

EuroCommerce Urges EU and US to Seize Tariff Halt Opportunity

European retail and wholesale sector, calls on EU and US leaders to leverage the recent US tariff suspension to engage in meaningful transatlantic dialogue. Urgent discussions are needed to tackle global trade challenges and protect consumers.

Retailers and wholesalers are crucial links between producers and consumers, who expect a wide choice of products at affordable prices. The ongoing announcements of tariffs between the EU and the US have already dented consumer confidence and could put the EU economy in dire strait.

With the US temporarily halting additional tariffs, EuroCommerce urges both sides to use this window of opportunity to develop sustainable solutions that prevent supply chain disruptions and price hikes. Christel Delberghe, Director General of EuroCommerce, stated, *"This tariff grace period must be used to minimise the economic damage caused by this trade conflict. As the cost-of-living crisis is still hitting consumers' wallets, authorities have a responsibility to shield consumers from rising prices—felt most directly when shopping in stores or online."*

EuroCommerce also stresses the importance of a unified European approach. *"The integrity of the EU Single Market must be upheld. Member States should avoid fragmented national responses that risk undermining the EU's collective strength,"* Delberghe added.

At the same time, this is the moment for the EU to speed up its competitiveness agenda: *"We urge EU decision-makers to support the competitiveness agenda, accelerate the EU Single Market integration and proceed swiftly with the regulatory simplification agenda"* says Delberghe. [The IMF estimates that Europe's internal barriers are equivalent to a tariff of 45 per cent for manufacturing and 110 per cent for services.](#)

The EU needs to establish a level playing field: EuroCommerce highlights the need for coordinated efforts to address the uneven Level Playing field for companies in the EU and warns policymakers about an additional flood of Chinese products destined originally for the US market that might hit the European market instead. Strengthening enforcement in the EU market will be even more important.

Sudden tariff impositions disrupt supply chains, often leading to price increases that retailers and wholesalers cannot absorb. These costs are ultimately borne by consumers. Given that trade contracts are often negotiated months in advance, it is crucial for businesses to operate within a stable and predictable trading environment.

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EuroCommerce is the principal European organisation representing the retail and wholesale sector. It embraces national associations in 28 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 businesses 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.