

E-commerce and Logistics Position Paper

E-commerce has the potential to change business models, consumer behaviour and the underlying logistics. Globally, there will be 3 billion internet users in 2015 – 40% of the world's population. The number of internet users in the developing world has doubled in just five years.¹ In 2015, e-commerce revenues worldwide are expected to exceed 1 trillion USD, and e-commerce sales are projected to exceed 1 trillion USD in China alone by 2018.² If all EU member states applied the same rules for e-commerce, 57% of companies would start or increase their online sales to other EU countries, with small and medium sized enterprises as the main beneficiaries.³

EU consumers could save €11.7 billion each year if they could choose from a full range of EU goods and services when shopping online, and the full realisation of the **digital single market** could generate € 340 billion in additional growth.⁴ **Logistics** provides the backbone for e-commerce. The current regulatory regime was negotiated long before e-commerce became a reality, and the Alliance for European Logistics (AEL) believes that it is time to adapt the existing regulations. AEL recommends for the EU to:

- *Complete and enforce the single transport market:* With **one single market**, logistics efficiency would be enhanced and transaction costs would be reduced, resulting in annual savings well above 2 billion euros a year.⁵ Compliance and enforcement should be harmonised in order to **avoid fragmentation** of the European market with regard to tax, customs, safety and security.
- *Support market dynamics with smart regulation:* The e-commerce market is highly competitive, especially with regard to cross-border parcel delivery. Any e-commerce related regulatory intervention should stimulate **investment** and **innovation**.
- *Enable digitalisation and big data to improve logistics performance:* **Big data and digitalisation** could vastly improve supply chain efficiency (for example through tracking & tracing), security and resilience. E-commerce poses a challenge to urban logistics, therefore the public and private sectors should co-operate more closely, in order to define the most effective solutions going forward.
- *Improve existing infrastructure:* Infrastructure can be improved through **transparency** across all modes and **paperless information exchange** between different actors.
- *Develop ambitious trade agreements:* Ambitious trade agreements will eliminate trade barriers and cut red tape⁶ and as a result increase member states' export and import levels.⁷
- *Promote global standardised and harmonised border management systems:* **Consistent implementation** of international agreements⁸, standards and guidelines will facilitate trade while enforcing customs and security rules. **Electronic border management** systems will facilitate the process.
- *Decouple fiscal and customs processes from physical flow of goods:* This could facilitate e-commerce, in particular for SMEs, and enhance fiscal and customs efficiency, for instance through **economically meaningful de minimis** for shipments not subject to duty and taxes or formal customs procedures.

Deutsche Post DHL, duisport, Hapag-Lloyd, Hutchison Whampoa, Kuehne + Nagel, Michelin, Zebra Technologies and SAP.

¹ [ITU Facts and Figures – The world in 2014](#)

² eMarketer global retail market [forecast](#)

³ Digital Single Market [fact sheet](#)

⁴ Digital Single Market [fact sheet](#)

⁵ [The cost of non-Europe in the Single Market in Transport and Tourism](#), European Parliament Research Service, October 2014.

⁶ [The Global Enabling Trade Report 2014](#) (p. 13).

⁷ [Delivering Tomorrow: Logistics 2050 A scenario study](#) (p. 55).

⁸ E.g. Revised Kyoto Convention, HS convention, WCO Immediate Release Guidelines