

## Overview: Legislation regarding shop opening hours in Europe\*

Last updated: 22 September 2014

| Member State   | Monday-Friday   | Saturday   | Sunday/Public Holidays   |
|--|---|--|--|
| <p><b>Austria</b></p> <p>Maximum opening time per week is 72 hours</p>                   | <p>06:00-21:00</p> <p>In Niederösterreich/Lower Austria the earliest time to open is 5:00</p> | <p>06:00-18:00</p>   | <p>Closed</p> <p>Exceptions:</p> <p>Tourist areas:<br/>Exemptions allowed</p>  |
| <p><b>Belgium</b></p> <p>Federal Government is consulting on extending opening hours</p> | <p>05:00-20:00</p> <p>05:00-21:00 day or Friday before a public holiday</p>                   | <p>05:00-20:00</p> <p>05:00-21:00 if following Monday a public holiday</p> | <p>Closed unless the retailer chooses an alternative closing day, in which case:</p> <p>All retail stores 05:00-12:00</p> <p>Furniture and gardening shops<br/>40 Sundays/year 05:00-20:00</p> <p>Food chains with less than five employees, butchers, bakers, newsagents and tobacconists, florists, petrol stations 05:00 - 20:00</p> <p>Other exceptions:<br/>Sunday before Christmas and two other Sundays of choice</p> <p>Super/hypermarkets three Sundays/year in addition to the provision above</p> <p>Tourist areas:<br/>Sunday opening 1 May- 30 September, on Christmas and Easter holidays, and a maximum of 13 other Sundays</p> <p>Night shops:</p> |

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|   |   |   | Food and household goods only 18.00 to 7.00<br>Other cases: opening only on Sunday morning between 8:00 and 12:00   |
| <b>Bulgaria</b><br>Opening hours are common practice rather than formal regulation<br>Some supermarkets/hypermarkets are open 24 hours a day  | Unrestricted  | Unrestricted but common practice is 10:00-17:00 | Unrestricted<br>Public holidays (common practice)<br>1 January  |
| <b>Croatia</b><br>The Trade Act prescribes that opening hours are not restricted as long as the labour rights of workers are adhered to   | Unrestricted  | Unrestricted                                    | Unrestricted<br>It is common practice for all stores to be closed on New Year's, Easter Sunday and Christmas Day  |
| <b>Cyprus</b><br>Opening hours vary according to the nature of the shop, typically 07:00-09:00 even though shops are allowed to open from 05:00 in the tourist areas between 23 March and 30 November and in the other areas between 12 July and 13 October (with the exception of Sundays where the opening hour is 09:00. | 12 July-13 October: Closing time 22:00-23:00.<br>14 October-11 July: closing time 19:00, with early closing Wednesdays at 14:00, and extended hours on Fridays until 20:00<br>Tourist areas:<br>The extended closing time (22:00-23:00) is for a longer period (23 March-30 November) | Same as for Monday-Friday                       | 12 July-13 October: Closing time 21:00-23:00.<br>Tourist areas:<br>The extended closing time (21:00-23:00) is for a longer period (23 March-30 November)<br>Christmas:<br>12-30 December: opening permitted until 20:00 |

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|  |               |              | 24 and 31 December: opening permitted until 19:00  |
| <b>Czech Republic</b>                                    | Unrestricted  | Unrestricted | Unrestricted<br><br>There is a draft law that forbids stores with more than 200 square metres to open on public holiday (Christmas, New Years, Easter and others – 8 days in total)  |
| <b>Denmark</b><br><br>Regulations changed 1 October 2012 | Unrestricted  | Unrestricted | All shops are allowed to be open all Sundays.<br><br>Public Holidays, Constitution Day, Christmas Eve the shops are to be closed and New Year's Eve closed at 15:00<br><br>Exceptions:<br>Unrestricted for the sale of bread, dairy produce, newspapers, flowers, plants, cars, ships, and fuel – furthermore exceptions for shops selling items for the house e.g. furniture shops and DIY centres.<br><br>Unrestricted for stores with turnovers less than 33,1 million Dkr selling DIY products, bakeries, grocers, household |

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|  |   |  | articles and garden goods   |
| <b>Estonia</b><br>Restricted sale of alcohol 10:00-22:00 | Unrestricted except alcohol   | Unrestricted except alcohol  | Unrestricted except alcohol   |
| <b>Finland</b>   | Local authorities may grant extensions<br>Restricted sale of alcohol between 21:00 and 9:00 | 07:00 – 18:00<br>Exceptions:<br>Unrestricted for grocery shops under 400 m <sup>2</sup> , petrol stations and florists | articles and garden goods<br>Sundays 12:00 – 18:00 from January to October<br>Sundays 12:00 – 21:00 in November and December<br>Exceptions:<br>Unrestricted for grocery shops under 400 m <sup>2</sup> , petrol stations and florists<br><hr/> Closed 1 and 6 January, Good Friday, Easter Day, Easter Monday, 1 May, Mother's Day and Ascension Day in May, Father's Day in November, 6 and 25 and 26 December<br>Midsummer Eve and 24 December close by 12:00<br>New Year's Eve and 30 April close by 18:00<br>Exceptions:<br>Unrestricted for grocery shops under 100 m <sup>2</sup> (kiosks), petrol stations and |

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| <b>France</b> | Unrestricted  | Unrestricted | <p>florists</p> <p>Closed</p> <p>Exceptions:<br/>Food shops until 13:00 and on five Sundays a year, the Mayor can ask for an extension of opening hours</p> <p>Florists, garden centres and furniture stores</p> <p>Tourist areas:<br/>Unrestricted for all shops</p> <p>Paris, Lille, Aix-Marseille (urban areas with more than 1 million population) and in border areas where shops open in the neighbouring Member State (except Moselle, Bas-Rhin and Haut-Rhin where local arrangements apply), the Préfet can extend Sunday opening</p> <p>Elsewhere the Préfet can derogate after consulting the local authority</p> <p>Local arrangements significantly limiting Sunday opening apply in Dijon, Toulouse, Brest and Nantes. In Rennes, shops can open only one Sunday per year</p> |

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| <p><b>Germany</b></p> <p>Hours are regulated by the countries. Where opening hours are restricted, exceptions (similar to those for Sundays and holidays) may be granted</p> | <p>Unrestricted</p> <p>Exceptions:</p> <p>Rhineland-Palatinate, Saxony: 06:00-22:00</p> <p>Saarland, Bavaria: 06:00-20:00</p> | <p>Unrestricted</p> <p>Exceptions:</p> <p>Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Northrhein-Westfalia, 00:00- 22:00</p> <p>Rhineland-Palatinate, Saxony 06:00-22:00</p> <p>Bavaria, Saarland 06:00-20:00</p> <p>Saxony-Anhalt, Thuringia 00:00-20:00</p> | <p>Closed</p> <p>Exceptions:</p> <p>Bakery products, flowers, newspapers, dairy products, museums,</p> <p>Railway and petrol stations, airports, resorts and places of pilgrimage</p> <p>In some federal states shops may open when it is in the public interest or in specific circumstances</p>  |
| <p><b>Greece</b></p> <p>There may be different arrangements for summer and winter seasons, defined as 16 May-30 September and 1 October-15 May</p>                           | <p>05:00-21:00</p> <p>Exception:</p> <p>Local authorities may grant extensions</p>  | <p>05:00-20:00</p>   | <p>Closed</p> <p>Exceptions:</p> <p>Closed</p> <p>Exceptions:</p> <p>Convenience stores, pastry shops, photography shops, florists, antiquaries and nut-selling shops</p> <p>Petrol stations</p> <p>Local Prefects may allow small shops (under 250 m<sup>2</sup>), in specific areas, to open</p> |

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|  |   |   | All shops are open on the 2 Sundays before Christmas, on the 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday of every Sales period (4 in total), and on the Sunday before Easter          |
| <b>Hungary</b>   | Unrestricted<br>Exception:<br>Budapest Mayor's Office can regulate local hours within 06:00-22:00 | Unrestricted but common practice to close at 14:00 or 16:00                                 | Public Holidays unrestricted<br>Exception:<br>24 December close by 14:00 except florists, petrol stations and confectionary shops                                |
| <b>Iceland</b>   | Unrestricted but common practice is 9:00-18:00  | Unrestricted but common practice is to close at 14:00, with some open until 16:00 or 17:00. | Sundays:<br>Generally closed, but shops in malls open 10:00-17:00<br><br>Public Holidays:<br>24 December close by 16:00 and may not open until 06:00 25 December |
| <b>Ireland</b><br>Restricted sale of alcohol, 10:30-22:30 Monday-Saturday, 12:30-22:30 Sundays, not at all on Christmas Day or Good Friday | Unrestricted  | Unrestricted  | Unrestricted   |
| <b>Italy</b>   | Unrestricted  | Unrestricted  | Unrestricted   |
| <b>Latvia</b>  | Unrestricted  | Unrestricted  | Unrestricted   |

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| Restricted sale of alcohol between 22:00 and 08:00  |   |   |  |
| <b>Lithuania</b><br>Restricted sale of alcohol between 22:00 and 08:00  | Unrestricted  | Unrestricted  | Unrestricted   |
| <b>Luxembourg</b><br>Once a year, every shop owner can obtain the authorisation to keep his shop open during 24 hours | 06:00-20:00<br>Exceptions:<br>Once a week shops can close at 21:00<br><br>Days immediately preceding Public Holidays 06:00-19:00 (except preceding National Day, Christmas Day, 1 January close 18:00)  | 06:00-19:00<br>Exceptions:<br>Where social partners have agreed an extension until 20:00<br><br>Saturdays preceding National Day, Christmas Day, 1 January close 18:00  | 06:00-13:00<br><br>Exceptions :<br><br>The Ministry can decide derogations for specific local areas.<br><br>Bakeries, butchers, cake shops, kiosks and souvenir shops 06:00 – 18:00  |
| <b>Malta</b><br>Lotto receivers can remain open 24 hours every day, subject to a permit from gaming authorities       | 8 January to 31 October: 04:00-19:00<br>1 November to 7 January: 04:00-22:00<br><br>Exceptions:<br>Valletta commercial premises until 22:00<br><br>Tourist areas:<br>Beverages, tobacco, fish, jewellery, souvenirs and photographic equipment 06:00 -23:00 | 8 January to 31 October: 04:00-20:00<br>1 November to 7 January: 04:00-22:00<br><br>Exceptions:<br>Valletta commercial premises until 22:00<br><br>Tourist areas:<br>Beverages, tobacco, fish, jewellery, souvenirs and photographic equipment 06:00 -23:00 | All year: 04:00-22:00<br><br>Exceptions:<br>Valletta commercial premises until 18:00, including Public Holidays or whenever a cruise liner is in harbour<br><br>Tourist areas:<br>Beverages, tobacco, fish, jewellery, souvenirs and photographic equipment 06:00 -23:00, including Public Holidays<br>Grocers 06:00-17:00, including Public |

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|                    | <p>Petrol stations 06:00-18:00<br/>Automated pumps unrestricted</p> <p>Hiring Carnival costumes until 22:00<br/>from Thursday preceding to Tuesday<br/>following Carnival</p> | <p>Petrol stations 06:00-15:00<br/>Automated pumps unrestricted</p> | <p>Holidays</p> <p>Essential items and street hawkers<br/>06:00-13:00, including Public Holidays</p> <p>Flowers, plants, seeds, fertilizers 06:00-<br/>19:00 including Public Holidays</p>   |
| <b>Netherlands</b> | 06:00-22:00   | 06:00-22:00   | <p>Closed</p> <p>Exceptions:<br/>Local authorities can allow Sunday<br/>opening.</p> <p>Good Friday, 24 December and 4 May<br/>no opening beyond 19:00</p> <p>Shops in petrol stations, airports,<br/>railway stations and hospitals also have<br/>flexibility</p> |
| <b>Norway</b>      | Unrestricted  | Unrestricted  | <p>Closed</p> <p>Exceptions:<br/>Grocers smaller than 100m<sup>2</sup></p> <p>Petrol stations smaller than 150m<sup>2</sup></p> <p>Camping site shops in-season</p> <p>Tourist areas:</p>  |

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|  |  |  | <p>Local authorities can authorise opening of shops selling products from tourist-focused production sites, home crafts and souvenirs</p> <p>Auctions, art galleries, exhibitions and trade fairs from a location not normally used for such purposes</p> <p>Florists, plants and garden supplies</p> <p>Tax-free stores at airports</p> <p>All shops for the last three Sundays before Christmas Eve 14:00-20:00</p> |
| <p><b>Poland</b></p> <p>Some Tesco stores are opened 24 hours</p>  | Unrestricted   | Unrestricted   | <p>Unrestricted on Sundays</p> <p>There are 13 Public holidays with mandatory closure</p>   |
| <p><b>Portugal</b></p> <p>Opening hours from 6:00 till 24:00. However, Mayors can restrict or extend hours provided under 2010 legislation</p> | <p>06:00- 24:00</p> <p>Legal exceptions:<br/>Convenience stores, coffee shops and restaurants until 02:00</p> <p>Dancing clubs, discos, cabarets until 4:00</p> <p>Shops in road, railway, maritime and airline terminals, Petrol stations</p> | <p>06:00- 24:00</p> <p>Legal exceptions:<br/>Convenience stores, coffee shops and restaurants until 02:00</p> <p>Dancing clubs, discos, cabarets until 4:00</p> <p>Shops in road, railway, maritime and airline terminals, Petrol stations</p> | <p>06:00- 24:00</p> <p>Legal exceptions:<br/>Convenience stores, coffee shops and restaurants until 02:00</p> <p>Dancing clubs, discos, cabarets until 4:00</p> <p>Shops in road, railway, maritime and</p>   |

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|   | permanently open  | permanently open  | airline terminals, Petrol stations permanently open   |
| <b>Romania</b><br>There is no central government regulation of shop opening hours<br><br>Romanian local authorities can restrict opening hours within their areas                         | Unrestricted but common practices are 7.30-21.00 and 7.30-22.00                         | Unrestricted but common practices are 7.30-21.00 and 7.30-22.00 | Unrestricted but common practices are 8.00-19.00 and 8.00-20.00<br><br>Public holidays: closed<br>Closed 1 and 2 January, Easter, 1 May, 15 August, 1 December and Christmas under the provisions of the Romanian Labour Code |
| <b>Slovakia</b><br>Parliament is actually discussing a new bill of amendment, which will be decided in September  | Unrestricted  | Unrestricted  | Unrestricted<br><br>Exceptions:<br>24 December after 12:00<br>25 December and 1 January<br>Easter Sunday  |
| <b>Slovenia</b><br>There is no regulation of opening hours for any day of the week or Public Holidays. Retailers decide opening hours but must trade within a publicly displayed schedule | Unrestricted  | Unrestricted  | Unrestricted<br><br>Retailers determine opening hours. They must, however, comply with labour legislation on Sunday and Public Holiday working, primarily working hours, breaks and overtime payments                         |
| <b>Spain</b><br>Regulated by the Regions<br><br>In 2012, national legislation sought to improve competitiveness by introducing  | Unrestricted for:<br><br>Shops smaller than 300 m <sup>2</sup><br><br>Convenience shops |   | Regulated by the Regions, permitted opening varies between 10-16 hours  |

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| <p>more flexibility. Asturias, Basque Country, Canary Islands, Catalonia and Navarra dispute this legislation and continue to apply previous provisions</p>   | <p>Shops selling bakery goods, confectionery, bread, ready meals, newspapers, fuel, flowers and plants</p> <p>Shops in railway stations and land, maritime and air transport terminals, border points</p> <p>Tourist areas</p> |   |  |
| <p><b>Sweden</b></p> <p>There is no specific regulation of shop opening hours. However, legislation restricts night work between 24:00 and 05:00. Employers and trade unions can come to collective agreements giving flexibility on night work</p> <p><a href="#">Deregulated shop opening hours: the Swedish experience</a></p> | <p>Unrestricted</p>  | <p>Unrestricted</p>   | <p>Unrestricted</p>  |
| <p><b>Turkey</b></p>  | <p>Unrestricted,</p> <p>Almost all the malls open at 10am and close at 10 pm.</p> <p>Street stores open at 9am, close around 8pm</p>   | <p>Unrestricted</p> <p>Almost all the malls open at 10am and close at 10 pm.</p> <p>Street stores open at 9am, close around 8pm</p> | <p>Unrestricted</p> <p>Almost all the malls open at 10am and close at 10 pm.</p> <p>Street stores open at 11-12 am, close around 7pm</p> |

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| <p><b>United Kingdom</b></p> <p>Labour legislation in England and Wales protects the rights of shop-workers to refuse work on Sundays, and to receive overtime payments and time in lieu for working on Public Holidays</p> | <p>Unrestricted</p> | <p>Unrestricted</p> | <p>Unrestricted in Scotland</p> <p>Sundays:<br/>           England and Wales –<br/>           Unrestricted for shops smaller than 280m<sup>2</sup><br/>           Stores larger than 280m<sup>2</sup> six hours opening within 10:00-18:00</p> <p>Northern Ireland –<br/>           Unrestricted for shops smaller than 280m<sup>2</sup><br/>           Stores larger than 280m<sup>2</sup> five hours opening within 13:00-18:00</p> <p>Public holidays:<br/>           England and Wales unrestricted</p> <p>Exception: Stores larger than 280m<sup>2</sup> cannot open on Easter Sunday or Christmas Day</p> <p>Northern Ireland unrestricted</p> <p>Exception: Stores larger than 280m<sup>2</sup> cannot open on Easter Sunday</p> |

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