

Retail and wholesale sector welcomes step towards legal clarity on AI

EuroCommerce – the association representing retailers and wholesalers in Brussels – supports yesterday’s [political agreement](#) on the Digital Omnibus on Artificial Intelligence, as long as it brings much-needed simplification and clarity to the implementation of the AI Act. Retailers and wholesalers increasingly rely on AI to optimise operations, improve customer experience and remain competitive, and require clear, workable and proportionate rules to do so across the Single Market. It marks the first deliverable under the [‘One Europe, One Market’ roadmap](#).

Ilya Bruggeman, Director for Internal Market, Consumer and Digital Policy at EuroCommerce, highlighted: *“Retailers and wholesalers support a strong, risk-based AI framework that protects consumers and fundamental rights while enabling innovation. Yesterday’s agreement is a positive step towards greater legal certainty and more practical rules for businesses, particularly in view of the approaching implementation deadlines. What matters now is a clear and coherent final text, accompanied by timely guidance, so companies can prepare properly and continue to invest in AI with confidence.”*

Retailers and wholesalers will benefit from the more realistic implementation timeline for high-risk AI systems, as policymakers agreed to postpone their application to December 2027 for stand-alone systems and August 2028 for AI embedded in regulated products. The agreement also clarifies the interaction of the AI Act with sectoral legislation and extends exemptions to SMEs.

Importantly, retailers expect that the agreement will strengthen and support innovation, including broader access to regulatory sandboxes (controlled environments where innovators can test AI technologies under temporary regulatory flexibility), and will reinforce the role of the Commission’s AI Office in ensuring coherent oversight.

[EuroCommerce highlights in its position paper on the Digital Omnibus on AI that](#) successful implementation now depends on a clear and coherent final legal text that avoids divergent interpretations across Member States, as well as a timely publication of guidance and standards, well ahead of application deadlines.

Retailers and wholesalers are hoping for a proportionate, risk-based approach, focusing requirements on genuinely high-risk use cases and reduced administrative burden, especially for low-risk AI systems widely used in the sector. And finally, a consistent enforcement across the Single Market would be paramount for supporting innovation, investment and scale when it comes to introducing AI in the sector.

The discussion will continue at the [EuroCommerce Retail Innovation Summit on 10 June 2026](#), featuring a panel on agentic commerce and the presentation of an upcoming joint EuroCommerce and McKinsey & Company AI report.

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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.