

Posti's survey: The end of the COVID-19 pandemic does not appear to be stopping the growth of e-commerce - green e-commerce will succeed in the future

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Finns have continued to actively shop online: the volume of online purchases increased in spring 2021 compared to the previous year. However, the growth has been even stronger in neighboring countries (Sweden, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania). At the same time, the importance of sustainability has increased, and many are hoping for decisive action in terms of deliveries and packaging materials. This information comes from Kantar TNS's 2021 online shopping survey commissioned by Posti, which was now conducted for the fourth time. The survey provides a comprehensive overview of the current state of online shopping in Finland.

According to Posti's Vice President for Parcel & eCommerce, Tommi Kässä, the increase in online shopping activity, brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, is going to be permanent.

"Nearly 70% of Finnish online shoppers expect that they will continue to shop online as much as they do right now, and up to 16% are planning to significantly increase their online shopping, which means that any improvement in the COVID-19 situation is not likely to stop the growth of online shopping. Over a quarter (28%) of Finnish online shoppers believe that they will be buying more from online stores in 2025. Despite the growth, Finland is still catching up with its neighbors: about a third of Finnish online shoppers (31%) estimated that they had significantly or somewhat

increased their online shopping this year. In Sweden, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, this figure was significantly higher: almost one in two respondents had increased their online shopping," says Kässä.

The level of online shopping activity in Finland's neighboring countries is also evident in how often online purchases are made: 62% of consumers in Sweden, 59% in Lithuania, 45% in Estonia and 43% in Latvia bought something online in the past week, whereas only 28% of consumers in Finland made an online purchase in the past week.

The most popular purchase categories are still clothes, shoes and accessories as well as home electronics and IT. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the buying of food, drinks, groceries and restaurant meals online increased in particular.

More than 60% of Finnish online shoppers would buy more online if they could get free delivery for their purchases. In addition, online shopping would also be increased by quicker deliveries (36%), the opportunity to choose the delivery time (32%) and the closeness of the delivery location (31%). More than 70% have added more items to their shopping cart to get free delivery.

New delivery types are becoming more popular: parcel lockers are the most popular, the popularity of home delivery is growing

The popularity of parcel lockers for receiving online purchases continues to grow. One in two Finnish online shoppers (54%) select parcel lockers as their preferred delivery location. Parcel lockers are the most popular delivery type in every age group, but they are especially popular among respondents aged 35–49. Picking up purchases from a parcel locker is felt to be quick and easy because parcel lockers are in locations with good transport links and along everyday routes.

However, the COVID-19 pandemic has also significantly increased the popularity of home delivery. Consumers choose home delivery when they want to save time or have heavy and/or big items delivered right to their door. Shoppers aged over 50 are more likely to choose home delivery.

“The increasingly strong position of parcel lockers, combined with the growing popularity of home delivery, is a fairly logical result. People want deliveries to fit in with their day-to-day life, and when parcels are small, they are easy to pick up when doing your grocery shopping. However, when orders are bigger and the delivered products are heavier, it’s nice to get the parcel delivered to your door,” says Kässä.

Green e-commerce will succeed in the future

More than half (56%) of the respondents to the survey believe that online stores that take the environmental impact of their operations into account will flourish in the future. 52% of respondents also want the transport method of their online purchases to be environmentally sustainable. Of all the respondents, 44% think it is important to strive for zero emissions. 44% of respondents prefer online stores that use recyclable packaging materials. The willingness to pay for eco-friendly transport varies by age group: respondents aged 18–24 are the most willing to pay extra for it (42%). Finns consider Posti to be the most sustainable transporter (19%).

“Young people’s interest in environmental issues is also evident in this survey. The younger the respondent, the more important zero-emission operations, recycling, eco-friendliness and the assessment of environmental impacts are to

them. This is, of course, something that makes us happy and also raises the bar for all of us in this industry. If I were to generalize a little, I'd say that the future of online shopping belongs to green online stores that young people approve of," says Noomi Jägerhorn, Posti's Director of Sustainability.

The data for the survey was collected by Kantar TNS with an online questionnaire in June 2021. The target group for the survey consisted of online shoppers between the ages of 18 and 79 in Finland, Sweden and the Baltic countries. The survey was responded to by 2,098 people in Finland, 1,231 in Sweden, 564 in Latvia, 516 in Estonia and 513 in Lithuania.

Source: [Posti](#)