

Information release

One in three retailers fails to provide accurate information about online discounts during Black Friday and Cyber Monday

An investigation by the European Commission and national consumer protection authorities in 25 countries to monitor the commercial practices of 314 online shops.

Madrid, 30 March 2026. - The European Commission and the consumer protection authorities of twenty-three Member States, as well as Iceland and Norway, have recently published the results of a series of [surveys](#) carried out to analyse the discounts offered online by retailers during the Black Friday and Cyber Monday sales.

The investigation was coordinated by the European Commission and carried out in collaboration with the various national consumer protection authorities across a total of twenty-five European countries. Its aim was to assess whether the discounts and pricing policies implemented during major online sales campaigns, such as Black Friday and Cyber Monday, complied with European Union consumer legislation.

As a result, consumer protection authorities have monitored the commercial practices of a total of 314 online shops and, following this investigation, have concluded that 30% of the retailers examined do not provide accurate information about discounts during such campaigns.

In this context, ECC-Spain points out that whenever items are offered at a reduced price, the previous price must be clearly stated so that a proper comparison can be made between the price with and without the discount. To this end, and in accordance with the [Price Indications Directive](#), the previous price must be the lowest price applied in the preceding thirty days.

Similarly, the national authorities assessed sales tactics used by other online retailers that could influence consumers' purchasing decisions:

- 36% of retailers (4 in 10) attempted to add additional items to consumers' shopping baskets without clearly seeking their consent;
- 34% displayed price comparisons, and 6 out of 10 shops did not clearly explain the reference price used for the comparison.
- 18% used high-pressure sales techniques, such as claiming that a product was running out of stock or using countdown timers. The Consumer Protection Cooperation ([CPC](#)) network found that more than half of these cases were misleading; in other words, the claim of scarcity was false.
- 10% used the 'drip pricing' technique, whereby additional charges are added during or at the end of the purchasing process, such as delivery or service charges.

It should be noted that adding items without the consumer's consent, displaying prices in a misleading manner, falsely claiming that a product is running out of stock, or concealing additional charges until the end of the purchasing process are illegal practices under EU consumer law.

Going forward, based on the findings, national consumer protection authorities will be able to take action against the companies concerned.

Countries participating in the investigation: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

About the CPC Network

The national authorities in each country are responsible for enforcing EU consumer protection legislation. To protect consumers when they shop across national borders, Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 on consumer protection cooperation established a network of competent public authorities to address these issues in a coordinated manner: the Consumer Protection Cooperation ([CPC](#)) Network. Under the coordination of the European Commission, these authorities work together to tackle infringements of consumer law occurring within the single market, such as unfair commercial practices, e-commerce, geo-blocking, package travel, online sales or passenger rights.

Source: [European Commission](#)