

Commerce welcomes Parliament's adoption of laws on out-of-court dispute resolution schemes

Following more than a year of intensive debate, MEPs today adopted, by a large majority, the Directive on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) and the Regulation on Online Dispute Resolution (ODR).

EuroCommerce welcomes the vote and believes that, once implemented, these measures will contribute to the smoother functioning of the Internal Market and of commercial relations. *"By providing for swift, cost-effective and easily accessible out-of-court redress mechanisms, ADR/ODR will ease dispute resolution between consumers and traders,"* said EuroCommerce Director-General Christian Verschueren.

Commerce is of the view that the adopted proposals strike the right balance between consumer and business interests on key issues such as the optional nature of ADR/ODR, information requirements, and ADR funding. The only area of disappointment lies in the somewhat rigid way independence requirements have been dealt with.

~ENDS~

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EuroCommerce and the commerce sector

EuroCommerce represents the retail, wholesale and international trade sectors in Europe. Its membership includes commerce federations and companies in 31 European countries.

Commerce plays a unique role in the European economy, acting as the link between manufacturers and the nearly 500 million consumers across Europe over a billion times a day. It is a dynamic and labour-intensive sector, generating 11% of the EU's GDP. One company out of three in Europe is active in the commerce sector. Over 99% of the 6 million companies in commerce are small and medium-sized enterprises. It also includes some of Europe's most successful companies. The sector is a major source of employment creation: 33 million Europeans work in commerce, which is one of the few remaining job-creating activities in Europe. It also supports millions of dependent jobs throughout the supply chain from small local suppliers to international businesses.

