



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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Dear Chair,

The Commission would like to thank the Assembleia da República for its Opinion on the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on establishing a single digital gateway to provide information, procedures, assistance and problem solving services and amending Regulation (EU) No 1024/2012 {COM(2017)256}, hereinafter referred to as the "single digital gateway Regulation", and the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council setting out the conditions and procedure by which the Commission may request undertakings and associations of undertakings to provide information in relation to the internal market and related areas {COM(2017)257}, hereinafter referred to as the "Single Market Information Tool".

These initiatives form a package of measures which would make it easier for individuals and companies to manage their paperwork when they decide to work, live or do business in another Member State and help ensure that commonly agreed EU internal market related rules are respected.

In proposing these measures, the Commission has delivered on President Juncker's political commitment to unleash the full potential of the Single Market and make it the launchpad for European companies to thrive in the global economy. The proposal for the single digital gateway Regulation also completes the list of initiatives foreseen in the Digital Single Market Communication which recognises the role of the Internet and digital technologies in facilitating the way individuals and businesses can benefit from their Single Market rights.

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The single digital gateway Regulation, once adopted, would empower those moving to or doing business in another Member State, but also the many individuals and companies who decide to stay in their home country, by providing them with an easy, online access to comprehensive and reliable information on the rights, rules and obligations in the Single Market, to procedures which could be completed cross-border, and to assistance and problem solving services.

The Regulation would also help Member States offer all European citizens and businesses a modern and efficient public service online.

Sometimes, the opportunities offered by the Single Market do not materialise because the underpinning rules are not fully or correctly implemented. When the Commission is alerted of cases where the Single Market may not be working properly, it needs evidence to demonstrate whether EU law is applied correctly. The current regulatory framework defining the Commission's means to obtain this sort of information works efficiently in a great majority of cases. However, challenges arise in specific situations where detailed, comparable, up-to-date, and often confidential, market-specific data are necessary within a limited time frame. Such information is particularly important for assessing complex cases with a cross-border dimension, notably when those cases relate to fast-moving markets, new economic activities and new business models challenging existing economic assumptions.

The Single Market Information Tool, once adopted, would enable the Commission to act faster and more effectively to ensure compliance with Single Market rules. This would benefit all citizens and companies who would be able to exercise their rights under the Single Market better and faster.

The Commission is pleased that the Assembleia da República shares the view that actions at EU level as envisaged in both proposals respect the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality as set out in Article 5(3) and (4) of the Treaty on the European Union. Both proposals are currently in the process of negotiations in the European Parliament and the Council.

The Commission agrees with the Assembleia da República that national authorities' compliance with the provisions of the single digital gateway Regulation, notably as concerns information quality and coverage and cross-border access to online procedures, is primordial for the success of the gateway. To this end, national authorities would have to provide links to their relevant websites. Amongst others, the initiative foresees the establishment of a gateway governance structure bringing together national authorities, represented by national coordinators, and the Commission as well as a monitoring mechanism allowing the Commission to take specific measures aimed at restoring the quality and usability of the services offered through the gateway.

The proposal also recognises the need for promotion efforts at national and Union level, so that information about the gateway can be widely spread among citizens and businesses.

The Commission will ensure financial support for such actions.

The Commission looks forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Frans Timmermans
First Vice-President*

*Elżbieta Bieńkowska
Member of the Commission*