

European Commission regulators are investigating e-commerce as part of an effort to remove barriers to shoppers wanting to use websites outside their countries within the EU.



"I can go to Italy and buy a pair of shoes but I am unable to do that from my home," EU Competition Commissioner Margrethe Vestager says. "If I try to buy on the website I may be redirected."

As part of the investigation EC staff raided a number of European online CE retailers on suspicion of "illegal behavior," including the Media-Saturn-owned RedCoon, following on December 2013 raids on Philips, Samsung and Media-Saturn. The EC is also looking into the "geo-blocking" of online videogame sales.

The Commission also plans to unveil proposals to removal online sales barriers come May 2015, as well as highlight the high delivery costs and price differences charged by online retailers for the same goods in different countries.

"It is high time to remove remaining barriers to ecommerce, which is a vital part of a true Digital Single Market in Europe," Vestager continues. "We hope to get the preliminary results in mid-2016. It is a long wait but it reflects the scope of the inquiry."

According to the EC 50% of EU consumers shopped online in 2014, but only 15% bought a product online in another EU country due to restrictions including language, different laws and anti-competitive behavior.

EU Probes into Online Commerce

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