



# Recommendations

FOR A UNION  
THAT THRIVES



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# A Europe that supports business –

# 1.

## Entrepreneurship

- Provide European companies with an environment in which their business can thrive
- Reduce bureaucracy in general and administrative and legislative demands in particular – promote initiatives such as the European Commission’s regulatory fitness and performance (REFIT) programme and platform
- Put forward a “small business act (SBA) 2.0” in order to help SMEs to better face current and future challenges and act accordingly – especially concerning the “think small first” principle
- Ensure competitiveness of European companies and implement *ex-ante* checks of all legislative acts
- Ensure financing for SMEs – by *inter alia* the COSME programme
- Enable common European integration policies in the context of finding qualified employees
- Help closing the digital divide between companies
- Further develop the European economy internally, boost ties with partners, and foster ecosystems, especially for SMEs and startups - on a Member state level and on an EU-widescale - in order to boost innovation and meet R&D targets
- Further conclude trade and investment agreements, thereby making European standards global standards

# A Europe that is fully integrated –

## 2. the Single Market

- Further develop integration within the EU – so that companies can benefit from the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and the Single Market
- Do away with all barriers hindering the free flow of goods, services, capital and people within the EU – create a barrier-free Single Market
- Communicate the advantages of the 4 freedoms and the Single Market, which provide access to an economic area with almost half a billion customers better to the public
- Complete the free movement of goods – eliminate limited harmonisation of legislation as well as unilateral policies and procedures that hinder the free flow of goods
- Revise the rules concerning competition across the EU
- Improve the Single Market in terms of services – eliminate unilateral demands for additional administrative forms and procedures
- Ensure the facilitation of the transnational provision of services in line with the posting of workers directive
- Further improve the Single Market for services, in line with the services directive
- Reduce administrative burden on companies and filing and enquiries on an EU-wide scale
- Ensure the free flow of capital and persons
- Facilitate teleworking
- Foster regional cooperation via tools such as the Interreg programme
- Further support initiatives such as the “Enterprise Europe Network”

# A Europe that innovates –

## 3.

## Digitalisation & new technologies

- Foster innovation regarding digitalisation and new technologies. Create incentives for companies to innovate. Boost investments in research & development, expand digitalization, super-computing and Artificial Intelligence in line with the needs of SMEs
- Develop policies in line with the Digital single market strategy and the Small Business Act (SBA)
- Further invest in ICT infrastructure (broadband network construction/ blockchain service infrastructure)
- Make Europe a digital innovation hub
- Enhance the habitual use and sharing of open data in companies and in public administration/Aim at sharing data openly - Make big data available to the public in order to generate innovation/Reduce the administrative burden on companies in the field of digital services
- Promote digitalisation at numerous levels of society/ Foster digital skills among the population as foreseen by the European Commission's action plan on education (upskilling and reskilling)
- Reduce potential gaps between bigger and smaller companies when it comes to digitalisation
- Facilitate e-commerce by doing away with barriers caused by geoblocking and by implementing the use of e-procurement tools on an EU-wide scale
- Help shape the European economy according to the Digital Europe programme and generate added value in the field of digitalisation
- Allocate further means to the Horizon Europe programme
- Follow-up and communicate on the policies established by the Cybersecurity Act
- Conduct a follow-up on the directive on the use of digital tools and processes in company law
- Adapt the proposed e-privacy regulation so that it best fits the needs of companies, especially of SMEs

# A Europe that acts responsibly –

## 4.

## Responsible Economy

- Ensure the three pillars of corporate sustainability (economic, environmental, social) are kept in mind in legislating
- Help companies to efficiently implement strategies for corporate social responsibility (CSR), such as enhancing the participation of women, youth and migrants in the labour market which in turn increases productivity
- Support companies in complying with the United Nations' *Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights* and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) without the burden of additional administrative work
- Climate & energy: Focus on the cross-sectional topics of climate and energy in legislation
- Promote green finance and transparency and sustainability in the finance sector, thereby channeling capital flow into sustainable investments
- Promote decarbonisation and help prevent carbon leakage by ensuring an international level playing field – the EU should become the model for a low carbon economy
- Keep in mind the importance of the EU emissions trading system (ETS), include more economic sectors in the system, and aim for a set ETS price on a global level, thereby installing a level playing field, especially for European industry
- Complete and implement a new circular economy action plan (EMAS and EU ecolabel schemes, green public procurement (GPP), and public-private partnerships)
- Set incentives to improve mobility in Europe and increase the budget of the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)
- Set European standards in the field of logistics by eliminating barriers that hinder economic activity
- Ensure Artificial Intelligence (AI) is developed in an ethical way
- Ensure that there is greater reliability concerning investment
- Continuously develop a legal, modern framework regarding waste management

# A Europe that is qualifying –

## 5. Talent recruitment, education and diploma recognition

- Prepare Europe for its future as a source of talent – foster qualification in a three-fold way (education, talent recruitment and diploma recognition)
- Increase the number of high-quality childcare facilities to enable women and men with caring responsibilities to participate in the labour market and to enable a level playing field concerning children’s education
- Increase the public awareness about *inter alia* vocational training and dual education options
- Increase the acceptance of non-formal and informal learning (VAE)
- Increase the levels of tertiary education (in line with OECD recommendations)
- Further improve the implementation of the *New Skills Agenda for Europe*
- Eliminate barriers in the field of diploma recognition
- Invest heavily in talent – local talent and talent from abroad
- Further develop the “Youth Guarantee”
- Improve access to formal education for senior citizens to raise their activity rates
- Foster regional cooperation in the fields of education and life-long learning
- Raise awareness on the importance of education for the European Union / Support teaching quality and effectiveness in training / Tackle challenges due to digitalization - upskill and reskill employees