Policy framework to strengthen the European Union manufacturing: towards a more integrated approach for industrial policy

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The committee adopted the own-initiative report drawn up by Joan CALABUIG RULL(PES, ES) in response to the Commission communication on a policy framework to strengthen EU manufacturing as part of the Lisbon agenda.

The report recognised the important role of the manufacturing industries in the Union and said that the EU "must aspire to remain a major industrial power and not merely confine itself to developing the services sector". MEPs therefore supported a "coherent industrial policy at European level to tackle the challenges of globalisation".

The committee was concerned at the preponderance in the EU of industries with medium-high technologies and low-to-intermediate labour skills. It said that education and training at all levels were crucial, and believed that the Commission's paper did not pay enough attention to these areas. It urged the Member States to attract more young students into technical and scientific studies, and emphasised the " major potential of nano-sciences and nano-technologies".

The Commission was urged to "focus on the area of market surveillance and the fight against unfair competition and counterfeiting". MEPs also said it should "monitor and record the extent to which imported products comply with European environmental and consumer health protection legislation and affect the competitivity of European products". Lastly, the report called on the Commission to make an in-depth analysis of the current situation of the manufacturing industries in the new Member States and the challenges ahead, and to ensure that Community legislation is properly enforced.