

## Press release

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### **New Christmas gifts jump into the wish list: gifts with a charitable twist and subscription based gifts**

**This year Belgians will spend 441 euros on Christmas, preferably in stores**

**Brussels - 4 December 2018**

**Two new types of Christmas gifts have become popular this year, reports Deloitte from its annual Christmas Survey. Seven percent of Belgians, with more women than men, would like a gift with a charitable twist. Nine percent of Belgians would like a subscription, like Netflix or Spotify, compared to two percent of British consumers and three percent of German and Dutch consumers.**

*"Gift-giving is changing so quickly, with online charitable giving, movie subscriptions and so much more," said **Agné Vezbergiené**, Director Consumer Products and Services at Deloitte Belgium. "Our survey results help retailers maximise their resources and make this a great holiday season."*

However, money is by far the most desired gift in Belgium this year, followed by books, gift vouchers and dining out at restaurants.

With money remaining at the top of the most desired gift list, Belgians remain faithful to their Christmas wishes. This desire to receive money distinguishes Belgians from their neighbours. In the Netherlands and the UK for example, money is absent from the top 3 of most desired gifts. Interestingly, Belgians do not fancy receiving chocolate for Christmas whilst it is on the top of the desired gifts list of the European consumers. In Belgium, chocolate is only the sixth most popular gift

#### **A 2 percent budget increase**

The Belgians intend to spend 2 percent more on year-end festivities than they did last year, 441 EUR this year compared to 432 EUR in 2017. The Belgian's holiday budget is slightly lower than in other European countries, where on average Belgian households plan to spend 456 EUR. Belgian households plan to spend money on travel, socialising, food and drinks, and gifts. Survey results further show that Belgians are average spenders for Christmas compared to the other 10 European countries that were in the scope of the study. Among the big spenders during the Christmas season are people in the UK (€646), Spain (€599) and Austria (€541), whilst the Dutch (€320), Russians (€284) and Poles (€322) tend to spend the least.

*"Caution based on perceptions of the economy will lead many people to spend prudently," said **Vezebergiené**. "Thirty-eight percent of those surveyed have negative perceptions of the economy, and 43 percent expect the economy to worsen in 2019. That being said, this negative outlook will not directly affect Christmas budgets, which will continue to grow."*

## **Women most likely to be early shoppers**

Once again, Belgians will do their Christmas shopping mostly during the first fortnight of December, with Thirty percent of purchases expected to happen at that time. Nevertheless, Belgians plan to start their Christmas shopping earlier than last year. Fifty-six percent say they will shop before mid December, compared to 49 percent shopping last year. Belgians generally shop later than people in neighbouring countries, with only 26 percent hitting the stores before December compared to neighbouring countries such as Germany (55 percent) and the UK (52 percent).

The early shoppers are more likely to be women. Thirty percent of women said they will start their Christmas shopping before December, compared with twenty-one percent of men.

## **Belgians prefer specialty brick & mortar stores**

Although the latest Comeos e-commerce study concludes a significant increase in online shopping trend, the Christmas Survey reveals that a whopping 75 percent of Belgian consumers prefer to buy their Christmas presents in physical, and specifically specialty stores.

*"Despite the fact that online shopping is prevalent and growing in Belgium, we see that Belgians will only spend 22 percent of the average Christmas budget online. People choose brick & mortar because they want to engage their five senses, and see, try and feel the product, immediately get the gift, and get inspired. Store assistants with a good product knowledge contribute largely to a pleasant shopping experience," **Vezebergiené** said.*

Shoppers in other countries will spend significantly more online this holiday season: 32 percent in the Netherlands, 37 percent in Germany and 42 percent in the UK.

## **About the survey**

The Deloitte Christmas Shopping survey was conducted in 10 countries in Eastern and Western Europe (Austria, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Spain, the Netherlands and the UK). The survey also contains data on what consumers want from store clerks; most desirable gifts for children and teenagers; online shopping attitudes; preferences for retail store sizes; and how consumers research and find gifts.

The full report is available for download at <https://www2.deloitte.com/be/en/pages/consumer-industrial-products/articles/christmas-survey-2018.html>

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