

Ecommerce continues to prosper in Europe, but markets grow at different speeds

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Online retail in Europe is growing exponentially, particularly in Southern Europe. This is one of the many interesting findings of the European Ecommerce Report 2017. Today, Ecommerce Europe, EuroCommerce and the Ecommerce Foundation jointly presented this report in Brussels. The report shows ecommerce[1] trends, facts and figures, and offers insights into each of the European ecommerce markets.

Ms. Marlene ten Ham, Secretary General of Ecommerce Europe, stated: "We are very pleased with the figures that are presented in the report, as stimulating European ecommerce is one of our main objectives. We strive to create a level playing field for online trading in EU countries and our work is more likely to be successful when we gather the right facts & figures".

European ecommerce turnover increased by 15% to €530 billion in 2016. For 2017, the European B2C ecommerce turnover is forecasted to reach around €602 billion, at a growth rate of nearly 14%. Key trends identified in the report show that the proportion of companies with more than 10 employees having a website is continuously growing - from 67% of all retail companies in 2010 to 77% in 2016. Yet only 18% of them sell through their website. However, the pace of this growth varies regionally across

European markets. Western European countries continue to lead the way, as the largest market for ecommerce, with the UK topping the list with approximately 33% of the European online sales. In the mature ecommerce markets, the proportion of consumers shopping online is highest, 87% in the UK, 84% in Denmark and 82% in Germany for 2016. In contrast, the share of people shopping online are the lowest in Romania, Macedonia and Bulgaria.

Nonetheless, Central and Eastern European Countries achieved the highest ecommerce sales growth in 2016; in Romania sales increased by 38%, and the market in Slovakia and Estonia grew by 35%, Ukraine saw a growth of 31%, and Poland and Bulgaria grew by 25%. Ecommerce, combined with the EU Single Market, is an opportunity to sell and shop across border without travelling or setting up shop in another country. 33% of online shoppers purchased abroad in 2016, with Luxembourg, Russia and Switzerland topping the list of cross-border online purchases (each over 60%).

Online purchasing is more popular with the younger generation: two-thirds of 16-24 year olds purchase online frequently, in comparison to one-third of the 55-74 year olds. The report also reveals challenges still faced by consumers in their online shopping experience. The three main complaints

include speed of delivery (17%), technical failures (13%) and damaged goods (9%).

Christian Verschueren, Director-General of EuroCommerce commented: "Ecommerce and the digitalisation of retail and wholesale are changing our sector fundamentally, creating new business opportunities and models, new jobs and new forms of interaction with consumers. Many more consumers are buying online and many more retailers are selling online; more significantly, both are combining online and

offline shopping seamlessly into what is becoming omnichannel retailing. And the EU can help: Europe needs policies to foster these developments and allow consumers and traders to make the most of the potential of a market of 500 million Europeans. Europe can be powerhouse for ecommerce, but we still have some way to go to get the environment right for this to be achieved."

Source: [EuroCommerce](#)

