



# Geo-blocking

## What is unjustified geo-blocking?

Discrimination between EU customers to segment markets along national borders and to increase profits to the detriment of foreign customers, is considered as unjustified geo-blocking.

## The regulation

The geo-blocking regulation defines three specific situations of unjustified geo-blocking:

- **The sale of goods without physical delivery**

Example: A Belgian customer wishes to buy a refrigerator and finds the best deal on a German website. The customer will be entitled to order the product and collect it at the trader's premises or organise delivery himself to his home.

- **The sale of electronically supplied services**

Example: A Bulgarian consumer wishes to buy hosting services for her website from a Spanish company. She will now have access to the service, can register and buy this service without having to pay additional fees compared to a Spanish consumer.

- **The sale of services provided in a specific physical location**

Example: An Italian family visits a French theme park and wishes to take advantage of a family discount on the price of the entry tickets. The discounted price will be available for the Italian family.

There are also justified reasons for traders not to sell cross-border. Such as the need to register at a tax authority in the country of destination, higher shipping costs or costs arising from the application of foreign consumer law. While outside barriers create additional complications and extra costs for the trader, differences in the treatment of customers are based on objective criteria.

For better understanding of the regulation, the Commission issued a [detailed Questions & Answers](https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/geo-blocking-regulation-questions-and-answers) (<https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/geo-blocking-regulation-questions-and-answers>) document and a [MEMO](https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/10-key-features-geo-blocking-regulation) (<https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/10-key-features-geo-blocking-regulation>).

This [regulation was part of an e-commerce package](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AOJ.LI.2018.060.01.0001.01.ENG&toc=OJ%3AL%3A2018%3A060%3ATOC) (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AOJ.LI.2018.060.01.0001.01.ENG&toc=OJ%3AL%3A2018%3A060%3ATOC>) together with a legislative proposal on cross-border parcel delivery services and a legislative proposal to strengthen enforcement of consumers' rights.

## First short term review

Within two years after the entry into force of the new rules, the Commission had to carry out a first short term review of the Regulation.

The Commission's Report summarising the results of this exercise included an analysis of the possible effects of the extension of the scope of the rules. This included possible application of the entire Regulation to certain electronically supplied services which offer copyright-protected content such as music, e-books, software and online games, as well as to services in sectors currently fully excluded such as transport and audio-visual.

The Report was adopted on 30 November 2020. You can read the [main conclusions of the report](https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/commission-publishes-its-short-term-review-geo-blocking-regulation) (<https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/commission-publishes-its-short-term-review-geo-blocking-regulation>).

## Stock-taking exercise

The Commission conducted a stock-taking exercise on the impact of the Geo-blocking Regulation and the progress made in cross-border accessibility to goods and services, considering the potential effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. This review followed the announcement made during the first evaluation.

The analysis found that the Geo-blocking Regulation has effectively decreased the geo-blocking practices of traders in regulated areas, continuing the trend observed since the 2020 first short-term review. However, the analysis highlighted other barriers that continue to prevent a seamless cross-border access to goods and services, such as remaining diverging national rules, certain taxation requirements, costs of parcel delivery services, and practices of multinational traders to arrange for the distribution of goods and services at national level.

The Commission Staff Working Document summarising the results of the stock-taking exercise was sent to the European Parliament and the Council on 18 July 2024. A formal review of the Geo-blocking Regulation is foreseen in 2025.

## Useful links

- [Staff Working Document \(SWD\) on the impact of the Geo-blocking Regulation and progress in further reducing crossborder barriers \(https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/redirection/document/107679\)](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/redirection/document/107679) (Stock-taking exercise)
- [Study for further evaluation of the Geo-blocking Regulation \(https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/redirection/document/107677\)](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/redirection/document/107677) (Supporting the data gathering and the analysis for the SWD):
  - [Summary of the study in FR \(https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/redirection/document/107675\)](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/redirection/document/107675)
  - [Summary of the study in DE \(https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/redirection/document/107676\)](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/redirection/document/107676)
- [Digital Single Market fragmentation by international traders, European Commission, 2024 \(https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/redirection/document/107678\)](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/redirection/document/107678)
- [First evaluation report \(.pdf\) \(http://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc\\_id=71398\)](http://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=71398)
- Staff Working Document [part 1 \(.pdf\) \(https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc\\_id=71400\)](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=71400) - [part 2 \(.pdf\) \(https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc\\_id=71401\)](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=71401)
- [Digibyte: Commission publishes its short-term review of the Geo-blocking Regulation \(https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/commission-publishes-its-short-term-review-geo-blocking-regulation\)](https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/commission-publishes-its-short-term-review-geo-blocking-regulation)
- [10 key features \(https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/10-key-features-geo-blocking-regulation\)](https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/10-key-features-geo-blocking-regulation) of Regulation 2018/302
- Questions and answers on Regulation 2018/302 (available in the following languages: [BG](#) ([https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc\\_id=55370](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55370)), [CS](#) ([https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc\\_id=55371](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55371)), [DA](#) ([https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc\\_id=55372](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55372)), [DE](#) ([https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc\\_id=55373](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55373)), [EL](#) ([https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc\\_id=55374](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55374)), [EN](#) ([https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc\\_id=55375](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55375)), [ES](#) ([https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc\\_id=55376](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55376)), [ET](#) ([https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc\\_id=55377](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55377)), [FI](#) ([https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc\\_id=56258](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=56258)), [FR](#) ([https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc\\_id=55379](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55379)), [HR](#) ([https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc\\_id=55380](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55380)), [HU](#) ([https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc\\_id=55381](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55381)), [IT](#) ([https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc\\_id=55434](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55434)), [LT](#) ([https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc\\_id=55391](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55391)), [LV](#) ([https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc\\_id=55382](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55382)), [MT](#) ([https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc\\_id=55383](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55383)), [NL](#) ([https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc\\_id=55384](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55384)), [PL](#) ([https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc\\_id=55385](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55385)), [PT](#) ([https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc\\_id=55386](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55386)), [RO](#) ([https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc\\_id=55387](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55387)), [SK](#) ([https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc\\_id=55388](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55388)), [SL](#) ([https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc\\_id=55389](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55389)), [SV](#) ([https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc\\_id=55390](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=55390))).
- [Regulation \(EU\) 2018/302 \(https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AOJ.LI.2018.060.01.0001.01.ENG\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AOJ.LI.2018.060.01.0001.01.ENG) on addressing unjustified geo-blocking and other forms of discrimination based on customers' nationality, place of residence or place of establishment within the internal market

# Implementation of geo-blocking by Member States



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