

# EU Stockpiling Strategy: Retail and wholesale essential partners in EU crisis resilience

As the Commission published its [EU Stockpiling Strategy](#), EuroCommerce - the European retail and wholesale association – asks to be part of the dialogue on planning and preparedness.

Christel Delberghe, EuroCommerce Director General, welcoming the EU's shift from reactive crisis management to proactive resilience said: "People turn to retail and wholesale for food, medicine, and other daily essentials. If our operations fail, the impact is immediate."

Retailers and wholesalers connect supply chains with EU customers and ensuring availability in every city, town or village. As the COVID-19 pandemic and recent [blackouts in Spain and Portugal](#) have clearly demonstrated, retail and wholesale of all sizes play an important role in crisis response.

Understanding critical needs and the costs of stockpiling as well as how to best communicate with customers will come from learning from front runners and ensuring the free movement of goods during crises. The EU added value is to bring together that expertise and define the chain of command for real-time coordination between authorities.

"We stand ready to work with the EU to build a resilient Europe, but, based on past and front runner's experience, retail and wholesale needs to be part of that discussion to make this strategy work," concluded Ms Delberghe.

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## **Note to editor:**

The EU Stockpiling Strategy aims to secure essential goods, such as food, water, oil, fuel and medicines in the event of a crisis. Stockpiling obligations would require a fundamental shift in how many businesses operate, especially those relying on just-in-time supply chains. Balancing reserves with supply chain efficiency and liquidity is an expected challenge. Engagement with the private sector must be voluntary and practical, building on existing company systems with clarity on cost-sharing and incentives to support investment in resilience. Many businesses already have contingency plans in place, but SMEs in particular need support and capacity building.

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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.