# Enlargement: industrial policy and competitiveness

2003/2063(INI) - 23/10/2003 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution based on the own-initiative report by Olga ZRIHEN (PES, Belgium) on industrial policy in an enlarged Europe. Parliament proposed an action plan to the Commission which could be based on some of the following measures and activities: - incorporating the aims of industrial policy into all policies, measures, and activities pursued by the Community; - taking into account the lower potential and expertise of the new Member States to make efficient use of Community policies and instruments and the need to secure equal access and clear orientation in the process; - harmonising national taxation systems that adversely affect the single market; - further simplifying administration for all companies and simplifying the formalities required to allow EC-based companies to be set up, for example by introducing a single EC document for that purpose; - incorporating education, training and skills into industrial policy. Parliament welcomed the idea of using the open coordination method to facilitate the implementation of a proactive industrial policy aimed at: - consolidating businesses that are subject to competition by establishing better conditions for them in the European area, thus enabling a key industrial sector able to offer employment at all levels to be maintained and developed; - tying in with regional policies with a view to better management of relocations and new industrial sitings; - improving coherence with employment policy, particularly by using the structural funds designated for this purpose. Parliament went on to state that it is not enough to keep only the headquarters of industrial undertakings in Europe, but that production activities and sites must be protected by means of appropriate framework conditions. Parliament cited legislative proposals, such as the directive on emissions trading, the regulation on the new chemicals policy, the directive on transport costs and the directive on environmental liability. The Commission needs to study how the EU can mobilise competition policy to boost industrial competitiveness, for instance by reviewing the block exemptions concerning tax systems and regional or cross-border subsidies and encouraging companies to join forces, in particular in the research and technological sphere. Parliament called upon Member States to create a more SME-friendly tax system and use tax incentives to stimulate private investment, in particular in the fields of research, education, training and lifelong learning, while at the same time ensuring stable financing for social protection and creating more job opportunities. An overall industrial strategy must encompass large-scale European projects involving both public and private partners, following the model of the Galileo project, in key sectors such as renewable energy sources, nanotechnologies, health, space, steel, security, and defence.