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REPORT

on the Single Market Strategy
(2015/2354(INI))

Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection

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MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

on the Single Market Strategy (2015/2354(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Article 3 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and Article 9 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU),
- having regard to Directive 2011/83/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on consumer rights, amending Council Directive 93/13/EEC and Directive 1999/44/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council and repealing Council Directive 85/577/EEC and Directive 97/7/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council¹,
- 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 ‘A Single Market Strategy for Europe – Analysis and Evidence’ (SWD(2015)0202),
- 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 2015²,
- having regard to its resolution of 11 December 2013 on the European Retail Action Plan for the benefit of all actors³,
- having regard to its resolution of 19 January 2016 on Towards a Digital Single Market Act⁴,
- having regard to its resolution of 14 January 2014 on effective labour inspections as a

¹ OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p.64.

² Texts adopted, P8_TA(2015)0069.

³ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0580.

⁴ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2016)0009.

- strategy to improve working conditions in Europe¹,
- having regard to the study of September 2014 entitled ‘The Cost of Non-Europe in the Single Market’, commissioned by the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection,
 - having regard to the study of September 2015 entitled ‘A strategy for completing the Single Market: “the trillion euro bonus”’, commissioned by the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection,
 - having regard to the study of 20 November 2015 entitled ‘Ex-post evaluation of Late Payment Directive’, commissioned by the Commission,
 - having regard to the study of November 2014 entitled ‘The EU furniture market situation and a possible furniture products initiative’, commissioned by the Commission,
 - having regard to the October 2015 edition of the online Single Market Scoreboard,
 - having regard to Rule 52 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection and the opinion of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (A8-0171/2016),
- A. whereas the single market has been, and remains, the cornerstone of EU integration and the engine of sustainable growth and jobs by facilitating trade across the EU while guaranteeing a highly competitive social market economy based on Article 3(3) of the TEU;
- B. whereas the deepening of the European internal market remains a key economic issue, especially in the context of the development of new technologies, where a market with critical mass is needed to promote the emergence of innovative and competitive players on the global scene;
- C. whereas the single market has undergone many positive developments in recent years, but could achieve more in almost all areas – in stimulating a digital-driven market, encouraging start-ups, integrating global supply chains, improving workers mobility and social rights, dealing with new business models and ensuring market facilitation, mutual recognition, standardisation and the licensing of professionals –if unjustified physical, legal and technical barriers are eliminated;
- D. whereas, according to Parliament’s own research, the anticipated gain from completing the single market stands at a trillion euros (corresponding to a potential efficiency gain of EUR 615 billion per year); whereas fragmentation of the single market is one of the major impediments to higher structural economic growth;
- E. whereas a genuinely strategic approach is called for the further integration of the single market, and whereas the response to the challenges faced should be political as much as technical in nature, particularly in the case of unjustified non-tariff barriers within the single market;
- F. whereas the EU should pursue a genuine single market and treat it as a common asset of all citizens, workers, economic operators and Member States, and whereas the single

¹ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2014)0012.

market will only reach its full potential if it has the full support of all Member States in collaboration with each other;

- G. whereas rules and actions at EU level should be incorporated into a uniform strategic vision and thus be consistent with each other and not contradictory; whereas Member States have to refrain from discriminatory measures, such as trade and tax laws that only affect certain sectors or business models and distort competition, making it difficult for businesses to establish themselves in a given Member State, which constitutes a clear breach of internal market principles;
- H. whereas the single market must not be seen in isolation from other horizontal policy areas, particularly the digital single market, health, social and consumer protection, labour law and mobility of citizens, the environment, sustainable development, energy, transport and external policies;
- I. whereas the completion of the single market in the product and services sector and the removal of barriers is a top priority which requires fast-track approach from Member States and the EU institutions;
- J. whereas barriers in the single market lead to less choice and more expensive products and services for consumers;
- K. whereas a low level of recognition is enjoyed by social economy enterprises at European level, and whereas most of these enterprises are not recognised by a European-level legal framework, but only at national level in some Member States, with different legal forms; whereas this lack of an EU legal framework hinders the capacity of such enterprises to operate cross-border within the internal market;
- L. whereas counterfeiting is a serious threat to public health and safety, and whereas the total value of counterfeit goods trafficking has increased significantly in recent years, exacerbating the devastating impact of counterfeiting on innovation, employment and the branding of European companies;
- M. whereas the creation of a single capital market would encourage greater cross-border risk-sharing and more liquid markets;
- N. whereas the summary report of the Commission consultation on geo-blocking reveals strong consumer support for legislative measures against geo-blocking;
- O. whereas the economic consequences of the financial crisis are still being felt and GDP remains below the 2008 level in several Member States;
- P. whereas the single market is characterised by persistently high unemployment rates; whereas since the financial crisis the number of unemployed has increased by over six million; whereas by the end of 2015 there were more than 22 million people in the Union without work;

Policy objectives

- 1. Supports the overall objectives of the Commission's Single Market Strategy for goods and services: 'Upgrading the Single Market: more opportunities for people and business', and appreciates its actions in key areas to unleash the full potential of the single market for the benefit of consumers, employees and businesses, in particular start-ups, to increase the number of sustainable jobs and to grow and develop SMEs;

encourages the Commission to develop cross-cutting policies designed to achieve a fairer and more competitive single market in line with Title II of the TFEU on provisions having a general application;

2. Notes that the establishment of the internal market in which the free movement of goods, persons, services and capital is ensured is an essential objective of the Union;
3. Welcomes the fact that the strategy seeks to complement the efforts made in other areas; believes that, by improving the initiatives already being taken, the strategy has good potential to help ensure economic prosperity, increase the creation of sustainable jobs and growth, improve the wellbeing of Europeans by practical measures, make the European Union attractive for investments and develop the global competitiveness of European businesses; stresses, however, the need in the implementation of this strategy to avoid inconsistencies and overlaps between the different initiatives; underlines that proposals should be evidence-based and in line with better regulation principles;
4. Underlines the urgent need to eliminate the unjustified barriers from the single market in order to achieve tangible and quick results in terms of competitiveness, sustainable growth, research, innovation, job creation, consumer choice and new business models; believes that in order to achieve these goals, we should strive towards more harmonisation of legislation, where necessary and appropriate, while preserving the highest possible level of consumer protection, and adopt appropriate actions to tackle unjustified barriers established by Member States;
5. Is of the opinion that the mid-term review of the EU's 2020 Strategy should set ambitious targets for reaching a highly competitive social market economy and sustainable growth by 2020; stresses that the single market should be central in achieving that goal;
6. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to be disruptive in the implementation of the single market legislation; stresses the great potential of labour-intensive sectors such as retail and the hospitality industry for job creation, integration and tackling youth unemployment;
7. Considers that the Monti report of 2010 entitled 'A new strategy for the single market' should be fully implemented and taken into account during the work on the Single Market Strategy;
8. Stresses that the Single Market Strategy must not disregard the potential of the industrial sector in terms of sustainable growth and quality employment in Europe;
9. Considers that internal demand – and especially improving purchasing power, the adoption of innovative measures and investment in the green economy – is essential for tapping the full potential of the single market and for promoting sustainable growth;

A modern and more innovative single market

10. Welcomes the strategy's focus on aspects aimed at helping businesses, in particular SMEs, micro-enterprises and start-ups, to scale up their activities, grow and stay in the single market, thus facilitating their innovation and job creation; underlines that all initiatives for SMEs and start-ups require immediate actions and should be treated as a priority, but recalls that these initiatives should not provide opportunities for dishonest businesses to circumvent existing rules, lower workers' and consumer standards, or

- increase the risk of corporate fraud, criminal activities and letterbox companies;
11. Takes the view that the strategy can offer fresh opportunities to SMEs which are the backbone of EU economies, and to micro-enterprises and innovative start-ups; believes that developing the right business environment by improving private venture capital frameworks for SMEs, facilitating access to finance, producing sound legislation and fully applying the ‘Think Small First’ principle across the single market is crucial and could support growth and job creation;
 12. Believes that the lowering of administrative burdens and compliance costs on businesses, especially SMEs, and repealing unnecessary legislation, while continuing to ensure high standards of consumer, employee, health and environmental protection is key to delivering the objectives of the strategy;
 13. Believes that it is necessary to consider a set of possible objective criteria and indicators for a definition of ‘innovative’ start-ups, SMEs and social economy enterprises that can be used as a point of reference for the adoption of related measures; calls on the Commission to propose such criteria and indicators;
 14. Stresses that there is a need to promote social economy enterprises within the internal market policies, bearing in mind that there are around 2 million social economy enterprises in the EU, accounting for approximately 10-12 % of all European businesses; stresses, moreover, that the social economy is rapidly growing, provides quality products and services, and creates high-quality jobs;
 15. Calls on the Commission to ask the REFIT platform to address barriers to innovation and put forward proposals, in addition to the proposal for the establishment of a European Innovation Council, for ways to reduce or remove them; stresses that this process must not lead to lower employment, consumer protection and environmental standards; believes that in order to ensure better regulation, existing legislation should be reviewed and, where necessary, simplified to make it fit for purpose, while all new legislation should be future-proof and digital by default and follow the ‘Think Small First’ principle;
 16. Notes that good regulation can benefit businesses and workers alike and help promote economic growth and quality employment in the single market; notes the Commission’s Better Regulation agenda including the strengthened stakeholder involvement by means of REFIT Platform for example and strengthened impact assessments; underlines the need to assess not only short-term effects but also the long-term value of legislation and the consequences of non-legislation; believes that better, more effective and simple legislation will reduce administrative burdens and boost growth and job creation while continuing to ensure high standards of consumer, employee, health and environmental protection;
 17. Considers that further development of the single market requires the elimination of barriers to trade between Member States; supports the European Declaration of Competitiveness of February 2016, in particular the commitment to regulatory simplification and burden reduction, to doing more to reduce the overall burden of EU regulation, especially on SMEs and microenterprises, and to establishing where possible burden reduction targets in specific sectors; recommends that work on establishing such burden reduction targets should commence immediately;
 18. Believes that in order to ensure the objectives of the single market and to generate

growth and jobs, the EU must enhance competitiveness, along the lines set out in the Declaration of the European Council on competitiveness;

19. Welcomes the Commission's determination to address the lack of tax coordination within the EU, in particular the difficulties faced by SMEs as a result of the complexity of differing national VAT regulations; extends its full support to the Commission with regard to the VAT reform; calls on the Commission to consider how the new rules concerning place of supply for VAT on digital services can be amended so as to accommodate the specific needs of small and micro-businesses; calls on the Commission to assess the feasibility of further coordination and, in particular, to assess the possibility of a simplified VAT approach (for the same category of goods) in the e-commerce sector;
20. Supports the Commission's efforts to ensure tax fairness in the European Union and combat aggressive tax planning and tax avoidance practices; calls on the Commission to focus on working towards a country-by-country reporting obligation for transnational corporations;
21. Draws attention to the difficulties faced by businesses, and in particular SMEs and start-ups, in securing funding; points out that differences in external factors, such as ease of access to credit, taxation regimes and labour regulations, mean that SMEs find themselves at a disadvantage compared to others; calls on the Commission, while continuing the valuable support provided to those companies through the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) and programmes such as Horizon 2020, COSME and the ESI funds, to explore ways of further facilitating access to these and other programmes and instruments, especially for micro-enterprises, for instance by reducing calls for applications to six-month periods and further simplifying the relevant procedures and increasing the visibility of European funding; welcomes the Commission's intention to use funds from the COSME programme to fund information campaigns targeting innovative young SMEs; invites all regional and local authorities responsible for supporting companies, particularly those involved in the Enterprise Europe Network, to participate in these campaigns; considers simplification to be the key enabler in SME and start-up access to funding; calls on the Commission to make sure that crowdfunding can be done seamlessly across borders;
22. Calls on the Commission to consider strengthening the SME Envoy Network by taking a series of actions – while avoiding further bureaucracy – to improve awareness of this tool, and its visibility, among SMEs, to strengthen the exchange between each national SME Envoy and the corresponding SME representatives, and to present the network's activities to Parliament once a year;
23. Points out that, despite the fact that the European Parliament adopted the directive on combating late payment in commercial transactions in February 2011, each year thousands of SMEs and start-ups across Europe go bankrupt while waiting for their invoices to be paid, including by national public administrations; calls on the Commission and the Member States to step up their efforts to facilitate the application and enforcement of the Late Payment Directive; calls, furthermore, on the Member States to consider, in the event of unsatisfactory implementation of the Late Payment Directive, forms of adequate compensation for companies owed money by a public administration, so that they are not forced to go bankrupt because of it;
24. Appreciates the legislative initiative on business insolvency, including early

- restructuring and second chances, which will ensure that Member States provide a regulatory environment that accepts that failure sometimes happens and can encourage innovation, but points out that the costs and consequences of failing companies affects not only the company's owner and shareholders, but also its creditors, its employees and taxpayers; calls on the Commission to ensure that this initiative will align insolvency proceedings across the EU and reduce the length and costs of proceedings;
25. Regrets that the Commission did not emphasise enough the specific role of traditional manufacturing by Crafts and SMEs as an important contribution to both competitiveness and economic stability in Europe; encourages the Commission to exploit the full potential of digitalisation and innovation of the manufacturing industry, in particular for micro and small manufacturers and start-ups, as well as for less industrialised regions, in order to help reduce regional disparities and revitalise local economies; believes that stronger SMEs and Crafts policy must be put forward as one of the top priorities of all the European Institutions and Member States over the coming years;
 26. Welcomes the Commission's Single Digital Gateway, which should build on existing Points of Single Contact (PSCs) set up under the Services Directive and connect PSCs to other similar single-market networks; calls on the Commission to explore all ways of making the best use of the Single Digital Gateway to help European start-ups to scale up across Europe and become more international in outlook by providing accurate and clear information in different languages on all procedures and formalities necessary to operate domestically or in another EU country; urges the Commission to create a single entry point for businesses and consumers to all single-market-related information, assistance and problem-solving and to the national and EU-wide procedures needed to operate cross-border in the EU; urges the Commission to ensure that they are swiftly implemented;
 27. Notes that companies, especially SMEs, are either not aware of the rules applicable in other Member States or experience difficulty in finding and understanding the information on the rules and procedures applicable to their business; calls on the Commission to interlink all the different portals, access points and information websites in a single gateway that will provide SMEs and start-ups with user-friendly information so that they can make well-informed decisions and save time and costs;
 28. Calls on the Commission to develop the Points of Single Contact from a regulatory portal into a system of fully fledged online business portals promoting regular exchange of information by and between business representatives and assisting national businesses and citizens to compete in other EU Member States;
 29. Recalls the importance of strengthening and streamlining existing single market tools for SMEs in order to simplify their cross-border expansion; urges the Commission and the Member States to place greater emphasis on streamlining and improving Product Contact Points and Points of Single Contact;
 30. Recalls the urgent need to provide consumers with an equivalent level of protection online and offline; stresses the need for all economic operators operating online and offline in the single market to take all reasonable and appropriate measures to fight counterfeiting, in order to ensure consumer protection and product safety;
 31. Emphasises that the sharing economy is growing fast and that, while changing the way that many services and assets are provided and consumed, it can steer innovation and

has the potential to bring additional benefits and opportunities for companies and consumers in the single market; highlights the economic, societal and environmental benefits and challenges of the sharing economy; calls on the Commission to coordinate the efforts of Member States in finding short- or long-term legislative solutions vis-à-vis the sharing economy; calls on the Commission and the Member States to come forward with proposals to prevent abuse in the employment and taxation areas in the sharing economy;

32. Welcomes the initiative announced by the Commission on the sharing economy, and its intention to look at businesses established in that sphere and to clarify, by means of guidance, the interaction between the provisions of existing EU law for the application and functioning of sharing economy business models; takes the view that regulatory intervention in this field should be characterised by flexibility, to enable the rules to be promptly adapted and enforced in a rapidly changing sector which calls for fast and effective adjustments; stresses that existing consumer protection standards must also be applied and enforced in the digital economy; calls on the Commission to ensure the best possible conditions for the sharing economy to develop and thrive;
33. Stresses that the new security features the sharing economy provides, such as security of payments, geolocalisation and insurance, empower consumers and therefore call for an assessment of where ex-post remedies might be more effective than ex-ante regulations; calls on the Commission to further promote public-private cooperation in order to address the existing barriers in the sharing economy, in particular to the increased use of digital identity to build consumer trust in online transactions, to the development of digital solutions for the payment of taxes, to providing cross-border insurance schemes, and to the modernisation of employment legislation;
34. Considers that, in the sharing economy, the development of new business models, innovative services and temporary use of assets should be encouraged, but based, where possible, on similar rules for similar services, with a view to safeguarding the high quality of services, independently of how their access and provision is organised and to ensuring a level playing field and consumer safety while avoiding fragmentation that would hamper the development of new business models; believes that only a single-market approach can be taken with regard to the sharing economy, as fragmentation of the single market through local or national rules prevents European companies in the sharing economy from scaling up at European level;
35. Draws attention to the important role of EU technical standards for innovation, competitiveness and progress in the single market; believes that timely action needs to be taken to develop high EU standards for quality, interoperability and safety in furtherance of EU industrial policy, and that those standards should also be promoted at international level; calls on the Commission to support and reinforce EU standards, as already provided for by Regulation No 1025/2012, and to make the framework for standardisation more efficient and fit for purpose, including by exploiting the opportunities offered by international trade negotiations; stresses that standards should be set in a market-driven, open, inclusive and competitive way in order to be easily implementable by SMEs, and to avoid the risk of closed value chains, while nonetheless avoiding delays in their publication;
36. Underlines the important role played by the standardisation system in the free circulation of products and, increasingly, services; notes that the voluntary use of standards has contributed between 0.3 and 1 % to GDP in Europe, and positively

benefits labour productivity;

37. Recalls that the vast majority of standards are developed in response to an industry-identified need, following a bottom-up approach in order to ensure the market relevance of the standards; supports the commitment contained in the Single Market Strategy to ensuring that Europe remains at the forefront of standards development globally; encourages standardisation which is compatible with an international approach either through the development of global international standards or the recognition of equivalent international standards where appropriate; notes the intention to establish a framework and priorities for standardisation activities under a Joint Initiative for Standardisation; calls on the Commission to ensure that the Joint Initiative remains driven by such a bottom-up, industry-identified need and thus prioritises and delivers only those standards which respond to identified needs and demonstrate market relevance, and does not lead to unnecessary standards being pursued or requirements inconsistent with other related standards being established;
38. Notes that the proposal for a Joint Initiative on European Standardisation will build on the Independent Review of the European Standardisation System, and supports its objective for the European standardisation community to develop actions that will improve the system as a whole, including recommendations regarding inclusiveness and support for the competitiveness of European business;
39. Calls on the Commission in its engagement with European Standardisation Organisations (ESOs) to support ESOs and their national counterparts in their efforts to improve the involvement of SMEs in both the standard-setting process itself and the take-up of standards once set; further encourages the Commission to work closely with ESOs, National Standards Bodies and others to improve the transparency of the standards process, in implementation of commitments contained in the work programme for European standardisation for 2016 and the underlying Regulation;
40. Considers that the Joint Initiatives should focus on continued improvements in working practices, in particular through the establishment of processes to review the composition of technical committees, and measures to promote an openness and inclusiveness that will allow a broad range of stakeholders to contribute to discussions in technical committees;
41. Considers that a more transparent and accessible appeals mechanism would build trust and improve standard-setting processes; believes that where a standard has been requested by the Commission following the adoption of legislation by the European Union, Parliament's relevant committee may be able to play a role in public scrutiny and debate as part of this process, in advance of a decision for formal objection if appropriate; emphasises that when determining standardisation requests to be given to standardisation bodies, principles of proportionality and a risk-based approach should be included;
42. Believes that increasing public awareness of proposed standards in draft form prior to final approval may increase accountability and transparency and provide for a more robust process, in line with the existing best practices found among the European standardisation community;
43. Invites the Commission to report to Parliament by the end of 2016 on its implementation of the Joint Initiative on European standardisation, and the progress that has been achieved in cooperation with the European standardisation community on the

recommendations contained in the 2016 annual Union work programme;

44. Calls on the Commission, being responsible for competition in the EU internal market, to ensure, in cooperation with national surveillance authorities, a level playing field among competitors operating on the market;
45. Welcomes the recent initiatives for more efficient and transparent public procurement through better use of procurement data and greater voluntary assessment of procurement in certain large-scale infrastructure projects; calls on the Member States to cooperate with the Commission in implementing these initiatives;
46. Hopes that the Commission will continue the process of reforming the public procurement system, which it began with the 2014 directives, moving towards an increasingly qualified demand in the area of procurement, with the aim of rewarding technological innovation and energy efficiency;
47. Notes that the new 2014 public procurement regime is less cumbersome, and includes more flexible rules to better serve other public sector policies as well as Member States and local specialist businesses; points out that there are still significant inefficiencies in public procurement across Member States that limit cross-border expansion and growth in domestic markets;
48. Welcomes, as a matter of principle, the initiatives announced by the Commission to increase transparency, efficiency and accountability in public procurement; stresses, however, that the implementation and application of new EU directives should take precedence over the introduction of new instruments such as the contract register; stresses in this connection that possible data analysis tools must not lead to new or additional reporting requirements; recalls that an ex-ante evaluation mechanism should be purely voluntary for large infrastructure projects;
49. Underlines the need for a fully electronic public procurement system; highlights the need for fast and comprehensive implementation of the Public Procurement Directive in its entirety; highlights the need for wider use of e-procurement to open the markets for SMEs;
50. Underlines the importance of the unitary patent; supports the Commission's intention to eliminate uncertainties as to how the unitary patent will coexist with national and supplementary protection certificates (SPCs), as well as the possible creation of a unitary SPC, whilst keeping in mind public health and patients' interests;
51. Urges the Commission to introduce and implement before 2019 an SPC manufacturing waiver to boost the competitiveness of the European Generics and Biosimilar Industry in a global environment, as well as to maintain and create additional jobs and growth in the EU, without undermining the market exclusivity granted under the SPC regime in protected markets; believes that such provisions could have a positive impact on access to high-quality medicines in developing and least developed countries and help to avoid the outsourcing of production;
52. Calls for measures to facilitate access to the patent system in Europe for all micro-enterprises and SMEs and start-ups that wish to use the European patent with unitary effect in innovating their products and processes, including by cutting application and renewal fees and providing translation assistance; emphasises the importance of both standard-essential patents (SEPs) and innovative open licensing solutions which sometimes are better suited to supporting innovation; stresses the importance of patent

licensing agreements, within the restraints of EU competition law, based on fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory (FRAND) terms in order to preserve R&D and standardisation incentives, foster innovation and ensure fair licensing conditions;

53. Calls on the Commission to present without delay a legislative proposal for the establishment of a single European system for the protection of geographical indications for non-agricultural products in the EU, as already called for by Parliament, with the aim of establishing a single European system and thus putting an end to an inadequate and highly fragmented situation in Europe, and offering many and varied positive effects for citizens, consumers, producers and the whole European economic and social fabric; stresses that such an instrument would explicitly highlight the added value of many local products, with obvious benefits for the producers and regions concerned and in terms of consumer awareness;
54. Notes that the full potential of public-private partnerships (PPP) has not yet been harnessed in the majority of EU Member States; calls for the harmonisation of Member State framework rules on PPP, the dissemination of best practices and the promotion of this model;
55. Calls on Member States to set up structures to advise and assist cross-border workers with regard to the economic and social consequences of working in another Member State;
56. Notes that the deepening of the single market and the digital single market can bring new opportunities and challenges and will raise questions in terms of skills, new forms of employment, financial structures, social protection, as well as health and safety at work, all of which will have to be addressed and must bring benefits to workers, businesses and consumers alike;
57. Regrets that the strategy does not devote particular attention to skills mismatches, which remains a barrier to growth in the single market; notes with concern that between 40 %-47 % of the population in the EU is insufficiently digitally skilled and that the demand for digitally skilled employees is growing by 4 % per year while public expenditure on education has seen a 3.2 % decrease since 2010, which poses a threat to the EU's competitive position in the medium term and to the employability of its labour force; encourages Member States to invest in digital education and skills;
58. Notes the aims of the labour mobility package to contribute to a deeper and fairer single market; stresses however the importance of ensuring that measures contained in this package are proportionate and take into account the consequences of large amounts of mobility to particular regions;
59. Highlights the Commission's support for dual education systems which in addition to facilitating personal development can help tailor the skills and qualifications of European workers more closely to the real needs of the labour market; stresses the importance of ensuring that the strategy does not in any way undermine dual education systems while ensuring the quality of apprenticeships and in particular employment protection; underlines the important role of social partners in the development of dual education systems; believes that while a dual education system used in one Member State cannot be simply copied by another Member State there should be a European focus on the strong correlation between dual education and youth employment;
60. Supports measures in favour of closing the gaps in EU anti-discrimination legislation in

employment especially with regard to people with disabilities; supports, in addition, the implementation without delay of Council Directive 2000/78/EC on equal treatment in employment and occupation;

61. Welcomes the establishment of a platform for combating undeclared work and encourages Member States and social partners in particular to engage fully with that platform so that more effective action may be taken against undeclared work and bogus self-employment;
62. Insists that in order to harness the opportunity arising from the digitalisation of jobs, there is a need to create secure flexible working time arrangements, stable working conditions, social protection and to facilitate 'smart working' to improve productivity and work-life balance; stresses the importance of rolling out digital infrastructure in rural areas in this regard in order to take advantage of the wide range of opportunities offered by the digital agenda, for example teleworking;
63. Highlights the importance of strong and independent social partners and effective social dialogue; emphasises the need to involve the social partners where appropriate in discussions on possible national reforms of regulated professions;
64. Stresses the importance of having a social dialogue about the opportunities and changes that a single market brings as regards employment;

A deeper single market

65. Calls on the Commission to deepen its work on enforcements; points out that many measures have already been adopted but are not yet properly enforced, thus undermining the level playing field in the single market; points out, furthermore, that according to data provided by the Commission in mid-2015, around 1 090 infringement proceedings were pending in the area of the single market; calls on the Commission, with a view to improved transposition, application and enforcement of single market legislation, to ensure that administrative coordination, cooperation and enforcement are prioritised at all levels (EU, and between Member States and national, local and regional authorities) by taking well-targeted enforcement actions based on transparent, objective criteria, ensuring that the most economically significant cases of unjustified or disproportionate barriers are addressed; believes that with regard to national measures or implementation early intervention may be more effective and better results achieved than through infringement procedures; stresses, nevertheless, that if the early intervention procedure does not give results, the Commission must use all available measures, including infringement procedures, to ensure full implementation of legislation on the single market;
66. Welcomes the intention in the strategy to create a compliance culture and continued zero tolerance of infringements of single market regulations; calls on the Commission and Member States to explore whether the Commission's powers under the infringement procedures should not be aligned with those it has under competition policy;
67. Calls on the Commission to further support the Member States in developing a strong culture of compliance and enforcement, including promoting and broadening the Internal Market Information System (IMI), developing implementation plans for new major legislation, organising compliance dialogues with Member States and training

courses for national public servants in charge of enforcement, and fostering more effective coordination between national regulators; calls on the Member States to fully commit to implementing and enforcing EU legislation and applying the mutual recognition principle; stresses that correct enforcement and better regulation are essential, given the fragmentation of the single market, which restricts economic activity and consumer choice, and should cover all business sectors and apply to existing and future legislation;

68. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to analyse unnecessary restrictions within the single market that are not justified by overriding reasons relating to the public interest, to bring forward ideas on how to overcome these challenges where necessary and to report on this in 2017;
69. Asks Member States to transpose internal market rules in a coherent and consistent way and to implement fully and correctly the internal market rules and legislation; stresses the fact that requirements for extra tests and registrations, the non-recognition of certificates and standards, territorial supply constraints and similar measures create extra costs for consumers and retailers, thereby depriving European citizens of the full benefits of the single market; calls also on the Commission, with the aim of ensuring better governance, to operate an adequate policy towards those Member States that fail to apply internal market rules properly and to do so, where appropriate, by means of infringement procedures and by speeding up those procedures using a fast-track approach;
70. Notes that consistent uniform application and proper enforcement of EU rules combined with regular monitoring and evaluation on the basis of qualitative and quantitative indicators, benchmarking and sharing of best practices is urgently needed to achieve more homogeneous implementation of existing single market legislation; recalls, therefore, the need to fully and thoroughly transpose and implement European rules concerning the functioning of the single market in all Member States;
71. Calls on the Commission to strengthen its efforts to identify possible infringements of EU law by Member States at a very early stage and to take a firm stance against any legislative measures, adopted or pending in national parliaments, that could increase the fragmentation of the single market;
72. Stresses that the commitment and willingness of the Member States to properly implement and apply EU law is essential to making the single market successful; calls on the Member States to remove unjustified and disproportionate barriers to the single market and to refrain from discriminatory and protectionist measures to foster jobs, growth and competitiveness;
73. Notes that Member States play a crucial role in the good governance and proper functioning of the single market, and that they therefore need to jointly exercise proactive ownership and management of the single market, generating a new political impetus through consolidated state-of-health reports on the single market, regular and thematic discussions at Competitiveness Council meetings, dedicated annual European Council meetings and the inclusion of the single market as a pillar of governance in the European Semester;
74. Reiterates that the EU could create its own set of scientifically based, independent indicators on the degree of integration of the single market, to be published as part of the Annual Growth Survey, and calls for the adoption of a strategic paper by the

presidents of certain EU bodies – a ‘Five-Presidents Report’ – to map the road to a genuine single market;

75. Stresses that Parliament’s Internal Market and Consumer Protection Committee must strengthen its ties with national parliaments in order to coordinate and address issues in relation to the transposition and implementation of single market rules;
76. Emphasises that it is necessary to reinforce the SOLVIT network, particularly by extending the interaction between SOLVIT, CHAP, EU Pilot and Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) to streamline the broader framework of EU complaint procedures, and to raise awareness of the network amongst citizens and SMEs and of its practical role in solving interpretation problems relating to the single market; considers that data on issues raised through the SOLVIT network should be taken into account when the Commission considers how to identify priorities for enforcement action; calls on the Commission to strengthen its efforts to help Member States solve the most problematic cases; calls on the Member States to appropriately equip and adequately position their national SOLVIT centres in order for them to fulfil their role;
77. Emphasises that transparency of national rules is a vital tool in enabling cross-border trade within the single market and helps identify non-tariff barriers; encourages the Member States to make their rules more easily available online and in more than one language, in the interests of increasing trade, which will be of benefit to all;
78. Notes the importance of promoting mobility through training, apprenticeships, skills and employability via programmes such as Erasmus+ and EURES, which provide opportunities for millions of EU workers to gain useful experience;
79. Regrets that the mutual recognition principle is not applied properly by many Member States; anticipates the Commission proposal from this point of view, as part of strengthening the single market in goods, as it will improve mutual recognition through action to increase awareness, as well as ensuring better application and enforcement of the mutual recognition principle through the revision of the Mutual Recognition Regulation, with a view, among other things, to improving instruments for resolving disputes in connection with inadequate implementation or application of the mutual recognition principle; emphasises that if the mutual recognition principle was applied properly by the competent authorities throughout the EU, businesses would be able to focus strictly on doing business and boosting the EU’s growth and not on striving to overcome various hurdles imposed by non-respect of mutual recognition by Member States;
80. Considers also that the Commission should be more proactive in identifying sectors with high potential for cross-border trade and digitalisation where the mutual recognition principle could apply;
81. Calls on the Commission to clarify how the proposed market information tools would work and the legal base for such tools;
82. Reiterates its call for the rapid adoption of the Product Safety and Market Surveillance Package by the Council and calls on the Commission to fully engage in its role as a solution facilitator in this context; underlines the importance of providing relevant information on retail products, in particular the indication of country of origin, which is crucial to protecting consumers and strengthening the fight against counterfeiting;
83. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to tighten up the penalties for

- counterfeiting and to make sure that EU legislation in this area is fully enforced;
84. Stresses that regulatory differences between Member States regarding differing labelling or quality requirements create unnecessary obstacles to the activities of suppliers of goods and to consumer protection; underlines the added value of eco-labelling; calls on the Commission to assess which labels are essential and which are not essential for ensuring consumer information and to consider introducing a mandatory scheme for the provision of key information for hand-made and industrial products, as has been considered, for example, in the furniture sector at EU level in order to provide consumers with key information and ensure equal product quality in the different Member States; considers that such an initiative would be beneficial for consumers, industries and trade operators, ensuring transparency, adequate recognition of European products and harmonised rules for operators in the single market;
 85. Emphasises, in respect of the single market in services, that there is a clear need to improve the cross-border provision of services, while taking care not to encourage social dumping; urges the Member States to ensure proper and more effective application of the Services Directive, while avoiding the practice of gold-plating; welcomes the Commission proposal to improve notification under the Services Directive as the current procedure is inefficient and not transparent; believes that notification should occur earlier in the legislative process to allow for timely feedback from stakeholders and Member States and to minimise delays in the adoption of new legislation; agrees to extend the notification procedure provided for in Directive 2015/1535 to all the sectors not covered by that directive; rejects any suggestion that the scope of the Services Directive should be extended; calls on the Commission to address the burdens on the fractured banking sector in Europe, which create difficulties for non-residents, especially SMEs, in opening a bank account in another Member State;
 86. Calls on the Commission to work towards a simplified and standardised form in the procedure for the cross-border provision of services in order to reduce the requirements in relation to the posting of workers and thereby integrate SMEs more effectively into the internal market;
 87. Points out that the requirements for proportionate regulation are clearly set out in Article 16, paragraph 1, of the Services Directive and the jurisprudence of the ECJ; recalls that the fact that one Member State imposes less strict rules than another does not mean that the latter's rules are disproportionate and hence incompatible with European Union law; reiterates that rules that undermine, hinder or make unattractive cross-border services are only compatible with the requirements of the internal market if they serve overriding reasons of public interest and are really suitable for this purpose, and do not adversely affect the freedom to provide services more than is necessary to protect the public interest issue they are seeking to serve;
 88. Emphasises the need to ensure consistent proportionality assessment of regulatory requirements and restrictions applicable to services; notes the Commission proposal to introduce a services passport to facilitate, in key economic sectors such as business services, the development and mobility of companies across the single market; considers that this initiative should be aimed at simplifying administrative procedures for service providers wanting to operate cross-border and authorities, and at addressing obstacles of a regulatory nature that discourage these companies from entering a market in another Member State; calls for the possible services passport to take its place among the series of horizontal tools aimed at supporting internal market legislation,

such as the Internal Market Information System (IMI) or the Points of Single Contact, which have been provided for by the Services Directive as a single administrative interface for dealing with all the necessary administrative procedures surrounding cross-border services activities; stresses that the introduction of a service passport must not lead to a situation in which the case-law developed by the ECJ on overriding reasons of public interest which can legitimise rules restricting the cross-border movement of services is weakened or repealed; underlines, however, that a services passport could be superfluous if the Services Directive were properly implemented and enforced; stresses that this must not be accompanied by the introduction of the country-of-origin principle;

89. Welcomes the strong focus on the role of services in the single market and making sure that professionals and service companies, especially retailers, are not locked into their national markets; stresses that the further enlargement of the professional and services passports schemes will be central to avoiding the unnecessary red tape between Member States that holds back our citizens from working and trading across borders;
90. Reiterates the importance of removing barriers (including language and administrative barriers and those relating to lack of information) which restrict the business potential of online cross-border trade and undermine consumers' confidence in the single market; emphasises the importance of eliminating operational restrictions on the exercise of retail activity such as the regulation of shop opening hours, retail-specific and selective taxes and disproportionate requesting of information from companies;
91. Acknowledges the competence of local authorities with regard to urban planning; stresses, however, that urban planning should not be used as a pretext to circumvent the right of free establishment; recalls, in this connection, the importance of proper enforcement of the Services Directive; urges the Member States to remove barriers to free movement and to open up their markets in order to stimulate competitiveness and promote diversity among shops, which is essential if shopping areas – in particular in town and city centres – are to remain attractive;
92. Underlines that the retail and wholesale sector is the largest business sector in Europe; considers that reducing unnecessary regulatory administrative and practical barriers to retail businesses is a priority;
93. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to give the highest political prominence to the retail sector as a pillar of the single market, including the digital single market, and to lift regulatory, administrative and practical obstacles hampering the start-up of businesses, development and continuity and making it difficult for retailers to benefit fully from the internal market; considers that retail market legislation should be evidence-based, taking into account the needs of the sector;
94. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to analyse unnecessary restrictions on retail establishment in the single market that are not justified by overriding reasons relating to the public interest, to bring forward proposals to overcome these problems where necessary, and to report on that in spring 2017;
95. Takes the view, in respect of the professional services sector, that different approaches to regulation do not per se constitute an obstacle to the deepening of the internal market; stresses that rules on access to, and the exercise of, professions may be necessary for the protection of public interest and consumer protection and that their evaluation makes sense only in the national context;

96. Agrees with the Commission that many of the Member States' regulations on access to, and exercise of, regulated professions are disproportionate to requirements and create barriers restricting access to those professions;
97. Considers that cross-border provision of services on a temporary basis, including professional services, should be considered a key element for the internal market as they create jobs and provide high-quality products and services to EU citizens; therefore considers the periodic guidance to be a useful instrument for the Member States, taking into account the different economic, geographical and social backgrounds of the Member States;
98. Welcomes the renewed focus, under the recent Single Market strategy, on regulated and liberal professions in Europe, which represent an important factor for growth and employment in the single market; calls on the Commission to propose specific measures to implement the recommendations of the Commission Working Group on 'Action Lines for Bolstering the Business of Liberal Professions';
99. Welcomes the Commission's legislative proposal to address regulatory barriers restricting access to certain professions as an important step in opening up the single market and fostering job growth;
100. Supports the Commission's initiative to review the regulated professions, but points out that any such exercise should maintain high quality standards for employment and services, sound qualifications and consumer safety;
101. Believes that without competitive professional and business services across the EU businesses may struggle to remain competitive and maintain and create new jobs;
102. Highlights the fact that inefficient delivery services, especially as regards final-mile delivery, constitute a major barrier to selling across borders in the EU; stresses that accessible, affordable, efficient and high-quality delivery services are an essential prerequisite for a thriving single market; calls on the Commission to come up with a comprehensive action plan for parcel delivery and to define the goals to be achieved in this market by the end of 2020; calls on the Commission to put more emphasis on dismantling the barriers operators encounter in cross-border delivery;
103. Calls on the Commission to work with the Member States to simplify and speed up procedures for the recognition of professional qualifications, including by facilitating and encouraging the introduction of Common Training Frameworks while fully respecting the principle of subsidiarity; calls on the Commission and the Member States to boost ICT and STEM training and education in order to equip both the current and the future workforce with the relevant e-skills;
104. Welcomes the fact that the strategy refers to the high level of unemployment across the EU, but regrets that it does not present specific steps and measures that can help people find employment, such as improving education and training standards, meeting lifelong learning targets, and tackling skills mismatches and qualifications of workers and professionals; considers that it is self-evident that the single market is changing rapidly as a result of digitalisation of the different industries and that the new jobs will require a different set of skills and qualifications;
105. Disapproves of the fact that the Commission did not adopt any specific measures in the Single Market Strategy to address the needs of people and consumers with disabilities, elderly people and people living in rural and remote areas;

106. Considers the principle of equal pay for equal work at the same place as advocated by Commission President Juncker to be an important tool with which to fight market distortions;

A fairer single market

107. Emphasises that the genuine single market should provide benefits and protection for citizens, consumers and businesses in terms of better quality, greater variety, reasonable prices, and safety of goods and services; stresses that unjustified discrimination against service recipients (consumers and entrepreneurs) on the basis of nationality or place of residence that is not based on any objective and verifiable criteria, in both online and offline environments, is not acceptable within the single market; considers, however, that an obligation for companies to sell to the whole EU is not feasible;
108. Calls on the Commission to press ahead with a legislative proposal to address unjustified geo-blocking and other unjustified forms of discrimination by market operators; calls on the Commission to lay down effective criteria for assessing the unjustified character of geo-blocking; stresses that any such proposal must respect the basic principle of freedom of trade; stresses also that the Commission's proposal should take into account the principle of proportionality, in particular for small and micro businesses; notes that market operators sometimes need to engage in market selection in order to function within the market conditions set;
109. Agrees that when purchasing goods and services in the single market, consumers need transparent information and a set of modern and solid rights to protect their interests; is of the opinion that any review, merger or consolidation of consumer law directives should provide for a truly high level of consumer protection and enforceable rights, recognising existing best practices from national legislation;
110. Calls on the Commission to analyse the current legal uncertainties affecting consumers and if necessary to resolve them through clarification and supplements to the legal framework of consumers' rights; reiterates its commitment to the principle of flexible harmonisation for any proposed EU legislation concerning consumers and that full harmonisation is only applied when it sets a very high level of consumer protection and provides clear benefits for consumers;
111. Emphasises that social economy enterprises represent a diverse range of business models, which is key to a highly competitive and fairer single market; calls on the Commission to mainstream the social economy within its single market policies and to develop a European Action Plan for social economy enterprises in order to unlock the full potential for sustainable and inclusive growth;

Conclusions

112. Calls on the Commission to submit the planned legislative proposals and initiatives to the legislators rapidly – taking into account the abovementioned proposals – following the appropriate stakeholder consultations and impact assessment, so as to ensure that they can be adopted in a timely manner;

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

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Completion of the single market has always been a fundamental political priority within the European integration process and it remains so.

The context has changed radically in recent years. The challenges to be tackled loom ever larger and have a particular bearing on the internal market: on the one hand, rising unemployment, which is hitting EU citizens and especially young people through its concomitant sapping of businesses and competitiveness, and on the other, the problem of immigration.

Some very important steps forward were taken in various sectors during recent years, while the Barroso Commission was in office.

The current situation, however, calls for a yet more pragmatic and incisive approach. The Juncker Commission has already, in a short period of time, set some important and ambitious actions in motion, such as, for instance, the Investment Plan for Europe, the European energy union, the digital single market strategy and the capital markets union.

The 'Upgrading the Single Market: more opportunities for people and business' strategy is an additional instrument complementing these initiatives, as prompt and effective action is needed to continue this work.

There are some interesting actions proposed in the Communication, such as for instance: the Action Plan on VAT, the legislative proposal on business insolvency, the services passport and a legislative initiative to stop consumers being discriminated against on the basis of their nationality or country of residence.

These are tangible measures that will definitely have a direct impact, with a leveraging effect on the market and on strengthening consumer protection.

The rapporteur is of the opinion that Parliament can contribute significantly to making the single market strategy more ambitious, by putting forward specific proposals in individual areas and focusing efforts on achieving a deeper and fairer single market that is more modern and innovative.

Strengthening business competitiveness (creating more jobs as a result), improving enforcement and better regulation, and strengthening consumer protection are the political priorities that need to be emphasised.

Existing businesses should be made more competitive by modernising business models, cutting back on barriers created by administration and taxation, and facilitating entry to other Member States' markets. The EU single market also needs to attract new businesses from outside the EU, and private investment. There should be support for new kinds of businesses, in particular start-ups and micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, that promotes their 'innovative' character and makes access to credit and EU funds easier and more efficient for them. The REFIT platform in particular can help identify barriers to innovation and reduce their number, while a stronger SME Envoy Network system could offer better protection for SMEs and coordination of national policies with EU ones.

The announcement of a legislative proposal on insolvency and early restructuring is welcome. The Late Payment Directive should be better applied at national level: it is totally unacceptable that businesses should go bankrupt or find themselves in difficulties because

public administrations that are their creditors do not abide by the payment terms in the Directive. Compensation mechanisms should also be considered therefore, in addition to the Directive being properly enforced.

The Services Directive continues to be an important priority: the Commission should exert a tighter control over its transposition by Member States so as to avoid the practice of gold-plating and improve the notification procedure.

Better regulation and enforcement continue to be fundamental general aims for the whole body of legislation, however.

The collaborative economy can play a part in growth and job creation but the same rules must be applied to the same services, so as to prevent fragmentation and not put obstacles in the way of new business models developing.

The unitary patent represents a significant step forward in protecting intellectual property but the link to national patent systems and supplementary protection certificates needs to be improved. At the same time however, measures could be introduced to facilitate use of the unitary patent by micro, small and medium-sized enterprises for their own innovative products.

The EU single market needs market supervision standards that are more suitable for their purpose. A decision on the future of the legislative package currently blocked in the Council is called for therefore. Standards for indications of product origin are also important for consumer protection.

Last but not least, the SOLVIT system should be strengthened to give a better interpretation of the rules and solve problems linked to the single market.

MINORITY OPINION

pursuant to Rule 56(3) of the Rules of Procedure
João Pimenta Lopes

Mechanisms such as the single market have accentuated the dismantling of sovereign economic regulation instruments, economic domination, divergence and uneven development, and have promoted tax avoidance and tax evasion and the transfer of profits to tax havens, privatisation, the deregulation of commercial relations and the concentration of capital. The single market has eclipsed much-vaunted concepts such as convergence, cooperation and solidarity and served to deepen neoliberalism.

The single market and competitiveness have been used as arguments to justify attacks on workers' rights, social inequalities, labour deregulation, wage devaluation and increasingly precarious employment, while fairer, more redistributive tax policies have been wrecked or stymied.

Citing concerns such as lack of growth, high levels of unemployment, financing difficulties facing SMEs and extremely low levels of investment, the Commission has now reshuffled its previous policies and come up with the Single Market Strategy. Unlike the majority, we firmly reject this strategy. It will serve capitalist goals whereby the concentration of wealth among major economic powers and groups will be deepened further and deregulation, liberalisation and exploitation will become the norm in Member State economies, imposing a single socio-economic model on the peoples and workers of Europe that goes against their interests, rights and legitimate aspirations.

19.4.2016

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

for the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection

on the Single Market Strategy
(2015/2354(INI))

Rapporteur: Ulrike Trebesius

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Employment and Social Affairs calls on the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

- having regard to Article 3 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and Article 9 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU),
 - having regard to its resolution of 14 January 2014 on effective labour inspections as a strategy to improve working conditions in Europe¹,
 - having regard to its resolution of 19 January 2016 on Towards a Digital Single Market Act²,
- A. whereas the economic consequences of the financial crisis are still being felt and GDP remains below the level of 2008 in several Member States;
- B. whereas the Single Market is characterised by persistently high unemployment rates; whereas since the financial crisis the number of unemployed has increased by over six million; whereas by the end of 2015 there were more than 22 million people in the Union without work;
- C. whereas policies to lower labour, social, environmental and consumer protection standards are forcing a race to the bottom, thereby contributing to the distortion of fair competition in the Single Market;
1. Notes with approval the Single Market Strategy (SMS), which could offer opportunities for workers, businesses and consumers and inject new life into Europe's economies by

¹ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2014)0012.

² Texts adopted, P8_TA(2016)0009.

opening up borders, facilitating mobility, and removing barriers for goods and services;

2. Notes that good regulation can benefit businesses and workers alike and help promote economic growth and quality employment in the Single Market; notes the Commission's Better Regulation agenda including the strengthened stakeholder involvement by means of REFIT Platform for example and strengthened impact assessments; underlines the need to assess not only short-term effects but also the long-term value of legislation and the consequences of non-legislation; believes that better, more effective and simple legislation will reduce administrative burdens and boost growth and job creation while continuing to ensure high standards of consumer, employee, health and environmental protection;
3. Notes that the establishment of the internal market in which the free movement of goods, persons, services and capital is ensured is an essential objective of the Union;
4. Notes the importance of promoting mobility through training, apprenticeships, skills and employability via programmes like Erasmus+ and EURES, which provide opportunities for millions of EU workers to gain useful experience;
5. Stresses that the Single Market Strategy must take the social dimension into account in line with Article 3 TEU and Article 9 TFEU and include proposals to combat unemployment and social exclusion; underlines that the SMS must put more emphasis on combating unemployment and in particular long-term, youth and 50 + unemployment and the promotion of social cohesion; calls on the Commission to review its strategy in this regard;
6. Stresses that the Single Market Strategy must not disregard the potential of the industrial sector in terms of sustainable growth and quality employment in Europe;
7. Believes that in order to ensure the objectives of the Single Market and to generate growth and jobs, the EU must enhance competitiveness, along the lines set out in the Declaration of the European Council on competitiveness;
8. Considers that internal demand – and especially improving purchasing power, the adoption of innovative measures and investment in the green economy – is essential for tapping the full potential of the Single Market and for promoting sustainable growth;
9. Believes that barriers to doing business across borders can hamper growth and job creation; calls therefore for a thorough analysis of the matter on a case-by-case basis; stresses that Member States have the right to regulate services and professions in line with their social policy; supports the establishment in border areas of EURES cross-border partnerships, which play a key role in the development of a genuine European labour market;
10. Recalls its 2014 report on effective labour inspections which highlights the importance of labour inspectorates in preventing distortions of the Single Market; calls for clear EU rules on the coordination of social security systems; invites the Commission to produce a study in cooperation with the Member States on the potential added value of introducing a European labour inspectorate and a European social security card;
11. Believes that without competitive professional and business services across the EU

businesses may struggle to remain competitive and maintain and create new jobs;

12. Recalls that competition policy is enforced at EU level; highlights that unfair competition in the single market has a negative effect on law-abiding businesses, in particular SMEs; calls on the Commission together with the Member States to take decisive measures to tackle unfair competition that is based on for example avoidance of social, fiscal or labour law;
13. Considers the principle of equal pay for equal work at the same place as advocated by Commission President Junker as an important tool to fight market distortions;
14. Recalls that all workers in the Single Market must have the right to enjoy the highest possible level of protection as regards health and safety at work regardless of the size of the company which employs them, the place of employment or the underlying contract;
15. Calls on Member States to set up structures to advise and assist cross-border workers with regard to the economic and social consequences of working in another Member State;
16. Notes that the deepening of the single market and the digital single market can bring new opportunities and challenges and will raise questions in terms of skills, new forms of employment, financial structures, social protection, as well as health and safety at work, all of which will have to be addressed and must bring benefits to workers, businesses and consumers alike;
17. Regrets that the SMS does not devote particular attention to skills mismatches, which remains a barrier to growth in the single market; notes with concern that between 40 %- 47 % of the population in the EU is insufficiently digitally skilled and that the demand for digitally skilled employees is growing by 4 % per year while public expenditure on education has seen a 3.2 % decrease since 2010, which poses a threat to the EU's competitive position in the medium term and to the employability of its labour force; encourages Member States to invest in digital education and skills;
18. Notes the opportunities and the challenges of the collaborative economy for job creation, economic growth and a more inclusive labour market; calls on the Commission to publish, in the near future, guidelines on how EU law applies to the various types of collaborative economies in order to eliminate regulatory uncertainty; stresses that the collaborative economy must not lead to an avoidance of tax and social contributions nor to non-compliance with employment and social legislation; notes the need to adapt and modernise legislation in order to achieve the full potential of the collaborative economy and calls on the Commission and the Member States to examine the need for a framework, at the most appropriate level, that will fill any potential regulatory gap and avoid an increase in precarious and bogus self-employment;
19. Welcomes the intention of the Commission to issue guidelines on the collaborative economy, which will provide much needed legal certainty in many areas such as health and safety norms, social security and employment protection;
20. Notes the aims of the labour mobility package to contribute to a deeper and fairer single market; stresses however the importance of ensuring that measures contained in this package are proportionate and take into account the consequences of large amounts of

mobility to particular regions;

21. Takes the view that the SMS can offer fresh opportunities to SMEs which are the backbone of EU economies, and to micro-enterprises and innovative start-ups; believes that developing the right business environment by improving private venture capital frameworks for SMEs, facilitating access to finance, producing sound legislation and fully applying the 'Think Small First' principle across the single market is crucial and could support growth and job creation;
22. Believes that particular attention must be paid to developing efficient and transparent administrative requirements for businesses; calls for one-stop shops to be set up in the Member States to support SMEs and business start-ups through simplified VAT requirements for example;
23. Highlights the Commission's support for dual education systems which in addition to facilitating personal development can help tailor the skills and qualifications of European workers more closely to the real needs of the labour market; stresses the importance of ensuring that the SMS does not in any way undermine dual education systems while ensuring the quality of apprenticeships and in particular employment protection; underlines the important role of social partners in the development of dual education systems; believes that while a dual education system used in one Member State cannot be simply copied by another Member State there should be a European focus on the strong correlation between dual education and youth employment;
24. Notes that the services market remains fragmented; calls on the Commission to ensure the correct implementation of the Services Directive by the Member States and to deliver the necessary reforms that will remove barriers in the service sector by adopting a targeted sector-specific approach for services without lowering standards of consumer, employee, health and environmental protection as well as, where appropriate, Member States' industrial relations systems; points out that inadequate enforcement of existing rules limits opportunities for businesses and hampers job creation; underlines that assessments show that when administrative barriers are lower, more businesses are created and thereby the potential for job creation is strengthened;
25. Welcomes the Commission's legislative proposal to address regulatory barriers restricting access to certain professions as an important step in opening up the single market and fostering job growth;
26. Calls on the Commission to work towards a simplified and standardised form in the procedure for the cross-border provision of services in order to reduce the requirements in relation to the posting of workers and thereby integrate SMEs more effectively into the internal market;
27. Believes that the lowering of administrative burdens and compliance costs on businesses, especially SMEs, and repealing unnecessary legislation, while continuing to ensure high standards of consumer, employee, health and environmental protection is key to delivering the objectives of the SMS;
28. Stresses in this regard the need to increase, in an effective manner, the information on EU funds available to SMEs, micro-enterprises and innovative start-ups; points out, moreover,

that to ensure the quality of the use of EU funds it is essential to implement a system to supervise and monitor the use of those resources;

29. Calls on the Commission to work with the Member States to simplify and speed up procedures for the recognition of professional qualifications, including by facilitating and encouraging the introduction of Common Training Frameworks while fully respecting the principle of subsidiarity; calls on the Commission and the Member States to boost ICT and STEM training and education in order to equip both the current and the future workforce with the relevant e-skills;
30. Supports measures in favour of closing the gaps in EU anti-discrimination legislation in employment especially with regard to people with disabilities; supports, in addition, the implementation without delay of Council Directive 2000/78/EC on equal treatment in employment and occupation;
31. Takes note of the Commission's proposal to introduce a services passport for companies, which aims to further promote the free movement of services; believes that such a passport should be without prejudice to the competence of the host Member States to ensure the effective enforcement and control of national and European employment legislation; expresses its strong concerns regarding the potential misuse of such an instrument in this respect and calls on the Commission to conduct a comprehensive regulatory impact assessment of the proposal in order to assess its opportunities and risks;
32. Calls on the Member States to make use of the possibility to introduce social requirements in the context of public procurement;
33. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to support quality employment in the collaborative economy by adapting and modernising legislation, preventing legal grey areas where existing requirements in relation to tax and employment law and other regulations as well as consumer rights are undermined, while at the same time providing a regulatory framework that will allow entrepreneurs to grow, innovate and create jobs; calls on the Commission, in addition, to promote specific support for entrepreneurs in the collaborative economy in order to help achieve the objectives of growth, innovation and job creation;
34. Welcomes the establishment of a platform for combating undeclared work and encourages Member States and social partners in particular to engage fully with that platform so that more effective action may be taken against undeclared work and bogus self-employment;
35. Insists that in order to harness the opportunity arising from the digitalisation of jobs, there is a need to create secure flexible working time arrangements, stable working conditions, social protection and to facilitate 'smart working' to improve productivity and work-life balance; stresses the importance of rolling out digital infrastructure in rural areas in this regard in order to take advantage of the wide range of opportunities offered by the digital agenda, for example teleworking;
36. Restates its firm opposition to the Commission proposal for a directive on single-member private limited liability companies;
37. Highlights the importance of strong and independent social partners and effective social

dialogue; emphasises the need to involve the social partners where appropriate in discussions on possible national reforms of regulated professions;

38. Stresses the importance of having a social dialogue about the opportunities and changes that a single market brings as regards employment.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

Date adopted	19.4.2016
Result of final vote	+: 43 -: 8 0: 3
Members present for the final vote	Laura Agea, Guillaume Balas, Tiziana Beghin, Brando Benifei, Vilija Blinkevičiūtė, Enrique Calvet Chambon, David Casa, Ole Christensen, Martina Dlabajová, Lampros Fountoulis, Elena Gentile, Arne Gericke, Marian Harkin, Danuta Jazłowiecka, Rina Ronja Kari, Jan Keller, Ádám Kósa, Agnieszka Kozłowska-Rajewicz, Jean Lambert, Jérôme Lavrilleux, Patrick Le Hyaric, Verónica Lope Fontagné, Javi López, Morten Løkkegaard, Thomas Mann, Dominique Martin, Anthea McIntyre, Elisabeth Morin-Chartier, Emilian Pavel, João Pimenta Lopes, Georgi Pirinski, Marek Plura, Claude Rolin, Anne Sander, Sven Schulze, Siôn Simon, Jutta Steinruck, Romana Tomc, Yana Toom, Ulrike Trebesius, Marita Ulvskog, Renate Weber, Tatjana Ždanoka, Jana Žitňanská
Substitutes present for the final vote	Maria Arena, Georges Bach, Lynn Boylan, Paloma López Bermejo, Edouard Martin, Csaba Sógor, Monika Vana, Kosma Złotowski
Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote	John Stuart Agnew, Sylvie Goddyn

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

Date adopted	21.4.2016
Result of final vote	+: 34 -: 3 0: 1
Members present for the final vote	Dita Charanzová, Carlos Coelho, Sergio Gaetano Cofferati, Lara Comi, Anna Maria Corazza Bildt, Daniel Dalton, Nicola Danti, Dennis de Jong, Vicky Ford, Ildikó Gáll-Pelcz, Evelyne Gebhardt, Antanas Guoga, Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto, Robert Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz, Liisa Jaakonsaari, Philippe Juvin, Antonio López-Istúriz White, Marlene Mizzi, Robert Rochefort, Virginie Rozière, Christel Schaldemose, Andreas Schwab, Olga Sehnalová, Igor Šoltes, Ivan Štefanec, Mylène Troszczynski, Anneleen Van Bossuyt, Marco Zullo
Substitutes present for the final vote	Lucy Anderson, Birgit Collin-Langen, Edward Czesak, João Pimenta Lopes, Julia Reda, Dariusz Rosati, Lambert van Nistelrooij, Sabine Verheyen, Kerstin Westphal
Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote	Georg Mayer