



e-Commerce rules in the EU

The EU has made it easier and safer for European consumers to shop online no matter where they are in the EU. To reach the full potential of e-Commerce, the EU has worked on:

- the revised Payment Services Directive and new rules on cross-border parcel delivery services that are already in force;
- new rules to stop unjustified geo-blocking;
- revised consumer protection rules;
- new VAT rules for the online sale of goods and services.

New rules to end unjustified geoblocking in the EU

Geoblocking prevents us buying from a website based in another EU Member State. This creates barriers for consumers in cross-border shopping.

What is the Commission doing about it?

The Commission has announced EU-wide rules to end online discrimination on the basis of nationality or place of residence. It is also introducing rules to ensure we no longer face unjustified barriers such as being re-routed back to country-specific websites, or having to pay with debit or credit cards from a certain country.

These rules will help ensure that online sellers treat all EU consumers equally regardless of where they choose to shop.

Find out more about geoblocking by reading through the Q&A, available in the following languages:

[BG \(https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55370\)](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55370), [CS \(https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55371\)](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55371), [DA \(https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55372\)](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55372), [DE \(https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55373\)](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55373), [EL \(https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55374\)](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55374), [EN \(https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55375\)](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55375), [ES \(https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55376\)](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55376), [ET \(https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55377\)](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55377), [FI \(https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=56258\)](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=56258), [FR \(https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55379\)](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55379), [HR \(https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55380\)](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55380), [HU \(https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55381\)](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55381), [IT \(https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55434\)](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55434), [LT \(https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55391\)](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55391), [LV \(https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55382\)](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55382), [MT \(https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55383\)](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55383), [NL \(https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55384\)](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55384), [PL \(https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55385\)](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55385), [PT \(https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55386\)](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55386), [RO \(https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55387\)](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55387), [SK \(https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55387\)](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55387), [SL \(https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55388\)](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55388), [SV \(https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55389\)](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55389), [SV \(https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55390\)](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55390)

Making cross-border parcel deliveries cheaper

Cross-border parcel delivery prices are on average 3 to 5 times higher than domestic delivery prices for all products. Around 62 percent of companies that wish to sell online identify high delivery costs as a problem. This is an obstacle for the development of cross border e-commerce.

[New rules on online cross-border parcel delivery services](#)

(http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/postal-services/parcel-delivery_en) make it easier to find the cheapest way of sending a parcel from one Member State to another.

What do the new rules change?

There is no cap on delivery prices, but businesses now have to disclose their prices clearly, so the consumer can easily compare options. Consumers are able to [consult parcel delivery prices on a dedicated webpage](#) (https://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/postal-services/parcel-delivery/public-tariffs-cross-border_en) on the European Commission's website.

National authorities will collect information every year from parcel delivery companies. Where parcel delivery is subject to a universal service obligation, national regulatory authorities will be required to assess where tariffs are unreasonably high.

Protecting your rights as an online consumer

EU-wide rules make it easier for Member States to protect consumers online. These rules enable the removal of sites or social media accounts where scams have been identified. They also make it possible to request information from internet service providers or banks, in order to trace the identity of rogue online traders.

The Commission has proposed [new rules for digital contracts](#) (https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/doing-business-eu/contract-rules/digital-contracts/digital-contract-rules_en), which will begin to apply at the end of 2021. The rules will create clearer rights for consumers when accessing digital content and digital services.

For example, if the digital content users receive is not as agreed or as they reasonably expected, they have specific contractual rights. These rights also apply when the consumer has provided personal data to the trader without paying a price.

The Commission proposed a [new deal for consumers](#) (https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/law-topic/consumers/review-eu-consumer-law-new-deal-consumers_en) in 2018 to further strengthen consumer rights online. The new deal suggests that:

- online market places will have to inform consumers whether they are buying from a trader or a private individual, so they are aware of their rights if something goes wrong;
- when consumers search online, they will be clearly informed when a search result is being paid for by a trader and online marketplaces will have to inform about the main parameters determining the ranking of the results;
- when consumers pay for a digital service, they will benefit from certain information rights with 14 days to cancel the contract.

More information on [consumer rights and details on rights as an EU citizen](#) (<http://europa.eu/youreurope/index.htm>) is available in all EU languages.

Facilitating access to audiovisual services

Europeans are able to use their online subscriptions to films, sports events, e-books, video games or music when travelling in the EU. The Commission is working to create a modern framework for copyright in the EU which will allow more [cross-border access to content online](#) (<https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/copyright>) by making licensing for online transmissions simpler.

New EU rules for audiovisual media have been agreed on, adapt existing rules to the digital age and promoting European works and preserving cultural diversity. These rules are not in force yet.

The Digital Services Act

The Commission has adopted a proposal for a [Digital Services Act \(DSA\)](#) (<https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/digital-services-act-package>). Together with a Digital Markets Act, this

proposal will create a safer and more open digital space for all users and ensure a level playing field for businesses.

The DSA has three specific goals:

- to protect consumers and their fundamental rights online more effectively;
- to establish a powerful transparency and accountability framework for online platforms;
- to foster innovation, growth and competitiveness within the single market.

While the e-Commerce Directive remains the cornerstone of digital regulation, much has changed since its adoption 20 years ago. The DSA will address these changes and the challenges that have come with them, particularly in relation to online intermediaries.

Source URL: <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/policies/e-commerce-rules-eu>

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