

Belgian online shopper survey 2021

Prepared for:



And its research partners:









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Background and method

Online shopping habits

- Frequency & categories
- Devices
- Delivery
- Payment
- Doubts and concerns

What makes an ideal webshop?

Different online shopper motivations

Additional insights

- Innovations
- Promotions
- Marketplaces
- Sustainability



Belgian online shopper survey 2021

01. Context



The research How?

W - WHAT

- A quantitative study by means of an online questionnaire.
- Yearly monitor 5th edition

W - who

- A national representative sample of Belgian online shoppers (roughly N=400).
- Representative in terms of gender, age and region.

W - why

To measure evolutions in attitudes and quantify online shopping motivations

W - WHEN

Fieldwork in April 2021



02. Sample description



02 Sample description

Representative sample of online shoppers

405

Belgian online shoppers participated in this study

The sample is representative in terms of gender, age (18-65) and region, but is also for other socio-demographic variables (living situation, education) (virtually) identical to all previous waves



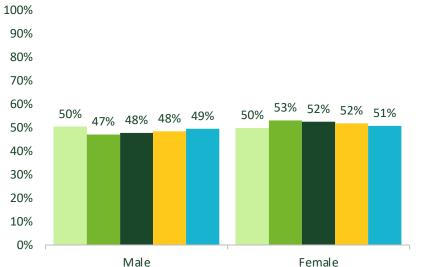
Sample description Representative sample of online shoppers

405

Belgian online shoppers participated in this study



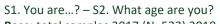
Female





Age





Base: total samples 2017 (N=522) 2018 (N=415) 2019 (N=416) 2020 (N=418) 2021 (N=405)

■ 2017 **■** 2018 **■** 2019 **■** 2020 **■** 2021

Significantly higher/lower

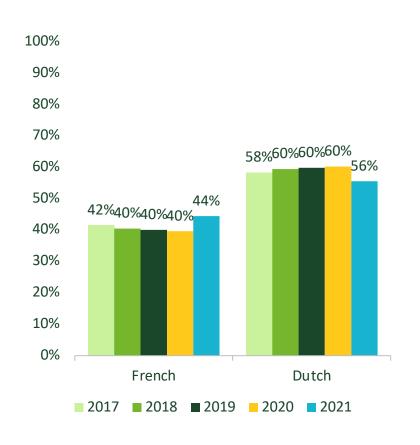
↓ compared to 2020 (c.i. 95%)

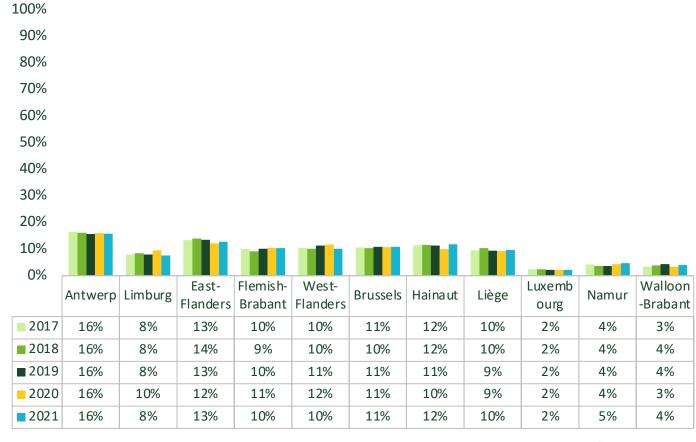
O2 Sample descriptionRepresentative sample of online shoppers



Language









S3. What is your postal code?

8

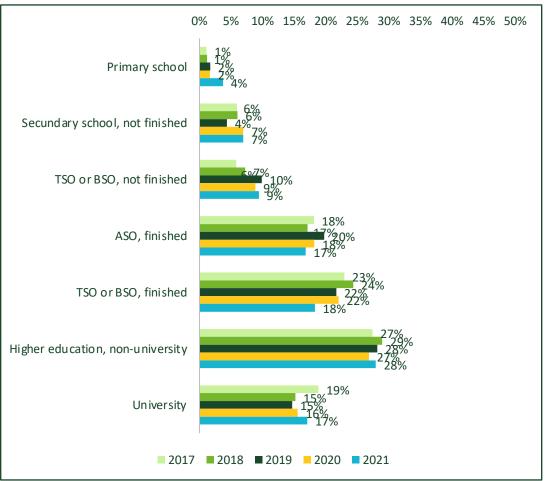
[↑] Significantly higher/lower

Sample description

Representative sample of online shoppers

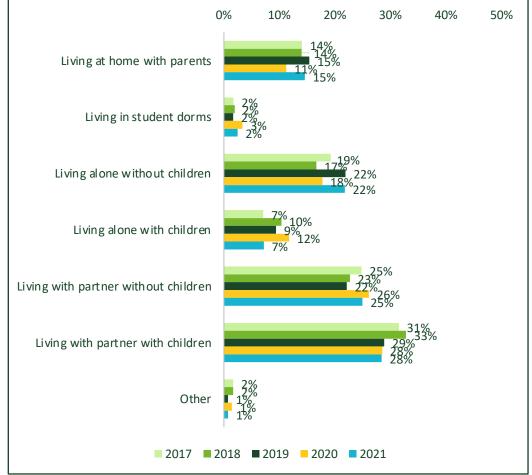


Education





Living situation







03. Online shopping habits



03. Online shopping habits

Frequency and categories



Online shopping habitsFrequency

During the COVID pandemic people started to **shop** more frequently online: almost half said they've bought more online compared to the year before.

The habit of shopping more online has been installed and will not go back to previous pre-covid level — Even with the big increase of online shopping during last year, 1 in 4 still believes to shop even more online in the next year.

The **scope** of online bought **categories online** has gotten **wider** in the last year.



Online shopping habits Frequency

Frequency of online shopping has increased from 20% weekly plus in February 2020 (right before the COVID-19 crisis) to 30% in 2021.

How often do you visit webshops?

How often do you buy something online?







compared to 2020 (c.i. 95%)

Online shopping habitsImpact of Covid-19

Right before the outbreak, 29% of shoppers estimated to buy more online in the coming year. But the Covid-19 situation, led to an actual increase of 48%.

Online shoppers in 2020, right before the COVID-19 outbreak, reflecing on their intentions to shop online in the coming year:

4%

Online shoppers in April 2021, about their online shopping in the past 12 months:

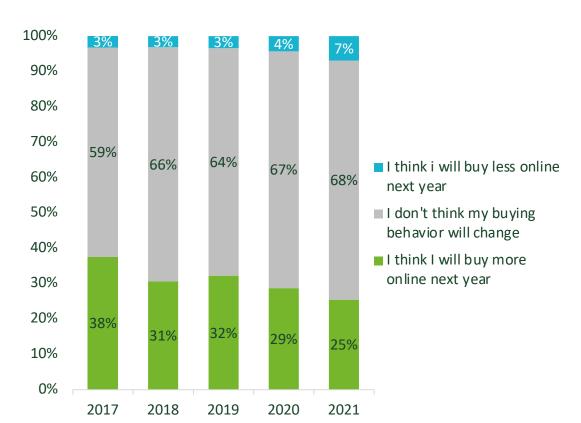


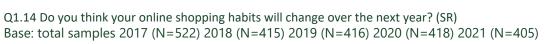




03 Online shopping habits1 Future behavior

Even with the increase in online shopping from last year, ¼ think they will buy even more next year.



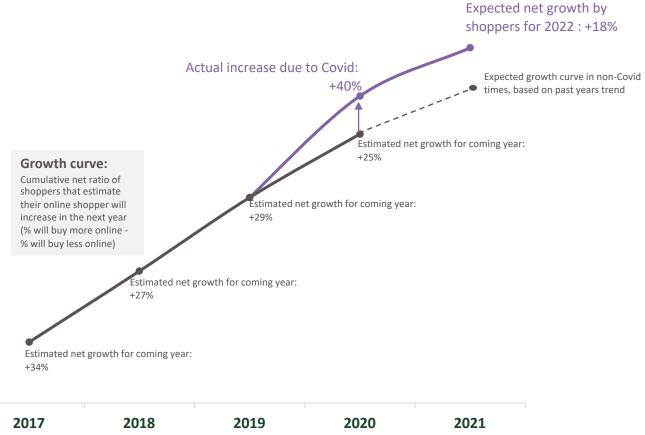






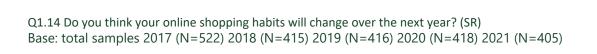
Online shopping Growth curve

Due to Covid19, the growth curve raised in 2021 above expectations. Shoppers estimate that the growth curve will flatten somewhat in the coming year, but will not drop back to pre-Covid level.





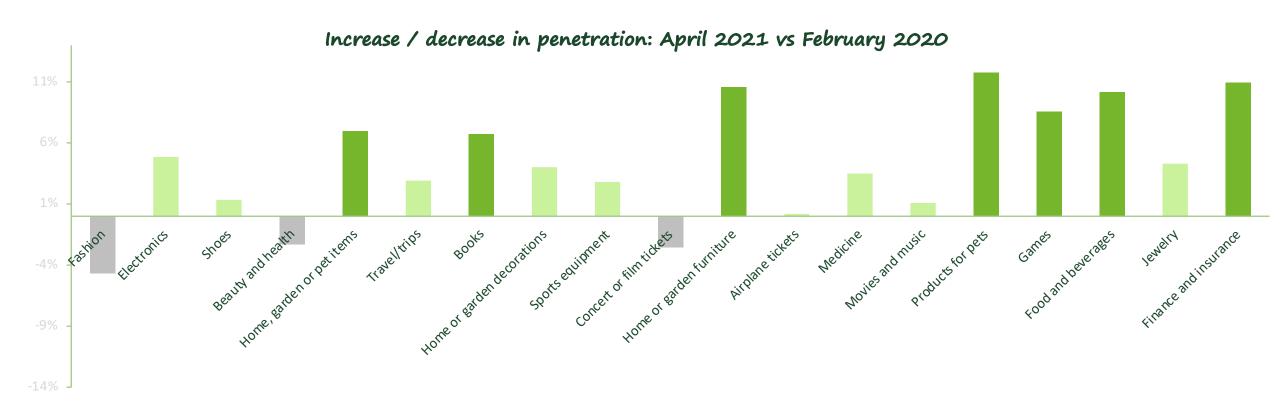




03 Online shopping habits1 Penetration of product categories

Some categories have increased in penetration: with home, garden and pets products as important growth categories together with games, food & beverages and finance & insurance.

Categories with decrease in purchase penetration were fashion, beauty & health and tickets.



03 Online shopping habits1 Penetration of product categories

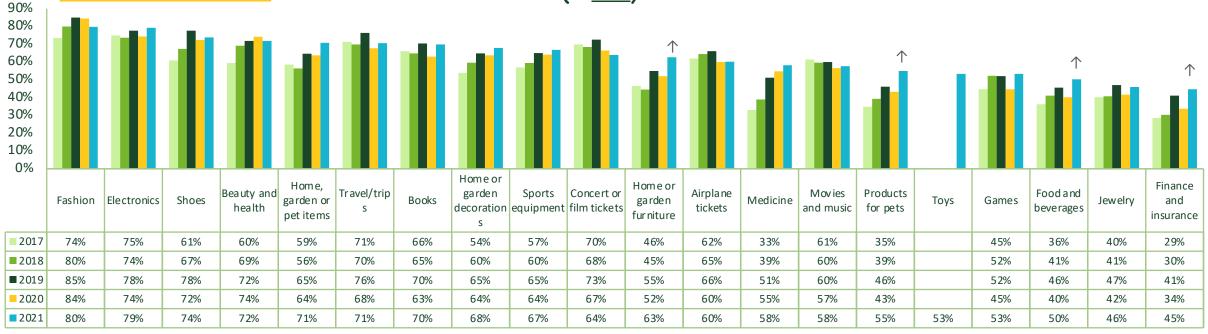
These percentages are <u>not</u> based on buying behaviour <u>of the last year</u>, but <u>ever bought</u>.

Therefore Covid effects are less visible on categories such as travel, airplane tickets etc.

However, what we do see is the growing online penetration of some categories.

Some categories have increased in penetration: with home, garden and pets products as important growth categories together with games, food & beverages and finance & insurance.

Which of these categories do you buy online? (% ever)





O3. Online shopping habits

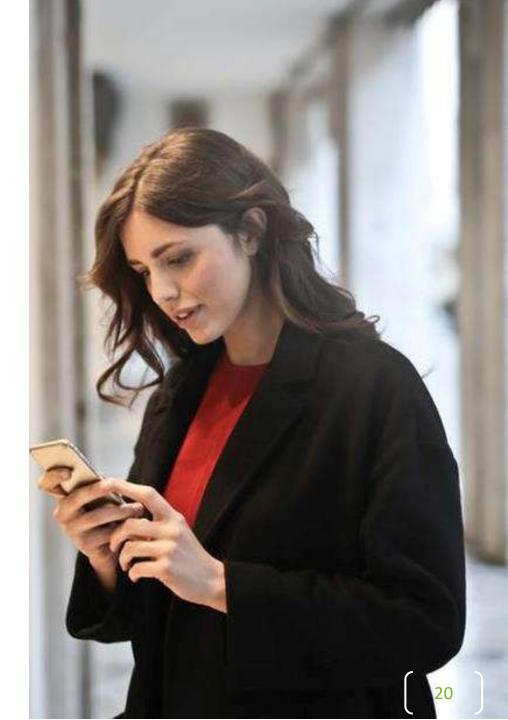
Devices used to shop online



Online shopping habitsOnline shopping devices

Computer and smartphone are still the most used devices for online shopping. The increasing trend of smartphone seems to be stabilizing. This might be caused by COVID.

The use of **an app for online shopping** also kept on **increasing**. The preference for app versus website is now close to 50/50.

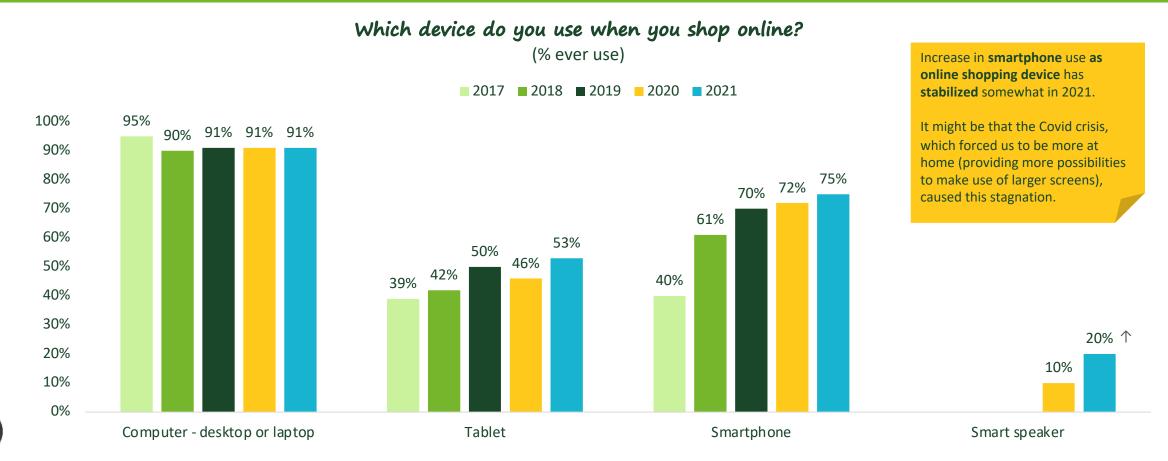




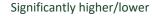
03 Online shopping habits2 Devices

Computer and smartphone remained the most used devices for online shopping.

- Some stagnation in the growing penetration of smartphone as online shopping device.
- There is a significant increase in the use of smart speakers compared to 2020.
- Smartphones are more often used by younger lifestages (-46 year) and smart speakers by people in their thirties.







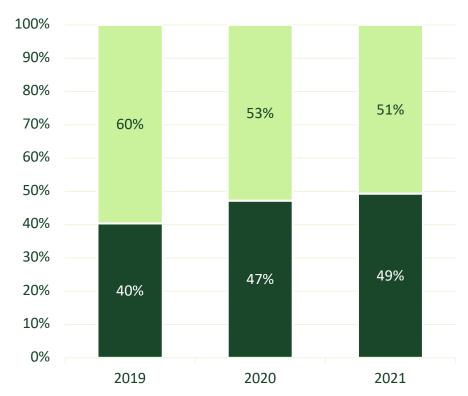
03 Online shopping habits2 Mobile shopping

The preference for using the app of a webshop is still increasing

- From 40% in 2019 to 47% in 2020 and 49% in 2021.
- There is **50-50 distribution** in the preference for an app or a website.

How do you prefer to shop online on your mobile?

(Filter: Belgians who shop online on their smartphone)



- Using the website of the webshop (by means of the browser on your tablet or smartphone)
- Using the app of the webshop (an app on your tablet or smartphone)





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Online shopping habits

Delivery and Payment



Online shopping habitsDelivery and Pay

Most people still prefer **home delivery**. But when missing the home delivery, the opinions are divided on what to do with the package: majority prefers drop off around the house or at the neighbors. **Only 17**% would prefer a **second delivery at home**.

PayPal and debit cards remained the most preferred ways for online payment in Belgium. Significant increase in preference of paying with credit card.

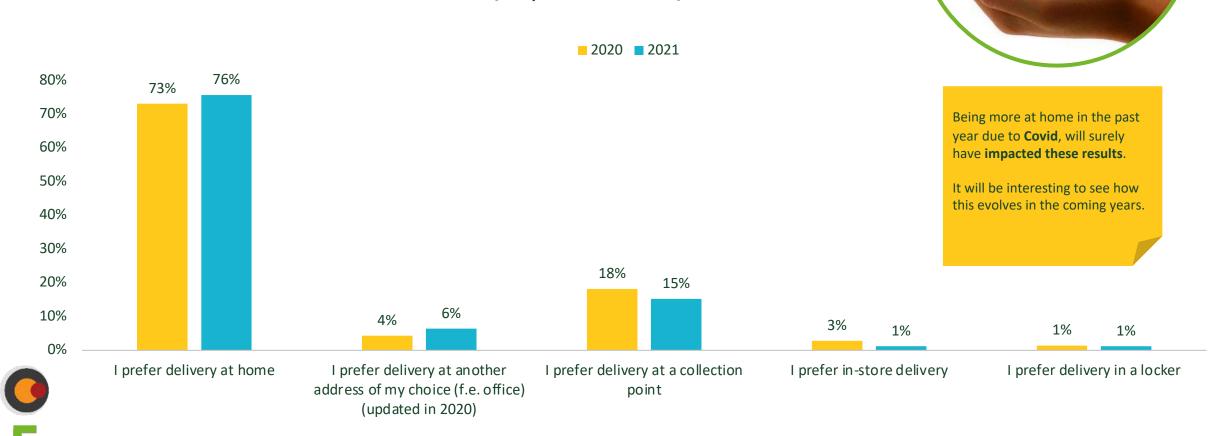


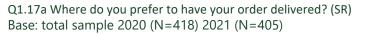


03 Online shopping habits3 Delivery

Delivery at home is still the most preferred option.

Where do you prefer to have your order delivered?



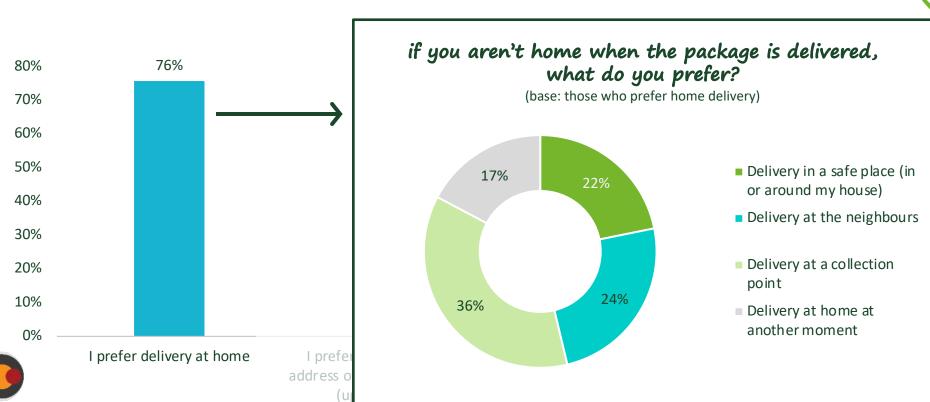


Online shopping habits Delivery

When people aren't home at moment of delivery, the opinions on what to do with the package are divided.

- Delivery at a collection point is overall the most preferred option (1/3 prefers this solution).
- Only 17% would prefer a second delivery at home.

Where do you prefer to have your order delivered?





I prefer delivery in a locker



Online shopping habitsDelivery

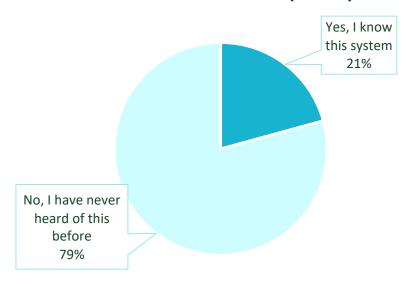
Awareness of Social Pudo's is limited:

- 1 in 5 knows it
- 1 in 10 has ever used it

But interest is quite high:

49% is interested to make use of it in the future

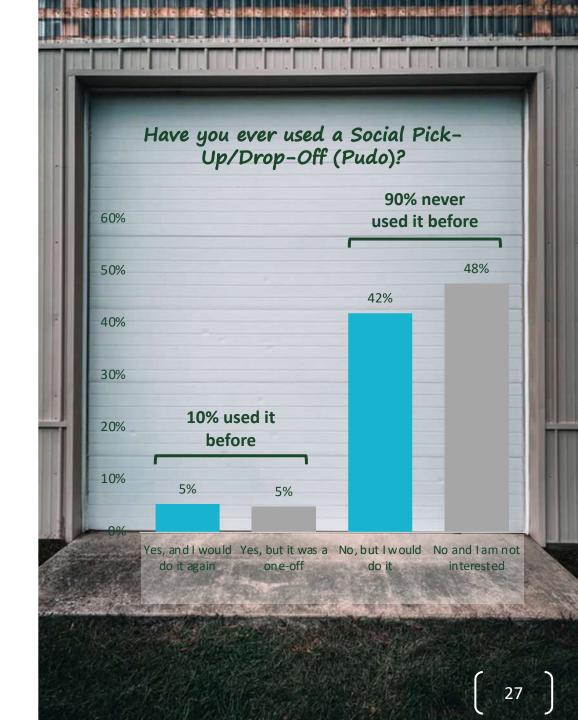
Do you know the system named Social PUDO's (abbreviation of Pick-Up/Drop-Off)?







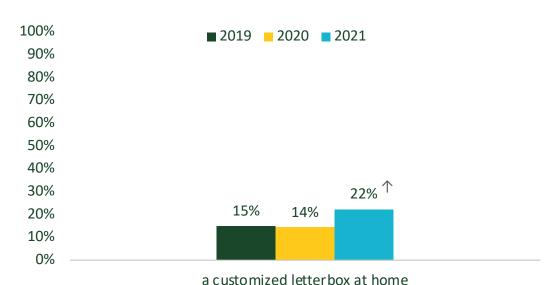
Q1.17d Do you the system named Social PUDO's (abbreviation of Pick-Up/Drop-Off)? Q1.17e Have you ever used a Social PUDO pick-up point? Base: total sample 2021 (N=405)



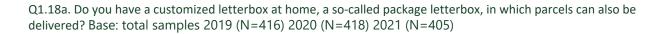
Online shopping habitsDelivery

There is an increase in the amount of people who have a customized letterbox at home.

Do you have a customized letterbox at home, a so-called package letterbox, in which parcels can also be delivered?







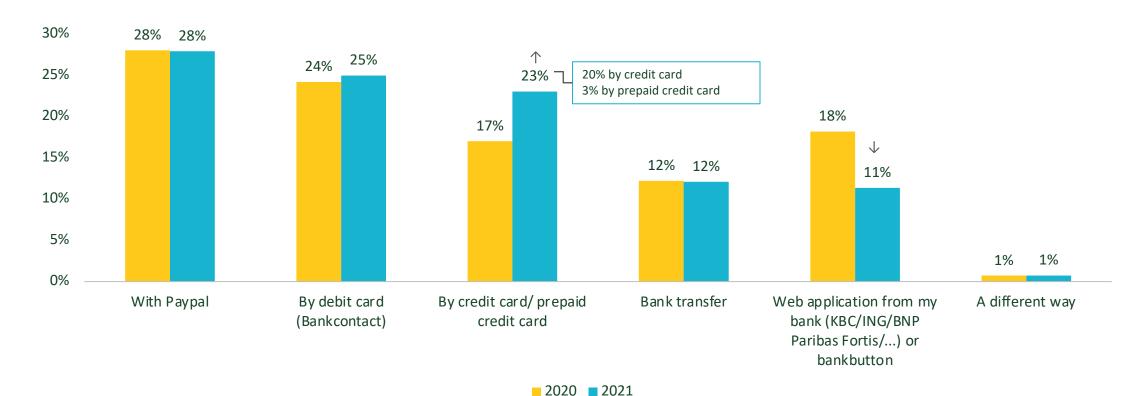


03 Online shopping habits3 Payment

Credit card has increased in preference.

• There is a **significant decrease** in the **preference** for a **web application or bank button** compared to 2020.

How do you prefer to pay when you buy something online?







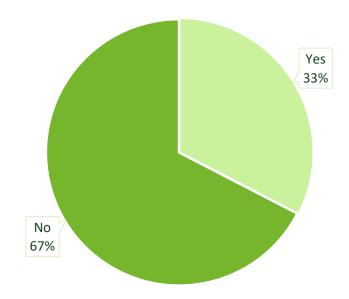
Q1.12 How do you prefer to pay when you buy something online? (SR) Base: total sample 2020 (N=418) 2021 (N=405)

03 Online shopping habits3 Payment

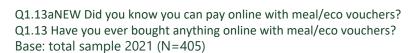
Only 1/3 knows you can pay online with meal and eco vouchers.

- Only 16% has ever paid online with meal or eco vouchers
- But 56% is interested in doing it.

Did you know you can pay online with meal/eco vouchers?









03. Online shopping habits

Doubts and concerns



03 Online shopping habits4 Knowledge and concerns

Protection of personal data during shopping is the number one concern of shoppers.

During the COVID pandemic worries about product quality and delivery have risen.

Not being sure about the **origin of webshops** is not a major concern. But **older shoppers** (50+) are relatively more concerned and afraid of scams.





03 Online shopping habits4 Concerns

In the past years, undamaged delivery became the number one concern.

What worries you most when shopping online?

(Top 5 concerns)

2017

- 1. Product quality
- 2. Warranty
- 3. Payment
- 4. Undamaged delivery
- 5. Will it arrive at all

2018

- 1. Product quality
- 2. Undamaged delivery
- 3. Will it arrive at all
- 4. Warranty
- 5. Where & how to complain

2019

- 1. Undamaged delivery
- 2. Product quality
- 3. Warranty
- 4. Where & how to complain
- 5. My privacy

2020

- 1. Undamaged delivery
- 2. Warranty
- 3. Where & how to complain
- 4. Product quality
- 5. My privacy





03 Online shopping habits4 Concerns

Protection of personal data is a big concern to online shoppers. Is even more mentioned as a concern than product or delivery concerns.

What worries you most when shopping online?

(Top 5 concerns)

2017

4. Undamaged delivery

5. Will it arrive at all

2. Warranty

3. Payment

- 1. Undamaged delivery
- 2. Product quality
 - 3. Warranty
 - 4. Where & how to complain
 - 5. My privacy

2019

- Product quality
 Product quality
 - 2. Undamaged delivery

2018

- 3. Will it arrive at all
- 4. Warranty
- 5. Where & how to complain

2020

- 1. Undamaged delivery
- 2. Warranty
- 3. Where & how to complain
- 4. Product quality
- 5. My privacy

2021

*New item in 2021

- 1. Protection of my data*
- 2. Undamaged delivery
- 3. Product quality
- 4. Warranty
- 5. Will it arrive at all

Back in top 5 of concerns after two years of absence





03 Online shopping habits4 Concerns – full table

In 2021 concerns about product quality and delivery have risen

- There is even a significant increase in worries about whether the product will be delivered at all.
- A possible explanation is that more people were 'forced' to buy online during the COVID pandemic. Therefore, people who did not have much experience in online shopping in the past, might be more worried.
 - We see higher levels of concern among younger age groups and older age groups:
 - Where <u>younger</u> age groups are relatively more concerned about the **product** (warranty, whether it will arrive undamaged, quality) & payment
 - And where <u>older</u> age groups are relatively more concerned about <u>privacy</u>, <u>origin</u> of the webshop, point of contact for <u>customer service</u>

Column %	2018	2019	2020	2021	Δ '21 vs '20
Column n	415	416	418	405	
Protection of my data (personal data, bank data,)	-	-	-	54%	n.a.
Whether the product will arrive undamaged	51%	46%	45%	50%	+5
The quality of the product	52%	41%	44%	49%	+5
The product warranty	49%	41%	44%	48%	+3
Whether the product will be delivered at all	50%	38%	38%	45%↑	+7
My privacy	42%	40%	43%	44%	+1
Where I can raise my complaints	48%	41%	44%	42%	-2
Hidden costs regarding delivery	44%	38%	43%	41%	-2
Unclear contact info	47%	35%	40%	40%	=
The origin of the webshop	39%	33%	40%	39%	-1
Whether I have bought the right product	38%	35%	37%	38%	-1
The payment	37%	28%	28%	32%	+4

03 Online

Online shopping habits

Reasons for concern about the origin of the webshop

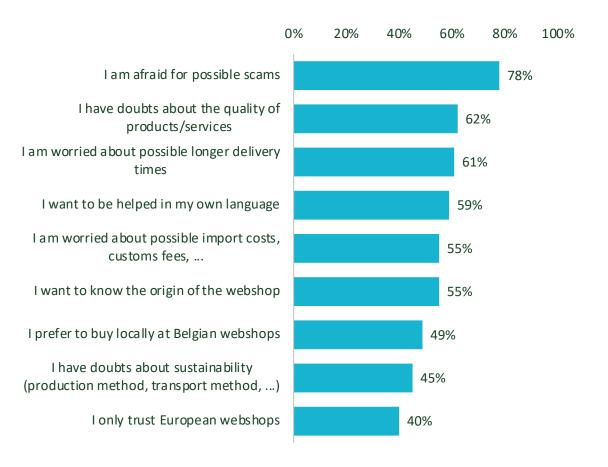
38% has concerns about the origin of the webshop. More mentioned by 50+ as a concern (46%).

Reasons for this are mainly driven by the fear of being scammed.

Secondly doubts about product quality and possible delay in delivery times are mentioned.



Where do your concerns about the origin of the web shop come from?





04. The ideal webshop



04 Ideal webshop General observation





Maybe a lot of these features are becoming a general expectation (a commodity)? As a consequence, it will be harder for webshops to step out of the crowd, to be different.

Ideal webshop

Importance

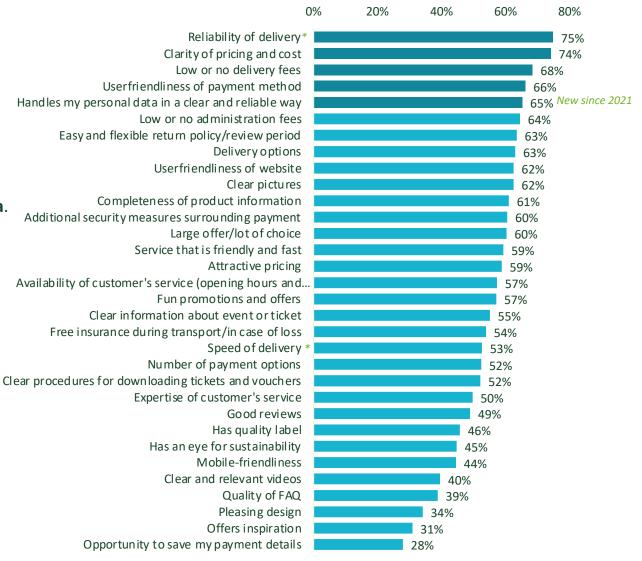
Reliability of delivery, transparency about costs and treatment of personal data, low delivery fees and user-friendly payment are the most important characteristics that discern good from bad webshops in shoppers' minds.

- Transparency is important for both costs and personal data.
- Reliability of the delivery is more important than speed.



Q3.1 Which of the following elements are important to you when discerning between good and bad webshops? Top 2 (important to very important) Base: Total sample 2021 (N=405)

Which of the following elements are important to you when discerning between good and bad webshops?



Ideal webshop

Importance - vs. 2020



In 2021 these aspects became relatively <u>more</u> important:

- Easy and flexible return policy or review period
- Availability and expertise of customer service
- Free insurance during transport (in case of loss)

All of these aspects are at play at the end of the customer journey



In 2021 these aspects became relatively <u>less</u> important:

- Clear **pictures**
- Large offer/ lot of choice
- Attractive pricing
- Delivery options
- Fun promotions and offers
- Saving payment details for future use

All of these aspects are at play when choosing the product





04 The ideal webshop1 Important elements

Most important elements when thinking about the **ideal webshop** are about:

- 1. Reliability of **delivery**
- 2. Transparency in prices and cost
- 3. Low delivery costs
- 4. User-friendly payment method
- 5. Respect for **privacy and data protection**

Elements which are at the end of the online shopping journey (such as transport, return and contact with customer service) have become relatively more important. An indication that the online shopper expects an optimal experience throughout the whole journey.





04 The ideal webshop2 Building blocks for the ideal webshop

The **ideal webshop** is made up out of following **building blocks**:



Delivery

- Free delivery
- Home delivery
- Track & trace function



Website characteristics

- Competitive pricing
- Qualitative product descriptions
- Qualitative pictures



Customer care

- Fast response time
- Reachable via email
- Capable staff



Security, transparency and trust

- Confidentiality of data
- Protection against hacking
- Clear warranty policy
- No unwanted advertising



Payment and terms

- Free returns
- Order confirmation
- Transparency of supplementary costs
- Multiple payment options





Ideal webshop

Delivery

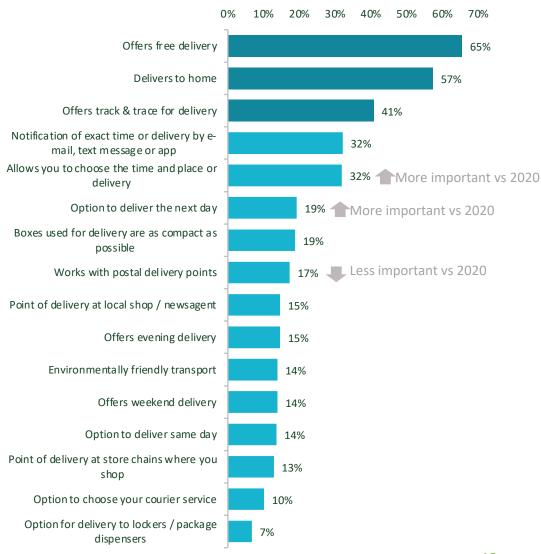
Free delivery, home delivery and track & trace function are still the most important delivery preferences.

- In comparison with 2020 choosing time and place of delivery and the option to deliver next day became relatively more important in 2021.
- In comparison with 2020 **postal delivery points** became relatively **less important** in 2021. This might be because of more at home presence due the COVID measures.



Q3.2 Which of these are the building blocks for the ideal webshop, in your opinion? Pick 5. Base: total samples 2017 (N=522), 2018 (N=415), 2019 (N=416), 2020 (N=418) and 2021 (N=405)

Which of these are the building blocks for the ideal webshop, in your opinion? When it comes to delivery:





Ideal webshop

Customer care

Fast response time, reachable via email and capable staff remain the most important customer care building blocks.

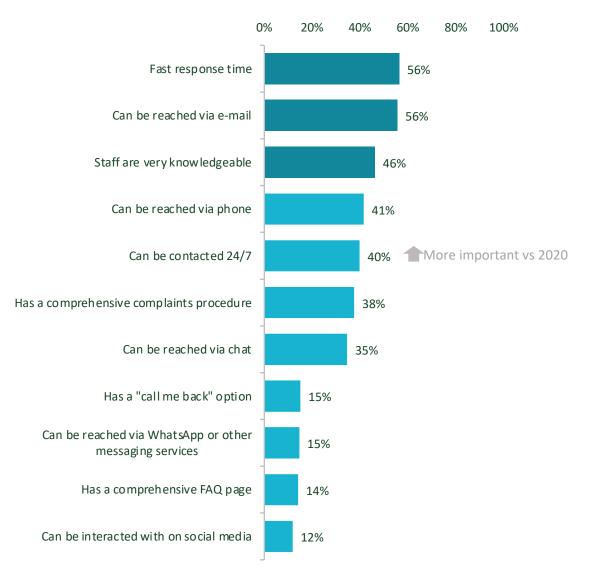
• **24/7 availability** became relatively **more important** in 2021 in comparison with 2020.





Q3.2 Which of these are the building blocks for the ideal webshop, in your opinion? Pick 5. Base: total samples 2017 (N=522), 2018 (N=415), 2019 (N=416), 2020 (N=418) and 2021 (N=405)

Which of these are the building blocks for the ideal webshop, in your opinion? When it comes to <u>customer care:</u>

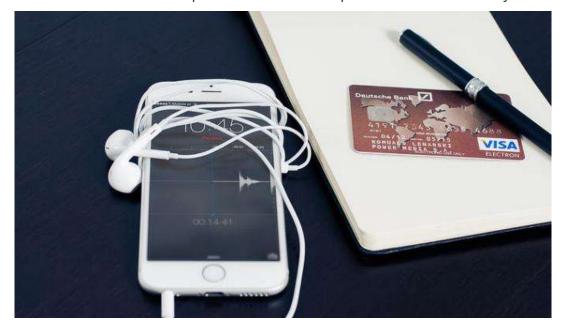


Ideal webshop

Payment & Terms

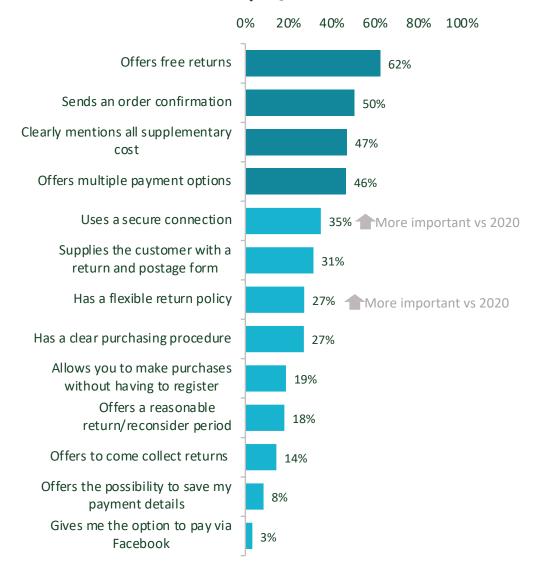
Most important preferences linked to payment and terms are free returns, order confirmation, transparency of supplementary costs and multiple payment options.

- A secure connection and a flexible return policy became relatively more important in 2021.
 - The importance of a flexible return policy might be something that became more important when brick shops had to close because of COVID.



Q3.2 Which of these are the building blocks for the ideal webshop, in your opinion? Pick 5. Base: total samples 2017 (N=522), 2018 (N=415), 2019 (N=416), 2020 (N=418) and 2021 (N=405)

Which of these are the building blocks for the ideal webshop, in your opinion? When it comes to payment and terms:





Ideal webshop

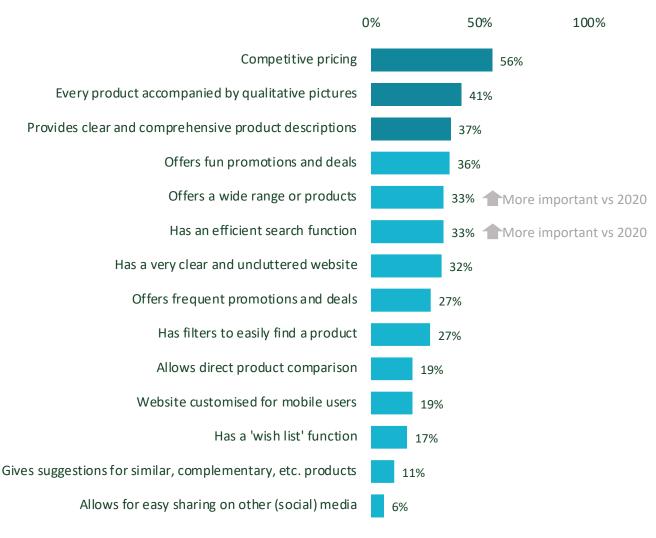
Webshop characteristics

Competitive pricing and the need for qualitative product descriptions and pictures are the most important website characteristics.

- **Declining trend** in the **need for product descriptions and pictures** remains in 2021.
- A wide offer of products and an efficient search function became relatively more important in 2021.



Which of these are the building blocks for the ideal webshop, in your opinion? When it comes to characteristics of the webshop:





Ideal webshop

Security, transparency and trust

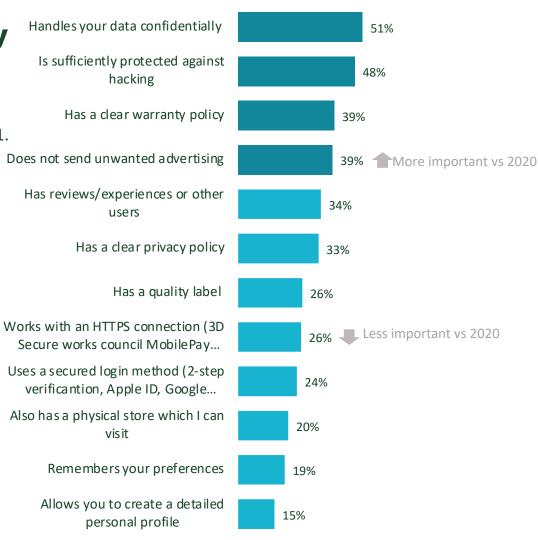
Confidentiality of data, protection against hacking, clear warranty policy and no unwanted advertising are the most important building blocks.

No unwanted advertising became relatively more important in 2021.



Q3.2 Which of these are the building blocks for the ideal webshop, in your opinion? Pick 5. Base: total samples 2017 (N=522), 2018 (N=415), 2019 (N=416), 2020 (N=418) and 2021 (N=405)

Which of these are the building blocks for the ideal webshop, in your opinion? When it comes to security, transparency and trust:





100%

05. Segmentation

Different motivations toward online shopping



05 Segmentation1 Influence COVID

Overall, during the **COVID pandemic** some people clearly missed the **experience** and **social contacts** of **real-life shopping**.

There is a **polarization** in **how** people **responded** to the **need of more online shopping** during the pandemic: both **Inspiration Shoppers**, who enjoy the online shopping experience, and **Careful Shoppers**, who prefer physical stores, have **increased**.

So, on the one hand there are people who have learned to enjoy online shopping, while on the other hand a group of shoppers definitely missed the experience of a physical store. These shoppers tend to have lower intention for online buying in the coming year.





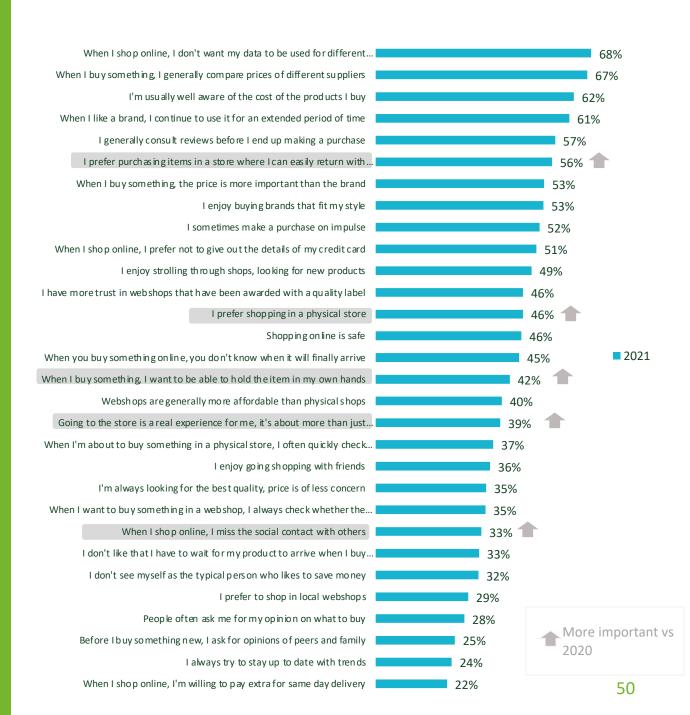
Segmentation General shopping attitudes

During the COVID pandemic people have realised the importance of the physical experience and social contacts during real life shopping.



Q2.1. To which extent do you agree with the following statements? 5-point scale (top 2: (totally) agree)
Base: total samples 2017 (N=522), 2018 (N=415) and 2019 (N=416)





"I can't think of any downsides of **Quantitative segmentation 05** online shopping: you're always in touch with what's new." **Attitudes toward online shopping Carefree** "I love online shopping: if you want something, it's only one click away" "Online I get inspired, but nothing beats a real shopping trip" **Inspiration shopper New convenience** 32% Shopper 15% Fun & Social shopper Experience 16% **Practical Focus Focus** "If you know how and where to "I prefer physical stores, than I look, you can get great deals **Smart shopper** know exactly what I get" online" **Careful shopper** 16% -2% 21%



Segmentation Differentiating attitudes towards online shopping

"I can't think of any downsides of online shopping: you're always in touch with what's new."

"Online I get inspired, but nothing beats a real shopping trip"

"I prefer physical stores, than I know exactly what I get"

"If you know how and where to look, you can get great deals online"

"I love online shopping: if you want something, it's only one click away"



Inspiration shopper

32%

High

(weekly +: 37%)

Stay on top of the **trends**

Sharing via social media

Great way to relax

Mobile friendly

Inspirational

Nice webdesign

Fast delivery

Easy payment





Careful shopper

21%



Smart shopper



Frequency online shopping

Advantages of online shopping:

A good webshop is/has:

Fun & social	
shopper	16%

Medium

(weekly +: 29%)

Inspiration

Sharing via social media

Inspirational

Nice webdesign

Good customer service

Easy payment

Low

(weekly +: 15%)

Convenience Price **comparisons**

Secure payment Low fees Free **insurance** (in case of loss during transport) Fast delivery **Data protection**

16% Medium

(weekly +: 32%)

Reviews Best deals/prices

Quality label Different payment options

New convenience shopper 15%

High

(weekly +: 37%)

Immediate gratification Fast Great way to **relax**

No extra fees

Reliable delivery





05 Segmentation1 Expectations for the coming year

All segments have a positive estimated net growth for the coming year, but this is lower among Careful shoppers.



06. Additional questions

Innovations



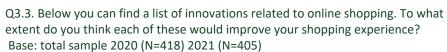
Additional questions

Innovations

Again, visual innovations seem to provide the best improvement for an online shopping experience

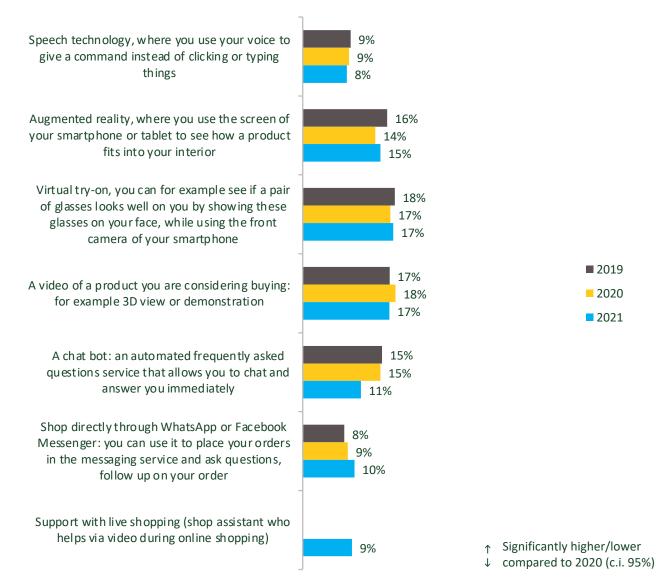
- Just like in 2020 visual innovations, like virtual try-on, product videos and augmented reality evoke relatively more interest among Belgians.
- Overall, the added value of these innovations are more often acknowledged by younger people (25-30 years) than older people (50+ years).





To what extent do you think each of these innovations would improve your shopping experience?

(% huge improvement)



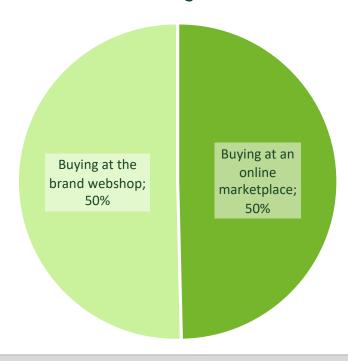
Additional questions Online marketplaces

Half of the people would choose to buy at a marketplace, the other half at the brand webshop

More preference for brand webshops among 50+



What would you choose?



<u>Profile of shoppers who prefer market places:</u>

- Relatively less 50+
- Relatively more Smart shoppers & New convenience shoppers



Additional questions Online marketplaces

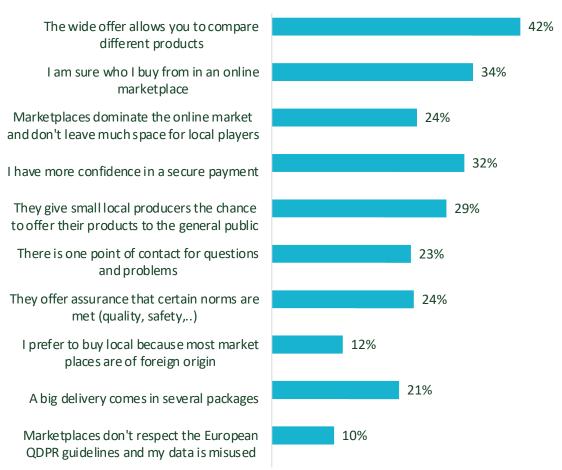
Those who prefer marketplaces:

- See the advantage of easily comparing different products
- Are reassured by secure payment, quality norms,...
- Think that small local producers are given chances on this platform



Attitudes towards online marketplaces % Agree

■ Prefer buying at an online marketplace





Q3.4a4. Which statements about online marketplaces do you agree with? Base: total sample 2021 (N=405)

Additional questions Online marketplaces

Those who prefer marketplaces:

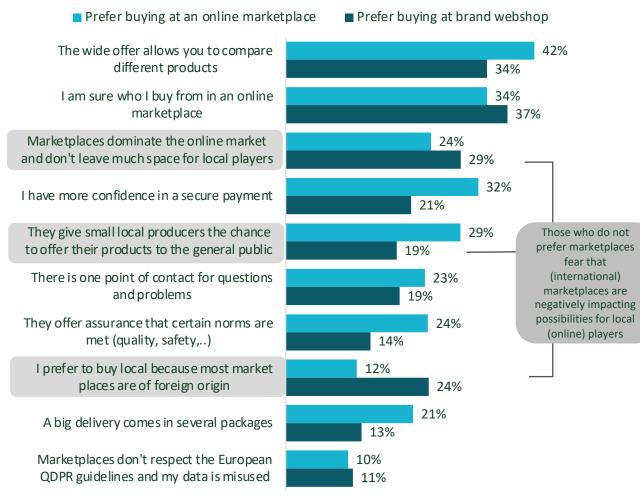
- See the advantage of easily comparing different products
- Are reassured by secure payment, quality norms,...
- Think that small local producers are given chances on this platform

Those who do not prefer marketplaces:

See these (international) players negatively impacting local webshops



Attitudes towards online marketplaces % Agree





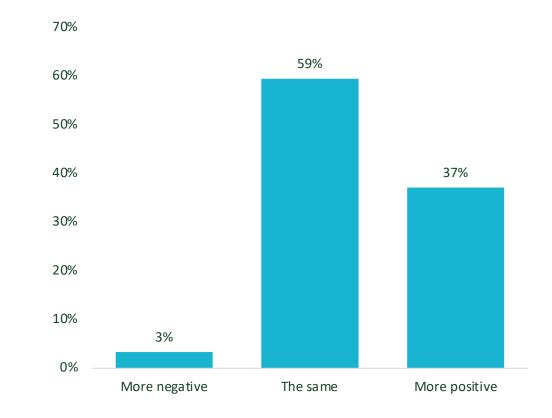
06 Additional questions3 C2C marketplaces

Most people's opinion would stay the same if they would know the identity of the buyers and sellers.

• But **37%** would **feel more positive** about C2C platforms



If you would know the identity of the sellers and buyers on C2C platforms, would this change your opinion?





06. Additional questions

Sustainability



06 Sustainability

45% thinks a good webshop should have eye for sustainability. Sustainability in the context of webshops is still mainly focused on packaging: environmentally friendly packaging material & efficient packaging are mentioned first.

3 in 4 cannot spontaneously name any sustainable webshop.

An estimation of 12% would be willing to pay more for sustainability when shopping online. But price as well as protection of product quality seem to overrule sustainability in trade-off situations. People are only willing to give in on delivery time when it comes to sustainability.





Sustainability Overview

Importance



45% thinks a good webshop should have eye for sustainability



14% believes an ideal webshop should have environmentally friendly transport



18% has doubts about sustainability when buying at a webshop from another origin



29% prefers to shop at a local webshop

A sustainable webshop should ...



Work with **sustainable** and environmentally friendly packaging



Ensure the recycling of old products

Willingness consumers

12% would pay more for sustainable products











A **lower price** is preferred over **sustainable** production and sustainable delivery methods.







Protection of the products is preferred over products with less packaging.







Sustainable delivery methods are preferred over fast delivery times.







There is a **50-50 distribution** when people have to choose between a wide international offer and a smaller local offer.

Sustainability ranking





- **1. Bol.com** (26%)
- 2. Zalando (17%)
- **3.** Amazon (15%)

75% could not name a sustainable webshop



TOP 3 deliverers



- **1. Bpost** (53%)
- **2. Postnl** (29%)
- **3.** DHL (17%)

35% said none of the deliverers is sustainable

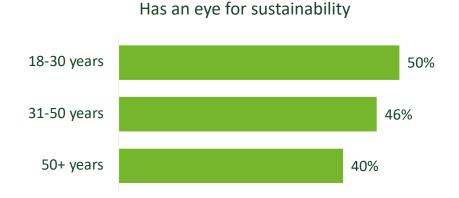


Work with efficient packaging

Additional questions Sustainability

Sustainability is not a main differentiator when discerning 'good' from 'bad' webshops

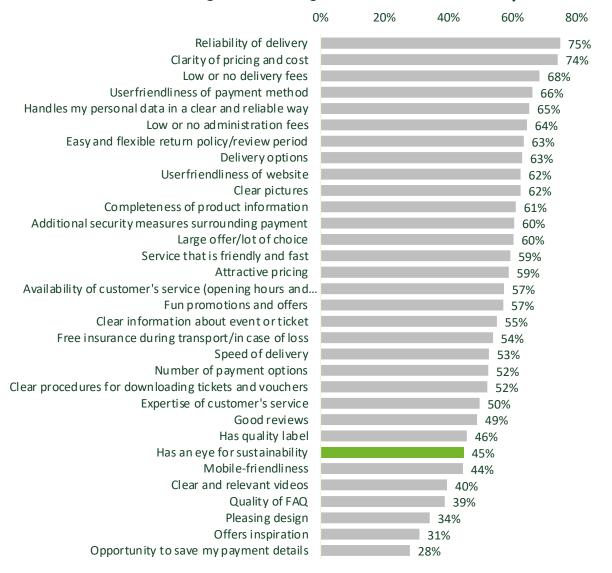
Relatively more important among -30 year olds



5

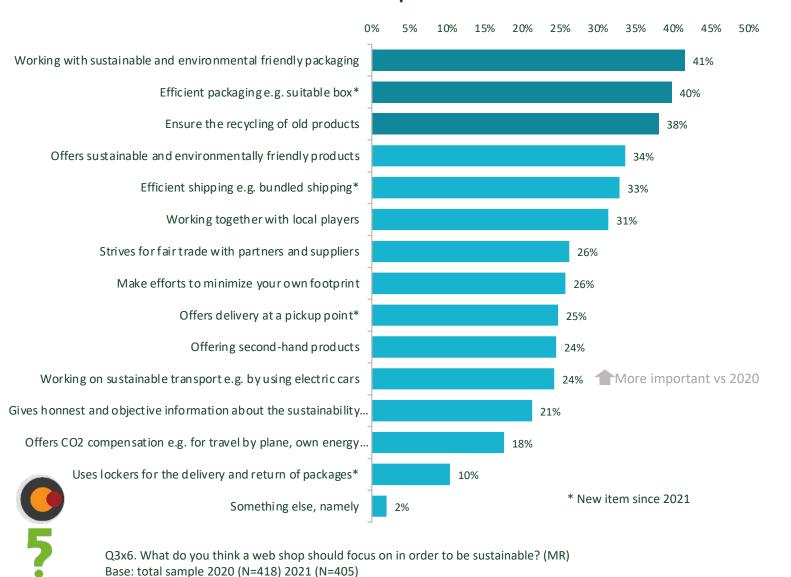
Q3.1 Which of the following elements are important to you when discerning between good and bad webshops? Top 2 (important to very important) Base: Total sample 2021 (N=405)

Which of the following elements are important to you when discerning between good and bad webshops?



06 Additional questions4 Sustainability

What should a web shop focus on to be sustainable?



When thinking about a sustainable web shop, packaging remains the most important. Sustainable transport became relative more important in 2021.

06 Additional questions4 Sustainability

Which webshop comes to mind when thinking about sustainability



Can't name a sustainable web shop

- The 3 most mentioned web shops are
 - 1. Bol.com (7%)
 - 2. Zalando (4%)
 - 3. Amazon (4%)



Additional questions Sustainability

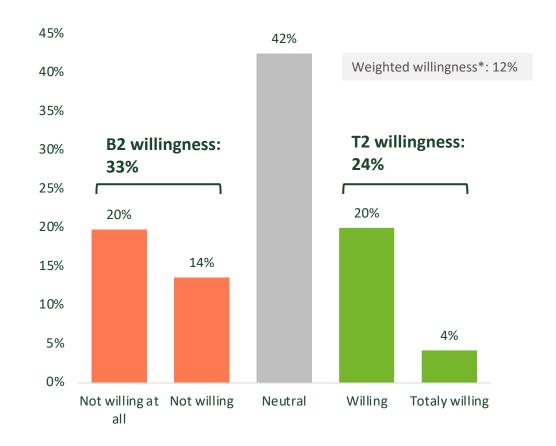
Willingness to pay extra for sustainability is limited

- 24% claims to be willing to pay more sustainable products (but only 4% is totally willing)
- 33% is not willing to pay more for sustainable products.
- 42% has no clear opinion about paying more for sustainable products.





To what degree are you prepared to pay more for sustainable products?

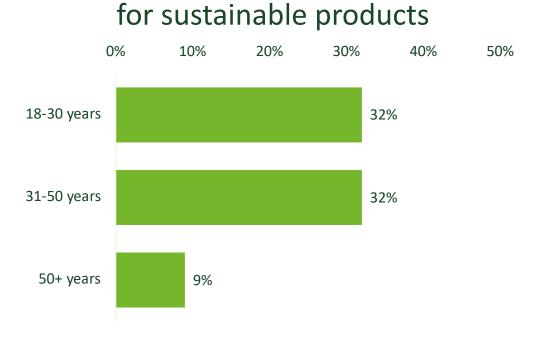




06 Additional questions4 Sustainability

More stated willingness to pay extra for sustainability among younger generations





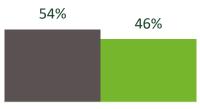
(Totally) willing to pay more



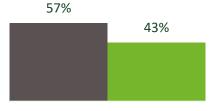
Q3.6a To what degree are you prepared to pay more for sustainable products? Base: total sample 2020 (N=418) 2021 (N=405)

06 Additional questions4 Sustainability – Trade-offs

Willingness to pay for sustainable transport is lower than 'sustainable products' in general



A less A sustainably sustainable produced product at a lower price A sustainably produced product at a higher price



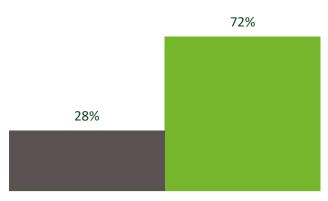
A delivery A sustainable method without extra attention for sustainability at a lower price





06 Additional questions4 Sustainability – Trade-offs

There is quite some willingness to accept longer delivery times under the condition that the delivery method is more sustainable



I choose fast delivery but I want to wait longer for not sustainable my package if it is delivered sustainably

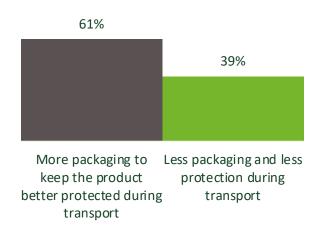
Lower willingness to wait longer among Inspiration Shoppers and New Convenience Shoppers





06 Additional questions4 Sustainability – Trade-offs

Less packaging is only accepted when there's no risk of damaging the product during transport







Thank you,

And let's talk!

