

Wednesday 6 April 2011

Single market for Europeans

P7_TA(2011)0145

European Parliament resolution of 6 April 2011 on a Single Market for Europeans (2010/2278(INI))

(2012/C 296 E/09)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, as incorporated into the Treaties by Article 6 of the EU Treaty,
- having regard to Article 26 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which stipulates that ‘the internal market shall comprise an area without internal frontiers in which the free movement of goods, persons, services and capital is ensured in accordance with the provisions of the Treaties’,
- having regard to Article 3(3) of the EU Treaty, which commits the Union to working for ‘a highly competitive social market economy, aiming at full employment and social progress, and a high level of protection and improvement of the quality of the environment’,
- having regard to Article 9 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which stipulates that ‘in defining and implementing its policies and activities, the Union shall take into account requirements linked to the promotion of a high level of employment, the guarantee of adequate social protection, the fight against social exclusion, and a high level of education, training and protection of human health’,
- having regard to Article 11 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which stipulates that ‘environmental protection requirements must be integrated into the definition and implementation of the Union policies and activities, in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development’,
- having regard to Article 12 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which stipulates that ‘consumer protection requirements shall be taken into account in defining and implementing other Union policies and activities’,
- having regard to Article 14 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and Protocol 26 thereto on services of general (economic) interest,
- having regard to the Commission Communication to the European Council entitled ‘Europe 2020, a strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth’ (COM(2010)2020),
- having regard to the Commission Communication entitled ‘Towards a Single Market Act – for a highly competitive social market economy’ (COM(2010)0608),
- having regard to the Commission Communication entitled ‘A citizen’s agenda – delivering results for Europe’ (COM(2006)0211),
- having regard to the Commission Communication entitled ‘A Single Market for 21st century Europe’ (COM(2007)0724) and the accompanying Commission staff working document entitled ‘The Single Market: review of achievements’ (SEC(2007)1521), Parliament’s resolution of 4 September 2007 on the Single Market review⁽¹⁾ and the Commission staff working document entitled ‘The Single Market review: one year on’ (SEC(2008)3064),

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 187 E, 24.7.2008, p. 80.

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- having regard to the Commission Communication entitled ‘Opportunities, access and solidarity: towards a new social vision for the 21st century’ (COM(2007)0726), the Commission Communication on ‘Services of general interest, including social services of general interest: a new European commitment’ (COM(2007)0725) and Parliament’s resolution of 27 September 2006 on the Commission White Paper on services of general interest ⁽¹⁾,
- having regard to the Commission Recommendation of 29 June 2009 on measures to improve the functioning of the single market ⁽²⁾ and the Commission Recommendation of 12 July 2004 on the transposition into national law of Directives affecting the internal market ⁽³⁾,
- having regard to the Internal Market Scoreboard of July 2009 (SEC(2009)1007) and to Parliament’s resolutions of 9 March 2010 ⁽⁴⁾ and 23 September 2008 ⁽⁵⁾ on the Internal Market Scoreboard,
- having regard to the Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament and the European Economic and Social Committee entitled ‘EU Consumer Policy strategy 2007-2013 – Empowering consumers, enhancing their welfare, effectively protecting them’ and Parliament’s resolution of 20 May 2008 on the EU consumer policy strategy 2007-2013 ⁽⁶⁾,
- having regard to the Commission Communication of 28 January 2009 entitled ‘Monitoring consumer outcomes in the Single Market – Second edition of the Consumer Markets Scoreboard’ (COM(2009)0025) and to the accompanying Commission staff working document entitled ‘Second Consumer Markets Scoreboard’ (SEC(2009)0076),
- having regard to the Commission Communication of 2 July 2009 on the enforcement of the consumer *acquis* (COM(2009)0330) and to the Commission report of 2 July 2009 on the application of Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on cooperation between national authorities responsible for the enforcement of consumer protection laws (the ‘Regulation on consumer protection cooperation’) (COM(2009)0336),
- having regard to the Commission Communication on ‘Cross-border business-to-consumer e-commerce in the EU’ (COM(2009)0557),
- having regard to its resolution of 9 March 2010 on consumer protection ⁽⁷⁾,
- having regard to Professor Mario Monti’s report to the Commission on revitalising the Single Market,
- having regard to its resolution of 20 May 2010 on delivering a Single Market to consumers and citizens ⁽⁸⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 20 October 2010 on the financial, economic and social crisis ⁽⁹⁾;
- having regard to the Commission Communication on ‘Youth on the Move’ (COM(2010)0477),
- having regard to its resolution of 21 September 2010 on completing the internal market for e-commerce ⁽¹⁰⁾,

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 306 E, 15.12.2006, p. 277.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 176, 7.7.2009, p. 17.

⁽³⁾ OJ L 98, 16.4.2005, p. 47.

⁽⁴⁾ OJ C 349 E, 22.12.2010, p. 25.

⁽⁵⁾ OJ C 8 E, 14.1.2010, p. 7.

⁽⁶⁾ OJ C 279 E, 19.11.2009, p. 17.

⁽⁷⁾ OJ C 349 E, 22.12.2010, p. 1.

⁽⁸⁾ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2010)0186.

⁽⁹⁾ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2010)0376.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2010)0320.

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- having regard to the Commission Communication entitled 'EU Citizenship Report 2010: Dismantling the obstacles to EU citizens' rights' (COM(2010)0603),
 - having regard to the report of the European Economic and Social Committee, Section for the Single Market, Production and Consumption, on 'Obstacles to the European Single Market 2008' ⁽¹⁾,
 - having regard to SOLVIT's 2008 annual report on the development and performance of the SOLVIT network (SEC(2009)0142), the Commission staff working paper of 8 May 2008 on an action plan on an integrated approach for providing Single Market Assistance Services to citizens and business (SEC(2008)1882) and Parliament's resolution of 9 March 2010 on SOLVIT ⁽²⁾,
 - having regard to Regulation (EC) No 765/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 July 2008 setting out the requirements for accreditation and market surveillance relating to the marketing of products, which aims to create an overall framework of rules and principles for accreditation and market surveillance ⁽³⁾,
 - having regard to Rule 48 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection and the opinions of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, the Committee on Legal Affairs, the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs and the Committee on Petitions (A7-0072/2011),
- A. whereas a functioning Single Market is the key driver which will enable the European Union to reach its full potential in terms of competitiveness, smart, inclusive and sustainable growth, the creation of more and better jobs, efforts to create a level playing field for enterprises of all kinds, the establishment of equal rights for all European citizens and strengthening a highly competitive social market economy,
- B. whereas the Single Market Act concerns Europeans as active participants in the European economy,
- C. whereas the Single Market cannot be regarded in purely economic terms, but must be seen as being embedded in a wider legal framework conferring specific, fundamental rights on citizens, consumers, workers, entrepreneurs and businesses, particularly small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) of all kinds,
- D. whereas too many obstacles stand in the way of citizens wishing to study or work in or move to another Member State or shop cross-border and of SMEs wishing to establish themselves in another Member State or trade cross-border; whereas these obstacles stem, *inter alia*, from insufficiently harmonised national laws, low portability of social security rights and excessive red tape, which impedes the free movement of persons, goods, services and capital within the Union,
- E. whereas the completion of the Single Market requires a holistic vision to further strengthen its development, as the Monti report and the resolution on delivering a Single Market to consumers and citizens highlighted, involving the incorporation of all relevant policies into a single strategic market objective, encompassing not only competition policy, but also, *inter alia*, industrial, consumer, energy, transport, digital, environment, climate change, trade, regional, justice and citizenship policies, in order to reach a high level of integration;

⁽¹⁾ http://www.eesc.europa.eu/smo/news/Obstacles_December-2008.pdf.

⁽²⁾ OJ C 349 E, 22.12.2010, p. 10.

⁽³⁾ OJ L 218, 13.8.2008, p. 30.

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- F. whereas the Single Market should offer European consumers more choices at lower prices, especially for those who live in less accessible areas, such as island, mountain and sparsely populated regions, and those who suffer from reduced mobility,
- G. whereas printed and online material published by the Commission is often either too abstract or too complex to truly engage citizens and reach a wide audience,
- H. whereas it is important that the Single Market Act should not consist of a series of isolated measures and that all the proposals must contribute to the achievement of a coherent objective,

Introduction

1. Welcomes the Commission Communication entitled 'Towards a Single Market Act', and specifically Chapter II, 'Restoring confidence by putting Europeans at the heart of the Single Market', which contains 19 initiatives geared to the needs of European citizens;
2. Considers that the Communication's proposals are generally in line with Parliament's expectations, but need to be further strengthened in order for citizens to be at the heart of the Single Market project;
3. Deplores the fact that the Communication has been divided into three chapters focusing on Europeans, businesses and governance, rather than along subject-matter lines; points out that the competitiveness of the Single Market and its acceptance among citizens should not be regarded as contradictory, but as mutually reinforcing objectives; considers, however, that the three chapters of the Communication are equally important and interconnected, and should be dealt with by means of a consistent approach, taking into account proposals made and concerns expressed by stakeholders at EU level and in the Member States;
4. Firmly believes that the Single Market Act needs to constitute a coherent and balanced package of measures, in keeping with the spirit of the Grech report (A7-0132/2010) and the Monti report, which lays the foundations for a Europe of Added Value for citizens and enterprises;
5. Argues that the relaunching and deepening of the Single Market are essential in the context of EU policies to fight the effects of the financial and economic crisis, and as part of the EU 2020 strategy;
6. Takes the view that Europeans have not yet fully exploited the potential of the Single Market in many areas, including the free movement of persons, goods and services, and that new incentives are needed in particular to ensure effective geographical labour mobility across Europe;
7. Takes the view that the Single Market strategy should strengthen social welfare and workers' rights and ensure fair working conditions for all Europeans;
8. Supports the Commission's idea of initiating, through the Single Market Act, a global and pragmatic debate throughout Europe on the benefits and costs of the internal market, and asks the Commission to ensure the effective application of internal market rules which reduce the administrative burden on citizens;
9. Shares the conviction that the full realisation of the European Single Market should form the basis for the completion of the process of political and economic integration;
10. Emphasises in particular the Commission's commitment, in this Communication, to promoting new approaches to sustainable development;

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11. Stresses that it is not just Single Market legislation which is implemented and applied poorly by the Member States, but also other legislation affecting the rights of European citizens and other legal residents; calls on the Member States to ensure better implementation of the Free Movement Directive (2004/38/EC) in particular;
12. Considers that efforts to complete the Single Market need to concentrate on the concerns and rights of citizens, consumers, public-service users and businesses and bring them tangible benefits in order to restore their full confidence in the Single Market and make them more aware of the opportunities it offers;
13. Urges the Member States and the Commission to join forces to put the Single Market message across to citizens and to ensure that its benefits are recognised and their rights as consumers are properly and widely understood and enforced; acknowledges, in that connection, the need for better communications strategies that truly engage the interest of the majority of citizens and for extensive, imaginative use to be made of modern technologies;
14. Stresses that the Single Market for Europeans is primarily about jobs and creating new jobs and that it is vital to create an environment in which businesses and citizens can fully exercise their rights;
15. Stresses that the Single Market offers great potential in terms of employment, growth and competitiveness and that strong structural policies must be adopted in order to exploit that potential to the full;
16. Stresses that demographic challenges require a strategy which would help create jobs that fill the gaps in the EU labour market;
17. Reiterates the view expressed in the resolution of 20 May 2010 on delivering a Single Market to consumers and citizens that the Commission ought to promote 'consumer-friendly' Single Market legislation, so as to ensure that consumer interests are fully taken into account in the workings of the Single Market;
18. Points out that the confidence of citizens and consumers is crucial for the functioning of the Single Market and cannot be taken for granted, but needs to be nurtured; considers, in particular, that in order to deliver on their promises Member States and the EU institutions must ensure that the current Single Market framework operates to its full capacity; emphasises that citizens' confidence is just as indispensable for the successful completion of the Single Market as a favourable environment for enterprises; believes that economic integration should be accompanied by appropriate social, environmental and consumer protection measures, in order to achieve both objectives;
19. Considers furthermore, that on the question of delivering added value for European citizens, Single Market proposals must respect the principles of subsidiarity and Member State sovereignty and promote exchanges of best practice between Member States;
20. Emphasises the lack of direct communication with citizens and considers that the EU representations in the Member States must be mandated to respond immediately to negative and misleading reports in the media by presenting the facts, and should make further efforts to provide information on European legislation, projects and programmes, thereby also promoting informed debate on European issues; advocates, further, the extensive and imaginative use of modern technology, including role-playing videogames which young people can play in a competitive way at European level (e.g. as part of an EU competition for schools), while at the same time learning about how the economy and the EU work;

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21. Points out that the effectiveness and democratic legitimacy of the enlarged EU can and should be improved, since the support of European citizens for the EU is clearly being eroded; takes the view that too little time and effort is spent, or that an incorrect method is used, to bring the people of Europe together, which should be the EU's core task; calls, therefore, for more to be done by the Member States and the EU institutions to create support for the EU and to convince the European people of the importance of the EU's values and of the usefulness and benefits of the EU;
22. Regards the fight against corruption and organised crime as essential to the proper functioning of the internal market and calls on the Commission and the Member States to continue their work in this field, using all available instruments, including the Mechanism for Cooperation and Verification;
23. Stresses the need to take account of the aims of the Stockholm Programme, in particular open borders and the free movement of goods, capital, services and people, in drawing up the Single Market Act.
24. Affirms that the Member States have a duty to adopt and implement European legislation on the internal market and on related European citizens' rights;
25. Emphasises that the implementation of the Single Market must proceed with full respect for the rights of citizens and residents of the Union, as enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights;
26. Believes that the petitions process can make a positive contribution to helping citizens take advantage of the internal market;
27. Invites the Commission to adopt a clear and readily accessible 'Citizens' Charter' on the right to live and work anywhere in the EU, and to develop targeted, multilingual information about the everyday problems that citizens encounter when moving, shopping or selling across Europe and the social, health, consumer protection and environmental protection standards on which they can rely;
28. Considers that the 19 actions proposed by the Commission should be prioritised according to their impact on job creation and their delivery of tangible benefits as well as their feasibility for European citizens in a realistic period of time;
29. Recalls that in its resolution on the social economy it called for greater recognition for social economy enterprises, including the generalised integration of the concept into EU policies, intensified dialogue with social economy representatives, better business support measures and recognition in the context of the social dialogue; recalls that in the same resolution it called for national registers to take social economy enterprises into account and for specific statistics on the activities of social economy enterprises;
30. Calls for the launch of a televised European competition for the 'European cross-border business of the year' to open people's eyes to the opportunities and benefits of the Single Market and to the potential of young people with ideas; considers that the attraction of seeing people from different parts of Europe getting together to develop a business plan, raise funding and start something positive together would help promote both the idea of Europe and the Single Market and the idea of entrepreneurship; further believes that following the winning business over the year - focusing also on its staff and their friends and families - could highlight the benefits and shortcomings of the Single Market, and the remedies for those shortcomings, in order to make people aware of what Europe is really about, also in human terms;

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31. Recalls the need to take account, under the EU's integrated policies, of the situation of regions with specific territorial characteristics, particularly the outermost regions as defined in Article 349 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, so that those regions and their enterprises, workforce and citizens can be fully integrated into the EU internal market and thus benefit fully from it; encourages the Commission to retain, and further develop, the specific provisions for these regions; recalls the need to establish the wider European neighbourhood action plan referred to in Commission Communication COM(2004)0343, as a complement to integration into the Single Market; calls, finally, for the proposals in the chapter entitled 'Increasing solidarity in the Single Market' to be expanded and bolstered, and, in particular, for due account to be taken of the impact of the Single Market in the most disadvantaged regions, in order to anticipate and support those regions' adjustment efforts;

General Assessment

32. Calls on the Commission to take urgent action to encourage the mobility of citizens with a view to promoting sustainable growth, employment and social inclusion, and calls for the establishment of a 'mobility scoreboard' to measure mobility within the EU; in that connection, welcomes the Commission's initiatives on the recognition of professional qualifications, the 'Youth on the Move' initiative, the 'European Skills Passport', the proposal on the rights of air passengers, the initiative on access to certain basic banking services and the proposed initiative to improve the transparency and comparability of bank charges; suggests that the Commission, in its impact assessment, conducts a cost-benefit analysis and looks for synergies between the above-mentioned initiatives; calls on the Commission to increase and widen participation in mobility programmes, particularly among young people, and to raise these programmes' profile;

33. Notes that issues relating to product safety and market surveillance are of the utmost importance to European citizens; welcomes, therefore, the Commission's multiannual action plan for the development of European market surveillance based on guidelines for customs control and for product safety, and urges the Commission to establish a Single Market surveillance system for all products, based on one legislative act covering both the GPSD and the Market Surveillance Regulation; calls on the Commission to play a more active role in coordination and sharing of best practice between national customs and market surveillance authorities in order to increase the effectiveness of border controls on goods imported from third countries;; calls on Member States and the Commission to deploy the resources needed to make market surveillance activities effective;

34. Calls on the Commission to ask the Member States which are still imposing restrictions on their labour markets to review their transitional provisions in order to open up their labour markets to all European workers

35. Considers that an influx of highly qualified migrants and seasonal workers would be beneficial for the European economy; calls on the Member States, therefore, to fast-track the removal of restrictions in force on their labour markets for all EU citizens; in addition, calls on the Commission to further develop immigration policy in respect of those groups, bearing in mind the need not to deprive countries of origin of their vital human resources, while simultaneously improving measures concerning the management of external borders and the prevention of illegal immigration;

36. Reiterates that the principle of non-discrimination within the internal market does away with the requirement imposed on nationals of another Member State to supply original documents, certified copies, certificates of nationality or official translations of documents in order to obtain a service or more advantageous terms or prices;

37. Takes the view that the Services Directive creates the fundamental framework for a higher degree of free movement of service providers, as well as aiming to strengthen the rights of consumers as recipients of services and enhance the availability of information, assistance and transparency with regard to service providers and their services;

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38. Calls on the Commission to put forward practical proposals to extend consumer protection against unfair commercial practices to small businesses;

39. Welcomes the Commission's intention to propose a legislative initiative to reform the system for the recognition of professional qualifications; calls on the Commission to evaluate the *acquis* and publish a Green Paper by September 2011; draws attention to the need to guarantee the portability of pension rights; calls on Member States to coordinate their pension policies more effectively and to exchange best practices at European level;

40. Calls for a clearer link to be established between secondary and higher education programmes and the needs of the job market and stresses the important role of apprenticeships; calls on the Commission to promote formal and informal learning; believes that professional cards could be a concrete measure to facilitate the mobility of professionals in the Single Market, at least in certain sectors; urges the Commission, ahead of its review, to carry out an assessment of the impact of the introduction of European professional cards, taking into consideration their benefits, added value, data protection requirements and costs;

41. Considers that the Commission should sponsor a European skills exchange whereby small and medium-sized enterprises can benefit from the skills available in larger enterprises, thereby promoting synergies and mentoring;

42. Welcomes the Commission's intention to adopt a Communication on energy priorities for the period to 2020/2030; calls on the Commission to tackle missing infrastructure links and facilitate the integration of renewable energy in order to develop a fully operational internal energy market;

43. Welcomes the announcement of a legislative initiative on the implementation of the Posting of Workers Directive (96/71/EC) with a view to guaranteeing respect for posted workers' rights and clarifying the obligations of national authorities and businesses; calls on the Member States to remedy shortcomings in the implementation and enforcement of the directive;

44. Welcomes the Commission's announcement of a measure to ensure access to certain basic banking services; notes that scrutiny measures applied to customers who are considered to represent higher risks for banks should be objectively justified and proportionate; welcomes the proposed initiative to improve the transparency and comparability of bank charges;

45. Calls on the Commission to include in its programme key financial services initiatives (e.g. the Single Euro Payments Area (SEPA) and increased legal certainty regarding securities holdings) which are highly relevant to the Single Market; stresses that a fragmented payment system is an obstacle to cross-border trade; calls on the Commission to continue to improve the SEPA system in order to define a basic payment service available for all credit cards, increasing transparency in transaction costs and reducing interchange fees in the EU;

46. Calls for measures to create an appropriate legal framework for foundations, mutual societies and associations so as to give them European status, to prevent legal uncertainty and to promote other social economy enterprises and other social projects; welcomes the Commission's intention to revise Regulation (EC) No 1435/2003 on the Statute for European Cooperative Societies, calls, as part of this revision, for the creation of a genuinely autonomous Statute; stresses the need to improve cross-border access for social economy enterprises and maximise their entrepreneurial, social, cultural and innovative potential in the Single Market;

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47. Welcomes the Commission's intention to take account of the social impact of proposed legislation concerning the Single Market whenever necessary in order to make better informed and more evidence-based political decisions; encourages the Commission to propose a set of indicators which could be used to assess the social impact of legislation; considers that this impact assessment should be undertaken as part of an integrated assessment that considers all relevant impacts of a proposal (i.e. financial and environmental and on competitiveness, job creation and growth);

48. Calls on the Commission, in the framework of the re-launch of a more competitive single market creating sustainable growth with more and better jobs, to ensure that all social rights are respected; considers that, to this end, the Commission should include a reference to social policies and rights in single market legislation, where justified in the light of the conclusions of an assessment of the social impact of proposed legislation; emphasises, in addition, that, where relevant, due account should be taken in single market legislation of new Articles 8 and 9 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and the entry into force of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, which provides a whole range of civil, political, economic and social rights to Europeans, as well as the right to negotiate, conclude and enforce collective agreements in accordance with national law and practices and with due respect for EU law;

49. Welcomes the Commission's intention to put forward a legislative proposal on mortgage loans in order to respond to the current lack of consumer protection, the legal uncertainty surrounding mortgage loans and the insufficient comparability of the conditions and choices offered by mortgage loan providers, to guarantee the stability of the economic and financial system and to reduce barriers so that mortgage loans providers can do business and citizens can obtain a mortgage in another Member State;

50. Deplores the fact that no action on roaming charges is envisaged in the Commission's Communication on the Single Market Act, despite the tangible nature of such measures and the high expectations of citizens in this area; urges the Commission to propose an extension of the existing roaming regulation both in time - to June 2015 - and in scope, introducing retail price caps for data roaming; takes the view that, in order to achieve the digital agenda goals, this initiative should be included in the scope of the Single Market Act; calls on the telecommunications sector to promote a business model based on flat-rate charges for data transmission, voice messaging and text message roaming throughout the EU;

51. Calls on the Commission to take urgent measures to stabilise financial markets, ensure that those markets work for the benefit of the real economy and create an appropriately regulated and supervised single retail market, with the dual aim of achieving a high level of consumer protection and ensuring financial stability by avoiding bubbles, in particular with regard to real estate;

52. Calls on the Commission to identify and eliminate the tax obstacles still faced by European citizens; calls for stronger action to prevent double taxation of European citizens;

53. Welcomes the Commission's initiative to launch a public consultation on corporate governance and improving the transparency of the information provided by businesses on social and environmental matters and respect for human rights, but emphasises the importance of taking further specific steps to promote sound and responsible remuneration policies, adequate participation of women in management and executive boards, the valorisation of long-term shareholder commitment and the enhancement of employee consultation, participation and shareholding schemes; calls, in particular, for the promotion of employee shareholding schemes, the strengthening of long-term shareholder commitment and the promotion of information and consultation rights for employees and their representatives, together with boardroom participation rights; emphasises that increased transparency, good relations with staff, and production processes consistent with sustainable development are also in the interests of businesses, their owners and those who invest in them;

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54. Notes the Commission proposal concerning the social business initiative and recommends launching a consultation process on this project in order to assess the potential of this measure in terms of economic growth and job creation;
55. Considers that the Single Market Act should propose ways in which the public sector can better involve businesses in promoting innovative arrangements for the provision of public services; calls on the Commission and the Member States, on the basis of their respective competences, to ensure that services of general economic interest (SGEI), including social services of general interest (SSGI), are secured within a framework of universal access, high quality, affordability and clear financing rules by providing public authorities with a 'tool-kit' to evaluate the quality of such services; believes that the Commission should take sector-specific initiatives using all options available, based on and consistent with Article 14 of and Protocol 26 to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, to ensure that SGEI and SSGI can be provided at an appropriate level, in keeping with the principle of subsidiarity;
56. Calls on the Commission to facilitate the application of EU rules by clarifying the criteria governing the compatibility of state aid and public procurement in connection with social services of general interest (SSGI) with the internal market;
57. Calls for strategic and appropriate use to be made of Structural Fund and Cohesion Fund resources, and for the expansion of the Trans-European Networks with a view to developing the Single Market;
58. Draws particular attention to the added value of the TEN-T network, especially of those projects that are transnational in nature and which alleviate bottlenecks: points out that TEN-T provides an efficient framework for the movement of people and goods within the EU, and notes that the Europe 2020 Strategy recognises the European added value of speeding up strategic projects that cross borders, remove bottlenecks and support intermodal nodes (cities, ports, airports, logistical platforms);
59. Supports the concept of a core network consisting of priority projects which adhere to these principles, which should then be the main beneficiaries of EU funding, and urges that EU-supported transport investment should be dovetailed with other related transport infrastructure projects that receive EU funding from other sources;
60. Welcomes the introduction of real rights for passengers undertaking intra-EU travel in the aviation, rail, maritime and coach and bus sectors, and recognises that these rights are essential to facilitating the free movement of persons within the Single Market;
61. Calls for a review of the enforcement of those rights in the aviation sector, to be followed, if necessary, by legislative proposals to clarify and consolidate those rights with a view to ensuring their uniform application throughout the European Union and to eliminate the risk of distorting competition within the Single Market both within and between transport modes; calls for these proposals to include adequate protection for consumers in such areas as package travel, bankruptcies and excessive charges for services;
62. Points out that the existing legislative framework regulating air passengers' rights needs better enforcement measures, so that citizens, particularly persons with reduced mobility (PRM), can fully avail themselves of their rights; calls on the Commission to adopt a proposal amending the regulation on the rights of air passengers, in order to enhance consumer protection, (Ex AM 113(Or. EN) of FdRand a communication on the rights of passengers using all modes of transport, to be followed by legislative proposals;

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63. Calls on the Commission to take stock of the experience gained so far in the area of passenger rights, identify common patterns between modes and set out general policy guidelines for the coming years, focusing in particular on how to increase passengers' awareness of their rights and how to exercise them;
64. Calls on the Commission to encourage the use of new technologies in an efficient, intelligent and sustainable transport system which aids the passenger by supporting the use of integrated ticketing;
65. Emphasises the need to complete the Digital Single Market, and notes that its benefits will have a direct impact on the day-to-day lives of Europeans; calls for measures to promote e-health and universal access to broadband services at affordable prices; welcomes the proposal for a decision establishing a European Radio Spectrum Action Programme, in particular the freeing-up of the 800 MHz digital dividend band by 2013 so that the wireless broadband market can grow and ensure fast internet access for all citizens, particularly those living in less accessible parts of Europe, such as island, mountain, rural and sparsely populated areas;
66. Urges Member States not to look at the Commission proposal on a horizontal anti-discrimination directive (COM(2008) 0426) only in terms of costs, but also in terms of the potential benefits when people who previously did not feel safe and secure in certain areas start to access services there;
67. Strongly supports the '25 actions to improve the daily life of EU citizens' contained in the EU Citizenship report 2010 (COM(2010)0603), particularly those relating to increased protection for victims, suspects and accused persons;
68. Welcomes the directive on patients' rights in cross-border healthcare and calls on Member States to implement it fully;

Key priorities

69. Calls on the Commission to endorse the following list of proposals as key Parliament priorities:
- Calls on the Commission to take measures to increase the mobility of European citizens, in particular by publishing by September 2011 a Green Paper on the recognition of professional qualifications, including an assessment of the existing framework, and, if appropriate, to propose a legislative initiative to reform this framework in 2012, at the same time assessing the feasibility and the added value of EU-wide professional identity cards and a 'European skills passport' in 2011 and setting-up a 'mobility scoreboard' to measure mobility within the EU;
 - Calls on the Commission to play a more active role in coordinating the activities of national market surveillance and customs authorities, in order to improve the effectiveness of border controls on goods imported from third countries, and to draw up in 2011 a multiannual action plan for the development of an effective European market surveillance system for all products, while allowing Member States flexibility in fulfilling their legal obligations;
 - Urges the Commission to propose an extension of the existing roaming regulation both in time - to June 2015 - and in scope, introducing retail price caps for data roaming in order to reduce roaming costs for members of the public and businesses;
 - Calls on the Commission to submit by June 2011 a legislative proposal on guaranteeing access to certain basic banking services and to improve the transparency and comparability of bank charges by the end of 2011;

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- Calls on the Commission to come up with a legislative proposal to remove obstacles encountered by mobile workers in order to ensure the full portability of pension rights;

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70. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.

Single market for enterprises and growth

P7_TA(2011)0146

European Parliament resolution of 6 April 2011 on a Single Market for Enterprises and Growth (2010/2277(INI))

(2012/C 296 E/10)

The European Parliament,

- having regard 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’ (COM(2010)0608),
- having regard to its resolution of 20 May 2010 on delivering a Single Market to consumers and citizens ⁽¹⁾,
- having regard to Professor Mario Monti’s report of 9 May 2010 ‘A new Strategy for the Single Market’,
- having regard to the Commission Communication ‘Europe 2020 – a strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth’ (COM(2010)2020),
- having regard to the Commission Communication ‘Europe 2020 Flagship Initiative. Innovation Union’ (COM(2010)0546),
- having regard to the Commission Communication ‘Smart Regulation in the European Union’ (COM(2010)0543),
- having regard to the Commission Communication ‘Digital Agenda for Europe’ (COM(2010)0245),
- having regard to the Report ‘Evaluation of SMEs’ access to public procurement markets in the EU’ ⁽²⁾,
- having regard to the Commission Communication ‘Cross-border business-to-consumer e-commerce in the EU’ (COM(2009)0557),
- having regard to the Commission Recommendation of 29 June 2009 on measures to improve the functioning of the single market ⁽³⁾,
- having regard to the Commission Communication ‘Public procurement for a better environment’ (COM(2008)0400),

⁽¹⁾ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2010)0186.

⁽²⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/business-environment/files/smes_access_to_public_procurement_final_report_2010_en.pdf

⁽³⁾ OJ L 176, 7.7.2009, p. 17.