



Ms Tiina Astola
Director-General
DG JUST
European Commission
Rue Montoyer 59
BE - 1000 Brussels
BELGIUM

6 April 2017

Re: The proposal for a Single Digital Gateway

Dear Director-General,

As you may know, BusinessEurope fully supports the Commission's initiative to create a one-stop shop to support businesses that wish to operate across borders. As an online portal, the Single Digital Gateway (SDG) would enable companies to find clear and precise single market information, access problem solving tools and complete a number of administrative procedures online.

We encourage the Commission to enable this through a Regulation as part of its Compliance Package on 26 April as originally intended. We believe that in the context of approximating laws to improve the functioning of the single market, a Regulation using the legal basis of Article 114 is the right approach. Furthermore, only a Regulation would deliver a harmonised system of national digital gateways in practice with specific performance standards and the quality that companies can rely on. This is vital so that the current patchwork of existing single market tools - such as the Points of Single Contact and Product Contact Points – are streamlined across Member States and brought up to standard. Conversely, we believe a Directive will not be sufficient to achieve this aim.

BusinessEurope encourages important information, for example on VAT, to be presented accurately through the SDG. This would allow businesses to access and understand basic rules in other Member States, thereby facilitating a higher level of compliance and reduction of administrative burdens while encouraging businesses to trade in other Member States to the benefit of investment, growth and jobs.

Another important reason for our support to the SDG is based on its ambition to ensure that various administrative procedures carried out within the life cycle of a business, such as commercial registering or declaring business tax, takes place fully online. While the proposal will not aim to harmonise these rules specifically, we believe that it is an important step to simplify procedures and formalities for businesses so that they can leverage the efficiency of digital. Losing any elements that the proposal seeks to enable online would seriously weaken the benefits that the SDG would offer to businesses and put its use and overall take-up in danger.



If the proposal delivers a useful SDG it will be broadly used by businesses.

At annex, you will find the original letter sent to Commissioner Bieńkowska in December 2016, which outlines our detailed views on this initiative. Businesses must benefit from a comprehensive and well-functioning SDG to truly support them in operating across borders. We remain at your disposal should you wish to discuss this important matter further.

Yours sincerely,

Markus J. Beyrer