Internal market scoreboard

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The Committee on Internal Market and Consumer Protection adopted an own-initiative report by Simon BUSUTTIL (EPP, MT) on the Internal Market Scoreboard.

The report notes that the publication of the Internal Market Scoreboard has consistently helped enhance the transposition of single market legislation by providing objective and substantive data on transposition and implementation of these rules by the Member States. Members consider, nevertheless, that some Member States are still failing fully to meet their objectives of correct and timely transposition of European legislation into national law. In this context, the Committee makes the following recommendations:

1) Building the regulatory framework of the internal market: the report welcomes the Internal Market Scoreboard and SOLVIT as important tools to monitor and identify problems in the transposition and implementation of EU law, but also to identify gaps and bottlenecks in the single market.

Members affirm that the **timely and correct transposition and implementation of internal market legislation** is a crucial prerequisite for the success of the internal market. They call for the Council to commit to **reducing the transposition deficit** further and to set **tougher more realistic transposition and implementation goals** for all Member States to fulfil.

The report notes that almost 50% of pending Internal Market infringement proceedings relate to areas of **taxation** and **environment**. It calls on the Member States to dedicate particular attention to better and timelier transposition and implementation of EU rules in these two areas.

It calls on the Commission, among other things, to:

- ensure that infringements of EU law are **pursued swiftly by infringement proceedings**;
- provide **support for Member States** in the transposition of EU law by developing new tools such as transposition guidelines and a transposition helpdesk;
- take effective action to **reduce the duration of infringement proceedings** and to report to Parliament on such action;
- explore new ways of ensuring timely and full application of Court **judgments** and procedures by Member States;
- report to Parliament on its application of Article 260(3) of the Lisbon Treaty regarding the possibility for the European Court of Justice to impose immediate fines at first instance in cases where Member States are found to have reneged on their obligation to transpose EU legislation;
- improve the **quality of drafting in European legislation**.

The report stresses that Member States should continue to **further reduce transposition delays in order to meet the 1% target**. It insists that Member States formally accept a reduction in numerical targets limiting the transposition and compliance deficit for national legislation to **0.5% for the transposition deficit and 0.5% for the compliance deficit** respectively, and to ensure more effective application of infringement proceedings by means of numerical targets relating to the stages of the procedure.

Members consider that special attention and priority should be given to directives whose deadline for transposition into national law has expired by more than a year. They call on Member States to **systematically provide proper correlation tables** setting out how internal market directives are applied in national regulations.

2) Delivering the internal market to businesses and citizens: the report calls on the Commission to find ways to **increase coordination and improve practical cooperation** between existing tools such as SOLVIT, Your Europe Advice, the Enterprise Europe Network, European Consumer Centres, the European Employment Service, IMI, the Europe Direct information network and the points of single contact to avoid duplication of efforts and resources and hence achieve more effective management. It calls on the Commission to propose ways of better integrating tools such as SOLVIT with the petitions process of the European Parliament.

Emphasising that the SOLVIT network remains largely fragmented and underused, it calls on the Member States to ensure that **SOLVIT centres are appropriately staffed** and that there is the necessary degree of coordination and communication with all levels of the national administrations, as well as with the different Commission services, to ensure that decisions are implemented. It also calls on the Commission to report on the feasibility of providing Commission staff for the single live points of contact in each Member State, as well as to consider the feasibility of **giving SOLVIT a specific legal basis**.

The report calls on SOLVIT, Your Europe Advice, the Enterprise Europe Network, European Consumer Centres and the European Employment Service to take note of the main concerns of citizens and businesses as articulated in the Commission Staff Working Paper 'The Single Market through the lens of the people: a snapshot of citizens and businesses' 20 main concerns', and to prioritise their work accordingly.

Members also recommend **further coordination between SOLVIT and the EU Pilot** in order to achieve better coordination and exchange of good practices.

The Commission is invited to:

- continue its efforts to offer citizens and businesses an **integrated virtual package of information and help services**, particularly by further developing the Your Europe portal as the single online gateway to all information and help ;
- take action to **promote the Your Europe portal** in national administrations and to develop cooperation between Your Europe and the websites of the national administrations;
- encourage Member States to further strengthen the **points of single contact (PSC)** and to provide citizens with information in a clear and practical way, by ensuring and taking full advantage of synergies in the area of information at European level, such as 'Your Europe Advice';
- ensure the setting-up of **online Points of Single Contact** via egovernment portals in all Member States in the official language of the host country and in English;
- report on the **main internal market obstacles** particular to citizens and consumers with a disability and to arrange for special efforts to be made to remove such obstacles;
- consider including the findings of **Eurobarometer surveys** in the Annual Governance Check-up as part of its evaluation in order to better inform decision-making.

Lastly, Members call on the Commission and the Member States to continue to engage and empower stakeholders by conducting regular **Single Market Forums**, supplementing these with frequent visits to assess and promote the single market in the individual Member States.