



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2014 - 2019

Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

2014/2245(INI)

25.3.2015

OPINION

of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

for the Committee on Regional Development

on investment for jobs and growth: promoting economic, social and territorial cohesion in the Union
(2014/2245(INI))

Rapporteur: Neoklis Sylikiotis

PA_NonLeg

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Industry, Research and Energy calls on the Committee on Regional Development, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Underlines that the economic crisis has challenged economic, social and territorial cohesion in the EU, creating additional differences between Member States and regions; recalls that since the onset of the crisis over 3.8 million jobs have been lost in manufacturing in the EU¹; emphasises the need to reinforce the EU's cohesion policy with a clear statement of priorities, highlighting the need to reduce regional disparities and to achieve the EU-wide goals of growth and jobs;
2. Highlights the fact that substantial efforts are needed to bring the EU back on track so as to meet the 20 % reindustrialisation target by 2020; calls for the strengthening and renewal of the industrial structure in the Union in order to boost competitiveness, growth and jobs; emphasises that in order to achieve this, investments need to be made in digital, energy and transport infrastructure, and also, in a longer-term perspective but no less urgently, in education, research and enhancing the skills of workers;
3. Acknowledges that cohesion policy investments have helped mitigate the negative effects of the economic and financial crisis and have become a significant part of the investment budget in certain European countries; acknowledges the Commission's efforts in redirecting cohesion policy investment to areas that were hit the hardest by the crisis;
4. Underlines that the Treaty on European Union includes the objective of promoting economic, social and territorial cohesion and solidarity among Member States (Article 3 TEU);
5. Emphasises that the goals set in the Europe 2020 strategy should be taken fully into account in cohesion policy; stresses that cohesion policy investments should be targeted on growth, increasing innovation, SMEs, the digital economy and a low-carbon bioeconomy; highlights the fact that in particular investments in these sectors have the potential not only to secure existing jobs but to trigger the creation of growth and further jobs;
6. Underlines the key role that the industrial sector, and manufacturing in particular, play in the European economy, accounting as the sector does for 80 % of exports and 80 % of expenditure on R&D; notes that an estimated 594 000 new jobs were created from 2007 to 2012 through EU regional policy alone²;
7. Recommends that cohesion policy should be modernised; recommends a central role in cohesion policy for renewing industry and structures and supporting innovation in order to enhance employment Union-wide;

¹ Industrial Scoreboard 2013, Commission Staff Working Document (SWD(2013)0346 , 20 September 2013), p.6.

² 'Making Europe's regions and cities more competitive, fostering growth and creating jobs' .
http://europa.eu/pol/pdf/flipbook/en/regional_policy_en.pdf - p. 6

8. Emphasises the importance of simplifying management and procedures for cohesion policy programmes; stresses that the administrative burden arising from different managing and monitoring procedures must be reasonable when compared to the amount of funding obtained from cohesion policy programmes;
9. Underlines that SMEs make up 99 % of the EU's corporate fabric and account for 80 % of jobs in the Union;
10. Considers that further efforts are needed to strengthen the industrial sector in several Member States, facilitate access to investment and credit for manufacturers, and tackle unemployment; underscores the need for an approach based on regions' specific strengths in order to achieve economic growth;
11. Considers that all the new projects and investments under cohesion policy are geared towards maximum results and impact, and respects the new performance framework aimed at boosting smart, sustainable and inclusive growth; also stresses that projects and investments promoted by EU funds should aim at the creation of new jobs; stresses therefore, that Member States should aim for the creation of quality and sustainable jobs while implementing their operational programs for the current funding period, in order to take measures against high youth unemployment and enable the regions to develop healthy and sustainable economies; recalls that investments and projects should take into account environmental protection, in particular in order to promote renewable energy sources as well as energy efficiency measures; recalls that the global market for eco-friendly products and services is projected to almost double by 2020 to EUR 2 trillion a year;
12. Welcomes the proposal for a Capital Markets Union and considers it an important tool to complement to the Investment Plan for Europe and improve SMEs' access to credit by creating and developing alternative sources of funding to bank loans, including through improving initial public offers;
13. Calls for the Capitals Markets Union to be rapidly implemented and made use of in order to support industry-led work in developing European private placement markets and supporting the take-up of long-term investment funds; believes that a successful Capital Markets Union will reduce fragmentation in the EU's financial markets, thereby helping reduce the cost of funding;
14. Stresses that investments should focus on areas that are capable of producing multiplier effects on jobs and growth, such as innovation or education;
15. Stresses the importance of regional funding for small and medium-sized companies, which act as a regional engine for job creation, smart growth and the moves towards digital and low-carbon economies;
16. Underlines the importance of cohesion policy funding for the transition to a low-carbon economy and achieving the 2020 and 2030n objectives for CO₂ reduction, energy efficiency and renewables;
17. Notes that reporting on projects financed by EU funds is usually focused on the expenditure itself and on compliance with administrative rules and not on the achievement

of tangible results, resulting in a lack of knowledge regarding the effectiveness of EU subsidies; stresses in this regard the importance of systematically collecting information on the impact of EU funds in order to be able to identify the measures which would be the most effective in fostering the economic development of the EU's regions;

18. Calls for more coordinated public investment by the Member States and local and regional authorities, and also calls for a more stable, economic and regulatory environment in the EU in order to make it more attractive for private investment, since without this it will be impossible to reach the target of raising industry's contribution to GDP to as much as 20 % by 2020; underlines the importance of concentrating EU investments on innovative sectors and thematic priorities, such as research and innovation, support for SMEs and the low-carbon economy, in order to maximise the impact of investments on sustainable economic growth and job creation; strongly supports the approach to R&I which aims at reducing the innovation gap within the Union by enabling less advanced regions to adopt, enhance and adapt the innovative solutions developed in the leading regions; calls also for further clarification and swift implementation of the Smart Specialisation concept, which has the potential to boost the sustainable growth of the EU's regions;
19. Calls for an inclusive industrial strategy which takes into account those areas affected by depopulation and aging processes; considers that its ultimate goals should be tackling unemployment, securing competition, sustainable development and growth and creating more jobs;
20. Emphasises, that in order to enable innovative and productive research activities it is necessary to further increase funding for research and development; calls, therefore, for better alignment of existing funding measures, i.e. the funding from the European Structural and Investment Funds and Horizon 2020 as laid down in Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council;
21. Calls on Member States to accelerate the Youth Guarantee programme, given that the crisis has prevented disproportionate numbers of young people at the beginning of their careers from finding jobs and youth unemployment has reached alarming levels in half of the regions;
22. Calls, in order to improve the employment situation, for proper account to be taken of the needs of SMUs when laws and regulations are drawn up and for access to credit to be facilitated for undertakings, whatever their size, which create jobs;
23. Calls, in order to improve the situation as regards innovation, exchanges of knowledge and ideas and the competitiveness and innovativeness of European undertakings, for the digital internal market to be completed.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	24.3.2015
Result of final vote	+: 47 -: 7 0: 9
Members present for the final vote	Bendt Bendtsen, Reinhard Bütikofer, Pilar del Castillo Vera, Christian Ehler, Fredrick Federley, Ashley Fox, Adam Gierek, Juan Carlos Girauta Vidal, Theresa Griffin, Marek Józef Gróbarczyk, András Gyürk, Roger Helmer, Dawid Bohdan Jackiewicz, Eva Kaili, Barbara Kappel, Krišjānis Kariņš, Seán Kelly, Jeppe Kofod, Miapetra Kumpula-Natri, Janusz Lewandowski, Ernest Maragall, Edouard Martin, Nadine Morano, Dan Nica, Angelika Niebler, Miroslav Poche, Miloslav Ransdorf, Michel Reimon, Herbert Reul, Paul Rübig, Algirdas Saudargas, Jean-Luc Schaffhauser, Neoklis Sylikiotis, Dario Tamburrano, Evžen Tošenovský, Claude Turmes, Miguel Urbán Crespo, Vladimir Urutchev, Adina-Ioana Vălean, Kathleen Van Brempt, Henna Virkkunen, Martina Werner, Hermann Winkler, Flavio Zanonato, Carlos Zorrinho
Substitutes present for the final vote	Pervenche Berès, Simona Bonafè, Cornelia Ernst, Yannick Jadot, Werner Langen, Morten Messerschmidt, Clare Moody, Dominique Riquet, Inmaculada Rodríguez-Piñero Fernández, Anne Sander, Maria Spyrali, Paul Tang, Pavel Telička, Anneleen Van Bossuyt, Cora van Nieuwenhuizen
Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote	Isabella Adinolfi, Ignazio Corrao, Antanas Guoga