



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2009 - 2014

Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection

2010/2055(INI)

3.6.2010

OPINION

of the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection

for the Committee on Legal Affairs

on the interconnection of business registers
(2010/2055(INI))

Rapporteur: Catherine Soullie

PA_NonLeg

SUGGESTIONS

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

- A. whereas facilitated access to reliable and updated information on companies from all the Member States across borders increases transparency and legal certainty in the internal market and can restore trust in the markets following the financial and economic crisis,
- B. whereas on 25-26 May 2010 the Council adopted conclusions that rightly underline the importance of the quality of data and the necessity of simplification regarding access to information, in order to enhance stakeholders' trust and the success of activities within the internal market, as well as the need to integrate all Member States in terms of ensuring centralised access to information,
- C. whereas efficient cooperation between business registers in cross-border procedures is indispensable to ensure proper functioning of the internal market,
- D. whereas the fragmentation of the rules on registering companies damages consumers as well as the business world and the economy, and whereas transparency is essential in order to create the necessary trust between stakeholders within the internal market,
 - 1. Claims that facilitating communication between all European business registers will enhance transparency and the confidence of the stakeholders in the internal market;
 - 2. Points out that it is essential to target bureaucratic, technical and linguistic barriers that hinder access to information on companies across borders and therefore prevent the internal market from functioning smoothly; insists that information on companies should be available in all official languages of the Union;
 - 3. Is convinced that improved and easy access to information is necessary to assist small and medium-sized enterprises, which represent a key element in the backbone of the European economy and the main motor for creating jobs, economic growth and social cohesion in Europe, as it contributes to the reduction of their administrative burdens;
 - 4. Stresses the importance of access to information on European companies, especially regarding the Services Directive and the pending European Private Company status; calls therefore for the implementation of a common technical format of business registers and a European business certificate for European enterprises, with the aim to further enhance the uniformity and legal certainty of the registered data;
 - 5. Highlights that easy access to reliable data concerning mergers, seat transfers or other cross-border procedures is indispensable for European companies and will further boost competitiveness and fluidity in the functioning of the internal market, by reinforcing its main freedoms of the circulation of funds, services and individuals;
 - 6. Believes that any strategy for exiting the crisis and improving the operation of the single

market must involve greater transparency and cooperation in cross-border mechanisms, which will boost the confidence of the 500 million European consumers;

7. Stresses the importance of the quality of the information contained in the business registers; emphasises that the quality of information on companies should be reliable and technically standardised across all Member States, so as to ensure transparent and user-friendly information disclosure;
8. Insists on the importance of the Internal Market Information System (IMI) for enhanced implementation of the internal market legislation, as it has already proved to be a successful instrument with regard to the implementation of the Professional Qualifications Directive (2005/36/EC) and the Services Directive (2006/123/EC);
9. Recalls that all Member States already use IMI and that it could be extended to a wider range of procedures without incurring significant investment by the Member States;
10. Recalls that the EBR (European Business Register) also offers citizens and companies access to information about companies, but that this network is not, however, yet used by all the Member States;
11. Points out the importance of automated communication between European business registers based on standards and allowing interoperability, which will boost transparency and confidence in the operation of the single market, and calls, therefore, on the Member States to commit to the BRITE (Business Register Interoperability Throughout Europe) project by adopting binding legislation; underlines that a strong legal basis is the only means to enhance the quality of the exchanged information;
12. Encourages the implementation of the BRITE project results, as they will be indispensable for building a European network of business registers;
13. Insists on the importance for competent authorities and citizens to have access to reliable, steady and updated company information that is available in the corresponding language; stresses the importance of further merging of the BRITE, IMI and EBR data and systems to put into place a single information access point for internal market stakeholders and consumers, reducing the costs of transactions for both producers and consumers by concentrating information, and thus reinforce cross-border commerce, especially cross-border electronic commerce, and economic growth in the Union;
14. Recommends that practical questions involving cooperation should be clarified in an administrative agreement between the Member States and/or their business registers;
15. Calls on the Commission to work towards integrating all the Member States into this future single information access point by providing expertise and additional resources; asks the Commission to examine the advantages and disadvantages of mandatory membership of this new single information access point for all Member States;
16. Proposes that this single information access point, with mandatory registration for businesses, should be available in all official languages of the Union; calls for effective ways of publishing details of its existence to be guaranteed so that all stakeholders can use

this single information access point to obtain clear and reliable information on European companies.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	3.6.2010
Result of final vote	+: 36 -: 0 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Pablo Arias Echeverría, Cristian Silviu Buşoi, Lara Comi, António Fernando Correia De Campos, Jürgen Creutzmann, Christian Engström, Evelyne Gebhardt, Małgorzata Handzlik, Malcolm Harbour, Philippe Juvin, Sandra Kalniete, Eija-Riitta Korhola, Kurt Lechner, Toine Manders, Hans-Peter Mayer, Mitro Repo, Robert Rochefort, Zuzana Roithová, Heide Rühle, Christel Schaldemose, Andreas Schwab, Catherine Stihler, Róza Gräfin Von Thun Und Hohenstein, Kyriacos Triantaphyllides, Emilie Turunen, Bernadette Vergnaud, Barbara Weiler
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Ashley Fox, Anna Hedh, Constance Le Grip, Emma McClarkin, Morten Messerschmidt, María Muñiz De Urquiza, Konstantinos Poupakis, Sylvana Rapti, Wim van de Camp