



Monday 20th March 2006

The cost of safe sex hits Brits hard

The UK is the most expensive place in Europe to buy condoms. In the lead up to Gordon Brown's budget speech on Wednesday, campaigners are calling for him to cut VAT from condoms and other contraceptives.

The annual European price comparison study, by leading price comparison website PriceRunner.co.uk, identified the UK as the most expensive place to buy condoms. On average a packet of 12 condoms costs £8.99 while in Malta the same amount costs over 75% less, setting the Maltese back just £2.17.

The five most expensive countries to buy condoms are:

UK	£8.99
France	£8.90
Ireland	£8.53
Netherlands	£7.95
Germany	£5.67

The five cheapest places to buy condoms are:

Poland	£4.30
Lithuania	£4.13
Czech Republic	£3.72
Belgium	£3.70
Malta	£2.37

There is also evidence to suggest teenage pregnancy rates in the UK are linked to condom prices. In the year 2003-04 although Britain remained the most expensive country, condom prices fell by 32p (3.4%) from £9.31** and teenage pregnancy fell by 1.4% ***.



Mattias Berg, UK Country Manager for PriceRunner.co.uk said "The UK has long been one of the most expensive European countries in which to buy condoms. We are not aware of any reason for the substantial difference, when our neighbours in Germany, Poland or Belgium, for example, have to pay so much less for such an essential purchase."

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* PriceRunner International Price Comparison survey 2005, product included was a 12 pack Durex Elite condoms

** Office for National Statistics

*** PriceRunner International Price Comparison survey 2003

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About PriceRunner

PriceRunner, a division of ValueClick, Inc. (Nasdaq: VCLK), is the UK's most comprehensive and independent price comparison company. Online prices are updated on a daily basis by a specialist team that develops and manages cutting edge technology which hunts down the cheapest online prices available. PriceRunner is unique in that, unlike other price comparison sites, a dedicated team of PriceRunners also checks prices in high street stores. PriceRunner always lists the cheapest price first and is completely independent in that it lists all retailers, regardless whether they pay or not, to provide consumers with a complete overview of the market.