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## The Single Market Act has to deliver tangible results by 2012!

Speakers and participants of the debate on the Commission's Single Market Act agreed that the proposal has to have balanced approach, clear prioritisation and clear support of European institutions, Member States and stakeholders in order to deliver tangible outcomes to businesses, consumers and citizens. The debate took place on the "Single Market day" - right after the adoption of the European Economic and Social Committee's opinion and prior to the vote in the European Parliament's IMCO Committee. The debate was attended by various representatives of European institutions, public administration and business organisations.



Public consultation on the 50 policy proposals to boost the Single Market was closed at the end of February after having received more than 850 responses. Based on the evaluation of these responses, view of the European Parliament and European Economic and Social Committee plus prioritisation of the Competitiveness Council, the Commission shall propose in mid-April second Communication outlining the priority legislative actions to be adopted till 2012.

"Many Member States assess the main aim of the Single Market shall be economic growth and job creation", confirmed **Věra KNOBLOCHOVÁ**, Head of Internal Market Unit at the Czech Permanent Representation to the EU. Czech top priorities are: friendly business environment, including smart regulation, implementation of SME test, access to finance or public procurements, further digital market and services sector, followed by number of others. **Henning EHRENSTEIN**, Policy development and coordination officer in DG Internal Market, pointed out that the success of the whole process depends on the ownership and support by all parties involved, including European institutions, Member States, businesses, consumers and citizens. On the basis of the public consultation and discussions with the European Parliament and Member States in the EU Council, the European Commission will come forward with a list of Single Market priority actions, which it will commit to propose during 2011 and which it hopes the European Parliament and the Council of the EU will agree to seek to adopt by the end of 2012 to further develop the Single Market. The European Economic and Social Committee represented by **Ivan VOLEŠ**, Member of Group I (Employers) and Rapporteur on the Single Market Act, adopted its opinion on 15<sup>th</sup> March, 2011. In its opinion, the EESC outlined the main aim of the Single Market – to enable all actors to make full use of its benefits. The EESC agreed priorities include, among others, Charter of Fundamental Rights, services, retail financial services, SGI, sustainable development, SME, public procurements, social economy, energy efficiency, competitiveness and external dimension. "Although the scope and the format make the SMA an unusual Commission proposal, it addresses the need to reboot the Single Market", highlighted Ben BUTTERS, Director of European Affairs of EUROCHAMBRES. According to him the Single Market has to become a reality for businesses and consumers in particular. EUROCHAMBRES top priorities include the Services Directive, e-commerce, SME access to finance, national transposition of EU rules, recognition of qualifications and inter-connection of business registers. "Completion of the Single Market ultimately comes down to governance", he added. **Luc HENDRICKX**, Director for Competitiveness of Enterprises and External Relations within UEAPME, said the Single Market Act did not enough defend the SME interest. According to him the Commission should seek for tools that will increase competitiveness of SMEs. Therefore UEAPME asks for taking into account the diversity of SMEs, applying the "think small first" principle and looking for better governance.

The event was organised by CEBRE and Czech Permanent Representation to the EU in cooperation with Confederation of Employers' and Entrepreneurs' Associations of CR as a part of the project "Round Tables on Promoting Czech Foreign Policy Priorities" supported by the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs. For more information see <http://cebre.cz/cz/docs/sma> or contact Michal Kadera, Director of CEBRE at [Michal.Kadera@cebre.cz](mailto:Michal.Kadera@cebre.cz).