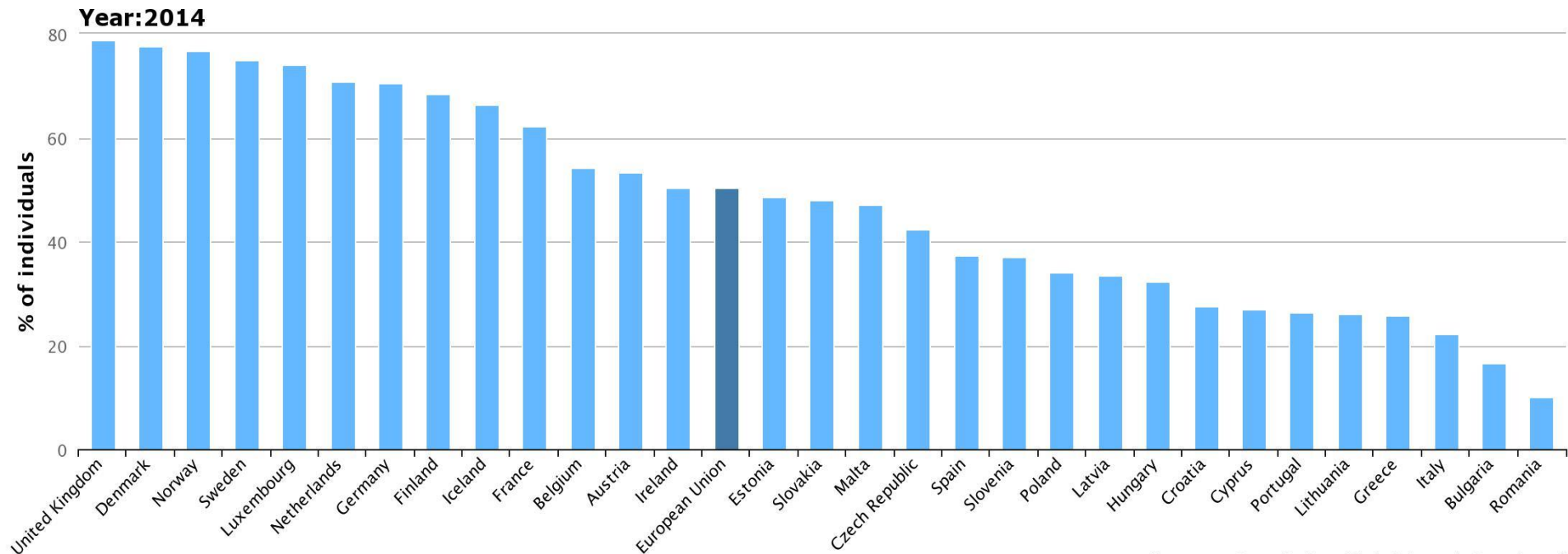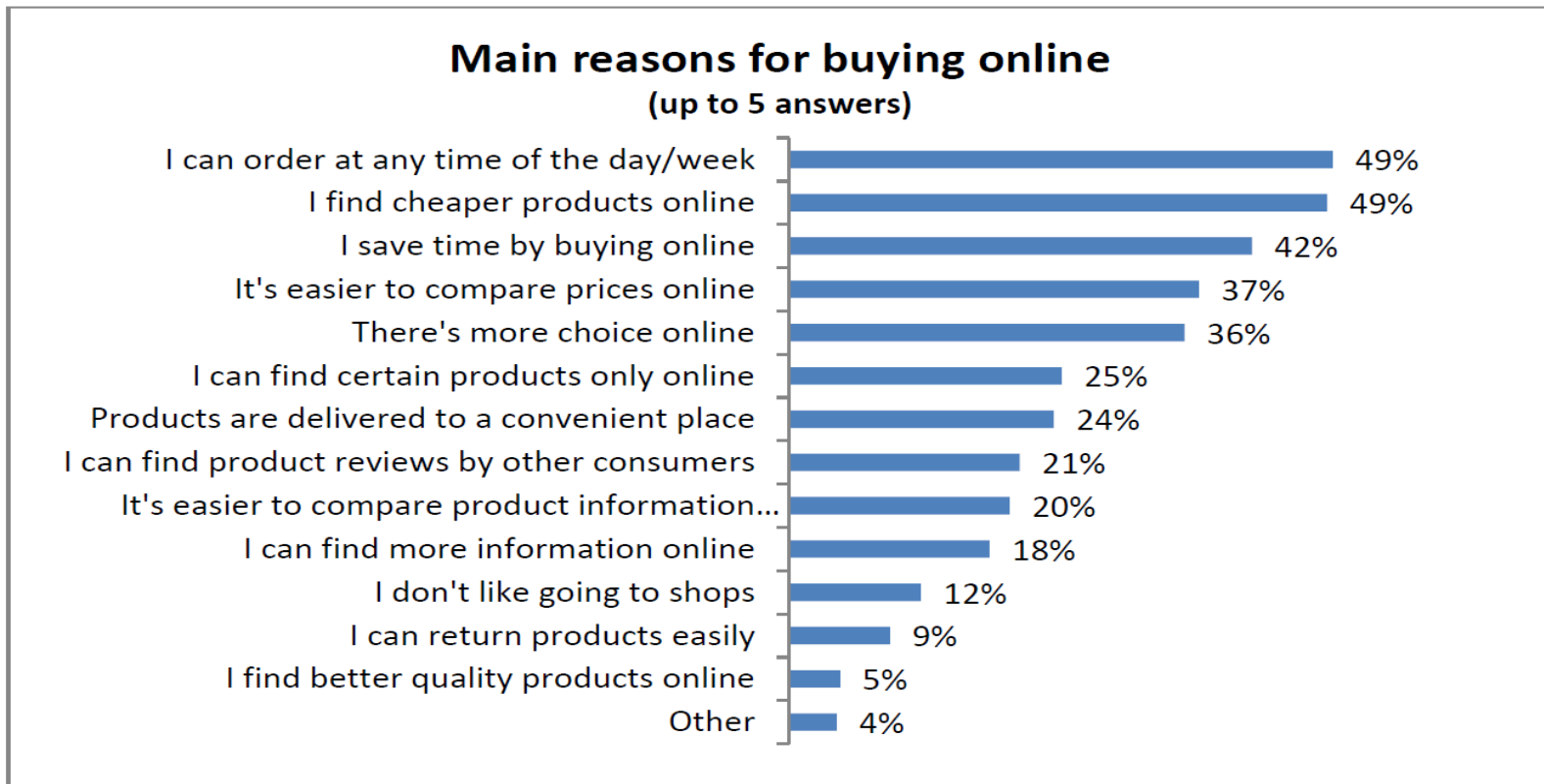# eCommerce

eCommerce by citizens

Online shopping has made continuous progress, up more than 14 percentage points to 50% of citizens. advancing in a close parallel with Internet use. There is no clear connection on member state level between level achieved and further progress, with only the Netherlands, Italy and Romania adding less than 10 percentage points. At the other end, Slovakia is the only country to increase by more than 20 percentage points.

Individuals ordering goods or services online

Year:2014

% of individuals

United Kingdom, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Germany, Finland, Iceland, France, Belgium, Austria, Ireland, European Union, Estonia, Slovakia, Malta, Czech Republic, Spain, Slovenia, Poland, Latvia, Hungary, Croatia, Cyprus, Portugal, Lithuania, Greece, Italy, Bulgaria, Romania

European Commission, Digital Agenda Scoreboard

Reasons for shopping online

Convenience, variety and prices are the main drivers for the adoption of eCommerce by citizens. On the other hand, data protection and payment security (30% of respondents were concerned that personal data may be misused and 25% that payment card details may be stolen) are the most important concerns of online shoppers.

Main reasons for buying online
(up to 5 answers)

Reason	Percentage
I can order at any time of the day/week	49%
I find cheaper products online	49%
I save time by buying online	42%
It's easier to compare prices online	37%
There's more choice online	36%
I can find certain products only online	25%
Products are delivered to a convenient place	24%
I can find product reviews by other consumers	21%
It's easier to compare product information...	20%
I can find more information online	18%
I don't like going to shops	12%
I can return products easily	9%
I find better quality products online	5%
Other	4%

Source: European Commission, Consumer survey identifying the main cross-border obstacles to the DSM and where they matter most, forthcoming 2015

Cross-border eCommerce by citizens

While 44% of citizens shop online nationally, only 15% cross a border to another Member State when doing so (9% do both, while 6% buy only from abroad, mostly in smaller Member States with a less developed offer). Cross-border online shopping is advancing regularly, adding six and a half percentage points in four years to reach nearly 15% in 2014. Smaller member states do not only have higher levels of cross-border shopping, but display also higher growth.

Individuals ordering goods or services online, from sellers from other EU countries

Year:2014
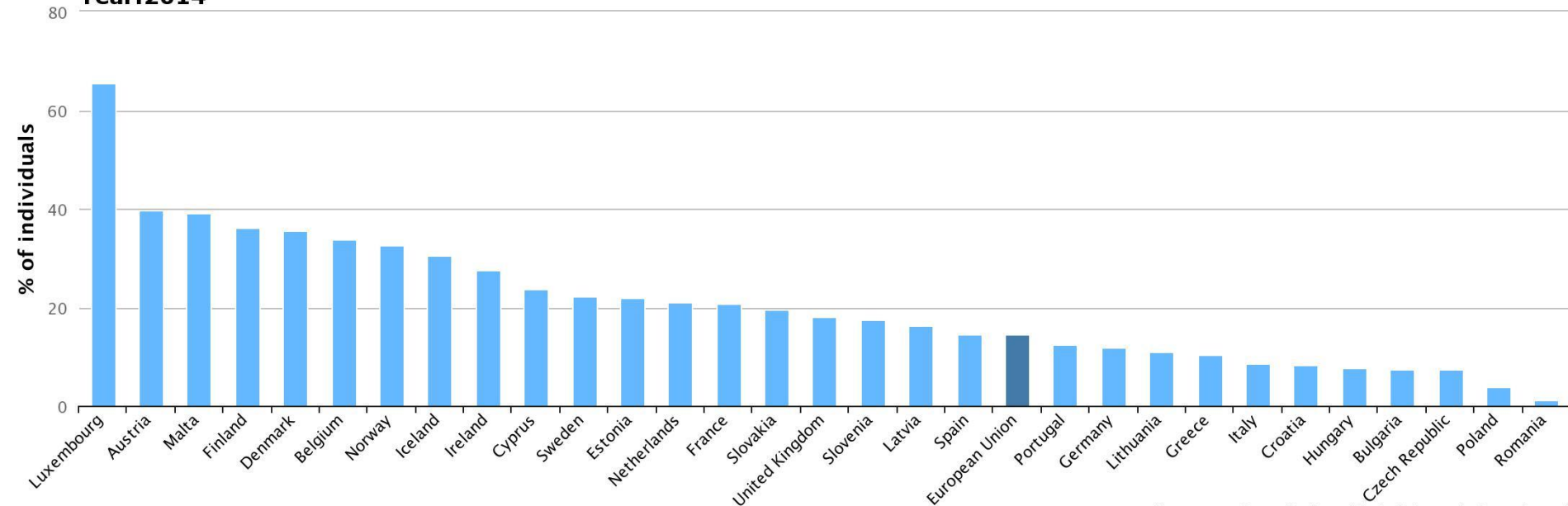
Concerns when shopping online cross-border

Consumer's main concerns with cross-border shopping relate to delivery in terms of cost and time, followed by solving problems in case of products which are not up to expectations.

What are your greatest CONCERNS about buying products online in another EU country? (% of respondents, N=22,848)
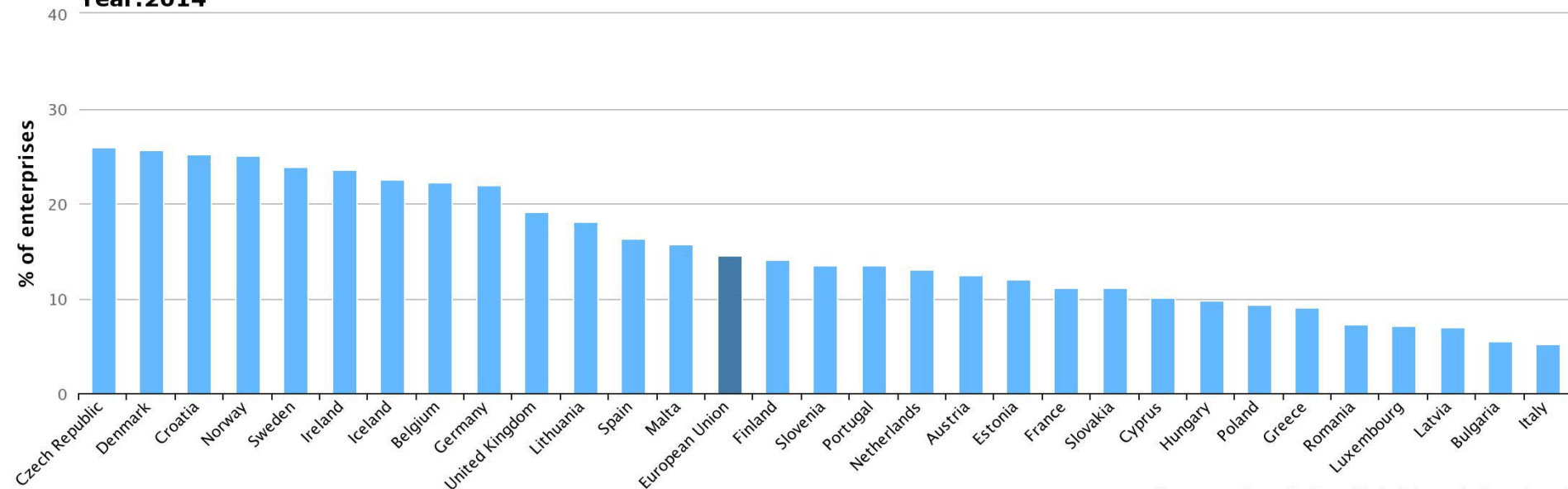
Concern	%
I do not know consumer rights when buying online from another…	11%
Goods sold online might be unsafe/ counterfeit	14%
Wrong or damaged products will be delivered	15%
Products will not be delivered at all	15%
The payment card details may be stolen	17%
Personal data may be misused	19%
Returning a product I didn't like and getting reimbursed is not easy	20%
Replacement or repair of a faulty product is not easy	20%
It may be more difficult to solve any problems	23%
Long delivery times	23%
High return shipping costs	24%
High delivery costs	27%

Source: European Commission, Consumer survey identifying the main cross-border obstacles to the DSM and where they matter most, forthcoming 2015

Digital Agenda Scoreboard 2015

eCommerce by companies

European SMEs continue to miss out on the opportunities of online sales. Only 14.5% of them sell online, which represents an increase of only 3.5 percentage points over five years. is growing at a glacial pace, reaching 14% in 2013, compared to a DAE baseline of 12%. Interestingly, the best performing countries include the Czech Republic and Croatia. Even the best performing countries are far from the EU-wide target of 33% by 2015 . Large companies, on the other hand, are much more active, with 35% of them selling online. This represents a gain of 6 percentage points over the last five years. Thus the gap between SMEs and large companies has increased since the Digital Agenda was launched.

Enterprises using any computer network for sales (at least 1%), SMEs (10-249 persons employed), without financial sector

Year:2014
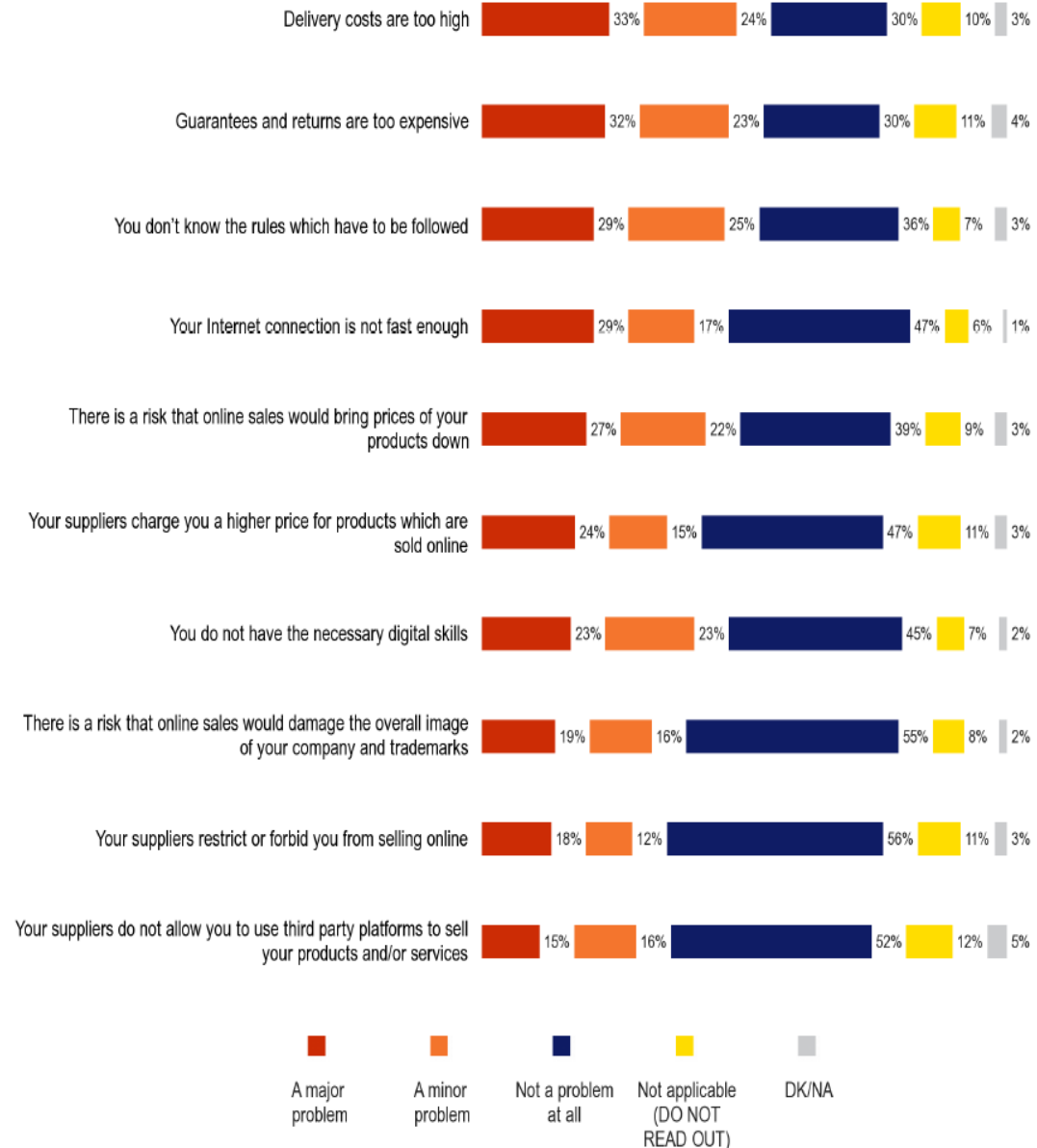

European Commission, Digital Agenda Scoreboard

Barriers to selling online

For companies who are not selling online, the delivery system is overwhelmingly the most important concern, either via direct shipping costs or via the cost of guarantees and returns, although uncertainty about the applicable law follows a close third.

In general, SMEs are more concerned about most of the barriers than large firms, and micro enterprises more than SMEs. Selling online requires an up-front investment (in terms of money but also in terms of time, e.g. to research legislation) which larger companies can afford more easily.

Digital Agenda Scoreboard 2015
Source: Flash Eurobarometer 413 (2015)

|	A major problem	A minor problem	Not a problem at all	Not applicable (DO NOT READ OUT)	DK/NA
Delivery costs are too high	33%	24%	30%	10%	3%
Guarantees and returns are too expensive	32%	23%	30%	11%	4%
You don't know the rules which have to be followed	29%	25%	36%	7%	3%
Your Internet connection is not fast enough	29%	17%	47%	6%	1%
There is a risk that online sales would bring prices of your products down	27%	22%	39%	9%	3%
Your suppliers charge you a higher price for products which are sold online	24%	15%	47%	11%	3%
You do not have the necessary digital skills	23%	23%	45%	7%	2%
There is a risk that online sales would damage the overall image of your company and trademarks	19%	16%	55%	8%	2%
Your suppliers restrict or forbid you from selling online	18%	12%	56%	11%	3%
Your suppliers do not allow you to use third party platforms to sell your products and/or services	15%	16%	52%	12%	5%

Cross-border eCommerce by companies

Businesses benefit from cross-border e-commerce by exploiting economies of scale which reduce costs, increase efficiency and promote competitiveness, improving total factor productivity . In many cases, without these economies of scale an on-line business may not be viable at all. This could be especially important for SMEs that remain confined to a small home market with high production costs. However, only 7% of European SMEs sell online to other Member states Member states, while 20% of large enterprises do so.
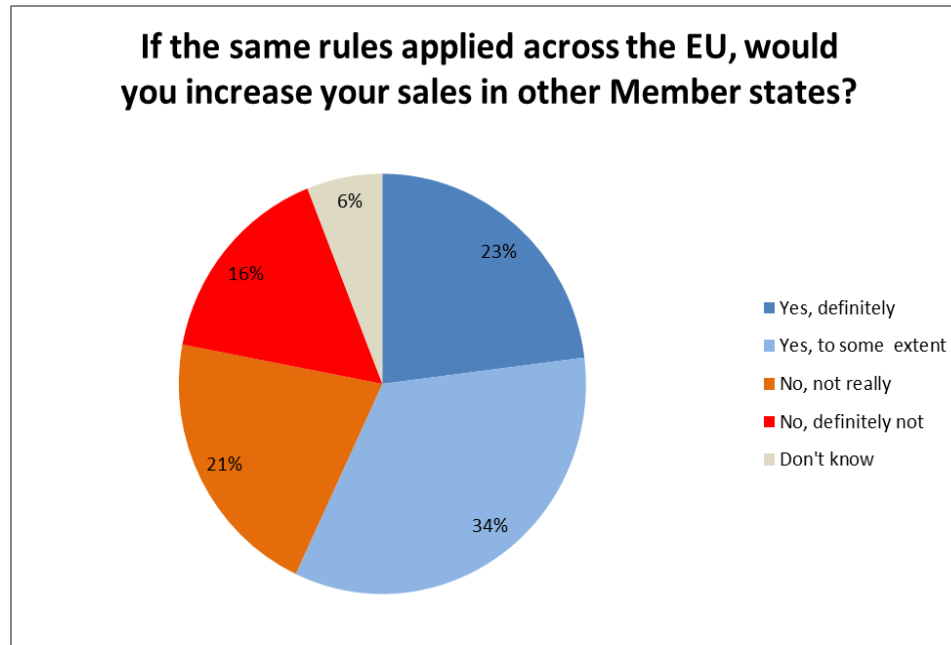
Enterprises having done electronic sales to other EU countries in the last calender year, SMEs (10-249 persons employed), without financial sector

Year:2013

% of enterprises

European Commission, Digital Agenda Scoreboard
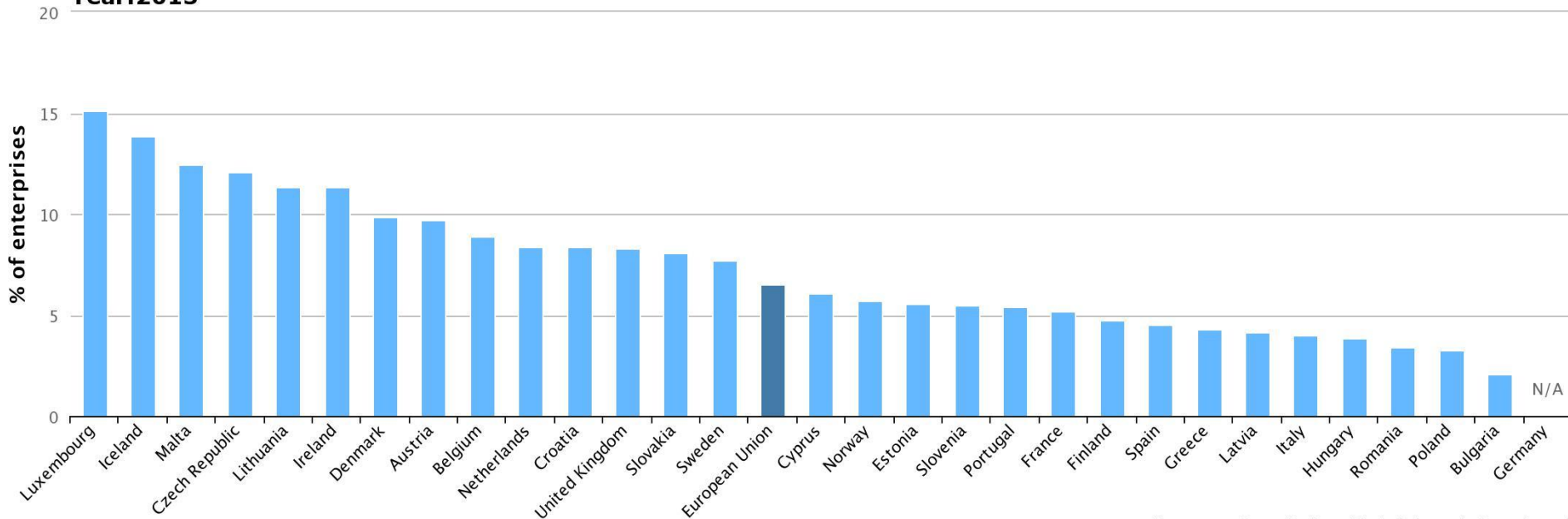
How to get companies to sell cross-border

Online suppliers of goods and services who wish to serve a pan-European market may potentially need to know about, and comply with, 28 differing sets of national regulations. Finding out which regulation applies in which case may be difficult. 37% of EU online exporters to other Member States have problems identifying which rules to follow. That figures rises to 63% for companies trying to start exporting online . This situation creates significant information and compliance costs for many online traders, especially for SMEs, in particular when the value of the transaction remains low.

If the same rules applied across the EU, would you increase your sales in other Member states?

- 23% — Yes, definitely
- 34% — Yes, to some extent
- 21% — No, not really
- 16% — No, definitely not
- 6% — Don't know

Base : Companies that sold their products and/or services online in another EU country in 2014 and those that used to do it, tried to do it, are trying to do it or are considering it (N=2423)

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