

Contact: Details for both organisations at bottom
Date: 20/02/2014
Reference: BEUC-PR-2014-003

European businesses & consumers in joint call to halt e-commerce law

BEUC, representing 41 national consumer associations and Ecommerce Europe, representing more than 4,000 companies that sell products and services online to consumers, are jointly calling on MEPs to reject a controversial European contract law proposal when they vote in plenary, Wednesday, 25th.

The Common European Sales Law aims to provide an EU alternative to national contract laws, including key consumer rights such as to pre-purchase information, return, delivery and replacement of defective goods.

Labelled an “optional” law for traders, it would operate in parallel to existing mandatory EU consumer law. However, this would provoke different rules within the Single Market for the same products, lead to confusion for consumers and business, increased legal complexity and uncertainty, a reduction of consumer protection in some countries and higher costs for SMEs.

Wijnand Jongen, Member of the Board of Directors and Chair of the Executive Committee of Ecommerce Europe said:

“Where we seek harmonisation and simplicity, this legislation only adds to the patchwork of rules governing consumer rights and online sales. Furthermore, we wish to lessen administrative burdens and the coming costs of implementing new, additional rules because this will raise the price the consumer pays.

“Online merchants need consumers’ trust to strongly increase cross-border sales, which is an ambition we share with the Commission. A parallel system of EU legislation, even an optional one, just does not contribute to trust, and therefore we are opposed to the proposal.”

Monique Goyens, Director General of The European Consumer Organisation said:

“Analysis shows the actual reasons consumers do not buy across borders are practical - hesitations due to delivery concerns (49%), fear of fraud (62%) or availability of redress (59%). CESL would not solve any of these. It means direct, unhealthy competition with national laws, carefully built over decades. The EU Parliament now has a chance to reject this misguided initiative.

“Consumer laws should outright protect the consumer, not be a legal puzzle to choose the best protection. The drive to create a parallel EU law for cross-border ecommerce defies common sense. Supporters claim the target beneficiaries are Europe’s consumers and traders, but we reiterate in unison that it would merely result in greater legal complexity and confusion for both.”

Read the joint letter [here](#).

Read BEUC Factsheet on CESL [here](#)

About Ecommerce Europe

Ecommerce Europe is the association representing 4,000+ companies selling products and/or services online to consumers in Europe. Founded by leading national e-commerce associations, its mission is to advance the interests and influence of e-commerce in Europe through advocacy, communication and networking.

Website: <http://www.ecommerce-europe.eu>

National associations that are members of Ecommerce Europe

Austria	aCommerce Team	www.acommerce-team.at
Belgium	Becommerce	www.becommerce.be
Denmark	FDIH	www.fdi.dk
Finland	Finnish Commerce Federation	www.kauppa.fi
France	FEVAD	www.fevad.com
Greece	GRECA	www.greekecommerce.gr
Ireland	Retail Excellence Ireland	www.retailexcellence.ie
Italy	Netcomm	www.consozionetcomm.it
The Netherlands	Thuiswinkel.org	www.thuiswinkel.org
Norway	DistansehandelNorge	www.distansehandel.no
Poland	e-Commerce Polska	www.ecommercepolska.pl
Spain	Adigital	http://www.adigital.org

Contact

Ecommerce Europe AISBL
Rue de Trèves 59-61, B-1000 Brussels, Belgium
Website: <http://www.ecommerce-europe.eu>
Twitter: @Ecommerce_eu

Press contact:

Wijnand Jongen
Chair of the Executive Committee
Tel.: +31 318 648 575
Cell: +31 6 55 87 69 68
Email: info@ecommerce-europe.eu

About BEUC

BEUC, The European Consumer Organisation has a membership of 41 well respected, independent national consumer organisations from 31 European countries (EU, EEA and applicant countries). BEUC acts as the umbrella group in Brussels for these organisations and our main task is to represent our members and defend the interests of all Europe's consumers.

Website <http://www.beuc.eu>
Twitter: @beuctweet

Press contact

John Phelan
Tel.: +32 (0)2 789 24 01
press@beuc.eu
Twitter: @beuctweet

ENDS