

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic On the behavior of European consumers

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered significant changes in social life over the year. This study looks at the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on consumer behavior in European countries. The main aim is to examine consumers' consumption patterns regarding POS and e-commerce payments, choosing between local and imported goods, as well as other lifestyle and travel preferences. The survey was carried out in 22 European countries using the CAWI method, on a total sample of 5504 respondents. Responses were collected from July to August 2020. The study presents the pandemic impact among European countries, and shows which countries are affected more. To obtain the results, analytical indexes, measuring shopping, payments, travel, and lifestyle preferences were developed. The indexes allowed for examining the factors influencing the differences between different countries, taking into account demographic characteristics, banking advancement, and digital payments' popularity. Changes and differentiation between countries were detected – the study revealed that over 56% of Irish people expect to conduct e-commerce purchases more often. At the bottom, only 24% of Czech citizens expect to do so. In addition, the study also shows a collective analysis of answers. The most changes within the social and economic areas are expected by Portuguese citizens (34% above average). In comparison, the least changes after the pandemic are predicted by Hungary's inhabitants (-20% below average). The results mean that some countries are affected more heavily, and the pandemic crisis' recovery time might be increased.

Keywords: epidemic, e-commerce, points-of-sale, payments, SARS-CoV-2