

Abstract

Background: The Czech Republic has traditionally been perceived as a country with a relatively high availability of addictive substances for minors, which is also reflected in the results of control studies. The Internet is an important market environment and medium through which so called distance selling takes place. There are legal obligations to verify age in distance selling, but the extent and application of these obligations are not sufficiently described.

Aim: The aim of this master's thesis was to find out how sellers of alcoholic beverages verify the age of shoppers and whether sellers of tobacco products etc. use a computer system that clearly verifies the age of the shopper. A sub-objective was to find out what the shipping options are when an order is placed and whether there is re-verification of the shopper's age when the goods are handed over.

Methodology and material: The research set consisted of 30 online e-shops offering alcohol and 30 e-shops offering tobacco products. The selection was done in a regular internet environment, using search strings. The e-shops where control purchases were made were randomly selected from the list of analysed e-shops.

Results: The research shows that alcohol and tobacco sellers do not sufficiently comply with all legal obligations. Only about 75%, i.e. 45 e-shops, comply with the obligation to clearly and visibly warn shoppers of the prohibition on the sale of these products to people under 18. Age verification of shoppers in e-shops offering alcohol is insufficient and formal, in many cases no age verification is carried out at all. 22 tobacco shops, or 73 %, comply with age verification by computer system. However, the remaining 26%, i.e. 8 e-shops, do not comply with this obligation. Vendors offer several modes of transport and a large choice of transport companies. Goods can be delivered to the shop, to an address, dispensing point, often even to dispensing boxes. In most cases, the age of the buyer is not checked when the goods are handed over. Only 3 out of 10 purchases were checked. Only one of these checks was sufficiently rigorous.

Conclusion: The results show that retailers do not sufficiently comply with their legal obligations when selling at a distance, age verification at purchase is insufficient and formal. Even when the goods are handed over by the seller or the transport company, age verification is generally not carried out, identity checks are made exceptionally, but again rather formally.

Keywords: Alcohol, availability, internet, tobacco products, adolescents