

# WHAT WORKS WELL IN THE SINGLE EUROPEAN MARKET?



The **Single European Market (SEM)** is one of the European Union's biggest success stories. It allows goods, services, people, and money to move freely across 27 countries, making life **easier, cheaper, and more connected** for businesses and citizens



Despite some challenges, there are many areas where the SEM works **really well**. Let's explore some key successes, with real-world examples!

## 1 | No Borders for Trade: Goods Flow Freely



Imagine you run a business selling eco-friendly sneakers in Spain. Before the SEM, shipping to France or Germany meant **customs checks, extra taxes, and lots of paperwork**.



Now, thanks to the SEM, you can sell across Europe as easily as within your own country.

What Works Well?

No tariffs or customs delays when trading within the EU.

Common product standards, meaning goods meet the same safety rules everywhere.

EU-wide supply chains make production and distribution **faster and cheaper**.



### Example:

A car built in Germany might have parts made in Italy and electronic components from the Netherlands. Because of the SEM, these parts can move without extra costs or delays, making European industries more competitive globally.



## 2 | More Choice & Lower Prices for Consumers

👉 Ever booked a cheap flight across Europe? Or noticed that your online shopping options are huge? That's the SEM in action!



With open competition, companies across Europe **compete for your business**, driving down prices and improving quality.



### What Works Well?

More choices for consumers in supermarkets, stores, and online shopping.

Airlines, phone companies, and banks compete across borders, making services cheaper.

Travel and transport costs have dropped significantly.



### Example:

Thanks to the SEM, airlines like Ryanair and EasyJet can operate across multiple EU countries, making flights across Europe much more affordable. Before the SEM, national airlines had monopolies and prices were much higher.



## 3 | Work & Live Anywhere in the EU



Ever thought about studying in Amsterdam, taking a job in Paris, or retiring in Portugal? The SEM makes it **easy to live, work, and study across Europe**—without visas, work permits, or complicated bureaucracy.

EU citizens can work in any EU country without needing extra permits.

Retirees can move freely without losing access to healthcare and pensions.

Students can study abroad with programs like Erasmus+, often with financial support.



### Example:

A nurse from Poland can move to Ireland and work in a hospital without needing extra qualifications or work permits. This not only helps the nurse find a job but also fills skill gaps in other EU countries.

## 4 | Easy & Secure Cross-Border Payments

Remember the hassle of **currency exchange fees** before the euro? Or high bank transfer costs? The SEM has made financial transactions **simpler and cheaper**, especially with the euro and modern digital banking.



### Example:

A freelancer in Italy can **get paid by a client in Germany** as easily as if they were in the same country, thanks to the EU's Single Payment Area (SEPA).

### What Works Well?

**SEPA payments** allow bank transfers between EU countries with no extra fees.

Businesses can **invest freely across borders**, creating more opportunities.

The **Eurozone** makes travel and shopping easier, with one common currency in 20 countries.



## 5 | Digital Services Without Borders

Streaming your favorite show, using your phone abroad, or shopping online? The SEM has boosted digital services, making it easier to access content and stay connected across Europe.



### What Works Well?

No more mobile roaming fees when traveling in the EU.

Online shoppers can buy from any EU country without restrictions.

Digital businesses can operate across the EU without needing separate licenses in every country.



### Example:

Before the SEM, using your phone in another EU country meant huge roaming charges. Now, thanks to the EU's Roam Like at Home policy, you can call, text, and use data anywhere in the EU without extra costs.

## 6 | Stronger Consumer Rights & Safety Standards



The EU has some of the world's strongest consumer protections, meaning companies must follow strict rules to keep products safe and fair for buyers.



### What Works Well?

**Stronger refund and return rights** when shopping anywhere in the EU.

**Strict product safety standards**—if something is sold in the EU, it must meet high safety requirements.

**GDPR privacy rules** protect your personal data when using online services.



### Example:

If you buy a faulty product from an online store in another EU country, you **have the right to a refund or replacement**, just like you would at home.



## 7 | A Global Economic Powerhouse

💡 With 450 million people, the SEM is one of the world's **biggest and most competitive markets**. This gives the EU strong bargaining power when negotiating trade deals with other global players.



### Example:

The EU's **free trade agreements** allow European companies to **export goods with fewer tariffs**, making them more competitive globally.

## Conclusion

### The Single Market Makes Life Easier & Cheaper

The Single European Market is a success story, creating jobs, lowering prices, and making life in Europe more connected.



While it still has **some challenges**, it remains a powerful driver of **economic growth, opportunity, and freedom**.

