



# **European Consumer Consultative Group**

## **Thematic discussion on the Digital Single Market**

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## Mystery shopping on territorial restrictions and geo-blocking in the European DSM - Rationale

- There is evidence that EU consumers often face territorial restrictions in their attempts to purchase from online shops in other Member States
- Amongst consumers with experience of cross border online shopping
  - 10% reported that on at least one occasion over the past 12 months the foreign seller **refused to deliver to their country**;
  - 8% were at least once **redirected to a website in their own country** where prices were different and
  - 5% reported that retailers **did not accept payment** from their country
- DSM Strategy has as one of 16 key actions **ending unjustified geo-blocking**

## Mystery shopping – objectives & scope

- **Main objective:** to collect a representative dataset on the incidence and characteristics of geo-blocking in online shopping in the EU DSM
- **Issues to be addressed:**
  - ✓ *how prevalent is geo-blocking in cross-border online shopping?*
  - ✓ *the stages in the shopping process and what form it takes*
  - ✓ *types of goods and services where it is most prevalent*
  - ✓ *types of web-shops where it is more prevalent*
  - ✓ *differences in the incidence by country pairs and direction of trade*
- **Coverage:** all EU28 Member States
- **Products:** goods/services representative of the online basket for the consumer - excluding digital content
- **Timeline:** preliminary data by early January 2016 (will inform economic analysis in view of COM initiative on geo-blocking); final report by end March 2016.