Completing the digital single market

2012/2030(INI) - 23/04/2013 - Follow-up document

This staff working document fulfils the commitment made in the European Commission's Communication "A coherent framework for building trust in the digital single market for e-commerce and online services" to report annually on the state of play of implementation of the action plan. It focuses on the 16 main actions undertaken by the Commission as part of the E-commerce Action Plan 2012-2015.

State of play of the action plan: the following are examples of the progress made in relation to some of the 16 actions one year after the adoption of the action plan:

1. Develop legal rules on cross-border offers of online products and services:

- the Regulation on the Internal Market Information (IMI) system was adopted in October 2012 and entered into force in December 2012, paving the way for the flexible expansion of IMI to further policy areas;

- in June 2012, the Commission adopted a "Communication on the implementation of the Services Directive: A partnership for new growth in services 2012-2015" with a view to establishing guidance on the application of Article 20(2) of the Services Directive which enshrines the principle of non-discrimination of service recipients on the basis of nationality or country of residence;

- in its Communication of December 2012 on "Content in the Digital Single Market", the Commission sets out its strategy for an effective digital single market in the area of copyright;

- the Commission adopted, in January 2013, a Green Paper launching a consultation on business-to-business unfair trading practices in the food and non-food supply chain.

2. Improve operator information and consumer protection:

- in December 2012, the Commission adopted, in line with its commitment in the Digital Agenda for Europe, the Code of EU online rights;

- this action was included in the May 2012 European Consumer Agenda and is part of the recently adopted European Retail Action Plan;

- in October 2012, the European Commission adopted the Communication "Towards a comprehensive European framework on online gambling".

3. Reliable and efficient payment and delivery systems:

- the Single Market Act II announced that the Commission will propose a revision of the Payment Services Directive and a legislative proposal on multi-lateral interchange fees (MIFs) in Spring 2013;

- in November 2012, the Commission adopted a Green Paper launching a public consultation on the delivery of parcels, with special emphasis on cross-border issues and e-commerce needs with a view to identifying solutions to help improve cross-border parcel delivery.

4. Combating abuse and resolving disputes more effectively:

- in September 2010, the Commission put forward a proposal for a Directive on cyber attacks. The Council and Parliament reached a political agreement on a compromise text in June 2012. It is expected to be adopted shortly;

- in February 2013, the Commission and the High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy adopted a comprehensive Cyber-Security Strategy of the European Union entitled "an open, safe and secure cyberspace". In parallel to the Strategy, the Commission has proposed a legislative initiative on a high level of network and information security across the Union.

5. Deploy high-speed networks and advanced technological solutions:

- in December 2012, the Commission adopted the new EU Guidelines for the application of state aid rules in relation to the rapid deployment of broadband networks;

- in July 2012, the Commission announced the outlines of a regulatory package to give a new impetus to the rolling out of high speed broadband networks;

- a legislative proposal on the cost reduction of deployment of high-speed electronic communications infrastructure was adopted in March 2013;

- the Communication "Unleashing the Potential of Cloud Computing in Europe" was adopted and published by the Commission in September 2012.

- the Radio Spectrum Policy Programme (RSPP) was adopted by Parliament and the Council in March 2012;

- the Commission adopted a Communication on the shared use of spectrum in September 2012 to ensure additional flexibility in spectrum authorisation and usage, as well as to foster innovation in wireless networks and services.