

**Introduction**  
**to the Research Conference on the Single Market**

Brussels, 7 February 2024

Paolo Pasimeni (European Commission)

Good morning everybody and welcome to our Research Conference on the Single Market!

It is an honour for me to open this day, but I am particularly proud because we managed to keep the promise we made in Prague, 14 months ago.

Back then, in December 2022, I said that that Conference on the Single Market was not merely the culmination of a great effort, but it was rather the beginning of a process.

A process that we hope will bring the Single Market back at the center of economic research.

As I said in Prague, the Single Market is our core business.

The Single Market is our most important asset.

As the former two-time EU Commissioner, French Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Brexit chief negotiator, Michel Barnier, has declared recently: “the only reason why President Joe Biden and President Xi Jinping respect us is the Single Market”.

Despite this political relevance, however, the European internal market seems to have been somehow neglected by economic scholars, at least after its establishment.

We are here, today, to fill that gap!

We want to bring together the most relevant works and develop a well-organized body of academic research on this topic.

Today we will look at the internal and the external dimensions of the Single Market, by discussing options for its future and the relation with other major economies, in particular the United States.

We will learn about the economic impact of the Single Market and its accountability vis-à-vis our citizens; we will get insights about financial integration, risk sharing and foreign direct investment.

Our speakers will tell us about the evolving landscape of supply chains, and the home bias in the procurement market; they will explain how to design carbon pricing mechanisms, and if there is a business case for the green transition.

As you can see, we have a very rich and interesting programme.

The goal of this conference is twofold:

On the one side, we want to inform policymakers, and this is an important year to do so...

On the other side, we also want to steer future academic research on the matter.

I encourage you to actively engage in the discussions, ask questions, and share your expertise.

The success of this conference hinges on our collective ability to exchange ideas and contribute to the ongoing debates.

And now, before launching the event, let me give you some logistical:

We will have a policy panel, right now, and then we will start with the five thematic sessions (outlined in the programme). After the end of the conference, I am delighted to extend an invitation on behalf of the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the EU to a standing dinner. The dinner will take place in the building right in front of this one. The conference is being live-streamed, and questions can be submitted through Slido.

Now, without further ado, I leave the floor to Kerstin Jorna.

Kerstin is the European Commission's Director General for the Internal Market and Industry.

She is therefore the best placed to chair our outstanding panel.

Thank you very much for being here today and enjoy the conference!