



Black Friday and Green Friday: the consumer dilemma

It is difficult to resist the call of promotions despite one's convictions when inflation is putting a strain on household budgets.

Although 70% of French people associate Black Friday with excess purchases and overconsumption, this shopping event is still very popular. However, French people are increasingly aware of the eco-responsible nature of their purchases, and 55% of them say they want to take advantage of the promotions this year. More surprisingly, 27% of them say they also want to take part in Green Friday, the alternative event that advocates sensible consumption.

This ambivalence was revealed in a study co-financed by MAIF, committed to responsible consumption, and the Green Friday Collective, on purchasing behaviour during Black Friday and Green Friday.

Here are some figures from the study carried out by Harris Interactive on 1,608 people representative of French people aged 15 and over.

Survey conducted online from 8 to 10 November 2022.

Green Friday has become a symbol of the fight against overconsumption, bringing together 560 retailers, united by the desire to raise awareness on the need to "consume better, consume less". For the past 6 years, the Collective has been taking the opposite approach to Black Friday by proposing a multitude of events throughout France and Belgium in the same week to help citizens rethink their consumption by raising awareness of more virtuous alternatives. This year, the Green Friday Collective and MAIF approached Harris Interactive to carry out a study on shopping behaviour during Black Friday and Green Friday. What emerged was a great paradox between the desire of the French to be careful with their consumption and the appeal of promotions in the middle of an inflationary period. **Rather than being in opposition, the two events seem to be complementary in the minds of some consumers.**

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"The study shows that mentalities are changing! The French are increasingly taking into account the impact of their consumption in their choices, which is very good news. Many French people are making efforts on a daily basis by trying, for example, to favour repair, reuse and second-hand goods, local products, ethical brands or even by taking part in events on the subject. In spite of this, and even more so because of the current inflation, Black Friday is still perceived as an opportunity to buy the products they feel they need at reduced prices. They are not necessarily in a buying frenzy but seize the opportunity to try to reduce spending." explains Jean-Paul RAILLARD, President of the Green Friday Collective.

The fight continues for Green Friday

*"The relatively positive image that Black Friday retains, despite its environmental and social impact, challenges us. If we really knew what goes on behind the scenes, it might not be seen so innocently. We have a great deal of communication work to do to inform people about **the other side of the coin: forced labour, global warming, destruction of biodiversity, etc.** The results of the study motivate us to continue our fight. We are aware of the paradoxes the people are facing. It is up to us to reassure them **about the sincerity of the actors who are truly committed** and to continue to democratise alternatives that reconcile the search for attractive prices and eco-responsible products. We **still have a long way to go, but we are stepping up our efforts** through a major communication campaign on our social networks and thanks to the week's varied programme," says Jean-Paul Raillard.*



The foundations of Green Friday

- **A sincere commitment**, not greenwashing. The companies or associations that join the movement must work concretely for responsible consumption all year round (repair, re-use, integration, organic...).
- The Green Friday Collective is asking member companies to commit to **not offering discounts to their customers on Friday 25 November 2022** and to donate 10% of their turnover on that day to committed associations, selected by the Collective.
- The Green Friday Collective is asking its member associations to get involved by **organising one or more events to raise awareness of responsible consumption** or to carry out an educational action on the impact of consumption and responsible alternatives. The program is very varied: repair workshops, DIY, discovery of local crafts, quizzes and more. All the actions can be found [here](#).



Summary of the study in three points

1 - Quality, price and eco-responsibility of products: the three priority criteria when making a purchase

In terms of consumption, the study shows that price and quality remain the two most important criteria for the French: **94% of them believe that quality is important when making purchases and 92% stress the importance of price.** Moreover, 87% say they like to take advantage of sales and promotions and 86% compare prices.

In third place: the eco-responsible criterion. Thus, 83% say they ask themselves if they really need a product before buying it and a majority of them report trying to **turn to local products as much as possible (73%) or regularly buying products from ethical and eco-responsible brands (59%).** Concerning second-hand purchases, the French seem rather inclined to turn to this alternative. 88% of the French could consider it and 48% even seem certain to do so in the near future.

On the other hand, product labelling, like the associated services, comes a long way behind.

2 - A nuanced view of Black Friday as an opportunity to make necessary purchases

A commercial tradition imported from the United States, Black Friday encourages retailers to offer low prices on the last Friday of November.

Although Black Friday is an event that almost all the population knows about (97% say they have already heard about it and 86% even know exactly what it is) and in which almost two thirds have already taken part (63%), **the French nevertheless have an ambivalent image of it.** 71% of the French who have already heard about it have a positive view of the event and emphasise that it is in particular an opportunity to anticipate Christmas shopping (80%) or to obtain products that are usually more difficult to access (71%). Despite this, they do not fail to point out the more negative aspects. **Thus, 3/4 of the French believe that Black Friday does not always provide good deals and 70% associate it with over-consumption.** This echoes the Greenflex 2022 barometer published by ADEME, which highlights that **90% of French people feel that we live in a society that pushes us to consume constantly. 83% would like consumption to take up less space in their lives.**

As for its alternative, Green Friday, 35% of the population say they have already heard of it (up 6 points compared to 2019). Furthermore, 16% of French people say they have already attended or participated in an event organised as part of Green Friday. The image of Green Friday is more positive among those who have heard of it than for Black Friday (83% positive image). However, this perception is also nuanced. While the majority agree that it is a way to rethink consumption (68%), to encourage eco-responsible behaviour (66%) and that it is a useful movement (62%), they also express doubts about its nature. Indeed, around 7 out of 10 French people think that it is above all a marketing approach that takes advantage of the eco-responsible argument (72%) and that it is only a fashion effect (70%).

3 - Black Friday and Green Friday, between ambivalence and complementarity

However, rather than being opposed, the two events seem paradoxically to be relatively compatible for some French people. Indeed, **while 55% of French people say they intend to take part in Black Friday this year and 35% in Green Friday, a number of them say they intend to take part in both (27%).** This apparent complementarity is particularly noticeable among younger people and those living in the Paris region. This clearly illustrates the trade-offs to which the French are subject in terms of consumption and their attempt to reconcile the search for attractive prices and eco-responsible products.

The full study can be found [here](#).

About

MAIF

MAIF is the 6th largest motor insurer and the leading insurer in the association sector. It covers more than 4 million members (property insurance, personal protection, health, assistance, savings, credit, etc.) and will generate a turnover of €3.93 billion in 2021. Regularly praised for its customer relations, in 2020 MAIF became a company with a mission, whose raison d'être is to pay sincere attention to others and to the world and to place this at the heart of each of its commitments and actions.

About the founding members of Green Friday

Altermundi

The Altermundi boutiques offer a different way of consuming. In a responsible trade approach, Altermundi offers the best ethical, responsible and Made in France brands. In its concept stores you will find a selection of design and eco-friendly products. Lifestyle, home, fashion or children... Altermundi offers a complete range of objects and items, made with respect for people and the environment. In a few figures: 12 shops, 1 e-shop, 100 suppliers of sustainable products, created in 2003 on the initiative of the SOS Group.
www.altermundi.com / [@Altermundi](#)

Dream

Act

Dream Act is the website for responsible consumption on a daily basis. Created 5 years ago, Dream Act now brings together nearly 1,200 brands committed to preserving the environment and improving society, hand-picked by an independent committee of experts. Dream Act offers ethical, ecological and sustainable consumption alternatives in the fields of ethical fashion, natural cosmetics, eco-design, children's products, books, etc. Our goal is simple: to make responsible and sensible consumption the norm and no longer the exception!
dreamact.eu / [@dreamact_eu](#)

ENVIE

Created in 1984, Envie is a precursor of the social and solidarity economy. Today, Envie is a network of 52 social integration companies that continues to innovate on a daily basis to repair and reuse electrical and electronic appliances, collect and recycle waste, and promote inclusion in local communities.

Some figures for 2021: 3,037 employees, including 2,187 on integration programmes / more than 108,000 household appliances renovated and put back on the market / more than 116,000 tonnes of waste electrical and electronic equipment processed.

www.envie.org / [@Envie_org](https://twitter.com/Envie_org)

The Réseau Francilien du Réemploi - REFER

The Réseau Francilien du Réemploi (REFER) is a network of 52 resourceries and recycleries in Ile-de-France. These associations work on a daily basis to give a second life to objects. By collecting, revaluing, reselling and donating the goods they collect, they combine a double action for the environment and solidarity. They place at the heart of their mission to raise awareness of the fight against waste, repair, environmental education and the reappropriation of techniques and craft skills. A few figures: 1,299 employees (857 in integration), more than 10,000 tons of waste avoided through reuse and recycling.

www.reemploi-idf.org / [@REEMPLOI_IDF](https://twitter.com/REEMPLOI_IDF)

EMMAÛS FRANCE

Emmaus was founded 73 years ago to work with people suffering from exclusion to find solutions that would enable them to take control of their lives once again. True to Abbé Pierre's vision, Emmaus has become both a factory for social innovation and solidarity to help people in very precarious situations and a committed frontline campaigner for a more humane and just society.

In a society largely dominated by profit, individualism and consumerism, the values that drive the Movement are above all humanistic. They place the social project and solidarity well before economic logic. Far from the traditional charity and assistance schemes, the possibility for each person to take their life in hand and dignity are the levers of the Emmaus model for getting people who have suffered a setback on their feet.

RESSOURCES

The federation RESSOURCES represents social and circular enterprises in the goods and materials reuse sector. It defends the interests of its members and supports them in creating economic, social and environmental value. Social economy enterprises have long been pioneers in implementing the principles of the circular economy. Through their activities, they combine social impact, sustainable service to the community and environmental preservation; sustainable local job creation and waste prevention.

RREUSE

Building on the experience of its members, RREUSE aims to ensure European policies that support the development of the circular and social economy, innovative partnerships and the sharing of best practice to develop inclusive and circular business models across Europe and beyond. RREUSE members employ people at risk of socio-economic exclusion and contribute to their reintegration into the labour market. In addition, they remarket second-hand products at affordable prices, providing essential items to people on low incomes.