Basic information

2013/2711(RSP) RSP - Resolutions on topical subjects	Procedure completed
Resolution on the 'top ten' consultation process and lightening the burden of EU regulation on SMEs **Subject** 3.45.02 Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME), craft industries 3.45.08 Business environment, reduction of the administrative burdens	

Key players

European Parliament	**Committee responsible**	**Rapporteur**	**Appointed**
	ITRE Industry, Research and Energy	RÜBIG Paul (PPE)	12/09/2013
		Shadow rapporteur ANDRÉS BAREA Josefa (S&D) JOHANSSON Kent (ALDE) BÜTIKOFER Reinhard (Verts/ALE) FORD Vicky (ECR)	

European Commission	**Commission DG**	**Commissioner**
	Secretariat-General	BARROSO José Manuel

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
14/04/2014	Debate in Parliament		
17/04/2014	Decision by Parliament	T7-0459/2014	Summary
17/04/2014	Results of vote in Parliament		
17/04/2014	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2013/2711(RSP)

Procedure type	RSP - Resolutions on topical subjects
Procedure subtype	Debate or resolution on oral question/interpellation
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 142-p5
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ITRE/7/13307

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Amendments tabled in committee		PE522.981	12/11/2013	
Motion for a resolution		B7-0415/2014	15/04/2014	
Motion for a resolution		B7-0434/2014	15/04/2014	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T7-0459/2014	17/04/2014	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Commission document (COM)	COM(2013)0446	18/06/2013	
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2014)470	25/09/2014	

Resolution on the ‘top ten' consultation process and lightening the burden of EU regulation on SMEs

2013/2711(RSP) - 17/04/2014 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the ‘top ten’ consultation process and lightening the burden of EU regulation on SMEs.

Members recalled that **20.7 million SMEs employ over 65% of the existing private-sector workforce** and whereas SMEs are among the most innovatory enterprises, with the best performance in terms of job creation and economic growth.

According to a Eurobarometer survey, **74% of Europeans believe that the EU generates too much red tape**. Almost one third of the administrative burden deriving from EU legislation stems primarily from disproportionate and inefficient national implementation, meaning that up to EUR 40 billion could be saved if the Member States transposed EU legislation more efficiently.

The Commission is pursuing regulatory and administrative effectiveness via its Regulatory Fitness and Performance (REFIT) programme, impact assessments, competitiveness proofing, fitness checks, the ‘top ten’ consultation process, the SME scoreboard and the SME test.

Parliament welcomed the ‘top ten’ initiative as part of the REFIT exercise. However, it stressed that the Commission should **accelerate its efforts** to address the concerns about regulatory burden raised by SMEs during the consultation process. It stressed that the ’top ten’ approach **must not replace a systematic, horizontal policy approach** to minimising the administrative burden stemming from EU regulation.

Members underlined the need for the ‘**think small first' principle** to better inform Union policies. The Commission and the Member States are called upon to:

- step up its efforts to ensure that SMEs, especially innovative ones, are encouraged to flourish through administrative simplification and the provision of targeted support in all policy areas;
- conduct **SME tests** transparently and properly when developing legislation;
- simplify excessive administrative formalities, while at the same time retaining necessary provisions that ensure safety, health and protection at work or require companies to provide their staff with a suitable working environment;

- ensure **easy access to funding and markets** and to reduce the regulatory burden, which constitutes one of the greatest obstacles to the creation and development of small and medium-sized enterprises;
- develop a **web-based application** enabling the administration concerned to indicate whether, and to what extent, SMEs are affected by upcoming legislation.

The resolution recalled the **importance for the Member States to implement Directive 2011/7/EU on combating late payment in commercial transactions**.

Parliament stated that the **impact assessment culture of all the European institutions** should be improved. It recommended that Parliament make greater use of its impact assessment and SME testing facilities, e.g. before introducing substantial changes to Commission proposals.

Members called on the Commission to simplify excessive administrative formalities, while at the same time retaining necessary provisions that ensure safety, health and protection at work or require companies to provide their staff with a suitable working environment.

They asked the Commission to accelerate all processing of **REACH applications** and, in particular, to fast-track applications from SMEs and micro-enterprises.

In this respect, Parliament recalled its position on general exemptions of **micro-enterprises** from EU legislation, as laid down in its aforementioned resolution of 23 October 2012, according to which exemptions should only be applied where a proper SME test is able to demonstrate, on a case-by-case basis, that the specific needs of micro-enterprises cannot be addressed by means of adapted solutions or lighter regimes.

Parliament encouraged the Member States to mirror the REFIT and 'top ten' exercises being undertaken at EU level and to ensure that the **administrative and regulatory burden is also eased for SMEs at national level**.

Parliament expected the next Commission to maintain responsibility for 'smart regulation' as one of the competences of the President's office, and encouraged it to **enhance the role of the SME envoys**.

Lastly, it insisted that the next Commission should establish a European objective of a **30% reduction** in the costs to SMEs generated by administrative and regulatory burdens **by 2020**.