

21 MAY 2025

# The clock is ticking: Europe's Single Market strategy must deliver real change for business

Today, the European Commission revealed its new Single Market Strategy, promising to simplify rules, reduce burdens on businesses, and boost digitalisation. DIGITALEUROPE supports the goals but warns that ambition alone isn't enough. Clear timelines and concrete steps are needed.

Cecilia Bonefeld-Dahl, Director-General of DIGITALEUROPE, said:

“Europe urgently needs a Single Market built for the digital age, and today's strategy sets strong priorities. The Commission's commitment to cutting regulatory fragmentation and removing longstanding cross-border barriers is a welcome step, especially the proposed 28th regime, which has real potential to simplify how businesses operate across Europe.

“We particularly welcome the proposal to link EU funding directly to national reforms that remove Single Market barriers and promote European businesses. This could become a significant gamechanger for real progress.

“The focus on digitalisation and burden reduction is promising, but impact will depend on swift, effective implementation. Structural reforms alone won't be enough to make Europe competitive, we also need smart, targeted incentives that support businesses and growth in the near term. Without clear implementation timelines, we risk missing the opportunity to make a real difference for innovative companies in the next 1–2 years.

“On the Commission's plan for new Common Specifications, we see this as a slippery slope. Standards must be industry driven, and together both public and private sector need to up their game and run the definition process much faster and educate more standardization specialists. Let us keep faith in European public-private partnerships that have always worked well.

DIGITALEUROPE calls for:

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- ▶▶ **Investments, joint procurement and incentives** for innovative companies to boost demand in Europe in the next 1-3 years.
  - ▶▶ **Clear timelines:** Set specific deadlines to quickly remove barriers, digitalise the single market and simplify regulations, as requested by the European Council
  - ▶▶ **Strong enforcement:** Make sure rules are followed consistently and transparently across the single market and speed up infringement procedures to combat fragmentation.
  - ▶▶ **Better lawmaking:** Incorporate strict SME and competitiveness checks, focus clearly on small businesses, listen closely to industry experts, and provide simple tools for compliance.
  - ▶▶ **Guardrails on Common Specifications:** Keep the balance between industry and public bodies clear and fair. Balance speed of developing standards with quality through clear drafting of essential requirements, setting realistic timelines, and faster citation of harmonised standards. Provide standardisers with technical help to avoid legal misalignment while translating essential requirements.

Europe has no time to lose. We need clear action plans—not just promises—to make the Single Market truly work for innovation and growth.

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