# Governance and partnership in the single market

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The Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection adopted the own-initiative report drafted by Sandra KALNIETE (EPP, LV) on Governance and Partnership in the Single Market, in response to the Commission Communication ‘Towards a Single Market Act for a highly competitive social market economy: 50 proposals for improving our work, business and exchanges with one another’.

Members welcome with interest the Commission Communication especially the global approach which it proposes in order to rebalance the single market between enterprises and citizens and to improve the democracy and transparency of the decision-making process.

The Commission and the Council are urged to reinforce the holistic approach to re-launching the Single Market, mainstreaming Single Market priorities to all policy areas which are crucial to achieving the Single Market.

**Strengthening political leadership and partnership**: Members suggest that the President of the Commission should be given the mandate to coordinate and supervise the relaunch of the Single Market, in close cooperation with the President of the European Council and the competent authorities in the Member States. Members highlight the enhanced role of the European Parliament and the national parliaments under the Lisbon Treaty and urge that Parliament’s role in the single market legislation process be strengthened. The Presidents of the Commission and of the European Council are urged to coordinate closely their respective actions that are to boost economic growth, competitiveness, the social market economy and sustainability in the Union.

Members call on the Commission jointly with the Presidency to organise a **yearly Single Market Forum** involving stakeholders from the EU institutions, Member States, civil society and business organisations to assess progress in relaunching the Single Market, exchange best practices and address the top concerns of European citizens.

The Commission is invited to:

- publish a **Green Paper** on guidelines for the consultations of the EU institutions with representative associations and civil society, ensuring that these consultations are broad, interactive and add value to the proposed policies;
- launch an **information and education campaign** on the essence of the single market and the objectives set in order to increase its dynamism while incorporating the dimensions of social and regional cohesion.

**Regulating the Single Market**: Members take the view that initiatives by single Member States cannot be effective without **coordinated action at EU level**, and that it is thus of fundamental importance that the European Union should speak with a strong single voice and implement common actions. They express their concern that the re-emergence of economic protectionism at national level would most probably result in fragmentation of the internal market and a reduction in competitiveness, and therefore needs to be avoided.

The report suggests that the Commission systematises and refines the **SME test**, taking into account the diversity of their situations, to evaluate the consequences of legislative proposals on these businesses.

Believing that correlation tables contribute to better transposition and significantly facilitate enforcement of the Single Market rules, Members urge Member States to **create and make publicly available correlation tables on all Single Market legislation**. They point out that in future Parliament may not include reports on compromise texts agreed with Council on the plenary agenda if provisions on correlation tables are not provided for.

**Administrative coordination, problem-solving mechanisms and information**: the report supports the proposals of the Single Market Act that aim at developing further administrative cooperation between the Member States, including extending the Internal Market Information (IMI) System to other relevant legislative areas. Members consider that local and regional authorities could be involved in this process.

The Commission is called upon to come up with a **roadmap** regarding the development and interlinking of different problem-solving tools (such as SOLVIT, the EU Pilot project) to ensure efficiency and user friendliness and avoid unnecessary overlaps. Member States are called upon to develop **points of single contact** under the Services Directive into user-friendly and easily accessible e-Government centres where businesses can obtain all the necessary information in the relevant EU languages, deal with all formalities and complete the necessary steps by electronic means in order to provide services in the respective Member State.

Moreover, Members call on the Commission to submit a legislative proposal on the **use of alternative dispute resolution in the EU** by the end of 2011 and underlines the importance of its quick adoption.

**Transposition and enforcement**: the Commission is called upon to use all powers under the Treaties to **improve transposition**, application and enforcement of the rules of the Single Market.

Members believe that the infringement procedure remains a key tool to ensure the functioning of the single market, but stress that consideration should be given to additional instruments which are less time-consuming and cumbersome. The Commission is called upon to: (i) resist any political interference and immediately launch infringement procedures where pre-litigation problem-solving mechanisms fail; (ii) set a benchmark of 12 months for the maximum average time taken to process infringements, from opening the file to sending the application to the Court of Justice.

Member States are called upon to **reduce the transposition deficit of Single Market Directives** to 0.5% for outstanding legislation and 0.5% for incorrectly transposed legislation by the end of 2012.