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6.6.2012

B7-0300/2012

## **MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION**

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Commission

pursuant to Rule 110(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on ‘Single Market Act: The Next Steps to Growth’  
(2012/2663(RSP))

**Malcolm Harbour**

on behalf of the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection

**B7-0300/2012**

**European Parliament resolution on ‘Single Market Act: The Next Steps to Growth’ (2012/2663(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- 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 27 October 2010 entitled ‘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 the Commission staff working document of 24 February 2012 entitled ‘Making the Single Market Deliver Annual Governance check-up 2011’ (SWD(2012)0025),
  - having regard to the Commission staff working paper of 16 August 2011 entitled ‘The Single Market through the lens of the people: A snapshot of citizens’ and businesses’ 20 main concerns’ (SEC(2011)1003),
  - having regard to the Conclusions of the Competitiveness Council of 10 December 2010,
  - having regard to its resolution of 20 May 2010 on delivering a single market to consumers and citizens<sup>1</sup>,
  - having regard to its resolution of 6 April 2011 on a single market for enterprises and growth<sup>2</sup>,
  - having regard to its resolution of 6 April 2011 on a single market for Europeans<sup>3</sup>,
  - having regard to its resolution of 6 April 2011 on governance and partnership in the Single Market<sup>4</sup>,
  - having regard to its resolution of 1 December 2011 on the outcome of the Single Market Forum, held in Krakow (Poland) on 3-4 October 2011, and the European Council conclusions of 23 October 2011,
  - having regard to Rule 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the European Single Market has brought tremendous benefits to the citizens of Europe, whilst opening up new opportunities for European businesses, especially small

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<sup>1</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2010)0186.

<sup>2</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2011)0146.

<sup>3</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2011)0145.

<sup>4</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2011)0144.

and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs);

- B. whereas the Single Market is a key driver for economic growth and employment in the European Union; whereas Europeans have not yet fully benefited from the potential of the Single Market in many areas and whereas new incentives are needed, in particular to ensure effective labour mobility across Europe, together with adequate social cohesion, and to facilitate selling and buying across borders;
- C. whereas the Single Market must not be seen in isolation from other horizontal policy areas, particularly health, social and consumer protection, labour law, the environment, sustainable development and external policies; whereas the concrete implementation of the EU 2020 Strategy needs a fully-fledged approach to the deepening of the Single Market;
- D. whereas the current economic downspin, and the re-emergence of protectionist economic attitudes in Member States, have threatened some of the most visible achievements of the European integration process; whereas the Single Market is needed more than ever as a means to revitalise the European economy, by providing a concrete response to the current long-standing crisis, and to ensure the viability of the European project in the long term;
- E. whereas the Member States and the EU institutions should agree on a binding calendar, and on the concrete measures needed to enforce the Single Market legislation and to abolish all remaining unjustified obstacles to the free circulation of goods, services and workers;
- F. whereas the Member States and the EU institutions should focus on adopting and swiftly implementing the key pieces of legislation on growth, giving priority to tackling youth unemployment and cutting red tape;

### ***I. Introduction***

1. Stresses that strengthening the Single Market and underpinning it with the right economic governance should be at the core of the EU's growth agenda, and calls for the Single Market to be completed with utmost determination and speed, taking due account of the economic, social and environmental dimensions;
2. Highlights the strategic relevance of the Single Market Act, and of the identification of the 'twelve levers' for sustainable, smart and inclusive growth, as an important contribution to strengthening the Single Market in a comprehensive and balanced manner; emphasises that the Single Market Act is the result of a broad stakeholder and inter-institutional consultation process;
3. Is of the opinion that 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; calls on the Commission to assist Member States in ensuring the implementation of the key actions aiming at early transposition, well ahead of the deadline;
4. Believes that there is a need to maintain the momentum achieved with the Single Market

Act and proposes, therefore, that the Single Market Act should be a rolling programme to be updated and reviewed annually; welcomes the Commission's plan to further deepen the Single Market by taking stock of progress achieved with the Single Market Act before the end of 2012, with the aim of facilitating growth and improving the governance of the Single Market; reiterates that the Single Market Act should also address the EU's socio-economic problems and should work towards a market that is at the service of citizens;

5. Takes the view that the next steps for priority actions should largely be based on the growth-boosting 'twelve levers' of the Single Market Act, in order to focus political attention, ensure consensus around a balanced way forward, and deepen and modernise the Single Market, with special attention given to promoting its benefits to consumers and business; takes the view that the Single Market should also preserve social welfare and ensure fair working conditions;
6. Requests the Commission to make relevant detailed proposals by spring 2013;

## ***II. Single Market governance***

7. Reiterates that strong leadership on the part of the European institutions, and political ownership on the part of the Member States, is required to restore the credibility of – and confidence in – the Single Market;
8. 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;
9. 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;
10. Calls on the Commission 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; calls, therefore, on the Commission to pursue Single Market infringements swiftly and vigorously;
11. Asks the Commission to 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;
12. Considers that correlation tables increase transparency in the process of ensuring the application of EU law;
13. Calls on the EU and the Member States to commit themselves to cut administrative burdens by an additional 25 % by 2015 and to modernise their public administrations;
14. Calls on the Commission to develop a 'proportionality test' to identify disproportionate EU legislation, and to repeal such legislation;
15. Welcomes the Commission's 2011 'Governance Check-Up', which presents for the first

time an integrated view of the various tools used in a ‘Single Market governance cycle’, including the Internal Market Scoreboard, the Solvit Annual Report and the ‘Your Europe’ website; strongly reaffirms its position regarding the importance of one-stop shops; commends the Commission for its work on the Your Europe portal, and encourages completion of the development of this innovative tool which serves as an essential complement to the ‘Points of Single Contact’ network by providing a single gateway to all the information and help services that citizens and businesses need in order to make use of their rights in the Single Market;

16. Encourages the Commission to adopt, without delay, 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;
17. Emphasises the importance of a stronger and earlier involvement of stakeholders in designing, adopting, implementing and monitoring the measures needed to boost growth and citizens’ rights in the Single Market; emphasises, furthermore, that dialogue with social partners, national parliaments and civil society plays an essential part in restoring confidence in the Single Market, and should therefore be at the core of the renewed Single Market;
18. Calls on the Member States and the Commission to involve citizens more closely in the development of the Single Market, in particular by providing clearer information that will allow them to monitor the enforcement of Single Market rules, by fostering dialogue and communication with citizens in order to better understand their expectations, and by ensuring that citizens and businesses are able to exercise their rights and meet their obligations;
19. Calls on the Commission to adopt a user-friendly, regularly updated and easily accessible ‘Citizens’ Charter’, as called for in Parliament’s aforementioned resolution of 20 May 2010, encompassing the various facets of the right to live and work anywhere in the EU; takes the view that this Charter should readily be available and serve as a handbook for all citizens moving, working, shopping and selling across borders, and that it should provide more practical information and solutions to the day-to-day problems encountered by European citizens;
20. Reiterates the need for the continuous monitoring of the implementation of the Single Market Act at the highest political level; welcomes the engagement of the European Council with the monitoring of the implementation of the Single Market Act; calls on the Commission and the Member States to ensure proper implementation and transposition of Single Market legislation through more systematic, independent monitoring in order to guarantee a level playing field throughout the Union; proposes that transposition can be improved by working closely with Member States to discover the problems that they face when transposing legislation, including conflicts with national legislation, so that the Commission can assist them;
21. Calls on the Commission to 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; takes the view that the annual

monitoring should assess the extent to which consumers and businesses alike benefit from the Single Market, and should report on obstacles to its functioning;

22. Invites the Commission to 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; suggests that the Growth initiative should be endorsed politically by the European Council and the European Parliament, following the consultation of the national parliaments, and that this process should feed into distinct country-specific recommendations that take into account the state of implementation of the Single Market;

### ***III. The next steps to growth***

23. Believes that it is important that sectors which have a direct impact on the daily lives of citizens and consumers' need to be at the centre of the Single Market policies and legislation;
24. 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, and to follow up the mutual evaluation process and the performance checks; considers that the Member States should consider integrating these with the Points of Single Contact required under the Goods Package;
25. 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;
26. Highlights the crucial role of public procurement in enhancing innovation and competitiveness and calls, therefore, for momentum to be maintained in this area; calls on the Commission, the Member States and local authorities 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;
27. Underlines the need to quickly use unspent EU funds for measures tackling efficiently high youth unemployment; 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;
28. Underscores that, in the digital era, the Union must fully realise the potential and opportunities that the internet, e-commerce and the diffusion of ICT – in SMEs and in public administration – present to the further development of the Single Market, making it available to all EU citizens; emphasises that the development of new technologies must take into account the need to protect all citizens, consumers and SMEs;
29. Calls on the Commission to 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; demands further action from the Member States in coordination with the

Commission to overcome hurdles preventing citizens from having access to online services;

30. Calls for an ambitious Consumer agenda, encompassing legislative and policy actions, aimed at fully empowering average as well as vulnerable consumers;
31. Highlights the role of retail as a driver for growth and jobs, and as a building-block of the Single Market; welcomes the planned adoption of the Commission's comprehensive Retail Action Plan, setting out a strategy for a more efficient and fair retail market in Europe, building on positive achievements and addressing outstanding challenges, as well as a Communication assessing national measures in place to deal with contractual relations; recalls that the Action Plan, and the results of the multi-stakeholder dialogue on B2B (business-to-business) practices, will be presented at the first Retail Market Roundtable, to be convened by the end of 2012;
32. Believes that the external dimension of the Single Market needs to be reinforced, in particular by enhancing cooperation in the field of international standardisation, and that synergies achievable between the Union's internal and external economic policies, namely between the Single Market and trade, should be pursued;
33. Calls on the Commission, and urges the Member States, to promote the implementation of the Single European Sky II, for which the deployment of SESAR will play an important role, and calls on the Commission to put forward, by 2013, a proposal on the completion of a single European airspace through the reduction of the number of functional airspace blocks;
34. Emphasises 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; stresses the need to create a single European energy market in order to reduce EU energy dependence, enhance EU energy efficiency and improve affordability of prices;
35. Calls on the Commission to 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 which does not detract from the quality of rail transport services and which safeguards public service obligations;
36. Stresses the need to foster the role of SMEs in the Single Market by ensuring access to credit and financing, and by fully implementing the Small Business Act;
37. Calls on the Commission to 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;
38. Recalls its request for the 14th Company Law Directive on the cross-border transfer of

company seats, pointing out that such a directive would considerably facilitate companies' mobility in Europe; asks the Commission, moreover, to present legislative proposals that follow up on the Green Paper on Corporate Governance and to include them in the 2013 Work Programme;

39. Deplores the withdrawal of the proposed regulation for the statute of European mutual societies, and asks the European Commission to put forward a new proposal; requests that the Commission resume its work on the Ninth Company Law Directive on groups of companies in order to provide a regulatory framework for this common form of business association, and thereby create a set of common rules with regard to, inter alia, the protection of subsidiaries and stakeholders, and greater transparency in the legal and ownership structure;
40. Calls on the Commission to bring forward proposals to improve the financial instruments available to support sustainable growth, such as project bonds for long-term investments, and to issue a communication on the contribution of competition policy to innovation and growth, reviewing existing rules as necessary;
41. Request that the Commission urgently brings forward proposals to improve the protection of investors and other retail clients with regard to financial services, notably packaged retail investment products (PRIIPS), undertakings for collective investments in transferable securities (UCITS), and insurance mediation and insurance guarantee schemes;
42. Underlines the importance of a robust financial market infrastructure to support the Single Market, and calls, therefore, on the Commission to bring forward early proposals for crisis resolution mechanisms for such an infrastructure; emphasises, furthermore, the importance of an early follow-up to the Commission's strategy paper on the future of VAT;
43. Reiterates its call on the Commission to 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 and serving to assess whether they are dealt with in a thorough and effective manner, not least by examining the phenomenon of 'social dumping'; calls on the Commission to present an action plan to remove the persistent obstacles facing Union citizens wishing to make use of their right to move and work in another Member State;
44. 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 and workers, and that important incentives are needed, in particular, to ensure effective labour mobility across Europe, notably through the guarantee of the portability of social security and pensions rights;
45. Calls on the Commission and the Member States, while complying with Regulation 883/2004 and Article 153 TFEU, to undertake studies to ensure the continuity of social security protection for mobile citizens in the EU and equal treatment with nationals, also taking into consideration an optional, voluntary and transferable social security system at European level, complementary to the general system, in order to set up closer cooperation on social policy; believes that previous ideas relating to a 28th regime of



social security systems should be updated and incorporated into the studies;

46. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and Commission.