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Strengthening the single market: the future of free movement of services
European Parliament resolution of 20 January 2021 on strengthening the single market: the future of free movement of services (2020/2020(INI))

The European Parliament,


– having regard to Regulation (EU) 2018/1724 of 2 October 2018 establishing a single digital gateway to provide access to information, to procedures and to assistance and problem-solving services and amending Regulation (EU) No 1024/20126 (‘the Single Digital Gateway Regulation’),

3 OJ L 159, 28.5.2014, p. 11.

having regard to its resolution of 12 December 2018 on the single market package\(^2\),


having regard to the Commission communication of 19 April 2018 entitled ‘A European retail sector fit for the 21\(^{\text{st}}\) century’ (COM(2018)0219),

having regard to the Commission communication of 10 March 2020 on identifying and addressing barriers to the Single Market (COM(2020)0093),

having regard to the Commission communication of 10 March 2020 on a long-term action plan for better implementation and enforcement of single market rules (COM(2020)0094),

having regard to the Commission communication of 13 May 2020 entitled ‘COVID-19: Towards a phased and coordinated approach for restoring freedom of movement and lifting internal border controls’ (C(2020)3250),

having regard to the Council Recommendation of 26 November 2018 on promoting automatic mutual recognition of higher education and upper secondary education and training qualifications and the outcomes of learning periods abroad\(^3\),

having regard to the letter of the Prime Ministers of the Member States to the President of the European Council of 26 February 2019 addressing the future development of the single market,

having regard to the Special Report of the European Court of Auditors of 14 March 2016 entitled ‘Has the Commission ensured effective implementation of the Services Directive?’,

having regard to Rule 54 of its Rules of Procedure,

having regard to the opinion of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs,

having regard to the report of the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection (A9-0250/2020),

A. whereas the Services Directive and the Professional Qualifications Directive are key instruments for ensuring the free movement of services within the European Union, but some of the single market’s potential for services remains untapped;

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\(^1\) OJ L 88, 4.4.2011, p. 45.

\(^2\) OJ C 388, 13.11.2020, p. 39.

B. whereas services account for 73% of the EU’s GDP and contribute to 74%\(^1\) of employment, which is highlighted by the fact that as many as 9 out of 10 new jobs in the European Union are created in this sector, while the share of services in intra-EU trade is only around 20%, generating just 6.5% of the EU’s GDP; whereas studies show that the potential gains associated with deepening the single market for services through the effective implementation and better harmonisation of legislation could potentially be up to EUR 297 billion, corresponding to 2% of the EU’s GDP; whereas 27%\(^2\) of the added value of manufactured goods in the EU is generated by services and 14 million jobs supporting manufacturing are in the services sector; whereas there are a number of services that have complex supply chains and are therefore less exposed to trade;

C. whereas balancing economic freedoms, social rights, the interests of consumers, workers and businesses, and the general interest is vital for the single market framework; whereas aligning economic growth with qualitative development aspects, such as enhancement of quality and safety of life and high-quality services, is crucial for evaluating the development of the single market and should bring further improvement concerning the rights of consumers and workers;

D. whereas high-quality services are in the interest of consumers and fragmentation of the single market through unjustified national regulation and certain business practices, which lead inter alia to less competition, not only hampers businesses, but also hurts consumers, who have fewer choices and pay higher prices;

E. whereas the Services Directive, which covers around two thirds of service activities, excludes – in line with the special regulatory frameworks that are in the general interest, Article 2 of Protocol 26 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) and Article 14 TFEU – either wholly or partially, social services, healthcare services, and other public services from its scope of application; whereas services of general interest may need to be provided, commissioned and organised by the Member States in line with local requirements and circumstances in order to respond to the needs of users at the most local level possible;

F. whereas the EU is currently facing a recession and rising unemployment caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and whereas deepening the single market for services is a key method of increasing EU trade flows and improving value chains, thus contributing to economic growth;

G. whereas employees in the services sector who have worked tirelessly throughout the COVID-19 pandemic in the European Union are being adversely affected, either due to severe economic insecurity or exposure on the frontline; whereas there is a need to address this issue at the EU level;

H. whereas the Member States should implement and monitor the revised Posting of Workers Directive\(^3\) in a correct and timely manner to protect posted workers during

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their postings and to avoid any undue restrictions on the freedom to provide services, by laying down mandatory provisions regarding working conditions and the protection of workers’ health and safety;

I. whereas a more integrated and interconnected services market is necessary to deliver on the European Pillar of Social Rights, tackle climate change, create a sustainable economy including digital commerce and unleash the full potential of the European Green Deal;

J. whereas different regulatory choices at both EU and national level and imperfect and inadequate transposition and implementation of existing legislation create an enforcement gap, since provisions that are not properly implemented might also be impossible to enforce effectively; whereas coherent and clear legislation is a prerequisite for tackling obstacles to the free movement of services; whereas infringements of services legislation can be difficult to identify and to address with existing enforcement mechanisms, especially at the local level;

K. whereas administrative procedures, diverging national regulations, and especially obstacles to accessing necessary information have made it complicated to engage in cross-border trade, in particular for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs); whereas existing tools to support the needs of smaller companies such as the Your Europe Business portal, SOLVIT case handling centres, the points of single contact e-government portals, the single digital gateway and other instruments should be better promoted in order to enhance cross-border trade in services;

L. whereas there is no EU-wide, systematic data gathering exercise aiming to provide adequate data on mobile workers or to allow them to establish their social security coverage status and claim various accrued entitlements; whereas access to information on applicable rules as well as effective compliance, monitoring and enforcement are necessary preconditions for fair mobility and the fight against abuses of the system; whereas digital technology, which can facilitate the supervision and enforcement of legislation safeguarding the rights of mobile workers, should therefore be promoted and used, in compliance with data protection rules;

M. whereas the lack of automatic recognition instruments for diplomas, qualifications, skills and competences between Member States is impeding the mobility of learners, apprentices, graduates and skilled workers and thereby hampering the flow of ideas within the EU, the innovation potential of the EU economy and the development of a truly integrated European single market;

Addressing barriers within the single market

1. Underlines that promoting the single market, including the free, fair and safe movement of services and people, consumer protection and the strict enforcement of EU law, is paramount for tackling the economic crisis caused by COVID-19; urges all Member States to ease unjustified and disproportionate barriers preventing the free movement of services within the single market as soon as possible; regrets that the recovery plan proposed by the Commission does not provide for any specific financing related to the 1996 concerning the posting of workers in the framework of the provision of services (OJ L 18, 21.1.1997, p. 1).
movement of services by recognising its importance as a tool for economic recovery;

2. Highlights that across the European Union businesses and workers should be able to move freely to offer their services, but insufficient implementation and enforcement of single market rules, inadequate electronic procedures, unjustified regulatory restrictions on service providers and obstacles to access to regulated professions continue to create barriers that deprive citizens of jobs, consumers of choices, and entrepreneurs, especially SMEs, microenterprises and the self-employed, of opportunities; calls on the Member States to reduce unnecessary requirements and to digitalise the documentation process for the cross-border provision of services; highlights the increasing importance of servicification – i.e. the growing role of services in the manufacturing sector – and stresses that barriers to trade in services are increasingly turning into barriers to manufacturing; highlights that the full implementation and enforcement of the Services Directive has the potential to reduce trade barriers and increase intra-EU trade in the services sector; calls on the Commission to define a schedule of specific actions regarding the conclusions of the Commission communications of 10 March 2020 on identifying and addressing barriers to the Single Market (COM(2020)0093) and a long-term action plan for better implementation and enforcement of single market rules (COM(2020)0094);

3. Welcomes the fact that the harmonisation of qualifications through mutual recognition inspired by the Professional Qualifications Directive has been successful in relation to several professions and encourages Member States to reconsider and coordinate rules governing entry and exercise requirements in relation to specific activities or professions; stresses the need to improve the comparability of levels of professional qualifications so as to ensure an easier transition towards the mutual recognition of education and training qualifications with regard to the services sector across the EU;

4. Highlights that the European professional card is only used for five regulated professions and is therefore not being used to its full potential; calls, therefore, on the Commission to increase the number of professions to which the European professional card applies, including engineering in particular;

5. Recalls the specific status that regulated professions have within the single market and their role in protecting the public interest; highlights that this specific status should not be used to maintain unjustified national monopolies in service provision resulting in the fragmentation of the single market;

6. Points out that the automatic mutual recognition of diplomas, qualifications, skills and competences between Member States would also have a positive impact on the internal market and the free movement of workers and services; welcomes the willingness of the Member States to promote the automatic mutual recognition of qualifications acquired abroad and the outcomes of learning periods spent abroad; calls, however, on the Member States to extend mutual recognition to all levels of education and to introduce the necessary procedures as soon as possible;

7. Calls for the European Qualifications Framework to be promoted and its application to be facilitated throughout the European Union, to ensure it becomes a widely accepted recognition instrument; welcomes the Commission’s efforts to eliminate undue restrictions on professional qualifications and considers that it should remain active and vigilant in pursuing its infringement policy when Member States do not comply with
EU legislation on the recognition of qualifications;

8. Regrets that unjustified legal complexities and administrative barriers for public procurement in the field of services within the EU due to diverging national implementations of Directive 2014/24/EU\(^1\) remaining in place; calls on the Commission to monitor and encourage further sector-specific harmonisation of and guidance on public procurement procedures with the ultimate aim of yielding the potential benefits and reducing the costs of cross-border procurement for SMEs, microenterprises and the self-employed; highlights the importance of services which facilitate a measurable reduction in the EU’s environmental footprint (‘green services’) and urges the Member States to increase awareness and make better use of existing schemes for promoting sustainable services in public procurement in order to achieve a circular and sustainable economy;

9. Recalls that the Services Directive aims to ensure high-quality services, reduce the fragmentation of the internal market, deepen the integration and the strengthening of the single market based on transparency and fair competition, and pave the way for businesses to achieve their full potential and benefit consumers, as well as to contribute to sustainable development and the growth of the EU economy’s competitiveness;

10. Considers that the development of services linked to disruptive or emerging technologies requires appropriate market scale to justify investments and to support the growth of the companies involved; notes that the fragmentation of the internal market often discourages such investments;

11. Regrets that many innovative or growing companies seek to establish themselves outside of the EU once they reach a certain size while continuing to operate in the single market; believes that attainment of the freedom to provide services can contribute to the reshoring of production back to the European Union and the competitiveness of EU businesses in global markets;

12. Notes that two thirds of service activities are included in the scope of the Services Directive and encourages the Commission to evaluate and improve its implementation to strengthen the single market legal framework;

13. Recalls that cross-border healthcare services fall within the ambit of freedom to provide services in accordance with the Professional Qualifications Directive, the Proportionality Test Directive and the case law of the Court of Justice, as long as the special nature of health services is recognised and public health is protected; notes that the Cross-Border Healthcare Directive was also adopted on basis of Article 114 TFEU; stresses that national regulations must not create additional obstacles to the provision of cross-border healthcare services when compared to the Cross-Border Healthcare Directive, in line with case law of the Court of Justice applying the Treaty provisions on the free movement of services; underlines the need for unjustified and disproportionate obstacles at the national level to also be removed while ensuring a high level of healthcare for all EU citizens;

14. Recalls that the principles of the Services Directive and the Professional Qualifications Directive facilitate the free movement of services; calls on the Commission to issue updated guidelines on the Services Directive with the objective to strengthen enforcement and harmonisation and compliance across Member States and service providers;

15. Recognises the special status of services of general interest and the need to guarantee them in the public interest, as ruled by the Court of Justice, taking into account the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality as laid down in Protocol No 26 TFEU on services of general interest; regrets, however, that some Member States still use unjustified reasons of public interest to insulate their domestic market for services that may not be considered services of general interest or services of general economic interest;

16. Highlights that requirements such as unfounded territorial restrictions, unjustified language requirements and economic needs tests can, if excessively applied, create unjustified and disproportionate obstacles to cross-border exchanges;

17. Urges against the citing of COVID-19 as a justification for limiting the free movement of services within the single market unless appropriately justified and instructs the Commission to remain vigilant against any abuse of this justification;

18. Regrets, while recognising the special status of public services and the need to guarantee them in the public interest, that Member States sometimes use the concept of non-economic services of general interest to exclude certain sectors from the scope of the internal market rules, despite this not being warranted by the general interest; underlines the need to further define the term to avoid national fragmentation and different interpretations;

19. Welcomes the Commission’s guidelines on seasonal workers of 16 July 2020 concerning the exercise of the free movement of frontier, posted and seasonal workers in the EU context of the COVID-19 pandemic and calls on the Member States to ensure frontier workers and seasonal workers can cross borders, while ensuring safe working conditions;

20. Notes that the Commission has decided to withdraw its proposal for a services notification procedure; regrets that no legislative result based on the position of Parliament could be achieved, which had the objective of preventing the introduction of unnecessary regulatory barriers in the services sector through a partnership approach between the Member States and the Commission;

21. Notes that the Commission has recently decided to withdraw its services e-card proposals; recalls that the Internal Market and Consumer Protection Committee rejected those proposals, which were supposed to address administrative complexities for cross-border service providers that remain in place; calls for a new assessment of the situation to solve existing administrative problems while respecting the Services Directive, as well as the principles of proportionality and subsidiarity;

22. Urges the Member States to ensure the proper implementation and enforcement of current legislation, to notify the Commission, in accordance with Article 15(7) of the Services Directive, of any new and draft laws, regulations or administrative provisions
which set requirements as referred to in Article 15(6) of the Services Directive, together with the reasons for those requirements, to avoid unjustified requirements, and to introduce straightforward electronic procedures for obtaining the documents needed for the cross-border provision of services, thereby ensuring a level playing field for businesses and workers while guaranteeing the highest level of consumer protection;

23. Underlines that increased cross-border mobility can be achieved through the implementation of the principle of mutual recognition, as well as through the coordination of rules across the Member States; highlights that the European Union supports and complements the activities of the Member States in the area of social policy according to Article 153 TFEU, which explicitly states that the EU rules adopted pursuant to Article 153 must not affect the right of Member States to define the fundamental principles of their social security systems and must not significantly affect the financial equilibrium thereof, and must not prevent any Member State from maintaining or introducing more stringent protective measures compatible with the Treaties;

24. Stresses that people with disabilities continue to face multiple obstacles that make it difficult or impossible to fully benefit from the free movement of services; calls on the Member States to implement without delay the European Accessibility Act, in order to effectively remove barriers for people with disabilities and ensure the availability of accessible services, as well as the suitability of the conditions under which services are provided; highlights the paramount importance of achieving a fully accessible single market that ensures the equal treatment and inclusion of people with disabilities;

25. Calls on the Commission to provide structured assistance and issue guidance to Member States on how to conduct ex ante proportionality assessments of new national regulations relating to services in line with the Proportionality Test Directive;

26. Calls on the national parliaments to actively engage in supporting the enforcement of existing rules, and to exercise their powers of scrutiny over national authorities;

27. Urges stakeholders, the business community and social partners to keep playing their part in calling on governments to revitalise the EU services sector and to strengthen both sectoral and cross-sectoral interoperability in areas including the environment, transport and health to work towards interlinked cross-border services; underlines that a sustainable, fair and rule-based single market for services with high social and environmental standards, quality services and fair competition should be promoted by all stakeholders;

**Ensuring enforcement of existing legislation**

28. Notes that the free movement of services is at the core of the single market, and could provide substantial economic gains, as well as high environmental, consumer and worker protection standards, when the balance between the market economy and social dimension of the European Union, as laid down in Article 3 of the Treaty on European Union, is respected, provided there is sufficient and active enforcement by the responsible authorities, national courts, and the Commission, and compliance by businesses with national and EU regulations; stresses that borders between Member States should remain open to guarantee the fundamental principles of the EU; highlights that any temporary reintroduction of border controls at internal borders during a crisis
situation, such as a health crisis, must be done with care and only as a measure of last resort, based on careful coordination between Member States, as border closures threaten the fundamental principles of the EU, and also stresses that as national confinement rules are lifted, the immediate focus must be on the removal of border controls;

29. Points out that businesses and consumers across the European Union benefit from adequate implementation and enforcement of existing legislation; encourages the Commission to use all means at its disposal to fully enforce existing rules and to promptly decide on complaints to ensure that relevant issues from an end-user perspective are effectively handled; calls for the assessment of alternative resolution mechanisms and infringement procedures to be applied stringently and without undue delay whenever breaches of the relevant legislation which contravene the proper functioning of the internal market are identified and disproportionate burdens are introduced;

30. Emphasises that overriding reasons of public interest must only be invoked by Member States when legitimate; underlines, however, the right of Member States to regulate the services sector in the general public interest to protect consumers and the quality of services;

31. Calls on the Commission to improve the monitoring of Member State performance and quality in transposing, implementing and enforcing legislation, including an annual report on these issues, and to develop with Member States, social partners and other stakeholders transparent and participative evaluations that are based on quantitative as well as qualitative criteria;

32. Regrets that as many as twenty Member States were late in transposing the Services Directive into national law; recalls that the range of instruments, such as the points of single contact, are still limited and that service providers are not sufficiently informed about all the possibilities available to them; calls therefore on the Commission to inform interested parties through, inter alia, internet advertising of the possibilities provided by the Directive;

33. Stresses that the establishment of a dynamic market and a level playing field for cross-border provision of information society services is a key component of the future competitiveness of the EU economy; calls on the Commission and the Member States to address the remaining barriers to the cross-border provision of information society services in the digital services legislative package;

34. Calls for increased vigour from the Commission to ensure efficient coordination and exchange of information between Member States so as to avoid duplication of procedures and checks for the cross-border provision of services;

35. Urges the Commission and the Member States to define the structure and modus operandi of the newly created Single Market Enforcement Task Force (SMET), including its practical dimension, and to deliver a schedule of specific actions in line with the priorities set by SMET\textsuperscript{1} by establishing a new-long term action plan for better

\textsuperscript{1} Commission communication on identifying and addressing barriers to the Single Market (COM(2020)0093).
implementation and enforcement of single market rules so as to maximise the potential of the single market for services; believes that SMET can provide additional value by ensuring the consistent implementation of all single market strategies and the sharing of data and metrics on accomplishments; encourages SMET to establish an open and transparent database of specific national non-tariff barriers and ongoing infringement procedures;

36. Highlights the significance of preliminary rulings in shaping EU law; regrets that, despite the length of the ruling procedure already having been considerably reduced, the 14.4 month\(^1\) average is still high; calls for the Court of Justice to assess how to reduce the length further in order to avoid problems for service providers and recipients in the single market; stresses that preliminary rulings have an important impact on the development of the single market and on reducing unjustified barriers within it;

**Advancing regulatory information and clarity by strengthening the role of points of single contact**

37. Notes that the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted a lack of regulatory clarity and a lack of effective communication between Member States on rapidly changing regulations; underlines the key importance of the single digital gateway and the points of single contact as an online access point for EU and national information, procedures and assistance services on the single market, as provided for in the Services Directive;

38. Recommends that Member States implement the single digital gateway in a consumer- and SME-friendly way and transform their points of single contact from mere regulatory portals into fully functioning portals; believes this should be achieved by providing user-centric information, assistance services and simplified procedures on the gateway and linking the single digital gateway with the points of single contact, so as to make it a virtual one-stop shop as far as possible, and ensure a maximum level of user-centricity; proposes that the design standards of the Europa Web Guide be adopted to guarantee a user-friendly and recognisable interface for all points of single contact;

39. Recommends that the Commission and the Member States systematically provide user-friendly information via the single digital gateway on all new EU legislation that creates rights or obligations for consumers and businesses; recommends that for this purpose, the Commission and the Member States frequently consult with stakeholders; highlights that transparency, equal treatment and non-discrimination are essential to the free movement of services;

40. Notes that the Member States need to ensure that all feasible administrative procedures regarding company establishment and freedom to provide services can be completed in a digital environment in accordance with Single Digital Gateway Regulation; urges the Member States to speed up their digitalisation work, especially for procedures that affect businesses and consumers, to enable them to conduct administrative procedures remotely and online; urges the Commission to redouble the efforts of those involved, and in particular to actively support underperforming Member States;

41. Recommends that the Commission assists national authorities in each Member State in improving the points of single contact to facilitate communication in English between

the authorities involved, in addition to their local language, and serve as an intermediary
should deadlines be disrespected or enquiries go unanswered; underlines that the point
of single contact should provide consumers, employees and businesses with the
following information and support, while respecting swift deadlines:

- The national and EU rules that companies must apply within the Member State in
question, and information for employees, including on employment law, health
and safety protocols, applicable collective agreements, social partner
organisations and counselling structures for workers and employees through
which they can inform themselves about their rights and report abuses;

- The action companies must take to comply with these rules, summarised by
procedure, with step-by-step guidance;

- The documents companies must have available, and within what timeframe;

- The authorities companies must contact to obtain necessary authorisation etc.;

42. Underlines that the points of single contact should provide all necessary information
about any business-related requirements for companies in the relevant Member State;
notes that examples of the above include professional qualification requirements, VAT
(rates, registration requirements, reporting obligations, etc.), income tax and social
security and labour law obligations; stresses that all relevant legislative and
administrative information, as well as any relevant documents provided by each point of
single contact should be available in English, if possible and appropriate, in addition to
the local language;

43. Recommends that points of single contact should be better connected and should
exchange information on requirements and procedures companies must comply with in
their Member States, as well as sector-specific information on professional
qualifications; recommends further that points of single contact assist foreign
companies wishing to do business within the Member State in question, as well as local
companies wishing to export services and goods to other Member States by providing
them with the exchanged information and necessary contact details; encourages the
Commission in this regard to explore further synergies with, for instance, the European
Labour Authority (ELA), in order to promote this exchange of information; calls on the
Commission to assess, in cooperation with the Member States, if the points of single
contact will require additional resources to carry out these tasks;

44. Urges cooperation between Member States’ points of single contact to ensure that
companies, employees and other interested parties are provided with prompt, correct,
comprehensive, and up-to-date information in the local language and English;

45. Calls for the Commission to play a coordinating role in information sharing between the
points of single contact and, where appropriate, to provide guidelines to help Member
States to streamline procedures, in particular for SMEs; underlines that such
cooperation should also ensure knowledge sharing across Member States, including on
mobile workers, both in terms of communication best practices and administrative and
unnecessary single market requirements;

46. Stresses that all points of single contact should be easily accessible through the single
digital gateway and should provide information and offer administrative services of the Member States using accessible terminology and with full availability, with trained help desk staff providing effective user-friendly support;

47. Urges the Member States to commit fully to the digitalisation of public services and to implement all components of the Electronic Exchange of Social Security Information system in order to enhance cooperation between Member States and social security institutions and facilitate the free and fair mobility of EU workers; calls on the Member States to improve cooperation and the exchange of information related to social security systems;

48. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to promote the use of digital tools and on the Member States to provide labour inspectorates with sufficient resources to tackle all forms of abuse; calls on the Commission to propose an initiative for an EU social security number, which would provide legal certainty for workers and businesses, while effectively controlling subcontracting practices and combatting social fraud, such as bogus self-employment and posting and letterbox companies; calls, furthermore, on the Member States to ensure that the checks carried out are proportionate, justified and non-discriminatory; urges the Commission to make the ELA fully operational as soon as possible to ensure better coordination between the national labour inspectorates and to tackle cross-border social dumping;

49. Urges the Commission to ensure that any new directives, regulations, or recommendations concerning the single market for services include a requirement to strengthen the points of single contact in their functions and devote adequate resources to fulfil possible additional functions in the framework of the Services Directive without prejudice to the allocation of functions and powers among the authorities within national systems;

Providing evaluation: the single market scoreboard and restrictiveness indicators

50. Supports the Commission’s preliminary initiative to update the single market scoreboard with a new set of indicators with which to evaluate Member State implementation of relevant single market legislation; encourages the Commission to supplement the data published with relevant data arising from IMI, SOLVIT, the CHAP central complaints registry and other relevant resources; underlines that there should be a focus on the quality of the implementation;

51. Recommends that the updated single market scoreboard will emphasise reporting relevant issues from an end-user perspective, evaluating whether concerns and complaints are settled, for instance within the SOLVIT or European Consumer Centres Network framework; further regrets that the SOLVIT tool is barely utilised in many Member States and often lacks digital state-of-the-art capabilities; underlines that greater transparency regarding infringements of the freedom to provide services is necessary; considers that the single market scoreboard should include appropriate information, including the number of complaints, number of cases initiated, their sector of infringement, number of completed cases and the result or reason for closing the case;

52. Urges the Commission to adopt a quantitative and qualitative evaluation method involving all relevant stakeholders encompassing in particular the general interest
objectives and the quality of the service provided; underlines that the method for qualitative indicators should be transparent and assess differences in ex ante and ex post regulation; notes the importance of evaluating whether relevant EU directives are implemented on time and as intended by the EU’s co-legislators;

53. Recommends that an updated single market scoreboard links the quality of implementation with existing restrictiveness indicators, and maps restrictions on services in new and existing policy fields and the differing levels of implementation and enforcement of EU legislation; recommends further that the European Semester is also utilised to strengthen the single market, as the removal of the most problematic regulatory and administrative burdens is an ongoing concern; encourages the Commission to include the mid-term activities of the Member States which aim to further remove the remaining administrative and regulatory barriers in the single market for services when presenting country-specific recommendations;

54. Considers that the Commission, in assessing the progress of Member States in implementing structural reforms, should analyse their achievements in relation to realising the potential of the single market and working towards a more sustainable economy;

55. Invites the Commission to update existing indicators and introduce new indicators that help Member States to identify where efforts could be made to improve their policy results, and monitor their efforts in reducing restrictions;

56. Urges the Member States to set annual national targets for opening up the services trade and carry out evaluations in this regard; recommends that the Commission utilise the single market scoreboard to demonstrate the openness of the services trade in the Member States, as exemplified in the European innovation scoreboard, as this would enable the Member States to make credible, concrete and measurable commitments to improve their implementation and enforcement performance in the area of intra-EU services trade;

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