



Photo: Arne Andersson

# E-barometern

PostNord in cooperation with Svensk Digital Handel and HUI Research

2021

ANNUAL  
REPORT

**postnord**

# About the E-barometern

In collaboration with **Svensk Digital Handel and HUI Research**, **PostNord monitors** the Swedish retail industry's e-commerce development. The E-barometern is published once a quarter and is based on a number of consumer surveys and a company survey. E-commerce is defined in the E-barometern as being the online sale of goods, with subsequent delivery to the home or a distribution point, or collection by the consumer at a store, warehouse or distribution center. The following are therefore not considered to be e-commerce in the E-barometern:

- In-store purchases that were initially arranged via the Internet
- The sale of services (for example, travel, hotel stays and concert tickets) arranged online
- Downloading of, for example, music files, movies and applications
- Business-to-business online sales
- Online sales between individuals

**The E-barometern Annual Report 2021** is based on information collected from retail companies in January 2022. A total of 221 companies that sell goods online participated in the survey. The consumer results are based on 12 monthly surveys with just over 1,200 respondents in each (total of 15,908 respondents). PostNord also conducted thematic surveys every quarter, with the most recent quarterly survey taking place in January 2022. This consisted of two questionnaires with 2,000 and 3,000 respondents respectively.

All the consumer surveys have been carried out using TNS Sifo's web panel. All the surveys are conducted with a representative sample of Sweden's population between the ages of 18–79. The online surveys are representative of the 95 percent of Sweden's population which has internet access. PostNord can be contacted for detailed information about each survey.

## Foreword

**T**he **2021 e-commerce** year turned out to be another special year. The coronavirus pandemic continued to affect Sweden and the world, although society opened up for a period and life in many ways returned to normal. In the first pandemic year of 2020, e-commerce grew by a record 40 percent. In 2021, growth continued, but at a less consistent pace than in the previous year. Overall, e-commerce grew by 20 percent, with the first quarter in particular with record growth of 53 percent driving this figure up. After that, growth slowed to finish at -1.2 percent in the fourth quarter, which is, however, in comparison with the record period of Q4 2020. It is with great excitement and humility that we follow the development of e-commerce as society opens up and Sweden enters the new normal.

**In 2021, consumer** preferences have shifted and home deliveries and parcel lockers are increasingly in demand as delivery options. At PostNord, we

continue to develop our services in line with consumer wishes. In 2021, we have improved our home deliveries, including Saturday deliveries in Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö and ETA (estimated time of arrival) so that recipients can track their evening and Saturday deliveries in the app. In addition, we have improved the Value Letter (Varubrev) service so they are always delivered to the recipient's home, whether they fit in the mailbox or not. We have continued the roll-out of parcel lockers and currently have over 1,500 open 24 hours a day across the country.

**We will relentlessly** continue our journey towards improving our products and services to meet the needs of recipients and facilitate e-commerce across the country.

Stockholm, February 2022

**Mathias Krümmel,**  
**CEO PostNord Sweden**



# Peaks, troughs and accelerating digital transformation

**A**t the end of 2020 we made a forecast of how e-commerce would evolve in 2021, an extremely difficult task to say the least. We set out two possible scenarios of what growth could possibly look like given how the pandemic would unfold and came up with a conservative forecast of 7% by 2021. The fact that growth has been as high as 20% in 2021, despite the historic growth of the previous year, is impressive and magnificent.

**But what can** we say when trying to sum up pandemic year number two? The development of e-commerce in 2021 has been characterized by a striking slowdown during the year. We started with an extremely strong first quarter, with 53 percent growth, then slowed to 16 percent growth in Q2, declined further in Q3 when growth was 11 percent, and finally culminated in a sharp decline to -1.2 percent in Q4. The negative growth in the fourth quarter is not surprising at all, given that the fourth quarter of 2020 was the strongest we have measured in the E-barometer, which of course made it very difficult for retailers to generate further growth.

**2021 has been** an eventful year for the retail sector. Shipping chaos has continued in 2021, making it difficult for retailers to forecast volumes and capacity. But despite setbacks in the form of imbalances in foreign supply chains and shortages of goods and components, many e-commerce companies have outperformed. E-commerce has continued to grow strongly in 2021.

**During 2021, we** have also seen an accelerated digital transformation among many retail and logistics market participants. The transformation that started modestly in 2020, when many were still confused about what to expect, really took off in 2021. We can also see that increasing numbers of e-retailers and hybrid retailers have invested in improving the delivery experience with multiple options at the checkout.

**In last mile,** both parcel bookings and home deliveries have grown strongly in line with increased demand for delivery services. This has both increased the freedom of choice in the checkout process and generated great value for

consumers, who have wanted to avoid crowds in stores or at distribution points. Another interesting phenomenon that has made a breakthrough in the past year is what is known as Q-commerce or ultra-fast food delivery. Companies offering these services deliver food and other everyday items in around 30 minutes, increasing consumer expectations of speed.

**Buying behavior changed** significantly during the peak period. A large number of e-retailers launched campaigns as early as Singles' Day, with the sale period subsequently continuing past Black Friday. In other words, the phenomenon has become more protracted than before, for example Black Friday has now become Black Week. Many consumers shopped earlier than usual due to concerns about goods running out because of supply chain disruptions and component shortages.

**Finally, increasing numbers of** retailers have become aware of the importance of optimizing their different channels based on purpose and need in order to provide the consumer with an

excellent customer experience. Who will succeed best in this area remains to be seen. 2022 will be very interesting to follow in this respect.

**Arne Andersson**

*E-commerce expert affiliated to PostNord*

**Soledad Gonzalez**

*Business Analyst PostNord*



## Contents

|   |  |       |
|---|--|-------|
| ● | E-commerce development                                     | 5–8   |
| ● | International e-commerce                                   | 9–13  |
| ● | E-commerce development, cont.                              | 14–21 |
| ● | Sector development   | 22–30 |
| ● | Consumers' favorites                                       | 31–32 |
| ● | What is loyalty – really?                                  | 33–34 |
| ● | Deliveries, payments and channels                          | 35–48 |
| ● | Topic – second-hand/used online                            | 49–52 |
| ● | Topic – C2C  | 53–56 |
| ● | Retail Day: Lindex may have found the Holy Grail of retail | 57–58 |

# E-commerce growth despite extreme comparative figures

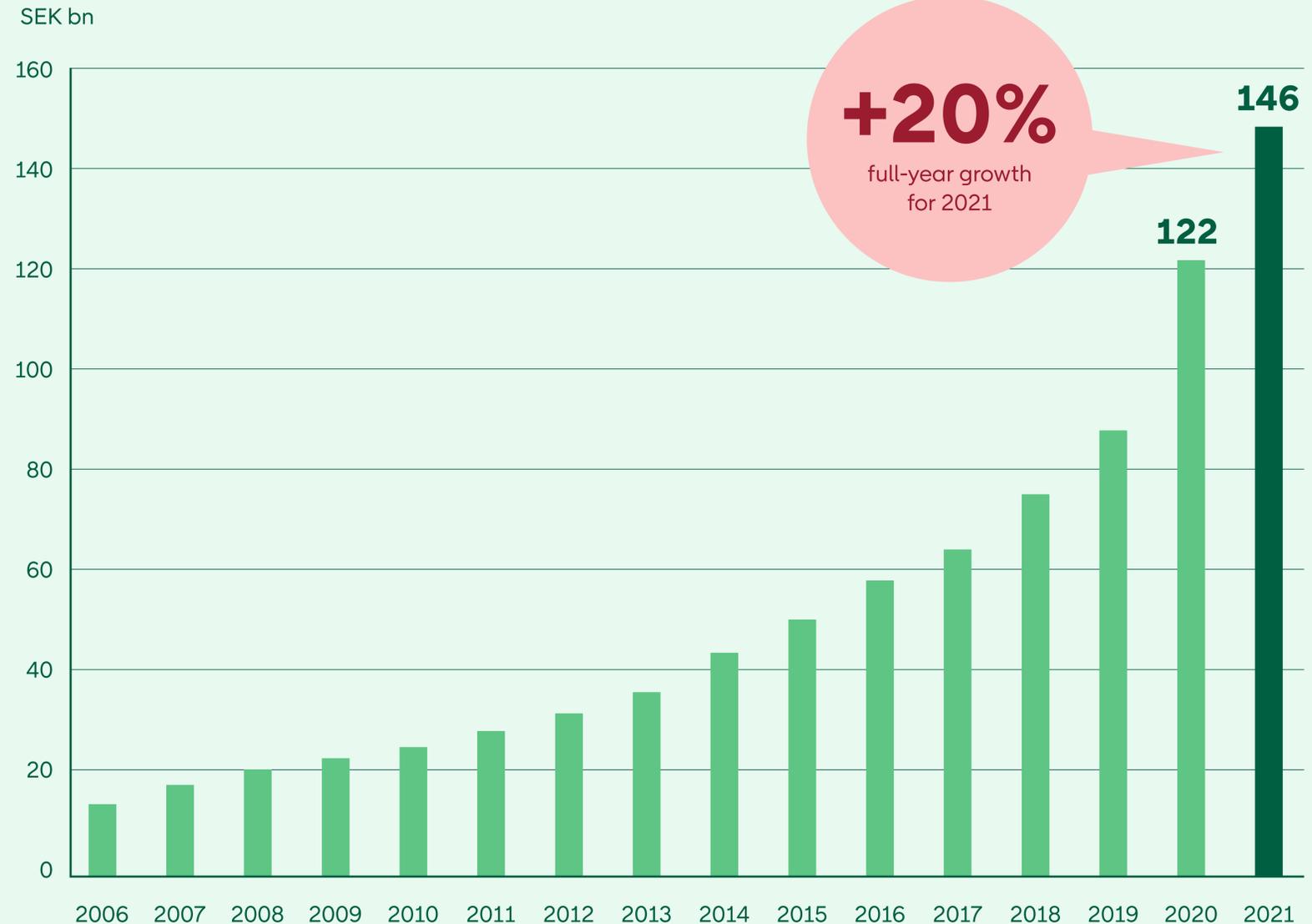
**T**he pandemic year 2020 was extreme from an e-commerce perspective. The sector grew by 40 percent and tens of billions of Swedish kronor of consumption were shifted from physical stores to e-commerce. E-retailers faced the huge challenge in 2021 of once again trying to increase their sales figures.

**Nevertheless, 2021 was** another relatively strong year for e-commerce, with growth reaching 20 percent. One explanation is the coronavirus pandemic, which was more protracted than many might have first imagined. The first quarter, where comparative figures were still weak, was also extremely strong. Furthermore, consumer behavior has gradually changed and previously unaccustomed consumer groups have embraced digital behaviors.

**Even more impressive** are the amounts themselves. E-commerce now has such high net sales that even 20 percent growth represents around SEK 24 billion. This in turn means that e-commerce represented around 45 percent of the growth in total retail – mostly because total retail had a strong year. The total e-commerce share is therefore around 16 percent.

**However, e-commerce growth** slowed down in the fall, especially in the fourth quarter, in which the negative growth rate was -1.2 percent. This was because last year's fourth quarter was the strongest we have recorded in the E-barometer, making it extremely difficult for retailers to produce further growth this year. For example, grocery retail grew by an astonishing 136 percent in Q4 2020, so it was not surprising that growth in the sub-sector was negative in the fourth quarter of the year.

## E-commerce net sales



# How the sub-sectors fared during 2021

**T**he year 2021 was an unusual year for the e-commerce sectors. It started extremely strong in the first quarter and has since fallen sharply for many sub-sectors as the comparative figures became increasingly tough.

**Grocery retail, which became the** winning sector of the year, is a clear example. From triple-digit growth in the first quarter, sales fell to 3 percent in Q3 and negative growth in Q4. But despite the weak finish, overall sales were still so strong that the sector topped the list.

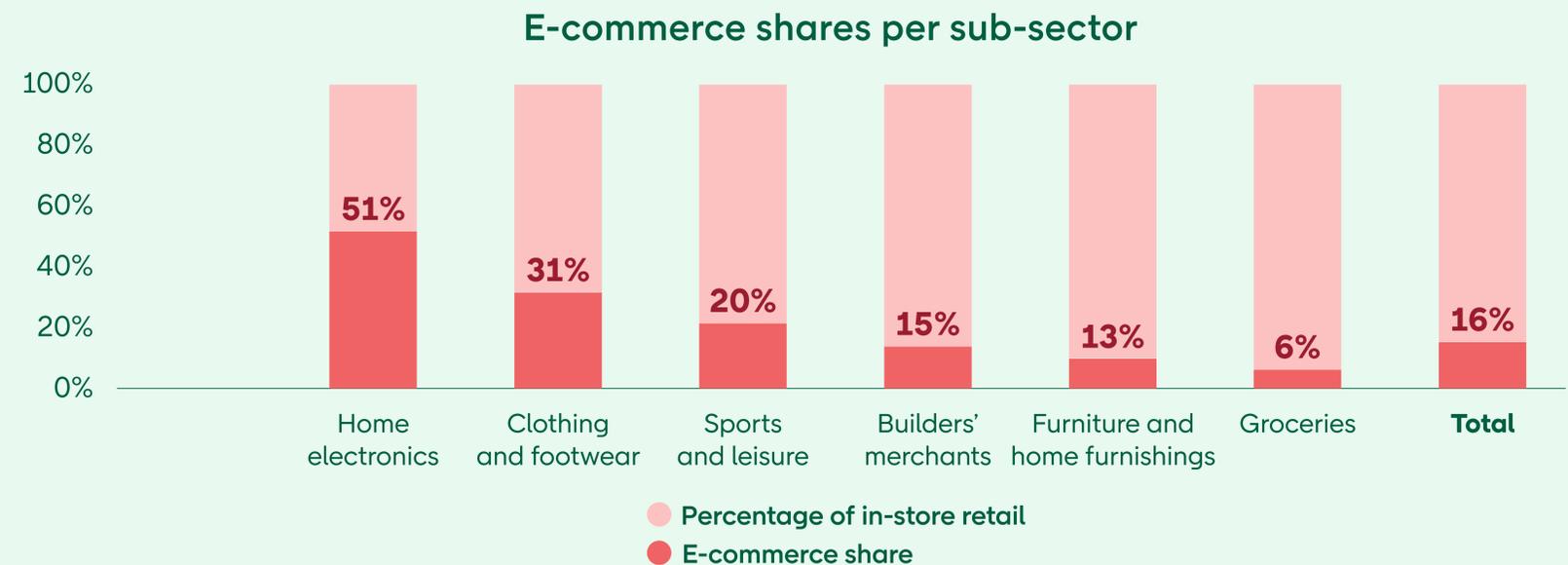
**Another success story** during the year was the home electronics sector. This was somewhat unexpected, as the sector is one of the most mature online. The

e-commerce share in 2020 was already 43 percent. With an annual growth of 23 percent, the e-commerce share for 2021 climbed to 51 percent. However, there have been sporting events and popular product launches during the year, and the sector probably also benefited from the absence of other consumption. If 2022 means more travel, eating out and going to concerts, and many people upgrading expensive capital goods such as cell phones, computers and TVs, consumption could be affected in the future.

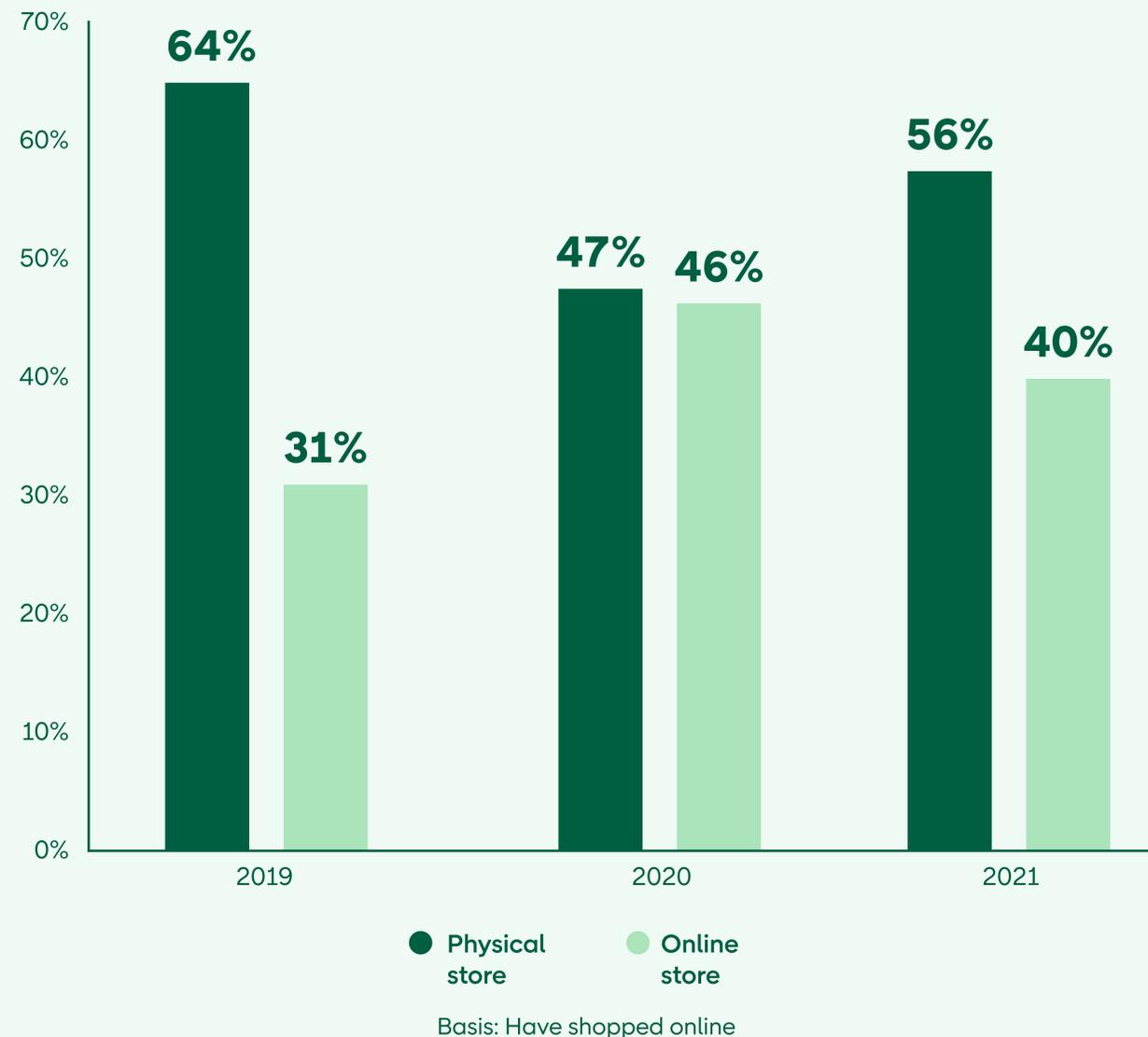
**One sector in which** we had expected a drop in e-commerce share was fashion retail. However, stores have not recovered sales to the extent we expected, and the sector as a whole is still somewhat below pre-pandemic sales levels.

## Sales growth and net sales per sub-sector

|                                | Growth rate 2021 | Net sales 2021 (SEK bn) | E-commerce share 2021 | E-commerce share 2020 |
|--------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Groceries                      | 35%              | 19                      | 6%                    | 4%                    |
| Furniture and home furnishings | 27%              | 9                       | 13%                   | 11%                   |
| Home electronics               | 23%              | 31                      | 51%                   | 43%                   |
| Pharmacy                       | 19%              | 9                       | N/A                   | 16%                   |
| Sports and leisure             | 19%              | 6                       | 20%                   | 18%                   |
| Children's items and toys      | 18%              | 3                       | N/A                   | N/A                   |
| Clothing and footwear          | 17%              | 18                      | 31%                   | 30%                   |
| Builders' merchants            | 15%              | 8                       | 15%                   | 14%                   |
| Books and media                | 6%               | 6                       | N/A                   | N/A                   |
| <b>Total</b>                   | <b>20%</b>       | <b>146</b>              | <b>16%</b>            | <b>14%</b>            |



## Think back to your latest purchase – in which type of store did you purchase the item?



## More people are once again making purchases in a physical store

**C**onsumer purchasing habits saw a clear change in 2020. In the previous year (2019), 64 percent of consumers stated that they made their most recent purchase in a physical store. In the following year there were more or less as many people who made their most recent purchase in an online store as in a physical store. In 2021, the physical store was once again dominant – although not quite as much as in 2019. This illustrates how the effects of the

pandemic are beginning to fade and consumers are to some extent returning to previous habits.

**Older consumers were** more likely to shop in physical stores in 2021. But there are also differences among e-commerce consumers. Young and middle-aged women are much more likely to use their cell phones for e-commerce than men, who prefer desktop or laptop computers as their main purchasing channel.

# Two expert voices on Swedish e-commerce

## “Shopping for second-hand/used goods online has become a popular movement”

**W**ho knew that 2021 would also be a pandemic year? Who would have thought it when the pandemic hit? The fluctuations in the retail sector are closely linked to the progress of the virus and our politicians' attempts to slow it down. E-commerce concerning food, in particular, is surging in the face of virus peaks and restrictions.

One type of retail that seems to have been unaffected by the pandemic is the digital second-hand market. The fact that almost half of Swedes have shopped second-hand in the past year is impressive. It has gone from being a trend to becoming a popular movement. Since it is mainly younger women who shop second-hand, we can expect it to be here to stay.

The fact that Tradera, Facebook and Blocket are the most popular retail websites shows that consumers appreciate shopping second-hand C2C, i.e. buying from and selling to other consumers. This phenomenon has grown in the shadow of expanding e-commerce with an equally rapid expansion of various forms of distribution points, collection stations, lockers

and home deliveries. However, the trend of growing second-hand sales between consumers is creating new demands for better possibilities for consumers not only to pick up parcels but also to send them.

At the same time, there is a growing phenomenon of micro-businesses in arts, crafts and design, with individual artists engaging in sales on a micro level via marketplaces such as Etsy or directly through social media channels. Each individual market participant is very small, but together they represent a growing phenomenon. These micro-retailers also need to package their products attractively and securely. The lack of locations from which consumers can send parcels as easily and conveniently as they now collect them will be a barrier to the further growth of this trade. This should be the next step in the development of seamless parcel management.



**Emma Hernell**  
CEO of HUI

## “We continue to be inspired by trends from China”

**F**rom net sales of SEK 87 billion in 2019 to SEK 146 billion in 2021. Much has rightly been written about the strong growth of e-commerce in the last two years.

With the exception of 2020, when the growth rate was 40 percent, we have to go back to 2007 to see a growth rate higher than this year's 20 percent. Impressive!

When I study the growth of the different sub-sectors, two real milestones in the history of e-commerce catch my eye. Net sales of groceries have overtaken clothing and footwear, and the sub-sector is now the largest after home electronics. And more than half of home electronics' total net sales now come from e-commerce.

So what can we expect from 2022? There are many indications that competition for Swedish consumption will intensify. It is likely that a larger share of consumer consumption will once again relate to travel, hotels and restaurants. The trend in the second half of 2021 is also that Swedish e-commerce consumption from foreign websites grew faster than domestic consumption.

So what does it take to be an e-commerce winner in 2022? We will continue to be inspired by trends originating in China. The journey continues from the transactional e-commerce of the past to an e-commerce in which consumers are entertained and engaged, feel part of a community and identify with brands that take social responsibility. Live shopping really took off in Sweden during the first pandemic year of 2020 and remains very popular. I believe that 2022 will be the year when gamification will take place on a broad front in a similar way in Swedish e-commerce.



**Per Ljungberg** CEO Swedish Digital Commerce

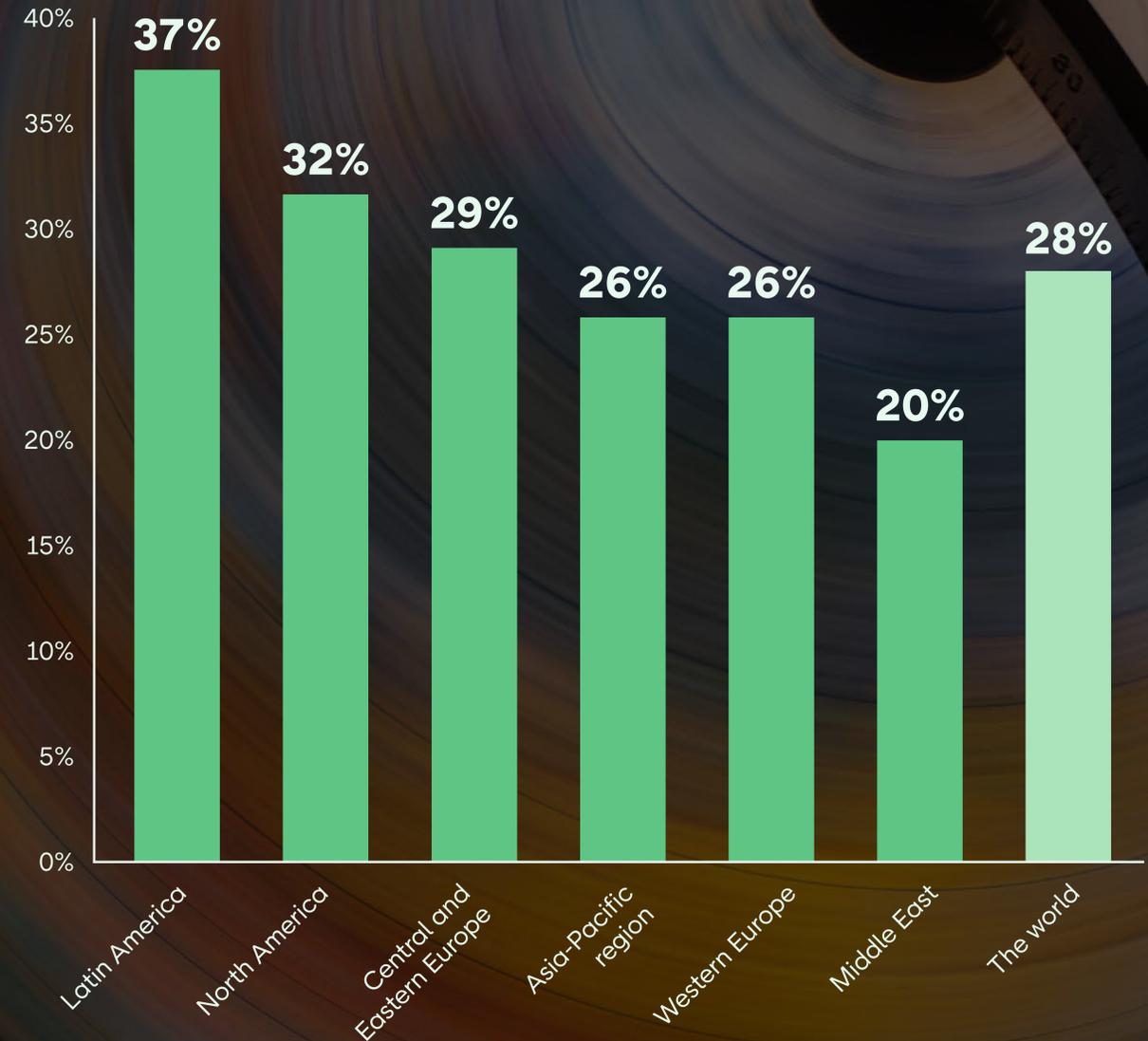
## Strong global growth for e-commerce

**S**hopping online is flourishing around the world. In 2020, global e-commerce grew by 28 percent, with the largest increase in Latin America (37 percent). In Europe, e-commerce grew by 29 percent in Central and Eastern Europe and 26 percent in Western Europe.

**The main reason** for the increase is the coronavirus pandemic. However, global e-commerce growth is likely to be lower in 2021. This is partly because more

physical stores are reopening and partly because several years of forecast growth were already realized in 2020 due to the pandemic. Despite expectations of slower growth, consumers have increasingly started to shop online, indicating a global adaptation to e-commerce. However, this varies between countries, with Germany and Belgium, for example, having a higher proportion who say they will return to stores after the pandemic.

### E-commerce growth in 2020 in different parts of the world



Source: E-marketer

## Strong e-commerce market in Sweden

**S**weden is one of the most mature e-commerce markets in Europe in terms of how many people make online purchases. In our E-commerce in Europe 2021 report, all of 96 percent of Swedish respondents said they had shopped online during the year, the highest percentage in Europe, followed by the UK and Finland.

**When it comes** to the amount consumers estimated they spent shopping online during the year, Sweden is at a more average level. In a year, the average Swede spends EUR 1,932 on e-commerce. This can be compared

to the UK, for example, where the equivalent figure was EUR 2,316. One explanation for the difference may be the UK's more developed online grocery sector, which is driving up annual online consumption.

**As in previous** years, the UK and Germany continue to be the largest European e-commerce markets. Both countries have large populations, high average purchases and significant percentages of e-commerce consumers. In Germany, more than 60 million consumers shop online and in the UK nearly 50 million.

Consumers who shop online, millions



|   | Consumers who shop online, millions | Percentage of the population who shop online | Average estimated purchase amount per person per year |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|---|
|  Belgium     | 7.8                                 | 87%  | EUR 1,572   |
|  Denmark     | 4.1                                 | 88%  | EUR 2,916   |
|  Finland     | 4.1                                 | 95%  | EUR 1,392   |
|  France      | 44.7                                | 87%  | EUR 2,208   |
|  Italy       | 40                                  | 84%  | EUR 1,608   |
|  Netherlands | 13                                  | 94%  | EUR 1,968   |
|  Norway    | 3.9                                 | 93%  | EUR 2,364   |
|  Poland    | 25.8                                | 85%  | EUR 1,296   |
|  Spain     | 34,6                                | 92%  | EUR 1,452   |
|  UK        | 49.3                                | 95%  | EUR 2,316   |
|  Sweden    | 7.6                                 | 96%  | EUR 1,932   |
|  Germany   | 62.1                                | 94%  | EUR 2,088   |

## Increasing numbers of Europeans are shopping online – but fewer from abroad

**T**he number of Europeans who shop online continues to grow steadily. In 2021, an estimated 297 million European consumers shopped online, compared to 293 million in 2020 and 286 million in 2019. Thanks to the growth of e-commerce and the extensive roll-out of digital infrastructure in many parts of Europe, this trend has been sustained. For example, 5G technology is being rolled out in Europe, enabling higher transmission speeds for digital information. This, in turn, can improve the experience of live shopping, for example, or enable brand-new services that require high bandwidth.

**Although more Europeans** shopped online in 2021, fewer bought goods from abroad than in the past. 216 million European consumers said that they made online purchases from abroad in 2021. One reason for the decrease was the closure of ports due to the coronavirus pandemic. There has also been a shortage of containers. This has caused major delays in the world's supply and logistics chains, particularly in Asia. In addition, the UK, which has been an attractive market for European e-commerce consumers, has also lost out due to Brexit.

## Europe's e-commerce in figures



# 297

million consumers in Europe shop online



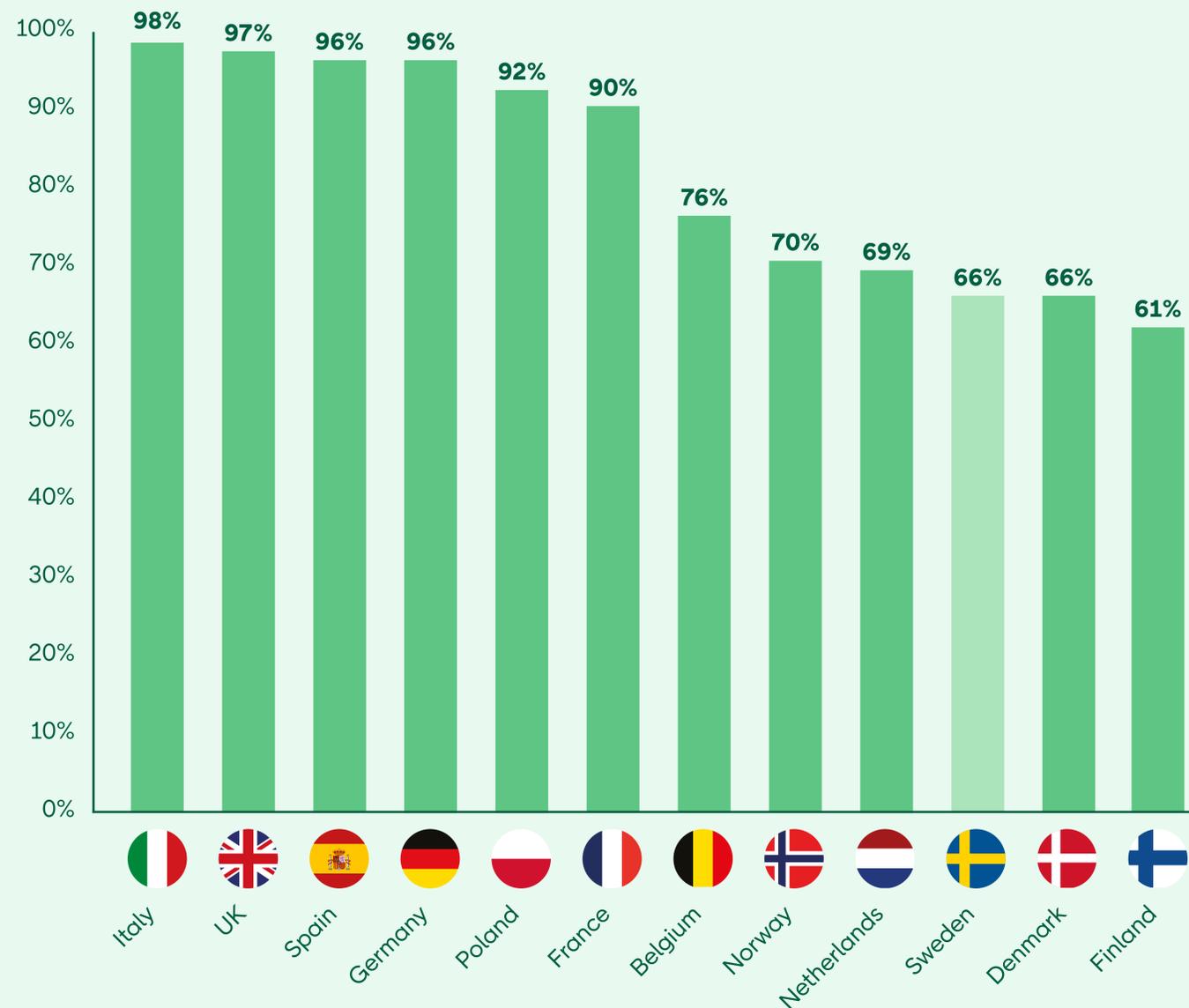
# 216

million European consumers make online purchases from abroad



*Although more Europeans shopped online in 2021, fewer bought goods from abroad than in the past.*

## Percentage who made purchases from a marketplace



Basis: Have shopped online

## Wish has lost market shares in Europe during the pandemic

**P**latform-based companies, like e-commerce, have benefited from the digital boom of the pandemic. However, some platforms have fared better than others in European countries. In Sweden and the Netherlands, the number of consumers shopping on Amazon increased by around 12 percent and 9 percent respectively compared to 2020, which is the largest increase in Europe. In the case of Sweden, this is probably due to Amazon establishing operations locally. Zalando has also seen growth in Europe, including an increase of around 4 percent in Scandinavia.

**Wish, on the other hand,** has gone in the opposite direction, losing market shares in Europe. In Denmark, Norway and the Netherlands, the share of Wish users decreased by around 6 percentage points in 2021 compared to the previous year. This is the same trend that we see in Sweden, for example in the list of consumers' favorite companies, with Alibaba/Aliexpress also losing share. This is likely a consequence of general uncertainty in China regarding production, shipping and logistics.

## Swedes choose Denmark over the US online

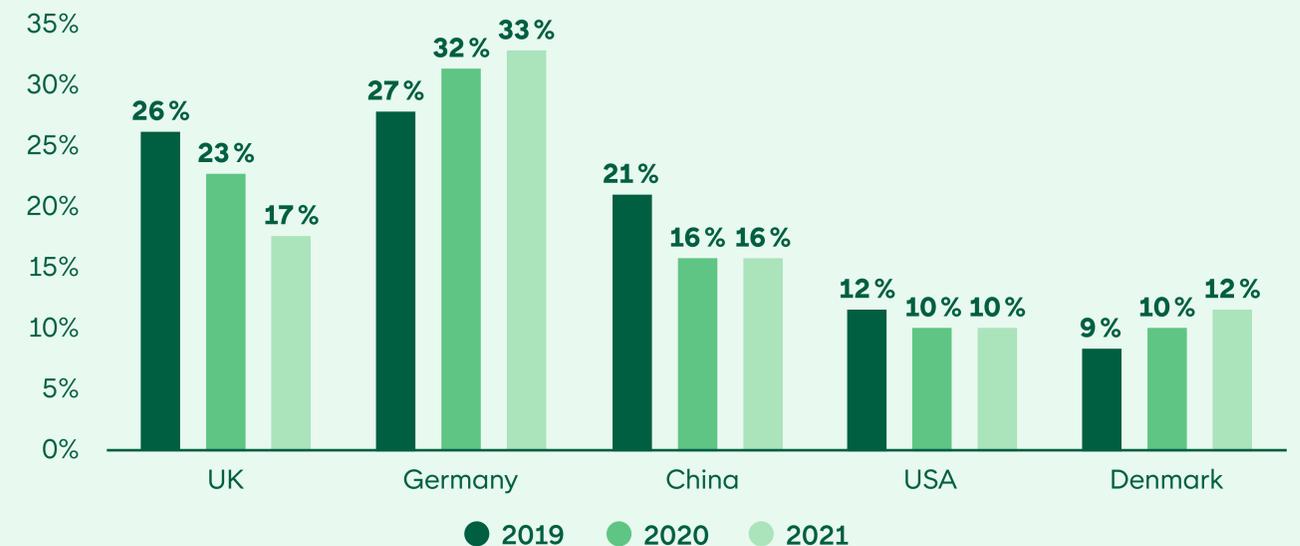
**W**e have been measuring consumers' online purchases from abroad for many years. In recent years, the share of foreign purchases has been declining. One reason is, of course, the coronavirus pandemic, which has disrupted the entire global logistics apparatus; but it is also a matter of foreign market participants establishing themselves in Sweden. Zalando established a warehouse in Sweden a few years ago, and then Amazon followed. This enables a greater proportion of products traditionally purchased online from abroad to be consumed domestically.

**The shipping problem** was particularly clearly symbolized in 2021 by the cargo

ship Ever Given, which managed to get stuck in the Suez Canal, blocking thousands of other ships carrying goods to Europe. Long-distance e-commerce from Asia is also one of the areas that has declined the most in recent years, along with UK e-commerce following Brexit.

**Instead, the e-commerce** imports that have increased the most are those coming via our southern neighbors. Denmark has grown in popularity among consumers in recent years and this year made it into the top four importing countries. Germany has also grown, probably at the expense of the UK.

## Germany is the top foreign market for Swedish e-commerce consumers



Basis: Made cross-border online purchases

## Percentage that shopped online from abroad



Basis: Shopped online in the past month

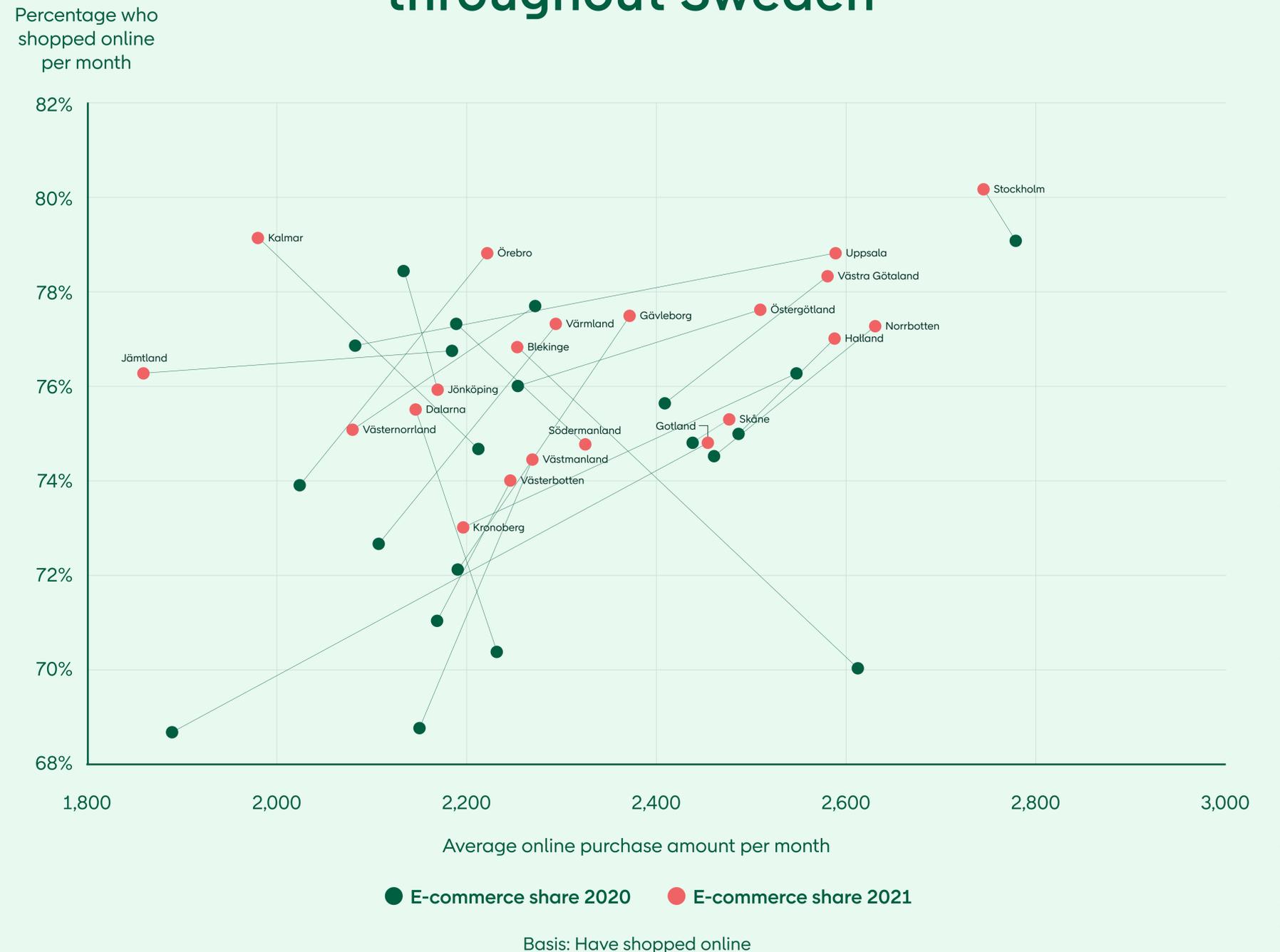
# E-commerce starting to take off in more remote regions

**T**he proportion of consumers who shop online, and how much they do so, differs among the different regions of Sweden. The share of e-commerce is highest in Stockholm County, where 80 percent of consumers shop online, followed by Kalmar and Örebro Counties. Västmanland, Västerbotten and Kronoberg County are the regions with the lowest e-commerce share. In Blekinge, Gotland and Västmanland, the share of e-commerce has increased most since 2020. On the island of Gotland, average purchases have also increased significantly, but both e-commerce share and average purchases are still below the national average. This is probably because the county is more remote from a logistical perspective.

Like the e-commerce share, Stockholm's average purchase is the highest among the country's regions. Norrbotten and Halland Counties follow. The lowest average purchases are found in Jämtland and Kalmar.

In several regions both average purchases and e-commerce share decreased compared to 2020. This may be largely due to the fact that 2020 saw the largest ever increase in e-commerce due to the pandemic. In 2021, the pandemic was more limited and many returned to shopping in physical stores, contributing to a decline in e-commerce in some regions. However, all regions' e-commerce shares have increased compared to 2019.

## A major shift in e-commerce throughout Sweden

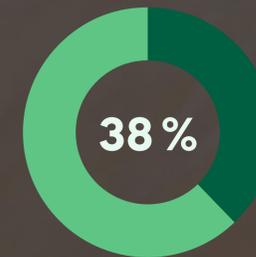


# Online shopping is more important for some product groups in terms of accessibility

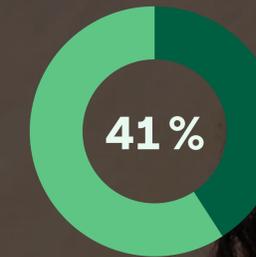
**N**ot all product groups are equal when it comes to accessibility. Consumers feel that some goods are easier to find in the local physical store than others. Beauty products seem to have by far the best selection in the local stores. This is probably due to the relatively small size of beauty products, which allows physical stores to have a relatively large selection. Fifty-six percent of consumers surveyed felt that the beauty/health product they bought online would have been just as easy to get hold of in a physical store in their local area.

**The product category** that consumers find most difficult to find locally is books and media. The book sector has a huge product range, especially if consumers are looking for international titles. Even large physical bookstores in big cities have difficulty competing with e-commerce when it comes to more niche titles. Thirty-three percent of consumers said they could have bought the same book/media product they bought online in their local store.

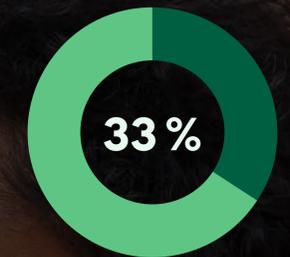
## Percentage of consumers able to purchase their most recent online purchase in their municipality



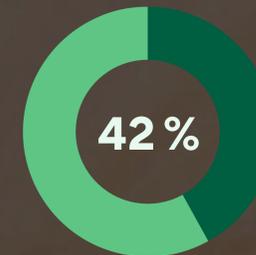
Children's items and toys



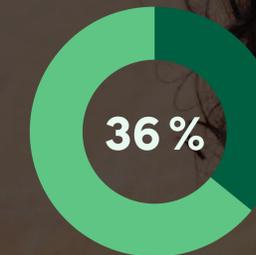
Vehicle-related products



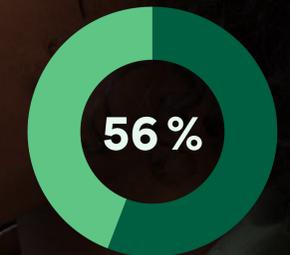
Books and media



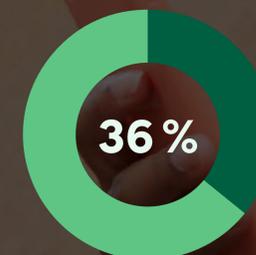
Home electronics



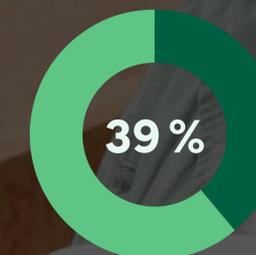
Clothing and footwear



Beauty and health



Sports and leisure



Building products



Furniture and home furnishings

Basis: Have shopped online

## E-commerce increases accessibility in rural areas

**Online shopping has reduced the** importance of the physical store for access to a product.

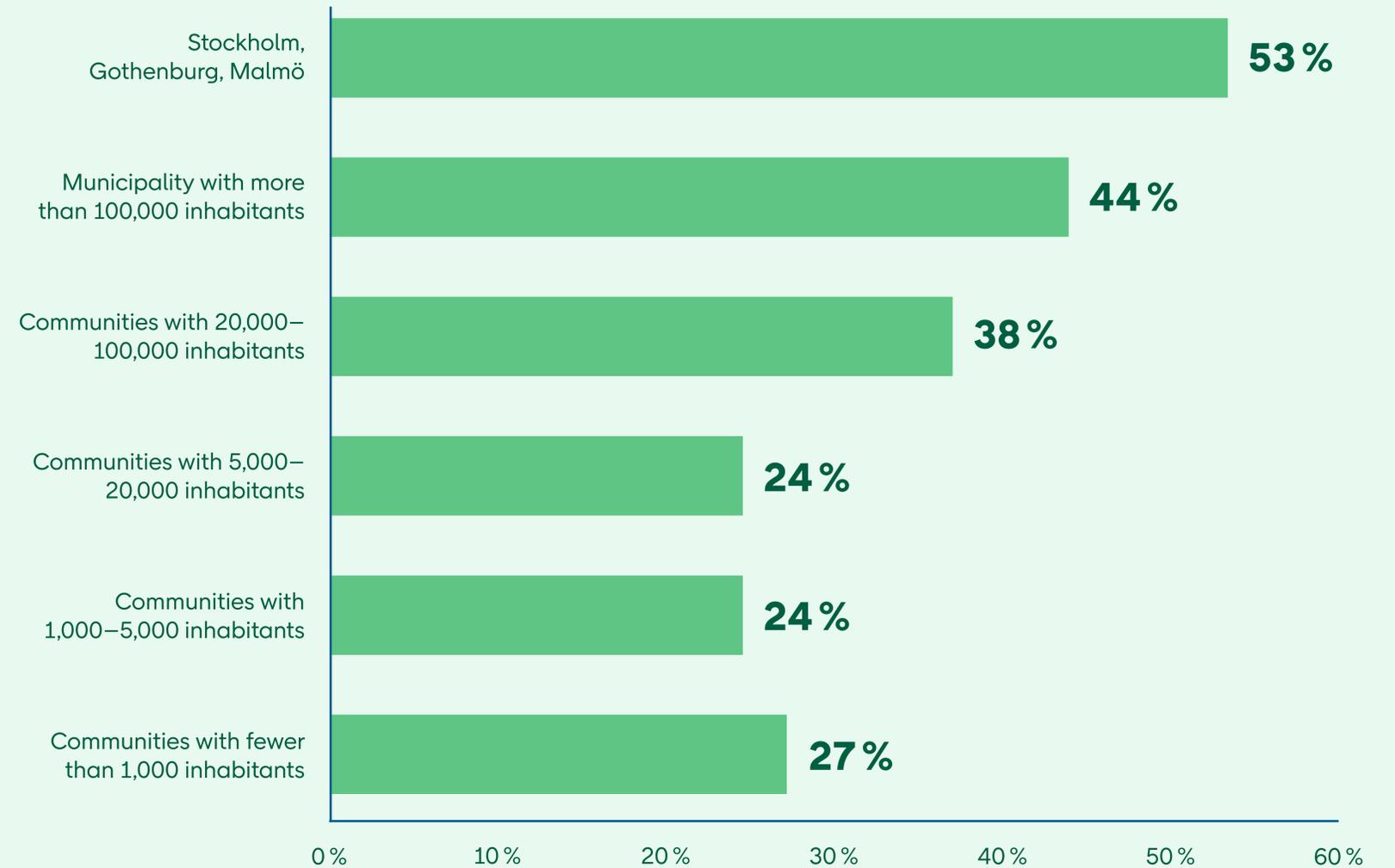
The range of products available online is far greater than in physical stores and this range is, in principle, constantly increasing in all product groups. The accessibility of e-commerce means that the place of residence plays less and less of a role in whether a specific product is available or not.

**In 2021, only 41 percent** of consumers surveyed felt that their last item they bought online had also been available for purchase in a physical store in their municipality. However, there is a big difference between consumers living in big cities and consumers living in the rest

of Sweden. But even in big cities, about half of the respondents said that the product was also available in physical stores, while the corresponding figure was only 24–27 percent in places with up to 20,000 inhabitants.

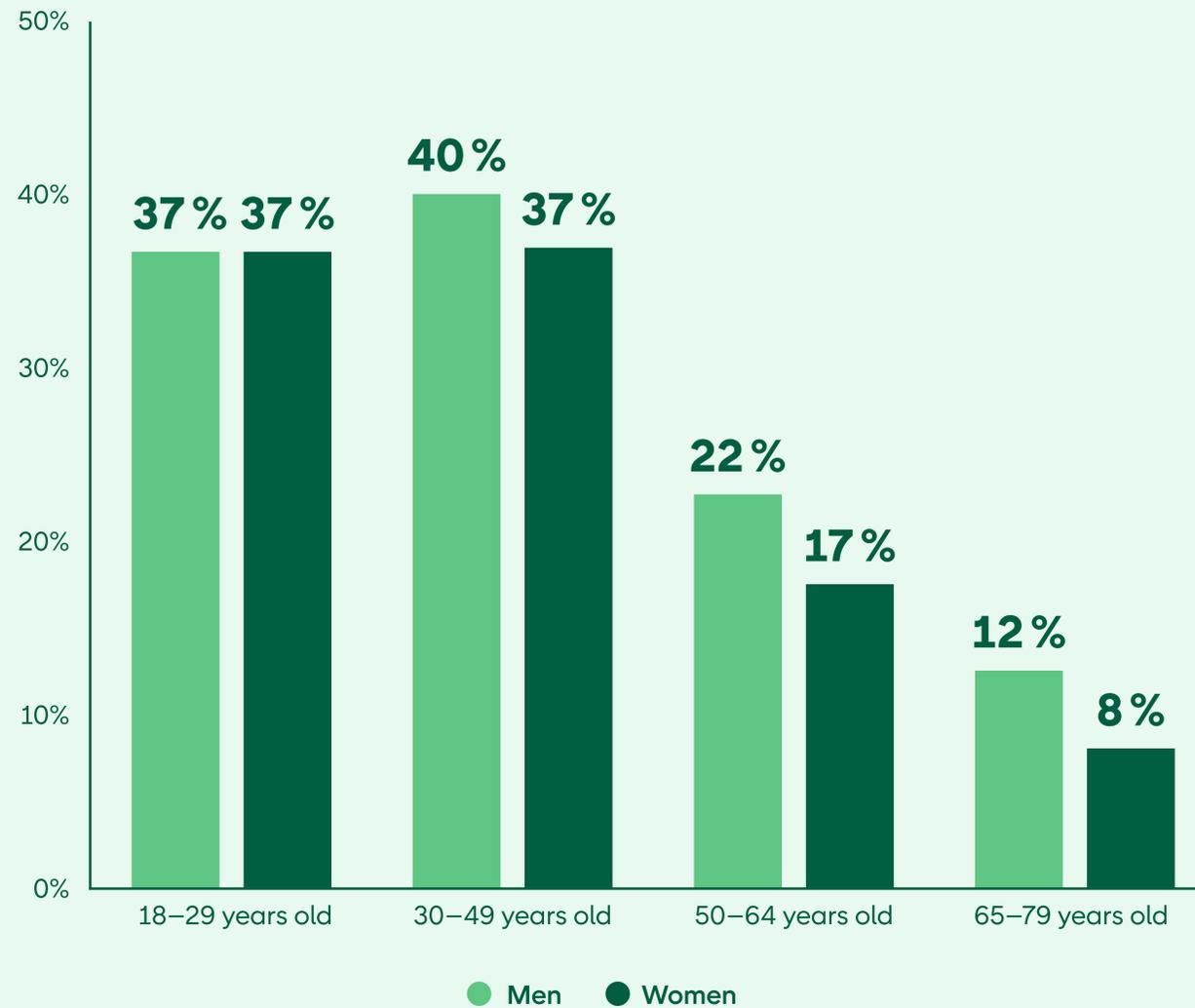
**The fact that even** big cities in many cases cannot compete with the huge range of goods available on the internet is probably one of the main factors for the success of e-commerce. But as we can see in the chart, it is above all in rural areas that this has the greatest impact. Consumers there have seen a huge increase in the range of goods available through e-commerce, and the vast majority of goods ordered cannot be purchased locally.

## Percentage of e-commerce consumers who said they could buy their latest online purchase in a physical store in the municipality where they live



Basis: Shopped online in the past year

## Percentage of consumers in different age groups who are willing to pay for same-day delivery



Basis: Have shopped online

## Young consumers are willing to pay for faster delivery

**S**ustainability is on the agenda and is predicted to become an increasingly important factor in future deliveries – at least if you ask consumers. In previous barometers we have described how many consumers say they could imagine waiting one to two days extra for their item if the delivery was made more sustainable/eco-friendly.

**But while consumers** say they are willing to wait a little longer for a good thing, rapid delivery is important. Some

28 percent of consumers surveyed in this year's survey said they would be willing to pay more for same-day delivery. This service is particularly important among younger people – 37 percent in the 18–29 age group compared to 10 percent in the 65–79 age group. It illustrates that long-term sustainable delivery cannot compromise other delivery values such as speed and convenience – especially among younger consumers. Instead, companies must develop these qualities in parallel.

## Consumers want more live shopping in online stores

**T**he phenomenon of live shopping – a live display of products with interactive features for viewers – has been growing rapidly in recent years and has made its way onto the list of what consumers want to see more of. Today, 10 percent of consumers surveyed say they wish online stores would do more live shopping. Young women (18–29 years) are particularly interested, with as many as 17 percent wanting to see more of it. Men aged 18–29 also appreciate live shopping, with 15 percent wanting more of it in online stores.

**The ability to** ask questions and buy the goods directly without leaving the broadcast creates added value for consumers. In addition, live shopping helps to create a closeness to the brand, just as a visit to a physical store does. Live shopping also enables retailers to use their expertise and build trust among consumers. If done correctly, it also invites additional sales of products that go with the product in question, which can benefit both the consumer and the retailer.

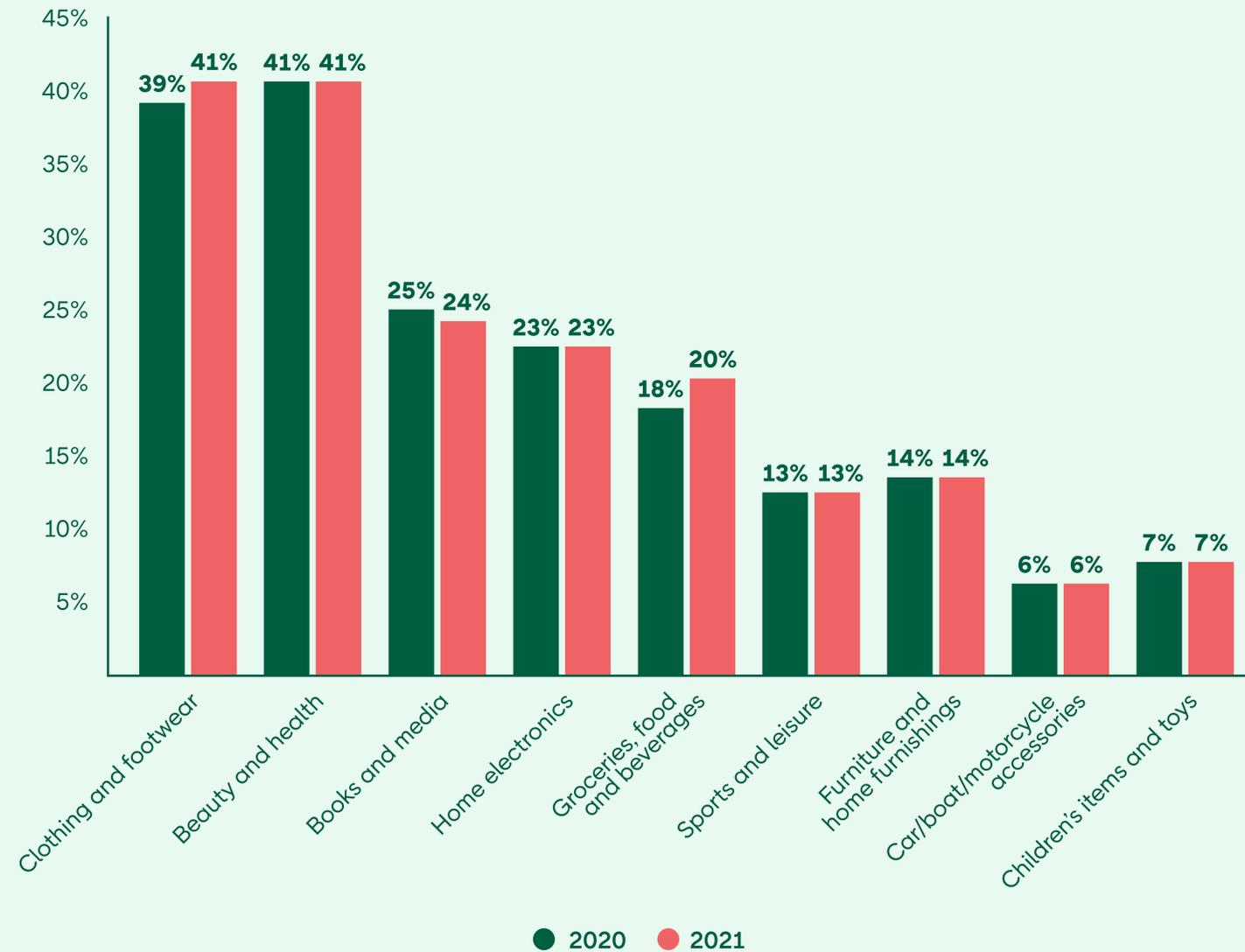


17%

percent of young women wish online stores worked more with live shopping

## What products have you bought online in the past month?

(average for 2020 and 2021)



Basis: Shopped online in the past month

## Clothing and footwear making a comeback in 2021

**T**he year 2021 has been an eventful year for the e-commerce sub-sectors. The pandemic that impacted 2020 slowly disappeared over the summer, only to reappear again in late fall with the new omicron mutation.

**Despite the lackluster** end to the year, clothing retail has made a comeback and regained the top spot from beauty products as the most popular sub-category. As society returns to normal, interest in clothing has increased. Beauty products include pharmacy retail, which remains

at a high level. Towards the end of the year, more people also say they bought cosmetics.

**The grocery sector**, last year's "e-commerce rocket", remains at a high level and is now one of the more popular e-commerce sectors. Grocery retail has gained many new consumer groups during the pandemic. However, a certain part of the increase during the pandemic in this sector is a specific type of consumption (in-store collection) that does not seem as persistent as home delivery.

# E-commerce growth in the grocery sector slowing down

**I**n 2021, the market has changed slightly for online grocery shopping. Sales were high at the beginning of the year, with the majority being made via in-store collection. This was probably due to the fact that there was simply no capacity or opportunity to cover all sales with home delivery.

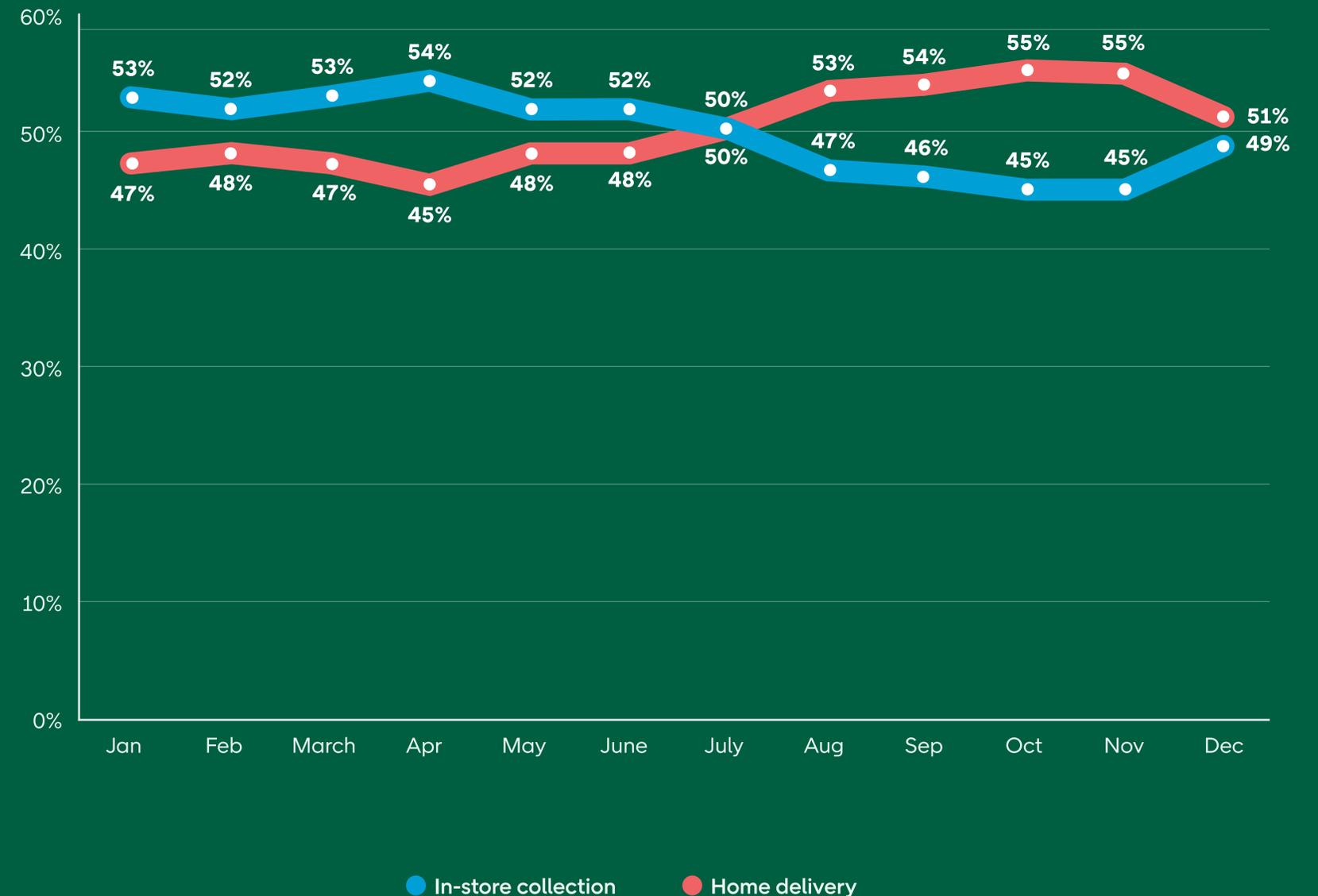
In the latter half of 2021, the e-commerce share was clearly lower for grocery retailers. A shift in deliveries was

also evident, with the majority having their goods delivered to their homes. When volumes fall, it is almost exclusively at the expense of in-store collection, illustrating that home delivery appears to be the preferred mode of delivery for consumers when grocery retailers are able to offer it. It is also conceivable that the expansion of home delivery is to some extent a limiting factor for the growth of the sector if it cannot keep pace with potential sales growth.

Source: <https://www.svenskdagligvaruhandel.se/wp-content/uploads/Dagligvaruindex-december-2021.pdf>

## Delivery methods for groceries purchased online

Percentage of home delivery and in-store collection (2021)



# Recovery for clothing and footwear – but shipping chaos and restrictions cause concern

**F**ashion retail is one of the sectors most affected by the pandemic. Restrictions have led to a reduction in store visits and in purchases of clothing and footwear by physical stores. Instead, consumers have turned to online shopping to buy new items for their wardrobes. At the same time, the general demand for clothing and footwear has increased as society has periodically returned to normal. This led to an overall annual growth of 17 percent for e-commerce.

**As the year** came to a close, it was time for Black Week and the Christmas shopping period. In 2020, the peak shopping season was marked by widespread contagion and restrictions, which hit the sector hard. Clothing then gave way to other types of

gifts, but in 2021 it once again became a popular gift under the Christmas tree. The fact that we were once again meeting in larger groups certainly contributed to the greater need for fashion-related products.

**Despite the recovery,** some concerns remain as we head into 2022. Recently, many fashion retailers have had problems getting their goods delivered. Delays in deliveries and increases in shipping rates are a source of concern for the sector, and there is currently no answer as to when these problems will subside. In addition, the spread of infection in the country is increasing and restrictions are being reintroduced. When social activities are cancelled, the recovery of fashion retail risks grinding to a halt.



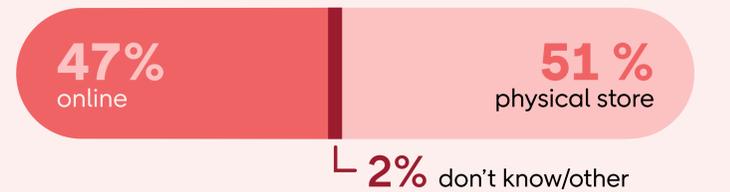
18

billion kronor net sales 2021.

31%

percentage of total fashion retail.

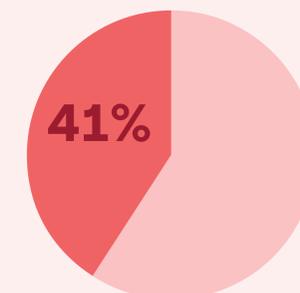
Percentage who made their most recent purchase in the category online or in store, respectively



Percentage of men and women who made online purchases (fourth quarter), respectively



Percentage of e-commerce consumers who bought clothing and footwear



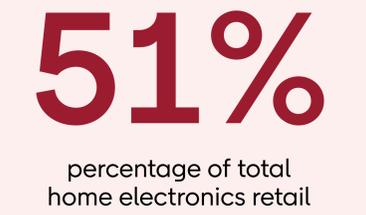
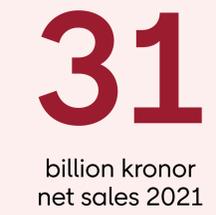
Average amount per month of those who purchased clothing and footwear



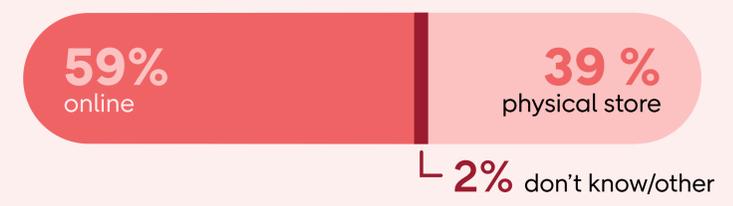
# Continued strong interest in home electronics

**T**he home electronics sector was strong in 2021, with growth of 23 percent. Despite the record-high comparative figures from last year, sales continue to grow. In 2020, sales were driven by the pandemic, which increased the need for electronic gadgets in the home. Even as we've moved further outside the home in recent times, the demand for an upgraded home has continued. Elgiganten reports that sales of household products and white goods were particularly strong in the second half of the year. <sup>1)</sup>

**Despite its success**, the sector has faced major problems with the lack of supply of semiconductor devices. In addition, electronics retailers have struggled with shipping issues. There were therefore concerns about empty shelves during Black Friday and the Christmas shopping period, but this was not the case. Electronics retailers were prepared for problems with semiconductor shortages and logistics becoming a hindrance during sales peaks, so many chose to restock in advance, but prices were higher than usual. Higher shipping costs and shortages of input goods are the main reasons for rising price levels. <sup>2)</sup>



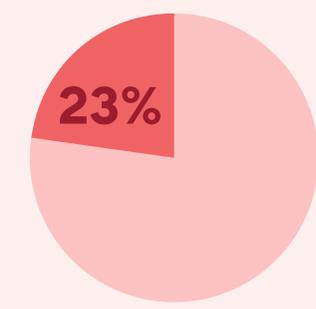
Percentage who made their most recent purchase in the category online or in store, respectively



Percentage of men and women who made online purchases (fourth quarter), respectively



Percentage of e-commerce consumers who bought home electronics



Average amount per month of those who purchased home electronics



<sup>1)</sup> [www.di.se/nyheter/elgiganten-fortsatter-oka-forsaljningen-otroligt-starkt-resultat/](http://www.di.se/nyheter/elgiganten-fortsatter-oka-forsaljningen-otroligt-starkt-resultat/)  
<sup>2)</sup> [www.dn.se/ekonomi/komponentbrist-och-fraktkaos-ger-hogre-priser-pa-black-friday/](http://www.dn.se/ekonomi/komponentbrist-och-fraktkaos-ger-hogre-priser-pa-black-friday/)

# A year of highs and lows for booksellers

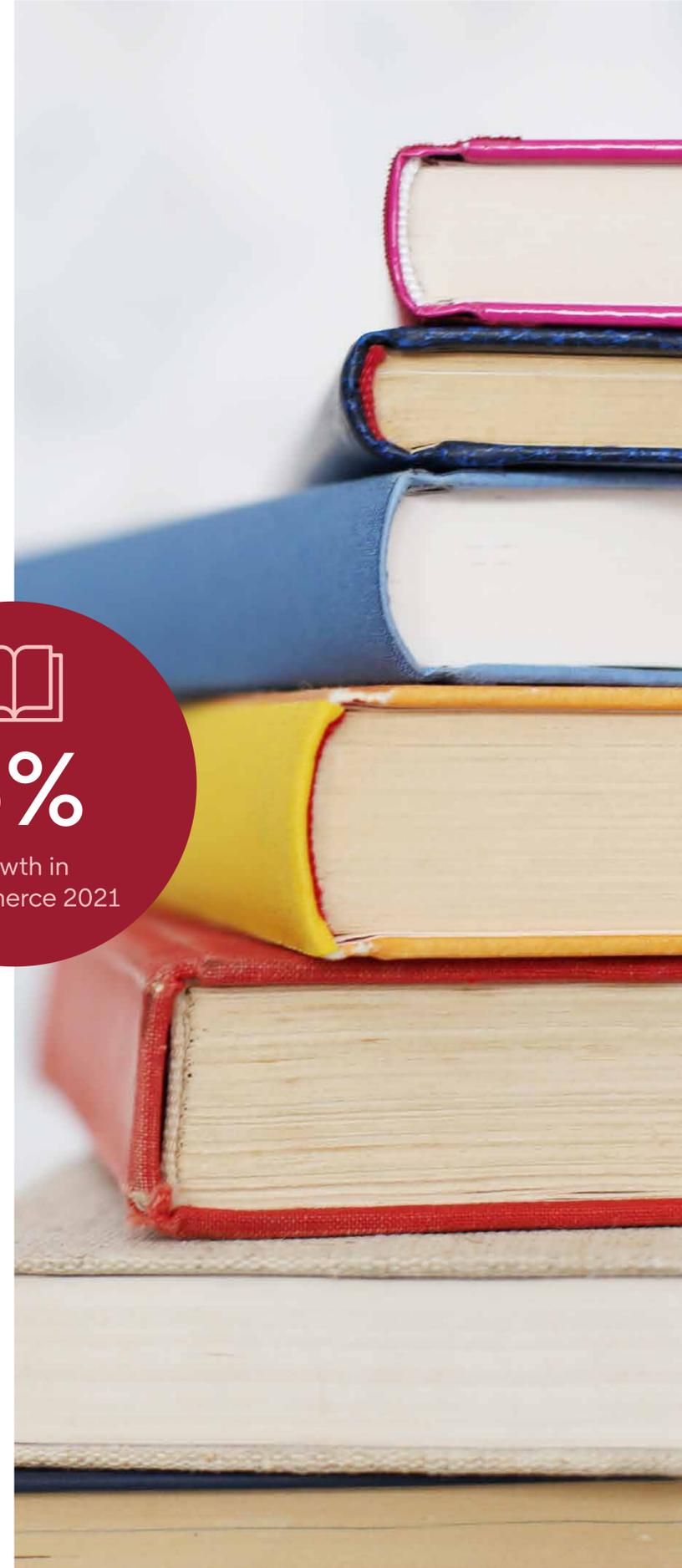
**T**he past year has been relatively good for book retailers in terms of sales. Growth certainly shifted in the latter half of the year, albeit from high levels and tough comparative figures. The total annual growth rate was thus 6 percent.

**But all is** not entirely well. Since the beginning of fall there have been some problems with printing. At the same time as the appetite for reading was strong, there were paper shortages, the relocation of book production from Asia to Europe and new coronavirus outbreaks around the

world. This led to delays in deliveries, price increases and concerns that books to be gifted at Christmas would not reach the shelves on time. The printers managed to deliver the books on schedule, but the difficult situation has still not been resolved. At present, paper producers are allocating paper quotas to printers. In addition, rising electricity prices, shortages of other input goods and the threat of strikes are adding to the problems. At this stage, there is no clear answer as to when the situation may turn around, but there are suspicions that it may last until the summer of 2022.<sup>3)</sup>



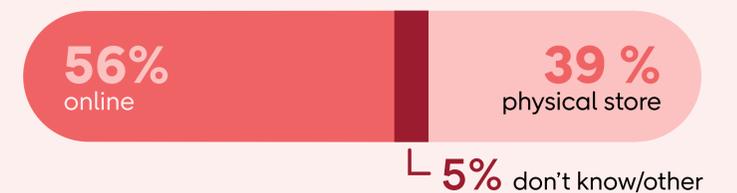
<sup>3)</sup> [www.svb.se/nyheter/presen-pa-tryckerierna-bara-hardnar](http://www.svb.se/nyheter/presen-pa-tryckerierna-bara-hardnar)



6

billion kronor  
net sales 2021

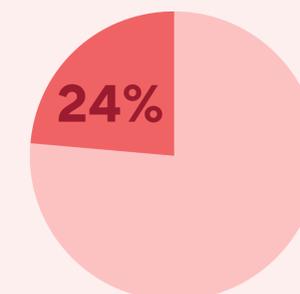
Percentage who made their most recent purchase in the category online or in store, respectively



Percentage of men and women who made online purchases (fourth quarter), respectively



Percentage of e-commerce consumers who bought books and media



Average amount per month of those who purchased books and media



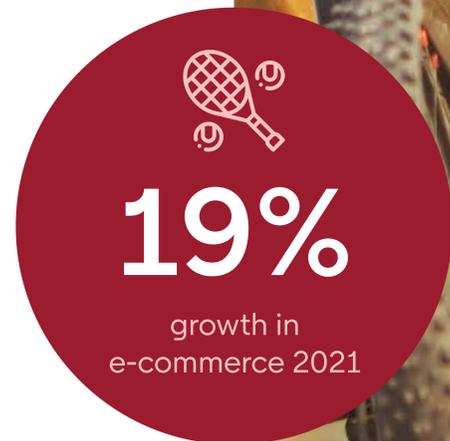
# E-commerce sales continue to grow in the sports and leisure sector

**S**ports and leisure performed strongly in 2021, with growth of 19 percent. Despite people returning to schools and workplaces, interest in outdoor activities and exercise has persisted. Many sporting activities resumed after being suspended during the pandemic, giving sales a boost. At the same time, disruptions in logistics and manufacturing have had a negative impact on sales. For example, the production of bicycles has been hard hit by the pandemic.

**The Christmas shopping** period was successful for the sector and was crowned by snowfall, which will certainly mean a good start to 2022. The continuation of

the strong outdoor trend led to a lot of Christmas gifts being purchased in the segment. Also, the fact that many people have tried new activities during the pandemic meant that more people wanted products that would allow them to continue with their newfound interest. The main example is padel, which has been extremely popular in 2020 and 2021. Footway Group is one of the market participants that has taken advantage of this trend, launching the Racketnow.com racket sports store in December. The niche online store was launched in 24 markets simultaneously and sells products for padel, tennis, badminton, squash and table tennis. <sup>4)</sup>

<sup>4)</sup> <https://news.cision.com/se/footway-group-ab/r/footway-group-lanserar-racketnow-com.c3468350>



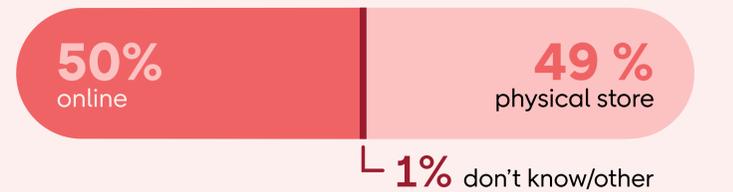
6

billion kronor net sales 2021.

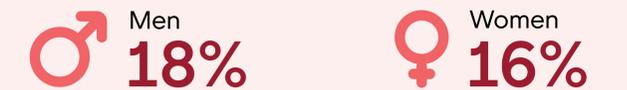
20%

percentage of total sports and leisure retail

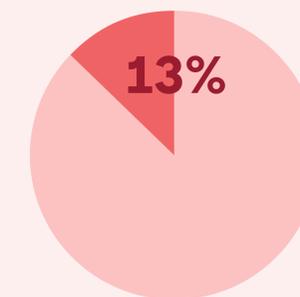
Percentage who made their most recent purchase in the category online or in store, respectively



Percentage of men and women who made online purchases (fourth quarter), respectively



Percentage of e-commerce consumers who bought sports and leisure products



Average amount per month of those who purchased sports and leisure products



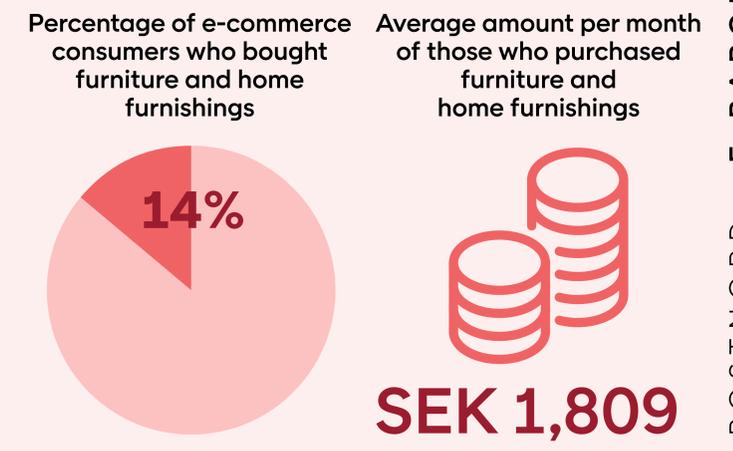
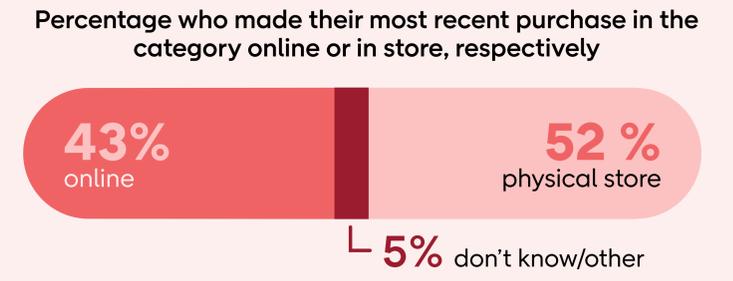
# Strong year for furniture and home furnishings

**A**nnual growth for the furniture and home furnishings sector was estimated at 27 percent in 2021, which corresponds to SEK 9 billion. The development of e-commerce has been accelerated by the pandemic and continued even as restrictions were gradually eased in the fall. In addition, the active housing market has led to an increased need for furniture. In the spring of 2021, the number of homes sold increased sharply. It is likely that an increase in working from home and the fact that more time was spent at home contributed to the high number of sales. <sup>5)</sup>

**During November, it** was time for Black Week. However, sales of furniture and home furnishings were weaker than in the same period in 2020. <sup>6)</sup> At the same

time, there were some developments on the sustainability front. Furniture giant IKEA, which has previously gone against the grain and refrained from campaigns during the period, chose to lower prices on its second-hand range in order to promote more sustainable consumption. <sup>7)</sup>

**During the Christmas** rush, demand for home furnishings was high, but some brands struggled to deliver on time. This is due to longer than usual delivery times from factories abroad. For example, several of glass manufacturer Orrefors' products were delayed. The delays affected, among others, the retail chain Cervera, which experienced the impact of the delivery crisis on the availability of individual goods. <sup>8)</sup>



<sup>5)</sup> [www.hemnet.se/artiklar/bostadsmarknaden/2021/12/10/hemnets-arskronika-2021-sa-var-bostadsmarknaden-under-aret](http://www.hemnet.se/artiklar/bostadsmarknaden/2021/12/10/hemnets-arskronika-2021-sa-var-bostadsmarknaden-under-aret)  
<sup>6)</sup> [www.market.se/affarsnyheter/forsaljning/stark-novembermanad-for-detaljhandeln-saljfest-for-vaskor-och-skor/](http://www.market.se/affarsnyheter/forsaljning/stark-novembermanad-for-detaljhandeln-saljfest-for-vaskor-och-skor/)  
<sup>7)</sup> [www.market.se/retailtrender/hallbarhet/ikeas-omvanda-black-friday-kampanj-ger-kunderna-extra-betalt-for-begagnade-mobler/](http://www.market.se/retailtrender/hallbarhet/ikeas-omvanda-black-friday-kampanj-ger-kunderna-extra-betalt-for-begagnade-mobler/)  
<sup>8)</sup> [www.di.se/nyheter/borsbolaget-drabbat-av-leveransproblem-i-julhandeln-storningar-overallt/](http://www.di.se/nyheter/borsbolaget-drabbat-av-leveransproblem-i-julhandeln-storningar-overallt/)

# Raw material shortages and fewer renovations in 2021

**I**n 2020, countless Swedes re-modeled their homes. Porches were expanded, holiday cottages were built from scratch and kitchens were renovated. By 2021, many had completed their building projects and demand for building materials had fallen. The high comparative figures for 2020 were difficult to top and this, combined with external factors such as raw material shortages, led to a weaker year for the building sector.

**In the West**, there has been a shortage of timber for several years, which has driven up prices. Timber from Sweden has also been difficult to obtain, and several Swedish sawmills have reported that their warehouses have been virtually empty

during the year. One explanation for the shortage may be the green transition the world is facing, where wood has become a more environmentally friendly option in construction. Another story during the year is the turmoil surrounding the company Cementa, which risked having to cease its cement production, which accounts for a significant part of the production of cement in Sweden.

**Although the building** sector has experienced a slightly more difficult year, a more optimistic future is in sight. Historically, as long as the real estate sector is experiencing positive growth, the builders' merchants sector is also doing well. Online retail is also expected to play an increasingly important role in the sector.



8

billion kronor net sales 2021.

15%

percentage of total builders' merchants sector

Percentage who made their most recent purchase in the category online or in store, respectively



# 2021 was child's play for the toy sector

**F**un and games will always be part of childhood – what changes is how we play. First it was sticks and pine cones, then porcelain dolls, and in the latter half of the 20th century it was plastic toys. Today, play has partially shifted to the digital world, but despite this, growth in 2021 has also been good in traditional categories such as games, crafts and puzzles.

**2021 was a** good year for the sector, with growth of 18 percent. This is partly due to the relatively weaker growth rates in previous years, with the sub-sector not exhibiting the huge growth rates recorded in some other sub-sectors. Market participants also report good Christmas sales. Fears about shortages and delivery problems do not seem to have materialized and affected sales significantly this year.<sup>9)</sup>



<sup>9)</sup> [www.moviezine.se/nyheter/fortfarande-stor-brist-pa-playstation-5](http://www.moviezine.se/nyheter/fortfarande-stor-brist-pa-playstation-5)



**3**

billion kronor net sales 2021.

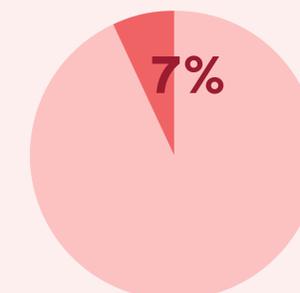
Percentage who made their most recent purchase in the category online or in store, respectively



Percentage of men and women who made online purchases (fourth quarter), respectively



percentage of e-commerce consumers who bought children's items and toys



Average amount per month among those who purchased children's items and toys



# Two steps forward – one step back

**D**uring the coronavirus pandemic, Swedes discovered not only the Swedish countryside but also the phenomenon of having food delivered to their door. In 2020, online food retail broke all records and the sector grew by 95 per cent. As the comparative figures were very high, growth in 2021 was more modest at around 35 percent. As grocery retailers have relatively small market shares online, growth fluctuations are more significant than for other product categories, which we have seen evidence of this year.

Although e-commerce growth for groceries was slightly slower in 2021, several

food market participants have invested in online retail. In December 2021 Axfood-owned mat.se merged with mathem.se. The deal was made with a promise that Axfood would acquire newly issued shares in mathem.se, making the Axfood Group the second largest owner of mathem.se.<sup>10)</sup> Coop is also expanding its online retail with a pilot project in Stockholm allowing customers to collect pre-packed bags of groceries in refrigerated collection cabinets in various locations in the downtown area. The project is a collaboration with logistics operator Gordon Delivery.<sup>11)</sup>



19

billion kronor net sales 2021.

6%

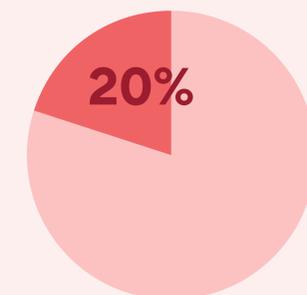
percentage of total grocery retail

Percentage of men and women who made online purchases (fourth quarter), respectively

♂ Men 18%

♀ Women 26%

Percentage of e-commerce consumers who bought groceries



Average amount per month of those who purchased groceries



<sup>10)</sup> [www.mynewsdesk.com/se/mathem/pressreleases/mathem-gaar-samman-med-mat-punkt-se-3150641](http://www.mynewsdesk.com/se/mathem/pressreleases/mathem-gaar-samman-med-mat-punkt-se-3150641)

<sup>11)</sup> [www.dagligvarunytt.se/marknadsnytt/e-handel/coop-och-gordon-i-samarbete-lanserar-kylda-hamtskap-i-stockholm/](http://www.dagligvarunytt.se/marknadsnytt/e-handel/coop-och-gordon-i-samarbete-lanserar-kylda-hamtskap-i-stockholm/)

# Swedes swimming against the tide – appreciate online pharmacies

**A**poteket, Apotek Hjärtat and Kronans Apotek were some of the market participants that increased most in popularity last year. The pandemic is the main cause of the increase, but not the only one. Shopping online for pharmacy products has been an ongoing trend in recent years, and Sweden's pharmacies have expanded their online sales significantly. In 2021, online retail of pharmacy products accounted for 19 percent of total pharmacy retail; five years ago, the corresponding figure was around 4 percent.<sup>12)</sup>

**By foreign standards,** the popularity of online pharmacy retail in Sweden is relatively rare. The Swedish Pharmacy Association (Sveriges Apoteksförening) writes that e-commerce involving foreign pharmacy products is seen as a shady activity, with many people associating it with illegal pharmaceutical sales.<sup>13)</sup> For example, in our neighboring Finland, only

physical pharmacies are allowed to register e-commerce sales.<sup>14)</sup> This in turn has meant that Finland's e-pharmacies account for only one percent of total e-commerce, compared to Sweden's 41 percent.

**The fact that** e-pharmacies have started to overtake physical pharmacies has led some to question whether the state's balancing subsidy to rural pharmacies is necessary. Björn Thorngren, CEO of Meds, wrote an opinion piece in early 2022 that was published in several of Sweden's local newspapers in which he argued that the subsidy is not necessary, as e-pharmacies cover the needs of rural areas for medicines and other pharmacy products. Others, however, argue that maintaining physical pharmacies in rural areas is a democratic issue. This is partly because the majority of people who need to buy medicines are from the older generation, and generally shop less online.

<sup>12)</sup> [www.sverigesapoteksforening.se/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Branschrapport-2016-1.pdf](http://www.sverigesapoteksforening.se/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Branschrapport-2016-1.pdf)

<sup>13)</sup> [www.sverigesapoteksforening.se/resa-i-apoteksvarlden/](http://www.sverigesapoteksforening.se/resa-i-apoteksvarlden/)

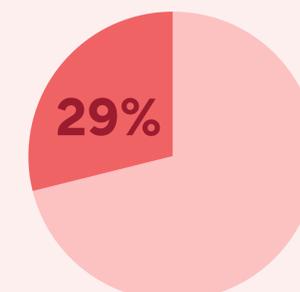
<sup>14)</sup> [www.konkurrensverket.se/informationsmaterial/nyhetsarkiv/svenska-e-handeln-med-lakemedel-storst-i-norden/](http://www.konkurrensverket.se/informationsmaterial/nyhetsarkiv/svenska-e-handeln-med-lakemedel-storst-i-norden/)



**9**  
billion kronor  
net sales 2021.

**19%**  
percentage of total  
pharmacy retail

Percentage of e-commerce consumers who bought pharmacy goods



# Apotea continues to be the Swedish favorite online

**W**hen Swedes are asked to name their e-commerce favorites, Apotea once again tops the list. In recent years, Apotea's smooth deliveries and competitive pricing have meant that the company has outperformed other e-retailers, both as a favorite online store and as the online store that consumers say they buy from the most. At the same time, both traditional market participants and new e-retailers are constantly expanding their

e-commerce offerings and getting better at competing with the Swedes' favorite market participant. However, as in previous years, Zalando and H&M still top the list after Apotea.

**The market participants** that have made the list during the year belong to the grocery, pharmacy and home electronics sectors. A couple of new market participants have entered the Top 20 list, Mathem and Apoteket.

## Favorite company and vote share

Last year's ranking in parentheses; the arrows show whether the vote share increased or decreased compared to the previous year

| Ranking | Businesses | Vote share | Ranking | Businesses | Vote share |
|---------|------------|------------|---------|------------|------------|
| 1 (1)   | Apotea     | 14.5% ↓    | 11 (9)  | Ica        | 1.9% ↑     |
| 2 (2)   | Zalando    | 5.5% ↑     | 12 (23) | Apoteket   | 1.5% ↑     |
| 3 (3)   | H&M        | 4.0% ↓     | 13 (11) | Netonnet   | 1.5% ↓     |
| 4 (6)   | Webhallen  | 3.3% ↑     | 14 (13) | Boozt      | 1.5% ↑     |
| 5 (4)   | Adlibris   | 2.8% ↓     | 15 (12) | Matsmart   | 1.4% ↓     |
| 6 (5)   | CDON       | 2.7% ↓     | 16 (14) | Lyko       | 1.2% ↓     |
| 7 (10)  | Amazon     | 2.5% ↑     | 17 (17) | Åhléns     | 1.1% ↓     |
| 8 (7)   | Tradera    | 2.5% ↑     | 18 (22) | Mathem     | 0.8% ↓     |
| 9 (19)  | Inet       | 2.1% ↑     | 19 (16) | Wish       | 0.8% ↓     |
| 10 (8)  | Bokus      | 1.9% ↑     | 20 (18) | Ellos      | 0.8% ↓     |

Basis: Have shopped online

# The market participants that expanded the most

Home electronics companies and pharmacies have risen in the rankings as favorite market participants in 2021.



Changes in percentage points between 2020 and 2021  
Basis: Shopped online in the past month

# Amazon, Apoteket and Inet increasingly popular with consumers

**S**ince the launch of the Swedish site at the end of 2020, Amazon has climbed up the list of Swedes' favorite e-retailers. Since last year's survey, Amazon has risen both as a favorite store and as the store from which consumers have shopped the most. Now that the company has also launched the Prime membership service in Sweden, it is possible that they will climb further in the future.

most, moving from 23rd to 7th place, with an increase of 1.5 percentage points. Since the beginning of the pandemic, e-pharmacies have gone from strength to strength, partly because new consumer groups such as pensioners have found their way to them. Over the past year, Apoteket has invested heavily in its own warehouse and logistics center in order to gain better control of its e-commerce chain.

**Another sector that** has grown in popularity is home electronics and in particular the gaming segment. Webhallen increased by 0.7 percentage points compared to the previous year and is now in fourth place among Swedes' favorite online stores. One up-and-coming company is Inet, which has gone from 19th to 9th place in the last year. Inet has invested heavily in broadening its range. The company has also invested in customer service and social media, including live broadcasts on YouTube and Twitch.

**Among the market** participants that lost ground during the year are the Chinese. Since 2019, Wish has dropped several places, from 11th to 19th this year. Alibaba/ Aliexpress has also lost ground. One explanation is the shipping chaos that has occurred during the year. But it may also be that consumers are becoming increasingly sustainability-conscious and thus choosing to buy from more local and quality-assured market participants.

**Furthermore, Apoteket has** emerged as a favorite among Swedes, moving from 23rd to 12th place over the past year and closing in on sector leader Apotea. Apoteket has also moved up the list of online stores from which consumers have shopped the

**Books and media** have also lost ground compared to before. Adlibris and CDON have fallen by one place each and Bokus by two places. It is possible that this reflects the shift towards streaming services for audiobooks that we have described in previous barometers.

# What is loyalty – really?

As a company, you can't create loyalty, and many people in the industry should listen more to their customer service. This is the opinion of Margareta Boström and Malin Sundström, who wrote the book *Lojalitet – på riktigt* (Loyalty – for real). Here, they share their views on the concept of loyalty and what companies can do to create better conditions for gaining loyal customers.



Margareta Boström is an expert in consumer behavior and a business developer for Jula.

Malin Sundström is a retail expert with a PhD in Economics and is an Associate Professor of Marketing.

**H**ow come you wrote a book about loyalty?  
*Malin:* We thought a book on the subject was necessary. We have a common view on loyalty and both find it frustrating when companies talk about “disloyal customers” when customers have not become less loyal. Instead, it’s about companies treating their customers wrongly. Many people claim that they have 75 percent customer satisfaction, for example, but what does that really mean? That customers shop at least twice a month for at least x number of Swedish kronor?

*Margareta:* We also find it unfortunate that companies see loyalty as something that comes from the inside out and that they talk about “creating loyal customers”. Already at that stage they go off track, because loyalty cannot be created by someone else – it comes from within the individual. What a company can do is create the conditions for loyalty.

**What would you say distinguishes your definition of loyalty from that of others?**

*Margareta:* First of all, we see loyalty as something multifaceted. For loyalty to arise, there needs to be a desire for a relationship. The relationship doesn’t have to be reciprocal, but it becomes deeper if it is. We want to get away from the

idea that repeat purchases equal loyalty.

*Malin:* Our definition, compared to academic definitions, fits much better in our current social context. We must be aware of the fact that digitalization and globalization have changed the way we relate to different phenomena.

Many companies talk about their “ambassadors”, meaning those who have a high level of willingness to recommend them.

*Margareta:* They’re not ambassadors – that’s an unfortunate choice of words that leads you astray. An ambassador is someone who stands up for the company regardless of what they do, and you don’t do that just because you recommend something. Recommendation has many parameters, one of which is how you want to appear to others. You can recommend or not, depending on how you want to appear, but in your heart and soul you don’t have to feel any loyalty.

**How do you view consumers who buy from a company but don’t want to tell people about it? Do you view them as loyal?**

*Margareta:* Exactly, customers don’t have to be loyal in terms of attitude even if they are loyal in terms of behavior. Maybe you just like shopping there because of the price? If a person thinks they are similar to a brand, they

are more likely to be loyal, especially in terms of attitudinal loyalty.

**Do you see any specific methods that companies can use to promote loyalty?**

*Malin:* An example of how group affiliation and loyalty can be built is the Schulman sisters’ Friday podcast. It contained a lot of fluff, but quickly gained a core of followers and managed to create a sense of belonging to a group. The listeners felt that they became like a club, that they were one of the team. This is an excellent way to create the right sense of loyalty. I see many others who are good at demonstrating the soul of their company, what they stand for and what they believe in. Lindex is another good example that has succeeded in creating a sense of community among its customers with its motto “empower women”.

*Margareta:* Companies can identify customers’ pain points and work to make things easier for them. Investigate areas where there are problems, misunderstandings and queues. It’s neither expensive nor difficult, but it requires commitment. Most companies have great customer service departments, but almost nobody cares which calls are received. Customer service should be seen as the first step – the data is there and you’re already paying for it.

*Malin:* It’s sad that so many



→ companies outsource their customer service today – it's like telling your neighbor your secret spot for picking wild mushrooms. Every single CEO should spend time in customer service once a month, because that's where the insights and the feel of the company are.

**In the book you talk about “a customer-centric approach to loyalty” – what do you mean by that?**

*Malin:* Again, that loyalty is the customer's. If you want to understand that, you have to work to gain customer insight. The loyalty wheel that we present in the book as a tool is a something of a mantra for me. It's something to work with, to use to check if “I've really understood this”. Many people think they have insight into the customer experience but they don't really. They don't delve into what the experience actually is and what variables make the customer happy.

**“Loyalty programs” – how do they relate to loyalty and what should their role be?**

*Malin:* They have very little to do with loyalty. Many of them are designed to reward you when you do something, like a controlled rat in a maze with a food bowl. This has very little to do with loyalty. If you stop seeing the customer as a rat, you can find other methods, like Shein for example. They reward their customers for how long they stay on the website, which is smart, because things

happen when you stay somewhere for a long time. They might attend an event and stay to talk to other customers, which could result in a transaction.

*Margareta:* Shein also works with rewards based on what customers share in the form of experiences, photos and reviews. So the food bowl exists, but Shein gets customer content that is very valuable. They reward not only the purchases but also sharing the experience, which is very smart.

**What about communities – what are your views on them?**

*Malin:* If you want to build a community, it is important not only to create a place to meet but also to encourage people to share their thoughts. What should the participants do? They don't always know themselves, so the company needs to think about how the community can lead to creativity and engagement and enable participants to share ideas and inspiration.

**But what should companies do when customers complain by posting on Facebook, for example?**

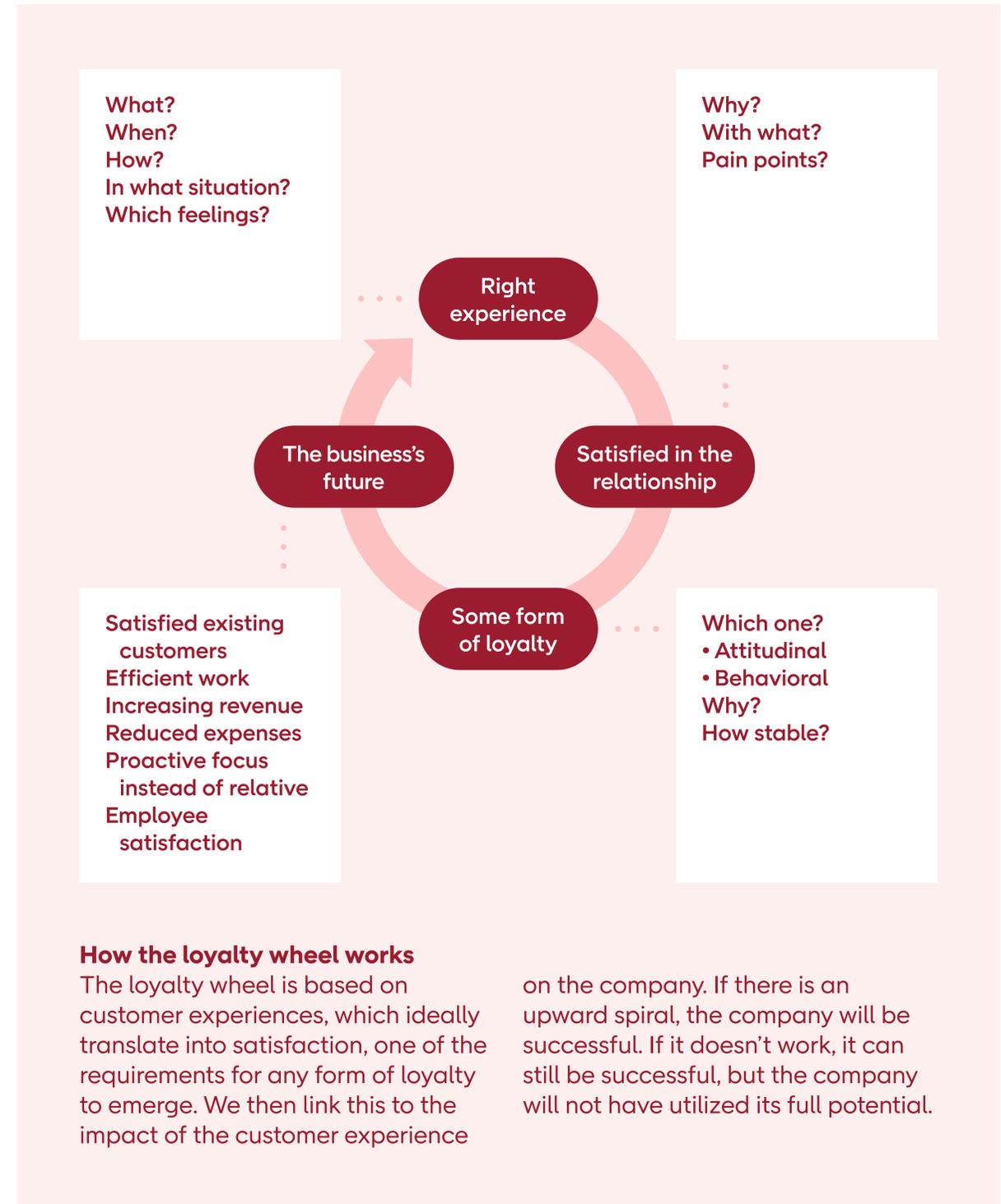
*Margareta:* It doesn't matter how much you explain or present the facts – once a mob has made up its mind, it's hard for a company to turn the critics around. You can go back into the business and look at what went wrong and make changes so that complaints no longer arise, but it's very

difficult to reverse a barrage of complaints. In threads with a lot of negativity, the company can be saved if other customers step in and give opposing views.

*Malin:* Companies have very little control over social media and should focus on what they themselves can change, and should listen to their customer service. New businesses often seem to think that they don't need customer service and that Facebook or Instagram is enough, but then they no longer have any control. If there is a complaint on social media, apologize for what has happened and refer the individual to customer service, where you are able to control the discussion.

**So what does the future hold for loyalty, do you think? Do you see any change in how loyal we are and how we relate to brands and products?**

*Margareta:* We humans have a basic need to feel loyalty. We want to belong, we want to be part of a context and have our feelings validated. That need won't change, but the expressions of loyalty, what a person is loyal to and what conditions need to be met will look different. It will be increasingly linked to the individual, for example in the form of customized products and on-demand service. We are moving further and further away from what we have seen in the past – when companies could control loyalty.



## Increased demand for delivery options

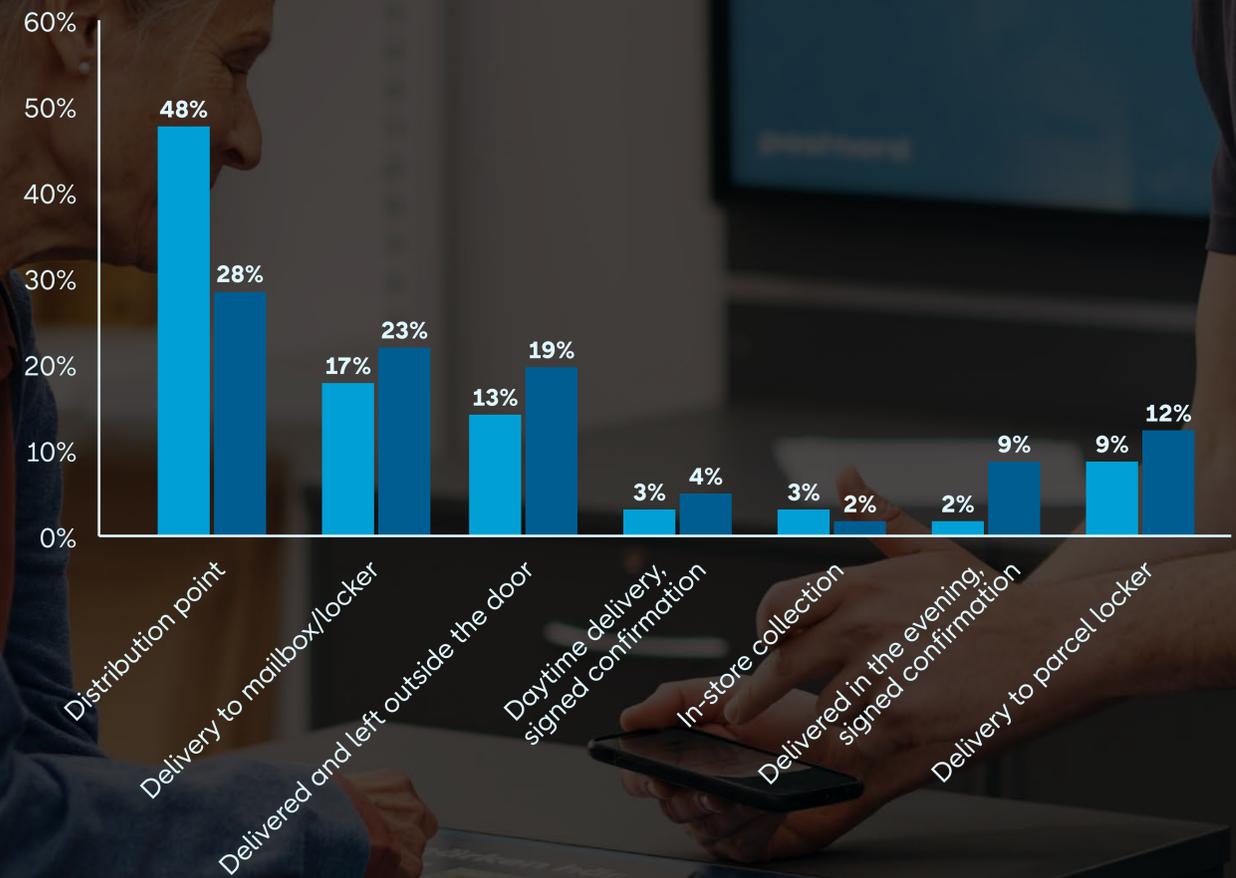
**H**aving their parcel sent to a distribution point is the most common delivery method for consumers shopping online. The delivery method is used for about half of all e-commerce deliveries. However, when consumers are allowed to choose, less than a third opt for the distribution point as their first choice.

**Instead, home deliveries** have become more popular among consumers, especially since the outbreak of the pandemic. In 2021, 23 percent said they wanted home delivery to a mail box/locker, 19 percent wanted their delivery

left at their door, and 13 percent wanted home delivery with signed confirmation (daytime and evening). In reality, however, the most common mode of delivery was via a distribution point (48 percent).

**Alongside home deliveries,** parcel lockers are an increasingly popular delivery option. It is likely that the parcel locker is perceived as a more flexible option compared to the distribution point. Self-collection is more convenient for the consumer if it can be done on the consumer's terms, at any time and in conjunction with other errands.

## How the last consignment was delivered and consumers' preferred mode of delivery for their last consignment



● How the latest item was delivered ● How recipients would prefer to have their deliveries made

Basis: Have shopped online

# Freedom of choice and control most important for delivery

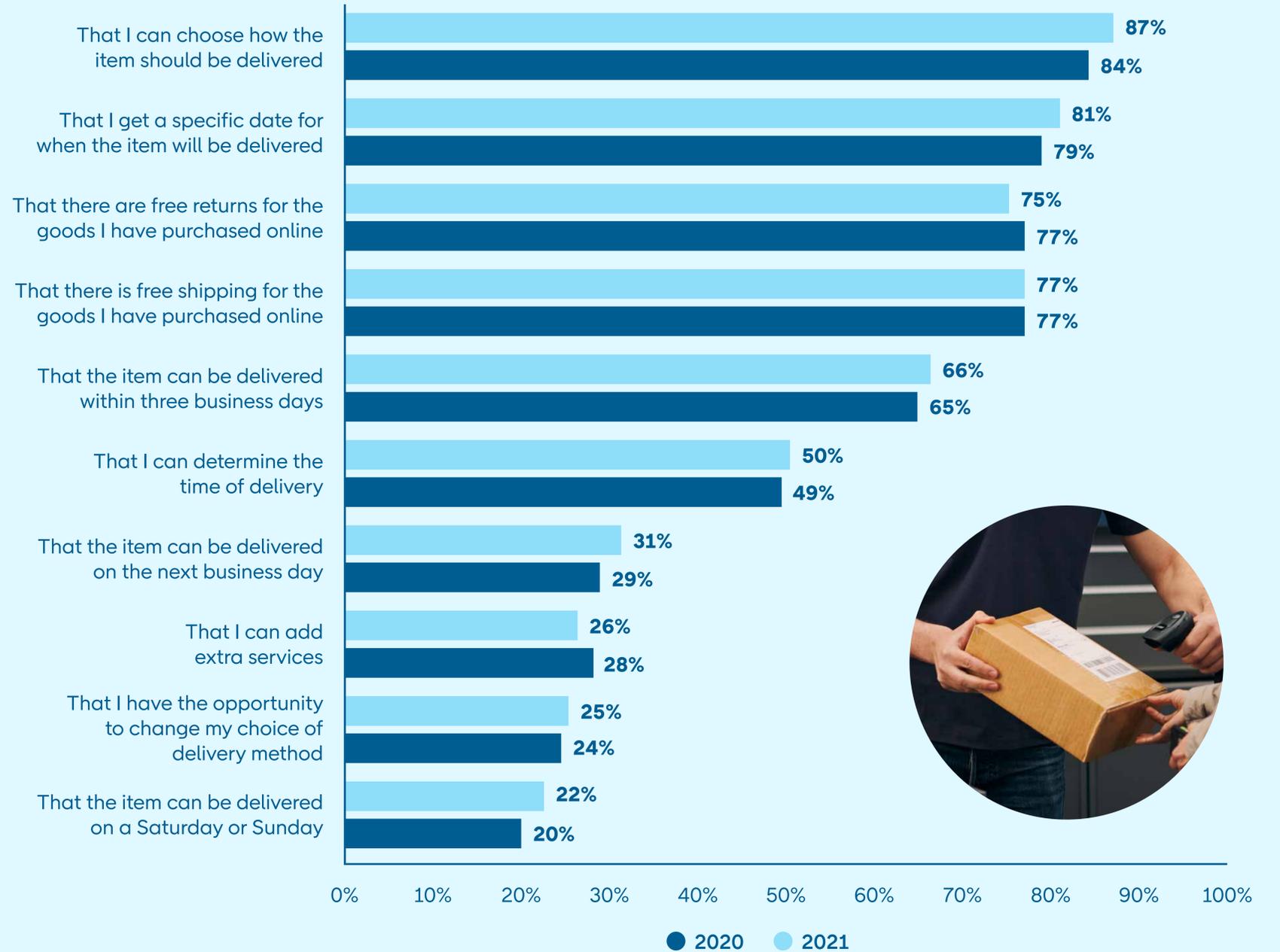
**E**-commerce has grown significantly in recent years. New consumer groups have emerged and are gradually becoming more habitual e-commerce consumers. This also means that demands are increasing, not least regarding deliveries.

In 2021, freedom of choice has become increasingly important for customers, especially in terms of being able to choose how the item is delivered. Eighty-seven percent said this was important, compared to 84 percent last year. In second place, we find that the

customer considers the date of delivery of the purchased product important, and in third place is the desire for free shipping.

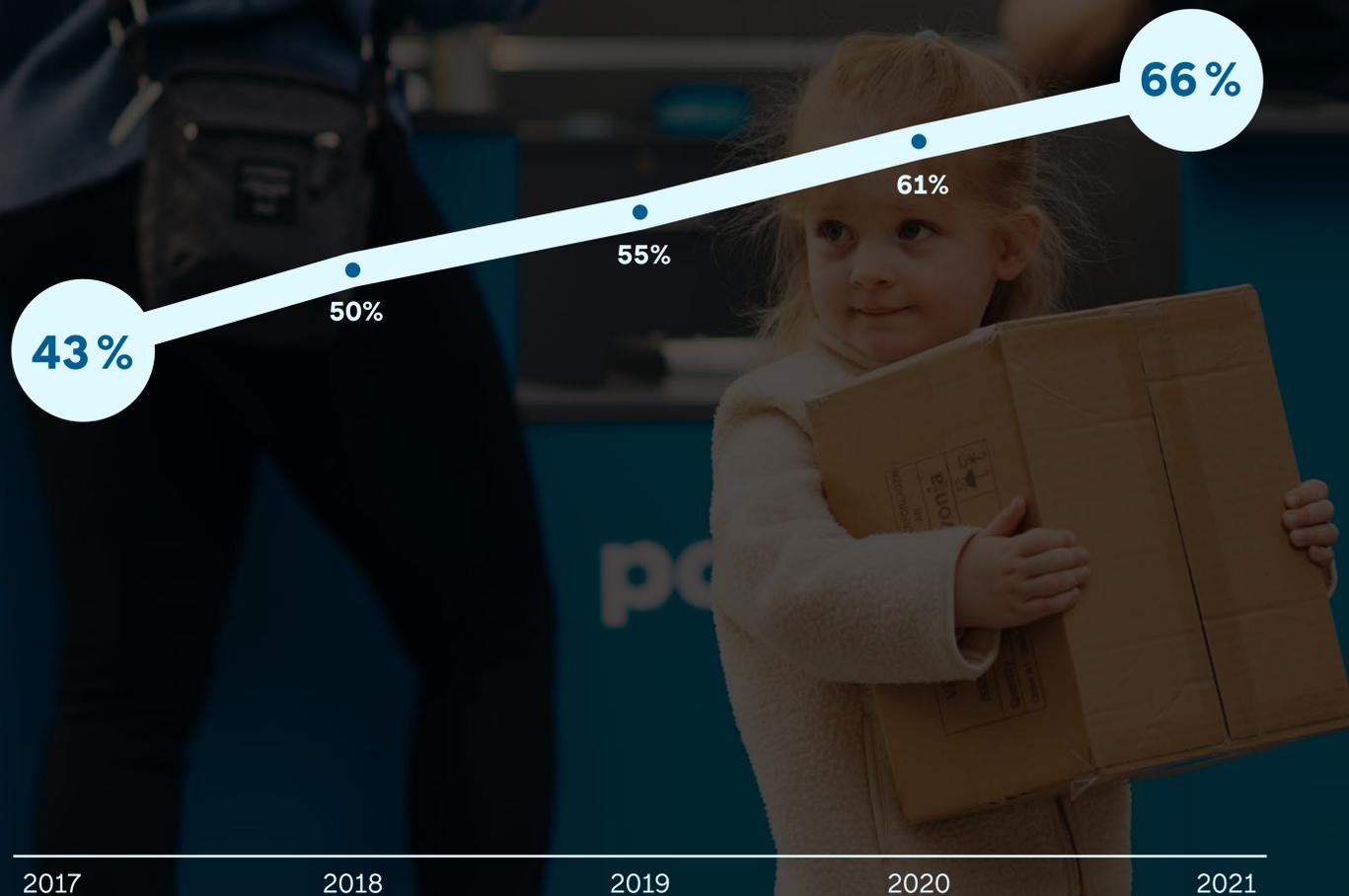
Also, phenomena that are appreciated by a smaller group of e-commerce consumers have increased in importance over the year. One example is that the item can be delivered on a Saturday or Sunday, which increases from 20 percent to 22 percent. It is likely that these types of service will grow in importance as they are implemented by retailers and tested by consumers.

## Most important for the consumer regarding delivery



Basis: Shopped online in the past month (Q2 survey)

## Percentage who could choose the delivery method for their most recent delivery



Basis: Shopped online in the past month

## New solutions give more people the option to choose the delivery method

**F**reedom of choice is one of the most important aspects when it comes to delivery. As the diagram on the left illustrates, more Swedes than ever are getting to choose how their products are delivered. The percentage has been steadily increasing, from 43 percent in 2017 to 66 percent in 2021.

**The reasons for** the strong growth include the introduction of new delivery methods that allow greater freedom of choice for customers. One example is parcel lockers, which complement traditional distribution points. Parcel lockers also have the

advantage that they can be deployed widely across the country and close to home. Another example is the strong growth of home deliveries.

**There are also** other types of innovation. One example is Atrium Ljungberg, which has initiated a new way of picking up parcels in some of its properties. There are also various projects underway involving parcel delivery in shopping malls, where customers can pick up their deliveries, try on clothes on the spot, manage returns and have packaging materials disposed of.

# Returns are increasing as more companies offer them for free

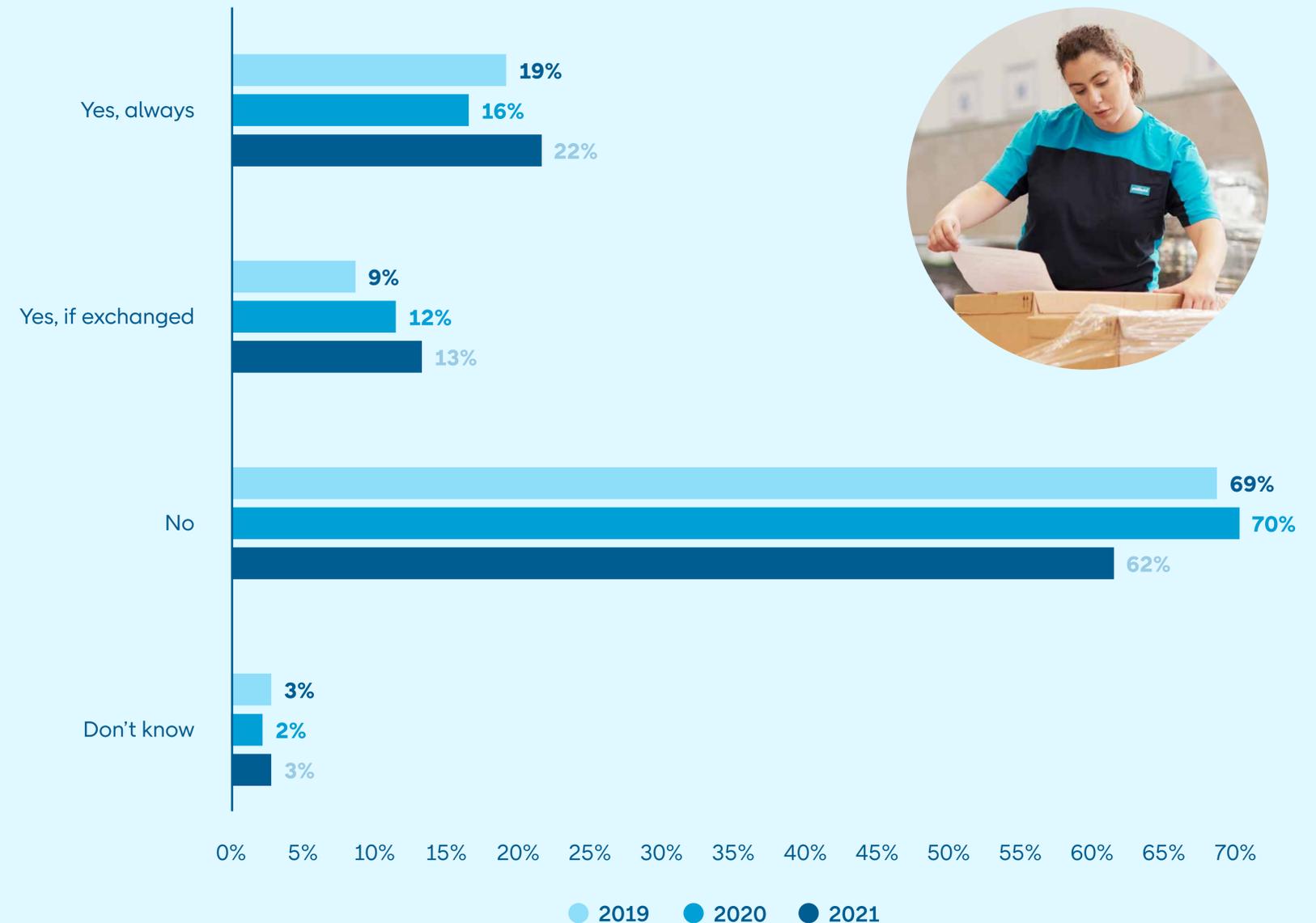
**A**s Sweden's e-commerce has expanded, the steps involved have been adapted to make the process as smooth as possible. For example, shipping times have been shortened and consumers can choose from more collection options. Progress has also been made in the area of returns, but there is still room for improvement.

**Returns in Sweden** have increased over the years and in 2021, 8% of e-commerce consumers returned at least one product purchased online per month. Despite the fact that many people return their newly purchased products, only 22 percent of companies always offer free returns. This is an increase compared to three years ago, when

19 percent of companies offered free returns. The increase is probably due to the coronavirus pandemic, which has led to a greater number of people shopping online. Returns management is tricky for e-retailers. On the one hand, free returns make online operators competitive in relation to physical stores; on the other, returns cost money and are questionable from a sustainability perspective when goods are shipped back and forth.

**A majority** (62 percent) of customers believe that they receive too little information from e-commerce companies about their returns. In general, there is room for improvement in terms of retailers being clearer about what applies to both shipping and returns.

## Does your company offer free returns?



Basis: Companies with e-commerce sales

# Consumers stop before completing purchases due to deficiencies in payment options

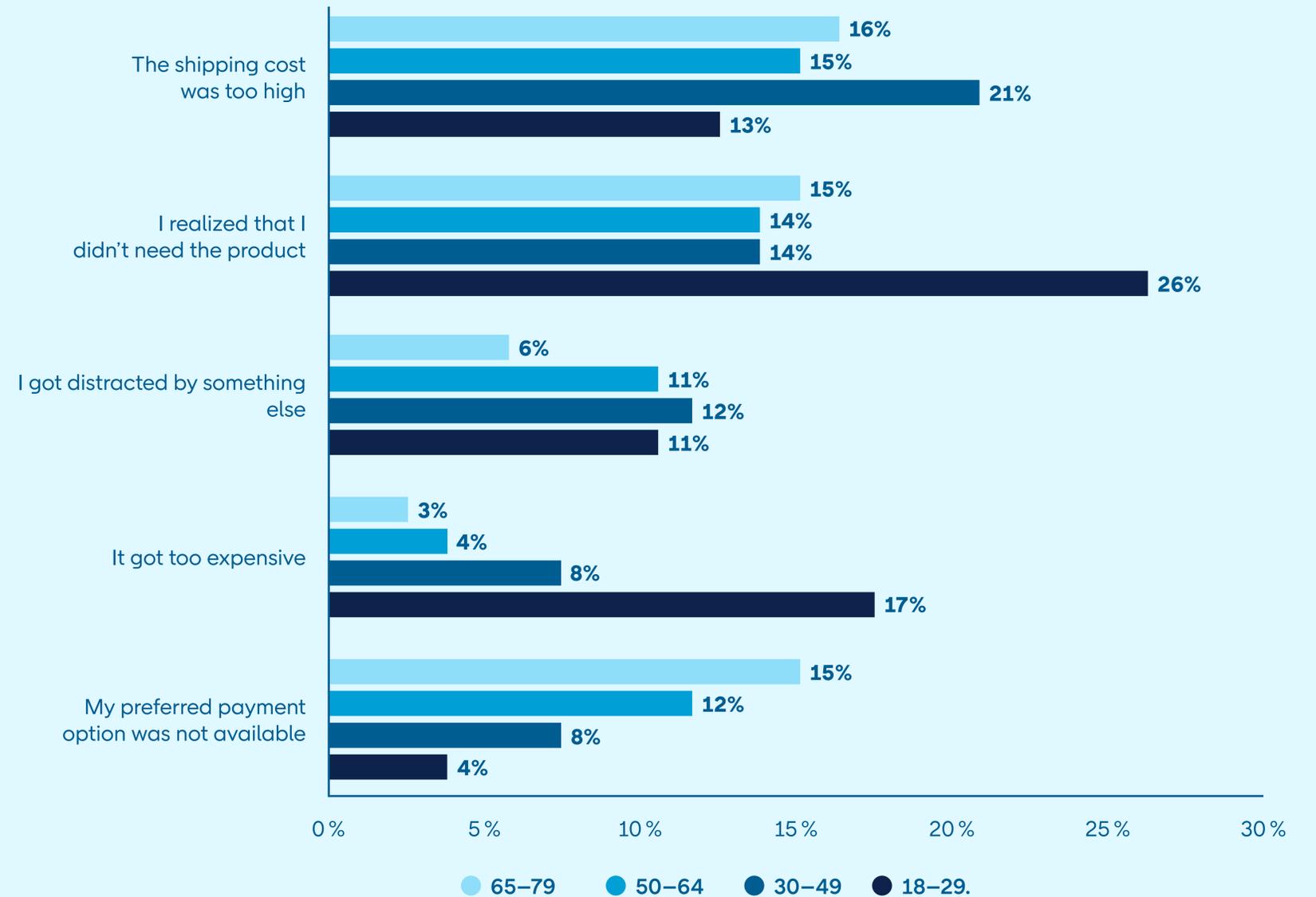
**M**ore than 40 percent of consumers say that they have left at least one online purchase uncompleted in the past month. In 2016 the figure was 33 percent. One explanation, of course, is that more e-commerce purchases are being made today and therefore more are not completed. Another is that many young people use digital shopping baskets as to-buy lists, and do not always have a clear intention to buy the product.

**Having said that,** there are also concrete barriers at the retailer level that increase the rate of uncompleted purchases. Two common reasons for uncompleted purchases are that the customer felt the shipping cost was too high or that the final price was too expensive. However, a striking number

also stated that it was not possible to pay in the way they desired. This should be seen as a black mark in 2022. Swedish e-retailers today should be able to provide the payment options that customers expect.

**Many people in** the group above who cited lack of payment options as a reason for canceling a purchase were in the older age group (65–79 years). It is possible that this may be due to details in the payment systems, which could be improved. One example is the need for an electronic Bank ID to complete a payment (not everyone over 70 has one). As increasing number of new consumer groups have started to shop online, inefficient systems are becoming costly for retailers and offer a bad experience for the customer.

## The last time you stopped before completing the online purchase of an item – what was the main reason for that?



Basis: If shopping at least once or twice a year and have not completed purchase(s)

## Different payment methods in Sweden compared to the rest of Europe

**I**n terms of preferred payment methods, Swedes differ from the inhabitants of many other European countries. Invoice payment comes first in Sweden and is preferred by as many as 31% of e-commerce consumers. This compares, for example, with neighboring Denmark, where the corresponding figure is only 5 percent. Invoice payment is likely to be preferred, as it is perceived as more secure to receive the goods before they are paid for. It is also likely that Klarna has helped provide convenient solutions in this area, and it is possible that their expansion abroad may drive behavior in other countries as well.

**Card payments have** a strong position in most countries. In the UK, France, Belgium, Denmark and Spain, the majority prefer to pay by card. This payment method is also popular in Sweden, but does not dominate in the same way as abroad.

**In the Nordic** countries, it has recently become increasingly popular to pay for goods via mobile applications – Swish in Sweden. Similar solutions exist abroad in the form of Mobilepay (Denmark, Finland, etc.) and Vipps (Norway). In addition to the Nordic countries, this method of payment is also very big in the Netherlands, primarily via the Ideal service.



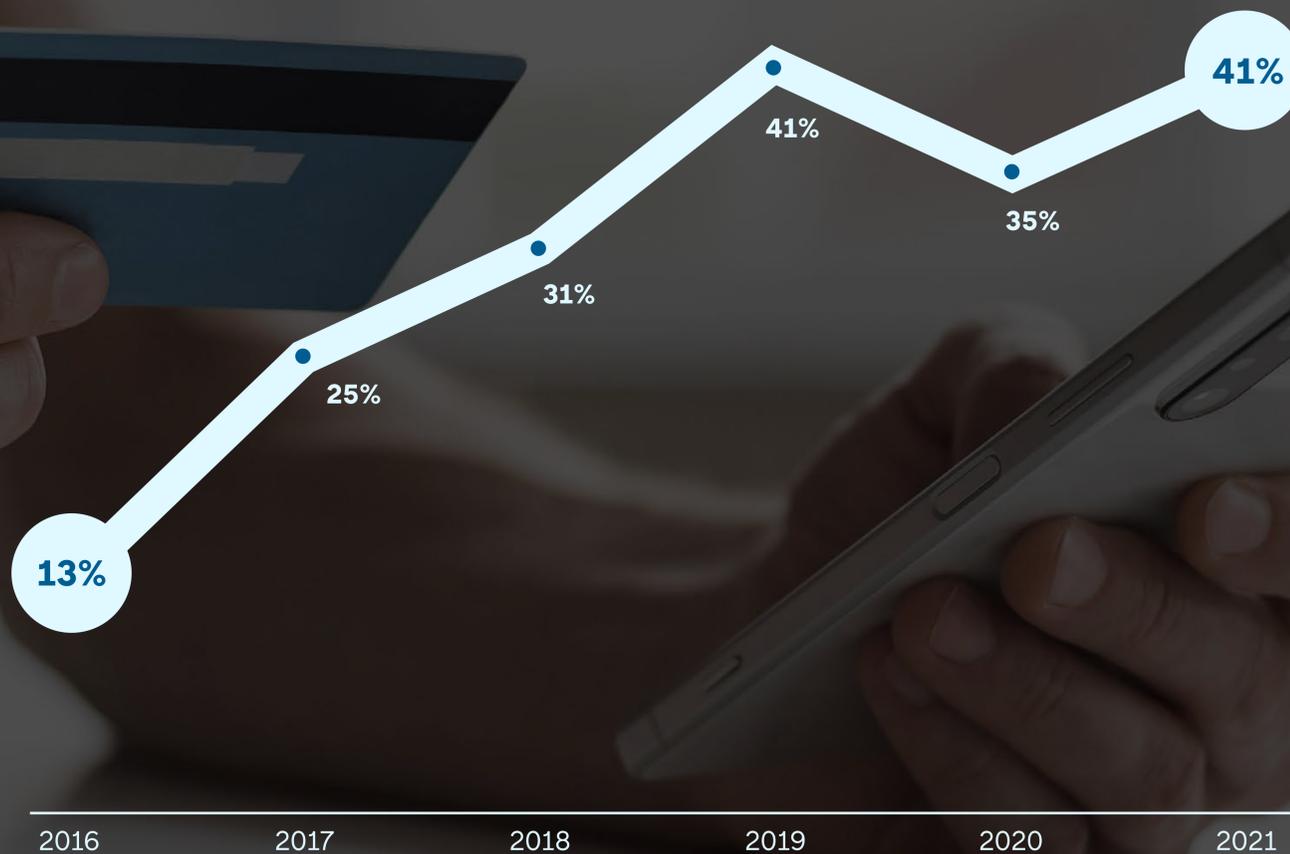
# 31%

in Sweden prefer  
invoice payment

|   | Debit card or credit card | Invoice | Mobile app<br>(e.g. Swish,<br>MobilePay, Vipps) |
|---|---------------------------|---------|---|
|  Belgium     | 51%                       | 4%      | 8%  |
|  Denmark     | 52%                       | 5%      | 22%   |
|  Finland     | 30%                       | 21%     | 3%  |
|  France      | 58%                       | 2%      | 1%  |
|  Italy       | 45%                       | 1%      | 1%  |
|  Netherlands | 17%                       | 4%      | 57%   |
|  Norway    | 39%                       | 18%     | 11%   |
|  Poland    | 23%                       | 1%      | 10%   |
|  Spain     | 54%                       | 1%      | 1%  |
|  UK        | 58%                       | 0%      | 2%  |
|  Sweden    | 28%                       | 31%     | 10%   |
|  Germany   | 17%                       | 21%     | 2%  |

Basis: Have shopped online

## E-commerce companies with a majority of their sales via cell phone



Basis: Companies with e-commerce sales

## Share of mobile purchases increases after pandemic year decline

**I**n the 2020 pandemic year, the percentage of e-commerce businesses making a majority of their online sales via cell phone decreased for the first time; from 41 percent in 2019 to 35 percent in 2020. Working from home and online shopping on the computer replaced commuting and mobile shopping on the go. In 2021, however, mobile shopping rebounded, landing at the same level as in 2019, i.e. 41 percent.

**The slow reopening** of society has led to a resurgence of old routines, including mobile surfing on the way to and from work. In 2020, many of the new e-commerce consumers were older, and this is also a likely reason for the decline in the percentage of mobile purchases over the

period. In 2021, the share of older people who shopped online via cell phone increased significantly, which may be partly due to the fact that those introduced to e-commerce in 2020 are now used to it and have taken the next step by shopping online via cell phone.

**The physical stores** have also seen a resurgence following the reopening of society and perhaps a general craving for physical shopping. Despite, or perhaps because of, this, mobile purchases have increased. The number of occasions on which mobile has become the first choice when researching, selecting and purchasing goods has increased, and the 2020 decline seems to have been largely a result of circumstance.

## Cell phones increasingly integrated into online shopping

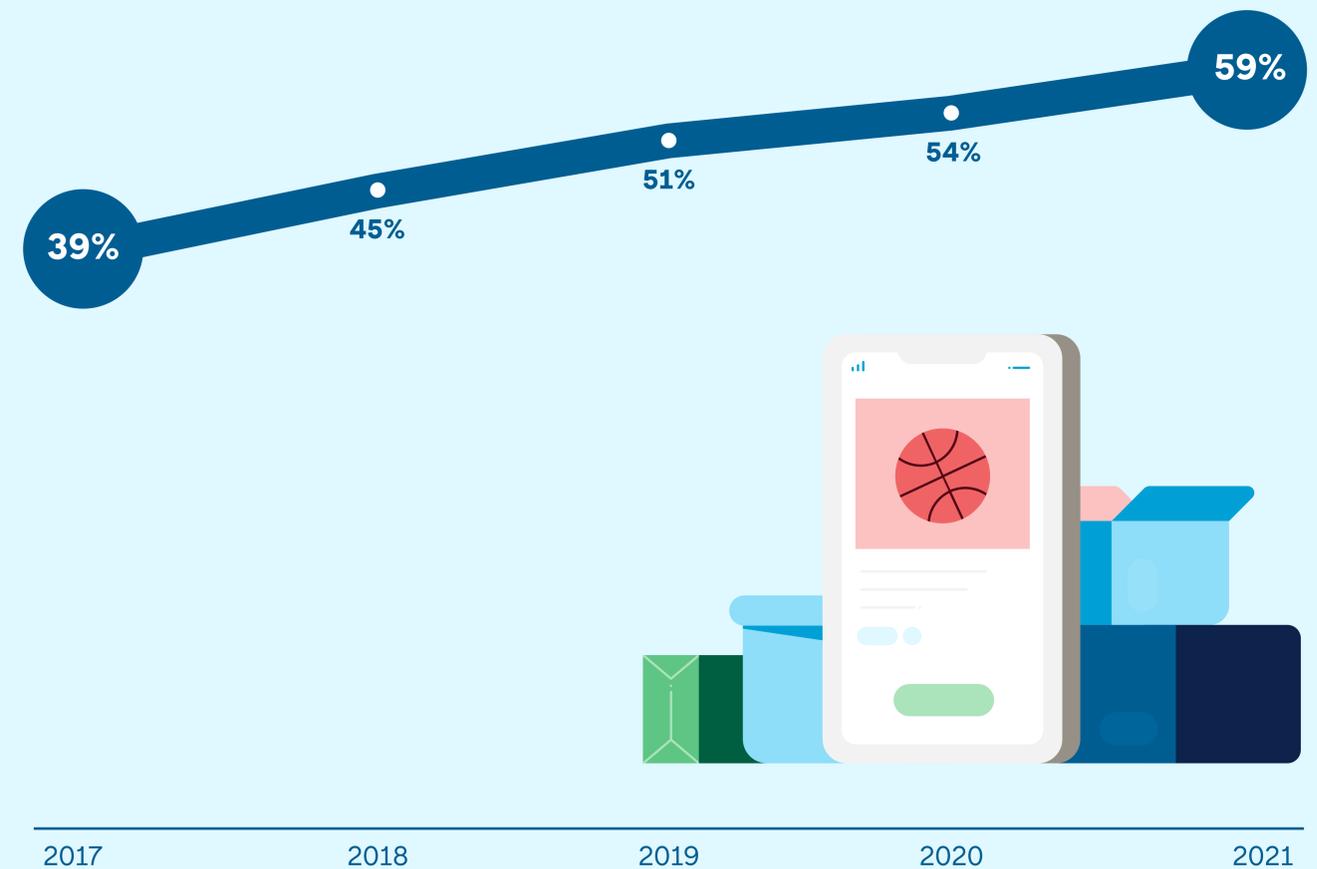
**T**he cell phone is becoming increasingly integrated into our lives. We don't just use it to call people – we post pictures of our lives, watch funny YouTube clips, read the news and play games. So it is not surprising that e-commerce via cell phone has also increased over the years.

**Online shopping via** cell phone is most common in the 30–49 age group, but it is becoming increasingly common among older consumers. This is probably a result of the pandemic. Increasing numbers of older people have had to learn digital behaviors such as online shopping and discovering the full capabilities of their phones. As more older people use cell phones for e-commerce, it may be

worthwhile for market participants to start reviewing their mobile platforms to make them suitable for all age groups.

**Apart from e-commerce** itself, cell phones are also used in other ways during the purchase journey. For example, consumers search for information about products on their cell phones and add them to their shopping baskets. However, it has become more common today to also complete the purchase directly on your cell phone – which was not done in the same way in the past. Cell phones have also been integrated into physical retail. In 2021, for example, Coop launched the “Coop Scan and Pay” concept, which allows customers to scan and pay for groceries in Coop's physical stores using a mobile app.

## Percentage that shopped online using their cell phone



Basis: Shopped online in the past month

# E-retailers' own websites still most important for marketing

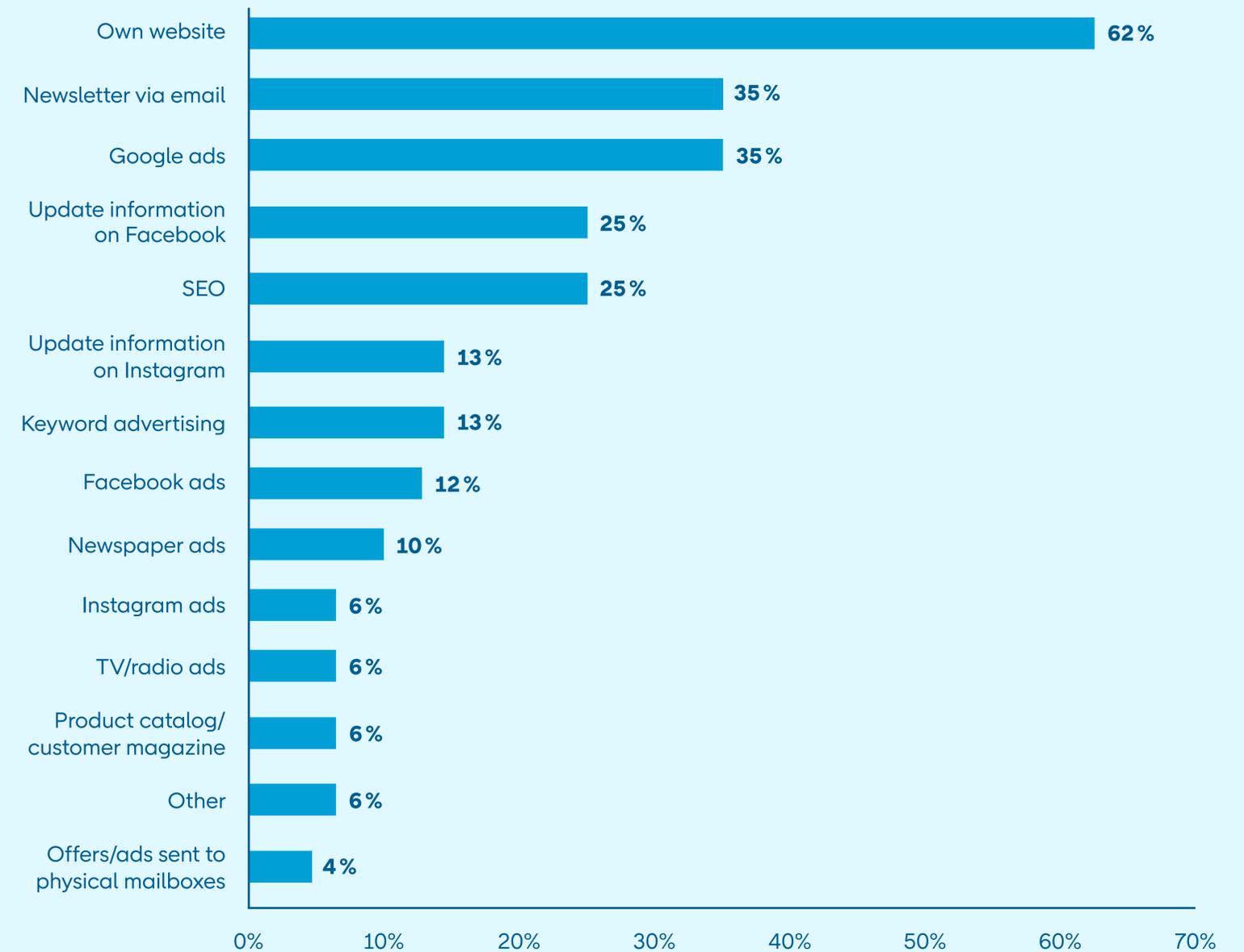
**W**hen selling products in digital markets, marketing has become increasingly important – particularly digital marketing that is measurable, can be targeted at different segments and is relatively easy to evaluate. In this way, the marketing landscape has changed, from TV and newspaper advertising to the increasing use of social media as the new advertising platform of the age.

However, in the E-barometer survey, e-retailers continue to state that their own website is their most important

marketing channel. In second place is their newsletter. These channels illustrate a couple of other important factors in this context: namely control and price.

Digital advertising prices have risen in many places in recent years, increasing the value of having your own communication with customers. In their own channels, market participants in e-commerce also decide on the content themselves and can easily control exactly how their products are marketed and in which context they appear.

## Which three tools and channels are most important for your marketing?



Basis: Companies with e-commerce sales



66%

prefer to receive offers via email from companies of which they are customers



49%

consider that email is the most personal communication channel

## Consumers use different services at different stages of the customer journey

**S**ocial media has made a major impact as a marketing channel over the years. However, when we ask consumers, the areas in which they think social media can be used are quite specific. For example, it is common to use both Facebook and Instagram to find new products.

**However, very few** people look for specific product information on social media once they have decided which product they are interested in. Instead, YouTube plays a bigger role, with reviews and product

ratings. But above all, consumers rely on price comparison sites, websites and even internet forums.

**In their contacts** with companies, the vast majority also prefer not to use social media, but rather the more traditional medium of email. One might think that this is age-related, but in fact the distribution is even across age groups. The youngest are even slightly less likely to want to engage with e-retailers via text message or Facebook, for example. No age group prefers to receive offers via social media.

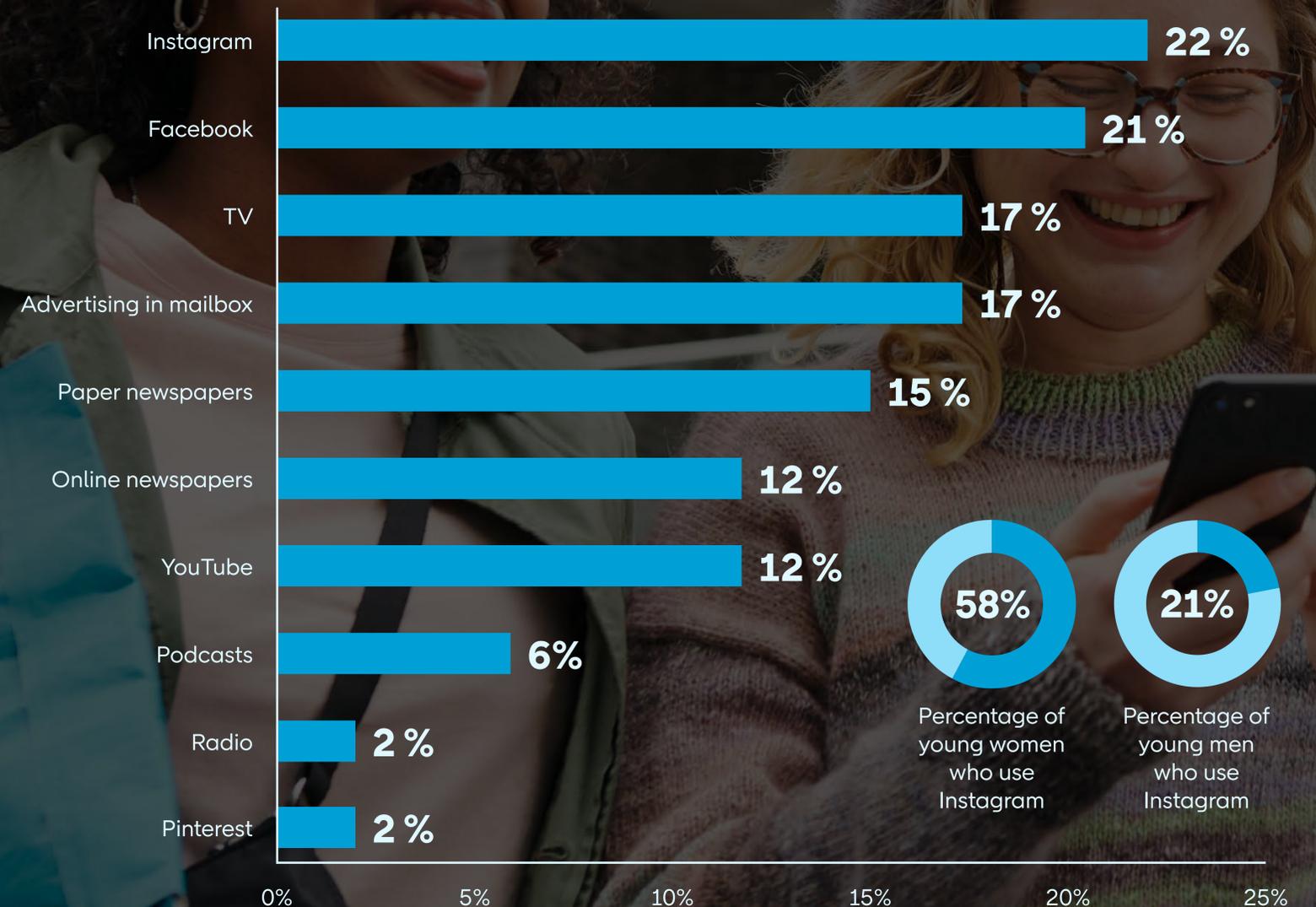
## Instagram entices young women to try new products

**T**he marketing landscape has changed significantly in recent years. Today marketing on social media such as Facebook and Instagram most often leads to a customer trying a new product. The type of marketing channel preferred by the customer depends to some extent on sex. For example, more women than men say that Instagram is the marketing channel that most often leads them to try a new product. Men, on the other hand, are more likely than women to say YouTube. The Swedish Internet Foundation shows in its report

*Svenskarna och Internet* (Swedes and the internet) that more women than men use Instagram and that men prefer YouTube<sup>15)</sup>, which also influences the results.

**There is also** a discrepancy between age groups. Older generations are most receptive to marketing via physical newspapers/magazines or advertising mailings that arrive in their mailboxes. The younger generations are attracted to social media advertising, which can be explained by the fact that they spend more time on these platforms.

## Which of the following marketing channels usually leads to you trying a new product or service?



Basis: If shopped online at least once or twice a year

<sup>15)</sup> <https://svenskarnaochinternet.se/rapporter/svenskarna-och-internet-2021/sociala-medier/>

## Product reviews increasingly important for consumers

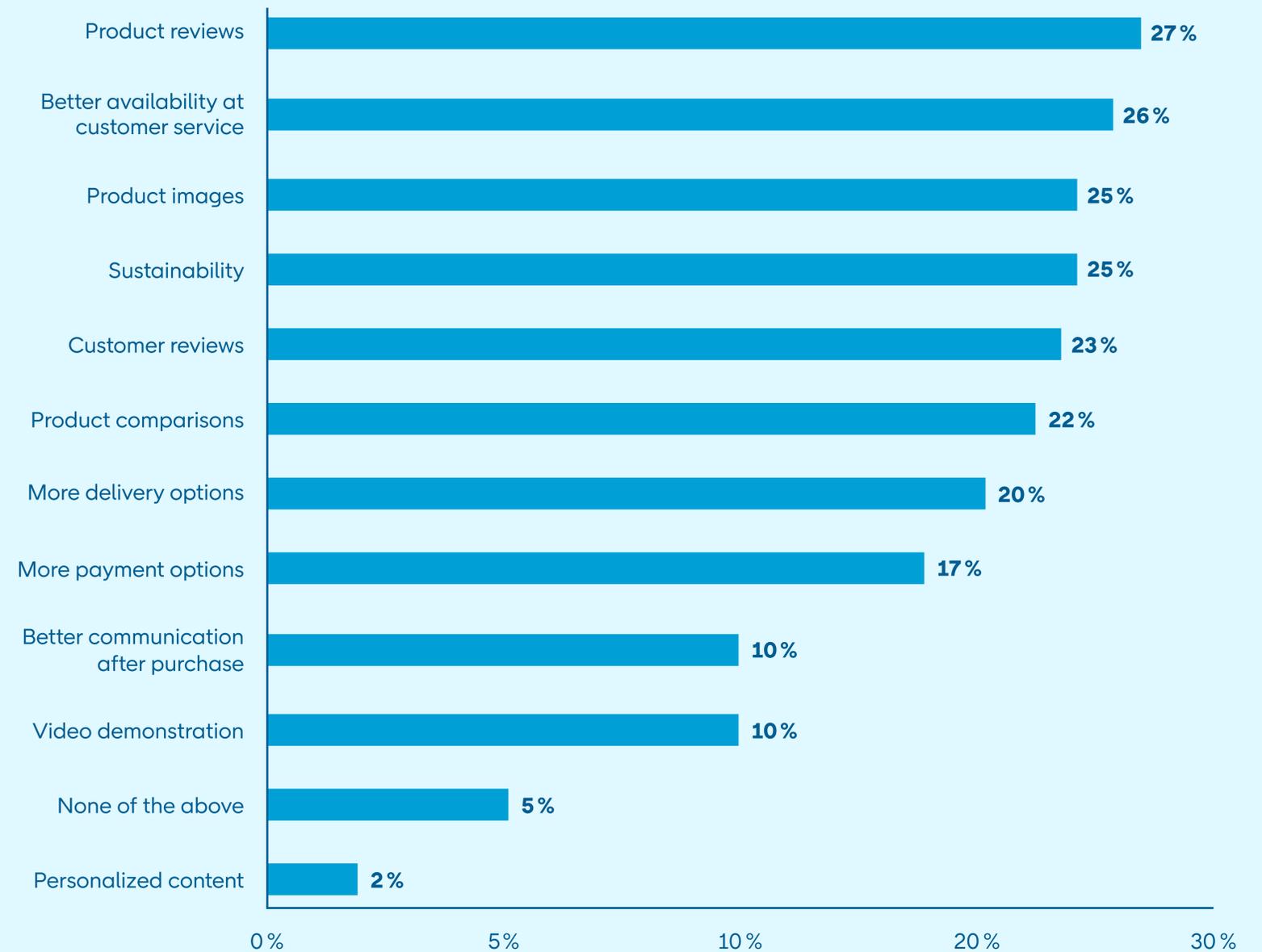
**W**hen a product is purchased in a physical store, the consumer often inspects it from top to bottom, touches it and forms their own opinion. Online, the physical experience of the product is not possible and is therefore replaced by second-hand sources: for example, pictures, descriptions and other customers' experiences in the form of ratings and reviews. When we ask consumers what they wish online stores would do more of, product reviews top the list (27 percent).

**With the growing** importance of reviews and the value consumers place on them, the problem of review manipulation has also increased in recent years – that is, that there are fake or bought reviews.

The problem has received a lot of attention recently. For example, in the fall, US-based Amazon suspended thousands of third-party sellers – primarily from China – for abusing the platform's review features. In this case, the issue has an extra dimension, as ratings, reviews and the additional purchases they generate are also likely to influence the search algorithm on the platform and thus which products are listed at the top.

**This is likely** to be an issue for a long time to come, as customers rely on reviews. This makes it particularly important to ensure that product reviews are genuine and provide a fair picture of the product.

## What do you wish that online stores worked more with?



Basis: Have shopped online

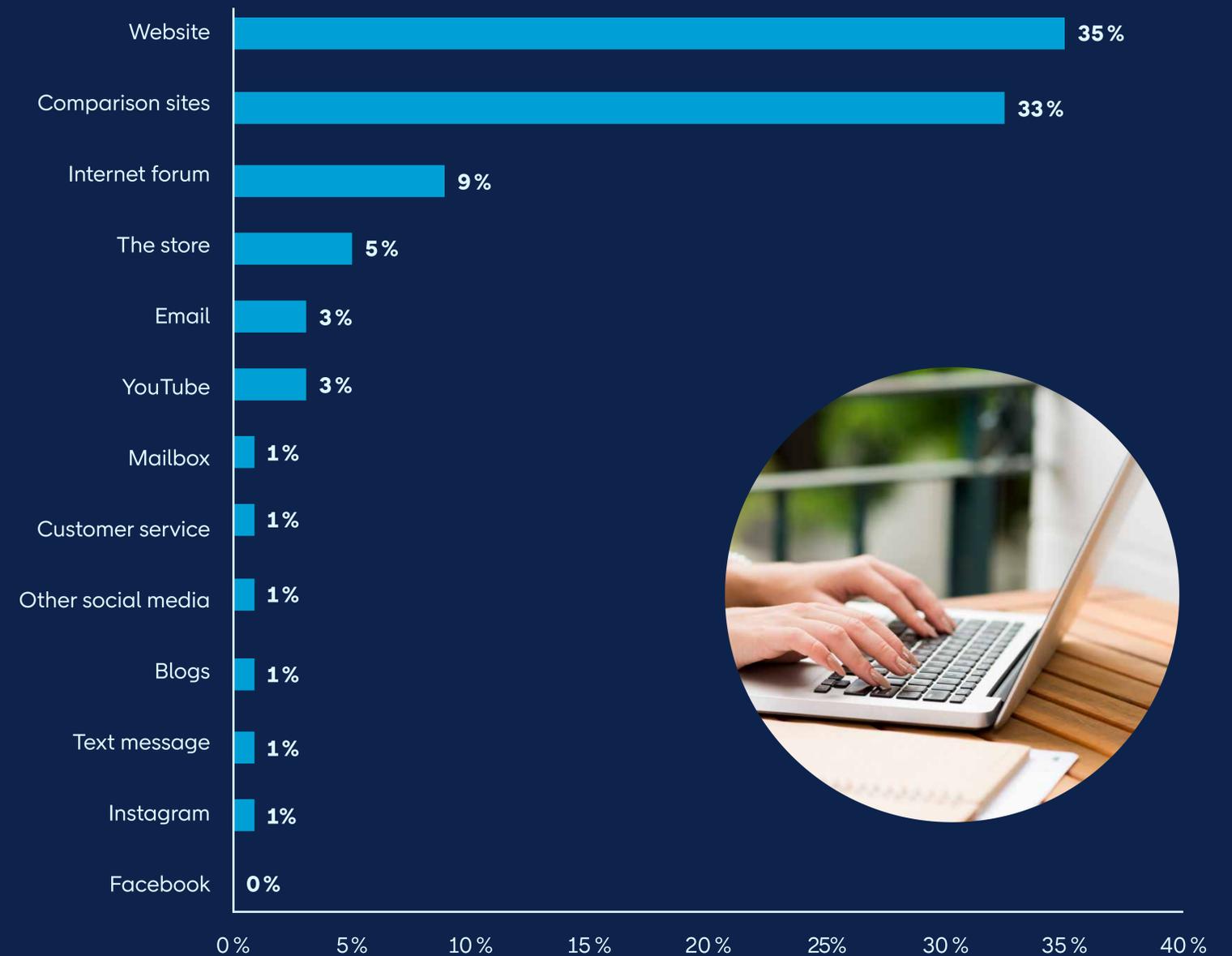
## The website is the main source of information

**W**e live in an “information society”. We can find information everywhere and especially on the internet. However, sometimes the information is contradictory and we have to decide which source we wish to trust. The vast majority of people seek guidance and facts before buying a product online. Most people choose to find information about a product on the website where it is sold.

**However, one thing** that stands out among these figures is that very few

consumers look for information about products on social media. On page 46, the E-barometer describes how many people, especially young women, say that Instagram often leads to trying a new product. But when it comes to finding information about a product, only one percent use the channel. This is probably because the point of social media is to generate rapid interest and all text content should be as short and concise as possible. This means that the customer has to go to the e-retailer’s website if they want further information.

## In what channel do you prefer to receive information on a specific item?



Basis: If shopped online at least once or twice a year





45 percent of e-commerce consumers have shopped second-hand during the year



Women aged 18–49 stand out among those who shop online for second-hand/used goods the most

## About half of the consumers shopped second-hand/used online

**I**n 2021, just under half of e-commerce consumers (45%) said they had shopped online for second-hand/used goods at some point during the year. This means that just under one in two people shop online for second-hand/used goods at least once a year. Of those who reported shopping for second-hand/used goods in 2021, it was most common to make between 3 and 5 purchases a year. Only around 10 percent of consumers buy second-hand/used goods online more than 5 times a year. Women, aged 18–49, stand out among those who buy second-hand/used goods very often.

**Consumers' favorite websites** for second-hand/used goods remain relatively unchanged compared to 2020. Tradera remains the favorite, followed by Facebook Marketplace. Blocket comes in third place. Facebook's continued rise in popularity is unsurprising, as the platform offers the service for free, has a huge user base and consumers can use both the Marketplace and specific groups to sell their second-hand/used goods, thereby pinpointing demand.

# Furniture and home furnishings are the most popular second-hand/used items to purchase

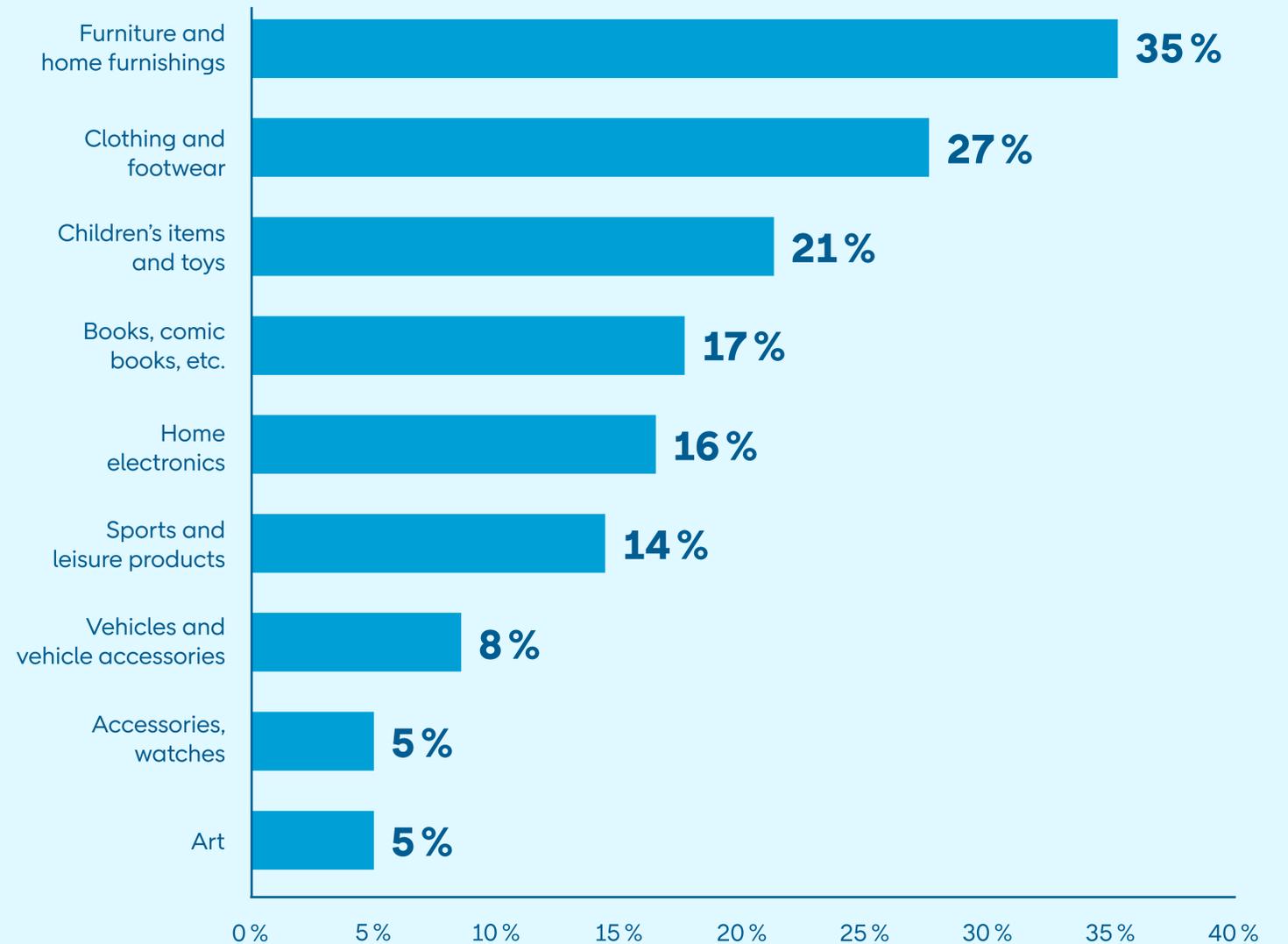
**I**t is mainly furniture and home furnishings that are bought second-hand/used online. Of the consumers surveyed in 2021, around 35 percent said that at least one purchase had been made in this category. This category is and will remain strong because regardless of sex and age, and whether you are renting your first apartment or renovating the house you have owned for 20 years, you will almost always be in need of furniture and home furnishings. With a long life, a wide range and expensive new purchases, this category is ideal for the second-hand market.

The second most popular product category, as in 2020, was clothing and footwear, which 27 percent said they bought second-hand. However, unlike furniture and home furnishings, there are clearer age groupings in this category.

Individuals under 50, especially those between 18–29, and women, drive the category’s popularity.

Children’s items and toys are the third most popular second-hand/used category, with 21 percent saying they have shopped online in this category. Children’s and baby products are used for a short period of time, they break easily and children quickly grow out of them. Being able to buy and sell clothes, toys and other children’s items second-hand/used is therefore of particular interest and makes the category popular among consumers who either have or are expecting children. As with clothing and footwear, there is therefore a clear age division here. The popularity of this category is mainly driven by parents of young children and parents-to-be aged 30-49.

## What second-hand/used items have you purchased online in the last 12 months?



Basis: Purchased second-hand/used online

## The price is the main reason to buy second-hand/used items

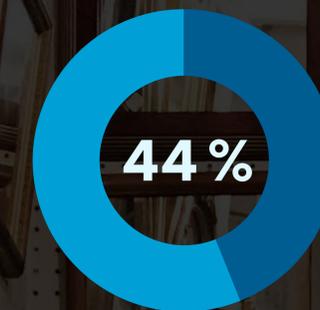
**B**argain hunting is the main reason to buy second-hand/used online. As many as 44 percent cited cheaper prices as their primary reason for buying second-hand/used goods. Almost 52 percent of men considered that the difference in price was most important, compared with 37 percent of women.

**The sustainability aspect** is also essential for the consumer. Thirty percent stated this as the main reason to buy second-hand/used items online. There is also a divide on this issue on the basis of sex, with women finding sustainability more important than men. Among women, sustainability and a cheaper price are equally important reasons for buying second-hand/used, while price is more than twice as important

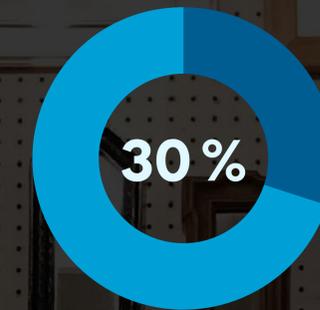
as sustainability among men. One possible explanation is the consumption of different product categories among the sexes, with clothing and footwear being more popular among women, while men are more likely to buy home electronics.

**14 percent of** consumers also said that the product they were looking for was easier to find second-hand/used than new. This may seem counter-intuitive, but is probably due to the fact that specific consumption interests are not covered by new products. For example, if you want to find older spare parts, prefer a certain style or are a collector of certain items, the goods may only be available on the second-hand market. In general, older men and women state this reason for shopping online for second-hand/used goods.

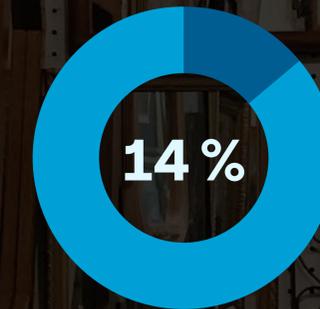
## What is the main reason you choose to buy second-hand/used items online instead of buying similar goods new?



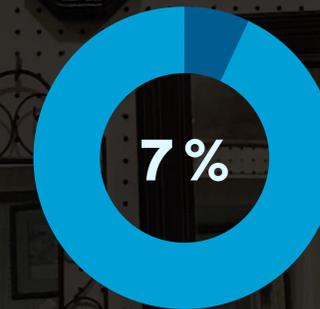
It's cheaper than buying an equivalent product new



It is more sustainable than buying the corresponding product new



The range of second-hand/used products is generally better, compared to new ones (for the type of goods I mainly buy)



Other

Basis: Purchased second-hand/used online

## E-retailers focus on circular solutions

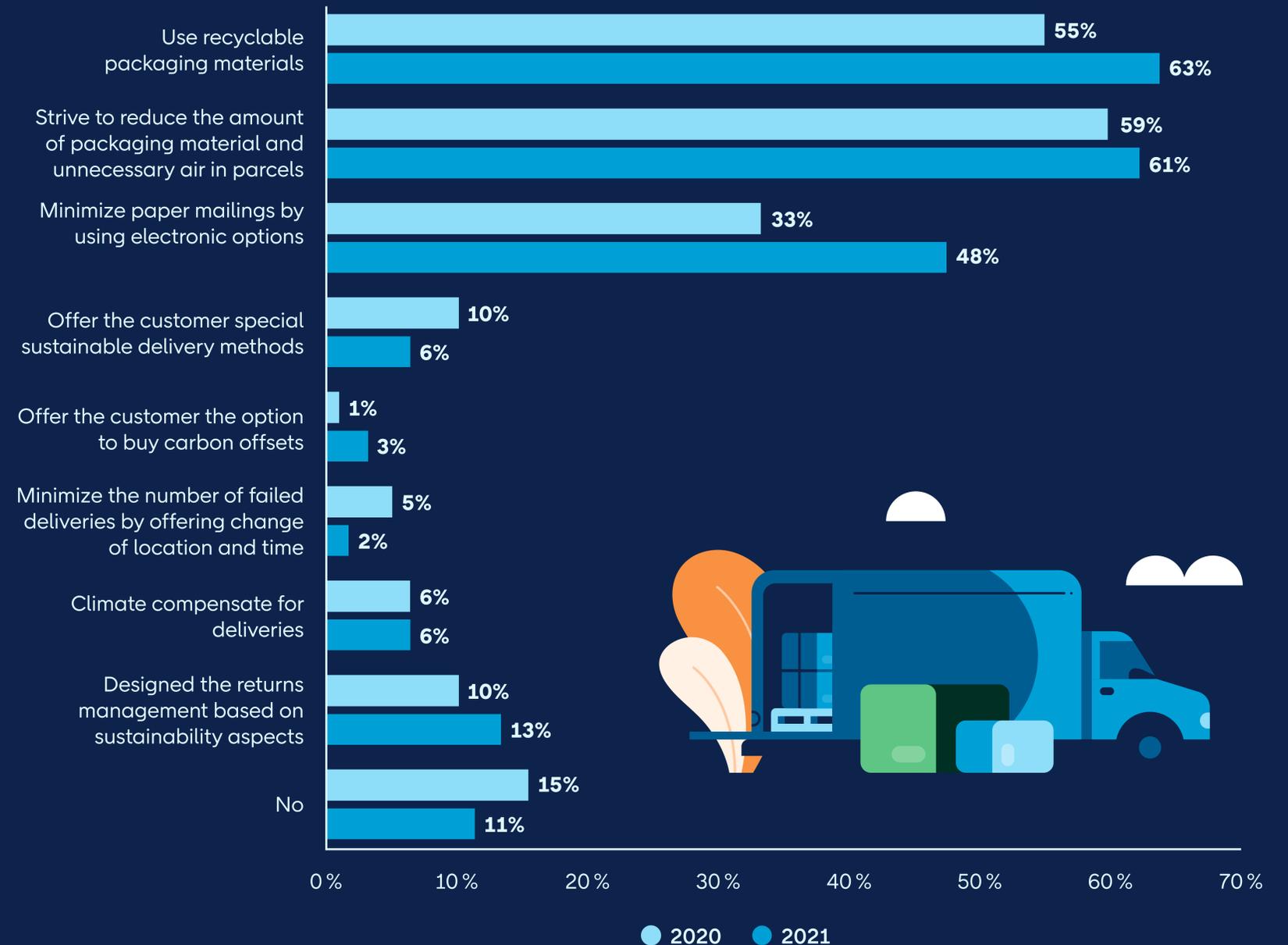
**T**he expansion of online shopping has received both praise and criticism. Time-efficient, convenient and more economical, advocates say. However, e-commerce has also been criticized. In particular, some consider it to be less sustainable in comparison with physical commerce.

**However, it is** clear that e-commerce companies are working to reduce their carbon footprint. An increasing number of companies are using recyclable packaging materials, and many

are working to reduce the amount of air in their packaging. The number of e-commerce companies using recyclable packaging in 2021 compared to 2020 increased by as many as 8 percentage points. One example is Gina Tricot, which has started to offer its customers the circular service RePack. This means that customers can have their goods delivered in a package that can be returned to the nearest mailbox. The packaging is then reused for new deliveries.<sup>16)</sup>

<sup>16)</sup> [www.ginatricot.com/se/hallbarhet/repack](http://www.ginatricot.com/se/hallbarhet/repack)

## How companies work with sustainability regarding deliveries



Basis: Companies that have e-commerce operations

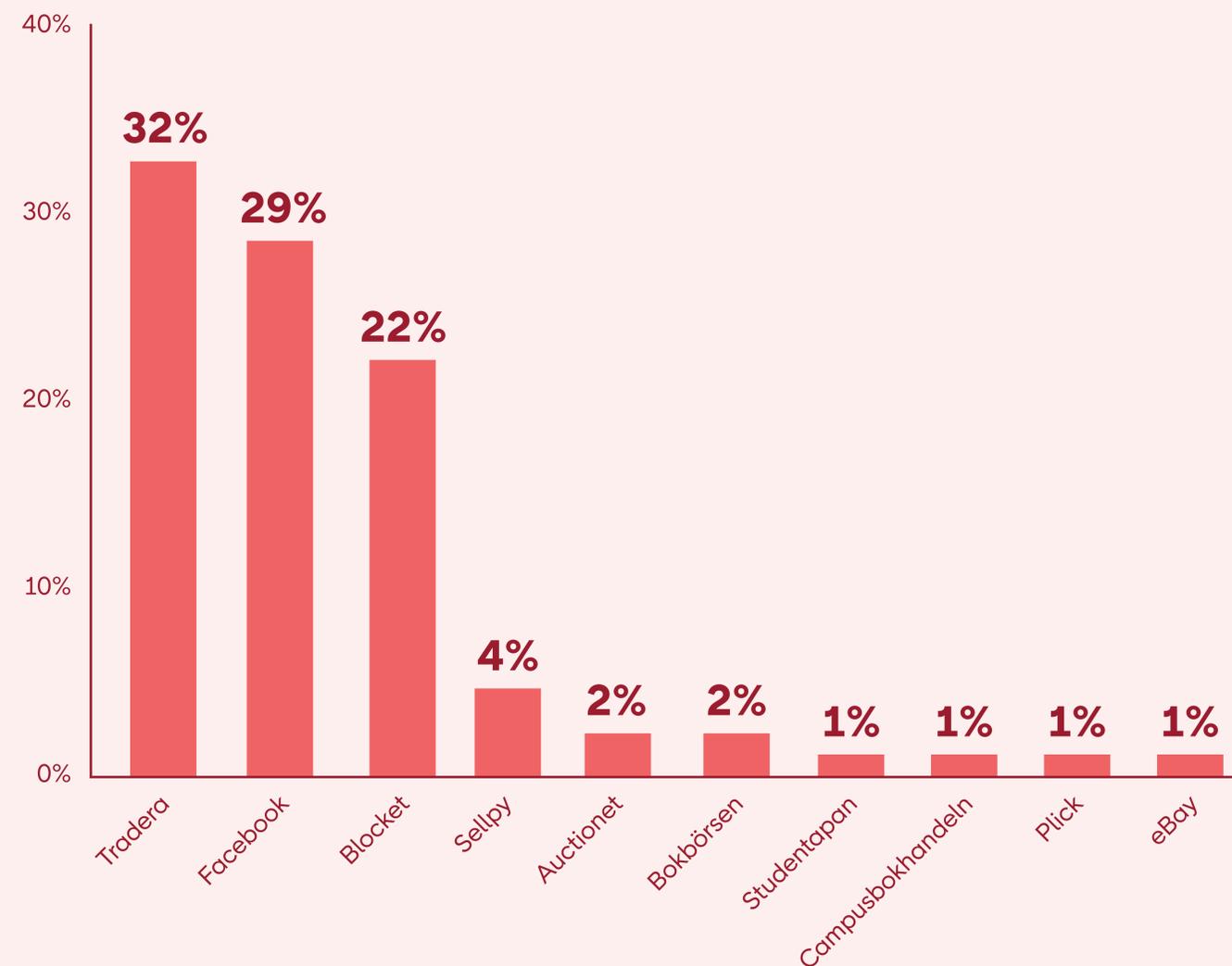
## Facebook takes more share of the online second-hand/used market

**T**radera, Facebook and Blocket dominate, as in previous years, among Swedish favorites when it comes to second-hand/used shopping online. Facebook has captured a large share of the online second-hand/used market in recent years since the launch of Facebook Marketplace. Facebook has grown by two percentage points since the 2020 survey, taking share from Blocket, which fell by three percentage points.

However, it is not only Facebook Marketplace that consumers use, but also various groups are used to buy and sell goods on the platform.

**Another rising star** that has emerged in recent years is Sellpy, owned by H&M. They have increased by 1 percentage point since the 2020 survey. Other market participants on the list of favorites are mainly booksellers selling second-hand/used books online.

## On which website or social media channel do you find most of the second-hand/used goods you buy on the internet?



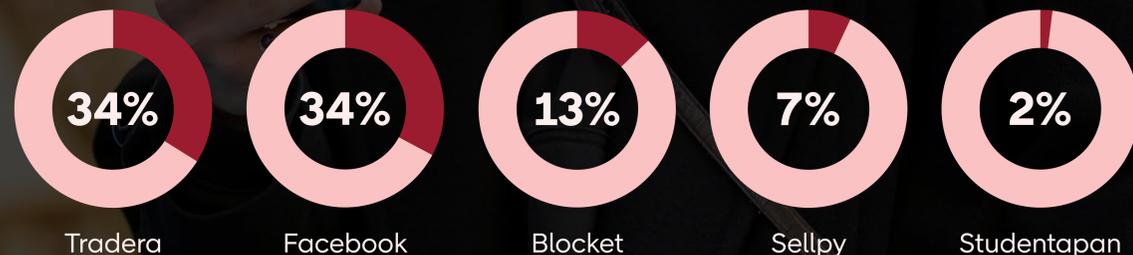
Basis: Have shopped online

## On which website or social media channel do you find most of the second-hand/used goods you buy online?

Men



Women



Basis: Have shopped online

## Blocket most popular among men but losing ground among women

**T**he choice of e-commerce operator from which consumers buy most second-hand/used goods differs somewhat between different consumer groups. Blocket is much more popular among men, with a third buying most of their second-hand/used goods online from the website. Among women, the corresponding figure is just 13 percent.

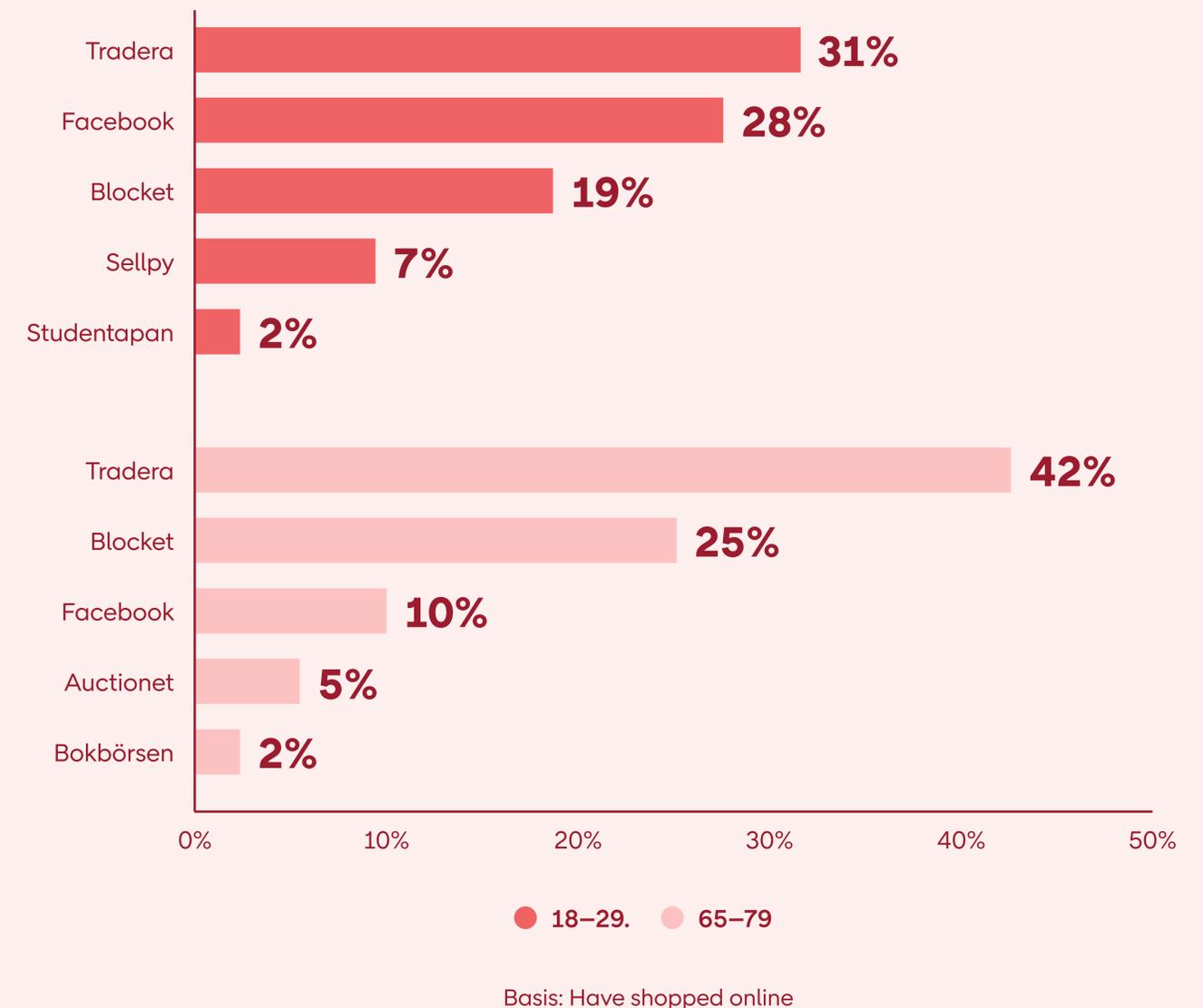
**Instead, women shop** more on Facebook than men. A third of women do most of their online shopping for second-hand/used goods on Facebook. Facebook groups and Marketplace are popular for fashion items, which may be a contributing factor to the differences. Sellpy is also significantly more popular among women than men.

## Older consumers prefer traditional second-hand/used websites

**T**he youngest and the oldest consumers have different preferences when it comes to which second-hand/used sites they use most. Younger consumers use Facebook to a much greater extent than older consumers. Sellpy also stands out among younger consumers and is not represented at all among older consumers.

Among older consumers, the more traditional second-hand/used websites Tradera and Blocket are used the most. Older people also display different consumption behavior, which is reflected in their preference for Auctionet at number 4, for example. Auctionet is dominated by antiques, art and design products from well-known auction houses – often at relatively high prices. It therefore involves the consumption of premium products or collectors' items.

## On which website or social media channel do you find most of the second-hand/used goods you buy on the internet?



# Three voices about second-hand/used online

“There’s stuff for both model boats and model railways.”

## What do you purchase second-hand/used online?

I mostly buy things for my hobby business. There is stuff for both model boats and model railways. I usually shop mostly from eBay in Germany, but there are also many good Facebook groups for my hobbies. The other day I needed some accessories, so I posted in the group “Those who love model boats” and got some help right away.

## How do these groups you are in work?

The groups are both forums and marketplaces. I have a real boat too, and that’s why I’m also in the “Those who love wooden boats” group. When you’re looking for something in particular, you can ask around in the groups. Either someone will help you find a link to what you need, or there will be someone who can sell it to you.

## Why do you buy these items second-hand/used online?

When you have an old boat like I do, you often need old repaired parts that can’t be found anywhere else. However,

there are often people who collect such things. My father once gave me an old motorcycle with English screw threads. These are invaluable for those working on old motorcycles. I then put an ad in a group and there were guys all over the country who wanted the screws!

## So the goods are rare – are they expensive too?

No, they’re often not very expensive either. I sold the bolts I was talking about for one Swedish krona each and five kronor each per bolt. These groups don’t exist to make money, but because it’s fun to help each other with our hobbies!



**Name:** Per Jonsson Gille

**Age:** 67

**Lives in:** Bromma

**Profession:** Retired chamber musician

“You can save a lot of money on it”

## What do you purchase second-hand/used online?

Primarily, I’ve been building and selling computers. I’ve had friends who want to buy computers and I’ve bought computer components second-hand online. It doesn’t affect the performance very much, but it’s cheaper. You can save a lot of money on it.

## Where do you find the items?

I find them mainly on Sweclockers. They have an excellent marketplace and very nice people. Sweclockers is really a forum, but it also offers information, articles and an active market. Although it’s a small marketplace, it’s very niche, which is good when you want to buy computer components.

## Technology items are very function-driven, and they immediately lose their value if they don’t work. How does it work out for you when you buy such items second-hand – is there ever a problem?

What you buy from such websites are certain types of components. The

components that deteriorate over time, such as hard drives, I never buy used. I don’t buy the chassis there either. What’s hidden inside the computer is usually just as good second-hand, so there’s no difference in performance. Also, it’s a small forum, and there are many rules so you can feel confident that you can trust the seller.

## Are there any other reasons why you buy computer accessories second-hand/used online?

It’s good for the environment too, but it’s definitely the price that’s the main reason.



**Name:** Gustav Ståhl

**Age:** 22

**Lives in:** Stockholm

**Profession:** Software Developer

## What do you purchase online?

Yes, I mostly buy jeans.

Maybe once or twice a month.

## Where do you buy them from, and why?

I usually buy from Relow, Sellpy and Plick. Relow has nicer jeans than you’ll find in regular stores and they’re not that expensive. Jeans from Zara, H&M and Gina Tricot cost the same but aren’t as stylish. On Plick, individuals post ads and you can then buy from them. Most of the people who use Plick are my age, so the clothes are in my style. But it can sometimes be more expensive than buying new items because people make bids.

## What do you think about the sizes of the clothes?

If it’s the wrong size, I’ll sell it on. But the inside leg measurement is listed on Relow and Sellpy, so I’m not worried about it being wrong. The important thing is that you buy something a little special, because then it feels worth it. Buying second-hand/used takes a bit more effort after all. The sustainability issue doesn’t really influence me when I shop – it’s more of a bonus.

## Is there anything that could be better about the experience of buying second-hand online?

Where I buy things, I don’t think so. Having contact with individual sellers can be a hassle. If you could avoid contact with them, that would be nice.

**Name:** Alice

**Age:** 16

# Retail Day: Lindex may have found the Holy Grail of retail

The theme of Retail Day was something that affects most retailers: optimal consumer experiences. “It’s more important than ever to find new ways to meet customer expectations, and tech is crucial for that,” says Lindex CEO Susanne Ehnbåge.

**F**rom seamless customer journeys to optimized customer experiences – that was the theme of this year’s Retail Day. A good customer journey is something of the Holy Grail of retail in Sweden.

Lindex CEO Susanne Ehnbåge, who perhaps drew the biggest crowd, together with Annika Elfström (CIO of the same company) talked about tech, business development and the effects of the pandemic. She notes that the consequences have been significant.

“Having to close down our stores in 15 markets in the space of a few days and only having stores open in three was a huge strain. And it’s a situation we’ve had on and off since the pandemic hit two years ago.”

**But the effects** have not only been negative, Susanne Ehnbåge stresses.

“Faced with extreme challenges, it becomes all the more important to focus your efforts. I would liken it to being on a raft – where all your focus is on keeping the raft afloat while paddling forward. Our focus has been clear from the beginning, and we’ve taken many important and courageous decisions. I would say that never before have we learned →

Susanne Ehnbåge, CEO of Lindex

See the broadcast on [postnord.se/retailday](https://postnord.se/retailday)

→ and achieved so much together in such a short time.”

**During Retail Day** the focus was on optimized customer experiences. This is an area that Lindex prioritizes.

“For us, it’s always about focusing on the customer’s needs and how we treat them and create value for them.

“This could be by ensuring simplicity and speed throughout the customer journey for those who seek it, while providing inspiration and commitment to those who want it.”

Susanne Ehnbåge

This could be by ensuring simplicity and speed throughout the customer journey for those who seek it, while providing inspiration and commitment to those who want it. One of our focal areas is our data-driven work to become even better at anticipating needs and create offers that are more relevant to our customers at all levels,” says Susanne Ehnbåge.

**How do you use different tech solutions to optimize the customer experience?**

“We’re in a period where finding new ways to meet customer expectations and changing behaviors is more important than ever, and where tech is key. Digital services and solutions run through everything we do today, wherever the customer encounters us. We’re in the midst of a major digital

transformation in which we’re implementing new tools and systems that will help optimize the customer experience. For example, we are rolling out a new checkout system in our stores and a new customer engagement solution so that we can be even more relevant to our customers,” she replies.

**At Lindex**, the work is now largely carried out in cross-functional teams. The company focuses on hosted omni, store and goods flows, with teams working agilely to maintain, operate and develop digital services to enable an optimized customer experience.

“We are also doing exciting work on 3D design, which we see as having great potential going forward. There are also many exciting developments underway in areas such as product tags, with great potential to optimize the customer experience in many ways.

**Lindex’s goal over** the past few years has been to double its net sales – while halving its carbon footprint.

“This requires investment and innovation, with new product areas, manufacturing methods and business opportunities for which tech is crucial. As we move forward, we will continue to be quick on our feet, testing, evaluating and once again trying new things,” concludes Susanne Ehnbåge.



Lindex’s Susanne Ehnbåge and Annika Elfström know all about tech, business development and 3D design.

Photo: Arne Andersson

# The E-barometern is published by PostNord in cooperation with Svensk Digital Handel and HUI Research

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## **About PostNord**

PostNord is a leader in parcels and logistics services to, from, and within the Nordic region. Our business and private customers must be able to reach their recipients at the right time, reliably and efficiently – whether the task involves a global logistics solution, an advertising campaign or a birthday greeting.

With around 28,000 employees (2021), PostNord is one of the largest employers in the Nordic region and bears a considerable measure of social responsibility. PostNord aims to offer an attractive, stimulating workplace. Visit us at [www.postnord.com](http://www.postnord.com)

**SVENSK  
DIGITAL  
HANDEL**

## **About Svensk Digital Handel**

Svensk Digital Handel is an interest group for digital retail in Sweden and strives to ensure that its members' digital activities are future-proof. Together with our members, we make it easier to shop online. Svensk Digital Handel owns the Trygg e-handel (Safe e-commerce) certification and is part of Svensk Handel.

**hui.**

## **About HUI Research**

HUI Research AB provides, via its consultancy and research activities, professional decision-making material and advice to businesses and the public sector in the areas of retail, tourism, consumption and economics. The company was founded in 1968 and is owned by the trade association Svensk Handel.

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