

Press Release

Independent retailers urge the Council to call for EU Single Market legislation banning territorial supply constraints

Brussels, 29 September 2025 – As the EU’s Competitiveness Council discusses today how to end “unjustified territorial supply constraints”, Independent Retail Europe calls on the 27 Member States to give a clear mandate to the European Commission to propose a Single Market legislation explicitly banning these unacceptable unfair practices.

“Territorial Supply Constraints are so widespread that in practice retailers do not have a Single Market for sourcing. Retailers are unfairly blocked from purchasing competitively across borders, which inevitably leads to higher consumer prices in most Member States. We urgently need a dedicated Single Market legislation to ban these unjustified discriminatory practices. Competition law instruments are insufficient to address alone the wide spectrum of TSCs” commented Else Groen, Director General of Independent Retail Europe.

Territorial Supply Constraints are unfair practices imposed by manufacturers that make it impractical or impossible for retailers and wholesalers to freely choose where to buy products in the EU. TSCs allow large manufacturers to keep prices artificially high in certain countries, thus extracting higher margins from retailers and consumers, and restrict product choice.

An [EU study](#) estimated in 2020 that Territorial Supply Constraints cost consumers at least €14 billion a year in only four food product categories studied at the time, a figure calculated before the recent inflation crisis, and which does not take into account TSCs applied in other common product categories.

Existing competition rules can only tackle TSCs by dominant players or when agreements explicitly include TSCs, leaving a broad legal gap. The only effective solution to this issue is the introduction of a dedicated Single Market legislation which explicitly bans Territorial Supply Constraints and similar discriminatory practices, supported by a blacklist of unilateral practices amounting to TSCs which should be prohibited under all circumstances.

The European Commission promised in its [Single Market Strategy](#) an initiative before the end of 2026 “to act against unjustified Territorial Supply Constraints”; Independent Retail Europe now calls on the Council to clearly task the Commission with the development of a Single Market legislation to ban these unjustified and unfair practices. #SingleMarket4All

[Further background information](#)

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About Independent Retail Europe:

Independent Retail Europe is the European association that acts as an umbrella organisation for groups of independent retailers in the food and non-food sectors. Our members are groups of independent retailers, associations representing them as well as wider service organizations built to support independent retailers. Independent Retail Europe represents 24 groups and their over 501.000 independent retailers, who manage more than 764.000 sales outlets, with a combined retail turnover of more than 1,411 billion euros and generating a combined wholesale turnover of 621 billion euros. This represents a total employment of more than 6.440.000 persons.

