



**NORGES DELEGASJON
TIL DEN EUROPEISKE UNION**

Statsråd Trond Giske
Nærings- og handelsdepartementet
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0030 OSLO

Deres ref.:

Vår ref.:

Dato:

7.august 2012

Kjære statsråd Giske,

Vedlagt følger brev fra Michel Barnier, kommissær for EUs indre marked og tjenester , som svar på brev av 4. juni. Kommisæren takker for støtten til et styrket indre marked og for innspill til handlingsplanen for det indre marked, som kommisjonen legger frem tidlig i høst.

Med vennlig hilsen

Niels Engelschjøn,
Chargé d'Affaires a. i.

Vedlegg: 1

MICHEL BARNIER

Membre de la Commission européenne

Brussels,

26 JUL. 2012

Ares D(2012) 1040233

Dear Minister,

Mr. Nord

I would like to thank you for your letter of 4 June outlining your priorities for the further strengthening of the Single Market and in particular the second chapter of the Single Market Act which the Commission will present in the autumn.

I fully share your view that a well-functioning Single Market is an indispensable driver for growth and employment, especially in the current economic context. I also fully agree that after the Single Market Act I we need to maintain the momentum for the further deepening and strengthening of the Single Market.

Given the current economic and employment crisis a strong, deep and integrated Single Market is needed more than ever. The Single Market Act II will set out a second set of key priority actions which can make a difference and deliver the extra boost to growth, employment and confidence that Europe needs. Its focus will be on measures within the 12 levers and the balanced approach of the Single Market Act I which you also clearly support in your letter.

Our assessment has shown that the scope for action is largest in services, network industries and the digital economy. The SMA II will put forward therefore a number of key actions in these sectors. We also need to ensure that the "dividends" of the Single Market benefit all, especially those who have become more vulnerable because of the crisis. To this end, we will make proposals to enhance citizens, consumers and businesses confidence in the Single Market.

To a significant degree this confidence will depend on whether Single Market rules are applied efficiently on the ground. It is a key priority for the Commission to improve the governance of the Single Market. I am happy to see that your government shares this view. In its 8 June Communication on better governance for the Single Market the Commission set out concrete proposals in this area. The Commission proposes to focus efforts on sectors with the largest growth potential. In 2012-2013, the sectors identified are services and network industries. In these areas, the Commission calls on Member States to commit to zero tolerance for late and incorrect transposition of Directives. In case of infringements, procedures should take no more than 18 months on average (currently 25.5 months) and Member States should comply with Court rulings within 12 months.

Mr Trond GISKE
Minister for Trade and Industry
Norway

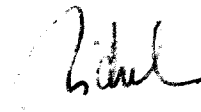
I fully share your view that further efforts are needed to unleash the potential for growth in the services sector. On 8 June, the Commission has proposed "A partnership for new growth in services 2012-2015" putting forward measures to improve the way the services sector works and to ensure the full growth potential from the implementation of the Services Directive is exploited. To achieve the forecasted growth the Commission calls upon Member States to eliminate discriminatory regulations which still exist in a number of EU countries, such as rules discriminating on the basis of nationality or residence, obliging service providers to carry out "economic needs tests". It stresses that it will open infringement procedures against violations of the Services Directive. Moreover, the Commission plans to work with Member States to maximize the economic benefits of the Services Directive through, for example, deep structural reforms in the areas where Member States decided previously to keep the status quo. Particular focus should be on key sectors such as business services, construction, tourism and retail (almost 30% of GDP).

As you see, our priorities for the strengthening and the deepening of the Single Market converge to a large extent.

Currently, the Commission is working on the identification of the key actions for the SMA II which will be presented in the autumn in time for the 20th Anniversary of the Single Market.

I would like to thank you again for your support for a strong Single Market and am looking forward for your cooperation in making the SMA I and SMA II proposals a reality.

Yours sincerely, *Michel Barnier*



Michel BARNIER