

30/04/2015

Europe's consumers' common concerns with online traders & digital businesses over EU's Digital Single Market plans.

The European Commission is set to unveil its Digital Single Market roster of policies on May 6. As the Heads of Cabinets meet today to discuss the final draft, BEUC and E-Commerce Europe have jointly written to express their views on plans to regulate cross-border online sales in Europe.

This follows last week's joint letter by Digital Europe and BEUC warning of missing the point in reforming copyright of online content.

Copyright to be half-tackled?

Digital Europe and BEUC's letter warns that the Digital Single Market will not be achieved by the European Commission if they do not phase out European copyright levies systems (which charge consumers for presumed use and levies vary between countries for the same product) and address consumers' uncertainty about what they can or cannot do with copyrighted digital content.

Monique Goyens said:

"We back Vice President Ansip's push to end 'geo-blocking'. To reach that goal we must update the EU Copyright Directive to ensure consumers will finally have access to content across the EU and benefit from the Digital Single Market with greater choice and better prices.

"The current laws precede mass use of online content and are clearly maladapted to consumers' needs. The vast majority are unsure what are they entitled to do with copyrighted content such as music and film."

Online buying rights must not be reduced

While E-commerce Europe and BEUC both agree 'harmonising' laws would boost clarity for both consumers and traders, they are united in concern over the prospect of establishing the trader's 'home country' as the law which governs the consumer's contract when they buy online.

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

"BEUC supports the European Commission's intention to fill important legal gaps, particularly for online purchases of digital content products. But to institute this 'traders' home option' concept would in fact replace one wall with another and could reduce consumers' rights. The existing 'Rome I Regulation' protects consumers by allowing application of their home laws if more protective than that in the contractual clauses to buy. We must retain this."

You can view a copy of the joint letters:

1. BEUC and E-Commerce Europe on online purchases [here](#) (available for quotation).
2. BEUC and Digital Europe on copyright [here](#).

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

ENDS
