Resolution on the entrepreneurship 2020 action plan - Reigniting the entrepreneurial spirit in Europe

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The European Parliament adopted a resolution tabled by the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy on the Entrepreneurship 2020 action plan – reigniting the entrepreneurial spirit in Europe.

The entrepreneurial spirit and entrepreneurial education and training: Members pointed out that, in response to low economic growth and high unemployment, more decisive measures are needed to promote entrepreneurship, especially among young people. The EU initiatives should complement Member States' actions in this field in a useful way, in particular **through cooperation and the exchange of best practices**.

Parliament considered that the EU and Member States should step up their coordinated efforts to explore the possibility of adopting specific measures and targets to make entrepreneurship attractive again, particularly in sectors that are of strategic importance for the Union. It felt that a strong link should be established between such initiatives and the Commission's activities in the field of **industrial policy**.

Parliament proposed that Member States should be able to apply for **additional funding from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund and the European Social Fund** as long as this is used to finance short-term measures such as support and advice for business start-ups and transfers and not to justify the further relocation of enterprises.

It called on the Commission, and Member States where appropriate, to:

- strengthen its back-up, advisory and assistance measures for businesses and set up programmes to facilitate guidance by older entrepreneurs who have the motivation to act as mentors for young entrepreneurs;
- promote the establishment of clusters, i.e. of business networks and associations which help to develop competitive advantage;
- develop the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs programme, with a target of 10 000 exchanges per year, and a minimum rate of 10 % annual growth until this target is reached;
- strengthen the provision of Vocational Education and Training (VET) across Europe.

The next Commission was expected to launch a European partnership within which Member States will be judged by the progress they make on the basis of certain criteria, such as: (i) the **inclusion of entrepreneurship education** in national school curricula; (ii) the level of support from Structural Fund resources for entrepreneurial education and training, and (iii) the number of participants in entrepreneurial modules within Youth Guarantee schemes or in mobility programmes for new entrepreneurs.

Parliament welcomed the **Knowledge and Innovation Community** (KIC) concept and stressed that all KICs should have entrepreneurship embedded in their structure and in their approach to research, innovation and training.

The environment and framework conditions for entrepreneurship: Parliament asked the Commission and the EIB Group to step up their efforts in the field of information in order to **make SMEs more aware of funding possibilities**. It stressed that the creation of flexible financing alternatives is of crucial

relevance to business start-ups, as is strengthening equity financing through a better environment for private equity and venture capital. It also stressed the following:

- the reduction of unnecessary administrative burdens should remain very high on the political agenda, with specific proposals for policies up to 2020, which may include targets (e.g. 25 % reduction in the administrative burden of EU regulations by 2020);
- the MFF should continue to provide for microfinancing programmes such as the European Progress Microfinance Facility and the JASMINE (Joint Action to Support Microfinance Institutions) initiative.

Member States were asked to establish **one-stop shops** where all business support services would be combined, including access to funding from various sources, and advice on business start-ups.

Entrepreneurs as role models, and reaching specific target groups: Members supported the establishment of a Europe-wide 'EU Entrepreneurship Day' to draw media attention to entrepreneurial success stories, and they hoped that schools and educational establishments would participate through meetings with entrepreneurs and visits to enterprises. Parliament highlighted the following: (i) women represented a major pool of entrepreneurial potential, and reliable data was needed to evaluate obstacles for female entrepreneurs; (ii) the potential of cooperatives and social enterprises as a tool for generating employment; (iii) the need to promote programmes to build ICT skills, particularly for young people and women; (iv) increased mobility and agreement on the directive on the recognition of professional qualifications.