

Single Market Report: High time to turn good intentions into concrete action, say Europe's retailers and wholesalers

Today, the European Commission's published its [Annual Single Market and Competitiveness Report](#) about the state of EU competitiveness and the Single Market. EuroCommerce believes that the EU institutions could be more ambitious in tackling fragmentation and should truly commit to strengthening and deepening the Single Market, which is essential for Europe's competitiveness and economic resilience.

The report covers the main legislative texts that have been proposed in recent years to support Single Market competitiveness in areas such as digitalisation and circularity, as well as other actions taken in the fields of job and skills, public investment, R&D and trade and strategic dependencies. EuroCommerce believes a balance is needed between necessary regulation and excessive requirements on companies for a successful digital and green transition as championed by the report.

Every day, retailers and wholesalers [encounter national barriers](#) to the free movement of goods and services in the EU. This makes it difficult or even impossible to find the best deal in the EU for its customers. This also results in less competition, less choice and higher prices for consumers.

Christel Delberghe, EuroCommerce Director General, commented: *"We call upon the EU institutions to demonstrate their unequivocal commitment to the Single Market and to alleviate the pressure on businesses from the regulatory tsunami that they are currently submerged in. Actions speak louder than reports. The Single Market is the bedrock for our sector's competitiveness and ability to serve consumers and business customers with a wide range of products and services, at the best prices."*

EuroCommerce also highlights that retailers and wholesalers need legislation that is practicable, consistent, evidence-based and proportionate to the problem it seeks to address, unlike the Commission's proposed [Late Payments regulation](#). In addition, the sector requires faster, stronger and non-politicised enforcement by the Commission where the Member States breach the rules, [as is the case with the Egalim 3 legislation in France, where EuroCommerce recently lodged a formal complaint](#).

The retail and wholesale sector needs to invest [up to €600 billion by 2030](#) for a successful green and digital transformation and to have the skills needed. The Single Market can help bridge that investment gap with a renewed commitment to following through in the next mandate on the actions that the [Retail Transition Pathway](#) has identified. These combined measures would help support the ecosystem to achieve its potential and would also provide the level playing field needed by the 5 million businesses in retail and wholesale, of which one in four is an SME. Finally, the sector also needs joint action by

policymakers to tackle the [territorial supply constraints](#) used by large manufacturers to fragment the Single Market that the Commission estimates is costing consumers €14 billion.

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For further information see [EuroCommerce's Single Market position paper](#).

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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.