



School of Social Sciences  
Supply Chain Management

Postgraduate Dissertation

From Suppliers to Shoppers: The Critical Role of Negotiations in  
the eCommerce Supply Chain Ecosystem

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Patras, Greece, January 2026

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# From Suppliers to Shoppers: The Critical Role of Negotiations in the eCommerce Supply Chain Ecosystem

Skapinaki Foteini

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***Dedication***

*I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my beloved daughter, **Vasiliki Anna Angeloniti**, who patiently supported me throughout this journey, even though I was often able to offer her less help than she needed, so that I could succeed in my postgraduate studies.*

*To my husband, **Panagiotis Angelonitis**, for his enduring patience and support, not only during this dissertation but also throughout the entire course of my postgraduate path.*

*Because, after all, the best team always wins.*

*However, the greatest tribute goes to my father, **Georgios Skapinakis**, who taught me to persist, to love what I do, and to remain fully dedicated to my goals. He has been my role model in everything – the best example a child could ever receive from a parent. **I will always be your greatest admirer, as your example in every aspect of life makes me a better person every single day.***

***Thank you, Dad, for everything.***

***Fotini Skapinaki***

## **Abstract**

My proposed dissertation title is “*From Suppliers to Shoppers: The Critical Role of Negotiations in the eCommerce Supply Chain Ecosystem*”, aims to investigate the important role of negotiation strategies into the Supply Chain Ecosystem inside the competitive eCommerce ecosystem.

My dissertation will analyze the science of negotiation, by examine how the negotiation techniques can affect supply chain efficiency and a company’s business success in the eCommerce landscape.

My study will present the eCommerce Supply Chain ecosystem in Greece and shall provide a relevant analysis of the power negotiation between suppliers, e-shops / intermediaries and end customers. It is also quite important to present all challenges and opportunities that are derived from digital technological advancements and eCommerce market peculiarities and demands.

My study will draw information from relevant literature in the field of Supply Chain Management, Negotiation Success and eCommerce market peculiarities and demands.

The dissertation will also extract important insights from articles and industry ecommerce reports from the global and the Greek eCommerce Market Landscape. This study shall aim to show the importance of negotiation processes in achieving strategic supply chain targets and goals in the eCommerce Industry. All sources that will be used shall be based on relevant articles, reports and books and of course relevant questionnaire as analytical feedback from platforms/e-shops and rest parties of Supply Chain Department in order to obtain and analyze useful conclusions on the advantages of negotiation strategy of eCommerce ecosystem to each channel of interaction such as merchant- eshop, end customer and suppliers.

### **Keywords**

Mention 3 to 6 key words for the indexing of your thesis / dissertation.

#eCommerce Ecosystem & Landscape

#eCommerce Supply Chain Services

#Negotiation Strategy Success

# Interconnection of Suppliers/E-shops/End Customers

#Warehousing & Last mile Services

## Από τους προμηθευτές στους αγοραστές: Ο κρίσιμος ρόλος των διαπραγματεύσεων στην εφοδιαστική αλυσίδα του ηλεκτρονικού εμπορίου

“Σκαπινάκη Φωτεινή”

### Περίληψη

**«Από τους Προμηθευτές στους Καταναλωτές: Ο Καθοριστικός Ρόλος των Διαπραγματεύσεων στην Εφοδιαστική Αλυσίδα του οικοσυστήματος του ηλεκτρονικού εμπορίου»**

Η παρούσα διατριβή στοχεύει να διερευνήσει τον σημαντικό ρόλο που διαδραματίζουν οι στρατηγικές διαπραγματεύσεων στην Εφοδιαστική Αλυσίδα του eCommerce οικοσυστήματος, εντός του ιδιαίτερα ανταγωνιστικού οικοσυστήματος του ηλεκτρονικού εμπορίου.

Η μελέτη θα αναλύσει την «επιστήμη των διαπραγματεύσεων», εξετάζοντας πώς οι τεχνικές διαπραγμάτευσης μπορούν να επηρεάσουν την αποδοτικότητα της εφοδιαστικής αλυσίδας και, κατ' επέκταση, την επιχειρηματική επιτυχία στον χώρο του eCommerce.

Ιδιαίτερη έμφαση θα δοθεί στην παρουσίαση του eCommerce οικοσυστήματος, των ηλεκτρονικών καταστημάτων και marketplaces ηλεκτρονικού εμπορίου.

Η διπλωματική εργασία θα εστιάσει στην ανάλυση της διαπραγματευτικής δυναμικής του του eCommerce οικοσυστήματος μεταξύ προμηθευτών, ενδιάμεσων/eshops και τελικών καταναλωτών.

Παράλληλα, θα εξεταστούν οι προκλήσεις και οι ευκαιρίες που απορρέουν από τις τεχνολογικές εξελίξεις και τις ιδιαιτερότητες/απαιτήσεις της αγοράς ηλεκτρονικού εμπορίου.

Η μελέτη θα αντλήσει δεδομένα τόσο από τη σχετική ακαδημαϊκή βιβλιογραφία στον τομέα του Supply Chain Management και των Διαπραγματεύσεων όσο και από αναλύσεις και εκθέσεις της ελληνικής και διεθνούς αγοράς eCommerce.

Στόχος είναι η ανάδειξη της σημασίας των διαδικασιών διαπραγμάτευσης στην επίτευξη στρατηγικών στόχων της εφοδιαστικής αλυσίδας στον κλάδο του ηλεκτρονικού εμπορίου.

Όλες οι πηγές που θα χρησιμοποιηθούν θα βασιστούν σε επιστημονικά άρθρα, αναφορές και βιβλία, ενώ θα αξιοποιηθεί και σχετικό ερωτηματολόγιο προς ηλεκτρονικά καταστήματα, marketplaces και λοιπά στελέχη που σχετίζονται με το eCommerce Supply Chain, προκειμένου να εξαχθούν και να αναλυθούν χρήσιμα συμπεράσματα για τα πλεονεκτήματα της διαπραγματευτικής στρατηγικής των eCommerce πλατφορμών σε κάθε κανάλι επαφής: Merchant–eshop, τελικός καταναλωτής και προμηθευτές.

### **Λέξεις-Κλειδιά**

- Οικοσύστημα & Τοπίο Ηλεκτρονικού Εμπορίου
- Υπηρεσίες Εφοδιαστικής Αλυσίδας στο eCommerce
- Επιτυχία Διαπραγματευτικής Στρατηγικής
- Διασύνδεση Προμηθευτών/Ηλεκτρονικών Καταστημάτων/Τελικών καταναλωτών.
- Υπηρεσίες Αποθήκευσης και τελευταίου μιλίου

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## List of Abbreviations & Acronyms

<b>3PL</b>	Third-Party Logistics
<b>ABC Analysis</b>	An inventory management technique
<b>AI</b>	Artificial Intelligence
<b>API</b>	Application Programming Interface
<b>AUEB</b>	Athens University of Economics and Business
<b>B2B</b>	Business-to-Business
<b>B2C</b>	Business-to-Consumer
<b>BATNA</b>	Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement
<b>C2C</b>	Consumer-to-Consumer
<b>CAGR</b>	Compound Annual Growth Rate,
<b>CoD</b>	Cash on Delivery
<b>CRIF</b>	Centre for Research in International Finance
<b>DHL</b>	a trademark of a delivery company
<b>dpt</b>	department
<b>ECDB</b>	Equal Common Database
<b>EDI</b>	Electronic Data Interchange
<b>E-GDP</b>	electronic Gross Domestic Product
<b>ELTRUN</b>	E-Business Research Center of the Athens University of Economics and Business
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>EUR</b>	Euro
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>GMV</b>	Gross Merchandise Value
<b>GR.EC.A</b>	Greek eCommerce Association
<b>ICAP</b>	International Compliance Assurance Programme
<b>IEEE</b>	Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers,
<b>KPI</b>	Key Performance Indicator
<b>M</b>	Mean
<b>Max</b>	maximum
<b>Min</b>	minimum
<b>n</b>	sample size
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organizations
<b>P2P</b>	Peer-to-Peer
<b>n.d.</b>	no date
<b>PR</b>	Press Release
<b>Q</b>	Question
<b>QA</b>	Quality Assurance
<b>SD</b>	Standard Deviation
<b>SKU</b>	Stock Keeping Unit
<b>SLA</b>	Service Level Agreement
<b>UNESP</b>	Universidade Estadual Paulista
<b>USA</b>	Unite States of America

<b>USD</b>	United States Dollar,
<b>VML</b>	a trademark of Wunderman Thompson LLC d/b/a VML
<b>Y2Y</b>	Year-to-Year

## 1. Introduction

The dissertation highlights how eCommerce platforms and big retailers, through its dominant market position – leverages their negotiation power to design distinct strategies with suppliers, partners, and customers. It explores how digital sales channels and advanced logistics skills strengthen negotiation dynamics, and how technology and digitalization have contributed to their success as a negotiation leader in the eCommerce landscape. Ultimately, this research aims to show the critical role of negotiation in building resilient, efficient, and customer-centric supply chains, while underscoring the strategic footprint of negotiation within logistics services.

### 1.1. Problem statement

It is worth noting that the choice of this dissertation topic is grounded in the fact that within the Greek eCommerce ecosystem, there is a significant scarcity of nationwide research at an in-depth analytical level. The objective lies in producing unique findings by combining insights from eCommerce sales in Greece with the negotiation strategies embedded within the supply chain. This uniqueness is further emphasized as the research focuses on the first and only established marketplace in Greece's eCommerce ecosystem.

The study aims to explore how such a structure can operate within a highly complex activity that integrates both the sale of goods and services, while simultaneously developing in-house, high-level logistics capabilities. These capabilities reinforce its position in the domestic market and enable the implementation of negotiation strategies within the logistics services it provides, particularly in e-fulfillment and last-mile delivery.

Existing literature in Greece remains limited and fragmented in addressing negotiation strategies within corporate entities operating in the eCommerce supply chain ecosystem. The contribution of this dissertation, therefore, is to demonstrate how eCommerce sales in Greece—through the model of a marketplace, which reflects a global consumer trend—

shape high-level logistics services, including inventory accuracy, warehousing, and distribution. This trend not only defines consumer experiences but also strengthens Greek entrepreneurship and empowers domestic marketplaces to consolidate their position against international eCommerce giant competitors.

## **1.2. Research questions / objectives**

This research comes to answer some very important questions about the importance of negotiation strategies within the eCommerce Supply Chain Ecosystem.

- How the negotiation strategies can be implemented on different partners and levels of collaborations
- What is the role of logistics capabilities in order for a company to strengthening negotiation effectiveness.
- How important are the digitalization and technological progress that can create new opportunities and challenges as well for the implementation of negotiation strategy within the supply chain.

This research objective is referred to the below:

- Draw and show insight of how important negotiations are and how empower the competitiveness of Greek eCommerce ecosystem against international marketplace and ecommerce sales Platforms.
- To analyze and show the contribution of logistics activities and services (Stock accuracy, e-fulfilment and Last mile services) that lead to effective and successful negotiation practices.
- The analysis of the negotiation strategy and all elements that eCommerce parties implement within tis supply chain processes.
- To show and provide useful information and material of practical examples to be applied within Supply Chain Management.
- The evaluation of the opportunities & challenges that are being created from the digital transformation and technology advancements of the Greek eCommerce market.

### **1.3. Aim of the Dissertation**

The aim of this dissertation is to show the importance of negotiation as a critical and strategic element for effectiveness, efficiency and competitiveness within the Greek eCommerce Supply Chain ecosystem. The dissertation is referred to the eCommerce Supply Chain ecosystem, and shows how a marketplace can leverage negotiation techniques and processes to enhance logistics services, the customer service experience and the partner relationships.

### **1.4. Structure of dissertation**

#### **CHAPTER 1 / Introduction**

On that chapter will show the main objectives and challenges and also a general overview of my dissertation structure.

#### **CHAPTER 2 / The E-Commerce Ecosystem & the Role into Supply Chain**

On that chapter we analyze the eCommerce ecosystem and marketplace environment and how important and critical the supply chain role is as a key factor against competition for the best customer service experience. In addition, it is presented the importance on theoretical level of negotiation into the supply chain.

#### **CHAPTER 3 / Negotiation Practices Between Suppliers and Shoppers**

On that chapter will be showed how shoppers & suppliers interact within the eCommerce and marketplace environment from service quality perspective, pricing and added value services. Great value is created as we also examine the customer behavior trends in Greece and on a global basis as well.

#### **CHAPTER 4 / eCommerce Supply Chain ecosystem**

That Chapter presents the Supply Chain models and more specifically the e-Fulfilment and Last mile operations. In addition, we analyze the negotiation strategy & tactics of all parties eshops/partners/suppliers and of course showing their impact and results. Of course, the role of negotiation strategy has a great impact also to the final e-shoppers so, we shall shed light on them as well in order to show the outcome from customer's perspective and role.

#### **CHAPTER 5 / Research Methodology and Design**

On that chapter will describe the approach of our research on quantitative method, the data collection method, the sampling framework and the validity consideration of the research and study.

#### **CHAPTER 6 / Findings of the Research**

On that chapter will show the results of the research with all quantitative & qualitative elements via a questionnaire to targeted professional of the Greek eCommerce Market.

#### **CHAPTER 7 / Discussion and Interpretation of Results**

All findings from the research are interpreted with the existing theoretical elements and the practical applications of eCommerce Platform & e-Shops and the wider 3PL ecosystem & Marketplace industry by ending on focusing on strategy points and takeaways.

#### **CHAPTER 8 – Conclusions, Limitations, and Recommendations**

The last chapter presents the final conclusions of the research with all possible limitations and of course shows some proposals for future research and potential developments on strategic level for eCommerce Supply Chain ecosystem.

## 2. The eCommerce Ecosystem & Supply Chain Dynamics

### 2.1. The Digital eCommerce sales & Marketplaces

The digital landscape of EUROPE is growing more than ever included 2024 and that growth it is also presented again online. According to the European E-commerce Report (2025) 93% of European are connected to the internet and **for 2025 the percentage of internet users will reach 94% as a forecasting**, so the digital transformation is really connected to the ecommerce ecosystem revolution.

It is worth to mention that the increasement of the internet users are translated to an increasement number of potential ecommerce customers that assist on increasing in a quick way the online sales for ecommerce businesses and marketplaces.

There are so many challenges that eCommerce & digital landscape faces, such as the high inflation, geopolitical instability and rising import tariffs that might slow the Europe's digital markets (eCommerce report 2025).

Although the GDP was rising for 2024 although a lot of uncertainty were presented, but the digital connectivity rises and more and more end customers/internet users show the potential even on difficult times. Relevant tables are presented below regarding population of Europe, the internet users increasement Y2Y and of course the increasement of GDP on a year basis till the forecasting of 2025.

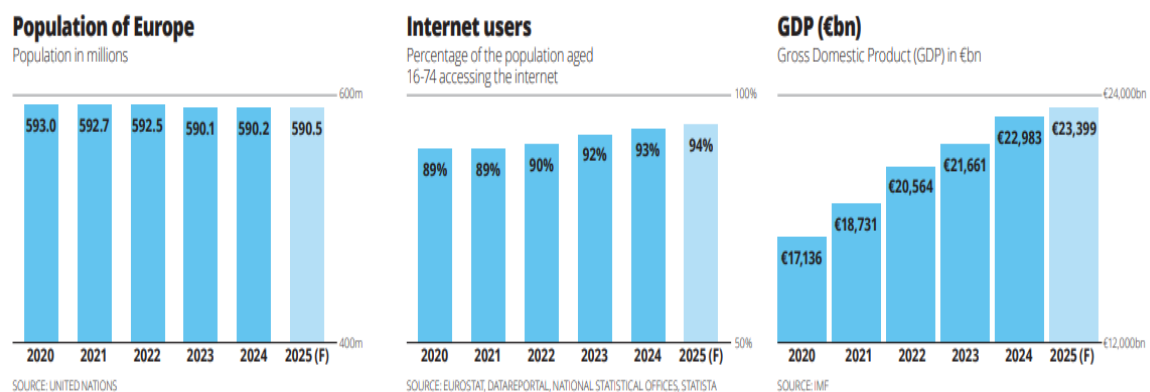


Figure 1: Digital landscape of EUROPE

(source: European eCommerce Report of 2025)

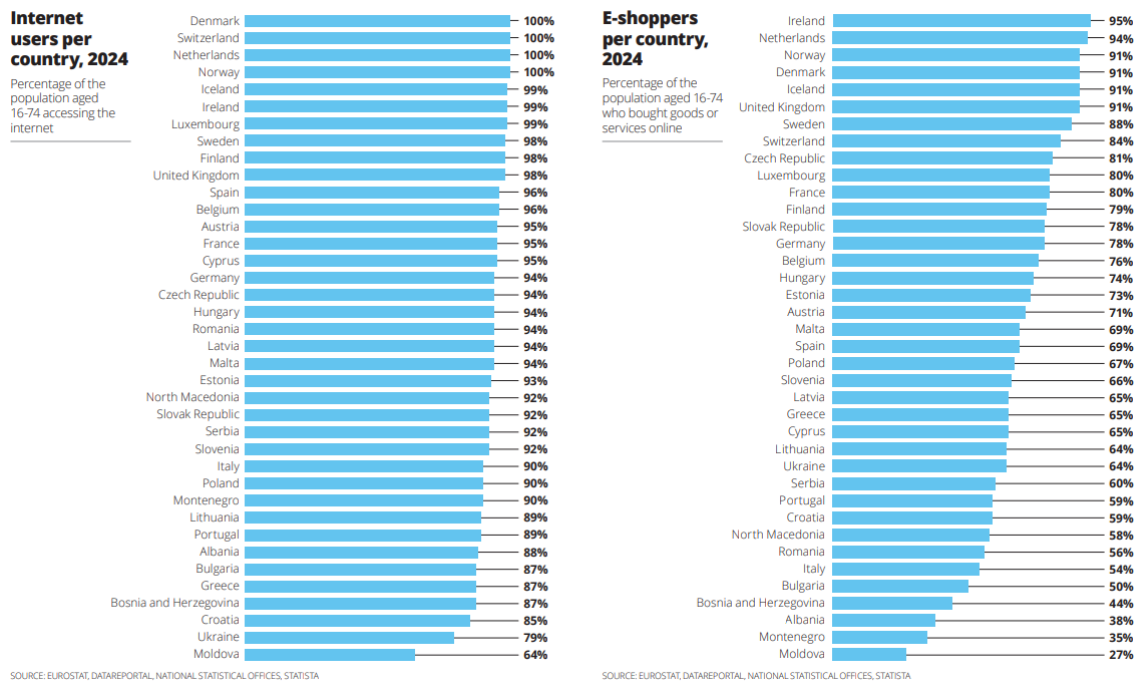


Figure 2: On Line Shipping Trends

(source: European eCommerce Report of 2025)

The European eCommerce Report of 2025 executed by Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences covers 38 European countries and the scope is to show the online shopping trends inside the European union and its pace as well as the yearly growth of the eCommerce market. Until 2025 the growth of eCommerce is expected to reach according to the eCommerce Report 2025 the 7% a fact that leads to a confident scenario for the eCommerce sales growth.

### Evolution of eCommerce sales & Marketplaces

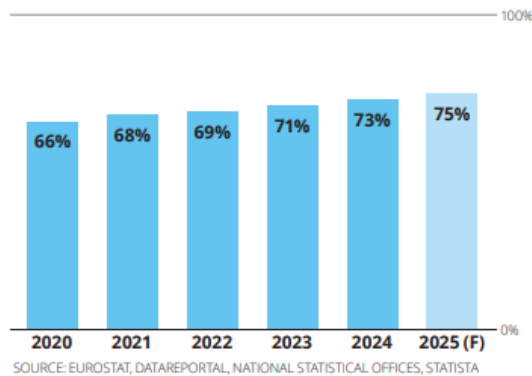
It is important to mention that the European eCommerce seems to be strong and on a growing path as the consumer seem to be more familiar with the digital world and of course with the eCommerce sales as a great part of the daily habit.

All tables below show the dynamic picture of the European e-shoppers even if we face multiple challenges such as inflation and economic crisis, the E-GDP growth of ecommerce sales as well as the eCommerce B2C Turnover in billions on a year basis.

On the table above, we can see that at the end of 2025 the European total eCommerce sales Turn over. The number is quite impressive as the forecasting is reaching the EUR 875 billion for Services & Goods eCommerce Sales.

### E-Shoppers, Europe

Percentage of the population aged 16-74 who bought goods or services online



### E-GDP, Europe

The percentage of GDP comprised of e-commerce sales (E-GDP)

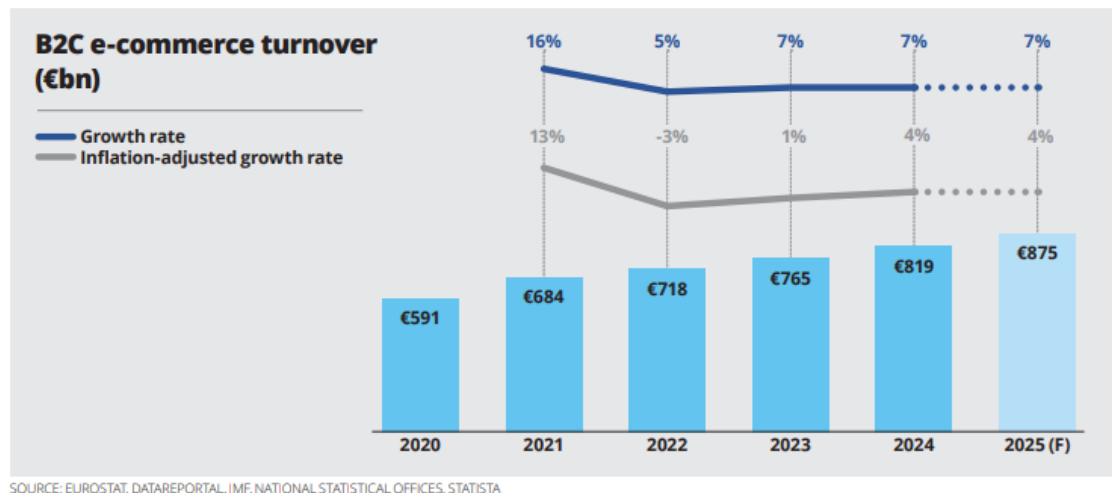
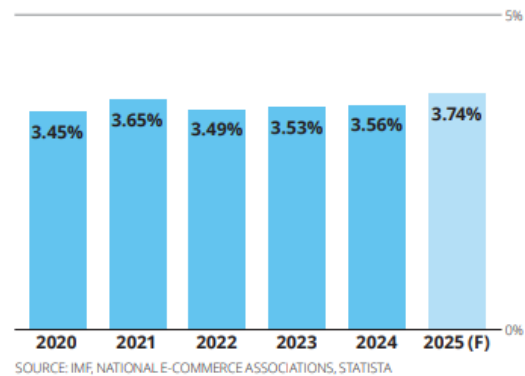


Figure 3: European total eCommerce sales Turn over.

(source: European eCommerce Report of 2025)

Also, it is quite important the comment that the internet usability inside the Greek territory, e-shopper percentage of the population that buy goods or services online and of course to comment the GDP and the e- GDP in billions on a year basis and the relevant growth. All data are derived from the eCommerce Report 2025 and are referred for the Greek eCommerce reality.

### **Countries included:**

Albania	Lithuania
Austria	Luxembourg
Belgium	Malta
Bosnia & Herzegovina	Montenegro
Bulgaria	Netherlands
Croatia	North Macedonia
Cyprus	Norway
Czech Republic	Poland
Denmark	Portugal
Estonia	Romania
Finland	Serbia
France	Slovak Republic
Germany	Slovenia
Greece	Spain
Iceland	Sweden
Italy	Switzerland
Hungary	Ukraine
Ireland	United Kingdom
Latvia	

\* Only goods are included in this new data source

Figure 4: Greek eCommerce reality

(source: eCommerce Report, 2025)

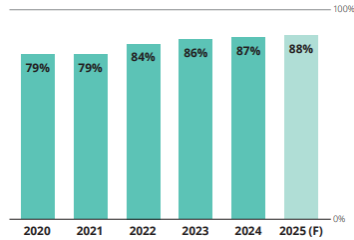
The forecasted turnover of the Greek eCommerce (B2C) Sales on a year basis for 2025 shall be EUR 19.1 billion according to the National eCommerce Association. The association analysis shows that for 2024 the 44% of the total yearly turnover represents goods and 56% is referred to services.

## Greece

Currency: euro | VAT: 24%

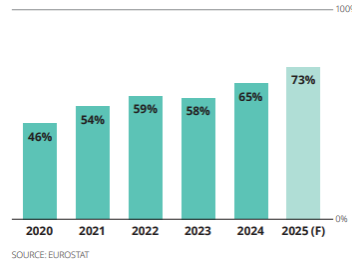
### Internet users

Percentage of the population aged 16-74 accessing the internet



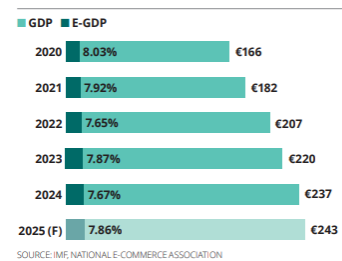
### E-Shoppers

Percentage of the population aged 16-74 who bought goods or services online



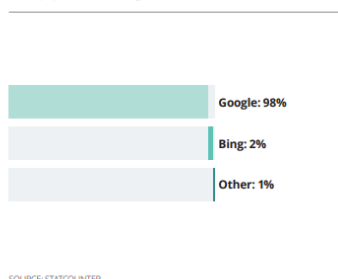
### GDP and E-GDP (€bn)

The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in €bn and the percentage of GDP comprised of e-commerce sales (E-GDP)



### Search engine market share

Most popular search engines in 2024



### B2C e-commerce turnover (€bn)

Growth rate

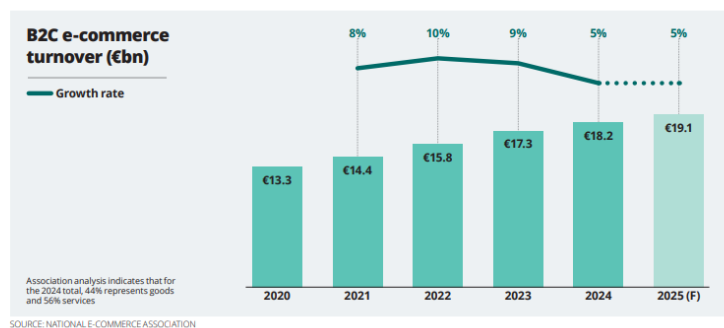


Figure 5: E-commerce Survey 2025

(source: GR.ECA)

The Greek eCommerce Association in Greece (GR.EC.A) recently published and presented after years a very interesting **E-commerce Survey 2025** that was conducted in cooperation with the **ELTRUN E-Business Research Center**, and is held under the auspices of **e-Quality NGO**. The specific survey shows relevant number of the internet usage for Greece, the reason of using it and the frequency of the online sales. It is worth to be mentioned that it is also presents the type of products and services that Greek citizens buy online as well as the money they spend for the online sales.

The specific survey was running via an online questionnaire with a sample (n) of 800 online shoppers from Greece with 33 multiple choice questions.

The 65% of the sample stated that they use internet more than 2-3 hours per day, while 74% stated that they use it to purchase products or services online.

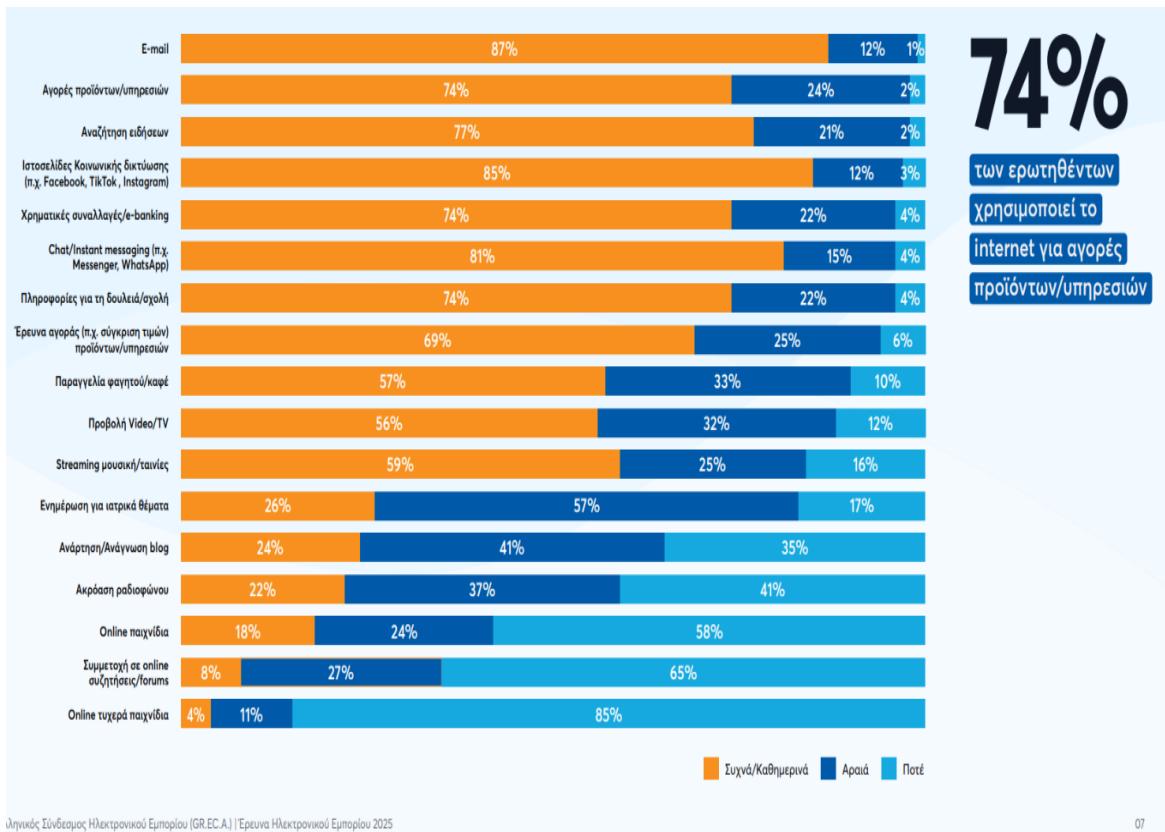


Figure 6: Online questionnaire

(source: GR.ECA)

The eCommerce ecosystem works also with major mechanisms and player giving a great impact on sales and eCommerce growth via the online Marketplaces. Such business models are working in order to connect sellers and end customers that offer a great variety of product and services. An eCommerce marketplace allows sellers and buyers to satisfy their targets (sell /buy) in a digital environment. Through a marketplace we can proceed with commercial transactions with a cost-effective way for a win-win convenience and benefit for both seller and buyer as well.

A marketplace business model provides an end-to-end approach with all transaction included for all parties and works as a broker between the whole flow.

Inside a marketplace there are multiple parties inside their ecosystem such as merchants / sellers / e-shops, intermediaries such as digital banks, Logistics Providers, Couriers and of course end customers.

According to Statista, many brick-and -mortar stores started to obtain their own e-retail platforms to 3rd party sellers (marketplaces) such as WALMART, a huge marketplace for

on line food sales in order to boost their sales with an omnichannel approach i.e. sales via physical stores, online sales and sales via major marketplaces.



Figure 7: The World's Biggest Online Marketplaces

(source: Future of Marketplaces Report, 2022)

According to the PR Web Cision (2022), it is worth to mention that 56% of the global eCommerce sales is derived from the online marketplaces and it is shown to be the fastest growing retail channel on a global basis. It seems that if a retailer omits to participate with a marketplace, then it seems to lose a missing out market share of the eCommerce sales pie. It is an easy way to sell services or goods with a low-risk way in order to enter in a market or grow the turnover of an e-shop.

The Global eCommerce Outlook from ECDB, shows that a concentration and huge increasement toward marketplaces on 2026 and shows that 87% of the global eCommerce

sales will be generated by them. That research shows that marketplace will dominate the eCommerce ecosystem and the online stores will gradually lose their importance as both end customers and retailers turn to enter to eCommerce Platforms such as Temu, Alibaba, Amazon, Shein and many more.



Figure 8: B2C Physical eCommerce Revenue in 2026

(Source: ECDB Global eCommerce Outlook, 2026)

Recently, major Chinese marketplaces such as Temu and Shein have penetrated the European Union, delivering an estimated 4.6 billion e-commerce items in 2024 alone - an impressive figure by EU standards (European Parliament, 2025).

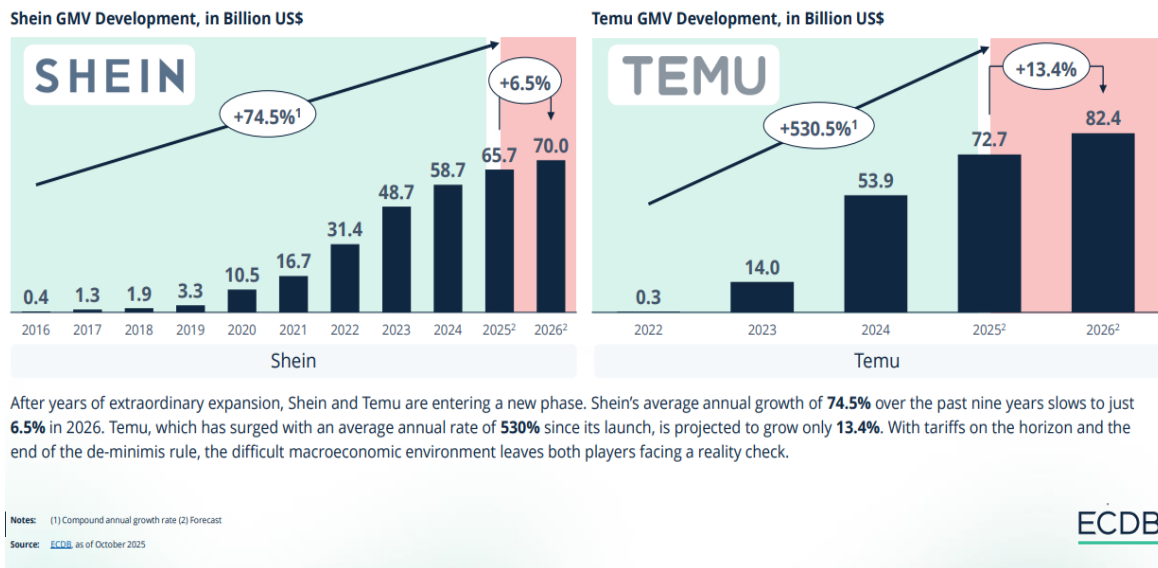


Figure 9: Shein / Temu GMV Development

(Source: EU standards, European Parliament. July 2025)

There are different types of online marketplaces and business models and it is quite important to refer them. There are three types of marketplaces, those that are selling to businesses (B2B = business to business), marketplaces that are selling direct – to – Consumers (the B2C business model) and the Peer to Peer or Consumer to Consumer Model (that is refer when a consumer sells direct to other end customer / C2C or P2P).

In order to be accurate and fully understand the business model for Marketplaces we have to describe a little bit more all business models as referred on the above text.

### **Business-to Business (B2B) Marketplace:**

When a marketplace act on B2B transactions it means that acts as a broker or better an intermediary between distributors / suppliers / manufacturers and actually connect them in marketplace environment. Such Marketplace is the Alibaba case.

### **Consumer to Consumer or Peer to Peer Marketplace (C2C/P2P):**

In such case, there are marketplaces that brings one consumer and some other individual in order to proceed in a private transaction. The first party acts as a seller and the second party as a buyer. It is important to highlight a case in order to be bring an example as such a

marketplace on C2C basis is Vinted a very famous C2C marketplace for second hand apparel.

The last Business model is referred to the most famous business model, a Marketplace that is using the **B2C model (Business to Consumer)**:

The online B2C marketplace environment that actually include businesses as seller and end Customers/Consumers as buyers. In such environments services or goods are passing through a marketplace platform that acts as an intermediary and provide to consumers the best possible customer services experience. An excellent example is Amazon on a global basis or alternatively SKROUTZ Marketplace the biggest marketplace within Greek territory.

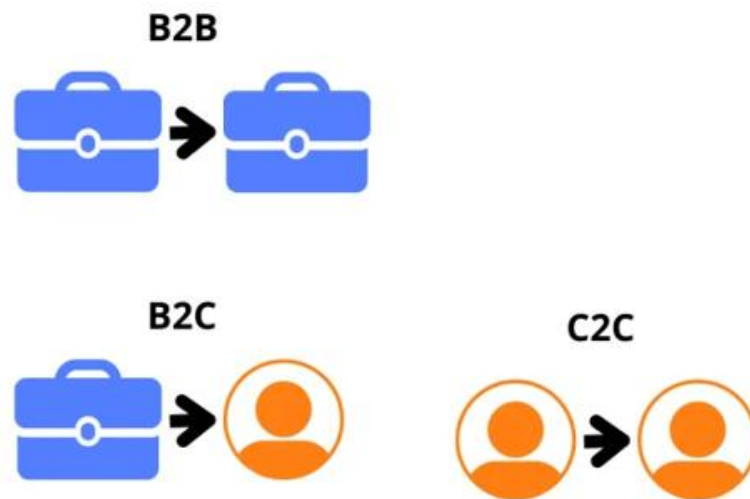


Figure 10: eCommerce Business Models

(source: VML the Future Shopper report of 2025)

According to the VML the Future Shopper report of 2025 (2025), the 61% of the global consumers tend to like of buying from one source or retailer and the 59% indicated by 2027 that all eCommerce sales on a global basis shall be made through marketplaces.

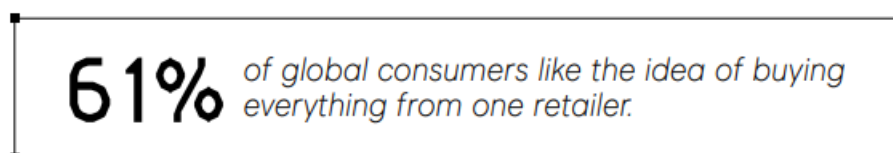


Figure 11: VML the Future Shopper report of 2025

It is important to refer that marketplaces show us a very dynamic path worldwide as according to Statista for 2024 online shoppers have as a starting point marketplace as an inspiration for their future buying needs.

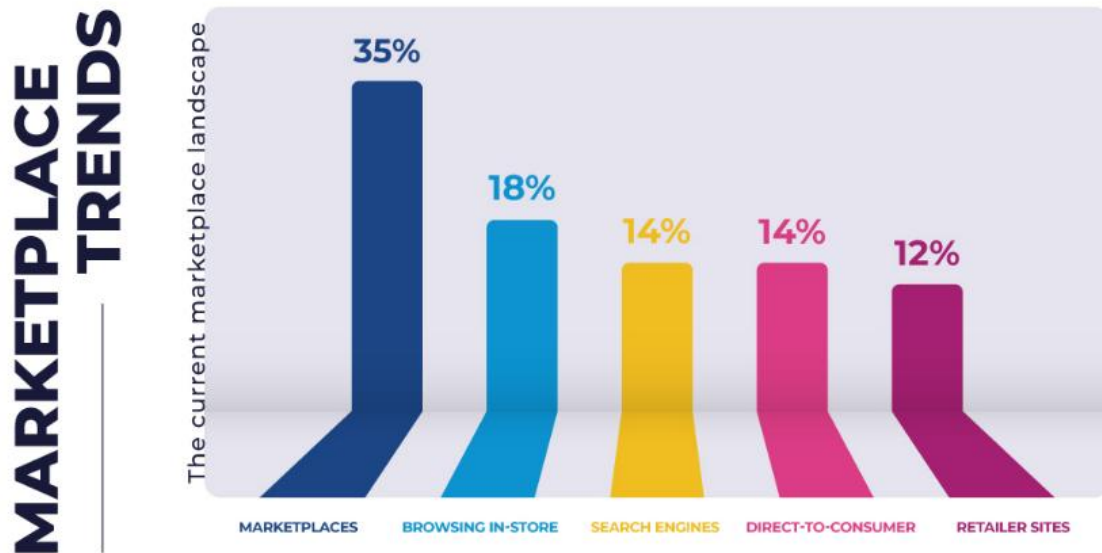


Figure 12: The current marketplace landscape

(Source: Statista, 2024)

Therefore, it seems that Marketplace will shall scale up and achieve eCommerce sales dominance by using data analytics and artificial intelligence (AI) in order for them to be able to collect, analyze each consumer habits and bring them a customized proposition offering services or goods that matches with their needs. Marketplaces success is depending on the variety, the user experience and the service level experience to the end customer and part of their success is referred to their supply chain flow that actually led to a high customer service experience.

Marketplace nowadays use AI powered tools and engines to have personalized marketing, appropriate analytics and forecasting as well as the optimum stock inventory.

## **2.2. Supply Chain as a Strategic Pillar of eCommerce**

According to Deshpande et al. (2023), supply chain is considered a very strategic pillar on eCommerce sales as sourcing, warehousing and distribution are shaping a huge part of the customer service experience for online sales. Huge eCommerce retailers like Amazon invest always on logistics network in order to satisfy their customers via a fastest delivery and to retain their promise that shall lead to sales increase.

The delivery performance to end customers lead consumers to share their testimonials through ratings and that is depending a lot of the logistics flow until the final destination.

The specific study examines customer service experience via service quality perspective by analyzing service level performance, logistics ratings and the impact on customer purchase. All marketplaces are trying to innovate their service via the logistics activities and network by developing drones, autonomous vehicles in order to enhance the service level to end customers.

The post Covid Era brought into the light the importance of customer convenience and accessibility for online shopping. Nowadays, online shoppers demand a customized approach from eCommerce retailers, brands and marketplaces.

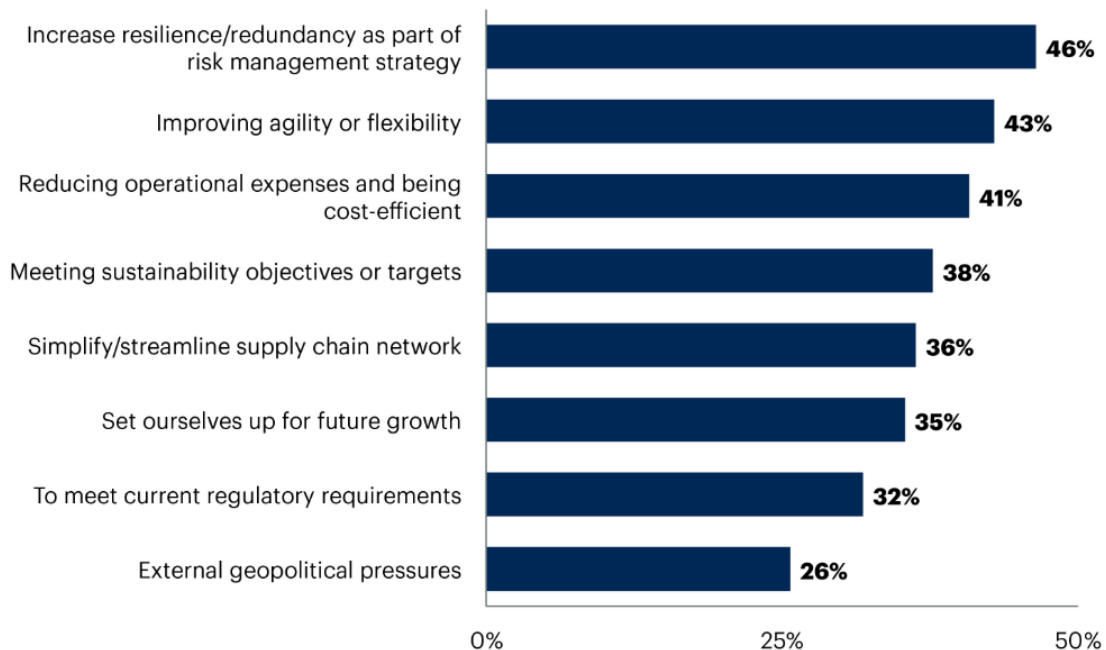
Herz, S. (2025), generally speaking, the rise of The Gartner Survey on 2024 showed, (2024, August 14) that more than 70 % of companies have made supply-chain-network changes in the past two years. Nowadays, consumers expectations for quick delivery, convenience and transparency lead e-shops & marketplaces to proceed with a more agile and technology driven supply chain systems. The strategy of the current eCommerce landscape for the major eCommerce Retailers, Brands and marketplaces shift to logistics optimization in order to increase their eCommerce sales and increase customer satisfaction via logistics activities such as quick e-fulfilment, quick last mile delivery and real – time inventory management.

Supply Chain Management is critical for online sales as it is clearly considered the main and critical reason for Customer Satisfaction. There are many challenges for Logistics for online sales as peak periods during high demands. Every eCommerce company is searching for the best Supply Chain flow in order to provide flexibility, innovation and agile implementation. According to Gartner Survey on 2024 showed that the 73% have made supply chain network changes in the past two years.

The main reason of the concentrate changing supply chain environment was the risk mitigation rather than cost efficiency. The survey shows the need of agility, flexibility and capacity to withstand disruptions.

The main element is to improve their service levels, proceed with cost reduction and reduce also carbon emissions. All changes show that supply chain strategy on the eCommerce landscape can lead to success and to a huge competitive advantage in order to increase sales and online sales loyalty.

**Figure 1: Factors Driving Changes to the Supply Chain Network in the Last Two Years**



n = 424; Supply Chain professionals who have made any changes to the network, excluding "don't know/not sure"

Q. What were the top three factors driving these changes to your supply chain networks in the past 2 years?

Source: 2024 Gartner Globalization Trends in Designing Supply Chain Networks Survey

817948\_C

**Figure 13: Factors Driving Changes to the Supply Chain Network in the last two years**

(source: Gartner Survey, 2024)

At the same time, the demands of high return volumes, peak demand, and sustainability also call for higher flexibility and innovation. E-commerce, despite these challenges, remains an area of great opportunities in terms of omnichannel fulfillment, automation, and logistics business models. In essence, the role of the supply chain in e-commerce remains an important enabling factor of e-commerce performance and customer satisfaction.

### 2.3. Why Negotiation Matters in Supply Chain Performance

It is important to refer that negotiation is a critical element in order to lead to an efficient supply chain management strategy. It leads to operational excellence and strategic implementation as it guides the appropriate approach to choose the right partners/suppliers, focus and implement the right contract terms and pricing as well as the liability and SLAs. Through negotiation you can gain and be proactive in order to avoid any disputes and be align with operations efficiency as well as to mitigate risks on operational and economical perspective.

According to Ionel (2025) we can see that effective negotiation practices lead to cost effective solutions and increase also trust and overall collaboration parties/suppliers within the supply chain *offering reliability and stability even inside sensitive and volatile market conditions.*

It is also important to share that strategic negotiation according to the Romanian Economic Journal article allows organization to prevent and react effectively to multiple challenges such as inflation, price instability, variation and many other supplies chain disruptions by providing agility without jeopardizing the relationships between all parties.

The negotiation plays a vital role into the supply chain as more and more professional cultivate and organization training their teams in order to succeed and implement the best outcome onto the negotiation based on data analytics, scenario planning by continuous improvement skills. The research of Ionel 2025, shows that negotiation works as a critical component of the supply chain strategy. Long terms strategies, and negotiations skills improvement as well as intercultural awareness are a great input in order to follow and implement an effective and successful negotiation process. If all these are succeeded a financial performance takes place as well as competitiveness and there is also a risk mitigation and of course sustainable business relations with all partners.

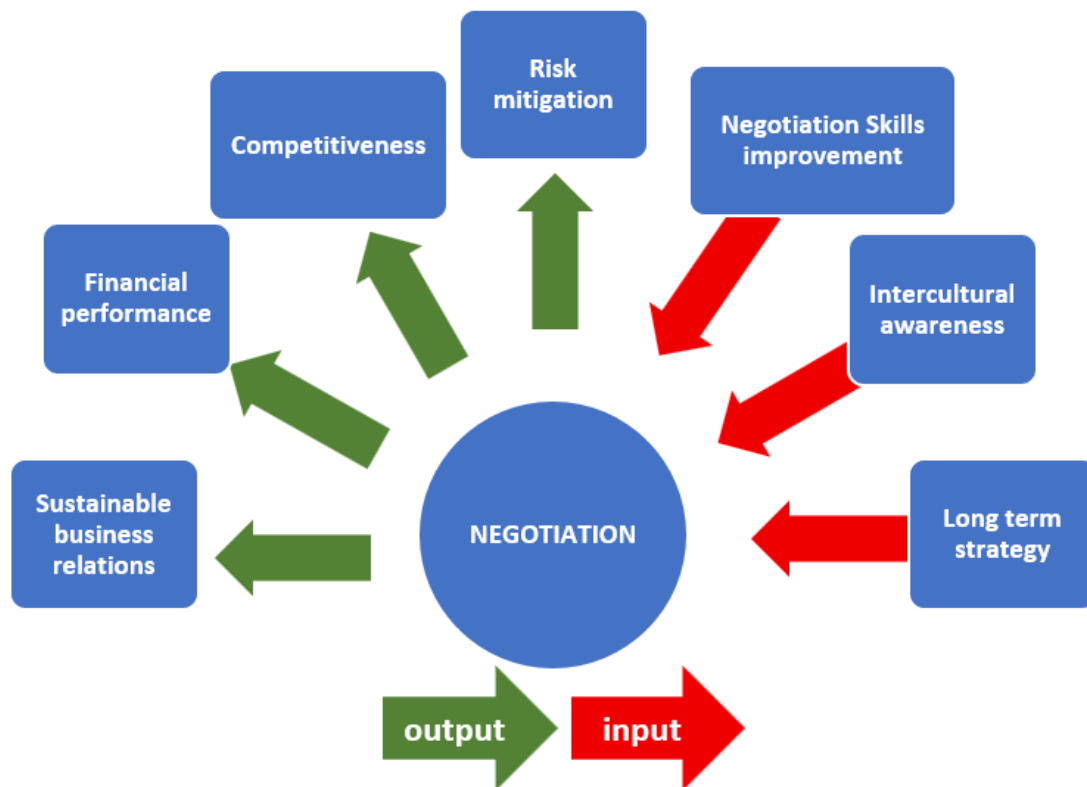


Figure 14: Negotiation impact in Supply Chain

Source: Created by Author, Jan 2025

All organizations are targeted to cost optimization and negotiation allows and shows the way to financial success. On the other hand, negotiation leads also to non-financial results such as trust with partners and suppliers, transparency and win-win partnerships.

According to Basiru et al., 2023 research shows that organizations that invest on negotiation efficiency tend to achieve cost reduction via good supplier relationships. Also, according to Cooper (2025) modern supply chain negotiations lead to win-win situations through data sharing, enhance coordination across the supply chain and to higher of course operational efficiency.

It is worth to mention that through negotiation acts as an important enabler of supply chain resilience as local or global disruptions on geopolitical basis, volatile market conditions, inflation and uncertainty lead companies to focus on flexible partnerships and contracts with quick responses in order to be ready to face and respond to each supply chain challenge even under lots of pressure and complexity (Ionel, 2025).

Supply chain performance is based a lot on negotiation success. Furthermore, negotiation significantly influences supplier relationship management by shaping power dynamics, trust, and ethical alignment.

Healthy negotiations promote cooperation and shared problem-solving, both critical for innovation and continuous improvement in the supply chain. In fact, empirical research has found that open and fair negotiation practices improve engagement with suppliers and prevent opportunistic behaviors by increasing the performance level of the entire supply chain (Basiru et al., 2023). In international supply chains, an understanding of cultural differences and interpersonal mechanic skills also impact negotiation success, as discrepancies in communication mechanics and expectations may have detrimental effects on cooperation and performance (Cooper, no date).

The improvement in the areas of digitalization and data analysis has also impacted negotiation processes by allowing data-driven decision-making and analysis of possible scenarios. However, technology-based tools support and supplement, but do not replace, human negotiation skills. Planning, flexibility, and the art of creating mutual value continue to constitute essential areas of competence for anyone operating within the supply chain field. Negotiation should therefore be incorporated as an integral part of supply chain strategy rather than being viewed as a transactional process. Negotiation has practical importance since it establishes direct linkage between strategic synchronizing and operational delivery within the scope of supply chain mechanics. Aspects affecting this field include cost structures, flexibility, relationships, and risk management: negotiation thus has the potential to improve the performance associated with sustainable competitive advantage by optimizing all these factors within the scope of this subject matter. Integrating negotiation with supply chain strategy enables organizations to optimize their ability to respond through uncertainty while also providing leverage aimed at developing stronger relationships with other parties altogether within this field.

## **2.4. Negotiation within Supply Chain Relationships**

Negotiation within Supply Chain relationships is a quite important element for successful operational efficiency in general and inside the eCommerce ecosystem as well.

The service level quality and the reliability of supply chain flow have a great impact and affect end customer's service experience, and it is truly connected as a critical part of the negotiation strategy. Between Companies or eCommerce businesses or Marketplaces there are suppliers that provide services such as warehousing services or distribution services and support the entire supply chain life cycle in order the entire ecosystem to work effectively. The negotiation part of each company scheme is quite important and there are many ways to approach a supplier to gain critical elements needed for the best possible results. Many of those companies schemes prefer to move in a more aggressive way in order to gain immediate cost reduction on the logistics cost with a short term approach or other companies/eCommerce schemes that choose to approach suppliers or partners within Supply chain with a more strategic way, on a long term approach in order to gain a more permanent solution in order for supply chain partners to jointly respond and built a win-win or peer to peer relationship to fight together the market volatility and share the future together efficiently during also on difficult times such as the peak periods.

Negotiation within Supply Chain relationships include eCommerce fulfillment providers, last mile delivery partners or platform operations and eCommerce Businesses, Retailers or brands are continuously negotiated with service priorities, time windows, SLAs and cost sharing clauses or mechanisms.

Win-Win strategies are generally connected with collaborative and long terms relationships (Thomas et al., 2018), on the other hand win-lose strategies lead to dominate transactional exchanges. According to Thomas et al. (2018) the win-lose strategies can reduce trust and cooperations and erode the relationship between them having a negative impact on the supply chain resilience.

According to academic literature negotiation is not just a part and a sole alone element but a recurrent relational process between suppliers and buyer interactions.

Inside supply chain relationships, the negotiation process is connected to three (3) connected roles as first it works as a value allocation mechanism that shows how charges, risks and advantages or benefits are shared between partners. Secondly, it works as a coordination

mechanism that set all the operational elements i.e. delivery times, capacity commitments, receipts and order quantities and last but not least the Service level agreements (SLA's) (Thomas et al., 2018).

The third element of the negotiation process works as a relationship shaping mechanism, that leads and inspire trust commitment between all parties both suppliers or end customers relationships and loyalty as the collaborative behaviors over time built strong relationships with all suppliers that are connected to eCommerce businesses and of course that element is passing through eCommerce business to end customers as a operational results that is transformed to the best possible customer service experience.

According to Cooper (2024) the rise of eCommerce showed the critical part of negotiation inside the supply chain as the eCommerce industry is connected with multiple peak periods and great variation and lot of uncertainty as the market landscape changes quickly and instantly with quick and promotional campaigns, same day on time execution for fulfillment, intense competition not only within the Greek territory but also the global ecommerce landscape as eCommerce sales are borderless.

According to all above elements, negotiation is an essential part of supply chain success between all parties as the right approach during negotiation process such as contractual terms, renegotiation of the capacity levels and the redefining the service level agreements can lead to a real competitive advantage.

Organized eCommerce Businesses & major Marketplaces during negotiation process go far from just negotiating prices, they decide and are well prepared about the negotiation strategy they shall follow analyze not just the pricing structure, the delivery terms but also the quality standards as that quality level should be succeeded during negotiations and how it gets measured as well as the service levels such as response times, support availability and problem resolution.

Every successful negotiation process inside the supply chain has a clear roadmap and each step built the next steps to the final result, according to an article on Kodiak Hub at 2025.

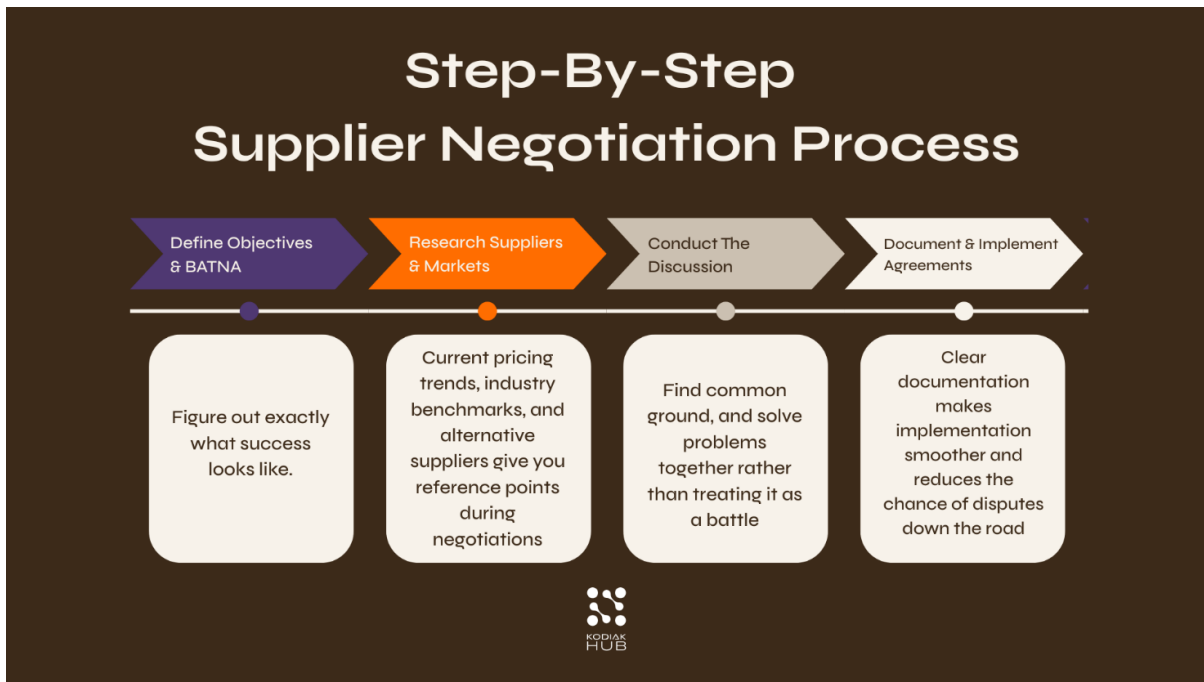


Figure 15: Step-by-Step Supplier Negotiation Process

(Source: Kodiak Hub, 2025)

It is common practice that before a negotiation starts companies are setting measurable targets for quality, prices, SLA's and delivery specs. Many times, BATNA as the Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement is a backup plan during the negotiation process that can give always a good alternative if the negotiation fall apart, the BATNA as negotiation method can give alternative options.

It is also known that the value of the preparation before the negotiation process plays the most significant role for negotiation success. Then the conversation tactics follow to complete a successful negotiation process.

Ming et al. (2012) refer that within Supply chain flow the digital transformation has altered the negotiation landscape by increasing information availability, transparency while data analytics and digital tools provide to the negotiators a better visibility regarding supply chain costs, demand planning and supplier performance that always led to better customer service levels and customer service satisfaction increasement. From upstream to downstream, the negotiation process gives great value, flexibility and problem-solving elements. The collaborative supply chain negotiation models focus on data sharing between suppliers and

eCommerce businesses as well as risk pooling mechanisms for improving supply chain efficiency.

### **Added Value of negotiation to Cost, Time and Service levels**

It is quite important to be mentioned that within supply chain ecosystem the added value of negotiation process can be measured through the below dimensions:

- Cost effectiveness
- Service Level Reliability
- On time execution and responsiveness

These elements are quite important into the eCommerce ecosystem as customer expectation are quite high today for availability of every item of its eCommerce order, need for speed and reliability regarding the on-time execution and delivery.

All above elements can be proven through the eCommerce European Survey (2023) shows that over **90%** of Europeans abandoned online purchase because their goods couldn't be delivered to a location or at a time that suited them – an important reminder that providing a range of delivery options. 64% of Europeans as online shoppers want a reliable delivery company for their eCommerce orders and 43% of them just abandon their cart if they don't like the delivery provider offered. So, the collaborative approach during negotiation with reliable partners across the supply chain 3PL's and Last mile providers seem to be very important for eCommerce businesses to succeed in their sales targets through reliable services with their appropriate supply chain suppliers and the appropriate pricing policy and flexible options.

According to Thomas et al (2018), negotiation strategies affect not only the economic part of a deal but also the relational behavior that led to long terms cost policies and structures i.e. the logistics provider that has the willingness to invest in a company on process optimization or to invest in technological solutions or assets. The win-win negotiation strategies with a collaborative character seem to be more efficient in that way in order for retailers, ecommerce business or marketplaces to succeed in cost reduction, stock optimization, optimum transportation consolidation.

Into the eCommerce Supply chains, the global cost pressures are quite high for e-fulfillment cost and last mile delivery expenses as we have also except for inbound and outbound flows

the reverse process and high-level expectations. The negotiation process and strategy are a critical part of cost efficiency especially on peak periods and how returns flow is processed. The collaborative approach of eCommerce businesses and companies lead to data shared cost models while the transparency maintains high. Another additional element of negotiation added value is the time performance such as delivery time windows, lead times especially during peak periods are truly connected with the negotiation strategy of e-shops that are quite sensitive to time responsiveness.

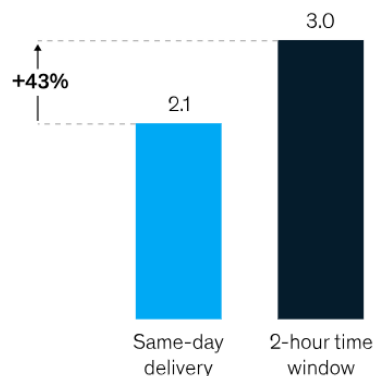
It is important to refer that next day delivery for eCommerce sales is the norm and same day delivery is an advantage as an option in order for the online customer to be satisfied as alternatives are always the best solutions for them to lead them to buy for eCommerce businesses or marketplaces. The eCommerce landscape demands reliable delivery service and negotiation plays a vital role for the SLA's that shall be agreed during negotiations.

McKinsey & Company in 2022 conducted a survey that showed that consumers are more interested in knowing exactly when their shipment will arrive and having a reliable delivery service (Beretzky et al. 2023).

### Consumer preferences are shifting toward reliable delivery services.

**Example: Germany**

Stated willingness to pay,<sup>1</sup> average € amount per service



Note: n = 1,000 per vertical and country; verticals: consumer electronics, fashion, grocery.  
<sup>1</sup>Q: "Thinking back to your last [vertical] order, what premium would you have been willing to pay for [delivery service]?" Answers: 1–6 euro/US dollars.  
 Source: Voice of Customer Survey, McKinsey 2022

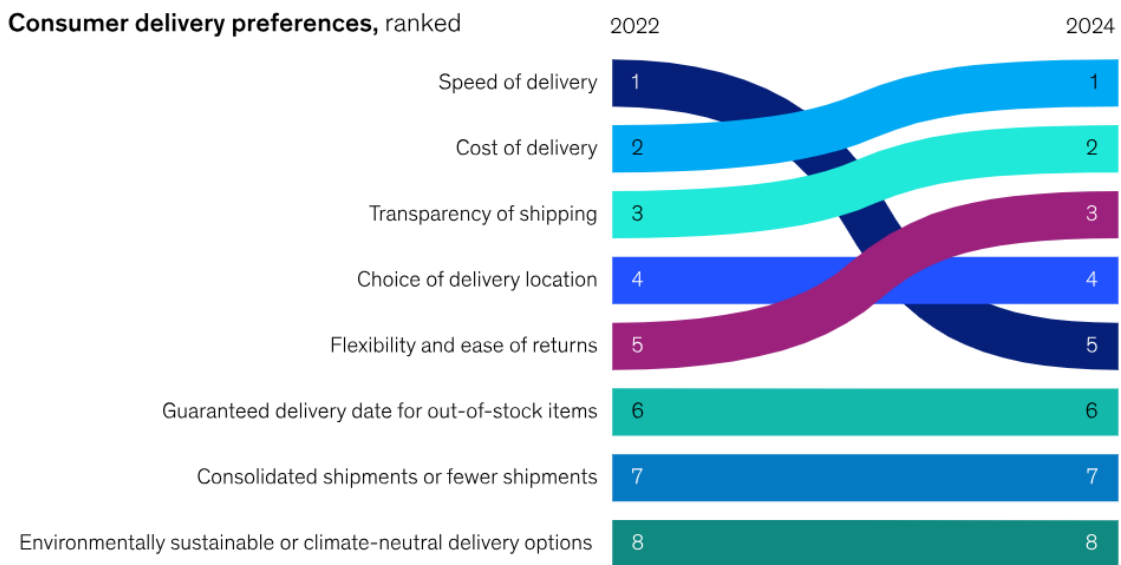
McKinsey & Company

Figure 16: Consumer preferences are shifting towards reliable delivery services

(Source: Beretzky et al. 2023)

On the other hand, another survey of McKinsey & company on 2024 shows that cost of delivery and flexibility is the new trend and it seems that eCommerce end customers changed prioritization and 90% of the sample according to the current survey <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/logistics/our-insights/what-do-us-consumers-want-from-e-commerce-deliveries> prefer to wait more to reduce the logistics cost and at the same time online shopper requests for flexibility options and transparency.

**Consumer preferences have shifted in recent years, placing less emphasis on delivery speed and more emphasis on flexibility.**



Source: McKinsey 2022 Voice of Consumer Survey, June 2022; McKinsey 2024 Voice of Consumer Survey, July 2024

McKinsey & Company

Figure 17: Consumer delivery preferences, ranked

(Source: McKinsey & Company, 2024)

SLAs is another element of the negotiation process that promise and lead to on time delivery, availability on each item of the eCommerce order, picking accuracy and customer service reliability according to the terms and conditions that each eCommerce platform or Marketplace has already committed to the end customer regarding the service level they promised to each online shopper.

It is worth noting that performance of service level agreement is extracted under negotiation process handling and also the continuous improvement program on each logistics flow which in turn improves service reliability and increase the customer satisfaction rate.

SLA's failures inside the eCommerce landscape during supply chain flow are transparent to end customers and contain a high risk of reputation as eCommerce businesses and marketplaces are in danger and face a reputation risk due to that reason. According to the European Survey review of DHL (2023) 86% of Europeans will check reviews before making a purchase with 31% of respondents stating that reviews strongly influence their final purchasing decision.

It is worth mentioning that negotiation process acts many times as contingency plans and enables supply chain providers to proactively design escalation procedures in order to avoid any failures regarding SLAs. The approach of collaborative negotiations shows that the service design, the flexibility options, a high-level delivery service via a reliable last mile partner, the cost of logistics services and the real time visibility via a reliable 3PL partner and on time fulfillment orders lead to overall supply chain performance with great achievements.

Negotiation to supply chain process can protect eCommerce business from disruption and customer service failures. The COVID -19 era showed to all eCommerce ecosystem the limitation and the critical role of negotiation capabilities using the right methodologies to well trusted negotiation practices to renegotiation prices, volumes, prices and service continuity under difficult circumstances and extreme conditions. We have also to consider that the cost control landscape during the whole supply chain flow is quite important in order for eCommerce businesses and marketplaces to be sustainable and competitive across the eCommerce Global market.

### 3. Negotiation Practices Between Suppliers and Shoppers

Negotiation is a very critical process in general and of course inside the eCommerce ecosystem. All negotiation practices represent a very important tool to implement an efficient supply chain mechanism inside the eCommerce ecosystem. In contrast, within the retail mechanism, negotiation practices are implemented by a procurement team depending mostly on upstream stages. On the other hand, eCommerce environment include a more integrated approach during negotiation process bringing together shoppers, suppliers such as Logistics providers (fulfilment centers or last mile providers) and e-shops that are all connected with platforms, contractual agreements, SLA's arrangements and targets that have a direct impact on prices during the negotiation process, pricing structure and strategy, customer service expectations and of course on time performance via the supply chain process ( e-fulfilment & courier service). It is known that negotiations are not just a trial to reduce prices or just actions for better terms but a whole strategy under the terms of negotiations that create an overall value starting from Suppliers until end Customers.

A severe factor that affects the critical role of negotiations is digitalization as it increases the transparency between all parties, accelerates the speed to all supply chain flow and creates value for all. It is important in negotiations that suppliers are directly connected with eCommerce businesses or Marketplaces and negotiate not only for better prices but also a strategy during negotiation process that can lead to data sharing, better visibility with proper forecasting implications, better e-fulfilment process during supply chain and of course the best possible customer service experience by implementing a proper inventory stock level with a proper price, even implementing a sustainable approach between supplier and eCommerce platforms (e-shops or marketplaces).

During negotiation process there must always be ready key points of the negotiation strategy ready and a data – driven preparation is needed based on the following:

- **Objectives definition:** The priorities needed except for the price negotiation), the risk reduction, innovation etc.
- **The BATNA knowledge model** is always known as the Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement as the next best possible action/option.

- **Suppliers and Market research:** The market landscape and the financial position on each part all strengths and weaknesses must be visible to the other party to implement the negotiation process on data driven approach.

### 3.1. Suppliers in the eCommerce Ecosystem

Grand (2024) claimed that suppliers always play a vital role inside the eCommerce ecosystem as it is truly connected to sources of products or services (warehousing / last mile), innovation and operational efficiency. Before starting analyzing the supplier's role in the eCommerce ecosystem from supply chain perspective, it is important to share that collaborative negotiations have a great impact on customer experience, the impact on supply chain strategy and the eCommerce platform functionality. Into the eCommerce world, suppliers are connected to multiple parties such as marketplaces platforms, eCommerce businesses, e-fulfilment centers. There are important reasons for suppliers to negotiate but the core of them is referred to Cost – Value- Performance -Quality – Conflict resolution.

It is important to analyze them more as from **cost perspective** there are gain -share clauses such as a bonus – malus mechanism inside a contract logistics agreement for both parties' suppliers and eCommerce Platforms to have a win-win approach that can lead to supply chain efficiency. The **value perspective** such as the payment terms always assists companies to start an immediate cooperation and having also a good after sales support in difficult situations.

The **performance perspective** leads during a negotiation process between a supplier and an eCommerce platform or Marketplace the KPI's & SLA's landscape that retain the logistics service level performance. The **Quality perspective** secure the warranty remedies and root cause protocols to protect all parties and final **Conflict Resolution** approach in order for any escalation matters to be resolved in the quickest way (Monczka et al. 2020).

#### **Suppliers as Value Creators on e-Shops and Marketplace Models**

According to The Institute for Supply Management (2025) for e-Shops & Marketplace schemes to proceed with negotiations and with suppliers' selection follows a market assessment in order from the Procurement team or Supply Chain team to create an internal agenda with must- haves or walk-aways prevents in order to use efficiently then during

negotiation process specific and well-designed tactics to balance an agreed prices or a price reduction with capacity, innovation and resilience.

It is important to refer that if negotiation tips are implemented, the procurement or the supply chain team of an eCommerce across the Suppliers can secure terms and appropriate needs coverage in order to satisfy and negotiate better by setting the objective, the supplier dynamic, the negotiation level, the expected outcome and, if possible, practical tips in order to succeed strategic goals for the company during negotiations.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Supplier Dynamic</b>	<b>Negotiation Lever</b>	<b>Expected Outcome</b>	<b>Practical Tip</b>
Lower total cost	High competition among qualified vendors	Volume commitments and multi-year terms	Tiered pricing and reduced freight	Bundle SKUs and align order cadence to capacity
Improve service reliability	Single-source with critical IP	Service credits and expedited recovery clauses	Faster mean time to restore	Define severity levels and response SLAs by site
Enhance quality	Mature supplier with stable processes	Defect thresholds and warranty extensions	Lower scrap and rework costs	Link warranty to verified process controls
Accelerate lead times	Capacity constrained but flexible scheduling	Forecast visibility and VMI	Shorter cycle and buffer stock	Trade early demand signals for priority allocation
Reduce risk	Geopolitical or logistics exposure	Diversification and dual-source options	Continuity under disruption	Pre-negotiate reroute and substitute material terms

Figure 18: Practical tips in order to succeed strategic goals for during negotiations

(Source: Institute for Supply Management, 2025)

For better results, an internal alignment it is important to be prepared using multiple departments and resources before and during the negotiation process from IT dpt, engineering, QA, Finance and legal as well in order for the Marketplaces or eCommerce Businesses to have a clear state and say by defining the overall outline and an approved path in order to secure efficiency, consistency and optimized negotiation outcomes.

A well-organized plan assists the supply chain team or the procurement team to follow the best practices as a strategic procurement negotiation tool that can assist the teams to have the best result that can be achieved and measured.

<b>Workstream</b>	<b>Primary Objective</b>	<b>Key Inputs</b>	<b>Negotiation Guardrails</b>
Procurement	Commercial coherence	Should-cost models, benchmarks, RFx results	Target price bands, indexation method, rebate tiers
Engineering/Quality	Performance assurance	Specs, test data, defect history	SLA floors, acceptance criteria, corrective-action timelines
Finance	Economic viability	TCO analysis, cash-flow impact	Payment terms, volume commitments, credit thresholds
Legal	Risk control	Contract templates, regulatory clauses	Liability caps, IP ownership, audit rights
Operations/Logistics	Continuity and agility	Lead-time data, capacity plans	Delivery windows, penalties, dual-sourcing options

Figure 19: Best practices as a strategic procurement negotiation tool

(Source: Institute for Supply Management, 2025)

The negotiation process between eCommerce businesses and suppliers especially inside the eCommerce ecosystem focuses on value creation and not just price reduction only. Suppliers negotiate terms with eCommerce Businesses on how their products are presented to end customers and how dynamic might have pricing mechanisms into the eCommerce platforms as well as data sharing of customer analytics in order for both parties to have the same insights and information in a collaborative way to approach the end customer with the same approach as peer-to-peer partners. Negotiation results can lead to upstream efficiency as well as to downstream consumer needs.

Nowadays, eCommerce platforms and marketplaces do not face suppliers as simple participants just to buy products or logistics services, but they manage to try through

negotiation processes to create active value and allow them to enter as a strategic party (suppliers) to reveal and receive innovation, increase customer service satisfaction, operational efficiency and product or service differentiation.

The above approach and shift can be shown especially on marketplaces (i.e. like Amazon, Alibaba, Skrutz etc.) that negotiations include data sharing and SLA's or KPI's agreement in order all parties to show the connected performance they have agreed. Digital Environments and specifically marketplaces have an analytical view via BI tools regarding sales, on time delivery performance, stock accuracy, fast moving consumer goods reporting (based on ABC analysis), picking accuracy and many more as Marketplaces they have all relevant reporting packages, parameters and tools to measure each supplier's performance. Data sharing during negotiation process is important to suppliers as relevant feedback regarding performance on a frequent basis can truly improve performance regarding rewarding when suppliers have really great performance, improve demand forecasting, inventory planning, better visibility and of course better performance across the supply chain.

Inside the marketplace ecosystem, negotiations are quite limited as the marketplace ecosystem is dominant in some countries. The 20 biggest marketplaces are shown



Figure 20: Top 20 eCommerce Marketplaces in the World in 2025

(Source: FAT bit Technologies, 2025)

It is important to see the dominance i.e. of the Amazon marketplace in United States, as their AMAZON as the biggest marketplace in USA hit in 2018 according to the below statement the 50% of the US retail ecommerce sales.

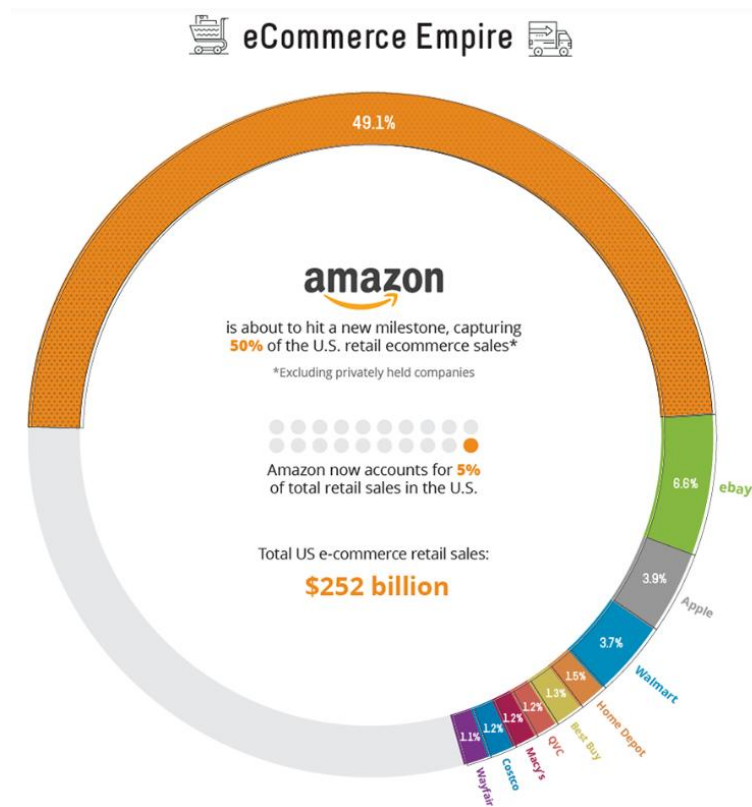


Figure 21 eCommerce Empire

(Source: Visual Capitalist, 2018)

Marketplaces have incredible power as their dominance shows that they define the negotiation process with suppliers as they are large eCommerce platforms and marketplaces that have specific contractual terms and conditions and limitations regarding suppliers' negotiations. On the other hand, unique brands as suppliers with bestselling products have exclusivity of selling unique products have some extra power to negotiate with them in order to conquer extra elements for a more win to win negotiation strategy with a long-term approach.

In general negotiations with suppliers as value creators can affect the customer service experience by providing under the negotiation process with a good pricing structure, in stock products with service quality and on time delivery. After a successful negotiation between

suppliers and eCommerce platforms or Marketplaces end customer can benefit from that due to better delivery experience, product variety, competitive pricing and operational efficiency. On the contrary, poor negotiation with suppliers has negative impact on stockouts, quality inconsistencies and higher prices leading to a bad end consumer experience and loss of eCommerce sales. (Grant, 2024)

Through the Emerald article called “Value Creation & Capture in innovation” shows that the value that create through the digital ecosystems is depending on collaborative partnerships. eCommerce ecosystems demand suppliers and platforms to coordinate as peer-to-peer partners to co create value via negotiated agreements and incentives with revenue sharing techniques. Suppliers that can create value through unique brands or products or innovate or provide product or services personalization can offer negotiate better and obtain better commercial terms due to their strategic positioning within the eCommerce ecosystem. (Magro-Montero et al. 2025)

### **e- Shops, Logistics Providers, and Fulfilment Networks**

Negotiations techniques and procedures in eCommerce have a great impact between supplier and eCommerce Businesses or Marketplaces include e- fulfilment centers such as 3PL (third party Logistics providers) and Courier Providers (last mile delivery service providers). These suppliers play a pivotal role as they are a huge part of the customer service experience inside the ecommerce ecosystem providing reliability, picking accuracy, stock availability, appropriate packaging, on time delivery, speed, reliability and reverse logistics management.

eCommerce competition is quite high as eCommerce sales are referred to global commerce and not on local basis as electronic sales have no borders. The service level performance such as the supply chain efficiency during negotiation process from 3PL partners and Couriers are quite strategic elements for marketplaces or eCommerce businesses to increase Customer royalty and Turnover. (Grant, 2024)

e-Fulfilment centers and courier providers act as fundamental pillars of eCommerce sales and customer satisfaction as the supply chain efficiency plays a significant role in the end user experience. All the negotiation processes between eCommerce businesses and logistics providers have a significant impact on speed, tracking systems, transparency after the sales

process, geographic coverage and return process. The negotiation results of eCommerce and Logistics partners are quite complex as in case of failures there are important reputation dangers and consumer disappointment. On e-Commerce landscape a negative impact on service level after the eCommerce order, it can be shown through rating process from Consumers due to operational disruptions from a bad negotiation process. The price reduction is not the solution, but the optimum mix of prices, operational efficiency and transparency from upstream to end consumers. According to Jean (2024) e-Fulfilment providers affect in a positive way the negotiation power as outsourcing logistics as a solution offer scalability and cost control.

3PL and Courier providers can integrate with eCommerce business and marketplaces to have better visibility, transparency, live tracking status to share it with end customers and multiple & flexible options for end customers. During negotiation process it is important for the digital players to have an integrated plan and all technological specifications needed to apply them into the contractual agreement and operational agreements to avoid any lack of visibility.

It is also interesting to note that outsourcing logistics is quite famous in the European Market and it seems to be adopted as a strategic choice compared to a fully in house logistics model.

**It is worth to mention that according to the European 3PL market size & forecasting research within 2025, it seems to be ~USD 286,13 billion (Mordor Intelligence) and expected to grow CAGR ~4.8% (Expert Market Research) with a projected expansion at ~5.6% through 2033 (Grand View Research).** It seems that European 3PL is quite large and grow on Y2Y basis. It is also important to touch the 3PL on Retail & eCommerce to be expected to grow fast end -user growth ~8.9% CAGR (2025–2030). 3PL providers, especially in the eCommerce industry, have a competitive advantage due to the scalable approach and due to specialization.

It is also interesting to have a clear view inside the Greek 3PL market that presents quite interesting finding according to the ICAP research for 2025. The top ten (10) 3PL companies has ~58% of the 3PL market share for 2024 on transportation and warehousing activities. 3PL market size according to the research of ICAP 2025, shall have for 2026 & 2027 a forecasted growth +2-3% on Y2Y basis due to eCommerce expansion, continued

outsourcing adoption and digitalization & regulatory compliance requirements (ICAP CRIF, 2025).

Except for eCommerce businesses that should negotiate with 3PL partners, there are also the suppliers of the eCommerce platforms that should operate fulfillment services via their own supply chain network either through 3PL network (outsourcing logistics) or having the logistics activities on a in house logistics model. When suppliers retail the control for the fulfilment activities then eCommerce businesses negotiate except for the products quality and availability also for the on-time delivery and availability during the negotiation process. If suppliers retain for eCommerce businesses the fulfilment processes, then the negotiation process focuses on the service level agreements (SLA's & KPI's), on cost sharing agreements and on delivery and inventory management.

Technology also is a critical part during the negotiations process as it allows eCommerce businesses via their cooperation with 3PL providers and couriers to have full visibility when they are fully integrated with them and setting also specific metrics and KPI's with them to retain the service quality on high levels. The technological part during a negotiation is quite important as it sets the whole negotiation strategy for all parties on data driven framework.

Grant (2024) on two separate papers, claims that the new era into the eCommerce environment on negotiation strategy, is based on collaborative relationship management and not a conflict-based negotiation as recent studies shows that organizations that invest in gaining trust, having a transparent communication and having a joint problem – solving achievements have more resilient supply chains. The specific approach shows a roadmap to a long terms cooperations between eCommerce business, Suppliers and 3PL's with a strong operational alignment focusing only on e-shopper needs for customer satisfaction.

### **3.2. Shoppers as Decision Makers and Value Drivers**

Shoppers are the key for every business around the world. By satisfying and covering end customers' needs businesses can create value by sourcing the appropriate products or services at a competitive price, transferring the goods or services via their brick and mortar or eCommerce sales channel in a good quality and customer service experience.

It is important to show the trend of online shoppers and in order to be more specifically within Greece according to the recent research of the Greek eCommerce Association 2025

(GR.EC.A) from a strong sample of 800 online shoppers with 33 analytical questions that shows the 65% of the end customers spent over 2-3 hours per day as a daily habit.

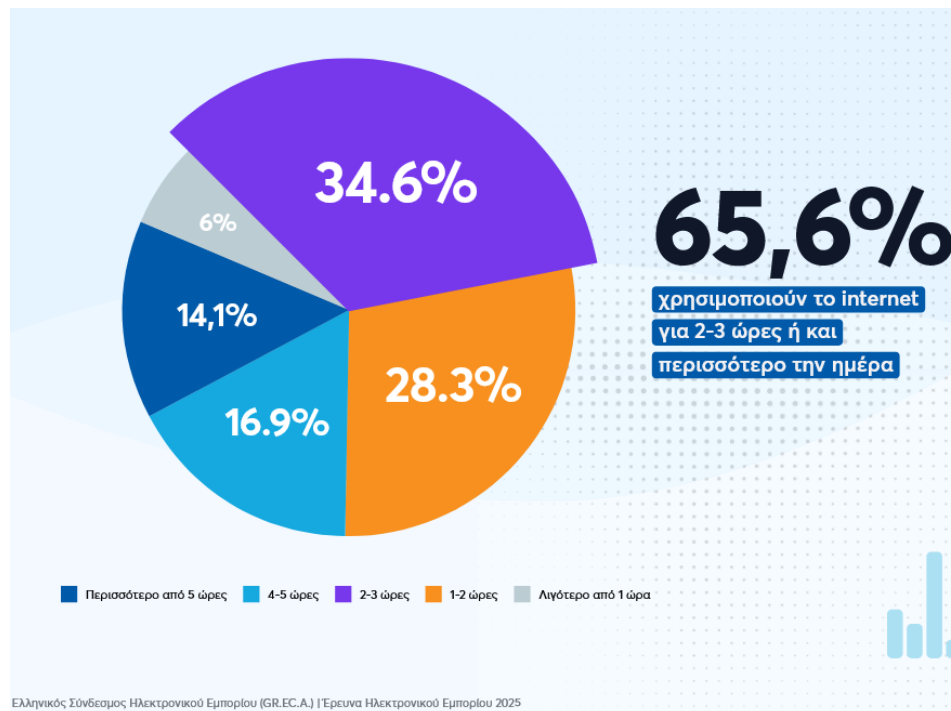


Figure 22: The trend of online shoppers

(Source: GR.EC.A, 2025)

The dynamic of the e-shoppers appeared as presented below, as 74% of the sample use the internet to buy services or products online on a frequent basis. Statistics show that size of impact on online shoppers on their day-to-day lives.

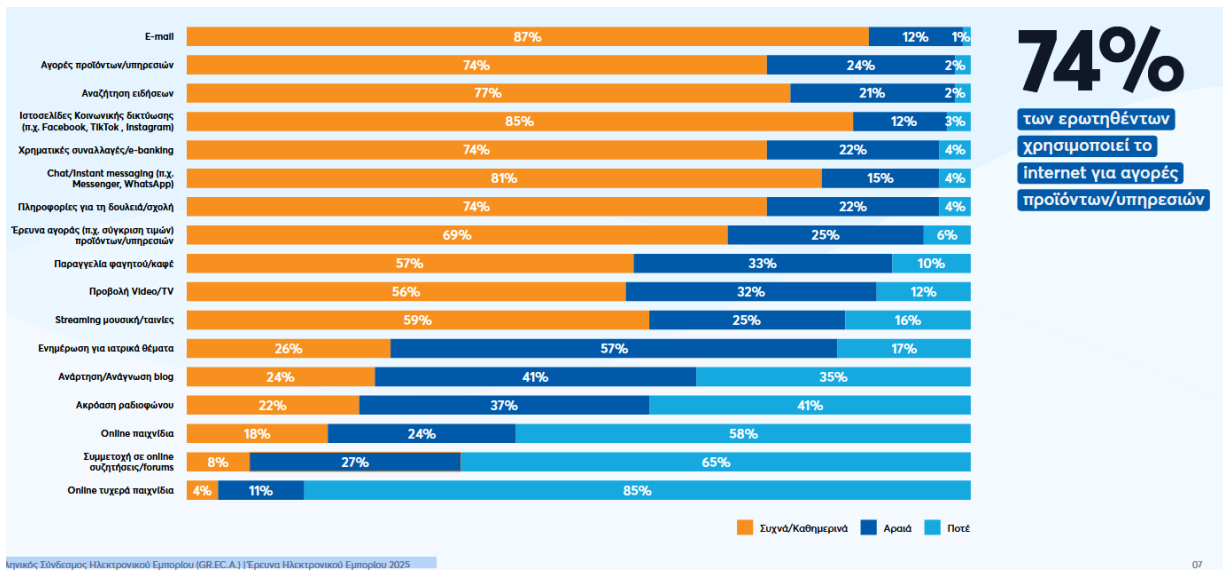


Figure 23 The dynamic of the e-shoppers

(Source: GR.EC. A. & ELTRUN, 2025)

All end customers act as value drivers, as they searching for buying a product or service they focus on find a trustful e-shop that shall satisfy their expectations in order for the e-shop to succeed a high conversion rate (conversion rate meaning: a percentage of users or shoppers that are achieving to complete a desired action out of the total number of visitors). It is important to highlight also in that section how the Global and Greek e-shoppers.

It is worth mentioning that all parties to the eCommerce ecosystems such as suppliers and e-businesses must find a way to make all necessary actions and measures to design and implement a supply chain flow to satisfy the end customers to increase their sales and competitiveness. According to Good sense research empirical elements shows that 70% of online customers proceed into an analytical comparison with at least three alternative choices (products or services) before proceeding to purchase. That element shows that the negotiations result between a retailer and a fulfilment provider is crucial as the logistics flow actual affecting in a very important way the customer experience and expectations.

Inside the eCommerce supply chain ecosystem, the end customers play a significant role in the construction of negotiation strategy into the supply chain, as the end customers' expectations are always the target for e-Shops to gain loyalty from shoppers and a sales increasement. The negotiation dynamics into the supply chain are guided by the end customers and shaping both upstream and downstream the supply chain strategies of

eCommerce businesses. It is also critical to implement a customer centric approach via the negotiation process into the eCommerce Supply chain ecosystem to achieve logistics performance, better pricing and loyalty by the end customers. In the eCommerce Supply Chain ecosystem personalization, a well-designed on time delivery and good experience on the returns as well as good pricing algorithms in contrast with more traditional sales channels that are referred only to prices and some specific points into the supply chain process.

It is important to show through the research of the Greek eCommerce association for 2025, that online shoppers shall not proceed with an online purchase if an e-shop will not apply the below criteria even if the price is lower.

## Criteria

1. "It has a reliable and well-designed website."
2. "It has a well-known brand name/reputation for high-quality experience."
3. "I read positive reviews on online blogs, forums, etc."
4. "It provides immediate and effective after-sales service."
5. "It has clean Terms of Use and product return policies."
6. "There is also a reliable physical store for customer service."
7. "It is recommended to me by friends."
8. "It is certified by an independent organization."
9. "It has the GR.EC.A. Trustmark."
10. "It has many followers and high engagement on social media."
11. "It runs a large advertising campaign to increase brand awareness."

It is important to refer that one of the criteria was the immediate and effective after sales service which include also the supply chain excellence. The 82% of the mature online shoppers prefer to buy if an immediate and effective approach is provided after sales such as fulfilment services and a 64.5% of the general population tends to buy again from an online shop for a good customer services experience. It seems that the after sales support and service is necessary for a repeat purchase and good negotiation process is derived from the end customers' needs. So, online shops & eCommerce businesses should find a way to negotiate in order for e-Shops to provide such service level excellence.

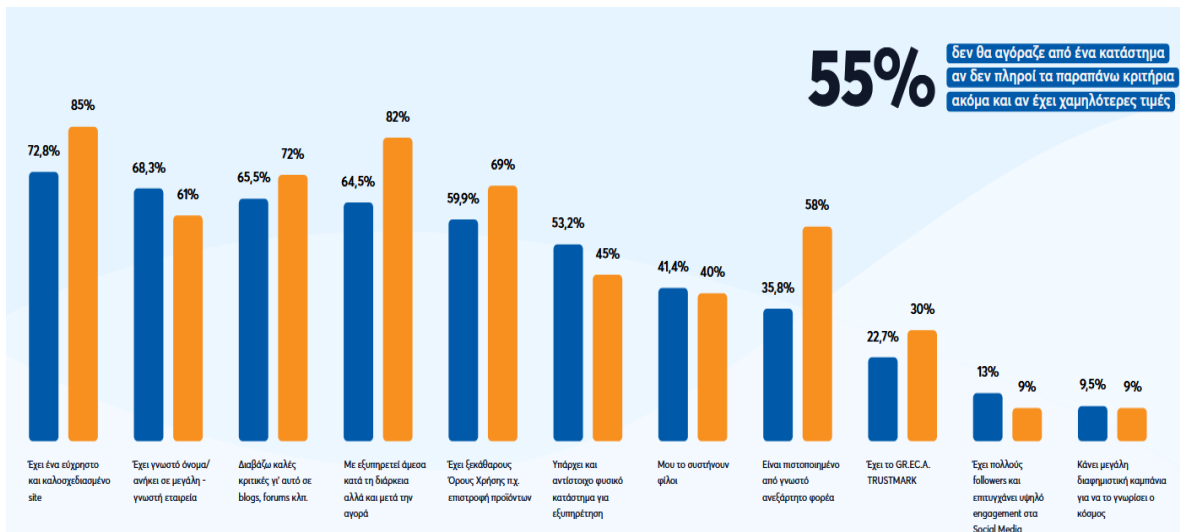


Figure 24: Percentage of Criteria

(Source: Greek eCommerce association, 2025)

### 3.3. Shopper Decision-Making Styles and Expectations

Through several research, online shoppers' decision-making is affected by cognitive processing styles to evaluate value propositions. There are two main decision – making categories:

- (1) The first category is referred to “**Analytical decision makers**” who are connected to online reviews, price performance ratios and compared specifications of a product or service.
- (2) The second category that is referred to “**Heuristic decision makers**” that are based on mental shortcuts i.e. the brand familiarity, the social proof etc.

It is worth noting that approximately ~60-65% of online shoppers belong to the second category when they buy, especially under time pressure or in a too much information moment.

This behavioral consumer segment in online reality brings an important impact for negotiations across the supply chain strategy, as the online businesses and retailers are taking care of their brand visibility, premium packaging and exclusive discounts to bring brand awareness and trigger “**Heuristic decision makers**” closer to a purchase.

Customer expectations and trust for online shoppers are increasingly affected by big platform giants that have already solved or offer premium supply chain services such as on time delivery with multiple options, safe & quick returns as well as ease and transparent pricing. Over ~80% of online shoppers abandon their e-order (before the purchase) when the delivery expectations are not met or there are unclear fields that cannot meet the end customers need with a transparent approach. That evidence leads to the importance of the logistics negotiations between the retailers and brands with their fulfilment and last mile providers in order to affect and win the online shoppers' expectations that will lead to multiple purchases (Virzi, 2022).

### ***The trust of online Shopper, as a core value Driver***

Inside the eCommerce ecosystem, trust is the biggest and fundamental factor for a online shopper to proceed with an online purchase. In digital world, commerce requires trust as tangibility as the physical element is absent. The negotiation process on eCommerce world offers better supply chain services and leads to satisfying the eCommerce journey for the end customers purchase until their final delivery. Extra finding is shown, from the **“Journal of Retailing”** that reliability and trustworthiness lead to an increased purchase likelihood approximately around ~50% even if the prices are higher sometimes.

It is worth noting that Trust for online shoppers is affected by some key supply chain factors such as:

- ✓ **On-time Delivery**
- ✓ **Picking Accuracy**
- ✓ **After sales support**

All the above elements are affected by the critical part of supply chain negotiations through the eCommerce ecosystem with the fulfilment providers and Courier service providers. On the other hand, platform governance and data security is a part of the trust for online shoppers as well as product quality regarding from suppliers' perspective by providing authentic products via a good sourcing process.

It is important to refer that Senecal et al (2005) mentioned that the negotiation process between retailers/eCommerce businesses and suppliers are connected in the digital world with Service level agreements according to the metrics that are also connected with online

shoppers such as on time delivery, picking accuracy, defect ratios, customer service satisfaction rate and multiple other KPIs that are part of the negotiation process between the two parties. The majority of those are also tied with service contracts agreements in order for keeping up the KPIs and the customer satisfaction even with a bonus malus logic. It is also important to refer to the fact that on time delivery **over 95%** shows and leads to repeated purchases and an increase in trust, because of a negotiated agreement with suppliers.

### ***Conversion rates because of Negotiated value and Process.***

In the eCommerce world, the Conversion rates are the key for all eCommerce businesses and that is achieved not only by online prices but also the value that comes from a good negotiation and successful process across the supply chain flow. The Research of **Good Sense** shows that price has an impact on the final purchase only ~**30-35%** while the rest of the percentage **depends on trust, the brand reputation, the convenience and the reliability of the product and services that accompany the product.**

It is also important to share that retailers negotiate also extra elements that add value to their eCommerce businesses such as exclusivity on many unique SKU's, certifications regarding quality and sustainability as well as data sharing information and transparency.

The negotiation process across the supply chain increases perceived value and the conversion rate as it enables customers to buy on a frequent basis as the eShop succeeds in increasing trust in end customers, they motivated them to buy repeatedly by guaranteeing the same customer service level as experience. Good negotiation elements are also sustainable products or packing materials, especially on the European markets as ~20% of the online shoppers prefer to buy more ethical products that respect the environment. It is mentioned at Good Sense Research, that a successful negotiation strategy between retailers and logistics providers and couriers is leading to better customer experience with the best after sales support and service.

### 3.4. Global e-Shopper Trends & Supply Chain results

#### Online Shoppers

Online Shoppers are becoming more mature consumers and are really exposed to omnichannel exposure that both brick and mortar and online sales world are connected, and the physical store are really connected to the online stores. The target for retail businesses is to provide the same customer service experience on two sales channels. Supply chain processes support all the omnichannel ecosystem by providing all important elements to increase loyalty and trust. According to Forbes' study (2024), **over 70% of shoppers research first online** before proceeding in a purchase even if it is referred to a physical store sale.

During the negotiations of all parties across the supply chain, online retailers require:

- ✓ Multiple & Flexible fulfillment and delivery options (i.e. same day delivery, parcel locker delivery, click & collect options, express delivery, clever points).
- ✓ Pricing consistency
- ✓ Real-time inventory across all sales channels (online & offline).

The supply chain negotiation process includes also pricing that is connected to specific services and connected to specific also SLAs. For many online shoppers it is quite important to enjoy free shipping. According to Prosper insights & Analytics survey the **85% percent of the online shoppers say that free shipping is highly important** for them to proceed with an online purchase.



Prosper - Importance of Free Shipping When Shopping Online  
PROSPER INSIGHTS & ANALYTICS

Figure 25: How important is Free Shipping when shopping online

(Source: Prosper insights & Analytics)

Flexibility for returns is also quite high to online shoppers, so the same research shows that for millennials & Gen-X, it is quite important to pick up their online purchase or return it to the store when shopping online. Online shoppers require flexibility, reliability and multiple delivery options to proceed and trust a brand or retailer.



Figure 26: Importance of pick up or return at store when shopping online  
(Source: Prosper insights & Analytics)

Inside the Greek eCommerce ecosystem, the Greek eCommerce Association research for 2025, showed that the ~78.7% of online shoppers choose the home delivery as the main options, but there are also many dynamic options that win more and more Greek online audience as the parcel locker solution.

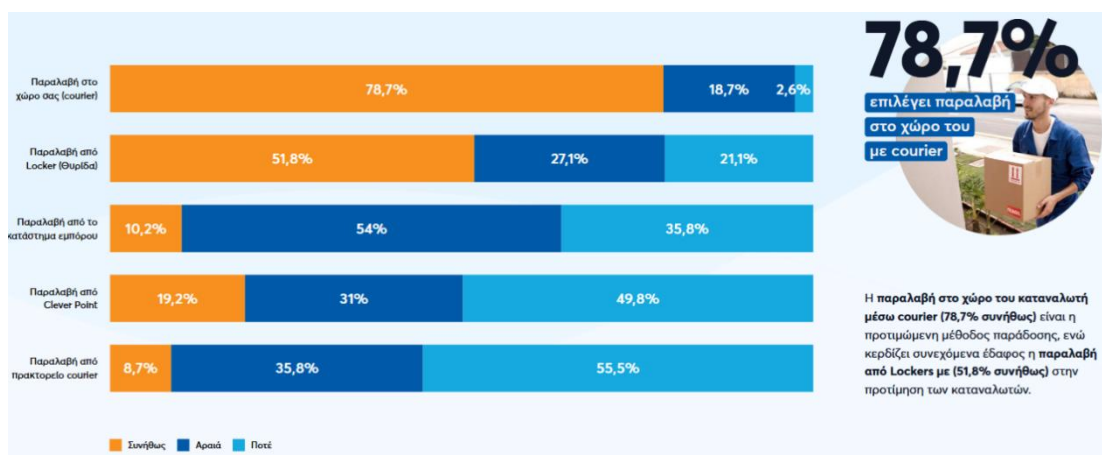


Figure 27: Choice of delivery when shopping online  
(Source: GR.EC.A Research, 2025)

## Decision Authority & Gender

It is important to highlight also via USA YouGov profiles, the shopper decision making authority across product categories & demographic segments. According to the research, women are primary decision makers for grocery purchases in over 70% of households and men is high on financial and technology purchases.

All the above statistics, lead retailers and suppliers to focus on promotional programs and discount policies in a specific way and by implement strategies that apply most. On the other hand, technology emphasizes warranty programs and technical specifications. Online businesses and Retailers align their supply chain negotiations with a demographic approach that achieve up to 15% higher eCommerce sales. (Shah, 2024)

## Greek e-Shopper Trends and Local Market Dynamics

Greek online Market seems to have a lot of potential. According to Eurostat, 88% of the population uses internet and 73% of those are online shoppers. GDP and e- GDP reach almost at the end of 2025 EUR 243 billion as a forecast according to the Greek eCommerce Association (GR.EC.A) with a 7.86% projected to belong on the Greek eCommerce field.

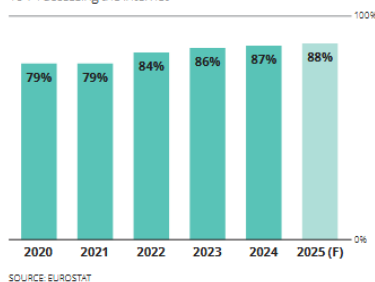
85 | European E-commerce Report 2025 | Southern Europe | Greece

### Greece

Currency: euro | VAT: 24%

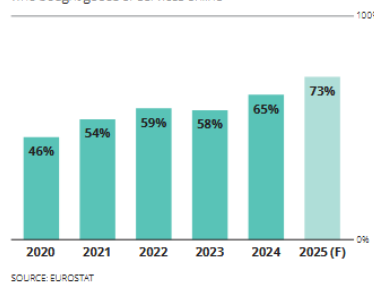
#### Internet users

Percentage of the population aged 16-74 accessing the internet



#### E-Shoppers

Percentage of the population aged 16-74 who bought goods or services online



#### GDP and E-GDP (€bn)

The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in €bn and the percentage of GDP comprised of e-commerce sales (E-GDP)

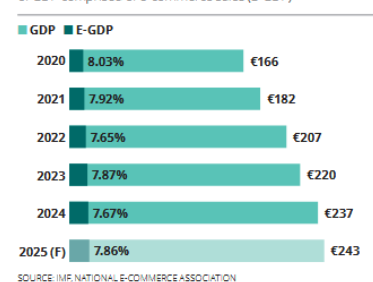
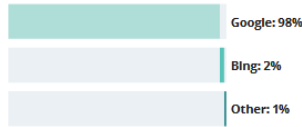


Figure 28: Greek online Market

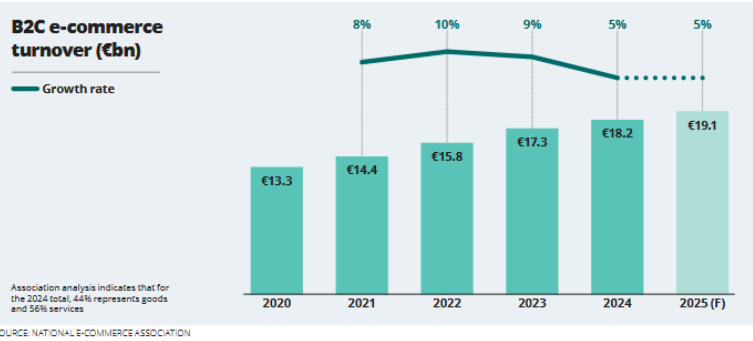
(Source: European E- eCommerce Report, 2025)

The eCommerce Turnover for total eCommerce sales tend to reach for 2025 the EUR 19.1 billion with a Y2Y growth of +5% the last two (2) years.

**Search engine market share**  
Most popular search engines in 2024



SOURCE: STATCOUNTER



SOURCE: NATIONAL E-COMMERCE ASSOCIATION

Figure 29: B2C e-commerce turnover

(Source: European E- eCommerce Report, 2025)

According to recent research of GRECA for 2025, the top 10 categories, that Greek online shoppers prefer: online booking for accommodation, ready food deliveries, tickets, Fashion products, Technology products, Cosmetics & Personal Care products, Pharmacy & Health Care products, Sports equipment, Books and Furniture.

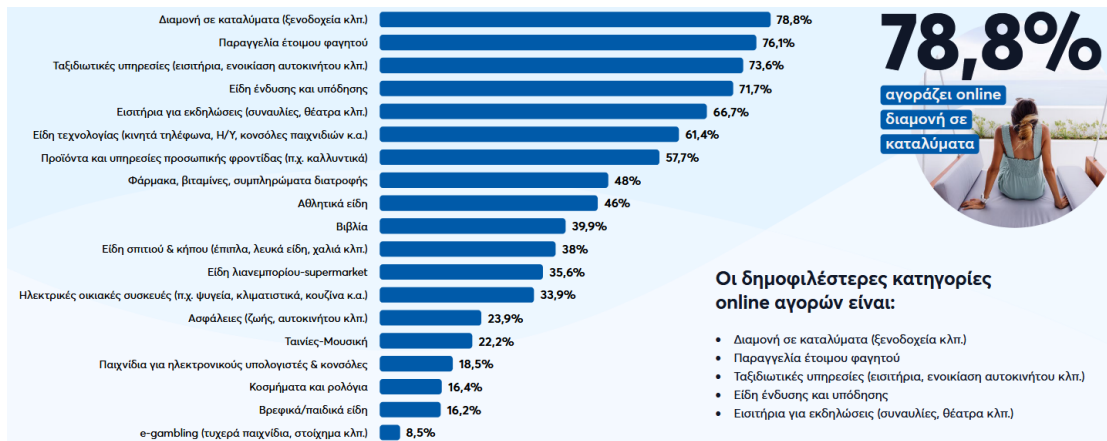


Figure 30: Top 10 categories Greek online shoppers prefer

(Source: Greek eCommerce Association, 2025)

The Greek eCommerce online shoppers affect by the economic conditions, cultural norms and logistics peculiarities. According to the annual survey of ELTRUN, the e-Business Research Center of the Athens University School of Economics and Business (AUEB), due to financial crisis the Greek online shoppers have become more price sensitive due to reduction of their income. So, price sensitivity is the major factor of 75%.

Other main factors that influence Greek online shoppers to choose an online store is the supply chain such as having a cooperation with a well-known carrier (46%), low prices and offer (42%), a user friendly e-shop platform (37%), clear terms of use (35%), good reviews (32%) a majority of those are referred to supply chain issues (stock availability, picking errors, bad delivery experience or bad customer service level).

It is quite strange in comparison to other European Countries, that Greek online shoppers still choose Cash on Delivery (CoD) as the main online payment term. It seems to be an outdated option, but Greek online Shoppers tend to be more secure with those options and on the other hand Courier Providers it seems to prioritize that payment option in order to take advantage the cash flow increasement due to that choice.

The 84.4% of Greek online shoppers according to GR.EC.A research report 2025, seem to prefer buying from local e-shops while the 48.3% Greek online shoppers declare that over half of their eCommerce orders have been made via marketplaces or price comparison engines.

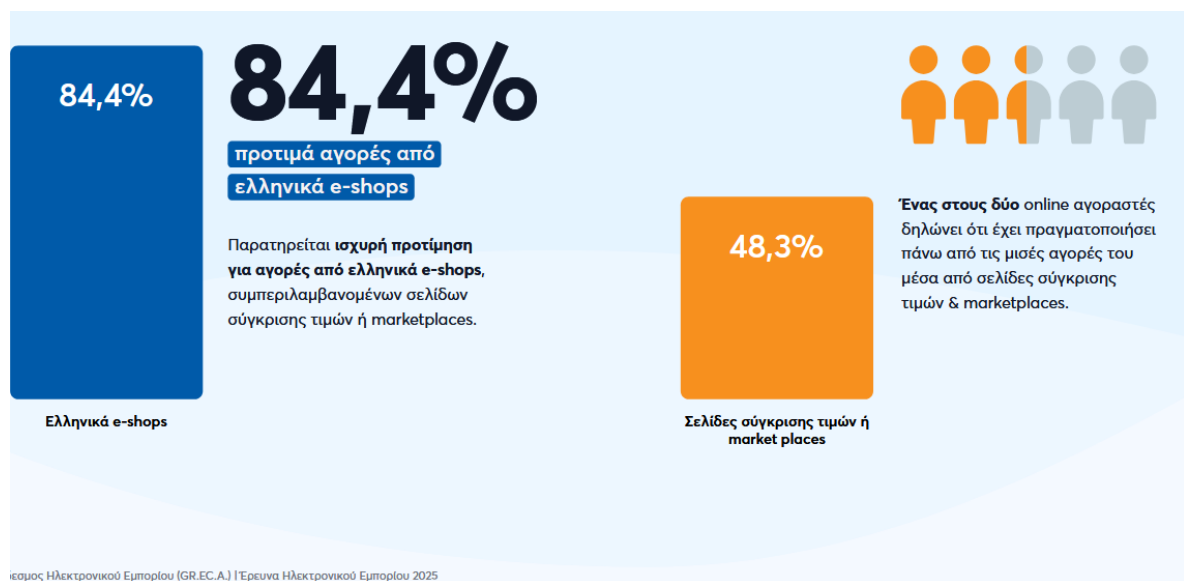


Figure 31: Preferences of online shoppers

(Source: GR.EC.A research, 2025)

Payments Industry Intelligence (2025) claims that all the above characteristics and consumers behaviors affect negotiations throughout the supply chain such as delivery reliability, return management, payment terms, pricing etc. Greek online retailers negotiate

many times with suppliers and fulfilment providers the payments terms to retain the cash flow and liquidity while on the other hand negotiate with suppliers more accuracy and better pricing to provide to online shoppers a better experience and quality.

To conclude with, online Shoppers are the decision makers and value drivers within the eCommerce Supply Chain ecosystem. All their needs, expectations and patterns affect negotiations between suppliers, retailers and fulfilment providers. By implementing customer centric approaches into negotiation frameworks, online businesses can implement online shopper's customer service excellence and transforming the best negotiation practices into competitive advantages across their end customers and competitors.

## **4. Negotiation Strategies in the eCommerce Supply Chain Ecosystem.**

### **4.1. eCommerce Supply Chain Models**

According to Magro-Montero et al., 2024, eCommerce is the new big thing and has been converted from classical supply chain models into a more sophisticated supply chain ecosystem with multiple complexities. Many characteristics of those are digital interconnectivity and of course continuous negotiation among all parties that evolved of the supply chain Flow. On the other hand, the traditional supply chain models are more connected with long-term contracts with specific orientations and specifications that do not change so frequently. It is important to refer to the fact that eCommerce Supply Chain model is characterized by unpredictable demand, high customer expectations, quick response and flexible solutions. eCommerce supply chain model should be described not only as flows and procedures but also as negotiation frameworks in which value is created, captured and distributed across the whole supply chain ecosystem.

eCommerce ecosystem is not just a field with a simple target, but a multifactor framework that includes suppliers, platforms, 3PL providers, Couriers, retailers and of course end customers. All parties interacted with a strategic approach as each party is trying to succeed its target by remaining profitable and accessible to markets or information that can lead to a better result. The eCommerce Supply chain ecosystem needs strong negotiation power and strong alignment between all parties independently the nature of the model each eCommerce business or any other party shall choose. There are multiple choices of supply chain models such as decentralized, centralized or hybrid that do not only defile the flow and process inside a supply chain but also determine the structure of bargaining relationships between all parties.

There is no a specific supply chain model that gives total alignment, full optimization or fairness. So, the eCommerce businesses are focused on supply chain design to apply either the centralized approach as a model with accumulated information in a specific area/central warehouse with a more simple and accurate alignment or to demonstrate a decentralized model that can add value flexibility, quick responses, multiple warehouses, faster response to local demand, more balanced bargaining power and distributed decision – making. The modern Supply Chain model tends to operate in a decentralized supply chain model or

Hybrid in order to have more realistic results and better control over the customer service level such as eCommerce (Haque et al., 2019). The decentralized approach with is the main element in the modern supply chain ecosystem, was created to create value but it is not always feasible to capture that value. eCommerce ecosystems are targeted to approach the end customer and covering all their needs such as the multiple delivery options, the on-time delivery, speed, variety of products or services with the assistance of all parties and supply chain factors that are rarely balanced between all, as there is a lot of complexities and peculiarities across the supply chain processes of all participants.

Huge retailers and Marketplaces are the dominant players that during a negotiation process are the winners due to their strong position and control. Along with the supply chain players such as 3PL and Couriers, Marketplaces and big retailers lead the upstream suppliers to undertake most of the operational risks with low prices. Platform operators and large retailers frequently occupy dominant positions that allow them to capture disproportionate shares of value, while upstream suppliers and logistics partners absorb operational risks and cost pressures. The supply chain models determine which parties according to their role and strength shall benefit most during the negotiation process (Magro-Montero et al., 2024).

The decentralized model that it is preferable to the eCommerce ecosystem act with an independent way, as an individual party and undertake the whole decision – making process to succeed their target from profit and metrics perspective with their own responsibility by choosing their own model, cooperations and negotiation strategies. Such supply chain models cannot be controlled via one party, but results can be achieved via data sharing, incentive mechanisms and good negotiation practices. Many studies show that bilevel programming and Stackelberg game theory show that the decentralized supply chain models lead to better results compared to the centralized model that negotiation and data sharing have their limits. (Haque et al., 2019)

It is important to refer that the role of negotiation is vital in the eCommerce supply chain ecosystem as the decision – making process is consisted of and depended across multiple parties and partners. Inside the eCommerce supply chain automated eCommerce ordering process and replenishment increase frequency with relevant feedback on each unique B2C ordering process, as the transactions are so many that shaping the negotiation dynamics so much. Each eCommerce order forms the SLAs, and extra actions are required. Cumulatively

eCommerce orders are leading to micro-negotiation that form the supply chain performance. Relevant research (IEEE, 2009) shows that such complex environments need very good coordination and protocols and not a centralized approach in order to successfully achieve accuracy and effectiveness.

According to a Tennessee thesis about the centralized purchasing (2018), all supply chain models have a relevant interaction with purchasing entities. The Centralized purchasing systems, especially large retailers aim to act and standardized their suppliers' interactions and unify demand in order to take advantage the economies of scale and negotiate better for their own good. Nevertheless, many times big retailers split their purchasing departments into smaller parts subdivided into subcategories per product that even on a centralized model the operational and negotiation efficiency act as a decentralized model. The subcategorization leads to additional negotiation processes to multiple parties/suppliers and as a result can drive to lack of efficiency with vendors.

Suppliers' face on such hybrid models complexities during negotiation as it seems to have one big retailer to negotiate with and having a relevant contract with specific terms and conditions, but operationally due to the nature of the hybrid model they receive multiple orders from multiple departments (Antypas, 2018). That complexity led to lack of centralization and operational alignment with extra cost for the vendor. Tennessee University presents a case study that shows that these cases increase the vendor fulfillment cost and lots of operations barriers.

Decentralized supply chain models that most eCommerce platforms and businesses follow declared clearly the critical role of modeling negotiation processes in the supply chain flow. As stated in the research of UNESP and related studies show that decentralized models need a good coordination mechanism that can orchestrate alignment on a realistic level. Centralized objectives with a decentralized execution show how critical it is to enable the negotiation within the supply chain models that treated them as a separate process or activity on an external basis.

The supply chain models are not focused only on the price reduction or the servile level efficiency but also on the support on a sustainable negation relationship between suppliers, 3PL and Couriers. Inside the eCommerce ecosystems where the cost of changing a partner or provider is not so high in comparison with other industries, any lack of negotiation results

can guide an innovation reduction or supplier inefficiency. Supply chain models that fail to handle in an efficient way the negotiation dynamics, tend to gain a short-term benefit but lose on a long-term efficiency (Magro-Montero et al., 2024). As reported by Haque et al. (2019) the Hybrid supply chain model merges with a part of centralization and decentralization. Centrally are coordinated the expected sales budget, the SLAs, or volumes but on the other hand operations, ordering process and transportation remain decentralized. The current hybrid supply chain model has a bilevel coordination in which the negotiation acts as a link between decentralized & centralized design and implementation.

Hernández et al. (2009) and Haque et al. (2019) stated that inside the eCommerce ecosystems on Hybrid supply chain models, marketplaces and platform-based entities act a central and main player that set the specification and rules and all the performance metrics & SLAs, while sellers and 3PL's keep the operational autonomy. The negotiation process on these models affects a lot on the marketplace mechanism as the other parties (3PLs, sellers or vendors) adapt their strategies in order to cover the demand and to show that they are competitive and provide add value to the platforms/marketplaces.

eCommerce Supply chain models create complexity for the negotiation strategy each party should follow. Centralized supply chain models have scale economies in order to bargain efficiently prices, but they risk from an operational perspective with upstream cost impact. On the other hand, the decentralized model offers flexibility, speed and enhancement of customer service satisfaction but with complex coordination mechanisms that must be set up locally with multiple parties. Finally, hybrid models combine both the other two model characteristics by embedding negotiation inside the organizational design of the supply chain.

## **4.2 Negotiation Strategies Across Supply Chain Parties (Suppliers & Logistics providers)**

The eCommerce ecosystem applies negotiation strategies that are less traditional than in other fields that require price reduction or negotiated contract terms. eCommerce requires negotiation strategies that apply a more dynamic governance mechanism that data sharing, risk and power are distributed through platforms, 3PL and Suppliers. So, the negotiations

practices are continuous with multiparty negotiations that included algorithmic decisions and digital infrastructures (Zhang & Wu, 2018).

According to Smith (2024), marketplaces and huge digital platforms have converted the total eCommerce environment, especially the total framework of the negotiation with all supply chain parties. Marketplaces & Platforms act as facilitators with a huge database, mechanisms of service level performance, they are the rule setter for the rest of the ecosystem, and they use their power to negotiate. Therefore, negotiation strategies are applied also to data sharing, end to end visibility, SLA's and in general a broader negotiation approach that is based on the whole ecosystem coordination and alignment.

In this framework, negotiation strategies are consisted of three mutually related dimensions:

- ✓ Dependency Structure
- ✓ Information Control
- ✓ Power asymmetry

Marketplaces and Platforms control a big part of the overall control as they have all data inside them, customer interfaces, demand data and suppliers control inventory & capabilities. 3PL's control on those cases only the execution of the fulfillment process and the last mile services. If the negotiation strategies are successful, then the target is to bring balance to all parties and a collaborative character in order to guarantee the whole eCommerce ecosystem functionality in a long-term approach (Yadav & Bhatnagar, 2019) Above all, the successful negotiation process determines whether the connection between suppliers, sellers, platform owners shall be on a long-term basis. It is important to highlight that if the negotiation outcome is misaligned then there is a severe risk that trust should be shaken and there are also operational exposure and threats. On the other hand, if negotiation strategies create value and have great outcomes then there is an increasement of value across the whole supply chain network (Meng, 2022).

Delfmann et al. 2002 claimed that all 3PL's have a specific negotiation position as their performance contribution is related to the high service level of fulfillment services. The basic negotiation elements between platforms and 3PL's usually are targeted on SLA's, capacity agreements and risk sharing mechanisms. In today's environment, the eCommerce Supply Chain Ecosystem demand also same day & next day delivery so the platforms

require an upgrade on last mile service and fulfillment execution as a part of negotiation process to use it as a competitive advantage and in order to increase customer satisfaction.

Supply chain Partnerships with a cooperative character is a strategic response to pressure and include joint investments, shared performance KPIs and fully integrated systems that allow and end – to – end visibility. All the above transform the negotiation strategies to a co- design of operational performance enabling. Collaborative logistics partnerships have emerged as a strategic response to these pressures. Rather than relying solely on transactional contracts, platforms increasingly engage in long-term partnerships that involve joint investment, shared performance metrics, and integrated information systems. Such arrangements transform negotiation from adversarial bargaining into **co-design of operational capabilities**, aligning positive drivers on the whole supply chain flow (Smith,2024 & Yadav et al. 2020)

Morales-Alonso et al. (2025) stated that one of the biggest Platforms of the world Amazon shows a very effective example of how critical the negotiation strategies are within the eCommerce platform ecosystem. Relevant research shows Amazon's innovation & partnership program that shows very specific and high-level performance with very selective partnerships by offering them access to important data, infrastructure, system integration in order to be compliant with Amazon high standards and assist them to get close to that. The hybrid negotiation model is used by Amazon to maximize value with strong assistance to all partners (sellers, merchants & logistics providers) to all parties to be high achievers.

Negotiation between suppliers and 3PL's are negotiated with Platform to affect the whole process indirectly a fact to tends to be vital. Suppliers negotiate with delivery accuracy, time windows, value added services, packing materials and reverse specifications to mitigate fulfillment charges and increase customer service satisfaction. All negotiations that are referred to above is connected to a triadic nature of eCommerce supply chains when bilateral partnerships are connected with a broader eCommerce ecosystem complexity (He et al.,2022). Moreover, Meng (2022) stated that negotiation strategies and outcomes across all parties' supplier and 3PL's reflect a main transition from a traditional negotiation process to a continuous trial of strategic alignment processes. The positive outcomes are based on

maximizing the long term by focusing on reliability increase within the whole eCommerce ecosystem.

### **Strategic Outcomes of Negotiation implementations**

All strategic outcomes of negotiation processes inside the eCommerce Supply chain ecosystem allow all parties to pass through the traditional contract agreements and to pass through innovative solutions, long terms agreements, improvement capacity and stability for the whole eCommerce ecosystem (Zhang & Wu, 2018). Effective negotiation practices offer positive outcomes and increase supply chain resilience as studies show that negotiation strategies with a cooperative character can reduce risk and create joint contingency planning by creating the right conditions to act efficiently to disruptions that might arise. On the other hand, poor negotiation practices bring to surface many institutional weaknesses and lack of trust (He et al. 2022).

3PLs and suppliers use in a positive and transparent way the negotiation process have many possibilities to proceed in innovative solutions, optimization on operational matters, technology investments and service upgrades. The successful implementation of negotiation results affects directly the end customer with upgraded service levels such as on-time delivery, picking accuracy and better after-sales support. Abidi et al. (2019) stated that the positive outcome of negotiations brings an important improvement in customer perception, and the negotiation process shows how vital it is on customer service experience, beyond the cost effectiveness outcome.

The negotiation practices on strategic level increase ecosystem longevity and it is marked by enhancement and reinforcement of trust and continuous support between all parties that create important value in the fast-moving e-Commerce environment (Wang et al., 2023). To conclude with, all negotiation strategies across the e-Commerce supply chain parties are not just operational means but key factors for strategic success in e-Commerce ecosystem. The positive outcome of these practices brings value to the end customer, innovation, long terms cooperations on a win-win basis, with the best possible supply chain alignment on the complex and contemporary e-Commerce ecosystem.

## **5. Methodology & Research Design**

### **5.1 The approach of Research & Methodology**

The relevant research is based on a quantitative method to examine the critical role of negotiations in the eCommerce Supply Chain ecosystem. Through that method the target was collected structured data of managerial sources in order to approach many negotiation dimensions, strategy conclusions, Operational KPI's and leading to results to be analyzed collectively.

The research was designed inside a research framework based on the assumption that the importance of negotiations and the effectiveness as well as the impact on the performance can be measured, analyzed and observed via numerical results.

It is important to refer that the research is connected to a practice-oriented approach that apply to the real world of negotiation practices across professional of the Greek eCommerce ecosystem.

#### **Research Design**

The research was found to be addressed to eCommerce professionals especially that are connected to supply chain processes. A cross-sectional survey design was created to collect relevant responses from the eCommerce Supply Chain ecosystem at a single point in time. The scope was to explore and show the importance of the negotiation outcomes and practices and the impact they have inside the eCommerce ecosystem. The perception of the negotiation practices is important to reveal through the research.

The research was created into specific sections by including the following:

- ✓ The professional background of each participant
- ✓ Negotiation dynamics inside the eCommerce Supply Chain
- ✓ Data & Decision Making practices
- ✓ The critical impact of the negotiation results
- ✓ Specialized sections for the Last mile & e-fulfillment
- ✓ Scenario based evaluation of the negotiation answers
- ✓ The future strategic perspective

The evaluative questions are accompanied by a 7-point Likert Scale (1-7) so all responses can choose the size of the agreement or importance or effectiveness according to their experience inside the eCommerce Supply Chain industry. In such a scale, it is provider great sensitivity in comparison with smaller scales.

## **5.2 Methodology of data collection**

All data were collected by an online questionnaire through Google forms and was sent to all respondents electronically to eCommerce Professionals that relate to the eCommerce Supply Chain ecosystem. The online approach was developed to be more accessible, efficient and suitable for a multivariate of professionals that are derived from Marketplaces, Retailers, E-shops and Brands that are all connected to eCommerce sales across multiple as well product categories.

The online questionnaire had 30 targeted and well-structured questions designed to extract the critical role of Negotiation effectiveness, the logistics coordination importance, the supplier cooperations and the supply chain performance both on warehousing and on distribution.

All answers were filled out electronically and were recorded on a real-time basis. Then the excel file was exported for further analysis. The responders were 26 with all valid and complete answers for appropriate analysis.

### **The Framework of the Sample**

The Sample was well chosen, and it is characterized by an expert bases sampling. All responders are all selected according to their experience inside the eCommerce Supply chain processes and their knowledge and opinion from their Supplier negotiations.

As referred before, the sample includes:

- ✓ Online retailers
- ✓ Major Marketplaces in the eCommerce industry
- ✓ Brands with online character

All participants have experience from multiple industries such as cosmetics and e-pharmacies, apparel, furniture, Technology, Sports equipment and home goods. The spans

from operational, senior/strategic roles or middle management to ensure that the negotiations processes can be implemented by both executional roles and governance.

The whole sampling scheme is characterized to support the Suppliers until the end customers logic of the research by arise the viewpoints from an upstream perspective and downstream operations that touches the final customers service level.

The data collection process was made inside a specific research period and correspondents filled out the questionnaire based on their current organizational position and professional experience. The methodology was based on the empirical foundation that the collected data show the real-world negotiation processes and practices inside the eCommerce Supply Chain ecosystem.

### **5.3 Techniques of data analysis**

All data processes use descriptive statistical methods in order to reach the perception-based nature of the research. Regarding the Likert – scale questions, the following metrics are presented below:

- ✓ Observe range (Min – Max.)
- ✓ Mean (M)
- ✓ Standard Deviation (sd)

For the rest of the categorical questions there are presented percentage distributions (%) and frequency counts (**n**) and for the multi-item questions both item level metrics and composite score (**average across items**) are calculated for a 360° approach to be provided.

All above techniques permit a clear view of the central tendencies, response variability across all participants.

## **5.4 Reliability, Validity & Ethical Considerations**

### **5.4.1 Validity of the content**

The validity of the content was designed carefully into a questionnaire in order for all questions to be aligned to investigate and draw valuable information and conclusions regarding negotiations and supply chain management aspects that shall include lead times, Capacity management, SLA's, mitigation of risks and digital integration.

The research includes two main pylons, the e-fulfillment field (warehousing & e-orders execution) as well as the last mile deliveries. The two fields complete the whole logistics flow to understand better in each field the operational characteristics and the results in a more analytical way.

### **5.4.2 Reliability**

The reliability is based and supported by:

- ✓ Structure with questions block
- ✓ Clear definition of the scale
- ✓ Extended use of a 7-point Likert scale for analytical evaluative metrics and conclusions.

### **5.4.3 Ethical considerations**

All ethical considerations are included throughout the research process, and all participants were answered on a voluntary basis, and all questionnaires were collected anonymized. All respondents were instructed and informed that all research will be performed for academic purposes only using all data for useful and targeted conclusions.

## 6. Empirical Findings

The empirical finding of the current research shows both quasi-qualitative and quantitative observations that are coming from an organized questionnaire that is focused and created to address professionals that are active inside the Greek eCommerce industry.

### 6.1. Observations and insights from eCommerce professionals that are connected to the eCommerce ecosystem.

The research is mainly quantitative and there are also in **Section E** scenario-based questions and domain specific modules in **Section F** that offer quasi-qualitative observations. In general, all respondents show a pronounced preference for negotiation approaches and practices that re-form and stabilize the stress across operations such as the periods during peaks and fuel volatility and a trend to the technology framework investments as strategic drivers when supported by performance mechanisms. All these elements show a turning point from economic bargaining to negotiation as a technique and mechanism for operational excellence and risk management across all eCommerce parties (suppliers, vendors, merchants, 3PLs etc.).

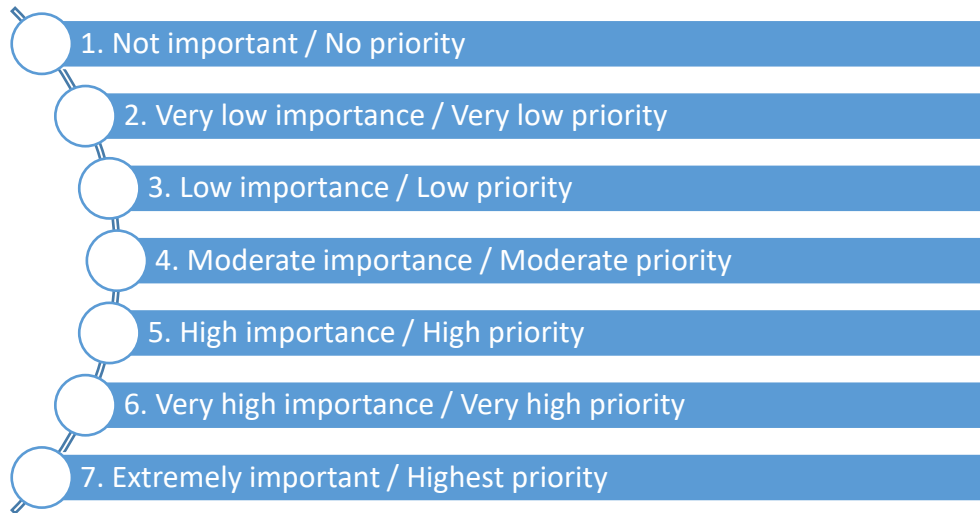
### 6.2 Quantitative results (n=26 participants)

That section refers to collected metrics from **1 up to 30 questions**. Using the Likert – scale model, all findings are synthesized by using the **Standard Deviation (SD)**, the **Mean (M)** and the range of course (**Minimum – Maximum**). For the thematic question blocks with several items, both item level metrics and a composite score (average across items) are reported. Each sub-section is clearly identified by questions number to better traceability among questions and empirical results.

This questionnaire examines the role of negotiations within the eCommerce supply chain ecosystem. Unless otherwise stated, all scale-based questions use a 7-point Likert scale.

#### **Standard Likert Scale Definition (1-7)**

This scale is applied consistently throughout the questionnaire:



## SECTION A - GENERAL

### Question 1

Checking the job level of the respondents. The n=26 shows the full group of participants that 34,6% belong to Senior /Strategic management (9/26), the operational with the same logic are 34,6% and the middle management respondents 30.8%.

#### 1. Current job level

26 απαντήσεις

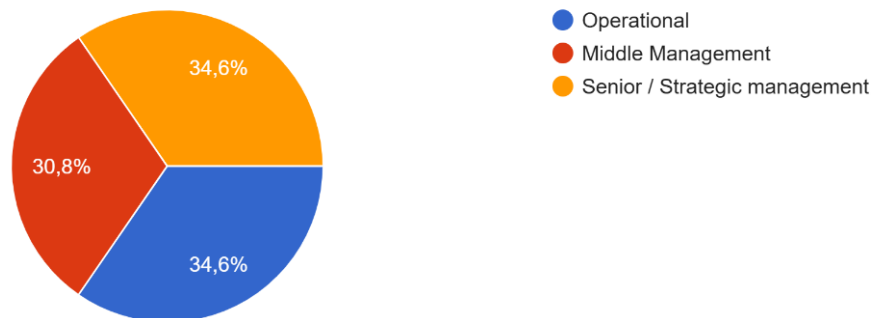


Figure 32: Q1 - Current job level

It seems that the sample spans from operational to strategic management level that shows a multi-level view of negotiations practices that shows both execution related approach and a senior oriented and strategic decision – making.

## **Question 2**

In the 2nd question we measure the functional area within the eCommerce Supply chain. We see a distribution as always n=26 splitting in e- Fulfillment / Warehousing (14/26) 53.8% belonging on that activity and the rest 46.2% that are connected to Last Mile Delivery and Courier Operations.

### 2. Primary functional area within the eCommerce supply chain

26 απαντήσεις

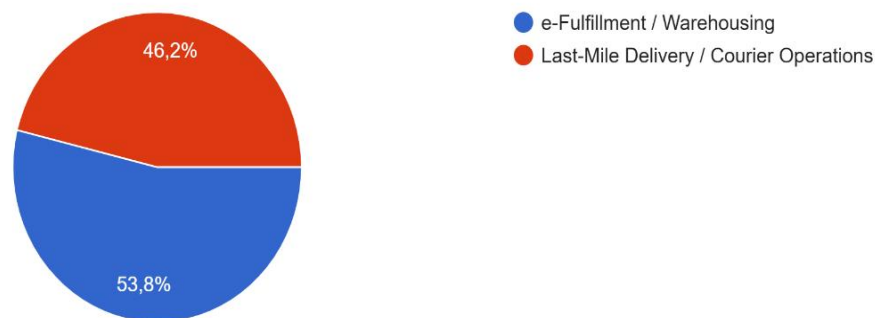


Figure 33: Q2 - Primary functional area within the eCommerce supply chain

By showing each functional area (e-fulfillment & last mile), we enable the comparison of the negotiation priorities between the two separate operational sections, that are highly interconnected fields of the eCommerce supply chain.

### **Question 3**

In the specific questions we can see the years of experience of the n inside the eCommerce Supply chain ecosystem. Always the Distribution n=26 shows the largest groups of participants that responded 3 to 5 years of experience – 30.8%, 6 to 10 years – 34.6%, +10 Years of experience – 19.2% and 0 to 2 Years just – 15.4%.

#### 3. Years of experience in eCommerce logistics

26 απαντήσεις

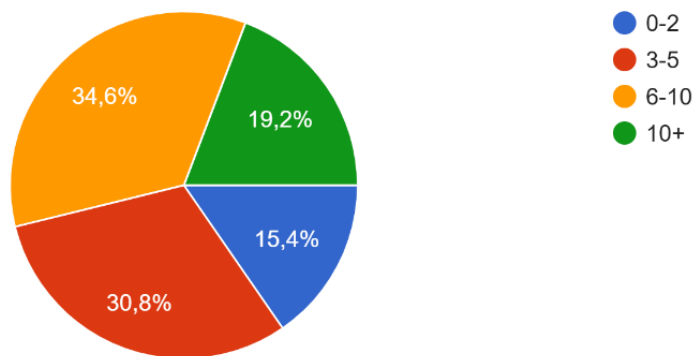


Figure 34: Q3 -Years of experience in eCommerce logistics

The Years of experience of the sample provide a credibility regarding the participants, as the members in the Sample are placed to examine negotiations that are based on the experience especially during their exposure on peak periods, partner or supplier performance and Service Level trade – offs.

#### **Question 4**

The question refers to the years of experience of the distribution (n=26) inside the eCommerce Supply Chain ecosystem. The results show that:

- ✓ +7 Years are 42.3% of the sample
- ✓ 4-6 Years are 34.6% of the sample
- ✓ 1-3 Years are the 19,2% of the sample
- ✓ <1 Years are 3.8% of the sample

The professional experience of the sample assists in the reliability of the responses by showing the exposure to the negotiation practices and processes within the eCommerce Supply Chain ecosystem.

#### 4. Years of involvement within the eCommerce supply chain ecosystem

26 απαντήσεις

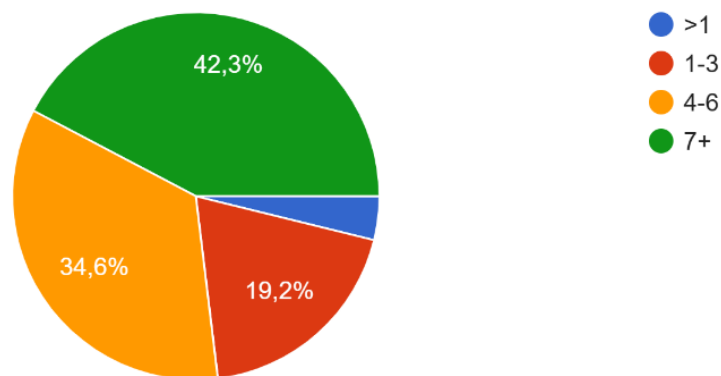


Figure 35: Q4 - Years of involvement within the eCommerce supply chain ecosystem

### **Question 5**

The question 5 is very the high involvement of the participants that are active contributors in defining and influencing the supplier and partner terms as well as to reinforce the internal evaluations on the negotiation effective inside their organization – always inside the eCommerce ecosystem.

5. Extent of personal involvement in supplier or partner negotiations (1–7)

26 απαντήσεις

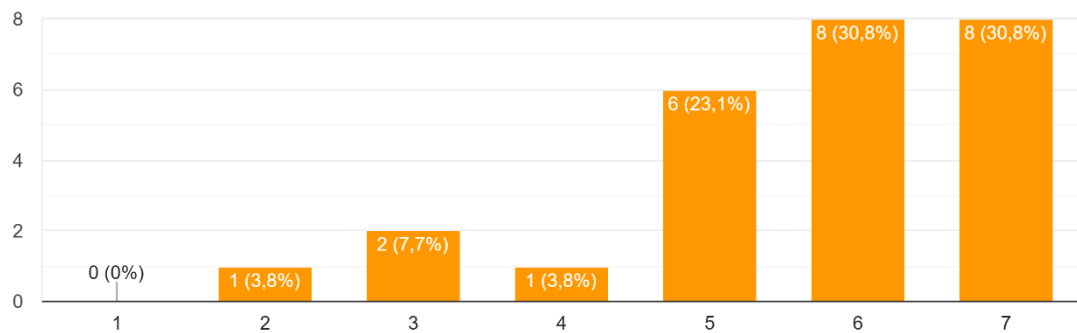


Figure 36: Q5 - Extent of personal involvement in supplier or partner negotiations (1–7)

The Mean of the distribution (Average rating) is  $M=5.62$ , the  $SD = 1.39$  and the range 2-7 (showing the very high importance of a heterogeneous pattern of responses).

## SECTION B — Negotiation Dynamics in the eCommerce Supply Chain

### **Question 6**

The Section B- enters the Negotiation Dynamics in the eCommerce Supply Chain.

Question 6. Ask for the participants to show the importance of negotiations for the effective functioning of the operational area (1-7).

The mean of the distribution  $M = 6.35$  with a standard deviation of  $SD = 0.75$  and the range = 5-7 (showing a very high importance with a low dispersion).

6. Importance of negotiations for the effective functioning of your operational area (1–7)  
26 απαντήσεις

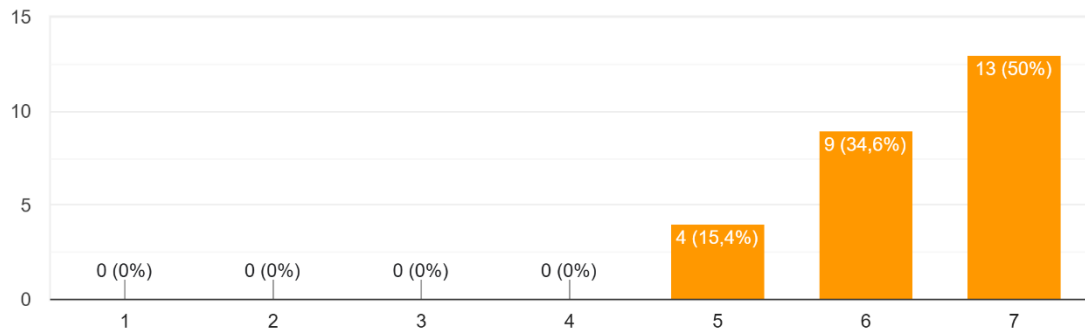


Figure 37: Q6 - Importance of negotiations for the effective functioning of your operational area (1–7)

Here we meet really high scores that confirm that negotiations act as a core operational enabler rather than a bargaining commercial activity.

## Question 7

The 7th Questions ask regarding the impact of negotiation dimensions on operational performance. The overall metrics show a mean of the distribution  $M=5,83$  with  $SD=1.01$  and a range of 3.5-7. The results show a very high importance in the impact of negotiation dimensions and a moderate level of consensus.

7a. Impact of negotiation dimensions on operational performance (1-7)

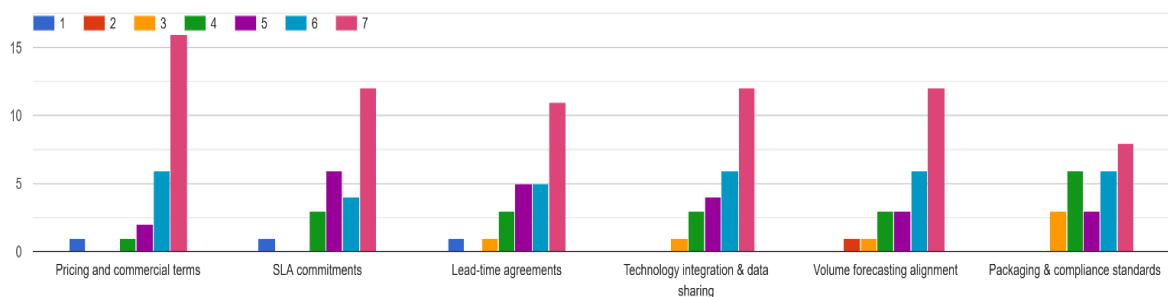


Figure 38: Q7 - Impact of negotiation dimensions on operational performance (1-7)

It is important also to analyze the metrics of Mean, Standard Deviation and range by each element to show the impact on each field.

- Pricing and commercial terms:  $M = 6.27$ ,  $SD = 1.34$ , range = 1–7
- SLA commitments:  $M = 5.81$ ,  $SD = 1.47$ , range = 1–7
- Lead-time agreements:  $M = 5.69$ ,  $SD = 1.54$ , range = 1–7
- Technology integration & data sharing:  $M = 5.96$ ,  $SD = 1.22$ , range = 3–7
- Volume forecasting alignment:  $M = 5.85$ ,  $SD = 1.43$ , range = 2–7
- Packaging & compliance standards:  $M = 5.38$ ,  $SD = 1.44$ , range = 3–7

High ratings across multiple dimensions indicate that negotiation outcomes are multi-causal drivers of performance, linking commercial terms (pricing) with executional reliability (SLAs, lead times), and increasingly with digital interdependence (technology integration and data sharing).

### **Question 8**

The 8th question asks the frequency of formal negotiation cycles in their function. Inside the distribution of n=26 most of the responses show that on the frequency seem to be on annual basis and more specifically 11/26 – show a 42.3% of the sample.

8. Frequency of formal negotiation cycles in your function

26 απαντήσεις

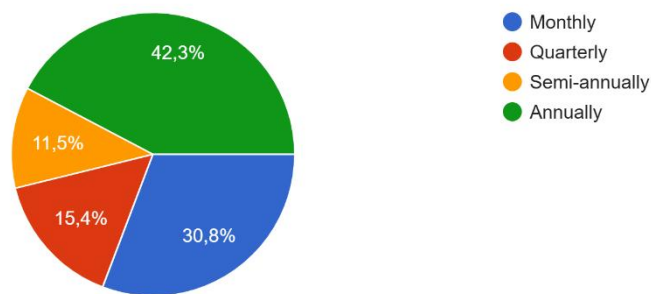


Figure 39: Q8 - Frequency of formal negotiation cycles in your function

The frequency of formal negotiation cycles offers context for the level of governance maturity at which operational and commercial factors are realigned.

- ✓ Annually: 11/26 - 42.3%
- ✓ Monthly: 8/26 - 30.8%
- ✓ Quarterly: 4/26 - 15.4%
- ✓ Semi-annually: 3/26 - 11.5%

**Question 9**

The question below shows the degree to which negotiation outcomes enhance operational resilience during peak periods with Likert scale (1-7). The metrics according to the responses are M= 5.92 – SD 1.13 and the range 3-7. Once again it seems to have very high importance at a moderate level of consensus.

9. Degree to which negotiation outcomes enhance operational resilience during peak demand (1–7)  
26 απαντήσεις

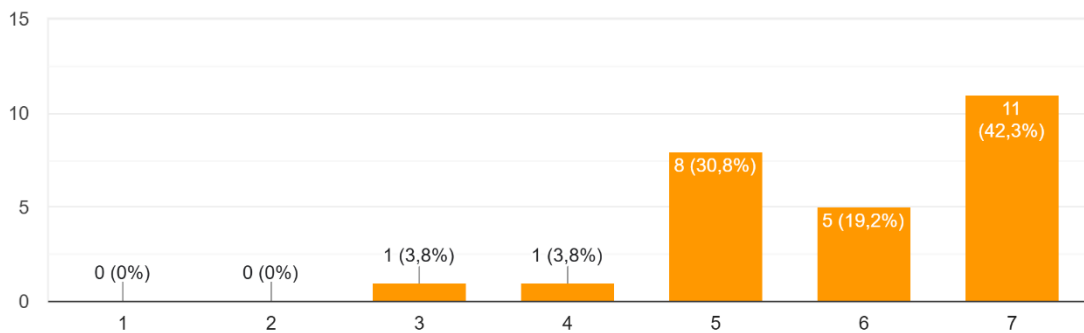


Figure 40: Q9 - Degree to which negotiation outcomes enhance operational resilience during peak demand (1–7)

The high score shows that negotiations contribute during peak periods as an important capability in the eCommerce ecosystem where high demands and high spikes are affecting the service level if capacity and resources are not aligned with the incentives.

### **Question 10**

The next questions touch the effectiveness of the following negotiation practices in ensuring operational stability. The responses show very high importance at a moderate level of consensus. The Mean here is  $M = 5.72$  with an  $SD = 0.92$  and with a range of 4-7.

10. Effectiveness of the following negotiation practices in ensuring operational stability (1-7)

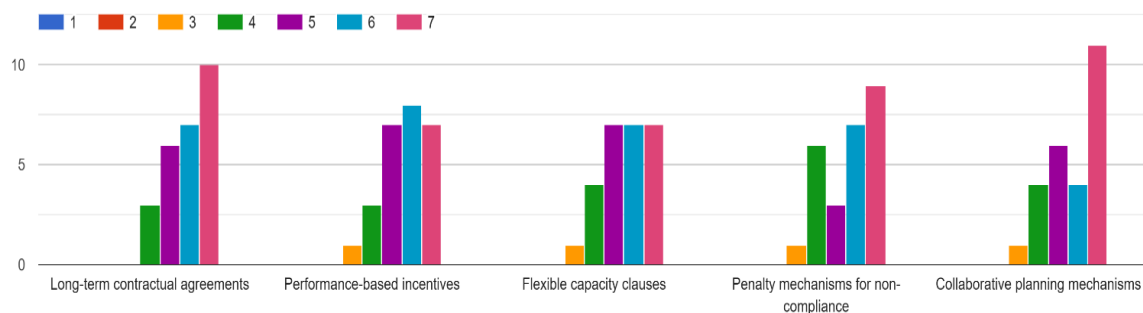


Figure 41: Q10 - Effectiveness of the following negotiation practices in ensuring operational stability (1-7)

#### **Each Metric is presented below:**

- ✓ Long-term contractual agreements:  $M = 5.92$ ,  $SD = 1.06$ , range = 4–7
- ✓ Performance-based incentives:  $M = 5.65$ ,  $SD = 1.13$ , range = 3–7
- ✓ Flexible capacity clauses:  $M = 5.58$ ,  $SD = 1.17$ , range = 3–7
- ✓ Penalty mechanisms for non-compliance:  $M = 5.65$ ,  $SD = 1.29$ , range = 3–7
- ✓ Collaborative planning mechanisms:  $M = 5.77$ ,  $SD = 1.27$ , range = 3–7

It is important to refer that collaborative planning mechanisms show that can stabilize operations when uncertainty comes and flexible causes signals and adaptive forecasting and contract terms are preventing mechanisms that protect the eCommerce supply chain ecosystem and subsequently the customer service experience.

## SECTION C — Operational and Strategic Impact

### Question 11

Proceeding with Section B of the questionnaire, that focuses on operational and strategic feedback. The 11<sup>th</sup> question, ask for the impact of negotiation quality on key performance indicators (KPI's).

The Mean of the sample is  $M= 6$ , the  $SD=0.71$  and the range = 4.5-7. It seems from the participants to have an overall very high importance with a low dispersion.

11. Impact of negotiation quality on key performance indicators (1-7)

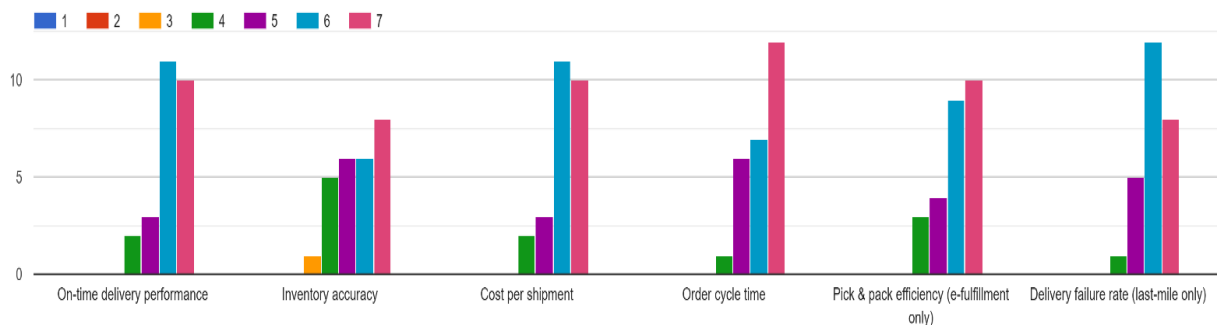


Figure 42: Q11 - Impact of negotiation quality on key performance indicators (1-7)

To be more analytic, relevant metrics are referred below on each element:

- ✓ **On-time delivery performance:**  $M = 6.12$ ,  $SD = 0.91$ , range = 4–7
- ✓ **Inventory accuracy:**  $M = 5.58$ ,  $SD = 1.24$ , range = 3–7
- ✓ **Cost per shipment:**  $M = 6.12$ ,  $SD = 0.91$ , range = 4–7
- ✓ **Order cycle time:**  $M = 6.15$ ,  $SD = 0.92$ , range = 4–7
- ✓ **Pick & pack efficiency (e-fulfillment only):**  $M = 6.00$ ,  $SD = 1.02$ , range = 4–7
- ✓ **Delivery failure rate (last-mile only):**  $M = 6.04$ ,  $SD = 0.82$ , range = 4–7

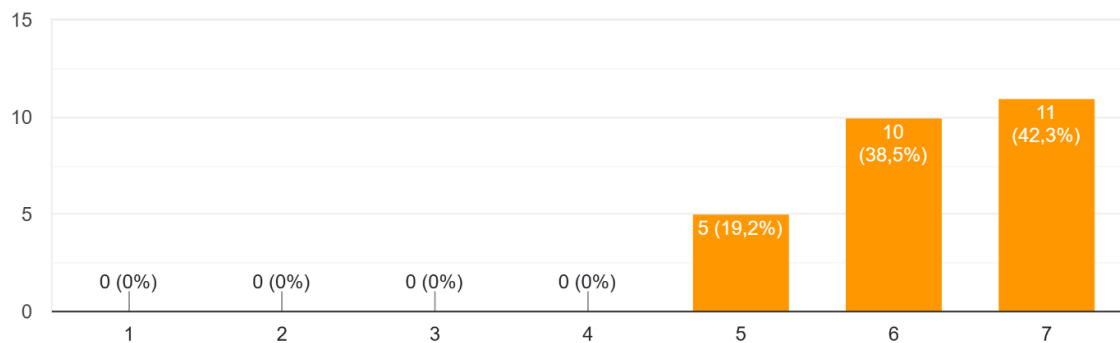
The results show that negotiation outcomes and quality affect the service level performance. That reinforces the idea that well – structure negotiations with an appropriate design and planning affect the customer service experience via the Operational KPI's.

### **Question 12**

The next question shows the findings of the overall impact of negotiation outcomes on customer experience. The results show very high importance of the impact and a moderate level of consensus.

#### 12. Overall impact of negotiation outcomes on customer experience (1-7)

26 απαντήσεις



The customer service experience is mainly formed by negotiated operational conditions such as capacity, resources, lead times, KPI's and SLA's enforcement rather than by bargaining prices.

### **Question 13**

The next question reveals the size and impact of the contribution of negotiation effectiveness to e-shops & marketplaces as a competitive advantage in the Greek eCommerce Market.

With a Mean of  $M = 6.12$ , an  $SD = 0.82$  and a range of 5-7, findings show a very high importance regarding the contribution impact of negotiation effectiveness with a moderate level of consensus.

13. Contribution of negotiation effectiveness to eshops & marketplaces competitive advantage in the Greek eCommerce market (1–7)

26 απαντήσεις

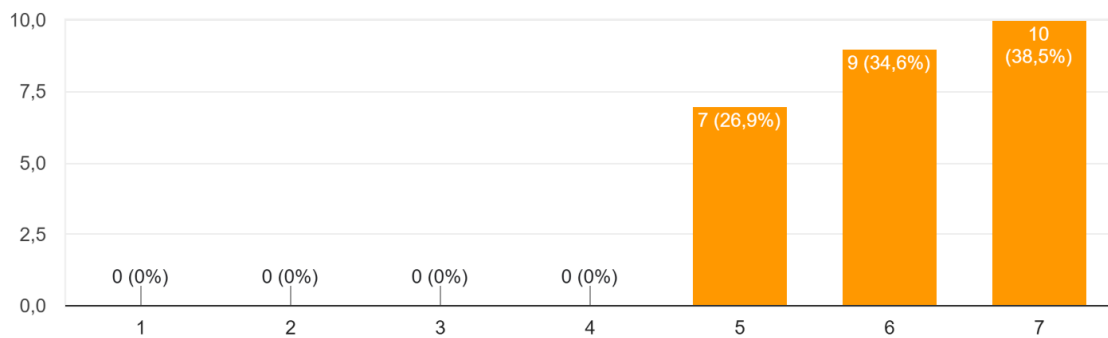


Figure 43: Q13 - Contribution of negotiation effectiveness to e-shops & marketplaces competitive advantage in the Greek eCommerce market (1–7)

The responses above reveal that the negotiation effectiveness is considered as a strategic differentiator inside the Greek eCommerce market. The eCommerce and Marketplaces seem to believe that negotiations based on contractual and operational alignment capabilities, are a source of competitive advantage.

### **Question 14**

The results below show the extent to which effective negotiations mitigate the following operational risks. As an overall mean with have  $M = 5.72$  with a  $SD = 0.84$  and a range 4-7. It seems to have a really high importance with a moderate level of consensus.

14. Extent to which effective negotiations mitigate the following operational risks (1-7)

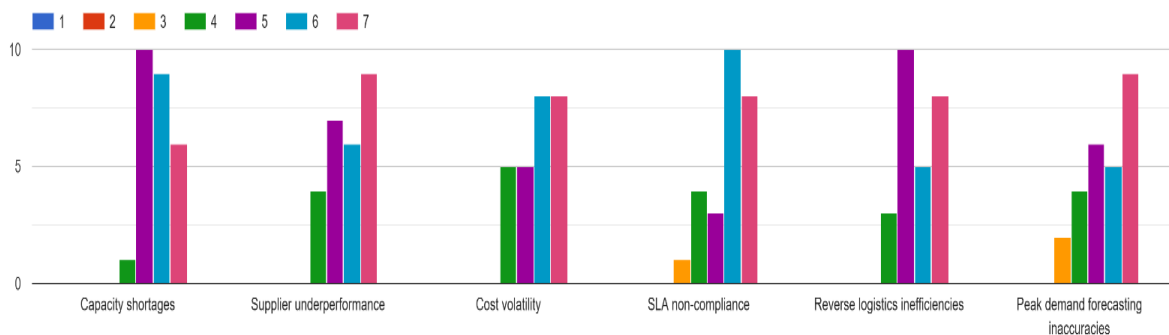


Figure 44: Q14 - Extent to which effective negotiations mitigate the following operational risks (1-7)

**Below are presented the metrics per operational risk:**

- ✓ **Capacity shortages:**  $M = 5.77$ ,  $SD = 0.86$ , range = 4-7
- ✓ **Supplier underperformance:**  $M = 5.77$ ,  $SD = 1.11$ , range = 4-7
- ✓ **Cost volatility:**  $M = 5.73$ ,  $SD = 1.12$ , range = 4-7
- ✓ **SLA non-compliance:**  $M = 5.77$ ,  $SD = 1.18$ , range = 3-7
- ✓ **Reverse logistics inefficiencies:**  $M = 5.69$ ,  $SD = 1.05$ , range = 4-7
- ✓ **Peak demand forecasting inaccuracies:**  $M = 5.58$ ,  $SD = 1.33$ , range = 3-7

Through the above rating it seems that negotiations mitigate operational risks and using negotiation practices as a tool to risk reduction and also achieve risk allocation by managing capacity shortages, supplier or vendor underperformance and an SLA failure.

**SECTION D — Digitalization, Data & Decision-Making Section**

**Question 15**

The next question shows the maturity level of data driven negotiation practices within each member of responders in their department. Once again, we see very high importance with a moderate level of consensus. The mean is  $M=5.88$  with a  $SD = 1.07$  and a range of 4-7.

15. Maturity level of data-driven negotiation practices within your department (1–7)

26 απαντήσεις

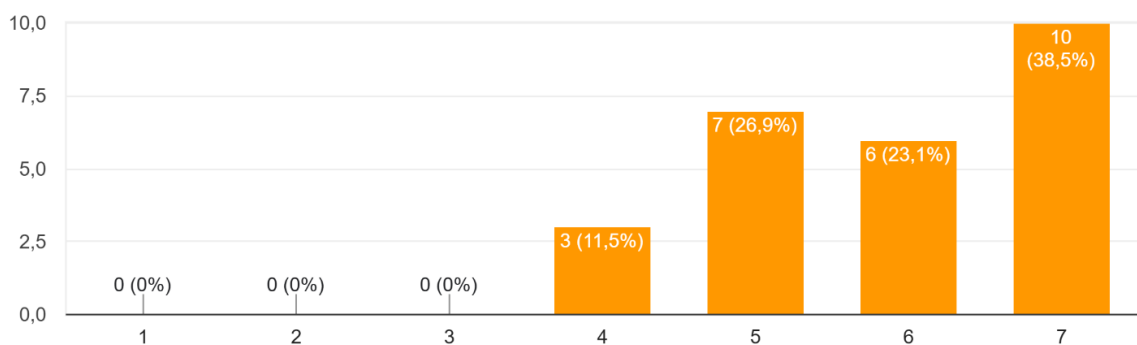


Figure 45: Q15 - Maturity level of data-driven negotiation practices within your department (1–7)

The maturity level of data driven negotiation practices is a critical capability that affects how effectively e-shops control performance levels via negotiation processes and reinforce clauses to achieve relevant results and targets.

### **Question 16**

The responses below depict the importance of the following data sources in negotiation preparation. A composite metric regarding  $M = 5.82$ ,  $SD = 1.01$  and a range of 2.6 -7. The results show very high importance with a moderate level of consensus.

16. Importance of the following data sources in negotiation preparation (1-7)

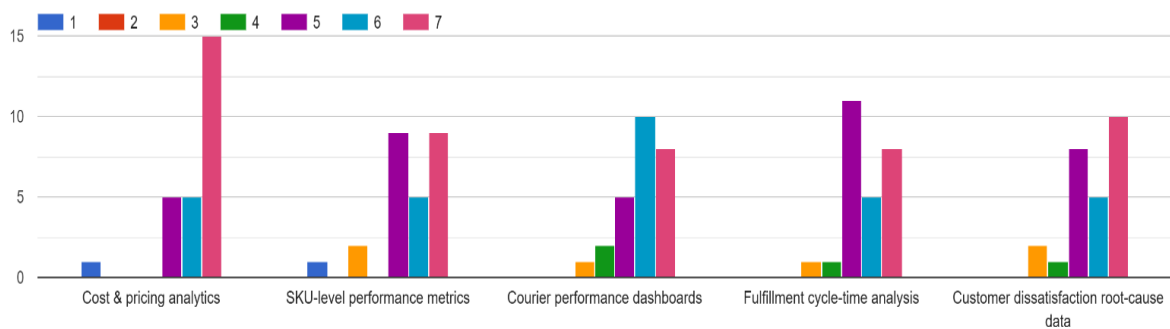


Figure 46: Q16 - Importance of the following data sources in negotiation preparation (1-7)

**The following data sources are referred below with relevant metrics:**

- ✓ **Cost & pricing analytics:**  $M = 6.19$ ,  $SD = 1.33$ , range = 1-7
- ✓ **SKU-level performance metrics:**  $M = 5.58$ ,  $SD = 1.50$ , range = 1-7
- ✓ **Courier performance dashboards:**  $M = 5.85$ ,  $SD = 1.08$ , range = 3-7
- ✓ **Fulfillment cycle-time analysis:**  $M = 5.69$ ,  $SD = 1.09$ , range = 3-7
- ✓ **Customer dissatisfaction root-cause data:**  $M = 5.77$ ,  $SD = 1.24$ , range = 3-7

It seems that we have high importance given to operational analytics that allow us to see that negotiation preparation is based a lot on data drive logic. eCommerce environment has a variety of unique SKU's and e-Fulfilment and courier performance data can really affect the operational decisions.

### **Question 17**

The next question is referred to the degree to which real time dashboards improve negotiation effectiveness. The responses showed very high importance at moderate level of consensus.

17. Degree to which real-time dashboards improve negotiation effectiveness (1–7)

26 απαντήσεις

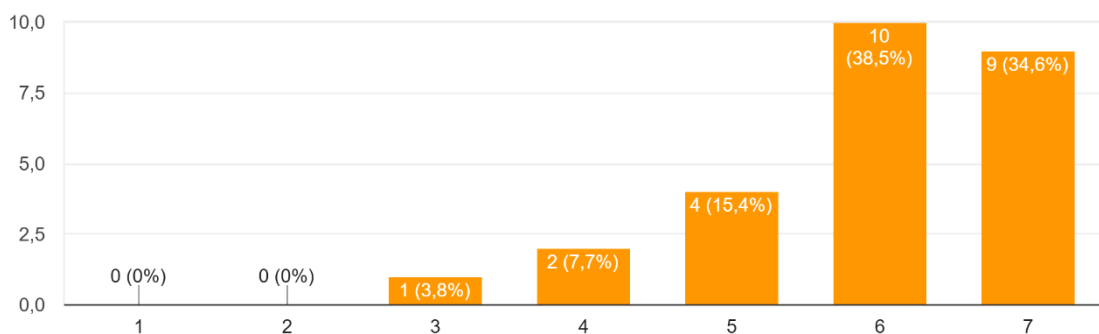


Figure 47: Q17 - Degree to which real-time dashboards improve negotiation effectiveness (1–7)

It is a fact the real time dashboards are a trigger point for successful negotiation planning. Dashboards with relevant and accurate data reduce the risk of information asymmetry and activate quick corrective actions when

Interpretation: Real-time dashboards are perceived as negotiation accelerators, reducing information asymmetry and enabling faster corrective actions when there are traces for low service level results.

### **Question 18**

The importance of system integration such as API's, EDI and tracking systems in negotiation with partners seem to be very important according to the results on a moderate level of consensus. Composite metrics are the Mean =6.42, the SD =0.81 and the range = 5-7.

18. Importance of system integration (APIs, EDI, tracking systems) in negotiations with partners (1–7)

26 απαντήσεις

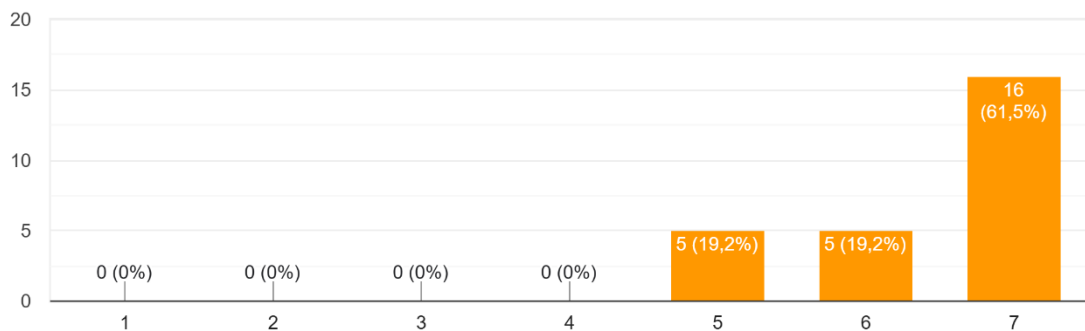


Figure 48: Q18 - Importance of system integration (APIs, EDI, tracking systems) in negotiations with partners (1–7)

Systems integrations act as a critical part during the negotiation planning and process, reflecting that API /EDI connectivity is required in order to have an end-to-end visibility and traceability.

## SECTION E — Scenario - Based Evaluation

### **Question 19**

Now we can enter to the Section E – the scenario-based evaluation.

According to the below scenario, it seems that it is important for the eCommerce businesses and marketplaces to focus on the capacity capabilities and peak performance clauses during peak periods. The mean is  $M = 6.27$ , the  $SD = 0.87$  and the range 5-7, a moderate level of consensus.

19. Scenario 1: A supplier consistently meets pricing expectations but underperforms during peak periods. Negotiation focus should shift toward capacity guarantees and peak-performance clauses.

26 απαντήσεις

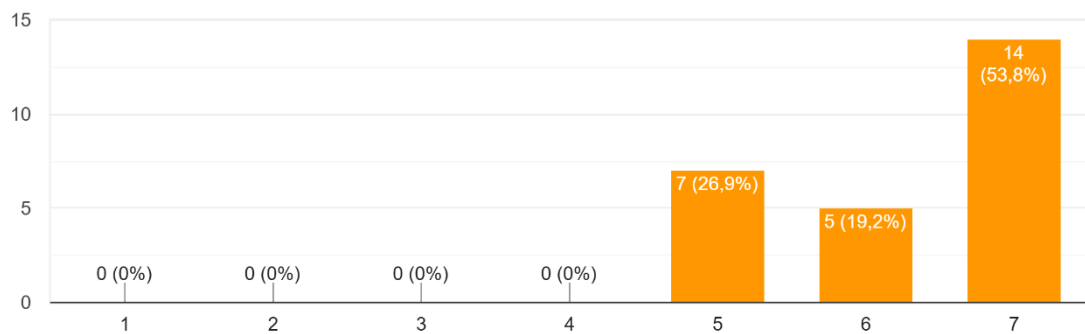


Figure 49: Q19 - Scenario 1: A supplier consistently meets pricing expectations but underperforms during peak periods. Negotiation

The above scenario shows a practical approach to negotiations. The participants seem to focus on negotiating further the terms of the contract that refers to the capacity level during peak periods. In addition, they focus also on the high SLAs with a straighter forwarding commitment.

### **Question 20**

The next scenario is based on a courier partner that requires a 13% increase on delivery prices due to fuel volatility. A balanced negotiation strategy, cost sharing and service level adjustments are also required.

The composite metric of the Mean is  $M = 5.96$  with  $SD = 0.92$  and a range of 4-7. The responses show the very high importance of negotiation mechanisms of cost sharing and SLAs improvements.

20. Scenario 2: A courier partner requests a 13% increase in cost per parcel due to fuel volatility. A balanced negotiation strategy combining cost-sharing and service-level adjustments is appropriate. (1-7)  
26 απαντήσεις

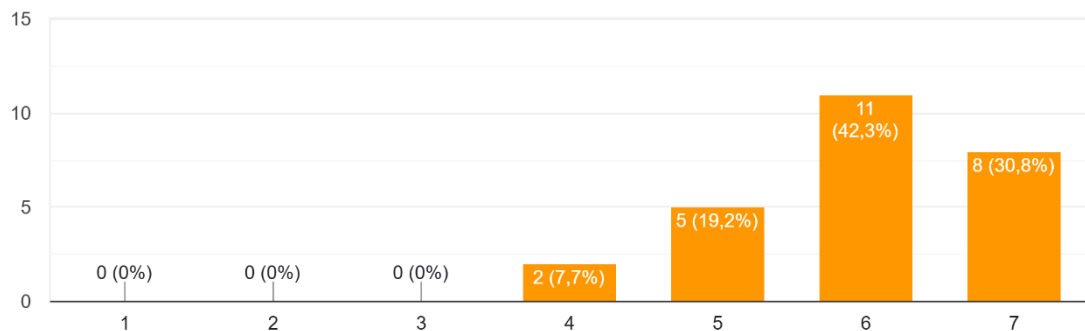


Figure 50: Q20 - Scenario 2: A courier partner requests a 13% increase in cost per parcel due to fuel volatility. A balanced negotiation strategy combining cost-sharing mechanisms and service-level adjustments is appropriate. (1-7)

The above scenario shows again a practical negotiation for the real supply chain life and to which the respondents seem to agree with parallel contract adjustments regarding the capacity limits, the cost management and the SLAs.

### **Question 21**

The 3rd scenario shows an e-fulfilment provider that proposes automation investments accompanied by long term service contract. The proposal should be viewed by eCommerce businesses as a strategic opportunity or a risk. Once again, the results see that very high importance of seeing the investment of the logistics provider as a strategic point than a risk with a moderate level of consensus.

Mean is  $M=6.08$ , the  $SD = 0.93$  and the range 4-7.

21. Scenario 3: A warehouse partner proposes automation investments requiring a multi-year commitment. This proposal should primarily be viewe... a strategic opportunity rather than a risk. (1-7)  
26 απαντήσεις

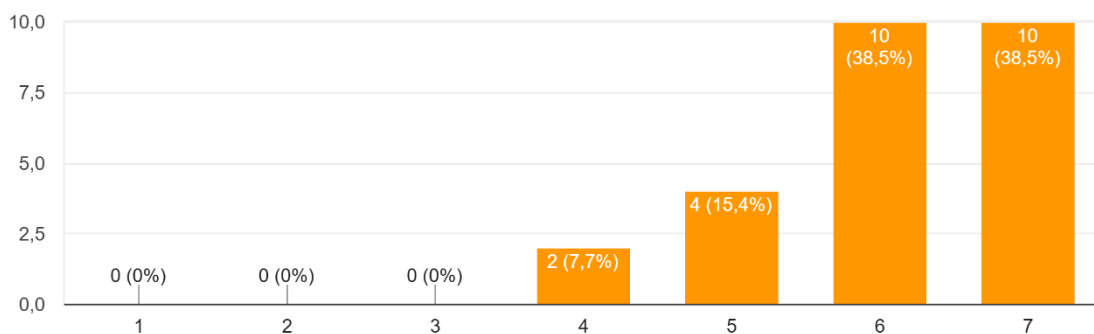


Figure 51: Q21 - Scenario 3: A warehouse partner proposes automation investments requiring a multi-year commitment. This proposal should primarily be viewed as a strategic opportunity rather than a risk. (1-7)

Another practical approach is presented that seem that participants will make the appropriate contract adjustments in order to extend their cooperation with the 3PL provider by negotiating the advantages that an investment shall bring such as the productivity increasement, to re arrange the capacity management during peak periods and the economies of scale as the responsiveness or the resources reduction due to investment shall take place.

## SECTION F — Domain - Specific Modules

### Module A — e-Fulfillment / Warehousing (Respond if applicable)

#### Question 22

The next Section F. is applied to the fulfillment process (warehousing), and the level of impact of negotiations on inbound flow reliability and storage capacity planning. The results showed a Mean of 5.65, a SD = 0.94 and a range of 4-7 that led to very high importance of the operational reliability and the storage capacity planning.

22. Influence of negotiations on inbound flow reliability and storage capacity planning (1–7)  
26 απαντήσεις

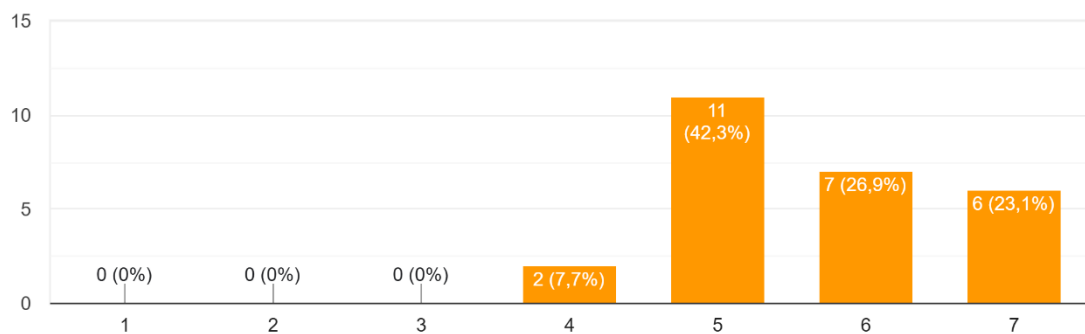


Figure 52: Q22- Influence of negotiations on inbound flow reliability and storage capacity planning (1–7)

The critical role of negotiations depends on the operational area of warehousing phase for that reason eCommerce business enter to the contract terms metrics and peak period planning regarding flow for on time receiving, storage capacity and on time execution during the warehouse activities.

**Question 23**

The metrics here show the very high importance of following a standard packaging process with a  $M = 5.81$ , a  $SD = 1.23$  and a range of 2-7 with moderate level of consensus.

23. Importance of packaging standardization agreements for warehouse efficiency (1–7)  
26 απαντήσεις

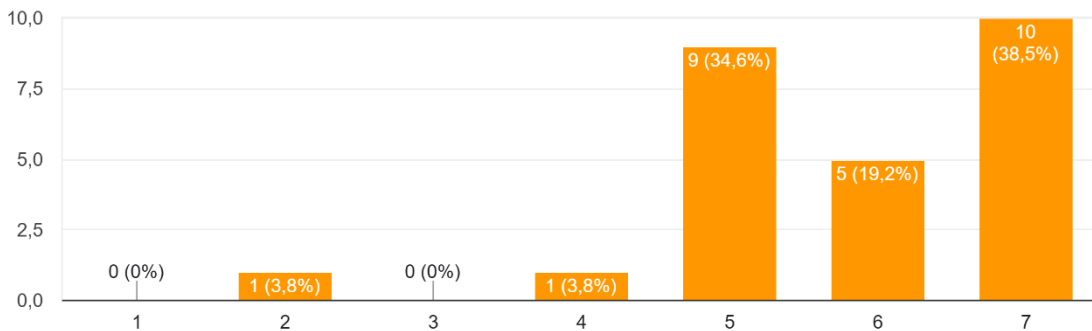


Figure 53: Q23- Importance of packaging standardization agreements for warehouse efficiency (1–7)

The results show that negotiations regarding the standardization of the packing process are important as productivity is quite high in that way and during peak periods the e-fulfillment providers respond quickly to eCommerce orders and can reach higher service levels. It seems that eCommerce businesses and Marketplaces tend to prefer that approach.

**Question 24**

The frequency of negotiation challenges is high with fulfillment partner according to the results on a moderate level of consensus. The Mean is  $M = 5.88$ , the  $SD = 1.18$  and the range 4-7.

24. Frequency of negotiation challenges with fulfillment partners regarding operational alignment (1–7)

26 απαντήσεις

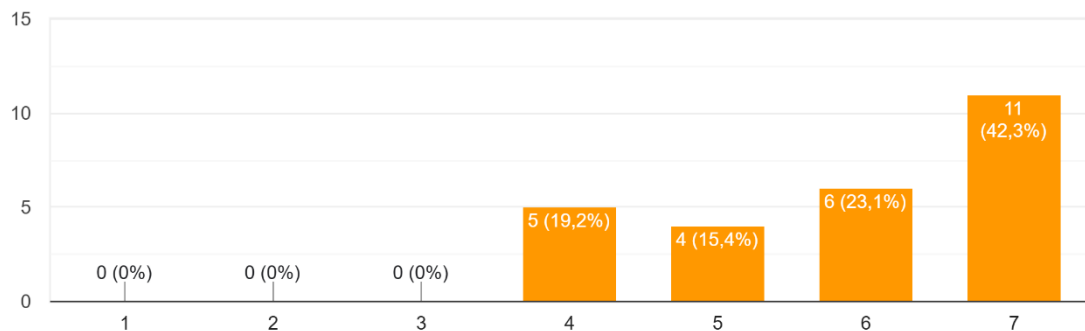


Figure 54: Q24 - Frequency of negotiation challenges with fulfillment partners regarding operational alignment (1–7)

**Module B — Last-Mile Delivery / Courier Operations**

**Question 25**

Proceeding with the B module regarding Courier service/ Last mile deliveries section, participants responded to the impact of cost to service negotiation on last -mile routing efficiency. The Impact is quite high, and we have a moderate level of consensus with M = 5.73, SD = 1.08 and a range = 4-7,

25. Impact of cost-to-serve negotiations on last-mile routing efficiency (1–7)

26 απαντήσεις

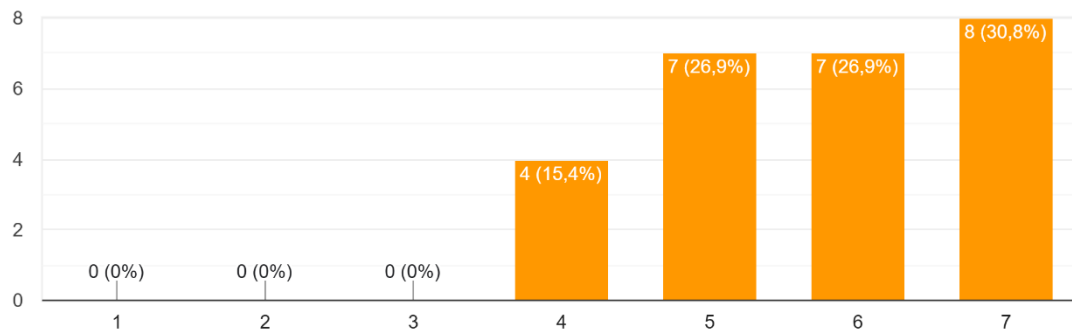


Figure 55: Q25 - Impact of cost-to-serve negotiations on last-mile routing efficiency (1–7)

The above findings show that negotiations play a significant role in comparison the SLA's results for on-time delivery and routing efficiency. The KPI's are always the key for negotiation processes.

**Question 26**

The importance of negotiated SLAs for the overall delivery quality seems to be important with a moderate level of consensus. The M =5.96, SD = 0.87 and a range of 4-7.

26. Importance of negotiated SLAs for overall delivery quality (1–7)  
26 απαντήσεις

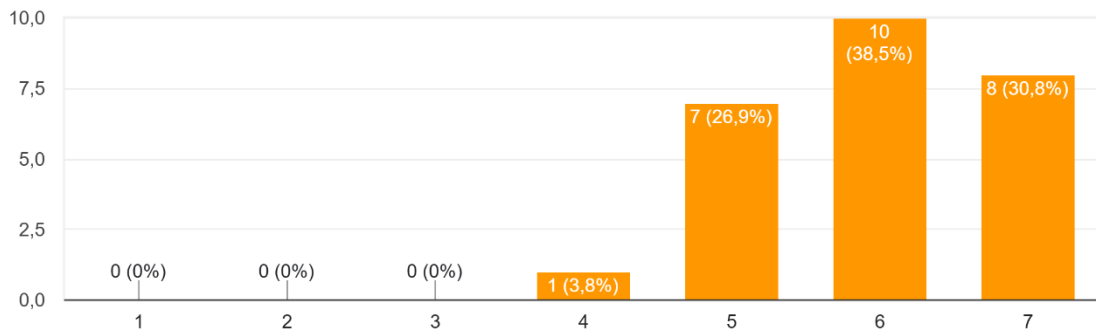


Figure 56: Q26 - Importance of negotiated SLAs for overall delivery quality (1–7)

The above findings show that last mile deliveries are important and sensitive and important. It is the last chain that is directly connected to the end customer. Delivery time windows, COD and delivery failure must be managed via the contract agreement adjustments and SLAs.

### **Question 27**

The criticality of negotiations in the following last mile areas seems to be important. With an overall Mean = 5.86, SD 0.81 and a range 4-7 it seems to have critical points as referred below per point/area in a more analytical way.

27. Criticality of negotiations in the following last-mile areas (1-7)

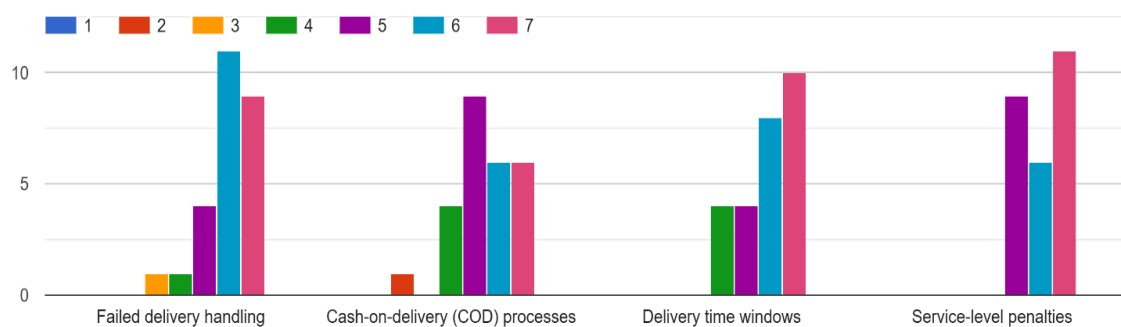


Figure 57 Q27 - Criticality of negotiations in the following last-mile areas (1-7)

- ✓ **Failed delivery handling:** M = 6.00, SD = 1.02, range = 3–7
- ✓ **Cash-on-delivery (CoD) processes:** M = 5.42, SD = 1.24, range = 2–7
- ✓ **Delivery time windows:** M = 5.92, SD = 1.09, range = 4–7
- ✓ **Service-level penalties:** M = 6.08, SD = 0.89, range = 5–7

## SECTION G — Future Strategic Outlook

### **Question 28**

Proceeding to the Section G – the Future Strategic outlook, we examine the importance of strengthening the following capabilities to improve negotiation outcomes. The Average is  $M = 6.07$ ,  $SD=0.79$  and the range =4-7. It seems once again that negotiations' outcomes improvement is quite important.

28. Importance of strengthening the following capabilities to improve negotiation outcomes (1-7)

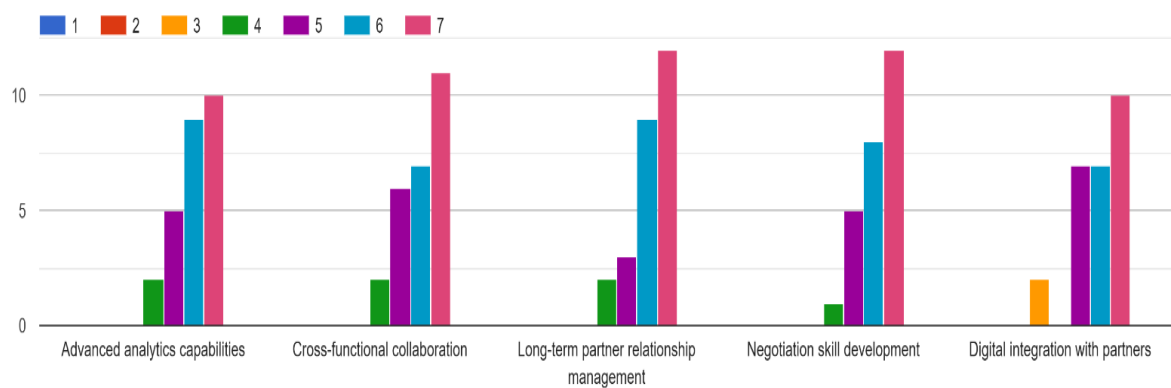


Figure 58: Q28 - Importance of strengthening the following capabilities to improve negotiation outcomes (1-7)

**Each of the following capabilities are referred below:**

- ✓ **Advanced analytics capabilities:**  $M = 6.04$ ,  $SD = 0.96$ , range = 4–7
- ✓ **Cross-functional collaboration:**  $M = 6.04$ ,  $SD = 1.00$ , range = 4–7
- ✓ **Long-term partner relationship management:**  $M = 6.19$ ,  $SD = 0.94$ , range = 4–7
- ✓ **Negotiation skill development:**  $M = 6.19$ ,  $SD = 0.90$ , range = 4–7
- ✓ **Digital integration with partners:**  $M = 5.88$ ,  $SD = 1.18$ , range = 3–7

All above finding shows that when we have successful negotiation practices, it is derived due to analytics the eCommerce businesses & marketplaces have the long terms partnerships with Suppliers/providers and the digital integrations.

**Question 29**

It seems that the expected impact of future supply chain trends on negotiation strategies is expected to be important according to our Sample with a moderate level of consensus. The Mean is  $M=6$ , the  $SD = 0.8$  and the range 4-7.

29. Expected impact of future supply chain trends on negotiation strategies (1–7)

26 απαντήσεις

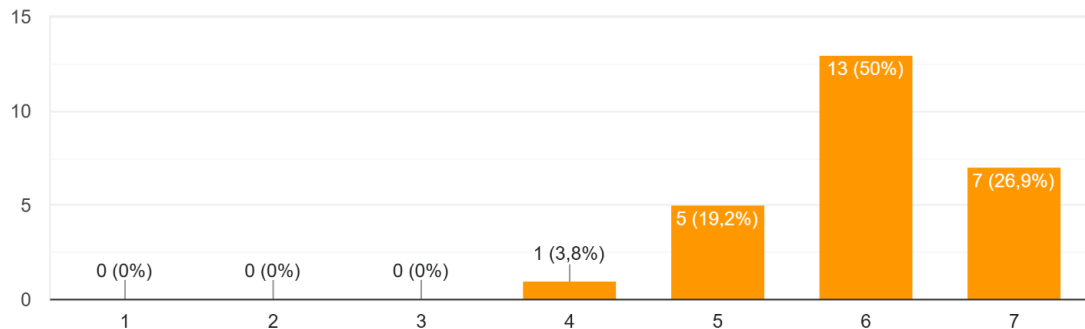


Figure 59: Q29 - Expected impact of future supply chain trends on negotiation strategies (1–7)

All participants see the future changes and trends in the supply chain shall affect the negotiation strategies, a fact that means that stable and fixed contract won't be enough as costs, storage capacity, resources, customer service levels and service expectations shall continue to change from time to time.

**Question 30**

The overall importance of negotiations in ensuring long – terms supply chain excellence at eCommerce ecosystem is quite high and critical according to the participants answers. The mean is  $M = 6.35$ , the  $SD = 0.69$  and the range 5-7, a fact that shows that here we have a strong consensus (low dispersion).

30. Overall importance of negotiations in ensuring long-term supply chain excellence at eCommerce ecosystem(1-7)

26 απαντήσεις

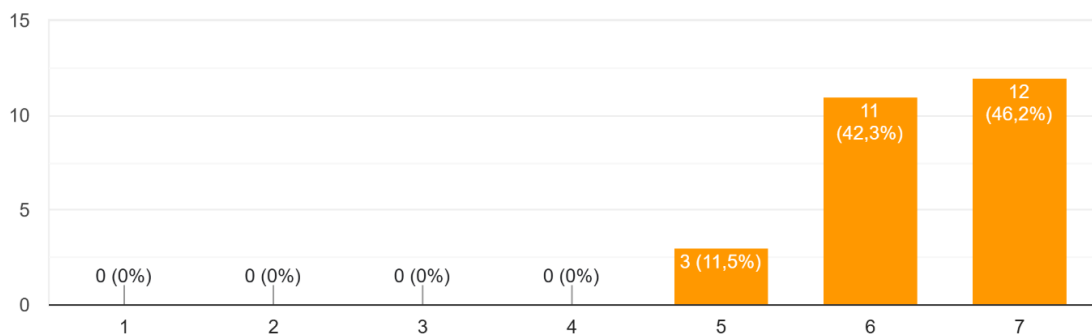


Figure 60: Q30 - Overall importance of negotiations in ensuring long-term supply chain excellence at eCommerce ecosystem (1-7)

To conclude with, all findings that are starting from “Supplier to Shoppers” show, that the critical role of negotiations acts as a connective mechanism that link upstream governance and a contractual planning and design with downstream operational performance and of course great customer service experience outcomes.

## **7. Interpretation of the Results & Discussion of Empirical results**

### **7.1 Discussion of Empirical Results**

All empirical findings show that negotiations are recognized as a core element of the eCommerce Supply chain success and not as a bargaining activity. All participants provide their answers regarding the overall importance of negotiations for operational effectiveness, showing that it is of high importance and extremely high with **Question 6. (M=6.35, SD = 0.75, Range 5-7)**. The results show that negotiation success acts as a core enabler for operational excellence and stability for day-to-day supply chain activities.

Negotiations are not targeted only to cost reduction that they spread across all operational activities and affect all the coordinative actions. **In Question 7** a multi-item evaluation of negotiations dimensions is revealed with **M = 5.83** and **SD 1.01**, that shows there is high importance on the SLA's, the lead times, the Commercial terms, the Technology & data sharing process and the forecasting alignment. The results strengthen the idea that negotiations form the terms of the execution process for eCommerce Supply chain ecosystem and set the terms of agreement that partners have to follow with, about the service quality is controlled and about the operational balance is controlled under uncertainty and on difficult times.

**On Question 11** The results revealed (**M = 6 & SD = 0.71**) that there is important connection between the negotiation quality and performance measurement. The findings show that negotiations results have a great impact on KPI's during supply chain activities such as order cycle time, cost per order/shipment and on time execution. The results support the title of the dissertation of the critical role of negotiation inside the eCommerce Supply Chain ecosystem that negotiations settings upstream affect the downstream ecosystem in a measurable way and ultimately are transformed into a visible customer service experience by the service quality level and reliability of the supply chain mechanisms.

**Question 14 Composite (M = 5.72, SD 0.84)** show that risk and market volatility controlled through negotiation process in the eCommerce as the participants reported the high contribution of negotiations to reduce the risk across any supplier underperformance, cost volatility, SLA's failures or capacity or resources shortages. Negotiations act as a

mechanism for risk mitigation and management and define how peak, variability or sudden cost increases are distributed between sellers, platforms, vendors or 3PL's.

In **Question 18 (M = 6.42, SD 0.81 & range 5-7)**, digitalization revealed as a core function of the negotiation capability. Participants showed that system integration is of high importance such as API/EDI connectivity, traceability across the supply chain flow and data sharing are structural prerequisites for service governance enforcement. **Question 28 (M = 6.07, SD =0.79)** confirms that negotiation results depend on external and internal readiness and responses based on analytics and cross functional alignment and relationship management.

The overall consolidation of the results show that negotiations are a fundamental part for a long-term eCommerce Supply Chain excellence (**Question 30. M =6.35, SD 0.69 and range 5-7**). Negotiations seem to be a continuous capability that connected effectively all parties, such as 3PL's, suppliers, intermediaries and end customers as well into a coordinated service framework.

## **7.2 Cross-Analysis with e Commerce Practice & Existing Literature**

The research shows that the established supply chain excellence is derived from a balance between the commercial outcomes and value creation through shared improvement, operational excellence and coordination. Inside the eCommerce ecosystem that balance is quite critical as that market is defined by high volatility, high customer expectations and strong interdependence between all partners.

Inside the eCommerce Supply Chain ecosystem parties are focusing on Lead times, Capacity commitments, SLA's performance to managing a high service level approach. The research does not focus on the price negotiations as the participants there are value during the negotiations that improve reliability and reduce volatility on day-to-day operations. The reality of eCommerce is that if services are not high and there are missed deliveries, stock outs or poor tracking visibility, that shall lead to low customer satisfaction rate with a serious reputation damage for the eCommerce business. It is quite important through the study that the system integrations and data maturity is of high importance and reduce the information asymmetry, support the performance measurement and reinforce the corrective actions that

should be taken to increase the service level. It is important to refer that negotiations show not only the results of what is delivered, but most importantly **“how the ecosystem observes and measure itself the whole supply chain flow”** via tracking system, BI tools, dashboards and customized reporting.

The findings show that the eCommerce Supply Chain ecosystem is not based in a linear chain approach but it works like a coordinated network which the negotiation process is a continuous alignment tool that connect all each part efficiently with specific agreement, quick responses, better metrics & SLAs to perform better and avoid out of stock issues, cost increasement, capacity constraints and increase customer satisfaction.

### **7.3 Managerial Implications for eCommerce Supply Chains**

There are 3 managerial implications that arise from the empirical findings:

- ✓ The negotiation processes act as operational planning and design and not as only commercial actions. According to **Question 11**, the high impact on KPI's and operational effectiveness on **Question 6**, the negotiations are a structured process that affect operations by the negotiated KPI's that can mutually be measured, SLA's definitions, escalations planning and of course performance incentives. All contract terms should be clearly written and agreed to secure operational reliability such as capacity, returns management, lead times etc.
- ✓ Analytics & Data driven negotiation preparation from eCommerce business. According to **Question 28**. Capacity building results and the high importance of system integration of **Question 18**. shows that negotiation power increasingly comes from data and transparency. Managers and Directors should base all their decisions on the full cost of service and not just the price to make the appropriate negotiations that focus not only on price or service reductions but mainly on the quality of service inside a multi-partner environment like that of ecommerce.
- ✓ Design flexible contracts to face demand volatility and peak periods. According to **Question 14**. we can see high ratings and importance of risk mitigations that show that eCommerce negotiations must control volatility. Capacity commitments, Peak clauses, SLA's, KPI's and data sharing should be agreed and activated as the target is to protect all

parties involved to stabilize the whole supply chain ecosystem with the needed outcomes for the final online shopper.

To sum up, the research shows that “**From suppliers to Shoppers**” approach of the study, show that negotiations is the connection mechanism that orchestrate upstream and downstream parties to succeed high customer service experience.

## 8. Conclusions, Recommendations & Limitations

### 8.1 Main Conclusions

The whole dissertation is based on finding from the Greek eCommerce ecosystem with a distribution **n =26 with 30 questions**, that shows that negotiations play a vital role to succeed eCommerce Supply Chain efficiency. Negotiations results act as a main operating system rather than a commercial action, with just a price reduction mechanism. Question 6. with **M=6.35** confirm the case above.

It is important also to refer that negotiations affect and influence a whole set of performance elements beyond the pricing as the participants in the research shared with us high importance of the negotiation dimensions. Execution reliability can be achieved via Lead time, Capacity Alignment, SLA's, digital integration and data sharing according to **Question 7. M = 5.83** and **Question 18. With M = 6.42**. The negotiation practices affect how partners can coordinate and align with eCommerce businesses needed to measure performance and response positively via the service level to the end customers.

The result of the research shows that negotiation quality can bring customer results via the KPI's according to the **Question 11 – M =6**. Negotiation also can specify if the delivery service is of high quality, the cost-to-serve can be controlled and the customer service experience can be maintained even during peak periods. The high importance rating on **the last Question (30): with Mean = 6.35 and SD = 0.69** give last evidence that negotiations are fundamental to reach a long-term eCommerce Supply Chain efficiency from Suppliers to Shoppers.

### 8.2 Research Limitations

The research has its own limitations and that should be taken into account that the sample size was **n=26** supported by experienced professional from the Greek eCommerce Ecosystem (eCommerce Platforms & Marketplaces) with limits statistical generalizability. In addition, within Greece the market includes also conditions such as service expectations, courier networks or other constraints that may differ from area to area due to geographical peculiarities.

The study revealed that participants reported that although the respondents are highly involved in negotiations inside the eCommerce Supply Chain ecosystem, the credibility of the results could be stronger by providing KPI Data, failure rates and cost to serve. It is important to state that the study cannot be fully captured in how the negotiation strategies can be observed from one time to the next, especially in different market conditions.

### **8.3 Recommendations and Future Research Directions**

#### **Practical Implications for Managers:**

- ✓ Digital Integrations (EDI/API) to be treated as contractual negotiation, for operational excellence especially during peak periods with capacity clauses, escalation rules and mutually agree measurable SLAs. Clear visibility tools and share reporting to improve transparency and traceability.
- ✓ Data analysis and important metrics as a critical part of the preparation of the negotiation planning to use the cost – to – serve models by sharing performance analytics & customer complaints.
- ✓ Enable standard contract terms and rules for peak periods with frequent updates that can be handled as next steps to a win-win collaboration that with steady improvements can be strengthened, within a well-defined framework delivering an enhanced version on each Supply Chain cycle.

#### **Research with Future Directions:**

- ✓ How digital tools (Automation, AI & forecasting analytics) can reform the negotiation strategies and proceed with risk mitigations across all parties inside the eCommerce Supply Chain ecosystem.
- ✓ Proceed with a combination of survey responses with operational data to measure how the negotiation processes can create impact on performance metrics & KPI's as well as to customer service experience.
- ✓ An expansion of research across different countries with different cultures, habits and market segments to compare power dynamics, with negotiation practices.

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## Appendix A: Questionnaire

The Critical Role of Negotiations - Academic Research Questionnaire – MSc in Supply Chain Management

### The Critical Role of Negotiations - Academic Research Questionnaire – MSc in Supply Chain Management

This questionnaire examines the role of negotiations within the eCommerce supply chain ecosystem. Unless otherwise stated, all scale-based questions use a 7-point Likert scale.

Standard Likert Scale Definition (1–7)

Please select the option that best reflects your professional experience.

This scale is applied consistently throughout the questionnaire:

Rating - Interpretation

- 1 - Not important / No priority
- 2 - Very low importance / Very low priority
- 3 - Low importance / Low priority
- 4 - Moderate importance / Moderate priority
- 5 - High importance / High priority
- 6 - Very high importance / Very high priority
- 7 - Extremely important / Highest priority

~~\* Υποδεικνύει απαιτούμενη ερώτηση~~

Ενότητα χωρίς τίτλο

#### SECTION A – Background Information

1. 1. Current job level \*

Να επισημαίνεται μόνο μία έλλειψη.

- Operational
- Middle Management
- Senior / Strategic management

The Critical Role of Negotiations - Academic Research Questionnaire – MSc in Supply Chain Management

2. 2. Primary functional area within the eCommerce supply chain \*

Να επισημαίνεται μόνο μία έλλειψη.

- e-Fulfillment / Warehousing
- Last-Mile Delivery / Courier Operations

3. 3. Years of experience in eCommerce logistics \*

Να επισημαίνεται μόνο μία έλλειψη.

- 0-2
- 3-5
- 6-10
- 10+

4. 4. Years of involvement within the eCommerce supply chain ecosystem \*

Να επισημαίνεται μόνο μία έλλειψη.

- >1
- 1-3
- 4-6
- 7+

5. 5. Extent of personal involvement in supplier or partner negotiations (1-7) \*

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆

SECTION B – Negotiation Dynamics in the eCommerce Supply Chain

The Critical Role of Negotiations - Academic Research Questionnaire – MSc in Supply Chain Management

6. 6. Importance of negotiations for the effective functioning of your operational area (1-7) \*

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆

7. 7a. Impact of negotiation dimensions on operational performance (1-7) \*

Na επισημαίνεται μόνο μία έλλειψη ανά σειρά.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Pricing and commercial terms</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>SLA commitments</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Lead-time agreements</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Technology integration &amp; data sharing</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Volume forecasting alignment</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Packaging &amp; compliance standards</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The Critical Role of Negotiations - Academic Research Questionnaire – MSc in Supply Chain Management

8. 8. Frequency of formal negotiation cycles in your function \*

*Να επισημαίνεται μόνο μία έλλειψη.*

- Monthly
- Quarterly
- Semi-annually
- Annually

9. 9. Degree to which negotiation outcomes enhance operational resilience during peak demand (1-7) \*

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆

The Critical Role of Negotiations - Academic Research Questionnaire – MSc in Supply Chain Management

10. 10. Effectiveness of the following negotiation practices in ensuring operational stability (1-7) \*

*Να επισημαίνεται μόνο μία έλλειψη ανά σειρά.*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Long-term contractual agreements</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Performance-based incentives</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Flexible capacity clauses</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Penalty mechanisms for non-compliance</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Collaborative planning mechanisms</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SECTION C – Operational and Strategic Impact

18/1/26, 8:01 μ.μ.

The Critical Role of Negotiations - Academic Research Questionnaire – MSc in Supply Chain Management

11. 11. Impact of negotiation quality on key performance indicators (1-7) \*

Να επισημαίνεται μόνο μία έλλειψη ανά σειρά.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>On-time delivery performance</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Inventory accuracy</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Cost per shipment</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Order cycle time</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Pick &amp; pack efficiency (e-fulfillment only)</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Delivery failure rate (last-mile only)</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

12. 12. Overall impact of negotiation outcomes on customer experience (1-7) \*

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆

The Critical Role of Negotiations - Academic Research Questionnaire – MSc in Supply Chain Management

13. 13. Contribution of negotiation effectiveness to eshops & marketplaces competitive advantage in the Greek eCommerce market (1-7) \*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

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☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

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14. 14. Extent to which effective negotiations mitigate the following operational risks (1-7) \*

*Να επισημαίνεται μόνο μία έλλειψη ανά σειρά.*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Capacity shortages</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Supplier underperformance</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Cost volatility</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>SLA non-compliance</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Reverse logistics inefficiencies</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Peak demand forecasting inaccuracies</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Untitled SECTION D – Digitalization, Data & Decision-Making Section

15. 15. Maturity level of data-driven negotiation practices within your department (1-7) \*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

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☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

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The Critical Role of Negotiations - Academic Research Questionnaire – MSc in Supply Chain Management

16. 16. Importance of the following data sources in negotiation preparation (1–7) \*

Να επισημαίνεται μόνο μία έλλειψη ανά σειρά.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Cost &amp; pricing analytics</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>SKU-level performance metrics</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Courier performance dashboards</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Fulfillment cycle-time analysis</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Customer dissatisfaction root-cause data</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

17. 17. Degree to which real-time dashboards improve negotiation effectiveness (1–7) \*

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆

18. 18. Importance of system integration (APIs, EDI, tracking systems) in negotiations with partners (1–7) \*

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆

The Critical Role of Negotiations - Academic Research Questionnaire – MSc in Supply Chain Management

### SECTION E – Scenario-Based Evaluation (Advanced / MSc Level)

For each scenario, indicate your level of agreement with the proposed negotiation response.

19. 19. Scenario 1: A supplier consistently meets pricing expectations but underperforms during peak periods. Negotiation focus should shift toward capacity guarantees and peak-performance clauses. \*

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆

20. 20. Scenario 2: A courier partner requests a 13% increase in cost per parcel due to fuel volatility. A balanced negotiation strategy combining cost-sharing mechanisms and service-level adjustments is appropriate. (1-7) \*

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆

21. 21. Scenario 3: A warehouse partner proposes automation investments requiring a multi-year commitment. This proposal should primarily be viewed as a strategic opportunity rather than a risk. (1-7) \*

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆

### SECTION F – Domain-Specific Modules

Module A – e-Fulfillment / Warehousing (Respond if applicable)

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22. 22. Influence of negotiations on inbound flow reliability and storage capacity planning (1-7)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

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23. 23. Importance of packaging standardization agreements for warehouse efficiency (1-7)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

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24. 24. Frequency of negotiation challenges with fulfillment partners regarding operational alignment (1-7)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

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☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

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Module B – Last-Mile Delivery / Courier Operations (Respond if applicable)

25. 25. Impact of cost-to-serve negotiations on last-mile routing efficiency (1-7)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

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☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

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26. 26. Importance of negotiated SLAs for overall delivery quality (1-7)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆

27. 27. Criticality of negotiations in the following last-mile areas (1-7)

Να επισημαίνεται μόνο μία έλλειψη ανά σειρά.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Failed delivery handling</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Cash-on-delivery (COD) processes</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Delivery time windows</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Service-level penalties</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SECTION G – Future Strategic Outlook

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28. 28. Importance of strengthening the following capabilities to improve negotiation outcomes (1-7)

Να επισημαίνεται μόνο μία έλλειψη ανά σειρά.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Advanced analytics capabilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cross-functional collaboration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Long-term partner relationship management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Negotiation skill development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Digital integration with partners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

29. 29. Expected impact of future supply chain trends on negotiation strategies (1-7)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆

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30. Overall importance of negotiations in ensuring long-term supply chain excellence at eCommerce ecosystem(1-7)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆

Αυτό το περιεχόμενο δεν έχει δημιουργηθεί και δεν έχει εγκριθεί από την Google.

Google Φόρμες

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