Question for oral answer O-000018/2021
to the Commission
Rule 136
Anna Cavazzini, Andreas Schwab, Andreas Schieder, Claudia Gamon, Eugen Jurzyca
on behalf of the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection

Subject: EU-EEA-Switzerland: internal market cooperation in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and more than 25 years of efforts to fully implement internal market rules

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown that measures taken at Member State level can cause interruptions to the functioning of the European economy and can jeopardise the general principles of internal market cooperation, including the free movement of goods, services and persons within the internal market and between the EU, the European Economic Area (EEA) and Switzerland. In this context, the EEA Agreement and relations with Switzerland are key factors for the EU’s economic growth. Since the 2015 IMCO report on EEA-Switzerland¹, several new factors regarding the application and implementation of the internal market rules in EEA countries and Switzerland have emerged. With regard to the latter, the results of the Swiss popular initiative of 27 September 2020 entitled ‘For moderate immigration (Limitation Initiative)’ will have a particular impact, as the vote confirms one of the cornerstones of the EU-Swiss relationship: the mutual freedom to move, live and work freely in Switzerland and the EU. In light of these factors and the COVID-19 crisis in particular, we should take stock – as far as the internal market is concerned – of the current functioning of the EEA Agreement and the state of relations with Switzerland.

1. How is the COVID-19 pandemic affecting EU-EEA-Swiss relations from an internal market perspective?

2. How will the Commission ensure that the EEA Agreement will be used as a tool in relation to future developments of the internal market?

3. How is the Commission planning to deal with the possible implications for the internal market of the fact that the EU-Switzerland Institutional Framework Agreement is still yet to be finalised?

4. While ensuring the homogeneity and the good functioning of the internal market and in light of the negotiations of association agreements with Andorra, Monaco and San Marino, to what extent is the Commission planning to give these states access to the internal market?

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Lapses: 18.6.2021