

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004624/25
to the Commission
Peter Agius (PPE)
(19 November 2025)

Subject: Extra costs for intra-EU deliveries to island Member States

In the EU single market, all citizens should enjoy equal treatment when purchasing goods and services online. However, Maltese consumers are often discriminated against by online traders when it comes to shipping conditions.

A recent case involved a Maltese citizen purchasing medical equipment worth EUR 1 451 from a company advertising free delivery. At checkout, a hefty delivery fee was added, as the supplier then excluded ‘non-EU mainland countries requiring air delivery’. This practice is recurrent and effectively discriminates against citizens in island and peripheral regions such as Malta, Cyprus, Sicily, Sardinia, and the Greek islands.

In the light of the above:

1. Is the Commission aware that online traders frequently exclude island regions such as Malta and Cyprus from ‘EU mainland’ delivery conditions?
2. What measures is the Commission taking or does it intend to take to ensure equal access to free or fair shipping for consumers in all Member States, including island and remote regions?

Submitted: 19.11.2025

Answer given by Executive Vice-President Séjourné on behalf of the European Commission
(21 January 2026)

According to the Geo-blocking Regulation ⁽¹⁾, traders shall not apply different general conditions of access to goods or services, for reasons related to a customer’s nationality, place of residence or place of establishment. However, this does not introduce an obligation on traders to deliver across the EU in a uniform way, nor does it force them to deliver at the same delivery price in certain regions.

Traders may charge higher delivery prices, depending on the area, based on objective criteria (i.e. shipping and handling), as outlined in the regulation on cross-border parcel delivery services ⁽²⁾. Tariffs of universal service providers must be cost-oriented ⁽³⁾.

The total price of goods or services and all additional freight, delivery or postal charges must be communicated in a clear and comprehensible manner to the consumer before conclusion of the contract, or before checkout, as required in the Consumer Rights Directive ⁽⁴⁾ and the regulation on cross-border parcel delivery services.

The Commission plans to propose in the second half of 2026 a reform of the EU postal regulatory framework that will focus on delivery as a service and will ensure that people and businesses can receive deliveries throughout the EU at affordable prices, while promoting fair competition on delivery markets and increasing consumer protection.

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU) 2018/302, OJ L 60I, 2.3.2018, pp. 1-15.

⁽²⁾ Regulation (EU) 2018/644, OJ L 112, 2.5.2018, pp. 19-28.

⁽³⁾ Directive 97/67/EC (as amended by Directives 2002/39/EC and 2008/6/EC), OJ L. 15, 21.1.1998, p. 14-25.

⁽⁴⁾ Directive 2011/83/EU, OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 74-78.