

Green Deal Industrial Plan – Now’s the time to focus on how retail and wholesale can be a partner in the transition

This week’s launch of the Net Zero Industry Act and last week’s adoption of the temporary crisis framework and General Block Exemption rules represent important steps toward reaching the EU’s climate goals. The retail and wholesale sector is ready to play its part. The attention from policymakers should now shift from the supply side to the demand side and put both on an equal footing. With the right support, the retail and wholesale sector can take comprehensive actions and help accelerate the energy transition.

On accelerating these efforts, EuroCommerce Director General, Christel Delberghe commented: *“Retailers and wholesalers are present throughout the EU and can play a significant role in driving the demand for renewables and investment in renewable energy production. Creating incentives to increase investments in net zero operations, including the generation and storage of green energy itself, can offer win-win outcomes. These benefits will help provide the EU with the opportunity to meet its climate goals and will encourage improvements in energy efficiency and innovation by our businesses. This, in turn, will help reduce energy price volatility and offer more stable prices for EU citizens, improving the competitiveness of our EU businesses and the competitiveness of the EU itself, simultaneously.”*

Retailers and wholesalers consume altogether 220-240TWh per year, much more than many energy- or electro-intensive sectors. The retail and wholesale sector is working to reduce this consumption through [its commitments to the UN Race to Zero](#). It is shaping and sharing best practices on energy saving, sustainability measures and is generally [supporting the energy transition](#).

[A recent study by EuroCommerce and McKinsey](#) recognises the potential of an advance towards net zero by retailers and wholesalers. [Action](#) to reduce up to 90% of their Scope 1 and 2 greenhouse gas emissions requires an investment of up to €300bn by 2030. The sector also has the capability to partner with its supply chain and consumers to reduce emissions and to take steps to become a supplier of green energy. If incentives are given to retailers and wholesalers to feed the excess energy produced through solar panels and wind turbines back into the grid, captured on an estimated 500 million sqm of real estate across the EU, this could offer huge potential benefits for Europe.

Concluding, Christel Delberghe noted: *“Retail and wholesale can be a key partner in the delivery of the [Green Deal Industrial Plan](#)’s objectives. We welcome the focus on support mechanisms for suppliers of clean energy and technology. However, to be a success, and to achieve the Green Deal’s ambitions, the strategy also needs to be reinforced with concrete incentives for users, including through access to financial support.”*

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Note to the editor:

Under the [Green Deal Industrial Plan](#) the European Commission proposed today a [Reform of the EU electricity market design \(europa.eu\)](#)

On Thursday, 16 March they will publish their Net zero industry act proposal.

Last week they already published the [General Block Exemption rules to further facilitate and speed up green and digital transition](#) and the [Temporary Crisis and Transition Framework](#).

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EuroCommerce is the principal European organisation representing the retail and wholesale sector. It embraces national associations in 27 countries and 5 million companies, including leading global players and many small businesses. Over a billion times a day, retailers and wholesalers distribute goods and provide an essential service to millions of business and individual customers. The sector generates 1 in 7 jobs, offering a varied career to 26 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.