

DIGITALEUROPE welcomes WTO decision to devise global rules on electronic commerce

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DIGITALEUROPE commends governments and trade officials from 75 countries for deciding to start negotiations to put in place global rules on electronic commerce under the umbrella of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

« Trading online in the 21st century requires trust, safety, effectiveness and predictability. Global electronic commerce needs an ambitious WTO framework that is commercially significant, negotiated in a timely fashion and can adjust to innovation and new technologies », said Cecilia Bonefeld-Dahl, Director-General of DIGITALEUROPE. *« Today's announcement is extremely encouraging, and we call upon additional WTO members to consider entering into the discussions as a means of enabling their small businesses and entrepreneurs to succeed in the digital economy »,* she added.

As the world economy is fast digitising, the digital economy and the global ecommerce boom are creating unprecedented opportunities for businesses from all sectors, of all sizes, and from all countries. However, despite exponential increase in electronic transactions, there are no specific multilateral rules in the WTO regulating this type of trade. Business and consumers instead rely on a patchwork of rules agreed by some countries in their bilateral or regional trade agreements.

The ability of businesses and individuals to participate effectively in the global economy today requires a modern e-commerce framework that facilitates customs clearance, digital transactions, transparency, trust, movement of information, and access to a variety of e-commerce platforms, payments technologies, communications, social media and marketing tools, productivity software, and shipping and logistics services.

Countries now have a unique opportunity to clarify and improve the existing framework of trade rules and commitments around trade facilitation, services, digital trade, transparency and trust to improve the ability of businesses of all sizes and across all industries to benefit from the global digital marketplace and realise the potential of e-commerce for development.

We hope future discussions will lead quickly to a framework that promotes a vibrant and inclusive e-commerce ecosystem and supports small businesses' ability to engage in digitally-enabled trade.

For more information please contact:

Patrice Chazerand, DIGITALEUROPE's Policy Director
+32 476 56 33 93 or Patrice.Chazerand@digitaleurope.org

Lionel Sola, DIGITALEUROPE's Director of Communications & Political Outreach
+32 492 25 84 32 or Lionel.Sola@digitaleurope.org

ABOUT DIGITALEUROPE

DIGITALEUROPE represents the digital technology industry in Europe. Our members include some of the world's largest IT, telecoms and consumer electronics companies and national associations from every part of Europe. DIGITALEUROPE wants European businesses and citizens to benefit fully from digital technologies and for Europe to grow, attract and sustain the world's best digital technology companies. DIGITALEUROPE ensures industry participation in the development and implementation of EU policies.

DIGITALEUROPE's members include in total over 35,000 ICT Companies in Europe represented by 63 Corporate Members and 40 National Trade Associations from across Europe. Our website provides further information on our recent news and activities: <http://www.digitaleurope.org>

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