Resolution on ‘Single Market Act: The Next Steps to Growth'

2012/2663(RSP) - 14/06/2012 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 554 votes to 41 with 20 abstentions a resolution tabled by the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection on the ‘Single Market Act: The Next Steps to Growth’.

It stresses that the European Single Market has brought tremendous benefits to the citizens of Europe, and is a key driver for economic growth and employment. However, the current economic downspin, and the re-emergence of protectionist economic attitudes in Member States, has threatened some of the most visible achievements of the European integration process, and the **Single Market is needed more than ever as a means to revitalise the European economy.** Accordingly, Parliament calls for the Single Market to be completed with utmost determination and speed. **Immediate priority should be given to the adoption of the** 12 key actions of the Single Market Act, especially those which will facilitate completion of the digital single market, wherever possible, by the end of 2012. The Single Market should also **preserve social welfare and ensure fair working conditions.**

Members call on the Commission to assist Member States in ensuring the implementation of the key actions aiming at early transposition, well ahead of the deadline. Since there is a need to maintain the momentum achieved with the Single Market Act Parliament proposes that the Single Market Act should be a **rolling programme to be updated and reviewed annually**. The next steps for priority actions should largely be based on the growth boosting ‘twelve levers’ of the Single Market Act, with special attention given to promoting its benefits to consumers and business. Parliament requests the Commission to make relevant detailed proposals by spring 2013.

Single Market governance: Parliament stresses that **poor and late transposition**, and inadequate implementation and **enforcement of rules**, prevent citizens and businesses from taking full advantage of the benefits of the Single Market. It reiterates the need 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. The Commission is asked to focus its efforts to **improve the enforcement of Single Market legislation**, especially in the services and goods sector, which are expected to have the highest potential for boosting economic growth in Europe. Parliament asks the Commission to:

- pursue Single Market infringements swiftly and vigorously;
- develop a ‘proportionality test’ to identify disproportionate EU legislation, and to repeal such legislation;
- adopt an action plan to further reinforce and strengthen the role of SOLVIT, Your Europe Advice and the European Consumers’ Centres, among others assistance services, in order to make them more visible to citizens and businesses;
- consider expanding innovative mechanisms, such as the mutual evaluation procedure of the Services Directive, to new areas in order to ensure better application of EU law;
- adopt a user-friendly, regularly updated and easily accessible ‘Citizens’ Charter’, encompassing the various facets of the right to live and work anywhere in the EU;

- monitor the completion of the Single Market within the annual exercise of the European Semester, taking account of the annual SMA Governance Check-up and the Scoreboard reporting mechanisms;

- propose a dedicated Growth initiative built on the European semester, based on the SMA and relevant existing decisions, and underpinned by funding from, inter alia, the Structural Funds, project bonds and the Research Framework Programme.

The EU and Member States are asked to **commit themselves to cut administrative burdens by an additional 25 % by 2015 and to modernise their public administrations**.

The next steps to growth: Parliament calls on the Commission to **bring forward the transparency mechanism provided in Article 59 of the MRPQ** (Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications) Directive **to identify areas where Member States are disproportionately blocking access to regulated professions.**

Furthermore, it underlines the need to quickly use **unspent EU funds for measures tackling efficiently high youth unemployment.** It calls on Member States and the EU institutions to swiftly agree on binding targets and measures in the area of youth mobility ('Youth on the Move'), as well as to speedily implement the Youth Opportunities Initiative.

Members stress the importance of **developing infrastructures for large network industries** and public services – including energy, transport services such as Cross-European railway networks, and electronic communications such as broadband access throughout the EU – as **leverage for competitiveness, growth and employment**, as well as the need to create a single European energy market.

They call on the Commission and Member States, as appropriate, to:

- implement the new legislation on **public procurements** in a strategic manner that guarantees that public money invested in works, services and supplies engender sustainable growth, employment and social cohesion;

- look upon the development of the **digital single market as a priority**, so that consumers have full access to more competitive offers of goods and services;

- promote the implementation of the Single European Sky II, and put forward, by 2013, a proposal on the completion of a single European airspace through the reduction of the number of functional airspace blocks;

- submit, no later than 31 December 2012, a proposal for a directive containing provisions on the relationship between infrastructure management and transport operations, and a proposal for opening-up the domestic rail passenger market;

- propose measures to improve framework conditions for industry, and for SMEs, especially by enhancing the **European Investment Bank's actions to support access to finance,** and to foster research and innovation by **substantially increasing key EU programmes for R&D and innovation** and by making better use of unspent EU funds for growth-enhancing projects;

- present legislative proposals that follow up on the Green Paper on Corporate Governance and to include them in the 2013 Work Programme;

- put forward a new proposal for the statute of European mutual societies;

- produce a scoreboard presenting the obstacles faced by Union workers wishing to make use of their right to free movement, describing how these obstacles are being tackled in the Member States, not least by examining the phenomenon of ‘social dumping’;

- undertake studies to ensure the continuity of social security protection for mobile citizens in the EU and equal treatment with nationals.

Lastly, Parliament calls on all EU Member States to ensure full and complete implementation of the Services Directive, inter alia, by setting up user-friendly and comprehensive Points of Single Contact.