



Public Consultation on Platforms: Preliminary results

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Public Consultation on Platforms, Online Intermediaries, Data and Cloud Computing and the Collaborative Economy

- Launched as part of the EU *Digital Single Market Strategy* to feed into a broader Comprehensive Assessment of the Role of Online Platforms and Online Intermediaries
- The public consultation consisted of 4 sections:
 - **Online Platforms**
 - **Online Intermediaries & Tackling Illegal Content**
 - **Data and Cloud Computing**
 - **The Collaborative Economy**
- Closed on 6 January 2016
- Preliminary results published on 26 January 2016

TOTAL NUMBER OF REPLIES

➤ More than **1036** replies



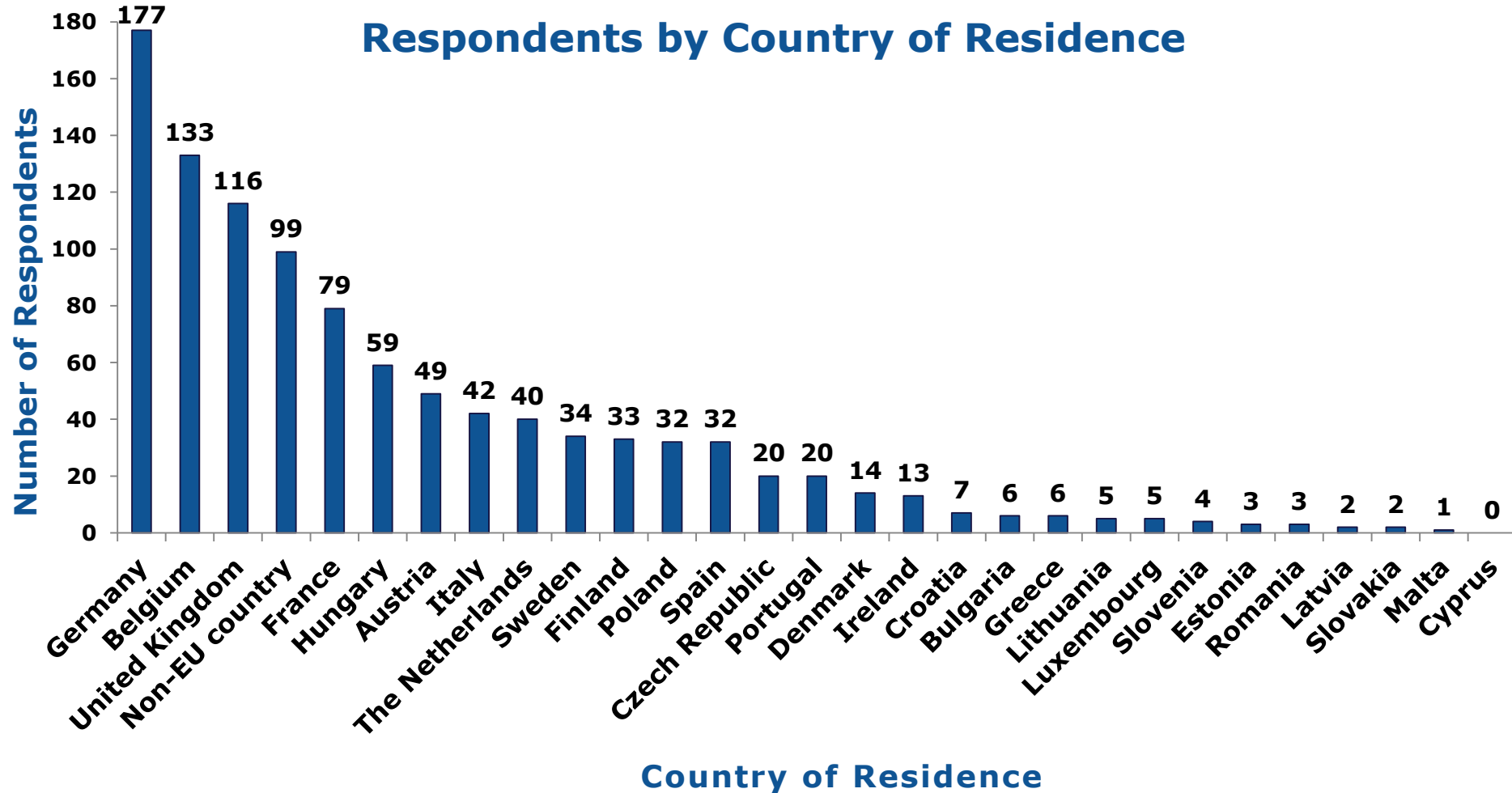
➤ Additional **10 599** individual contributions received via a single advocacy association (mostly addressing a limited number of questions in the PC)

➤ Replies came from **27 MS** and from **non-EU countries**

- About 10% from outside of the EU; more than 1/2 of them are from the US

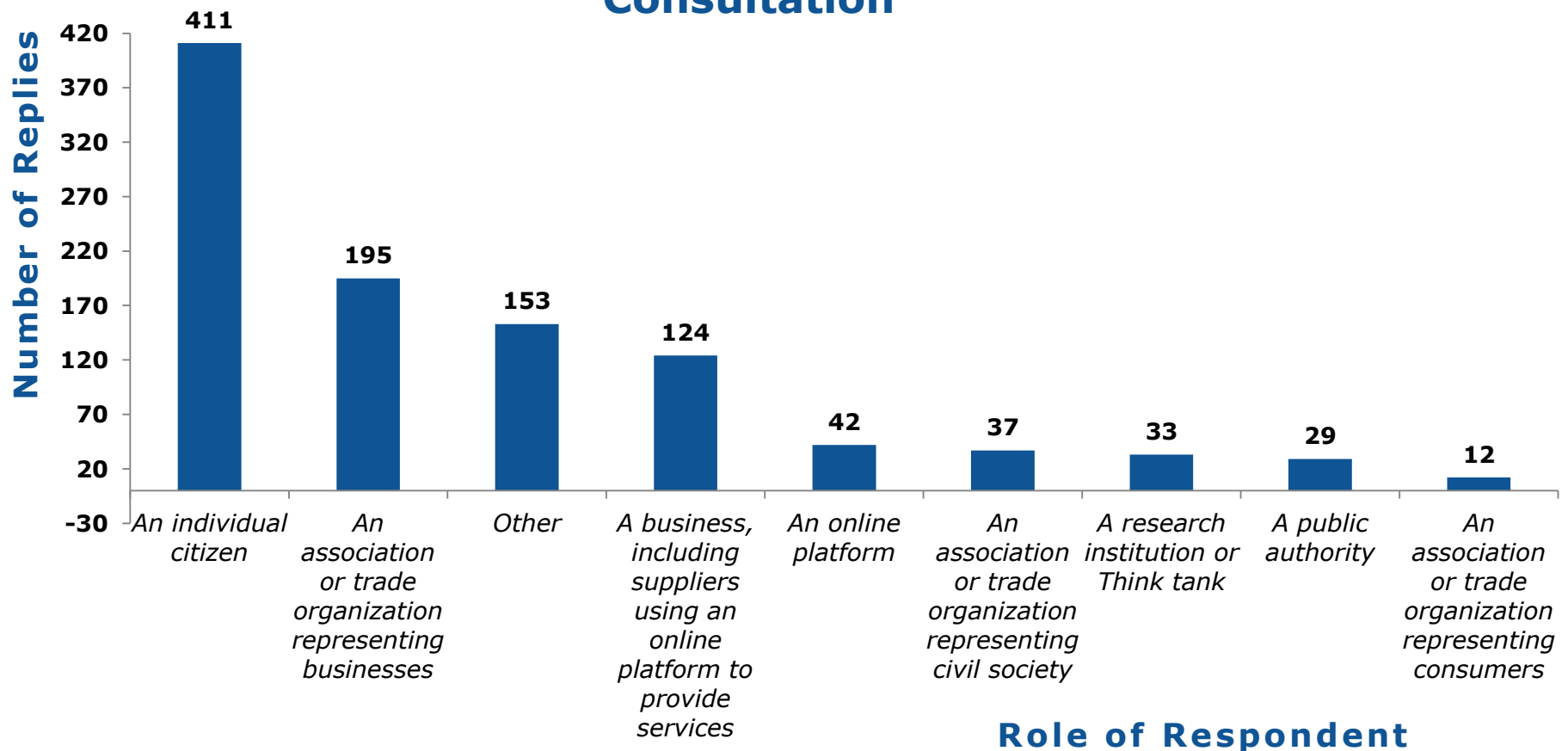
Overview of Respondents

Respondents by Country of Residence



Overview of Respondents

Respondents by Role for the Purpose of the Consultation



Preliminary Trends of the replies to the questions on platforms

- A large majority of citizens and businesses recognised the **benefits** of online platforms
 - *For e.g. making information more accessible*
- A large majority have encountered, or are aware of **problems** faced by consumers or suppliers when dealing with online platforms

Preliminary Trends of the replies to the questions on platforms

- Examples of problems include:
 - Lack of clarity as to the usage of data, as to terms and conditions and data privacy rules and as to the identity of the trader
 - Misleading statements about goods and advertising, and the abundance of counterfeit goods which then do not correspond with what consumers expected to receive. Lack of redress as a result due to lack of traceability of traders on online marketplaces.
 - Issues with fake reviews and paid for search results – platform users would like these clearly differentiated from legitimate search results. Consumers do not trust reviews

Preliminary Trends of the replies to the questions on platforms

- Examples of solutions put forward:
 - Greater clarity as to the rights and obligations under existing Directives (e.g. consumer acquis) and better enforcement of existing legislation
 - Clarity as to the definitions under the E-Commerce Directive, such as "content hosting", "notice" etc.
 - A number of respondents called for guidance as to how to apply existing legislation to current developments instead of creating new rules. They believe the introduction of new laws would cause fragmentation.
 - Support for different notice-and-action procedures for different types of illegal content

Forthcoming Communication on Platforms

- Will use the results of the public consultation and other evidence collected
- Will focus on:
 - **The role of platforms in the economy**
 - **Existing rules and how they apply to platforms (e.g. consumer acquis, data protection, competition rules)**
 - **Areas where further work may be needed, for instance in relation to B2B relations.**