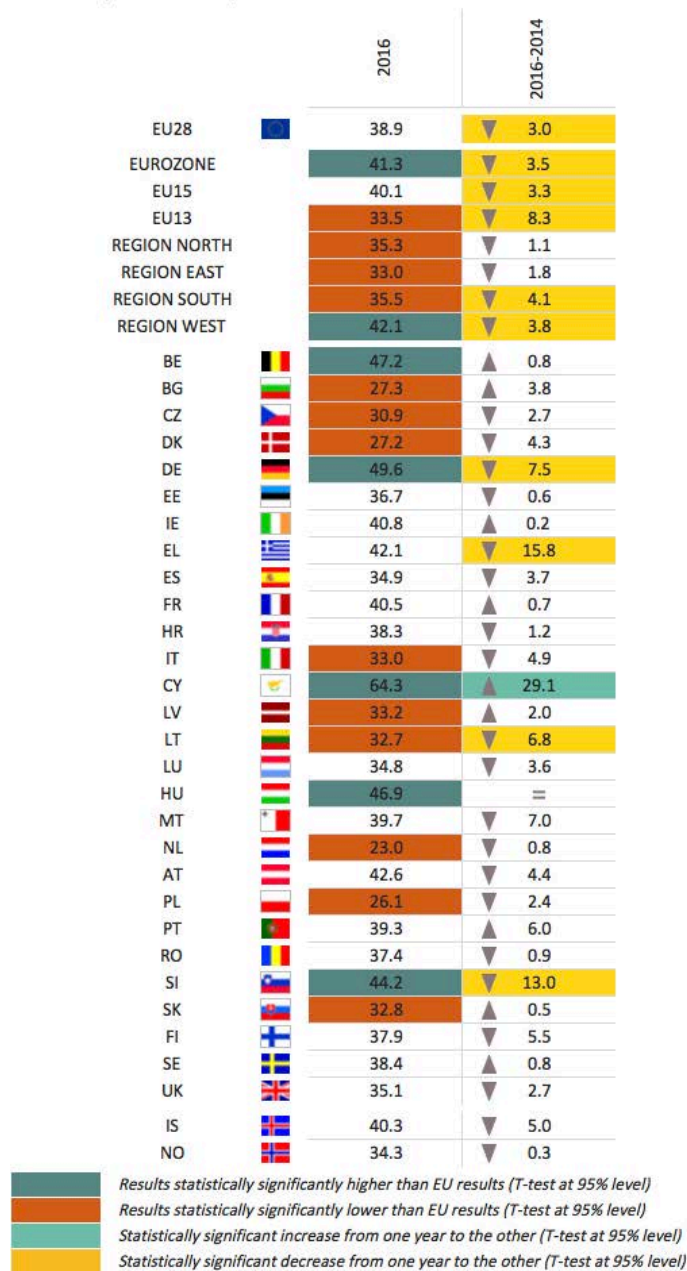
Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

Retailers in Cyprus (64.3%), Germany (49.6%) and Belgium (47.2%) are the most likely to know it is prohibited to run a promotional campaign stating "we offer a discount of 60%" although the products offered with a 60% discount are

almost out of stock. At the opposite end of the scale, retailers in the Netherlands (23.0%), Poland (26.1%) and Denmark (27.2%) are the least likely to know it.

At an EU level, there has been a slight drop in the proportion that know this practice is prohibited (-3.0pp). At a country level, the largest increase in the proportion of companies that know this practice is prohibited is observed amongst retailers in Cyprus (+29.1pp) and the largest decrease is seen amongst those in Greece (-15.8pp).

**Q6.2** I will read 4 statements concerning legislation in (OUR COUNTRY) related to commercial practices. Some of them are prohibited and some are not. For each statement, please tell me if you think it is prohibited or not?  
 To run a promotional campaign stating "We offer a discount of 60%" although the products offered with a 60% discount are almost out of stock  
 (% - PROHIBITED)



Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

The analysis of company characteristics highlights a range of differences. Retailers that know it is not prohibited to promote products for children by targeting the parents are more likely to:

- o belong to sector K - financial and insurance activities (81.9%), sector S - other service activities (80.7%), or sector L - real estate activities (79.2%), and less likely to belong to sector D – electricity and gas retail services (56.3%) and sector I – accommodation and food services (71.5%);
- o be the oldest companies (established before 1990): 77.2%;
- o be engaged in online sales: 76.6%.
- o be companies where the respondent is a commercial or sales manager (79.0%).

Companies that know it is prohibited to include a document seeking payment in marketing material are more likely to:

- o belong to sector K (66.5%) or sector L - real estate activities (62.5%);
- o be the oldest companies (established before 1990): 59.4%;
- o be engaged in distance sales (57.7%) or online sales (57.8%);

Retailers that know it is prohibited to run a promotional campaign offering discounts on items that are almost out of stock are more likely to:

- o be in the trade sector (NACE G): 42.5%, and less likely to be in the services sector, particularly in sectors N (26.9%), J (32.7%), H (35.4%) and I (36.4%);

Companies that know it is prohibited to describe a product as "free" although it requires calling a premium rate phone number are more likely to:

- o belong to the trade sector (66.4%) or to services like sector K (72.4%), sector L (70.2%) sector G (66.4%), but less likely to belong to sector N (58.2%) or sector I (61.2%);
- o be the oldest companies: 66.5%;

It is worth noting that marketing managers are less likely to correctly answer whether or not each of these practices is prohibited. Compared to general managers, they are less likely to know it is prohibited to run a promotional campaign offering discounts on items that are almost out of stock (27.6% vs. 44%), to describe a product as "free" although it requires calling a premium rate phone number (53.8% vs. 69.0%) or to include a document seeking payment in marketing material (51.9% vs. 58.7%); and also less likely to know it is not prohibited to promote products for children by targeting the parents (70.4% vs. 76.8%).

c) Knowledge of cooling off period: Q4b

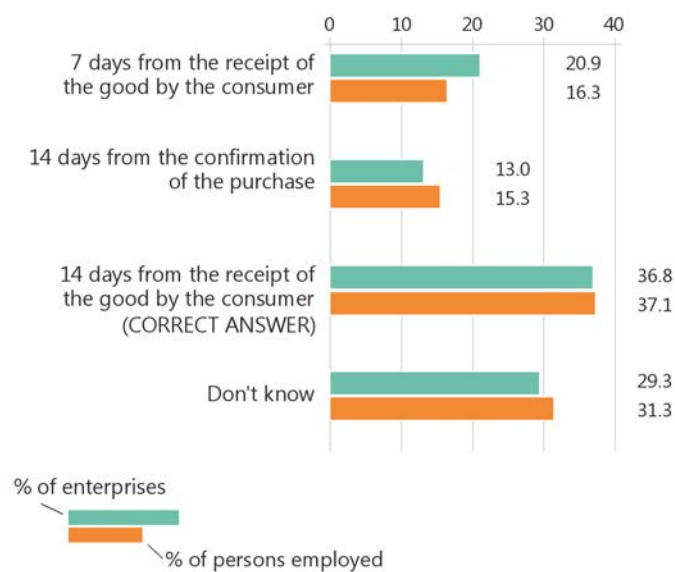
For the first time in this survey, a new question was added to probe retailers' knowledge of the "cooling off period": the time consumers have to change their mind and cancel an order made online, by mail or by phone.

- Less than four in ten retailers know consumers have 14 days to change their mind after receipt of the good -

More than a third of all retailers (36.8%) correctly answered that a consumer who bought a good online, by mail or by phone has 14 days from the receipt of the good by the consumer to change his/her mind and cancel the order. This represents 37.1% of the total persons employed by retailers in the survey.

Just over one in five companies (20.9%), representing 16.1% of persons employed by retailers, incorrectly thinks the consumer can change his/her mind and cancel the order for 7 days from the receipt of the item. Less than one in six retailers (13.0%) think the consumer can cancel the order for 14 days from the confirmation of the purchase, which is also incorrect. Almost three in ten companies (29.3%) do not know the consumer's rights in this situation.

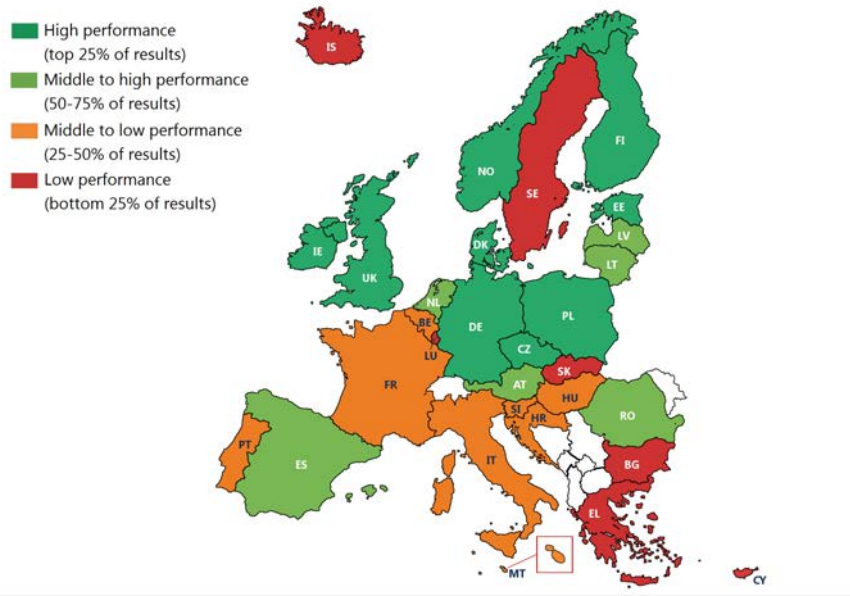
**Q4b** You have sold a good online, by mail or by phone. Legally, how many days can the consumer still change his/her mind and cancel the order?  
(% - EU)



Base: Retailers in EU Member States (n=10,437).  
This question refers to goods and not to services. Retailers who do not engage in online or distance sales were asked to imagine the situation to answer this question.

Companies in the eurozone (34.7%) and those in the northern (29.4%) and the southern (30.5%) regions of Europe are significantly less likely to know the consumer’s rights in this situation. Additionally, countries in the eastern and western regions are significantly more likely to know this right.

**Q4b** You have sold a good online, by mail or by phone. Legally, how many days can the consumer still change his/her mind and cancel the order?  
 (% - 14 DAYS FROM THE RECEIPT OF THE GOOD BY THE CONSUMER)



Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).  
 This question refers to goods and not to services. Retailers who do not engage in online or distance sales were asked to imagine the situation to answer this question.

Retailers in Estonia (56.1%), Poland (54.4%) and the Czech Republic (47.7%) are the most likely to know the consumer can cancel the order for 14 days from the receipt of the good, while for all other countries less than half of retailers provided the right answer. At the other end of the scale, no more than one in four retailers in Sweden (16.7%), Greece (20.8%) and Luxembourg (20.9%) know the correct answer.

**Q4b** You have sold a good online, by mail or by phone. Legally, how many days can the consumer still change his/her mind and cancel the order?  
(%)

		7 days from the receipt of the good by the consumer	14 days from the confirmation of the purchase	14 days from the receipt of the good by the consumer (CORRECT ANSWER)	Don't know
EU28		20.9	13.0	36.8	29.3
EUROZONE		22.6	14.4	34.7	28.3
EU15		20.9	14.3	36.4	28.4
EU13		20.4	7.4	38.6	33.6
REGION NORTH		12.2	12.6	29.4	45.8
REGION EAST		20.2	7.4	38.9	33.5
REGION SOUTH		34.1	9.0	30.5	26.4
REGION WEST		17.2	16.1	38.8	27.9
BE		29.1	14.4	26.6	29.9
BG		33.3	6.6	24.6	35.5
CZ		10.3	8.6	47.7	33.4
DK		4.3	12.3	42.2	41.2
DE		7.7	17.1	40.1	35.1
EE		8.2	5.4	56.1	30.3
IE		15.8	13.9	40.3	30.0
EL		28.6	8.3	20.8	42.3
ES		30.3	9.7	34.0	26.0
FR		45.0	20.3	25.5	9.2
HR		32.4	9.0	25.2	33.4
IT		43.0	8.8	28.9	19.3
CY		38.0	9.9	22.9	29.2
LV		11.8	7.5	37.4	43.3
LT		25.5	14.5	37.7	22.3
LU		28.4	11.6	20.9	39.1
HU		16.8	6.3	25.5	51.4
MT		17.1	3.2	28.5	51.2
NL		18.5	15.7	34.9	30.9
AT		22.6	16.4	39.5	21.5
PL		14.9	7.2	54.4	23.5
PT		21.8	7.5	30.3	40.4
RO		24.8	5.4	33.2	36.6
SI		38.7	6.7	29.7	24.9
SK		25.8	7.1	24.8	42.3
FI		18.2	17.2	45.1	19.5
SE		13.9	10.9	16.7	58.5
UK		16.1	12.7	46.6	24.6
IS		17.4	8.0	24.8	49.8
NO		5.7	8.6	41.7	44.0

Results statistically significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Results statistically significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)

Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

This question refers to goods and not to services. Retailers who do not engage in online or distance sales were asked to imagine the situation to answer this question.

The analysis of company characteristics shows retailers that know consumers have 14 days from receipt of the good to cancel their order are more likely to:

- o belong to sector G - trade (44.0%) and less likely to belong to the services sectors, particularly to sector H (23.8%), sector I (32.0%) or sector N (21.6%);
- o be companies established between 1990 and 1999: 39.1%;
- o be not engaged in distance sales (38.5%);
- o be planning on continuing selling online in the next 12 months: 43.6%;
- o sell non-food products (45.3%), or sell products (40.8%) rather than services.

## 1.2. Trust of retailers

This section explores retailers' trust in the safety of non-food products, as well as their perceptions of environmental claims made about goods or services in their sector.

### a) Trust in non-food product safety (Q4a)

Retailers that sell non-food products were asked to what extent they believe these products are safe or unsafe.

- Most retailers think non-food products are generally safe -

Around one quarter think essentially all non-food products are safe (24.4%) and just over half think a small number of these products are unsafe (52.0%).

Almost one in five retailers (17.4%) think a significant number of non-food products are unsafe, while just over one in twenty (6.2%) say they do not know.

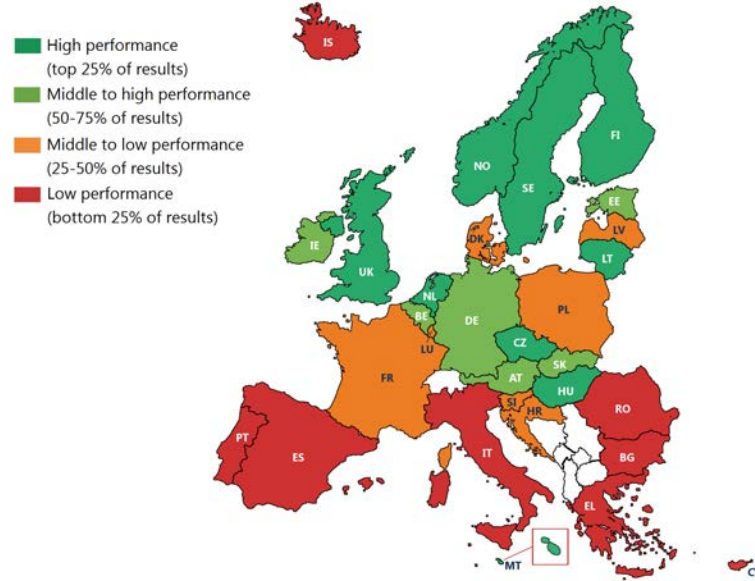


Base: Retailers in the EU who sell non-food products (n=4,459).

Retailers outside the eurozone are significantly more likely to say essentially all non-food products are safe (33.7%), while those in NMS13 countries are significantly more likely to say a significant number of non-food products are unsafe (23.3%).

Retailers in the northern region are significantly more likely to think non-food products are safe, while those in the eastern and southern regions are significantly less likely to think this.

**Q4a** "Product safety" relates to consumer products only and does not include industrial products. Unsafe products are those which fail to comply with safety standards. Here we are not talking for example about rifles or knives. Thinking about all non-food products currently available in your market in (OUR COUNTRY), do you think that ...?  
 (% - TOTAL 'NON-FOOD PRODUCTS ARE SAFE')



Base: Retailers in the survey who sell non-food products (n=4,745).

In all countries, at least half of all retailers think non-food products are generally safe, with those in in Finland (92.0%), Malta (89.9%) and Sweden (87.9%) the most likely to think that generally non-food products are safe. At the opposite end of the scale, retailers in Romania (51.7%), Bulgaria (58.2%) and Cyprus (59.5%) are the least likely to say this, but even so this represents more than half of all retailers.

Across the EU, there has been a small increase in the proportion of companies that say that generally non-food products are safe (+1.8pp). This increase represents a reversal since the previous wave when there was a decline of 2.1pp. In fact, the increase observed this wave is the first one since 2010.

At a country level, the largest increase since 2014 in the proportion of companies that think that generally non-food products are safe is observed in the Czech Republic (+9.6pp). This is a reversal of the trend in the past wave, when there was a 9.9pp decrease.



Q4a "Product safety" relates to consumer products only and does not include industrial products. Unsafe products are those which fail to comply with safety standards. Here we are not talking for example about rifles or knives. Thinking about all non-food products currently available in your market in (OUR COUNTRY), do you think that ...?  
 (% - TOTAL 'NON-FOOD PRODUCTS ARE SAFE')

	2016	2016-2014	2014-2012	2012-2011	2011-2010	2016-2010
EU28	76.4	▲ 1.8	▼ 2.1	▼ 2.6	▼ 0.2	▼ 3.1
EUROZONE	75.8	▲ 2.1	▼ 1.4	▼ 2.5	=	▼ 1.8
EU15	77.4	▲ 1.6	▼ 2.0	▼ 2.3	▲ 0.1	▼ 2.6
EU13	71.9	▼ 3.6	▲ 3.0	▲ 4.0	▲ 1.2	▼ 5.8
REGION NORTH	84.9	▲ 4.4	▼ 7.5	▼ 3.2	▲ 4.3	▼ 2.0
REGION EAST	71.9	▲ 2.9	▼ 3.7	▼ 3.8	▼ 1.1	▼ 5.7
REGION SOUTH	70.0	▲ 2.9	▼ 3.5	▼ 4.0	▼ 4.7	▼ 9.3
REGION WEST	78.8	▲ 0.3	▼ 0.5	▼ 2.1	▲ 1.4	▼ 0.9
BE	76.1	▼ 2.7	▲ 4.9	▼ 10.2	▲ 3.1	▼ 4.9
BG	58.2	▼ 5.2	▲ 0.6	▼ 13.1	▲ 10.1	▼ 7.6
CZ	86.9	▲ 9.6	▼ 9.9	▼ 0.8	▲ 1.3	▲ 0.2
DK	73.4	▼ 0.1	▼ 10.3	▼ 3.6	▲ 5.5	▼ 8.5
DE	76.7	▲ 0.1	▼ 2.2	▲ 1.0	▲ 5.1	▲ 4.0
EE	80.1	▲ 0.4	▼ 8.7	▼ 2.6	▲ 1.0	▼ 9.9
IE	82.3	▼ 1.4	▼ 2.6	▼ 3.5	▼ 3.0	▼ 10.5
EL	65.8	▲ 5.0	▼ 1.4	▼ 1.4	▼ 0.3	▲ 1.9
ES	70.4	▲ 0.9	▼ 1.3	▼ 9.3	▼ 2.9	▼ 12.6
FR	73.6	▲ 2.4	▲ 4.3	▼ 6.0	▼ 2.3	▼ 1.6
HR	72.5	▲ 5.6	▼ 1.9	N.A	N.A	N.A
IT	71.2	▲ 6.3	▼ 8.5	▲ 1.0	▼ 5.4	▼ 6.6
CY	59.5	▼ 12.4	▲ 27.5	▼ 20.9	▼ 3.4	▼ 9.2
LV	75.7	▲ 0.7	▲ 9.6	▼ 4.1	▼ 10.3	▼ 4.1
LT	83.6	▲ 8.5	▼ 2.9	▼ 1.2	▼ 0.1	▲ 4.3
LU	73.3	▼ 7.7	▼ 3.2	▼ 4.1	▲ 13.2	▼ 1.8
HU	83.1	▲ 3.1	▼ 7.2	▲ 4.4	▲ 4.5	▼ 4.2
MT	89.9	▲ 9.7	▼ 1.4	▼ 4.5	▼ 6.7	▼ 2.9
NL	85.0	▲ 1.7	▼ 6.3	▼ 1.8	▲ 10.5	▲ 4.1
AT	79.0	▼ 6.3	▲ 8.2	▼ 1.5	▼ 12.2	▼ 11.8
PL	75.1	▲ 5.3	▼ 0.5	▼ 10.3	▼ 2.9	▼ 8.4
PT	67.2	▼ 3.8	▲ 2.5	=	▼ 17.8	▼ 19.1
RO	51.7	▼ 0.5	▼ 6.4	▲ 0.8	▼ 0.5	▼ 6.6
SI	73.9	▼ 3.3	▼ 1.2	▼ 5.0	▼ 1.6	▼ 11.1
SK	78.1	▲ 7.0	▼ 2.2	▼ 3.6	▼ 9.9	▼ 8.7
FI	92.0	▼ 1.7	▼ 2.7	▲ 1.6	▲ 1.8	▼ 4.6
SE	87.9	▲ 5.8	▼ 5.5	▼ 2.2	▲ 5.5	▲ 3.6
UK	84.5	▲ 1.2	▼ 1.9	▼ 4.1	▲ 0.1	▼ 4.7
IS	69.9	▼ 6.5	▼ 2.7	▲ 7.9	▼ 11.7	▼ 13.0
NO	84.0	▲ 3.9	▼ 5.9	▼ 2.4	▼ 4.9	▼ 9.3

Results statistically significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
Results statistically significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
Statistically significant increase from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)  
Statistically significant decrease from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

Base: Retailers in the survey who sell non-food products (n=4,745).

The analysis of company characteristics shows retailers that think non-food products are generally safe are significantly more likely to:

- o be medium (82.2%) or large companies (88.2%);
- o be the oldest companies: 80.7%;
- o sell food products: 81.4%;
- o be companies where the respondent is a commercial or sales manager: 81.6%.

b) Trust in environmental claims (Q12)

Retailers were asked their opinion about the reliability of environmental claims made about goods or services in their sector.

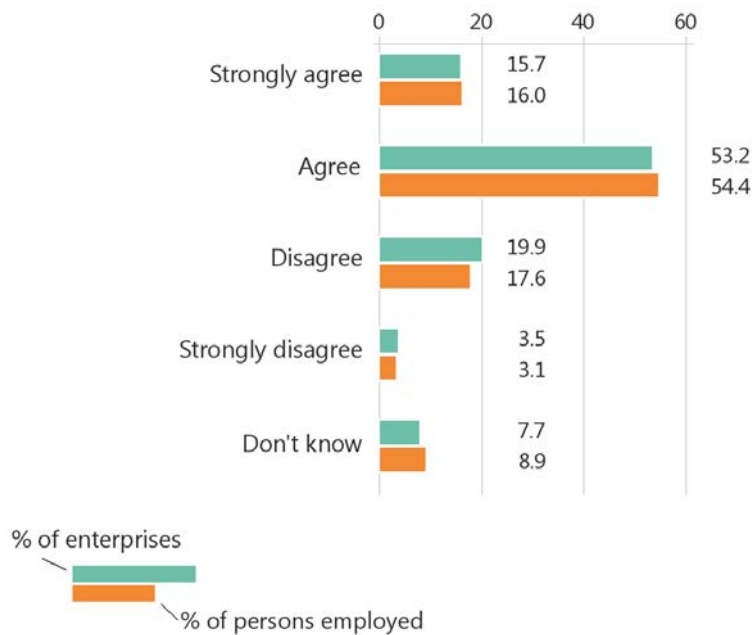
- More than two thirds say the environmental claims made about goods or services in their sector are reliable -

Overall, around seven in ten retailers (68.9%) agree most of these claims are reliable, with 15.7% strongly agreeing and 53.2% agreeing. Less than a quarter of retailers (23.4%) disagree: 19.9% disagree and less than one in twenty (3.5%) strongly disagree. Only a small proportion of retailers (7.7%) say they do not know.

The results for the total persons employed follow the same pattern, with only minor differences in proportions.

**Q12** Please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement:

**Most environmental claims about goods or services in your sector in (OUR COUNTRY) are reliable (% - EU)**

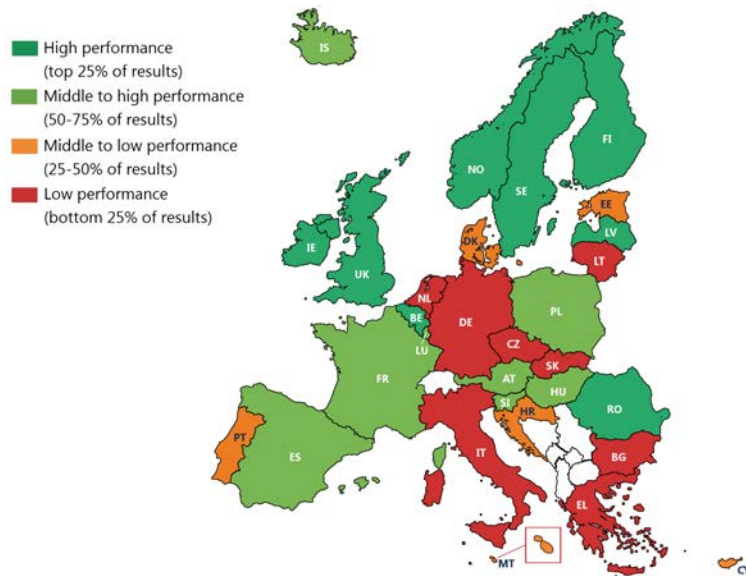


Base: Retailers in EU Member States (n=10,437).

Retailers outside the eurozone are significantly more likely to agree most environmental claims about goods and services in their sector in their country are reliable (73.3%).

Retailers in the northern region are significantly more likely to agree most environmental claims about goods or services in their sector are reliable.

**Q12** Please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement:  
**Most environmental claims about goods or services in your sector in (OUR COUNTRY) are reliable (% - TOTAL 'AGREE')**



Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

The majority of companies in all Member States agree most environmental claims in their sector are reliable. Companies in Finland (86.1%), Ireland (81.8%) and Sweden (79.7%), within the EU, as well as in Norway (81.2%), are the most likely to agree, while those in Bulgaria (53.7%), Lithuania (54.5%) and Greece (58.8%) are least likely to do so.

The EU level trend since 2014 shows a slight drop in the proportion of companies that agree with the idea that most environmental claims about goods or services in their sector are reliable in their country (-1.6pp).

Since the last survey, the largest increase in the proportion of companies that agree is observed in Croatia (+8.9pp), and a larger increase is observed in Iceland (+13.4pp) if non-EU countries are considered, while the largest decrease is recorded amongst retailers in Hungary (-8.5pp).

**Q12** Please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement:  
**Most environmental claims about goods or services in your sector in (OUR COUNTRY) are reliable**  
 (%)

	Total 'Agree'		Total 'Disagree'		Don't know	
	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014
EU28	68.9	▼ 1.6	23.4	▲ 1.6	7.7	=
EUROZONE	66.7	▼ 1.6	26.6	▲ 1.9	6.7	▼ 0.3
EU15	68.9	▼ 1.6	24.0	▲ 1.7	7.1	▼ 0.1
EU13	68.5	▼ 1.5	20.9	▼ 0.9	10.6	▲ 2.4
REGION NORTH	77.9	▲ 0.4	12.7	▼ 2.0	9.4	▲ 1.6
REGION EAST	68.6	▼ 1.9	20.9	▲ 1.0	10.5	▲ 0.9
REGION SOUTH	66.7	▼ 0.9	28.1	▲ 1.3	5.2	▼ 0.4
REGION WEST	69.0	▼ 2.0	23.4	▲ 2.3	7.6	▼ 0.3
BE	76.5	▲ 0.5	14.6	▼ 1.1	8.9	▲ 0.6
BG	53.7	▼ 4.0	34.5	▲ 3.7	11.8	▲ 0.3
CZ	59.8	▼ 6.6	26.6	▲ 2.7	13.6	▲ 3.9
DK	68.2	▼ 6.7	10.4	▼ 2.8	21.4	▲ 9.5
DE	63.3	▼ 2.6	30.0	▲ 3.7	6.7	▼ 1.1
EE	64.7	▼ 3.2	4.7	▼ 0.5	30.6	▲ 3.7
IE	81.8	▼ 0.4	11.5	▼ 0.8	6.7	▲ 1.2
EL	58.8	▼ 2.2	33.0	▼ 3.9	8.2	▲ 6.1
ES	71.2	▼ 0.3	25.7	▲ 3.2	3.1	▼ 2.9
FR	73.2	▲ 2.8	24.7	=	2.1	▼ 2.8
HR	68.0	▲ 8.9	22.0	▼ 8.5	10.0	▼ 0.4
IT	63.4	▼ 1.0	30.9	▲ 1.4	5.7	▼ 0.4
CY	65.0	▲ 6.7	19.6	▲ 4.3	15.4	▼ 11.0
LV	78.1	▲ 2.8	16.1	▼ 3.3	5.8	▲ 0.5
LT	54.5	▲ 0.8	24.2	▼ 1.6	21.3	▲ 0.8
LU	73.7	▼ 2.8	15.8	▼ 5.2	10.5	▲ 8.0
HU	75.7	▼ 8.5	7.5	▼ 1.2	16.8	▲ 9.7
MT	67.6	▲ 3.3	18.7	▲ 0.3	13.7	▼ 3.6
NL	59.9	▼ 6.1	24.5	▲ 5.1	15.6	▲ 1.0
AT	70.9	▲ 1.7	22.9	▲ 0.3	6.2	▼ 2.0
PL	74.7	▲ 2.0	18.1	▼ 0.2	7.2	▼ 1.8
PT	65.6	▲ 0.4	25.6	▼ 5.2	8.8	▲ 4.8
RO	76.7	▼ 6.3	19.2	▲ 5.2	4.1	▲ 1.1
SI	72.0	▲ 7.6	21.8	▼ 1.7	6.2	▼ 5.9
SK	61.7	▲ 2.2	29.3	▲ 1.3	9.0	▼ 3.5
FI	86.1	▲ 3.8	11.1	▼ 3.6	2.8	▼ 0.2
SE	79.7	▲ 2.7	14.5	▼ 1.4	5.8	▼ 1.3
UK	76.6	▼ 2.2	13.7	▲ 2.0	9.7	▲ 0.2
IS	75.3	▲ 13.4	12.2	▼ 12.9	12.5	▼ 0.5
NO	81.2	▲ 2.4	12.1	▼ 3.9	6.7	▲ 1.5

Results statistically significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Results statistically significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Statistically significant increase from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)  
 Statistically significant decrease from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

The analysis of company characteristics reveals retailers that agree most environmental claims in their sector are reliable are more likely to be in the trade sector (NACE G) (71.4%), or to sell products (71.3%) rather than services (67.6%). Conversely, retailers are less likely to agree if they belong to the services sector (67.0%), particularly in the financial and insurance services sector (NACE K, 56.1%), and if they are engaged in both online and cross-border sales (66.3%).

## 2. Compliance and Enforcement

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This chapter considers a range of issues to do with consumer legislation. Firstly, retailers' experience of unfair commercial practices will be reviewed. Next, their views on compliance with consumer legislation will be discussed, including the cost of compliance and perceptions of compliance by competitors. Retailers' perceptions about the enforcement of consumer legislation by a range of authorities and bodies will be considered, followed by a discussion of retailers' experience of warnings or recalls relating to non-food products.

### 2.1. Unfair commercial practices

Retailers were asked whether they had experienced a range of unfair commercial practices, that fall within the scope of the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive, in the last 12 months. The results consider the experience of unfair practices from local as well as cross-border competitors.

A composite indicator has been built from retailers' response about whether they had come across unfair commercial practices, in six categories, by competitors in their own country. As explained in more detail in section 6 of this report, each retailer is given a percent-based score depending on the number of categories they have come across with and an average is calculated at EU, regional and country level. At the EU level, a retailer has in average faced almost two UCPs (30.1%, -3.6pp) from competitors in their own country. Retailers in the euro zone or in EU15 Member states are statistically significantly less likely to mention having come across UCPs by domestic competitors. Retailers in the eastern region (42.2%) are more likely to report the incidence of unfair commercial practices from competitors.

Cc1\_r Prevalence of UCPs in the sector, domestically  
(AVERAGE INCIDENCE OF 6 UCP - %)

		2016	2016-2014
EU28		30.1	▼ 3.6
EUROZONE		29.2	▼ 4.6
EU15		27.6	▼ 3.9
EU13		42.0	▲ 9.2
REGION NORTH		24.0	▼ 1.5
REGION EAST		42.2	▼ 2.9
REGION SOUTH		31.1	▼ 6.1
REGION WEST		26.8	▼ 2.9
BE		23.2	▼ 0.7
BG		48.4	▼ 2.6
CZ		39.7	▼ 6.2
DK		13.5	▼ 4.8
DE		28.2	▼ 5.2
EE		20.2	▼ 5.2
IE		27.2	▼ 0.9
EL		40.5	▼ 6.3
ES		32.4	▼ 7.8
FR		29.3	▼ 2.0
HR		31.1	▼ 11.7
IT		28.6	▼ 4.4
CY		36.8	▲ 4.5
LV		24.7	▼ 4.2
LT		31.7	▲ 1.3
LU		19.9	▼ 2.5
HU		34.0	▼ 13.3
MT		30.1	▼ 4.9
NL		27.3	▼ 4.5
AT		30.0	▲ 1.3
PL		57.1	▲ 0.1
PT		26.6	▼ 6.0
RO		37.6	▼ 3.7
SI		31.6	▲ 5.8
SK		47.4	▼ 1.9
FI		32.1	▲ 0.5
SE		26.2	▼ 3.0
UK		22.9	▲ 0.4
IS		23.7	▼ 6.1
NO		24.4	▼ 5.3

Results statistically significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Results statistically significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Statistically significant increase from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)  
 Statistically significant decrease from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

- Retailers are most likely to have experienced unfair commercial practices from competitors in their own country -

More than four in ten retailers (43.3%) say in the past year their domestic competitors have been pressuring consumers with persistent commercial calls or messages. Less than one in ten retailers who sell cross-border to other EU countries has experienced this practice from competitors in other EU countries (6.1%).

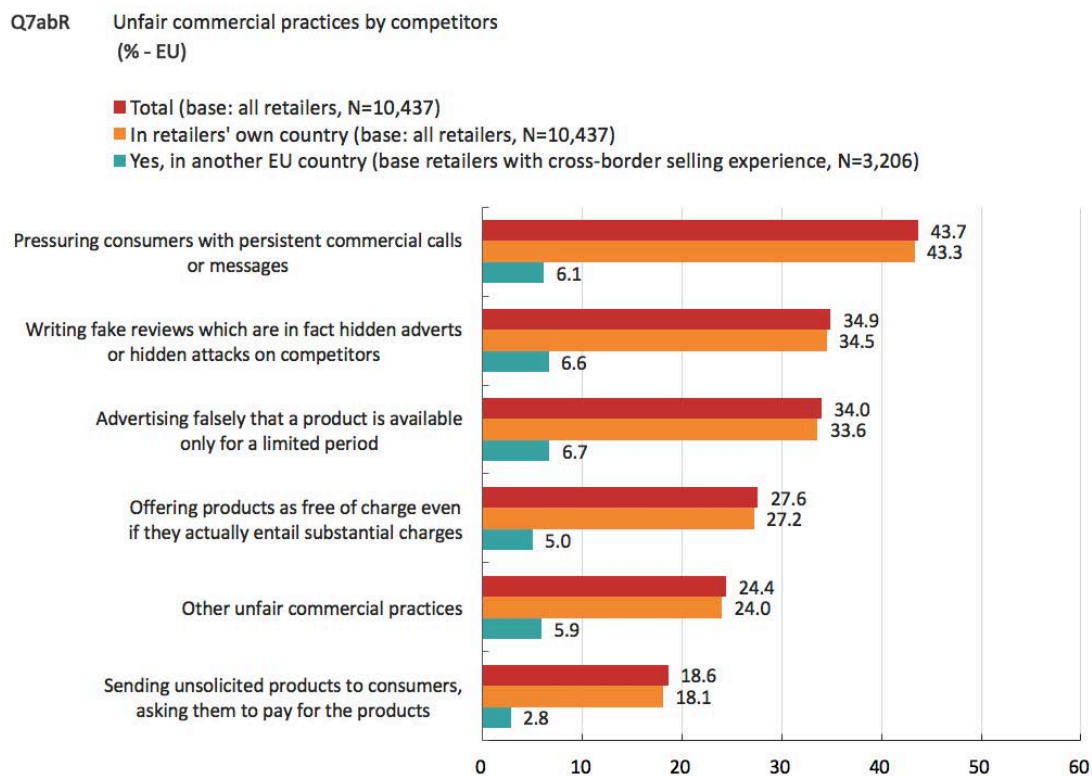
Just over a third of retailers (34.5%) say domestic competitors have been writing fake reviews which are in fact hidden adverts or hidden attacks on competitors. Far fewer - 6.6% - have experienced this from cross-border competitors.

A third of retailers (33.6%) say domestic competitors have been advertising falsely that a product is available only for a limited period, much more than retailers who have experienced this practice from competitors in another EU country (6.7%).

Just over a quarter of retailers (27.2%) say domestic competitors have been offering products as free of charge even if they actually entail substantial charges. One in twenty companies (5.0%) has experienced this from competitors in another EU country.

Almost one quarter of retailers (24.0%) have experienced other unfair commercial practices from domestic competitors, while 3.5% say this in relation to a competitor in another EU country (3.5%).

Finally, almost one in five retailers (18.1%) mentions that in the past year domestic competitors have been sending unsolicited products to consumers, asking them to pay for the products. It is much less common for retailers to have experienced this practice from competitors in another EU country (2.8%).



Base: Retailers in EU Member States (n=10,437).

Retailers in NMS13 countries are significantly more likely to have experienced each of these unfair practices. For example, 46.8% have experienced competitors' false advertising that a product is only available for a short time, while 56.7% mention pressuring consumers with persistent calls or messages.

Companies outside the eurozone are significantly more likely to mention competitors writing fake reviews that are really hidden attacks or advertisements (39.1%).

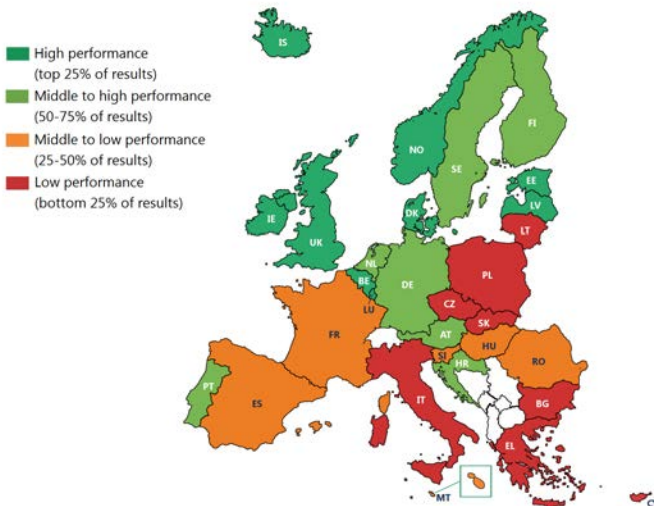
When looking at the results based on the total persons employed, a similar pattern to the previous chart based on the proportion of retailers can be observed.

Retailers in the eastern region are significantly more likely to have experienced each of these unfair commercial practices in the last 12 months. Those in the southern region are also significantly more likely to report domestic competitors pressuring consumers with persistent commercial calls or messages.

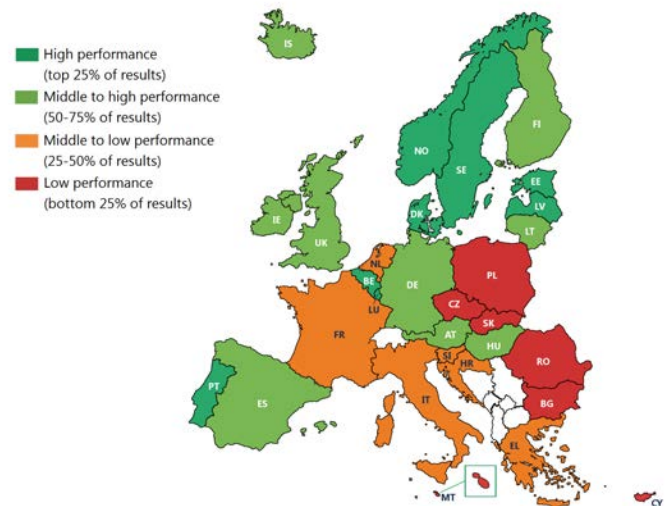
Retailers in the west are significantly less likely to report experiencing each of these practices, with the exception of competitors writing fake reviews that are hidden adverts or attacks. Retailers in the north are significantly less likely to have experienced each of these practices, with the exception of competitors advertising falsely that a product is only available for a limited time and other unfair practices.

In the following pages, the country level results for each of these practices will be considered first for domestic competitors, and then for competitors in other EU countries (for retailers that sell cross-border in other EU countries). In the maps below, countries where the incidence of unfair commercial practices by competitors is lower are presented in green, whereas the countries where it is higher are displayed in red.

**Q7abR.2** Unfair commercial practices by competitors  
Pressuring consumers with persistent commercial calls or messages (% - IN RETAILERS' OWN COUNTRY)



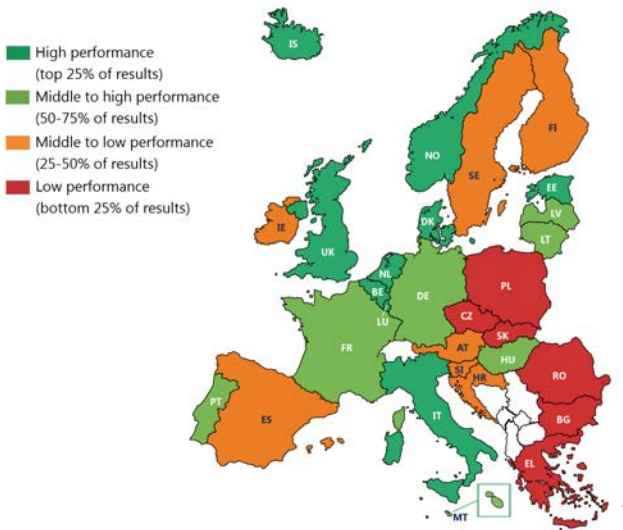
**Q7abR.4** Unfair commercial practices by competitors  
Writing fake reviews which are in fact hidden adverts or hidden attacks on competitors (% - IN RETAILERS' OWN COUNTRY)



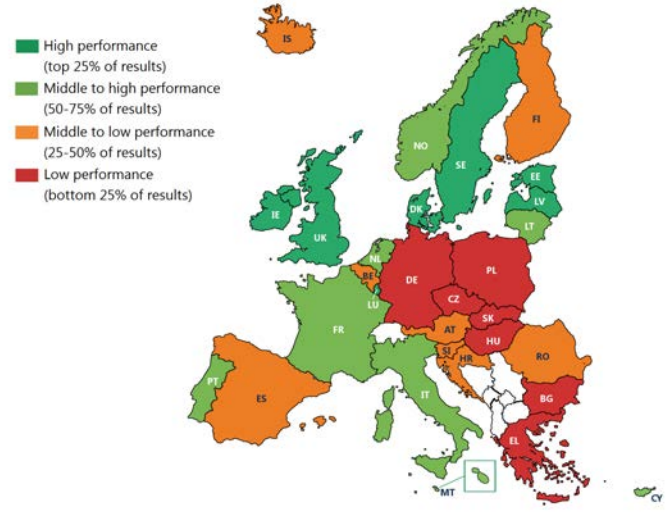
Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).



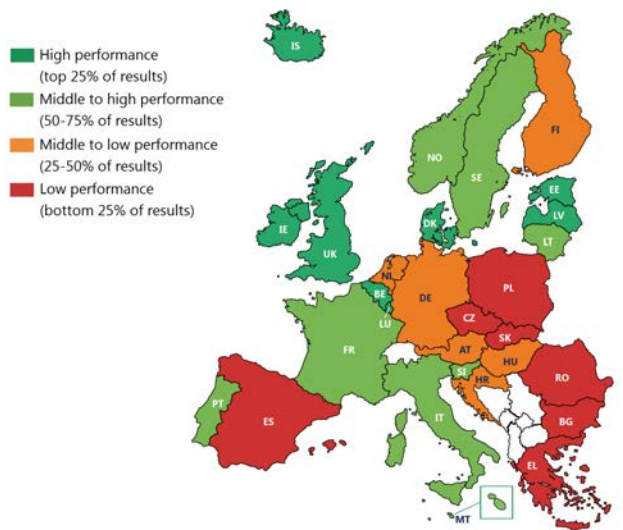
**Q7abR.3** Unfair commercial practices by competitors  
**Advertising falsely that a product is available only for a limited period**  
 (% - IN RETAILERS' OWN COUNTRY)



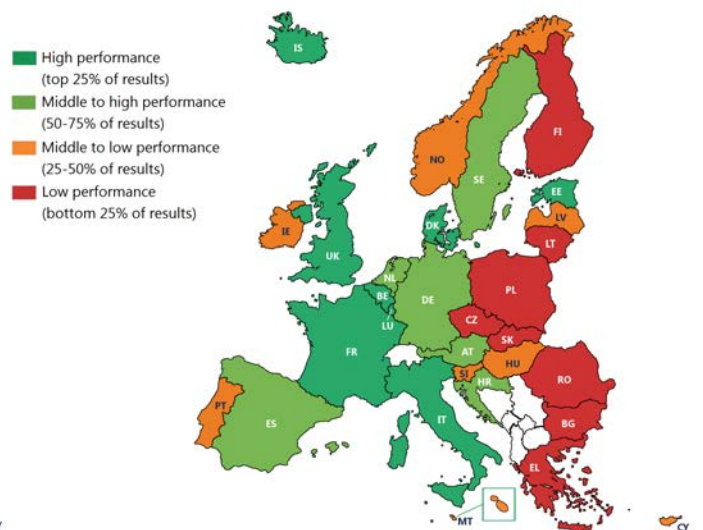
**Q7abR.5** Unfair commercial practices by competitors  
**Sending unsolicited products to consumers, asking them to pay for the products**  
 (% - IN RETAILERS' OWN COUNTRY)



**Q7abR.1** Unfair commercial practices by competitors  
**Offering products as free of charge even if they actually entail substantial charges**  
 (% - IN RETAILERS' OWN COUNTRY)



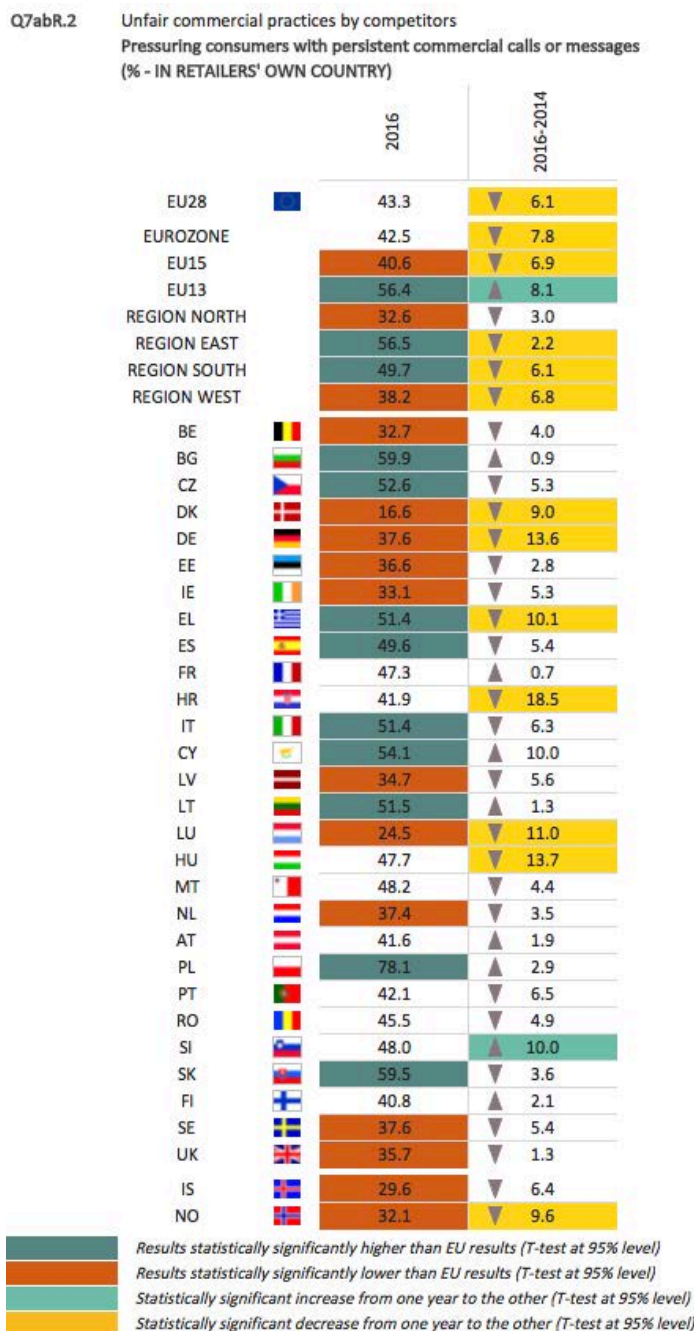
**Q7abR.6** Unfair commercial practices by competitors  
**Other unfair commercial practices**  
 (% - IN RETAILERS' OWN COUNTRY)



Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

UCPs in retailers' own country

In eight Member States (in descending order of prevalence: Poland, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Lithuania, Italy and Greece), more than half of all retailers say their domestic competitors have been pressuring consumers with persistent commercial calls or messages. Retailers in Poland (78.1%), Bulgaria (59.9%) and Slovakia (59.5%) are the most likely to mention it, compared to 16.6% in Denmark and 24.5% in Luxembourg, as well as 29.6% in Iceland if non-EU countries are considered. At EU level there has been a decrease in the proportion of retailers facing this UCP (-6.1pp), with the largest within-country increase in Slovenia (+10.0pp) and the largest decrease in Croatia (-18.5pp).

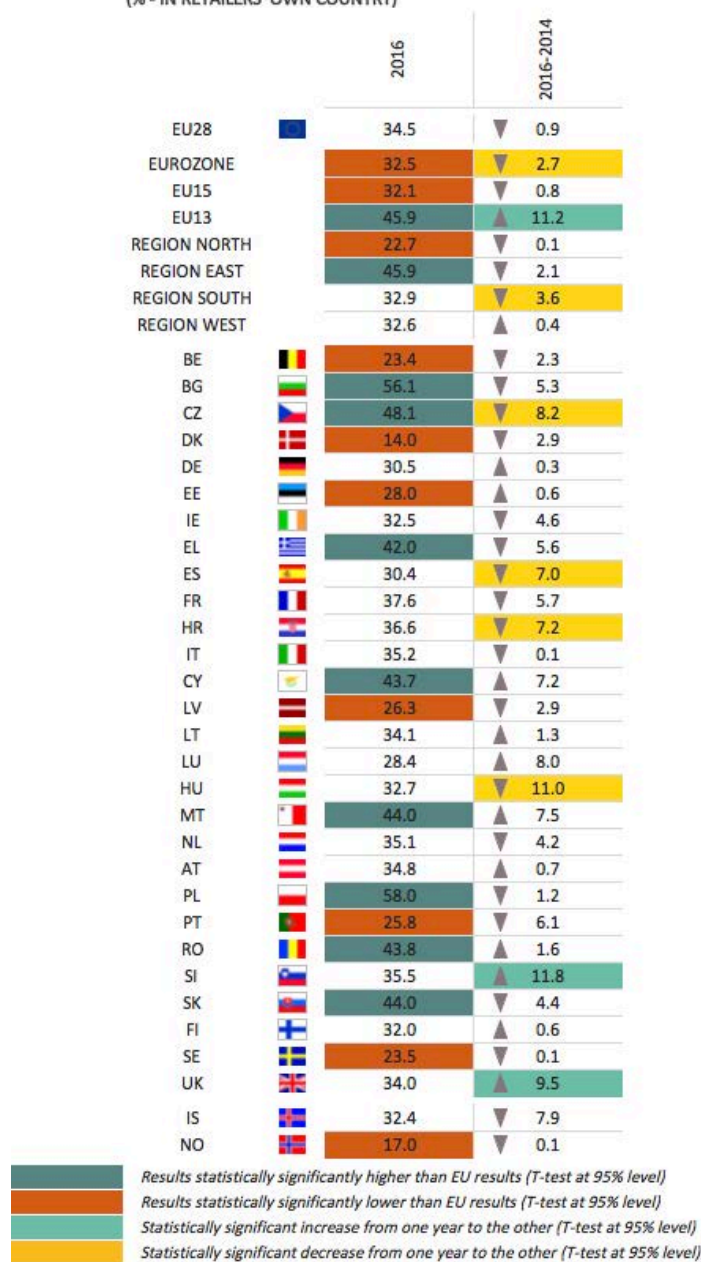


Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

Retailers in Poland are also the most likely to say their domestic competitors have been writing fake reviews which are in fact hidden adverts or hidden attacks (58.0%), followed by those in Bulgaria (56.1%) and the Czech Republic (48.1%). Retailers in Denmark (14.0%), Belgium (23.4%) and Sweden (23.5%) within the EU, as well as those in Norway (17.0%), are the least likely to have experienced this practice from a domestic competitor.

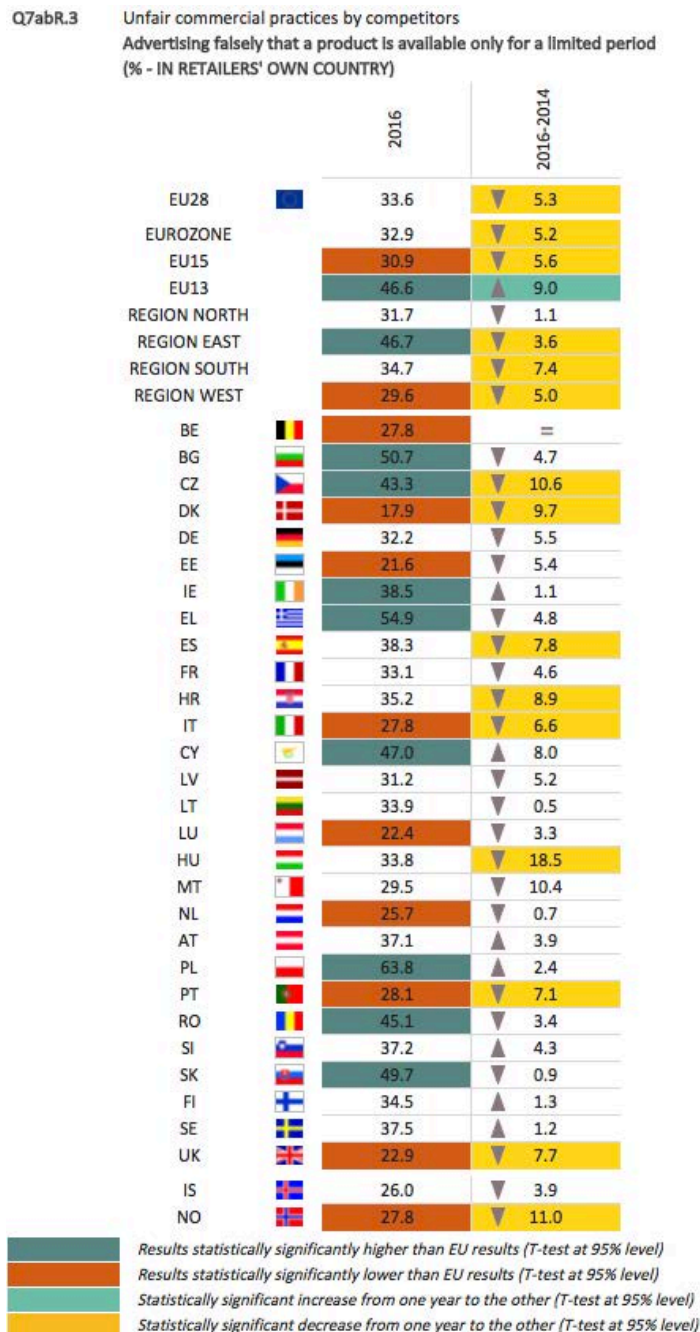
Compared to 2014, there has been a slight decrease at EU28 level (-0.9 pp), which is however not statistically significant. At country level, the largest increase in the proportion of companies that say competitors have done this is seen amongst retailers in Slovenia (+11.8pp), while the highest decrease is recorded in Hungary (-11.0pp).

**Q7abR.4** Unfair commercial practices by competitors  
**Writing fake reviews which are in fact hidden adverts or hidden attacks on competitors**  
 (% - IN RETAILERS' OWN COUNTRY)



Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

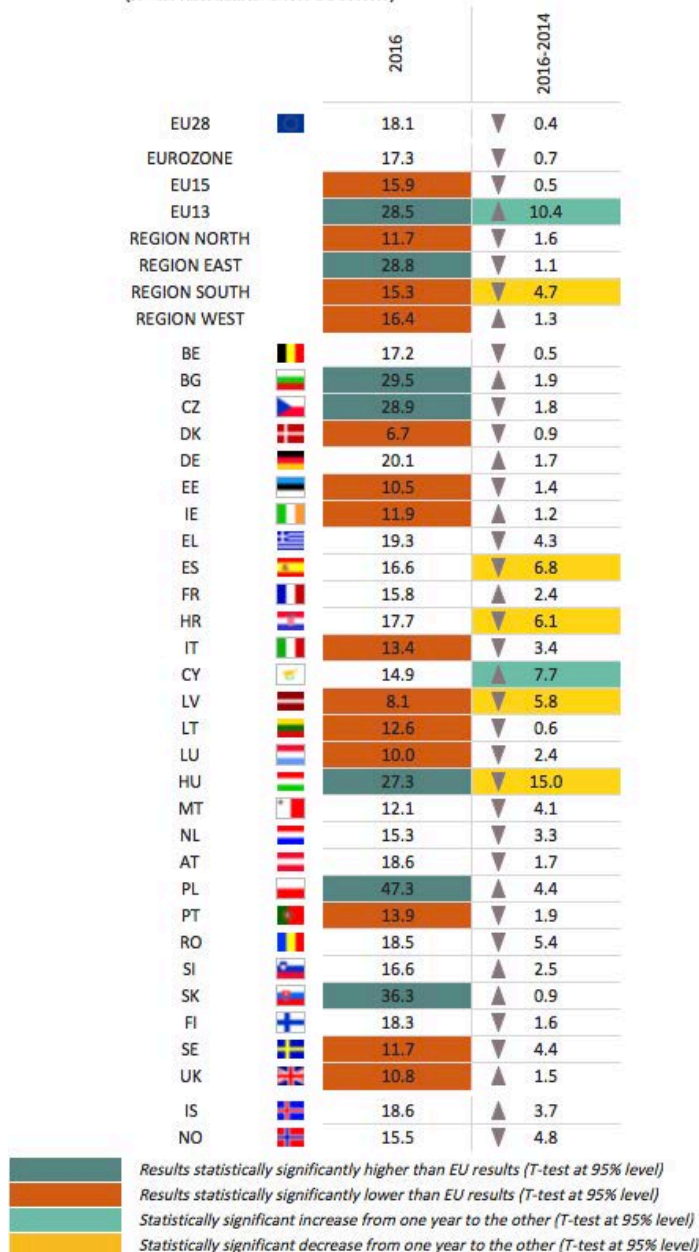
Retailers in Poland (63.8%), Greece (54.9%) and Bulgaria (50.7%) are the most likely to say their domestic competitors have been advertising falsely that a product is available only for a limited period. Those in Denmark (17.9%), Estonia (21.6%) and Luxembourg (22.4%) are least likely to mention this practice. Compared to 2014, a large decrease is observed in the proportion of companies who mention this unfair commercial practice in their country at EU level (-5.3pp). The largest declines in the proportion of companies that mention having faced this practice from competitors is observed amongst retailers in Hungary (-18.5pp). There were no statistically significant increases.



Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

Less than half of the retailers in each country say that in the past year their domestic competitors have been sending unsolicited products to consumers, asking them to pay for the products. Retailers in Poland (47.3%), Slovakia (36.3%) and Bulgaria (29.5%) are the most likely to have experienced it, while those in Denmark (6.7%), Latvia (8.1%) and Luxembourg (10.0%) are the least likely. Since the last survey in 2014, the largest increase in the proportion of retailers that mention this as a practice by domestic competitors is observed in Cyprus (+7.7pp), while the largest decrease is observed amongst retailers in Hungary (-15.0pp).

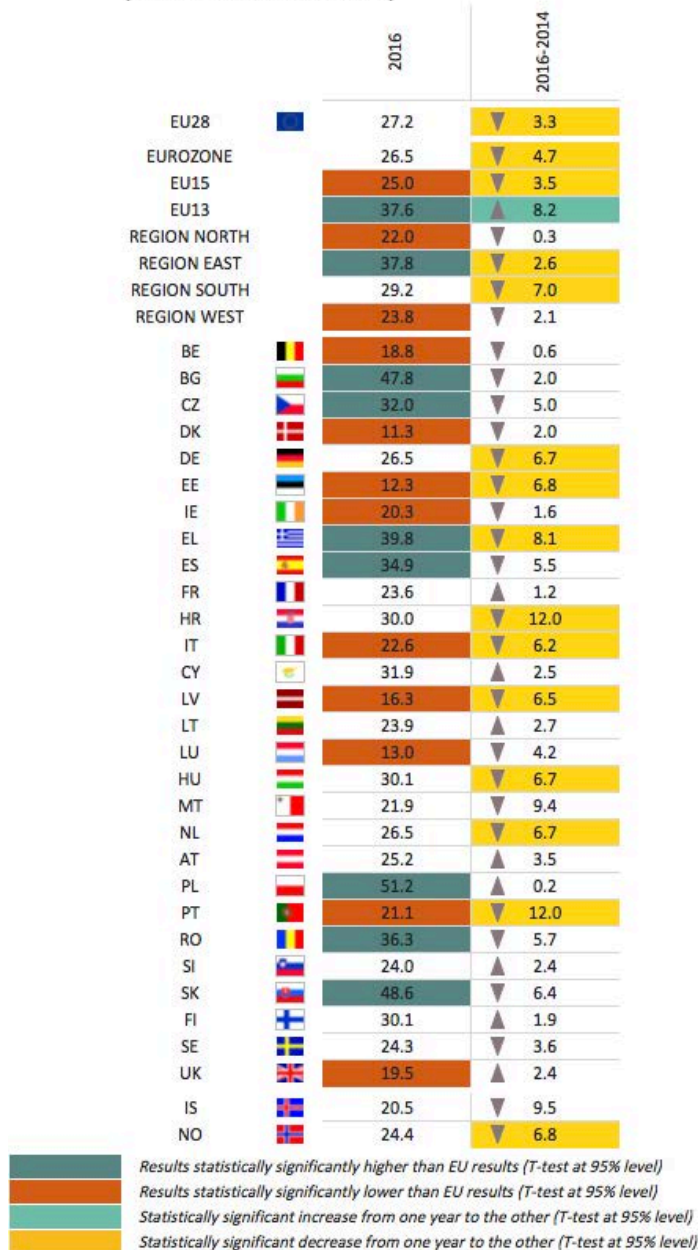
**Q7abR.5** Unfair commercial practices by competitors  
**Sending unsolicited products to consumers, asking them to pay for the products**  
 (% - IN RETAILERS' OWN COUNTRY)



Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

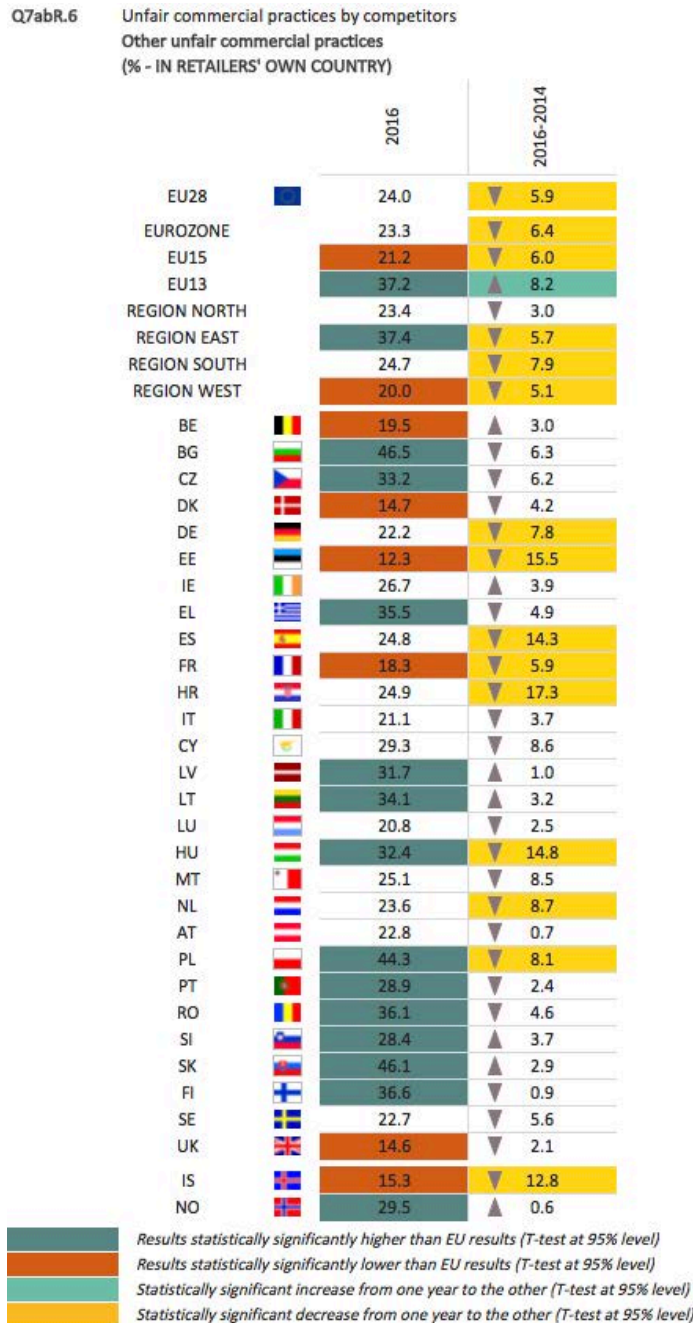
Retailers in Poland (51.2%), Slovakia (48.6%) and Bulgaria (47.8%) are the most likely to say their domestic competitors have been offering products as free of charge even if they actually entail substantial charges. At the opposite end of the scale, retailers in Denmark (11.3%), Estonia (12.3%) and Luxembourg (13.0%) are the least likely to say this. At EU level, the proportion of retailers saying that offering products as free of charge even if they actually entail substantial charges in their country has declined (statistically significant, -3.3pp). The biggest decrease is seen amongst retailers in Portugal and Croatia (-12.0pp). There were no statistically significant increases.

**Q7abR.1** Unfair commercial practices by competitors  
Offering products as free of charge even if they actually entail substantial charges  
(% - IN RETAILERS' OWN COUNTRY)



Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

More than four in ten retailers in Bulgaria (46.5%), Slovakia (46.1%), and Poland (44.3%) say their domestic competitors have exposed them to other unfair commercial practices. At the other end of the scale, this is mentioned least by retailers in Estonia (12.3%), the United Kingdom (14.6%), and Denmark (14.7%). At EU level, a large decline in the proportion of retailers that claim having faced this problem is recorded since 2014 (-5.9pp). The largest decline is observed amongst retailers in Croatia (-17.3pp). There were no statistically significant increases.



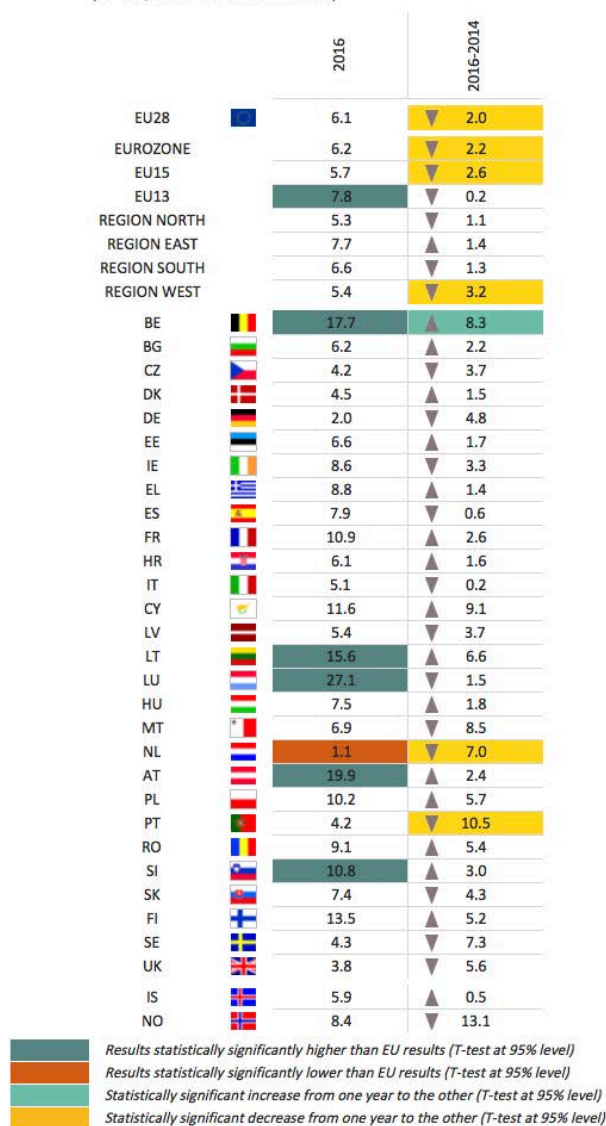
Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

UCPs in another EU country

Companies in Luxembourg (27.1%), Austria (19.9%) and Belgium (17.7%) are the most likely to mention competitors in another EU country pressuring consumers with persistent commercial calls or messages, while retailers in the Netherlands (1.1%), Germany (2.0%) and the UK (3.8%) are the least likely to mention this<sup>14</sup>.

Compared to 2014, a statistically significant decline in this proportion can be seen at EU level (-2.0pp). Amongst countries, the largest increase in the proportion of retailers that mention having come across this practice in another EU country can be observed in Belgium (+8.3pp), while the largest decrease is seen in Portugal (-10.5pp).

Q7a.2 Please tell me if you have come across any of the following unfair commercial practices by your competitors in the last 12 months (MAX. 2 ANSWERS):  
Pressuring consumers with persistent commercial calls or messages  
(% - YES, IN ANOTHER EU COUNTRY)



<sup>14</sup> Results for the following countries are based on a very small sample (less than 100 observations) and should therefore be considered as mainly indicative: Iceland (n=33), Finland (n=39), Cyprus (n=41), Norway (n=48), Malta (n=53), Luxembourg (n=54), Poland (n=67), Romania (n=67), Sweden (n=68), the United Kingdom (n=76), Estonia (n=92) and France (n=98). The same sample sizes also apply to Q7a.1, Q7a.3, Q7a.4, Q7a.5 and Q7a.6.

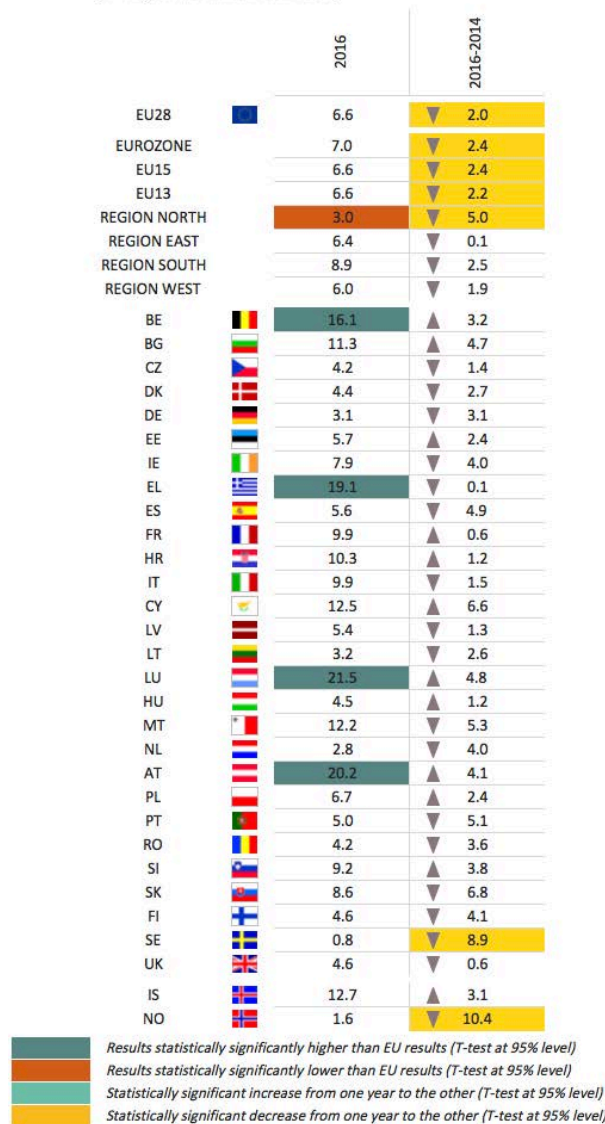


Base: Retailers in the survey who sell cross-border within the EU (n=3,287).

Companies in the north region are significantly less likely to have experienced competitors in another EU country writing fake reviews that are actually hidden adverts or attacks. Around one in five companies in Luxembourg (21.5%), Austria (20.2%) and Greece (19.1%) have experienced competitors in another EU country writing fake reviews which are in fact hidden adverts or hidden attacks, compared to 0.8% of retailers in Sweden, 2.8% in the Netherlands and 3.1% in Germany. Out of the EU, 1.6% of retailers in Norway have experienced this.

Since 2014, this proportion has declined statistically significantly at EU level (-2.0pp). At country level, the largest decrease within the EU can be observed amongst retailers in Sweden (-8.9pp), while outside the EU retailers in Norway (-10.4pp) have also seen a statistically significant decrease. No statistically significant increases can be observed.

Q7a.4 Please tell me if you have come across any of the following unfair commercial practices by your competitors in the last 12 months (MAX. 2 ANSWERS):  
Writing fake reviews which are in fact hidden adverts or hidden attacks on competitors  
(% - YES, IN ANOTHER EU COUNTRY)

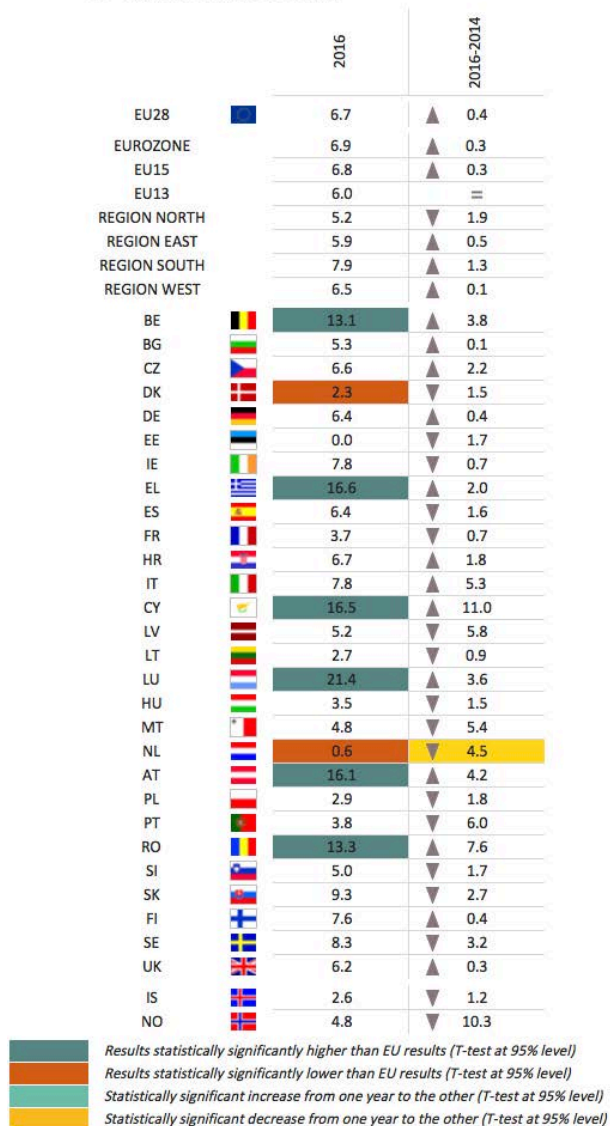


Base: Retailers in the survey who sell cross-border within the EU (n=3,287).

Around one in five companies in Luxembourg (21.4%), Greece (16.6%) and Cyprus (16.5%) have experienced competitors in other EU countries advertising falsely that a product is available only for a limited period. At the opposite end of the scale, companies in Estonia (0.0%), the Netherlands (0.6%), Denmark (2.3%), as well as in Iceland (2.6%) outside the EU, are the least likely to have experienced this.

Compared to 2014, there has been a very slight, statistically nonsignificant increase at EU28 level (+0.4pp). At country level, retailers' likelihood of experiencing competitors in other EU countries advertising falsely that a product is available only for a limited period has decreased in the Netherlands (-4.5pp). No statistically significant increases can be observed.

Q7a.3 Please tell me if you have come across any of the following unfair commercial practices by your competitors in the last 12 months (MAX. 2 ANSWERS):  
Advertising falsely that a product is available only for a limited period  
(% - YES, IN ANOTHER EU COUNTRY)

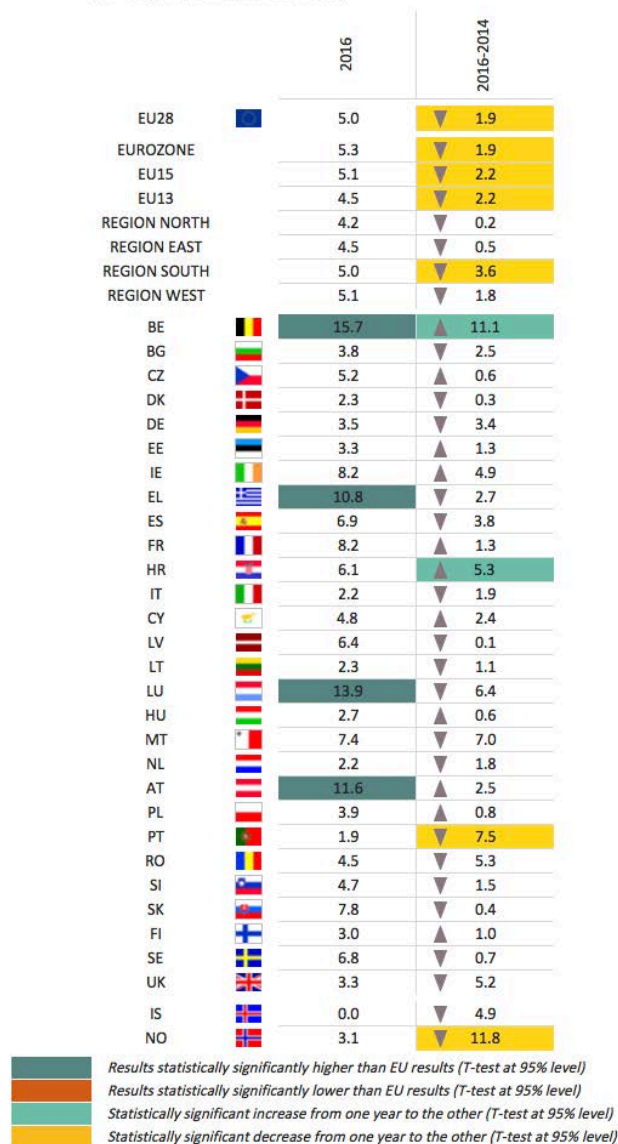


Base: Retailers in the survey who sell cross-border within the EU (n=3,287).

Companies in Belgium (15.7%), Luxembourg (13.9%) and Austria (11.6%) are the most likely to say competitors in other EU countries have been offering products as free of charge even if they actually entail substantial charges. In contrast, just 1.9% in Portugal and 2.2% in the Netherlands and Italy mention the same, while no companies in Iceland mention it.

Since 2014, a statistically significant decline in this proportion can be seen at EU level (-1.9pp). At country level, the largest increase in the proportion of retailers that mention having come across this practice in another EU country can be observed in Belgium (+11.1pp), while the largest decrease is seen amongst retailers in Portugal (-7.5pp) within the EU, and amongst retailers in Norway (-11.8pp) outside the EU.

**Q7a.1** Please tell me if you have come across any of the following unfair commercial practices by your competitors in the last 12 months (MAX. 2 ANSWERS):  
Offering products as free of charge even if they actually entail substantial charges  
(% - YES, IN ANOTHER EU COUNTRY)

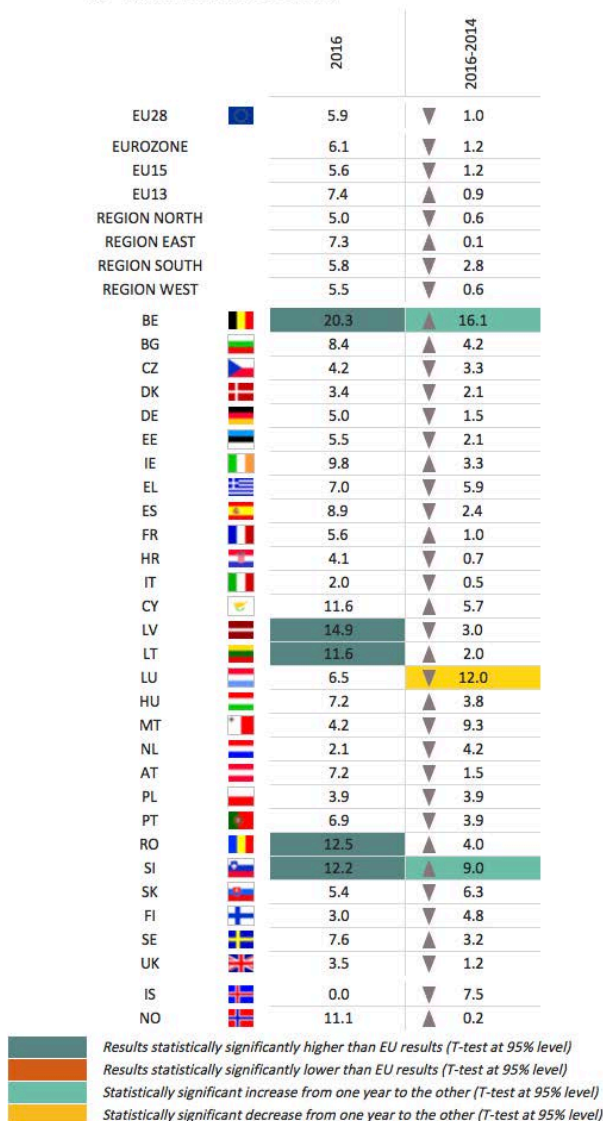


Base: Retailers in the survey who sell cross-border within the EU (n=3,287).

Companies in Belgium (20.3%), Latvia (14.9%) and Romania (12.5%) are the most likely to say competitors in other EU countries have exposed them to other unfair commercial practices, while those in Italy (2.0%), the Netherlands (2.1%) and Finland (3.0%) are the least likely to say this in the EU, as well as those in Iceland (0.0%) outside the EU.

Since 2014, a small decrease (-1.0pp) can be seen at EU level, although not statistically significant. At country level, the largest increase in the proportion of retailers that mention having come across this practice in another EU country can be observed in Belgium (+16.1pp), while the largest decrease is seen amongst retailers in Luxembourg (-12.0pp).

Q7a.6 Please tell me if you have come across any of the following unfair commercial practices by your competitors in the last 12 months (MAX. 2 ANSWERS):  
Other unfair commercial practices  
(% - YES, IN ANOTHER EU COUNTRY)

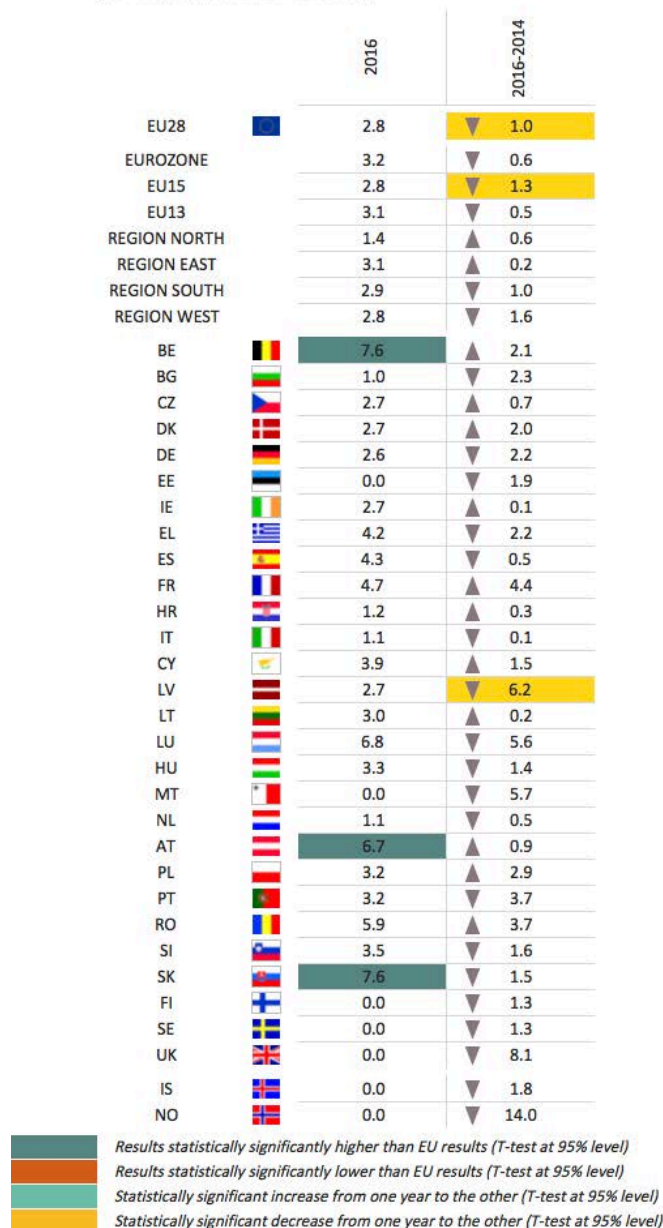


Base: Retailers in the survey who sell cross-border within the EU (n=3,287).

Companies in Belgium, Slovakia (both 7.6%) and Austria (6.7%) are the most likely to have experienced competitors in other EU countries sending unsolicited products to consumers and asking them to pay, while no companies in Estonia, Malta, Finland, Sweden or the UK, in the EU, nor in Iceland or Norway, outside the EU, report this.

Since 2014, a statistically significant decline in this proportion can be seen at EU level (-1.0pp). At country level, the largest decrease in the proportion of companies that experienced competitors in other EU countries sending unsolicited products to consumers and asking them to pay can be seen amongst retailers in Latvia (-6.2pp). No statistically significant increases can be observed.

**Q7a.5** Please tell me if you have come across any of the following unfair commercial practices by your competitors in the last 12 months (MAX. 2 ANSWERS):  
**Sending unsolicited products to consumers, asking them to pay for the products**  
 (% - YES, IN ANOTHER EU COUNTRY)



Base: Retailers in the survey who sell cross-border within the EU (n=3,287).

Notable EU changes since 2014 include:

- a drop in the proportion of companies that say competitors have been pressuring consumers with persistent commercial calls or messages in another EU country (-2.0pp).
- a decline in the proportion of retailers that say competitors have been writing fake reviews which are hidden adverts or attacks (-2.0pp).
- a drop in the proportion of companies that say competitors have been offering products as free of charge even if they entail substantial charges (-1.9pp).
- a slight but statistically significant decline in the proportion of companies that say competitors have been sending unsolicited products to consumers, asking them to pay (-1.0pp).

Highlights from the country analysis of changes with respect to 2014 include the following:

- Retailers in Latvia had the highest decrease in the proportion who say competitors in other EU countries have, in the last 12 months, sent unsolicited products to consumers, asking them to pay (-6.2pp).
- The highest increase in the proportion of companies that mention competitors in another EU country have been offering products as free of charge even if they entail substantial charges is observed in Belgium (+11.1pp), while the largest decrease is recorded in Portugal (-7.5pp) within the EU, and amongst retailers in Norway (-11.8pp) outside the EU.
- The largest decrease in the proportion of companies that say competitors in another EU country have been advertising falsely that a product is available only for a limited period can be seen amongst retailers in the Netherlands (-4.5pp).
- Since the last wave, the biggest decrease in the proportion of companies saying competitors in other EU countries have been writing fake reviews which are hidden adverts or attacks is observed amongst retailers in Sweden (-8.9pp) within the EU, while outside the EU a larger decrease is observed amongst retailers in Norway (-10.4pp).
- The largest increase in the proportion of companies that say competitors have been pressuring consumers with persistent commercial calls or messages in another EU country can be seen amongst retailers in Belgium (+8.3pp), while the largest decrease is observed amongst retailers in Portugal (-10.5pp).
- The biggest increase in the proportion of companies that mention competitors exposing them to other unfair commercial practices in another EU country is recorded in Belgium (+16.1pp), while the largest decrease is observed in Luxembourg (-12.0pp).

Some patterns emerge also in the analysis of company characteristics. Retailers in sector S – other services activities (34.0%) and companies that sell services (29.1%) are the most likely to say their competitors have been offering products as free when they actually involve substantial charges. Conversely, retailers with 50 or more persons employed (16.3% to 21.8%) and those in sector N – administrative and support services (19.9%) are the least likely.

Retailers in sector S are also the most likely to mention competitors pressuring consumers with persistent commercial calls or messages (49.3%), followed by those in the trade sector G (45.4%). Companies established between 1990 and 1999 are also more likely to say they have experienced this practice in the past year (46.9%), as are those that sell in two languages (47.7%). Retailers with 50 or more persons employed (31.3% to 38.5%), those in sectors J (33.6%) and K (35.3%), and created in 2000 or more recently (41.1%) are the least likely.

Companies that have experienced domestic competitors writing fake reviews which are hidden adverts or attacks are least likely companies with 50 or more persons employed (27.1% to 29.8%). They are most likely to:

- o belong to sector I - accommodation and food service activities: 41.2%, and least likely to belong to sectors N (25.2%), H (26.3%) and K (27.2%);
- o sell food products: 38.1%;
- o be the youngest companies: 36.5%;
- o sell in two (36.7%), or three languages (37.7%).

Companies who have experienced domestic competitors advertising falsely that a product is available only for a limited period are least likely companies with 250 or more persons employed (22.6%). They are statistically significantly more likely to:

- o be in the trade sector (NACE G): 39.5% rather than in the services sector, particularly in sectors K (24.3%), J (24.7%), L (25.5%), N (26.1%), H (27.2%) and I (31.3%);
- o sell non-food products: 37.5%;
- o have been established between 1990 and 1999: 36.1%;
- o sell online: 35.5%;
- o sell in three (37.9%), or four or more languages (37.3%);
- o be companies where the respondent is a commercial or sales manager: 37.6%.

Retailers that say domestic competitors have been sending unsolicited products to consumers, asking them for payment are the most likely to:

- o belong to sector L - real estate activities: 24.8%, and least likely to be in sectors J (12.0%) and K (13.8%);
- o sell services: 20.2%;
- o have been established between 1990 and 1999: 22.6%.

Turning to at the experience of unfair commercial practices from competitors in other EU countries, the analysis of company characteristics shows a number of differences.

Retailers belonging to sector N - administrative and support service activities (11.1%) and those where the respondent is a commercial or sales manager (9.5%) are the most likely to report competitors have been offering products as free of charge even if they entail substantial charges. Retailers in the trade sector (3.4%) and those created between 1990 and 1999 (3.0%) are the least likely.

The following subgroups of retailers are the most likely to have experienced competitors in other EU countries pressuring consumers with persistent commercial calls:

- o companies where the respondent is a marketing manager: 10.4%;
- o companies engaged in online cross-border sales: 7.9%;
- o companies selling online to other EU countries: 8.3%.

The proportion of companies that say competitors in other EU countries have been writing fake reviews which are in fact hidden adverts or attacks is significantly higher amongst the following types of companies:

- o those belonging to sector N - administrative and support service activities (12.7%) or sector I - accommodation and food service activities (11.0%), while those in the trade sector (3.9%) are the least likely;
- o those engaged in online cross-border sales: 8.6%;
- o those that sell in four or more languages and more: 9.7%, while they are least likely to sell in their country's language only (4.8%);
- o those that sell food products: 9.1%;

those where the respondent is a marketing manager: 13.6%.

Companies that mention competitors falsely advertising a product is available only for a limited period are most likely to:

- o belong to the sector N - administrative and support service activities (13.7%), and the least likely to belong to sector J – information and communication;
- o be engaged in online cross-border sales: 8.7%;
- o sell in four or more languages: 12.9%, while those selling in 2 languages are the least likely;
- o be companies where the respondent is a general manager: 9.7%.

Companies that sell food products to final consumers are significantly more likely to say that, in the past year, their competitors in other EU countries have been sending unsolicited products to consumers and asking them to pay (4.7%).

## 2.2. Compliance with consumer legislation

Retailers were asked their opinions about the ease and costs of compliance with consumer legislation, and the extent to which competitors in their sector comply with this legislation, both in their own country and in other countries (for retailers that sell cross-border). For the perceived compliance with consumer legislation, index variable Cc2\_r has been calculated based upon retailers' responses on to what extent they agree with three statements about compliance.

### a) Compliance perceptions, domestically

At the EU level, in average a retailer company agrees with a bit more than two of the statements related to compliance with consumer legislation in their own country. The average score is 68.1% agreement rate. This is a decrease of 0.1pp compared to 2014. Retailers in EU15 Member States are statistically significantly more likely to perceive their domestic competitors comply with product safety and consumer legislation.



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

CC2\_r Perception of compliance  
(AVERAGE RATE OF AGREEMENT - %)

		2016	2016-2014
EU28		68.1	▼ 0.1
EUROZONE		67.7	▲ 0.1
EU15		69.5	▼ 0.2
EU13		61.9	▼ 5.9
REGION NORTH		71.4	▲ 0.9
REGION EAST		61.9	▲ 0.1
REGION SOUTH		62.6	▲ 2.4
REGION WEST		71.6	▼ 2.0
BE		70.8	▼ 1.8
BG		57.6	▲ 2.1
CZ		52.9	▼ 5.7
DK		67.1	▲ 0.4
DE		68.3	▼ 4.9
EE		76.9	▲ 4.6
IE		72.6	▲ 2.6
EL		62.9	▲ 1.0
ES		62.5	▲ 3.0
FR		73.0	▲ 5.9
HR		64.8	▲ 8.6
IT		63.3	▲ 1.6
CY		62.1	▲ 0.8
LV		66.2	▼ 5.8
LT		67.4	▲ 2.9
LU		76.1	▼ 1.3
HU		57.6	▼ 4.6
MT		67.2	▲ 1.1
NL		73.6	▼ 1.0
AT		67.9	▼ 0.5
PL		61.9	▲ 4.5
PT		60.3	▲ 5.8
RO		71.0	=
SI		58.3	▲ 3.5
SK		57.4	▼ 3.3
FI		76.0	▼ 1.5
SE		71.7	▲ 0.6
UK		76.3	▼ 3.6
IS		74.0	▲ 0.4
NO		72.0	▼ 1.0

Results statistically significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Results statistically significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Statistically significant increase from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)  
 Statistically significant decrease from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

- Retailers are more likely to be positive about compliance with consumer regulation in their own country than in other EU countries -

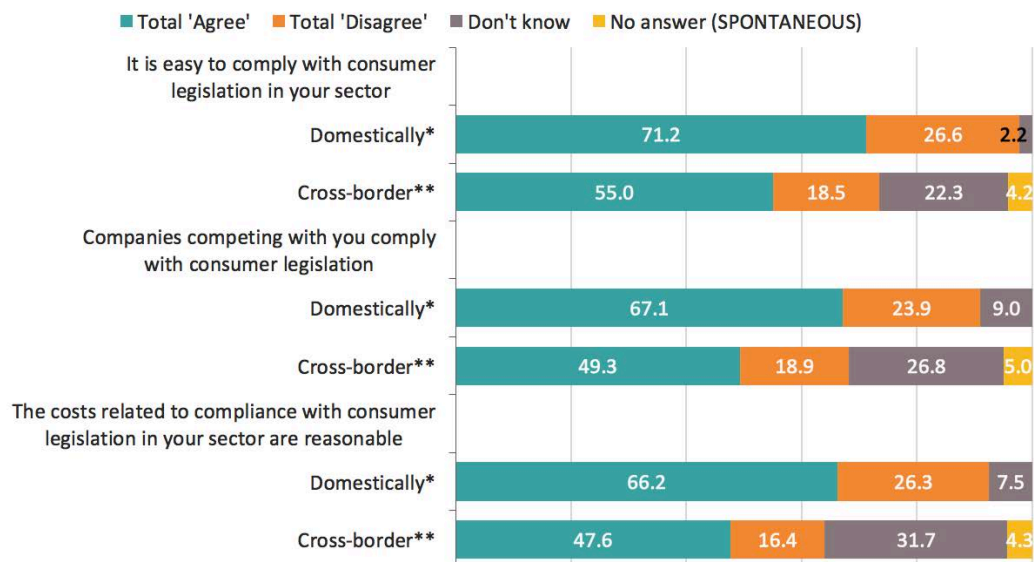
Retailers are most likely to agree it is easy to comply with consumer legislation in their sector in their own country (71.2%), with one in five strongly agreeing (20.8%). For retailers that sell cross-border to other EU countries, the majority also agrees it is easy to comply with consumer legislation for their sector in other EU countries (55.0%), although only 11.6% strongly agree.

More than two-thirds of retailers (67.1%) agree their competitors comply with consumer legislation in their own country, with 15.6% strongly agreeing. Amongst retailers that sell to other EU countries, 49.3% agree companies competing with them in other EU countries comply with consumer legislation, with only 9.7% strongly agreeing.

Two-thirds of retailers (66.2%) agree the costs of compliance with consumer legislation in their sector are reasonable, with 15.4% saying they strongly agree. Nearly half (47.6%) of retailers who sell in other EU countries agree costs related to compliance with consumer legislation are reasonable in other EU countries.

It is worth pointing out that there is a much higher level of uncertainty about compliance when it comes to other EU countries, with at least one in five retailers that sell in these countries unable to answer each question.

**Q10Q11** I will read you similar statements about compliance with consumer legislation. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each of them:  
(% - EU)



\* Base: Retailers in EU Member States (n=10,437).

\*\* Base: Retailers who sell cross-border within the EU (n=3,287).

Retailers in EU15 countries are significantly more likely to agree their domestic competitors comply with consumer legislation (69.8%), while those in NMS13 countries are significantly more likely to agree companies competing with them in other EU countries comply with consumer legislation (55.6%).

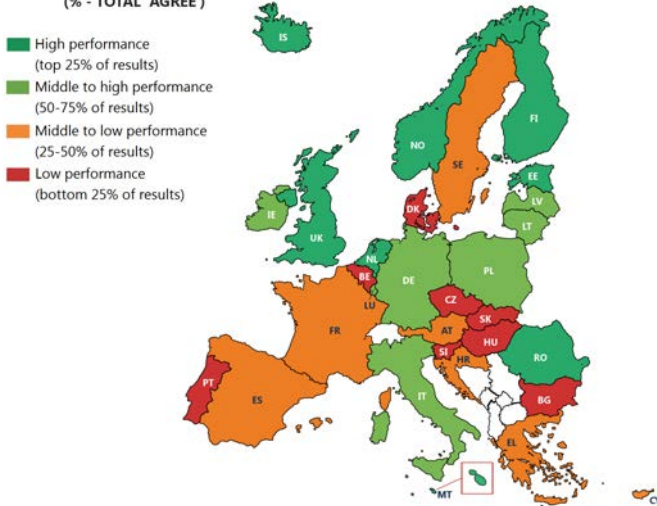
Retailers outside the eurozone are significantly more likely to agree that the costs of compliance with domestic consumer legislation in their sector are reasonable (69.4%).

The results are quite similar when looking at the results based on the total number of people employed. The level of agreement with each statement is slightly higher than when looking at company level - both for domestic consumer legislation and for

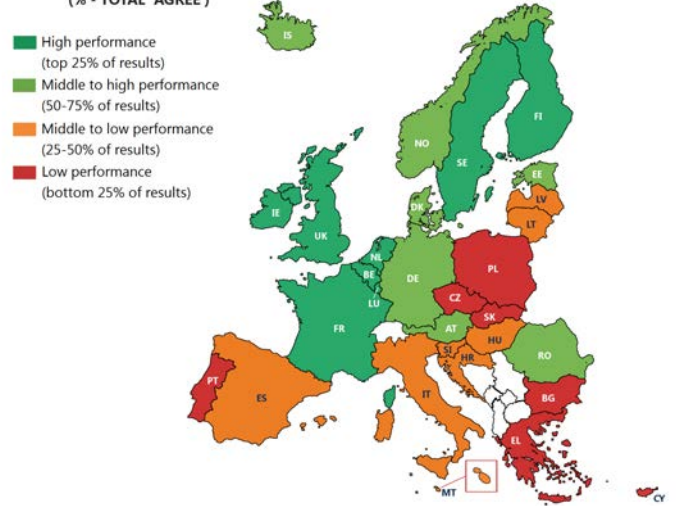
legislation in other EU countries. However, agreement is still higher for questions about domestic consumer legislation than for cross-border legislation.

The regional analysis shows retailers in the eastern region are statistically significantly less likely to agree it is easy to comply with consumer legislation in their sector. Those in the western and northern regions are statistically significantly more likely to agree competitors in their country comply with consumer legislation, while companies in the south and east are statistically significantly less likely to do so. Companies in the north are also statistically significantly more likely to agree the costs of compliance are reasonable, while those in the south are statistically significantly less likely to do so.

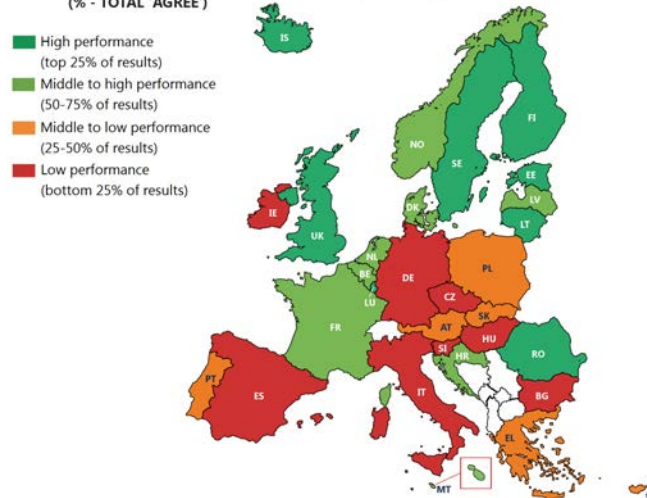
**Q10.2** I will read you three statements about compliance with consumer legislation in (OUR COUNTRY). Please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each of them:  
**It is easy to comply with consumer legislation in your sector**  
 (% - TOTAL 'AGREE')



**Q10.1** I will read you three statements about compliance with consumer legislation in (OUR COUNTRY). Please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each of them:  
**Your competitors comply with consumer legislation**  
 (% - TOTAL 'AGREE')



**Q10.3** I will read you three statements about compliance with consumer legislation in (OUR COUNTRY). Please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each of them:  
**The costs of compliance with consumer legislation in your sector are reasonable**  
 (% - TOTAL 'AGREE')



Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

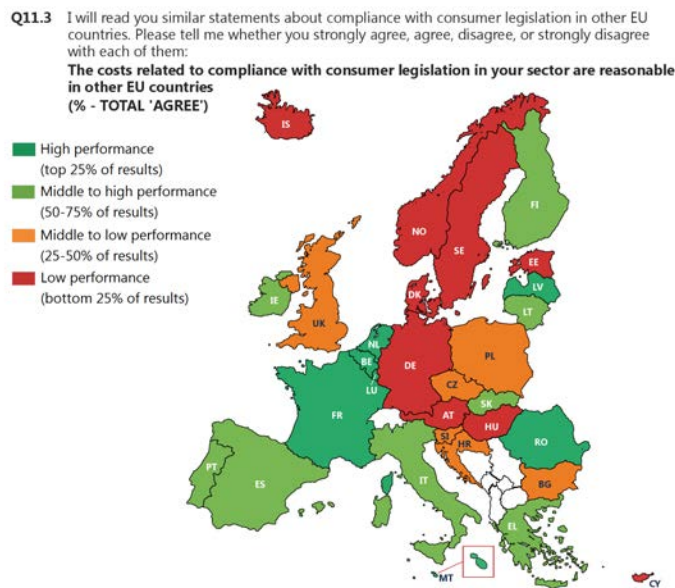
The majority of retailers in all countries agree it is easy to comply with consumer legislation in their sector in their country. At country level within the EU, around eight in ten retailers in Estonia (85.9%) agree with this statement. Outside the EU, also about eight in ten retailers in Norway (82.9%) and Iceland (79.6%) agree with it. At the other end of the scale, retailers in the Czech Republic (51.2%), Slovenia (55.6%) and Hungary (56.2%) are the least likely to say so, but even in these countries the majority agrees.

In all but two countries most retailers agree their competitors comply with consumer legislation. Retailers in Ireland (82.9%), the United Kingdom (78.8%) and France (77.2%) are the most likely to agree with it. The exceptions are retailers in Bulgaria (44.5%), Poland (48.4%), but even there almost half agree.

In all but three countries at least six in ten retailers agree the costs of compliance with consumer legislation in their sector are reasonable. More than eight in ten retailers in Luxembourg (81%) agree with this idea, as do 77.7% in Finland and 76.7% in Estonia. The exceptions are the Czech Republic (53.8%), Hungary (58.2%) and Spain (59%), but even in these three countries the majority of retailers agree.

b) Compliance perceptions, in other EU countries

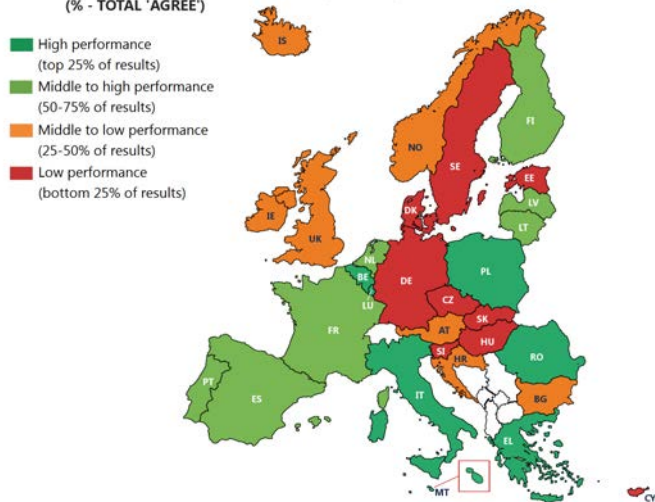
Companies in the southern region are statistically significantly more likely to agree with each statement about compliance, while those in the north are statistically significantly less likely to do so. Retailers in the east are statistically significantly more likely to agree companies competing with them in other EU countries comply with consumer legislation, while those in the west are statistically significantly less likely to agree. Retailers in the west are also statistically significantly less likely to agree it is easy to comply with consumer legislation in their sector in other EU countries.



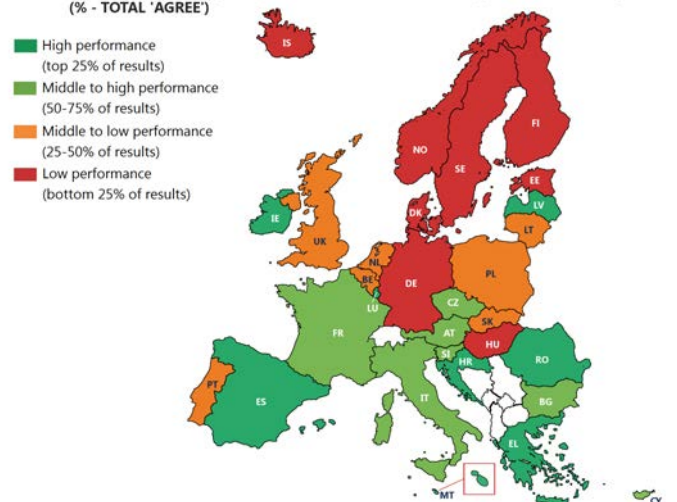
Base: Retailers who sell cross-border within the EU (n=3,287).

In 19 countries at least half of all retailers that sell in other EU countries agree the costs related to compliance with consumer legislation in their sector are reasonable in other EU countries. Retailers in Luxembourg (73.5%), Belgium (67.2%) and Latvia (66.8%) agree with this statement. Conversely, this answer is named the least by retailers in Germany (30.3%), Sweden (32.6%) and Cyprus (33.1%)<sup>15</sup>.

**Q11.2** I will read you similar statements about compliance with consumer legislation in other EU countries. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each of them:  
**It is easy to comply with consumer legislation in your sector in other EU countries (% - TOTAL 'AGREE')**



**Q11.1** I will read you similar statements about compliance with consumer legislation in other EU countries. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each of them:  
**Companies competing with you in other EU countries comply with consumer legislation (% - TOTAL 'AGREE')**



Base: Retailers who sell cross-border within the EU (n=3,287).

In 21 countries, the majority of retailers that sell in other EU countries agree it is easy to comply with consumer legislation in their sector in other EU countries. More than seven in ten retailers in Italy (72.6%), Romania (71.5%) and Belgium (71.4%) agree with this statement. At the opposite end of the scale, retailers in Sweden (30.3%), Hungary (40.1%) and Denmark (41.9%) are the least likely to agree.

In 22 countries, the majority of retailers that sell in other EU countries agree companies competing with them in other EU countries comply with consumer legislation. Nearly three quarters of retailers in Malta (73.0%) agree, as do 72.2% in Luxembourg (72.2%) and 70.6% in Latvia. On the other hand, within the EU retailers in Germany (34.1%) and Hungary (34.3%) are the least likely to agree, although those in Norway (31.8%) are the least likely amongst the interviewed.

Across the EU, there has been a small increase in the proportion of retailers that agree domestic competitors comply with consumer legislation (+2.4pp). At country level, retailers in Croatia (+11.5pp) are now significantly more likely to agree than in 2014.

The largest increase in the proportion of retailers that agree companies competing with them in other EU countries comply with consumer legislation is observed in Luxembourg (+27.9pp), while the largest decline is seen in Slovakia (-12.7pp).

<sup>15</sup> Results for the following countries are based on a very small sample (less than 100 observations) and should therefore be considered as mainly indicative: Iceland (n=33), Finland (n=39), Cyprus (n=41), Norway (n=48), Malta (n=53), Luxembourg (n=54), Poland (n=67), Romania (n=67), Sweden (n=68), the United Kingdom (n=76), Estonia (n=92) and France (n=98). The same sample sizes apply to Q11.1, Q11.2 and Q11.3.

**Q10Q11.1** I will read you three statements about compliance with consumer legislation. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each of them:  
**Companies competing with you comply with consumer legislation**  
 (% - TOTAL 'AGREE')

		'Domestically*		Cross-border**	
		2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014
EU28		67.1	▲ 2.4	49.3	▼ 2.2
EUROZONE		67.2	▲ 2.2	48.8	▼ 2.2
EU15		69.8	▲ 2.6	48.1	▼ 2.3
EU13		54.0	▼ 10.8	55.6	▲ 3.8
REGION NORTH		71.1	▲ 4.3	36.3	▲ 3.6
REGION EAST		54.1	▲ 2.6	55.4	▼ 2.2
REGION SOUTH		55.6	▲ 4.7	59.7	▼ 3.2
REGION WEST		74.4	▼ 0.3	44.6	▼ 1.4
BE		72.9	▼ 2.0	53.4	▼ 3.9
BG		44.5	▲ 3.1	59.8	▲ 5.0
CZ		53.5	▼ 1.9	56.5	▼ 0.7
DK		64.4	▲ 2.2	35.6	▲ 0.5
DE		71.2	▼ 3.6	34.1	▼ 8.6
EE		68.1	▲ 6.2	46.3	▲ 5.3
IE		82.9	▲ 8.4	65.5	▲ 5.2
EL		53.9	▲ 4.6	68.9	▼ 7.1
ES		57.6	▲ 5.9	60.5	▼ 2.3
FR		77.2	▲ 6.8	58.0	▲ 13.7
HR		58.2	▲ 11.5	62.3	▲ 6.6
IT		54.9	▲ 5.1	57.2	▼ 4.2
CY		50.7	▼ 0.8	55.8	▼ 3.0
LV		56.5	▼ 6.0	70.6	▼ 4.8
LT		54.1	▲ 3.7	53.2	▼ 7.2
LU		75.7	▲ 2.2	72.2	▲ 27.9
HU		58.5	▲ 2.8	34.3	▼ 6.7
MT		56.9	▼ 3.6	73.0	▲ 13.4
NL		73.0	▼ 1.5	51.3	▲ 8.0
AT		69.9	▲ 1.3	55.8	▲ 18.1
PL		48.4	▲ 5.1	52.4	▼ 1.9
PT		51.0	▲ 2.3	54.6	▲ 1.7
RO		63.5	▲ 4.1	69.8	▼ 10.3
SI		57.1	▲ 6.5	55.0	▲ 6.8
SK		51.4	▼ 1.2	50.4	▼ 12.7
FI		75.3	▲ 0.8	46.3	▲ 4.7
SE		72.7	▲ 4.9	35.0	▲ 9.9
UK		78.8	▲ 0.2	50.2	▼ 6.3
IS		65.7	▼ 1.8	38.6	▼ 12.8
NO		65.3	▼ 5.8	31.8	▼ 11.5

	Results significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)
	Results significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)
	Positive evolutions significant from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)
	Negative evolutions significant from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

\* Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).  
 \*\* Base: Retailers who sell cross-border within the EU (n=3,287).

The EU level trend analysis shows a small but significant drop in the proportion of retailers that agree it is easy to comply with consumer legislation in their sector in their country (-1.6pp).

At a country level, the largest increase in the proportion of companies that agree it is easy to comply with domestic consumer legislation in their sector is observed in Estonia (+6.8pp); the largest decrease is found amongst those in the Czech Republic (-8.4pp). Retailers in Luxembourg recorded the highest increase in the proportion that agree it is easy to comply with consumer legislation in their sector in other EU countries (+18.4pp). During the same period the proportion of retailers in Romania that agree has declined statistically significantly (-14.9pp).

**Q10Q11.2** I will read you three statements about compliance with consumer legislation. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each of them:  
It is easy to comply with consumer legislation in your sector  
(% - TOTAL 'AGREE')

		'Domestically*		Cross-border**	
		2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014
EU28		71.2	▼ 1.6	55.0	▼ 2.0
EUROZONE		71.3	▼ 0.8	55.8	▼ 1.5
EU15		72.1	▼ 1.8	54.6	▼ 2.1
EU13		66.8	▼ 5.1	56.4	▼ 0.1
REGION NORTH		68.9	▼ 2.0	39.0	▲ 1.6
REGION EAST		66.7	▼ 0.7	56.5	▼ 2.5
REGION SOUTH		70.4	▲ 0.5	67.2	▲ 0.3
REGION WEST		73.0	▼ 3.0	51.0	▼ 2.5
BE		67.9	▼ 1.1	71.4	▲ 7.7
BG		67.3	▲ 0.2	59.8	▼ 1.6
CZ		51.2	▼ 8.4	48.0	▼ 4.9
DK		65.4	▼ 2.6	41.9	▲ 1.9
DE		72.1	▼ 4.8	42.5	▼ 9.5
EE		85.9	▲ 6.8	42.2	▲ 4.6
IE		72.5	▲ 1.3	59.9	▼ 4.6
EL		69.2	▲ 2.1	67.7	▼ 7.6
ES		70.8	▲ 1.9	63.6	▼ 1.3
FR		70.2	▲ 4.3	62.4	▲ 13.4
HR		69.1	▲ 6.4	54.1	▼ 5.1
IT		72.2	▼ 2.4	72.6	▲ 1.4
CY		70.4	▲ 1.9	48.3	▲ 3.5
LV		71.4	▼ 5.3	60.1	▼ 9.9
LT		71.9	▲ 1.1	63.5	▼ 1.3
LU		71.5	▼ 6.1	71.3	▲ 18.4
HU		56.2	▼ 7.3	40.1	▼ 13.2
MT		73.9	▲ 8.3	67.2	▲ 18.4
NL		76.5	▼ 0.3	62.5	▲ 6.7
AT		68.6	▼ 3.2	59.6	▲ 15.3
PL		71.9	▲ 4.8	70.3	▲ 12.6
PT		62.9	▲ 5.9	60.4	▼ 1.3
RO		75.7	▲ 0.1	71.5	▼ 14.9
SI		55.6	▲ 1.8	48.0	▲ 5.4
SK		57.1	▼ 6.8	48.3	▼ 7.2
FI		74.8	▼ 3.1	60.2	▲ 3.0
SE		68.3	▼ 1.4	30.3	▲ 4.1
UK		76.1	▼ 8.2	50.9	▼ 9.3
IS		79.6	▼ 1.6	58.8	▼ 6.1
NO		82.9	▲ 4.8	51.7	▼ 4.6

Results significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Results significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Positive evolutions significant from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)  
 Negative evolutions significant from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

\* Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

\*\* Base: Retailers who sell cross-border within the EU (n=3,287).





Since 2014, the proportion of EU retailers that agree costs related to compliance with consumer legislation in their sector are reasonable domestically has slightly decreased (-1.1pp) at EU28 level, although not statistically significantly. At country level, companies in Portugal recorded the largest increase in the proportion that agree the costs of compliance with domestic consumer legislation in their sector are reasonable (+9.1pp), while the biggest decrease is amongst retailers in Hungary (-9.2pp).

The proportion of EU retailers that agree costs related to compliance with consumer legislation in their sector are reasonable in other EU countries has fallen since 2014 (-4.0pp). At a country level, retailers in Malta (+24.4pp) are now significantly more likely to agree with this and those in Cyprus (-28.0pp) are significantly less likely.

**Q10Q11.3** I will read you three statements about compliance with consumer legislation. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each of them:  
**The costs related to compliance with consumer legislation in your sector are reasonable**  
 (% - TOTAL 'AGREE')

	'Domestically*		Cross-border**	
	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014
EU28	66.2	▼ 1.1	47.6	▼ 4.0
EUROZONE	64.6	▼ 0.9	47.4	▼ 3.4
EU15	66.4	▼ 1.0	47.0	▼ 4.0
EU13	65.0	▼ 1.9	50.5	▼ 1.0
REGION NORTH	74.2	=	38.0	▼ 7.0
REGION EAST	65.0	▼ 1.6	50.7	▼ 4.7
REGION SOUTH	61.8	▲ 2.1	56.8	▼ 2.2
REGION WEST	67.4	▼ 2.6	43.9	▼ 3.8
BE	71.7	▼ 2.2	67.2	▲ 2.8
BG	61.0	▲ 3.1	49.6	▲ 0.8
CZ	53.8	▲ 6.5	49.8	▼ 0.5
DK	71.5	▲ 1.3	38.3	▼ 5.9
DE	61.5	▼ 6.5	30.3	▼ 9.8
EE	76.7	▲ 0.6	35.8	▲ 2.3
IE	62.3	▼ 1.8	54.9	▼ 6.9
EL	65.5	▼ 3.7	54.1	▼ 17.4
ES	59.0	▲ 1.2	56.6	▼ 2.1
FR	71.6	▲ 6.3	61.3	▼ 7.3
HR	67.2	▲ 7.7	50.1	▼ 0.4
IT	62.7	▲ 2.1	58.3	=
CY	65.3	▲ 1.4	33.1	▼ 28.0
LV	70.5	▼ 6.1	66.8	▼ 3.0
LT	76.2	▲ 3.9	53.1	▼ 14.8
LU	81.0	▼ 0.2	73.5	▲ 11.4
HU	58.2	▼ 9.2	36.4	▼ 9.6
MT	70.9	▼ 1.7	61.7	▲ 24.4
NL	71.2	▼ 1.4	64.4	▲ 10.3
AT	65.2	▲ 0.4	45.7	▲ 12.5
PL	65.4	▲ 3.8	50.4	▼ 2.8
PT	66.9	▲ 9.1	56.9	▲ 2.0
RO	73.9	▼ 4.2	62.7	▼ 18.4
SI	62.2	▲ 2.1	51.4	▲ 4.3
SK	63.8	▼ 1.9	53.5	▼ 7.1
FI	77.7	▼ 2.3	58.8	▼ 5.8
SE	74.0	▼ 1.6	32.6	▼ 6.6
UK	74.0	▼ 3.0	50.9	▼ 7.3
IS	76.6	▲ 4.5	41.6	▼ 14.8
NO	67.9	▼ 2.1	44.1	▼ 8.0

	Results significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)
	Results significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)
	Positive evolutions significant from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)
	Negative evolutions significant from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)



\* Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

\*\* Base: Retailers who sell cross-border within the EU (n=3,287).

The analysis of company characteristics for factors relating to domestic consumer legislation shows a range of statistically significant differences:

Companies that agree it is easy to comply with consumer legislation in their sector are statistically significantly more likely to belong to sector N - administrative and support service activities (80.7%), sector S – other service activities (76.7%), or sector G – trade (73.6%). They are also statistically significantly more likely to sell non-food products (73.7%).

They are less likely to belong to sector K – financial and insurance service activities (63.0%), or sector H – transporting and storage (64.3%). They are also less likely to sell food products (68.9%) or to sell in 4 languages or more (65.7%).

Retailers that agree their competitors comply with consumer legislation are statistically significantly more likely to:

- o belong to sector K - financial and insurance activities (77.4%) or the trade sector (NACE G) (70.1%), and less likely to belong to sector S – other service activities (50.8%) or sector H – transporting and storage (56.3%);
- o be medium (71.7%) or large (77.5%) sized companies;
- o sell non-food products: 71.2%;
- o sell online (70.3%), and less likely not to make distance sales (65.3%);
- o be companies where the respondent is a general manager: 69.7%.

Companies that agree the costs of compliance with consumer legislation in their sector are reasonable are most likely to be found amongst those that:

- o belong to sector N - administrative and support service activities: 77.0%, and least likely amongst retailers that belong to sector K – financial and insurance service activities (59.3%);
- o are medium-sized: 70.2%;
- o were established most recently (2000-2016): 69.1%, and least likely amongst companies created before 1990 (63.5%);
- o sell non-food products (69.4%).

The analysis of company characteristics (for companies that sell in other EU countries) for factors relating to consumer legislation in other EU countries shows the following statistically significant differences.

Retailers that agree it is easy to comply with consumer legislation in their sector in other EU countries are more likely to sell in three (60.7%), or four or more languages (67.4%), or to sell online to other EU countries (60.5%). However, they are less likely to have been created between 1990 and 1999 (50.6%)

Retailers that agree companies competing with them in other EU countries comply with consumer legislation are more likely to:

- o belong to sector I - accommodation and food service activities: 53.7%, but less likely to be in the trade sector (44.9%);

- o sell in three (56.3%), or four or more languages (61.0%) and less likely to sell only in their country's language (43.7%);
- o sell online to other EU countries: 52.9%, and less likely not to sell to other EU countries (38.3%);

Companies that agree the costs related to compliance with consumer legislation in their sector are reasonable in other EU countries are more likely to:

- o belong to sector J - information and communication (57.0%) or sector I - accommodation and food service activities (52.4%). In fact, overall, service companies are significantly more likely to agree (50.8%), while trade companies are significantly less likely to do so (42.2%). The exception amongst service retailers are those in sector N – administrative and support services (34.8%);
- o be the largest companies: 61.0%;
- o sell in three (56.8%) or four or more languages (62.3%) and less likely to sell only in their country's language (43.1%);
- o sell food products: 53.7%;
- o sell online to other EU countries: 52.6%.

### 2.3. Enforcement of consumer and product safety regulation

Retailers were asked their opinions about the monitoring and enforcement of consumer and product safety legislation by a range of authorities and other bodies. For this, they were asked whether or not they agreed with five statements shown in the graph below.

#### a) Enforcement of consumer legislation and product safety legislation

As in previous topics, an aggregate index was calculated to observe the level to which retailers agree that consumer and product safety legislation is enforced in their country. The index is built upon their response in terms of agreement or disagreement with five statements<sup>16</sup>. The index measures the level of agreement in a percentage scale, where 100% means agreement with all five statements. On average, a company in the EU agrees with slightly more than three of the five (62.0%) statements related to the monitoring and enforcement of consumer and product safety legislation in their own country. This rate of agreement varies from one statement to the other, on the one hand, and across regions and countries, on the other hand.

The overall rate of agreement is higher amongst countries in the North (66.3%) and West (65.8%) regions, and lower in the South (57.5%) and East (52.6%).

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<sup>16</sup> The answers used to compute this index are those to the five items of Q8 (respectively about enforcement of consumer legislation by public authorities, NGOs, self-regulatory bodies and the media, as well as enforcement of product safety legislation by public authorities). Each respondent was assigned a score of 1 per item when answered that they "agree" or "strongly agree" with the statement. EC2\_r is calculated at the level of country averages (see table on page 66). It is important to note that Q8.5 (on enforcement of product safety legislation by public authorities) has been asked only to retailers that sell non-food products. Therefore, the average level of agreement amongst this subgroup of retailers was used for the calculation of the average score in the composite index for all retailers in one country.

More specifically, the highest average rates can be observed in France (78.7%), Ireland (75.8%) and Finland (74.8%), and the lowest in Poland (43.2%), Bulgaria (45.3%) and Croatia (46.4%). With respect to the figures in 2014, the largest increase within the EU is recorded in Malta (+15.1pp) while the largest decrease can be seen in Romania (-4.1pp), although a larger decrease is observed in Norway (-8.7pp).

EC2\_r Enforcement of consumer and product safety legislation  
(AVERAGE RATE OF AGREEMENT - %)

	2016	2016-2014	2014-2012	2012-2011	2016-2011
EU28	62.0	▲ 0.1	▼ 5.0	▲ 3.5	▼ 1.4
EUROZONE	61.6	▲ 0.9	▼ 4.3	▲ 3.5	▲ 0.1
EU15	63.9	▲ 0.4	▼ 4.7	▲ 4.0	▼ 0.3
NMS13	52.7	▼ 9.1	▲ 2.0	▲ 0.8	▼ 6.3
REGION NORTH	66.3	▲ 2.1	▼ 4.9	▲ 7.3	▲ 4.5
REGION EAST	52.6	▼ 0.6	▼ 6.6	▲ 0.5	▼ 6.7
REGION SOUTH	57.5	▲ 4.2	▼ 6.8	▲ 2.9	▲ 0.3
REGION WEST	65.8	▼ 1.9	▼ 3.7	▲ 3.9	▼ 1.7
BE	72.3	▲ 2.2	▲ 1.1	▼ 1.5	▲ 1.8
BG	45.3	▼ 1.6	▼ 11.2	▲ 2.9	▼ 9.9
CZ	48.6	▲ 2.3	▼ 5.7	▲ 0.2	▼ 3.6
DK	59.4	▼ 4.1	▼ 6.8	▲ 6.3	▼ 4.6
DE	56.8	▼ 2.0	▼ 4.7	▲ 5.8	▼ 0.9
EE	52.3	▼ 2.3	▲ 3.7	▲ 12.5	▲ 13.9
IE	75.8	▲ 2.3	▼ 2.8	▲ 7.0	▲ 6.5
EL	49.3	▼ 1.0	▼ 0.7	▼ 0.8	▲ 2.5
ES	52.5	▲ 3.1	▼ 13.0	▲ 6.1	▼ 3.8
FR	78.7	▲ 5.0	▲ 0.6	▲ 3.6	▲ 9.2
HR	46.4	▲ 1.5	▼ 8.1	N.A	N.A
IT	63.1	▲ 4.5	▼ 1.7	▲ 1.7	▲ 4.5
CY	53.5	▼ 2.5	▲ 0.3	▲ 6.2	▲ 4.0
LV	51.1	▼ 3.8	▲ 1.6	▲ 1.0	▼ 1.2
LT	61.1	▲ 7.0	▼ 5.3	▲ 0.8	▲ 2.5
LU	72.0	▲ 6.5	▼ 7.0	▲ 17.2	▲ 16.7
HU	66.3	▼ 4.1	▲ 0.2	▲ 6.6	▲ 2.7
MT	71.7	▲ 15.1	▼ 3.5	▲ 11.8	▲ 23.4
NL	66.6	▼ 0.1	▼ 2.6	▼ 4.4	▼ 7.1
AT	58.0	▼ 0.7	▼ 7.3	▲ 3.6	▼ 4.4
PL	43.2	▲ 3.6	▼ 12.5	▼ 1.3	▼ 10.2
PT	64.3	▲ 8.2	▼ 12.5	▼ 1.9	▼ 6.2
RO	66.2	▼ 4.3	▼ 4.6	▼ 2.5	▼ 11.4
SI	54.4	▲ 4.3	▼ 7.2	▲ 9.3	▲ 6.4
SK	51.3	▲ 0.5	▼ 4.4	▼ 4.9	▼ 8.8
FI	74.8	▲ 1.3	▼ 0.1	▲ 2.0	▲ 3.2
SE	66.2	▲ 7.1	▼ 4.9	▲ 12.6	▲ 14.8
UK	73.1	▼ 4.0	▼ 6.4	▲ 3.3	▼ 7.1
IS	57.1	▲ 9.8	▼ 7.6	▲ 5.1	▲ 7.3
NO	69.2	▼ 8.7	▲ 6.4	▲ 2.3	=

Results statistically significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Results statistically significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Statistically significant increase from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)  
 Statistically significant decrease from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

- At least two thirds of all retailers agree public authorities actively monitor and ensure compliance with product safety legislation and consumer legislation in their sector –

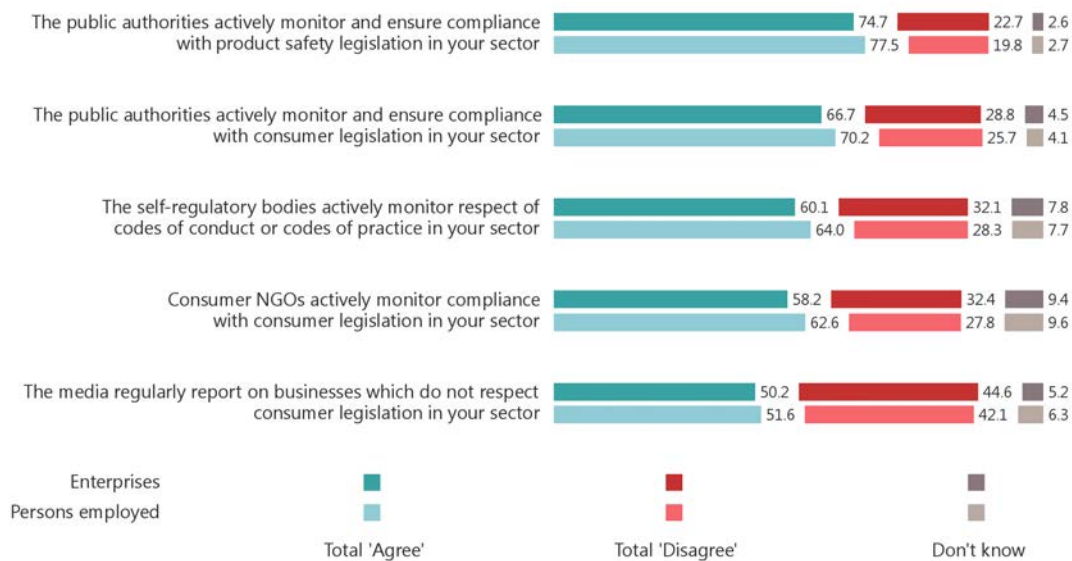
Nearly three quarters of companies (74.7%) agree public authorities actively monitor and ensure compliance with product safety legislation in their sector, while two-thirds (66.7%) agree public authorities actively monitor and ensure compliance with consumer legislation in their sector.

Six in ten companies (60.1%) agree self-regulatory bodies actively monitor respect of codes of conduct or codes of practice in their sector. Almost as many (58.2%) agree consumer NGOs actively monitor compliance with consumer legislation.

Finally, half of all companies (50.2%) agree the media regularly report on businesses which do not respect consumer legislation in their sector.

The analysis based on total persons employed shows the same overall pattern of results, although a slightly higher proportion agrees with each statement.

**Q8** Please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each of the following statements.  
In (OUR COUNTRY):  
(% - EU)



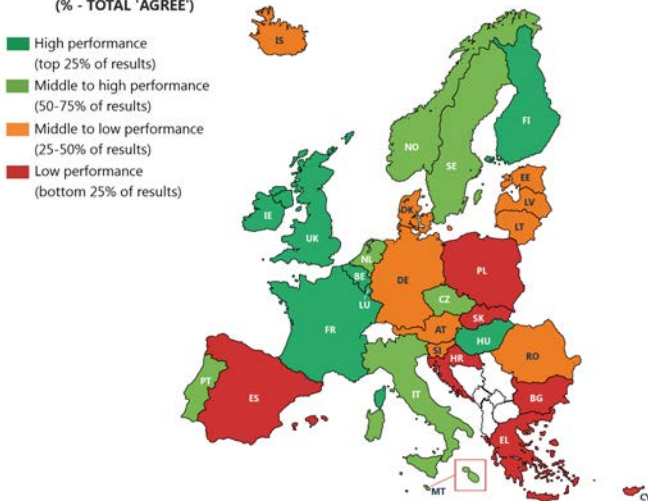
Base: Retailers in EU Member States (n=10,437), except the first item "The public authorities actively monitor and ensure compliance with product safety legislation in your sector", which was asked only to retailers in the EU selling non-food products (n=4,459)

Retailers in EU15 countries are significantly more likely to agree with each of these five statements, while those in NMS13 countries are significantly less likely to agree. For example, 76.8% of retailers in EU15 countries agree public authorities actively monitor and ensure compliance with product safety legislation, compared to 64.8% of those in NMS13 countries.

Companies outside the eurozone are significantly more likely to agree public authorities actively monitor and ensure compliance with consumer legislation (68.7%), or that self-regulatory bodies actively monitor respect of codes of conduct or codes of practice (63.6%).

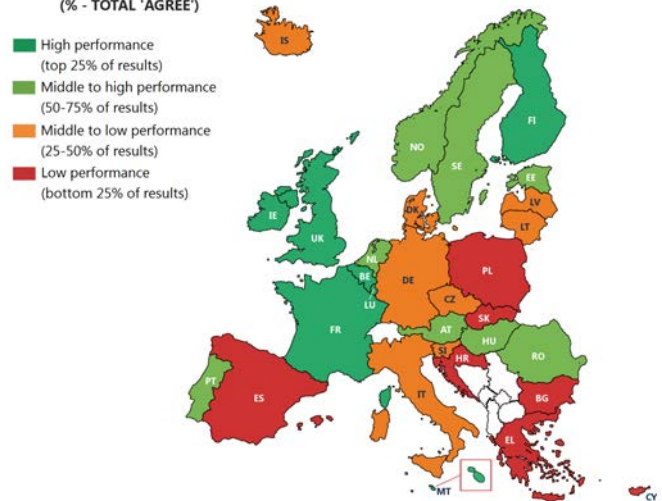
Retailers in the northern and western regions of the EU are significantly more likely to agree that each of these bodies monitor and in some cases ensure compliance in their country. The exception is for consumer NGOs, where only those in the west are significantly more likely to agree. Retailers in the eastern region are significantly less likely to agree that each of these bodies monitors and/or ensures compliance, while those in the south are significantly less likely to agree public authorities actively monitor and ensure compliance with product safety legislation or consumer legislation, or that the media regularly report on businesses which do not respect consumer legislation.

**Q8.5** Please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each of the following statements. In (OUR COUNTRY):  
**The public authorities actively monitor and ensure compliance with product safety legislation in your sector**  
 (% - TOTAL 'AGREE')



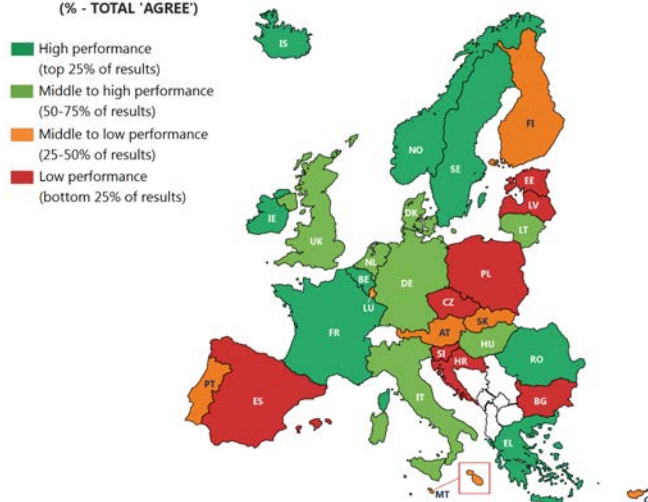
Base: Retailers selling non-food products (n=4,745)

**Q8.1** Please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each of the following statements. In (OUR COUNTRY):  
**The public authorities actively monitor and ensure compliance with consumer legislation in your sector**  
 (% - TOTAL 'AGREE')



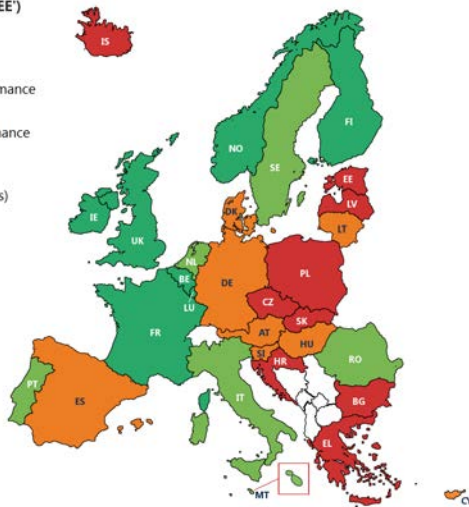
Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988)

**Q8.4** Please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each of the following statements. In (OUR COUNTRY):  
**The media regularly report on businesses which do not respect consumer legislation in your sector**  
 (% - TOTAL 'AGREE')



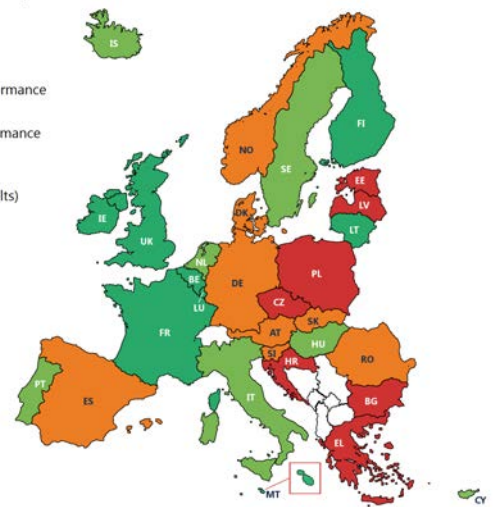
**Q8.3** Please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each of the following statements. In (OUR COUNTRY):  
**The self-regulatory bodies actively monitor respect of codes of conduct or codes of practice in your sector**  
 (% - TOTAL 'AGREE')

- High performance (top 25% of results)
- Middle to high performance (50-75% of results)
- Middle to low performance (25-50% of results)
- Low performance (bottom 25% of results)



**Q8.2** Please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each of the following statements. In (OUR COUNTRY):  
**Consumer NGOs actively monitor compliance with consumer legislation in your sector**  
 (% - TOTAL 'AGREE')

- High performance (top 25% of results)
- Middle to high performance (50-75% of results)
- Middle to low performance (25-50% of results)
- Low performance (bottom 25% of results)



Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988)

In all countries, most retailers agree public authorities actively monitor and ensure compliance with product safety legislation in their sector. This varies from more than eight in ten companies in Finland (88.9%), France (88.7%) and the United Kingdom (87.5%) to just over half in Poland (50.5%), Greece (51.1%) and Cyprus (59.3%)<sup>17</sup>.

Since 2014, the proportion of EU retailers that agree with this statement has slightly increased (+1.1pp) at EU28 level, although not statistically significantly. At country level, the largest increase in the proportion that agrees public authorities actively monitor and ensure compliance with product safety legislation in their sector can be seen amongst retailers in Croatia (+12.7pp), a reversal of the 2012-2014 trend (-23.9pp). No statistically significant decrease in agreement with this statement is observed amongst retailers in any EU Member State, although it is in Norway (-9.4pp).

<sup>17</sup> Results for the following countries are based on a very small sample (less than 100 observations) and should therefore be considered as mainly indicative: Iceland (n=73), Cyprus (n=52), Malta (n=73) and Luxembourg (n=74).

**Q8.5** Please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each of the following statements. In (OUR COUNTRY):  
**The public authorities actively monitor and ensure compliance with product safety legislation in your sector (% - TOTAL 'AGREE')**

	2016	2016-2014	2014-2012	2012-2011	2016-2011
EU28	74.7	▲ 1.1	▼ 7.6	▲ 3.3	▼ 3.2
EUROZONE	74.3	▲ 1.9	▼ 7.9	▲ 4.1	▼ 1.9
EU15	76.8	▲ 1.3	▼ 7.0	▲ 4.0	▼ 1.7
EU13	64.8	▼ 8.9	▼ 1.1	▼ 1.3	▼ 11.3
REGION NORTH	79.0	▲ 2.5	▼ 7.9	▲ 4.7	▼ 0.7
REGION EAST	64.7	▼ 0.2	▼ 10.1	▼ 1.3	▼ 11.6
REGION SOUTH	67.5	▲ 6.0	▼ 13.5	▲ 5.7	▼ 1.8
REGION WEST	79.1	▼ 1.1	▼ 4.6	▲ 2.6	▼ 3.1
BE	84.0	▲ 1.3	▲ 0.5	▼ 1.3	▲ 0.5
BG	61.4	▲ 5.7	▼ 15.7	▲ 1.8	▼ 8.2
CZ	72.1	▲ 6.9	▼ 2.0	▼ 1.5	▲ 3.4
DK	71.0	▼ 5.0	▼ 7.0	▲ 1.2	▼ 10.8
DE	71.3	▼ 2.5	▼ 7.4	▲ 6.2	▼ 3.7
EE	69.3	▲ 0.4	▼ 2.4	▲ 5.0	▲ 3.0
IE	82.6	▲ 2.1	▲ 4.6	▲ 1.9	▲ 8.6
EL	51.1	▼ 2.7	▼ 8.6	▲ 0.6	▼ 10.7
ES	64.5	▲ 7.1	▼ 22.4	▲ 8.7	▼ 6.6
FR	88.7	▲ 8.1	▼ 5.2	▲ 0.5	▲ 3.4
HR	61.9	▲ 12.7	▼ 23.9	N.A.	N.A.
IT	72.0	▲ 5.8	▼ 9.8	▲ 9.4	▲ 5.4
CY	59.3	▲ 4.0	▼ 5.0	▼ 6.6	▼ 7.6
LV	66.6	▼ 1.1	▼ 6.3	▲ 3.5	▼ 3.9
LT	66.4	▼ 3.5	▼ 0.6	▼ 3.1	▼ 7.2
LU	85.6	▲ 4.0	▼ 7.0	▲ 20.7	▲ 17.7
HU	83.9	▲ 1.6	▼ 4.9	▲ 3.4	▲ 0.1
MT	79.5	▲ 7.9	▲ 1.6	▲ 6.1	▲ 15.6
NL	78.5	▼ 3.0	▲ 2.0	▼ 6.2	▼ 7.2
AT	69.1	▼ 7.7	▼ 7.1	▲ 0.1	▼ 14.7
PL	50.5	▲ 1.0	▼ 17.7	▲ 0.6	▼ 16.1
PT	75.0	▲ 8.9	▼ 7.0	▼ 10.2	▼ 8.3
RO	70.6	▼ 7.7	▼ 9.8	▼ 4.6	▼ 22.1
SI	71.5	▲ 3.9	▼ 9.4	▲ 2.9	▼ 2.6
SK	65.2	▲ 4.3	▼ 12.0	▼ 3.2	▼ 10.9
FI	88.9	▲ 0.4	▼ 0.4	▲ 5.6	▲ 5.6
SE	78.3	▲ 8.4	▼ 12.6	▲ 15.6	▲ 11.4
UK	87.5	▲ 0.7	▼ 3.7	▲ 0.3	▼ 2.7
IS	71.8	▲ 17.0	▼ 15.0	▲ 7.6	▲ 9.6
NO	78.7	▼ 9.4	▲ 4.4	▲ 6.6	▲ 1.6

Results significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
Results significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
Positive evolutions significant from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)  
Negative evolutions significant from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

Base: Retailers selling non-food products (n=4,745)

In all but three countries, most retailers agree public authorities actively monitor and ensure compliance with consumer legislation in their sector, with those in Finland (83.9%), France (83.5%) and Malta (83.3%) the most likely to agree. The exceptions are retailers in Poland (43.5%), Croatia (46.5%) and Bulgaria (48.5%).

At EU level, retailers are now more likely to agree with this than in 2014 (+1.3pp), a reversal of the 2012-2014 trend (-9.9pp). At a country level, retailers in Malta show the largest increase in agreement with this statement since 2014 (+24.2pp), a reversal of the 2012-2014 trend (-12.1pp). On the other hand, retailers in Norway are now significantly less likely to agree with it than they were in 2014 (-9.5pp), while no statistically significant decrease is recorded amongst retailers in any EU Member State.

**Q8.1** Please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each of the following statements. In (OUR COUNTRY):  
**The public authorities actively monitor and ensure compliance with consumer legislation in your sector**  
 (% - TOTAL 'AGREE')

		2016	2016-2014	2014-2012	2012-2011	2011-2010	2010-2009	2016-2009
EU28		66.7	▲ 1.3	▼ 9.9	▲ 4.2	▲ 1.2	▼ 4.1	▼ 7.3
EUROZONE		65.8	▲ 2.5	▼ 10.3	▲ 3.7	▼ 0.6	▼ 4.5	▼ 9.2
EU15		68.4	▲ 1.8	▼ 9.6	▲ 4.5	▲ 0.4	▼ 3.7	▼ 6.6
EU13		58.4	▼ 7.3	▼ 4.3	▲ 3.4	▲ 4.1	▼ 5.6	▼ 9.7
REGION NORTH		72.4	▲ 2.4	▼ 9.5	▲ 13.2	▲ 2.9	▼ 14.3	▼ 5.3
REGION EAST		58.2	▼ 0.8	▼ 11.2	▲ 3.1	▲ 4.5	▼ 5.4	▼ 9.8
REGION SOUTH		60.1	▲ 5.6	▼ 11.2	▲ 1.6	▼ 3.3	▼ 5.4	▼ 12.7
REGION WEST		71.0	▼ 0.7	▼ 8.9	▲ 4.8	▲ 2.1	▼ 2.2	▼ 4.9
BE		78.4	▼ 1.3	▼ 1.3	▼ 1.0	▲ 20.3	▼ 18.0	▼ 1.3
BG		48.5	▲ 1.1	▼ 15.3	▲ 8.4	▼ 8.0	▲ 5.5	▼ 8.3
CZ		59.8	▲ 7.1	▼ 5.7	▼ 3.4	▲ 6.0	▼ 14.5	▼ 10.5
DK		65.4	▼ 3.1	▼ 13.2	▲ 10.4	▼ 3.8	▼ 7.5	▼ 17.2
DE		61.3	▲ 0.6	▼ 14.0	▲ 7.8	▼ 2.5	▼ 3.6	▼ 11.7
EE		71.9	▼ 3.4	▲ 1.8	▲ 15.6	▼ 5.1	▼ 1.4	▲ 7.5
IE		81.6	▲ 3.8	▼ 7.3	▲ 12.0	▼ 8.0	▼ 1.2	▼ 0.7
EL		51.2	▲ 3.2	▼ 4.1	▼ 1.9	▲ 3.9	▼ 2.2	▼ 1.1
ES		53.9	▲ 4.7	▼ 18.3	▲ 5.0	▼ 6.8	▼ 2.0	▼ 17.4
FR		83.5	▲ 6.6	▼ 4.5	▲ 0.9	▲ 0.5	▲ 1.9	▲ 5.4
HR		46.5	▼ 0.3	▼ 13.5	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A
IT		66.4	▲ 4.9	▼ 5.4	▲ 0.6	▼ 4.0	▼ 7.8	▼ 11.7
CY		55.4	▼ 5.4	▼ 0.4	▲ 6.5	▼ 3.0	▼ 12.2	▼ 14.5
LV		66.4	▼ 0.7	▲ 0.2	▼ 2.8	▲ 9.7	▼ 12.8	▼ 6.4
LT		62.8	▲ 5.7	▼ 15.7	▲ 5.2	▲ 7.2	▲ 2.4	▲ 4.8
LU		83.0	▲ 4.7	▼ 2.6	▲ 10.3	▲ 15.3	▼ 29.7	▼ 2.0
HU		77.0	▼ 4.4	▼ 3.6	▲ 12.0	▼ 1.9	▼ 2.5	▼ 0.4
MT		83.3	▲ 24.2	▼ 12.1	▲ 16.0	▼ 5.7	▼ 23.6	▼ 1.2
NL		69.1	▼ 1.2	▼ 3.7	▼ 5.5	▲ 16.9	▼ 10.9	▼ 4.4
AT		68.2	▲ 3.2	▼ 17.7	▲ 4.9	▼ 0.9	▼ 3.3	▼ 13.8
PL		43.5	▼ 1.2	▼ 15.2	▲ 2.1	▼ 4.9	▲ 8.7	▼ 10.5
PT		68.7	▲ 10.9	▼ 15.8	▼ 7.6	▲ 10.0	▼ 13.1	▼ 15.6
RO		71.8	▼ 3.1	▼ 12.6	▼ 0.2	▲ 21.3	▼ 14.8	▼ 9.4
SI		60.6	▲ 6.4	▼ 14.2	▲ 13.4	▼ 5.1	▼ 17.6	▼ 17.1
SK		55.9	▼ 0.7	▼ 9.4	▼ 1.6	▲ 17.9	▼ 25.1	▼ 18.9
FI		83.9	▲ 1.8	▼ 2.3	▲ 10.4	▼ 7.7	▲ 0.9	▲ 3.1
SE		71.3	▲ 7.0	▼ 8.2	▲ 18.0	▲ 10.7	▼ 26.8	▲ 0.7
UK		79.4	▼ 5.0	▼ 4.9	▲ 5.5	▲ 8.1	▲ 1.2	▲ 4.9
IS		62.6	▲ 7.0	▼ 3.4	▲ 4.5	▼ 4.9	▼ 11.1	▼ 7.9
NO		74.8	▼ 9.5	▼ 2.9	▲ 10.1	▼ 2.9	▼ 3.4	▼ 2.8

Results significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Results significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Positive evolutions significant from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)  
 Negative evolutions significant from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988)

In 20 countries, the majority of retailers agree self-regulatory bodies actively monitor respect of codes of conduct or codes of practice in their sector. Retailers in Ireland (80.7%), Finland (79.8%) and the United Kingdom (77.2%) are the most likely to agree, while those in the Czech Republic (33.8%) and Latvia (41%) are the least likely to do so in the EU. Outside the EU, retailers in Iceland (40.7%) are amongst the most likely. Even so, these results still represent a considerable proportion of retailers.

Since 2014, the proportion of EU28 retailers that agree with this statement has slightly increased (+1.2pp), although not statistically significantly. The country trend analysis shows the largest increase in the proportion of companies that agree occurred in



Luxembourg (+12.6pp), and this is also a reversal of the trend from 2012-2014 when agreement decreased by 16.4pp. Since 2014, no statistically significant decrease in agreement is observed in any EU Member State, although it is the case amongst retailers in Norway (-8.5pp).

**Q8.3** Please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each of the following statements. In (OUR COUNTRY):

The self-regulatory bodies actively monitor respect of codes of conduct or codes of practice in your sector (% - TOTAL 'AGREE')

	2016	2016-2014	2014-2012	2012-2011	2011-2010	2010-2009	2016-2009
EU28	60.1	▲ 1.2	▼ 4.7	▲ 6.0	▲ 3.4	▼ 9.3	▼ 3.4
EUROZONE	58.5	▲ 1.2	▼ 4.9	▲ 6.5	▲ 1.2	▼ 8.9	▼ 4.9
EU15	62.4	▲ 1.4	▼ 4.6	▲ 6.7	▲ 2.5	▼ 9.9	▼ 3.9
EU13	49.4	▼ 9.1	▲ 4.7	▲ 2.6	▲ 8.8	▼ 6.1	▲ 0.9
REGION NORTH	66.0	▲ 5.6	▼ 1.1	▲ 11.5	▲ 3.9	▼ 15.5	▲ 4.4
REGION EAST	49.1	▲ 1.2	▼ 5.6	▲ 2.2	▲ 8.8	▼ 5.7	▲ 0.9
REGION SOUTH	57.8	▲ 5.8	▼ 9.4	▲ 1.7	▲ 1.1	▼ 8.5	▼ 9.3
REGION WEST	63.7	▼ 1.5	▼ 2.6	▲ 8.3	▲ 3.2	▼ 10.1	▼ 2.7
BE	72.0	▲ 2.8	▲ 0.2	▲ 6.5	▲ 20.9	▼ 25.6	▲ 4.8
BG	44.9	▼ 0.2	▼ 9.5	▲ 4.8	▼ 5.3	▲ 27.5	▲ 17.3
CZ	33.8	▲ 2.4	▼ 6.3	▲ 1.2	▼ 1.4	▼ 18.9	▼ 23.0
DK	58.4	▲ 3.2	▼ 2.4	▲ 13.9	▼ 2.8	▼ 15.4	▼ 3.5
DE	49.7	▼ 1.6	▼ 5.4	▲ 12.6	▼ 1.0	▼ 6.8	▼ 2.2
EE	44.0	▼ 6.7	▼ 19.8	▲ 17.8	▼ 23.3	▲ 2.2	▲ 9.8
IE	80.7	▲ 7.0	▼ 5.7	▲ 11.8	▼ 8.8	▼ 5.0	▼ 0.7
EL	46.2	▼ 2.6	▲ 2.7	▲ 4.3	▲ 6.2	▼ 15.7	▼ 5.1
ES	55.9	▲ 6.7	▼ 15.5	▲ 5.0	▲ 2.1	▼ 4.3	▼ 6.0
FR	75.8	▲ 3.4	▲ 4.9	▲ 2.3	▲ 4.2	▼ 8.3	▲ 6.5
HR	46.7	▼ 4.6	▼ 3.2	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A
IT	60.6	▲ 6.0	▼ 5.3	▼ 1.5	▼ 3.4	▼ 8.1	▼ 12.3
CY	53.2	▼ 5.3	▲ 3.7	▲ 15.3	▲ 1.8	▼ 18.8	▼ 3.3
LV	41.0	▼ 6.9	▲ 6.0	▲ 5.4	▲ 9.5	▼ 16.1	▼ 2.1
LT	56.6	▲ 9.6	▼ 3.8	▲ 0.7	▲ 13.5	▲ 2.8	▲ 22.8
LU	72.8	▲ 12.6	▼ 16.4	▲ 17.6	▲ 20.6	▼ 41.4	▼ 7.0
HU	58.6	▼ 1.0	▲ 6.0	▲ 7.6	▲ 13.7	▼ 11.4	▲ 14.9
MT	70.6	▲ 4.6	▲ 0.7	▲ 18.4	▲ 24.1	▼ 47.0	▲ 0.8
NL	70.9	▲ 2.9	▼ 0.4	▲ 5.0	▲ 13.0	▼ 19.0	▲ 1.5
AT	54.8	▲ 1.9	▼ 8.3	▲ 16.7	▼ 4.1	▼ 1.0	▲ 5.2
PL	44.6	▲ 9.1	▼ 19.5	▲ 1.0	▲ 4.3	▲ 6.8	▲ 1.7
PT	64.8	▲ 9.2	▼ 16.1	▼ 3.0	▲ 11.7	▼ 21.7	▼ 19.9
RO	68.6	▼ 4.5	▼ 2.0	▼ 2.4	▲ 27.4	▼ 16.1	▲ 2.4
SI	51.9	▲ 6.2	▼ 4.9	▲ 14.4	▼ 13.8	▼ 14.7	▼ 12.8
SK	42.4	▲ 1.1	▼ 3.6	▼ 4.0	▲ 13.3	▼ 25.2	▼ 18.4
FI	79.8	▲ 6.3	▼ 4.5	▲ 6.0	▼ 0.9	▲ 8.9	▲ 15.8
SE	64.4	▲ 5.6	▲ 2.1	▲ 11.5	▲ 12.1	▼ 25.7	▲ 5.6
UK	77.2	▼ 3.6	▼ 3.3	▲ 4.5	▲ 12.6	▼ 13.1	▼ 2.9
IS	40.7	▲ 1.9	▲ 6.5	▼ 5.7	▼ 4.5	▼ 7.5	▼ 9.3
NO	75.4	▼ 8.5	▲ 5.1	▲ 3.2	▼ 0.1	▼ 7.3	▼ 7.6

▲ Results significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
▼ Results significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
▲ Positive evolutions significant from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)  
▼ Negative evolutions significant from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988)

In 13 countries, more than half of all companies agree consumer NGOs actively monitor compliance with consumer legislation in their sector, with those in Finland (79.1%), France (79%) and Luxembourg (75.8%) the most likely to do so. At the other end of the scale, 41.0% of companies in Bulgaria and Estonia, and 41.6% in Croatia say the same – although these are still relatively high proportions.

The proportion of EU retailers that agree consumer NGOs actively monitor compliance with consumer legislation in their sector has fallen slightly since the last survey (-2.4pp).

At a country level, retailers in Malta are now significantly more likely to agree than they were in 2014 (+26.6pp), while those in Hungary (-8.4pp), within the EU, and in Norway (-8.9pp) are more likely to disagree. In fact, in Norway this represents a reversal of the previous positive trend from 2012-2014 (+13.7pp).

**Q8.2** Please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each of the following statements. In (OUR COUNTRY):  
**Consumer NGOs actively monitor compliance with consumer legislation in your sector**  
 (% - TOTAL 'AGREE')

	2016	2016-2014	2014-2012	2012-2011	2011-2010	2010-2009	2016-2009
EU28	58.2	▼ 2.4	▼ 1.6	▲ 8.0	▲ 2.7	▼ 11.2	▼ 4.5
EUROZONE	58.6	▼ 2.5	=	▲ 8.3	=	▼ 11.5	▼ 5.7
EU15	60.0	▼ 2.6	▼ 1.2	▲ 8.6	▲ 2.2	▼ 12.2	▼ 5.2
EU13	49.4	▼ 11.2	▲ 7.0	▲ 4.9	▲ 6.0	▼ 5.4	▲ 1.3
REGION NORTH	60.0	▲ 0.4	▲ 0.7	▲ 10.7	▲ 9.1	▼ 20.8	▲ 0.1
REGION EAST	49.1	▼ 1.3	▼ 3.1	▲ 4.6	▲ 6.0	▼ 4.9	▲ 1.3
REGION SOUTH	58.1	▼ 1.4	▼ 1.0	▲ 8.1	▼ 2.7	▼ 12.5	▼ 9.5
REGION WEST	60.6	▼ 3.4	▼ 1.5	▲ 8.8	▲ 3.6	▼ 11.3	▼ 3.8
BE	70.5	▲ 0.9	▲ 3.8	▲ 6.0	▲ 24.4	▼ 34.2	▲ 0.9
BG	41.0	▼ 3.7	▼ 4.1	▲ 7.5	▼ 7.2	▲ 21.4	▲ 13.9
CZ	41.8	▼ 2.7	▼ 3.3	▲ 3.8	▼ 0.3	▼ 13.4	▼ 15.9
DK	50.2	▼ 7.9	▼ 1.9	▲ 13.8	▲ 11.7	▼ 33.3	▼ 17.6
DE	50.5	▼ 2.3	▼ 1.0	▲ 9.2	▲ 2.2	▼ 10.6	▼ 2.5
EE	41.0	▼ 1.2	▼ 1.5	▲ 20.0	▼ 20.3	▼ 2.1	▼ 5.1
IE	72.9	▼ 0.4	▼ 1.4	▲ 12.6	▼ 14.0	▼ 4.2	▼ 7.4
EL	42.7	▼ 4.6	▼ 1.9	▲ 1.0	▲ 0.3	▼ 15.1	▼ 20.3
ES	53.6	▼ 4.8	▼ 6.9	▲ 10.4	▼ 1.5	▼ 7.5	▼ 10.3
FR	79.0	▲ 1.8	▲ 10.1	▲ 10.2	▼ 7.4	▼ 3.9	▲ 10.8
HR	41.6	▼ 5.9	▲ 1.0	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A
IT	64.5	▼ 0.5	▲ 7.4	▲ 6.1	▼ 7.0	▼ 15.1	▼ 9.1
CY	56.3	▼ 2.9	▲ 0.1	▲ 22.4	▼ 3.7	▼ 14.7	▲ 1.2
LV	46.3	▼ 6.8	▲ 10.6	▲ 5.3	▲ 9.5	▼ 14.0	▲ 4.6
LT	66.6	▲ 8.2	=	▲ 6.1	▲ 8.0	▼ 1.0	▲ 21.3
LU	75.8	▲ 7.8	▲ 1.2	▲ 18.7	▲ 3.3	▼ 21.6	▲ 9.4
HU	60.8	▼ 8.4	▲ 11.4	▲ 2.8	▲ 17.5	▼ 10.7	▲ 12.6
MT	74.2	▲ 26.6	▼ 7.1	▲ 16.0	▲ 22.8	▼ 53.1	▲ 5.2
NL	60.4	▼ 1.8	▼ 13.6	▼ 0.1	▲ 24.9	▼ 22.7	▼ 13.3
AT	54.2	▲ 0.8	▼ 7.8	▲ 12.3	▲ 1.3	▼ 11.1	▼ 4.5
PL	48.3	▲ 7.8	▼ 13.2	▲ 6.1	▼ 3.8	▲ 8.1	▲ 5.0
PT	64.6	▲ 4.5	▼ 12.8	▲ 9.6	▲ 9.8	▼ 21.2	▼ 10.1
RO	51.4	▼ 5.2	▼ 3.6	▲ 0.2	▲ 22.9	▼ 14.3	=
SI	53.9	▲ 3.3	▼ 8.4	▲ 20.4	▼ 14.0	▼ 15.5	▼ 14.2
SK	50.9	▼ 1.4	▲ 1.4	▼ 4.7	▲ 14.5	▼ 24.5	▼ 14.7
FI	79.1	▲ 0.7	▲ 1.5	▲ 5.3	▲ 1.2	▲ 0.5	▲ 9.2
SE	57.4	▲ 7.9	▲ 3.6	▲ 9.3	▲ 8.6	▼ 18.5	▲ 10.9
UK	66.5	▼ 5.1	▼ 8.8	▲ 8.2	▲ 13.4	▼ 12.7	▼ 5.0
IS	55.0	▲ 6.1	▼ 5.1	▲ 11.4	▼ 12.9	▲ 2.8	▲ 2.3
NO	53.5	▼ 8.9	▲ 13.7	▼ 3.0	▲ 0.5	▼ 12.6	▼ 10.3

Results significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
Results significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
Positive evolutions significant from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)  
Negative evolutions significant from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988)

In 16 countries, at least half of all companies agree the media regularly report on businesses which do not respect consumer legislation in their sector. Companies in Romania (68.6%) and France (66.6%), within the EU, as well as in Norway (63.8%) are the most likely to agree, while those in Poland (29.2%), Bulgaria (30.9%) and Slovenia (34.1%) are the least likely to do so.

Since 2014, the proportion of EU retailers that agree with this statement has very slightly decreased (-0.4pp) at EU28 level, although not statistically significantly. The country level trend shows the largest increase in the proportion of companies that agree occurred amongst retailers in Lithuania (+14.9pp), within the EU, and in Iceland (+17.1pp) outside the EU. In addition, this represents a reversal of the positive trend observed in the last wave (+21.1pp). The largest decrease can be observed amongst retailers in Bulgaria (-10.6pp). In fact, agreement has been declining in Bulgaria since 2011, and this is also the case in Denmark.

**Q8.4** Please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each of the following statements. In (OUR COUNTRY):

The media regularly report on businesses which do not respect consumer legislation in your sector  
(% - TOTAL 'AGREE')

	2016	2016-2014	2014-2012	2012-2011	2011-2010	2010-2009	2016-2009
EU28	50.2	▼ 0.4	▼ 1.3	▼ 4.3	▼ 1.3	▼ 6.6	▼ 13.9
EUROZONE	50.7	▲ 1.1	▲ 1.6	▼ 4.8	▼ 2.6	▼ 7.0	▼ 11.7
EU15	52.0	=	▼ 0.9	▼ 4.0	▼ 2.0	▼ 7.2	▼ 14.1
EU13	41.8	▼ 8.6	▲ 3.7	▼ 6.0	▲ 2.7	▼ 3.6	▼ 11.8
REGION NORTH	54.0	▼ 0.6	▼ 6.8	▼ 3.6	▲ 4.9	▼ 11.8	▼ 17.9
REGION EAST	41.7	▼ 2.0	▼ 3.2	▼ 6.1	▲ 2.9	▼ 3.3	▼ 11.7
REGION SOUTH	44.2	▲ 4.7	▲ 0.9	▼ 2.3	▼ 7.0	▼ 5.1	▼ 8.8
REGION WEST	54.5	▼ 2.9	▼ 1.0	▼ 4.7	▼ 0.6	▼ 7.8	▼ 17.0
BE	56.8	▲ 7.2	▲ 2.2	▼ 17.4	▲ 16.5	▼ 7.7	▲ 0.8
BG	30.9	▼ 10.6	▼ 11.4	▼ 8.4	▲ 1.2	▼ 5.3	▼ 34.5
CZ	35.7	▼ 2.6	▼ 11.0	▼ 0.9	▲ 2.4	▼ 5.5	▼ 17.6
DK	51.9	▼ 7.6	▼ 9.4	▼ 7.7	▲ 0.2	▼ 7.9	▼ 32.4
DE	51.1	▼ 4.0	▲ 4.3	▼ 6.8	▼ 0.7	▼ 10.2	▼ 17.4
EE	35.3	▼ 0.3	▲ 0.5	▲ 4.0	▼ 8.5	▼ 16.1	▼ 20.4
IE	61.2	▼ 1.0	▼ 4.5	▼ 3.3	▼ 9.1	▲ 0.4	▼ 17.5
EL	55.3	▲ 1.3	▲ 8.5	▼ 8.0	▼ 5.3	▼ 9.0	▼ 12.5
ES	34.5	▲ 1.6	▼ 2.0	▲ 1.8	▼ 13.2	▲ 2.0	▼ 9.8
FR	66.6	▲ 4.9	▼ 1.7	▲ 3.7	▼ 6.4	▼ 3.1	▼ 2.6
HR	35.2	▲ 5.6	▼ 0.9	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A
IT	51.8	▲ 6.5	▼ 4.7	▼ 6.1	▼ 3.7	▼ 8.3	▼ 6.9
CY	43.1	▼ 2.7	▲ 3.3	▼ 6.6	=	▼ 11.8	▼ 17.8
LV	35.2	▼ 3.3	▼ 2.8	▼ 6.2	▲ 3.5	▼ 13.5	▼ 22.3
LT	53.2	▲ 14.9	▼ 6.5	▼ 4.8	▲ 7.8	▼ 3.4	▲ 8.0
LU	42.8	▲ 3.0	▼ 10.2	▲ 18.9	▼ 14.5	▲ 4.3	▲ 1.5
HU	51.4	▼ 8.6	▼ 7.8	▲ 7.4	▼ 3.9	▼ 6.3	▼ 19.2
MT	50.7	▲ 12.1	▼ 1.0	▲ 2.8	▼ 13.9	▼ 4.7	▼ 4.7
NL	54.1	▲ 2.6	▲ 2.2	▼ 14.9	▲ 13.0	▼ 16.9	▼ 14.0
AT	43.8	▼ 1.2	▲ 4.0	▼ 15.8	▲ 2.0	▼ 10.7	▼ 21.7
PL	29.2	▲ 1.1	▲ 3.0	▼ 15.9	▼ 10.2	▲ 11.8	▼ 10.2
PT	48.3	▲ 7.3	▼ 10.7	▲ 1.9	▼ 0.1	▼ 20.1	▼ 21.5
RO	68.6	▼ 1.0	▲ 5.0	▼ 5.6	▲ 22.7	▼ 5.2	▲ 15.9
SI	34.1	▲ 1.7	▲ 1.1	▼ 4.5	▼ 13.5	▼ 17.0	▼ 32.2
SK	42.3	▼ 0.6	▲ 1.2	▼ 11.2	▲ 7.4	▼ 16.4	▼ 19.6
FI	42.2	▼ 3.2	▲ 5.6	▼ 17.6	▼ 0.3	▲ 2.6	▼ 12.9
SE	59.6	▼ 6.2	▼ 9.6	▲ 8.8	▼ 7.5	▼ 21.1	▼ 8.2
UK	54.7	▼ 6.9	▼ 11.6	▼ 2.0	▲ 1.9	▼ 6.5	▼ 25.1
IS	55.6	▲ 17.1	▼ 21.1	▲ 8.1	▼ 7.2	▼ 3.5	▼ 6.6
NO	63.8	▼ 7.0	▲ 5.3	▼ 5.1	▼ 0.4	▼ 3.5	▼ 10.7

Results significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
Results significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
Positive evolutions significant from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)  
Negative evolutions significant from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988)

Statistically significantly higher proportions of retailers who agree public authorities actively monitor and ensure compliance with consumer legislation are:

- o retailers belonging to sector K - financial and insurance activities (76.5%) or sector I - accommodation and food service activities (72.0%), while retailers belonging to sector S – other service activities (53.0%), sector H – transporting and storage activities (55.2%) or sector J – information and communication service activities (55.5%) are less likely to agree to this;
- o medium sized retailers: 71.6%;
- o companies selling food products (74.2%), while the proportion is lower amongst retailers selling services (65.0%).

Likelihood to agree consumer NGOs actively monitor compliance with consumer legislation in their sector is statistically significantly higher amongst:

- o companies from the trade sector (NACE G): 60.4%, and it is lower amongst those the services sector (56.6%). This is the case specifically for retailers in sector S – other service activities (44.7%), sector J – information and communication service activities (51.5%) and sector H – transporting and storage (53.9%);
- o medium (64.6%) or large retailers (65.5%);
- o companies selling non-food products: 62.8%.

Statistically significantly higher proportions of companies that agree self-regulatory bodies actively monitor respect of codes of conduct or codes of practice are:

- o retailers belonging to sector K (68.2%), sector I (63.3%) or the trade sector (61.9%), and lower proportions agree on it amongst retailers in sector S (44.0%), sector J (50.9%), sector H (53.8%) and sector L (55.6%);
- o medium sized companies: 67.0%;
- o companies selling food products (68.2%) or non-food products (62.5%), while the proportion is statistically significantly lower amongst retailers of services (58.0%).

Likelihood to agree public authorities actively monitor and ensure compliance with product safety legislation in their sector is statistically significantly higher amongst:

- o companies belonging to sector N - administrative and support service activities (95.8%) or sector I (84.5%), and lower amongst companies in sector J (64.3%);
- o medium sized companies: 79.9%;
- o companies selling food products: 83.1%.

The proportion of companies that agree the media regularly report on businesses which do not respect consumer legislation in their sector is statistically significantly higher amongst:

- o companies belonging to sector K (56.5%) or sector I (54.6%), while lower amongst retailers in sector H (28.0%), sector S (32.9%), sector J (42.3%) and sector H (44.5%);
- o companies selling food products (56.5%), and lower amongst retailers selling services (48.4%);
- o companies where the respondent is a general manager: 52.8%.

b) Additional measures from public authorities to insure product safety

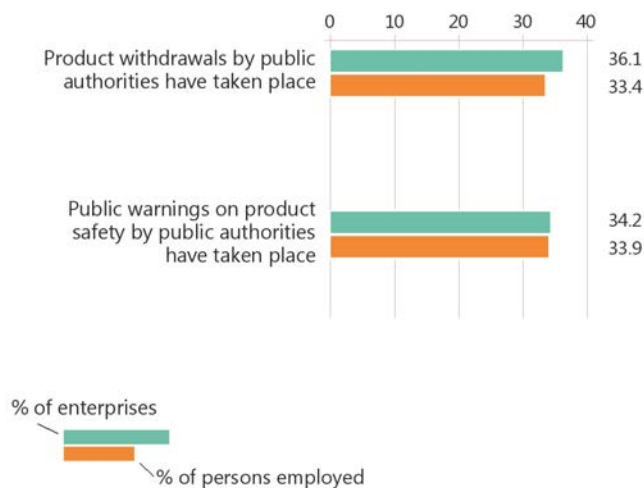
Retailers that sell non-food products were also asked whether any product warnings or product withdrawals had taken place in their sector last 24 months.

- Less than four in ten companies say that product withdrawals by public authorities have taken place -

Just over a third of companies (36.1%) say that product withdrawals by public authorities have taken place – this represents 33.4% of the total number of people employed.

Almost as many retailers (34.2%) say public warnings on product safety by public authorities have taken place in their sector in the last 24 months. This represents 33.9% of the total persons employed.

**E6rE7r** With regard to product safety, please tell me whether any of the following has taken place in your sector in the last 24 months:  
(% - EU)



Base: Retailers in EU Member States selling non-food products (n=4,459)

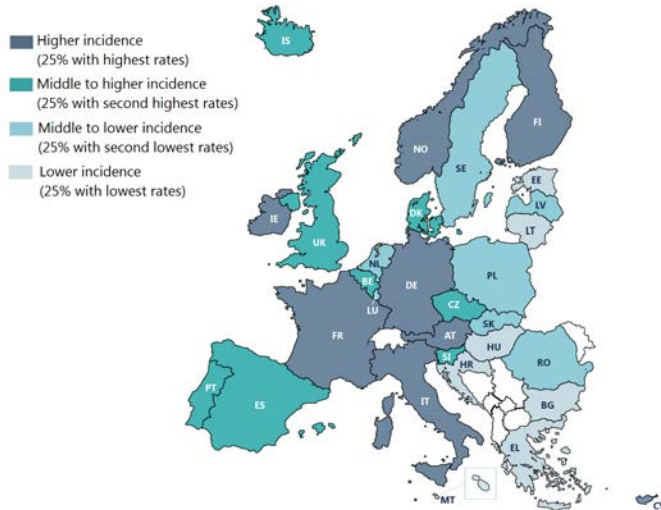
Companies in the eurozone are significantly more likely to say product withdrawals have taken place in the last 24 months (39.0%), while those in NMS13 countries are significantly less likely to say so (25.2%).

Companies outside the eurozone (31.1%) and those in NMS13 countries (25.3%) are significantly less likely to say public warnings have taken place in the last 24 months.

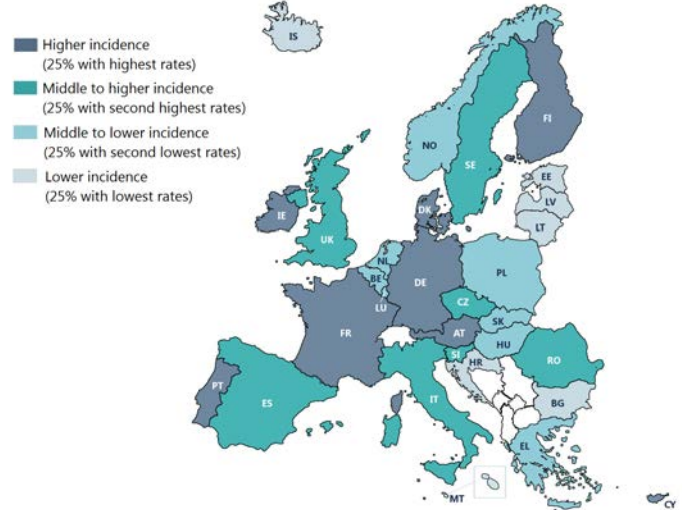
Retailers in the western region are significantly more likely to say product withdrawals by public authorities have taken place in the last 24 months in their country. On the other hand, retailers in the eastern region are significantly less likely to say this.

Retailers in the eastern region are significantly less likely to say public warnings on product safety by public authorities have taken place in the last 24 months in their country.

**E6r** With regard to product safety, please tell me whether any of the following has taken place in your sector in the last 24 months:  
 (% - PRODUCT WITHDRAWALS BY PUBLIC AUTHORITIES HAVE TAKEN PLACE)



**E7r** With regard to product safety, please tell me whether any of the following has taken place in your sector in the last 24 months:  
 (% - PUBLIC WARNINGS ON PRODUCT SAFETY BY PUBLIC AUTHORITIES HAVE TAKEN PLACE)



Base: Retailers in the survey selling non-food products (n=4,745)
































Companies in Ireland (49.7%), France (48.7%) and Poland (28.2%) are the most likely to say that product withdrawals by public authorities have taken place, while those in Estonia (12.4%), Lithuania (12.8%) and Malta (16.6%) are the least likely to say so.





Companies in Austria (43.3%), Portugal (43.1%), and Ireland (41.9%) are the most likely to say public warnings on product safety have occurred, while those in Estonia (8.4%), Lithuania (16.4%) and Bulgaria (19.2%) are the least likely to say this.

Since 2014, the proportion of retailers answering that product withdrawals by public authorities have taken place has slightly increased (+1.9pp) at EU28 level, although not statistically significantly. Similarly, the proportion of retailers answering that public warnings on product safety have occurred has slightly increased (+1.0pp) at EU28 level, although not statistically significantly. The country trend analysis shows companies in Cyprus are much more likely to say product withdrawals by public authorities have occurred (+21.6pp), whilst retailers in Portugal recorded the highest increase in agreement that public warnings on product safety have occurred (+14.1pp).

Companies in Malta recoded the largest decrease in the proportion of retailers that say product withdrawals by public authorities have taken place (-26.1 pp), and in the proportion that say public warnings on product safety have occurred (-18.5pp).

E6\_rE7\_r With regard to product safety, please tell me whether any of the following has taken place in your sector in the last 24 months:  
(%)

	Product withdrawals by public authorities have taken place		Public warnings on product safety by public authorities have taken place	
	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014
EU28 	36.1	▲ 1.9	34.2	▲ 1.0
EUROZONE	39.0	▲ 1.9	35.5	▼ 0.8
EU15	38.3	▲ 2.5	35.9	▲ 1.7
EU13	25.2	▼ 8.0	25.3	▼ 7.3
REGION NORTH	32.1	▲ 5.1	34.5	▲ 6.6
REGION EAST	25.1	▼ 1.2	25.2	▼ 2.6
REGION SOUTH	33.0	▲ 4.0	33.6	▲ 2.0
REGION WEST	40.2	▲ 1.2	36.6	▲ 1.1
BE 	31.6	▲ 3.1	28.0	▼ 3.8
BG 	19.6	▼ 11.2	19.2	▼ 13.0
CZ 	32.6	▲ 9.1	33.6	▲ 5.4
DK 	35.8	▲ 13.2	38.8	▲ 13.6
DE 	43.1	▲ 1.2	38.9	▼ 4.9
EE 	12.4	▼ 2.3	8.4	▼ 4.9
IE 	49.7	▲ 0.7	41.9	▲ 2.1
EL 	22.9	▼ 3.3	22.8	▼ 6.0
ES 	29.8	▲ 2.4	31.5	▼ 0.3
FR 	48.7	▲ 4.1	39.2	▲ 6.6
HR 	20.4	▼ 3.8	20.2	▼ 7.3
IT 	38.1	▲ 4.6	35.8	▲ 2.4
CY 	44.6	▲ 21.6	37.1	▲ 9.3
LV 	25.4	▲ 7.7	20.0	▼ 3.0
LT 	12.8	▲ 2.2	16.4	▲ 2.7
LU 	28.5	▲ 2.0	25.0	▼ 1.3
HU 	21.9	▼ 3.7	22.1	▼ 1.9
MT 	16.6	▼ 26.1	20.4	▼ 18.5
NL 	27.8	▼ 7.1	23.0	▼ 13.6
AT 	38.9	▲ 2.5	43.3	▲ 7.2
PL 	28.2	▼ 2.0	24.3	▼ 1.3
PT 	33.0	▲ 9.4	43.1	▲ 14.1
RO 	25.2	▼ 3.1	31.8	▼ 5.2
SI 	32.9	▲ 4.6	31.1	▲ 8.9
SK 	23.8	▼ 7.0	22.2	▼ 8.1
FI 	42.0	▲ 4.5	39.3	▲ 1.9
SE 	24.0	▼ 6.5	29.1	▼ 0.3
UK 	33.3	▲ 1.5	35.3	▲ 8.2
IS 	31.3	▲ 11.9	19.4	▲ 0.9
NO 	37.0	=	25.0	▼ 2.1

 Results significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Results significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Positive evolutions significant from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)  
 Negative evolutions significant from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

Base: Retailers in the survey selling non-food products (n=4,745)

The analysis of company characteristics shows that for both product withdrawals and public warnings on product safety the same subgroups of retailers are most likely to say they have taken place in their sector: trade companies, those established in 2000 or later, those that also sell food products, and companies where the respondent is a general manager. For example, 43.1% of companies in the trade sector say product withdrawals have taken place, compared to 19.6% in the services sector.

### 3. Complaints and Dispute Resolution

This chapter starts by reviewing retailers’ knowledge about alternative dispute resolution mechanisms. The discussion then moves on to consider retailers’ experiences of customer complaints, including the types of complaints received, and the means consumers use to make complaints.

#### 3.1 Alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms

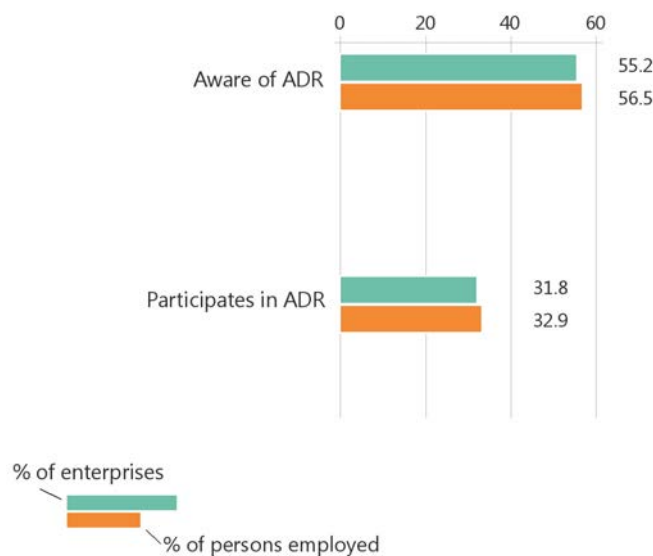
Retailers were asked about their awareness and use of Alternative Dispute Resolution bodies (ADR) for settling disputes with consumers in their own country.

- Only slightly more than half of all retailers are aware of ADR while less than a third participates in ADR -

When asked, at least half of all companies (55.2%) say they are aware of ADR bodies, while almost one third (31.8%) participates in ADR mechanisms. This represents 56.5% and 32.9% respectively of the total persons employed.

More specifically, slightly less than a third (31.8%) are willing or mandated by law to use ADR in connection with consumer complaints, 15.0% are aware of such procedures but say they do not exist in their sector, while 8.4% explicitly declare their unwillingness to use them.

**T1rPC5r** Awareness and participation in ADR mechanisms (% - EU)

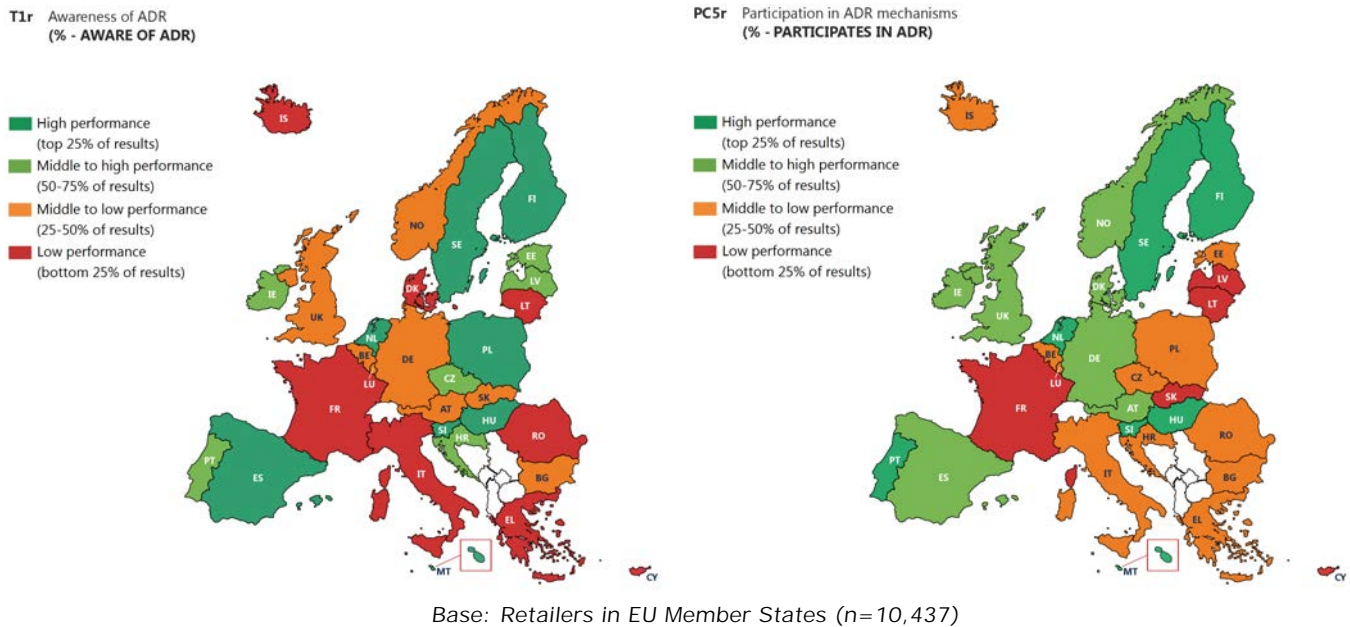


Base: Retailers in EU Member States (n=10,437)



Retailers in NEM13 countries are significantly more likely to be aware of ADR (57.4%), while those outside the eurozone are significantly more likely to participate in ADR mechanisms (33.7%).

Not only are companies in the north significantly more likely to be aware of ADR, they are also significantly more likely to participate in ADR mechanisms. Those in the eastern region, on the other hand, are significantly less likely to do so.



In 22 countries, an absolute majority of retailers say they are aware of ADR, with those in Malta (71.5%), the Netherlands (69.1%) and Hungary (69%) the most likely to be aware. In contrast, only around a third of retailers in Cyprus (30.6%) and Italy (37.5%), as well as in Iceland (28.7%), outside the EU, are aware of ADR bodies.

There are only four Member States where at least half of all retailers participate in ADR mechanisms: Sweden (67.2%), Malta (62.3%), Portugal (52.2%) and Hungary (50.0%). At the other end of the scale, companies in Lithuania (12.3%), Latvia (16.2%) and Cyprus (17.1%) are the least likely to give this answer.

It is interesting to note that awareness and use of ADR bodies are not always positively related. For example, in Sweden (both 67.2%)<sup>18</sup>, Malta (71.5% and 62.3%), Portugal (62.8% and 52.2%) and Norway (51.1% and 40.1%) there is both high awareness and high use of ADR bodies. Meanwhile in Cyprus, awareness of ADR bodies is relatively low (30.6%), but the proportion who participate in ADR is just slightly lower (17.1%), and a similar pattern applies in Italy (37.5% and 21.6%). Outside the EU, this pattern is also observed in Iceland (28.7% and 26.9% respectively).

<sup>18</sup> Please note that in Sweden, this question was formulated in a specific way, which makes results not fully comparable to the other country results.

On the other hand, some countries have high levels of awareness of ADR bodies, but low participation. This is the case in Latvia, where 61.7% are aware but only 16.2% have used ADR mechanisms. The same applies in the Czech Republic, Poland, Croatia, Slovakia and Estonia.

Retailers in the EU are significantly more likely to participate in ADR mechanisms than they were in 2014 (+1.7pp).

At a country level, the highest increase in the proportion of companies aware of ADR is observed amongst retailers in Portugal (+15.9pp), and the largest decrease amongst those in Greece (-19.0pp) and outside the EU, in Iceland (-19.0pp).

Retailers in Portugal also recorded the highest increase in participation in ADR mechanisms (+21.6pp), while the largest declines are observed amongst companies in Estonia (-7.1pp).

T1\_rPCS\_r Awareness and participation in ADR mechanisms (%)

	Aware of ADR		Participates in ADR	
	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014
EU28	55.2	▲ 1.0	31.8	▲ 1.7
EUROZONE	54.5	▲ 0.1	30.9	▲ 0.4
EU15	54.8	▲ 0.8	33.1	▲ 2.1
EU13	57.4	▲ 3.7	25.5	▼ 3.9
REGION NORTH	62.5	▲ 1.1	53.3	▲ 3.2
REGION EAST	57.6	▲ 1.4	25.4	▼ 0.4
REGION SOUTH	54.0	▼ 1.8	32.5	▲ 1.5
REGION WEST	54.4	▲ 1.9	31.9	▲ 2.6
BE	51.3	▼ 0.8	25.1	▼ 5.3
BG	51.0	▼ 0.6	21.5	▼ 5.1
CZ	63.9	▲ 2.1	21.5	▲ 1.1
DK	49.2	▼ 3.0	32.3	▼ 2.9
DE	54.5	▼ 4.3	30.9	▼ 0.9
EE	55.0	▲ 0.9	24.5	▼ 7.1
IE	60.6	▲ 12.0	38.5	▲ 7.3
EL	48.3	▼ 16.0	21.8	▼ 4.1
ES	67.5	▼ 1.1	39.3	▼ 1.9
FR	45.8	▲ 7.3	20.6	▲ 2.1
HR	59.6	▼ 5.2	24.3	▼ 0.3
IT	37.5	▼ 1.5	21.6	▲ 2.0
CY	30.6	▼ 0.2	17.1	▲ 0.8
LV	61.7	▼ 1.1	16.2	▲ 2.4
LT	39.1	▼ 1.3	12.3	▼ 3.4
LU	51.5	▼ 6.2	29.3	▼ 0.7
HU	69.0	▲ 3.9	50.0	▲ 5.3
MT	71.5	▲ 6.3	62.3	▲ 8.8
NL	69.1	▲ 1.3	42.5	▼ 2.8
AT	54.7	▲ 2.5	38.4	▼ 3.8
PL	64.7	▲ 1.7	26.0	▲ 3.0
PT	62.8	▲ 15.9	52.2	▲ 21.6
RO	44.3	▲ 0.1	21.3	▼ 6.3
SI	64.9	▲ 10.9	47.2	▲ 16.1
SK	53.6	▼ 0.7	19.8	▼ 4.4
FI	67.7	▲ 3.9	44.9	▲ 1.4
SE	67.2	▼ 1.9	67.2	▲ 1.9
UK	54.0	▲ 4.3	35.5	▲ 9.3
IS	28.7	▼ 19.0	26.9	▼ 8.1
NO	51.1	▼ 9.5	40.1	▼ 6.5

Results significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Results significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Positive evolutions significant from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)  
 Negative evolutions significant from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988)

The analysis of company characteristics shows a number of commonalities in the retailers most likely to both be aware of ADR and participate in ADR mechanisms:

- companies in sector K - financial and insurance activities, sector L or in the trade sector, with retailers in sector I significantly less likely for both;
- companies established prior to 1990 and the least likely those created since 2000;
- companies selling services or non-food products;
- companies engaged in distance sales or online sales;
- companies where the respondent is a commercial or sales manager.

In addition, companies in sector S (49.1%) are less likely to be aware of ADR, while retailers in sector N (24.3%), sector J (25.3%) and sector H (27.0%) are statistically significantly less likely to participate in ADR mechanisms. Moreover, 57.5% of companies that know about ADR bodies have actually used them. Those that participate in ADR are significantly more likely to have 50-249 persons employed (35.1%) and less likely to sell in 2 languages (29.2%).

### 3.2 Consumer complaints

Retailers were asked whether they had received complaints from consumers in their own country and, if so, the channels used to make these complaints.

#### a) Incidence of complaints and channels used to receive them

- Retailers are more likely to have received complaints from consumers located in their country, than from consumers in another EU country -

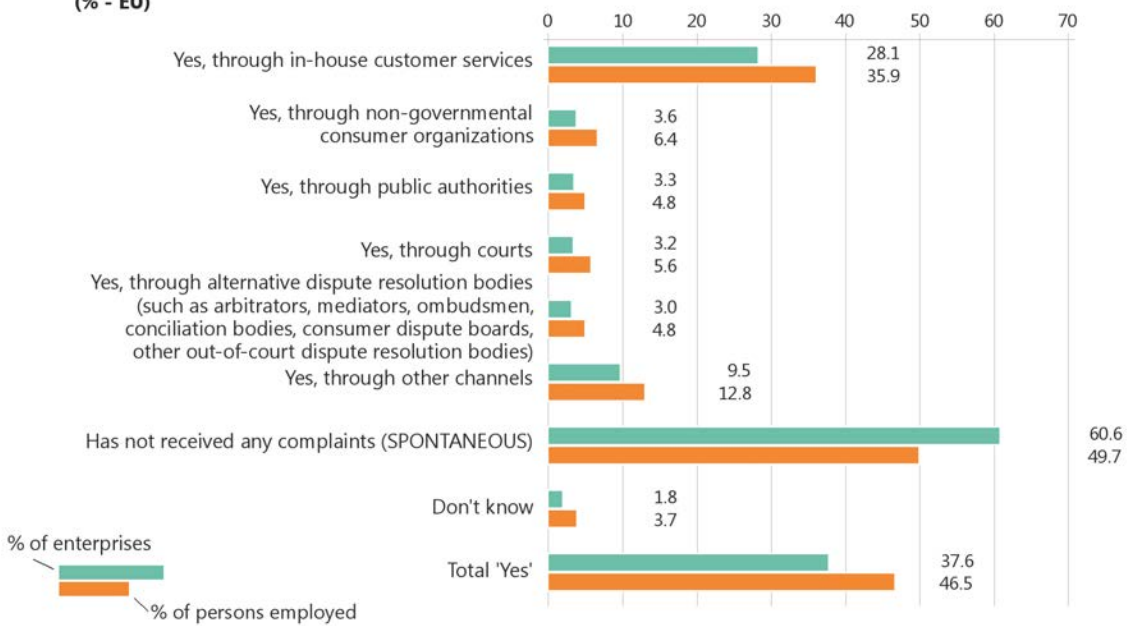
More than one third of retailers (37.6%) have received complaints from consumers in their own country in the past 12 months, which represents 46.5% of the total persons employed, which shows that likelihood to receive complaints is somewhat dependant from the company size. In contrast, only 15.7% of retailers selling cross border received complaints from consumers located in other EU countries, representing 20.4% of the total persons employed.

Looking first at complaints from consumers in the retailer's own country, these are most likely to come through in-house customer services (28.1%). In fact, this is the only channel mentioned by more than one in ten retailers.

Almost one in ten retailers mention complaints received via other channels (9.5%), less than one in twenty retailers mention non-governmental consumer organizations (3.6%), public authorities (3.3%), courts (3.2%) or alternative dispute resolution bodies (3.0%).

The majority of retailers, however, have not received any complaints in the past 12 months (60.6%).

**Q14T** During the past 12 months, has your company received complaints from consumers located in (OUR COUNTRY)?  
(MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)  
(% - EU)

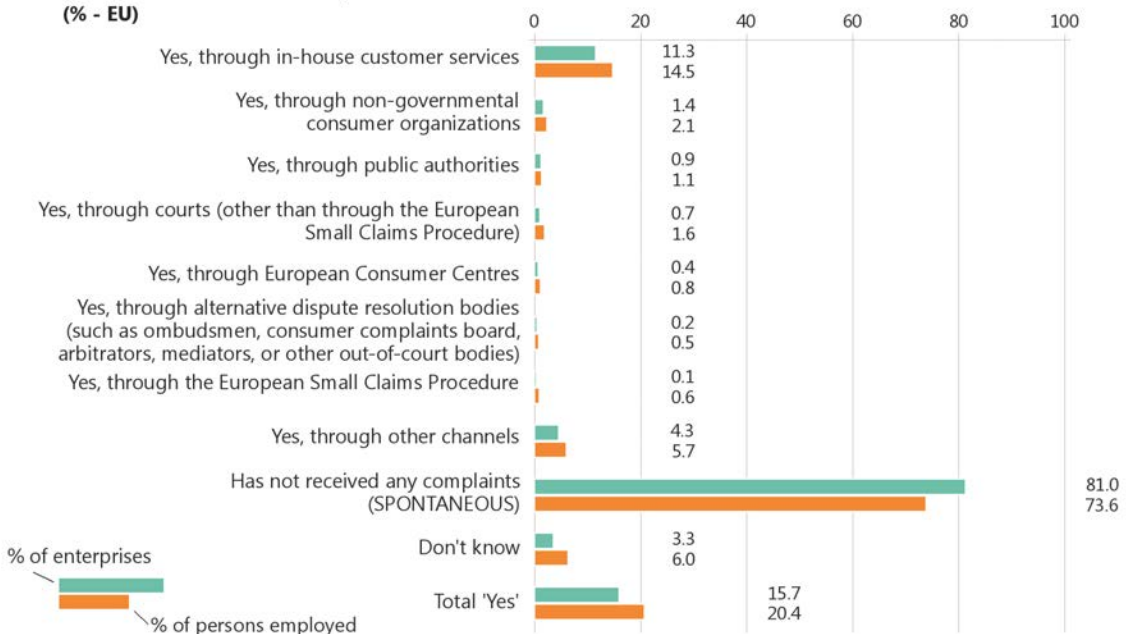


Base: Retailers in EU Member States (n=10,437)

For retailers that sell in other EU countries, complaints from consumers in other EU countries are also most likely to come through in-house customer services (11.3%) – in fact this is the only channel mentioned by at least one in ten. Almost one in five mentions other channels (4.3%), while channels such as the non-governmental consumer organisations, public authorities, courts, European Consumer Centres, ADR bodies and the European Small Claims Procedure are mentioned by no more than 1.4%.

The large majority of these retailers, however, have not received any complaints in the past 12 months (81.0%).

**Q15** During the past 12 months, has your company received complaints from consumers located in other EU countries?  
(MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)  
(% - EU)

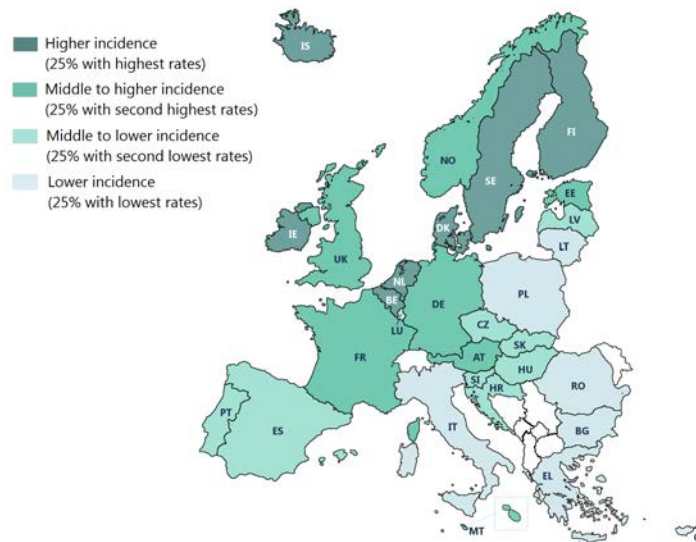


Base: Retailers in the EU who sell cross-border within the EU (n=3,206)

## Complaints received from domestic consumers

The map illustrates companies in the northern and western regions are significantly more likely to have received complaints from consumers in their own country in the past 12 months, as compared to those in the eastern and southern.

**Q14T** During the past 12 months, has your company received complaints from consumers located in (OUR COUNTRY)? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)  
(% - TOTAL 'YES')



Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

There are only eight countries where at least half of all retailers have received complaints from consumers located in their country, with those in Finland (69.2%), Ireland (66.0%) and Sweden (60.5%) the most likely to say this. At the opposite end of the scale, around a tenth of retailers in Greece (8.1%), Cyprus (10.5%) and Romania (13.6%) have received complaints from domestic consumers.

Looking at the results in more detail, companies in Finland (64.9%) and Ireland (57.9%) are the most likely to have received complaints through in-house customer services in the EU. Those in Iceland (47.7%), outside the EU, also make a top proportion. In contrast, fewer than one in twenty companies in Romania (3.5%), Greece and Cyprus (both 4.8%) have received customer complaints via this medium.

Retailers in Ireland (8.3%) and the United Kingdom (6.7%), as well as in Iceland (5.1%) considering non-EU countries, are the most likely to have received complaints through non-governmental consumer organizations, while those in Cyprus (0.0%), Lithuania (0.2%) and Malta (0.4%) are the least likely to have done so.

Companies in the United Kingdom (6.7%), Spain (6.4%) and Ireland (6.1%) are the most likely have received complaints through public authorities, with those in Hungary (0.1%), Italy (0.6%), Croatia and the Netherlands (both 0.8%) the least likely to mention them.

Retailers in Belgium (6.0%), Ireland (5.9%) and France (5.5%) are the most likely to have received complaints through the courts, particularly compared to those in Bulgaria (0.3%), Malta and Portugal (both 0.4%).

Companies in Ireland (5.8%), Belgium (5.7%) and Spain (4.7%) are the most likely to have received complaints through alternative dispute resolution bodies, while those in Slovenia, Romania (both 0.2%), Bulgaria and Croatia (both 0.5%) are the least likely to have done so.

**Q14T** During the past 12 months, has your company received complaints from consumers located in (OUR COUNTRY)?  
(MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)  
(%)

		Yes, through in-house customer services		Yes, through non-governmental consumer organizations		Yes, through public authorities		Yes, through courts		Yes, through alternative dispute resolution bodies (such as arbitrators, mediators, ombudsmen, conciliation bodies, consumer dispute boards, other out-of-court dispute resolution bodies)	
		2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014
		EU28	28.1	▼ 2.9	3.6	▲ 0.1	3.3	▼ 1.1	3.2	▼ 0.4	3.0
EUROZONE	26.2	▼ 4.0	3.5	▼ 0.2	2.7	▼ 1.1	3.7	▼ 0.2	2.8	▼ 0.1	
EU15	30.8	▼ 3.4	4.1	▲ 0.1	3.4	▼ 1.2	3.5	▼ 0.6	3.2	▼ 0.4	
EU13	15.2	▼ 16.1	1.0	▼ 2.5	2.6	▼ 1.7	1.6	▼ 2.2	1.7	▼ 1.5	
REGION NORTH	50.4	▲ 0.1	2.4	▼ 1.1	3.4	▼ 1.2	1.3	▼ 0.8	4.3	▼ 0.7	
REGION EAST	15.1	▼ 0.2	1.0	▲ 0.1	2.6	▼ 0.5	1.6	▲ 0.3	1.7	▲ 0.5	
REGION SOUTH	15.6	▼ 4.9	2.2	▼ 1.3	3.4	▼ 2.5	2.1	▼ 0.6	2.9	▼ 0.5	
REGION WEST	34.4	▼ 4.6	4.9	▲ 0.6	3.4	▼ 0.6	4.2	▼ 0.7	3.3	▼ 0.4	
BE	42.0	=	5.0	▼ 2.1	4.6	▲ 1.3	6.0	▼ 0.3	5.7	▲ 1.2	
BG	15.1	▼ 4.3	1.0	▲ 0.9	2.2	▼ 0.4	0.3	▼ 0.5	0.5	▼ 0.6	
CZ	24.2	▼ 0.1	0.6	▲ 0.2	4.5	▲ 0.9	2.2	▼ 0.5	1.4	▼ 0.1	
DK	45.2	▼ 1.7	3.0	▼ 0.6	2.3	▼ 1.5	1.5	▼ 1.1	4.2	▲ 0.3	
DE	26.2	▼ 9.4	4.0	▲ 0.6	1.8	▼ 1.4	4.7	▼ 0.7	2.1	▲ 0.1	
EE	37.8	▲ 1.8	2.2	▼ 2.5	2.6	▼ 1.5	0.7	▼ 0.3	2.7	▲ 0.9	
IE	57.9	▲ 4.8	8.3	▲ 3.2	6.1	▲ 2.2	5.9	▲ 0.7	5.8	▲ 2.3	
EL	4.8	▼ 3.7	0.9	▼ 0.6	2.5	▲ 0.3	0.8	▼ 0.9	1.8	▼ 0.2	
ES	20.2	▼ 4.0	3.3	▼ 3.0	6.4	▼ 3.5	1.7	▼ 1.4	4.7	▼ 0.3	
FR	27.9	▼ 3.1	5.0	▲ 0.1	3.6	▲ 1.8	5.5	▲ 1.2	3.8	▲ 0.1	
HR	15.4	▲ 5.8	1.3	▲ 0.1	0.8	=	2.8	▲ 2.2	0.5	▼ 0.1	
IT	11.7	▼ 5.7	1.2	=	0.6	▼ 0.2	3.2	▲ 0.2	1.6	▼ 0.6	
CY	4.8	▼ 0.9	0.0	▼ 1.2	2.7	▲ 2.3	1.0	▲ 0.1	2.3	▲ 2.3	
LV	17.3	▲ 3.0	0.8	▼ 2.0	3.0	▼ 2.1	1.2	▼ 0.6	0.8	▼ 1.1	
LT	19.3	▲ 4.0	0.2	▼ 0.8	2.9	▼ 1.8	0.5	▼ 0.4	0.6	▲ 0.4	
LU	21.2	▼ 2.0	3.4	▲ 1.2	1.4	▼ 1.6	0.5	▼ 1.4	2.0	▲ 1.5	
HU	19.1	▼ 2.0	0.8	=	0.1	▼ 2.0	1.1	▲ 0.4	0.9	▼ 0.6	
MT	43.9	▼ 0.3	0.4	▼ 2.2	2.7	▲ 0.1	0.4	▼ 1.0	4.4	▼ 0.4	
NL	44.0	▼ 3.4	2.3	▼ 1.2	0.8	▼ 0.2	2.4	▲ 0.7	3.2	=	
AT	31.6	▲ 12.7	4.4	▲ 2.5	3.4	▲ 2.2	4.7	▲ 0.9	4.2	▲ 2.8	
PL	11.8	▲ 1.2	1.6	▲ 0.6	2.0	▲ 0.7	3.2	▲ 1.1	4.4	▲ 3.0	
PT	17.7	▼ 3.4	2.7	▼ 0.6	2.1	▼ 9.2	0.4	▼ 1.2	0.9	▼ 0.2	
RO	3.5	▼ 0.8	0.7	=	4.5	▼ 1.0	0.5	=	0.2	▼ 0.7	
SI	28.9	▲ 17.9	0.7	▼ 0.4	1.7	▲ 0.7	0.5	▼ 0.8	0.2	▼ 0.9	
SK	12.4	▼ 9.5	2.0	▲ 0.4	2.0	▼ 2.3	1.1	▲ 0.4	1.6	▲ 0.3	
FI	64.9	▼ 1.2	1.7	▼ 0.4	4.6	▼ 0.8	0.9	▼ 0.9	4.2	▼ 1.6	
SE	47.2	▲ 1.8	2.3	▼ 2.0	3.4	▼ 1.5	1.4	▼ 0.4	4.4	▼ 1.4	
UK	46.1	▼ 3.3	6.7	▲ 1.7	6.7	▼ 2.2	2.5	▼ 3.0	4.3	▼ 2.6	
IS	47.7	▲ 4.8	5.1	▲ 1.0	5.6	▲ 4.3	2.6	▲ 1.9	1.8	▲ 0.6	
NO	28.7	▼ 24.0	1.5	▼ 1.3	2.6	▼ 3.9	0.7	▼ 1.4	1.1	▼ 2.8	

Results significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
Results significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
Positive evolutions significant from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)  
Negative evolutions significant from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

Retailers in Norway (17.7%), as well as in Ireland (15.7%) and the Netherlands (13.3%), within the EU, are the most likely to have received complaints through other channels, particularly compared to companies in Cyprus (1.2%), Greece (1.8%), Lithuania and Estonia (both 2.1%).

Since 2014, there has been a decrease in the proportion of EU retailers that have received complaints from consumers located in their country (-2.3pp), with the largest increase recorded in Slovenia (+14.1pp) and the largest decrease, amongst the EU Member States, can be observed amongst companies in Slovakia (-7.7pp). When considering also countries outside the EU28, the decrease is even higher amongst retailers in Norway (-24.3pp).

**Q14T** During the past 12 months, has your company received complaints from consumers located in (OUR COUNTRY)?  
(MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)  
(%)

		Yes, through other channels		Has not received any complaints (SPONTANEOUS)		Don't know		Total 'Yes'	
		2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014
EU28		9.5	▼ 0.4	60.6	▲ 1.9	1.8	▲ 0.4	37.6	▼ 2.3
EUROZONE		9.3	▲ 0.5	62.1	▲ 2.1	1.4	▲ 0.2	36.5	▼ 2.3
EU15		9.8	▼ 0.4	57.9	▲ 2.1	1.9	▲ 0.4	40.2	▼ 2.5
EU13		7.7	▼ 2.5	73.1	▲ 15.0	1.7	▲ 0.5	25.1	▼ 15.5
REGION NORTH		10.3	▼ 2.5	37.8	▲ 0.7	2.4	▲ 0.6	59.9	▼ 1.4
REGION EAST		7.8	▼ 0.9	73.1	▲ 0.7	1.8	▲ 0.7	25.1	▼ 1.4
REGION SOUTH		6.1	▲ 0.2	73.8	▲ 6.3	0.5	▼ 1.2	25.7	▼ 5.1
REGION WEST		11.0	▼ 0.8	54.1	▲ 1.8	2.3	▲ 1.0	43.6	▼ 2.8
BE		10.6	▼ 2.1	47.1	▼ 0.3	1.7	▲ 0.7	51.2	▼ 0.4
BG		7.3	▼ 1.1	73.8	▲ 5.7	1.4	▼ 0.3	24.8	▼ 5.4
CZ		13.0	▲ 3.3	63.0	▼ 0.2	0.8	▼ 0.8	36.2	▲ 0.9
DK		5.0	▼ 4.4	46.4	▲ 5.4	2.2	▼ 0.5	51.4	▲ 4.9
DE		10.3	=	59.1	▲ 2.9	2.7	▲ 1.8	38.2	▼ 4.8
EE		2.1	▼ 0.7	56.7	▼ 3.3	0.8	▲ 0.3	42.5	▲ 2.9
IE		15.7	▲ 6.9	32.8	▼ 5.3	1.2	▼ 1.4	66.0	▲ 6.7
EL		1.8	▲ 0.8	91.3	▲ 5.4	0.6	▲ 0.1	8.1	▼ 5.5
ES		4.4	▼ 0.9	69.7	▲ 7.9	0.5	▼ 1.4	29.8	▼ 6.6
FR		10.6	▲ 0.7	62.5	▲ 1.6	0.0	▼ 0.8	37.4	▼ 0.7
HR		11.1	▲ 0.1	68.6	▼ 8.1	2.5	▲ 1.3	29.0	▲ 6.7
IT		8.5	▲ 0.4	75.6	▲ 5.2	0.3	▼ 1.8	24.1	▼ 3.4
CY		1.2	▼ 0.9	89.1	▲ 1.3	0.3	▼ 2.5	10.5	▲ 1.2
LV		10.4	▼ 1.4	68.5	▼ 2.5	0.5	▼ 0.9	30.9	▲ 3.4
LT		2.1	▼ 0.5	76.2	▼ 1.7	1.2	▲ 1.1	22.6	▲ 0.5
LU		6.2	▲ 1.2	73.3	▲ 9.7	0.0	▼ 3.4	26.7	▼ 6.3
HU		8.1	▲ 0.7	67.9	▼ 1.3	4.1	▲ 2.9	28.0	▼ 1.6
MT		3.0	▼ 8.7	47.3	▲ 3.0	2.7	▲ 1.8	49.9	▼ 4.7
NL		13.3	▼ 3.0	45.6	▲ 5.6	1.5	▲ 0.5	52.9	▼ 6.2
AT		12.5	▲ 3.3	60.4	▼ 10.2	0.7	▼ 1.1	38.9	▲ 11.2
PL		7.9	▼ 1.9	77.7	▲ 1.7	0.9	▲ 0.4	21.4	▼ 2.1
PT		9.1	▲ 2.5	71.3	▲ 4.9	1.1	▲ 0.5	27.5	▼ 5.4
RO		4.4	▼ 4.1	83.7	▲ 2.2	2.7	▲ 0.9	13.6	▼ 3.1
SI		3.2	▼ 1.6	66.6	▼ 13.4	0.5	▼ 0.8	32.9	▲ 14.1
SK		10.7	▼ 0.9	67.0	▲ 5.2	4.1	▲ 2.6	28.9	▼ 7.7
FI		12.2	▲ 6.6	30.5	▲ 1.5	0.3	▼ 0.6	69.2	▼ 0.8
SE		12.1	▼ 7.5	36.2	▼ 1.5	3.2	▲ 2.4	60.5	▼ 0.9
UK		11.2	▼ 4.7	45.7	▲ 4.2	3.5	▲ 1.4	50.8	▼ 5.6
IS		7.1	▼ 6.6	42.4	▼ 1.0	3.7	▲ 3.3	54.0	▼ 2.3
NO		17.7	▼ 6.1	50.9	▲ 22.3	4.0	▲ 2.0	45.2	▼ 24.3

Results statistically significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)

Results statistically significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)

Statistically significant increase from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

Statistically significant decrease from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988)



Since 2014, there have been limited significant decreases in the proportion of EU retailers receiving complaints through in-house customer services (-2.9pp) or through public authorities (-1.1pp). The highlights from the country trend analysis (amongst the 28 Member States) are presented in the table below.

Source of complaint	Largest <u>increase</u> since 2014	Largest <u>decrease</u> since 2014
In-house customer services	Slovenia (+17.9pp)	Germany (-9.4pp)
Non-governmental consumer organizations	Austria (+2.5pp) <sup>19</sup>	Estonia (-2.5pp) <sup>20</sup>
Public authorities	Austria (+2.2pp) <sup>21</sup>	Portugal (-9.2pp)
Alternative dispute resolution bodies	Poland (+3.0pp)	No statistically significant decrease <sup>22</sup>
Courts	Croatia (+2.2pp)	United Kingdom (-3.0pp)
Other channels	Ireland (+6.9pp)	Malta (-8.7pp)

The analysis of retailer's characteristics shows that retailers who received complaints from consumers in their own country are statistically significantly more likely to:

- o be in sector K - financial and insurance activities (48.8%), sector L – real estate activities (47.0%) or in trade (NACE G) (40.1%), and statistically significantly less likely to be in sector S (24.6%), sector J (24.8%), sector H (27.2%) or sector N (30.2%);
- o be medium (54.2%) or large sized retailers (59.9%);
- o have been established before 1990: 40.5%;
- o sell via distance methods (43.6%) or online (46.5%);
- o sell non-food products (43.0%) or food products (39.9%);
- o sell to other EU countries (45.3%) and in four or more languages: 42.4%.
- o companies where the respondent is a marketing manager (45.7%) or a commercial or sales manager (42.6%).

<sup>19</sup> In Ireland (+3.2pp), complaints via non-governmental consumer organisations have increased but this change is not statistically significant.

<sup>20</sup> In Spain (-3.0pp), complaints via non-governmental consumer organisations have declined but this change is not statistically significant.

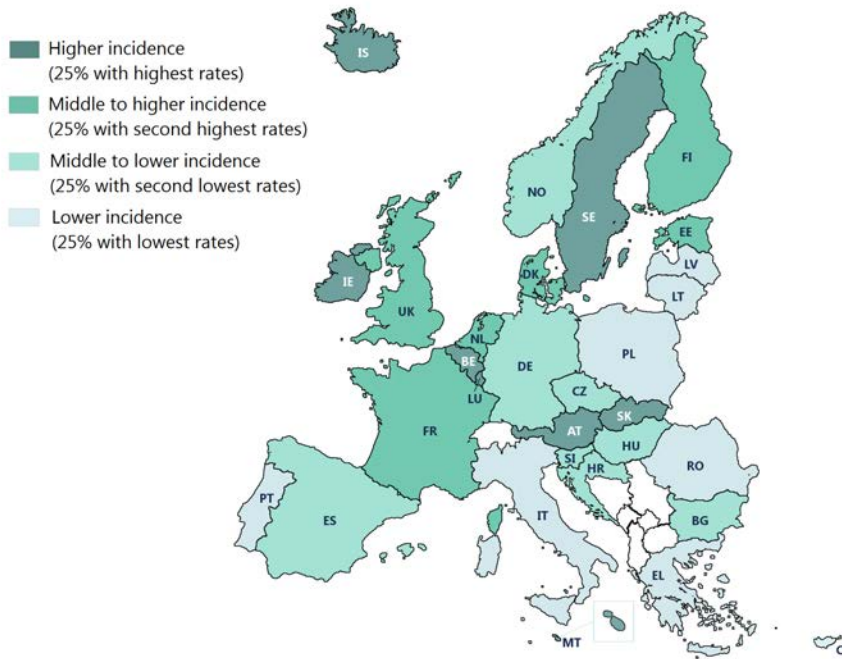
<sup>21</sup> In Iceland (+4.3pp, Cyprus (+2.3pp) and Ireland (+2.2pp), complaints via public authorities have increased but this change is not statistically significant.

<sup>22</sup> In the United Kingdom (-2.6pp), complaints via alternative dispute resolution bodies have declined but this change is not statistically significant.

Complaints received from consumers in other EU countries

Companies in the northern region are significantly more likely to have received complaints from consumers in other EU countries in the past 12 months, while those in the eastern and southern regions are significantly less likely to have done so.

**Q15** During the past 12 months, has your company received complaints from consumers located in other EU countries? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)  
(% - TOTAL 'YES')



Base: All retailers selling cross-border (n=3,287)

Overall, 16.1% of retailers that sell in other EU countries have received complaints from customers in other EU countries. In all countries, only a minority of retailers say they have received complaints from consumers located in other EU countries. The highest proportions are observed amongst retailers in Malta (43.0%) and Ireland (32.0%) in the EU, and outside the EU in Iceland (37.6%), while the lowest proportions are observed amongst those in Greece (3.3%), Romania (3.4%) and Lithuania (5.7%)<sup>23</sup>.

Looking at the results in more detail shows retailers in Malta (33.9%) and Ireland (28.1%) are the most likely to have receive complaints from customers in other EU countries through in-house customer services. Moreover, retailers in Iceland (27.5%) are also amongst the most likely. Retailers in Romania (1.7%), Greece (3.0%) and Latvia (3.4%) are the least likely to mention this.

<sup>23</sup> Results for the following countries are based on a very small sample (less than 100 observations) and should therefore be considered as mainly indicative: Iceland (n=33), Finland (n=39), Cyprus (n=41), Norway (n=48), Malta (n=53), Luxembourg (n=54), Poland (n=67), Romania (n=67), Sweden (n=68), the United Kingdom (n=76), Estonia (n=92) and France (n=98).

Mentions of other vehicles for customer complaints are generally very low, and in many countries no retailers mention them. Highlights for the other options are:

- Retailers in Austria (3.4%), Germany, Luxembourg and Ireland (all 2.7%) are the most likely to have received complaints through non-governmental consumer organisations.
- Retailers in Luxembourg (2.7%), Ireland (2.0%) and Spain (1.8%) are the most likely to have received complaints through public authorities.
- Companies in Luxembourg (5.5%), Slovakia (2.5%) and Sweden (2.1%) are the most likely to mention the courts.
- Companies in Malta (4.2%), Luxembourg and Sweden (both 3.8%) are the most likely to have received complaints through European Consumer Centres.
- Retailers in Luxembourg (2.7%), Denmark (2.1%) and Hungary (1.0%) are the most likely to mention alternative dispute resolution bodies.
- Retailers in Luxembourg (2.7%), Sweden (1.7%) and Belgium (0.8%) are the most likely to say they have received complaints through the European Small Claims procedure.
- Companies in Malta (10.2%) and Austria (9.7%) in the EU, as well as in Iceland (16.9%) outside the EU, are the most likely to mention receiving complaints through other channels.

Q15 During the past 12 months, has your company received complaints from consumers located in other EU countries?  
(MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)  
(%)

		Yes, through in-house customer services		Yes, through non-governmental consumer organizations		Yes, through public authorities		Yes, through courts (other than through the European Small Claims Procedure)		Yes, through European Consumer Centres	
		2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014
EU28		11.3	▼ 0.9	1.4	▲ 1.1	0.9	▲ 0.5	0.7	▲ 0.2	0.4	▲ 0.1
EUROZONE		11.0	▼ 2.3	1.5	▲ 1.2	1.0	▲ 0.7	0.8	▲ 0.3	0.5	▲ 0.3
EU15		12.2	▼ 1.4	1.6	▲ 1.3	1.0	▲ 0.7	0.7	▲ 0.2	0.5	▲ 0.2
EU13		7.2	▼ 5.2	0.3	▲ 0.1	0.3	▼ 0.3	0.5	=	0.2	▼ 0.1
REGION NORTH		19.1	▲ 2.2	0.5	▼ 0.2	0.7	▲ 0.2	1.0	▲ 0.5	1.7	▲ 1.2
REGION EAST		6.9	▲ 1.5	0.3	▲ 0.2	0.3	▼ 0.3	0.5	▼ 0.2	0.2	▼ 0.1
REGION SOUTH		9.2	▼ 0.4	0.0	▼ 0.9	0.7	▲ 0.1	0.6	▲ 0.4	0.1	▼ 0.1
REGION WEST		13.0	▼ 2.2	2.3	▲ 2.3	1.2	▲ 0.9	0.7	▲ 0.2	0.6	▲ 0.2
BE		18.1	▼ 2.6	1.3	▲ 0.7	0.8	▲ 0.4	1.1	▼ 0.2	0.8	▼ 0.7
BG		5.6	▲ 1.6	0.0	=	0.4	▼ 0.3	0.0	=	0.0	▼ 0.8
CZ		10.5	▲ 2.6	0.0	=	1.2	▼ 0.3	0.0	▼ 0.3	0.3	▲ 0.3
DK		15.9	▼ 4.5	0.4	▼ 0.2	0.4	▲ 0.6	0.4	▲ 0.4	0.4	▲ 0.6
DE		8.3	▼ 5.3	2.7	▲ 2.8	1.4	▲ 1.5	1.1	▲ 0.6	0.7	▲ 0.6
EE		15.0	▲ 6.4	0.0	=	0.0	=	0.0	=	0.0	▼ 0.5
IE		28.1	▲ 4.4	2.7	▲ 2.2	2.0	▲ 2.0	1.5	▲ 0.8	0.8	▼ 0.1
EL		3.0	▼ 1.9	0.0	▼ 0.2	0.0	▼ 0.5	0.0	=	0.0	=
ES		13.3	▼ 0.4	0.0	=	1.8	▲ 1.5	1.4	▲ 0.9	0.0	▼ 0.2
FR		12.5	▼ 8.3	1.7	▲ 1.9	1.3	▲ 1.0	0.0	▼ 0.6	1.2	▲ 1.3
HR		5.9	▲ 1.2	0.5	▲ 0.4	0.0	▼ 0.4	0.6	▲ 0.7	0.5	▲ 0.1
IT		6.9	▲ 1.7	0.0	▼ 2.3	0.0	=	0.2	▲ 0.3	0.0	=
CY		6.8	▲ 6.7	0.0	=	0.0	=	0.0	=	2.0	▲ 1.9
LV		3.4	▼ 2.7	0.0	▼ 2.1	0.7	▼ 0.3	0.9	▲ 1.0	0.9	▲ 1.0
LT		4.8	▲ 1.0	0.0	=	0.0	=	0.0	=	0.0	=
LU		6.0	▼ 7.3	2.7	▲ 0.1	2.7	▲ 2.2	5.5	▲ 2.3	3.8	▲ 3.9
HU		8.7	▲ 1.4	0.8	▲ 0.7	0.0	▼ 1.3	0.0	▼ 3.6	0.0	=
MT		33.9	▲ 13.5	0.0	=	0.0	=	0.0	=	4.2	▲ 4.1
NL		14.2	▼ 2.6	0.0	▼ 0.2	0.6	▼ 0.1	0.0	▼ 0.6	0.0	=
AT		24.7	▲ 19.7	3.4	▲ 3.0	0.3	▲ 0.2	0.6	▼ 0.3	0.3	▲ 0.2
PL		5.9	▲ 3.7	0.7	▲ 1.5	0.0	=	1.8	▼ 0.2	0.0	=
PT		5.9	▼ 2.6	0.0	▼ 0.5	0.0	▼ 3.9	0.0	=	0.0	=
RO		1.7	▲ 0.6	0.0	▼ 1.5	0.0	=	0.0	=	0.0	=
SI		11.4	▲ 8.4	0.4	▲ 0.5	0.0	=	0.5	▲ 0.5	0.0	=
SK		7.7	▼ 3.3	1.6	▲ 0.9	0.0	▼ 1.4	2.5	▲ 1.4	0.7	▼ 1.8
FI		15.7	▲ 1.4	0.0	=	0.0	▼ 0.7	0.0	▼ 1.9	0.0	=
SE		24.0	▲ 13.8	0.8	▼ 0.2	1.2	▼ 0.1	2.1	▲ 1.5	3.8	▲ 2.3
UK		18.1	▲ 4.8	2.4	▲ 2.5	0.8	▼ 0.4	0.0	=	0.0	▼ 1.4
IS		27.5	▼ 3.0	0.0	▼ 1.3	0.0	=	0.0	=	0.0	▼ 3.1
NO		9.5	▼ 1.2	2.6	▲ 2.8	0.0	=	0.0	=	0.0	▼ 1.8

Results statistically significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Results statistically significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Statistically significant increase from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)  
 Statistically significant decrease from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

Base: All retailers selling cross-border (n=3,287)

The following highlights from the trend analysis are worth noting:

- There has been an increase in the proportion of companies across the EU that have received complaints through non-governmental consumer organizations (+1.1pp), or through public authorities has increased slightly since the last wave (+0.5pp).
- Retailers in Austria recorded the highest increase in the proportion receiving complaints (via any means) from customers in other EU countries (+21.1pp), and retailers in Austria also had the largest increase in the proportion receiving complaints through in-house customer services (+19.7pp).
- The largest increase in the proportion of companies receiving complaints through other channels can be found amongst retailers in Austria (+6.1pp), and considering also countries outside the EU in Norway (+8.8pp). Meanwhile the largest decrease is observed in Latvia (-7.2pp).

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Q15 During the past 12 months, has your company received complaints from consumers located in other EU countries? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)  
(%)

	Yes, through alternative dispute resolution bodies (such as ombudsmen, consumer complaints board, arbitrators, mediators, or other out-of-court bodies)		Yes, through the European Small Claims Procedure		Yes, through other channels		Has not received any complaints (SPONTANEOUS)		Don't know		Total 'Yes'	
	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014
	EU28	0.2	▼ 0.1	0.1	▲ 0.1	4.3	▲ 1.0	81.0	▼ 0.2	3.3	▼ 0.3	15.7
EUROZONE	0.1	▼ 0.2	0.1	▲ 0.1	4.8	▲ 2.1	81.5	▲ 0.2	2.7	▼ 0.2	15.8	=
EU15	0.3	▼ 0.1	0.1	▲ 0.1	4.5	▲ 1.1	80.1	▲ 0.4	3.3	▼ 0.5	16.6	▲ 0.2
EU13	0.2	▼ 0.2	0.2	▲ 0.3	3.2	▼ 0.6	85.3	▲ 4.9	3.2	▼ 0.6	11.5	▼ 4.4
REGION NORTH	1.1	▲ 0.2	0.9	▲ 1.0	1.4	▼ 4.8	72.8	▲ 0.2	5.1	▼ 0.1	22.1	▼ 0.1
REGION EAST	0.2	▲ 0.1	0.2	▲ 0.3	3.2	▲ 0.8	85.6	▼ 3.4	3.2	▲ 1.1	11.2	▲ 2.3
REGION SOUTH	0.0	▼ 0.2	0.1	▲ 0.1	2.4	▲ 0.1	86.3	▲ 4.3	1.8	▼ 3.6	11.9	▼ 0.7
REGION WEST	0.3	▼ 0.1	0.1	▲ 0.1	5.5	▲ 1.9	78.2	▼ 1.0	3.8	▲ 0.7	18.1	▲ 0.4
BE	0.8	▲ 0.8	0.8	▲ 0.4	3.9	▼ 0.8	76.3	▲ 2.7	3.0	▲ 2.2	20.7	▼ 4.9
BG	0.0	▼ 0.4	0.0	=	5.1	▲ 4.3	88.5	▼ 0.6	0.4	▼ 3.7	11.1	▲ 4.2
CZ	0.0	=	0.4	▲ 0.4	4.3	▼ 0.6	80.5	▼ 4.2	3.6	▲ 1.0	15.9	▲ 3.1
DK	2.1	▲ 1.5	0.4	▲ 0.6	1.6	▼ 5.2	76.1	▲ 6.5	5.6	▼ 0.1	18.3	▼ 6.3
DE	0.0	▼ 0.9	0.0	=	5.8	▲ 6.2	81.8	▼ 2.5	3.3	▲ 1.8	14.8	▲ 0.7
EE	0.0	=	0.0	=	1.3	▲ 0.7	80.5	▼ 9.3	3.2	▲ 2.7	16.3	▲ 6.7
IE	0.4	▲ 0.4	0.0	=	8.6	▲ 4.3	64.3	▼ 1.4	3.6	▼ 3.0	32.0	▲ 4.3
EL	0.0	▼ 0.5	0.0	=	0.3	▼ 2.2	96.7	▲ 5.8	0.0	▼ 0.7	3.3	▼ 5.1
ES	0.0	▼ 0.2	0.2	▲ 0.3	1.5	▼ 1.1	81.5	▲ 3.4	2.9	▼ 2.8	15.6	▼ 0.6
FR	0.5	▲ 0.9	0.0	=	5.2	▼ 3.3	81.3	▲ 7.3	0.7	▼ 0.5	18.0	▼ 6.9
HR	0.0	=	0.5	▲ 0.4	5.8	▲ 1.8	84.6	▼ 6.5	4.0	▲ 3.7	11.4	▲ 2.8
IT	0.0	=	0.0	=	3.1	▲ 1.3	89.0	▲ 3.8	0.9	▼ 6.2	10.1	▲ 2.4
CY	0.0	=	0.0	=	2.9	▲ 2.8	90.3	▼ 3.8	0.0	▼ 5.8	9.7	▲ 9.6
LV	0.0	=	0.0	=	0.9	▼ 7.2	93.2	▲ 8.0	0.9	▼ 0.8	5.9	▼ 7.4
LT	0.0	=	0.0	=	0.9	▲ 0.4	88.6	▼ 4.3	5.7	▲ 2.9	5.7	▲ 1.4
LU	2.7	▲ 2.9	2.7	▲ 2.9	8.6	▲ 0.2	77.8	▲ 2.9	1.1	▼ 3.2	21.2	▲ 0.4
HU	1.0	▲ 1.0	0.0	=	2.7	▲ 1.2	76.1	▼ 12.1	10.8	▲ 11.5	13.1	▲ 0.6
MT	0.0	=	0.0	=	10.2	▼ 1.5	52.0	▼ 16.1	5.0	▲ 3.1	43.0	▲ 12.9
NL	0.0	=	0.0	=	4.5	▼ 1.5	77.5	▲ 0.5	4.7	▲ 2.8	17.8	▼ 3.3
AT	0.6	▲ 0.6	0.3	▲ 0.2	9.7	▲ 6.1	67.5	▼ 22.3	2.8	▲ 1.2	29.7	▲ 21.1
PL	0.0	=	0.7	▲ 1.5	1.3	▼ 0.3	91.0	▼ 0.9	0.0	▼ 3.3	9.0	▲ 4.2
PT	0.0	=	0.0	=	6.0	▲ 2.1	86.1	▲ 1.4	3.1	▲ 2.3	10.8	▼ 3.8
RO	0.0	=	0.0	=	1.7	▲ 2.1	96.6	▼ 2.8	0.0	=	3.4	▲ 2.8
SI	0.4	▲ 0.5	0.0	▼ 0.6	1.7	▲ 0.3	85.4	▼ 8.3	1.1	▼ 0.4	13.6	▲ 8.7
SK	0.7	▼ 0.4	0.0	=	7.5	▲ 3.2	72.5	▼ 2.7	6.7	▲ 2.4	20.8	▲ 0.3
FI	0.0	▼ 0.7	0.0	=	6.3	▲ 3.6	79.7	▲ 0.7	1.7	▼ 0.7	18.6	=
SE	0.0	▼ 1.7	1.7	▲ 1.8	0.0	▼ 6.3	67.0	▼ 9.7	5.3	▼ 0.6	27.7	▲ 10.3
UK	0.8	▲ 0.2	0.0	=	3.2	▼ 6.0	72.8	▲ 1.6	7.6	▼ 3.4	19.7	▲ 1.8
IS	0.0	▼ 1.3	0.0	▼ 1.8	16.9	▲ 9.7	57.9	▲ 3.7	4.5	▼ 1.6	37.6	▼ 2.1
NO	0.0	=	0.0	=	9.5	▲ 8.8	67.4	▼ 12.8	17.9	▲ 11.8	14.8	▲ 1.0

Base: All retailers selling cross-border (n=3,287)

Retailers selling in other EU countries that have received complaints from consumers in other EU countries are the most likely to:

- o belong to sector L - real estate activities (28.6%) or sector I - accommodation and food service activities (22.0%), and the least likely to belong to sector N (8.1%) or sector H (11.4%);
- o be medium-sized: 25.0%;
- o be engaged in distance sales (19.1%), and particularly selling online to other EU countries (27.7%);
- o sell in four or more languages: 30.9% as opposed to retailers selling only in their country's language which are the least likely (10.7%).

b) Type of complaints received

Retailers who had received complaints from consumers were asked about the nature of these complaints.

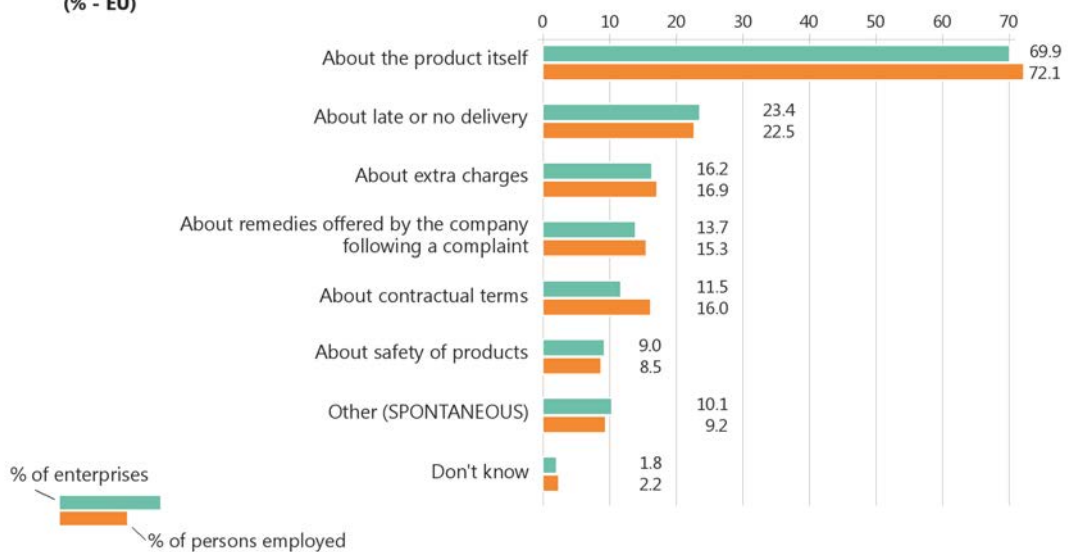
- Consumer complaints are most likely to have been about a product –

Complaints received from domestic consumers

Retailers are most likely to say complaints from consumers in their own country were about the product (66.9%), while more than one in twenty say complaints were about late or non-delivery (23.4%). Less than one in five retailers say complaints were about extra charges (16.2%), remedies offered by the company following a complaint (13.7%) or about contractual terms (11.5%). One in ten retailers (10.1%) mention other types of complaints, while almost as many (9.0%) say complaints were about the safety of products<sup>24</sup>.

The results based on total persons employed shows the same pattern, although the proportion of persons receiving complaints about contractual terms is higher (16.0% vs 11.5%).

**Q16** What type of complaints has your company received from consumers located in (OUR COUNTRY) during the past 12 months? Were they complaints... (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)  
(% - EU)



Base: Retailers in EU Member States who have received complaints from domestic consumers (n=4,012).

Companies in the eurozone are significantly more likely to have received complaints from domestic consumers about extra charges (18.3%), while those outside the eurozone are significantly more likely to mention complaints received about remedies offered after a complaint (16.9%).

<sup>24</sup> Results for the following countries are based on a very small sample (less than 100 observations) and should therefore be considered as mainly indicative: Cyprus (n=18), Luxembourg (n=36), Greece (n=37), Romania (n=54), Malta (n=79), Iceland (n=87), and Poland (n=96).

Looking at the country level results for complaints received from consumers in a retailer's own country shows complaints about the product are the most mentioned type received by retailers in each country. Companies in Finland (81.0%), the United Kingdom (77.1%) and Germany (76.5%) are the most likely to have received complaints about the product from domestic consumers, while those in Croatia (43.5%), Greece (43.7%) and Portugal (44.0%) are the least likely to have received this type of complaint. Even so, these proportions are still relatively high.

Companies in Belgium (37.5%) and Luxembourg (33.9%) in the EU, and in Iceland (32.9%) outside the EU, are the most likely to have received complaints about late or no delivery, while those in Cyprus (0%), Slovakia (7.6%) and Estonia (8.9%) are the least likely to have done so.

Complaints about extra charges are most likely to have been received by companies in Luxembourg (26.3%), Germany (24.3%) and Belgium (23.6%), particularly compared to retailers in Slovakia (1.0%), Estonia (2.3%) and Croatia (3.0%).

Companies in Belgium (25.9%), Poland (24.8%) and the United Kingdom (20.3%) are the most likely to have received complaints about remedies offered following a complaint. At the other end of the scale, retailers in Lithuania (1.3%), Latvia (1.5%) and Romania (1.8%) are the least likely to mention this kind of complaint.

Companies in Cyprus (28.0%), Greece (26.9%) and France (17.7%) are the most likely to have received complaints about contractual terms, while those in Estonia (4.3%), Malta and Portugal (both 5.5%) are the least likely to mention this kind of complaint.

At least one third of companies in Estonia (32.2%) mention other types of complaints, as do 30.0% in Portugal and 23.7% in Romania. At the other end of the scale, companies in Finland (3.8%), Germany (5.7%) and Belgium (7.8%) are the least likely to have received other types of complaints.

Companies in Greece (21.5%) and Poland (13.3%), within the EU, and in Iceland (12.4%) outside the EU, are the most likely to have received complaints about product safety. At the other end of the scale, this answer is given the least by companies in Croatia (1.0%), Estonia (1.3%) and Luxembourg (1.5%).

At the EU level, statistically significant decreases since 2014 can be observed in the proportions of retailers who have received complaints from domestic consumers about late or no delivery (-3.4pp), contractual terms (-3.0pp) or other types of complaints (-1.6pp). Additionally, non-statistically significant decreases can also be observed regarding complaints about remedies offered by the company following a complaint (-1.4pp). Conversely, non-statistically significant increases can be observed in the proportion of retailers who have received complaints about the product itself (+1.8pp), about extra charges (+1.2pp) and about safety of products (+0.6 pp).

Highlights from the country trend analysis include the following:

- The largest increase in the proportion of retailers that have received complaints about the product itself is observed in Luxembourg (+30.3pp), with the largest decrease (-26.1pp) recorded in Portugal.

- The largest increase in the proportion of companies that have received complaints about late or no delivery is observed in Malta (+16.4pp), while the largest decrease within the EU is observed in Spain (-11.4pp), and outside the EU it can be found in Norway (-12.2pp).
- Companies in France (+11.7pp) recorded the biggest increase in the proportion saying they received complaints about extra charges, while within the EU those in the UK (-10.4) recorded the biggest decrease. Companies in Norway (-13.9pp) also recorded a statistically significant decrease.
- The highest increase in the proportion of companies that mention complaints about product safety is observed in Poland (+8.5pp), and the largest decrease is found amongst companies in Romania (-11.6pp).
- The largest decrease in the proportion of companies that have received complaints about remedies offered by the company following a complaint is recorded in Portugal (-9.9pp).
- The highest increase in the proportion of companies that cite other types of complaints can be observed in Portugal (+15.5pp), while the largest decrease is recorded by companies in Austria (-20.5pp).



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Q16 What type of complaints has your company received from consumers located in (OUR COUNTRY) during the past 12 months? Were they complaints... (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)  
(%)

		About the product itself		About late or no delivery		About extra charges		About remedies offered by the company following a complaint	
		2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014
EU28		69.9	▲ 1.8	23.4	▼ 3.4	16.2	▲ 1.2	13.7	▼ 1.4
EUROZONE		69.5	▲ 1.4	23.6	▼ 4.2	18.3	▲ 3.7	12.0	▼ 1.8
EU15		71.5	▲ 2.1	23.8	▼ 4.2	17.2	▲ 1.2	14.1	▼ 1.7
EU13		58.5	▼ 10.3	20.7	▼ 5.6	8.7	▼ 6.8	10.1	▼ 4.7
REGION NORTH		72.2	▼ 1.4	20.5	▼ 4.2	8.4	▲ 2.7	14.1	▼ 3.4
REGION EAST		58.8	▲ 0.3	20.6	▲ 3.9	8.7	▲ 1.8	10.0	▲ 0.7
REGION SOUTH		53.6	▼ 6.7	17.6	▼ 5.6	9.1	▼ 0.9	8.0	▼ 4.8
REGION WEST		74.8	▲ 3.3	25.3	▼ 4.4	19.6	▲ 0.6	15.3	▼ 1.1
BE		71.2	▼ 5.6	37.5	▼ 2.2	23.6	▲ 0.1	25.9	▲ 2.0
BG		70.6	▲ 18.5	14.2	▼ 6.1	7.3	▲ 3.6	4.1	▼ 1.1
CZ		57.0	▼ 8.2	25.1	▲ 0.6	14.8	▲ 4.9	10.0	▼ 7.0
DK		70.9	▼ 0.1	19.4	▼ 1.8	10.1	▲ 2.9	14.4	▼ 5.1
DE		76.5	▲ 4.9	22.2	▼ 7.3	24.3	▲ 3.0	8.8	▼ 1.4
EE		59.8	▼ 3.2	8.9	▲ 3.6	2.3	▲ 0.7	3.8	▼ 0.3
IE		72.5	▲ 6.5	23.0	▲ 8.1	20.0	▲ 6.6	15.9	▲ 5.0
EL		43.7	▼ 11.9	21.3	▲ 14.4	19.0	▲ 9.6	17.1	▲ 8.9
ES		54.8	▼ 1.2	17.6	▼ 11.4	9.0	▼ 0.1	8.9	▼ 7.3
FR		67.3	▼ 8.0	32.6	▼ 1.9	17.3	▲ 11.7	18.5	▼ 0.1
HR		43.5	▼ 4.7	21.2	▲ 10.6	3.0	▼ 2.7	14.3	▼ 0.4
IT		55.7	▼ 7.7	16.1	▼ 2.4	9.7	▼ 2.1	6.7	▼ 1.6
CY		55.9	▲ 2.9	0.0	▼ 14.9	22.3	▲ 15.5	11.0	▲ 6.2
LV		61.7	▼ 1.7	17.2	▲ 0.2	7.4	▼ 4.9	1.5	▼ 1.0
LT		72.1	▲ 6.2	15.9	▲ 2.5	4.7	▲ 0.8	1.3	▲ 0.4
LU		63.8	▲ 30.3	33.9	▲ 6.3	26.3	▲ 11.2	14.7	▼ 5.9
HU		54.7	▼ 6.6	17.3	▲ 7.1	4.7	▼ 1.0	4.7	▼ 1.1
MT		44.3	▼ 10.8	32.0	▲ 16.4	4.9	▼ 8.5	13.8	▲ 1.5
NL		72.9	▲ 1.6	29.0	▼ 2.6	18.1	▼ 3.4	18.7	▼ 3.2
AT		75.9	▲ 14.2	22.3	▲ 7.0	21.2	▲ 5.9	12.2	▲ 5.3
PL		59.9	▲ 4.5	26.4	▲ 10.0	13.2	▲ 3.2	24.8	▲ 7.7
PT		44.0	▼ 26.1	20.6	▲ 0.9	5.0	▼ 1.0	5.6	▼ 9.9
RO		46.9	▼ 2.2	27.6	▲ 9.9	4.3	▲ 0.1	1.8	▼ 0.8
SI		66.8	▲ 19.9	12.3	▼ 0.4	9.8	▼ 2.9	4.2	▼ 1.9
SK		58.1	▼ 8.4	7.6	▼ 5.2	1.0	▼ 2.5	9.7	▲ 1.9
FI		81.0	▲ 5.1	23.1	▼ 3.5	9.4	▲ 0.3	19.1	▼ 3.9
SE		68.8	▼ 6.0	19.8	▼ 6.9	7.2	▲ 4.8	11.8	▼ 0.5
UK		77.1	▲ 5.7	24.1	▼ 4.0	13.9	▼ 10.3	20.3	▼ 1.6
IS		70.5	▲ 2.0	32.9	▲ 0.5	13.2	▲ 1.9	8.7	▼ 1.5
NO		76.0	▼ 6.5	18.0	▼ 12.2	6.3	▼ 13.9	8.0	▼ 6.0

Results statistically significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Results statistically significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Statistically significant increase from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)  
 Statistically significant decrease from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

Base: Retailers who have received complaints from domestic consumers (n=4,286).

Q16 What type of complaints has your company received from consumers located in (OUR COUNTRY) during the past 12 months? Were they complaints... (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE) (%)

	About contractual terms		About safety of products		Other (SPONTANEOUS)		Don't know	
	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014
EU28	11.5	▼ 3.0	9.0	▲ 0.6	10.1	▼ 1.6	1.8	▲ 0.4
EUROZONE	12.9	▼ 3.4	9.2	▲ 1.8	9.9	▼ 2.0	1.8	▲ 1.1
EU15	11.7	▼ 3.3	9.6	▲ 0.8	9.4	▼ 1.6	1.7	▲ 0.4
EU13	10.0	▼ 4.8	4.6	▼ 3.5	15.4	▲ 3.8	2.3	▲ 1.0
REGION NORTH	11.9	▲ 2.4	6.0	▲ 0.5	10.2	▼ 0.1	1.6	▲ 0.2
REGION EAST	10.0	▼ 0.9	4.6	▼ 1.1	15.4	▼ 1.0	2.3	▲ 0.3
REGION SOUTH	10.7	▼ 4.4	6.2	▼ 0.1	16.6	▲ 3.3	3.8	▲ 2.0
REGION WEST	11.8	▼ 3.9	10.6	▲ 0.7	7.9	▼ 2.4	1.3	▲ 0.1
BE	15.4	▼ 3.0	5.3	▲ 0.2	7.8	▲ 1.1	2.5	▲ 1.7
BG	8.4	▼ 2.5	1.9	▼ 2.7	10.1	▼ 4.8	1.1	▼ 3.4
CZ	8.5	▼ 2.3	1.7	▲ 0.5	13.1	▼ 1.5	6.2	▲ 4.7
DK	8.9	▼ 0.3	5.8	▲ 0.9	16.4	▲ 4.8	2.3	▲ 0.4
DE	13.7	▼ 6.0	11.6	▲ 2.3	5.7	▼ 4.6	1.4	▲ 1.6
EE	4.3	▼ 4.3	1.3	▼ 1.4	32.2	▲ 0.5	0.0	=
IE	9.6	▲ 3.2	10.3	▼ 0.6	10.4	▼ 5.3	1.3	▼ 1.9
EL	26.9	▲ 15.8	21.5	▲ 13.7	17.9	▲ 4.2	2.0	▲ 2.0
ES	9.6	▼ 4.7	5.7	▲ 1.0	16.3	=	5.2	▲ 3.7
FR	17.7	▼ 0.4	10.9	▲ 4.4	13.5	▲ 3.3	1.1	▲ 1.5
HR	6.0	▼ 7.7	1.0	▼ 8.2	20.7	▼ 2.9	1.0	▲ 1.0
IT	12.6	▼ 6.8	6.5	▼ 2.5	13.1	▲ 4.3	3.4	▲ 1.1
CY	28.0	▲ 21.8	9.3	▲ 8.6	15.8	▼ 21.8	0.0	=
LV	11.4	▼ 5.2	3.1	▼ 7.3	17.7	▲ 0.5	1.4	▲ 1.4
LT	13.5	▲ 4.4	2.8	▼ 3.2	8.8	▼ 7.6	0.0	▼ 0.4
LU	11.4	▲ 6.8	1.5	▼ 4.2	12.1	▼ 10.6	3.3	▲ 0.3
HU	8.1	▲ 0.7	4.4	▼ 2.5	21.3	▲ 5.3	2.3	▲ 1.2
MT	5.5	▼ 5.9	8.0	▲ 1.4	13.7	▼ 4.9	0.1	▲ 0.1
NL	9.7	▼ 2.8	8.5	▲ 1.2	8.2	=	0.6	▼ 0.6
AT	17.0	▲ 8.1	7.9	▲ 4.3	8.8	▼ 20.5	2.0	▲ 0.9
PL	15.2	▲ 1.3	13.3	▲ 8.5	10.9	▼ 0.5	0.0	▼ 3.4
PT	5.5	▲ 1.4	3.7	▲ 0.1	30.0	▲ 15.5	0.0	▼ 1.2
RO	9.0	▲ 2.5	1.8	▼ 11.6	23.7	▼ 5.5	3.6	▲ 2.3
SI	7.7	▼ 4.7	2.2	▼ 0.6	12.3	▼ 10.3	1.6	▲ 0.6
SK	7.4	▼ 6.0	1.9	▼ 3.8	16.6	▲ 12.9	4.5	▲ 1.3
FI	10.7	▲ 1.2	7.3	▲ 2.6	3.8	▼ 1.9	1.0	=
SE	13.7	▲ 4.6	5.6	▼ 1.3	10.4	▼ 2.5	1.6	▲ 0.5
UK	7.0	▼ 4.5	11.2	▼ 3.7	8.1	▼ 0.3	1.3	▼ 2.4
IS	13.5	▲ 3.8	12.4	▲ 4.2	15.1	▲ 6.2	0.4	▼ 1.1
NO	9.5	▼ 3.7	4.6	▼ 2.8	10.5	▲ 4.9	1.4	▲ 1.7

Results statistically significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Results statistically significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Statistically significant increase from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)  
 Statistically significant decrease from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

Base: Retailers who have received complaints from domestic consumers (n=4,286).

Highlights from the analysis of company characteristics for retailers who have received complaints from consumers in their own country are presented below.

In general, medium-sized companies have a statistically significant higher probability of receiving complaints about late or no delivery, contractual terms and remedies offered as a response to a complaint. Large companies are also more likely to receive complaints for the two latter, while small companies are statistically significantly less likely to receive complaints about contractual terms. Additionally, companies selling in three languages have a statistically significant lower probability of receiving a complaint of any of these types, with the exception of those about remedies to previous complaints.

Companies that have received complaints about the product are significantly more likely to belong to sector I - accommodation and food service activities (77.9%) or the trade sector (73.2%). Companies in sector D (29.3%), sector H (40.7%), sector S (52.8%) sector K (56.7%) or sector J (59.3%) have a statistically significant smaller likelihood. They are also more significantly more likely to sell products (75.2%) rather than services (65.5%). Companies that sell in two (65.5%) or three languages (64.4%) are statistically significantly less likely to receive complaints about the product.

Statistically significantly higher proportions of retailers that have received complaints about product safety are found in the trade sector (11.7%), while those in the services sector (6.9%) are significantly less likely to have received them. This is the case specially for retailers in sector S (0.5%) and sector I (6.2%). Retailers created between 1990 and 1999 are significantly less likely to receive complaints for this concept. The proportion that has received complaints about product safety is also higher amongst retailers selling non-food products (11.6%).

Companies that received complaints about late or no delivery are significantly more likely to:

- o belong the trade sector (28.7%) rather than the services sector (19.2%), although retailers in sector J (44.7%) and sector H (43.0%) are more likely. Companies in sector I (12.7%), sector K (13.9%) and sector L (14.1%) are statistically significantly less likely;
- o be medium sized (50-250 persons employed): 27.5%;
- o sell non-food products: 29.0%;
- o be engaged in distance sales (28.3%), online sales (28.6%) or sales to other EU countries (27.5%);
- o sell in two languages (29.2%) while those selling in three languages are less likely (16.3%).

Companies that mention complaints about extra charges, are most likely to:

- o belong to the services sector (18.2%), specially to sector K - financial and insurance activities (33.4%) or sector H - transportation and storage (23.0%);
- o be the oldest companies (established prior to 1990): 19.9%. Companies created since 2000 have a statistically significant lower likelihood (13.0%);
- o sell services: 20.5%. Companies selling food products are the least likely: 12.9%;
- o sell in four or more languages: 21.7%. Retailers selling in three languages are the least likely: 9.9%.

Companies that have received complaints about remedies offered following a complaint are significantly more likely to:

- o be in sector J - information and communication (22.1%) or sector L - real estate activities (18.2%);
- o be medium (18.4%) or large companies (20.6%);
- o be the oldest companies: 15.8%.
- o sell services: 15.6%;
- o be engaged in distance sales (16.0%) or online sales (16.4%).

Significantly higher proportions of companies that have received complaints about contractual terms can be found in the following subgroups:

- o service sector companies (13.8%) rather than trade sector companies (8.5%);
- o belong to sector D - electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply (36.1%), sector L – real estate (32.0%), sector K (28.6%) or sector J - information and communication (19.6%);
- o companies selling services (14.7%) rather than products (8.9%);
- o medium (17.1%) or large sized companies (21.5%);
- o those engaged in distance sales (13.3%) or online sales (13.8%).

### Complaints received from consumers in other EU countries

For retailers selling in other EU countries, complaints received from consumers in other EU countries are most likely to have been about the product (62.4%). Just over a quarter of companies (27.2%) say they received complaints about late or no delivery, while 21.6% say complaints were about extra charges. Less than one in five retailers received complaints about contractual terms (16.9%) or remedies offered following a complaint (16.0%). Just over one in ten retailers (12.0%) received complaints about the safety of products, while 10.3% cite other type of complaints.

The overall pattern for the results based on the proportion of persons employed is the same, although the proportions are higher for complaints about late or no delivery, contractual terms or the remedies offered by the company after a complaint.

**Q17** What type of complaints has your company received from consumers located in other EU countries during the past 12 months? Were they complaints... (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)  
(% - EU)



Base: Retailers in EU Member States who have received complaints from consumers located in other EU countries (n=560).

Due to small sample sizes country analysis could not be performed for complaints from consumers based in other EU countries. Indeed, results for this question are based on very small samples, ranging from 2 retailers in Romania to 56 in Ireland.

Since 2014, there has been an increase in the proportion of companies receiving complaints about product safety (+5.4pp) from consumers in another EU country. However, due to small sample sizes country trend analysis could not be performed for complaints from consumers based in other EU countries.

Due to low sample sizes for some categories<sup>25</sup>, only a limited analysis of company characteristics for retailers who have received complaints from consumers in other EU countries could be conducted. The results show:

- o companies mentioning complaints about the product itself are least likely to be in sector H- transportation and storage (35.9%) and most likely to sell food (75.6%) or non-food (71.5%) products rather than services (61.6%);
- o companies belonging to sector H are significantly more likely to mention complaints about late or no delivery (57.7%) while companies in sector I – accommodation and food services are significantly less likely (10.5%);
- o companies belonging to sector I have a statistically significant lower likelihood of receiving complaints about product safety (5.5%);
- o companies that have received complaints about remedies offered by the company following a complaint are least likely in the trade sector (3.4%) and most likely to be in sector I (48.6%) and to sell non-food products (22.8%), or to only sell in their own language (24.5%).

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<sup>25</sup> Amongst the categories for which samples are too small for a relevant analysis are:

By size, large companies (n=18); by sector, sector D (n=1), sector S (n=7), sector N (n=8), sector K (n=18), sector L (n=19) and sector J (n=20); also, companies not engaged in distance sales (n=31), not engaged in sales to other EU countries (n=20), companies that do not plan to continue online selling (n=4) and companies not confident to sell online (n=38).

## 4. Retailers in the Digital Single Market

This chapter of the report focusses on the digital single market. The proportion of retailers selling online and the channels they use are discussed and future intentions to sell online are also canvassed. Retailers' confidence to sell online, as well as perceived obstacles to selling online are also considered.

### 4.1. Domestic and cross-border online sales

This first section considers domestic and cross-border online sales, as well as retailers' interest in either continuing or commencing online selling in the future.

#### a) Online sales domestically and cross-border

Retailers were asked whether they sell online, either domestically or cross-border.

- Just over half of all retailers sell via distance methods, with just over one third selling online -

More than half of all retailers (52.1%) are currently engaged in distance selling<sup>26</sup>, although as the chart below illustrates, more retailers sell via direct retail (67.4%).

E-commerce is the most common form of distance selling (36.0%), followed by telesales (17.0%) and mobile commerce (15.4%). Just over one in ten retailers use sales reps visiting consumers' homes (12.9%), mail order (12.6%) or other methods (11.3%). Compared to the proportion of retailers, the proportion of persons employed that sell via e-commerce (42.6% vs 36.0%), mobile commerce (20.8% vs 15.4%), and telesales (21.9% vs 17.0%) is higher.

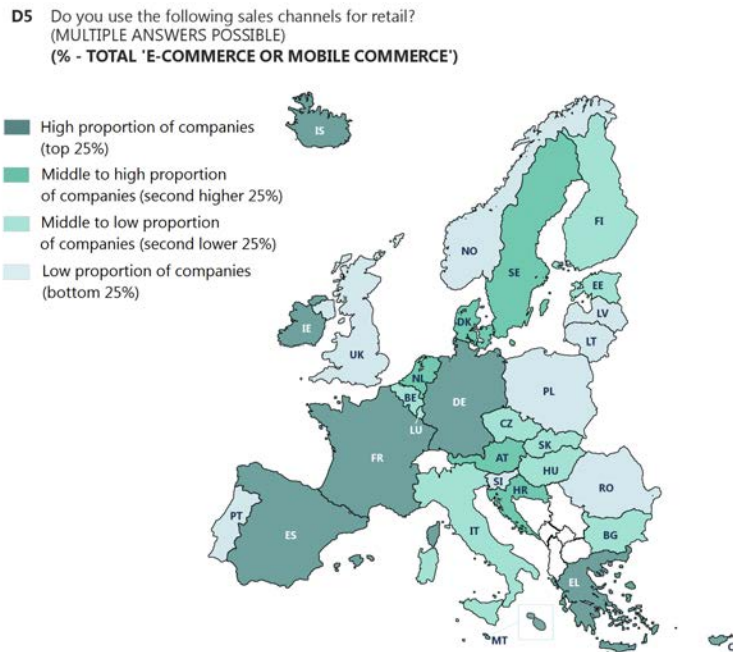


Base: Retailers in EU Member States (n=10,437).

<sup>26</sup> Distance selling includes e-commerce, mobile commerce, telesales or call center, door-to-door sales and mail orders

Overall, almost four in ten retailers sell via e-commerce or mobile commerce (39.2%). This represents 46.9% of the total persons employed.

Retailers in EU15 countries (41.0%) and those within the eurozone (43.0%) are significantly more likely to currently sell via e-commerce or mobile commerce, while companies in the eastern region are significantly less likely to do so.



Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

In 13 countries, most retailers are engaged in distance selling. Around seven out of ten retailers in Greece (70.8%) and Spain (68.0%) are in this situation in the EU, as are in Iceland (68.3%). This compares to around one third in Estonia (33.9%), and Romania (35.3%), within the EU, as well as in Norway (34.6%).

Companies in Malta (36.6%), Spain (35.3%) and Austria (35.1%) are the most likely to sell via telesales, while those in Portugal, The Czech Republic (both 2.9%) and Estonia (4.0%) are the least likely to do so.

Retailers selling via sales reps visiting consumers at home are most likely to be found in Denmark (26.4%), Spain (24.6%) and Belgium (20.6%), and least likely to be found in Estonia (2.6%) and Lithuania (5.6%), within the EU, and additionally in Norway (5.4%).

Companies in Lithuania (24.4%) and Greece (20.4%) are the most likely to sell via mail order in the EU. Considering non-EU countries, companies in Iceland (23.3%) are amongst the most likely. Those in Sweden (2.7%), Estonia (3.9%) and Denmark (5.1%) are the least likely to do so.

Only in four countries at least half of all retailers sell via mobile or e-commerce: Greece (56.1%), Ireland (50.2%) and Malta (50.0%), in the EU, and Iceland (52.8%). Retailers in Romania (22.1%) and Slovenia (24.9%) within the EU, as well as in Norway (26.1%), are the least likely to use these methods, but even so these proportions represent more than one in five retailers.

Since 2014, the proportion of EU retailers selling via at least one distance channel has fallen by 2.2pp. At a country level, the largest increase in the proportion of companies that are currently engaged in distance selling can be observed amongst retailers in Lithuania (+15.2pp), while the largest decrease is recorded amongst those in Portugal (-15.6pp).

Looking specifically at e-commerce and mobile commerce, there has been no statistically significant change at EU level. However, there have been a few significant changes at country level. Greece is the only country where the proportion of retailers selling by mobile or e-commerce has increased significantly (+8.4pp). Furthermore, this is a reversal of the trend observed between 20112 and 2014, when the proportion decreased by 10.0pp. On the other hand, the proportion of retailers in the UK selling via mobile or e-commerce has dropped 9.5pp – this continues the trend seen in the last survey where the proportion dropped by 29.7pp.

D5 Do you use the following sales channels for retail?  
(MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)  
(% - TOTAL 'E-COMMERCE OR MOBILE COMMERCE')

	2016	2016-2014	2014-2012	2012-2011	2016-2011
EU28	39.2	▼ 1.0	▼ 10.1	▲ 9.9	▼ 1.2
EUROZONE	43.0	▼ 0.1	▼ 6.6	▲ 10.1	▲ 3.4
EU15	41.0	▼ 1.5	▼ 10.2	▲ 10.5	▼ 1.2
EU13	30.9	▼ 10.4	▲ 2.9	▲ 6.5	▼ 1.0
REGION NORTH	39.1	▲ 2.8	▼ 14.4	▲ 11.0	▼ 0.6
REGION EAST	30.5	▲ 1.5	▼ 8.9	▲ 6.0	▼ 1.4
REGION SOUTH	41.4	▼ 0.3	▼ 10.3	▲ 16.3	▼ 5.7
REGION WEST	41.1	▼ 2.3	▼ 9.7	▲ 8.0	▼ 4.0
BE	34.6	▼ 3.5	▼ 9.2	▲ 9.3	▼ 3.4
BG	34.4	▲ 2.1	▼ 3.5	▲ 6.5	▲ 5.1
CZ	33.7	▲ 3.1	▼ 14.5	▲ 5.1	▼ 6.3
DK	37.7	▼ 1.6	▼ 16.9	▲ 12.4	▼ 6.1
DE	44.8	▲ 2.0	▼ 2.1	▲ 3.8	▲ 3.7
EE	31.2	▼ 1.9	▼ 6.5	▲ 15.3	▲ 6.9
IE	50.2	▲ 2.4	▼ 16.5	▼ 4.3	▼ 18.4
EL	56.1	▲ 8.4	▼ 10.0	▲ 14.0	▲ 12.4
ES	47.0	▼ 7.4	▼ 6.1	▲ 20.0	▲ 6.5
FR	47.8	▼ 5.5	▲ 2.6	▲ 15.8	▲ 12.9
HR	37.4	▲ 4.5	▼ 17.6	N.A	N.A
IT	34.6	▲ 6.7	▼ 14.0	▲ 13.8	▲ 6.5
CY	47.9	▲ 10.8	▼ 9.4	▲ 19.3	▲ 20.7
LV	30.3	▼ 3.1	▼ 10.3	▲ 18.2	▲ 4.8
LT	30.1	▲ 3.5	▼ 3.5	▲ 4.7	▲ 4.7
LU	33.7	▲ 3.8	▼ 16.6	▲ 15.4	▲ 2.6
HU	31.5	▲ 5.1	▼ 18.5	▲ 5.5	▼ 7.9
MT	50.0	▲ 4.9	▼ 16.4	▲ 25.3	▲ 13.8
NL	43.8	▲ 4.4	▼ 31.1	▲ 11.5	▼ 15.2
AT	42.9	▲ 6.1	▲ 0.1	▼ 6.9	▼ 0.7
PL	30.6	▲ 0.1	▼ 8.6	▲ 5.0	▼ 3.5
PT	29.1	▼ 6.6	▼ 10.6	▲ 13.7	▼ 3.5
RO	22.1	▲ 0.5	▼ 4.7	▲ 4.1	▼ 0.1
SI	24.9	▲ 0.6	▼ 8.5	▲ 0.4	▼ 7.5
SK	34.4	▼ 2.9	▼ 12.8	▲ 8.3	▼ 7.4
FI	34.7	▲ 3.1	▼ 15.3	▲ 15.6	▲ 3.4
SE	41.5	▲ 6.6	▼ 10.6	▲ 6.8	▲ 2.8
UK	30.0	▼ 9.5	▼ 29.7	▲ 13.0	▼ 26.2
IS	52.8	▼ 7.9	▼ 4.9	▲ 4.9	▼ 7.9
NO	26.1	▼ 8.5	▼ 6.0	▲ 9.1	▼ 5.4

Results statistically significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
Results statistically significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
Statistically significant increase from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)  
Statistically significant decrease from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).



The analysis of company characteristics shows statistically significantly higher proportions of companies that are currently engaged in distance selling in the following subgroups:

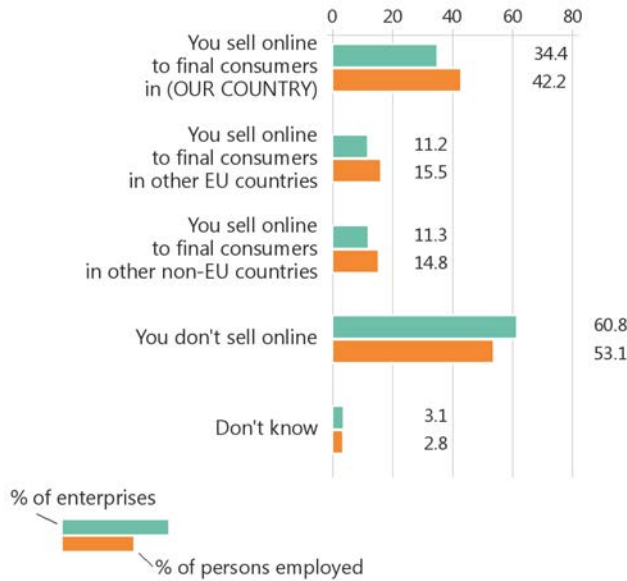
- o retailers in sector K - financial and insurance activities (71.0%), sector J – information and communication (63.7%), sector N – Administrative and support service activities (63.6%), or sector H - transportation and storage (57.7%). A lower proportion of retailers in sector I – food and accommodation (47.0%) is engaged in distance selling;
- o medium (62.1%) or large sized companies (64.7%), while a statistically significantly lower proportion is observed amongst small companies (50.6%);
- o the oldest companies (established before 1990): 59.1%. Companies created since 2000 show lower proportions: 46.5%;
- o companies that sell non-food products (58.5%) or services (57.3%);
- o companies that sell in two (58.4%), three (62.0%), or four or more languages (66.8%);
- o companies where the respondent is a commercial or sales manager (63.6%) or a marketing manager (64.2%).

Similarly, statistically significantly higher proportions of companies currently selling via mobile commerce or e-commerce can be found in the following subgroups:

- o retailers in sector K (50.1%), sector L – real estate activities (44.3%), sector N (46.2%), but there is a significantly lower proportion amongst retailers in sector S – other service activities;
- o medium (50.9%) or large sized companies (53.5%), while the proportion is lower for small companies (37.5%);
- o the oldest companies (established before 1990): 45.7%;
- o companies selling cross-border to other EU countries: 61.8%;
- o companies that sell non-food products (43.8%) or services (42.7%);
- o companies that sell in two (46.2%), three (44.8%), or four or more languages (58.8%);
- o companies where the respondent is a commercial or sales manager (42.8%) or a marketing manager (46.3%).

Just over a third of retailers (34.4%) sell online to final consumers in their country, representing 42.2% of the total persons employed. Less than one in eight retailers sell online to consumers in non-EU countries (11.3%) or in other EU countries (11.2%). The majority of retailers do not sell online (60.8%) at all.

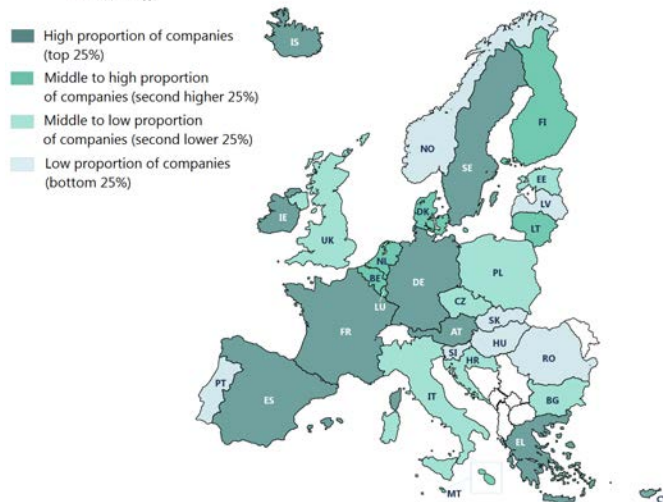
**D6TT** Please tell me which of the following statements apply to you:  
(MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)  
(% - EU)



Base: Retailers in EU Member States (n=10,437).

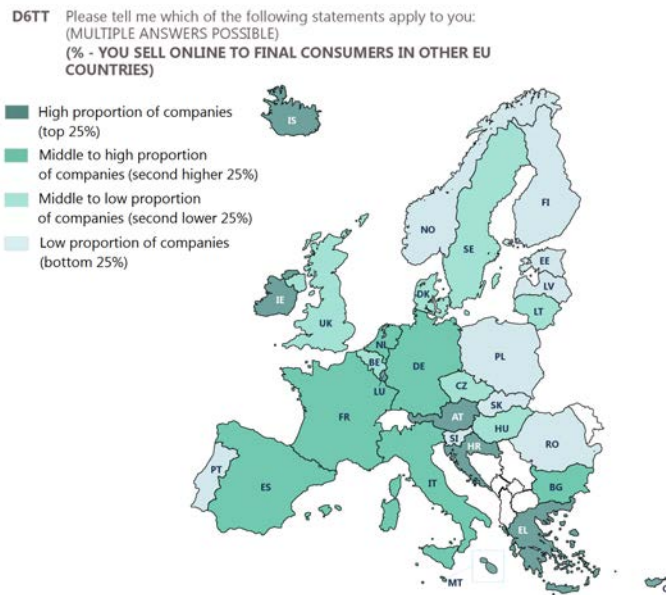
Retailers in the eurozone are significantly more likely to sell online to consumers in their own country (38.0%), in other EU countries (13.1%) and in non-EU countries (12.5%). Retailers in EU15 countries are significantly more likely to sell online to consumers in their own country (36.3%). Retailers in NMS13 countries (69.1%) and those outside the eurozone (68.7%) are significantly more likely to say they do not sell online. In addition, retailers in the western region are significantly more likely to sell online to consumers in their own country, while those in the eastern region are significantly less likely to do so.

**D6TT** Please tell me which of the following statements apply to you:  
(MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)  
(% - YOU SELL ONLINE TO FINAL CONSUMERS IN (OUR COUNTRY))



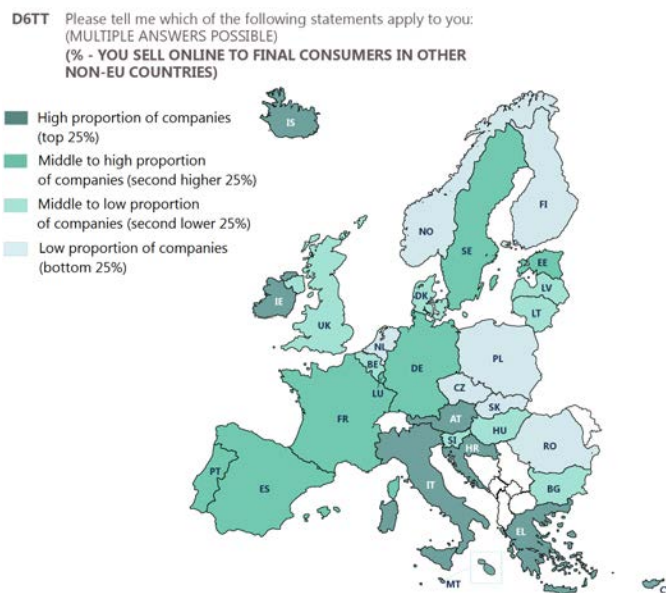
Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

Retailers in the southern region are significantly more likely to sell online to consumers in other EU countries, while those in the north and east are significantly less likely to do so.



Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

As was the case for selling online to consumers in other EU countries, retailers in the southern region are also significantly more likely to sell online to consumers in non-EU countries, while those in the north and east are significantly less likely to do so.



Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

Only a minority of retailers in each country say they sell online to consumers in their own country. Nearly half of companies in Greece (48.5%) and Cyprus (46.7%) do so, as well as in Iceland (48.3%) considering non-EU, compared to 16.7% of companies in Romania, 17.2% in Slovenia and 23.4% in Portugal (23.4%).

Around a quarter of companies in Malta (26.1%), Cyprus (25.4%) and Greece (23.1%) sell online to consumers in other EU countries. At the other end of the scale, companies in Romania (1.7%), Slovenia (4.7%) and Finland (4.9%) are the least likely to do so.

Companies in Greece (27.1%), Cyprus (24.6%) and Malta (23.8%) are the most likely to sell online to final consumers in other non-EU countries. At the opposite end of the scale, companies in Romania (2.4%), Slovakia (4.0%) and Poland (4.5%) are the least likely to do so.

Since 2014, the proportion of companies that sell online to final consumers in their own country (-1.5pp) has fallen slightly, as has the proportion that sell online to final consumers in non-EU countries (-1.0pp).

The country level trends since 2014 show the largest increase in the proportion of companies that sell online to consumers in their own country occurred in Cyprus (+15.9pp), while the largest decrease is observed amongst retailers in Spain (-11.8pp).

Retailers in Cyprus also recorded the largest increase in the proportion of retailers that sell online to consumers in other EU countries (+13.9pp), while the biggest decrease can be seen amongst companies in Portugal (-6.6pp) within the EU, as well as in Iceland (-15.0pp) outside the EU.

Companies in Luxembourg are significantly more likely to say they sell online to consumers in other non-EU countries than they were in 2014 (+9.3pp).

Compared to the previous survey, the largest increase in the proportion of companies that don't sell online can be observed amongst retailers in the United Kingdom (+9.5pp), while the largest decrease is found amongst retailers in Greece (-8.4pp).

D6TT Please tell me which of the following statements apply to you: (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)  
(%)

		You sell online to final consumers in (OUR COUNTRY)		You sell online to final consumers in other EU countries		You sell online to final consumers in other non-EU countries		You don't sell online		Don't know	
		2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014
EU28		34.4	▼ 1.5	11.2	▲ 0.2	11.3	▼ 1.0	60.8	▲ 1.0	3.1	▲ 0.2
EUROZONE		38.0	▼ 1.1	13.1	=	12.5	▼ 1.9	57.0	▲ 0.1	2.9	▲ 0.6
EU15		36.3	▼ 1.9	12.0	▲ 0.2	12.1	▼ 1.3	59.0	▲ 1.5	3.0	▲ 0.1
EU13		25.4	▼ 11.3	7.5	▼ 4.5	7.1	▼ 6.5	69.1	▲ 10.4	3.4	▲ 0.5
REGION NORTH		35.6	▲ 2.9	7.0	▲ 0.3	9.3	▲ 1.9	60.9	▼ 2.8	2.2	▼ 0.5
REGION EAST		25.0	▲ 0.4	7.1	▲ 0.1	6.7	▲ 0.2	69.5	▼ 1.5	3.4	▲ 1.0
REGION SOUTH		34.0	▼ 5.2	12.9	▼ 0.7	14.9	▲ 0.4	58.6	▲ 0.3	2.5	▲ 1.5
REGION WEST		37.2	▼ 1.3	12.1	▲ 0.6	11.5	▼ 1.9	58.9	▲ 2.3	3.2	▼ 0.5
BE		28.3	▼ 2.5	9.9	▼ 0.4	9.2	▲ 1.2	65.4	▲ 3.5	4.2	▼ 2.0
BG		27.9	▲ 0.7	10.5	▲ 4.4	9.8	▲ 5.9	65.6	▼ 2.1	2.7	▼ 0.5
CZ		26.6	▼ 0.4	8.2	▼ 3.0	6.2	▼ 0.1	66.3	▼ 3.1	4.8	▲ 2.7
DK		34.4	▼ 0.5	8.0	▲ 1.6	7.3	▼ 0.2	62.3	▲ 1.6	1.8	▼ 1.1
DE		41.4	▲ 2.9	13.7	▲ 0.3	11.8	▼ 4.1	55.2	▼ 2.0	3.0	=
EE		27.9	▼ 1.5	6.9	▼ 3.7	11.6	=	68.8	▲ 1.9	0.8	▼ 0.2
IE		42.3	▲ 0.4	21.7	▲ 1.2	20.5	▲ 1.8	49.8	▼ 2.4	5.8	▲ 1.7
EL		48.5	▲ 2.3	23.1	▲ 1.7	27.1	▲ 8.3	43.9	▼ 8.4	0.8	▲ 0.6
ES		39.8	▼ 11.8	13.5	▼ 3.4	12.5	▼ 5.3	53.0	▲ 7.4	3.7	▲ 2.6
FR		46.1	▼ 3.6	12.3	▲ 0.7	12.6	▼ 4.0	52.2	▲ 5.5	1.5	▼ 0.6
HR		26.9	▼ 2.2	16.6	▲ 0.2	21.5	▲ 1.0	62.6	▼ 4.5	3.4	▲ 2.8
IT		26.5	▲ 1.5	11.1	▲ 2.7	15.4	▲ 4.3	65.4	▼ 6.7	1.8	▲ 1.0
CY		46.7	▲ 15.9	25.4	▲ 13.9	24.6	▲ 4.1	52.1	▼ 10.8	0.0	▼ 2.0
LV		25.7	▼ 5.7	6.9	▼ 2.6	8.1	▼ 0.5	69.7	▲ 3.1	1.2	▲ 0.8
LT		28.0	▲ 3.9	9.5	▲ 2.4	8.6	▲ 2.7	69.9	▼ 3.5	1.2	▼ 0.3
LU		28.2	▲ 4.6	16.6	▲ 3.4	14.3	▲ 9.3	66.3	▼ 3.8	0.9	▼ 3.0
HU		24.4	▲ 3.4	7.6	▲ 3.8	7.4	▲ 2.2	68.5	▼ 5.1	4.8	▲ 1.4
MT		33.6	▼ 5.2	26.1	▲ 4.9	23.8	▲ 4.2	50.0	▼ 4.9	7.3	▲ 3.1
NL		36.8	▲ 2.9	10.9	▼ 0.5	6.0	▲ 1.8	56.2	▼ 4.4	6.1	▲ 0.9
AT		37.0	▲ 3.5	22.4	▲ 7.7	20.9	▲ 7.5	57.1	▼ 6.1	3.1	▲ 0.7
PL		27.7	▲ 2.2	6.7	▲ 1.0	4.5	▼ 2.8	69.4	▼ 0.1	2.7	▼ 0.9
PT		23.4	▼ 10.8	6.6	▼ 6.6	12.3	▼ 1.8	70.9	▲ 6.6	1.5	▲ 1.1
RO		16.7	▼ 1.5	1.7	▼ 1.7	2.4	▼ 1.3	77.9	▼ 0.5	4.6	▲ 3.1
SI		17.2	▼ 3.8	4.7	▼ 2.9	9.2	▲ 3.8	75.1	▼ 0.6	1.7	▼ 0.2
SK		25.8	▼ 4.6	5.0	▼ 4.1	4.0	=	65.6	▲ 2.9	5.4	▲ 2.1
FI		32.6	▲ 2.8	4.9	▲ 1.6	5.0	▲ 0.4	65.3	▼ 3.1	1.7	▲ 1.2
SE		37.3	▲ 6.2	7.4	▼ 1.8	11.9	▲ 3.2	58.5	▼ 6.6	2.7	▼ 0.7
UK		26.2	▼ 7.0	7.3	▲ 0.8	10.0	▲ 1.2	70.0	▲ 9.5	3.3	▼ 2.3
IS		48.3	▼ 7.8	16.8	▼ 15.0	22.5	▼ 8.7	47.2	▲ 7.9	1.4	▲ 0.7
NO		25.3	▼ 5.1	5.4	▼ 0.6	4.9	▼ 3.3	73.9	▲ 8.5	0.7	▼ 0.6

Results statistically significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Results statistically significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Statistically significant increase from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)  
 Statistically significant decrease from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

The analysis of company characteristics shows the proportion of companies that sell online to consumers in their own country is statistically significantly higher amongst companies:

- o in sector K - financial and insurance activities (45.5%) or sector L - real estate activities (39.0%), and lower for those in sector S – other services (24.7%);
- o that are medium (46.7%) or large companies (48.5%);
- o established prior to 1990: 40.0%;
- o selling to other EU countries (52.0%), and particularly sell online to other EU countries (95.4%);
- o selling non-food products (40.4%) or services (37.2%);
- o selling in two (37.7%) or four or more languages (47.8%);
- o where the respondent is a commercial or sales manager (37.7%) or a general manager (37.0%).

Companies that sell online to final consumers in other EU countries, or to consumers in other non-EU countries are significantly more likely to:

- o be in the service sector, particularly in sector I - accommodation and food service activities. Companies in the trade sector and in sector S are statistically significantly less likely;
- o be medium or large companies;
- o sell services, while retailers selling food products are less likely;
- o sell in two or more languages;
- o be retailers where the respondent is a marketing manager or a commercial or sales manager.

Furthermore, they are less likely to have been created between 1990 and 1999. Moreover, companies that sell online to final consumers in other EU countries are also significantly more likely to be in sector J - information and communication (16.5%), or to sell non-food products (12.4%). Companies that sell online to consumers in other non-EU countries are also significantly less likely to belong to sector D – electricity and gas retail.

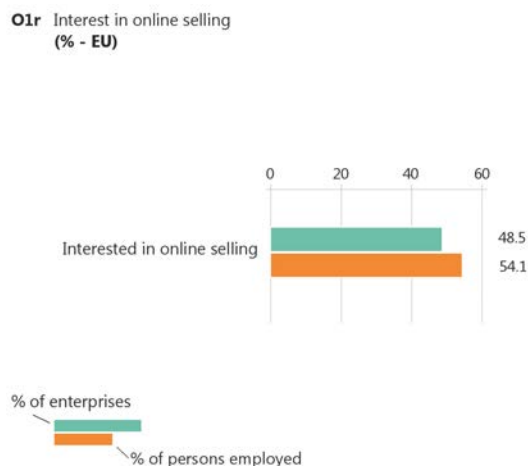
More than four in ten (43.5%) retailers that are engaged in cross-border sales to other EU countries sell online to consumers in other EU countries, while almost one third (32.5%) of companies that are engaged in cross-border sales to non-EU countries sell online to consumers in non-EU countries.

b) Future interest in online selling

- Just under half of all retailers are interested in selling online in the next 12 months -

Retailers were asked about their future plans for online selling. Those who do not currently sell online were asked if they planned to start online sales, while those who currently sell online were asked if they plan to continue to do so.

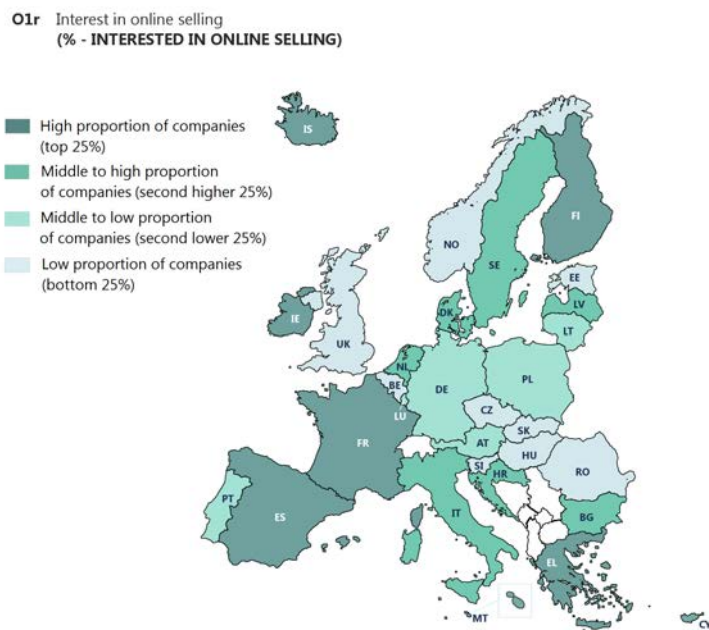
Overall, 48.5% of all retailers are interested in selling online in the next 12 months. This proportion of companies represents 54.1% of the total persons employed.



Base: Retailers in EU Member States (n=10,437)

Retailers in the eurozone are significantly more likely to be interested in selling online in the next 12 months (51.6%).

The map illustrates retailers in the northern (52.4%) and southern (54.5%) regions are significantly more likely to be interested in selling online in the next 12 months, while those in the eastern region (43.8%) are less likely to be so.



Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

In 15 countries, at least half of all retailers are interested in online selling. Companies in Greece (73.3%) and Cyprus (65.3%), as well as in Iceland (65.0%) outside the EU, are the most likely to be interested, while those in Slovakia (34.9%), the Czech Republic (35.8%) and Hungary (37.7%) are the least likely to be so.

Across the EU, the proportion of retailers interested in online selling has fallen slightly since 2014 (-3.3pp), although there have been larger changes within some countries. Retailers in Cyprus (+11.9pp) are now much more interested in selling online compared to 2014, while those in Estonia are significantly less interested in doing so (-14.9pp).

O1\_r Interest in online selling  
(% - INTERESTED IN ONLINE SELLING)

	2016	2016-2014
EU28	48.5	▼ 3.3
EUROZONE	51.6	▼ 3.0
EU15	49.4	▼ 3.9
EU13	44.2	▼ 8.1
REGION NORTH	52.4	▲ 0.2
REGION EAST	43.8	▲ 0.3
REGION SOUTH	54.5	▼ 5.6
REGION WEST	47.6	▼ 2.9
BE	42.8	▼ 2.8
BG	50.7	▲ 0.1
CZ	35.8	▼ 1.3
DK	50.1	▼ 1.6
DE	47.4	▲ 0.5
EE	42.7	▼ 14.9
IE	63.0	▲ 4.3
EL	73.3	▲ 1.3
ES	56.3	▼ 14.0
FR	59.3	▼ 1.7
HR	53.9	▼ 0.2
IT	51.0	▲ 0.9
CY	65.3	▲ 11.9
LV	52.2	▼ 7.1
LT	45.4	▲ 8.1
LU	44.4	▲ 1.2
HU	37.7	▲ 1.1
MT	62.7	▼ 5.8
NL	55.4	▼ 1.0
AT	49.6	▲ 4.9
PL	47.9	▲ 1.4
PT	43.5	▼ 4.3
RO	40.0	▲ 2.4
SI	42.6	▲ 5.0
SK	34.9	▼ 13.6
FI	56.5	▲ 2.2
SE	52.0	▲ 0.6
UK	37.8	▼ 9.9
IS	65.0	▼ 4.4
NO	42.1	▼ 8.0

Results statistically significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Results statistically significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Statistically significant increase from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)  
 Statistically significant decrease from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

The analysis of company characteristics shows retailers interested in selling online in the next 12 months are most likely to:

- o be in the trade sector (50.8%) or in sector K (57.3%), rather than in the service sector (46.8%), especially in sector S (36.5%), sector H (44.8%) or sector I (46.3%), for which they are the least likely to be;
- o be medium (60.1%) or large companies (59.4%);
- o be the oldest companies (established before 1990): 54.4%;
- o sell non-food products (55.9%) or services (52.4%) rather than food products (38.1%);
- o sell in two (55.9%), three (57.1%) or four or more languages (65.1%);
- o be companies where the respondent is a marketing manager (64.3%) or a commercial or sales manager (54.7%).



In addition, at least nine out of ten retailers who already sell online (90.5%) or already sell online to other EU countries (98%) are interested in selling online in the next 12 months. In contrast, just 21.4% of those not engaged in online sales are interested in selling online in the next 12 months.

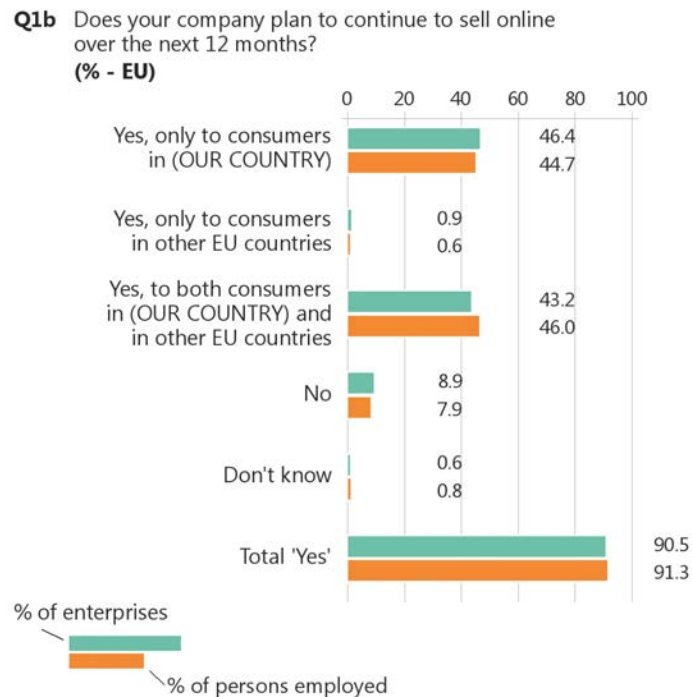
Confidence to sell online is also important: 75.4% of retailers feeling confident about it plan to sell online in the next 12 months, compared to 10.5% who are not confident.

- Almost every retailer currently selling online plans to continue to doing it over the next 12 months -

Amongst companies that currently sell online, nine in ten (90.5%) plan to continue to sell online over the next 12 months, and this represents 91.3% of persons employed in this group of retailers.

Nearly half of these companies (46.4%) plan to sell online only to consumers in their country over the next 12 months, while almost as many (43.2%) plan to sell online consumers in their own and in other EU countries. Less than one in a hundred companies plan to sell online only to consumers in other EU countries (0.9%) in the coming year.

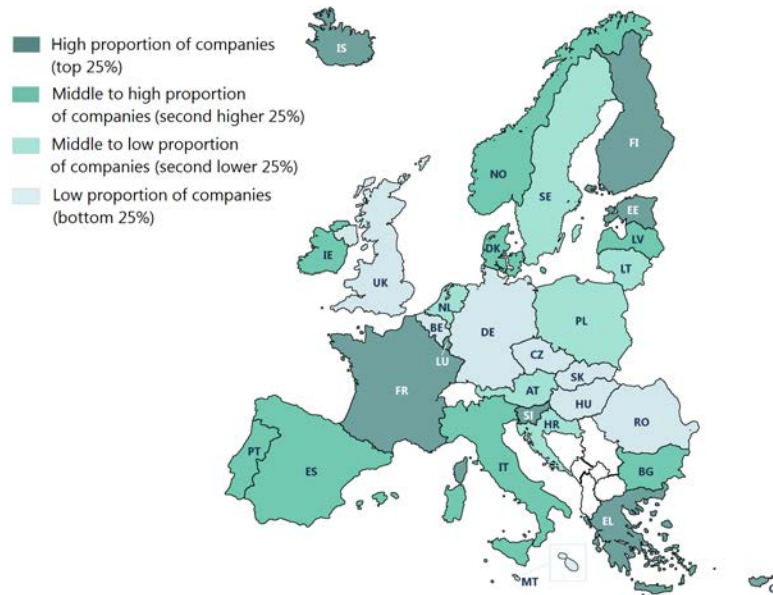
Less than one in ten (8.9%) do not plan to continue to sell online over the next 12 months.



Base: Retailers in EU Member States currently selling online (n=4,011).

Retailers in the southern region are significantly more likely to be planning to continue to sell online.

**Q1b** Does your company plan to continue to sell online over the next 12 months?  
(% - TOTAL 'YES')



Base: All retailers currently selling online (n=4,198).

In all countries, at least seven in ten retailers who already sell online plan to continue to do so over the next 12 months, with retailers in in Finland (99.2%), Cyprus (98.7%) and Estonia (98.3%) are the most likely to say this. Retailers in Slovakia (73.5%), Hungary (79.3%) and Romania (80.1%) are the least likely to say they will continue to sell online, but even so these figures represent a considerable majority.

Looking at the results in more detail shows retailers in Finland (74.1%) and Sweden (61.4%), in the EU, and in , Norway (68.3%), are the most likely to be planning to continue to sell online only to consumers in their own country. This compares to 22.6% of retailers in Malta, 24.6% in Luxembourg and 26.6% in Croatia.

Retailers in Luxembourg (65.8%), Greece (64.8%) and Italy (64.5%) are the most likely to plan to continue to sell online to consumers in their own or in other EU countries. Retailers in Slovakia (22.5%) and Finland (24.3%), in the EU, and in Norway (26.1%) are the least likely to say this.

Retailers in Malta (8.3%), Luxembourg (7.0%) and Cyprus (5.9%), and in Iceland (5.9%) considering non-EU countries, are the most likely to be planning to continue to sell online only to consumers in other EU countries.

Since 2014 there has been a slight increase in the proportion of retailers in the EU that do not plan to continue to sell online over the next 12 months (+1.3pp).

At a country level, the largest increase in the proportion of companies that plan to continue to sell online over the next 12 months is found in Slovenia (+10.4pp), while the largest decrease is observed amongst retailers in Slovakia (-17.4pp).

Retailers in Hungary are significantly less likely to say they plan to continue to sell online over the next 12 months only to consumers in their country, compared to 2014 (-13.2pp).

The largest increase in the proportion of companies that plan to continue to sell online over the next 12 months to consumers in their country and in other EU countries can be observed amongst retailers in Slovenia (+25.3pp).

Q1b Does your company plan to continue to sell online over the next 12 months? (%)

		Yes, only to consumers in (OUR COUNTRY)		Yes, only to consumers in other EU countries		Yes, to both consumers in (OUR COUNTRY) and in other EU countries		No		Don't know		Total 'Yes'	
		2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014
EU28		46.4	▲ 0.4	0.9	▼ 0.4	43.2	▼ 0.7	8.9	▲ 1.3	0.6	▼ 0.6	90.5	▼ 0.7
EUROZONE		46.2	▲ 2.5	1.0	▼ 0.5	43.6	▼ 3.7	8.6	▲ 1.6	0.6	▲ 0.1	90.8	▼ 1.7
EU15		46.6	▲ 0.9	0.8	▼ 0.4	43.3	▼ 1.3	8.8	▲ 1.2	0.5	▼ 0.4	90.7	▼ 0.8
EU13		45.3	▲ 1.3	1.4	=	42.8	▼ 2.9	9.6	▲ 2.1	0.9	▼ 0.5	89.5	▼ 1.6
REGION NORTH		63.1	▼ 1.1	0.3	▼ 1.4	29.7	▲ 1.3	6.0	▲ 1.4	0.9	▼ 0.2	93.1	▼ 1.2
REGION EAST		45.6	▼ 4.0	1.2	▼ 1.0	42.5	▲ 5.1	9.8	▲ 1.5	0.9	▼ 1.6	89.3	▲ 0.1
REGION SOUTH		39.3	▼ 5.3	1.2	▼ 0.2	54.9	▼ 3.8	4.0	▲ 1.6	0.6	▲ 0.1	95.4	▼ 1.7
REGION WEST		47.8	▲ 2.9	0.8	▼ 0.4	40.3	▼ 2.4	10.6	▲ 0.6	0.5	▼ 0.7	88.9	▲ 0.1
BE		44.4	▲ 4.0	0.0	▼ 4.2	44.1	▲ 1.3	11.5	▼ 1.1	0.0	=	88.5	▲ 1.1
BG		45.7	▼ 11.7	0.8	▼ 0.8	48.5	▲ 16.8	5.0	=	0.0	▼ 4.3	95.0	▲ 4.3
CZ		46.3	▼ 0.3	1.6	▼ 1.0	41.4	▼ 1.3	9.8	▲ 2.7	0.9	▼ 0.1	89.3	▼ 2.6
DK		58.6	▼ 3.1	0.6	▼ 2.6	35.2	▲ 6.0	5.1	▼ 0.2	0.5	▼ 0.1	94.4	▲ 0.3
DE		47.8	▲ 8.9	0.9	▼ 1.0	36.2	▼ 9.4	14.4	▲ 1.4	0.7	▲ 0.1	84.9	▼ 1.5
EE		43.4	▼ 3.6	1.4	▲ 0.6	53.5	▲ 5.4	0.0	▼ 3.3	1.7	▲ 0.9	98.3	▲ 2.4
IE		35.8	▲ 4.9	0.6	▼ 1.5	57.6	▼ 2.5	4.3	▼ 2.6	1.7	▲ 1.7	94.0	▲ 0.9
EL		29.6	▼ 7.9	2.9	▲ 2.5	64.8	▲ 3.7	2.7	▲ 1.7	0.0	=	97.3	▼ 1.7
ES		48.5	▼ 0.4	0.7	▼ 0.4	46.0	▼ 1.6	4.5	▲ 2.1	0.3	▲ 0.3	95.2	▼ 2.4
FR		60.1	▲ 7.7	0.0	▼ 0.6	37.3	▼ 3.1	2.5	▼ 3.8	0.1	▼ 0.2	97.4	▲ 4.0
HR		26.6	▲ 3.3	5.3	▼ 0.6	60.9	▼ 6.6	6.4	▲ 3.7	0.8	▲ 0.2	92.8	▼ 3.9
IT		30.0	▼ 8.8	0.8	▼ 1.5	64.5	▲ 9.5	3.6	▲ 1.1	1.1	▼ 0.3	95.3	▼ 0.8
CY		42.0	▲ 6.3	5.9	▲ 4.4	50.8	▼ 5.8	1.3	▼ 2.5	0.0	▼ 2.4	98.7	▲ 4.9
LV		44.1	▼ 11.7	0.0	▼ 3.1	50.7	▲ 14.1	2.6	▼ 0.3	2.5	▲ 1.0	94.8	▼ 0.7
LT		41.8	▼ 8.0	1.4	▼ 1.5	50.6	▲ 12.9	6.2	▼ 1.7	0.0	▼ 4.7	93.8	▲ 6.4
LU		24.6	▼ 2.7	7.0	▲ 7.2	65.8	▲ 1.8	2.6	▼ 6.3	0.0	=	97.4	▲ 6.3
HU		39.1	▼ 13.2	2.3	▲ 1.5	37.9	▲ 6.5	19.2	▲ 4.4	1.5	▲ 0.8	79.3	▼ 5.2
MT		22.6	▼ 6.2	8.3	▲ 4.1	55.7	▼ 3.5	10.9	▲ 5.0	2.5	▲ 0.6	86.6	▼ 5.6
NL		50.9	▼ 1.8	0.6	▲ 0.3	39.1	▲ 0.3	8.6	▲ 0.2	0.8	▲ 1.0	90.6	▼ 1.2
AT		28.5	▼ 0.8	5.8	▲ 3.2	58.4	▼ 3.4	7.3	▲ 1.9	0.0	▼ 0.9	92.7	▼ 1.0
PL		55.2	▲ 4.8	0.0	▼ 1.7	38.4	▲ 3.0	5.5	▼ 3.7	0.9	▼ 2.4	93.6	▲ 6.1
PT		31.7	▼ 1.0	2.0	▲ 2.3	61.3	▼ 3.8	4.0	▲ 2.1	1.0	▲ 0.4	95.0	▼ 2.5
RO		43.0	▼ 6.8	0.0	▼ 1.0	37.1	▲ 4.3	18.8	▲ 5.4	1.1	▼ 1.9	80.1	▼ 3.5
SI		37.9	▼ 12.8	1.0	▼ 2.1	57.5	▲ 25.3	3.6	▼ 7.1	0.0	▼ 3.3	96.4	▲ 10.4
SK		46.8	▼ 8.4	4.2	▼ 4.5	22.5	▼ 4.5	25.2	▲ 17.3	1.3	▲ 0.1	73.5	▼ 17.4
FI		74.1	▼ 1.8	0.8	▼ 0.2	24.3	▲ 2.7	0.8	▼ 0.7	0.0	=	99.2	▲ 0.7
SE		61.4	▲ 2.1	0.0	=	29.0	▼ 3.9	8.1	▲ 2.6	1.5	▼ 0.8	90.4	▼ 1.8
UK		43.6	▼ 9.7	0.0	=	46.0	▲ 13.7	10.4	▼ 0.2	0.0	▼ 3.8	89.6	▲ 4.0
IS		47.3	▲ 8.0	5.9	▲ 1.2	43.0	▼ 7.3	3.8	▼ 1.9	0.0	=	96.2	▲ 1.9
NO		68.3	▲ 1.0	0.0	=	26.1	▼ 3.7	4.8	▲ 2.0	0.8	▲ 0.7	94.4	▼ 2.7

     Results statistically significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
     Results statistically significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
     Statistically significant increase from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)  
     Statistically significant decrease from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

Base: All retailers currently selling online (n=4,198)

The analysis of company characteristics shows that retailers that plan to continue to sell online in the next 12 months are statistically significantly less likely to be in sector H – transporting and storage (84.8%); however, they are more likely to belong to the following subgroups:

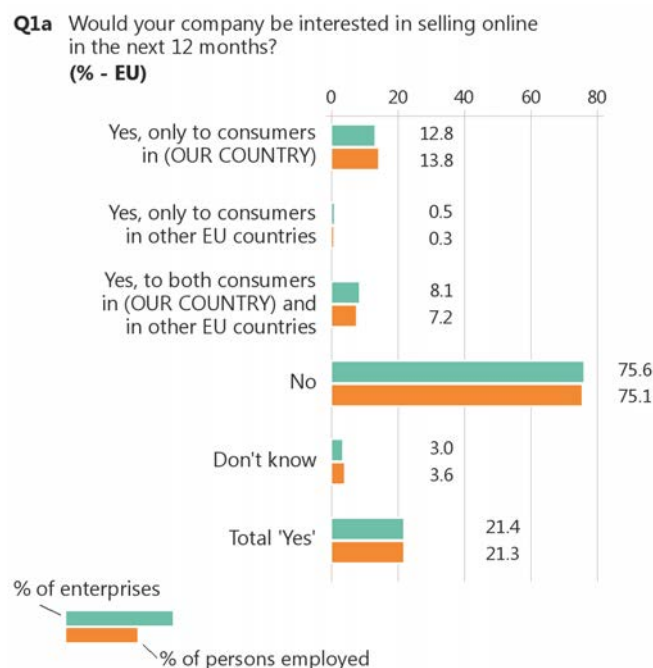
- o medium sized companies (50-250 persons employed): 95.2%;
- o companies engaged in online and cross-border sales (97.7%), and particularly those engaged in online sales to other EU countries (98.0%);
- o companies selling non-food products: 93.9%. They are less likely to be companies selling food products: 87.4%;
- o companies selling in four or more languages: 93.4%;
- o companies where the respondent is a commercial or sales manager: 95.3%.

Confidence to sell online is also important: 96.9% of retailers that are confident to sell online plan to continue to do so, compared to 43.2% of those that are not confident.

- Just over one in five retailers currently not selling online would be interested in starting to do so in the next 12 months -

Retailers that do not currently sell online were asked whether they would be interested in doing so in the next 12 months. Just over one in five (21.4%) say they would be: 12.8% would be interested in selling online only to consumers in their country, while 8.1% would be interested in selling online to consumers in their own and in other EU countries. Less than one in twenty retailers (0.5%) would be interested in selling online only to consumers in other EU countries.

However, the majority of retailers that don't currently sell online would not be interested in doing so in the next 12 months (75.6%) – this represents 75.1% of the total persons employed by this group of retailers.

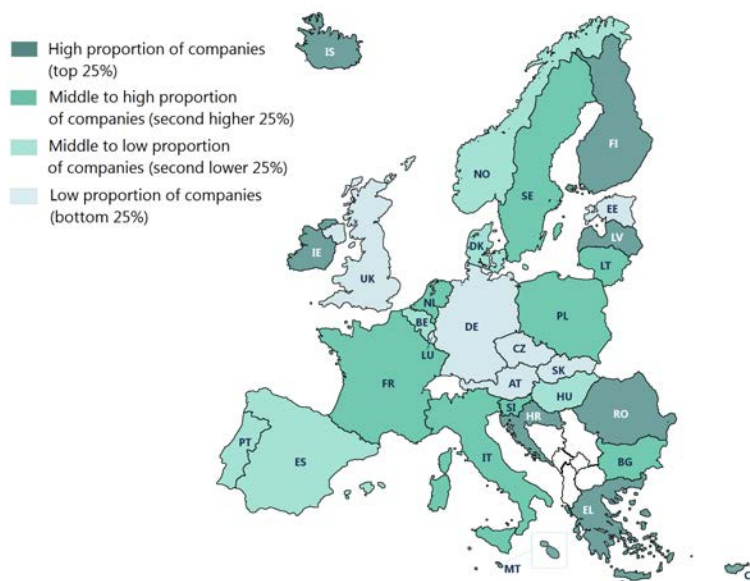


Base: Retailers in EU Member States currently not selling online (n=6.426)

Retailers in NMS13 countries that don't already sell online are significantly more likely to be interested in selling online in the next 12 months (24.0%).

Amongst retailers that don't already sell online, those in the northern, eastern and southern regions are significantly more likely to be interested in selling online in the next 12 months, while those in the western region are significantly less likely to be interested.

**Q1a** Would your company be interested in selling online in the next 12 months?  
(% - TOTAL 'YES')



Base: All retailers currently not selling online (n=6.790)

In all countries, only a minority of the retailers that don't currently sell online would be interested in doing so in the next 12 months. Companies in Greece (42.5%), Malta (38.8%) and Cyprus (34.7%) are the most likely to be interested, while those in the Czech Republic (8.6%), Slovakia (14.7%) and the United Kingdom (15.7%) are the least likely to be so.

Looking at the results in more detail shows companies in Finland (27.8%), Cyprus (27.0%) and Malta (22.7%) are the most likely to be interested in selling online only to consumers in their own country. At the other end of the scale, companies in the Czech Republic (4.8%), Luxembourg (6.0%) and Austria (6.8%) are the least likely to say this.

Companies in Greece, Italy (both 19.4%) Croatia (15.9%) are the most likely to be interested in selling online to consumers in their own and other EU countries. This compared to 3.4% in the Czech Republic, Germany, and 4.1% in the United Kingdom.

Retailers in Malta (1.9%), the United Kingdom and Slovenia (both 1.4%) are the most likely to be interested in selling online only to consumers in other EU countries.

Across the EU, there has been a decrease of 4.1pp in the proportion of this group of retailers that would be interested in selling online in the next 12 months. Specifically, there have been declines in the proportion of retailers that would be interested in selling online only to consumers in their country (-2.6pp) or both domestically and to other EU countries (-1.6pp) since the last wave.

At a country level, retailers in Estonia recorded the largest decrease in the proportion that would be interested in selling online in the next 12 months (-21.0pp). There were no significant increases.

Retailers in Estonia also recorded the largest decrease in the proportion that would be interested in selling online only to consumers in their country (-13.1pp).

Compared to the previous survey, the biggest increase in the proportion of companies that would be interested in selling online to consumers in their own and in other EU countries can be observed amongst retailers in Romania (+5.8pp), although it was larger in Iceland (+12.2pp) if considering non-EU countries. The largest decline is observed amongst those in Spain (-8.5pp).

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Q1a Would your company be interested in selling online in the next 12 months?  
(%)

		Yes, only to consumers in (OUR COUNTRY)		Yes, only to consumers in other EU countries		Yes, to both consumers in (OUR COUNTRY) and in other EU countries		No		Don't know		Total 'Yes'	
		2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014
EU28		12.8	▼ 2.6	0.5	▲ 0.1	8.1	▼ 1.6	75.6	▲ 4.2	3.0	▼ 0.1	21.4	▼ 4.1
EUROZONE		13.0	▼ 1.6	0.3	▼ 0.1	8.9	▼ 2.3	75.4	▲ 3.9	2.4	▲ 0.1	22.2	▼ 4.0
EU15		12.5	▼ 2.5	0.5	▲ 0.2	7.7	▼ 2.4	76.4	▲ 5.0	2.9	▼ 0.3	20.7	▼ 4.7
EU13		13.7	▼ 2.0	0.5	▲ 0.2	9.8	▲ 0.6	72.7	▲ 0.9	3.3	▲ 0.3	24.0	▼ 1.2
REGION NORTH		19.7	▼ 2.1	0.0	▼ 0.3	6.7	▲ 0.6	71.3	▲ 0.9	2.3	▲ 0.9	26.4	▼ 1.8
REGION EAST		13.5	▼ 3.0	0.5	▲ 0.1	9.8	▲ 1.9	72.9	▲ 0.6	3.3	▲ 0.4	23.8	▼ 1.0
REGION SOUTH		10.4	▼ 7.4	0.3	▼ 0.1	15.0	▼ 0.8	71.5	▲ 8.5	2.8	▼ 0.2	25.7	▼ 8.3
REGION WEST		12.8	▼ 0.5	0.5	▲ 0.3	5.4	▼ 2.3	78.3	▲ 3.0	3.0	▼ 0.5	18.7	▼ 2.5
BE		9.6	▼ 2.3	0.4	▼ 0.1	8.7	▲ 1.1	79.6	▲ 0.2	1.7	▲ 1.1	18.7	▼ 1.3
BG		14.3	▼ 5.3	0.5	▼ 0.2	12.6	▲ 1.6	70.0	▲ 4.7	2.6	▼ 0.8	27.4	▼ 3.9
CZ		4.8	▼ 1.7	0.4	▲ 0.4	3.4	▼ 3.1	85.6	▲ 0.5	5.8	▲ 3.9	8.6	▼ 4.4
DK		16.0	▼ 2.6	0.0	▼ 0.6	7.2	▲ 2.4	73.5	▼ 0.7	3.3	▲ 1.5	23.2	▼ 0.8
DE		13.4	▲ 3.2	0.2	▲ 0.2	3.4	▼ 3.7	80.2	▼ 0.4	2.8	▲ 0.7	17.0	▼ 0.3
EE		11.8	▼ 13.1	0.4	▲ 0.1	5.3	▼ 8.0	78.7	▲ 19.8	3.8	▲ 1.2	17.5	▼ 21.0
IE		19.6	▲ 3.4	0.0	=	12.2	▲ 1.3	62.1	▼ 6.8	6.1	▲ 2.1	31.8	▲ 4.7
EL		22.6	▼ 5.8	0.5	▼ 0.9	19.4	▲ 2.0	53.4	▲ 1.3	4.1	▲ 3.4	42.5	▼ 4.7
ES		11.1	▼ 7.9	0.0	▼ 0.8	10.7	▼ 8.5	77.2	▲ 17.7	1.0	▼ 0.5	21.8	▼ 17.2
FR		15.4	▲ 0.2	0.0	▼ 0.6	9.2	▲ 0.9	74.5	▲ 0.5	0.9	▼ 1.0	24.6	▲ 0.5
HR		14.7	▲ 0.1	0.0	▼ 1.5	15.9	▼ 1.0	64.5	▲ 0.9	4.9	▲ 1.5	30.6	▼ 2.4
IT		7.6	▼ 9.2	0.6	▲ 0.5	19.4	▲ 3.7	69.1	▲ 5.7	3.3	▼ 0.7	27.6	▼ 5.0
CY		27.0	▲ 7.1	0.0	=	7.7	▼ 1.9	62.6	▲ 9.0	2.7	▼ 14.2	34.7	▲ 5.2
LV		17.2	▼ 9.0	0.7	▲ 0.4	15.7	▲ 1.3	64.2	▲ 7.7	2.2	▼ 0.4	33.6	▼ 7.3
LT		15.0	▲ 4.3	0.6	▲ 0.6	8.9	▲ 0.4	72.5	▼ 2.2	3.0	▼ 3.1	24.5	▲ 5.3
LU		6.0	▼ 2.1	0.6	▼ 0.8	10.8	▼ 3.1	81.3	▲ 6.5	1.3	▼ 0.5	17.4	▼ 6.0
HU		10.7	▼ 5.3	0.8	▲ 0.8	7.1	▲ 3.7	76.3	▼ 2.7	5.1	▲ 3.5	18.6	▼ 0.8
MT		22.7	▲ 0.5	1.9	▼ 2.3	14.2	▼ 8.6	54.9	▲ 4.5	6.3	▲ 5.9	38.8	▼ 10.4
NL		18.6	▼ 2.8	0.0	=	9.3	▼ 2.9	70.8	▲ 5.3	1.3	▲ 0.4	27.9	▼ 5.7
AT		6.8	▼ 0.4	0.8	▼ 0.1	9.6	▲ 1.9	82.2	▼ 1.7	0.6	▲ 0.3	17.2	▲ 1.4
PL		17.5	▼ 3.7	0.4	▼ 0.1	9.7	▲ 2.9	71.2	▲ 1.3	1.2	▼ 0.4	27.6	▼ 0.9
PT		10.1	▲ 2.2	0.4	▲ 0.3	11.9	▼ 0.2	71.4	▼ 4.5	6.2	▲ 2.2	22.4	▲ 2.3
RO		15.4	▼ 1.9	0.3	▼ 0.1	13.0	▲ 5.8	67.6	▼ 3.6	3.7	▼ 0.2	28.7	▲ 3.8
SI		11.6	▼ 2.4	1.4	▲ 0.3	11.7	▲ 4.7	73.3	▲ 1.3	2.0	▼ 3.9	24.7	▲ 2.6
SK		8.9	▼ 5.0	0.7	▼ 0.6	5.1	▼ 3.0	82.3	▲ 6.9	3.0	▲ 1.7	14.7	▼ 8.6
FI		27.8	▲ 2.4	0.0	=	6.0	▼ 2.4	65.0	▼ 0.1	1.2	▲ 0.1	33.8	=
SE		18.1	▼ 4.6	0.0	=	6.7	=	72.9	▲ 3.6	2.3	▲ 1.0	24.8	▼ 4.6
UK		10.2	▼ 6.4	1.4	▲ 1.3	4.1	▼ 2.5	79.6	▲ 11.5	4.7	▼ 3.9	15.7	▼ 7.6
IS		15.1	▼ 11.3	0.0	▼ 2.0	15.0	▲ 12.2	65.7	▲ 0.1	4.2	▲ 1.0	30.1	▼ 1.1
NO		18.8	▼ 2.6	0.0	=	4.9	▲ 1.1	69.6	▲ 1.0	6.7	▲ 0.5	23.7	▼ 1.5

Base: All retailers currently not selling online (n=6.790)

The analysis of company characteristics highlights retailers interested in selling online in the next 12 months are most likely to:

- o be in the trade sector (NACE G) (25.6%) rather than the services sector (18.3%). They are the least likely to belong to sector S (15.7%), sector L (16.1%) or sector I (17.7%);
- o be the oldest companies: 24.2%;
- o be engaged in distance sales (30.5%) or be engaged in cross-border sales to other EU countries (30.4%);
- o be confident to sell online: 44.1%;
- o sell non-food products (26.4%) or services (23.5%);
- o sell in two (24.5%) or three languages (31.6%). They are less likely to sell only in their country's language (19.0%);
- o be companies where the respondent is a marketing manager: 37.8%.

## 4.2. Drivers of, and barriers to e-commerce

All retailers - irrespective of whether or not they currently sell online - were asked how confident they are to sell online. They were also asked to evaluate the importance of specific obstacles to developing online sales.

### a) Confidence to sell online, domestically and cross-border

- Almost six in ten retailers are confident to sell online -

Retailers were asked if their company was confident to sell online – most (58%) say they are. This represents 62.1% of the total persons employed.

Three in ten retailers are confident only when selling to consumers in their country (30.0%), while almost as many are confident to sell to consumers in their own or in other EU countries (27.2%). Finally, less than one company in a hundred say they are only confident when selling to consumers in other EU countries (0.8%).

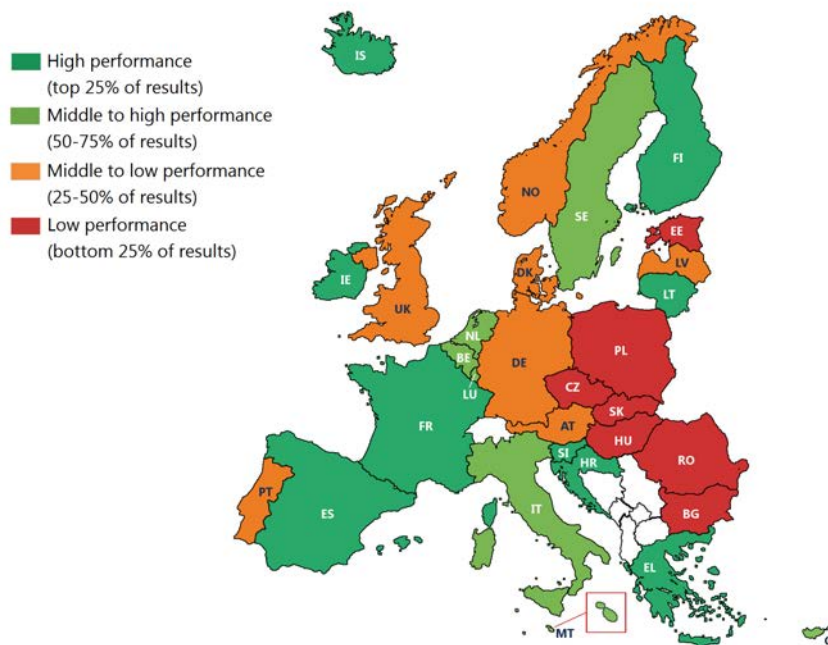


Base: Retailers in EU Member States (n=10,437).

Retailers in the eurozone (61.8%) and those in EU15 countries (60.2%) are significantly more likely to be confident to sell online. In addition, retailers in the northern and southern regions are significantly more likely to be confident to sell online, while those in the south are significantly less likely to express confidence.



**Q2** Would you say that your company is confident to sell online?  
(% - TOTAL 'YES')



Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

In 23 countries, the majority of retailers say they are confident to sell online. Retailers in Greece (80.3%), France (73.8%) and Finland (73.5%) are the most likely to express confidence, while those in Hungary (32.3%), Estonia (34.5%) and the Czech Republic (40.6%) are the least likely to do so.

Looking at the results in more detail shows companies in Finland (53.1%), France (40.8%) and Sweden (40.7%) are the most likely to be confident to sell online only to consumers in their country, while those in Luxembourg (16.5%), Estonia (17.6%) and Hungary (18.6%) are the least likely to say this.

Companies in Greece (54.6%), Slovenia (53.9%) and Lithuania (50.7%) are the most likely to be confident to sell online to consumers in their own and in other EU countries, particularly compared to those in Slovakia (9.9%) and Hungary (12.5%), as well as in Norway (13.2%) outside the EU.

Companies in Malta (8.4%), Luxembourg (2.8%) and Greece (2.7%) are the most likely to say that their company is confident, but only when selling online to consumers in other EU countries.

Since 2014, retailers in the EU have become more likely to say they are not confident to sell online (+2.7pp). There has also been a slight decrease in the proportion that say their company is confident only when selling to consumers in their country or in other EU countries (-1.7pp).

At a country level, the largest increase since 2014 in the proportion of companies that are confident to sell online is observed amongst retailers in Slovenia (+24.9pp), while the biggest decrease is observed amongst those in Portugal (-9.5pp).

The largest increase in the proportion of retailers that say their company is confident, but only when selling to consumers in their country is recorded amongst retailers in Croatia (+7.5pp), while the highest decrease is recorded amongst retailers in Denmark (-10.5pp).

Compared to the previous wave, the highest increase in the proportion of companies that say that their company is confident only when selling online to consumers in other EU countries can be observed amongst retailers in Malta (+7.1pp). The largest decline is recorded by retailers in Slovenia (-2.7pp).

Compared to the previous survey, the largest increase in the proportion of companies that are confident when selling to consumers in their country and in other EU countries is seen in Slovenia (+30.3pp). In contrast, the largest decrease is observed amongst retailers in Malta (-13.8pp).

Q2 Would you say that your company is confident to sell online? (%)

		Yes, but only when selling to consumers in (OUR COUNTRY)		Yes, but only when selling to consumers in other EU countries		Yes, when selling to both consumers in (OUR COUNTRY) and in other EU countries		No		Don't know		Total 'Yes'	
		2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014	2016	2016-2014
EU28		30.0	▲ 0.7	0.8	▲ 0.2	27.2	▼ 1.7	34.6	▲ 2.7	7.4	▼ 1.9	58.0	▼ 0.8
EUROZONE		30.4	▲ 2.3	0.9	▲ 0.2	30.5	▼ 2.5	32.3	▲ 1.9	5.9	▼ 1.9	61.8	=
EU15		31.1	▲ 1.2	0.8	▲ 0.3	28.3	▼ 2.7	32.9	▲ 2.9	6.9	▼ 1.7	60.2	▼ 1.2
EU13		24.5	▼ 4.2	1.0	▲ 0.3	22.2	▼ 7.4	42.5	▲ 10.9	9.8	▲ 0.4	47.7	▼ 11.3
REGION NORTH		41.4	▼ 2.4	0.5	▲ 0.6	21.3	▲ 3.8	21.9	▲ 3.0	14.9	▼ 5.0	63.2	▲ 2.0
REGION EAST		24.5	▼ 1.6	0.9	▲ 0.1	22.0	▲ 3.1	42.7	▲ 1.4	9.9	▼ 3.0	47.4	▲ 1.6
REGION SOUTH		24.2	▼ 0.7	1.0	▼ 0.1	42.7	▲ 1.7	23.6	▲ 0.7	8.5	▼ 1.6	67.9	▲ 0.9
REGION WEST		32.7	▲ 1.7	0.8	▲ 0.3	24.0	▼ 3.5	36.8	▲ 2.5	5.7	▼ 1.0	57.5	▼ 1.5
BE		23.1	▼ 2.4	0.6	▼ 0.4	41.5	▲ 3.9	30.0	▼ 2.3	4.8	▲ 1.2	65.2	▲ 1.1
BG		20.8	▼ 4.4	2.1	▲ 1.4	17.9	▲ 8.7	46.5	▼ 6.0	12.7	▲ 0.3	40.8	▲ 5.7
CZ		21.2	▼ 1.6	0.3	▼ 0.2	19.1	▼ 0.8	47.5	▼ 1.2	11.9	▲ 3.8	40.6	▼ 2.6
DK		33.7	▼ 10.5	1.0	▲ 1.0	23.0	▲ 7.1	22.0	▲ 1.9	20.3	▲ 0.5	57.7	▼ 2.4
DE		33.1	▲ 7.3	1.0	▲ 0.5	19.4	▼ 6.0	41.4	▲ 0.4	5.1	▼ 2.2	53.5	▲ 1.8
EE		17.6	▼ 6.8	0.4	▲ 0.2	16.5	▲ 1.9	34.9	▲ 2.3	30.6	▲ 2.4	34.5	▼ 4.7
IE		29.1	▲ 0.4	0.3	▼ 0.7	38.2	▲ 2.2	25.5	▼ 2.5	6.9	▲ 0.6	67.6	▲ 1.9
EL		23.0	▼ 3.5	2.7	▲ 2.1	54.6	▲ 9.1	17.0	▼ 7.8	2.7	▲ 0.1	80.3	▲ 7.7
ES		29.1	▲ 0.6	0.7	▼ 0.1	43.3	▼ 7.2	17.7	▲ 3.4	9.2	▲ 3.3	73.1	▼ 6.7
FR		40.8	▲ 1.0	0.3	=	32.7	▲ 0.3	23.6	▲ 1.4	2.6	▼ 2.7	73.8	▲ 1.3
HR		25.3	▲ 7.5	2.5	▲ 0.5	39.8	▼ 1.6	23.8	▼ 9.8	8.6	▲ 3.4	67.6	▲ 6.4
IT		19.1	▼ 1.5	0.6	▼ 0.7	42.4	▲ 12.1	29.4	▼ 3.2	8.5	▼ 6.7	62.1	▲ 9.9
CY		30.2	▲ 6.3	2.6	▲ 1.3	27.9	▲ 5.2	35.4	▲ 5.6	3.9	▼ 18.4	60.7	▲ 12.8
LV		31.4	▼ 8.5	1.7	▲ 1.3	23.0	▲ 2.1	35.9	▲ 7.7	8.0	▼ 2.6	56.1	▼ 5.1
LT		21.1	▲ 7.2	1.0	▲ 0.3	50.7	▲ 10.2	14.4	▼ 6.5	12.8	▼ 11.2	72.8	▲ 17.7
LU		16.5	▲ 1.5	2.8	▲ 1.0	41.8	▲ 13.5	34.7	▼ 12.1	4.2	▼ 3.9	61.1	▲ 16.0
HU		18.6	▼ 3.1	1.2	▲ 0.8	12.5	▲ 3.2	58.5	▼ 0.1	9.2	▼ 0.8	32.3	▲ 0.9
MT		23.4	▼ 3.1	8.4	▲ 7.1	31.6	▼ 13.8	31.5	▲ 8.8	5.1	▲ 1.0	63.4	▼ 9.8
NL		33.2	▼ 2.8	0.3	▼ 0.1	27.8	▼ 1.8	36.0	▲ 4.4	2.7	▲ 0.3	61.3	▼ 4.7
AT		19.8	▲ 1.9	2.2	▲ 1.1	33.3	▲ 5.1	40.8	▼ 5.6	3.9	▼ 2.5	55.3	▲ 8.1
PL		29.9	▲ 0.8	0.0	▼ 1.0	18.0	▲ 2.2	42.3	▲ 10.9	9.8	▼ 12.9	47.9	▲ 2.0
PT		22.7	▲ 2.5	1.3	▲ 1.0	34.4	▼ 13.0	31.1	▲ 8.1	10.5	▲ 1.4	58.4	▼ 9.5
RO		24.0	▼ 5.4	1.0	▲ 0.5	23.4	▲ 3.1	47.0	▲ 0.7	4.6	▲ 1.1	48.4	▼ 1.8
SI		19.0	▼ 2.7	0.5	▼ 2.7	53.9	▲ 30.3	17.3	▼ 17.7	9.3	▼ 7.2	73.4	▲ 24.9
SK		32.6	▼ 2.7	1.4	▼ 1.3	9.9	▲ 1.6	47.5	▲ 3.7	8.6	▼ 1.3	43.9	▼ 2.4
FI		53.1	▲ 3.3	0.3	=	20.1	▼ 1.8	23.9	▲ 1.1	2.6	▼ 2.6	73.5	▲ 1.5
SE		40.7	▲ 3.1	0.5	▲ 0.4	20.9	▲ 2.8	21.0	▲ 6.0	16.9	▼ 12.3	62.1	▲ 6.3
UK		31.4	▲ 4.2	0.5	▲ 0.4	20.4	▼ 2.0	37.9	▲ 4.8	9.8	▲ 1.0	52.3	▼ 5.8
IS		39.1	▲ 6.9	1.5	▼ 0.3	28.9	▼ 10.0	29.7	▲ 4.0	0.8	▼ 0.6	69.5	▼ 3.4
NO		37.7	▼ 5.9	0.2	▲ 0.2	13.2	▼ 3.1	37.1	▲ 3.7	11.8	▲ 5.1	51.1	▼ 8.8

Results statistically significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Results statistically significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Statistically significant increase from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)  
 Statistically significant decrease from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

The analysis of company characteristics shows statistically significantly higher proportions of retailers that are confident to sell online in the following subgroups:

- o retailers belonging to sector J - information and communication: 64.3%. Lower proportions are observed in sector S (50.6%) and sector I (55.7%);
- o medium (67.2%) or large sized companies (66.2%);
- o the oldest companies: 60.8%;
- o companies engaged in distance sales (78.1%) and those that sell cross-border to other EU countries (73.4%);
- o companies selling online (87.5%), and those selling online to other EU countries (96.3%);
- o companies interested in selling online in the next 12 months (80.4%), or planning to continue selling online in the next 12 months (93.7%);
- o companies selling non-food products (65.0%) or services (60.8%);
- o companies selling in two (62.9%), three (64.4%) or four or more (70.5%) languages;
- o companies where the respondent is a marketing manager (67.1%) or a commercial or sales manager (62.9%).

b) Obstacles to the development of online sales:

- o Obstacles to developing online sales to the other EU Member States amongst retailers currently selling online

Retailers that currently sell online were asked to evaluate the importance of a number of possible obstacles to the development of their online sales to other EU Member States.

- Fraud risk and differences in tax regulations are the most mentioned barriers to developing online sales to other EU countries -

Almost four in ten retailers that currently sell online (39.7%) mention the higher risk of fraud and non-payments in cross border sales as an important obstacle to the development of online sales to other EU countries, while almost as many mention differences in national tax regulations (39.6%). At least one in five companies considers each of these obstacles to be very important.

Nearly four in ten companies (38.1%) mention differences in national contract law while 37.4% mention differences in national consumer protection rules and 37.2% say higher transport costs as important obstacles to the development of online sales to other EU countries.

Just over a third of companies (36.2%) say the potentially higher costs involved in resolving complaints and disputes cross-border are an important obstacle to the development of online sales to other EU countries. Almost as many (34.6%) mention the higher costs of cross-border delivery, while 31.2% mention extra costs from after-sales service in cross-border transactions.

Almost three in ten companies (29.2%) say restrictions on cross-border sales imposed by manufacturers or suppliers are an important obstacle, while 26.0% mention extra costs arising from language differences.

**Q3a** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales to other EU countries by your company? (% - EU)



Base: Retailers in EU Member States currently selling online (n=4,011)

The analysis based on the number of persons employed shows several differences in the ranking of obstacles, although overall proportions are broadly similar (within 1-3pp). For example, higher risk of fraud ranks fourth rather than first, tax regulation differences ranks first rather than second, differences in contract law ranks second rather than third, and differences in consumer protection regulation ranks third rather than fourth.

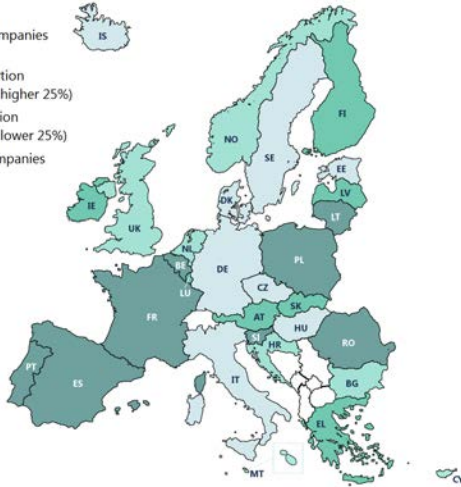
Retailers in NMS13 countries are significantly more likely to say each of these obstacles is important. For example, 46.1% mention the potentially higher costs involved in resolving complaints and disputes cross-border.

Retailers outside the eurozone are also significantly more likely to mention the potentially higher costs involved in resolving complaints and disputes cross-border (41.0%), higher risk of fraud and non-payments in cross-border sales (49.2%), extra costs arising from language differences (30.9%), and the extra costs from after-sales service in cross-border transactions (35.6%).

Amongst companies that currently sell online, retailers in the eastern and southern region are significantly more likely to say each of the issues are important obstacles to the development of online sales to other EU countries. The exception is the higher risk of fraud and non-payments – only retailers in the east are significantly more likely to say this is an important obstacle. Retailers in the north are significantly less likely to consider each of these issues to be important obstacles to the development of online sales to other EU countries. Finally, companies in the western region are significantly less likely to consider higher transport costs due to geographic distance, potentially higher costs involved in resolving complaints and disputes cross-border, higher costs of cross-border delivery, or extra costs from after-sales service in cross-border transactions as important obstacles.

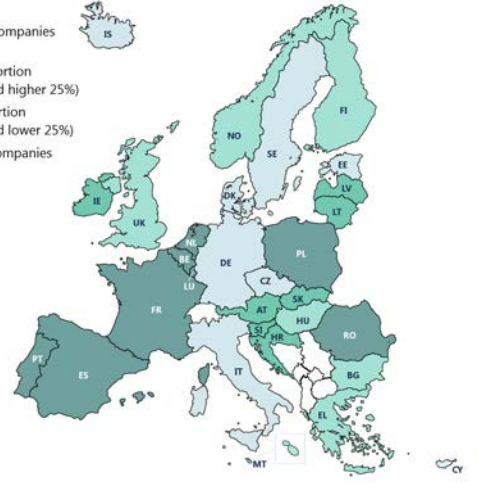
**Q3a.3** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales to other EU countries by your company?  
**Differences in national contract law**  
 (% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')

- High proportion of companies (top 25%)
- Middle to high proportion of companies (second higher 25%)
- Middle to low proportion of companies (second lower 25%)
- Low proportion of companies (bottom 25%)



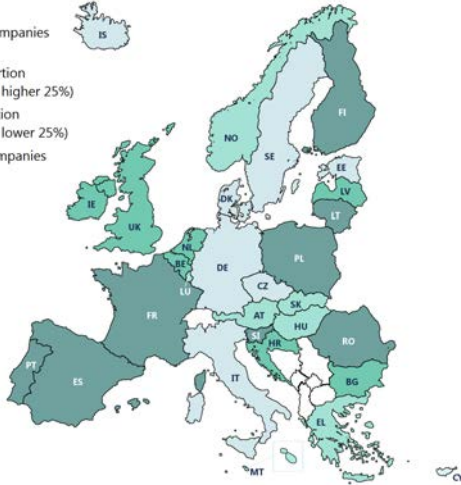
**Q3a.2** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales to other EU countries by your company?  
**Differences in national consumer protection rules**  
 (% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')

- High proportion of companies (top 25%)
- Middle to high proportion of companies (second higher 25%)
- Middle to low proportion of companies (second lower 25%)
- Low proportion of companies (bottom 25%)



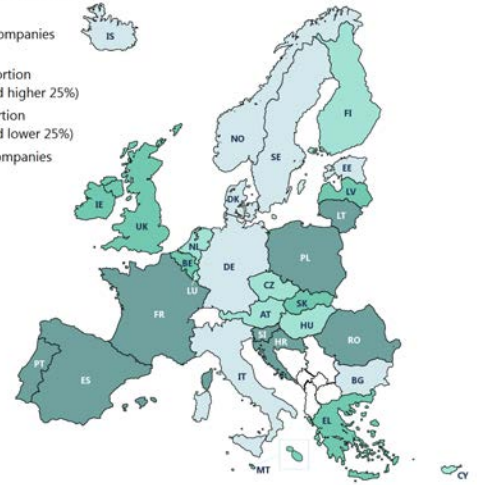
**Q3a.4** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales to other EU countries by your company?  
**Higher costs of cross-border delivery compared to domestic delivery**  
 (% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')

- High proportion of companies (top 25%)
- Middle to high proportion of companies (second higher 25%)
- Middle to low proportion of companies (second lower 25%)
- Low proportion of companies (bottom 25%)



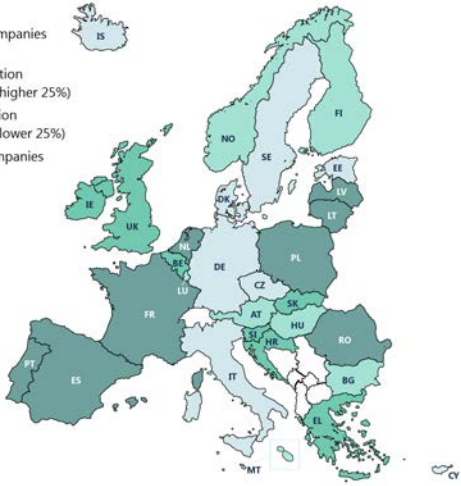
**Q3a.8** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales to other EU countries by your company?  
**Extra costs from after-sales service in cross-border transactions**  
 (% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')

- High proportion of companies (top 25%)
- Middle to high proportion of companies (second higher 25%)
- Middle to low proportion of companies (second lower 25%)
- Low proportion of companies (bottom 25%)



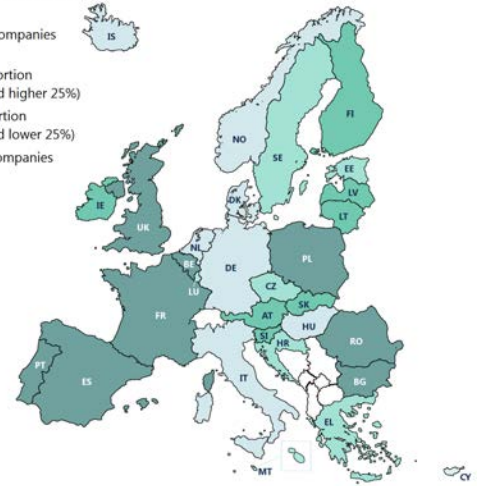
**Q3a.9** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales to other EU countries by your company?  
**Restrictions on cross-border sales imposed by manufacturers or suppliers**  
 (% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')

- High proportion of companies (top 25%)
- Middle to high proportion of companies (second higher 25%)
- Middle to low proportion of companies (second lower 25%)
- Low proportion of companies (bottom 25%)



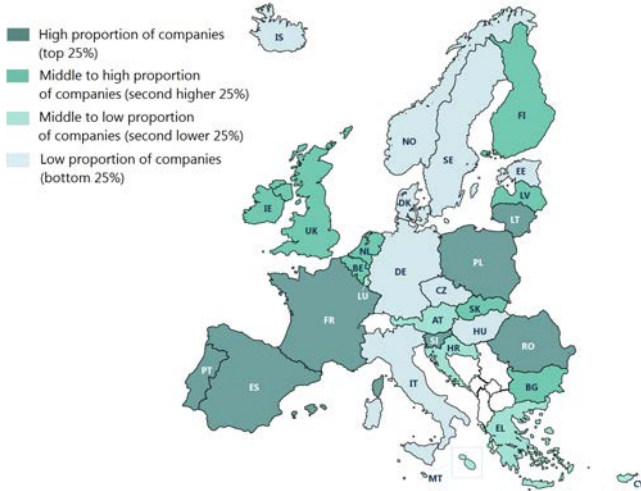
**Q3a.7** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales to other EU countries by your company?  
**Extra costs arising from language differences**  
 (% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')

- High proportion of companies (top 25%)
- Middle to high proportion of companies (second higher 25%)
- Middle to low proportion of companies (second lower 25%)
- Low proportion of companies (bottom 25%)

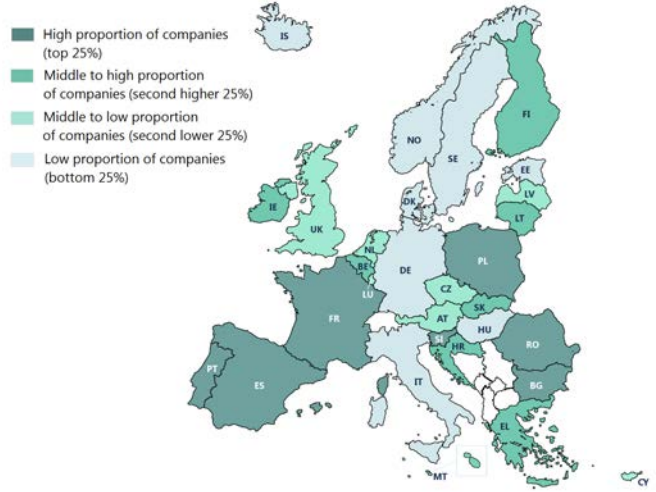


Base: All retailers currently selling online (n=4,198)

**Q3a.10** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales to other EU countries by your company?  
**Higher transport costs due to geographic distance**  
 (% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')



**Q3a.5** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales to other EU countries by your company?  
**Potentially higher costs involved in resolving complaints and disputes cross-border**  
 (% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')



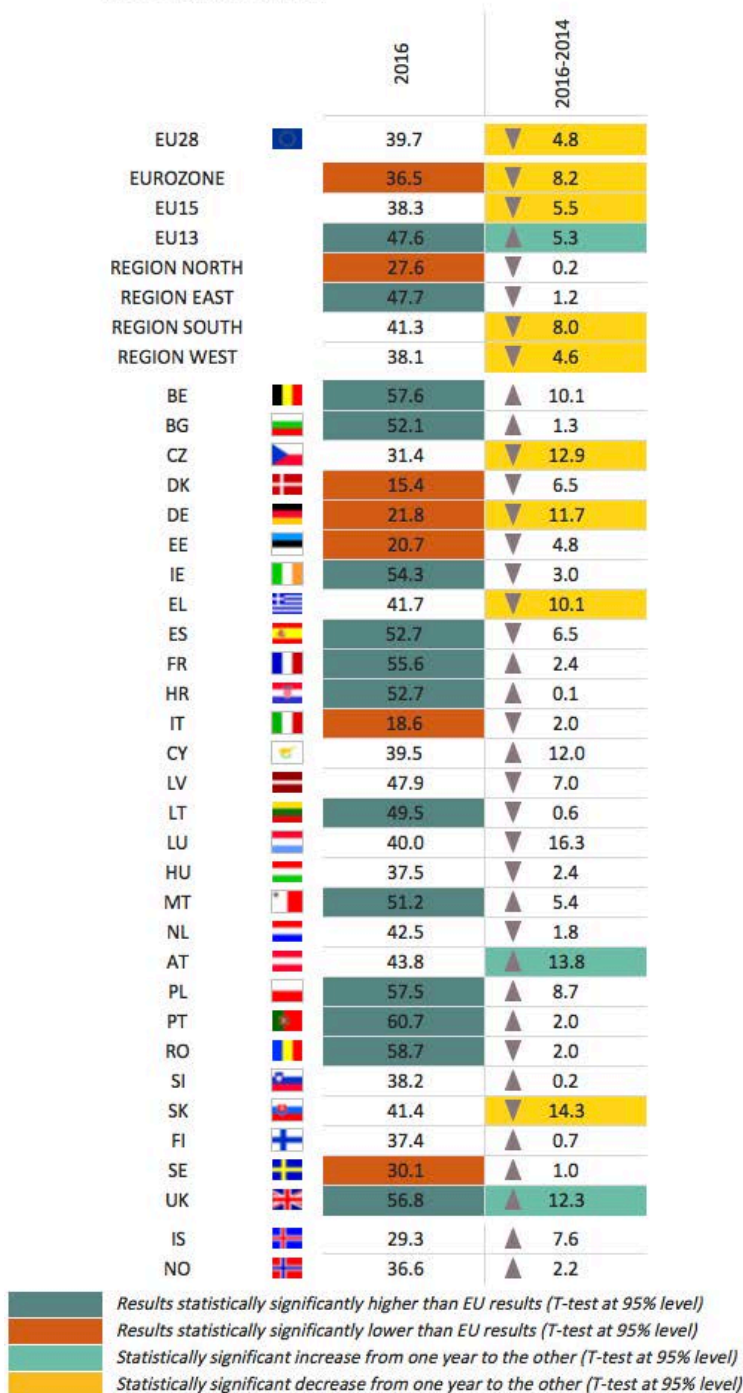
Base: All retailers currently selling online (n=4,198)

Overall, companies in Romania and France are generally amongst the most likely to consider each issue as an important obstacle to the development of online sales to other EU countries, while those in Denmark, Germany and Estonia are fairly consistently amongst the least likely to do so.

The following pages present the detailed results per country, for each of the obstacles.

Companies in Portugal (60.7%), Romania (58.7%) and Belgium (57.6%) are the most likely to say the higher risk of fraud and non-payments in cross border sales is an important obstacle, compared to no more than one in twenty retailers in Denmark (15.4%), Italy (18.6%) and Estonia (20.7%).

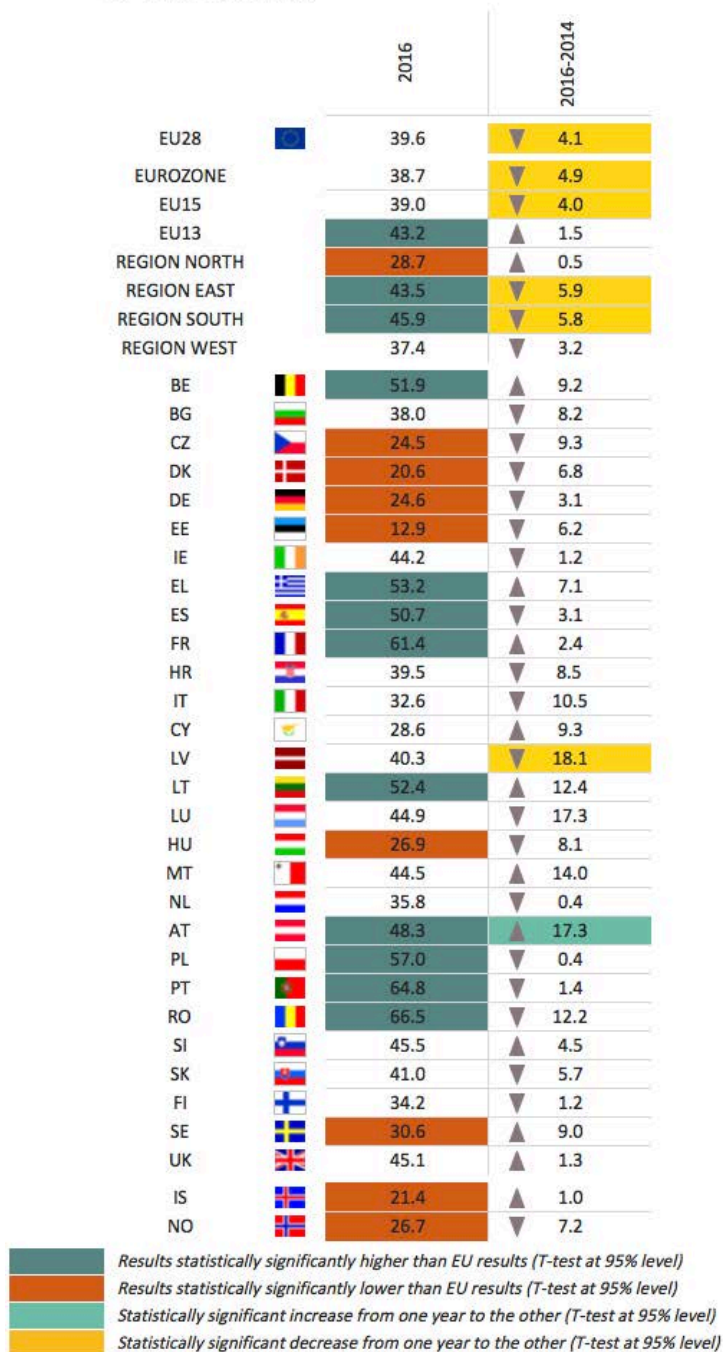
**Q3a.6** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales to other EU countries by your company?  
Higher risk of fraud and non-payments in cross-border sales  
(% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')



Base: All retailers currently selling online (n=4,198)

Companies in Romania (66.5%), Portugal (64.8%) and France (61.4%) are the most likely to mention differences in national tax regulations as important obstacles to the development of online sales. This obstacle is least mentioned in the EU by companies in Estonia (12.9%) and Denmark (20.6%), and outside the EU in Iceland (21.4%).

**Q3a.1** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales to other EU countries by your company?  
Differences in national tax regulations (e.g. VAT rules)  
(% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')



Base: All retailers currently selling online (n=4,198)



Nearly three quarters of companies in Romania (73.1%), as well as 59.4% in France and 59.3% in Portugal consider differences in national contract law as an important obstacle to the development of online sales. This compares to no more than one in five companies in Denmark (17.4%) and Italy (20.4%), as well as in Iceland (13.9%), outside the EU.

**Q3a.3** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales to other EU countries by your company?  
Differences in national contract law  
(% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')

		2016	2016-2014
EU28		38.1	▼ 2.7
EUROZONE		37.4	▼ 4.5
EU15		37.0	▼ 3.3
EU13		44.4	▲ 6.5
REGION NORTH		27.4	▲ 1.8
REGION EAST		44.8	=
REGION SOUTH		42.7	▼ 5.5
REGION WEST		35.8	▼ 2.3
BE		48.8	▲ 3.2
BG		39.0	▼ 8.1
CZ		26.8	▲ 0.7
DK		17.4	▼ 4.5
DE		25.2	▼ 6.8
EE		22.4	▲ 5.1
IE		45.1	▼ 0.5
EL		40.1	▼ 3.5
ES		55.6	▲ 1.5
FR		59.4	▲ 10.2
HR		34.8	▼ 9.7
IT		20.4	▼ 9.6
CY		31.0	▲ 12.1
LV		42.8	▼ 7.2
LT		46.7	▲ 5.0
LU		42.8	▼ 11.4
HU		27.0	▼ 8.9
MT		30.8	▼ 1.3
NL		32.0	▼ 0.1
AT		42.8	▲ 16.1
PL		57.9	▲ 7.7
PT		59.3	▲ 3.1
RO		73.1	▲ 7.1
SI		51.9	▲ 15.2
SK		41.5	▼ 15.1
FI		41.2	▲ 3.9
SE		27.5	▲ 6.1
UK		39.5	▲ 3.8
IS		13.9	▼ 3.0
NO		28.2	▼ 0.1

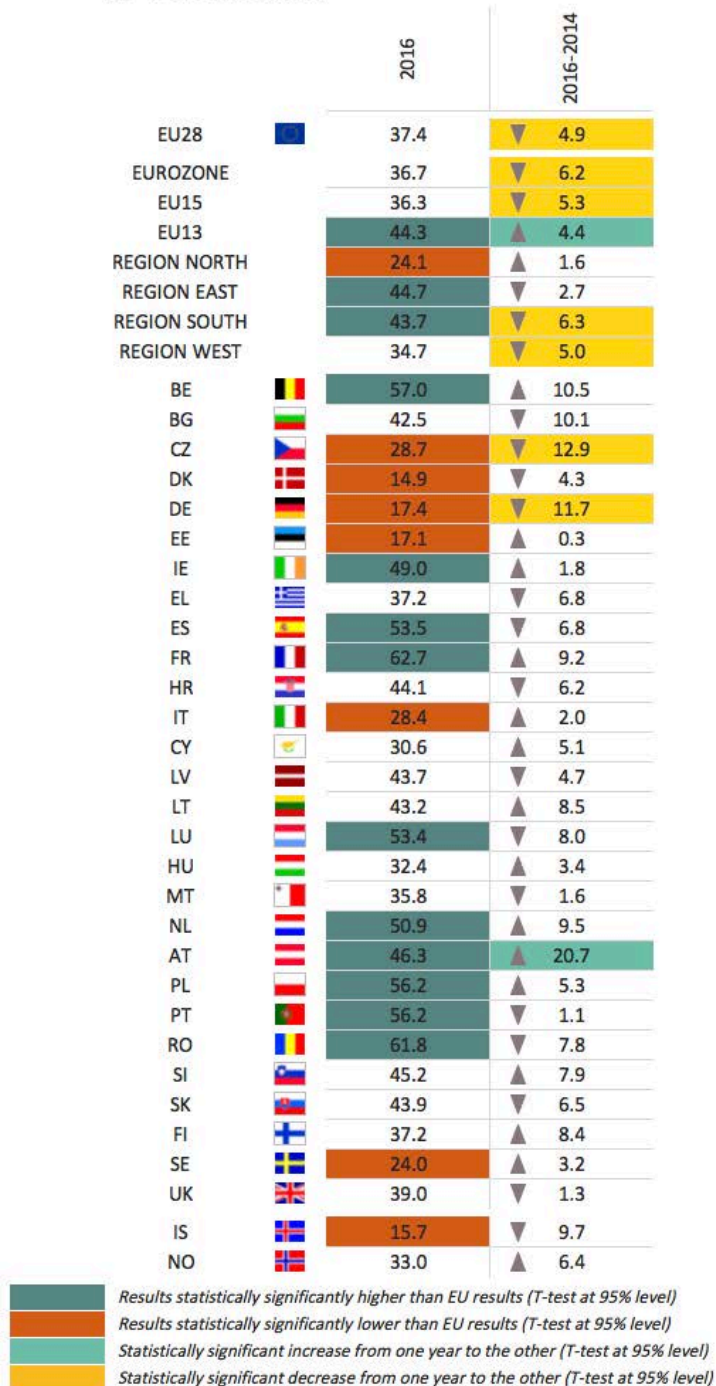
	Results statistically significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)
	Results statistically significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)
	Statistically significant increase from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)
	Statistically significant decrease from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

Base: All retailers currently selling online (n=4,198)

Companies in France (62.7%), Romania (61.8%) and Belgium (57.0%) are the most likely to mention differences in national consumer protection rules, while those in Denmark (14.9%) and Estonia (17.1%) are the least likely to do so in the EU, as well as those in Iceland (15.7%) outside the EU.

**Q3a.2** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales to other EU countries by your company?

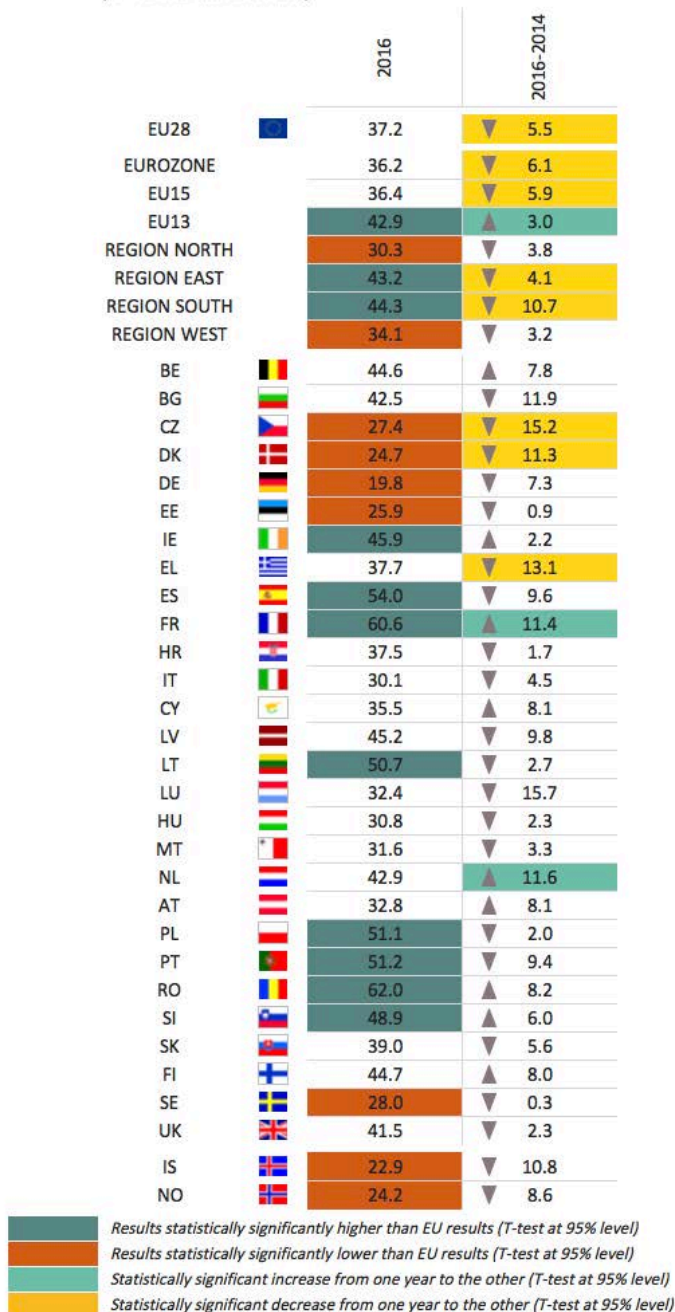
Differences in national consumer protection rules  
(% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')



Base: All retailers currently selling online (n=4,198)

Higher transport costs due to geographic distance are most likely to be mentioned as an important obstacle by companies in Romania (62.0%), France (60.6%) and Spain (54.0%), and least likely to be mentioned by those in Germany (19.8%), Denmark (24.7%) and Estonia (25.9%). Outside the EU, companies in Iceland (22.9%) and Norway (24.2%) are amongst the least likely to mention this.

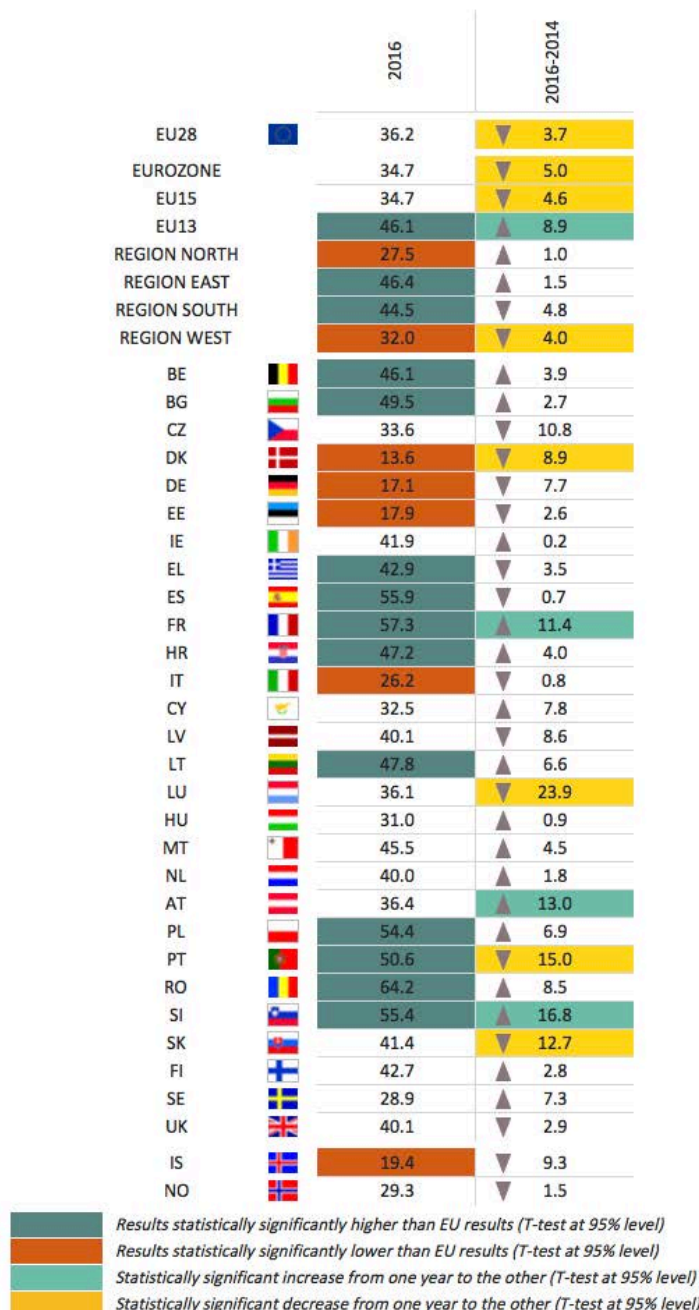
**Q3a.10** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales to other EU countries by your company?  
Higher transport costs due to geographic distance  
(% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')



Base: All retailers currently selling online (n=4,198)

Companies in Romania (64.2%), France (57.3%) and Spain (55.9%) are the most likely to say the potentially higher costs involved in resolving complaints and disputes cross-border are an important obstacle to the development of online sales, while those in Denmark (13.6%), Germany (17.1%) and Estonia (17.9%) are the least likely to do so.

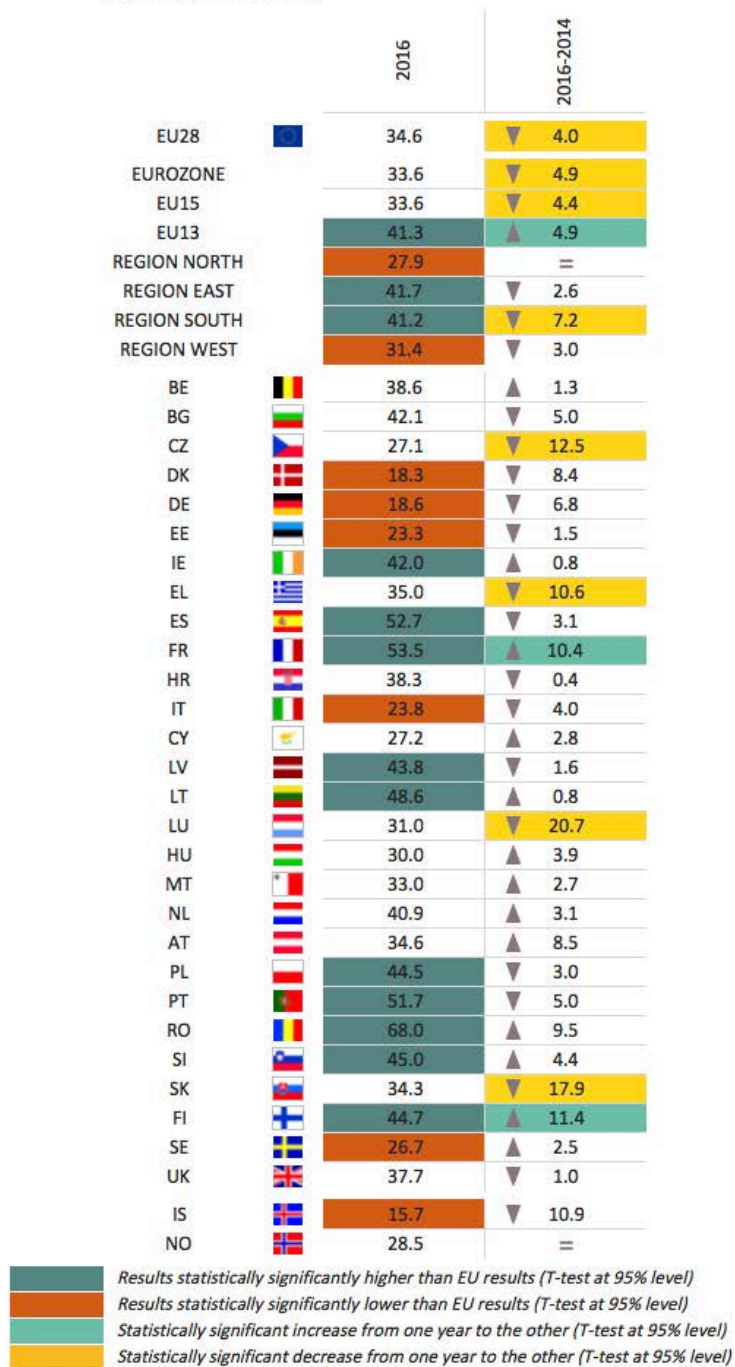
**Q3a.5** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales to other EU countries by your company?  
Potentially higher costs involved in resolving complaints and disputes cross-border  
(% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')



Base: All retailers currently selling online (n=4,198)

Nearly seven in ten companies in Romania (68.0%) name higher costs of cross-border delivery compared to domestic delivery as an important obstacle, as do just over half in France (53.5%) and Spain (52.7%). By comparison, this obstacle is mentioned least by companies in Denmark (18.3%) and Germany (18.6%) in the EU, and in Iceland (15.7%), outside the EU.

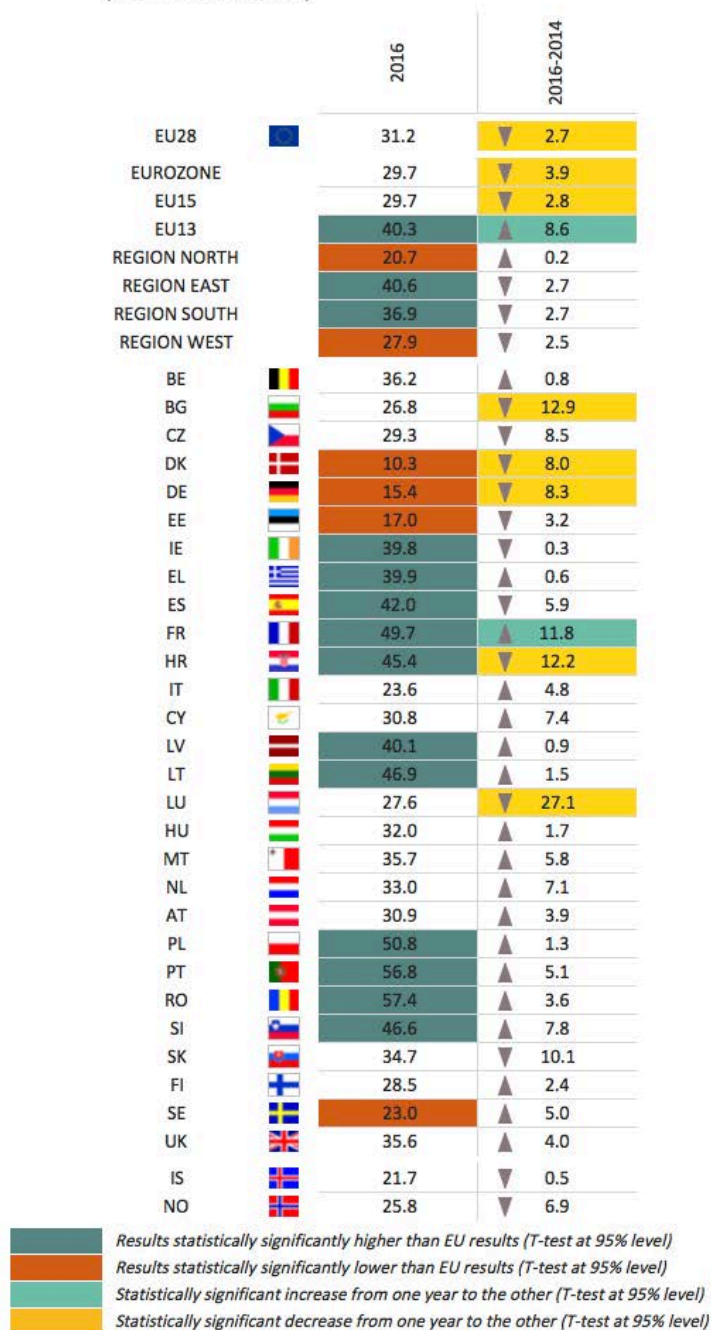
**Q3a.4** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales to other EU countries by your company?  
Higher costs of cross-border delivery compared to domestic delivery  
(% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')



Base: All retailers currently selling online (n=4,198)

At least half of all companies in Romania (57.4%), Portugal (56.8%) and Poland (50.8%) consider the extra costs from after-sales service in cross-border transactions to be an important obstacle to the development of online sales. No more than one in five companies in Denmark (10.3%), Germany (15.4%) and Estonia (17.0%) share this opinion.

**Q3a.8** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales to other EU countries by your company?  
**Extra costs from after-sales service in cross-border transactions**  
 (% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')



Base: All retailers currently selling online (n=4,198)

Companies in Poland (50.7%), Romania (47.7%) and France (47.4%) are the most likely to mention restrictions on cross-border sales imposed by manufacturers or suppliers, while those in Denmark (14.2%), Germany (15.9%) and Estonia (16.5%) are the least likely to do so.

**Q3a.9** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales to other EU countries by your company?

Restrictions on cross-border sales imposed by manufacturers or suppliers  
(% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')

		2016	2016-2014
EU28		29.2	▼ 1.9
EUROZONE		28.4	▼ 1.8
EU15		28.2	▼ 2.2
EU13		34.9	▲ 6.6
REGION NORTH		19.3	▼ 2.4
REGION EAST		35.5	▼ 1.1
REGION SOUTH		33.6	▼ 5.6
REGION WEST		27.0	▼ 0.3
BE		34.0	▲ 8.4
BG		26.2	▼ 10.3
CZ		18.0	▼ 7.8
DK		14.2	▼ 7.7
DE		15.9	▼ 1.3
EE		16.5	▲ 2.2
IE		32.4	▼ 2.2
EL		34.1	▼ 2.5
ES		41.7	▼ 2.0
FR		47.4	▲ 14.4
HR		34.5	▲ 3.3
IT		19.0	▼ 8.2
CY		18.0	▲ 7.7
LV		43.7	▲ 2.1
LT		40.2	▲ 3.7
LU		22.5	▼ 31.9
HU		22.9	▼ 5.7
MT		22.1	▲ 3.2
NL		38.4	▲ 4.3
AT		25.2	▲ 0.9
PL		50.7	▲ 8.8
PT		44.1	▲ 6.1
RO		47.7	▼ 1.5
SI		33.4	▲ 8.1
SK		30.9	▼ 14.5
FI		27.5	▼ 1.1
SE		19.0	▲ 2.9
UK		31.9	▼ 3.6
IS		18.6	▼ 0.3
NO		25.5	▼ 0.6

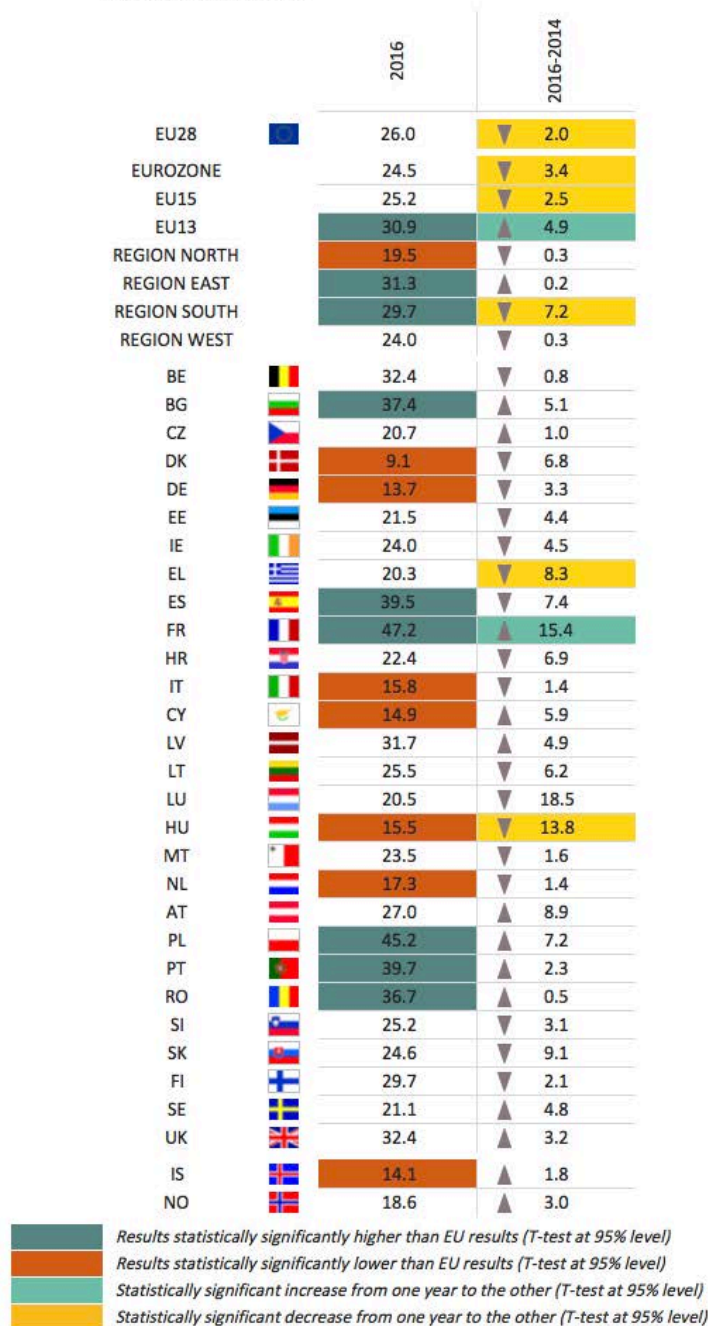
Results statistically significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Results statistically significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Statistically significant increase from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)  
 Statistically significant decrease from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

Base: All retailers currently selling online (n=4,198)

Extra costs arising from language differences are most likely to be mentioned as an important obstacle by companies in France (47.2%), Poland (45.2%) and Portugal (39.7%), and least likely to be mentioned by those in Denmark (9.1%) and Germany (13.7%) in the EU, and in Iceland (14.1%) outside the EU.

**Q3a.7** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales to other EU countries by your company?

Extra costs arising from language differences  
(% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')



Base: All retailers currently selling online (n=4,198).



Since 2014, there have generally been (statistically significant) decreases in the proportion of retailers in the EU mentioning each of these issues as obstacles. Specifically:

- a drop of 4.8pp in the proportion of companies that consider higher risk of fraud and non-payments in cross border sales an important obstacle;
- a decrease in the proportion that mention differences in national tax regulations as an important obstacle to the development of online sales (-4.1pp).
- a decline in the proportion of companies that mention differences in national contract law (-2.7pp);
- a decrease in the proportion of companies that name differences in national consumer protection rules (-4.9pp);
- a drop in the proportion of companies that mention higher transport costs due to geographic distance (-5.5pp);
- a decline in the proportion of companies that name potentially higher costs involved in resolving complaints and disputes cross-border (-3.7pp);
- a decrease in the proportion of companies that mention higher costs of cross-border delivery compared to domestic delivery (-4.0pp);
- a drop of 2.7pp in the proportion that consider extra costs from after-sales service in cross-border transactions as an important obstacle;
- a decline in the proportion of companies that mention restrictions on cross-border sales imposed by manufacturers or suppliers (-1.9pp, although this is not a statistically significant difference);
- a decrease of 2.0pp in the proportion of companies that mention extra costs arising from language differences.

The highlights from the country trend analysis are presented in the table below. They show retailers in Austria and France are much more likely to consider a range of these obstacles as important, compared to 2014. In contrast, retailers in Luxembourg, Slovakia and the Czech Republic are less likely to do so.

Potential important obstacle	Largest <u>increase</u> since 2014	Largest <u>decrease</u> since 2014
Higher risk of fraud and non-payments in cross border sales	Austria (+13.8pp)	Slovakia (-14.3pp)
Differences in national tax regulations	Austria (+17.3pp)	Latvia (-18.1pp)
Differences in national contract law	Austria (+16.1pp)	Slovakia (-15.1pp)
Differences in national consumer protection rules	Austria (+20.7pp)	Czech Republic (-12.9pp)
Higher transport costs due to geographic distance	Netherlands (+11.6pp)	Czech Republic (-15.2pp)
Potentially higher costs involved in resolving complaints and disputes cross-border	Slovenia (+16.8pp)	Luxembourg (-23.9pp)
Higher costs of cross-border delivery compared to domestic delivery	Finland (+11.4pp)	Luxembourg (-20.7pp)
Extra costs from after-sales service in cross-border transactions	France (+11.8pp)	Luxembourg (-27.1pp)
Restrictions on cross-border sales imposed by manufacturers or suppliers	France (+14.4pp)	Luxembourg (-31.9pp)
Extra costs arising from language differences	France (+15.4pp)	Hungary (-13.8pp)

The analysis of company characteristics shows a number of consistent patterns across the different obstacles under scrutiny:

- o Companies in the trade sector are (statistically) significantly more likely than service sector companies to consider each issue an obstacle, with the exceptions of the higher risk of fraud or non-payment, and the extra costs arising from language differences. In these two, items, trade sector companies are more likely to see an obstacle than service sector retailers but the difference is not statistically significant. For example, 44.8% of trade companies mention the potentially higher costs involved in resolving complaints and disputes cross-border, compared to 30.4% of service sector companies.
- o Retailer of food and accommodation services (NACE I) and real estate services (NACE L) are usually amongst the statistically significantly least likely groups to face any of these obstacles.
- o Companies that sell non-food products are significantly more likely to consider each issue an obstacle: for instance 47.8% say higher transport costs due to geographic distance are an obstacle.
- o Companies that sell food products are significantly more likely to mention higher risk of fraud and non-payments (45.7%), differences in national tax regulations (44.1%), differences in national consumer protection rules (41.1%) and extra costs due to language differences (29.7%). Companies that sell services are statistically significantly less likely to mention higher costs of cross-border delivery (29.1%) or restrictions on cross-border sales imposed by manufacturers or suppliers (26.1%).
- o Companies that only sell in their own language are significantly more likely to consider almost all issues as important obstacles. The exceptions are differences in national tax regulations, differences in national consumer protection rules and differences in national contract law. Meanwhile, those selling in four or more languages amongst the least likely to mention them, with differences in national consumer protection rules, higher risk of fraud and non-payments and extra costs from after-sales service in cross-border transactions as exceptions.

In addition, medium sized companies are significantly more likely to mention the higher risk of fraud and non-payment (45.8%), while companies established in 2000 or later are significantly more likely to mention the extra costs arising from language differences. The oldest companies are amongst the least likely to mention these two obstacles.

- o Obstacles to developing online sales amongst retailers not currently selling online

(Q3b)

Retailers that do not currently sell online were asked to evaluate the importance of a number of possible obstacles to their company developing online sales.

- The nature of their business is the most important obstacle to retailers starting to sell online -

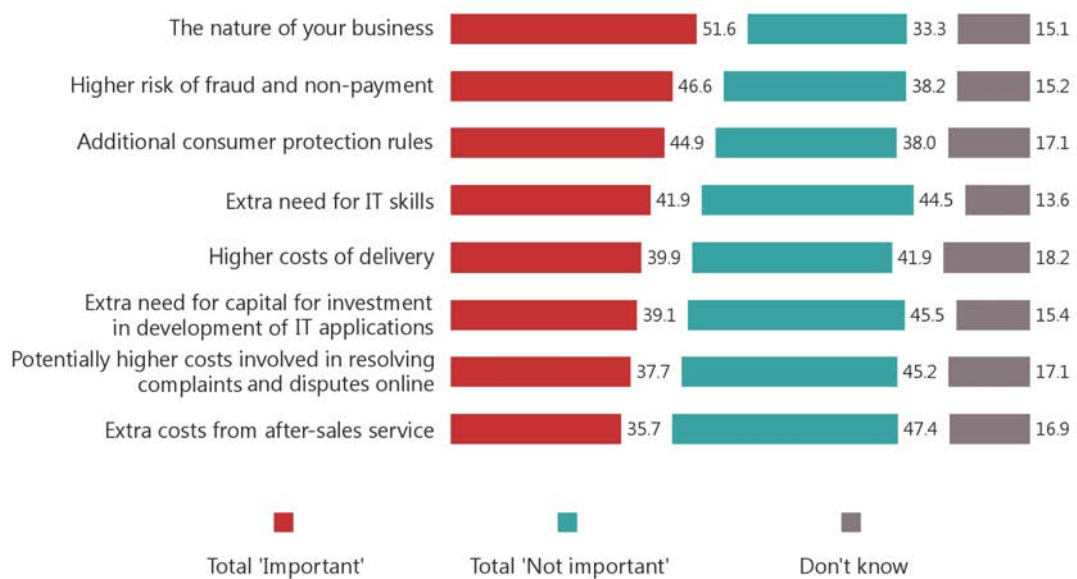
Just over half of the retailers who do not currently sell online say the nature of their business is an important obstacle to the development of online sales (51.6%) – in fact just over three in ten consider it a very important obstacle (31.9%).

Nearly half (46.6%) mention higher risk of fraud and non-payment, while 44.9% mention additional consumer protection rules and 41.9% the extra need for IT skills as important obstacles to the development of online sales.

Almost four in ten retailers (39.9%) mention higher costs of delivery, or the extra need for capital for investment in development of IT applications (39.1%). More than one third (37.7%) mention potentially higher costs involved in resolving complaints and disputes online, or extra costs from after-sales service (35.7%).

The analysis based on persons employed shows only minor differences (1-2pp). The only difference in the ranking of obstacles is that the extra need for capital for investment in development of IT applications ranks 5<sup>th</sup> and higher costs of delivery 6<sup>th</sup>.

**Q3b** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales by your company? (% - EU)

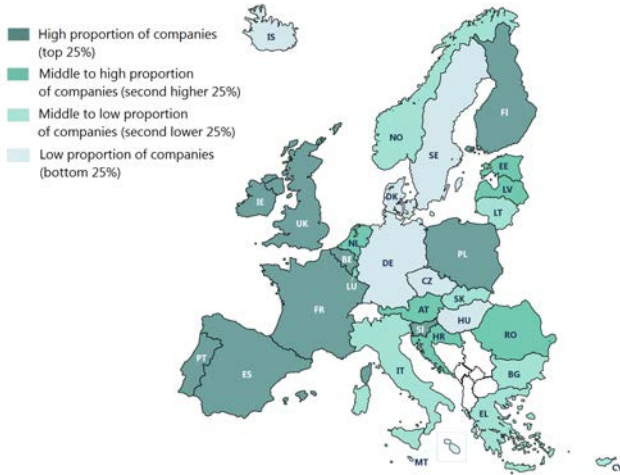


Base: Retailers in EU Member States currently not selling online (n=6,426).

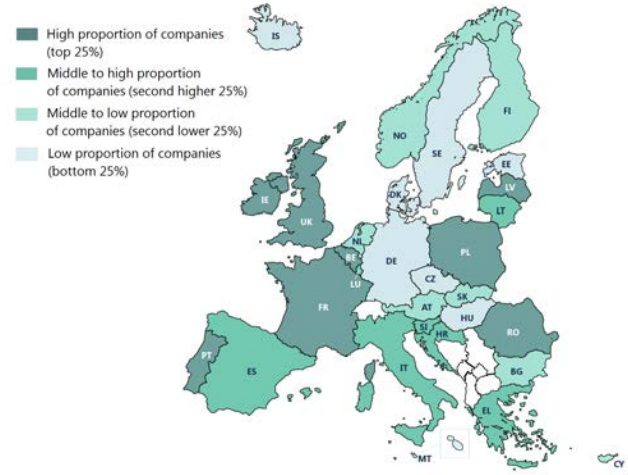
Companies outside the eurozone are significantly more likely to mention each of these potential obstacles are important, with the exception of extra costs from after-sales service and the extra need for capital for investment in development of IT applications. Companies in NMS13 countries are significantly more likely to mention the higher costs of delivery (43.4%) and the higher risk of fraud or non-payment (49.7%).

Amongst retailers that do not currently sell online, those in the southern region significantly more likely to say each of these issues is an important obstacle to developing online sales, while those in the north are significantly less likely to do so. In addition, retailers in the eastern region are significantly more likely to say a higher risk of fraud and non-payment, and additional consumer protection rules are important obstacles.

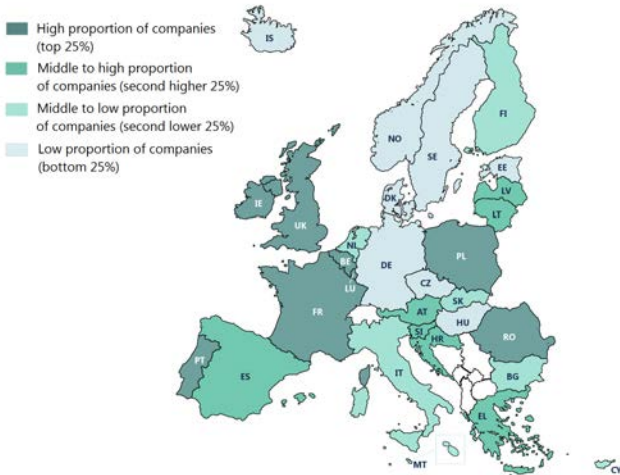
**Q3b.8** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales by your company?  
**The nature of your business**  
(% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')



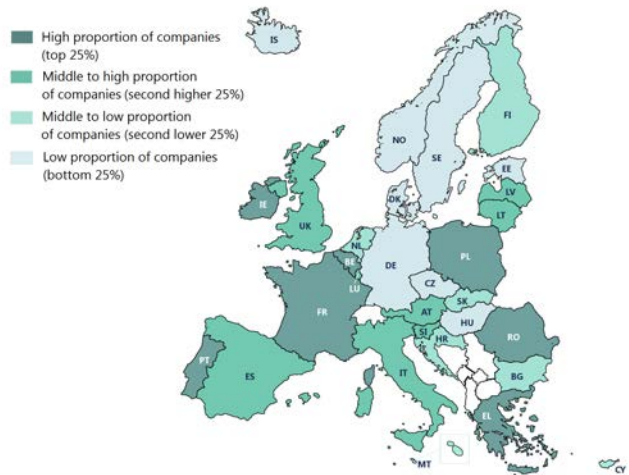
**Q3b.4** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales by your company?  
**Higher risk of fraud and non-payment**  
(% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')



**Q3b.1** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales by your company?  
**Additional consumer protection rules**  
(% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')



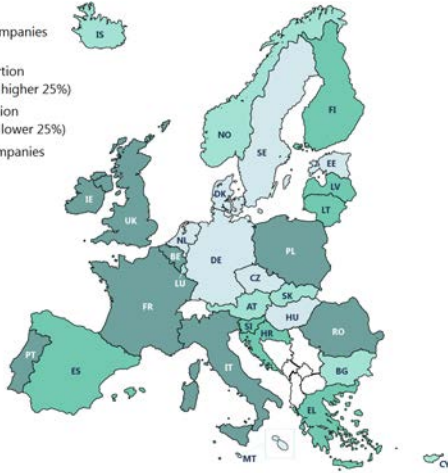
**Q3b.6** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales by your company?  
**Extra need for IT skills**  
(% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')



Base: All retailers currently not selling online (n=6,790).

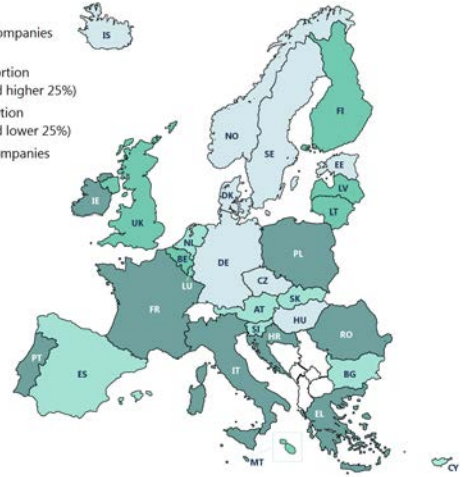
**Q3b.2** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales by your company?  
**Higher costs of delivery**  
 (% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')

- High proportion of companies (top 25%)
- Middle to high proportion of companies (second higher 25%)
- Middle to low proportion of companies (second lower 25%)
- Low proportion of companies (bottom 25%)



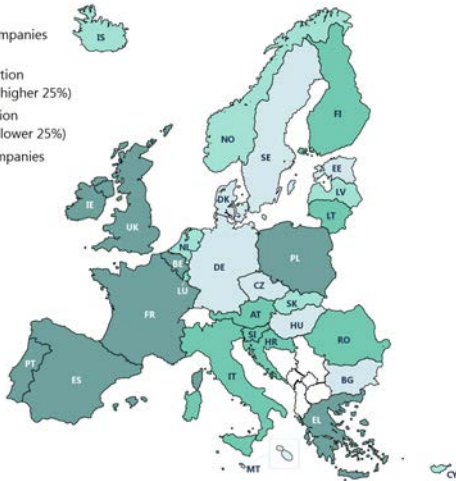
**Q3b.7** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales by your company?  
**Extra need for capital for investment in development of IT applications**  
 (% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')

- High proportion of companies (top 25%)
- Middle to high proportion of companies (second higher 25%)
- Middle to low proportion of companies (second lower 25%)
- Low proportion of companies (bottom 25%)



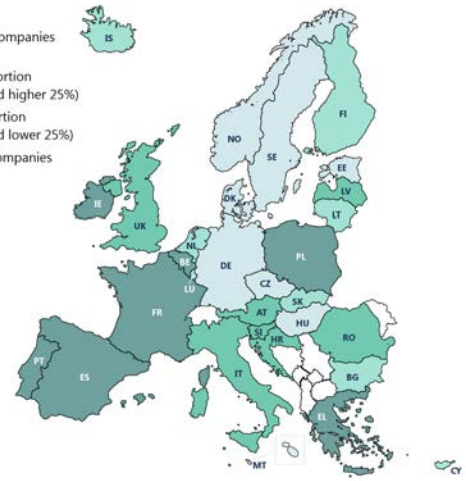
**Q3b.3** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales by your company?  
**Potentially higher costs involved in resolving complaints and disputes online**  
 (% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')

- High proportion of companies (top 25%)
- Middle to high proportion of companies (second higher 25%)
- Middle to low proportion of companies (second lower 25%)
- Low proportion of companies (bottom 25%)



**Q3b.5** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales by your company?  
**Extra costs from after-sales service**  
 (% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')

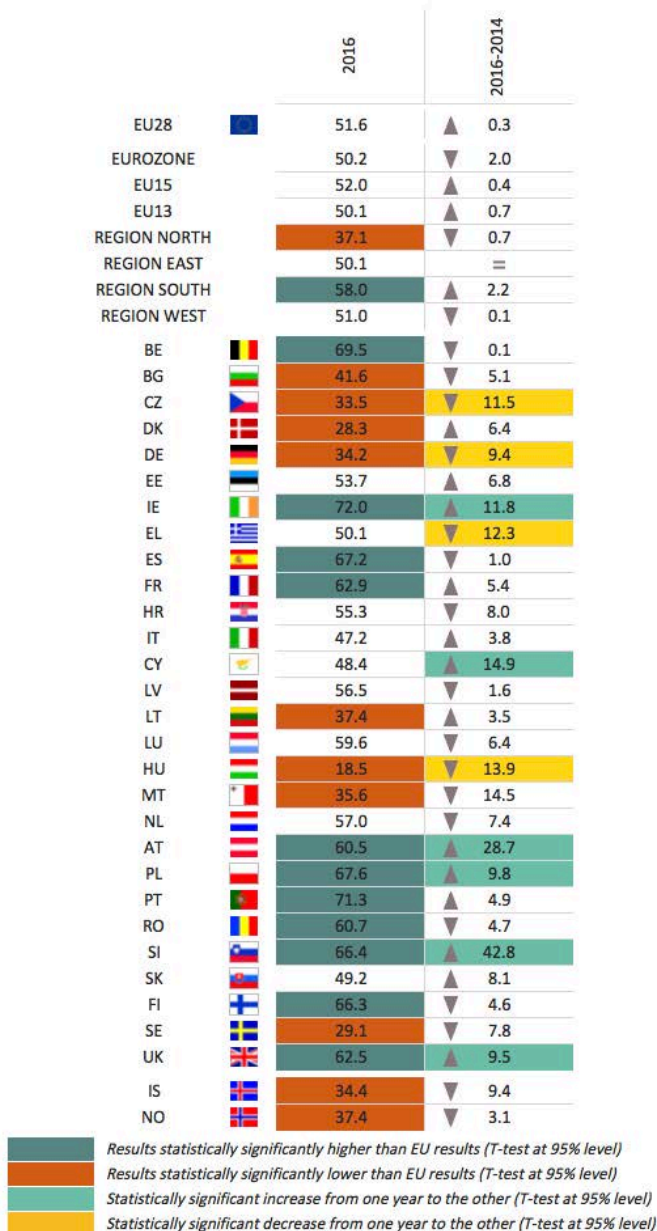
- High proportion of companies (top 25%)
- Middle to high proportion of companies (second higher 25%)
- Middle to low proportion of companies (second lower 25%)
- Low proportion of companies (bottom 25%)



Base: All retailers currently not selling online (n=6,790).

In 17 countries, at least half of the companies that do not currently sell online say the nature of their business is an important obstacle to the development of online sales. Around seven out in ten companies in Ireland (72.0%), Portugal (71.3%) and Belgium (69.5%) say this, compared to 18.5% in Hungary, 28.3% in Denmark and 29.1% in Sweden.

**Q3b.8** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales by your company?  
The nature of your business  
(% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')

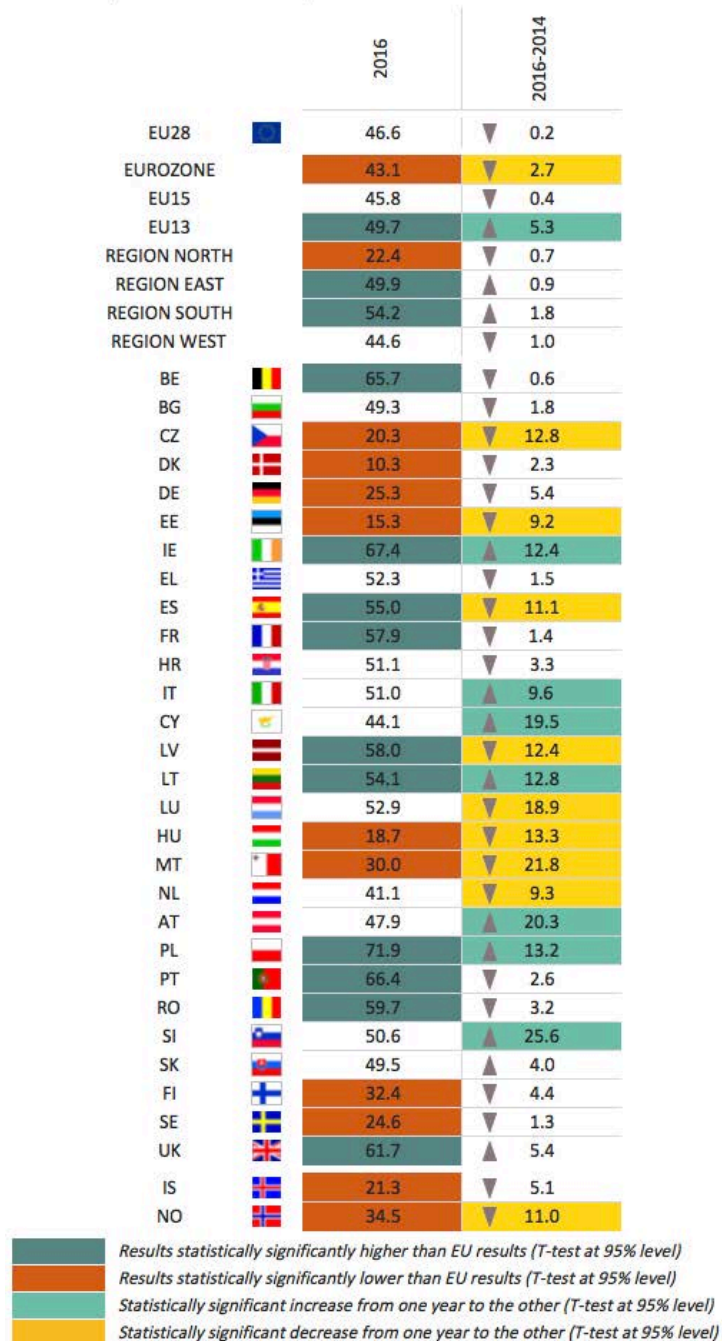


Base: All retailers currently not selling online (n=6,790).

In 15 countries at least half mention the higher risk of fraud and non-payment as an important obstacle. Companies in Poland (71.9%), Ireland (67.4%) and Portugal (66.4%) are the most likely to do so, while those in Denmark (10.3%), Estonia (15.3%) and Hungary (18.7%) are the least likely to consider this an important obstacle.

**Q3b.4** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales by your company?

Higher risk of fraud and non-payment  
(% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')


































Base: All retailers currently not selling online (n=6,790).





In 22 countries, at least one third of retailers mention additional consumer protection rules. Over three quarters of companies in Portugal (75.8%) mention this, followed by just over seven in ten in Poland (71.3%) and at least six in ten in Ireland (62.7%). Retailers in Denmark (9.1%), Estonia (12.4%) and the Czech Republic (15.3%) are the least likely to mention this as an important obstacle.

**Q3b.1** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales by your company?

**Additional consumer protection rules**  
(% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')

		2016	2016-2014
EU28		44.9	▼ 0.1
EUROZONE		43.5	▼ 2.5
EU15		44.2	=
EU13		47.2	▲ 3.9
REGION NORTH		20.8	▲ 2.9
REGION EAST		47.4	▲ 0.2
REGION SOUTH		49.7	▲ 4.6
REGION WEST		44.2	▼ 2.2
BE		56.8	▲ 0.9
BG		43.8	▼ 6.2
CZ		15.3	▼ 13.0
DK		9.1	▼ 0.4
DE		30.6	▼ 10.6
EE		12.4	▼ 6.4
IE		62.7	▲ 5.6
EL		47.1	▼ 9.7
ES		48.8	▼ 11.2
FR		60.6	▲ 0.1
HR		48.6	▼ 1.8
IT		43.9	▲ 13.7
CY		39.7	▲ 15.3
LV		47.9	▼ 10.1
LT		47.9	▲ 13.8
LU		53.6	▼ 19.7
HU		18.8	▼ 12.3
MT		33.9	▼ 22.4
NL		41.6	▼ 4.2
AT		51.3	▲ 24.2
PL		71.3	▲ 12.5
PT		75.8	▲ 7.5
RO		60.7	▼ 5.7
SI		51.8	▲ 27.1
SK		43.9	▲ 1.3
FI		43.1	▲ 3.5
SE		17.5	▲ 3.8
UK		52.8	▲ 8.0
IS		31.9	▲ 6.4
NO		27.7	▼ 12.4

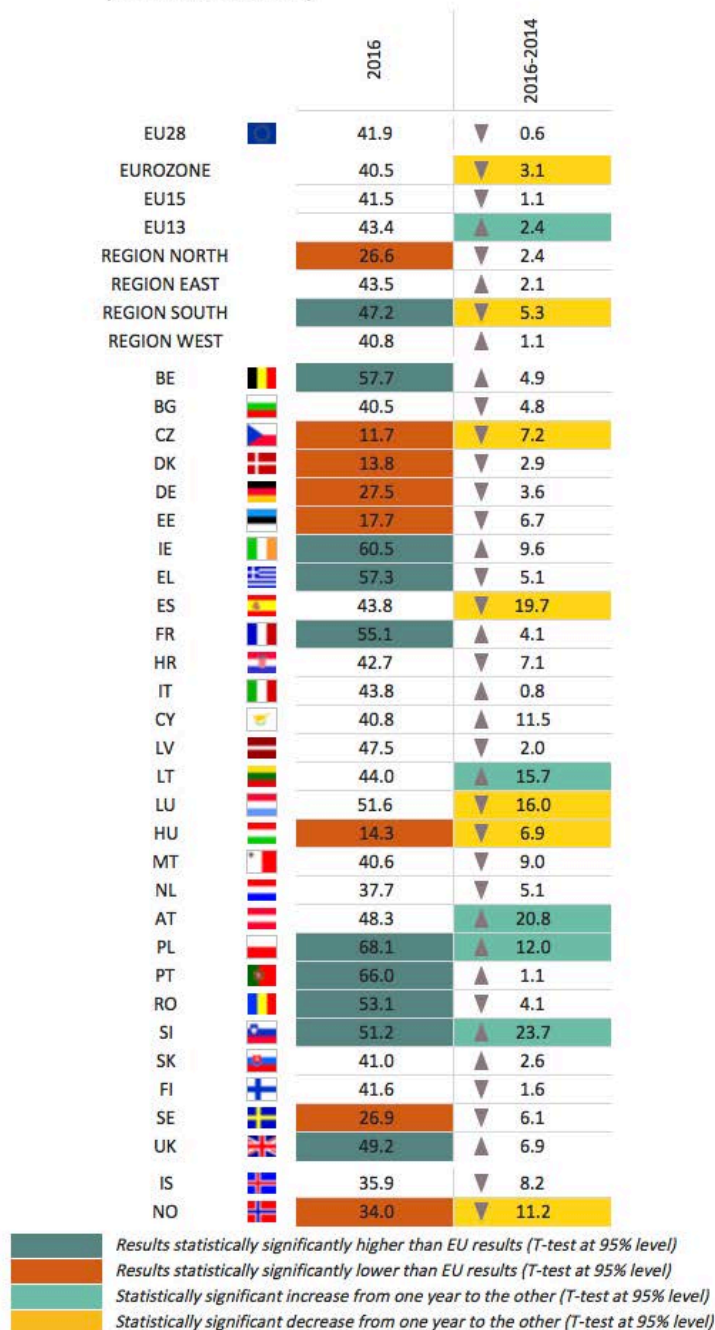
	Results statistically significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)
	Results statistically significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)
	Statistically significant increase from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)
	Statistically significant decrease from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

Base: All retailers currently not selling online (n=6,790).



In 22 countries at least one third of companies mention the extra need for IT skills as an important obstacle. Companies in Poland (68.1%), Portugal (66.0%), and Ireland (60.5%) are the most likely to mention this, while those in the Czech Republic (11.7%), Denmark (13.8%) and Hungary (14.3%) are the least likely to do so.

**Q3b.6** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales by your company?  
 Extra need for IT skills  
 (% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')






































Base: All retailers currently not selling online (n=6,790).

Higher costs of delivery is most likely to be mentioned as important by companies in Poland (56.4%), Portugal (56.3%) and Ireland (56.1%), and least likely to be mentioned by those in Denmark (10.7%), the Czech Republic (11.1%) and Hungary (13.1%). Overall at least one third of retailers in 19 countries mentions this as an obstacle.

Q3b.2 How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales by your company?

Higher costs of delivery  
(% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')

		2016	2016-2014
EU28		39.9	▲ 1.2
EUROZONE		37.9	▼ 0.3
EU15		40.4	▲ 2.2
EU13		37.9	▲ 0.8
REGION NORTH		23.1	▼ 1.7
REGION EAST		37.9	▼ 3.3
REGION SOUTH		46.1	▲ 1.7
REGION WEST		39.8	▲ 3.2
BE		52.5	▲ 2.8
BG		31.3	▼ 5.8
CZ		11.1	▼ 10.3
DK		10.7	▼ 5.0
DE		26.0	▲ 1.3
EE		17.0	▼ 2.4
IE		56.1	▲ 3.3
EL		40.2	▼ 5.3
ES		40.7	▼ 13.2
FR		55.0	▲ 4.2
HR		43.3	▼ 8.2
IT		49.5	▲ 12.2
CY		34.8	▲ 14.8
LV		45.8	▼ 13.6
LT		40.8	▲ 7.6
LU		38.0	▼ 21.4
HU		13.1	▼ 15.0
MT		28.4	▼ 24.6
NL		28.2	▼ 12.0
AT		34.5	▲ 13.2
PL		56.4	▲ 0.9
PT		56.3	▼ 5.5
RO		49.8	▼ 4.2
SI		40.5	▲ 17.3
SK		32.9	▲ 1.7
FI		40.1	▼ 1.1
SE		22.2	▼ 1.1
UK		53.5	▲ 10.2
IS		35.5	▲ 3.8
NO		32.8	▼ 8.3

 Results statistically significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Results statistically significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Statistically significant increase from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)  
 Statistically significant decrease from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

Base: All retailers currently not selling online (n=6,790).

Companies in Greece (62.8%), Poland (59.3%) and Portugal (58.8%) are the most likely to consider the extra need for capital for investment in development of IT applications as an important obstacle to the development of online sales. Companies in Denmark (8.8%), the Czech Republic (11.5%) and Hungary (16.1%) are the least likely to consider this obstacle important.

**Q3b.7** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales by your company?

Extra need for capital for investment in development of IT applications  
(% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')

		2016	2016-2014
EU28		39.1	▼ 1.2
EUROZONE		37.8	▼ 4.8
EU15		38.7	▼ 1.4
EU13		40.4	▲ 1.6
REGION NORTH		22.5	▼ 0.1
REGION EAST		40.4	▼ 0.4
REGION SOUTH		47.1	▼ 2.0
REGION WEST		37.1	▼ 0.5
BE		43.9	▼ 3.9
BG		38.5	▼ 0.2
CZ		11.5	▼ 13.3
DK		8.8	▼ 4.1
DE		25.1	▼ 8.1
EE		20.6	▼ 7.7
IE		56.7	▲ 12.0
EL		62.8	▼ 2.5
ES		41.9	▼ 15.4
FR		49.9	▼ 3.5
HR		52.0	▲ 0.8
IT		47.0	▲ 6.6
CY		37.4	▲ 5.7
LV		45.5	▼ 2.1
LT		44.3	▲ 13.4
LU		46.0	▼ 7.9
HU		16.1	▼ 8.9
MT		42.5	▼ 14.5
NL		32.3	▼ 3.1
AT		40.9	▲ 18.9
PL		59.3	▲ 4.4
PT		58.8	▼ 6.8
RO		49.5	▼ 2.7
SI		39.9	▲ 16.2
SK		32.5	▼ 2.0
FI		44.9	▲ 6.8
SE		20.0	▼ 1.9
UK		46.8	▲ 13.1
IS		26.6	▼ 4.1
NO		25.4	▼ 10.1

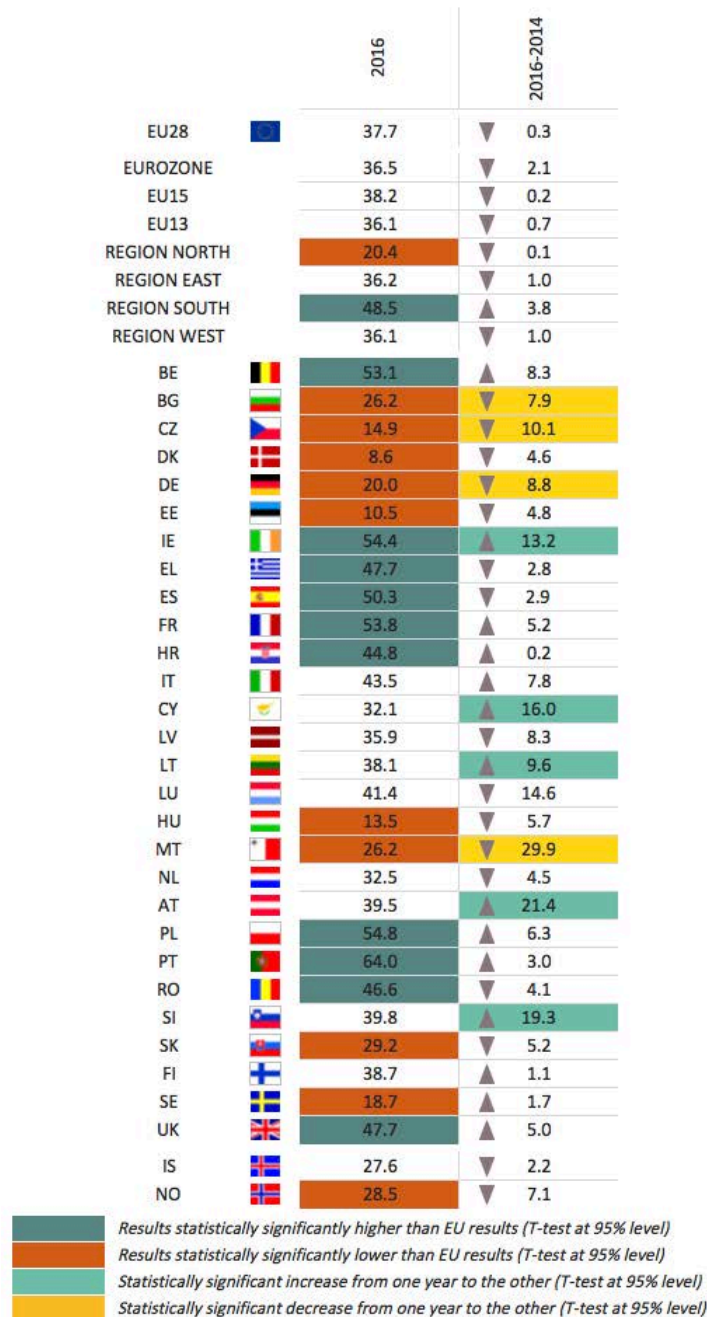
	Results statistically significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)
	Results statistically significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)
	Statistically significant increase from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)
	Statistically significant decrease from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

Base: All retailers currently not selling online (n=6,790).

The potentially higher costs involved in resolving complaints and disputes is most likely to be considered an important obstacle by companies in Portugal (64.0%), Poland (54.8%) and Ireland (54.4%), and least likely to be considered important by those in Denmark (8.6%), Estonia (10.5%) and Hungary (13.5%).

**Q3b.3** How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales by your company?

Potentially higher costs involved in resolving complaints and disputes online  
(% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')

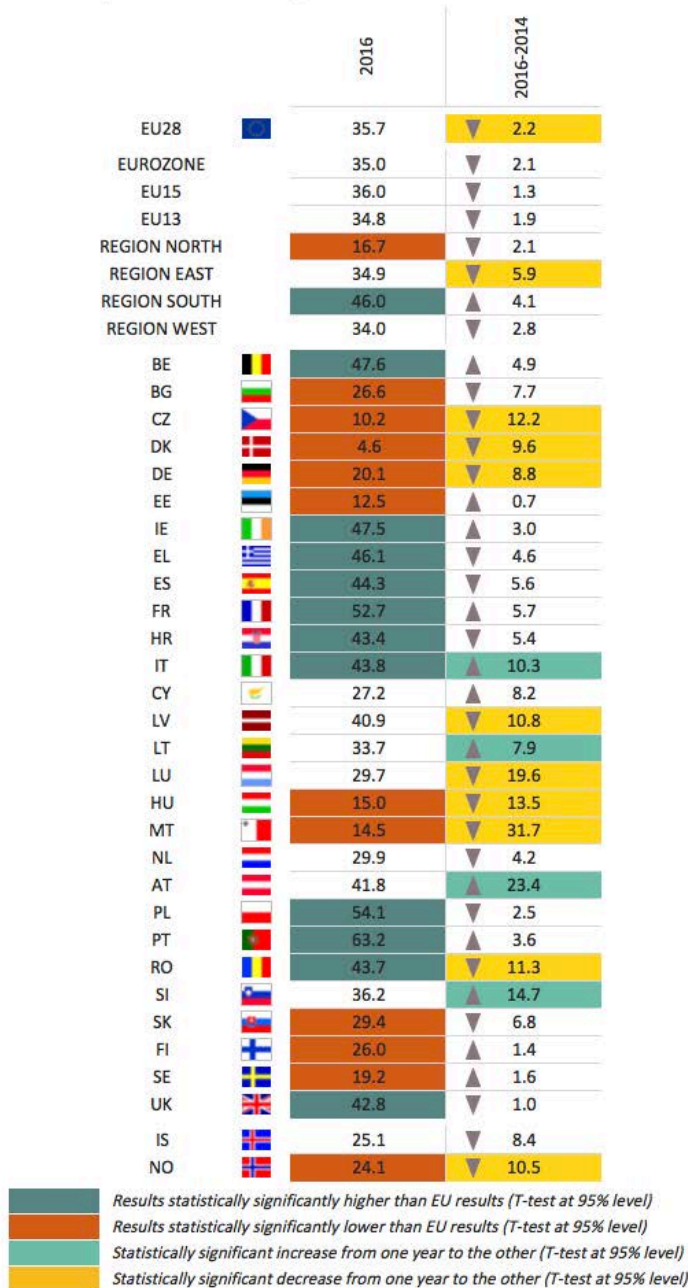


Base: All retailers currently not selling online (n=6,790).

Companies in Portugal (63.2%), Poland (54.1%) and France (52.7%) are the most likely to say extra costs from after-sales service are an important obstacle to developing online sales. Companies in Denmark (4.6%), the Czech Republic (10.2%) and Estonia (12.5%) are the least likely to consider this obstacle important.

Q3b.5 How important are the following obstacles to the development of online sales by your company?

Extra costs from after-sales service  
(% - TOTAL 'IMPORTANT')



Base: All retailers currently not selling online (n=6,790).

At an EU level, there has only been one significant change since 2014: the proportion of retailers that say extra costs from after-sales service are an important obstacle to the development of online sales has declined (-2.2pp).

Highlights from the country trend analysis are presented in the table below. They show retailers in Slovenia and Austria are now much more likely to consider a range of these obstacles as important, while those in Malta are less likely to do so.

Potential important obstacle	Largest <u>increase</u> since 2014	Largest <u>decrease</u> since 2014
Nature of their business	Slovenia (+42.8pp)	Hungary (-13.9pp)
Higher risk of fraud and non-payment	Slovenia (+25.6pp)	Malta (-21.8pp)
Additional consumer protection rules	Slovenia (+27.1pp)	Malta (-22.4pp)
Extra need for IT skills	Slovenia (+23.7pp)	Spain (-19.7pp)
Higher costs of delivery	Slovenia (+17.3pp)	Malta (-24.6pp)
Extra need for capital for investment in development of IT applications	Austria (+18.9pp)	Spain (-15.4pp)
Potentially higher costs involved in resolving complaints and disputes online	Austria (+21.4pp)	Malta (-29.9pp)
Extra costs from after-sales service	Austria (+23.4pp)	Malta (-31.7pp)

The analysis of company characteristics shows a number of patterns across obstacles:

- o Companies in the trade sector are statistically significantly more likely than those in the services sector to consider each issue an obstacle, with the exception of the nature of their business. For example, 49.6% of trade companies mention additional consumer protection rules, compared to 41.4% of service sector companies.
- o Retailers in the information and communication sector (NACE J) are amongst the least likely to mention every single obstacle, except for extra costs from after-sales services. Companies in sector S - other services activities are significantly more likely to say the nature of their business is an important obstacle to developing online sales (58.6%).
- o Companies that are interested in selling online in the next 12 months, and those that are confident to sell online are significantly more likely to consider each issue to be an important obstacle. For instance, 49.1% of those confident to sell online say higher delivery costs are an important obstacle to developing online sales.
- o Companies that sell non-food products are significantly more likely to consider each issue an obstacle: for instance, 40.8% say extra costs from after-sales service are an important obstacle.

- o Companies that sell food products are significantly more likely to mention almost all of these issues as important obstacles: the exceptions are the higher risk of fraud and non-payment, the extra need for IT skills or the extra need for capital for investment in development of IT applications.
- o Companies established between 1990 and 1999 are significantly more likely to mention additional consumer protection rules (48.4%) or the higher risk of fraud and non-payment (50.4%). The oldest companies are the most likely to mention the need for capital for investment in development of IT applications (41.9%).
- o Companies that are not engaged in distance sales are significantly more likely to mention higher costs of delivery (41.9%). Those that are engaged in distance sales are significantly more likely to mention potentially higher costs involved in resolving complaints and disputes online (41.5%) or the extra need for IT skills (46.1%).
- o Retailers where the respondent is a marketing manager are significantly more likely to mention additional consumer protection rules (53.9%), extra need for IT skills (50.7%) or the extra need for capital for investment in development of IT applications (48.3%).

## 5. Cross-border Sales in the Internal Market

This final chapter of the report covers cross-border sales within the EU. The proportion of retailers already making cross-border sales is discussed, as well as the countries these sales are made to. The approximate proportion of sales that are cross-border is also considered. Finally, the languages retailers use to sell to consumers are reviewed.

### 5.1. Current level of cross-border sales

#### a) EU countries to which cross-border sales are made (D2T)

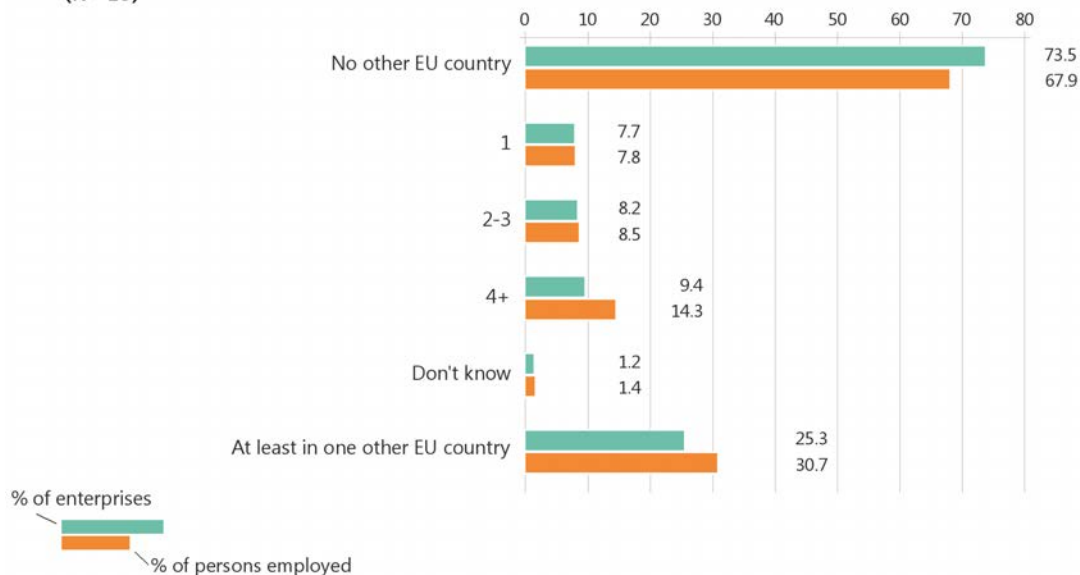
Retailers were asked which countries they sell to for sales to final consumers.

- Most companies only sell to consumers within their own country -

Nearly three quarters of companies (73.5%) only sell to consumers within their own country, while one quarter (25.3%) sells to consumers in at least one other EU country. This represents 67.9% and 30.7% of the total persons employed, respectively.

Looking in more detail, less than one in ten companies sell to consumers in one (7.7%), two or three (8.2%), or four or more other EU countries (9.4%).

**D2T** Besides (OUR COUNTRY), to which EU countries do you currently make cross-border sales to final consumers? A "cross-border sale" is a sale to a final consumer resident in a different EU Member State. This includes online/telephone/mail sales, but not sales made in shops. (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)  
(% - EU)



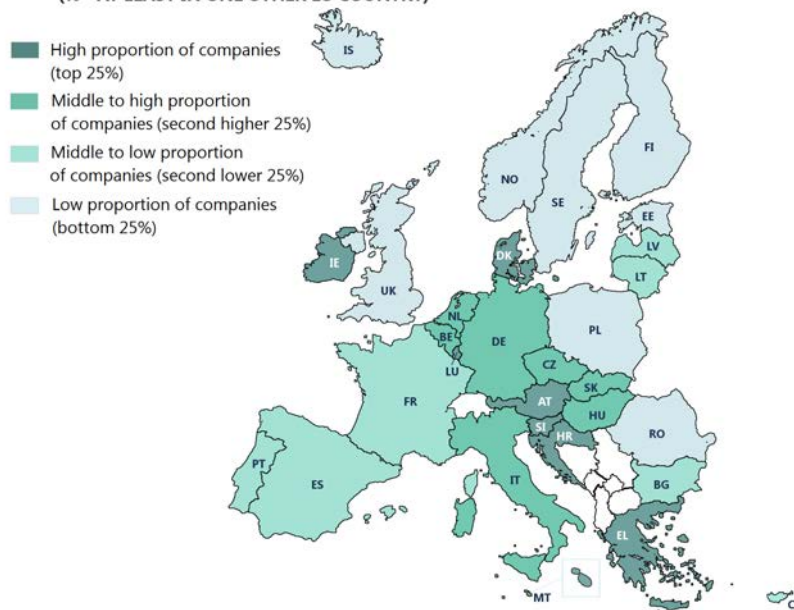
Base: Retailers in EU Member States (n=10,437).

Retailers in the eurozone are significantly more likely to sell to at least one other EU country (28.6%), while those outside the zone are significantly less likely to do so (18.3%).

Companies in the southern region are significantly more likely to sell in at least one other EU country, while those in the north are significantly less likely to do so.



**D2T** Besides (OUR COUNTRY), to which EU countries do you currently make cross-border sales to final consumers? A "cross-border sale" is a sale to a final consumer resident in a different EU Member State. This includes online/ telephone/ mail sales, but not sales made in shops. (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)  
 (% - AT LEAST IN ONE OTHER EU COUNTRY)



Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988)

In all countries, the majority of companies only sell to consumers in their own country. Nine in ten companies in Finland (90.5%) only sell to domestic consumers, as do 84.3% in Sweden. Outside the EU, 88.1% of companies in Norway do so. In contrast, companies in Slovenia (51.8%), Croatia (53.7%) and Luxembourg (57.1%) are the least likely to only sell to domestic consumers.

The proportions of companies that only sell to one other EU country are generally low. Companies in Denmark (16.1%), Ireland (15.4%) and Slovenia (13.1%) are the most likely to do this, while those in Finland (1.9%), within the EU, and outside the EU in Norway (2.5%) and Iceland (3.2%) are the least likely to do so.

Just under a quarter of companies in Luxembourg (24.8%) sell to consumers in two or three other EU countries, as do 17.2% in Slovenia and 12.3% in Italy and Croatia. Companies in the United Kingdom (3.5%) are the least likely to do this within the EU, while companies in Iceland (2.8%) and Norway (3.1%) are even less likely.

Companies in Croatia (25.5%), Malta (20.1%) and Greece (17.2%) are the most likely to sell to consumers in four or more EU countries. In contrast, less than one in twenty companies in Finland (3.3%), Sweden (3.8%) and Poland (4.0%) do the same.

Overall, companies in Slovenia (47.2%), Croatia (45.1%) and Luxembourg (41.7%) are the most likely to sell to consumers in at least one other EU country. On the other hand, companies in Finland (9.0%) and the United Kingdom (12.0%), as well as in Norway (10.0%), when considering non-EU countries, are the least likely to do so.

Looking at the EU trends over the last 7 waves shows a history of increases and decreases in the last 10 years in the proportion of retailers that sell in at least one other EU country. However, in the period 2006-2016 overall, there has been a small but significant decline (-2.1pp).

At a country level, the largest increase in the proportion of retailers that sell to consumers in at least one other EU country is observed in Hungary (+10.7pp), while the largest decrease in the EU is seen amongst retailers in Estonia (-16.9pp), although in Iceland (-18.9pp) the decrease is larger. For Iceland, this is a reversal of the trend between 2012 and 2014 (+20.1pp). Over the longer term, since 2006 retailers in Denmark have recorded the largest increase in the proportion that sell to at least one other EU country (+15.0pp), while those in the Czech Republic (-13.0pp) have recorded the largest decrease.

**D2T** Besides (OUR COUNTRY), to which EU countries do you currently make cross-border sales to final consumers? A “cross-border sale” is a sale to a final consumer resident in a different EU Member State. This includes online/telephone/mail sales, but not sales made in shops. (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)  
 (% - AT LEAST IN ONE OTHER EU COUNTRY)

	2016	2016-2014	2014-2012	2012-2011	2011-2010	2010-2009	2009-2008	2008-2006	2016-2006
EU28	25.3	▼ 1.0	▲ 2.8	▼ 2.1	▲ 5.3	▼ 3.5	▲ 4.6	▼ 8.2	▼ 2.1
EUROZONE	28.6	▼ 0.7	▲ 3.8	▼ 1.5	▲ 6.2	▼ 4.3	▲ 2.8	▼ 8.6	▼ 2.3
EU15	25.4	▼ 1.1	▲ 3.4	▼ 2.3	▲ 4.2	▼ 3.2	▲ 4.0	▼ 7.7	▼ 2.7
EU13	25.1	▼ 2.1	▲ 2.2	▼ 1.8	▲ 11.6	▼ 5.3	▲ 5.6	▼ 8.7	▲ 1.5
REGION NORTH	19.6	▼ 2.3	▲ 1.5	▼ 10.7	▲ 14.0	▼ 0.7	▼ 1.4	▲ 1.1	▲ 1.5
REGION EAST	25.0	▼ 0.1	▲ 0.1	▼ 1.9	▲ 11.8	▼ 5.4	▲ 5.7	▼ 8.5	▲ 1.7
REGION SOUTH	28.3	▲ 1.9	▲ 3.3	▼ 0.8	▲ 4.4	▲ 1.8	▲ 5.1	▼ 11.4	▲ 4.3
REGION WEST	24.8	▼ 1.9	▲ 3.5	▼ 1.9	▲ 3.1	▼ 5.6	▲ 4.8	▼ 7.3	▼ 5.3
BE	30.1	▼ 5.4	▼ 7.1	▲ 8.8	▲ 7.2	▲ 13.6	▼ 15.5	▼ 5.1	▼ 3.5
BG	27.2	▼ 0.9	▲ 1.6	▼ 4.0	▲ 18.0	▲ 2.4	▲ 4.2	N.A	N.A
CZ	32.8	▼ 4.5	▲ 1.9	▼ 3.8	▲ 20.5	▼ 9.9	▲ 9.3	▼ 26.5	▼ 13.0
DK	38.0	▲ 9.8	▲ 1.6	▼ 17.5	▲ 19.9	▼ 3.6	▼ 0.4	▲ 5.2	▲ 15.0
DE	29.3	▼ 3.4	▲ 2.1	▲ 0.1	▲ 8.6	▼ 12.8	▲ 3.1	▼ 10.0	▼ 12.3
EE	19.8	▼ 16.2	▲ 1.4	▲ 9.9	▲ 2.1	▼ 9.3	▲ 6.2	▲ 1.2	▼ 4.7
IE	34.9	▲ 3.0	▲ 5.1	▼ 4.7	▲ 8.6	▼ 13.4	▲ 15.0	▼ 5.5	▲ 8.1
EL	38.6	▲ 1.5	▲ 1.6	▼ 10.7	▼ 1.6	▼ 1.6	▲ 5.6	▼ 1.3	▲ 14.9
ES	26.3	▼ 2.4	▲ 1.2	=	▲ 12.7	▼ 1.6	▲ 1.1	▼ 7.1	▲ 3.9
FR	22.9	▲ 1.3	▲ 9.5	▼ 5.8	▲ 2.4	▼ 6.2	▲ 1.0	▼ 2.1	▲ 0.1
HR	45.1	▲ 5.0	▲ 4.5	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A
IT	30.2	▲ 7.4	▼ 7.9	▼ 5.8	▼ 4.5	▲ 6.5	▲ 13.1	▼ 19.2	▲ 5.4
CY	28.3	▲ 6.6	▼ 6.1	▲ 0.8	▲ 8.1	▼ 4.3	▲ 6.2	▼ 12.6	▼ 1.3
LV	28.7	▲ 4.2	▼ 3.9	▼ 3.1	▲ 13.7	▼ 5.9	▼ 13.4	▲ 3.2	▲ 6.6
LT	25.5	▼ 1.8	▼ 4.7	▲ 4.4	▲ 6.6	▼ 3.6	▼ 0.3	▼ 6.2	▼ 5.6
LU	41.7	▲ 1.2	▲ 1.8	▼ 6.4	▼ 5.2	▲ 8.2	▲ 0.7	▼ 10.4	▼ 10.1
HU	30.5	▲ 10.7	▼ 9.3	▲ 0.2	▲ 8.8	▲ 2.5	▲ 10.0	▼ 3.7	▲ 19.2
MT	34.7	▲ 2.6	▲ 11.2	▲ 0.3	▼ 2.1	▲ 0.5	▲ 1.3	▼ 21.5	▼ 7.7
NL	29.8	▼ 2.9	▲ 4.5	▼ 2.8	▲ 6.8	▲ 1.8	▲ 2.2	▼ 10.6	▼ 1.0
AT	40.3	▼ 0.2	▲ 5.7	▼ 6.5	▲ 12.1	▼ 10.7	▲ 6.5	▼ 10.3	▼ 3.4
PL	15.6	▼ 1.9	▲ 3.1	▼ 8.3	▲ 13.4	▼ 20.5	▲ 11.4	▲ 1.5	▼ 1.3
PT	21.4	▼ 5.9	▼ 6.6	▲ 8.3	▲ 9.8	▲ 2.0	▼ 5.0	▼ 10.6	▼ 8.0
RO	16.5	▲ 4.4	▼ 2.9	▲ 4.7	▲ 4.1	▲ 0.7	▲ 5.2	N.A	N.A
SI	47.2	▼ 5.4	▲ 12.9	▼ 6.8	▲ 20.9	▼ 6.0	▼ 2.9	▼ 3.2	▲ 9.5
SK	32.6	▼ 4.9	▼ 0.5	▼ 6.2	▲ 15.1	▲ 1.0	▼ 0.8	▼ 16.2	▼ 12.5
FI	9.0	▼ 7.2	▲ 6.2	▼ 3.6	▲ 4.6	▼ 5.3	▲ 7.7	▼ 9.7	▼ 7.3
SE	14.4	▼ 5.7	▼ 1.1	▼ 5.6	▲ 9.3	▲ 3.9	▼ 7.9	▲ 3.0	▼ 4.1
UK	12.0	▼ 2.1	▲ 2.1	▼ 2.6	▼ 10.0	▲ 0.9	▲ 9.0	▼ 7.2	▼ 9.9
IS	16.9	▼ 18.9	▲ 20.1	▼ 5.4	▼ 6.4	▼ 1.8	N.A	N.A	N.A
NO	10.0	▼ 1.4	▲ 7.2	▼ 6.2	▼ 6.0	▼ 2.7	▲ 11.5	▼ 2.6	▼ 0.2

Results statistically significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
Results statistically significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
Statistically significant increase from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)  
Statistically significant decrease from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988)

Retailers that sell to consumers in at least one other EU country are significantly more likely to be found in the following subgroups:

- o services companies (27.3%), and particularly those in sector H - transportation and storage (41.9%), sector J - information and communication (46.0%), or sector N – administrative and support service activities (35.8%). Sector S (11.9%) and sector L (12.0%) are exceptions to this;
- o medium (34.9%) or large retailers (34.9%);
- o companies established before 1990: 27.7%;
- o companies engaged in online sales: 39.9%;
- o companies that sell in two (38.3%), three (42.6%), or four or more languages (45.6%);
- o companies where the respondent is a commercial or sales manager (32.2%).

Additionally, the largest increase in the proportion of retailers that only sell in their own country is observed amongst retailers in Iceland (+16.9pp), while the largest decrease is seen amongst those in Denmark (-11.3pp). The long trend analysis also shows a succession of increases and decreases, resulting in an overall increase of 5.1pp between 2006 and 2016.

The biggest increase in the proportion of companies that sell to consumers in four or more EU countries can be observed amongst retailers in Hungary (+9.0pp), and the largest decrease amongst those in Iceland (-16.7pp). The overall proportion across all 28 Member States has successively increased and decreased over the waves, resulting in an overall decrease of 3.2pp between 2006 and 2016.

#### b) Proportion of cross-border sales to consumers in other EU Member States in the total sales (D3T)

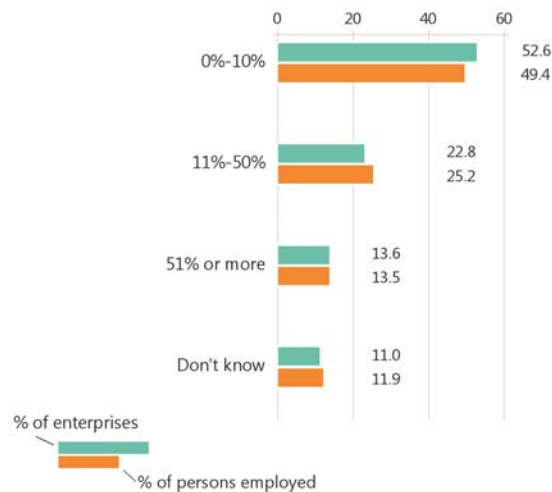
Companies that currently sell cross-border were asked to estimate the percentage of their total sales to final consumers that are sales to consumers in other EU Member States.

- Over half of retailers say 0% -10% of their total sales to final consumers are cross-border sales to other EU Member States -

At least half of retailers (52.6%) say that between 0% and 10% of their total sales to final consumers are cross-border sales to consumers in other EU Member States. Just over one in five (22.8%) say that between 11% and 50% of their total sales to consumers fall into this category, while more than one in ten (13.6%) say 51% or more of their total sales to consumers are cross-border sales to other EU Member States. Finally, just over one in ten retailers do not know (11.0%).

The proportion of persons employed is slightly lower for retailers that have between 0% and 10% of their total sales to cross-border consumers and slightly higher for those between 11% and 50%

**D3T** What percentage of your total sales to final consumers are cross-border sales to consumers in other EU Member States? (% - EU)

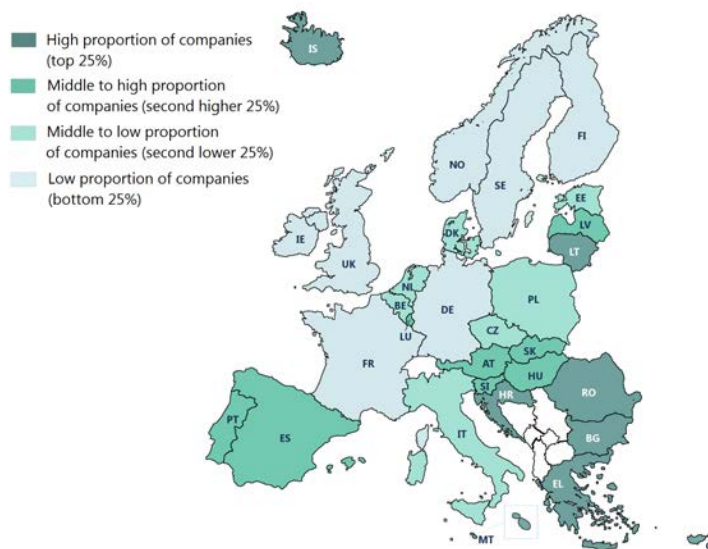


Base: Retailers in the EU selling cross-border within the EU (n=3,206)

Retailers in NMS13 countries are significantly more likely to say between 11% and 50% (26.7%) or 51% or more (23.6%) of their total sales to consumers come from cross-border sales.

Retailers in the western region are significantly more likely to say between 0% and 10% of their sales to consumers come from cross border sales, while those in the eastern and southern region are significantly more likely to say 11% or more come from cross-border sales.

**D3T** What percentage of your total sales to final consumers are cross-border sales to consumers in other EU Member States? (% - 51% OR MORE)



Base: All retailers in the survey selling cross-border within the EU (n=3,287)

In all but five countries, retailers are most likely to say between 0% and 10% of their total sales to final consumers are cross-border sales to other EU Member States. Retailers in Finland (72.3%), Sweden (65.8%) and Germany (64.5%) are the most likely

to give this proportion, while those in Malta (19.4%) and Croatia (30.8%) are the least likely to do so in the EU, as well as in Iceland (17.5%), outside the EU<sup>27</sup>.

Conversely, in the five following countries, retailers mention that 51% or more of their total sales to consumers are cross-border sales to other EU Member States: Malta (53.0%), Cyprus (45.3%), Croatia (37%) and Lithuania (35.8%), and Iceland (37.1%) outside the EU. At the other end of the scale, retailers in France (2.5%), Finland (4.6%) and the United Kingdom (5.0%) are the least likely to give this proportion.

In some countries, the proportion of retailers that do not know is very important, for instance in the United Kingdom (29.6%) and Estonia (21.1%), and in Norway (24.0%) if considering non-EU countries.

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<sup>27</sup> Results for the following countries are based on a very small sample (less than 100 observations) and should therefore be considered as mainly indicative: Iceland (n=33), Finland (n=39), Cyprus (n=41), Norway (n=48), Malta (n=53), Luxembourg (n=54), Poland (n=67), Romania (n=67), Sweden (n=68), the United Kingdom (n=76), Estonia (n=92) and France (n=98).

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

D3T What percentage of your total sales to final consumers are cross-border sales to consumers in other EU Member States? (%)

		0%-10%	11%-50%	51% or more	Don't know
EU28		52.6	22.8	13.6	11.0
EUROZONE		54.7	22.5	13.4	9.4
EU15		54.9	22.0	11.4	11.7
EU13		42.0	26.7	23.6	7.7
REGION NORTH		58.0	24.1	8.5	9.4
REGION EAST		42.4	26.9	23.0	7.7
REGION SOUTH		46.1	27.7	19.9	6.3
REGION WEST		57.6	19.8	8.8	13.8
BE		52.3	31.3	12.2	4.2
BG		34.9	30.3	28.4	6.4
CZ		52.3	26.4	14.9	6.4
DK		49.3	27.9	10.9	11.9
DE		64.5	12.1	8.7	14.7
EE		49.4	15.1	14.4	21.1
IE		43.9	38.1	9.3	8.7
EL		39.0	23.9	30.2	6.9
ES		50.5	27.8	17.2	4.5
FR		54.9	33.8	2.5	8.8
HR		30.8	21.6	37.0	10.6
IT		46.5	29.0	16.9	7.6
CY		31.8	19.0	45.3	3.9
LV		36.1	33.4	27.7	2.8
LT		32.8	18.3	35.8	13.1
LU		58.3	20.6	20.0	1.1
HU		35.9	34.0	19.8	10.3
MT		19.4	17.4	53.0	10.2
NL		59.5	27.1	10.5	2.9
AT		41.9	29.1	26.7	2.3
PL		56.2	26.0	10.2	7.6
PT		36.2	28.4	27.1	8.3
RO		36.9	24.9	32.6	5.6
SI		42.3	28.5	24.0	5.2
SK		43.2	26.2	25.2	5.4
FI		72.3	20.1	4.6	3.0
SE		65.8	20.2	6.4	7.6
UK		47.6	17.8	5.0	29.6
IS		17.5	31.3	37.1	14.1
NO		50.2	20.5	5.3	24.0

Results significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
 Results significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)

Base: All retailers in the survey selling cross-border within the EU (n=3,287)

The analysis of company characteristics shows that for companies selling between 0% and 10% of their total consumer sales cross-border to other EU Member States are significantly more likely to:

- o be in the trade sector rather than the services sector (71.2% vs. 41.9%), although retailers in sector S (70.9%) are amongst the most likely;
- o be the oldest companies (58.9%), while companies created after 1999 are the less likely (46.5%);
- o be companies that sell non-food products (63.7%);
- o only sell in their own language (65.5%);
- o be companies where the respondent is the general manager (60.5%).

Companies saying that 51% or more of their total consumer sales are cross-border to other EU Member States are significantly more likely to:

- o be services companies, rather than trade sector companies (18.5% vs. 4.9%), particularly in sector H and sector I;
- o sell in three (23.7%) or four or more languages (26.0%);
- o have their commercial or sales director as respondents (20.3%).

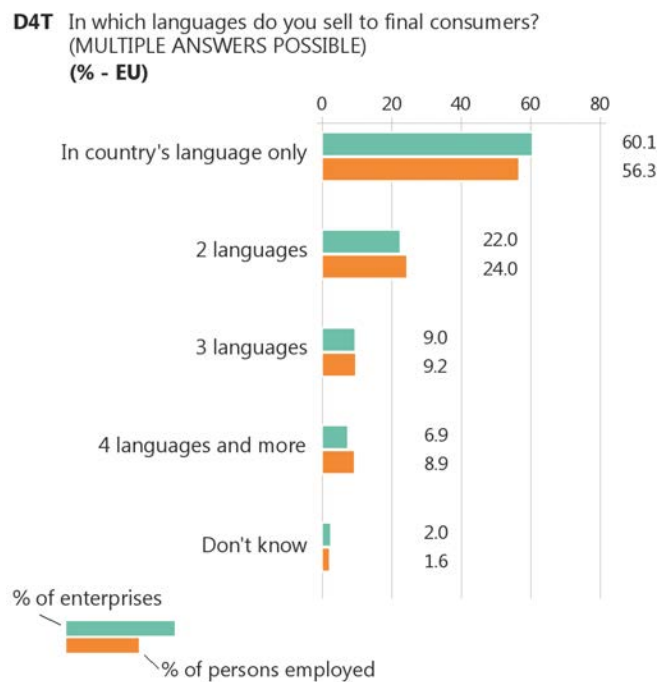
## 5.2. Languages used to sell to final consumers

Retailers were asked which languages they use to sell to final consumers.

- Six in ten retailers sell in their country's language only -

Most retailers (60.1%) only sell in their country's language. Just over one in five retailers (22.0%) sell in two languages, while less than one in ten sell in three (9.0%) or in four or more languages (6.9%).

The proportion of persons employed is slightly lower for those selling only in their country's language, and slightly higher for those selling in two languages, or in four or more languages.



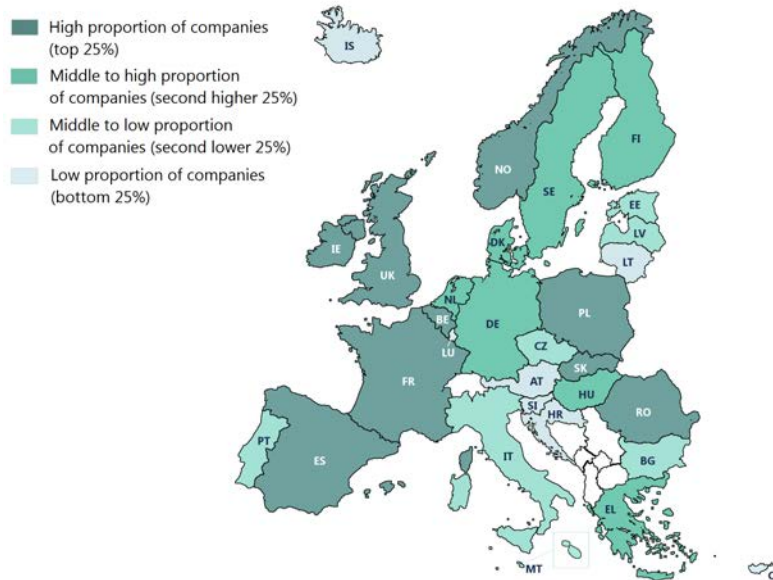
Base: Retailers in EU Member States (n=10,437).

Retailers in EU15 countries and those outside the eurozone are significantly more likely to only sell in their own language. Retailers in the eurozone and those in NMS13 countries are significantly more likely to sell in two, three or four or more languages.

Retailers in the western region are significantly more likely to only sell in their country's language, while those in the north are significantly more likely to sell in two languages. Retailers in the east and south are significantly more likely to sell in two or

three languages, while those in the south are also significantly more likely to sell in four or more languages.

**D4T** In which languages do you sell to final consumers? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)  
(% - IN COUNTRY'S LANGUAGE ONLY)



Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

In 15 countries, at least half of all companies sell in their country's language only. More than eight in ten companies in the United Kingdom (88.3%) and Ireland (85.8%) only sell in their country's language, as do two-thirds of those in Poland (66.3%). Companies in Cyprus (12.8%) and Luxembourg (24.7%) are the least likely to only sell in their own language in the EU, comparable to those in Iceland (15.0%), outside the EU.

There are only three Member States where two languages is the most mentioned answer: Cyprus (51.0%), Latvia (46.9%) and Luxembourg (42.5%), and Iceland (42.0%) as a non-EU country. In contrast, this answer is mentioned the least by companies in Ireland (4.2%), the United Kingdom (6.3%) and Hungary (18.7%).

At least one in five companies in Lithuania (27.8%), Slovenia (26.7%) and Cyprus (21.5%) sell in three languages, compared to no more than one in twenty retailers in the United Kingdom (1.0%), Ireland (2.9%) and Belgium (5.0%).

Companies in Croatia (23.6%) and Slovenia (21.6%) are the most likely to sell in four languages or more, as are those in Iceland (26.2%), outside the EU. At the opposite end of the scale, no more than three in a hundred companies in Belgium (2.3%), the United Kingdom (2.8%) and Latvia (2.9%) do so.



Since 2014, the proportion of companies in the EU that only sell in their country's language has increased (+4.0pp). At a country level, the largest increase since 2014 is recorded in Belgium (+12.0pp). Furthermore, this represents a reversal of the trend in the last wave, when the proportion decreased by 13.0pp. Since 2014, the largest decrease in those only selling in their own language can be seen amongst companies in Malta (-22.7pp). Retailers in Hungary are also less likely to only sell in their own language (-8.4pp), and this represents a reversal of the trend between 2012 and 2014, when the proportion increased by 11.0pp.

The longer term trend over the last 10 years shows there has been a 24.0pp increase in the proportion of companies that only sell in their own language. At a country level, the largest increase in the proportion selling only in their own language is observed amongst retailers in Poland (+50.6pp), while the only decrease is observed amongst those in Slovenia (-1.5pp). It must be noted that not all countries have run the survey for those 10 years.

The analysis of company characteristics shows that companies that only sell in their country's language are significantly more likely:

- o to be in the trade sector (64.5%), in sector S (66.0%) or in sector L (70.5%);
- o to sell products (62.4%) rather than services (55.8%);
- o not to sell via distance methods: 67.3%;
- o not to sell online: 65.3%;
- o say they are not confident to sell online: 65.8%.

D4T In which languages do you sell to final consumers? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)  
(% - IN COUNTRY'S LANGUAGE ONLY)

	2016	2016-2014	2014-2012	2012-2011	2011-2010	2010-2008	2008-2006	2016-2006
EU28	60.1	▲ 4.0	▼ 0.6	▲ 22.6	▼ 12.6	▲ 5.9	▲ 4.7	▲ 24.0
EUROZONE	55.1	▲ 4.0	▼ 1.8	▲ 22.0	▼ 9.7	▲ 7.6	▲ 4.2	▲ 26.3
EU15	61.8	▲ 5.0	▼ 1.7	▲ 22.8	▼ 11.9	▲ 4.0	▲ 4.5	▲ 22.7
EU13	52.0	▼ 2.8	▲ 6.8	▲ 21.3	▼ 16.0	▲ 12.7	▲ 9.5	▲ 31.5
REGION NORTH	57.5	▼ 0.9	▲ 12.5	▲ 30.2	▼ 26.8	▲ 13.8	▲ 2.8	▲ 31.6
REGION EAST	52.5	▼ 1.1	▲ 5.2	▲ 21.5	▼ 16.2	▲ 13.1	▲ 9.1	▲ 31.6
REGION SOUTH	52.1	▼ 1.5	▲ 6.8	▲ 12.0	▼ 13.8	▲ 5.7	▲ 5.5	▲ 14.7
REGION WEST	65.1	▲ 7.1	▼ 6.8	▲ 26.6	▼ 9.5	▲ 2.8	▲ 4.6	▲ 24.8
BE	58.8	▲ 12.0	▼ 13.0	▲ 26.1	▲ 8.7	▼ 2.1	▲ 5.5	▲ 37.2
BG	39.5	▼ 2.4	▲ 13.1	▲ 1.0	▼ 23.8	▲ 4.3	N.A	N.A
CZ	48.0	▼ 3.1	▲ 10.2	▲ 24.4	▼ 21.3	▲ 8.3	▲ 10.9	▲ 29.4
DK	57.8	▼ 5.1	▼ 3.9	▲ 55.2	▼ 33.2	▲ 5.7	▲ 6.2	▲ 24.9
DE	57.5	▲ 11.9	▼ 9.1	▲ 29.3	▲ 0.9	▼ 0.9	▲ 11.0	▲ 43.1
EE	44.3	▲ 6.6	▲ 1.3	▲ 23.4	▼ 9.4	▲ 15.5	▼ 10.7	▲ 26.7
IE	85.8	▲ 3.2	▼ 9.1	▲ 12.2	▲ 11.9	▲ 0.4	▼ 4.4	▲ 14.2
EL	49.1	▼ 0.8	▲ 18.8	▲ 7.2	▲ 0.9	▼ 2.8	▲ 10.7	▲ 34.0
ES	58.6	▲ 7.3	▲ 15.7	▲ 0.2	▼ 23.0	▲ 15.0	▼ 3.1	▲ 12.1
FR	58.0	▼ 1.6	▼ 2.0	▲ 23.2	▼ 22.6	▲ 21.9	▼ 1.8	▲ 17.1
HR	31.1	▲ 7.1	▼ 16.0	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A
IT	48.8	▼ 10.5	▼ 0.3	▲ 20.1	▼ 3.3	▼ 2.1	▲ 11.3	▲ 15.2
CY	12.8	▲ 8.4	▼ 3.1	▲ 1.0	▼ 16.5	▼ 16.9	▲ 30.9	▲ 3.8
LV	42.4	▲ 6.6	▼ 3.0	▲ 19.4	▼ 27.4	▲ 25.7	▼ 9.3	▲ 12.0
LT	36.8	▼ 9.5	▲ 4.9	▲ 28.0	▼ 13.5	▼ 2.7	▲ 12.9	▲ 20.1
LU	24.7	▼ 2.2	▼ 4.3	▲ 20.2	▼ 2.0	▲ 5.2	▲ 7.9	▲ 24.8
HU	55.4	▼ 8.4	▲ 11.0	▲ 13.4	▲ 5.6	▼ 4.4	▼ 4.5	▲ 12.7
MT	47.4	▲ 22.7	▲ 1.2	▲ 27.8	▲ 33.5	▼ 5.1	▲ 8.2	▲ 42.9
NL	56.4	▲ 6.2	▼ 5.9	▲ 35.0	▼ 16.4	▲ 16.2	▼ 8.5	▲ 26.6
AT	37.4	▼ 8.6	▲ 1.9	▲ 28.7	▼ 11.1	▲ 5.4	▲ 7.5	▲ 23.8
PL	66.3	▼ 2.9	▼ 4.2	▲ 45.9	▼ 27.5	▲ 28.4	▲ 10.9	▲ 50.6
PT	43.2	▲ 7.5	▼ 7.3	▲ 29.3	▼ 30.3	▲ 5.3	▲ 14.5	▲ 19.0
RO	60.3	▲ 0.9	▲ 14.8	▲ 2.6	▼ 8.6	▲ 12.1	N.A	N.A
SI	29.2	▼ 17.5	▲ 2.3	▲ 28.5	▼ 23.2	▲ 6.7	▲ 1.7	▼ 1.5
SK	58.7	▲ 9.2	▲ 3.2	▲ 32.6	▼ 17.5	▲ 12.4	▼ 0.9	▲ 39.0
FI	57.2	▲ 8.8	▲ 0.1	▲ 34.7	▼ 1.2	▲ 2.0	▲ 1.3	▲ 45.7
SE	57.4	▼ 0.4	▲ 40.1	▼ 4.7	▼ 29.6	▲ 23.6	▲ 0.9	▲ 29.9
UK	88.3	▲ 7.4	▼ 7.4	▲ 24.2	▼ 9.8	▼ 2.3	▲ 6.0	▲ 18.1
IS	15.0	▼ 6.0	▲ 9.1	▲ 1.1	▼ 24.7	N.A	N.A	N.A
NO	59.4	▲ 4.8	▲ 4.7	▲ 22.2	▼ 3.8	▲ 23.5	▼ 3.9	▲ 47.5

Results statistically significantly higher than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
Results statistically significantly lower than EU results (T-test at 95% level)  
Statistically significant increase from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)  
Statistically significant decrease from one year to the other (T-test at 95% level)

Base: All retailers in the survey (n=10,988).

Additionally, a decrease of 3.9pp since 2014 can be observed in the proportion of retailers that sell in at least one other EU language. At a country level, the largest increase in the proportion selling in at least one other EU language is observed amongst retailers in Malta (+22.7pp), while the largest decrease is observed amongst those in Germany (-13.9pp).

Across the EU, the proportion of companies selling in four or more languages has declined by 2.1pp since 2014. At a country level, the biggest increase is observed in Italy (+5.2pp), while the largest decline is recorded amongst retailers in Portugal (-8.7pp).

## 6. Determinants of Retailers' Performance in Consumer Conditions Indices

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Throughout the previous sections a number of indices of retailers' performance regarding consumer and product safety legislation have been presented. These indices are part of a larger initiative called the Consumer Conditions Scoreboard (CCS) and they are allocated into three pillars:

- Knowledge, awareness, trust: Retailers' overall knowledge of consumer rights<sup>28</sup>, confidence on online selling, trust in product safety and trust in environmental claims.
- Compliance and enforcement: No prevalence of unfair commercial practices, perception of competitors' compliance with consumer legislation, and perception of enforcement of consumer and product safety legislation.
- Complaints and dispute resolution: Participation in Alternative Dispute Resolution bodies (ADR).

In this last section of the report, the relationship between general characteristics of the companies and performance on these indices is analysed in-depth through logistic and poisson regressions. Either a logistic or a poisson regression model is built for each of these indices (as dependent variables) based on company characteristics (as independent variables)<sup>29</sup>. On the side of the independent variables, the characteristics that are taken into consideration are the EU region where the company is based, the sector to which it belongs, the number of persons employed (grouped in three ranges), the position of the interview respondent in the company, whether the company sells in other language than the national, the year in which the company was established (grouped in three periods) and engagement in cross-border sales.

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<sup>28</sup> Note that, compared to the Kc\_r variable presented in pages 10 to 14 of this report, the index Retailers' overall knowledge of consumers' rights observed on the following pages is computed from responses to six questions instead of five, and measured always at the individual retailer level.

<sup>29</sup> Logistic regression is the appropriate regression analysis to conduct when the dependent variable is dichotomous (binary) while poisson regression is used to model count data.

The table on the following page presents the predicted scores or probabilities for each of these indices<sup>30</sup>. Statements about predicted scores and probabilities (or likelihood) found in the following pages refer always to a statistical significance of 95%<sup>31</sup>.

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<sup>30</sup> For retailers' overall knowledge of consumer rights, no prevalence of UCPS enforcement, perception of compliance and enforcement of consumer and product safety legislation, the parameter observed corresponds to predicted average score for each group, modelled with a Poisson regression. For confidence in online selling, trust in non-food product safety, trust in environmental claims and participation in ADR, the parameter can be interpreted as the predicted probability of positive response by a member of each group, modelled with a logistic regression.

<sup>31</sup> The table in the following page shows the average scores or probabilities predicted by the respective model for each dependent variable, according to the different values of the independent variable. They do not necessarily match the values computed through a simple cross-tabulation, which do not take into account the interaction with the remaining independent variables. All the values for the dependant variables have been normalized and they are thus expressed within the same range (from 0 to 1). In addition, these predicted scores or probabilities should be considered statistically significantly different from each other, except when two or more categories share one letter (see the column adjacent to the right). This is, a category associated to a blank means that that category is statistically significantly different from all the other categories. The letters used in the table have no meaning as they are only used for comparing categories. For example, the predicted score for Retailers' overall knowledge of consumers rights is equal to 0.48 for retail trade of goods and to 0.45 for retail of services, and this difference is statistically significant (both categories are associated to a blank). Conversely, for the same index, the estimated score on the northern region of the EU (0.49) is not statistically significantly different from the one of the western Region (0.48) as they both share the letter A.

	Retailers' overall knowledge of consumers rights <sup>1</sup>		Confidence in online selling in their own country		Trust in non-food product safety		Trust in environmental claims		No prevalence of UCPs (Unfair Commercial practices)		Perception of compliance with consumer legislation		Enforcement of consumer and product safety legislation <sup>2</sup>		Participation in ADR mechanisms	
<b>Region</b>																
REGION NORTH	0.49	A	0.64	A	0.84		0.78		0.68		0.72	B	0.68	A	0.52	
REGION EAST	0.41		0.47		0.73	A	0.67	A	0.50		0.61	A	0.53		0.26	
REGION SOUTH	0.44		0.67	A	0.69	A	0.67	A	0.59		0.62	A	0.58		0.33	A
REGION WEST	0.48	A	0.58		0.79		0.69	A	0.64		0.72	B	0.69	A	0.32	A
<b>NACE</b>																
Retail trade of goods	0.48		0.61		0.77	A	0.72		0.60	A	0.71		0.65	A	0.34	
Provision of services (to consumers)	0.45		0.56		0.75	A	0.67		0.61	A	0.66		0.63	A	0.30	
<b>Cross-border sales</b>																
Not selling in another EU country	0.48	A	0.53		0.77	A	0.69	A	0.57		0.68	A	0.65	A	0.32	A
Selling in at least one other EU country	0.45	A	0.72	A	0.75	A	0.68	A	0.71	A	0.69	A	0.63	A	0.32	A
<b>Languages</b>																
In country's language only	0.45	A	0.56	A	0.77	A	0.69	A	0.61	A	0.68	A	0.65	A	0.33	A
At least in one other EU language	0.48	B	0.62	B	0.75	A	0.68	A	0.60	A	0.68	A	0.63	A	0.30	A
<b>Year of establishment</b>																
Before 1990	0.47	A	0.58	A	0.80	B	0.66	A	0.59	A	0.66	A	0.63	A	0.36	C
Between 1990 and 1999	0.47	A	0.58	A	0.76	AB	0.70	A	0.61	A	0.68	AB	0.63	A	0.32	BC
Between 2000 and 2016	0.46	A	0.59	A	0.74	A	0.70	A	0.61	A	0.70	B	0.66	A	0.28	AB
<b>Company size</b>																
10-49	0.46	A	0.57	A	0.76		0.69	A	0.60		0.68	A	0.64		0.31	A
50-249	0.47	A	0.66	B	0.81	A	0.70	A	0.63		0.70	A	0.68	A	0.34	A
250+	0.47	A	0.64	AB	0.87	A	0.75	A	0.67		0.71	A	0.72	A	0.33	A
<b>Position in the company</b>																
General manager	0.47	B	0.58	A	0.74	A	0.68	A	0.59	A	0.67	A	0.63	AB	0.31	A
Commercial/Sales manager	0.48	B	0.61	A	0.81	A	0.66	A	0.60	AB	0.67	A	0.58	A	0.35	A
Marketing manager	0.42	A	0.62	A	0.80	A	0.70	A	0.64	B	0.70	A	0.68	BC	0.31	A
Other	0.45	A	0.58	A	0.77	A	0.70	A	0.62	B	0.69	A	0.67	C	0.32	A

Predicted probabilities/scores based on logistic or Poisson regression models

1 Based on six statements

2 Retailers selling non-food products

## 6.1. Knowledge, awareness, trust

Retailers' overall knowledge of consumer rights was tested with five questions presenting hypothetical marketing strategies to increase sales and asking whether it was prohibited or not to do so, and one question about the right to cancel a purchase. Individual binary indices were drawn for each question (Q4b, Q5, Q6.1, Q6.2, Q6.3, and Q6.4); the composite index presented in the table just above measures overall knowledge by tallying the six of them<sup>32</sup>, at the level of each participating company. Awareness was assessed by asking retailers if they were aware of Alternative Dispute Resolution bodies (ADR) (see discussion on T1r on pages 77 to 81), but this variable is not part of the regression analysis presented in this section. Meanwhile, trust was evaluated on the areas of product safety and environmental claims (see pages 29 to 34). Two questions were asked to retailers' about their attitudes towards online selling (see pages 99 to 107), while an index measuring confidence in online selling in their own country is included in this section.

The composite variable Retailers' overall knowledge of consumers rights is computed by counting how many of the six questions the respondent representing the retailer answered correctly. It is analysed with a Poisson regression to identify which of the categories within the independent variables have statistically significantly different scores in the index compared to other categories. Each retailer has a score between 0 and 6 correct answers<sup>33</sup>.

For this index, company characteristics variables that have a statistically significant impact on the score are region of the EU, sector, selling in other languages and the position of the respondent in the company. Companies in the northern and western regions of the EU have a higher score, and those in the eastern region have a lower score. Similarly, companies selling goods (retail trade) score higher than those selling services. Moreover, companies that sell in at least one other language than their own country's have a score statistically significantly higher. Meanwhile, marketing managers score lower than general, or commercial or sales managers.

The index Confidence in online selling in their own country is a binary response variable in which companies are either confident or not about selling online to customers in their own country. With no changes in other variables, companies in the southern and northern regions of the EU are the most likely to be confident about online selling in their own country. On the contrary, companies in the eastern region of the EU are the least likely.

Retailers of goods are statistically significantly more likely to be confident about online selling than those in the services sector. Retailers that sell cross-borders or that sell in at least one other language than their own country's are also more likely to be confident about online sales in their own country. Retailers with 10 to 49 persons employed are the

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<sup>32</sup> Composite variable Kc\_r (Knowledge of consumer rights) is calculated on the base of response to questions Q4b, Q5 and the four items of Q6.

<sup>33</sup> However, the predicted scores have been normalized and they therefore range from 0 (no correct answers) to 1 (6 correct answers).

least likely to be confident in this area, while the most likely are retailers with 50 to 249 persons employed. There is a statistically significant difference between these two groups but not between either of them and that of retailers that employ 250 or more people.

Trust in non-food product safety is measured with a binary response index amongst companies selling non-food products. Assuming all other variables remain unchanged, companies in the eastern and southern regions of the EU trust the least non-food product safety. Companies in the northern region of the EU are statistically significantly more likely than companies in any of the other three regions of the EU to assert their trust in non-food products safety. Companies established before 1990 trust the most non-food products safety while companies established since 2000 trust it the least; these two groups are statistically significantly different between them, although no statistically significant difference is observed between the two of them and that of companies established between 1990 and 1999. Moreover, companies with 10 to 49 persons employed are the least likely to assert their trust in product safety.

Trust in environmental claims was in turn measured for all the interviewed retailers, also as a binary response index. With remaining characteristics constant, retailers in the EU northern region trust environmental claims more than those in other EU regions. There is no statistically significant difference between the other three regions. Retailers of goods trust environmental claims more (in a statistically significant level) than retailers of services. Other variables did not have a statistically significant relation with this variable.

## 6.2. Compliance and enforcement

Retailers' experience with compliance and enforcement of consumer legislation was examined through three sets of questions. The first set is oriented to measure prevalence of unfair commercial practices (UCP) and asks for five particular situations as well as a question on any other UCP (see pages 35 to 54). Composite variable No prevalence of UCPs measures the likelihood of not having faced any of the six situations as a score from zero to six (computed as the inverse of the sum of positive responses)<sup>34</sup>.

The second set enquires about the Perception of compliance of consumer legislation in the domestic market (see pages 54 to 58) and is measured through another composite variable. The composite variable tallies responses to three questions (Q10.1, Q10.2 and Q10.3). The third set and composite variables are dedicated to Enforcement of consumer legislation and product safety legislation<sup>35</sup>, counting the retailers' agreement with four or five statements on the topic, depending on whether the retailer sells non-food products<sup>36</sup>.

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<sup>34</sup> After normalization, the estimated score ranges from 0 (having experienced all the UCPs) to 1 (not having experienced any of the UCPs).

<sup>35</sup> Composite variable on Enforcement of consumer and product safety legislation is calculated at the company level, although for companies not selling non-food products, one of the components is extracted from the aggregated country average for E5\_r.

<sup>36</sup> Predicted scores for these two variables are also normalized as to range from 0 to 1.

The predicted scores for No prevalence of UCPs show the following. All other variables being equal, companies in the northern region of the EU are the least likely to come across UCPs. Companies in the eastern region of the EU are the most likely to come across these practices. Companies selling only domestically are more likely to come across UCP's in their own country. Meanwhile, retailers employing 250 persons or more are the least likely and thus score higher in this index, whereas companies employing 10 to 49 people are the most likely to experience UCPs.

On Perception of compliance with consumer legislation, it is observed that retailers in the northern and western regions of the EU are more likely to believe that their competitors comply with consumer and product safety legislations than retailers based in the southern and eastern regions of the EU. Retailers in the trade sector are more likely to believe this. Additionally, retailers established before 1990 are statistically significantly less likely to believe this than those established since 2000.

With respect to Enforcement of consumer and product safety legislation, once again companies in the northern and western regions of the EU are the most likely to think that consumer and product safety legislations are enforced in their sector. Retailers in the eastern EU are the least likely to agree with this. Furthermore, retailers with 10 to 49 persons employed are less likely to believe consumer and product safety legislation are enforced with respect to retailers employing a larger number of persons. Finally, retailers where the respondent was the commercial or sales manager are the least likely to agree that these legislations are enforced, although their score is not statistically significantly different from that of retailers where respondent was the general manager.

### 6.3. Complaints and dispute resolution

Retailers' experience with complaints and dispute resolution has been evaluated through three indices, two of which ask respectively whether retailers received complaints through Alternative Dispute Resolution bodies (ADR) or courts (see pages 77 to 90) and one measuring Participation in ADR mechanisms (see pages 77 to 81). Only the latter is considered for the regression analysis presented next, modelled as a binary response index variable through a logistic regression.

When other features unchanged, the EU region where a retailer is based, the sector and the year in which the retailer was established are the main predictors of their likelihood of participation in ADR mechanisms. Retailers in the EU northern region are the most likely to participate in ADR, while those in the EU eastern region are the least likely. There is no statistically significant difference between retailers based in the other EU regions. Retailers in the trade sector are more likely to participate in ADR than their counterparts in the services sector. Moreover, retailers established before 1990 are the most likely to participate in ADR, while those started since 2000 are the least likely.



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