

## E-commerce: Council adopts supplementary mandate for WTO negotiations

The Council today adopted a negotiating **mandate** to enable the Commission to participate in plurilateral negotiations on **electronic commerce**.

In **January 2019**, in the margins of the World Economic Forum in **Davos**, the European Union and 48 other members of the WTO **decided to start negotiations** to put in place global rules on electronic commerce.

The digitalisation of our economy has fundamentally changed the way businesses and consumers do trade. It was high time for international rules to reflect this transformation. The EU is committed to working with its WTO partners to put in place an ambitious and pragmatic framework that will guarantee a safe and predictable environment for online trade.

*Ștefan-Radu Oprea, Minister for Business Environment, Trade and Entrepreneurship of Romania*

In order for the Commission to engage in negotiations with its WTO partners on behalf of the EU, its existing mandate for the Doha Development Agenda had to be supplemented to include the EU position on trade-related aspects of e-commerce.

The aim of the negotiations is to put in place international rules **encouraging global e-commerce**, **facilitating the operations** of businesses, in particular **SMEs**, strengthening **consumers' trust** in the online environment and creating **new opportunities** to promote inclusive and sustainable growth and development.

On 26 April, the EU tabled initial negotiating proposals in the WTO. These were discussed along with proposals from other participating WTO members during a round of formal discussions on 13-15 May 2019, in Geneva.

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