Single market for Europeans

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The Council held a debate on the Single Market Act (SMA), a two year plan (2011-2012) of 50 initiatives aimed at ensuring continuous optimisation of the internal market and contributing to the successful implementation of the Europe 2020 objectives on stimulating employment and economic growth.

The debate was preceded by a Commission presentation on the main findings of a public consultation conducted by the Commission which was completed in February 2011. In particular, delegations expressed views on the criteria to be used for choosing the area for a priority commitment by the institutions and Member States and how to define the priority actions for achieving the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy in the most effective way.

In the light of the debate, the forthcoming opinion of the European Parliament and the findings of the public consultation, the Commission is expected shortly to present a selection of initiatives that will better contribute to overcoming the economic crisis and to promoting growth and employment.

On 10 December 2010, the Council adopted conclusions on the SMA, committing Member States to define the priority measures that should be in place before the end of 2012 in order to facilitate access to the single market, support businesses, encourage growth andhelp to create jobs.

The conclusions also endorsed the general approach of the SMA, submitted by the Commission in October 2010, according to which the single market must rest upon a strong economic and social basis with a view to building a highly competitive economy.