BUSINESSEUROPE

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

Mr Peter Burke
Chair of EU Competitiveness Council, Minister for Enterprise, Tourism and Employment of Ireland
Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment
Kildare Street, Dublin 2, D02 TD30
Ireland

22 September 2026

Dear Minister,

Key messages to EU Competitiveness Council of 24 September 2026

The "One Europe, One Market Roadmap" agreed on 24 April 2026 by the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission is an important framework for the EU institutions and Member States to pursue the competitiveness agenda. The Council will discuss some of its measures at this forthcoming meeting.

However, mere legislative action with adoption deadlines as main KPIs gives little room to measure actual progress in market integration which, we expected, had to be the main thrust of the Roadmap. We regret that the Roadmap also lacks long-term targets for a more open EU market guaranteeing free trade and investment across borders, comparable to those established for the green and digital transitions.[1]

With a view to the upcoming EU Competitiveness Council meeting on 24 September, BusinessEurope presents key messages from the European business community, which we trust you will find a helpful contribution to the selected agenda items.

EU Inc

Businesses call on the Council to deliver on the promise to adopt the EU Inc. that brings real added value, helping companies to scale in Europe and attract investment to innovate and compete globally. Member States should make the initiative work rather than dilute the original Commission proposal, which broadly provides a balanced and practical basis for achieving these objectives. The required approach is to place the EU Inc as an opportunity rather than a threat.

[1] See the joint statement by BusinessEurope, EUROCHAMBRES, EuroCommerce, ERT, Digital Europe and SMEunited 2026-09-22 One-Europe-One-Market - time to deliver

To be future-proof EU Inc should be made available to all types of companies not excluding certain forms, sectors or sizes of companies. It should also be able to exercise the fundamental freedom of establishment enshrined in the EU Treaties and repeatedly recognised by case law of the Court of Justice of the EU.

As foreseen in the proposal, a proportionate, risk-based check at incorporation can provide the necessary safeguards without creating additional burdens on entrepreneurs and investors.

Existing EU and national legislation already provide robust safeguards for different stakeholders, including rules governing employee participation. This does not change with EU Inc. Introducing new labour law requirements or additional employee participation rules specifically for EU Inc. is neither necessary nor justified. EU Inc should be simple, attractive and competitive, rather than burdened with additional requirements that unjustifiably discriminate it against other national company forms. Otherwise, we risk rendering it unappealing and defeat the goal of the initiative.

The 'One Europe, One Market' Roadmap, co-signed by the Council, European Parliament and Commission, sets a target for agreement by the end of this year. We urge Member States to act decisively and constructively to meet this commitment without delay.

Merger guidelines

BusinessEurope is looking forward to the adoption of the new merger guidelines with a more flexible and forward-looking approach that fosters investments in innovation, sustainability and resilience. This new approach should provide for a more balanced assessment of both the potential benefits and harms of a merger under a comparable standard of proof, thereby allowing companies in Europe to have a more conducive and at the same time predictable legal environment that will enable them to compete globally.

We stand ready to discuss these issues with the Council further,

Yours sincerely,

Markus J. Beyrer
Director General