

3. Opportunities and Risks, including Trust, Security and Privacy, in a Digital Society

Digital technology has changed the way we consume goods and services. The internet has very quickly become one of the easiest ways consumers can get information about future purchases, compare prices and buy goods from anywhere in the world. In addition, recent events have given rise to concerns that fake news and on-line disinformation campaigns, through new technology, can have a real impact.

New technologies, such as augmented and virtual reality, will continue to change how consumers interact with products, or how they experience content in the future. These new technologies challenge our traditional frameworks to protect them, requiring consumer laws to be brought up to date to reflect the new digital reality, and raising important questions about what 'ownership' and 'accessing content' mean in the context of digital.

Only 22% of Internet users in the EU buy goods or services in another EU country. That is why one of the main goals of the Digital Single Market Strategy is to facilitate consumer access to goods and services, while maintaining and enforcing consumer protection. The EU must continue to offer the highest standards of consumer protection, as well as protecting people's personal data and privacy, to embed our essential European values and build trust in the digital economy. Maintaining trust online will also rely on the media literacy of European citizens and the EU's ability to limit the dissemination of fake news and online disinformation. According to a Eurobarometer survey published March 2018, more than 80% of EU citizens perceive fake news to be a problem for democracy, while one out of four EU citizens does not feel confident in identifying information that is false or misrepresents reality.

4. How to ensure an Online Platform Economy that benefits businesses and consumers, supported by fair taxation

In today's world where competition is truly global, European businesses need the competitive advantage of a strong Internal Market that allows them to operate without barriers and achieve the scope and scale of world-class companies.

The new rules on portability of online content and unjustified geo-blocking are important measures to prevent digital technology from being used to create new barriers within the Internal Market.

How can businesses maximise the benefits of the Digital Single Market and operate cross-border in a fair business environment? How do we ensure an Online Platform Economy that benefits businesses and consumers, supported by fair taxation?

How companies can acquire, aggregate and interpret data to extract value from it is the key to achieving growth in the digital age. Policy makers must ensure that a level playing field is maintained, underpinned by the respect of fundamental rights, such as the protection of personal data and the right to privacy as well as core internal market principles, such as free market access and fair competition. In particular, many businesses depend on access to online platforms, transparent trading practices as well as effective ways to resolve disputes.