



Coimisiún um
Iomaíocht agus
Cosaint Tomhaltóirí

Competition and
Consumer Protection
Commission

Online Purchasing Behaviour Research Report

Published: November 2016

Research Objectives

The primary objective of the research was:

“To understand online purchasing behaviour amongst Irish consumers.”

More specific objectives included:

To measure the incidence of encountering issues when purchasing goods/services online.

To ascertain the degree to which Irish consumers understand their rights when purchasing online.

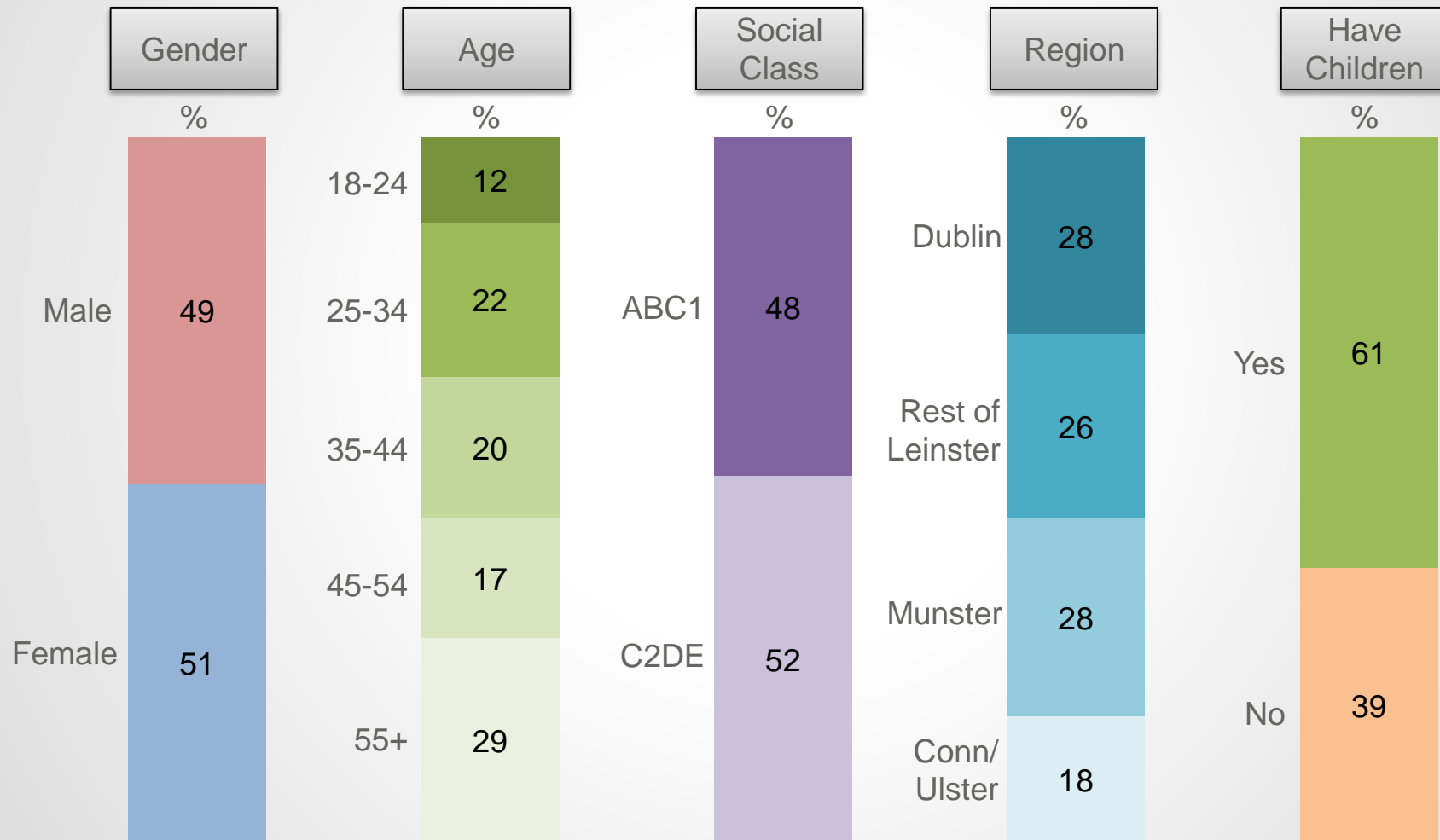
To measure the level of awareness of the cooling off period when purchasing online.

Research Methodology

- Several questions were placed on the Coyne Research omnibus survey which involves 1,000 online interviews with adults aged 18+ years. The total online sample is representative of the national population in the Republic of Ireland.
- The margin of error for the sample is +/- 3.2%.
- Quotas were set in terms of age, gender, region and social class in order to ensure that a nationally representative online sample was achieved.
- The fieldwork was conducted between the 9th and the 19th of August.

Profile of Sample

Base: All adults 18+ - 1,000



Quotas were set to ensure the sample was nationally representative of the national population.

Key Findings - 1

- Amongst Irish adults who purchase online, the most commonly purchased goods/services are
 - clothing/footwear (65%),
 - flights (65%) and
 - holidays/hotels & accommodation (57%)
- The incidence of experiencing difficulties is highest when purchasing
 - clothing/footwear (52%), main difficulty being delay in receiving (32%)
 - grocery products (45%), main difficulty being wrong product delivered (24%)
 - Cosmetics (40%), main difficulty being delay in receiving (32%)
 - Telecommunications (39%), main difficulty being unexpected/hidden charges (19%)

Key Findings - 2

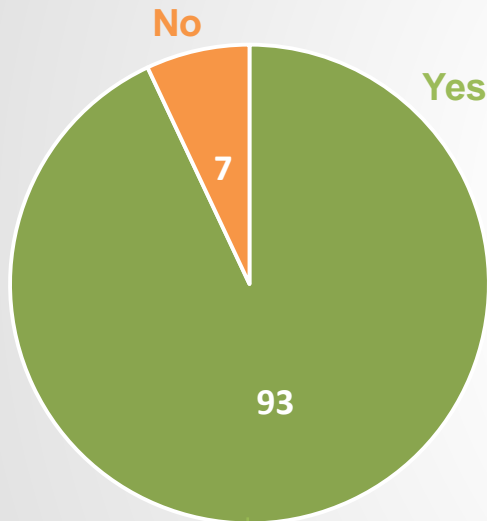
- Just under half (49%) of Irish adults are aware that they have different rights when purchasing from an EU-based website compared to a non-EU one. This is higher amongst males (57%) and those living in Dublin(56%)
- Just 3 in 10 (29%) can correctly identify that the cooling off period when purchasing online lasts until 14 days after receipt of the goods
- One third (33%) are **not aware** that they have the right to return something if they change their mind when buying online
- 70% are **not aware** that there are different rights when buying online from an individual versus from a business

Online Purchasing

Base: All adults 18+ - 1,000

Ever bought goods/services online

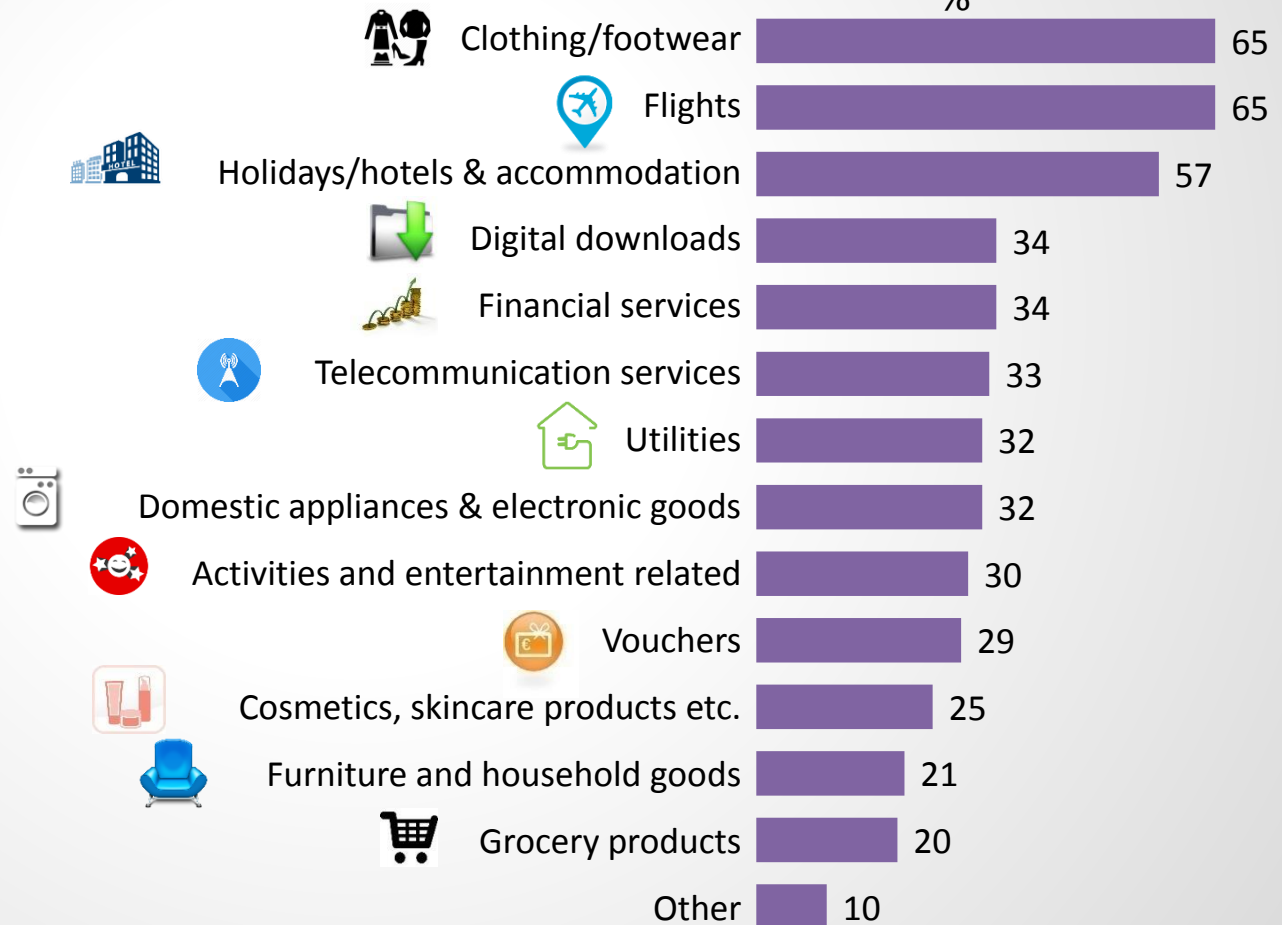
%



Amongst all who have ever purchased, **99%** have purchased in the past 12 months

Purchased product/service online last 12 months

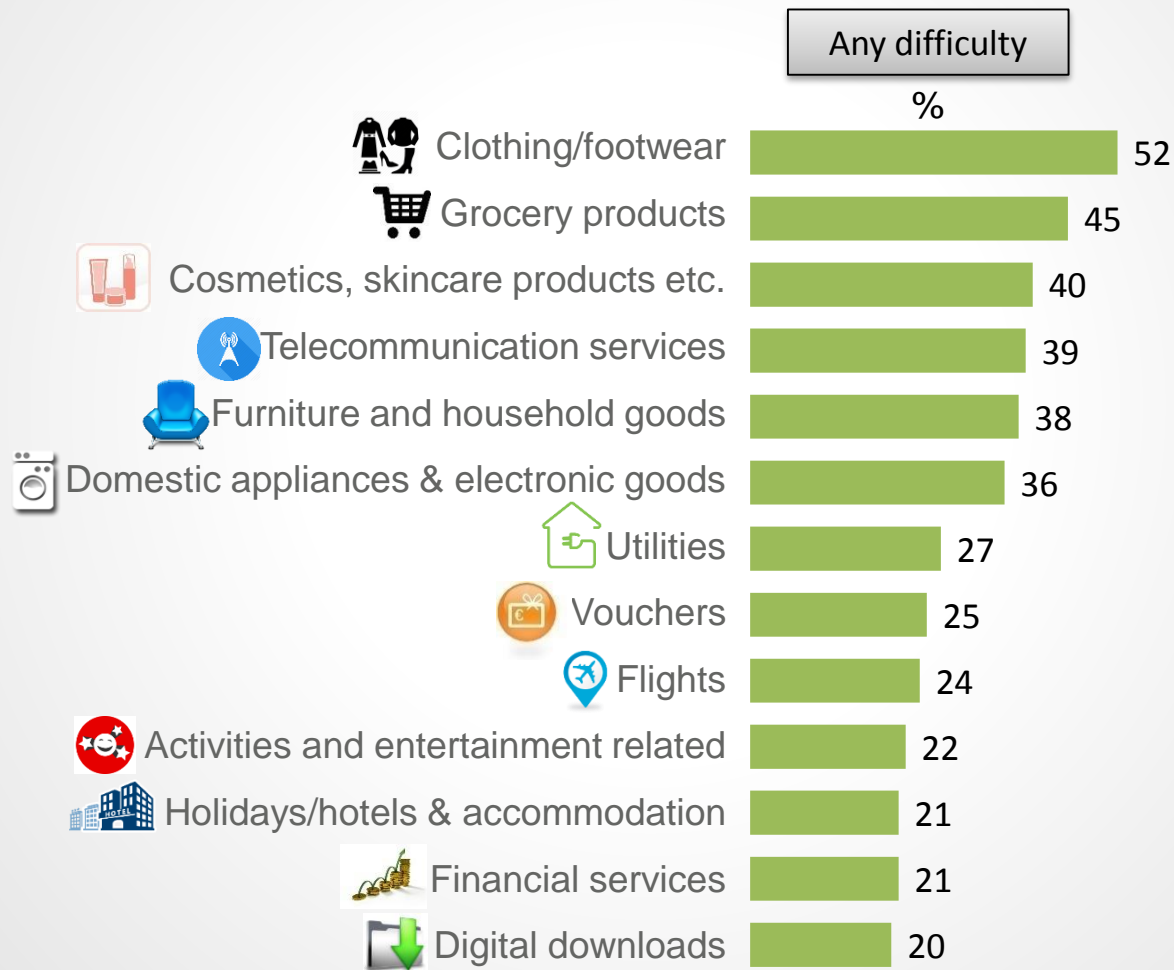
Base: all who have ever purchased online - 935
%



Amongst the online population, over 9 in 10 (93%) claim to have ever bought goods/services online. Of those that have ever bought online, circa 2 in 3 (65%) have purchased clothing/footwear in the last year, whilst a similar proportion have purchased flights.

Incidence of Experiencing Difficulties When Purchasing Online

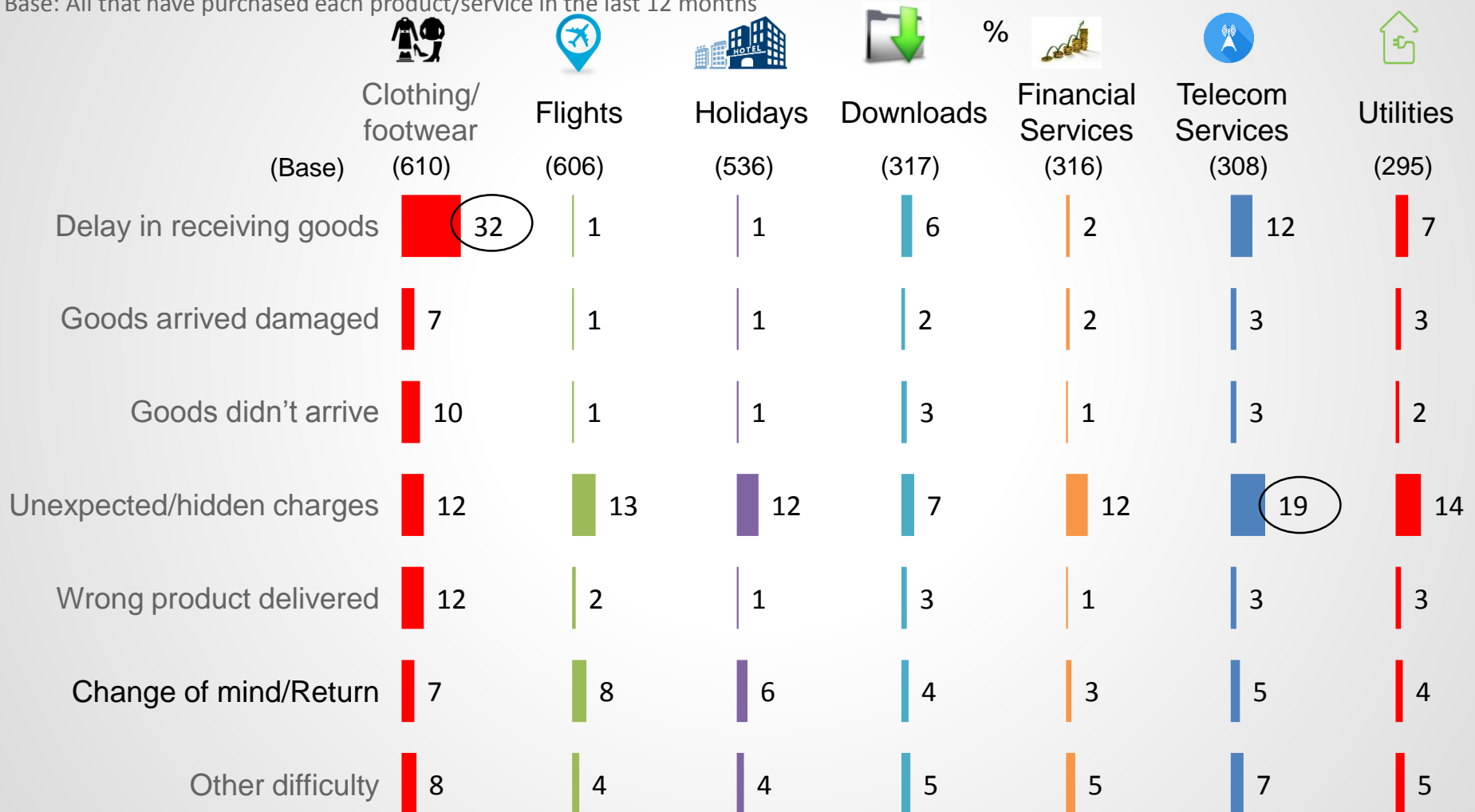
Base: All that have purchased each product/service in the last 12 months



Clothing/footwear are most likely to entail difficulties when purchasing online; over half (52%) of those who had purchased in the past year claim to have experienced some sort of difficulty.

Difficulties Experienced - I

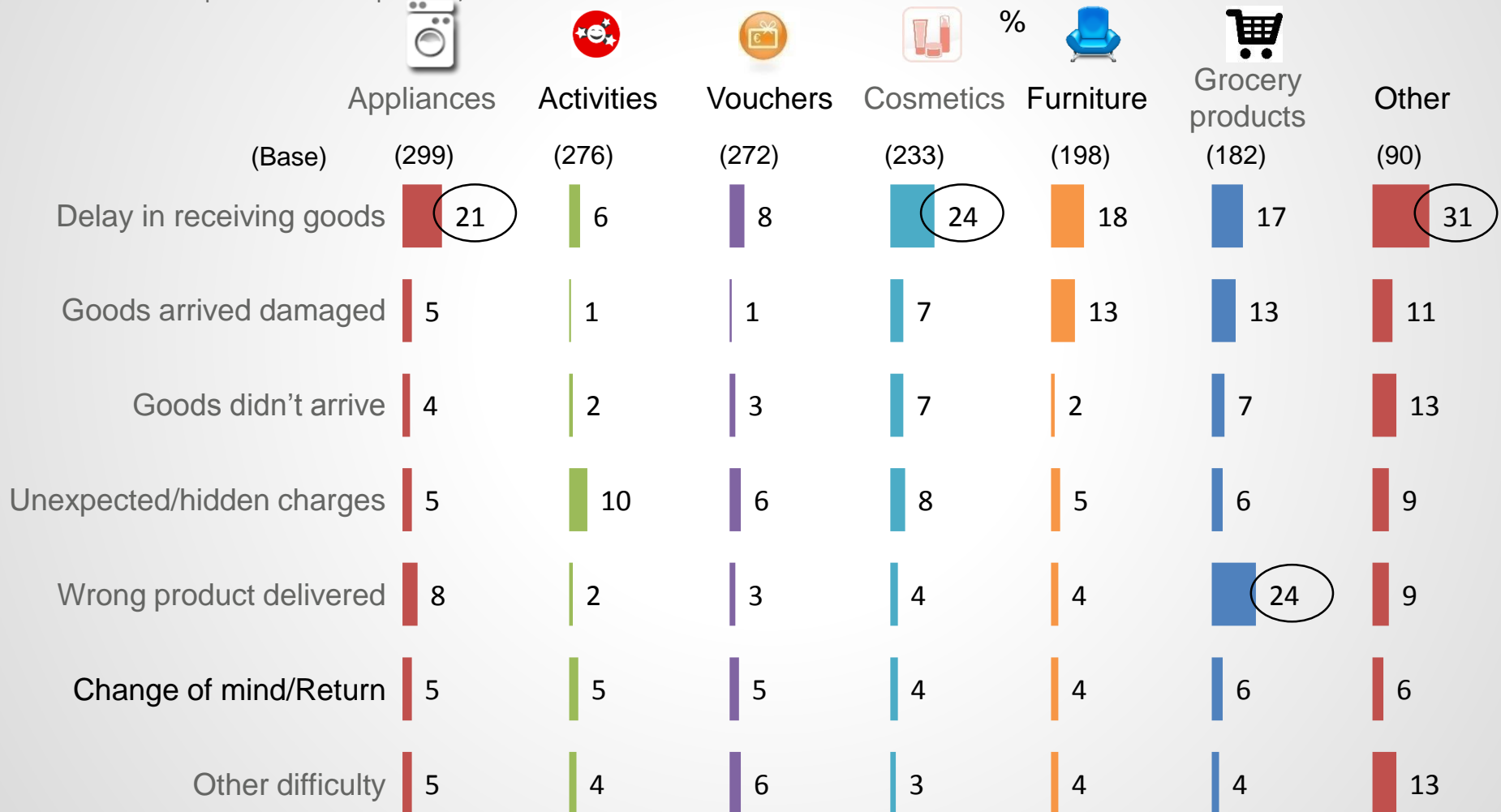
Base: All that have purchased each product/service in the last 12 months



Circa 1 in 3 (32%) of those who had purchased clothing/footwear in the past year experienced a delay in receiving goods. 1 in 5 (19%) of those who purchased telecoms experienced unexpected or hidden charges.

Difficulties Experienced - II

Base: All that have purchased each product/service in the last 12 months

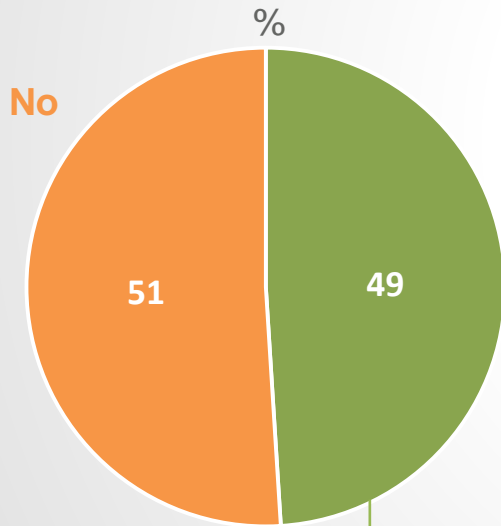


Delays in receiving goods were relatively common across a number of product categories, particularly clothing, appliances and cosmetics. 1 in 4 (24%) of those who purchased groceries claimed they had had the wrong product delivered.

Awareness of Rights - I

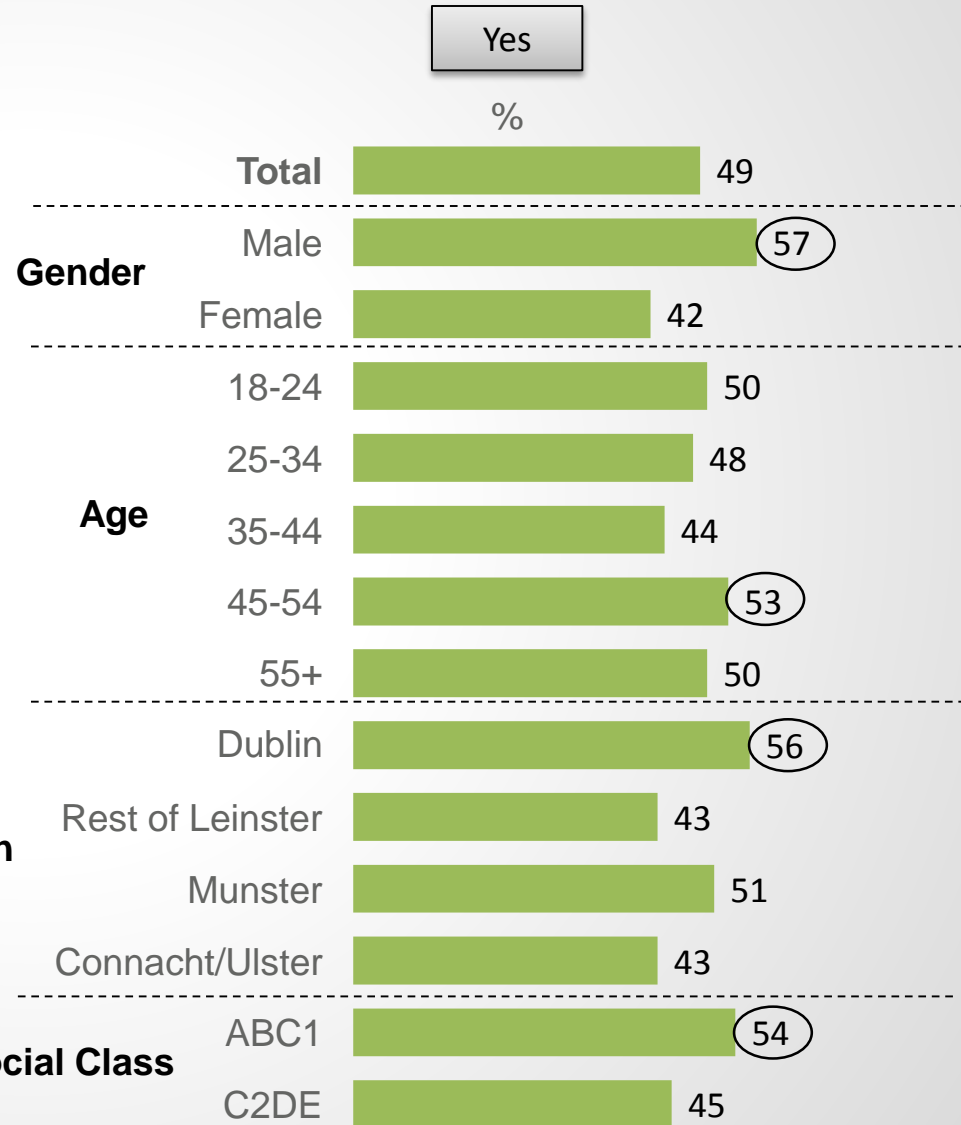
Base: All adults 18+ - 1,000

“Are you aware that you have different rights when buying from a website based in the EU compared to a website based outside the EU?”



Amongst all who have ever purchased online, **50%** are aware of different rights.

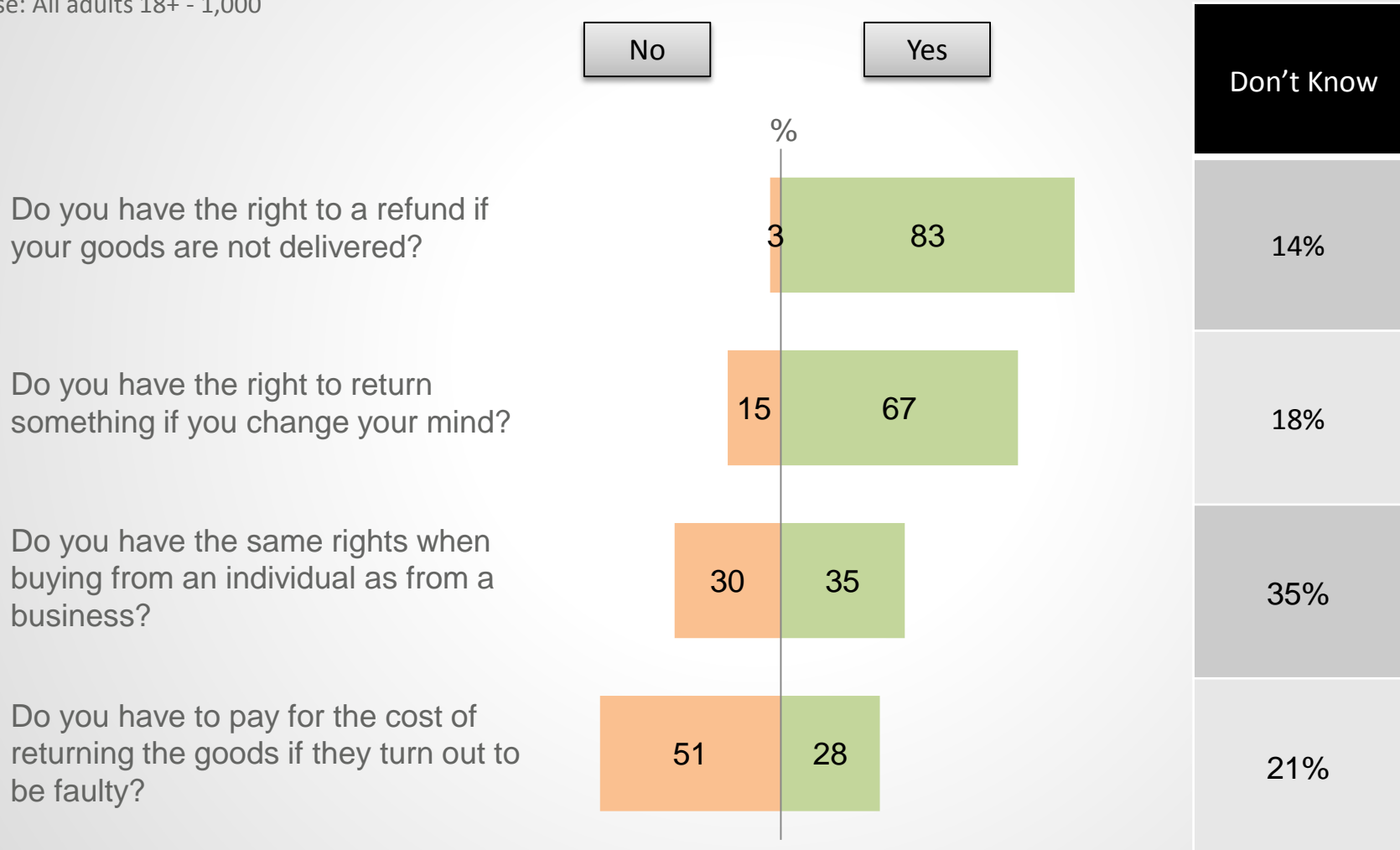
Yes →



Just half (49%) of Irish adults were aware that they had different rights depending on the website location. This was highest amongst males (57%), aged 45-54 (53%), Dublin residents (56%) and ABC1s (54%)

Awareness of Rights - II

Base: All adults 18+ - 1,000



There is strong awareness (83%) of the right to a refund if goods are not delivered. 2 in 3 (67%) believe they have the right to return something if they change their mind. However, there is confusion around whether the same rights exists when buying from a business or an individual.

Cooling Off Period

Base: All adults 18+ - 1,000

Perceived Length of Cooling off Period

%

7 days after you pay

10

14 days after you pay

28

7 days after you receive

8

14 days after you receive

29

Don't know

25



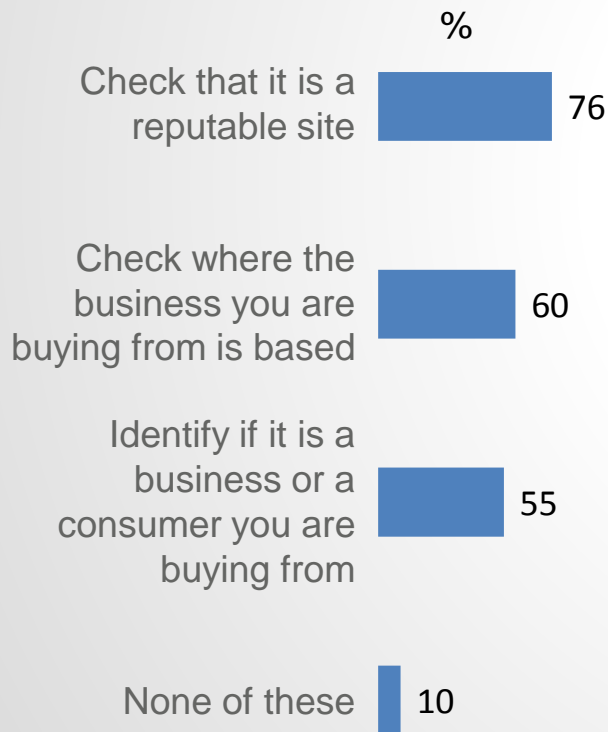
	Gender %		Age %					Social Class %	
	M	F	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-55	55+	AB C1	C2 DE
Base:	494	506	120	220	200	170	290	477	523
7 days after you pay	8	11	11	14	7	9	8	9	10
14 days after you pay	29	28	23	31	35	27	24	32	25
7 days after you receive	7	9	14	9	8	10	6	6	10
14 days after you receive	30	28	27	23	27	32	34	30	28
Don't Know	26	24	25	23	23	23	28	23	27

Less than 3 in 10 (29%) correctly understand that the cooling off period is in place for 14 days after you receive goods. Correct understanding is highest amongst the 55+ age cohort, and lowest amongst 25-34 year olds.

Online Purchasing Behaviour

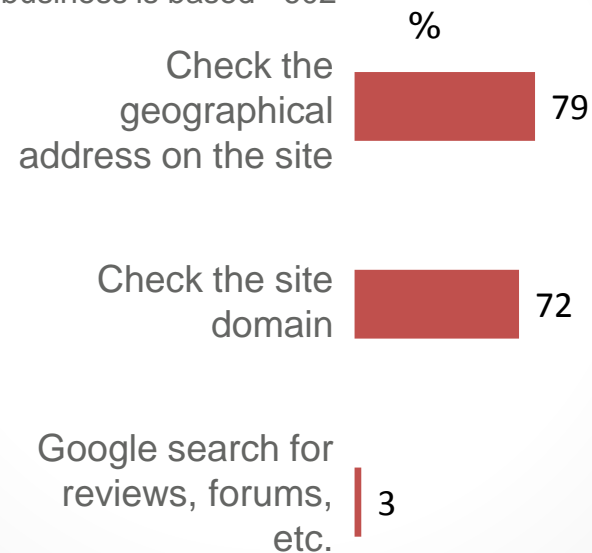
“When making purchases online, which of the following do you do?”

Base: all adults - 1,000



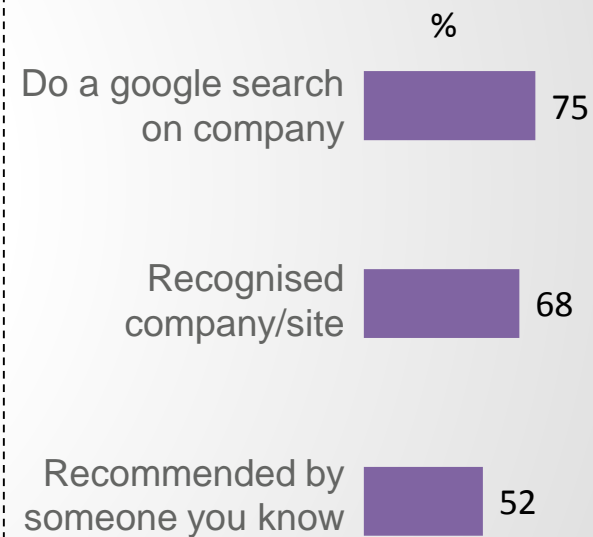
“How do you check where the business you are buying from is based?”

Base: all who check where business is based - 602



“How do you check that the website you are buying off is reputable?”

Base: all who check reputability - 761



3 in 4 (76%) Irish adults claim to check the reputability of a website when making a purchase online; of those, 3 in 4 (75%) do so using a Google search. 3 in 5 (60%) claim to check where the business is based when purchasing online, of whom 4 in 5 (79%) check the geographical address on the site, and over 7 in 10 (72%) check the site domain



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