

**Question for written answer E-010214/2015**  
**to the Commission**  
Rule 130  
**Adam Szejnfeld (PPE)**

Subject: The digital revolution - a challenge for SMEs

In order to keep pace with societal change, EU companies are obliged to adapt to the needs and purchasing patterns of consumers, which increasingly involve the use of new technologies. However, familiarity with and use of digital services vary widely from firm to firm. Unfortunately, micro, small and medium-sized businesses face a number of difficulties when trying to take advantage of the opportunities afforded by digital technology. These include a lack of technical knowledge, poor infrastructure (especially in the countryside and in small towns) and a lack of funds for equipment purchases and of qualified staff.

These factors make it difficult for them to embrace new solutions. For example, only 15% of SMEs sell their products online, and only half of those do so outside their home countries. This is an extremely challenging situation for SMEs, which is why the EU and its Member States should do more to help micro, small and medium-sized businesses to develop and 'move with the times'.

What is the Commission doing to support small businesses and encourage them to use digital tools in order to become more competitive, not only on local, regional and national markets, but also at international level?