



Benelux 2022

Ecommerce Region Report

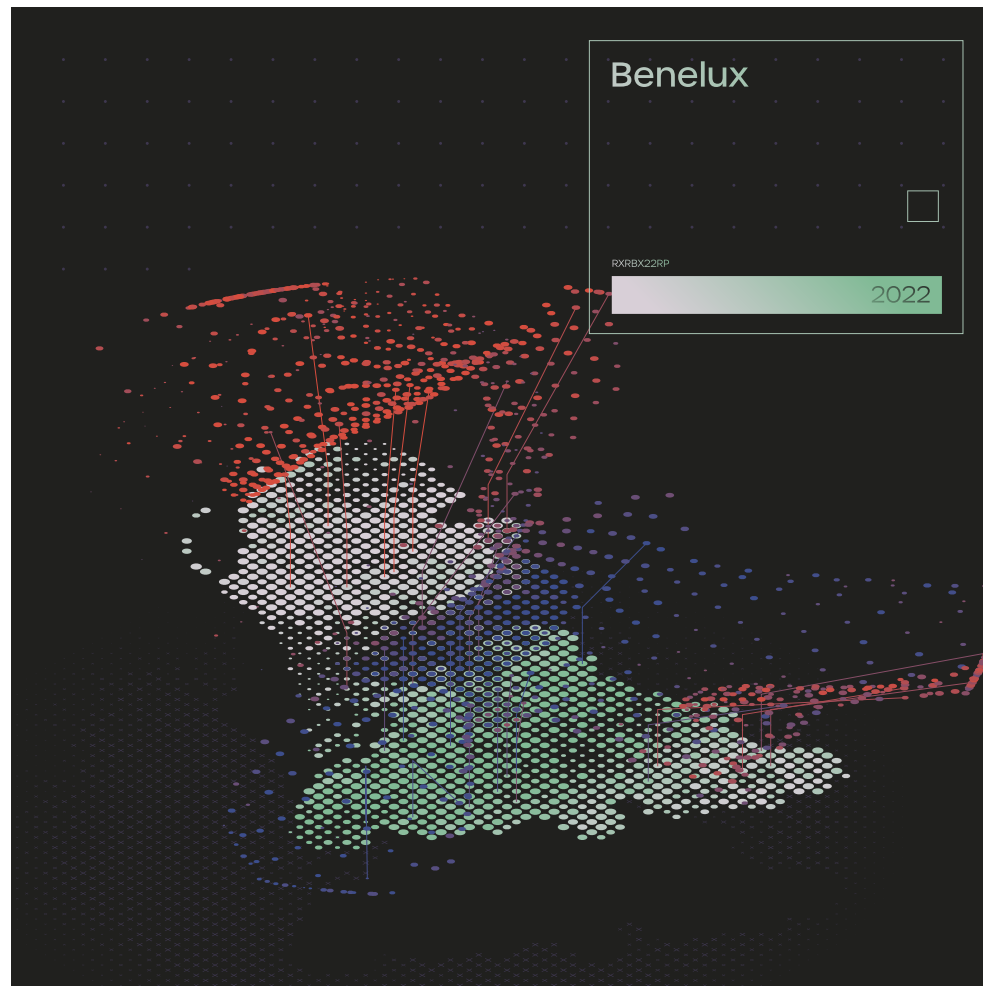
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Introduction



The Benelux region is one of Europe's most significant markets both in terms of retail and through the political and economic cooperation between Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. The Benelux Union is an exemplar of how a single market can work. It is like a laboratory, highlighting and inspiring the rest of the European Union.

It is within this context that the RetailX research team has analysed the region, investigating what retail without borders means for domestic and international brands and retailers, and for consumers. The similarities and disparities between the individual countries of Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands are also noted across features on cross-border trade, sustainability, payments and the final mile. For while cooperation between the three countries runs deep they are still three independent countries, all members of the European Union and operating within the constraints of their own governance and populations.

The three countries differ in size, population and GDP per capita. Netherlands, the largest country with the highest population is known for its ecommerce players and omnichannel maturity. The names of its largest retailers are listed frequently within various RetailX European rankings. Its marketplaces continue to hold off Amazon from becoming the go to platform for Dutch consumers. The upcoming launch of Amazon in Belgium, another strong market for retailers founded in the Netherlands, will be interesting to witness, as will its development over the next year.

None of the countries holds significant barriers to entry for international businesses. The region is keen to be seen as an entry point for wider expansion in Europe. Consumers in all countries shop online and all shop across borders. The extent to which they do so, the methods they use to pay, expectations around delivery, returns and engagement all differ but none of these unique behaviours is insurmountable for ecommerce players ready to investigate the market further.

Ian Jindal, CEO, RetailX

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Regional profile

A political union with a single internal market means high GDP per capita

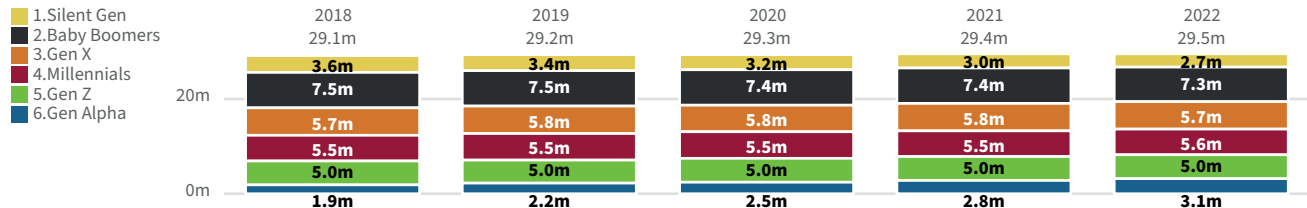
The region of **Benelux consists of the three neighbouring countries of Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands**. All are members of the European Union.

The region covers **1.7% of the landmass of the European Union, has 5.6% of the population and generates 7.9% of the continent's GDP**. It is a prosperous region, with a large GDP per capita. At almost €76,000, **GDP per capita in 2022 is far above the European average** of €27,912.

The three countries are more than geographic neighbours; they cooperate as an inter-governmental union. **The Benelux Union** was formed in 1944 as a customs union. Since then, the three countries have increased their cooperation in a number of ways. A new treaty was signed on 17 June 2008 bringing the countries closer together in a union focused on economic union and the removal of barriers in order to form a **single internal market, sustainable development and justice & home affairs**.

The partnership is seen by some as a living example of what could be achieved by the European Union.

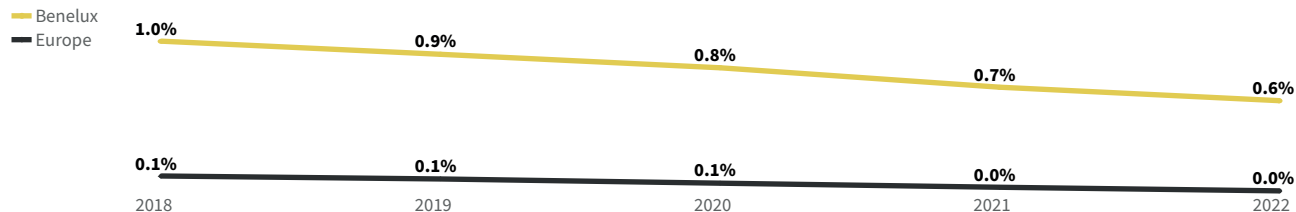
Population structure by age group



Age groups (year of birth): Gen Alpha (2013-present), Gen Z (1998-2012), Millennials (1983-1997), Gen X (1968-1982), Baby Boomers (1948-1967), Silent Gen (1928-1947)
Source: RetailX, drawing on data from UN

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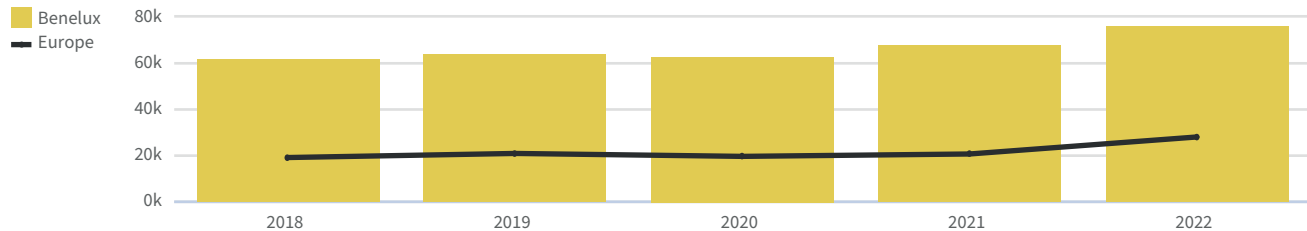
Population growth



Source: RetailX, drawing on data from UN

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GDP per capita (EUR)



Source: RetailX, drawing on data from IMF

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Market context

Early internet adoption results in a region with high internet usage and mature ecommerce markets

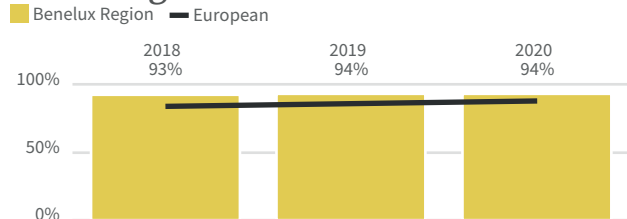
The percentage of the population using the internet is higher in Benelux than it is across Europe as a whole. This has been the case in every year analysed by RetailX. Subsequently, the region's digital maturity has resulted in a larger percentage of the population shopping online as well.

However, **the amount being spent online is slightly below the average for the European Economic Area**, according to the RetailX Ecommerce Revenue Index.

The Netherlands, with its larger population, is the biggest market online. The value of goods and services sold online in the country totals €30.6bn. This is a major jump from the €25.8bn spent online in 2021. A large increase in the market was seen between 2019 and 2020 with the start of the pandemic when the online market increased from €17.8bn to €23.3bn.

This upwards trajectory shows a healthy appetite for ecommerce among consumers in the Netherlands and a market that has not diminished post-Covid. This bodes

Percentage of internet users



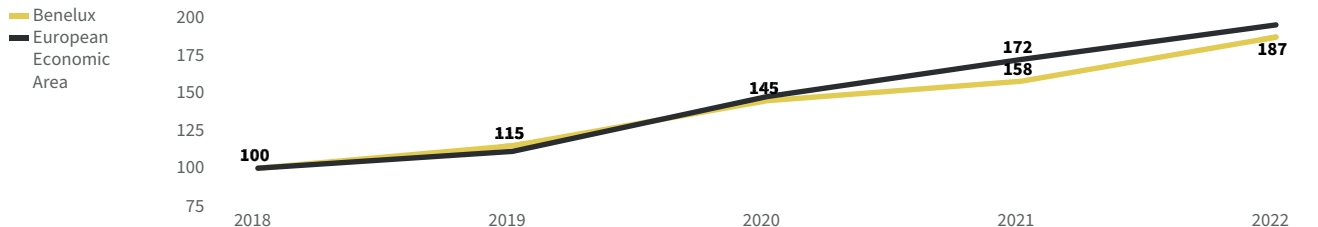
Source: RetailX, drawing on data from the World Bank

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well for brands and retailers selling through digital and omnichannel channels as investments made to firm up and formalise processes set up during the pandemic to handle the increase in online orders are leading to further growth.

The same is true in Belgium and Luxembourg. Both countries saw ecommerce grow rapidly during the pandemic and both continue to see the value of their ecommerce markets increase this year.

Ecommerce revenue Index



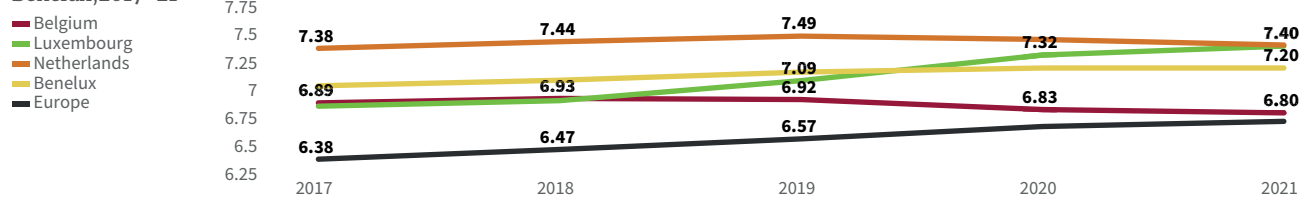
Index 2018=100

RetailX, drawing on data from Statista

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Happiness Index

Benelux, 2017-21



Survey respondents evaluate the quality of their current lives on a scale of 0 (unhappy) to 10 (happy)

Source: The World Happiness Report

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Ecommerce revenue in Belgium increased from €6.6bn in 2019 to €8.1bn in 2020 and continued to grow in subsequent years. In 2021, €8.5bn was spent by consumers online and this is expected to reach €10.4bn in 2022.

Luxembourg is the smallest market in the region. Its population is also the smallest of the three countries but GDP per capita is much larger. **The overall annual revenue for ecommerce in Luxembourg is €1.29bn.**

Across the Benelux region, the most money is spent online on fashion.

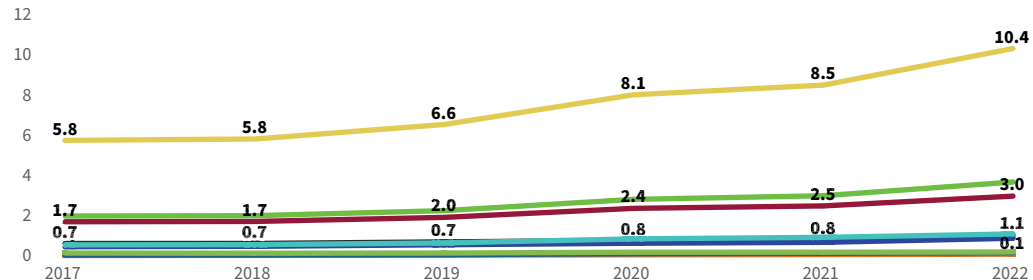
However, consumers may start to cut back their spending as prices are rising, resulting in lower sales volumes. **In September, Belgium's rate of inflation reached 11.27%, the highest in nearly 50 years.** This is mainly due to high energy prices which are seeing an inflation rate of 60.54%. Food prices are rising as well. In September, food inflation reached 10.4%, according to Statbel.

Inflation topped 17% in the Netherlands in September. Again, energy prices are quoted as the main cause.

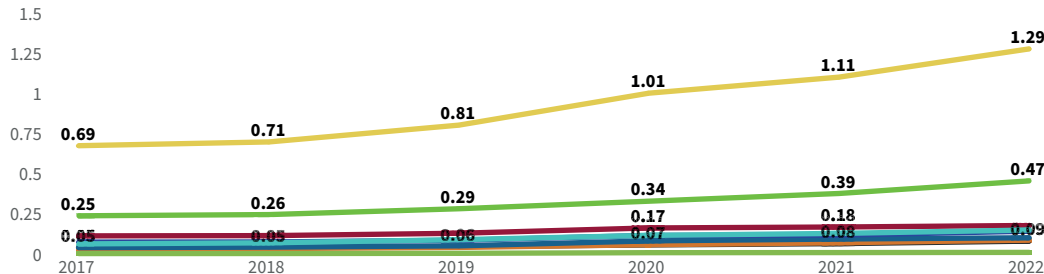
Annual revenue for the ecommerce market

Belgium,
2017-22 (bn EUR)

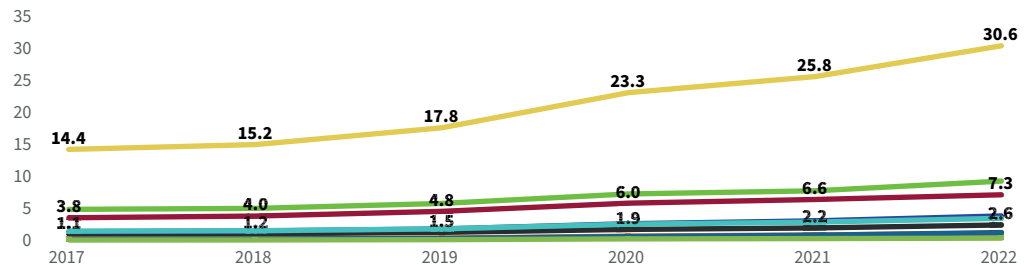
Total
 Beauty, Health,
 Personal & Household
 Care
 Beverages
 Electronics
 Fashion
 Food
 Furniture
 Media
 Toys, Hobby
 & DIY



Luxembourg,
2017-22 (bn EUR)



The Netherlands,
2017-22 (bn EUR)



Source: Statista

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The Largest 100

Brands and retailers from the Netherlands account for the major share of the Largest 100

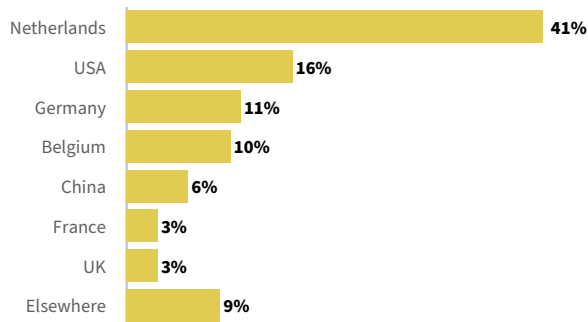
The Benelux ecommerce market is dominated by retailers headquartered in the Netherlands. **41% of the Largest 100 retailers visited by consumers in the region are headquartered in the Netherlands.** 16% have their headquarters in the USA, while 11% are German and 10% are Belgian.

While Dutch retailers account for the biggest share of the retail ranking it is retailers in the US that attract the most amount of traffic from Benelux's consumers. **43% of web traffic from the region goes to US-headquartered retailers.**

Retailers in the region have built up substantial businesses outside of Benelux. The ecommerce sites of 50 brands and retailers within the Largest 100 that are based in the region attract consumers from a variety of countries including the USA, Germany, France, UK and Poland.

The Netherlands and Belgium are where the majority of consumers browsing their sites are located. 31% of web traffic to this group of 50 retailers headquartered in Benelux comes from consumers in the Netherlands.

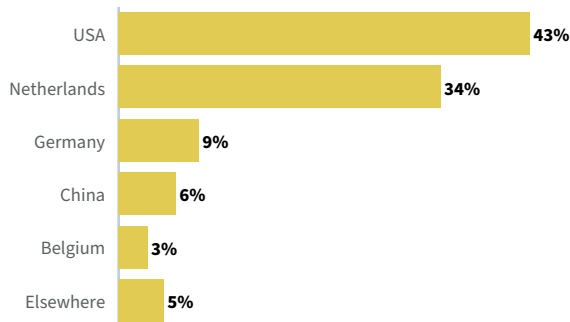
Where the Benelux Largest 100 are based



Source: RetailIX, drawing on data from SimilarWeb

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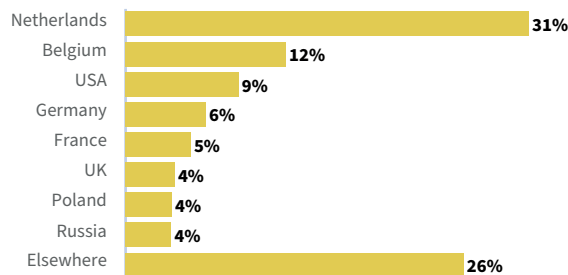
Web traffic to the Benelux Largest 100 retailers by location of HQ



Source: RetailIX, drawing on data from SimilarWeb

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Web traffic to the largest Benelux-based retailers split by consumer location



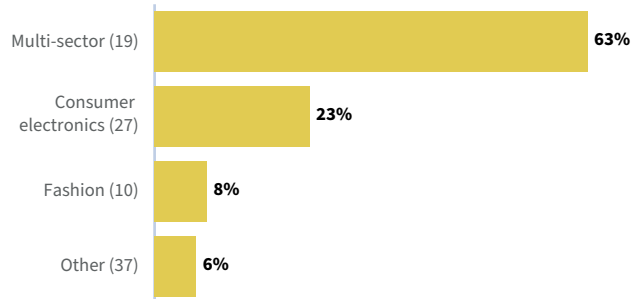
Note: Data from 50 retailers are used. These are all the Benelux-based retailers that belong to the Benelux Largest 100.

Source: RetailIX, drawing on data from SimilarWeb

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Web traffic by sector in Benelux

Web visits of local consumers to the Benelux Largest 100 retailers



Note: The number of retailers in a sector is shown in parentheses

Source: RetailIX, drawing on data from SimilarWeb

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Indices

A region open for business but still with areas to iron out

For all that the Benelux Union cooperates as a single market for trade, they are still three individual countries within the European Union. As such they are scored individually in multiple indices ranking the ease of conducting business around the world.

None of the countries comprising the Benelux region make it hard for domestic or international businesses to trade. Digital infrastructure, postal services and the ease with which government services are made available online for the population all highlight a region open for a digital future. **Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands all rank within the top quartile of the UN's E-government Development Index.**

In fact, **digitalising infrastructure is one of the key pillars outlined by the Benelux Union for growth** during the period through to 2024. A digital economy is seen by the region as a powerful catalyst for growth, innovation and prosperity. In its position as role model for how a single market can work, the three countries have ambitions as digital pioneers advancing the Digital Single Market within the European Union.

INDICES BENELUX 2022	EASE OF DOING BUSINESS INDEX	E-GOVERNMENT DEVELOPMENT INDEX	INTEGRATED INDEX FOR POSTAL DEVELOPMENT (21PD)	AVAILABILITY	AFFORDABILITY	RELEVANCE	READINESS	OVERALL INTERNET INCLUSIVE INDEX	HAPPINESS INDEX	CAGR (2018-2022 %)
BENELUX										
BELGIUM	46	41	12	19	7	64	22	24	6.8	15.3
LUXEMBOURG	72	33	64	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	7.4	16.1
NETHERLANDS	42	10	6	3	26	56	5	8	7.41	19.1

KEY: ■ Top quartile ■ Second quartile ■ Third quartile ■ Bottom quartile

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This single market extends to online enabling goods, services, money and people to move freely between countries while also ensuring privacy and the correct handling of sensitive data. The three countries work together to combat cybercrime and digital fraud recognising that distances and national borders are irrelevant to a certain degree online.

The Benelux region is also seen as a springboard to the rest of Europe, something that the Union is keen to emphasize and enable for businesses. “Benelux is a place where the most colourful and inspiring cross border experiments can grow and flourish,” says Wopke Hoekstra, the Dutch minister of foreign affairs.

However, the rankings are not all green, top quartile, for the three countries. **Belgium and the Netherlands are in the third quartile for the ‘Relevance’ score.** This score

marks countries on the extent and relevance of content such as news, finance and health that can be found online in local languages. While government information scores are high, Belgium's ranking was brought down by the fact that many high trafficked sites do not carry Belgian country domains. Also there is dissatisfaction with the quality of education online.

Also, the country's Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) scores for 2018-2022 are not as high as some others. The Netherlands's growth of 19.1% is higher than the CAGRs for Belgium (15.3%) and Luxembourg (16.1%).

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Accelerate time-to-market



Reduce return rates



Eliminate redundant technology costs



Increase customer loyalty

Expert insight

Tony Majidi



Benelux Sales Manager, Akeneo

It's no secret that lockdowns during the pandemic in combination with technological advancements are driving a boom in ecommerce sales; [almost a quarter of all retail sales](#) this past year happened online, and that percentage is only growing as these new technologies offer never-before-seen shopping experiences and a constant stream of new touchpoints.

In short, shoppers are headed online in droves and they're not looking back. Your audience pool is larger than ever before as technology continues to break down geographical boundaries and allow retailers to open up their virtual shop doors to a worldwide market.

Whether your customers are searching for you on a digital retail platform, social media app, search engine, or utilising newer technologies such as voice search or AI, they want to know they can find your brand wherever they're searching. With thousands of options infiltrating their screens and brains every second, it's crucial that your organisation makes the process of choosing your brand as easy as possible by tapping into the omnichannel nature of shoppers and showing up on the channels they're already utilising.

But while taking full advantage of this truly global market can reap massive rewards, it can be a rocky start for many brands and retailers as it brings along time-consuming work, like setting up hundreds of new localisation processes for every product, marketplace, and channel. It's not enough to simply have a presence on the channels, your consumers are interacting with you; you need to ensure that all the product information they're consuming is correct and up-to-date, regardless of where they've discovered you. Customers need to feel that they can trust an organisation and its products in order to make a purchase, and this trust cannot be built if they are struggling to read or even find product descriptions, understand product data, or view product assets.

So how can you optimise your global omnichannel success without breaking the bank or burning out your employees? Like any good architect will tell you, it starts at the foundation; your product information.

Without a dedicated solution for managing product information, your omnichannel product activation efforts will be doomed from the start. When [66 per cent of consumers](#) say they would cease buying a brand due to a bad product information experience, your organisation can't afford to have scattered and siloed product data. Having a central repository for product information that communicates effectively and seamlessly with all the other tools in your tech stack allows brands and

retailers to create personalised customer experiences across all owned and unowned channels. Not only does this accelerate time-to-market and optimise product information for existing channels, but it makes joining new and emerging channels much faster and more efficient.

When a customer knows that they're going to get the same experience regardless of where they encounter a brand or its products, that can serve as a foundation for loyalty. And in such a tumultuous time, customers are looking for brands they can trust and rely on. By focusing on the root of the issue, proper management of your product information, your organisation will be able to embrace the omnichannel nature of shoppers and meet them where they are, all while ensuring you're providing the best, most seamless experience possible.



Akeneo Product Cloud is a composable solution for orchestrating, activating, and optimizing product experiences across all owned and unowned channels. With its open platform, leading PIM, add-ons, connectors, and marketplace, the Akeneo Product Cloud improves product data quality and accuracy, simplifies catalog management, and accelerates the sharing of product information across all channels and locales. For more information, visit [Akeneo.com](https://akeneo.com).



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Expert insight

Lindsay McEwan



Tealium's RVP and GM EMEA Lindsay McEwan explains why individuality shouldn't be forgotten when taking a regional perspective

Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands show what can be achieved when countries work together.

As one, they have forged closer links with their neighbours to deepen cross-border trade. The Benelux Union has been so successful that it has been hailed as a laboratory for the European Union and promoted as a showcase for what can be accomplished through cross-border cooperation.

As this RetailX report reveals, the region is prosperous, with a GDP per capita almost three times higher than the European average. The region's population makes up just 5.6% of the EU total but generates 7.9% of its GDP.

Of course, there are differences between the three countries that comprise Benelux. Not everyone earns the same as those working in Luxembourg's financial sector, nor does every consumer spend their time on social media sites

browsing for the latest fashion must-haves – although fashion is the biggest sector online in each Benelux country.

What does hold true is that consumers in Belgium, Luxembourg and – to a lesser extent – the Netherlands, shop with retailers in other countries. Dutch retailers which, according to RetailX, lead the ecommerce market in the region have built up businesses in their own country as well as across Benelux. Their marketplaces have managed to hold off Amazon and prevent it from dominating. In growing their businesses, marketplaces such as bol.com have understood consumer trends as well as developments within the retail sector in each individual country as ecommerce has matured.

Logistics and payments are localised. However, personalisation and consumer choice go deeper than checkout services. The multitude of languages spoken across the region take localisation and personalisation to a certain level, but customers are more than just the language they speak – especially in an area where people can be multilingual and the official languages of a country may not be their first or even second language.

In understanding the market, the country and the retail category, retailers must also understand the customer as an individual. They may have a preference for wide-leg jeans but the Balenciaga cotton baggies they've seen on Instagram could turn their eye. This must-have item takes

on even more importance when it's needed the same day or even within the hour. And will the same jeans turn the head of a customer who always buys sustainable denim?

Retailers need this deep an understanding of the customer and their individual behaviour in order to anticipate and fulfil their needs and to sell to them successfully. Knowledge after the fact is just data and without the right tools in place it can only deliver a certain level of understanding. Data is not understanding the customer or actionable.

As Benelux shows, forging closer ties brings results at the top, at the intergovernmental level, which filter down to improve things for the population of each country – and within that there is still a place for individuality.



Tealium provides the industry standard platform for businesses aiming to unleash innovation with a real-time, universal data foundation. More than 850 companies trust Tealium to orchestrate their customer data. These include Domino's, Gap, IBM, Molekule, Epson America, Cambia Health, Orange, TUI, Rakuten, Sportsbet and Network 10.
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Belgium

A nation of three languages means opportunities for cross-border trade but Amazon's upcoming launch could shake up the market

Belgium's geographic position, bordering France, Germany and the Netherlands, has lead to different political and trading machinations throughout its history. **In Flanders, the region in the north of the country, Dutch is the prominent language. In southerly Wallonia, French is spoken, while there is a German-speaking community to the east.** When the country became independent in the 19th century it was decreed that all three would be adopted as official languages.

Belgium

Area: 30,530km²

Capital: Brussels

Currency: euro (EUR)

Official language(s):

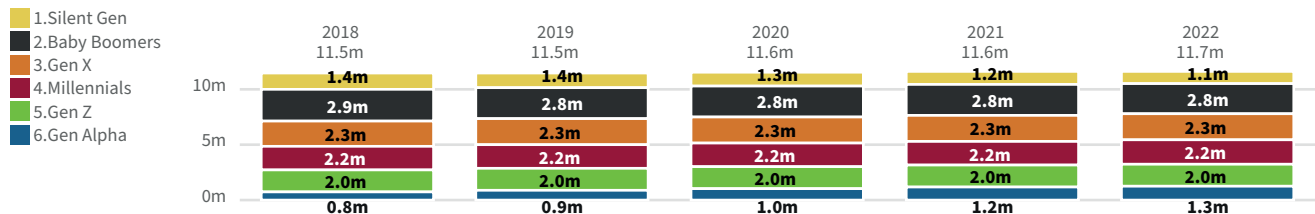
Dutch, French, German

Government: Federal parliamentary democracy under a constitutional monarchy

VAT: 21% | **Reduced VAT:** 12%



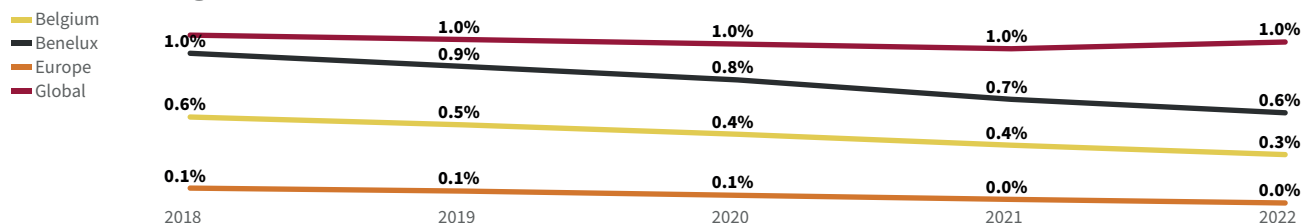
Population structure by age group



Age groups (year of birth): Gen Alpha (2013-present), Gen Z (1998-2012), Millennials (1983-1997), Gen X (1968-1982), Baby Boomers (1948-1967), Silent Gen (1928-1947)
Source: RetailX, drawing on data from UN

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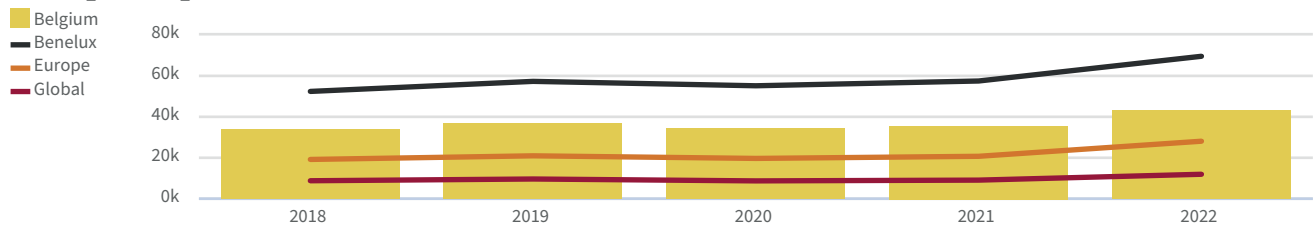
Population growth



Source: RetailX, drawing on data from UN

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GDP per capita (EUR)



Source: RetailX, drawing on data from IMF

RetailX 2022

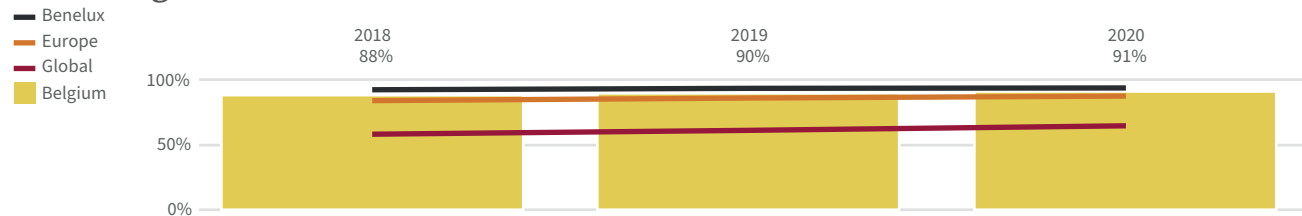
Belgium's GDP per capita is lower than that of the Benelux region overall but has increased in the last year. Many municipalities in Flanders have a higher GDP than those in Wallonia.

The percentage of the population using the internet has been increasing in recent years and the number of people shopping online has been rising as well. In 2018, just 60% of internet users shopped online. This increased to 66% by 2021 and continued to rise, with **67% of internet users shopping online in 2022.** This is lower than the average for the Benelux region but comparable with the average for Europe as a whole.

The amount being spent online has been growing as well. Having been given a major boost by the pandemic, annual ecommerce revenue has continued to increase. **Total growth in 2022 is expected to reach 21%.** Electronics is the category most people have bought online but **highest growth is coming from the furniture sector.** This is growing by 28.5% in 2022. Grocery, which saw the largest increase in ecommerce revenue in 2020 (51%), continues to grow at 17.7% annually. **The beauty, health, personal & household care category is also booming online,** with 27% revenue growth in 2022.

While there has been an increase in the number of people shopping online and the amount being spent, it is still a relatively low percentage. **Just 11% of multichannel shoppers say they prefer online channels.**

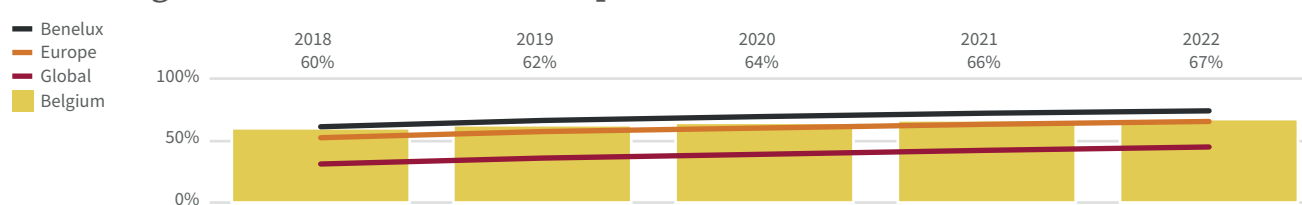
Percentage of internet users



Source: RetailX, drawing on data from the World Bank

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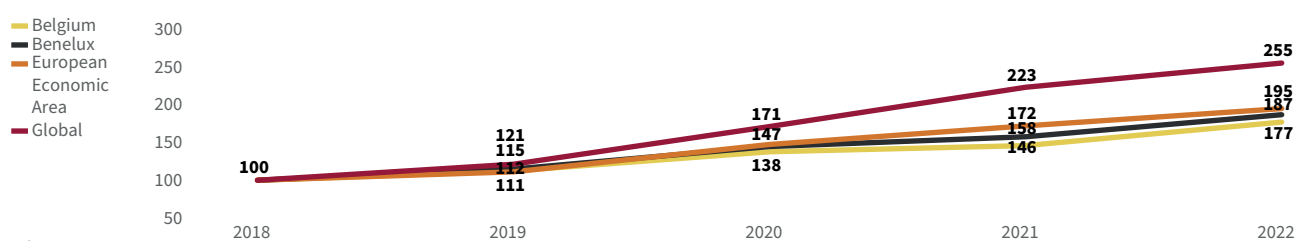
Percentage of internet users who shop online



Source: RetailX, drawing on data from Statista

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Ecommerce revenue Index



Index 2018=100
RetailX, drawing on data from Statista

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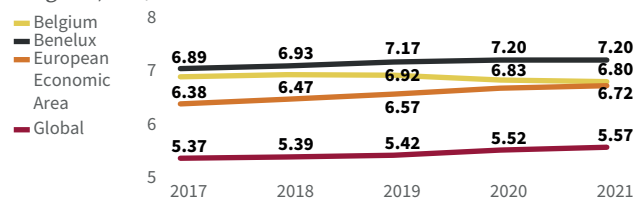
Where consumers in Belgium follow similar behaviour to those across the rest of Benelux is in the use of smartphones for shopping. **36% of Belgium's consumers prefer to shop on their phone.** 64% say they prefer to shop on a desktop device.

The business environment in Belgium is expected to be challenged in the latter months of 2022 as the economy contracts by 0.2% in the third quarter. The increase in energy prices as winter approaches, rising inflation and the geopolitical situation brought about by the war in Ukraine are all weighing heavily on consumers. Subsequently, the National Bank of Belgium's consumer confidence index for the next 12 months plunged 16 points in September.

This brings consumer confidence to a level similar to that seen at the start of the coronavirus crisis and the outbreak of hostilities in Ukraine.

Happiness Index

Belgium, 2017-21

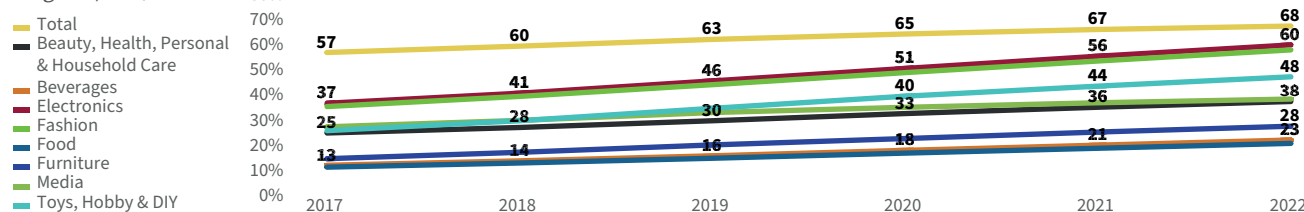


Survey respondents evaluate the quality of their current lives on a scale of 0 (unhappy) to 10 (happy). Source: The World Happiness Report

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Percentage of online shoppers, by product category

Belgium, 2017-22

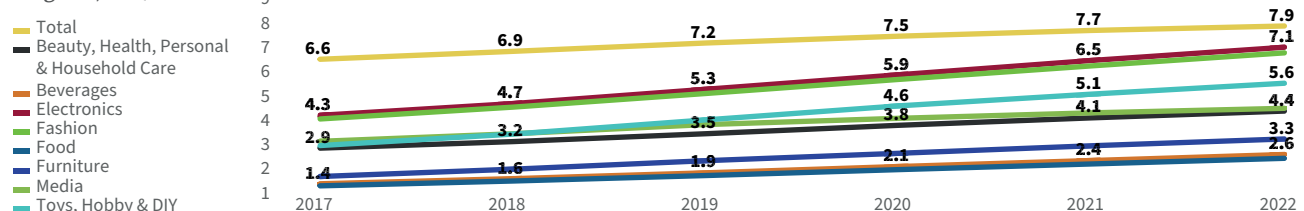


Source: Statista

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Number of online shoppers (in millions)

Belgium, 2017-22

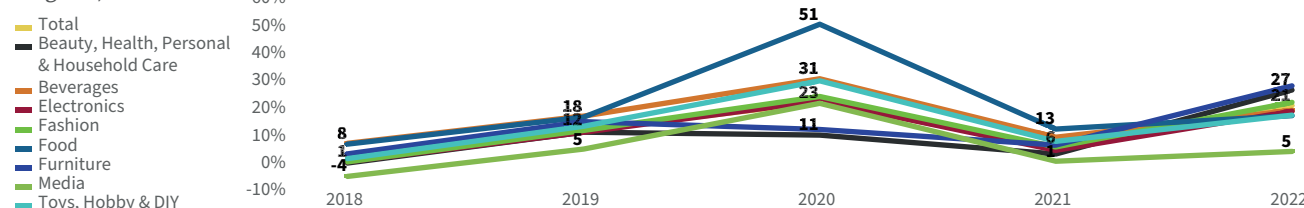


Source: Statista

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Annual ecommerce revenue change (%)

Belgium, 2018-22



Source: Statista

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The Largest 100

Belgium's geographic position in Europe, the ease of moving goods across borders and the split of languages spoken is reflected in the retailers within the country's Largest 100. Both domestic and international retailers make up the Largest 100 as consumers shop online with domestic retailers as well as those headquartered in the US, the Netherlands, China and France. All of which means **Belgium has a higher than average prevalence of cross-border shopping.**

Consumer preference for browsing multi-sector ecommerce stores has not been lost of Amazon. **A localised Belgium marketplace is being launched by Amazon in 2022.** Belgian retailers also have reach outside of the country, with large percentages of traffic from consumers in Brazil and Germany.

Income status split of online shoppers

Belgium, 2021



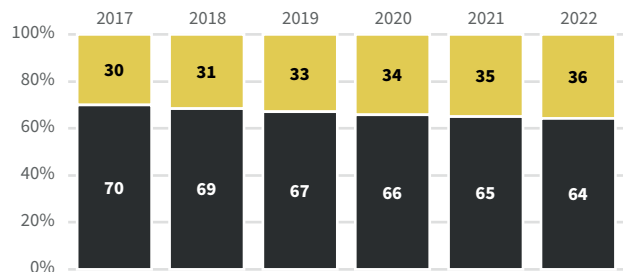
Source: Statista

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Preferred device for online shopping (%)

Belgium, 2017-22

Mobile Desktop

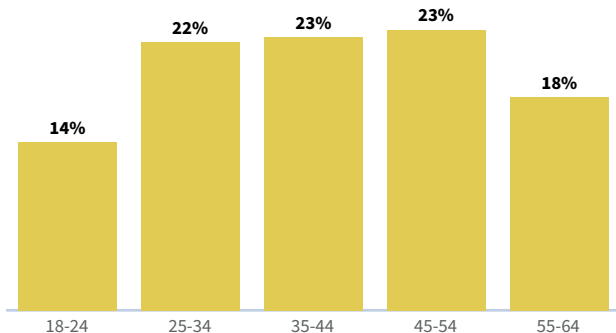


Source: Statista

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Age distribution of online shoppers

Belgium, 2021



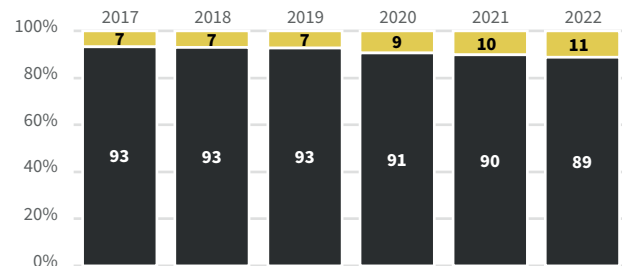
Source: Statista

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Shopping channel preference of multi-channel shoppers (%)

Belgium, 2017-22

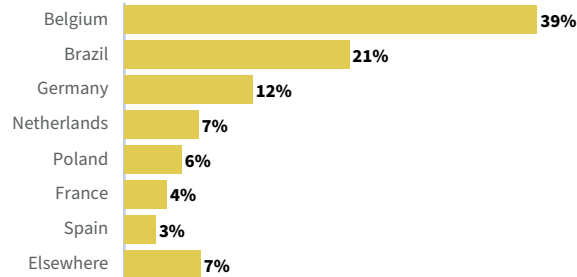
Online Offline



Source: Statista

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Web traffic to the largest Belgium-based retailers split by consumer location



Note: Data from 13 retailers are used. These are all the Belgium-based retailers that belong to the Belgium Largest 100

Source: RetailX, drawing on data from SimilarWeb

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Luxembourg

A financial powerhouse of Europe with a rich and happy, multi-national population

Luxembourg is a small country. With a population of fewer than one million, it is also one of Europe's lowest populated countries. Almost half of the country's population was born elsewhere having been attracted to the country by its healthy economic situation and wealth of career opportunities.

Foreign nationals, mainly from other countries within the European Union, make up 70% of the capital's population resulting in an open and cosmopolitan city. The largest proportion of foreign nationals in Luxembourg comes from Portugal.

Luxembourg

Area: 2,590 km²

Capital: Luxembourg

Currency: euro (EUR)

Official languages:

Luxembourgish, French, German

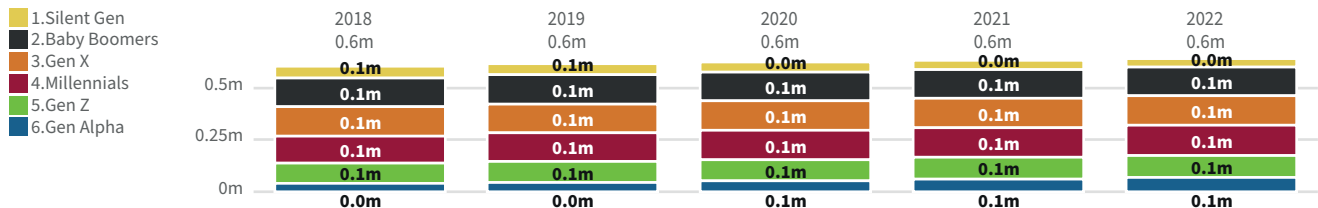
Other languages spoken: English, Italian, Portuguese

Government: Constitutional monarchy

VAT: 17% | **Reduced VAT:** 3%



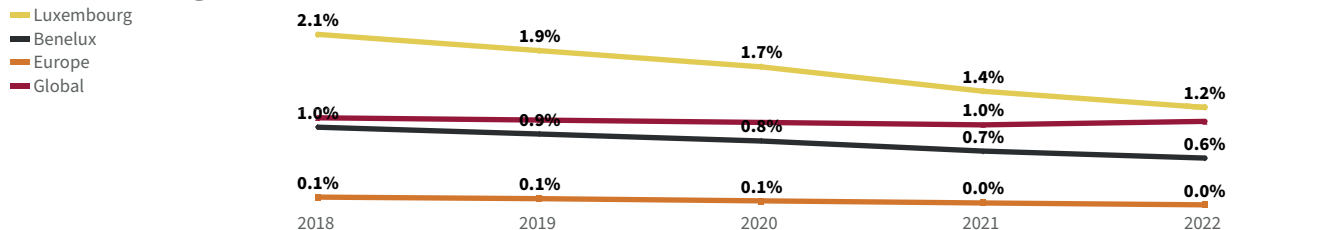
Population structure by age group



Age groups (year of birth): Gen Alpha (2013-present), Gen Z (1998-2012), Millennials (1983-1997), Gen X (1968-1982), Baby Boomers (1948-1967), Silent Gen (1928-1947).
Source: RetailX, drawing on data from UN

© RetailX 2022

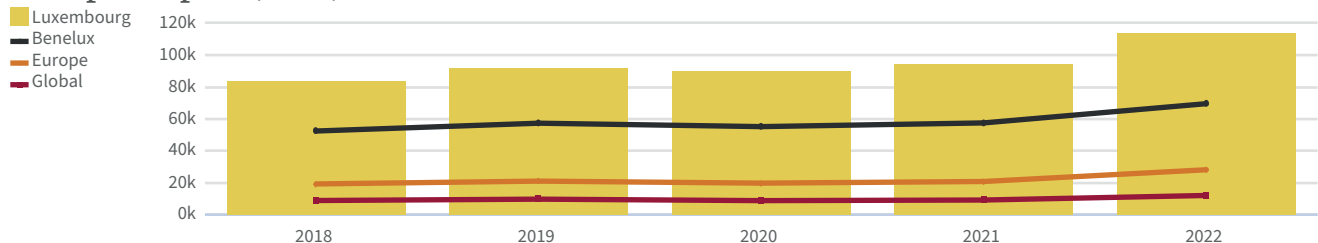
Population growth



Source: RetailX, drawing on data from UN

© RetailX 2022

GDP per capita (EUR)



Source: RetailX, drawing on data from IMF

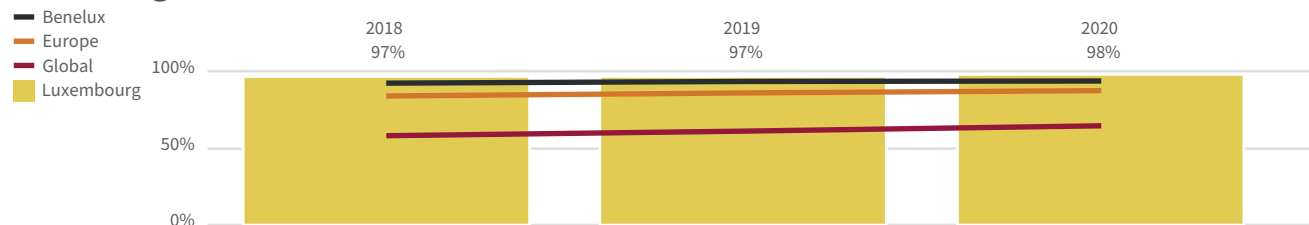
© RetailX 2022

Much of the population is highly educated. **They are also more content than other people.** In a survey conducted by The World Happiness Report, consumers in Luxembourg scored themselves as happier than the average for Benelux, the European Economic Area and the average for the global population.

Luxembourg is a member of the European Union and is regarded as a financial powerhouse. It is a tax haven as well as being the location of many banks' European headquarters. The European holding companies of major tech companies, including Amazon, also call Luxembourg home. Financial services account for 35% of Luxembourg's GDP. **GDP per capita is one of the highest in the world**, just below that of Monaco and Liechtenstein, according to The World Bank. This helps to push the Benelux region's GDP above the average for Europe overall. **Luxembourg's GDP per capita rose from €94,300 in 2021 to €114,040 in 2022.**

The majority of the population uses the internet and 76% of them shop online. This is above the average for Europe and globally. The percentage of the population shopping online has risen steadily since 2020 when 71% of the population shopped via digital channels. 19% of the population prefers to shop online rather than visiting a bricks-and-mortar store and **39% say that they prefer to shop on a mobile phone than on a desktop device.**

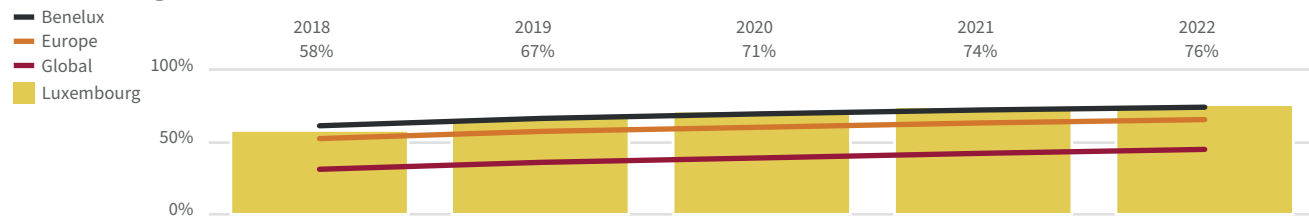
Percentage of internet users



Source: RetailIX, drawing on data from the World Bank

© RetailIX 2022

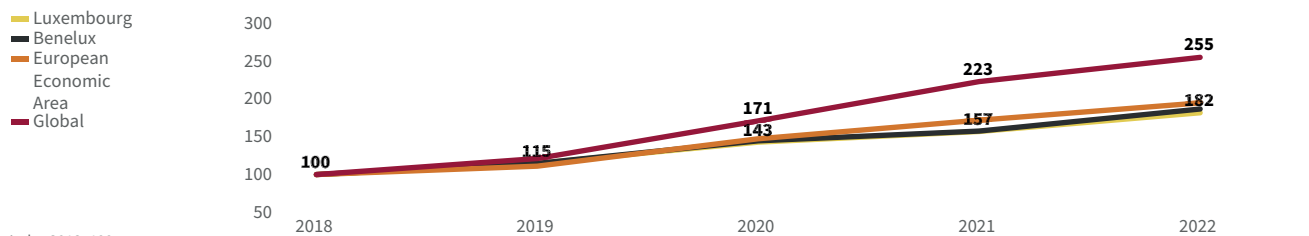
Percentage of internet users who shop online



Source: RetailIX, drawing on data from Statista

© RetailIX 2022

Ecommerce revenue Index



Index 2018=100
RetailIX, drawing on data from Statista

© RetailIX 2022

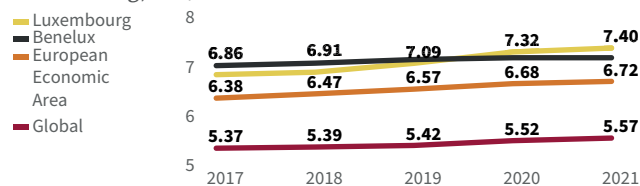
Consumer electronics is the category from which most consumers in Luxembourg have bought. A large proportion of consumers who use digital channels for shopping have also bought fashion online. This is followed by toys, DIY & hobby items and then media.

Electronics is a fairly mature market online. While it is still a growing category, it is at the lower end of ecommerce growth. Groceries, which saw a 50% growth rate online in 2020, is expected to grow at 7% in 2022. **The fastest growing sectors currently are beverages, beauty, health, personal & household care and fashion.** All three categories are seeing above 20% growth online in 2022.

Luxembourg is one of the few countries not expected to dip into recession in 2022. Inflation is affecting the country and consumer confidence has declined but while GDP growth is dropping from 6.9% in 2021 to 2.9% in 2022, it is expected to reach 2.1% in 2023.

Happiness Index

Luxembourg, 2017–21

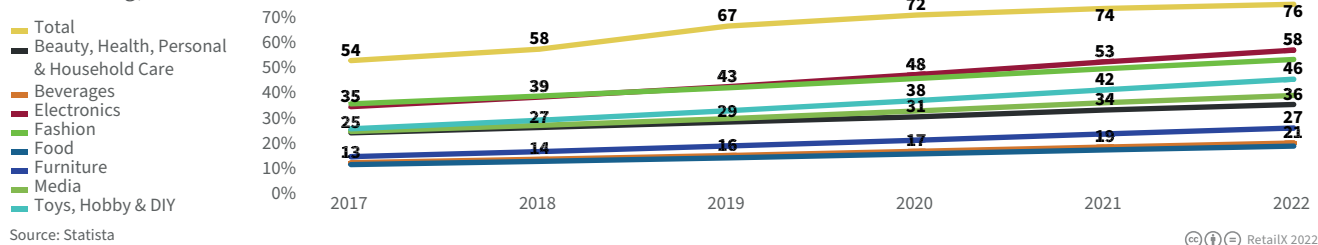


Survey respondents evaluate the quality of their current lives on a scale of 0 (unhappy) to 10 (happy). Source: The World Happiness Report

© RetailX 2022

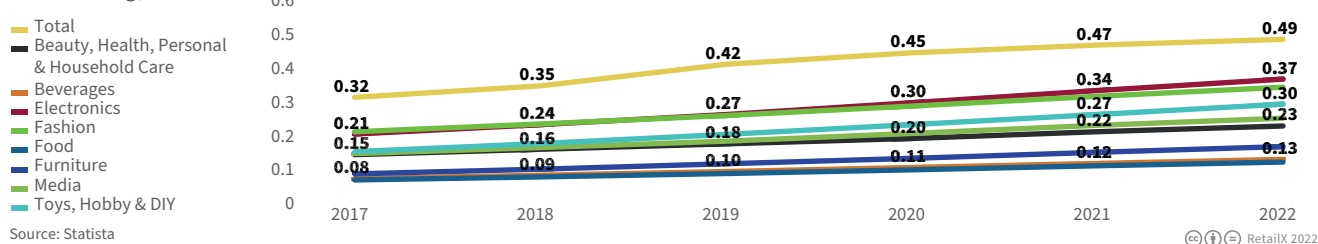
Percentage of online shoppers

Luxembourg, 2017–22



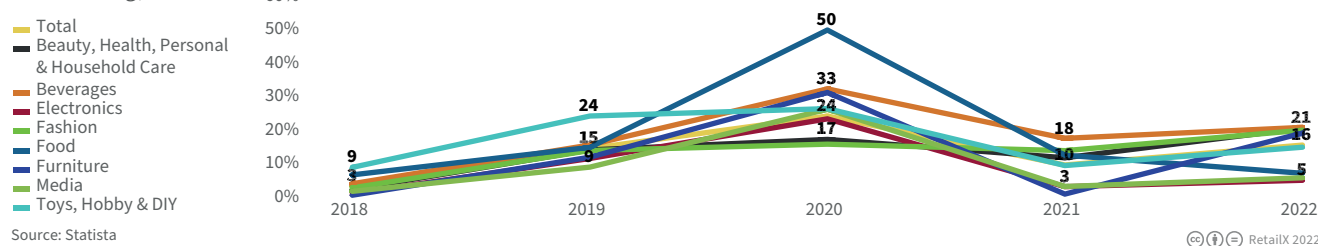
Number of online shoppers (in millions)

Luxembourg, 2017–22



Annual ecommerce revenue change (%)

Luxembourg, 2018–22



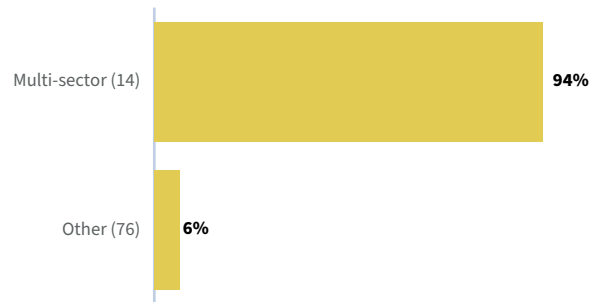
The Largest 100

By far the **biggest share of web traffic from consumers in Luxembourg goes to multi-sector stores**. 14 such retailers are included in the group of the Largest 100 retailers online visited by consumers in the country.

Retailers headquartered in the US over index in terms of web traffic. Of the 100 retailers measured, 22 are headquartered in the US, but they account for 74% of web traffic to the Largest 100 from consumers in Luxembourg.

Web traffic by sector in Luxembourg

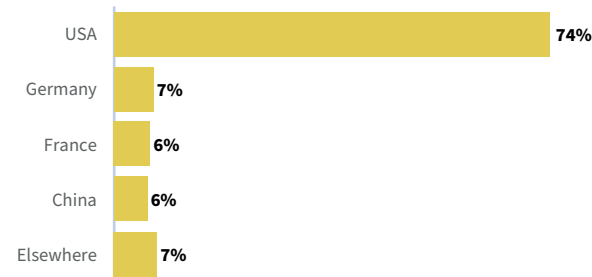
Web visits of local consumers to the Luxembourg Largest 100 retailers



Note: The number of retailers in a sector is shown in parentheses
Source: RetailIX, drawing on data from SimilarWeb

© RetailIX 2022

Web traffic to the Largest 100 retailers by location of HQ

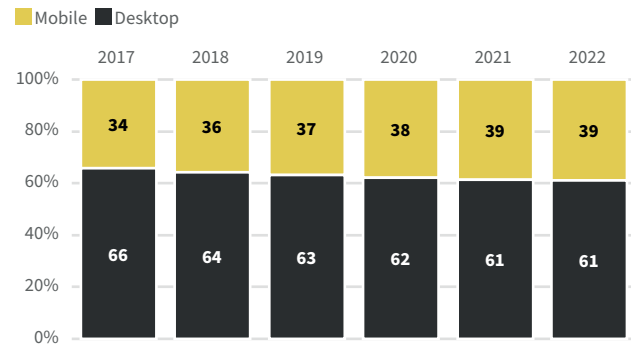


Source: RetailIX, drawing on data from SimilarWeb

© RetailIX 2022

Preferred device for online shopping (%)

Luxembourg, 2017-22

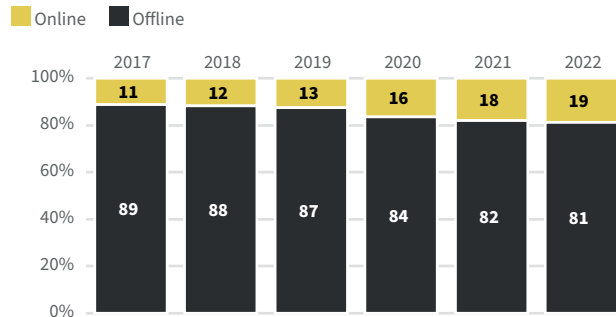


Source: Statista

© RetailIX 2022

Shopping channel preference of multichannel shoppers (%)

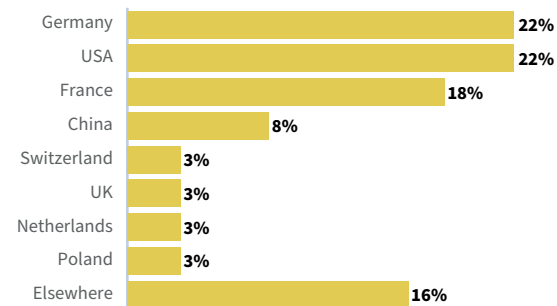
Luxembourg, 2017-22



Source: Statista

© RetailIX 2022

Where the Luxembourg Largest 100 are based



Source: RetailIX, drawing on data from SimilarWeb

© RetailIX 2022

The Netherlands

A strong economy, with plans for a green and digital future in which ecommerce will continue to grow

The Netherlands is the **largest country in Benelux in terms of geographic area as well as population**. With an area of more than 40,000km², the Netherlands is 36% bigger than Belgium and considerably larger than the more affluent Luxembourg. Its population is 17.2m, compared to Belgium's 11.7m.

The population of the Netherlands has remained steady in recent years, while GDP per capita has been rising over the same time period. **GDP has increased sharply in the past year, rising from €42,000 in 2021 to €50,000 in 2022.**

The Netherlands

Area: 41,540km²

Capital: Amsterdam

Currency: euro (EUR)

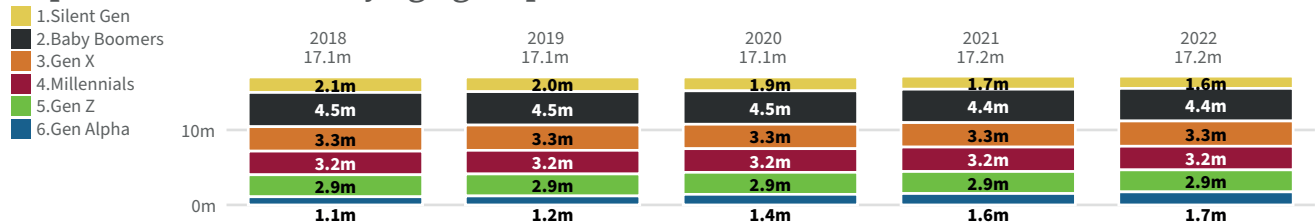
Official language: Dutch

Government:

Parliamentary constitutional monarchy

VAT: 21% | **Reduced VAT:** 9%

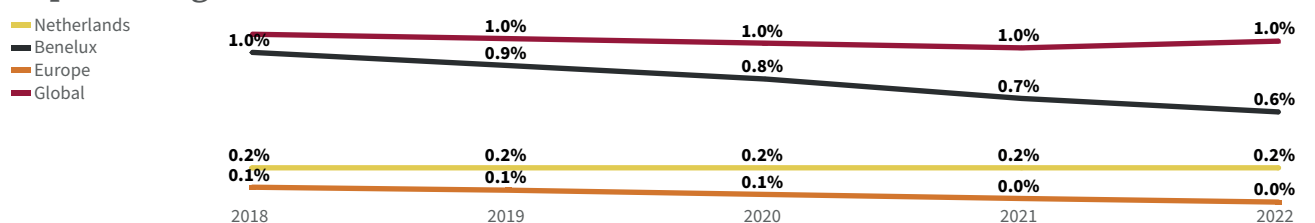
Population structure by age group



Age groups (year of birth): Gen Alpha (2013-present), Gen Z (1998-2012), Millennials (1983-1997), Gen X (1968-1982), Baby Boomers (1948-1967), Silent Gen (1928-1947)
Source: RetailX, drawing on data from UN

RetailX 2022

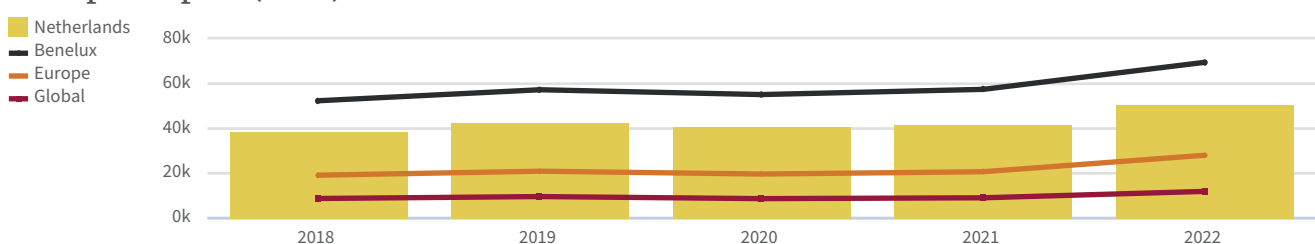
Population growth



Source: RetailX, drawing on data from UN

RetailX 2022

GDP per capita (EUR)



Source: RetailX, drawing on data from IMF

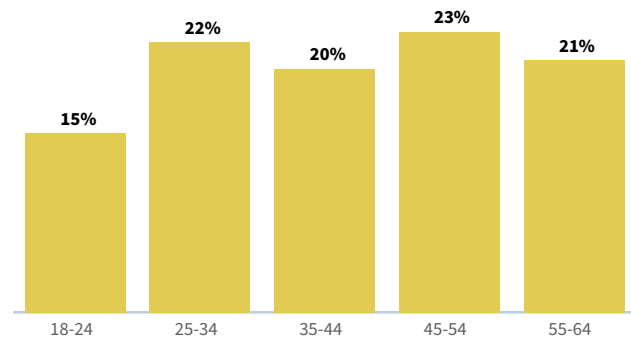
RetailX 2022

This highlights how the country has not just recovered from 2020's dip due to the pandemic but has seen substantial growth and high employment.

The country's recovery and resilience plan under the NextGenerationEU programme will see the Netherlands investing more than €2bn in green projects, including maritime, rail and air transport. With the port of Rotterdam being the largest in Europe, this will have implications for the logistics industry and retailers alike. The Netherlands' plan also boosts innovation through the development of artificial intelligence solutions.

Age distribution of online shoppers

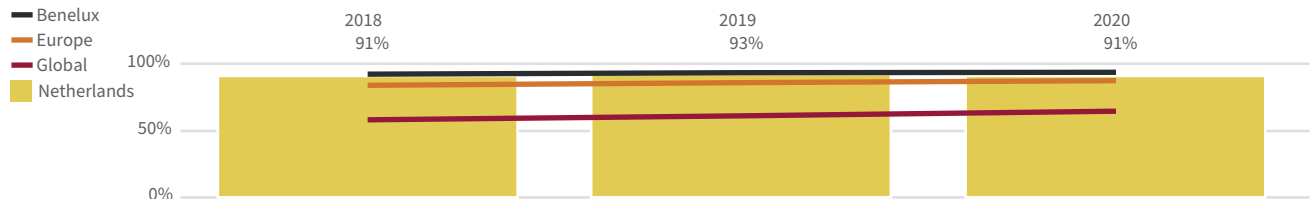
Netherlands, 2021



Source: Statista

© RetailX 2022

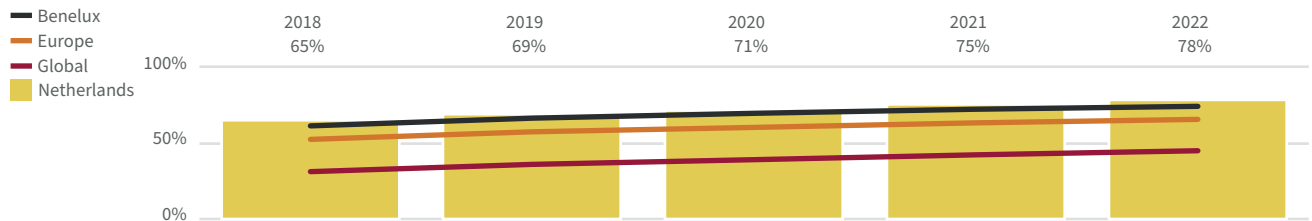
Percentage of internet users



Source: RetailX, drawing on data from the World Bank

© RetailX 2022

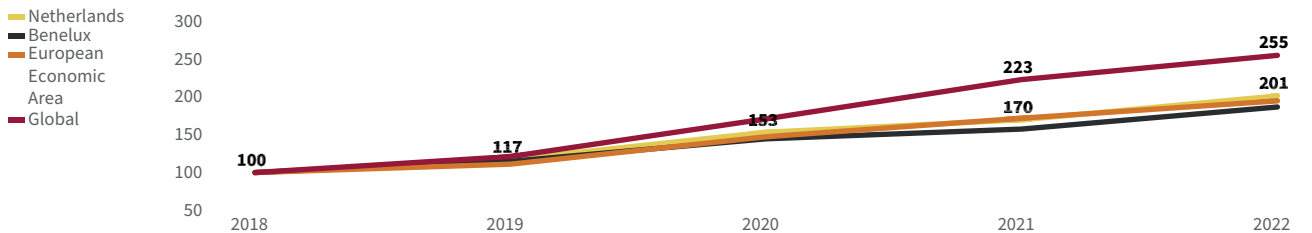
Percentage of internet users who shop online



Source: RetailX, drawing on data from Statista

© RetailX 2022

Ecommerce revenue Index



Index 2018=100

RetailX, drawing on data from Statista

© RetailX 2022

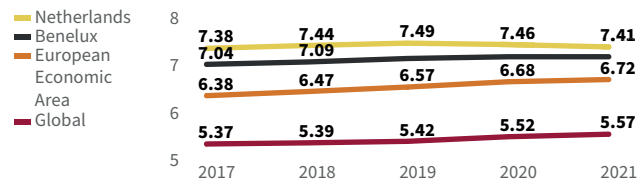
Consumers in the Netherlands have been spending more post-pandemic; however, inflationary factors including high energy costs pose a risk to consumer confidence and household budgets. Spending in the later months of 2022 and into early 2023 is predicted to drop slightly.

Despite a possible recession, consumers in the Netherlands are expected to continue shopping online. Ecommerce has grown in popularity in recent years, with **78% of internet users shopping online in 2022.** This has risen from 75% in 2021, 71% in 2020 and 69% in the previous year.

Accompanying this increase has been **a steady rise in mobile commerce.** Mobile has grown to a point where 37% of consumers say they prefer to shop online from their smartphone rather than a PC or laptop.

Happiness Index

The Netherlands, 2017–21

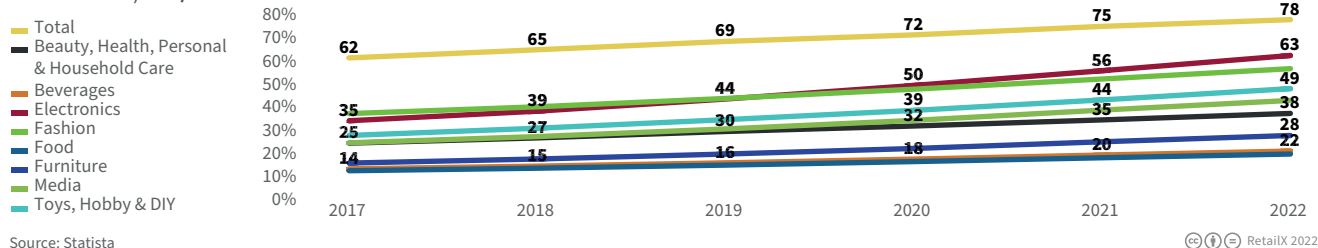


Survey respondents evaluate the quality of their current lives on a scale of 0 (unhappy) to 10 (happy). Source: The World Happiness Report

© RetailX 2022

Percentage of online shoppers

Netherlands, 2017–22

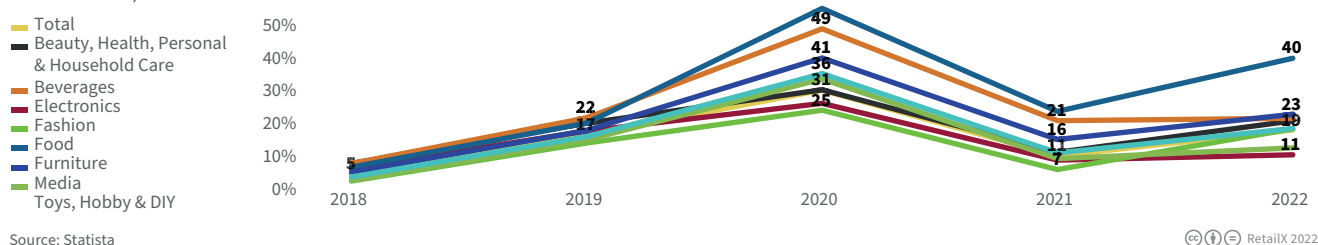


Source: Statista

© RetailX 2022

Annual ecommerce revenue change (%)

Netherlands, 2018–22

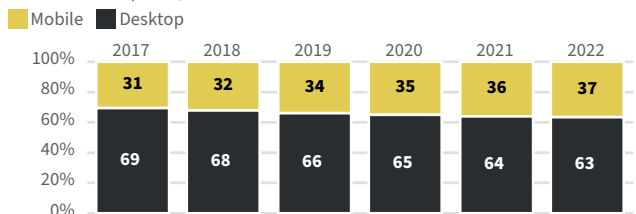


Source: Statista

© RetailX 2022

Preferred device for online shopping (%)

Netherlands, 2017–22

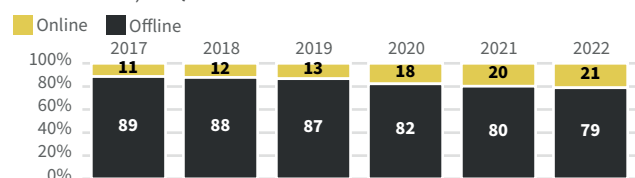


Source: Statista

© RetailX 2022

Shopping channel preference of multichannel shoppers (%)

Netherlands, 2017–22



Source: Statista

© RetailX 2022

The Largest 100

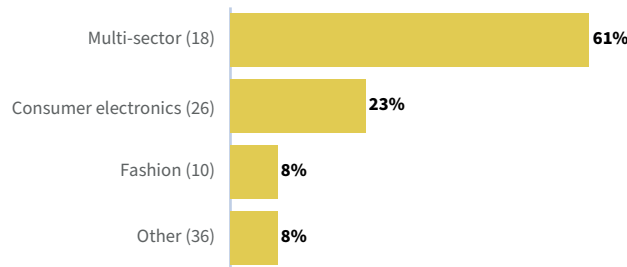
The Netherlands has a mature ecommerce industry, with omnichannel services expected by consumers when shopping with retailers which have bricks-and-mortar stores as well as an online presence. Shoppers are happy browsing on the ecommerce sites of domestic brands and retailers as well as those of international brands that have built up a presence in the country.

The majority of the Largest 100 retailers online in the country have their headquarters in the Netherlands (47%). 23% are based in the US and 9% in Germany. The ratio between domestic and international companies alters when viewed from the perspective of web traffic. **Retailers headquartered in the US account for the biggest share of web traffic** from consumers in the Netherlands (42%). Retailers in the Netherlands receive 41% of the traffic to the Largest 100.

Marketplaces and multi-sector stores hold a prominent position in the ecommerce industry. Among the 100 ecommerce sites with the most traffic from consumers in the country, multi-sector stores receive the majority (61%). This group includes the marketplaces of Wehkamp and bol.com which are among some of the largest retailers in Benelux. This is highlighted by the fact **18% of the traffic to the Netherlands-based retailers within the Largest 100 group comes from consumers in Belgium.**

Web traffic by sector

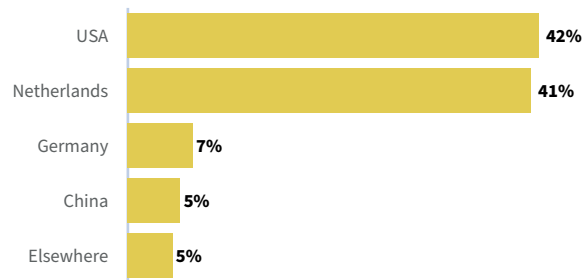
Web visits of local consumers to the Netherlands Largest 100 retailers



Note: The number of retailers in a sector is shown in parentheses
Source: RetailX, drawing on data from SimilarWeb

© RetailX 2022

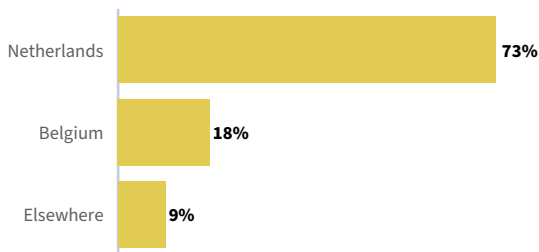
Web traffic to the Largest 100 retailers by location of HQ



Source: RetailX, drawing on data from SimilarWeb

© RetailX 2022

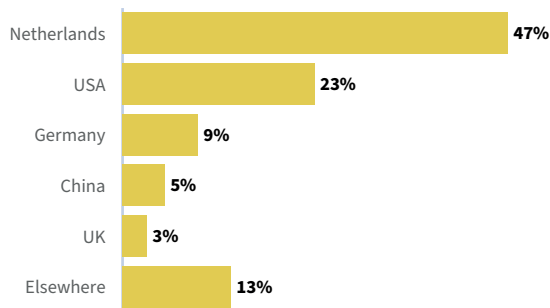
Web traffic to the largest Netherlands-based retailers split by consumer location



Note: Data from 46 retailers are used. These are all the Netherlands-based retailers that belong to the Netherlands Largest 100
Source: RetailX, drawing on data from SimilarWeb

© RetailX 2022

Where the Netherlands Largest 100 are based



Source: RetailX, drawing on data from SimilarWeb

© RetailX 2022

Product categories

Consumers spend the most online with fashion retailers but the product category in second place differs between countries

Consumers in all of the three countries that make up the Benelux region are comfortable with buying online.

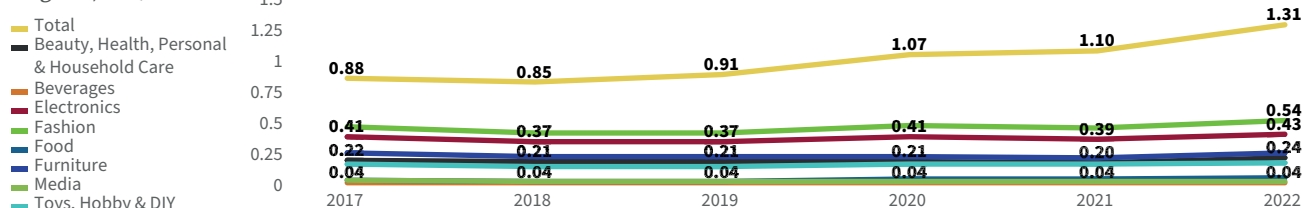
All three are mature ecommerce markets in terms of consumer expectations of retailers online and the extent to which they use omnichannel services. There is still room for growth especially for retailers able to fulfil consumer desire for convenience.

Convenience is the main reason why consumers in Belgium and the Netherlands shop online. 44% say that price is the main reason for shopping online and 32% cite delivery options. 31% give the main reason as being choice and the wide variety of products available online. The ease with which consumers can browse between retailers and brands online and the preferences shown towards retailers selling across multiple categories has helped towards growing these ecommerce markets.

Consumers in Luxembourg spend the most money online. While it has the largest GDP per capita, Luxembourg has the smallest population of the three

Average online spend, per shopper (thousand EUR)

Belgium, 2017-22

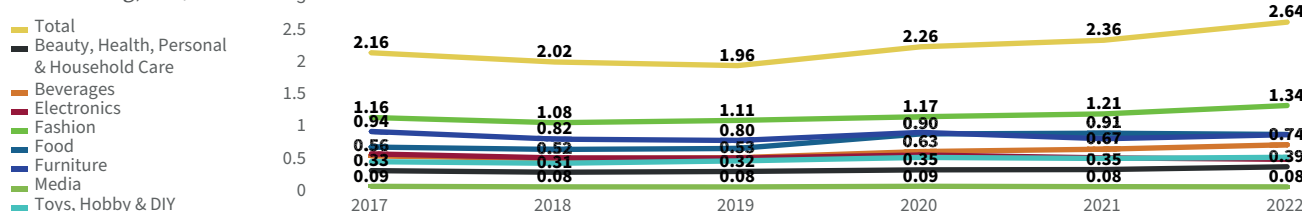


Source: Statista

© RetailX 2022

Average online spend, per shopper (thousand EUR)

Luxembourg, 2017-22

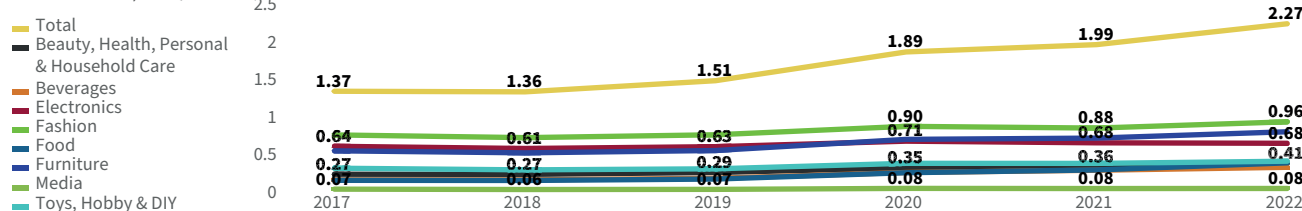


Source: Statista

© RetailX 2022

Average online spend, per shopper (thousand EUR)

Netherlands, 2017-22



Source: Statista

© RetailX 2022

countries so it isn't the largest ecommerce market in terms of total size. **With each consumer spending an average online of €2,270 in 2022, the Netherlands is the second most affluent market.** Its population being higher than the other countries makes it the largest of the three markets overall.

Consumers across all three countries spend the most buying fashion online. In Luxembourg, this amounts to an average per person of €1,344. In the Netherlands, average online spend with fashion retailers is €963, while in Belgium the figure is €540. Fashion retailers leading the market across Benelux and ranking within the Largest 100 are C&A, Bonprix, Zalando, de Bijenkorf, Zara, H&M, NA-KD, Asos and Shein.

C&A, which was founded in the Netherlands in the 19th century, opened its first bricks-and-mortar store in Belgium in 1963 and in Luxembourg in 1982. It has ecommerce sites localised for consumers in Belgium and the Netherlands, amongst others, as well as selling online via Zalando and on the Amazon Fashion platform in the Netherlands. These partnerships are seen as a way for C&A to extend its omnichannel strategy. "Amazon is becoming an increasingly important fashion destination for consumers in Europe. It is important for us that we serve consumers and help them find the best of C&A, especially when their journey starts with Amazon Fashion," says Joris van Rooy, chief digital officer at C&A Europe.

Articles bought online



Based on 813 residents of Benelux (excluding Luxembourg) aged 18-64, November 2021. Results are stratified by age and gender and population-weighted averages are used.

Question: "What do you shop for online?"

Source: RetailX Consumer Observatory

CC BY ND RetailX 2022

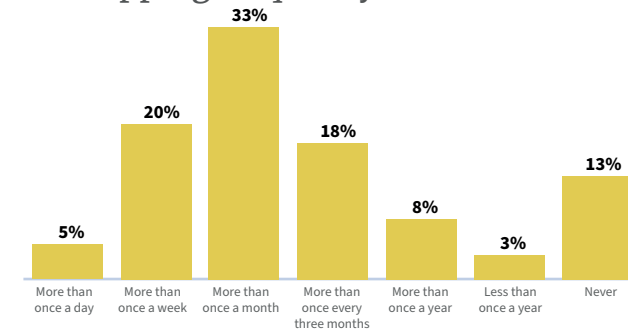
The fashion brand has recently re-branded following a survey among fashion shoppers in Europe which shows they "prefer a brand that combines affordability, sustainability, quality and style."

Luxury fashion retailer de Bijenkorf operates online sites for its customers in the Netherlands, as well as Dutch and French-language sites for customers in Belgium.

Furniture & homewares is another product category with a high average online, per shopper spend.

Consumers in Luxembourg and the Netherlands spend the most on this category.

E-shopping frequency



Based on 900 residents of Benelux (excluding Luxembourg) aged 18-64, November 2021.

Results are stratified by age and gender and population-weighted averages are used.

Question: "How often do you shop online?"

Source: RetailX Consumer Observatory

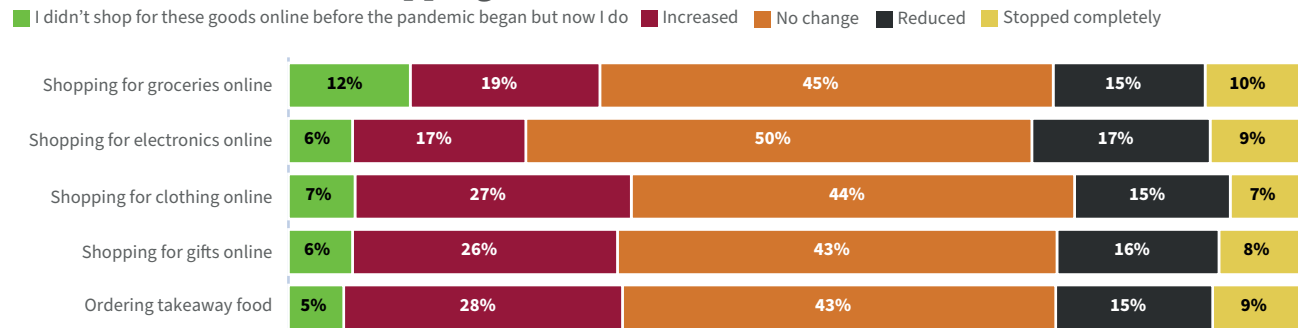
CC BY ND RetailX 2022

It is the **groceries category that stands in second place in terms of average spend online by consumers in Luxembourg**. They spend an average of €895 each. This has decreased slightly from the highs of €903 in 2020 and €914 in 2021, but is still above the €677 average amount spent online by consumers in Luxembourg before the pandemic. Interestingly, for a small country it has a large number of retailers operating in the grocery sector. These include domestic retailer Cactus and Delhaize, Cora and Colruyt from Belgium, as well as French grocer Auchan and Germany's Lidl and Aldi. Foodbox and HelloFresh also deliver mealkits to consumers in Luxembourg.

In June, Belgian grocery chain Colruyt announced it would start delivering to customer homes. Previously, online orders could only be collected from stores. It is also working on a peer-to-peer solution enabling shoppers to deliver to other customers in Luxembourg.

Online grocery spend has continued to rise in the Netherlands and in Belgium but is still low in comparison to Luxembourg. Recent years have seen much movement among retailers in this sector, initially trying to gain traction among consumers remaining at home during the pandemic. Reporting Ahold Delhaize's Q2 2022 financial figures, the company's president and CEO Frans Muller said: "consumer online sales increased by 11.5% at constant rates, as online grocery penetration rates continued to increase."

Covid-19 effect on e-shopping



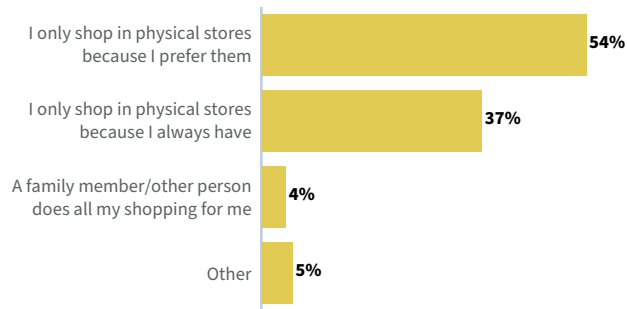
Based on 813 residents of Benelux (excluding Luxembourg) aged 18-64, November 2021. Results are stratified by age and gender and population-weighted averages are used.

Question: "How has Covid-19 (coronavirus) affected your online shopping? Please choose the most relevant option against the following activities:"

Source: RetailX Consumer Observatory

© RetailX 2022

Top reasons for not shopping online



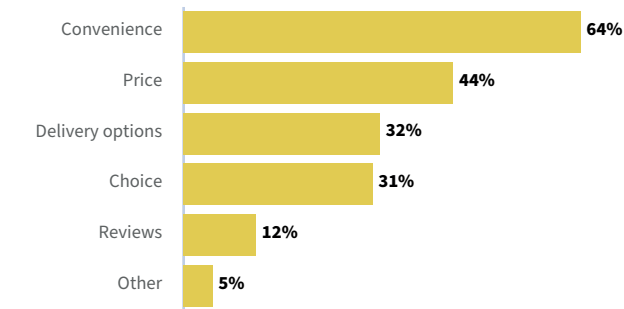
Based on 86 residents of Benelux (excluding Luxembourg) aged 18-64, November 2021. Results are stratified by age and gender and population-weighted averages are used.

Question:

"Why do you not shop online?"

© RetailX 2022

Top reasons for shopping online



Based on 798 residents of Benelux (excluding Luxembourg) aged 18-64, November 2021. Results are stratified by age and gender and population-weighted averages are used.

Question: "Why do you shop online?"

Source: RetailX Consumer Observatory

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Cross-border

Shopping across borders appears to be second nature for online shoppers in Luxembourg and Belgium

Belgium is the centre of the European Union. The departments and executive agencies of the EU are based in Brussels, as well as in Luxembourg, Strasbourg and Frankfurt. More than 5,000 people work directly for the Parliament in Brussels and a further 2,200 in Luxembourg. However, the number of EU institutions and other international agencies, lobbyists, consultancies and diplomats in Brussels extends the workforce to above 120,000. As a result, Brussels and Luxembourg are multi-cultural cities, welcoming people from across Europe to live and work in their centres and surroundings.

Public opinion about the European Union and wider globalisation are mainly positive in Benelux. Consumers in the Netherlands are more likely to see globalisation in a positive light than do their peers in Belgium and Luxembourg. **Just 59% of consumers in Luxembourg are positive about globalisation, compared to 63% in Belgium and 76% in the Netherlands.**

While the Netherlands is the largest ecommerce market in Benelux, and is home to the region's ecommerce leaders,

consumers in the country are just as likely to buy from brands headquartered overseas as they are from domestic retailers. As shown in the charts relating to the Largest 100 data, **74% of online traffic to the Largest 100 retailers visited by consumers in Luxembourg goes to retailers headquartered in the US.** This is despite these accounting for just 22 of the 100 brands and retailers.

Consumers in Belgium and Luxembourg are more likely to shop online with retailers based in other countries.

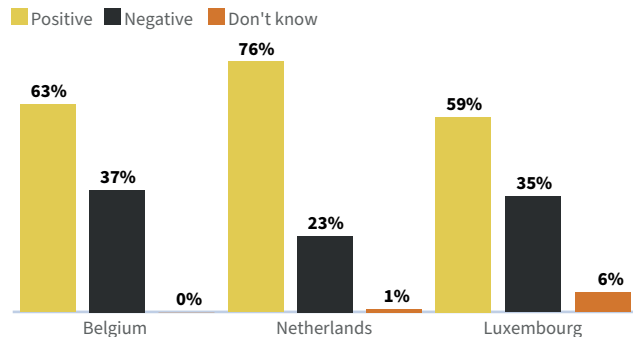
This behaviour extends to shopping on sites hosted for consumers in other countries rather than just those localised to their market. The fact **that 52% of consumers in Luxembourg have shopped online with retailers in other countries of the EU** highlights how processes and user experiences have been simplified online. Consumers can shop easily online with brands and retailers in other countries, particularly within the EU, and retailers can ship goods from one country to another.

A fifth of consumers in Luxembourg have also shopped online with retailers outside of the EU.

Cross-border shopping amongst consumers in Luxembourg and Belgium is higher than the European average. **81% of what consumers in Luxembourg spend online is spent with retailers in other countries.** 40% of cross-border purchases are clothing, shoes and accessories. **31% of the money spent online by Belgian**

Public opinion about globalisation

Benelux countries 2021



Source: Standard Eurobarometer

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consumers is spent with retailers in other countries.

In the Netherlands, it is just 7%. A certain amount of this will be the expat community buying from favourite brands at home, but not all. French and Dutch retailers have long seen Belgium as an easy market into which to expand. The lack of a language barrier in the relevant parts of the country, and the EU's unrestricted movement of goods, makes Flanders and Wallonia the obvious first steps for marketing cross-border, if not a direct launch.

At the start of the pandemic, grocers in the Netherlands were quick to expand their propositions with delivery into Belgium. **Albert Heijn started delivering grocery orders from the Netherlands to customers in Belgium in 2020,**

although it had stores in the country already. Orders were fulfilled from a store in Eindhoven before being sent to a hub 45km away in Turnhout, Belgium, from where they were loaded into the grocer's branded vans. **The grocer opened a new, 23,000m² distribution centre in Roosendaal in November 2021 paving the way for expansion of its online business to 50% of Flemish households.** The new distribution centre can process 40,000 orders per week.

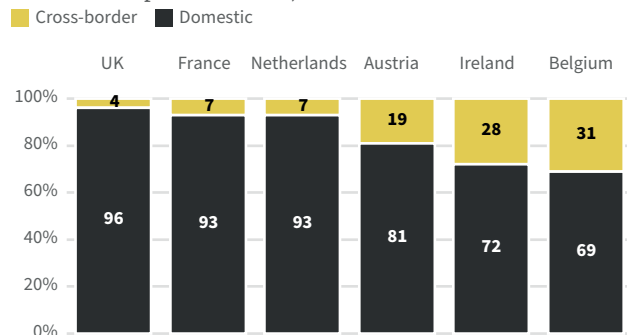
"From November 16, 1.4 million households in Belgium can have their groceries delivered by Albert Heijn at home," said Marit van Egmond, general manager of Albert Heijn, at the time.

Retailers in Belgium are also seizing the opportunities of cross-border trade. **The number of Belgian retailers on the bol.com marketplace has doubled in the last two years, up from 2,600 to over 5,400 in 2022.** Bol gives them access to consumers in Belgium, as well as extending their reach into the Netherlands. Many of the new entrants on Bol's platform are SMEs who have traded online for five years at most, many moving online during the pandemic. At the end of 2021, 45,116 ecommerce stores operated in Belgium, according to BeCommerce.

Luxembourg and Belgium are targets for international brands as well. The first customer delivery to Belgium from Amazon.com took place in June 2002 while the country's

Share of cross-border ecommerce

Selected European countries, 2022



Source: Statista

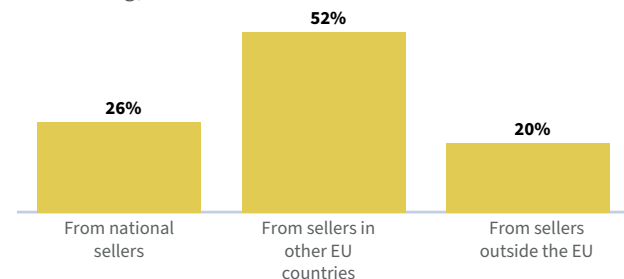
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French speakers have been buying from Amazon.fr since 2003. Flemish speakers have been served by the German site since it launched a localised Flemish/Dutch version in 2016, followed, by a site specifically for Dutch and Flemish shoppers in 2020. **Amazon is launching a site for consumers in Belgium this year.**

Among other global brands, H&M directs consumers in Luxembourg to a European site, while Decathlon redirects from a .lu site to the Belgian site, which has options for browsing in French or Dutch. Online orders are fulfilled from its store in Luxembourg City, with large or bulky items despatched from across the border in Arlon, Belgium.

Share of individuals who made domestic and cross-border purchases online

Luxembourg, 2021



Source: Eurostat

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Apple has sites in French and Dutch for the Belgian market and for consumers in Luxembourg. It has one bricks-and-mortar store in Brussels.

Chinese sites **AliExpress** and **Shein** are also popular with shoppers across Benelux. Both retailers have language-specific sites for French and Dutch from their European sites. Shein is working to build up its presence in the region opening a pop up bricks-and-mortar store in Brussels in September 2022.

Sustainability

Government, retailers and consumers are working towards a carbon-neutral Europe

As members of the EU, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg have set targets to hit as part of the **EU's bid to become the first climate-neutral region by 2050**.

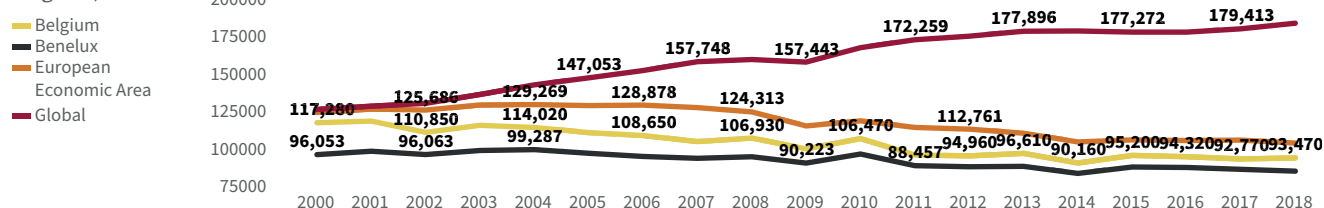
In 2021, targets based on the UN Convention on Climate Change, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement were enshrined in EU law. These include an interim target for the **EU to emit at least 55% fewer greenhouse gas emissions by 2030**, compared to 1990 levels.

The **countries of Benelux are supporting each other** in their work towards achieving these goals. They are embracing opportunities of EU funding for a green recovery from the pandemic while appreciating how their connected infrastructure and transport can work to transition to a more environmentally friendly future.

Climate change cannot be achieved by governments alone. Businesses and consumers also have a part to play. **Half of the consumers in the Netherlands want retailers to be ecologically sustainable**. A larger percentage (72%) want **retailers to have fair workplace practices** and ensure companies that supply them also have high standards of community welfare.

Carbon dioxide emissions (kilotonnes)

Belgium, 2000–18

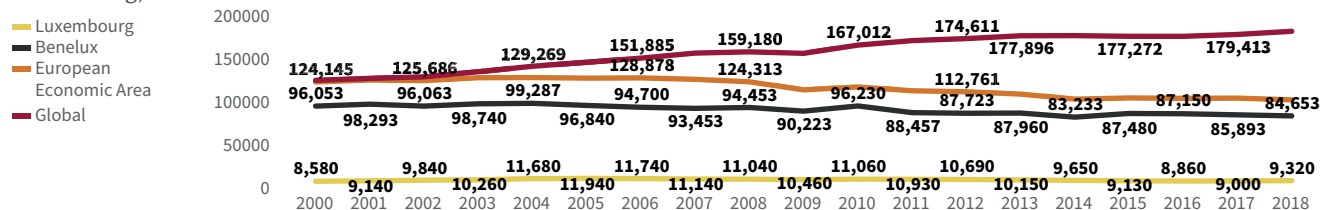


Source: The World Bank

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Carbon dioxide emissions (kilotonnes)

Luxembourg, 2000–18

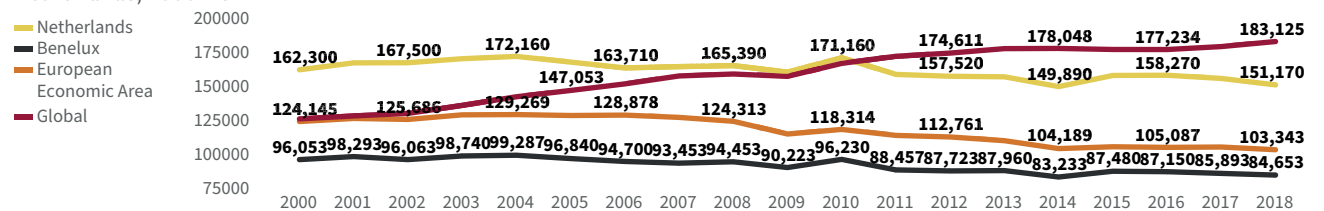


Source: The World Bank

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Carbon dioxide emissions (kilotonnes)

Netherlands, 2000–18



Source: The World Bank

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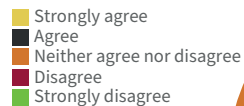
However, only **39% of consumers would be willing to pay more for products** that were either produced or transported in a way that didn't harm the environment. This is below the figure for Europe as whole, which stands at 59.6%.

In 2021, RetailX found that 32% of 1,200 European brands and retailers shared some sustainability information with consumers. This rose to 40% of Europe's Top 50.^[1]

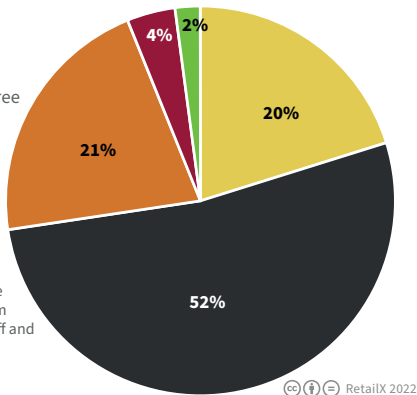
Health and beauty chain **Kruidvat has sustainability information on its ecommerce sites in the Netherlands and Belgium**. In 2020, the company reduced its CO2 emissions by 50%, compared to 2015. Kruidvat is

I want retailers to ensure community welfare

Netherlands, 2022

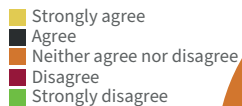


Based on 487 residents of Netherlands aged 16+, June 2022. Original statement: "I want retailers to have fair workplace practices and ensure the companies that supply them also have high standards of staff and community welfare". Results stratified by age and gender
Source: RetailX

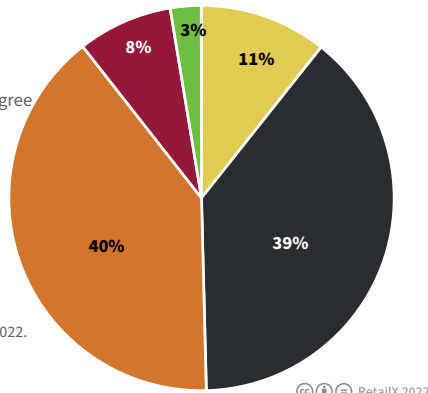


I want retailers to be ecologically sustainable

Netherlands, 2022



Based on 487 residents of Netherlands aged 16+, June 2022. Results stratified by age and gender.
Source: RetailX

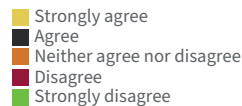


part of AS Watson Group which has switched to 100% renewable electricity for its businesses in Belgium and the Netherlands. These include Kruidvat, Trekpleister and ICI Paris XL. Renewable electricity makes up 86% of AS Watson's European portfolio.

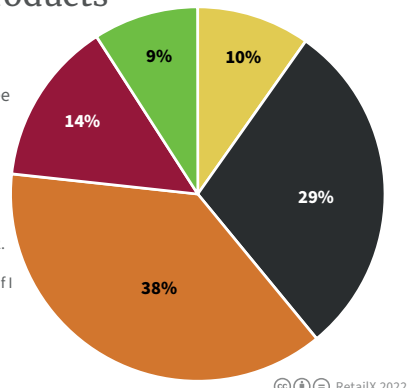
Marketplace **bol.com was voted as the most sustainable ecommerce brand in the Netherlands**. The company has "invested heavily" in reducing its CO2 emissions. In April 2022, Bol became the first ecommerce company in the Netherlands and Belgium to carry the Climate Neutral Certification label highlighting how it has eliminated, or offset, emissions from the moment products arrive in a fulfilment centre until they are delivered to the customer.

I would be willing to pay more for sustainable products

Netherlands, 2022



Based on 487 residents of Netherlands aged 16+, June 2022. Original statement: "I would be willing to pay more for products if I knew they were produced and transported in a way that didn't harm the environment." Results stratified by age and gender
Source: RetailX



"We not only look critically at our own emissions, but we also want to help our partners in making them more sustainable. The outcome of the SBI survey shows that our efforts are seen by Dutch consumers, who appreciate that we are on the right track," says Jori Ebskamp, lead CSR & sustainability at bol.

Bol is helping customers to do better by the environment by offering sustainable alternatives across 60% of its product categories, and labelling them as such. Navigation filters enable customers to search for sustainable products. These include secondhand items and those made of at least 50% recycled material.

[1] <https://internetretailing.net/sustainability/>

Payments

E-wallets continue to gain share of ecommerce payments as consumer preferences for traditional methods declines

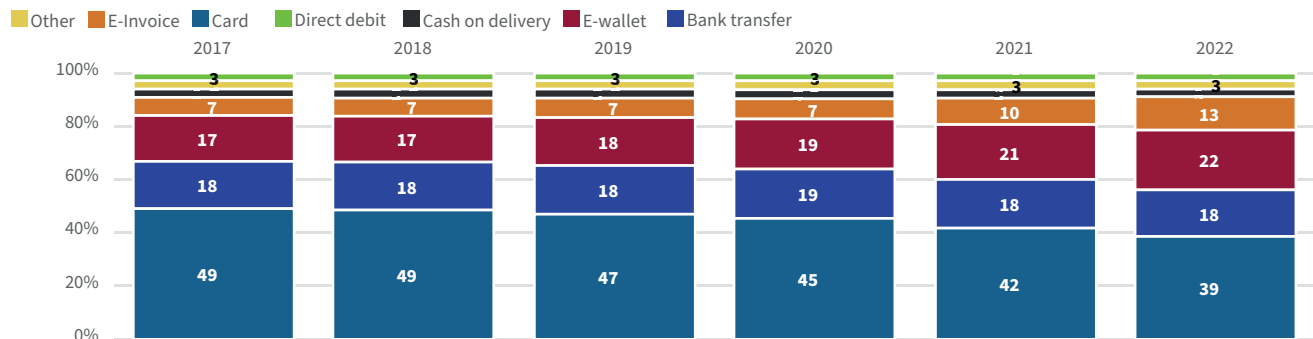
The iDEAL bank transfer system marks online checkout in the Netherlands as different to Belgium and Luxembourg. **IDEAL is the most popular method of payment online in the Netherlands**, enabling funds to be debited immediately upon authorisation from the customer's bank account. The funds appear in the retailer's account one to three days later. There is no need to enter bank or card details and there are no chargebacks, so trust and security are ensured and the retailer can start fulfilling the order straightaway. Since **each transaction is authorised individually it means payment for subscription services are authorised each month**.

Other online payment methods are slowly chipping away at iDEAL's dominance. **E-wallets are now the preferred payment method for 10% of consumers in the Netherlands**.

The use of e-wallets and e-invoice are increasing in Belgium as well. **Card payments are still the preferred payment method online for 39% of consumers in Belgium**, a decline from 49% in 2017. **In Luxembourg, Digicash by Payconiq is becoming the most used digital payment solution**.

Preferred payment type for online shopping (%)

Belgium, 2017-22

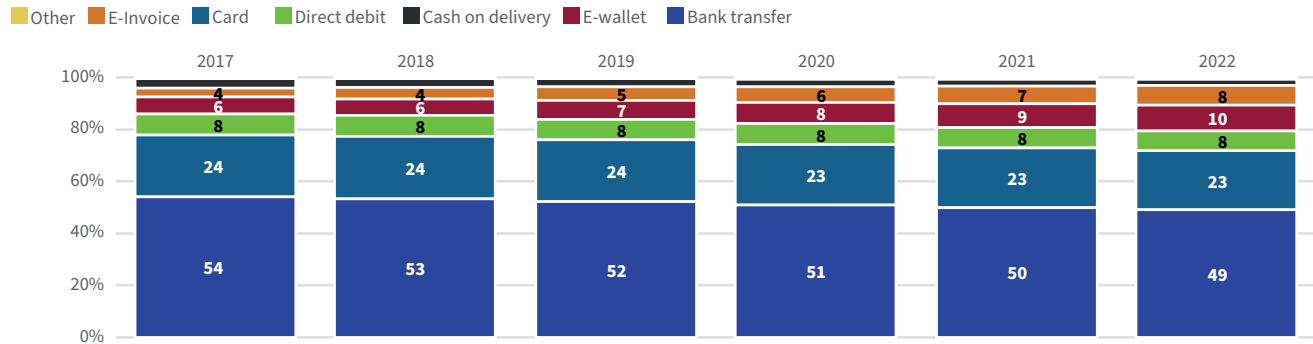


Source: Statista

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Preferred payment type for online shopping (%)

Netherlands, 2017-22



Source: Statista

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The final mile

Competition is leading to cooperation between carriers and retailers and innovation in sustainability

Consumers in Benelux want choice around delivery of online orders, where they are delivered – or can be collected from, the time frame and even the type of vehicle used to carry their parcel. The three countries have their own postal incumbents but they still remain **competitive markets, with companies competing over locker networks, bicycle deliveries, cross-border deliveries and fast fulfilment**.

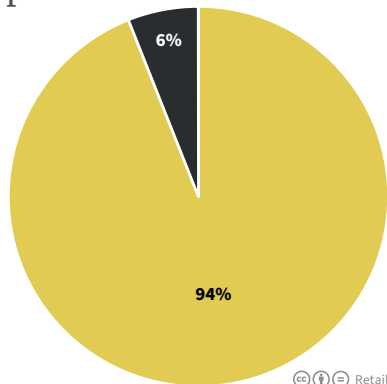
Fast delivery company **Deliveroo is closing its operations in the Netherlands**, citing the need for large levels of investment with no prediction of gaining a leading market share as a reason. The future is looking brighter for others, including Dutch bicycle delivery firm Cyclooon. Dutch retailer bol.com has invested in the company and together they plan to make delivery “more sustainable and social”.

The partnership with bol.com enables Cyclooon to substantially accelerate its mission of green and social delivery, creating a future-proof position with strong growth opportunities in a competitive market. For bol.com and its sales partners, the majority stake will ensure a

Share of parcels successfully delivered at first attempt

Belgium, 2021

Delivered
Not delivered



Source: ParcelMonitor

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larger proportion of packages can be delivered by bicycle. As part of the terms of the transaction, **bol.com will acquire the remaining shares in four years' time with Cyclooon continuing to operate as an independent brand**.

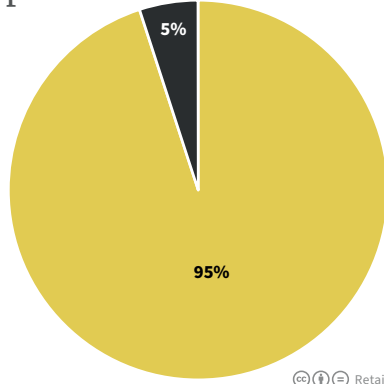
Bol is also working with grocery chain Albert Heijn and zero-emission delivery company Budbee on the installation of parcel lockers, enabling customers to pick up online orders at stores in the Netherlands and Belgium.

Such is the need for sustainability and zero emission deliveries, **POST Luxembourg is transitioning to a 100% electric fleet** having switched to electricity from renewable sources for all of its buildings and data centres. **The company is part of Green Postal Day**, a campaign

Share of parcels successfully delivered at first attempt

Netherlands, 2021

Delivered
Not delivered

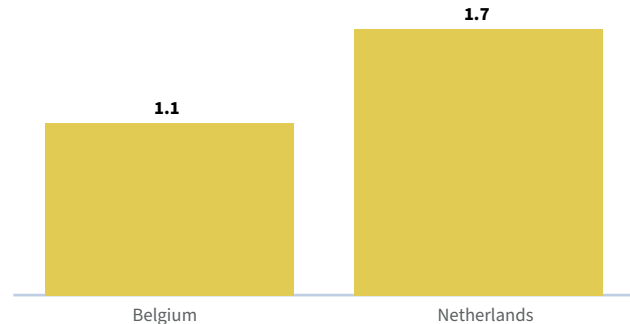


Source: ParcelMonitor

© RetailX 2022

Parcel transit time (days)

Benelux selected countries, 2021



Source: ParcelMonitor

© RetailX 2022

that shows the commitment of 18 postal incumbents to lowering their impact on the planet, as well as increasingly selling reusable, recyclable or compostable packaging.

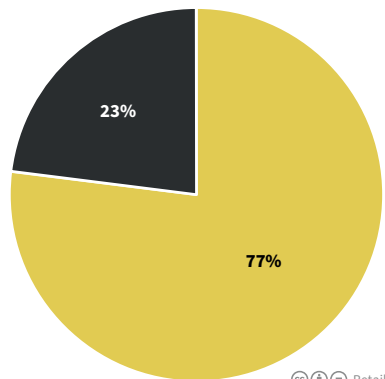
Dutch incumbent PostNL aims for the last mile of all parcels and letter deliveries in the Benelux region to be emission-free by 2030. This move will also help retailers with their net zero ambitions. PostNL already delivers anything that fits through a letterbox to 96% of homes in the Netherlands by bike or on foot. In 2021, PostNL delivered more than 80 million parcels emission-free.

Half of its delivery fleet is electric or runs on renewable fuels such as HVO100 and Bio-LNG. The share of renewable

Share of parcels delivered after one business day

Belgium, 2021

Delivered
Not delivered



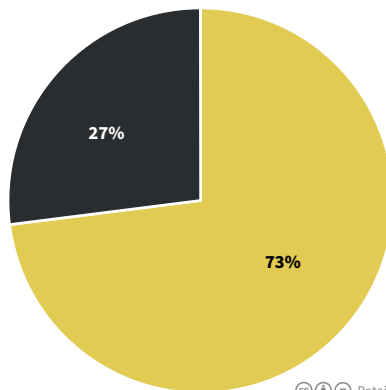
Source: ParcelMonitor

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Share of parcels delivered after one business day

Netherlands, 2021

Delivered
Not delivered



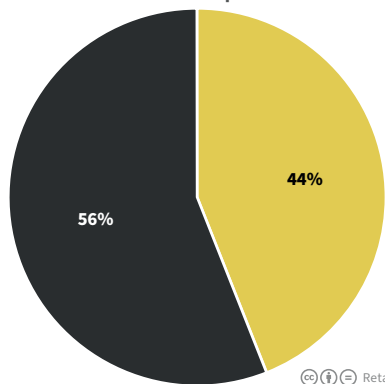
Source: ParcelMonitor

CC BY ND

Share of parcels picked up from Collection Points within 24 hours

Belgium, 2021

Picked up
Not picked up



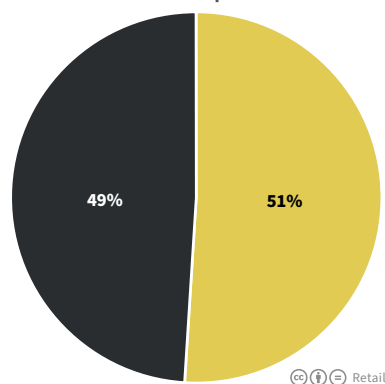
Source: ParcelMonitor

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Share of parcels picked up from Collection Points within 24 hours

Netherlands, 2021

Picked up
Not picked up



Source: ParcelMonitor

CC BY ND

fuels grew to 35% in 2021, up from 8% in 2020. The company says that because PostNL was one of the first companies in the Netherlands to start using HVO100 on a large scale, this cleaner fuel can now be accessed more easily in many places around the country – enabling more carriers to make the switch to greener fuel.

Moves such as these will become increasingly urgent as city centres transition to low emissions zones, blocking the use of polluting vehicles from urban areas. In response to such a move by The Hague, PostNL is making deliveries by small, emission-free light electric vehicles (LEVs). These LEVs are reported to be quiet, clean, narrow, agile and low-nuisance.

Amazon

Company: Amazon

Headquartered: USA

Founded: 1994

Online: www.amazon.com.be

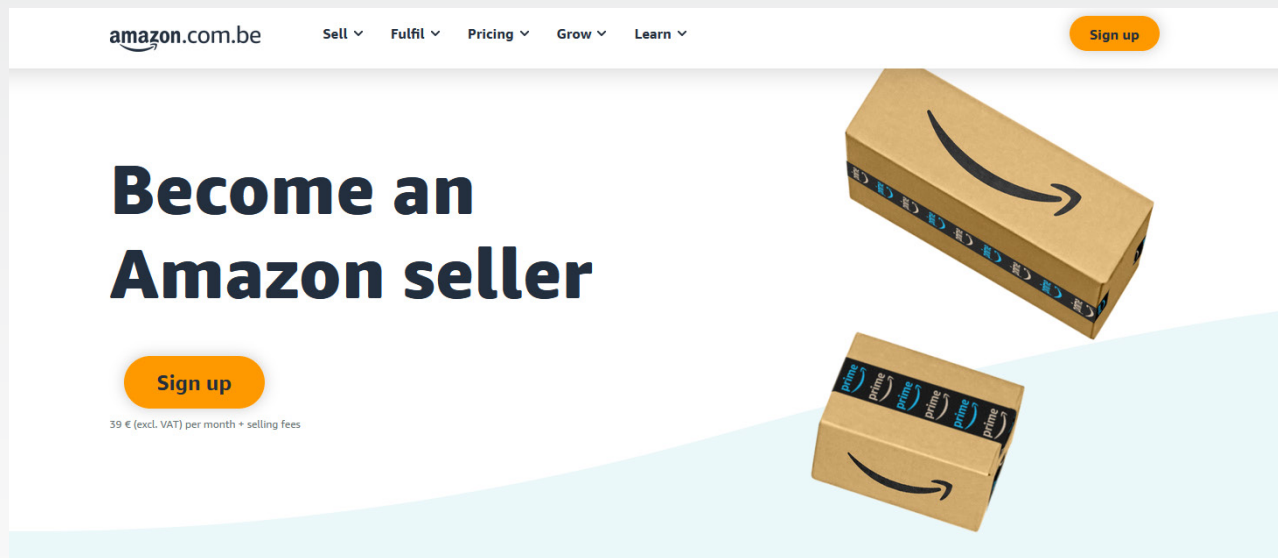


Amazon heads into Belgium

Amazon is to launch a version of its multi-sector platform for customers in Belgium in the “coming months,” the US behemoth announced officially in July 2022. The site was unavailable still at the time of writing but the company is making preparations, inviting interested sellers to register and prepare listings via sell.amazon.com.be.

More than 1,000 Belgian small and medium sized businesses sell already on at least one of Amazon’s 21 ecommerce sites across the world and Belgian consumers have been buying from Amazon in other countries for the last 20 years. The first customer delivery to Belgium from Amazon.com took place in June 2002.

“I have seen how Amazon delights customers around the globe through the incredible convenience and the breadth of choice that we offer with the help of selling



Amazon is launching a localised site for Belgium in the autumn

partners, and I am excited that all of these opportunities will be available for my home country and its great entrepreneurs,” says Amazon.com.be country manager Eva Faict.

The launch is an interesting move by Amazon since **the site will need to be available in multiple languages** to cover the French, Dutch and German speaking parts of the country. Shoppers in the Walloon region of Belgium have been able to shop on Amazon.fr since 2003, and Flemish speakers have been served by the German site since it launched a localised Flemish/

Dutch version in 2016.

A site specifically for Dutch and Flemish shoppers launched more recently in 2020. The popularity of Dutch retail sites bol.com and Coolblue mean strong competition for Amazon in this area of Belgium.

Amazon has confirmed that customer services will operate in French, Dutch and English on the new site.

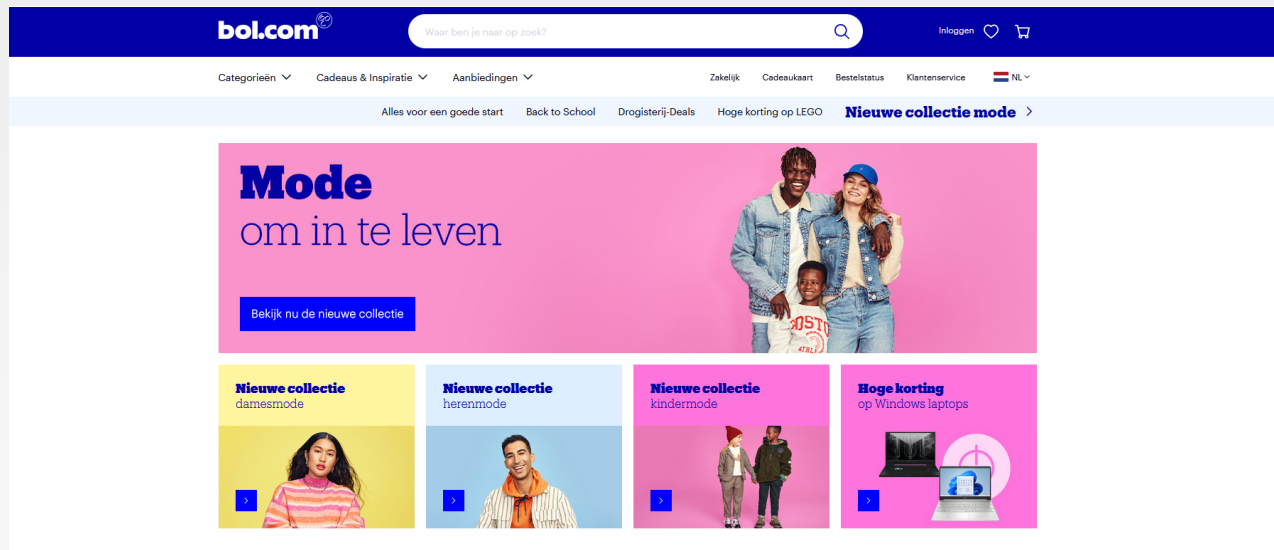
Bol.com**Company:** Bol.com**Headquartered:** Netherlands**Founded:** 1999**Online:** www.bol.com

Bol.com continues to expand in the Netherlands and Belgium

Marketplace bol.com has grown to a business employing 2,900 people, since launching as an online book store in 1999. **50,000 companies offer 47 million items for sale on the platform with 13 million customers visiting from the Netherlands and Belgium.** Over the years, bol.com has expanded its presence in Belgium, and the number of Belgian retailers selling on the Dutch platform has doubled in the last two years to 5,400.

In 2012, the company was acquired by Ahold Delhaize, which subsequently enabled customers to collect online orders from bricks-and-mortar stores within the group.

Expansion of bol's logistics capability continued with operating warehousing and fulfilment services for sellers on its platform. A recently opened extension to its **fulfilment centre in Waalwijk sees total floor space doubling to 100,000m².**



Marketplace bol.com offers 47 million items for sales from 50,000 sellers

In January 2022, the **shopping platform launched a French-language site** to cater for Walloons and French-speaking residents of Brussels. Bol.com has been active in Flanders since 2010, so the company saw its expansion for customers in this part of Belgium as a logical step.

“We launched our French-language app back in 2020. That caused quite a stir. In the meantime, one in three French-speaking Belgians knows us and the app has been downloaded more than 200,000 times,” says Boukje Taphoorn, CMO at bol.com.

“At the moment, however, we see that about 50% of our French-speaking customers mainly surf to the Dutch-language website. That is why we decided to go the extra mile to launch the full website in French.”

The company is **currently expanding the number of physical pick-up points in Wallonia and Brussels.** This way, customers can not only have their parcels delivered to their home, they can also opt to collect it from a Delhaize supermarket, for example.

Kruidvat

Company: Kruidvat

Headquartered: Netherlands

Founded: 1975

Online: www.kruidvat.nl



Health and beauty at an affordable price

Kruidvat is a multichannel **health and beauty retailer operating within the AS Watson Group**. It has a chain of almost 1,000 bricks-and-mortar stores in the Netherlands, with a further 298 in Belgium, as well as **ecommerce sites**. It sells cosmetics, beauty and personal care products, along with items for babies and children, household and cleaning, fashion, consumer electronics and photographic services.

The retailer emphasises its commitment to making health and beauty accessible to everyone by showcasing its value-for-money proposition on its ecommerce sites. Large pack sizes, special offers and BOGOF promotions feature heavily.

Top sellers, current promotions, popular brands and trending items are all highlighted on category pages helping shoppers drawn to an offer or looking for inspiration. Further inspiration is provided on the retailer's blog which covers the



Promotions form the backbone of Kruidvat's operation as it aims to make health and beauty accessible to everyone

latest trends and make-up tips showing how best to use beauty products once bought.

The retailer operates a loyalty scheme, with card-holding members of its Kruidvat Discount Club receiving exclusive discounts on a range of products that changes every two weeks. Members receive points against purchases, with one point collected for each €1 spent in one of the retailer's stores or online. 450 points can be exchanged for a free gift valued at €2.50.

Other promotions enable cardholders to quickly save extra points or redeem different points values for free gifts. Points can be redeemed in store only.

The company also **highlights its sustainability credentials to customers** along with a belief that customers shouldn't have to pay a premium to buy products that have a lower impact. Among the products launched in recent years are climate neutral disposable nappies and a vegan beauty range.

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Conclusion

The freedom and movement of goods and people even before the signing of the Schengen Agreement has resulted in a region open to ideas, with multi-cultural cities in which multiple languages are spoken. Consumers buy from their home countries as well as from retailers in the country in which they live and from international players.

The Netherlands has the largest ecommerce market by virtue of being the most populous country in the region. Many of Benelux's leading retailers online were founded in the Netherlands before expanding their operations into Belgium and elsewhere. With Dutch and French spoken in the country, consumers in Belgium happily shop on French and Dutch ecommerce sites as well as domestic ones. The country is an exemplar of how languages and historical borders are not divisive. Luxembourg, the financial powerhouse of Europe, offers high spending customers for international retailers looking to expand.

Overall, consumers in Benelux are open to the convenience of ecommerce, while its governments want the region to be seen as a springboard to the rest of Europe.

We hope that you have found our research and analysis to be of interest and commercial value. We would be very pleased to hear from you with questions, suggestions or comments on retailing in this country or others. In particular, we would like to hear about any areas you think we should include in the 2023 report. Please get in touch via: research@retailx.net

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