

## Single Market for Services remains a top priority for retail and wholesale

The digital revolution is forcing fundamental change to the retail and wholesale sector. It depends on free movement of goods and services around Europe and the world, and therefore shares with the whole EU economy the imperative of resisting populist pressure to break up the Single Market.

As a contribution to the ongoing debate on how to develop a competitive Europe, EuroCommerce has launched its paper '[Making the Single Market a fairer, sustainable and globally competitive space](#)', setting out the retail and wholesale sector's ideas for the next Commission on how to strengthen and deepen the Single Market and stimulate economic growth and jobs.

These ideas were echoed in a [keynote address](#) by Director-General Christian Verschueren at the High-Level Conference on Retail organised by the European Commission last week. He called on policy-makers to stop holding back the powerful potential of services liberalisation to drive economic growth and global competitiveness: *"Services make up the lion's share of the EU GDP, but is an orphan in policy-making. We need policy-makers finally to take the steps to unleash the 300 to 400 billion euros of growth that a functioning Single Market for Services would bring."*

After more than 25 years, the Single Market is still not a reality, either for services, or for goods. Retailers and wholesalers face discriminatory regulation in many member states. In order to make the Single Market a fairer, sustainable and globally competitive space, member states and major brand manufacturers should stop fragmenting the single market. Retailers and wholesalers should be able to source freely from anywhere in the EU, and to provide European consumers with the choice and quality of products they want at a competitive price. Verschueren added: *"A strong EU, firmly based on a properly functioning and competitive Single Market, is the best hope we have for developing European champions who can compete globally with the new economic tigers emerging on other continents. Retail and wholesale need regulation fit for the digital age, and an end to discrimination against European companies in Europe."*

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*EuroCommerce is the principal European organisation representing the retail and wholesale sector. It embraces national associations in 31 countries and 5.4 million companies, both leading global players such as Carrefour, Ikea, Metro and Tesco, and many small businesses. Retail and wholesale provide a link between producers and 500 million European consumers over a billion times a day. It generates 1 in 7 jobs, providing a varied career for 29 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.*