

BUSINESSEUROPE SINGLE MARKET CONFERENCE

10 April 2019 from 14h00-17h15 | followed by reception
VBO/FEB | Rue Ravenstein 4, Brussels

PANEL 1 – TOUGH TALK ON MARKET OPENING AND INTEGRATION

A barrier-free, fair and future-proof Single Market, and how to make rules so that market integration brings benefits to all

8.5 % of the European Union's GDP is an estimate of economic benefits brought by the Single Market. The Single Market seems to be the most supported Union policy, with 82% of EU citizens positively assessing the freedom to live, work, study and do business in other Member States. At the same time, over the last years the co-legislators have often become lost in battles over keeping consistency with the very principles of the Single Market and preserving the rules we have today, rather than creating a future-proof framework that would help the integrated EU to reap the benefits of digitalisation and globalisation. A clear gap between the rhetoric of politicians and delivery when negotiating new rules has become very evident and protectionist tendencies have been picking up. Instead of being the top priority that delivers benefits to citizens and businesses, the Single Market is pushed to the "defensive". The panel will address these issues and discuss how to make rules so that market integration brings benefits to all.

- Do perceptions of what needs to be defended as a public interest in the Single Market change, and what leads to new tendencies of its fragmentation (Member States or EP ask for exemptions, possibilities for additional national rules on top of the *acquis* etc.)?
- To what extent should EU Single Market governance be expected to reconcile a wider range of public policy goals (including environmental, social) with the Single Market freedoms for goods, services, capital, people and data?
- What should the priorities for EU Single Market look like in concrete terms in order to achieve the interest(s) identified above, following the letter of the Treaties ([Art. 114 TFEU](#) on regulatory approximation and [Art. 26 TFEU](#) on the internal market)?
- What is the best way to engage stakeholders in the Single Market governance (good examples)?

PANEL 2 – TOUGH TALK ON IMPLEMENTATION, ENFORCEMENT AND BENCHMARKING

Ambition of taking it seriously to create an enforceable level playing field, and how to make implementation and enforcement more effective, transparent and uniform

As the Single Market regulatory framework is a complex build-up supposed to work for all Member States, so is its transposition to national law, implementation and enforcement. Statistics on transposition of the Single Market directives to national law of Member States have significantly improved, with an average “transposition deficit” falling from 6.3% in 1997 to 0.9% in 2017. However, figures do not reflect persisting problems on the ground, such as uneven application of rules by different Member States, complex administrative procedures or very weak enforcement. Minimum harmonisation directives allow Member States to add their own national requirements, there are issues with transparency of implementation methods and practices, and lack of resources for enforcement is often highlighted by Member States. Coordination and cooperation in implementation and enforcement of rules is insufficient, which may be one of the reasons why European Commission states that positive impact of the Single Market has not been spread evenly and not all citizens and businesses benefit from the freedoms it provides. The panel will address these issues and discuss how to make implementation and enforcement more effective, transparent and uniform.

- What are major EU Single Market legislation design flaws that lead to uneven implementation or unenforceable rules?
- Can transparency measures among Member States, a ‘duty to explain’ and benchmarking solve inconsistencies in implementation?
- What are business/consumer experiences of ineffective or uneven implementation of rules that creates unfair competition or consumer discrimination (bad examples), and how stakeholders can engage in correcting these (good examples, soft law, cooperation platforms)?
- How can the problem of resources be addressed and how the Commission could play its Treaty watchdog role, not only vis-à-vis national implementation, but also regional and local levels?