**Ecommerce Europe** **ready to put Digital Single Market into action**

PRESS RELEASE May 6, 2015

 **Vice-President of the European Commission Ansip officially presented the Digital Single Market Strategy today. Ecommerce Europe welcomes the progress that the European Commission has made and generally supports the way the Commission wants to meet the main challenges. Ecommerce Europe takes up its role to make sure that the implementation of the strategy mostly benefits the needs of the e-commerce sector.**

Marlene ten Ham, Secretary General of Ecommerce Europe states: “We support Vice-President Ansip and the Commission in their efforts to ensure better access for consumers and businesses to the online sale of goods, services and digital content across Europe. We noticed that a large number of issues addressed in the Digital Single Market strategy confirm the outcome of Ecommerce Europe’s survey on existing barriers to cross-border e-commerce. The coming months will be crucial to work together as EU regulators, industry and consumer associations and to implement a framework that truly benefits the development of the sector.”

**Ecommerce Europe’s priorities**

Out of the many initiatives proposed, Ecommerce Europe has identified the following items of the strategy as key points. These are the main initiatives to be developed further to foster growth in cross-border sales of goods and services.

* Ecommerce Europe welcomes the Commission’s proposals to simplify **rules for online cross-border purchases**. Ecommerce Europe believes that full legal harmonization is the preferred regulatory tool for B2C contract law and consumers’ rights and obligations while insisting on the need for a reasonable and balanced approach that would allow to build trust and to support growth and innovation. Full harmonization should not only cover rules for the sale of digital content and tangible goods, but also the cross-border online sale of services.
* Ecommerce Europe asks for a rapid harmonizationof **privacy and data protection legislation** while recognizing the potential of innovation, such as the important role that data driven marketing and profiling play in improving sales for online merchants and enhancing the shopping experience for consumers.
* Concerning **parcel delivery**, the sector needs an interoperable EU-wide delivery system as soon as possible. Ecommerce Europe welcomes the launch of complementary measures in the first half of 2016. In order to increase transparency there is a need for more information, affordable services, a decrease of costs of cross-border flows and an increase of reliability and quality of delivery services. By the creation of an online e-Logistics Platform, Ecommerce Europe also takes up its role to further improve the functioning of the parcel delivery market for online merchants. This will have an enormous impact on transparency, cost decrease and quality improvement by listing all delivery suppliers active in e-commerce on the same website, with all necessary details, allowing merchants to quickly identify for free which operators are most suited to their needs.
* In terms of preventing **geo-blocking**, Ecommerce Europe asks for more evidence and clarification on the matter. Online merchants have a freedom of contract and there are many objective justified reasons why a cross-border sale is restricted. These reasons can also be non-legal, such as high distribution and compliance costs or a non-feasible business model.
* Ecommerce Europe fully supports the Commission’s proposals to reduce **VAT-related burdens** when selling cross-border as well as to extend the Mini-One-Stop-Shop to online sales of tangible goods. Ecommerce Europe calls for a harmonization of VAT rates as much as possible and welcomes the planned threshold for the destination principle at €100.000.
* Ecommerce Europe supports **fair competition** to ensure equal access to services of online platforms for all online merchants. Ecommerce Europe therefore agrees with the Commission that it is necessary to assess a potential need for new rules on the matter.

Ecommerce Europe looks forward to cooperate with EU regulators, the industry and consumer associations to increase further growth in e-commerce and make cross-border online purchasing simpler and easier for traders and consumers.

To read the recommendations in more detail, you can download Ecommerce Europe’s Priority Paper here:

<http://www.ecommerce-europe.eu/stream/ecommerce-europe-priority-paper-new-april-2015.pdf>

**END OF PRESS RELEASE**

**About Ecommerce Europe**

Ecommerce Europe is the association representing 25,000+ companies selling goods and/or services online to consumers in Europe. Founded by leading national e-commerce associations, Ecommerce Europe is the voice of the e-commerce sector in Europe. Its mission is to stimulate cross-border e-commerce through lobbying for better or desired policy, by offering a European platform bringing the European e-commerce sector and other stakeholders together, and by providing in-depth research data about European markets.

Website: [www.ecommerce-europe.eu](http://www.ecommerce-europe.eu)

**National associations that are members of Ecommerce Europe**

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| Belgium | Becommerce | [www.becommerce.be](http://www.becommerce.be) |
| Czech Republic  | APEK | [www.apek.cz](http://www.apek.cz) |
| Denmark | FDIH | [www.fdih.dk](http://www.fdih.dk) |
| Finland | Finnish Commerce Federation | [www.kauppa.fi](http://www.kauppa.fi) |
| Finland | Internet Industry Finland | [www.verkkoteollisuus.fi](http://www.verkkoteollisuus.fi) |
| France | FEVAD | [www.fevad.com](http://www.fevad.com) |
| Germany  | Händlerbund e.V. | [www.haendlerbund.de](http://www.haendlerbund.de) |
| Greece | GRECA | [www.greekecommerce.gr](http://www.greekecommerce.gr) |
| Hungary | SzEK.org | [www.szek.org](http://www.szek.org)  |
| Ireland | Retail Excellence Ireland | [www.retailexcellence.ie](http://www.retailexcellence.ie) |
| Italy | Netcomm | [www.consorzionetcomm.it](http://www.consorzionetcomm.it) |
| The Netherlands | Thuiswinkel.org  | [www.thuiswinkel.org](http://www.thuiswinkel.org) |
| Norway | Virke  | [www.virke.no](http://www.virke.no)  |
| Poland | e-Commerce Polska | [www.ecommercepolska.pl](http://www.ecommercepolska.pl) |
| Portugal | ACEPI | [www.acepi.pt](http://www.acepi.pt)  |
| Spain | Adigital | [www.adigital.org](http://www.adigital.org) |
| Switzerland | NetComm Suisse | [www.netcommsuisse.ch](http://www.netcommsuisse.ch)  |
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