



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

*Brussels, 19.10.2016
C(2016) 6523 final*

*Ms Regina BASTOS
Chair of the
European Affairs Committee
Assembleia da República
Palácio de S. Bento
1249-068 Lisboa
PORTUGAL*

*cc. Mr Eduardo FERRO RODRIGUES
President of the
Assembleia da República
Palácio de S. Bento
1249-068 Lisboa
PORTUGAL*

Dear Chair,

The Commission would like to thank the Assembleia da República for its Opinion on the Commission's proposal for a Regulation on addressing geo-blocking and other forms of discrimination based on customers' nationality, place of residence or place of establishment within the internal market and amending Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 and Directive 2009/22/EC {COM(2016) 289 final}.

This proposal forms part of a broader package of ambitious measures designed to create a Digital Single Market and to unlock the full potential of the Single Market, as announced in the Commission's Digital Single Market Strategy¹ and Single Market Strategy². In response to these strategies, the European Council called for swift progress in removing barriers to e-Commerce, including unjustified geo-blocking, in its conclusions of 28 June 2016³.

The proposal addresses restrictions to cross-border sales which traders apply, particularly but not exclusively, through the use of technology, and offers a targeted response to the problem of geo-blocking that is affecting more and more customers in Member States who are interested in shopping cross-border.

¹ COM(2015) 192 final.

² COM(2015) 550 final.

³ EUCO 26/16

The Commission welcomes the Assembleia da República's broad support for the Commission's initiative. The Commission also welcomes the Assembleia da República's acknowledgement that there is a need for action at EU level. Geo-blocking of customers based on their nationality or country of residence or establishment constitutes a restriction to the Single Market and is cross border in nature as it only applies to transactions between nationals or residents of two different Member States.

The proposal is currently in the legislative process involving both the European Parliament and the Council, in which the Portuguese government is represented.

The Commission looks forward to continuing our political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Frans Timmermans
First Vice-President*

*Andrus Ansip
Vice-President*