French government castigates Amazon for refusing to sign code of conduct with SMEs

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On Monday, France’s Secretary of State for Digital Affairs, Mouni Mahjoubi, castigated Amazon for not being among the signatories of the code of conduct for e-tailers and the SMEs selling products on the e-tailers’ sites.

“While Leboncoin, Rakuten, Cdiscount, eBay, Fnac Darty, La Redoute, Mano mano and Conforama will be signing the charter on Tuesday, Alibaba and especially Amazon, the industry’s leading player, refused to join in at the last minute,” rued Mahjoubi in an interview published by the Le Parisien newspaper on Monday.

“If the relationship with e-tailers like Amazon, Alibaba, Leboncoin, Fnac Darty and others is too unbalanced, this could have very serious consequences for them,” said Mahjoubi, notably citing issues of transparency and asymmetries in terms of inventory management, intermediation costs and counterfeiting.

“French consumers who buy online will have a choice between websites which pledge to treat French SMEs fairly ... and the others. It is also down to consumers to make responsible buying choices,” added Mahjoubi, implicitly referring to the US e-commerce giant.

The code of conduct will notably allow commercial relationships between the parties to be formalised, to ensure “open, trustworthy and customised trade,” and to fight against counterfeiting, stated the French government in a press release.

Amazon France was contacted, but offered no comment for the time being.

Translated by Nicola Mira