

Read the text about online trade between EU countries. Some parts are missing. Choose the correct part from the list (A–K) for each gap (1–8). There are two extra parts that you should not use. Write your answers in the boxes provided on the answer sheet. The first one (0) has been done for you.



Europe's digital economy

An open digital economy can power Europe's growth, but more needs to be done to encourage online trade within the EU. Digital technology (0) _____. The internet supports the free exchange of goods and services, providing consumers with greater choice and businesses with access to skills, resources and customers.

So far, however, the online exchange of goods and services between EU countries (1) _____. Only 11% of retailers sell to customers based in other EU countries through the internet, according to a survey by the European Commission, and crossborder trade accounts for just 4% of Europe's market for digital services. Evidently, more (2) _____ between European nations online.

Support for openness in the digital economy among European businesses is unequivocal. A survey of executives from both digital start-ups and conventional businesses, conducted by the Economist Intelligence Unit and sponsored by Android, found that the vast majority (98%) (3) _____ for growth and stability in Europe. When asked which form of openness is of greatest benefit to their organisation, 59% of respondents cite access to customers and markets, more than any other.

Many respondents struggle to access customers in other EU countries online, however: 30% say they (4) _____ through the digital channels. This figure varies significantly by country: 44% of Polish respondents say this is the case, while only 18% of UK respondents do.

Some factors that (5) _____, such as linguistic diversity, cannot be addressed by policymakers, but others can. For example, the biggest concern preventing retailers from selling into other European countries is the perceived risk of fraud. Greater international cooperation would (6) _____: in 2016 the first ever pan-European crackdown on e-commerce fraud led to the arrest of 42 individuals, who had allegedly purchased luxury goods worth €3.5m with stolen credit cards.

Retailers also bemoan the variations in rules on tax, contracts and consumer complaints in its first year. Of these, one-third were related to crossborder purchases.

Finally, achieving open digital markets requires investment in infrastructure. Unequal access to the internet (7) ____: just 30% of households in Bulgaria are online, compared with 90% in the Netherlands. As technology advances, these inequalities will only become more pronounced.

Unifying rules and regulations, working together to build trust in crossborder transactions and investing in the necessary enabling infrastructure would (8) _____. This, in turn will ensure that access to the digital economy and its benefits is widespread.

A	needs to be done to cultivate the open exchange of goods and services
B	help Europe to achieve a more open digital economy
C	agree that openness in the digital economy is “vital”
D	prevent companies from reaching customers across European borders
E	means too many people are still outside the digital economy
F	has catalysed the interconnection of the global economy
G	help allay their fears
H	find most or all other European markets difficult to access
I	has to adapt to customer wishes
J	has been limited
K	has offered a wide range of goods to global customers

