

E-commerce by individuals

1 out of 2 persons in the EU purchased online in 2015

Clothes and sport goods: most popular items bought

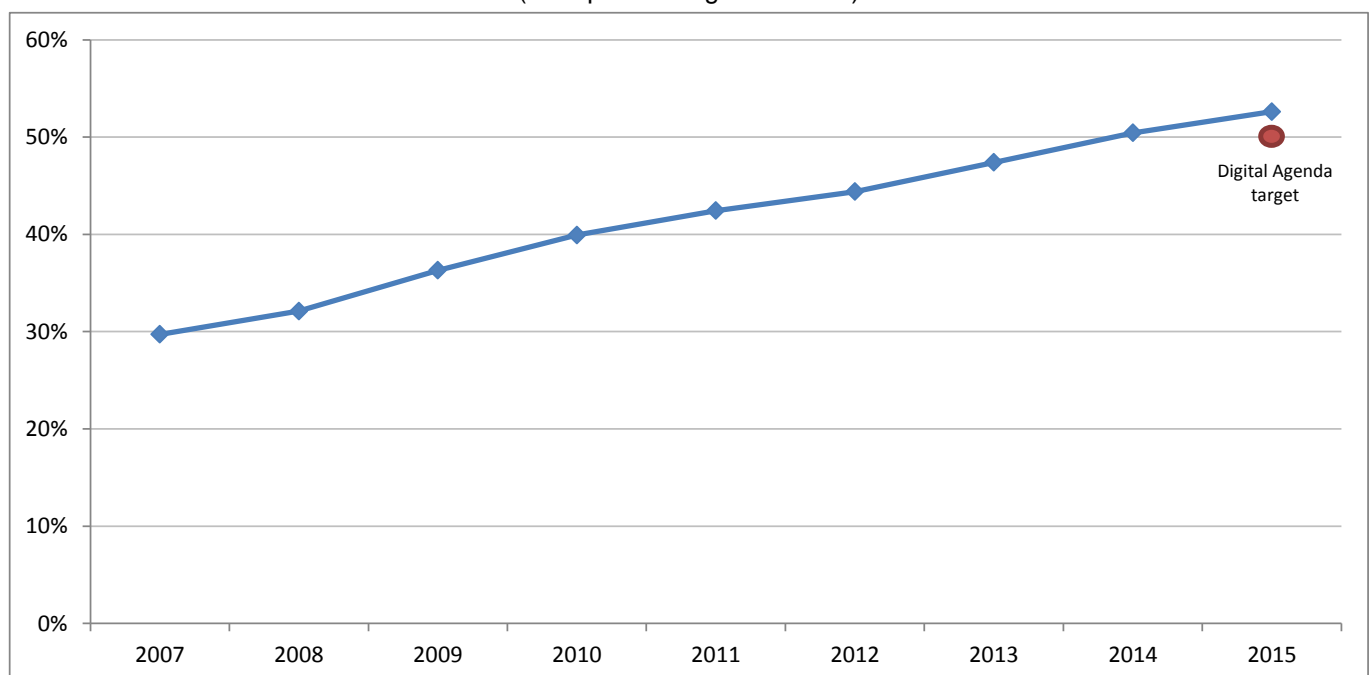
In the **European Union** (EU), the proportion of individuals aged 16 to 74 having ordered goods or services for private use over the internet ("e-buyers") has continuously risen, from 30% in 2007 to 53% in 2015. This means that the **EU** has exceeded its Digital Agenda target of 50% by 2015.

Among **EU** internet users who did not make any on-line purchase in 2015, 75% reported that they preferred to shop in person and 27% were concerned about payment security and privacy.

Most e-buyers in the **EU** seemed satisfied with their online purchases: 70% said they did not encounter any problem when ordering online. The most popular items bought over internet were clothes and sports goods (ordered by 60% of e-buyers), followed by travel and holiday accommodation (52%) and household goods and toys (41%).

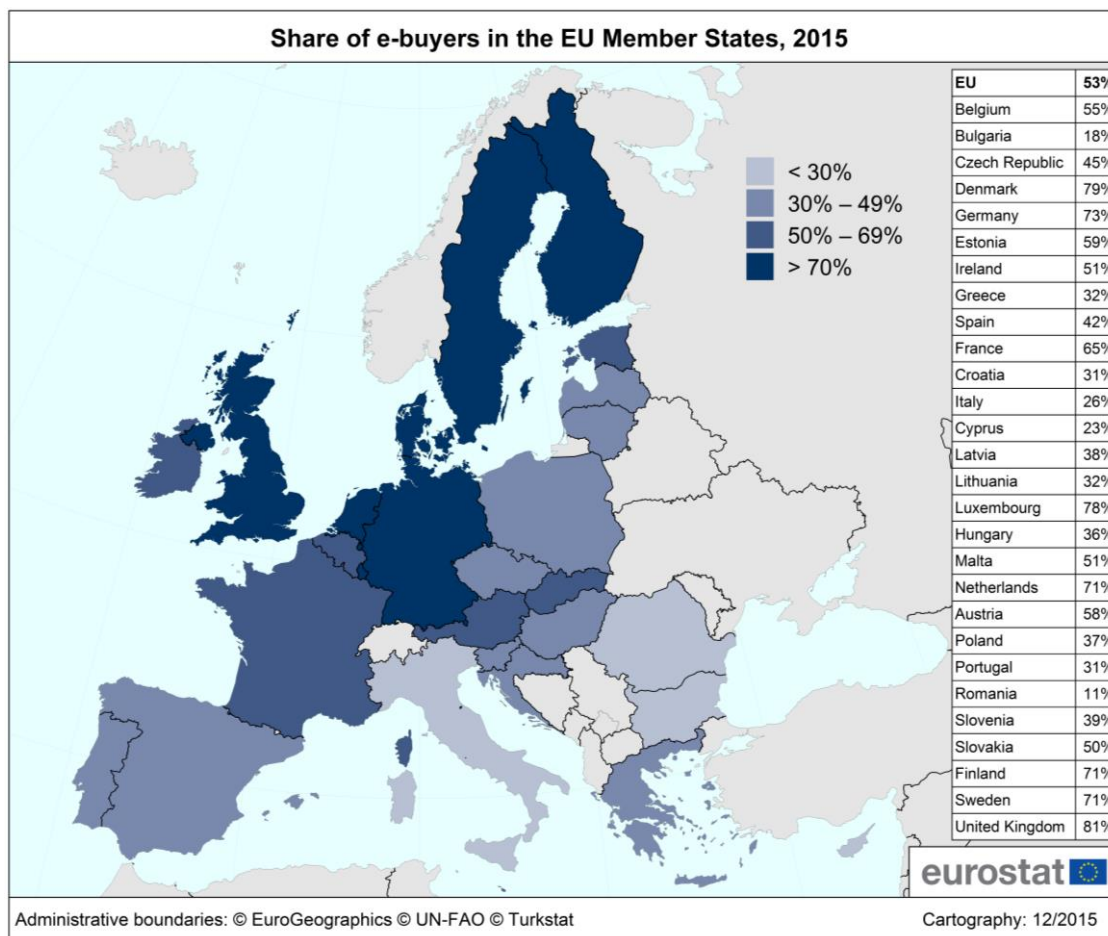
These data come from a [report](#) issued by **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**, and are part of the results of the survey conducted in 2015 on ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) usage in households and by individuals. The data are used to monitor several EU policies, in particular the Digital Agenda for Europe.

Individuals having purchased online, 2007-2015
(% of persons aged 16 to 74)



Highest proportion of e-buyers in the United Kingdom, Denmark and Luxembourg

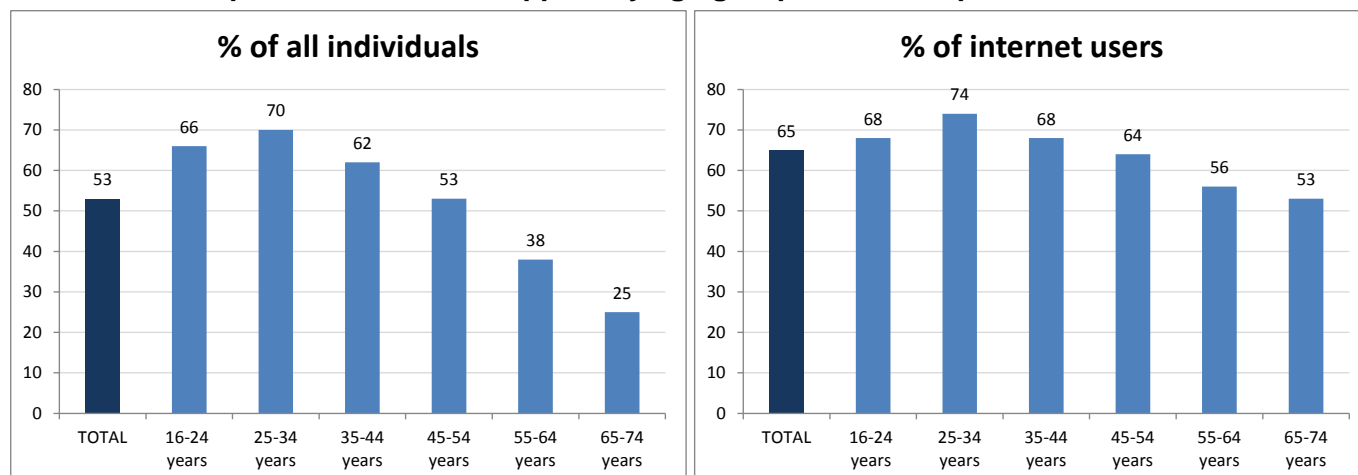
In 2015, the share of e-buyers was highest in the **United Kingdom** (where 81% of the total population aged 16 to 74 purchased online), **Denmark** (79%), **Luxembourg** (78%), **Germany** (73%), the **Netherlands**, **Finland** and **Sweden** (all 71%). In contrast, **Romania** (11% of e-buyers), **Bulgaria** (18%), **Cyprus** (23%) and **Italy** (26%) registered the lowest proportions. Overall, in half of the Member States, the share of e-buyers was above 50%.



1 out of 2 silver surfers bought online in 2015

In the **EU**, online shopping is considerably less widespread among the older generations (with 25% of those aged 65-74 shopping online in 2015) than among the younger generations (66% of those aged 16-24 and 70% of those aged 25-34). This difference between the two age groups is largely explained by the fact that older people are less likely to use the internet - for whatever purpose. In fact, the share of online shoppers among silver surfers (internet users aged 65 to 74) has reached 53%, compared with 68% of young internet users.

Proportion of online shoppers by age group in the European Union, 2015



Highest share of e-buyers among the age group 25-34

Among the younger age group (those aged 16 to 24), the share of internet users having purchased online in 2015 was above 50% in most EU Member States, while for those aged 65 to 74, the proportion was above 50% only in the **United Kingdom** (78%), **Luxembourg** (69%), **Germany** (65%), **Denmark** (63%), **Sweden** (58%) and **France** (57%). Overall, in an overwhelming majority of Member States, the highest share of online purchasers among internet users was found in the age group 25 to 34 years.

While the same general pattern was observed in all Member States, with the share of internet users having purchased online in 2015 being lower for the older generations than for younger ones, the size of this effect differed markedly between Member States.

Internet purchasers by age groups, 2015
(as % of internet users in the respective age group)

	16-24 years	25-34 years	35-44 years	45-54 years	55-64 years	65-74 years
EU	68	74	68	64	56	53
Belgium	68	73	71	64	52	39
Bulgaria	40	41	31	22	13	11
Czech Republic	62	70	63	46	36	29
Denmark	88	88	89	84	73	63
Germany	81	94	89	82	72	65
Estonia	76	83	75	61	45	31
Ireland	71	72	66	58	47	36
Greece	48	57	50	39	33	22
Spain	55	63	58	49	41	29
France	77	84	78	73	65	57
Croatia	60	53	46	40	22	16
Italy	39	47	41	37	32	25
Cyprus	33	39	33	26	20	22
Latvia	55	70	54	39	24	16
Lithuania	51	60	49	34	19	13
Luxembourg	77	87	84	83	72	69
Hungary	51	57	55	45	28	19
Malta	83	79	65	60	43	36
Netherlands	84	90	83	73	68	48
Austria	81	81	72	63	53	37
Poland	59	68	57	43	33	27
Portugal	54	59	51	36	20	17
Romania	21	21	19	13	9	6
Slovenia	61	68	52	41	34	25
Slovakia	68	76	64	56	38	27
Finland	88	91	88	77	58	43
Sweden	80	89	86	80	65	58
United Kingdom	93	91	91	87	80	78
Norway	77	91	87	83	67	48
Former Yug. Rep. of Macedonia	23	20	10	13	10	5
Turkey	24	37	29	21	16	17

The source dataset can be found [here](#).

Clothes in the United Kingdom, tourism services in Denmark, books in Luxembourg

In 2015, the most popular product purchased online in the **EU** was clothes and sports goods, with 60% of e-buyers having bought an item of this group. They were followed by travel and holiday accommodation (52%), household goods and toys (41%), tickets for events (37%) and books, magazines and newspapers (33%).

Clothes and sports goods were the top item in nineteen Member States. The highest share of e-buyers having purchased clothes online in 2015 was registered in the **United Kingdom** (74%), ahead of **Malta** (72%) and **Bulgaria** (71%). Travel and holiday accommodation, the most popular category in the remaining nine Member States, was acquired online by a particularly high proportion of e-buyers in the three Nordic EU Member States – **Denmark** (73%), **Finland** (70%) and **Sweden** (69%). Buying household goods and toys from the internet was most popular in the **United Kingdom** (61% of e-buyers), tickets for events in **Denmark** (69%) and **Sweden** (64%), and books, magazines and newspapers in **Luxembourg** (54%).

Individuals purchasing selected goods and services over the internet, 2015 (as % of all e-buyers)

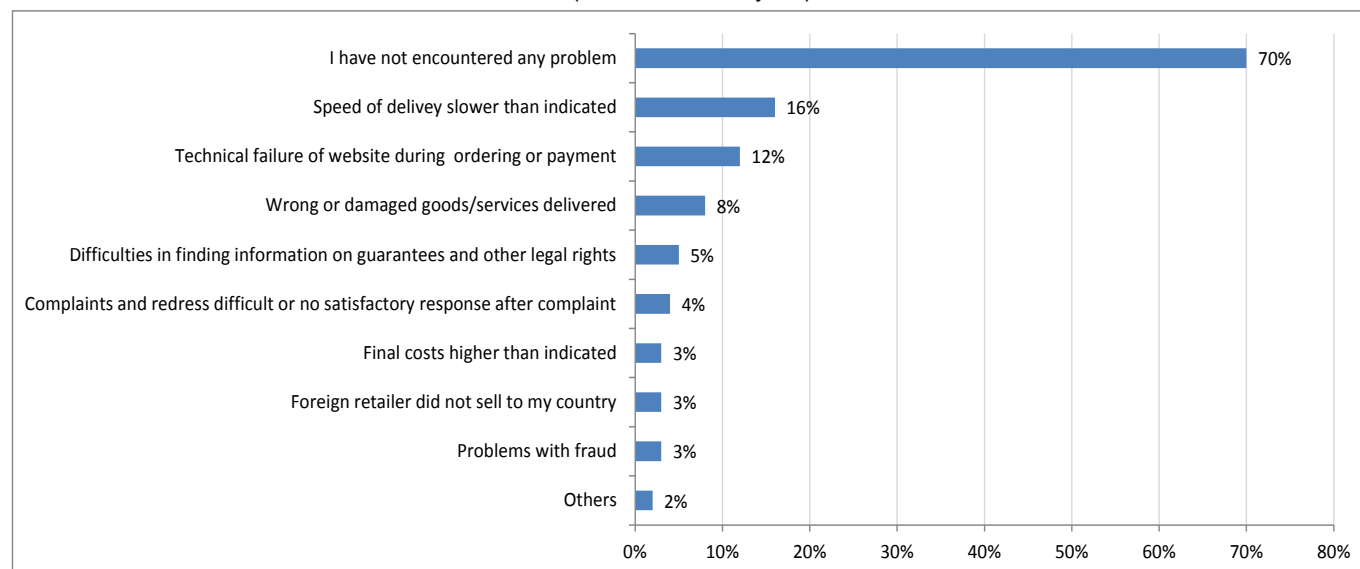
	Clothes, sports goods	Travel and holiday accommodation	Household goods and toys*	Tickets for events	Books, magazines, newspapers
EU	60	52	41	37	33
Belgium	47	46	32	36	29
Bulgaria	71	31	31	19	13
Czech Republic	62	25	13	37	17
Denmark	58	73	42	69	27
Germany	64	49	49	40	42
Estonia	52	60	37	57	30
Ireland	60	65	27	56	35
Greece	48	23	17	12	12
Spain	50	63	29	43	23
France	57	53	35	24	28
Croatia	48	23	21	25	14
Italy	37	42	26	19	26
Cyprus	60	51	11	10	15
Latvia	51	21	32	29	8
Lithuania	52	20	40	33	11
Luxembourg	56	62	37	49	54
Hungary	45	43	26	28	27
Malta	72	49	27	32	36
Netherlands	65	63	38	54	44
Austria	62	55	30	38	47
Poland	62	20	34	17	20
Portugal	49	55	24	31	32
Romania	67	22	15	17	21
Slovenia	45	26	28	21	12
Slovakia	66	29	40	28	25
Finland	64	70	31	61	30
Sweden	60	69	35	64	39
United Kingdom	74	63	61	47	41
Norway	52	71	33	54	38
Former Yug. Rep. of Macedonia	67	17	8	17	16
Turkey	57	30	26	15	18

* excluding consumer electronics

7 e-buyers out of 10 did not encounter any problem when purchasing online

Smooth transactions over the internet appear to be the rule. In 2015, 70% of e-buyers in the **EU** did not encounter any problem when purchasing online. When however issues occurred, the speed of delivery (mentioned by 16% of e-buyers) and technical failure of the website during the ordering or payment (12%) were the two main problems encountered, followed by wrong or damaged goods/services delivered (8%).

Problems encountered when purchasing over the internet*
(in % of all e-buyers)

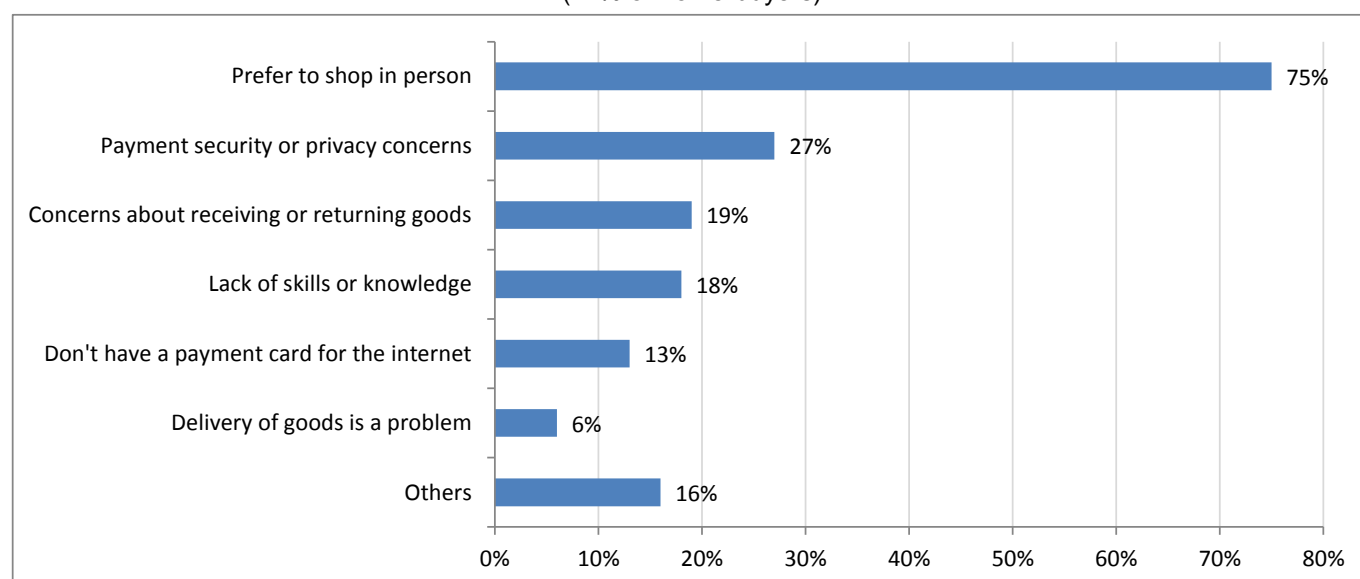


*Respondents could report more than one problem.

More than a quarter of non-e-buyers are concerned about security on the internet

As to those people in the **EU** who did not make any purchases over the internet in 2015, an overwhelming majority had a preference to shop in person. They like to see the product before they buy it, express loyalty to shops or have a strong habit of making their purchases in person. More than a quarter (27%) reported that payment security or privacy concerns prevented them from shopping electronically, ahead of reasons linked to worries about receiving or returning goods (19%) and to the lack of skills or knowledge for shopping online (18%).

Perceived barriers to buying over the internet*
(in % of non e-buyers)



* Respondents could report more than one barrier.

Methods and definitions

The data source is the 2015 Community survey on ICT usage in households and by individuals. The survey covered individuals aged 16-74. In most countries it was conducted in the second quarter of 2015. Individuals were asked about frequency of internet use and about activities they had carried out on the internet in the last three or twelve months prior to the survey, at home or at any other location.

E-buyers are individuals who ordered/bought goods or services over the internet for private use in the 12 months prior to the survey.

For more information

Eurostat [website section](#) on information society statistics.

Eurostat [database](#) on information society statistics.

Eurostat Statistics Explained article on [e-commerce statistics for individuals](#).

European Commission Digital Agenda [scoreboard](#).

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