Resolution on building an ambitious EU industrial strategy as a strategic priority for growth, employment and innovation in Europe

2017/2732(RSP) - 05/07/2017 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on building an ambitious EU industrial strategy as a strategic priority for growth, employment and innovation in Europe.

The text adopted in plenary was tabled by the EPP, S&D, ECR, ALDE and Green/EFA groups.

Parliament stressed the fundamental role of industry as a driver of sustainable growth, employment and innovation in Europe: it accounts for more than half of European exports and about 65% of research and development investments, and providing more than 50 million jobs (both directly and indirectly), meaning 20 % of jobs in Europe.

Noting that the contribution of the European manufacturing industry to the EU's GDP has decreased from 19 % to less than 15.5 % during the last 20 years, Members emphasised the importance of **strengthening and modernising the industrial base in Europe**, while recalling the EU's target of ensuring that 20 % of Union GDP is based on industry by 2020.

Union strategy and action plan: the Commission is called on to develop, **by early 2018**, together with the Member States, a Union strategy and an action plan for a consistent and comprehensive industrial policy aimed at Europe's reindustrialisation, with targets, indicators, measures and time scales.

This strategy should be based *inter alia* on **digitalisation**, on an **energy**- and resource-efficient economy and on a life-cycle and circular economy approach.

Highlighting the **role of SMEs** as the backbone of EU industry, Parliament stressed the need to support the creation of a business-friendly environment by establishing a level playing field for all EU SMEs, start-ups and scale-ups, young entrepreneurship, in particular in the most innovative areas.

Members called for **support for competitiveness clusters and innovation hubs** and for their cooperation at European level, ensuring the participation of SMEs, research centres and universities at regional and local level. They also stressed the importance of:

- **supporting the qualitative rise of European products** through reindustrialisation processes, notably through research and digitalisation;
- enhancing Europe's industrial **attractiveness** for European and foreign direct investment;
- keeping sufficient **financial means** for the industry sector in the next multiannual financial framework (MFF);
- exploiting the full potential of the industry, including **environmental technologies**;
- **reducing administrative burdens** and compliance costs for businesses, without undermining the effectiveness of EU legislation on consumer protection, health, safety and the environment.

Trade policy: stressing the importance of open and fair trade for the Union industry, Parliament called for more consistency between trade and industrial policy and the **anti-dumping and anti-subsidy** measures to be consistent with the rules of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

The Commission should in this respect:

- assess the Union's current competition rules in order to take account of developments in the respective world markets and the emerging role of major national players in third countries;
- pay more attention to the **role of foreign-based state-owned enterprises** that are supported and subsidised by their governments;
- screen **direct investment abroad** by third countries in the strategic industries, infrastructures and key future technologies of the Union.

Lastly, Parliament stressed the need for coordinated EU efforts, with consultation of all relevant partners, including social partners and academia, to pursue the **promotion of new skills** as well as retraining.