

Wednesday 12 December 2018

P8_TA(2018)0511

Single Market package**European Parliament resolution of 12 December 2018 on the single market package (2018/2903(RSP))**

(2020/C 388/06)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission communication of 28 October 2015 entitled ‘Upgrading the Single Market: more opportunities for people and business’ (COM(2015)0550),
 - having regard to the Commission staff working document of 28 October 2015 entitled ‘Report on single market integration and competitiveness in the EU and its Member States’ (SWD(2015)0203),
 - having regard to the Commission communication of 6 May 2015 entitled ‘A digital single market strategy for Europe’ (COM(2015)0192),
 - having regard to the Commission communication of 13 April 2011 entitled ‘Single Market Act — Twelve levers to boost growth and strengthen confidence — Working together to create new growth’ (COM(2011)0206),
 - having regard to the Commission communication of 3 October 2012 entitled ‘Single Market Act II — Together for new growth’ (COM(2012)0573),
 - having regard to the report of 9 May 2010 by Mario Monti to the President of the Commission entitled ‘A New Strategy for the Single Market — At the Service of Europe’s Economy and Society’,
 - having regard to its resolution of 11 March 2015 on single market governance within the European Semester 2015 ⁽¹⁾,
 - having regard to its study of September 2014, commissioned by the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection, entitled ‘The cost of non-Europe in the single market’,
 - having regard to its study of January 2016, commissioned by the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection, entitled ‘A strategy for completing the single market: the trillion euro bonus’,
 - having regard to its resolution of 26 May 2016 on non-tariff barriers in the single market ⁽²⁾, based on a report by the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection,
 - having regard to its resolution of 26 May 2016 on the single market strategy ⁽³⁾, based on a report by the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection,
 - having regard to the Commission communication of 10 May 2017 entitled ‘Mid-Term Review on the implementation of the Digital Single Market Strategy — A Connected Digital Single Market for All’ (COM(2017)0228),
 - having regard to the Commission communication of 22 November 2018 entitled ‘The Single Market in a changing world — A unique asset in need of renewed political commitment’ (COM(2018)0772),
 - having regard to Rule 123(2) and (4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the single market has been, and remains, the cornerstone of European integration and a highly competitive social market economy, as well as an engine of growth and jobs; whereas this has been highlighted further during the recent negotiations on the withdrawal of the UK from the EU;

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 316, 30.8.2016, p. 98.

⁽²⁾ OJ C 76, 28.2.2018, p. 105.

⁽³⁾ OJ C 76, 28.2.2018, p. 112.

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- B. whereas the world is going through a process of rapid and significant change that also has an impact on the EU single market;
 - C. whereas the single market is not fully exploiting its potential;
 - D. whereas the single market cannot be considered in purely economic terms;
 - E. whereas, according to Parliament's own research, the anticipated gain from completing the single market stands at EUR 1 trillion in increased GDP collectively across the Union, including significant gains to be made in the services sector;
 - F. whereas a strategic and comprehensive approach is needed, and whereas the response to the challenges faced should be as much political as technical in nature;
 - G. whereas recent signs of transposition are not reassuring; whereas, according to the Commission communication on the single market in a changing world, the transposition deficit for 16 directives with transposition dates between December 2017 and May 2018 was 25 % in June 2018;
1. Welcomes the overall objectives of the Commission communication on the single market in a changing world, just months before the European elections of 2019 and on the 25th anniversary of the single market;
 2. Emphasises that a well-functioning single market is one of the essential foundations of the European Union, and the deepening of the single market should therefore be brought back to the top of the political agenda, as it contributes to freedom, opportunity and prosperity for Europe, creates specific rights and obligations for citizens, workers, consumers, entrepreneurs and businesses, and benefits more than 500 million Europeans and more than 21 million SMEs;
 3. Emphasises the urgent need to eliminate the unjustified remaining barriers from the single market in order to achieve tangible and quick results in terms of growth, innovation, job creation, consumer choice and new business models;
 4. Stresses that the Union must work to ensure that the free movement of services is given the same priority as the free movement of goods within the single market; underlines that the free movement of services is far less developed than the free movement of goods;
 5. Stresses that, despite the abolition of tariff barriers in the single market, a vast number of various unjustified non-tariff barriers still exist; highlights that strengthening the single market requires urgent action at both EU and national level in order to address these unjustified barriers;
 6. Believes that deeper integration of the single market requires more political courage and commitment than 25 years ago and greater efforts to close the gap between rhetoric and delivery and to tackle its weaknesses;
 7. Is convinced that in order to achieve deeper integration a level playing field is key, applying to all players in all Member States;
 8. Notes that only 7 % of SMEs offer goods and services online to customers in other Member States and only 15 % of consumers make use of this possibility, and points out that through the completion of the digital single market more than EUR 415 billion could be gained and new jobs created in this area;
 9. Highlights that this data clearly demonstrates the urgent need to continue working to make the digital sphere fully accessible to citizens and businesses and to improve consumer trust in the digital dimension;
 10. Urges the outdated separation of the 'digital' single market from the 'offline' single market to be stopped, as digital solutions are an indispensable part of the modern economy and the products and services it provides, and every aspect of the single market should be digitally fit;
 11. Asks the Commission to continue working towards completing the digital single market with ambitious proposals, with a view to establishing modern and effective common rules in order to protect consumers, help public administrations, enhance the competitiveness of European businesses and SMEs, and generate fair competition;

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12. Believes that in order to defend and deepen the single market it is crucial to strongly defend the four freedoms, namely the free movement of people, services, goods and capital, both physically and online, and stresses that all EU actors need to play by commonly agreed rules;
 13. Points out that new legislation should consistently reflect the market integration ambition, the need to eliminate unjustified regulatory and administrative barriers and the need to be future-proof;
 14. Points out that the single market is increasingly coming under pressure from national rules that run counter to the principles underpinning it, especially rules at national level that impact the free movement of goods and services; recognises that unjustified and disproportionate national measures, as well as uncoordinated measures, could put at risk the unity and the effectiveness of the Single Market; recalls, however, that certain measures may be legitimate and necessary to protect public interest objectives as recognised in the treaties;
 15. Stresses that it is important to ensure that rules deliver in practice: citizens and businesses can only enjoy the many advantages of the single market if the rules that have been jointly agreed actually work in practice and benefit those citizens and businesses;
 16. Urges the Commission to make better use of existing instruments to take action against national rules not in line with single market legislation;
 17. Acknowledges that the single market governance structure clearly needs to be strengthened with a view to ensuring effective monitoring mechanisms and detecting inadequate transposition of single market legislation or inadequate implementation and application, thus ensuring that infringement procedures are applied where necessary;
 18. Strongly supports the Commission's invitation to the European Council to dedicate an in-depth discussion at the level of heads of state or government to the single market in all its dimensions, with a view to identifying common priorities for action and appropriate mechanisms to match the much-needed renewed political commitment to the single market;
 19. Urges the next Commission, in view of the upcoming political term 2019-2024, to ambitiously plan single market actions; regrets that the Commission presented a number of legislative proposals too late for the co-legislators to be able to work on them properly and adopt them by the end of the mandate;
 20. Asks the European Council to commit to a new pledge to complete the single market by 2025, including a new public timetable for actions, as European leaders did in 1985; is very concerned, however, by the fact that several legislative proposals are completely blocked in the Council, which has been unable to adopt a position on them; calls on the Council to put an end to this situation, which harms both our citizens and companies;
 21. Reminds the Commission and the Council of their responsibility regarding the single market, especially towards European citizens and businesses;
 22. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.
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