

**Statement of BEUC Director General Monique Goyens  
at Single Market Forum  
Krakow, 3 October**

***Workshop on e-commerce: perspectives and challenges***

Speaking at the Single Market Forum, BEUC Director General Monique Goyens emphasised the economic importance and convenience of e-commerce for European consumers, pointing out its flexibility, the variety of choice it offers, the ease of its use and the improved possibility to compare products.

She also highlighted the following points on the EU Single Market:

- Consumers wishing to buy online across borders regularly have the unfortunate experience of traders refusing orders from another country or applying differing conditions or prices. These are frustrating experiences for consumers and do not correspond with their idea of a Single Market. Several reasons exist, such as territoriality of intellectual property rights (copyright levies, territorial licensing, and collective management of copyright) or vertical distribution agreements.
- On the other hand, cross-border e-commerce should not be seen as an end in itself, but as a tool to achieve consumer welfare. Consumers who do not make cross-border online purchases, do so for many practical reasons: language, problems with delivery, what to do if things go wrong, trust in the foreign trader, data protection, security of payments, etc.

Monique Goyens also stressed that the recent work of the EU Commission to promote and fulfil the potential of cross-border e-commerce focuses too much on contract law, which has been largely dealt with by the Consumer Rights Directive and not enough on solutions to problems of trust voiced by consumers, particularly a solid framework for consumer redress.