

Wholesale Day 2021 – lifting the veil on a vital part of the economy

EuroCommerce is today holding its #WholesaleDay21 with a line-up of high-level speakers, including senior executives and entrepreneurs. They will be engaging with European Commission representatives and the audience on the contribution of wholesalers to the EU economy, the key challenges they face in a changing environment, how they address them and what support they need. Opening the event, EuroCommerce President Régis Degelcke said:

“The title of our event today tells its own story – lifting the veil which often hides from public view the vital role that wholesalers play in making our economy work. Today’s complex supply chains are like any machine we use every day – we don’t look at every component in the machine: we just expect it to work. It is the same with wholesalers. Because they work with a wide range of industrial and professional customers, we, the final customer, do not see what they do to make the supply chain work for us. From the speakers today, we will be hearing a lot more about what the immensely diverse wholesale sector does for almost all parts of Europe’s and the world’s economy, and how they are meeting the challenges of the digital and sustainability transition.”

Philippe Delpech CEO of Sonepar, the world’s no 1 wholesaler of electrical goods, summed up his vision in the keynote speech:

“Wholesale is a key industry that is undergoing a major digital transformation with an ever-increasing need for sustainable solutions. I am delighted to be speaking at this year’s Wholesale Day and sharing Sonepar’s ambitious transformation agenda to become the first global B-to-B electrical distributor to provide a fully digitalized and synchronised omnichannel experience to all customers. Through a dense network of 100 brands spanning 40 countries, Sonepar makes its customers’ lives easier, over the counter, visiting customers, by phone or online, – wherever and however we’re needed.”

There are 1.8 million wholesale companies across the EU, working closely with upstream and downstream industries in a varied and diverse range of ecosystems. In doing so, they simplify and reduce the number of interfaces between producers and professional customers, and provide a complete range of products, accompanied by expert services and value added to allow their customers to focus on running their business successfully. 91% of wholesalers are micro businesses with less than 10 employees, and most others, SMEs. They employ 10.6 million Europeans and produce €660 billion value added.

The COVID-19 crisis has accelerated the need to adapt their business and their workers for the digital and green transformation, and they need support to make the investments to achieve this. Wholesalers supplying the Horeca sector were hit hard by the closure of hotels, restaurants and canteens, and a majority of other wholesalers are seeing orders from customers falling or being cancelled because of the crisis. Those dependent on global supply chains have also been badly affected by the severe disruption and spiralling cost of international shipping and containers.

See the full programme and list of speakers [here](#).

Contact:

Neil McMillan - +32 479 40 22 41 - mcmillan@eurocommerce.eu

Vincent Yhuello - +32 471 95 03 55 - yhuello@eurocommerce.eu

www.eurocommerce.eu

.....
EuroCommerce is the principal European organisation representing the retail and wholesale sector. It embraces national associations in 31 countries and 5.4 million companies, both leading global players such as Carrefour, Ikea, Metro and Tesco, and many small businesses. Retail and wholesale provide a link between producers and 500 million European consumers over a billion times a day. It generates 1 in 7 jobs, providing a varied career for 29 million Europeans, many of them young people. It also supports millions of further jobs throughout the supply chain, from small local suppliers to international businesses. EuroCommerce is the recognised European social partner for the retail and wholesale sector.