

Confederation of Finnish Industries EK Position Paper

Single Market is a joint achievement, but more can be done

Next steps: improving services and data economy

Europe needs economic growth and more jobs, but also a stable business environment in the form of a strong Single Market. A strong Single Market ensures equal opportunities for new and old players and encourage companies to invest and innovate in the EU. It provides also a strong launchpad for companies to compete globally.

Goods, services, capital, workers and data still face various barriers within the Single Market. Sometimes the barriers are legislative, sometimes administrative practices are prohibitive to free movement. Although legislation is well developed, its proper implementation in the Member States has been neglected. This is especially true in the case of free movement of services.

New technologies and business models create immense possibilities for Europeans. They shouldn't be limited upfront. Artificial restrictions and thresholds are not in the interest of companies nor consumers. Only when substantial risks are identified based on solid evidence, the legislators need to act.



The European Commission estimates that making the Single Market fit for the digital age could contribute €415 billion per year to economic growth. Better implementation of the Services Directive could yield 1.8 % GDP growth.

The innovation principle means that policies and legislation should be reviewed based on their impact on innovation. Following the innovation principle is key to supporting open innovation and development. Effortless deployment of new technologies and business models attract new investment and skills to Europe.

Free movement of data is another prerequisite for widespread exploitation of new technologies, including in the fields of artificial intelligence and big data. Data protection has developed by leaps and bounds during last years, making sure that users' privacy is already well protected across the EU.

Following a few key principles we can create solid base for the Single Market. The regulatory framework should be future proof and technology neutral. Let consumers and companies pick the winners but ensure fair conditions for competition. An open and transparent Single Market benefits the whole Europe.

The Confederation of Finnish Industries EK believes that

1. We must get back to the basics and make the Single Market stronger by boosting the four freedoms: free movement of goods, services, capital and people.
2. Free flow of data should be recognised as the fifth freedom.
3. Digitalisation and data economy are best advanced by market operators, not by governments; legislation must be future proof, technology neutral and create a level playing field to allow this.
4. The next Commission should step up the efforts to enforce existing Single Market rules, as currently there are shortcomings in their implementation across the EU.