

Retail & wholesale: What the EU needs to succeed

With the right support, retailers and wholesalers have huge potential to help deliver a more competitive, empowered, sustainable, innovative and skilled EU, as highlighted by [EuroCommerce's new manifesto](#).

The manifesto provides food for thought for the incoming European Parliament and Commission at a time when measures to strengthen the EU's Single Market and competitiveness are urgently needed. These are issues which the reports by Mr Enrico Letta and Mr Mario Draghi will also seek to address.

Reflecting on the role of commerce in the EU, EuroCommerce's President, Juan Manuel Morales commented: *"Retailers and wholesalers already make a huge contribution towards the EU's competitiveness and resilience. We are a sector in the middle of a massive talent, sustainability and digital transformation, which is fully aligned with the EU's own transition ambitions. With the right political and regulatory support, we can deliver significant additional economic, societal and environmental gains between now and 2030. We are calling on the incoming EU institutions to work together with us in partnership to help capture this potential."*

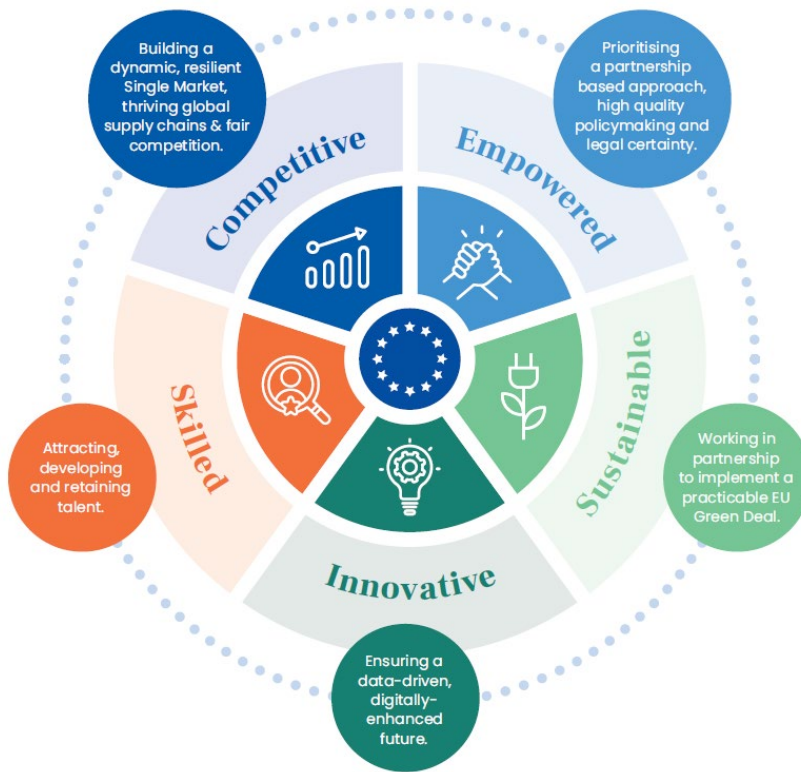
The manifesto identifies a series of policy measures needed to shape an EU that is:

- **Competitive:** building a resilient, dynamic Single Market with fully functioning supply chains and fair competition
- **Empowered:** prioritising a partnership-based approach towards quality policy-making that provides legal certainty
- **Sustainable:** working in partnership to implement a practicable EU Green Deal
- **Innovative:** ensuring a data-driven, digitally enhanced future
- **Skilled:** attracting developing and retaining talent

However, the manifesto also highlights how, throughout the last mandate, the sector has suffered from a series of high-impact shocks, triggered by the pandemic and Russia's war on Ukraine, including soaring energy prices, steep inflation, the cost-of-living crisis and an EU regulatory tsunami, all of which have hampered the ability to invest and to compete. In addition, a decrease of 80% in the number of infringement proceedings opened by the Commission, related to the Single Market, compared to the previous 2014-19 mandate has also fractured the foundations of the EU's competitiveness.

EuroCommerce's Director General, Christel Delberghe, concluded: *"In the coming mandate, we need a clear focus on higher-quality, practical, coherent legislation, based on a sound understanding of our sector, that avoids unreasonable costs. The EU also needs to foster and strengthen a supportive Single Market, fair competition and resilient global supply chains, as these will be critical for our future security and success. By working more closely in partnership with policymakers, and other actors in our*

value chain, we can lead by example on the European and global stage by co-creating the conditions for a more competitive, sustainable, resilient Europe”



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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.