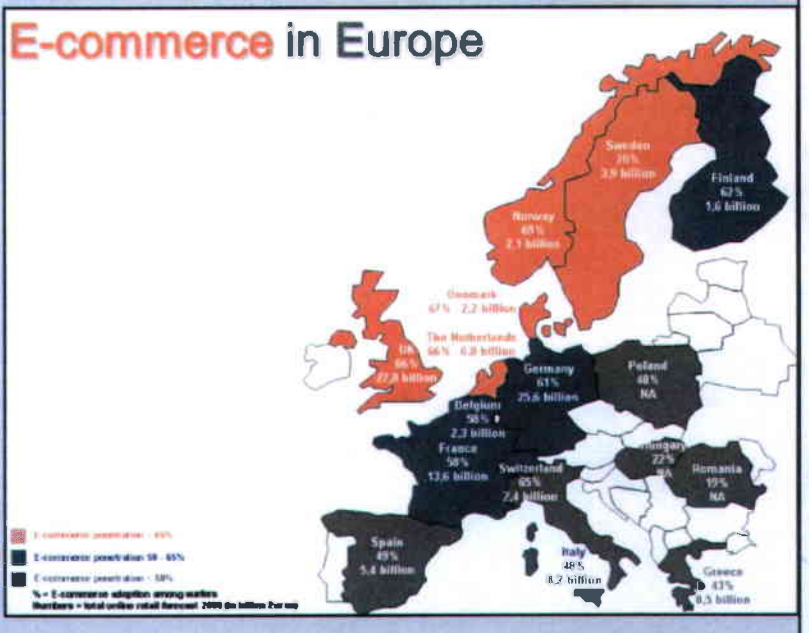
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Nordics ahead online

InSites Consulting says the Nordic countries are definitely ahead in terms of online buying (together with the Netherlands and the UK), although Finland itself lags its neighbours Norway and Sweden. And because its population is that much smaller than some other European countries, the actual size of the market is relatively small at just €1.6bn, putting it behind Switzerland and Belgium. Finland is one of the few that have already ruled that Internet access is a human right for its citizens.

And Finland is the latest European country preparing to offer online gaming. The Finnish Slot Machine Association (RAY) and State Lottery Veikkhaus Oy have permission to offer online casino, poker and bingo games from March 1st, however, RAY will not begin online until August. Veikkhaus Oy and RAY are two-thirds of the gaming in Finland and Finnish regulators are hoping to keep the monopoly going in Finland. They feel they are not in violation of any current EU law, despite protests from some land based gaming operators in the country.





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