

Brussels, 8 May 2026
(OR. en)

8464/26

COMPET 469
MI 379
ENFOCUSTOM 64
STATIS 35
FISC 171
GAF 19
ECOFIN 600
IND 275
CONSOM 157
UD 135
CADREFIN 208
SAN 288
CODEC 872
PHARM 77
INTER-REP 27

NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
On: 8 May 2026
To: Delegations

Subject: Presentation by the European Economic and Social Committee (agenda item 3.) at the Working Party on Competitiveness and Growth (Internal Market) on 5 May 2026

Delegations will find attached a presentation made by the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) at the Working Party on Competitiveness and Growth (Internal Market) at its meeting on 5 May 2026.

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Single Market and Customs Programme 2028–2034

EESC Opinion
Vasco de Mello



Key Messages



- The Single Market is still incomplete
- The SM&C Programme can improve its functioning
- Main risk: weak implementation
- Enforcement and human resources are critical

The Problems



- Persistent barriers
- Weak import controls
- Uneven regulation across EU countries
- External competition (non-EU)

Why the Programme Matters



- Unfair competition
- Risks for consumers
- Loss of tax revenue
- Market inefficiency



Programme Overview

EU Programme (2028-2034) integrates:

- Single Market
- Customs
- Union Taxation
- Anti-fraud



Strategic Pillars

- Digitalisation
- Cooperation
- Enforcement
- Capacity Building



Key Insights

- Only around 4.5% of goods are inspected
- This highlights a structural enforcement gap



Investment Focus

- Strong focus on digital systems
- Training and capacity building
- Modernisation of infrastructure

Customs Problems



- Weak border controls
- Increase in e-commerce
- More pressure on customs authorities

Recommendations



- Increase in human resources
- Strengthening of inspections
- Harmonisation of regulations
- Improvement of digital systems

Risks



- Uneven implementation
- Lack of funding
- Administrative complexity

Conclusion



- Strategy is strong
- Execution is the challenge
- Success depends on Member States



Thank you

Contact Details:

Rapporteur:

Vasco.LinharesDeLimaAlvaresDeMello@eesc.europa.eu

INT Secretariat:

Marco.Manfroni@eesc.europa.eu